

CHAPTER 39 : PROTESTANT REFORMATION IN SCOTLAND

It would have been thought improbable that any very distinguished share awaited Scotland in the great Protestant Reformation. A small country, it was parted by barbarism as well as by distance from the rest of the world. Its rock-bound coast was perpetually beaten by a stormy sea; its great mountains were drenched in rains and shrouded in mist; its plains, abandoned to swamps, had not been conquered by the plough, nor yielded aught for the sickle. The mariner shunned its shore, for there no harbor opened to receive his vessel, and no trader waited to buy his wares. This land was the dwelling of savage tribes, who practiced the horrid rites and worshipped, under other names, the deities to which the ancient Assyrians had bowed down.

Scotland first tasted of a little civilization from the Roman sword. In the wake of the Roman Power came the missionaries of the Cross, and the gospel found disciples where Caesar had been able to achieve no triumphs. Next came Columba, who kindled his evangelical lamp on the rocks of Iona, at the very time that Mohammedanism was darkening the East, and Rome was stretching her shadow farther every year over the West. In the ninth century came the first great step in Scotland's preparation for the part that awaited it seven centuries later. In the year 838, the Picts and the Scots were united under one crown. Down to this year they had been simply two roving and warring clans; their union made them one people, and constituted them into a nation. In the erection of the Scots into a distinct nationality we see a foothold laid for Scotland's having a distinct national Reformation: an essential point, as we shall afterwards see, in order to the production of an advanced and catholic Protestantism.

The second step in Scotland's preparation for its predestined task was the establishment of its independence as a nation. It was no easy matter to maintain the political independence of so small a kingdom, surrounded by powerful neighbors who were continually striving to effect its subjugation and absorption into their own wealthier and larger dominions. To aid in this great struggle, on which were suspended far higher issues than were dreamed of by those who fought and bled in it, there arose from time to time "mighty men of valor." Wallace and Bruce were the leaders in this war for national independence.

In the twelfth century Iona still existed, but its light had waxed dim. Under King David the Culdee establishments were suppressed, to make way for Popish monasteries; the presbyters of Iona were driven out, and the lordly prelates of the Pope took their place; the edifices and heritages of the Culdees passed over wholesale to the Church of Rome, and a body of ecclesiastics of all orders, from the mitered abbot down to the begging friar, were brought from foreign countries to occupy Scotland, now divided into twelve dioceses, with a full complement of abbeys, monasteries, and nunneries. But it is to be noted that this establishment of Popery in the twelfth century is not the result of the conversion of the people, or of their native teachers: we see it brought in over the necks of both, simply at the will and by the decree of the monarch. So little was Scottish Popery of native growth that the men as well as the system had to be imported from abroad.

If in no country of Europe was the dominant reign of Popery so short as in Scotland, in no country was the Church of Rome so powerful when compared with the size of the kingdom and the number of the population. The influences which in countries like France set limits to the power of the Church did not exist in Scotland. On her lofty height she was without a rival, and looked down upon all ranks and institutions – upon the throne, which was weak; upon the nobles, who were parted into factions; upon the people, who were sunk in ignorance. Bishops and abbots filled all the great posts at court and discharged all the highest offices in the state. They were chancellors, secretaries of state, justiciaries, ambassadors; they led armies, fought battles, and tried and executed criminals. They were the owners of lordships, hunting-grounds, fisheries, houses; and while a full half of the kingdom was theirs, they heavily taxed the other half, as they did also all possessions, occupations, and trades. Thus with the passing years cathedrals and abbeys continued to multiply and wax in splendor; while acres, tenements, and tithing, in an ever-flowing stream, were pouring fresh riches into the Church's treasury. In the midst of the prostration and ruin of all interests and classes, the Church stood up in overgrown arrogance, wealth, and power. Just before the era of Protestant Reformation, the Romish Church stood at the apex of her power in Scotland.

The era of Protestant Reformation began in Scotland like it had in England: from the message of John Wyckliffe. Followers of Wyckliffe took the gospel message into Scotland, and from that time until the conclusion of the era of Protestant Reformation, Protestantism was on the ascent. The first who suffered for the Reformed faith, so far as can be ascertained, was James Resby, an Englishman, and a disciple of John Wyckliffe. He taught that "the Pope was not Christ's Vicar, and that he was not Pope if he was a man of wicked life." This was pronounced heresy, and for that heresy he had to do expiation in the fire at Perth. He was burned in 1406 or 1407, some nine years before the martyrdom of Huss. In 1416 the University of St. Andrews, then newly founded, ordained that all who commenced Master of Arts should take an oath to defend the Church against the insults of the Lollards, proof surely that the sect was sufficiently numerous to render Churchmen uneasy. A yet stronger proof of this was the appointment of a Heretical Inquisitor for Scotland. The office was bestowed upon Laurence Lindores, Abbot of Scone. Prior Winton in his *Metrical Chronicle* (1420) celebrates the zeal of Albany, Governor of Scotland, against Lollards and heretics. Murdoch Nisbet, of Hardhill, had a manuscript copy of the New Testament (of Wyckliffe's translation doubtless), which he concealed in a vault, and read to his family and acquaintance by night.

Gordon of Earlston, another early favorer of the disciples of Wyckliffe, had in his possession a copy of the New Testament, in the vulgar tongue, which he read at meetings held in a wood near to Earlston House. The Parliament of James I, held at Perth (1424), enacted that all bishops should make inquiry by Inquisition for heretics, and punish them according to the laws of "holy Kirk," and if need were they should call in the secular power to the aid of "holy Kirk."

In 1431 we find a second stake set up in Scotland. Paul Crawar, a native of Bohemia, and

a disciple of John Huss, preaching at St. Andrews, taught that the mass was a worship of superstition. This was no suitable doctrine in a place where a magnificent cathedral and a gorgeous hierarchy were maintained in the service of the mass, and should it fall they too would fall. To avert so great a “catastrophe”, Crawwar was dragged to the stake and burned, with a ball of brass in his mouth to prevent him from addressing the people in his last moments.

The Lollards of England were the connecting link between their great master, Wyckliffe, and the English Reformers of the sixteenth century. Scotland too had its Lollards, who connected the Patriarch and school of Iona with the Scottish Reformers. The Lollards of Scotland could be none other than the descendants of the Culdee missionaries, and such of the disciples of Wyckliffe as had taken refuge in Scotland. In the testimony of both friend and foe, there were few counties in the Lowlands of Scotland where these Lollards were not to be found. They were numerous in Fife; they were still more numerous in the districts of Cunningham and Kyle; hence their name, the Lollards of Kyle. In the reign of James IV (1494) some thirty Lollards were summoned before the archiepiscopal tribunal of Glasgow on a charge of heresy. They were almost all gentlemen of landed property in the districts already named, and the tenets which they were charged with denying included the mass, purgatory, the worshipping of images, the praying to saints, the Pope's vicarship, his power to pardon sin – in short, all the peculiar doctrines of Romanism. Their defense appears to have been so spirited that the king, before whom they argued their cause, shielded them from the doom that the archbishop, Blackadder, would undoubtedly have pronounced upon them.

These incidental glimpses show us a scriptural Protestantism already in Scotland, but it lacks that diffusion into which the sixteenth century awoke it. When that century came new agencies began to operate. In 1526, Hector Boece, Principal of King's College, Aberdeen, and the fellow-student and correspondent of Erasmus, published his *History of Scotland*. In that work he draws a dark picture of the manners of the clergy; of their greed in monopolizing all offices, equaled only by their neglect of their duties; of their promotion of unworthy persons, to the ruin of letters; and of the scandals with which the public feeling was continually outraged, and religion affronted; and he raises a loud cry for immediate Reformation if the Church of his native land was to be saved.

About the same time the books and tracts of Luther began to enter the seaports of Montrose, Dundee, Perth, St. Andrews, and Leith. These were brought across by the skippers who made annual voyages to Flanders and the Lower Germany. In this way the east coast of Scotland, and the shores of the Frith of Forth, were sown with the seeds of Lutheranism. By this time Tyndale had translated the New Testament into English, and he had markets for its sale in the towns visited by the Scottish traders, who bought numerous copies and carried them across to their countrymen.

When the New Testament entered, a ray from heaven had penetrated the night that brooded over much of the country. The Bible was the only Reformer then possible in Scotland. Had a Luther or a Knox arisen at that time, he would have been consigned before many days to a dungeon or a stake. The Bible was the only missionary that could

enter with safety, and operate with effect. With silent foot it began to traverse the land; it came to the castle gates of the primate, yet he heard not its steps; it preached in cities, but its voice fell not on the ear of bishop; it passed along the highways and by-ways unobserved by the spy. To the Churchman's eye all seemed calm; but in the stillness of the midnight hour men welcomed this new Instructor, and opened their heart to its comforting and beneficent teaching. The Bible was emphatically the nation's one great teacher; it was stamping its own ineffaceable character upon the Scottish Reformation. The movement thus initiated was helped forward by every event that happened, till at last in 1543 its first great landing-place was reached, when every man, woman, and child in Scotland was secured by Act of Parliament in the right to read the Word of God in their own tongue.

As with Reformation elsewhere, the fire of Christian martyrdom was the flame from which the gospel shined. Patrick Hamilton was destined to fulfill that great but arduous task. Born in 1504, he was the second son of Sir Patrick Hamilton, and the great-grandson, both by the father's and the mother's side, of King James II. He received his education at the University of St. Andrews, and about 1517 was appointed titular Abbot of Ferne, in Ross-shire, though it does not appear that he ever took priest's orders. In the following year he went abroad, and would seem to have studied some time in Paris, where it is probable he came to the first knowledge of the truth; and thence he went to pursue his studies at the College of Marburg, then newly opened by the Landgrave of Hesse. At Marburg the young Scotsman enjoyed the friendship of a very remarkable man, whose views on some points of Divine truth exceeded in clearness even those of Luther; we refer to Francis Lambert, the ex-monk of Avignon, whom Landgrave Philip had invited to Hesse to assist in the Reformation of his dominions.

The depth of Hamilton's knowledge, and the beauty of his character, won the esteem of Lambert, and we find the ex-Franciscan saying to Philip, "This young man of the illustrious family of the Hamiltons... is come from the end of the world, from Scotland, to your academy, in order to be fully established in God's truth. I have hardly ever met a man who expresses himself with so much spirituality and truth on the Word of the Lord."

Hamilton's preparation for his work, destined to be brief but brilliant, was now completed, and he began to yearn with an intense desire to return to his native land, and publish the gospel of a free salvation. He could not hide from himself the danger which attended the step he was meditating.

The priests were at this hour all-powerful in Scotland. A few years previously (1513), James IV and the flower of the Scottish nobility had fallen on the field of Flodden. James V was a child: his mother, Margaret Tudor, was nominally regent; but the clergy, headed by the proud, profligate, and unscrupulous James Beaton, Archbishop of St. Andrews, had grasped the government of the kingdom. It was not to be thought that these men would permit a doctrine to be taught at their very doors, which they well knew would bring their glory and pleasures to an end, if they had the power of preventing it. The means of suppressing all preaching of the truth were not wanting, certainly, to these tyrannical Churchmen. But this did not weigh with the young Hamilton. Intent upon

dispelling the darkness that covered Scotland, he returned to his native land (1527), and took up his abode at the family mansion of Kincavel, near Linlithgow.

With the sword of Beaton hanging over his head, he began to preach the doctrines of the Reformed faith. The first converts of the young evangelist were the inmates of the mansion-house of Kincavel. After his kinsfolk, his neighbors became the next objects of his care. He visited at the houses of the gentry, where his birth, the grace of his manners, and the fame of his learning made him at all times welcome, and he talked with them about the things that belonged to their peace. Going out into the fields, he would join himself to groups of laborers as they rested at noon, and exhort them, while laboring for the "meat that perisheth," not to be unmindful of that which "endures unto eternal life." Opening the Sacred Volume, he would explain to his rustic congregation the "mysteries of the kingdom" which was now come nigh unto them, and bid them strive to enter into it. Having scattered the seed in the villages around Linlithgow, he resolved to carry the gospel into its Church of St. Michael. The ancient palace of Linlithgow, "the Versailles of Scotland," as it has been termed, was then the seat of the court, and the gospel was now brought within the hearing of the priests of St. Michael's, and of the members of the royal family who repaired to it. Hamilton, standing up amid the altar and images, preached to the polished audience that filled the edifice, with that simplicity and chastity of speech which were best fitted to win his way with those now listening to him. It is not, would he say, the cowl of St. Francis, nor the frock of St. Dominic, that saves us; it is the righteousness of Christ. It is not the shorn head that makes a holy man, it is the renewed heart. It is not the chrism of the Church, it is the anointing of the Holy Spirit that replenishes the soul with grace. What doth the Lord require of thee, O man? To count so many beads a day? To repeat so many paternosters? To fast so many days in the year, or go so many miles on pilgrimages? That is what the Pope requires of thee; but what God requires of thee is to do justly, and love mercy, and walk humbly. Pure religion, and undefiled, is not to kiss a crucifix, or to burn candles before Our Lady; pure religion is to visit the fatherless and the widow in their affliction, and to keep one's self unspotted from the world. "Knowest thou," he would ask, "what this saying means? Christ died for thee?" Verily that thou shouldest have died perpetually, and Christ, to deliver thee from death, died for thee, and changed thy perpetual death into his own death; for thou madest the fault, and he suffered the pain."

Among Hamilton's hearers in St. Michael's there was a certain maiden of noble birth, whose heart the gospel had touched. Her virtues won the heart of the young evangelist, and he made her his wife. His marriage was celebrated but a few weeks before his martyrdom.

A little way inland from the opposite shores of the Forth, backed by the picturesque chain of the blue Ochils, was the town of Dunfermline, with its archiepiscopal palace, the towers of which might almost be descried from the spot where Hamilton was daily evangelizing. Archbishop Beaton was at this moment residing there, and news of the young evangelist's doings were wafted across to that watchful enemy of the gospel. Beaton saw at a glance the difficulty of the case. A heretic of low degree would have been summarily disposed of; but here was a Lutheran with royal blood in his veins, and

all the Hamiltons at his back, throwing down the gage of battle to the hierarchy. What was to be done? The cruel and crafty Beaton hit on a device that but too well succeeded. Concealing his dark design, the primate sent a pressing message to Patrick, soliciting an interview with him on points of church reformation. Hamilton divined at once what the message portended, but in spite of the death that almost certainly awaited him, and the tears of his friends, who sought to stay him, he set out for St. Andrews. He seemed to feel that he could serve his country better by dying than by living and laboring.

This city was then the ecclesiastical and literary metropolis of Scotland. As the seat of the archiepiscopal court, numerous suitors and rich fees were drawn to it. Ecclesiastics of all ranks and students from every part of the kingdom were to be seen upon its streets. Its cathedral was among the largest in Christendom. It had numerous colleges, monasteries, and a priory. As the traveler approached it, whether over the long upland swell of Fife on the west, or the waters of the German Ocean on the east, the lofty summit of St. Regulus met his eye, and told him that he was nearing the chief seat of authority and wealth in Scotland.

On arriving at St. Andrews, Hamilton found the archbishop all smiles; a most gracious reception, in fact, was accorded him by the man who was resolved that he should never go hence. He was permitted to choose his own lodgings; to go in and out; to avow his opinions; to discuss questions of rite, and dogma, and administration with both doctors and students; and when he heard the echoes of his own sentiments coming back to him from amid the halls and chairs of the "Scottish Vatican," he began to persuade himself that the day of Scotland's deliverance was nearer than he had dared to hope, and even now rifts were appearing in the canopy of blackness over his native land. An incident happened that specially gladdened him. There was at that time, among the Canons of St. Andrews, a young man of quick parts and candid mind, but enthralled by the scholasticism of the age, and all on the side of Rome. His name was Alane, or Alesius – a native of Edinburgh. This young canon burned to cross swords with the heretic whose presence had caused no little stir in the university and monasteries of the ancient city of St. Andrew. He obtained his wish, for Hamilton was ready to receive all, whether they came to inquire or to dispute. The Sword of the Spirit, at almost the first stroke, pierced the scholastic armor in which Alesius had encased himself, and he dropped his sword to the man whom he had been so confident of vanquishing.

There came yet another, also eager to do battle for the Church – Alexander Campbell, Prior of the Dominicans – a man of excellent learning and good disposition. The archbishop, feeling the risks of bringing such a man as Hamilton to the stake, ordered Prior Campbell to wait on him, and spare no means of bringing back the noble heretic to the faith of the Church. The matter promised at first to have just the opposite ending.

After a few interviews, the prior confessed the truth of the doctrines which Hamilton taught. The conversion of Alesius seemed to have repeated itself. But, alas! no; Campbell had received the truth in the intellect only, not in the heart. Beaton sent for Campbell, and sternly demanded of him what progress he was making in the conversion of the heretic. The prior saw that on the brow of the archbishop which told him that he must make his

choice between the favor of the hierarchy and the gospel. His courage failed him: the disciple became the accuser.

Patrick Hamilton had now been a month at St. Andrews, arguing all the time with doctors, priests, students, and townspeople. From whatever cause this delay proceeded, whether from a feeling on the part of Beaton and the hierarchy that their power was too firmly rooted to be shaken, or from a fear to strike one so exalted, it helped to the easy triumph of the Reformed opinions in Scotland. During that month Hamilton was able to scatter on this center part of the field a great amount of the "incorruptible seed of the Word," which, watered as it was soon thereafter to be with the blood of him who sowed it, sprang up and brought forth much fruit. But the matter would admit of no longer delay, and Patrick was summoned to the archiepiscopal palace, to answer to a charge of heresy.

Before accompanying Hamilton to the tribunal of Beaton, let us mention the arrangements of his persecutors for putting him to death. Their first care was to send away the king. James V was then a youth of seventeen, and it was just possible that he might not stand quietly by and see them ruthlessly murder one who drew his descent from the royal house.

Accordingly the young king was told that his soul's health required that he should make a pilgrimage to the shrine of St. Duthac, in Ross-shire, whither his father had often gone to disburden his conscience. It was winter, and the journey would necessarily be tedious; but the purpose of the priests would be all the better served thereby. Another precaution taken by the archbishop was to cause the movements of Sir James Hamilton, Patrick's brother, to be watched, lest he should attempt a rescue. When the tidings reached Kincavel that Patrick had been arrested, consternation prevailed at the manor-house; Sir James, promptly assembling a body of men-at-arms, set out at their head for St. Andrews.

The troop marched along the southern shore of the Forth, but on arriving at Queensferry, where they intended to cross, they found a storm raging in the Frith. The waves, raised into tumult in the narrow sea by the westerly gale, would permit no passage; and Sir James, the precious hours gliding away, could only stand gazing helplessly on the tempest, which showed no signs of abating. Meanwhile, being descried from the opposite shore, a troop of horse was at once ordered out to dispute their march to St. Andrews. Another attempt to rescue Patrick from the hands of his persecutors was also unsuccessful. Duncan, Laird of Ardrie, in the neighborhood of St. Andrews, armed and mounted about a score of his tenants and servants, intending to enter the city by night and carry off his friend, whose Protestant sentiments he shared; but his small party was surrounded, and himself apprehended, by a troop of horsemen. Hamilton was left in the power of Beaten.

The first rays of the morning sun were kindling the waters of the bay, and gilding the hilltops of Angus on the other side of the Tay, when Hamilton was seen traversing the streets on his way to the archiepiscopal palace, in obedience to Beaton's summons. He had hoped to have an interview with the archbishop before the other judges had assembled; but, early as the hour was, the court was already met, and Hamilton was

summoned before it and his accusation read. It consisted of thirteen articles, alleged to be heretical, of which the fifth and sixth may be taken as samples. These ran: "That a man is not justified by works, but by faith alone," and "that good works do not make a good man, but that a good man makes good works." Here followed a discussion on each of the articles, and finally the whole were referred to a committee of the judges chosen by Beaton, who were to report their judgment upon them in a few days. Pending their decision, Hamilton was permitted his liberty as heretofore; the object of his enemies being to veil what was coming till it should be so near that rescue would be impossible.

In a few days the commissioners intimated that they had arrived at a decision on the articles. This opened the way for the last act of the tragedy. Beaton issued his orders for the apprehension of Patrick, and at the same time summoned his court for the next day. Fearing a tumult should he conduct Hamilton to prison in open day, the officer waited till night-fall before executing the mandate of the archbishop. A little party of friends had that evening assembled at Patrick's lodgings. Their converse was prolonged till late in the evening, for they felt loath to separate. The topics that engaged their thoughts and formed the matter of their talk, it is not difficult to conjecture. Misgivings and anxieties they could not but feel when they thought of the sentence to be pronounced in the cathedral tomorrow. But with these gloomy presentiments there would mingle cheering hopes inspired by the prosperous state of the Reformation at that hour on the continent of Europe. When from their own land, still covered with darkness, they turned their eyes abroad, they saw only the most splendid triumphs. In Germany a phalanx of illustrious doctors, of chivalrous princes, and of free cities had gathered round the Protestant standard. In Switzerland the new day was spreading from canton to canton with an effulgence sweeter far than ever was day-break on the snows of its mountains. Farel was thundering in the cities of the Jura, and day by day advancing his posts nearer to Geneva. At the polished court of Francis I, and in the halls of the Sorbonne, Luther's doctrine had found eloquent expositors and devoted disciples, making the hope not too bold that the ancient, civilized, and powerful nation of France would in a short time be won to the gospel. Surmounting the lofty banner of snows and glaciers within which Italy reposes, the light was circulating round the shores of Como, gilding the palaces of Ferrara and Florence, and approaching the very gates of Rome itself. Amid the darkness of the Seven Hills, whispers were beginning to be heard, "The morning cometh."

Turning to the other extremity of Europe, the prospect was not less gladdening. In Denmark the mass had fallen, and the vernacular scriptures were being circulated through the nation. In Sweden a Protestant king filled the throne, and a Protestant clergy ministered to the people. In Norway the Protestant faith had taken root, and was flourishing amid its fjords and pine-covered mountains. Nay, to the shores of Iceland had that blessed day-spring traveled. It could not be that the day should break on every land between Italy's "snowy ridge" and Iceland's frozen shore, and the night continue to cover Scotland. It could not be that the sunrise should kindle into glory the Swiss mountains, the German plains, and the Norwegian pine-forests, and no dawn light up the straths of Caledonia.

No! the hour would strike: the nation would shake off its chains, and a still brighter lamp

than that which Columba had kindled at Iona would shed its radiance on hill and valley, on hamlet and city of Scotland. Whatever tomorrow might bring, this was what the future would bring; and the joy these prospects inspired could be read in the brightening eyes and on the beaming faces of the little company in this chamber, and most of all on those of the youthful and noble form in the center of the circle.

But hark! the silence of the night is broken by a noise as of hostile steps at the door. The company, startled, gaze into one another's faces, and are silent. Heavy footsteps are now heard ascending the stair; the next moment there is a knocking at the chamber door. With calm voice Hamilton bids them open the door; nay, he himself steps forward and opens it. The archbishop's officer enters the apartment. "Whom do you want?" inquires Patrick. "I want Hamilton," replies the man. "I am Hamilton," says the other, giving himself up, requesting only that his friends might be allowed to depart unharmed.

A party of soldiers waited at the door to receive the prisoner. On his descending, they closed round him, and led him through the silent streets of the slumbering city to the castle. Nothing was heard save the low moaning of the night-wind, and the sullen dash of the wave as it broke against the rocky foundations of the sea tower, to the dungeons of which Hamilton was consigned for the night.

It is the morning of the last day of February, 1528. Far out in the bay the light creeps up from the German Ocean: the low hills that run along on the south of the city, come out in the dawn, and next are seen the sands of the Tay, with the blue summits of Angus beyond, while the mightier masses of the Grampians stand up in the northern sky. Now the sun rises; and tower and steeple and, proudest of all, Scotland's metropolitan cathedral began to glow in the light of the new-risen luminary. A terrible tragedy is that sun to witness before he shall set. The archbishop is up betimes, and so too are priest and monk. The streets are already all astir. A stream of bishops, nobles, canons, priests, and citizens is roiling in at the gates of the cathedral. How proudly it lifts its towers to the sky! There is not another such edifice in all Scotland; few of such dimensions in all Christendom. And now we see the archbishop, with his long train of lords, abbots, and doctors, sweep in and take his seat on his archiepiscopal throne. Around him on the tribunal are the Bishops of Glasgow, Dunkeld, Brechin, and Dunblane. The Prior of St. Andrews, Patrick Hepburn; the Abbot of Arbroath, David Benton; as also the Abbots of Dunfermline, Cambuskenneth, and Lindores; the Prior of Pittenweem; the Dean and Sub-Dean of Glasgow; Ramsay, Dean of the Abbey of St. Andrews; Spens, Dean of Divinity in the University; and among the rest sits Prior Alexander Campbell, the man who had acknowledged to Hamilton in private that his doctrine was true, but who, stifling his convictions, now appears on the tribunal as accuser and judge.

The tramp of horses outside announced the arrival of the prisoner. Hamilton was brought in, led through the throng of canons, friars, students, and townspeople, and made to mount a small pulpit erected opposite the tribunal. Prior Campbell rose and read the articles of accusation, and when he had ended began to argue with Hamilton. The prior's stock of sophisms was quickly exhausted. He turned to the bench of judges for fresh instructions. He was bidden close the debate by denouncing the prisoner as a heretic.

Turning to Hamilton, the prior exclaimed, "Heretic, thou saidst it was lawful to all men to read the Word of God, and especially the New Testament." "I wot not," replied Hamilton, "if I said so; but I say now, it is reason and lawful to all men to read the Word of God, and that they are able to understand the same; and in particular the latter will and testament of Jesus Christ." "Heretic," again urged the Dominican, "thou sayest it is but lost labor to call on the saints, and in particular on the blessed Virgin Mary, as mediators to God for us."

"I say with Paul," answered the confessor, "there is no mediator between God and us but Christ Jesus his Son, and whatsoever they be who call or pray to any saint departed, they spoil Christ Jesus of his office."

"Heretic," again exclaimed Prior Campbell, "thou sayest it is all in vain to sing soul-masses, psalms, and dirges for the relaxation of souls departed, who are continued in the pains of purgatory." "Brother," said the Reformer, "I have never read in the scripture of God of such a place as purgatory, nor yet believe I there is anything that can purge the souls of men but the blood of Jesus Christ." Lifting up his voice once more Campbell shouted out, as if to drown the cry in his own conscience, "Heretic, detestable, execrable, impious heretic!" "Nay, brother," said Hamilton, directing a look of compassion towards the wretched man, "thou dost not in thy heart think me heretic – thou knowest in thy conscience that I am no heretic."

Not a voice was there on that bench but in condemnation of the prisoner. "Away with him! away with him to the stake!" said they all. The archbishop rose, and solemnly pronounced sentence on Hamilton as a heretic, delivering him over to the secular arm that is, to his own soldiers and executioners – to be punished.

This sentence, Beaton believed, was to stamp out heresy, give a perpetuity of dominion and glory to the Papacy in Scotland, and hallow the proud fane in which it was pronounced, as the high sanctuary of the nation's worship for long centuries. How would it have amazed the proud prelate, and the haughty and cruel men around him, had they been told that this surpassingly grand pile should in a few years cease to be – that altar, and stone image, and archiepiscopal throne, and tall massy column, and lofty roof, and painted oriel, before this generation had passed away, smitten by a sudden stroke, should fall in ruin, and nothing of all the glory on which their eyes now rested remain, save a few naked walls and shattered towers, with the hoarse roar of the ocean sounding on the beach beneath, and the loud scream of the sea bird, as it flew past, echoing through their ruins!

Escorted by a numerous armed band, Hamilton was led back to the castle, and men were sent to prepare the stake in front of St. Salvator's College.

The interval was passed by the martyr in taking his last meal and conversing calmly with his friends. When the hour of noon struck, he rose up and bade the governor be admitted. He set out for the place where he was to die, carrying his New Testament in his hand, a few friends by his side, and his faithful servant following. He walked in the midst of his

guards, his step firm, his countenance serene.

When he came in sight of the pile he halted, and uncovering his head, and raising his eyes to heaven, he continued a few minutes in prayer. At the stake he gave his New Testament to a friend as his last gift. Then calling his servant to him, he took off his cap and gown and gave them to him, saying, "These will not profit in the fire; they will profit thee. After this, of me thou canst receive no commodity except the example of my death, which I pray thee bear in mind. For albeit it be bitter to the flesh, and fearful before man, yet is it the entrance to eternal life, which none shall possess that denies Christ Jesus before this wicked generation."

He now ascended the pile. The executioners drew an iron band round his body, and fastened him to the stake. They piled up the fagots, and put a bag of gunpowder amongst them to make them ignite. "In the name of Jesus," said the martyr, "I give up my body to the fire, and commit my soul into the hands of the Father."

The torch was now brought. The gunpowder was exploded; it shot a fagot in the martyr's face, but did not kindle the wood. More powder was brought and exploded, but without kindling the pile. A third supply was procured; still the fagots would not burn: they were green. Turning to the deathsman, Hamilton said, "Have you no dry wood?" Some persons ran to fetch some from the castle; the sufferer all the while standing at the stake, wounded in the face, and partially scorched, yet "giving no signs of impatience or anger." So testifies Alesins, who says, "I was myself present, a spectator of that tragedy."

Hovering near that pile, drawn thither it would seem by some dreadful fascination, was Prior Campbell. While the fresh supplies of powder and wood were being brought, and the executioners were anew heaping up the fagots, Campbell, with frenzied voice, was calling on the martyr to recant.

"Heretic," he shouted, "be converted; call upon Our Lady; only say, Salve Regina." "If thou believest in the truth of what thou sayest," replied the confessor, "bear witness to it by putting the tip of thy finger only into the fire in which my whole body is burning." The Dominican burst out afresh into accusations and insults. "Depart from me, thou messenger of Satan," said the martyr, "and leave me in peace." The wretched man was unable either to go away or cease reviling. "Submit to the Pope," he cried, "there is no salvation but in union to him." "Thou wicked man," said Hamilton, "thou knowest the contrary, for thou toldest me so thyself. I appeal thee before the tribunal-seat of Jesus Christ." At the hearing of these words the friar rushed to his monastery: in a few days his reason gave way, and he died raving mad, at the day named in the citation of the martyr.

Patrick Hamilton was led to the stake at noon: the afternoon was wearing, in fact it was now past sunset. These six hours had he stood on the pile, his face bruised, his limbs scorched; but now the end was near, for his whole body was burning in the fire, the iron band round his middle was red-hot, and the martyr was almost burned in two. One approached him and said, "If thou still holdest true the doctrine for which thou diest, make us a sign." Two of the fingers of his right hand were already burned, and had

dropped off. Stretching out his arm, he held out the remaining three fingers till they too had fallen into the fire. The last words he was heard to utter were, "How long, O Lord, shall darkness overwhelm this realm? How long wilt thou suffer this tyranny of men? Lord Jesus, receive my spirit."

We have given prominence to this great martyr, because his death was one of the most powerful of the instrumentalities that worked for the emancipation of his native land.

Between the death of Hamilton and the appearance of Knox there intervenes a period of a checkered character; nevertheless, we can trace all throughout it a steady onward march of Scotland towards emancipation from Romish lies. Hamilton had been burned; Alesius and others had fled in terror; and the priests, deeming themselves undisputed masters, demeaned themselves more haughtily than ever. But their pride hastened their downfall. The nobles combined to set limits to an arrogance which was unbearable; the greed and profligacy of the hierarchy discredited it in the eyes of the common people.

The burning of Patrick Hamilton began immediately to bear fruit. From his ashes arose one to continue his testimony, and to repeat his martyrdom. Henry Forrest was a Benedictine in the monastery of Linlithgow, and had come to a knowledge of the truth by the teaching and example of Hamilton. It was told the Archbishop of St. Andrews that Forrest had said that Hamilton "was a martyr, and no heretic," and that he had a New Testament in his possession, most probably Tyndale's, which was intelligible to the Scots of the Lowlands. "He is as bad as Master Patrick," said Beaton; "we must burn him." A "merry gentleman," James Lindsay, who was standing beside the archbishop when Forrest was condemned, ventured to hint, "My lord, if ye will burn any man, let him be burned in how [hollow] cellars, for the reek [smoke] of Patrick Hamilton has infected as many as it did blow upon." The rage of Beaton blinded him to the wisdom of the advice. Selecting the highest ground in the immediate neighborhood of St. Andrews, he ordered the stake of Forrest to be planted there (1532), that the light of his pile, flashing across the Tay, might warn the men of Angus and Forfarshire to shun his heresy.

The next two martyrs were David Straiton and Norman Gourlay. David Straiton, a Forfarshire gentleman, whose ancestors had dwelt on their lands of Laudston since the sixth century, was a great lover of field sports, and was giving himself no concern whatever about matters of religion. He happened to quarrel with Patrick Hepburn, Prior of St. Andrews, about his ecclesiastical dues. His lands adjoined the sea, and, daring and venturesome, he loved to launch out into the deep, and always returned with his boat laden with fish. Prior Hepburn, who was as great a fisher as himself, though in other waters and for other spoil, demanded his tithe. Straiton threw every tenth fish into the sea, and gruffly told the prior to seek his tithe where he had found the stock. Hepburn summoned the laird to answer to a charge of heresy. Heresy! Straiton did not even know what the word meant. He began to inquire what that thing called heresy might be of which he was accused. Unable himself to read, he made his nephew open the New Testament and read it to him. He felt his sin; "he was changed," says Knox, "as if by miracle," and began that course of life which soon drew upon him the eyes of the hierarchy. Norman Gourlay, the other person who now fell under the displeasure of the priesthood, had been a student at

St. Andrews, and was in priest's orders. The trial of the two took place in Holyrood House, in presence of King James V, "clothed all in red;" and James Hay, Bishop of Ross, acting as commissioner for Archbishop Beaton. They were condemned, and in the afternoon of the same day they were taken to the Rood of Greenside, and there burned. This was a high ground between Edinburgh and Leith, and the execution took place there "that the inhabitants of Fife, seeing the fire, might be stricken with terror." To the martyrs themselves the fire had no terror, because to them death had no sting.

Four years elapsed after the death of Straiten and Gourlay till another pile was raised in Scotland. In 1538, five persons were burned. Dean Thomas Forrest, one of the five martyrs, had been a canon regular in the Augustinian monastery of St. Colme Inch, in the Frith of Forth, and had been brought to a knowledge of the truth by perusing a volume of Augustine, which was lying unused and neglected in the monastery. Lest he should infect his brethren he was transferred to the rural parish of Dollar, at the foot of the picturesque Ochils. Here he spent some busy years preaching and catechizing, till at last the eyes of the Archbishop of St. Andrews were drawn to him. There had been a recent change in that see -- the uncle, James Beaton, being now dead, the more cruel and bloodthirsty nephew, David Beaton, had succeeded him. It was before this tyrant that the diligent and loving friar of Dollar was now summoned. He and the four companions who were tried along with him were condemned to the stake, and on the afternoon of the same day were burned on the Castle-hill of Edinburgh. Placed on this elevated site, these five blazing piles, proclaimed to the men of Fife, and the dwellers in the Lothians, how great was the rage of the priests, but how much greater the heroism of the martyrs which overcame it.

If the darkness threatened to close in again, the hierarchy always took care to disperse it by kindling another pile. Only a year elapsed after the bunting of the five martyrs on the Castle-hill of Edinburgh, when two other confessors were called to suffer the fire. Jerome Russel, a Black Friar, and Alexander Kennedy, a gentleman of Ayrshire, were put on their trial before the Archbishop of Glasgow and condemned for heresy, and were burned next day. At the stake, Russel, the more courageous of the two, taking his youthful fellow-sufferer by the hand, bade him not fear. "Death," he said, "cannot destroy us, seeing our Lord and Master has already destroyed it."

The blood the hierarchy was spilling was very fruitful. For every confessor that perished, a little company of disciples arose to fill his place. The martyr-piles, lit on elevated sites and flashing their gloomy splendor over city and shire, set the inhabitants a-talking; the story of the martyrs was rehearsed at many a fire-side, and their meekness contrasted with the cruelty and arrogance of their persecutors; the Bible was sought after, and the consequence was that the confessors of the truth rapidly increased.

The first disciples in Scotland were men of rank and learning; but these burnings carried the cause down among the humbler classes. The fury of the clergy, now presided over by the truculent David Beaton, daily waxed greater, and numbers, to escape the stake, fled to foreign countries. Some of these were men illustrious for their genius and their scholarship, of whom were Gawin Logic, Principal of St. Leonard's College, the renowned George Buchanan, and McAlpine, or Maccabaeus, to whom the King of

Denmark gave a chair in his University of Copenhagen. The disciples in humble life, unable to flee, had to brave the terrors of the stake and cord.

The greater part of their names have passed into oblivion, and only a few have been preserved. In 1543, Cardinal Beaton made a tour through his diocese, illustrating his pride by an ostentatious display of the symbols of his rank, and his cruelty by hanging, burning, and in some cases drowning heretics, in the towns where it pleased him to set up his tribunal. The profligate James V had fallen under the power of the hierarchy, and this emboldened the cardinal to venture upon a measure which he doubted not would be the death-blow of heresy in Scotland, and would secure to the hierarchy a long and tranquil reign over the country. He meditated cutting off by violence all the nobles who were known to favor the Reformed opinions. The list compiled by Beaton contained above 100 names, and among those marked out for slaughter were Lord Hamilton, the first peer in the realm, the Earls of Cassillis and Glencairn, and the Earl Marischall – a proof of the hold which the Protestant doctrine had now taken in Scotland. Before the bloody plot could be executed the Scottish army sustained a terrible defeat at the Solway, and the king soon thereafter dying of a broken heart, the list of the proscribed was found upon his person after death. The nation saw with horror how narrow its escape had been from a catastrophe which, beginning with the nobility, would have quickly extended to all the favorers of the Protestant opinions. The discovery helped not a little to pave the way for the downfall of a hierarchy which was capable of concocting so diabolical a plot.

Instead of the nobility and gentry of Scotland, it was the king himself whom the priests had brought to destruction; for, hoping to prevent the Reformed opinions entering Scotland from England, the priests had instigated James V to offer to Henry VIII the affront which led to the disaster of Solway-moss, followed so quickly by the death-bed scene in the royal palace of Falkland. The throne now vacant, it became necessary to appoint a regent to govern the kingdom during the minority of the Princess Mary, who was just eight days old when her father died in 1542. The man whose name was first on the list of nobles marked for slaughter, was chosen to the regency, although Cardinal Beaton sought to bar his way to it by producing a forged will of the late king appointing himself to the post. The fact that Arran was a professed Reformer contributed quite as much to his elevation as the circumstance of his being premier peer. Kirkaldy of Grange, Learmonth of Balcomy, Balnaves of Halhill, Sir David Lindsay of the Mount, and other known friends of the Reformed opinions became his advisers. He selected as his chaplains Thomas Guillian and John Rough, and opening to them the Church of Holyrood, they there preached "doctrine so wholesome," and so zealously reproved "impiety and superstition," that the Gray Friars, says Knox, "rowped as they had been ravens," crying out, "Heresy! Heresy!"

Guillian and Rough will carry the governor to the devil!" But the most important of all the measures of the regent was the passing of the Act of Parliament, 15th of March, 1543, which made it lawful for every subject in the realm to read the Bible in his mother tongue. Hitherto the Word of God had lain under the ban of the hierarchy; that obstruction now removed, "then might have been seen," says Knox, "the Bible lying upon almost every gentleman's table. The New Testament was borne about in many men's

hands." And though, as Knox tells us, some simulated a zeal for the Bible to make court to the governor, "yet thereby did the knowledge of God wondrously increase, and God gave his Holy Spirit to simple men in great abundance. Then were set forth works in our own tongue, besides those that came from England, that did disclose the pride, the craft, the tyranny and abuses of that Roman Antichrist."

It was only four months after Scotland had received the gift of a free Bible, that another boon was given it in the person of an eloquent preacher. We refer to George Wishart, who followed Patrick Hamilton at an interval of seventeen years. Wishart, born in 1512, was the son of Sir James Wishart of Pitarrow, an ancient and honorable family of the Mearns. An excellent Grecian, he was the first who taught that noblest of the tongues of the ancient world in the grammar schools of Scotland. Erskine of Dun had founded an academy at Montrose, and here the young Wishart taught Greek, it being then not uncommon for the scions of aristocratic and even noble families to give instructions in the learned languages. Wishart, becoming "suspect" of heresy, retired first to England, then to Switzerland, where he passed a year in the society of Bullinger and the study of the Helvetic Confession. Returning to England, he took up his abode for a short time at Cambridge. Let us look at the man as the graphic pen of one of his disciples has painted him. "He was a man," says Tylney – writing long after the noble figure that enshrined so many sweet virtues, and so much excellent learning and burning eloquence, had been reduced to ashes – "he was a man of tall stature, polled-headed, and on the same a round French cap of the best. Judged of melancholy complexion by his physiognomy, black-haired, long-bearded, comely of personage, well-spoken after his country of Scotland, courteous, lowly, lovely, glad to teach, desirous to learn, and was well-traveled; having on him for his habit or clothing never but a mantle, frieze gown to the shoes, a black Milan fustian doublet, and plain black hosen, coarse new canvass for his shirts, and white falling bands and cuffs at the hands."

Wishart returned to Scotland in July of 1543. Arran's zeal for the Reformation had by this time spent itself; and the astute and resolute Beaton was dominant in the nation. It was in the midst of perils that Wishart began his ministry. "The beginning of his doctrine" was in Montrose, at that time the most Lutheran town perhaps in Scotland. He next visited Dundee, where his eloquence drew around him great crowds.

Following the example of Zwingli at Zurich, and of Calvin at Geneva, instead of discoursing on desultory topics, he opened the Epistle to the Romans, and proceeded to expound it chapter by chapter to his audience. The gospel thus rose before them as a grand unity. Beginning with the "one man" by whom sin entered, they passed on to the "one Man" by whom had come the "free gift." The citizens were hanging upon the lips of the greatest pulpit orator that had arisen in Scotland for centuries, when they were surprised by a visit from the governor and the cardinal, who brought with them a train of field artillery. Believing the town to be full of Lutherans, they had come prepared to besiege it. The citizens retired, taking with them, it is probable, their preacher, leaving the gates of the city open for the entrance of the churchman and his unspiritual accompaniments. When the danger had passed Wishart and his flock returned, and, resuming his exposition at the point where the cardinal's visit had compelled him to break

off, he continued his labors in Dundee for some months. Arran had sunk into the mere tool of the cardinal, and it was not to be expected that the latter, now all-powerful in Scotland, would permit the erection of a Lutheran stronghold almost at his very door. He threatened to repeat his visit to Dundee if the preacher were not silenced, and Wishart, knowing that Beaton would keep his word, and seeing some of the citizens beginning to tremble at the prospect, deemed it prudent to obey the charge delivered to him in the queen's name, while in the act of preaching, to "depart, and trouble the town no more."

The evangelist went on his way to Ayr and Kyle. That was soil impregnated with seed sown in it by the hands of the Lollards. The church doors were locked against the preacher, but it was a needless precaution, no church could have contained the congregations that flocked to hear him. Wishart went to the market crosses, to the fields, and making of a "dry dyke" a pulpit, he preached to the eager and awed thousands seated round him on the grass or on the heather. His words took effect on not a few who had been previously notorious for their wickedness; and the sincerity of their conversion was attested, not merely by the tears that rolled down their faces at the moment, but by the purity and consistency of their whole after-life. How greatly do those err who believe the Reformation to have been but a battle of dogmas!

The Reformation was the cry of the human conscience for pardon. That great movement took its rise, not in the conviction of the superstitions, exactions, and scandals of the Roman hierarchy, but in the conviction of each individual of his own sin. That conviction was wrought in him by the Holy Spirit, then abundantly poured down upon the nations; and the gospel which showed the way of forgiveness delivered men from bondage, and imparting a new life to them, brought them into a world of liberty. This was the true Reformation. We would call it a revival were it not that the term is too weak: it was a creation; it peopled Christendom with new men, in the first place, and in the second it covered it with new churches and states.

Hardly had Wishart departed from Dundee when the plague entered it. This was a visitant whose shafts were more deadly than even the cardinal's artillery. The lazar-houses that stood at the "East Port," round the shrine of St. Roque, the protector from pestilence, were crowded with the sick and the dying. Wishart hastened back the moment he heard the news, and mounting on the top of the Cowgate the healthy inside the gate, the plague-stricken outside – he preached to the two congregations, choosing as his text the words of the 107th Psalm, "He sent his Word and healed them." A new life began to be felt in the stricken city; measures were organized, by the advice of Wishart, for the distribution of food and medicine among the sick, and the plague began to abate. One day his labors were on the point of being brought to an abrupt termination. A priest, hired by the cardinal to assassinate him, waited at the foot of the stairs for the moment when he should descend. A cloak thrown over him concealed the naked dagger which he held in his hand; but the keen eye of Wishart read the murderous design in the man's face. Going up to him and putting his hand upon his arm, he said, "Friend, what would ye?" at the same time disarming him. The crowd outside rushed in, and would have dispatched the would-be assassin, but Wishart threw himself between the indignant citizens and the man, and thus, in the words of Knox, "saved the life of him who sought his."

On leaving Dundee in the end of 1545, Wishart repaired to Edinburgh, and thence passed into East Lothian, preaching in its towns and villages. He had a deep presentiment that his end was near, and that he would fall a sacrifice to the wrath of Beaton. Apprehended at Ormiston on the night of the 16th of January, 1546, he was carried to St. Andrews, thrown into the Sea-tower, and brought to trial on the 28th of February, and condemned to the flames. Early next morning the preparations were begun for his execution, which was to take place at noon.

It was Wishart," says Dr. Lorimer, "who first molded the Reformed theology of Scotland upon the Helvetic, as distinguished from the Saxon type; and it was he who first taught the Church of Scotland to reduce her ordinances and sacraments with rigorous fidelity to the standard of Christ's Institutions."

It is at the stake of Wishart that we first catch sight as it were of Knox, for the parting between the two, so affectingly recorded by Knox himself, took place not many days before the death of the martyr. John Knox, descended from the Knoxes of Ranferly, was born in Gifford-gate, Haddington, in 1505. From the school of his native town he passed (1522) to the University of Glasgow, and was entered under the celebrated John Major, then Principal Regent or Professor of Philosophy and Divinity. After leaving college he passes out of view for ten or a dozen years. About this time he would seem to have taken priest's orders, and to have been for upwards of ten years connected with one of the religious establishments in the neighborhood of Haddington. He had been enamored of the scholastic philosophy, the science that sharpened the intellect, but left the conscience unmoved and the soul unfed; but now loathing its dry crusts, and turning away from its great doctors, he seats himself at the feet of the great Father of the West. He read and studied the writings of Augustine. Rich in evangelical truth and impregnate with the fire of Divine love, Augustine's pages must have had much to do with the molding of Knox's mind, and the imprinting upon it of that clear, broad, and heroic stamp which it wore all his life long.

Augustine and Jerome led Knox to the feet of a Greater. The future Reformer now opens the Sacred Oracles, and he who had once wandered in the dry and thirsty wilderness of scholasticism finds himself at the fountain and well-head of Divine knowledge. The wonder he felt when the doctrines of the schools vanished around him like mist, and the eternal verities of the gospel stood out before him in the clear light of the Bible, we are not told. Did the day which broke on Luther and Calvin amid lightning and great thundering dawn peacefully on Knox? We do not think so. Doubtless the Scottish Reformer, before escaping from the yoke of Rome, had to undergo struggles of soul akin to those of his two great predecessors; but they have been left unrecorded.

From the doctors of the Middle Ages to the Fathers of the first ages, from the Fathers to the Word of God, Knox was being led, by a way he knew not, to the great task that awaited him. His initial course of preparation, begun by Augustine, was perfected doubtless by the private instructions and public sermons of Wishart, which Knox was privileged to enjoy during the weeks that immediately preceded the martyr's death. That

death would seal to Knox all that had fallen from the lips of Wishart, and would bring him to the final resolve to abandon the Roman communion and cast in his lot with the Reformers. But both the man and the country had yet to pass through many sore conflicts before either was ready for that achievement which crowned the labors of the one and completed the Reformation of the other.

On Saturday morning, the 29th of May, the Castle of St. Andrews was surprised by Norman Leslie and his accomplices, and Cardinal Beaton slain. This was a violence which the Reformation did not need, and from which it did not profit. The cardinal was removed, but the queen-dowager, Mary of Guise, a woman of consummate craft, and devoted only to France and Rome, remained. The weak-minded Arran had now consummated his apostasy, and was using his power as regent only at the bidding of the priests. Moreover, the see which the dagger of Leslie had made vacant was filled by a man in many respects as bad as the bloodthirsty and truculent priest who had preceded him. John Hamilton, brother of the regent, did not equal Beaton in rigor of mind, but he equaled him in profligacy of manners, and in the unrelenting and furious zeal with which he pursued all who favored the gospel. Thus the persecution did not slacken.

The cardinal's corpse flung upon a dung-hill, the conspirators kept possession of his castle. It had been recently and strongly repaired, and was well mounted with arms; and although the regent besieged it for months, he had to retire, leaving its occupants in peace. Its holders were soon joined by their friends, favorers of the Reformation, though with a purer zeal, including among others Kirkaldy of Grange, Melville of Raith, and Leslie of Rothes. It had now become an asylum for the persecuted, and at Easter, 1547, it opened its gates to receive John Knox. Knox had now reached the mature age of forty-two, and here it was that he entered on that public career which he was to pursue without pause, through labor and sorrow, through exile and peril, till the grave should bring him repose.

That career opened affectingly and beautifully. The company in the castle had now grown to upwards of 150, and "perceiving the manner" of Knox's teaching, they "began earnestly to travail with him that he would take the preaching place upon him," and when he hesitated they solemnly adjured him, as Farel had done Calvin, "not to refuse this holy vocation." The flood of tears, which was the only response that Knox was able to make, the seclusion in which he shut himself up for days, and the traces of sore mental conflict which his countenance bore when at last he emerged from his chamber, paint with a vividness no words can reach the sensibility and the conscientiousness, the modesty and the strength of his character. It is a great office, it is the greatest of all offices, he feels, to which he is called; and if he trembles in taking it upon him, it is not alone from a sense of unfitness, but from a knowledge of the thoroughness of his devotion, and that the office once undertaken, its responsibilities and claims must and will, at whatever cost, be discharged.

Knox preached in the castle, and at times also in the parish church of St. Andrews. In his first sermon in the latter place he struck the key-note of the Reformation in his native land. The Church of Rome, said he, is the Antichrist of Scripture. No movement can rise

higher than its fundamental principle, and no doctrine less broad than this which Knox now proclaimed could have sustained the weight of such a Reformation as Scotland needed.

"Others sned [lopped] the branches of the Papistrie," said some of his hearers, "but he strikes at the root to destroy the whole." Hamilton and Wishart had stopped short of this. They had condemned abuses, and pointed out the doctrinal errors in which these abuses had their source, and they had called for a purging out of scandalous persons – in short, a reform of the existing church. Knox came with the ax in his hand to cut down the rotten tree. He saw at once the point from which he must set out if he would arrive at the right goal. Any principle short of this would but give him an improved Papacy, not a scriptural church – a temporary abatement to be followed by a fresh outburst of abuses, and the last end of the Papacy in Scotland would be worse than the first. Greater than Hamilton, greater than Wishart, Knox took rank with the first minds of the Reformation, in the depth and comprehensiveness of the principles from which he worked. The deliverer of Scotland stood before his countrymen. But no sooner had he been revealed to the eyes of those who waited for deliverance than he was withdrawn. The first gun in the campaign had been fired; the storming of the Papacy would go vigorously forward under the intrepid champion who had come to lead. But so it was not to be; the struggle was to be a protracted one. On the 4th of June, 1547, the French war-ships appeared in the offing. In a few hours the castle, with its miscellaneous occupants, was enclosed on the side towards the sea, while the forces of Arran besieged it by land. It fell, and all in it, including Knox, were put on board the French galleys and, in violation of the terms of capitulation, borne away into foreign slavery. The last French ship had disappeared below the horizon, and with it had vanished the last hope of Scotland's Reformation. The priests loudly triumphed, and the friends of the gospel hung their heads.

The work now stood still, but only to the eye – it was all the while advancing underground. In this check lay hid a blessing to Scotland, for it was well that its people should have time to meditate upon the initial principle of the Reformation which Knox had put before them. That principle was the seed of a new church and a new state, but it must have time to unfold itself. The people of Scotland had to be taught that Reformation could not be furthered by the dagger; the stakes of Hamilton and Wishart had advanced the cause, but the sword of Norman Leslie had thrown it back; they had to be taught, too, that to reform the Papacy was to perpetuate it, and that they must return to the principle of Knox if they were ever to see a scriptural church rising in their land.

To Knox himself this check was not less necessary. His preparation for the great task before him was as yet far from complete. He wanted neither zeal nor knowledge, but his faculties had to be widened by observation, and his character strengthened by suffering. His sojourn abroad shook him free of those merely insular and home views, which cling to one who has never been beyond seas, especially in an age when the channels of intercourse and information between Scotland and the rest of Christendom were few and contracted. In the French galleys, and scarcely less in the city of Frankfort, he saw deeper than he had ever done before into the human heart. It was there he learned that self-control, that parlance of labor, that meek endurance of wrong, that calm and therefore

steady and resolute resistance to vexatious and unrighteous opposition, and that self-possession in difficulty and danger that so greatly distinguished him ever after, and which were needful and indeed essential in one who was called, in planting religion in his native land, to confront the hostility of a Popish court, to moderate the turbulence of factious barons, and to inform the ignorance and control the zeal of a people who till that time had been strangers to the blessings of religion and liberty. It was not for nothing that the hand which gave to Scotland its liberty, should itself for nearly the space of two years have worn fetters.

It was another advantage of his exile that from a foreign stand-point Knox could have a better view of the drama now in progress in his native land, and could form a more just estimate of its connection with the rest of Christendom, and the immense issues that hung upon the Reformation of Scotland as regarded the Reformation of other countries. Here he saw deeper into the cunningly contrived plots and the wide-spread combinations then forming among the Popish princes of the age – a race of rulers who will remain renowned through all time for their unparalleled cruelty and their unfathomable treachery. These lessons Knox learned abroad, and they were worth all the years of exile and wandering and all the hope deferred which they cost him; and of how much advantage they were to him we shall by-and-by see, when we come to narrate his supreme efforts for his native land.

Nor could it be other than advantageous to come into contact with the chiefs of the movement, and especially with him who towered above them all. To see Calvin, to stand beside the source of that mighty energy that pervaded the whole field of action to its farthest extremities, must have been elevating and inspiring. Knox's views touching both the doctrine and the polity of the church were formed before he visited Calvin, and were not altered in consequence of that visit; but doubtless his converse with the great Reformer helped to deepen and enlarge all his views, and to keep alive the fire that burned within him, first kindled into a flame during those days of anguish which he passed shut up in his chamber in the Castle of St. Andrews. In all his wanderings it was Scotland, bound in the chains of Rome, riveted by French steel, that occupied his thoughts; and intently did he watch every movement in it, sometimes from Geneva, sometimes from Dieppe, and at other times from the nearer point of England; nor did he ever miss an opportunity of letting his burning words be heard by his countrymen, till at length, in 1555, eight years from the time he had been carried away with the French fetters on his arm, he was able again to visit his native land.

Knox's present sojourn in Scotland was short, but it tended powerfully to consolidate and advance the movement. His presence imparted new life to its adherents; and his counsels led them to certain practical measures, by which each strengthened the other, and all were united in a common action.

Several of the leading nobles were now gathered round the Protestant banner. Among these were Archibald, Lord Lorne, afterwards Earl of Argyle; John, Lord Erskine, afterwards Earl of Mar; Lord James Stuart, afterwards Earl of Murray; the Earl Marischall; the Earl of Glencairn; John Erskine of Dun; William Maitland of Lethington,

and others. Up to this time these men had attended mass, and were not outwardly separate from the communion of the Roman Church; but, at the earnest advice of the Reformer, they resolved not to participate in that rite in future, and to withdraw themselves from the Roman worship and pale; and they signalized their secession by receiving the sacrament in its Protestant form at the hands of Knox. We see in this the laying of the first foundations of the reformed Church of Scotland. In the days of Hamilton and Wishart the reformation in Scotland was simply a doctrine; now it was a congregation.

This was all that the times permitted the Reformer to do for the cause of the gospel in Scotland; and, feeling that his continued presence in the country would but draw upon the infant community a storm of persecution, Knox retired to Geneva, where his English flock anxiously waited his coming. But on this second departure from Scotland, he was cheered by the thought that the movement had advanced a stage. The little seed he had deposited in its soil eight years before had been growing all the while he was absent, and now when a second time he goes forth into exile, he leaves behind him a living organization – a company of men making profession of the truth.

From this time the progress of the Reformation in Scotland was rapid. In the midland counties, comprehending Forfar, Fife, the Lothians, and Ayr, there were few places in which there were not now professors of the reformed faith. They had as yet no preachers, but they met in such places, his such times, as circumstances permitted, for their mutual edification. The most pious of their number was appointed to read the scriptures, to exhort, and to offer up prayer. They were of all classes – nobles, barons, burgesses, and peasants. They felt the necessity of order in their meetings, and of purity in their lives; and with this view they chose elders to watch over their morals, promising subjection to them. Thus gradually, stage by stage, did they approach the outward organization of a church, and at it is interesting to mark that in the reformed Church of Scotland elders came before ministers. The beginning of these small congregations, presided over by elders, was in Edinburgh. The first town to be provided with a pastor, and favored with the dispensation of the sacraments, was Dundee, the scene of Wishart's labors, of which the fruits were the zeal and piety that at this early stage of the Reformation distinguished its citizens. Dundee came to be called the Geneva of Scotland; it was the earliest and loveliest flower of that spring-time. The next step of the "lords of the Congregation" was the framing of a "band" or covenant, in which they promised before "the Majesty of God and his Congregation" to employ their "whole power, substance, and very lives" in establishing the gospel in Scotland, in defending its ministers, and building up its "Congregation." The earliest of these "bands" is dated the 3rd December, 1557; and the subscribers are the Earls of Argyle, Glencairn, Morton, Lord Lorne, and Erskine of Dun. Strengthened by this "oath to God" and pledge to one another, they went forth to the battle.

The year that followed (1558) witnessed a forward movement on the part of the Protestant host. The lords of the Congregation could not forbid mass, or change the public worship of the nation; nor did they seek to do so; but each nobleman within his own jurisdiction caused the English "Book of Common Prayer," together with the lessons

of the Old and New Testament, to be read every Sunday and festival-day in the parish church by the curate, or if he were unable or unwilling, by the person best qualified in the parish. The reformed teachers were also invited to preach and interpret scripture in private houses, or in the castles of the reforming nobles, till such time as the government would allow them to exercise their functions in public. The latter measures in particular alarmed the hierarchy.

It began to be apparent that destruction impended over the hierarchy unless speedy measures were taken to avert it. But the priests unhappily knew of only one weapon, and though their cause had reaped small advantage from it in the past, they were still determined to make use of it.

They once more lighted the flames of martyrdom. Walter Mill, parish priest of Lunan, near Montrose, had been adjudged a heretic in the time of Cardinal Beaton, but effecting his escape, he preached in various parts of the country, sometimes in private and sometimes in public. He was tracked by the spies of Beaton's successor, Archbishop Hamilton, and brought to trial in St. Andrews. He appeared before the court with tottering step and bending figure, so that all who saw him despaired of his being able to answer the questions about to be put to him. But when, on being helped up into the pulpit, he began to speak, "his voice," says Knox, "had such courage and stoutness that the church rang again." "Wilt thou not recant thy errors?" asked the tribunal after he had been subjected to a long questioning. "Ye shall know," said he, looking into the faces of his enemies, "that I will not recant the truth, for I am corn and not chaff. I will not be blown away with the wind, nor burst with the flail, but I will abide both."

He stood before his judges with the burden of eighty-two years upon him, but this could procure him no pity, nor could his enemies wait till he should drop into the grave on the brink of which he stood. He was condemned to the flames. A rope was wanted to bind the old man to the stake, but so great was the horror of his burning among the townsmen that not a merchant in all St. Andrews would sell one, and the archbishop was obliged to furnish a cord from his own palace. When ordered by Oliphant, an officer of the archbishop, to mount the pile, "No," replied the martyr, "I will not unless you put your hand to me, for I am forbidden to be accessory to my own death." Whereupon Oliphant pushed him forward, and Mill ascended with a joyful countenance, repeating the words of the Psalm, "I will go to the altar of God." As he stood at the stake, Mill addressed the people in these words: "As for me, I am fourscore and two years old, and cannot live long by course of nature; but a hundred better shall rise out of the ashes of my bones. I trust in God that I shall be the last that shall suffer death in Scotland for this cause." He expired on the 28th of August, 1558.

These few last words, dropped from a tongue fast becoming unable to fulfill its office, pealed forth from amid the flames with the thrilling power of a trumpet. They may be said to have rung the death-knell of Popery in Scotland. The citizens of St. Andrews raised a pile of stones over the spot where the martyr had been burned. The priests caused them to be carried off night by night, but the ominous heap rose again duly in the morning. It would not vanish, nor would the cry from it be silenced. The nation was

roused, and Scotland waited only the advent of one of its exiled sons, who was day by day drawing nearer it, to start up as one man and rend from its neck the cruel yoke which had so long weighed it down in serfdom and superstition.

It was now thirty years since the stake of Patrick Hamilton had lighted Scotland into the path of Reformation. The progress of the country had been slow, but now the goal was being neared, and events were thickening. The two great parties into which Scotland was divided stood frowning at each other: the crime of burning Mill on the one side, and "the oath to the Majesty of Heaven" on the other, rendered conciliation hopeless, and nothing remained but to bring the controversy between the two to a final issue.

The stake of Mill was meant to be the first of a series of martyrdoms by which the Reformers were to be exterminated. Many causes contributed to the adoption of a bolder policy on the part of the hierarchy. They could not hide from themselves that the Reformation was advancing with rapid strides. The people were deserting the mass; little companies of Protestants were forming in all the leading towns, the scriptures were being interpreted, and the Lord's Supper dispensed according to the primitive order; and many of the nobles were sheltering Protestant preachers in their castles. It was clear that Scotland was going the same road as Wittenberg and Geneva had gone; and it was equally clear that the champions of the Papacy must strike at once and with decision, or surrender the battle.

But what specially emboldened the hierarchy at this hour was the fact that the queen regent had openly come over to their side. A daughter of the House of Lorraine, she had always been with them at heart, but her ambition being to secure the crown-matrimonial of Scotland for her son-in-law, Francis II, she had poised herself, with almost the skill of a Catherine de Medici, between the bishops and the lords of the Congregation. She needed the support of both to carry her political objects. In October, 1558, the Parliament met; and the queen regent, with the assistance of the Protestants, obtained from "the Estates" all that she wished. It being no longer necessary to wear the mask, the queen now openly sided with her natural party, the men of the sword and the stake. Hence the courage which emboldened the priests to re-kindle the fires of persecution; and hence, too, the rigor that now animated the Reformers. Disenchanted from a spell that had kept them dubiously poised between the mass and the gospel, they now saw where they stood, and, shutting their ears to Mary's soft words, they resolved to follow the policy alike demanded by their duty and their safety.

They assembled at Edinburgh, and agreed upon certain demands, which they were to present by commissioners to the convention of the nobility and the council of the clergy. The reforms asked for were three: that it should be lawful to preach and to dispense the sacraments in the vulgar tongue; that bishops should be admitted into their sees only with the consent of the barons of the diocese, and priests with the consent of the parishioners; and that immoral and incapable persons should be removed from the pastoral office. These demands were rejected, the council having just concluded a secret treaty with the queen for the forcible suppression of the Reformation. No sooner had the Protestant nobles left Edinburgh than the regent issued a proclamation prohibiting all persons from

preaching or dispensing the sacraments without authority from the bishops.

The Reformed preachers disobeyed the proclamation. The queen, on learning this, summoned them to appear before her at Stirling, on the 10th of May, and answer to a charge of heresy and rebellion. There were only four preachers in Scotland, namely, Paul Methven, John Christison, William Harlow, and John Willock. The Earl of Glencairn and Sir Hugh Campbell, Sheriff of Ayr, waited on the queen to remonstrate against this arbitrary proceeding. She haughtily replied that "in spite of them all their preachers should be banished from Scotland." "What then," they asked, "became of her oft-repeated promises to protect their preachers?" Mary, not in the least disconcerted, replied that "it became not subjects to burden their princes with promises further than they pleased to keep them." "If so," replied Glencairn, "we on our side are free of our allegiance." The queen's tone now fell, and she promised to think seriously over the further prosecution of the affair. At that moment, news arrived that France and Spain had concluded a peace, and formed a league for the suppression of the Reformation by force of arms. Scotland would not be overlooked in the orthodox crusade, and the regent already saw in the contemplated measures the occupation of that country by French soldiers. She issued peremptory orders for putting the four Protestant ministers upon their trial. It was a strange and startling juncture. The blindness of the hierarchy in rejecting the very moderate reform which the Protestants asked, the obstinacy of the queen in putting the preachers upon their trial, and the league of the foreign potentates, which threatened to make Scotland a mere dependency of France, all met at this moment, and constituted a crisis of a trimly momentous character, but which above most things helped on that very consummation towards which Scotland had been struggling for upwards of thirty years.

There wanted yet one thing to complete this strange conjuncture of events. That one thing was added, and the combination, so formidable and menacing till that moment, was changed into one of good promise and happy augury to Protestantism. While the queen and the bishops were concerting their measures in Edinburgh, and a few days were to see the four preachers consigned to the same fate which had overtaken Mill; while the Kings of Spain and France were combining their armies, and meditating a great blow on the Continent, a certain ship had left the harbor of Dieppe, and was voyaging northward with a fair wind, bound for the Scottish shore, and on board that ship there was a Scotsman, in himself a greater power than an army of 10,000 men. This ship carried John Knox, who, without human pre-arrangement, was arriving in the very midst of his country's crisis.

Knox landed at Leith on the 2nd of May, 1559. The provincial council was still sitting in the Monastery of the Gray Friars when, on the morning of the 3rd of May, a messenger entering in haste announced that John Knox had arrived from France, and had slept last night in Edinburgh. The news fell like a thunder-bolt upon the members of council. They sat for some time speechless, looking into one another's faces, and at last they broke up in confusion. Before Knox had uttered a single word, or even shown himself in public, his very name had scattered them. A messenger immediately set off with the unwelcome news to the queen, who was at that time in Glasgow; and in a few days a royal proclamation declared Knox a rebel and an outlaw. If the proclamation accomplished nothing else, it made the fact of the Reformer's presence known to all Scotland. The

nation had now found what it needed, a man able to lead it in the great war on which it was entering. His devotion and zeal, now fully matured in the school of suffering; his sincerity and uprightness; his magnanimity and courage; his skill in theological debate, and his political insight, in which he excelled all living Scotsmen; the confidence and hope with which he was able to inspire his fellow-countrymen; and the terror in which the hierarchy stood of his very name, all marked him out as the chosen instrument for his country's deliverance. He knew well how critical the hour was, and how arduous his task would be. Religion and liberty were within his country's grasp, and still it might miss them. The chances of failure and of success seemed evenly poised; half the nobles were on the side of Rome; all the Highlands, we may say, were Popish; there were the indifference, the gross ignorance, the old murky superstition of the rural parts; these were the forces bearing down the scale, and making the balance incline to defeat. On the other side, a full half of the barons were on the side of the Reformation; but it was only a few of them who could be thoroughly depended upon; the rest were lukewarm or wavering, and not without an eye to the spoils that would be gathered from the breakup of a hierarchy owning half the wealth of the kingdom. The most disinterested, and also the most steadfast, supporters of the Reformation lay among the merchants and traders of the great towns - the men who loved the gospel for its own sake, and who would stand by it at all hazards. So evenly poised was the balance; a little thing might make it incline to the one side or to the other; and what tremendous issues hung upon the turning of it!

Not an hour did Knox lose in beginning his work. The four preachers, as we have already said, had been summoned to answer before the queen at Stirling. "The hierarchy," said the lords of the Congregation, "hope to draw our pastors into their net, and sacrifice them as they did Walter Mill. We will go with them, and defend them." "And I too," said Knox, not daunted by the outlawry which had been passed upon him, "shall accompany my brethren, and take part in what may await them before the queen." But when the queen learned that Knox was on his way to present himself before her, she deserted the Diet against the preachers, and forbade them to appear; but with the characteristic perfidy of a Guise, when the day fixed in the citation came, she ordered the summons to be called, and the preachers to be outlawed for not appearing.

Then the news reached Perth that the men who had been forbidden to appear before the queen, were outlawed for not appearing, indignation was added to the surprise of the nobles and the townspeople. It chanced that on the same day Knox preached against the mass and image-worship. The sermon was ended, and the congregation had very quietly dispersed, when a priest began to say mass. A boy standing near called out, "Idolatry!" The priest repaid him with a blow: the youth retaliated by throwing a stone, which, missing the priest, hit one of the images on the altar, and shattered it in pieces. It was the sacking of Antwerp Cathedral over again, but on a smaller scale. The loiterers in the church caught the excitement; they fell upon the images, and the crash of one stone idol after another reechoed through the edifice; the crucifixes, altars, and church ornaments shared the same fate. The noise brought a stream of idlers from the street into the building, eager to take part in the demolition. Mortified at finding the work finished before their arrival, they bent their steps to the monasteries. The tempest took the direction of the Gray Friars on the south of the town, another rolled away towards the

Black Friars in the opposite quarter, and soon both monasteries were in ruins, their inmates being allowed to depart with as much of their treasure as they were able to carry. Not yet had the storm expended itself; it burst next over the abbey of the Charter House. This was a sumptuous edifice, with pleasant gardens shaded by trees. But neither its splendor, nor the fact that it had been founded by the first James, could procure its exemption from the fury of the iconoclasts. It perished utterly. This tempest burst out at the dinner hour, when the lords, the burghers, and the Reformers were in their houses, and only idlers were abroad. Knox and the magistrates, as soon as they were informed of what was going on, hastened to the scene of destruction, but their utmost efforts could not stop it. They could only stand and look on while stone cloister, painted oriel, wooden saint, and fruit-tree, now clothed in the rich blossoms of early summer, fell beneath the sturdy blows of the "rascal multitude." The monasteries contained stores of all good things, which were divided amongst the poor; "no honest man," says Knox, "was enriched thereby the value of a groat."

It is to be remarked that in Perth, as in the other towns of Scotland, it was upon the monasteries that the iconoclastic vengeance fell; the cathedrals and churches were spared. The monasteries were in particularly evil repute among the population as nests of idleness, gluttony, and sin. Dark tales of foul and criminal deeds transacted within their walls were continually in circulation, and the hoarded resentment of long years now burst out, and swept them away. The spark that kindled the conflagration was not Knox's sermon, for few if any of those rioters had heard it: Knox's hearers were in their own houses when the affair began. The more immediate provocative was the wanton perfidy of the queen, which more disgraced her than this violence did the mob; and the remoter cause was the rejection of that moderate measure of Reformation which the lords of the Congregation had asked for, protesting at the same time that they would not be responsible for the irregularities and violence that might follow the rejection of their suit.

Knox deplored the occurrence, as well he should. Idols should be removed from the community, but that by lawful civil authorities, and not the violence of the mob. Not that Knox mourned over idol slam, and nest of lazy monk and moping nun rooted out, but he foresaw that the violence of the mob would be made the crime of the Reformers. And so it happened; it gave the queen the very pretext she had waited for. The citizens of Perth, with the lords of the Congregation at their head, had, in her eye, risen in rebellion against her government. Collecting an army from the neighboring counties, she set out to chastise the rebels, and lay waste the city of Perth with fire and sword.

When the queen regent arrived before Perth at the head of 8,000 men, she found the Reformers so well prepared to receive her that, instead of offering them battle as she had intended, she agreeably surprised them with overtures of peace. Although fully resolved to repel by arms an assault which they deemed none the less illegal and murderous that it was led by the queen, the lords of the Congregation joyfully accepted the olive-branch now held out to them. "Cursed be he," said they, "that seeks effusion of blood, war, or dissension. Give us liberty of conscience, and the free profession of the `Evangel,' and none in all the realm will be more loyal subjects than we." Negotiations were opened between the regent and the Reformers, which terminated amicably, and the strife ceased

for the moment. The lords of the Congregation disbanded their army of about 5,000, and the queen took peaceable possession of the city of Perth, where her followers began to make preparations for mass, and the altars having been overturned, their place was supplied by tables from the taverns, which, remarks Knox, "were holy enough for that use."

The Reformers now met, and took a survey of their position, in order to determine on the course to be adopted. They had lost thirty years waiting the tardy approach of the reforms which the queen had promised them. Meanwhile the genius, the learning, the zeal which would have powerfully aided in emancipating the country from the sin and oppression under which it groaned, were perishing at the stake. Duped by the queen, they had stood quietly by and witnessed these irreparable sacrifices. The reform promised them was as far off as ever. Abbot, bishop, and cowled monk were lifting up the head higher than before. A French army had been brought into the country, and the independence and liberties of Scotland were menaced. This was all the Reformers had reaped by giving ear to the delusive words of Mary of Guise. While other countries had established their Reformation, Scotland lingered on the threshold, and now it found itself in danger of losing not only its Reformation, but its very nationality. The lords of the Congregation, therefore, resolved to set up the Reformed worship at once in all those places to which their authority extended, and where a majority of the inhabitants were favorable to the design.

A commencement was to be made in the ecclesiastical metropolis of Scotland. The Earl of Argyle and Lord James Stuart, Prior of St. Andrews, arranged with Knox to meet in that city on an early day in June, and inaugurate there the Protestant worship. The archbishop, apprised of Knox's coming, hastened in from Falkland with 100 spears, and sent a message to him on Saturday night, that if he dared to appear in the pulpit of the cathedral tomorrow, he would cause his soldiers to shoot him dead. The lords, having consulted, agreed that Knox should forego the idea of preaching. The resolution seemed a prudent one. The dispositions of the townspeople were unknown; the lords had but few retainers with them; the queen, with her French army, was not more than fifteen miles off; and to preach might be to give the signal for bloodshed. Knox, who felt that to abandon a great design when the moment for putting it in execution had arrived, and retire before an angry threat, was to incur the loss of prestige, and invite greater attacks in future, refused for one moment to entertain the idea of not preaching. He said that when lying out in the Bay of St. Andrews in former years, chained to the deck of a French galley, his eye had lighted on the roof of the cathedral, which the sun's rays at that moment illuminated, and he said in the hearing of some still alive, that he felt assured that he should yet preach there before closing his career; and now when God, contrary to the expectations of all men, had brought him back to this city, he besought them not to hinder what was not only his cherished wish, but the deep-rooted conviction of his heart. He desired neither the hand nor weapon of man to defend him; He whose glory he sought would be his shield. "I only crave audience," said he, "which, if it be denied here unto me at this time, I must seek where I may have it."

The intrepidity of Knox saved the Reformation from the brand of timidity which the

counsel of the lords, had it been followed, would have brought upon it. It was a display of courage at the right time, and was rewarded with a career of success. On the morrow Knox preached to perhaps the most influential audience that the Scotland of that day could furnish; nobles, priests, and townspeople crowding to hear him. Every part of the vast edifice was filled, and not a finger was lifted, nor a word uttered, to stop him. He preached on the cleansing of the Temple of old, picturing the crowd of buyers and sellers who were busy trafficking in that holy place, when One entered, whose awful glance, rather than the scourge of cords which he carried, smote with terror the unholy crew, and drove them forth a panic-stricken crowd. The preacher then called up before his hearers a yet greater crowd of traffickers, occupied in a yet unholier merchandise, therewith defiling, with immeasurably greater pollutions and abominations, the New Testament temple. As he described the corruptions which had been introduced into the church under the Papacy – the great crowd of simonists, pardon-mongers, sellers of relics and charms, exorcists, and traffickers in the bodies and souls of men, with the sin and shame and ruin that followed – his eye began to burn, his words grew graphic and trenchant, the tones of his righteous yet terrible reproof rung out louder and fiercer, and rolled over the heads of the thousands gathered around him, till not a heart but quaffed under the solemn denunciations. It seemed as if past ages were coming up for trial; as if mitred abbots and bishops were leaving their marble tombs to stand at the judgment-seat; as if the voices of Hamilton, and Wishart, and Mill – nay, as if the voice of a yet Greater were making itself audible by the lips of the preacher. The audience saw as they had never done before the superstitions which had been practiced as religion, and felt the duty to comply with the call which the Reformer urged on all, according to the station and opportunity of each, to assist in removing these abominations out of the church of God before the fire of the Divine wrath should descend and consume what man refused to put away. When he had ended, and sat down, it may be said that Scotland was reformed.

Knox, though he did not possess the all-grasping, all-subduing intellect of Calvin, nor the many-toned eloquence of Luther, which could so easily rise from the humorous and playful to the pathetic and the sublime, yet, in concentrated fiery energy, and in the capacity to kindle his hearers into indignation, and rouse them to action, excelled both these Reformers. This one sermon in the parish church of St. Andrews, followed as it was by a sermon in the same place on the three consecutive days, cast the die, and determined that the Reformation of Scotland should go forward. The magistrates and townspeople assembled, and came to a unanimous resolution to set up the Reformed worship in the city. The church was stripped of its images and pictures, and the monasteries were pulled down. The example of St. Andrews was quickly followed by many other places of the kingdom. The Protestant worship was set up at Craft, at Cupar, at Lindores, at Linlithgow, at Scone, at Edinburgh and Glasgow. And thus did church and state, albeit at the local level, work together to uphold the Ten Commandments as they should.

This was followed by the purgation of the churches, and the demolition of the monasteries. The fabrics pulled down were mostly those in the service of the monks, for it was the cowed portion of the Romish clergy whom the people held in special detestation, knowing that they often did the dishonorable work of spies at the same time that they scoured the country in quest of alms. A loud wail was raised by the priests over

the destruction of so much beautiful architecture, and the echoes of that lamentation have come down to our day. Only where it was not done decently and orderly by the lawful authorities should we condemn though.

The peace between the queen regent and the Reformers, agreed upon at Perth, was but short-lived. The queen, hearing of the demolition of images and monasteries at St. Andrews, marched with her French soldiers to Cupar-Moor, and put herself in order of battle. But when the lords of the Congregation advanced to meet her, she fled at their approach, and going round by Stirling, took refuge in Edinburgh. On being followed by the forces of the "Congregation," she quitted the capital, and marched to Dunbar. After a few weeks, learning that the soldiers of the Reformers had mostly returned to their homes, she set out with her foreign army for Leith, and took possession of it. The lords of the Congregation now found themselves between two fires: the queen threatened them on the one side, and the guns of the castle menaced them on the other, and their new levies having left them, they were forced to conclude a treaty by which they agreed to evacuate Edinburgh. The stipulation secured for the citizens the right of worshipping after the Protestant form, and Willock was left with them as their minister. Knox, who had preached in St. Giles's Cathedral, and in the abbey church, had been chosen as pastor by the inhabitants, but he was too obnoxious to Mary of Guise, to be left in her power, and at the earnest request of the lords of the Congregation he accompanied them when they left the capital. On retiring from Edinburgh the Reformer set out on a preaching-tour, which embraced all the towns of note, and almost all the shires on the south of the Grampian chain.

From the time of his famous sermon in St. Andrews, Knox had been the soul of the movement. The year that followed was one of incessant and Herculean labor. His days were spent in preaching, his nights in writing letters, he roused the country, and he kept it awake. His voice like a great trumpet rang through the land, firing the lukewarm into zeal, and inspiriting the timid into courage. When the friends of the Reformation quarreled, he reconciled and united them. When they sank into despondency he rallied their spirits. He himself never desponded.

Cherishing a firm faith that his country's Reformation would be consummated, he neither sank under labor, nor fell back before danger, nor paused in the efforts he found it necessary every moment to put forth. He knew how precious the hours were, and that if the golden opportunity were lost it would never return. He appealed to the patriotism of the nobles and citizens. He told them what an ignominious vassalage the Pope and the Continental Powers had prepared for them and their sons, namely, that of hewers of wood and drawers of water to France. He especially explained to them the nature of the gospel, the pardon, the purity, the peace it brings to individuals, the stable renown it confers on kingdoms; he forecast to them the immense issues that hung upon the struggle. On the one side stood true religion, like an angel of light, beckoning Scotland onwards; on the other stood the dark form of Popery, pulling the country back into slavery. The crown was before it, the gulf behind it. Knox purposed that Scotland should win and wear the crown.

The Reformer was declared an outlaw, and a price set upon his head; but the only notice we find him deigning to take of this atrocity of the regent and her advisers, was in a letter to his brother-in-law, in which with no nervous trepidation whatever, but good-humoredly, he remarks that he "had need of a good horse." Not one time less did Knox preach, although he knew that some fanatic, impelled by malignant hate, or the greed of gain, might any hour deprive him of life. The rapidity of his movements, the fire he kindled wherever he came, the light that burst out all over the land – north, south, east, and west – confounded the hierarchy; unused to preach, unskilled in debate, and too corrupt to think of reforming themselves, they could only meet the attack of Knox with loud wailings or impotent threats.

A second line of action was forced upon Knox, and one that not only turned the day in favor of the Reformation of Scotland, but ultimately proved a protection to the liberties and religion of England. It was here that the knowledge he had acquired abroad came to his help, and enabled him to originate a measure that saved two kingdoms. Just the year before – that is, in 1558 – Spain and France, as we have previously mentioned, had united their arms to effect the complete and eternal extirpation of Protestantism. The plan of the great campaign – a profounder secret then than now – had been penetrated by Calvin and Knox, who were not only the greatest Reformers, but the greatest statesmen of the age, and had a deeper insight into the politics of Europe than any other men then living.

The plan of that campaign was to occupy Scotland with French troops, reduce it to entire dependency on the French crown, and from Scotland march a French army into England. While France was assailing England on the north, Spain would invade it on the south, put down the government of Elizabeth, raise Mary Stuart to her throne, and restore the Romish religion in both kingdoms. Knox opened a correspondence with the great statesmen of Elizabeth, in which he explained to them the designs of the Papal Powers, their purpose to occupy Scotland with foreign troops, and having trampled out its religion and liberties, to strike at England through the side of Scotland. He showed them that the plan was being actually carried out; that Mary of Guise was daily bringing French soldiers into Scotland; that the raw levies of the Reformers would ultimately be worsted by the disciplined troops of France, and that no more patriotic and enlightened policy could England pursue than to send help to drive the French soldiers out of the northern country; for assuredly, if Scotland was put down, England could not stand, encompassed as she then would be by hostile armies. Happily these counsels were successful. The statesmen of Elizabeth, convinced that this was no Scottish quarrel, but that the liberty of England hung upon it also, and that in no more effectual way could they rear a rampart around their own Reformation than by supporting that of Scotland, sent military aid to the lords of the Congregation, and the result was that the French evacuated Scotland, and the Scots became once more masters of their own country. Almost immediately thereafter, Mary of Guise, the regent of the kingdom, was removed by death, and the government passed into the hands of the Reformers. The way was now fully open for the establishment of the Reformation. It is hardly possible to over-estimate the importance of the service which Knox rendered. It not only led to the establishment of Protestantism in Scotland, and the perpetuation of it in England; but, in view of the critical condition in which Europe then was, it may indeed with justice be said that it saved the Reformation

of Christendom.

The fifteen months which Knox had spent in Scotland had brought the movement to its culminating point. The nation was ready to throw off the Popish yoke; and when the Estates of the Realm met on the 8th of August, 1560, they simply gave expression to the nation's choice when they authoritatively decreed the suppression of the Romish hierarchy and the adoption of the Protestant faith. A short summary of Christian doctrine had been drawn up by Knox and his colleagues; and being read, article by article, in the Parliament, it was on the 17th of August adopted by the Estates. It is commonly known as the First Scots Confession. Only three temporal lords voted in the negative, saying "that they would believe as their fathers believed." The bishops, who had seats as temporal lords, were silent.

On the 24th of August, Parliament abolished the Pope's jurisdiction; forbade, under certain penalties, the celebration of mass; and rescinded the laws in favor of the Romish Church, and against the Protestant faith.

Thus speedily was the glorious work consummated at last. There are supreme moments in the life of nations, when their destiny is determined for ages. Such was the moment that had now come to Scotland. On the 17th of August, 1560, the Scotland of the Middle Ages passed away, and a New Scotland had birth – a Scotland destined to be a sanctuary of true religion, a temple of true liberty, and a fountain of justice, letters, and art. Intently had the issue been watched by the churches abroad, and when they learned that Scotland had placed itself on the side of Protestant truth, these elder daughters of the Reformation welcomed, with songs of joy, that country which had come, the last of the nations, to share with them their glorious inheritance of truth and liberty.

Knox had now the sublime satisfaction of thinking that his country was emancipated from the superstition and thralldom of Popery, and illumined in no small degree with the light of the "Evangel." But not yet had he rest. No sooner had he ended one battle than he had to begin another; and the second battle was in some respects more arduous than the first. He had called the Reformation into being, and now he had to fight to preserve it. But before following him in this great struggle, let us consider those organizations of an ecclesiastical and educational kind which he was called to initiate, and which alone could enable the Reformation to spread itself over the whole land, and transmit itself to after-ages.

Knox's idea of a church was, in brief, a divinely originated, a divinely enfranchised, and a divinely governed society. Its members were all those who made profession of the gospel; its law was the Bible, and its King was Christ. The conclusion from these principles Knox did not hesitate to avow and carry out, that the church was to be governed solely by her own law, administered by her own officers, whose decisions and acts in all things falling within the spiritual and ecclesiastical sphere were to be final.

This freedom he held to be altogether essential to the soundness of the church's creed, the purity of her members, and that vigor and healthfulness of operation without which she

could not subserve those high ends which she had been ordained to fulfill to society. This independence he was careful to confine to the spiritual sphere; in all other matters the ministers and members of the church were to be subject to the civil law of their country. He thus distinguished it from the independence of the Romish Church, which claimed for its clergy exemption from the civil tribunals, and exalted its jurisdiction above the power of the crown. The beginning of this theory was with Wyckliffe; Calvin developed it; but in a little city like Geneva, where the same persons nearly composed both the Church and the State, it was neither very easy nor very necessary to draw the line between the two jurisdictions. The power of admitting or excluding members from the Communion-table was all that Calvin had demanded; and he had a hard battle to fight before he could obtain it; but having won it, it gave a century of glory to the church of Geneva. Knox in Scotland had more room for the development of all that is implied in the idea of a church with her own law, her own government, and her own monarch. An independent government in things spiritual, but rigidly restricted to things spiritual, was the root-idea of Knox's church organization. Knox hinged this independence on another point than that on which Calvin rested it. Calvin said, "Take from us the purity of the Communion-table, and you take from us the Evangel." Knox said, "Take from us the freedom of Assemblies, and you take from us the Evangel." It was, however, the same battle on another fold: the contest in both cases had for its object the freedom of the church to administer her own laws, without which she could exist for no useful end.

A few sentences will enable us to sketch the church organization which Knox set up. Parliament had declared Protestantism to be the faith of the nation: Knox would make it so in fact. The orders of ecclesiastical men instituted by him were four – 1st, Ministers, who preached to a congregation; 2nd, Doctors, who expounded scripture to the youth in the seminaries and universities; 3rd, Elders, who were associated with the minister in ruling, though not in teaching, the congregation; and, 4th, Deacons, who managed the finance, and had the care of the poor. In every parish was placed a minister; but as the paucity of ministers left many places without pastoral instruction meanwhile, pious persons were employed to read the scriptures and the common prayers; and if such gave proof of competency, they were permitted to supplement their reading of the scriptures with a few plain exhortations. Five Superintendents completed the ecclesiastical staff, and their duty was to travel through their several districts, with the view of planting churches, and inspecting the conduct of ministers, readers, and exhorters.

The government of the church, Knox regarded as hardly second to her instruction, believing that the latter could not preserve its purity unless the other was maintained in its rigor. First came the Kirk Session, composed of the minister and elders, who managed the affairs of the congregation; next came the Presbytery, formed by the delegation of a minister and elder from every congregation within the shire; above it was the synod, constituted by a minister and elder from each congregation within the province, and having, like the court below it, power to decide on all causes arising within its bounds. Last of all came the General Assembly, which was constituted of a certain number of delegates from every Presbytery. This scheme gave to every communicant member of the church, directly or indirectly, a voice in her government; it was a truly popular rule, but acting only through constitutional channels, and determining all cases by the laws of

scripture.

In the lowest court the laity greatly outnumbered the ministers; in all the others the two were equal. This gradation of church power, which had its basis in the Kirk Sessions distributed all over the land, found its unity in the General Assembly; and the concentrated wisdom and experience of the whole church were thus available for the decision of the weightiest causes. But its ultimate basis was found in Holy Writ, in which we find the same basic constitution in Old and New Testament church alike.

The Reformer no more overlooked the general tuition of the people than he did their indoctrination in the faith. He sketched a scheme of education more complete and thorough than any age or country had ever yet been privileged to enjoy. He proposed that a school should be planted in every parish, that a college should be erected in every notable town, and a university established in the three chief cities of Scotland. He demanded that the nobility and gentry should send their sons to these schools at their own expense, and that provision should be made for the free education of the entire youth of the humbler classes, so that not a child in all Scotland but should be thoroughly instructed, and the path of all departments of knowledge and the highest offices of the state opened to every one who had inclination or talent for the pursuit. Such was the scheme proposed by Knox in the First Book of Discipline. In order to carry it out, the Reformer proposed that the funds set free by the fall of the Romish Church, after due provision for the dismissed incumbents, should be divided into three parts, and that one-third should go to the support of the Protestant Church, another to the endowment of the schools and colleges, and the remaining portion to the support of the deserving poor. Could these funds have been devoted to worthier objects? Was there any class in the country who had a prior or a stronger claim upon them? How then came it that a third only of the revenues of the fallen establishment was given to these objects, and that the munificent scheme of Knox was never carried out, and to this day remains unrealized?

The answer of history to this question is that the nobles rapaciously seized upon these lands and heritages, and refused to disgorge their plunder. The disappointment must have been unspeakably bitter to the great patriot who devised the plan: but while disgusted at the greed which had tendered it frustrate, he places his scheme sorrowfully on record, as if to challenge future ages to produce anything more perfect.

Had the grand and patriotic device of Knox been fully carried out, Scotland would have rivaled, if not eclipsed, the other kingdoms of Europe, in the number of its educational institutions, and in the learning of its sons. As it was, an instantaneous impulse was given to all its energies, intellectual and industrial. Learning and art began to flourish, where for four centuries previously nothing had prospered save hierarchic pride and feudal tyranny. And if Scotland attained no mean rank among the nations despite the partial and crippled adoption of the Reformer's plan, how much more brilliant would have been its place, and how much longer the roll of illustrious names which it would have been to letters and science, to the senate, the army, and the state, had the large-hearted plan of Knox been in operation during the following centuries?

The Reformer was yet smarting from the avariciousness of those who preferred the filling of their purses and the aggrandizing of their families to the welfare and grandeur of their country, when another powerful adversary stood up in his path. This new opponent sought to strip him of all the fruits of his labor, by plucking up by the very roots the ecclesiastical and educational institutions he had just planted in Scotland.

On the 19th of August, 1561, Mary Stuart arrived at Holyrood from France. There are few names in Scottish history that so powerfully fascinate to this day as that of Mary Stuart. She could have been no common woman to have taken so firm a hold upon the imaginations of her countrymen, and retained it so long. Great qualities she must have possessed, and did no doubt possess. Her genius was quick and penetrating; she was an adept in all field exercises, more particularly those of riding and hunting; she was no less skilled in the accomplishments of her age. She was mistress of several languages, and was wont, when she lived in France, to share with her husband, Francis II, the cares of state, and to mingle in the deliberations of the Cabinet. In person she was tall and graceful: the tradition of her beauty, and of the fascination of her manners, has come down to our days. But these great faculties, perverted by a sinister influence, led her first of all into hurtful follies, next into mean deceptions and debasing pleasures, then into dark intrigues, and at last into bloody crimes. The sufferings of Mary Stuart have passed into a proverb. Born to a throne, yet dying as a felon: excelling all the women of her time in the grace of her person and the accomplishments of her mind, and yet surpassing them in calamity and woe as far as she did in beauty and talent! Unhappy in her life – every attempt to retrieve her fallen fortunes but sank her the deeper in guilt; and equally unhappy in death, for whenever the world is on the point of forgetting a life from the odiousness of which there is no escape but in oblivion, there comes forward, with a certainty almost fated – the Nemesis, one might say, of Mary Stuart – an apologist to rehearse the sad story over again, and to fix the memory of her crimes more indelibly than ever in the minds of men.

It is at the tragic death-bed of her father, James V, in the palace of Falkland, that we first hear the name of Mary Stuart. A funeral shadow rests above her natal hour. She was born on the 8th of December, 1542, in the ancient palace of Linlithgow. The infant had seen the light but a few days when, her father dying, she succeeded to the crown. While only a girl of six years of age, Mary Stuart was sent to France, accompanied by four young ladies of family, all of her own age, and all bearing the same name with their royal mistress, and known in history as the "Queen's Maries."

Habituated to the gallantry and splendor of the French court, her love of gaiety was fostered into a passion; and her vanity and self-will were strengthened by the homage constantly paid to her personal charms. Under the teaching of her uncles, the Duke of Guise and the Cardinal of Lorraine, she contracted a blind attachment to the religion of Rome, and an equally blind detestation of the faith of her future subjects. So had passed the youth of Mary Stuart. It is hardly possible to conceive a course of training that could have more unfitted her to occupy the throne of a Protestant nation, and that nation the Scots.

Fortune seemed to take a delight in tantalizing her. A mishap in the tournament field suddenly raised her to the throne of France. She had hardly time to contemplate the boundless prospect of happiness which appeared to be opening to her on the throne of a powerful, polished, and luxurious nation, when she was called to descend from it by the death of her husband. It was now that the invitation reached her to return to her native country and assume its government. No longer Queen of France, Mary Stuart turned her face towards the northern land which had given her birth. She set sail from Calais on the 15th of August, 1561. The anguish that wrung her heart in that hour it is easy to conceive, and impossible not to sympathize with. She was leaving a land where the manners of the people were congenial to her tastes, where the religion was dear to her heart, and where the years as they glided past brought her only new pleasures and brighter splendors. Mary took her stand on the deck of the vessel that was bearing her slowly away, and fixed her eyes on the receding shores of France. The sun sank in the ocean; the shades of evening descended; but the queen made her couch be placed on the vessel's deck.

The morning dawned: Mary was still there, gazing in the direction of the shore, which was still in sight. But now a breeze springing up, she was quickly borne away into the North Sea. "Farewell," said she, as the land sank finally beneath the wave, "farewell, happy France! I shall nevermore see thee."

The queen arrived at Leith on the 19th of August. The citizens, who had not reckoned on the voyage being completed in four days, were not prepared to receive her, and they had to extemporize a cavalcade of ponies to convey their queen to the palace of Holyrood. This simplicity could be no agreeable surprise to the young sovereign. Nature seemed as much out of unison with the event as man. It had dressed itself in somber shadows when Mary was about to step upon the ancient Scottish shore. A dull vapor floated over-head. The shores, islands, and bold rocky prominences that give such grandeur to the Frith of Forth were wholly hidden; a gray mist covered Arthur Seat, and shed a cold cheerless light upon the city which lay stretched out at its feet. Edinburgh was then by no means imposing, and needed all the help which a bright sun could give it; and the region around it. Nevertheless, despite this conjunction of untoward circumstances, which made Mary's arrival so unlike the first entrance of a sovereign into the capital of her dominions, the demonstrations of the people were loyal and hearty, and the youthful queen looked really pleased, as surrounded by her Scottish nobles and her French attendants, and dressed in widow's weeds, she passed in under those gray towers, which were destined to wear from this day the halo of a tragic interest in all coming time.

The nobles had welcomed with a chivalrous enthusiasm the daughter of their ancient kings; and the people, touched by her beauty and her widowhood, had begun to regard her with mingled feelings of compassion and admiration. All was going well, and would doubtless have continued so to do, but for a dark purpose which Mary Stuart carried in her breast. She had become the pivot around which revolved that plot to which those monstrous times had given birth, for the extermination of the Protestant faith in all the countries of the Reformation. If that conspiracy should succeed, it would open the Scottish queen's way to a fairer realm and a mightier throne than the kingdom she had just arrived to take possession of. The first step in the projected drama was the forcible

suppression of the Protestant faith in Scotland, and the restoration in it of the Church of Rome. This was the dark purpose which Mary had carried across the seas, and brought with her to Holyrood.

But meanwhile, as tutored by her uncles the Guises, who accompanied her, she dissembled and temporized. Smiles and caresses were her first weapons; the nobles were to be gained over by court blandishments and favors; the ministers were to be assailed by hypocritical promises; and the people were to be lured by those fawning arts of which there lived no greater adept than Mary Stuart. The "holy water of the court" soon began to tell upon the Protestant leaders. Even the lords of the Congregation were not proof against the fascination which the young queen seemed to exert upon every one who entered her presence. If her thinly-veiled Romish proclivities had at first alarmed or offended them, they had been no long time in the queen's presence till their anger cooled, their fears were laid aside, and their Protestant zeal in some measure evaporated. Every man, one man excepted, who entered this charmed circle was straightway transformed. Knox in his *History* has quaintly described the change that passed upon the nobility under this almost magical influence. "Every man as he came up to court," says he, "accused them that were before him; but, after they had remained a certain space, they came out as quiet as the former. On perceiving this, Campbell of Kinyeancleugh, a man of some humor and zealous in the cause, said to Lord Ochiltree, whom he met on his way to court, "My lord, now ye are come last of all, and I perceive that the fire edge is not yet off you, but I fear that after the holy water of the court be sprinkled upon you, ye shall become as temperate as the rest. I think there be some enchantment by which men are bewitched."

On the first Sunday after her arrival, Mary adventured on an act, by the advice of her uncles, which was designed to feel the pulse of her Protestant subjects; at all events, it unmistakably notified to them what her future course was to be: mass was said in her chapel of Holyrood. Since the establishment of the Reformation, mass had not been publicly celebrated in Scotland, and in fact was rightly prohibited by Act of Parliament. When the citizens learned that preparations were making for its celebration in the Chapel Royal, they were thrown into excitement and alarm, and but for the interposition of Knox would have forcibly prevented it. Lord James Stuart, Prior of St. Andrews, and the brother of Mary, stood sentinel at the door of the chapel, all the time the service was going on; the man who carried in the candle trembled all over; and the priest who performed the rite was, at its conclusion, conducted to his chamber by two Protestant lords. The queen's relatives and attendants threatened that they would instantly return to France, for they could not live in a land where mass could not be said, without which they could not have the pardon of their sins. "Would," says Knox, "that they, together with the mass, had taken good night of this realm for ever."

On the following Sunday, Knox, although he had restrained the more zealous of the Protestants who sought by force to suppress the celebration, sounded a note of warning from the pulpit of St. Giles's. He preached on the sin of idolatry, "showing what tenable plagues God had taken upon realms and nations for the same;" and added, "One mass is more fearful to me than if 10,000 armed enemies were landed in any part of the realm, of purpose to suppress the whole religion." This was indeed the case then, as it forever shall

be. The well-being of a state is dependent upon the blessing of God. And God will not bless that state profusely which tolerates idolatry. A little leaven will leaven the whole lump. And once given over to false worship, God will in judgment give over such a people to yet greater sins. Oh, but that Scotland would ever heed the words of Knox on this matter!

It is probable that the substance of the Reformer's sermon was reported to the queen, for in a few days after its delivery she sent a message to Knox, commanding his attendance at the palace. This interview has gathered round it great historic grandeur, mainly from the sentiments avowed by Knox before his sovereign, which made it one of the turning-points in the history of the man and of the country, and partly also from the charge which the flatterers of despotic princes have founded upon it, that Knox was on that occasion lacking in courtesy to Mary as a woman, and in loyalty to her as his sovereign; as if it were a crime to defend, in words of truth and soberness, true religion. The queen opened the conference, at which only her brother Lord James Stuart, and two ladies in waiting were present, with a reference to the Reformer's book on the "Regiment of Women," and the "necromancy" by which he accomplished his ends; but departing from the grave charge of magic, she came to what was uppermost in her mind, and what was the head and front of Knox's offending.

"You have taught the people," remarked the queen, "to receive another religion than that which their princes allow; but God commands subjects to obey their prince;" ergo, "you have taught the people to disobey both God and their prince." Mary doubtless thought this syllogism unanswerable, till Knox, with a little plain sense, brushed it away completely.

"Madam," replied the Reformer, "as right religion received neither its origin nor its authority from princes, but from the eternal God alone, so are not subjects bound to frame their religion according to the tastes of their princes. For oft it is that princes, of all others, are the most ignorant of God's true religion. If all the seed of Abraham had been of the religion of Pharaoh, whose subjects they long were, I pray you, madam, what religion would there have been in the world? And if all in the days of the Apostles had been of the religion of the Roman emperors, I pray you, madam, what religion would there have been now upon the earth?... And so, madam, you may perceive that subjects are not bound to the religion of their princes, although they are commanded to give them reverence."

"Yea," replied the queen, "but none of these men raised the sword against their princes."

"Yet, madam," rejoined Knox, "they resisted, for they who obey not the commandment given them, do in some sort resist."

"But," argued the queen, "they resisted not with the sword."

"God, madam," answered the Reformer, "had not given them the power and the means."

"Think ye," said the queen, "that subjects having the power may resist their princes?"

"If princes exceed their bounds, madam, and do that which they ought not, they may doubtless be resisted even by power. For neither is greater honor nor greater obedience to be given to kings and princes, than God has commanded to be given to father and mother. But, madam, the father may be struck with a frenzy, in which he would slay his own children. Now, madam, if the children arise, join together, apprehend him, take the sword from him, bind his hands, and keep him in prison till the frenzy be over, think ye, madam, that the children do any wrong? Even so is it, madam, with princes who would murder the children of God who are subject unto them. Their blind zeal is nothing but a mad frenzy; and, therefore, to take the sword from them, to bind their hands, and to cast them into prison till they be brought to a sober mind, is no disobedience against princes, but a just obedience, because it agreeth with the will of God."

At last Lord James Stuart, feeling the silence insupportable, or fearing that his sister had been seized with sudden illness, began to entreat her and to ask, "What has offended you, madam?" But she made him no answer. The tempest of her pride and self-will at length spent itself. Her composure returned, and she resumed the argument.

"Well then," said she, "I deafly perceive that my subjects shall obey you, and not me; and shall do what they list, and not what I command; and so must I be subject to them, and not they to me."

"God forbid," promptly rejoined the Reformer, "that ever I take upon me to command any to obey me, or to set subjects at liberty to do whatever pleases them." Is then Knox to concede the "right Divine?" Yes; but he lodges it where alone it is safe; not in any throne on earth. "My travail," adds he, "is that both subjects and princes may obey God. And think not, madam, that wrong is done you when you are required to be subject unto God; for he it is who subjects peoples unto princes, and causes obedience to be given unto them. He craves of kings that they be as it were foster-fathers to his church, and commands queens to be nurses to his people."

"Yes," replied the queen; "but ye are not the Kirk that I will nourish. I will defend the Kirk of Rome, for it is, I think, the true Kirk of God."

"Your will, madam," said Knox, "is no reason; neither doth it make that Roman harlot to be the true and immaculate spouse of Jesus Christ. I offer myself, madam, to prove that the church of the Jews which crucified Christ Jesus was not so far degenerate from the ordinances and statutes given it of God, as the Church of Rome is declined, and more than 500 years hath declined, from the purity of that religion which the Apostles taught and planted."

"My conscience," said Mary, "is not so." "Conscience, madam," said Knox, "requires knowledge, and I fear that right knowledge ye have none."

"But," said she, "I have both heard and read." "Have you," inquired Knox, "heard any

teach but such as the Pope and cardinals have allowed You may be assured that such will speak nothing to offend their own estate."

"You interpret the scripture in one way, and they interpret it in another," said Mary: "whom shall I believe, and who shall be judge?"

"You shall believe God, who plainly speaketh in his Word," was the Reformer's answer, "and farther than the Word teaches you, ye shall believe neither the one nor the other. The Word of God is plain in itself, and if in any one place there be obscurity, the Holy Ghost, who never is contrary to himself, explains the same more clearly in other places, so that there can remain no doubt but unto such as are obstinately ignorant." He illustrated his reply by a brief exposition of the passage on which the Romanists found their doctrine of the mass; when the queen said that, though she was unable to answer him, if those were present whom she had heard, they would give him an answer. "Madam," replied the Reformer, "would to God that the learnedest Papist in Europe, and he that you would best believe, were present with your Grace, to sustain the argument, and that you would patiently hear the matter debated to an end; for then I doubt not, madam, you would know the vanity of the Papistical religion, and how little foundation it has in the Word of God."

"Well," said she, "you may perchance get that sooner than you believe."

"Assuredly," said Knox, "if I ever get it in my life I get it sooner than I believe; for the ignorant Papist cannot patiently reason, and the learned and crafty Papist will not come in your presence, madam, to have the grounds of his belief searched out, for they know that they cannot sustain the argument unless fire and sword and their own laws be judges. When you shall let me see the contrary, I shall grant myself to have been deceived in that point."

The dinner-hour was announced, and the argument ended. "I pray God, madam," said Knox in parting, "that ye may be as blessed within the commonwealth of Scotland, as ever was Deborah in the commonwealth of Israel."

Luther before Charles V at Worms, Calvin before the Libertines in the Cathedral of St. Pierre, and Knox before Queen Mary in the Palace of Holyrood, are three dramatic points in the Reformation. The victory in each of these three cases was won by one man, and was due solely to the grace of God. Luther, Calvin, Knox at these unspeakably critical moments stood alone among men; their friends could not or dared not show themselves; they were upheld only by the truth and God's presence with them. A concession, a compromise, in either case would have ruined all; and Worms, St. Pierre, and Holyrood would have figured in history as the scenes of irretrievable disaster, over which nations would have had cause to weep. They are instead names of glorious victory; Marathon, Morat, and Bannockburn shine not with so pure a splendor, nor will they stir the hearts of men so long.

In the room of a sacerdotal hierarchy there had been planted in Scotland a body of teaching pastors. The change had been accomplished with the sanction of Parliament, but no provision was made for the temporal support of the new ecclesiastical establishment. This was a point on which Knox was not unnaturally anxious, but on which he was doomed to experience a bitter disappointment. The Romish Church in Scotland had possessed a boundless affluence of houses, valuables, and lands. Her abbacies dotted the country, mountain and meadow, forest and cornfield, were hers; and all this wealth had been set free by the suppression of the priesthood, and ought to have been transferred, so far as it was needed, to the Protestant Church. But the nobles rushed in and appropriated nearly the whole of this vast spoil. Knox lifted up his voice to denounce a transaction which was alike damaging to the highest interests of the country, and the characters of those concerned in it: but he failed to ward off the covetous hands that were clutching this rich booty; and the only arrangement he succeeded in effecting was, that the revenues of the Popish Church should be divided into three parts, and that two of these should be given to the former incumbents, to revert at their death to the nobility, and that the third part should be divided between the court and the Protestant ministers. The latter had till now been entirely dependent upon the benevolence of their hearers, or the hospitality of the noblemen in whose houses some of them continued to reside. When Knox beheld the revenues which would have sufficed to plant Scotland with churches, colleges, and schools, and suitably provide for the poor, thus swallowed up, he could not refrain from expressing his mortification and disgust. "Well," exclaimed he, "if the end of this order be happy, my judgment fails me. I see two parts freely given to the devil, and the third must be divided between God and the devil. Who would have thought that when Joseph ruled in Egypt his brethren would have traveled for victuals, and would have returned with empty sacks to their families?" It was concern for his brethren's interest that drew from the Reformer this stern denunciation, for his own stipend, appointed by the magistrates of Edinburgh, was an adequate one. The same cause occasioned to Knox his second great disappointment. He had received from the Privy Council a commission, along with Winram, Spottiswood, Douglas, and Row, to draft a plan of ecclesiastical government. Comprehensive in outline, incalculable would have been the moral and literary benefits this plan would have conferred upon Scotland had it been fully carried out. But the nobles liked neither the moral rules it prescribed, nor the pecuniary burdens it imposed, and Knox failed to procure for it the ratification of the Privy Council. Many of the members of Council, however, subscribed it, and being approved by the first General Assembly, which met on the 20th of December, 1560, it has, under the name of the "First Book of Discipline," always held the rank of a standard in the Protestant Church of Scotland.

A third and still more grievous disappointment awaited the Reformer. The Parliament of 1560, which had abolished the Papal jurisdiction, and accepted Protestantism as the national religion, had been held when the queen was absent from the kingdom, and the royal assent had never been given to its enactments, not only did Mary, under various pretexts, refuse to ratify its deeds while she resided in France, but even after her return to Scotland she still withheld her ratification, and repeatedly declared the Parliament of 1560 to be illegal. If so, the Protestant establishment it had set up was also illegal, and no man could doubt that it was the queen's intention, so soon as she was able, to overthrow it

and restore the Romish hierarchy. This was a state of matters which Knox deemed intolerable; but the Protestant lords, demoralized by the spoils of the fallen establishment and the blandishments of the court, took it very easily. The Parliament the first since Mary's arrival – was about to meet; and Knox fondly hoped that now the royal ratification would be given to the Protestant settlement of the country. He pressed the matter upon the nobles as one of vital importance. He pointed out to them that till such assent was given they had no law on their side; that they held their religion at the mere pleasure of their sovereign, that they might any day be commanded to go to mass, and that it was indispensable that these uncertainties and fears should be set at rest. The nobles, however, found the matter displeasing to the queen, and agreed not to press it. Knox learned their resolve with consternation.

He could not have believed, unless he had seen it, that the men who had summoned him from Geneva, and carried their cause to the battle-field, and who had entered into a solemn bond, pledging themselves to God and to one another, to sacrifice goods and life in the cause if need were, could have so woefully declined in zeal and courage, and could so prefer the good-will of their sovereign and their own selfish interests to the defense of God's interests and the welfare of their country. This exhibition of faithlessness and servility well-nigh broke his heart, and would have made him abandon the cause in despair but for his faith in God. The Parliament had not yet ended, and in the pulpit of St. Giles's, Knox poured out the sorrows that almost overwhelmed him in a strain of lofty and indignant, yet mournful eloquence. He reminded the nobles who, with some thousand of the citizens, were gathered before him, of the slavery of body, and the yet viler slavery of soul, in which they had been sunk; and now, when the merciful hand of God had delivered them, where was their gratitude? And then addressing himself in particular to the nobility, he continued, "In your most extreme dangers I have been with you; St. Johnston, Cupar-Moor, the Craigs of Edinburgh" (names that recalled past perils and terrors) "are yet fresh in my heart; yea, that dark and dolorous night wherein all ye, my lords, with shame and fear left this town, is yet in my mind, and God forbid that ever I forget it. What was, I say, my exhortation to you, and what has fallen in vain of all that ever God promised unto you by my mouth, ye yourselves are yet alive to testify. There is not one of you, against whom was death and destruction threatened, perished; and how many of your enemies has God plagued before your eyes! Shall this be the thankfulness that ye shall render unto your God? To betray his cause when you have it in your hands to establish it as you please? Their religion had the authority of God, and was independent of human laws, but it was also accepted within this realm in public Parliament, and that Parliament he would maintain was as free and lawful as any that had ever assembled in the kingdom of Scotland." He alluded, in fine, to the reports of the queen's marriage, and bidding his audience mark his words, he warned the nobility what the consequences would be should they ever consent to their sovereign marrying a Papist.

Knox himself tells us in his *History* that this plainness of speech gave offense to both Papists and Protestants. He had not expected, nor indeed intended, that his sermon should please the latter any more than the former. Men who were sinking their patriotism in cupidity, and their loyalty in sycophancy, would not be flattered by being told to their face that they were ruining their country. Another result followed, which had doubtless

also been foreseen by the preacher. There were those in his audience who hurried off to the palace as soon as the sermon was ended, and reported his words to the queen, saying that he had preached against her marriage. Hardly had he finished his dinner when a messenger arrived from Holyrood, ordering his attendance at the palace. His attached friend, Lord Ochiltree, and some others, accompanied him, but only Erskine of Dun was permitted to go with him into the royal cabinet. The moment he entered, Mary burst into a passion, exclaiming that never had prince been vexed by subject as she had been by him; "I vow to God," said she, "I shall once be revenged." "And with these words, hardly could her page bring napkins enough to hold her tears." Knox was beginning to state the paramount claims that governed him in the pulpit, when the queen demanded, "But what have you to do with my marriage?" He was going on to vindicate his allusion to that topic in the pulpit on the ground of its bearing on the welfare of the country, when she again broke in, "What have you to do with my marriage? or what are you in this commonwealth?"

Posterity has answered that question, in terms that would have been less pleasing to Mary than was Knox's own reply. "A subject born within the same, madam," he at once said with a fine blending of courtesy and dignity: "a subject born within the same, madam, and albeit I be neither earl, lord, nor baron in it, yet has God made me (how abject that ever I be in your eyes) a profitable member within the same; yes, madam, to me it appertains no less to forewarn of such things as may hurt it, if foresee them, than it doth to any of the nobility, for both my vocation and my conscience require plainness of me; and, therefore, madam, to yourself I say, that which I spake in public place – whensoever the nobility of this realm shall consent that ye be obedient to an unfaithful husband, they do as much as in them lieth to renounce Christ, to banish his truth from them, to betray the freedom of this realm, and perchance shall in the end do small comfort to yourself." Mary's reply to these words was a burst of tears.

Erskine of Dun stepped forward to soothe her, but with no great success. Knox stood silent till the queen had composed herself, and then said he was constrained, though unwillingly, to sustain her tears, rather than hurt his conscience and betray the commonwealth by his silence. This defense but the more incensed the queen; she ordered him to leave her presence and await in the ante-chamber the signification of her pleasure. There he was surrounded by numbers of his acquaintances and associates, but he stood "as one whom men had never seen." Lord Ochiltree alone of all that dastardly crowd found courage to recognize him. Turning from the male, but not manly, courtiers, Knox addressed himself to the queen's ladies. "O fair ladies," said he, in a vein of raillery which the queen's frown had not been able to extinguish, "how pleasing were this life of yours, if it should ever abide, and then, in the end, we might pass to heaven with all this gay gear! but fie upon that knave Death that will come whether we will or no." Erskine now came to hint to say that the queen permitted him to go home for the day. Mary was bent on a prosecution of the Reformer, but her councilors refused to concur, and so, as Knox says, "this storm blew over in appearance, but not in heart."

Sternly, uncompromisingly, Knox pursues his course! Not an uncourteous, undignified, treasonable word does he utter; yet what iron inflexibility! He sacrifices friends, he incurs

the mortal hatred of his sovereign, he restrains the yearnings of his own heart; the sacrifice is painful – painful to himself and to all about him, but it is the saving of his country. What hardness! exclaim many. We grant it; Knox is hard as the rock, stubborn as the nether millstone; but when men seek to erect a beacon that may save the mariner from the reef on which the tumultuous billows are about to pitch his vessel headlong, it is the rock, not the sand-heap, that they select as a foundation.

At last, as the queen thought, the Reformer had put himself in her power. Had it been as Mary believed, no long time would have elapsed till his head had fallen on the scaffold, and with it, in all human reckoning, would have fallen the Protestant Church of his native land. During the queen's absence at Stirling, the same summer, mass was celebrated at Holyrood by her domestics with greater pomp than usual, and numbers of the citizens resorted to it. Some zealous Protestants of Edinburgh forced their way into the chapel, principally to see who of their fellow-citizens were present, and finding the priest attired for celebration, they asked him why he durst do these things in the queen's absence. The chaplain and the French domestics, taking fright, raised a cry which made Comptroller Pitarrow hasten to their aid, who found no tumult, however, save what he brought with him. Information having been sent to the queen, she caused two of the Protestants to be indicted for "forethought felony, hamesucken, and invasion of the palace." Fearing that it might go hard with the accused, the ministers urged Knox, agreeably to a commission he had received from the church, to address a circular to the leading Protestants of the country, requesting their presence on the day of trial. A copy of this letter having been sent to the queen, she submitted it to the Privy Council; and the Council, to her great delight, pronounced it treasonable.

In December, 1563, an extraordinary meeting of Council was called, and Knox was put upon his trial. Mary took her seat at the head of the table with an affectation of great dignity, which she utterly spoiled by giving way to a fit of loud laughter, so great was her joy at seeing Knox standing uncovered at the foot of the table. "That man," said she, "made me weep, and shed never a tear himself; I will now see if I can make him weep."

Secretary Maitland of Lethinton conducted the prosecution, and seemed almost as eager as Mary herself to obtain a conviction against the Reformer. Maitland was a formidable opponent, being one of the most accomplished dialecticians of the age. He had been a zealous Protestant, but caring little at heart for any religion, he had now cooled, and was trying to form a middle party, between the court and the church. Nothing has a greater tendency to weaken the insight than the want of definite views and strong convictions, and so the secretary was laboring with all his might to realize his narrow and impracticable scheme, to the success of which, as he deemed, one thing only was wanting, namely, that Knox should be got rid of. The offense for which the Reformer was now made answerable was, "convening the lieges" by his circular; but the sting of his letter lay in the sentence which affirmed that the threatened prosecution "was doubtless to make preparation upon a few, that a door may be opened to execute cruelty upon a greater number." Knox had offended mortally, for he had penetrated the designs of the court, and proclaimed, them to the nation. The proceedings were commenced by the reading of the circular for which Knox had been indicted. "Heard you ever, my lords,"

said Mary, looking round the Council, "a more spiteful and treasonable letter?" This was followed up by Maitland, who, turning to Knox, said, "Do you not repent that such a letter has passed your pen?" The Reformer avoided the trap, and made answer, "My lord secretary, before I repent I must be shown my offense." "Offense!" exclaimed Maitland, in a tone of surprise; "if there were no more but the convocation of the queen's lieges, the offense cannot be denied." The Reformer took his stand on the plain common sense of the matter, that to convene the citizens for devotion, or for deliberation, was one thing; and to convene them with arms was another; and Maitland labored to confound the two, and attach a treasonable purpose to the convocation in question. "What is this?" interposed the queen, who was getting impatient; "methinks you trifle with him. Who gave him authority to make convocation of my lieges? Is not that treason?" "No, madam," replied Lord Ruthven, whose Protestant spirit was roused – "no, madam, for he makes convocation of the people to hear prayers and sermon almost daily, and whatever your Grace or others will think thereof, we think it no treason."

After a long and sharp debate between the Reformer and the secretary, the "cruelty upon a greater multitude," for which the summons served on the two Protestants would, it was affirmed, prepare the way, came next under discussion. The queen insisted that she was the party against whom this allegation was directed; Knox contended that its application was general, and that it was warranted by the notorious persecutions of the Papacy to exterminate Protestants. He was enlarging on this topic, when the chancellor interrupted him. "You forget yourself," said he; "you are not now in the pulpit." "I am in the place," replied the Reformer, "where I am demanded of conscience to speak the truth, and therefore the truth I speak, impugn it whose list." At last Knox was withdrawn, and the queen having retired, in order that the judgment of the Council might be given, the lords unanimously voted that John Knox had been guilty of no violation of the laws. Secretary Maitland stormed, and the courtiers stood aghast. The queen was brought back, and took her place at the head of the table, and the votes were called over again in her presence. "What!" said the members, "shall the Laird of Lethington make us condemn an innocent man?" The Council pronounced a second unanimous acquittal. They then rose and departed. The issue had been waited for with intense anxiety by the Protestant citizens of Edinburgh, and during the sitting of Council a dense crowd filled the court of the palace, and occupied the stairs up to the very door of the council-chamber. That night no instruments of music were brought before the queen; the darkened and silent halls of Holyrood proclaimed the grief and anger of Mary Stuart. But if the palace mourned, the city rejoiced.

We have missed the true character of this scene if we have failed to see, not Mary Stuart and Knox, but Rome and the Reformation struggling together in this chamber. The execution of the Reformer would have been immediately followed by the suppression of the ecclesiastical and educational institutions which he had set up, and Scotland plunged again into Popery. Nay, the disastrous consequences of the Reformer's imprisonment or death would have extended far beyond his native land. Had Scotland been a Popish country at the time of the Armada, in all human probability the throne of Elizabeth would have been overturned. Nay, with Scotland Popish, it may be doubted whether the throne of Elizabeth would have stood till then. If Mary Stuart had succeeded in restoring the

Papacy in Scotland, the country would, as an almost inevitable consequence, have fallen under the power of France, and would have become the door by which the Popish Powers would have entered England to suppress its Reformation, and place the Queen of the Scots upon its throne. Had Knox that night descended the stairs of the royal cabinet of Holyrood with a sentence of condemnation upon him, his countrymen would have had more cause to mourn than himself, and England too would, in no long time, have learned the extent of the calamity which had befallen the great cause with which she had identified herself, when she saw the fall of the northern kingdom followed by the destruction of her own Protestant religion.

The dangerous crisis was now past, and a tide of prosperous events began to set in, in favor of the Scottish Reformation. The rising of the Earl of Huntly, in the north who, knowing the court to be secretly favorable, had unfurled the standard for Rome – was suppressed. The alienation which had parted Knox and Lord James Stuart, now Earl of Murray, for two years was healed; the Protestant spirit in the provinces was strengthened by the preaching tours undertaken by the Reformer; the jealousies between the court and the church, though not removed, were abated; the abdication of the queen, which grew out of the deplorable occurrences that followed her marriage with Darnley, and to which our attention must briefly be given, seeing they were amongst the most powerful of the causes which turned the balance between Protestantism and Romanism, not in Scotland only, but over Europe; and, as a consequence of her abdication, the appointment, as regent of the kingdom, of the Earl of Murray, the intimate friend of Knox, and the great outstanding patriot and Reformer among the Scottish nobles -- all tended in one direction, to the establishment, namely, of the Scottish Reformation. Accordingly, in 1567, the infant James being king, and Murray regent, the Parliament which met on the 15th of December ratified all the Acts that had been passed in 1560, abolishing the Papal jurisdiction, and accepting the Protestant faith as the religion of the nation. Valid legal securities were thus for the first time reared around the Protestant Church of Scotland. It was further enacted, "That no prince should afterwards be admitted to the exercise of authority in the kingdom, without taking an oath to maintain the Protestant religion; and that none but Protestants should be admitted to any office, with the exception of those that were hereditary, or held for life. The ecclesiastical jurisdiction, exercised by the Assemblies of the church, was formally ratified, and commissioners appointed to define more exactly the causes which came within the sphere of their judgment."

The Scottish Reformation had now reached its culmination in that century, and from this point Knox could look back over the battles he had waged, and the toils he had borne, and contemplate with thankfulness their issue in the overthrow of the Papal tyranny, and the establishment of a scriptural faith in Scotland. He had, too, received legal guarantees from the state that the abolished jurisdiction would not be restored, and that the Protestant church would have liberty and protection given it in the exercise of its worship and the administration of its discipline. The two years that followed, 1568 and 1569, were perhaps the happiest in the Reformer's life, and the most prosperous in the history of his country during that century. Under the energetic and patriotic administration of the "Good Regent" Scotland enjoyed quiet. The Reformed church was enlarging her borders; all was going well; and that yearning for rest which often visits the breasts of those who

have been long tossed by tempests, began to be felt by Knox. He remembered the quiet years at Geneva, the loving flock to whom he had there ministered the Word of Life, and he expressed a wish to return thither and spend the evening of his life, and lay his wearied body, it might be, by the side of greater dust in the Plain-palais.

But it was not to be so. Other storms were to roll over him and over his beloved church before he should descend into his grave. The assassination of the Regent Murray, in January, 1570, was the forerunner of these evils. The tidings of his death occasioned to Knox the most poignant anguish, but great as was his own loss, he regarded it as nothing in comparison with the calamity which had befallen the country in the murder of this great patriot and able administrator. Under the Earl of Lennox, who succeeded Murray as regent, the former confusions returned, and they continued under Mar, by whom Lennox was succeeded. The nobles were divided into two factions, one in favor of Mary, while the other supported the cause of the young king. In the midst of these contentions the life of the Reformer came to be in so great danger that it was thought advisable that he should remove from Edinburgh, and take up his residence for some time at St. Andrews. Here he often preached, and though so feeble that he had to be lifted up into the pulpit, before the sermon had ended his earnestness and vehemence were such that, in the words of an eye-witness, "He was like to ding the pulpit in blads and flie out of it."

Weary of the world, and longing to depart, he had nevertheless to wage battle to the very close of his life. His last years were occupied in opposing the introduction into the Presbyterian church of an order of bishop known only to Scotland, and termed Tulchan. Several rich benefices had become vacant by the death of the incumbents, and other causes; and the nobles, coveting these rich living, entered into simoniacal bargains with the least worthy of the ministers, to the effect that they should fill the post, but that the patron should receive the richest portion of the income: hence the term Tulchan Bishops. Knox strongly objected to the institution of the new order of ecclesiastics – first, because he held it a robbery of the church's patrimony; and secondly, because it was an invasion on the Presbyterian equality which had been settled in the Scottish Kirk. His opposition delayed the completion of this disgraceful arrangement, which was not carried through till the year in which he died.

In August, 1572, he returned to Edinburgh, and soon thereafter received the news of the St. Bartholomew Massacre. We need not say how deeply he was affected by a crime that drowned France in Protestant blood, including that of many of his own personal friends. Kindling into prophet-like fire, he foretold from the pulpit of St. Giles's a future of revolutions as awaiting the royal house and throne of France; and his words, verily, have not fallen to the ground.

His last appearance in public was on the 9th of November, 1572, when he preached in the Tolbooth church on occasion of the installation of Mr. Lawson as his colleague and successor. At the close of the service, as if he felt that no more should flock see their pastor, or pastor address his flock, he protested, in the presence of Him to whom he expected soon to give an account, that he had walked among them with a good conscience, preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ in all sincerity, and he exhorted and

charged them to adhere steadfastly to the faith which they had professed. The services at an end, he descended the pulpit-stairs, with exhausted yet cheerful look, and walked slowly down the High Street leaning on the arm of his servant, Richard Bannatyne; his congregation lining the way, reverently anxious to have their last look of their beloved pastor. He entered his house never again to pass over its threshold.

While the events we have so rapidly narrated were in progress, Mary Stuart, the other great figure of the time, was pursuing her career, and it is necessary that we should follow – not in their detail, for that is not necessary for our object, but in their outline and issue – a series of events of which she was the center, and which were acting with marked and lasting effect on both Romanism and Protestantism. We have repeatedly referred to the league of the three Papal Powers France, Spain, and Rome – to quench the light which was enlightening the nations, and bring back the night on the face of all the earth. We have also said that of this plot Mary Stuart had become the center, seeing the part assigned her was essential to its success. It is surely a most instructive fact, that the series of frightful crimes into which this prince plunged was one of the main instruments that Providence employed to bring this plot to nought. From the day that Mary Stuart put her hand to this bond of blood, the tide in her fortunes turned, and all things went against her. First came her sudden and ill-starred affection for Lord Darnley, the son of the Earl of Lennox; then followed her marriage with him, accomplished through treachery, and followed by civil war. The passion which Mary felt for Darnley, a weak, vain, and frivolous youth, and addicted to low company, soon gave place to disgust. Treated with neglect by her husband, Mary was thrown upon others, and then came her worse than unseemly intimacy with the low-born and low-bred Italian, David Rizzio. This awakened a fierce and revengeful jealousy in the breast of Darnley, which led to the midnight assassination in the palace. A band of barons, with naked swords, suddenly appeared in the supper-chamber of the queen, and seizing her favorite, and loosening his grasp on the dress of his mistress, which he had clutched in despair, they dragged him out, and dispatched him in the ante-chamber, his screams ringing in the ears of the queen, who was held back by force from rescuing him. Then came the settled purpose of revenge in the heart of Mary Stuart against her husband, for his share in the murder of Rizzio. This purpose, concealed for a time under an affectation of tender love, the more effectually to lure the vain and confiding Lord Darnley into the snare she had set for him, was steadily and coolly pursued, till at last it was consummated in the horrible tragedy of the "Kirk-of-Field." The lurid blaze which lighted the sky of Edinburgh that night, and the shock that roused its sleeping citizens from their beds, bring upon the stage new actors, and pave the way for outrages that startle the imagination and stupefy the moral sense. Darnley has disappeared, and now an infamous and bloody man starts up by the side of Mary Stuart.

There comes next, her strange passion for Bothwell, a man without a single spark of chivalry or honor in him – coarse-minded, domineering, with an evil renown hanging about him for deeds of violence and blood, and whose gross features and badly-molded limbs did not furnish Mary with the poor apology of manly beauty for the almost insane passion for him to which she abandoned herself. Then, before the blood of her husband was dry, and the ruins of the Kirk-of-Field had ceased to smoke, came her marriage with Bothwell, whom the nation held to be the chief perpetrator of the cruel murder of her

former husband. To take in marriage that hand which had spilt her husband's blood was to confess in act what even she dared not confess in words. From this moment her fatuous career becomes more reckless, and she rushes onward with awful speed towards the goal.

Aghast at such a career, and humiliated by being ruled over by such a sovereign, her subjects broke out in insurrection. The queen flew to arms; she was defeated on the field of Carberry Hill and brought as a captive to Edinburgh; thence sent to Lochleven Castle, where she endured a lonely imprisonment of some months. Escaping thence, she fled on horseback all night long, and at morning presented herself at the castle-gates of the Hamiltons. Here she rallied round her the supporters whom her defeat had scattered, and for the last time tried the fortune of arms against her subjects on the field of Langside, near Glasgow. The battle went against her, and she fled a second time, riding night and day across country towards the Border, where, fording the Solway, she bade adieu to Scottish soil, nevermore to return. She had left her country behind, not her evil genius, nor her ill-fortune; these, as a terrible Nemesis, accompany her into England. There, continuing to be the principal card in the game the Popish Powers were playing, she was drawn to conspire against the life and throne of Elizabeth. It was now that doom overtook her. On a dull winter morning, on the 8th of February, she who had dazzled all eyes by her beauty, all imaginations by her liveliness and gaiety, and who had won so many hearts by her fascinating address -- the daughter of a king, the wife of a king, and the mother of a king, and who herself had sat on two thrones -- laid her head, now discrowned, gray with sorrows, and stained with crimes, upon the block. At the very time that the Armada was being built in the dockyards of Spain, and an immense host was being collected in the Netherlands, with the view of making vacant Elizabeth's throne, and elevating Mary Stuart to it, the head of the latter princess fell on the scaffold.

It is noteworthy that Queen Mary survived all who had been actors along with her in the scenes of crime and blood in which she had so freely mingled. Before she herself mounted the scaffold, she had seen all who had sided with her in Scotland against Knox and the Reformation, die on the gallows or in the field. Before her last hour came, the glory of the House of Hamilton had been tarnished, and the member of that house who fired the shot that deprived Scotland of her "Good Regent" had to seek asylum in France. Kirkaldy of Grange, who espoused Mary's quarrel at the last hour, and held the Castle of Edinburgh in her behalf, was hanged at the Market Cross; and Maitland of Lethington, who had lent the aid of his powerful talents to the queen to bring Knox to the block, died, it is supposed, by his own hand, after living to witness the utter wreck of all Mary's interests in Scotland. Bothwell, who had stained his life and conscience with so many horrid deeds to serve her, rotted for years in a foreign dungeon, and at last expired there. The same fatality attended all in other lands who took part with her or embarked in her schemes. Her co-conspirators in England came to violent ends. The Earls of Westmoreland and Northumberland were executed. The Duke of Norfolk, the premier peer, was beheaded in the Tower. All concerned in the Babington plot were swept off by the ax. In France it was the same. Her uncles had died violent and bloody deaths; Charles IX expired, blood flowing from every opening in his body; Catherine de Medici, after all her crimes, trod the same road; and last of all Mary herself went to her great audit. As she stands this dark morning beside the block in Fotheringay Castle, it could hardly fail to put

a double sting into death to reflect that she had seen the ruin of all her friends, and the utter overthrow of all her projects, while the Reformation against which she had so sorely combated was every year striking its roots deeper in her native land.

From this blood-stained block, with the headless corpse of a queen beside it, we turn to another death-scene, tragic too – not with horrors, as the other, but with triumph. We stand in a humble chamber at the foot of the High Street of Edinburgh. Here, on this bed, is laid that head over which so many storms had burst, to find at last the rest which, wearied with toil and anxiety, it had so earnestly sought. Noblemen, ministers, burgesses pour in to see how Knox will die. As he had lived so he dies, full of courage. From his dying bed he exhorted, warned, admonished all who approached him as he had done from the pulpit. His brethren in the ministry he adjured to "abide by the eternal truth of the gospel." Noblemen and statesmen he counseled to uphold the "evangel" and not forsake the church of their native land, if they would have God not to strip them of their riches and honors. He made Calvin's sermons on the Ephesians be read to him, as if his spirit sought to commune once more on earth with that mightier spirit.

But the scriptures were the manna on which he mostly lived: "Turn," said he to his wife, "to that passage where I first cast anchor, the seventeenth of the gospel of John." In the midst of these solemn scenes, a gleam of his wonted geniality breaks in. Two intimate friends come to see him, and he makes a cask of French wine which was in his cellar be pierced for their entertainment, and hospitably urges them to partake, saying that "he will not tarry till it be all drunk." He was overheard breathing out short utterances in prayer: "Give peace to this afflicted commonwealth; raise up faithful pastors." On the day before his death, being Sunday, after lying some time quiet, he suddenly broke out, "I have fought against spiritual wickedness in heavenly things," referring to the troubled state of the church, "and have prevailed; I have been in heaven and taken possession, I have tasted of the heavenly joys." At eleven o'clock in the evening of the 24th of November, he heaved a deep sigh, and ejaculated, "Now it is come." His friends desired of him a sign that he died in peace, whereupon, says the chronicler of his last hours, "As if he had received new strength in death, he lifted one of his hands towards heaven, and sighing twice, departed with the calmness of one fallen into sleep."

The two master-qualities of Knox were faith and courage. The fundamental quality was his faith, courage was the noble fruit that sprang from it. The words of Regent Morton, spoken over his dust, have become proverbial, "There lies one who never feared the face of man." John Knox did not fear man because he trusted God. His faith taught him, first of all, a fearless submission of his understanding to the Word of God. To this profound submission to the Bible we can trace all the noble and rare qualities which he displayed in his life. To this was owing the simplicity, the clearness and the vigor of all his views, his uniform consistency, and that remarkable foresight which to his countrymen appeared to approach almost to prophecy. Looking along the lines of the Divine government, as revealed in the scriptures, he could foretell what would inevitably be the issue of a certain course of conduct or a certain train of events. It might come sooner or it might come later, but he no more doubted that it would come than he doubted the uniformity and equity of God's rule over men.

To this too, namely, his submission to the Bible, was owing at once the solidity and the breadth of his reform. Instead of trammeling himself by forms he threw himself fearlessly and broadly upon great principles. He spread his Reformation over the whole of society, going down till he had reached its deepest springs, and traveling outwards till he had regenerated his country in all departments of its action, and in all the spheres of its well-being. He was all advocate of constitutional government, and a friend, as we have seen, of the highest and widest intellectual culture. It is no proof of narrowness, surely, but of insight and breadth, that he discerned the true foundation on which to build in order that his Reformation might endure and extend itself, he placed it upon the Bible. His wide and patriotic views on public liberty and education, which he held and inculcated, we gratefully acknowledge; but the great service which he rendered to Scotland was the religious one – he gave it liberty by giving it the "evangel."

The same year (1572) which saw Knox descend into the grave beheld the rise of a system in Scotland, which was styled episcopacy, and yet was not episcopacy, for it possessed no authority and exercised no oversight. We have already indicated the motives which led to this invasion upon the Presbyterian equality which had till now prevailed in the Scottish church, and the significant name borne by the men who filled the offices created under this arrangement. They were styled Tulchan bishops, being only the image or likeness of a bishop, set up as a convenient vehicle through which the fruits of the benefices might flow, not into the treasury of the church, their rightful destination, but into the pockets of patrons and landlords.

We have seen that Knox resisted this scheme, as stained with the double guilt of simony and robbery. He held it, moreover, to be a violation of one of the fundamental laws of the Presbyterian polity, so far as the new bishops might possess any real superiority of power or rank. This they hardly did as yet, for the real power of the church lay in her courts, and the Tulchan bishops were subject to the jurisdiction of the Synods and Assemblies equally with their brethren; but the change was deemed ominous by all the more faithful ministers, as the commencement of a policy which seemed certain in the end to lay prostrate the Presbyterianism of the Church of Scotland, and with it the reformed religion and the liberties of the country.

Meanwhile, numerous other evils grew out of this arrangement. The men who consented to be obtruded into these equivocal posts were mostly unqualified, some by their youth, others by their old age; some by inferior talents, others by their blemished character. They were despised by the people as the tools of the court and the aristocracy. Hardly an Assembly met but it had to listen to complaints against them for neglect of duty, or irregularity of life, or tyrannical administration. The ministers, who felt that these abuses were debasing the purity and weakening the influence of the church, sought means to correct them. But the government took the side of the Tulchan dignitaries. The regent, Morton, declared the speeches against the new bishops to be seditious, threatened to deprive the church of the liberty of her Assemblies, and advanced a claim to the same supremacy over ecclesiastical affairs which had been declared an inherent prerogative in the crown of England. Into this complicated and confused state had matters now come

in Scotland.

The man who had so largely contributed by his unwearied labors to rear the Scottish ecclesiastical establishment, and who had watched over it with such unslumbering vigilance, was now in his grave. Of those who remained, many were excellent men, and ardently attached to the principles of the Presbyterian church; but there was no one who possessed Knox's sagacity to devise, or his intrepidity to apply, the measures which the crisis demanded. They felt that the Tulchan episcopacy which had lifted up its head in the midst of them must be vigorously resisted if Presbyterianism was to live, but a champion was wanting to lead in the battle.

At last one not unworthy to succeed Knox came forward to fill the place where that great leader had stood. This man was Andrew Melville, who in 1574 returned from Geneva to Scotland. He was of the Melvilles of Baldovy, in the Mearns, and having been left an orphan at the age of four years, was received into the family of his elder brother, who, discovering his genius and taste for learning, resolved to give him the best education the country afforded. He acquired Latin in the grammar-school of Montrose, and Greek from Pierre de Marsilliers, a native of France, who taught in those parts; and when the young Melville entered the University of St. Andrews he read the original text of Aristotle, while his professors, unacquainted with the tongue of their oracle, commented upon his works from a Latin translation. From St. Andrews, Melville went to prosecute his studies at that ancient seat of learning, the University of Paris. The Sorbonne was then rising into higher renown and attracting greater crowds of students than ever, Francis I, at the advice of the great scholar Budaeus, having just added to it three new chairs for Latin, Greek, and Hebrew.

These unlocked the gates of the ancient world, and admitted the student to the philosophy of the Greek sages and the diviner knowledge of the Hebrew prophets. The Jesuits were at that time intriguing to obtain admission into the University of Paris, and to insinuate themselves into the education of youth, and the insight Melville obtained abroad into the character and designs of these zealots was useful to him in after-life, stimulating him as it did to put the colleges of his native land on such a footing that the youth of Scotland might have no need to seek instruction in foreign countries. From Paris, Melville repaired to Poitiers, where, during a residence of three years, he discharged the duties of regent in the College of St. Marceon, till he was compelled to quit it by the troubles of the civil war. Leaving Poitiers, he journeyed on foot to Geneva, his Hebrew Bible slung at his belt, and in a few days after his arrival he was elected to fill the chair of Humanity, then vacant, in the famous academy which Calvin had founded ten years before, and which, as regards the fame of its masters and the number of its scholars, now rivaled the ancient universities of Europe. His appointment brought him into daily intercourse with the scholars, ministers, and senators of Geneva, and if the Scotsman delighted in their urbanity and learning, they no less admired his candor, vivacity, and manifold acquirements. The Massacre of St. Bartholomew took place during Melville's residence in Geneva, and that terrible event, by crowding Geneva with refugees, vastly enlarged his acquaintance with the Protestants of the continent. There were at one time as many as 120 French ministers in that hospitable city, and among other learned strangers was Joseph

Scaliger, the greatest scholar of his age, with whom Melville renewed an acquaintance which had been begun two years before. The horrors of this massacre, of which he had had so near a view, deepened the detestation he felt for tyranny, and helped to nerve him in the efforts he made in subsequent years for the liberties of his native land.

Surrounded with congenial friends and occupied in important labors, that land he had all but forgotten, till it was recalled to his heart by a visit from two of his countrymen, who, struck with his great capabilities, urged him to return to Scotland. Having obtained with difficulty permission from the Senate and Church of Geneva to return, he set out on his way homeward, with a letter from Beza, in which that illustrious man said that "the Church of Geneva could not have a stronger token of affection to her sister of Scotland than by despoiling herself of his services that the Church of Scotland might therewith be enriched." Passing through Paris on the very day that Charles IX died in the Louvre, he arrived in Edinburgh in July, 1574, after an absence of ten years from his native country. "He brought with him," says James Melville, "an inexhaustible treasury of learning, a vast knowledge both of things human and divine, and, what was better still, an upright and fervent zeal for true religion, and a firm resolution to devote all his gifts, with unwearied painfulness, to the service of his Kirk and country without recompense or gain.

On his arrival in Scotland he found the battle against the Tulchan episcopate, so incongruously joined on to the Presbyterian church, halting for one to lead. Impressed with the simple order which Calvin had established in Geneva, and ascribing in large degree to that cause the glory to which that church had attained, and the purity with which religion flourished in it, and believing with Jerome that, agreeably to the interchangeable use of the words "bishop" and "presbyter" in the New Testament, all ministers of the gospel were at first equal, Melville resolved not to rest till he had lopped off the unseemly addition which avaricious nobles and a tyrannical government had made to the church of his native land, and restored it to the simplicity of its first order. He began the battle in the General Assembly of 1575; he continued it in following Assemblies, and with such success that the General Assembly of 1580 came to a unanimous resolution, declaring "the office of a bishop, as then used and commonly understood, to be destitute of warrant from the Word of God, and a human invention, tending to the great injury of the church, and ordained the bishops to demit their pretended office simpliciter, and to receive admission as ordinary pastors de novo, under pain of excommunication." Not a holder of a Tulchan miter but bowed to the decision of the Assembly.

While, on the one hand, this new episcopacy was being cast down, the church was laboring, on the other, to build up and perfect her scheme of Presbyterian polity. A committee was appointed to prosecute this important matter, and in the course of a series of sittings it brought its work to completion, and its plan was sanctioned by the General Assembly which met in the Magdalene Chapel of Edinburgh, in 1578, under the presidency of Andrew Melville. "From this time," says Dr. McCrie, "the Book of Policy, as it was then styled, or Second Book of Discipline, although not ratified by the Privy Council or Parliament, was regarded by the church as exhibiting her authorized form of

government, and the subsequent Assemblies took steps for carrying its arrangements into effect, by erecting presbyteries throughout the kingdom, and committing to them the oversight of all ecclesiastical affairs within their bounds, to the exclusion of bishops, superintendents, and visitors."

It may be well to pause and contemplate the Scottish ecclesiastical polity as now perfected. Never before had the limits of the civil and the ecclesiastical powers been drawn with so bold a hand as in this Second Book of Discipline. In none of the confessions of the Reformation had the church been so clearly set forth as a distinct and, in spiritual matters, independent society as it was in this one. The Second Book of Discipline declared that "Christ had appointed a government in his church, distinct from civil government, which is to be executed in his name by such office-bearers as he has authorized, and not by civil magistrates or under their direction." This marks a notable advance in the Protestant theory of church power, which differs from the Popish theory, inasmuch as it is co-ordinate with, not superior to, the civil power, its claims to supremacy being strictly limited to things spiritual, and subject to the state in things temporal. The First Book of Discipline was incomplete as regards its arrangements. It was compiled to meet an emergency, and many of its provisions were necessarily temporary. But the Second Book of Discipline contained a scheme of church polity, developed from the root idea of the supernatural origin of the church, and which alike in its general scope and its particular details was framed with the view of providing at once for the maintenance of the order, and the conservation of the liberty of the church. The Parliament did not ratify the Second Book of Discipline till 1592; but that was a secondary matter with its compilers, for in their view the granting of such ratification could not add to, and the withholding of it could not take from, the inherent authority of the scheme of government, which had its binding power from the scriptures or had no binding power whatever. Of what avail, then, was the ratification of Parliament. Simply this, that the state thereby pledged itself not to interfere with or overthrow this discipline; and, further, it might be held as the symbol of the nation's acceptance of and submission to this discipline as a scriptural one, which, however, the church neither wished nor sought to enforce by civil penalties.

In 1578, James VI, now twelve years of age, took the reins of government into his own hand. His preceptor, the illustrious Buchanan, had labored to inspire him with a taste for learning – the capacity he could not give him – and to qualify him for his future duties as a sovereign by instructing him in the principles of civil and religious liberty. But unhappily the young king, at an early period of his reign, fell under the influence of two worthless and profligate courtiers, who strove but too successfully to make him forget all that Buchanan had taught him. These were Esme Stuart, a cousin of his father, who now arrived from France, and was afterwards created Earl of Lennox; and Captain James Stuart, a son of Lord Ochiltree, a man of profligate manners, whose unprincipled ambition was rewarded with the title and estates of the unfortunate Earl of Arran. The sum of what these men taught James was that there was neither power nor glory in a throne unless the monarch were absolute, and that as the jurisdiction of the Protestant church of his native country was the great obstacle in the way of his governing according to his own arbitrary will, it behooved him above all things to sweep away the jurisdiction

of Presbyterianism. An independent Kirk and an absolute throne could not co-exist in the same realm. These maxims accorded but too well with the traditions of his house and his own prepossessions not to be eagerly imbibed by the king. He proved an apt scholar, and the evil transformation wrought upon him by the counselors to whom he had surrendered himself was completed by his initiation into scenes of youthful debauchery.

The Popish politicians on the continent foresaw, of course, that James VI would mount the throne of England; and there is reason to think that the mission of the polished and insinuating but unprincipled Esme Stuart had reference to that expectation. The Duke of Guise sent him to restore the broken link between Scotland and France; to fill James's mind with exalted notions of his own prerogative; to inspire him with a detestation of Presbyterian Protestantism, the greatest foe of absolute power; and to lead him back to Rome.

Accordingly Esme Stuart did not come alone. He was in due time followed by Jesuits and seminary priests, and the secret influence of these men soon made itself manifest in the open defection of some who had hitherto professed the Protestant faith. In short, this was an off-shoot of that great plot which was in 1587 to be smitten on the scaffold in Fotheringay Castle, and to receive a yet heavier blow from the tempest that strewed the bottom of the North Sea with the hulks of the "Invincible Armada," and lined the western shores of Ireland with the corpses of Spanish warriors.

The Presbyterian ministers took the alarm. This flocking of fowl birds to the court, and this crowding of "men in masks" in the kingdom, fore-boded no good to that Protestant establishment which was the main bulwark of the country's liberties: The alarm was deepened by intercepted letters from Rome granting a dispensation to Roman Catholics to profess the Protestant faith for a time, provided they cherished in their hearts a loyalty to Rome, and let slip no opportunity their disguise might offer them of advancing her interests. Crisis was evidently approaching, and if the Scottish people were to hold possession of that important domain of liberty which they had conquered they must fight for it. Constitutional government had not indeed been set up as yet in full form in Scotland; but Buchanan, Knox, and now Melville were the advocates of its principles; thus the germs of that form of government had been planted in the country, and its working initiated by the erection of the Presbyterian church courts; limits had been put upon the arbitrary will of the monarch by the exclusion of the royal power from the most important of all departments of human liberty and rights; and the great body of the people were inflamed with the resolution of maintaining these great acquisitions, now menaced by both the secret and the open emissaries of the Guises and Rome. But there were none to rally the people to the defense of the public liberties but the ministers. The Parliament in Scotland was the tool of the court; the courts of justice had their decisions dictated by letters from the king; there was no organ through which the public sentiment could find expression, or shape itself into action, but the Kirk. It alone possessed anything like liberty, or had courage to oppose the arbitrary measures of the government. The Kirk therefore must come to the front, and give expression to the national voice, if that voice was to be heard at all; and the Kirk must put its machinery in action to defend at once its own independence and the independence of the nation, both of which were threatened by

the same blow. Accordingly, on this occasion, as so often afterwards, the leaders of the opposition were ecclesiastical men, and the measures they adopted were on their outer sides ecclesiastical also. The circumstances of the country made this a necessity. But whatever the forms and names employed in the conflict, the question at issue was, shall the king govern by his own arbitrary irresponsible will, or shall the power of the throne be constitutionally limited, based upon scriptural principles?

This led to the swearing of the National Covenant. It is only ignorance of the great conflict of the sixteenth century that would represent this as a mere Scottish peculiarity. They were all founded upon the social covenants of the people of God, such as during the Reformation of Joshua, Hezekiah, and Nehemiah. We have already met with repeated instances, in the course of our church history, in which this scriptural expedient for cementing union and strengthening confidence amongst the friends of Protestantism was had recourse to. The Lutheran princes repeatedly subscribed not unsimilar bonds. The Waldenses assembled beneath the rocks of Bobbio, and with uplifted hands swore to rekindle their "ancient lamp" or die in the attempt. The citizens of Geneva, twice over, met in their great Church of St. Peter, and swore to the Eternal to resist the duke, and maintain their evangelical confession. The capitals of other cantons also hallowed their struggle for the gospel by an oath. The Hungarian Protestants followed this example. In 1561 the nobles, citizens, and troops in Erlau bound themselves by oath not to forsake the truth, and circulated their Covenant in the neighboring parishes, where also it was subscribed. The Covenant from which the Protestants of Scotland sought to draw strength and confidence has attracted more notice than any of the above instances, from this circumstance, that the Covenanters were not a party but a nation, and the Covenant of Scotland, like its Reformation, was national. The Covenanters swore in brief to resist Popery, and to maintain Protestantism and constitutional monarchy. They first of all explicitly abjured the Romish tenets, they promised to adhere to and defend the doctrine and the government of the reformed Church of Scotland, and finally they engaged under the same oath to defend the person and authority of the king, "with our goods, bodies, and lives, in the defense of Christ's Evangel, liberties of our country, ministration of justice, and punishment of iniquity, against all enemies within this realm and without." It was subscribed (1581) by the king and his household and by all ranks in the country. The arrangement with Rome made the subscription of the courtiers almost a matter of course; even Esme Stuart, now Earl of Lennox, seeing how the tide was flowing, professed to be a convert to the Protestant faith.

The national enthusiasm in behalf of the Reformed Church was greatly strengthened by this solemn transaction, but the intrigues against it at court went on all the same. The battle was begun by the appointment of a Tulchan bishop for Glasgow. The person preferred to this questionable dignity was Robert Montgomery, minister of Stirling, who, said the people, "had the title, but my Lord of Lennox (Esme Stuart) had the milk."

The General Assembly of 1582 were proceeding to suspend the new-made bishop from the exercise of his office, when a messenger-at-arms entered, and charged the moderator and members, "under pain of rebellion and putting them to the horn," to stop procedure. The Assembly, so far from complying, pronounced the heavier sentence of

excommunication on Montgomery; and the sentence was publicly intimated in Edinburgh and Glasgow, in spite of Esme Stuart, who, furious with rage, threatened to poignard the preacher. It shows how strongly the popular feeling was in favor of the Assembly, and against the court, that when Montgomery came soon after to pay a visit to his patron Lennox, the inhabitants of Edinburgh rose in a body, demanding that the town should not be polluted with his presence, and literally chased him out of it. Nor was he, with all his speed, about to escape a few "buffets in the neck" as he hastily made his exit at the wicket-gate of the Potter Row.

The matter did not end with the ignominious expulsion of Montgomery from the capital. The next General Assembly adopted a spirited remonstrance to the king, setting forth that the authority of the Church had been invaded, her sentences annulled, and her ministers obstructed in the discharge of their duty, and begging redress of these grievances. Andrew Melville with others was appointed to present the paper to the king in council; having obtained audience, the commissioners read the remonstrance. The reading finished, Arran looked round with a wrathful countenance, and demanded, "Who dares subscribe these treasonable articles?" "We dare," replied Melville, and, advancing to the table, he took the pen and subscribed. The other commissioners came forward, one after another, and appended their signatures. Even the insolent Arran was abashed; and Melville and his brethren were peaceably dismissed. Protection from noble or from other quarter the ministers had none; their courage was their only shield.

There followed some checkered years; the nobles roused by the courageous bearing of the ministers, made all attempt to free themselves and the country from the ignominious tyranny of the unworthy favorites, who were trampling upon their liberties. But their attempt, known as the "Raid of Ruthven," was ill-advised, and very unlike the calm and constitutional opposition of the ministers. The nobles took possession of the king's person, and compelled the Frenchmen to leave the country. The year's peace which this violence procured for the Church was dearly purchased, for the tide of oppression immediately returned with all the greater force. Andrew Melville had to retire into England, and that intrepid champion off the scene, the Parliament (1584) overturned the independence of the church. It enacted that no ecclesiastical Assembly should meet without the king's leave; that no one should decline the judgment of the king and Privy Council on any matter whatever, under peril of treason, and that all ministers should acknowledge the bishops as their ecclesiastical superiors. These decrees were termed the Black Acts.

Their effect was to lay at the feet of the king that whole machinery of ecclesiastical courts which, as matters then stood, was the only organ of public sentiment, and the only bulwark of the nation's liberties. The General Assembly could not meet unless the king willed, and thus he held in his hands the whole power of the church. This was in violation of repeated Acts of Parliament, which had vested the church with the power of convoking and dissolving her Assemblies, without which her liberties were an illusion.

The reformed Church of Scotland was lying in what seemed ruin, when it was lifted up by an event that at first threatened destruction to it and to the whole Protestantism of

Britain. It was at this time that the storm-cloud of the Armada gathered, burst, and passed away, but not without rousing the spirit of liberty in Scotland. The Scots resolved to set their house in order, lest a second Armada should approach their shores, intercepted letters having made them aware that Huntly and the Popish lords of the north were urging Philip II of Spain to make another attempt, and promising to second his efforts with soldiers who would not only place Scotland at his feet, but would aid him to subjugate England. Even James VI paused in the road he was traveling towards that oldest and staunchest friend of despotic princes, the Church of Rome, seeing his kingdom about to depart from him. His ardor had been cooled, too, by the many difficulties he had encountered in his attempts to impose upon his subjects a hierarchy to which they were repugnant; and either through that fickleness and inconstancy which were a part of his nature, or through that incurable craft which characterized him as it had done all of his race, he became for the time a zealous Presbyterian. Nay, he "praised God that he was born in such a place as to be king in such a Kirk, the purest Kirk in the world. I, forsooth," he concluded, "as long as I brook my life and crown shall maintain the same against all deadly". Andrew Melville had returned from London after a year's absence, and his first care was to resuscitate the Protestant liberties which lay buried under the late Parliamentary enactments. Nor were his labors in vain. In 1592, Parliament restored the Presbyterian church as it had formerly existed, ratifying its government by Kirk-sessions, Presbyteries, Provincial Synods, and National Assemblies.

This Act has ever been held to be the grand charter of Presbyterianism in Scotland. It was hailed with joy, not as adding a particle of inherent authority to the system it recognized – the basis of that authority the Church had already laid down in her Books of Discipline – but because it gave the Church a legal pledge that the jurisdiction of the Romish Church would not be restored, and by consequence, that of the Reformed Church not overthrown. This Act gave the Church of Scotland a legal ground on which to fight her future battles.

But James VI was incapable of being long of one mind, or persevering steadily in one course. In 1596 the Popish lords, who had left the country on the suppression of their rebellion, returned to Scotland.

Notwithstanding that they had risen in arms against the king, and had continued their plots while they lived abroad, James was willing to receive and reinstate these conspirators. His Council were of the same mind with himself. Not so the country and the church, which saw new conspiracies and wars in prospect, should these inveterate plotters be taken back.

Without loss of time, a deputation of ministers, appointed at a convention held at Cupar, proceeded to Falkland to remonstrate with the king on the proposed recall of those who had shown themselves the enemies of his throne and the disturbers of his realm. The ministers were admitted into the palace. It had been agreed that James Melville, the nephew of Andrew, for whom the king entertained great respect, being a man of courteous address, should be their spokesman. He had only uttered a few words when the king violently interrupted him, denouncing him and his associates as seditious stirrers up of the people. The nephew would soon have succumbed to the tempest of the royal anger

if the uncle had not stepped forward. James VI and Andrew Melville stood once more face to face. For a few seconds there was a conflict between the kingly authority of the sovereign and the moral majesty of the patriot. But soon the king yielded himself to Melville. Taking James by the sleeve, and calling him "God's sillie vassal," he proceeded, says McCrie, "to address him in the following strain, perhaps the most singular, in point of freedom, that ever saluted royal ears, or that ever proceeded from the mouth of loyal subject, who would have sprit his blood in defense of the person and honor of his prince: "Sir," said Melville, "we will always humbly reverence your Majesty in public, but since we have this occasion to be with your Majesty in private, and since you are brought into extreme danger both of your life and crown, and along with you the country and the church of God are like to go to wreck, for not telling you the truth and bring you faithful counsel, we must discharge our duty or else be traitors, both to Christ and you. Therefore, sir, as divers times before I have told you, so now again I must tell you, there are two kings and two kingdoms in Scotland: there is Christ Jesus the King of the church, whose subject King James the Sixth is, and of whose kingdom he is not a king, nor a lord, nor a head, but a member... We will yield to you your place, and give you all due obedience; but again I say, you are not the head of the church; you cannot give us that eternal life which even in this world we seek for, and you cannot deprive us of it. Permit us then freely to meet in the name of Christ, and to attend to the interests of that church of which you are the chief member. Sir, when you were in your swaddling-clothes, Christ Jesus reigned freely in this land, in spite of all his enemies; his officers and ministers convened for the ruling and the welfare of his church, which was ever for your welfare, defense, and preservation, when these same enemies were seeking your destruction and cutting off. And now, when there is more than extreme necessity for the continuance of that duty, will you hinder and dishearten Christ's servants, and your most faithful subjects, quarreling them for their convening, when you should rather commend and countenance them as the godly kings and emperors did?" The storm, which had risen with so great and sudden a violence at the mild words of the nephew, went down before the energy and honesty of the uncle, and the deputation was dismissed with assurances that no favor should be shown the Popish lords, and no march stolen upon the liberties of the church.

But hardly were the ministers gone when steps were taken for restoring the insurgent nobles, and undermining the ecclesiastical jurisdiction. The policy adopted for accomplishing this was singularly subtle, and reveals the hand of the Jesuits, of whom there were then numbers in the country.

First of all, the king preferred the apparently innocent request that a certain number of ministers should be appointed as assessors, with whom he might advise in "all affairs concerning the weal of the church." Fourteen ministers were appointed: "the very needle," says James Melville, "which drew in the episcopal thread." The second step was to declare by Act of Parliament that Prelacy was the third Estate of the Realm, and that those ministers whom the king chose to raise to that dignity should be entitled to sit or vote in Parliament. The third step was to enact that the church should be represented in Parliament, and that the fourteen assessors already chosen should form that representation. The matter having reached this hopeful stage, the king adventured on the fourth and last step, which was to nominate David Lindsay, Peter Blackburn, and George

Gladstones to the vacant bishoprics of Ross, Aberdeen, and Caithness. The new-made bishops took their seats in the next Parliament. The art and finesse of the king and his counselors had triumphed; but his victory was not yet complete, for the General Assembly still continued to manage, although with diminished authority and freedom, the affairs of the church.

The war we have been contemplating was waged within a small area, but its issue was world-wide. The ecclesiastical names and forms that appear on its surface may make this struggle repulsive in the eyes of some. Waged in the Palace of Falkland, and on the floor of the General Assembly, these contests are apt to be set down as having no higher origin than clerical ambition, and no wider object than ecclesiastical supremacy. But this, in the present instance at least, would be a most superficial and erroneous judgment. We see in these conflicts infant Liberty struggling with the old hydra of Despotism. The independence and freedom of Scotland were here as really in question as on the fields waged by Wallace and Bruce, and the men who fought in the contests which have been passing before us braved death as really as those do who meet mailed antagonists on the battlefield.

Nay, more, Scotland and its Kirk had at this time become the keystone in the arch of European gospel truth and liberty; and the unceasing efforts of the Pope, the King of Spain, and the Guises were directed to the displacing of that keystone, that the arch which it upheld might be destroyed. They were sending their agents into the country, and they were fomenting rebellions. They were also flattering the weak conceit of wisdom and of arbitrary power in James. They not only wanted to rid Scotland of its Reformation, but even more they coveted a door by which to enter England, and suppress its Reformation, which they regarded as the main element necessary to complete the success of their schemes for the total extermination of Protestantism. With servile Parliaments and a spiritless nobility, the public liberties as well as the Protestantism of Scotland would have perished but for the vigilance, and intrepidity of the Presbyterian ministers, and, above all, the incorruptible, the dauntless and unflinching courage and patriotism of Andrew Melville.

Because of the righteous zeal of men like Knox and Melville, idolatry was made punishable by death in the realm of Scotland, that God's favor might not depart from the land. Thus, by the 104th act, Parliament 7, of James VI, not only were Romish masses prohibited, but pilgrimages, saints' days, carols, and other Papistical rites, under this penalty, if they continued in these practices after pecuniary pains were inflicted. Likewise by James VI's Parliament 6, chapter 71, ratified by the Scotch act of King William 1700, all persons, going abroad for education, were obliged within twenty days after their return to make the confession of their faith as then established, or to fly the kingdom within forty days thereafter, or be pursued as adversaries to the religion. The Reformation in Scotland by such efforts was arguably carried further than in any other nation of the world. And only when Scotland ceased to have leaders and to be led by such honorable men as these, did the glory of God depart from this covenanted nation.

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CHAPTER 39 : PROTESTANT REFORMATION IN SCOTLAND

This second volume in a two-part series on church history is primarily an edited version of the following works on church history and Biblical interpretation:

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The on-line resources of Historicism Research Foundation at <http://www.historicism.net/> also proved invaluable for my understanding of Biblical prophecy. Biblical prophecy concerning Christian church history, especially as revealed in the book of Revelation, serves as the foundation upon which all church histories should be based.