ST GILES' LECTURES.

FIRST SERIES—THE SCOTTISH CHURCH.

LECTURE IV.

PRE-REFORMATION SCOTLAND, 1513 TO 1559 A.D.

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I CANNOT, like my predecessors, complain of the length of the period of which I have to treat. But events of the greatest interest and importance are crowded into it. With the exception of the introduction of Christianity into the world, the Reformation of the sixteenth century is the most glorious revolution that has occurred in the history of our race; and that period of earnest contending and heroic suffering which prepared the way for it, and the story of the men who, by God's grace, were enabled to bear the brunt of the battle, and at last to lead their countrymen on to victory, will ever have a fascination for all in whose hearts patriotism is not extinct nor religion dead.[1]

By the time at which Reforming influences began manifestly to shew themselves, that grand mediæval organisation

[1] Authorities consulted: Theiner's *Monumenta*, Robertson's *Concilia*, rare treatises of Alesius; Knox, Calderwood, Spottiswood, Petrie, M'Crie, Cook, Lee, Lorimer, Cunningham, D'Aubigné, &c.

which had supplanted the simpler arrangements of the old Celtic Church, had exhausted its life powers, and shewn unmistakable signs of deep-seated corruption as well as hopeless decay. Whatever good it may have been honoured to do in previous times in preserving knowledge of God and things divine in the midst of 'a darkness which might be felt,' in promoting civilisation, alleviating the evils of feudalism, and providing institutions which, with a purified Church and revived Christian life, were to be a source of blessing to many generations—yet now it had grossly failed to keep alive true devotion, or to give access to the sources at which the flame might be rekindled; it had failed to provide educated men for its ordinary cures, to raise the masses from the rudeness and ignorance in which they were still sunk, and even to maintain that hearty sympathy with them and that kindly interest in their temporal welfare which its best men in its earlier days had shewn. It continued to have its services in a language which had for ages been unintelligible to the bulk of the laity, and was but partially intelligible to not a few of its ordinary priests. It had no catechisms or hymn-books bringing down to the capacities of the unlettered the truths of religion, and freely circulated among them.[1] It did not, when the invention of printing put it in its power, make any effort to circulate among them the Holy Book, that they might read therein, in their own tongue, the message of God's love. No doubt it had its pictures and images, its mystery plays and ceremonies, which it deemed fit books for children and the unlearned. But it forgot that these children were growing in capacity, even if allowed to grow untrained; that 'to credulous simplicity was succeeding a spirit of eager curiosity, an impatience of mere authority, and a determination to search into the foundation of things;' and that if it was to maintain its place, it must not only keep

[1] The one catechism which at the last it ventured to issue was 'not to be put into the hands of lay persons without permission of the ordinary.'

abreast but ahead of advancing intelligence and morality. So far from doing this, it began greatly to decline just as the laity began to rise, and let slip the golden opportunity it got of itself initiating needed reforms during the century which followed the councils of Constance and Basel. It never grappled as it ought with the problem of the education of the masses; and what was done for those in more fortunate circumstances was done more by the efforts of noble-minded individuals than by any corporate action. It never grappled as it ought with the problem of easing the burdens which had long been so galling to the peasantry and poorer burgesses.

Not only had the life powers of the Mediæval Church been exhausted and decay set in, but corruption—positive and gross corruption—had reached an alarming height. There was indolence and neglect of duty, especially the neglect of preaching by the higher ecclesiastics and ordinary parish priests; the conferring of benefices on unqualified men and minors; luxury, avarice, oppression, simony, pluralities, and 'crass ignorance;' and above all, that celibate system, which nothing would persuade them honestly to abandon, though it proved to be a yoke they could not bear, and was producing only too generally results humiliating and disastrous to themselves and to all who came under their influence.[1] The harsh methods to which men themselves so vulnerable resorted to maintain their position, the shameless cruelties they perpetrated on men of unblemished conduct and deeply religious character, could not fail in the end to turn the tide against them, and arouse feelings of indignation which on any favourable opportunity would induce the nation to sweep them away.

The corruptions in the doctrine of the Church were hardly less notable than those in the lives of its clergy. The sufficiency and supremacy of the written word of God were denied, and co-ordinate authority was claimed for tradition. The blessed

[1] Robertson's *Concilia*, pp. xc. cxl. 283, 289.

Virgin and the saints departed were asserted to share the office which Scripture reserves for the one Mediator between God and man. Penances and external acts of work-righteousness were thought to co-operate in the pardon of sin with the 'one obedience' by which 'many are made righteous.' The sacraments were asserted to produce their effect *ex opere operato*, not by the working of God's Spirit in them that by faith receive them. The literal transubstantiation of the bread and wine in the Lord's Supper was maintained. The doctrine of a purgatory after this life and the virtue of masses for the dead were persistently taught. The Roman Church was held to be the mother and mistress of the Churches, and its head the Vicar of Christ.

Yet, even in these degenerate days, there were those among the ministers of the Church who wept in secret over the abominations that were done, and longed for the dawn of a better day—who, in their parishes or cloisters or colleges, sought to prepare the way for it, and succeeded in doing so with many of their younger comrades, and only made up their minds to abandon the old Church when all their efforts for its revival proved vain. Nay, the men who initiated or carried to a successful issue the struggle for a more thorough reformation—the martyrs, confessors, and exiles—were almost all from the ranks of the priesthood of the old Church, from the regular as well as from the secular priesthood; from the Dominican and Franciscan Monasteries as well as from the Augustinian Abbeys; and from none more largely than the Priory of St Andrews and its daughter College of St Leonard's. At least twenty priests joined the reformed congregation of St Andrews in 1559-60, and among them more than one who had sat in judgment on the martyrs and assisted in their condemnation.

How was the great revolution which was to bring the Church back from these corruptions of life and doctrine prepared for? Scotland had had no Grosteste, no Anselm or Bradwardine among its mediæval prelates—no Wicliffe among its priests.

But the earnest contendings of the latter for the reformation of the Church of England, could not fail to be heard of here. His poor priests, when persecuted in the South, naturally sought shelter among the moors and mosses of the North. The district of Kyle and Cunningham was 'an ancient receptacle of the servants of God,' where their doctrines were cherished till the dawn of the Reformation. In 1406-7, one of these priests is found teaching as far North as Perth, and for his teaching accused and condemned to a martyr's death. A similar fate is said to have befallen another in Glasgow about 1422; and in 1433 Paul Craw or Crawar, a Bohemian, for disseminating similar opinions, was burned at the market cross of St Andrews. These were not in all probability the only grim triumphs of Laurence of Lindores, who during so many years 'gave no rest to heretics,' but they are all of which records have been preserved. The facts that every Master of Arts in the university of St Andrews had to take an oath to defend the Church against the Lollards, and that the Scottish Parliament in 1425-6 enjoined that every bishop should make inquiry anent heretics and Lollards, speak even more significantly of the alarm they had occasioned than these sporadic martyrdoms. And in the very close of the century, and in the old haunt, we find no fewer than thirty processed, but through the kindness of the king more gently dealt with. Three of the most resolute—namely, Campbell of Cessnock, his noble wife, and a priest who officiated as their chaplain and read the New Testament to them, were released when at the stake.

It has not been very clearly ascertained how or when the opinions and writings of Luther were first introduced into Scotland. Chief among its doctors at that time was John Major, who taught with distinguished success in Paris as well as at home. He was a true disciple of D'Ailly and Gerson, and trained many to testify against the immorality and ignorance of the clergy. In the year 1523, Patrick Hamilton, having

studied in Paris and Louvain, and taken the degree of M.A. in Paris, was admitted as a member of the faculty of Arts in the University of St Andrews. At that time he was probably more Erasmian than Lutheran, though of that more earnest school who were ultimately to outgrow their teacher, and find their congenial home in a new Church. He associated chiefly with the younger canons of the Priory and the members of St Leonard's College. Skilled in the musical art, he set himself to improve the service of praise, and composed a chant in nine parts, which was performed in the cathedral, and is said to have greatly delighted the hearers. He talked much of recalling philosophy to its fountains in Plato and Aristotle, and abandoning the scholastic subtleties which Major so greatly affected. He sought the imposition of hands, that he might be authorised to preach the pure word of God to the people, as well as to defend its teaching in the schools.

The years 1525 and 1526 were very unquiet years in Scotland, various factions contending with varying success for the possession of the person of the young king. In 1525 the Parliament passed its first act against strangers introducing the new opinions; and two years after, in consequence of a letter from the Pope, urging the young king to keep his realm free from heresy, the act was extended to natives of the kingdom.

In 1526 the Primate, having taken keen part in the political contentions of the day with the faction which lost, had to escape for a time from St Andrews, and disguised as a shepherd, to tend a flock of sheep for three months on the hills of Fife. It was at this juncture that copies of Tyndale's translation of the New Testament were brought over from the Low Countries by the Scottish traders. Most of them are said to have been taken to St Andrews, and put in circulation there in the absence of the Archbishop. Hamilton, who had long treasured the precious saying of Erasmus: 'Let us eagerly read the Gospel; yea, let us not only read, but live the Gospel,' seized the golden opportunity to impress the saying on others, and

invite longing souls to quench their thirst at those wells of living water which had so marvellously been opened to them. His conduct could not long escape the notice of the returned Archbishop. I do not suppose that the latter was naturally cruel, nor after his recent misfortunes likely, without consideration, to embroil himself with the Hamiltons, with whom in the tortuous politics of the times he had often acted. But he had those about him who were both less timid and more cruel. He was himself ambitious and crafty, and about this very time was exerting all his influence to obtain special favours from the Pope. He knew that there was no more certain way to counteract the opposition of the king and to secure what he sought than by zeal against heretics. Still, he was anxious to perform the ungrateful task in the way least offensive to the Hamiltons. He would rather, if he could, rid the kingdom of the Reformer without imbruing his hands in his blood. And that result he attained by the summons he issued.

Hamilton, yielding to the counsels of friends and opponents, made his escape to the continent. His original intention was to visit Luther and Melanchthon at Wittenberg, as well as Frith, Tyndale, and Lambert at Marburg. At the time he arrived on the continent, however, the plague was raging at Wittenberg. So he went to study at Marburg, and publicly disputed those theses that most fully and systematically set forth the main doctrines which he taught, and for which at last he suffered. He was warmly beloved there, and urged to remain. But his heart yearned to return to his native land, and once more proclaim in it the truths which had now become to him more precious and engrossing than before. His faith had been confirmed, and his spirit quickened by living for a time among earnest and decided Christians; and in the autumn of 1527 he set out once more for his own country, prepared for any fate that might await him, not counting even life dear unto him if he might finish his course with joy, and bear faithful witness to his Master's truth, where before he had

shrunk back from an ordeal so terrible. He appears first to have resorted to his native district, and made known to relatives, friends, and neighbours that Gospel of the grace of God which gave strength and peace to his own spirit. In his discourses and conversations, he dwelt chiefly on the great and fundamental truths which had been brought into prominence by the Reformers, and avoided subjects of doubtful disputation. His own gentle bearing gained favour for his opinions, and it won for him the heart of a young lady of noble birth, to whom he united himself in marriage.

Archbishop Beaton, if not at the king's express desire, then certainly, from his own wariness, did not at first venture formally to renew his old summons. He invited the Reformer to St Andrews to a friendly conference with himself and other chiefs of the Church 'on such points as might seem to stand in need of reform.' Hamilton accepted the invitation. At first he was well received; 'all displayed a conciliatory spirit; all appeared to recognise the evils in the Church; some even seemed to share on some points his own sentiments.' He left the conference not without hope of some other than the sad issue he had anticipated. He was permitted for nearly a month to move about with freedom in the city, to dispute in the schools, and privately to confer with all who chose to resort to him at the lodging which had been provided for him. It was evidently the intention of those who were determinedly opposed to him, that he should have ample time allowed him to express his sentiments fully and unmistakably, and even should be tempted by dissemblers to unbosom himself in private on matters as to which he refrained from saying much in public —on the many alterations required in doctrine, and in the administration of the sacraments and other rites of the Church.

At length the mask was thrown aside, and he was once more summoned before the ecclesiastical authorities in continuation of the former process. It is said that the Archbishop still desired that he should again save himself by flight; but he and

his friends took the credit of the terrible deed as promptly as if they had planned and intended it from the first. They also assembled their armed retainers, that they might be able to hold their prisoner when once seized, against all attempts to rescue him. On 28th February he was seized, and on the 29th was brought out for trial, in the Abbey church or cathedral.

Among the articles with which he was charged, and the truth of which he maintained, the most important were, 'that a man is not justified by works but by faith; that faith, hope, and charity are so linked together, that he who hath one of them hath all, and he that lacketh one lacketh all; and that good works make not a good man, but a good man doeth good works.' On being challenged by his accuser, he also affirmed it was not lawful to worship images nor to pray to the saints, and that it was 'lawful to all men, that have souls, 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.' These truths, which have been the source of life and strength to many, were then to him the cause of condemnation and death; and the same day the sentence was passed, it was remorselessly executed. 'Nobly,' I have said elsewhere, 'did the martyr confirm the minds of the many godly youths he had gathered round him, by his resolute bearing, his gentleness and patience, his steadfast adherence to the truths he had taught, and his heroic endurance of the fiery ordeal through which he had to pass to his rest and reward.' The harrowing details of his six long hours of torture have been preserved for us by Alesius, himself a sorrowing witness of the fearful tragedy. 'He was rather roasted than burned,' he tells us. It may be, his persecutors had not deliberately planned thus horribly to protract his sufferings; though such cruelty was not unknown in France either then or in much later time. They were as yet but novices at such revolting work, and all things seemed to conspire against them. The execution had been hurried on before a sufficiency of dry wood

had been provided for the fire. The fury of the storm, which had prevented the martyr's brother from crossing the Forth to rescue him, was not yet spent. With a wind from the east sweeping up the street, it would be a difficult matter in such a spot to kindle the pile and keep it burning, or to prevent the flames, when fierce, from being so blown aside as to be almost as dangerous to the surrounding crowd as to the tortured victim. They did so endanger his accuser, 'set fire to his cowl, and put him in such a fray, that he never came to his right mind.' But through all his excruciating sufferings, the martyr held fast his confidence in God and in his Saviour, and the faith of many in the truths he taught was only the more confirmed by witnessing their mighty power on him.

The Archbishop thought that by this cruel deed he had extinguished Lutheranism. The university of Louvain applauded his deed, and so also did Major, the old Scottish Gallican, then residing at Paris, and preparing for the press his commentary on the four Gospels. But, according to the well-known saying, 'the reek of Patrick Hamilton infected all on whom it did blow;' his martyr death riveted for ever in the hearts of his friends the truths he had taught in his life. This was especially the case with the younger alumni in the colleges, and the less ignorant and dissolute inmates of the Priory and other monastic establishments in the city where he suffered. As at a future period they made sure of detecting a stern Covenanter, if he refused to admit that the killing of Archbishop Sharp was to be regarded as murder, so they thought it sufficient mark of an incipient Lutheran if they did not get him to acknowledge that Patrick Hamilton deserved his fate. One on this sole charge, and that he had a copy of the English New Testament, was subjected to long imprisonment and a violent death; another, for simply preaching, as Major would, of the corruptions of the clergy, had to escape for his life; and a third, whose history, after being long forgotten, has been again brought to light in our own day, was for the same offences subjected

to many cruelties, and at last forced to flee from his native land, and plead with it by his writings.

The original name of this confessor was Alexander Alane; but he afterwards obtained from Melanchthon the name of Alesius or the Wanderer, and by that he has been commonly known ever since. Born in Edinburgh on the 23d April 1500, of honest parents, he received the first rudiments of education in his native city. He was sent early to the university, and entered St Leonard's College when opened in 1512. In due course he took his degree, and probably after acting for a few years as one of the regents of the college, he was drafted into the Priory as one of its canons. When Major came to St Andrews, he studied theology under him, and made great progress in acquaintance with the schoolmen and fathers of the Christian Church. He was, like most of the young scholastics of the time, fond of disputation, and probably imbibed from his able teacher that combative attitude towards the new opinions which at this period of his life he shewed. He thought it would be an easy task to convince Patrick Hamilton of his errors, and had various discussions with him. 'Hamilton, who had before him nothing but the Gospels, replied to all the reasonings of his opponent with the clear, living, far-reaching words of Scripture. Alesius was embarrassed, and at length silenced; not only was his understanding convinced, but his conscience was won, and the breath of a new life penetrated his soul.' He continued to visit the Reformer while he lived, and to cherish his memory when cut off. When his opinions and martyrdom were the subject of conversation among the canons, several of the younger of whom loved to speak of him, Alesius refused to condemn him.

His silence or reserve in regard to the martyr brought him under the suspicion of his more bigoted associates, and gave special offence to his superior, Prior Patrick Hepburn, a violent, coarse, immoral young noble, emulous of the debaucheries and vices as well as of the hauteur and polish of the young French ecclesiastics among whom his youth had been passed,

and, like them and young Beaton, a cruel persecutor of the Reformers. Knox has drawn a graphic if severe account of the revelries of this young Prior and his gay associates, more in keeping with what we should have expected from the sons of Tarquin in heathen Rome, than from the *élite* of the young ecclesiastics in a Christian primatial city, and under the eye of an aged Archbishop. The representation of Alesius on the same subject is only the more credible because the more restrained, and combines with the other in shewing to what a low ebb morality had sunk among the aristocratic ecclesiastics of the old Church ere it was swept away.

The more Christian lives of the younger canons could not but be felt to be a standing rebuke by their superior, and doubtless were one main cause why he bore them such a deep grudge, and gave way to such fierce outbursts of passion in his intercourse with them. He denounced them, and especially Alesius, to the Archbishop; and soon after got him appointed to preach the sermon at the opening of a Synod of bishops and priests which was held in St Andrews, probably in the spring of the year 1529. Alesius says he inveighed earnestly against immoral priests; but he adds that, as he said nothing in a disloyal spirit, and attacked no one by name, the sermon gave no offence to good men. But his irate superior imagined that the sermon was specially intended to hold him up to ridicule before the assembled prelates and clergy; and having already defied the Archbishop, he was not likely patiently to brook such conduct on the part of one of his subordinates. An opportunity soon occurred to him of repaying with interest the insult which he imagined had been done to him. The canons had determined to lodge with the king a complaint of the cruelty of their Prior. When this came to Hepburn's ears, he rushed with a band of armed attendants into the place where they were met, ordered Alesius to be seized, and himself drew his sword, and would have run it through him had not two of the canons dragged him back and pushed aside his sword.

The affrighted canon was hurried off to prison, whither his companions speedily followed; but on a remonstrance by certain noble friends, the king gave orders that they should be released. These orders were soon carried out with respect to all save Alesius. So far from being set free, he was thrust into a more filthy dungeon, called in one of his little treatises *teterrimo specu subtus terram inter bufones et serpentes*, and in another a *latrina* or sink, to which nothing corresponding has yet been found in St Andrews, save the lately discovered roughly hewn cavern stretching to the northwards of Castle Street, going down by its southern entrance into the solid rock by thirty somewhat irregular steps, and terminating in a small chamber of rounded or oval form. This chamber had in its roof a circular opening eight or ten inches in diameter, which has now been enlarged, and to which a low rock-hewn passage from the castle leads down. No cry from that chamber deep in the rock could reach the upper air, and he might well abandon hope who entered it. In this or some similar place yet undiscovered, the poor canon was confined for eighteen or twenty days; and when released was enjoined to tell nothing about the treatment to which he had been subjected. Alesius, however, would not conceal the truth, and for that he was again seized and kept in confinement for nearly a year. This, probably, was within the priory itself, and when the Prior was absent, the canons occasionally had the prisoner brought out, and even allowed him to take a leading part in their service at the altar. On one occasion, the Prior came back when he was not expected, and seeing what went on in his absence, ordered his victim into ward again, threatening on the morrow to have him off to the place where his life had been so nearly sacrificed before.

The canons, now satisfied that horrible torments and certain death awaited him if he did not at once escape, gathered around him as soon as their superior had left for the night, and urged him to seek safety in flight. With reluctance he yielded to their wishes. Then followed a parting scene only

less affecting than that of St Paul from the disciples on the sea-shore of Phenicia, and shewing that even then goodness and charity were still strong in the hearts of not a few left under the rule of Hepburn. Only, the Apostle, though in a heathen land, could in open day kneel down on the sea-shore and commend his friends in prayer to God, and they could openly take leave of him at his ship; while these, though living in a Christian land, had secretly to bring out their friend under cover of the night, and with a few words of comfort, send him forth alone. 'Secretly,' he says, 'they bring me forth and supply me with provisions for the journey. So when with tears we had bidden each other farewell, and they had somewhat alleviated my sorrow by sweet mention of the illustrious and holy men who, giving place to tyranny, had abandoned their native country, I set out on my way.'

In solitude and sadness he plodded on his way, under cover of thick darkness, to that broad Firth which on this same Sunday last year was the scene of such sad disaster to trustful travellers, if haply he might find on its shore some tiny boat, or on its bosom some friendly craft, to convey him without loss of time beyond the reach of his implacable persecutor. In both respects he was successful, and with earliest morn got safe on ship-board. *Quidam homo germanus*, which some translate 'a certain man, a German,' others render 'a certain man, a kinsman,' kindly received him and affectionately nursed him in his sickness during the tedious and stormy voyage, on which he started before the horsemen sent to recapture him arrived.

Thus Alane left his native land and the friends to whom he was so deeply attached. 'Could any one have whispered in the ear of the disconsolate fugitive that he was on the road to far more extensive usefulness' and happiness than had yet been his lot; that under his new name and in his new home he would gain many true friends, and be honoured to do much good work for Christ; that he would not only be the first by his writings to plead for the free circulation of the vernacular Scriptures in

Scotland, and one of the first to aid Cranmer in England in asserting the authority of the word of God, and Hermann von Wied in his noble effort to introduce the Reformation at Cologne; but that he would be also privileged to be the special friend of Luther and Melanchthon, to command at the same time the respect of Calvin and Beza, to attend many of the great conferences of the leaders of the Reformation on the continent; to labour as a professor of theology, first in the university of Frankfort-on-the-Oder, and then in that of Leipsic; to write commentaries on the Psalms, the Gospel of St John, the Epistle to the Romans, and the Pastoral Epistles, and live and die honoured and beloved in the land of his exile—'how incredible would it all have seemed to him.' Yet it was thus God meant it, and thus he brought it to pass. And if there was one among the Scottish confessors of that age who was less embittered than another towards his persecutors in the old Church, more willing to yield to them in things of minor importance, if only he could hope to secure their favourable regard for truths of highest moment and immediate concern to the welfare of his native land, it was this cruelly harassed fugitive. He was unquestionably the most learned, as well as the most conciliatory of the Scottish reformed theologians of the sixteenth century. It was to his persistent advocacy, perhaps, more than to any other human instrumentality, that his countrymen owe the concession of the precious privilege of reading the Scriptures in their mother-tongue. Had he done nothing more than successfully pleaded for that concession, he would have given them abundant reason to remember him still. But in addition, he pled with them, before the author of the *Complaynt of Scotland* did so, to lay aside their animosities, to have more confidence in each other, and less dependence either on England or France, if they would secure a happy issue from their troubles, civil or ecclesiastical. No monument has yet been reared to his memory, even in this city of statues—the city of his birth, which he has described so well—but I hope

the day may yet come when Anderson's suggestion may be acted on, and a statue of the exile erected, bearing on its pedestal that scene from *The Cottar's Saturday Night,* still so dear to the hearts of his countrymen.

From the time that Alesius fled, down to the death of James V., there was almost continuous inquisition for those who were suspected of having heretical books, including the New Testament in the vernacular, or who otherwise shewed a leaning towards the new opinions. In 1532, as is generally supposed, Henry Forrest, who like Hamilton was a native of the county of Linlithgow, and had associated with the martyr in St Andrews, was the first to share his fiery baptism. He was burned at the North Kirk Stile there, that the heretics of Angus might see the fire and take warning from it. In the same year, 'there was a great abjuration of the favourers of Martin Luther in the Abbey of Holyrood.' In 1534 a second great assize against heretics was held in the same place. The king, as the great Justiciar, was present in his scarlet robe, and took part in the proceedings. About sixteen are said to have been convicted, and had their goods forfeited. James Hamilton, the brother of the martyr, had been ordered by the king to flee, as he could not otherwise be saved. His sister was persuaded to submit to the Church. Norman Gourlay, a priest who had been abroad and had imbibed the new opinions, and David Stratoun, the brother of the laird of Laureston, were burned at the Rood of Greenside. In the same year, Willock, M'Alpin, and M'Dowall had to escape into England. In 1536, when the king and the Cardinal were abroad, there was comparative peace. In 1537 several were convicted in Ayr and had their goods forfeited, among whom was Walter Steward, son of Lord Ochiltree. In 1538-9 many were accused and convicted in various burghs, and many sought safety in flight. Among these last were Gavin Logie, who in St Leonard's College had done good to many under him; John Fife, who became Professor of Divinity in the university of Frankfort-on-the-Oder; George

Buchanan, who at the king's command had written the *Franciscanus;* also George Wishart, who had taught the Greek New Testament; John and James Wedderburn of Dundee; and Thomas Cocklaw, John and Robert Richardson, and Robert Logie, canons of the Augustinian Abbey of Cambuskenneth. Cocklaw, Knox tells us, for marrying a wife, had been shut up within stone walls, but his brother came with crowbars and released him. 'Large numbers of the wealthy burgesses were stripped of their possessions, even after they had abjured, among whom the burgesses of Dundee were conspicuous. Nor was the good town of Stirling far behind Dundee in the race of Christian glory. She had less wealth to resign, but she brought to the altar a larger offering of saintly blood. On the 1st of March 1539, no fewer than four of her citizens were burned at one pile on the Castle-hill of Edinburgh. At the same stake with them perished one of the most sainted and interesting of Scotland's martyrs—Thomas Forret, Dean of the Augustinian Abbey of Inchcolm, and Vicar of Dollar.' He taught his parishioners the Ten Commandments, penned a little catechism for their instruction, preached every Sunday, and shewed them that pardon of sin could only be obtained through the blood of Christ. When he pulled from his sleeve his New Testament, his accuser exclaimed: 'This is the book that makes all the din and pley in our Kirk.' The same year two were condemned and burned at Glasgow.[1]

During all these anxious years, the measures against the Reformers had been really directed by the man who comes more into public view towards their close. This was David Beaton, the nephew of the Primate, and by this time Abbot of Arbroath and Bishop of Mirepoix in France, coadjutor to his uncle, and Cardinal of St Stephen on the Cœlian Mount. I can but abridge here what I have elsewhere said of him.

[1] Then also Mr John Brown, patron of the Chaplainry of St Francis' Altar, within the College Kirk of St Giles, was convicted of heresy, and his goods and patronage assigned to Mr James Foulis, of Colinton.

He was a man not only of large intelligence, consummate ability, unbounded ambition, and indomitable energy; but also of polished manners and considerable scholarly attainments. He did not, it is true, belong to the school of Pole and Contarini, who would have made concessions to the Reformers in respect of doctrine; nor to that of the disciples of D'Ailly and Gerson, who were pressing for a reformation in respect of morals. His associations and sympathies were rather with the Italian or French Humanist school, both in its virtues and vices. He was versed in the study of canon and civil law, as well as of the classics. He was a great stickler for the liberties of Holy Church, and for years refused to pay the tax imposed on him for the support of the College of Justice. It was no doubt by his advice that heretical processes from the first were carried on under the canon law, rather than under the acts of the Scotch Parliament. His time, from 1514 to 1524, was passed abroad—the later years in the diplomatic service of his country; and he had no sooner returned home than the same measures of restraint began to be adopted here, which had already been put in practice in France. Even some of the hardest sayings of the king were but the echo of those of the king of France. Like many of the high dignitaries of the Scottish Church of that time, he was of incontinent habits, but he was never, so far as I know, guilty of such shameless excesses as were the boast of his comrade Hepburn; nor did he ever allow himself to sink into the same indolent and unredeemed self-indulgence. He was above all a 'hierarchical fanatic,' devoted to the cause of absolutism, who would shrink from no measures, however cruel, to preserve intact the privileges of his order, and to stamp out more earnest and generous thought, whether having in view the reformation of the old Church, or the building up of another and better on her ruins. If we may not say that he had sold himself to France, which had pensioned him with a rich bishopric, and helped him to his honours, we must say he had lived so long in it, and had got so enamoured of it, that he was

three parts French and 'all Popish.' He had mingled not only with its scholars, but with its nobles; and he loved their society —loved and resolved to imitate their ways, even down to their way of treating heretics. He made no earnest effort to reform the old Church; and it was not till towards the close of his life that he began to apply for the building of St Mary's College, the money which his uncle had set apart for it.

For the suppression of evangelical Christianity, the Cardinal needed the support of his sovereign, and he spared no efforts to gain him over to his side, and to detach him from his nobility and his uncle. There was much in the king's character to encourage such efforts. With good natural abilities, and a frank and amiable disposition, he had been encouraged by his guardians in sensual pleasures, and never to the last freed himself from his evil habits. 'Dissolute as a man, prodigal as a king, and superstitious as a Catholic, he could not but easily fall under the sway of superior minds, who promised to free him from the worries of business, to regard his failings with indulgence, and to provide him with money.' These things Beaton and his party endeavoured to do; and lest he should be tempted to follow the example of his uncle, and appropriate the property of the monasteries and other religious institutions, or set the Church lands to feu, as he once threatened, they repeatedly presented to him lists of those who were suspected of heresy, urging that they should be prosecuted without delay, and their goods, on conviction, be escheated to the crown. They made large contributions from their own revenues to aid him in the wars with England, which obedience to their counsels had brought on him. They procured dispensations from the papal court to enable his sons, though illegitimate and infants, to hold any benefices inferior to bishoprics, and on reaching a certain age, to hold even the highest offices in the Church.

But though James shewed little indulgence to the Reformers, and little favour for their doctrine, he seems to the last to have had no great liking for the priests of the old faith. No bribery,

no flattery, no solicitations, could reconcile him permanently to those who for their selfish ends dragged him into courses from which his own better impulses at times made him revolt. 'He incited Buchanan to lash the mendicant friars in the vigorous verse of the *Franciscanus*. He encouraged by his presence the public performance of a play which, by its exposure of the vices of the clergy, contributed' greatly to weaken their influence. 'He enforced the object of that remarkable drama by exhorting the bishops to amend their lives under a threat that, if they neglected his warning, he would deal with them after the fashion of his uncle in England. He repeated the exhortation in his last Parliament, declaring that the negligence, the ignorance, the scandalous and disorderly lives of the clergy, were the cause why the Church and Churchmen were scorned and despised.'

So, notwithstanding all measures of repression, the desire for reformation grew and spread throughout the nation, especially among the smaller landed proprietors in Angus and Mearns, in Perth and Fife, in Kyle and Cunningham, as also among the more intelligent burgesses in the cities and burghs, and above all, among the *élite* of the younger inmates of the monasteries and of the alumni of the universities. When the poor monarch, almost as much sinned against as sinning, at last died of a broken heart, and the Earl of Arran looked about for trusty supporters to defend his claims to the regency, he deemed it politic to shew not a little countenance to the friends of the Reformation and of the English alliance. We should hardly be warranted to assert that even then he meant to rank himself among Protestants. But he chose as his chaplains preachers who inclined to their opinions, he encouraged their chief men to frequent his court, and he ventured to lay hands on the haughty and unscrupulous Cardinal. He consented to pass through Parliament an act expressly permitting the people to have and to read the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments in the vulgar tongue, and despatched messengers to all the chief

towns to make public proclamation of the act. The little treatises of Alesius had done their work, and he himself thought of returning and completing what he had so well begun. The friends of the Reformation imagined that the hour of their triumph was at hand. They did not know on what a treacherous prop they were leaning, nor that the Regent, within six weeks after the last of the messengers was despatched with the above-named proclamation, secretly sent off others to inform the Holy Father of his accession to the regency, to put himself and the kingdom under his protection, and to ask permission to have under his control the income of the benefices of the king's sons till they should come of age. The love of money was with him the root of this evil, as the fear of man was of others; and so he went from bad to worse, till in the dim light of the Franciscan chapel at Stirling, 'that weak man, to whom people had been looking for the triumph of the Reformation in Scotland, fondly fancying that he was performing a secret action, knelt down before the altar, humbly confessed his errors, trampled under foot the oaths which he had taken to his own country and to England, renounced the evangelical confession of Jesus Christ, submitted to the Pope, and received absolution from the Cardinal.'

Even in June he had entered in the books of the Privy Council an ordinance against Sacramentaries holding opinions of the effect and essence thereof tending to the enervation of the faith catholic, in which they were threatened with loss of life, lands, and goods. He had not dared to proclaim this openly, though perhaps his friend Henry VIII. would not have blamed him greatly for doing so. But no sooner was he under the power of the Cardinal, than he shewed in open Parliament 'how there is great murmur that heretics more and more rise and spread within this realm, sowing damnable opinions contrary to the faith and laws of Holy Kirk, and to the acts and constitutions of the realm;' and exhorted 'all prelates and ordinaries . . . to make inquisition after all such manner of

persons, and proceed against them according to the laws of Holy Kirk;' promising to be ready himself at all times to do what belonged to his office. This promise he was soon called to fulfil. On the 20th January 1544, he set out in company of the Cardinal, the Lord Justice and his deputy, with a band of armed men and artillery, to Perth, where a great assize was held. Several were convicted of heresy, and their goods forfeited. Several were condemned to die. The governor was inclined to spare their lives, but the Cardinal and the nobles threatened to leave him if he did this. So, on 25th January 1544, Robert Lamb, James Hunter, William Anderson, and James Ronaldson were hanged. The wife of the last-named was refused the consolation of being suspended from the same beam with her husband, and put to death by drowning, after she had consigned to the care of a neighbour the infant she carried in her arms. Dundee was next visited, but the suspected citizens had taken the alarm and fled, leaving only their books to be burned.

It was about this time that a new evangelist arrived in the country, singularly fitted to impress on the hearts of men the lessons of the holy book to which they had now free access in their native tongue. This was George Wishart, a younger brother of the laird of Pittarrow in the Mearns. He appears to have been born about 1512, and to have received his university training in Aberdeen, or abroad. He acquired a knowledge of Greek—at that time a very rare accomplishment in Scotland—from a Frenchman brought by Erskine of Dun to Montrose. While acting as schoolmaster there, Wishart had read the Greek New Testament with some of his pupils, and in consequence had been cited by the Bishop of Brechin to answer to a charge of suspected heresy. Like many others at that time, he thought it best not to appear, and escaped to England. He was thereupon excommunicated and outlawed. He is found at Bristol in 1539, involved in fresh troubles. After that he visited several of the Continental Reformed Churches, especially those of German Switzer-

land, and brought home and translated into English the First Helvetic Confession. He is supposed to have returned to England before the close of 1541, and shortly after his return, to have entered into residence in Benet College, Cambridge. To one of his pupils there we are indebted for our fullest account of his appearance and habits; and in one of its stained-glass windows, place has been found for a worthy memorial of him. He 'was a man of tall stature . . . 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 travelled. . . . His charity was unbounded; he studied all means of doing good to all, hurt to none.' He was not only of rare graces, but 'learned in all honest human science.'

Such was the evangelist who—in 1543 according to some, in 1544 according to others—returned to his native land, and for two years testified of the Gospel of the grace of God throughout Angus and Mearns, Ayrshire and the Lothians, but whose favourite fields of labour were to be the towns of Montrose and Dundee. A portrait of him has been preserved and engraved, and the expression of the face harmonises well with what his pupil has said of him. It is supposed that for a short time after his return he lived quietly at Pittarrow, and being an accomplished artist, occupied himself in adorning the ancestral mansion with several significant paintings, which, after being long covered over by the wainscot, were again brought to light in the present century, but unfortunately were destroyed before their value was perceived. The most remarkable of them was a painting of the city of Rome, and a grand procession going to St Peter's. Below the picture were written the following enigmatical lines on the Pope:

Laus tua non tua fraus, virtus non gloria rerum
Scandere te fecit hoc decus eximium ;
Pauperibus dat sua gratis nec munera curat
Curia Papalis, quod more percipimus.
Hæc carmina potius legenda, cancros imitando,

It was about the same time that he formed that kirk or congregation which at a later period we shall find he came to salute, and began his labours as a preacher by expounding the Ten Commandments, the Lord's Prayer, and the Apostles' Creed. This was in the town of Montrose, the scene of his early scholastic labours. At that time it was frequented by some of the nobles and many of the landed gentry around who were favourable to the Reformation and the English alliance; and their hearts could not fail to be cheered and their courage raised by the exhortations of the evangelist. Dundee, however, was the chief and favourite scene of his ministrations, and it was from the great success which attended these that it gained the name of the Scottish Geneva. It was even more decidedly attached to the new opinions and to the English alliance than Montrose; and a Reformation, as it was called, including the sacking of the monasteries in the town and neighbourhood, took place shortly before or soon after his arrival. He preached for a time in Dundee with great acceptance, expounding systematically the Epistle to the Romans, the full significance of which the recently published commentary of Calvin had deeply impressed on the minds of his co-religionists in various lands. At length he was charged by one of the magistrates in the queen's name and the governor's to desist from preaching, depart from the town, and trouble it no more. This was intimated to him when he was in the pulpit surrounded by a great congregation. Thereupon he called God to witness that he intended not their trouble but their comfort, and felt sure that to reject the word of God and drive away his messenger was not the way to save themselves from trouble.' He then left the town, and 'with all possible expedition passed to the west land.' There he pursued his labours in the same kindly spirit, refusing to allow his followers to dispute possession of the churches by force, and choosing rather to preach in the open air wherever he found a convenient place and audience fit, than go where he was not welcome.

Soon after he left Dundee, the plague extended its ravages to that place. Wishart, on hearing this, returned to the afflicted town, and its inhabitants received him with joy. He announced without delay that he would preach to them; but it was impossible he could do so in a church. Numbers were sick of the plague; others in attendance on them were regarded as infected, and must not be brought into contact with those who were free from infection. The sick were lodged in booths and the 'lazar-houses' near St Roque's Chapel, outside the East or Cowgate Port of the town. Wishart chose as his pulpit the top of this port, which, in memory of the martyr-preacher, has been carefully preserved, though, like Temple Bar—so long tolerated in London—it is now in the heart of the town, and an obstruction to its traffic. The sick and suspected were assembled outside the port, and the healthy inside. The preacher took for the text of his first sermon the words of Psalm cvii. 20: 'He sent His word and healed them;' and starting on the key-note that it was neither herb nor plaster, but God's word which healeth all, as Knox tells us, he so raised up the hearts of all who heard him, that they regarded not death, but judged those more happy that should depart than those that should remain behind; considering that they knew not that they should have such a comforter with them at all times.' John Wedderburn, as well as others who had fled from the town in the persecution of 1539, had before this time returned, and no doubt they were co-operating with Wishart in his work. Then in all probability came out in rudimentary form the 'Psalms of Dundee,' and that beautiful funeral hymn which passed from the Bohemians to the Germans, and from the Germans to the Scotch, and which in the Scottish version contains certain additional stanzas, having unmistakable reference to the circumstances in which it originated in a plague-stricken town, which had just before been occupied by the soldiers of the Cardinal and the Regent, and might well dread a similar visitation:

Though *pest or sword* wald us prevene,
Before our hour to slay us clene,
They cannot pluck one little hair
Furth from our head, or do us dare.

Wishart concerned himself not only about the souls, but also about the bodies of his hearers in that sad time, fearlessly exposing himself to the risk of infection, that he might minister to the diseased and the dying, and taking care that the public funds for the relief of the destitute should be properly administered. He forgot himself only too much, and the terrible risks to which, as an excommunicated and outlawed man, he was exposed in so near proximity to the Cardinal.

One day as the people were departing from the sermon, Knox tells us that a priest, bribed by the Cardinal, stood waiting at the foot of the steps by which the preacher was descending from the top of the port, with his gown loose, and his dagger drawn in his hand under his gown. Wishart, most sharp of eye and swift of judgment, at once noticed him, and as he came near, seized the hand in which he held the dagger and took it from him. Immediately the rumour spread that a priest had attempted to assassinate their favourite preacher, the sick outside burst open the gate, crying: 'Deliver the traitor to us, or else we will take him by force.' But the preacher put his arms around his would-be assassin, exclaiming: 'Whosoever troubles him shall trouble me, for he has hurt me in nothing, but has let us understand what we may fear in time to come;' 'and so he saved the life of him that sought his.'

Like Dr Lorimer, I cannot persuade myself that the man who spoke and acted thus is the same as 'a Scottish man called Wishart,' who is mentioned in a letter of the Earl of Hertford, in the spring of the year 1544, as privy to a conspiracy to assassinate Cardinal Beaton, and as employed to carry letters between the conspirators and the English court. There were other Wisharts in Scotland, and even in Dundee, at that time, also friends of the English alliance. It is unjust, therefore, to

charge the Reformer with any participation in such a dastardly plot, without a particle of positive evidence to support the charge. As an outlawed man, he came down to Scotland under protection, and seems never to have travelled in it save under protection; and so he was one of the last men likely to be chosen for a secret mission. If anything more than the able essay of the late Professor Weir, in the *North British Review* for 1868, were needed to prove that 'the pure lustre of the martyr's fame is still unsullied,' it seems to me to be furnished by himself in his affecting address at the stake: 'I beseech the Father of heaven to forgive them that have of any ignorance, or else of any evil mind, *forged any lies* upon me. I forgive them with all my heart.'

From this time forth, the Reformer had a clearer view of the perils which beset him, and a mournful conviction of the issue which awaited him if he would not flee or flinch. By his success in Dundee, the rage of his adversaries was lashed into fury, which appalled his friends and partisans in various districts; but none of these things moved him, that he might finish his course with joy, and make full proof of his ministry. As soon as the plague abated, heedless of the warnings of his northern friends as to the risk he ran in leaving, he administered the communion in both kinds at Dun, and took his last farewell of the churches of Montrose and Dundee. At all hazards, he was determined to fulfil his engagement to meet with his western friends in Edinburgh, prosecute his work there under their protection, and engage in public disputation with certain of the popish clergy, who about that time were to meet in synod in the capital. Disappointed of their presence and protection, he laboured for a brief season in Leith, Inveresk, and East Lothian with varying success. At last, forsaken by many of those who should have stood by him, he was seized at Ormiston under cover of night, and promise of safe keeping by the Earl of Bothwell, Sheriff-Principal of the county. The earl pledged his honour not to give him up to his enemies, but was per-

suaded to deliver him to the governor, as the governor was to hand him over to the Cardinal, though finally protesting against his being tried or condemned in his own absence. A full account of these transactions has been given by Knox, who rendered his first service to the cause of the Reformation by attending on him, bearing a two-handed sword, and was dismissed on the night of his betrayal with the significant words: 'One is sufficient for a sacrifice.'

I cannot enlarge on these things, nor on the sad scenes which took place at St Andrews on the 28th February and 1st March 1546, when the Cardinal, regardless of the remonstrances of the Regent, and the murmurs of the people, tried and condemned him; nor on his last touching interviews with the Sub-Prior of the Monastery and the Captain of the Castle. Throughout all these trying scenes he comported himself as nobly as Hamilton had done, and not less plentifully did his blood prove the seed of the Church, so that, as he said, not many should suffer after him. Within three months his persecutor was surprised in his stronghold, and 'cut off by a fate as tragical and ignominious as any that has ever been recorded in the long catalogue of human crimes.' No doubt this cruel martyrdom hastened the removal of the tyrant, who set himself above all restraint of law, and breathed forth threatenings against the saints of God; though that removal had not been plotted by Wishart, nor would have been approved by him. The words attributed to him at the stake by Buchanan are not generally regarded as authentic.

The remembrance of Wishart was fondly cherished, especially in that district where he chiefly laboured, and where he wrought a work not less memorable than that M'Cheyne and Burns were honoured to do in our own day. His influence was but deepened by his cruel fate, and 'he lived again,' as Dr Lorimer has said, 'in John Knox.' 'This zealous disciple, who had counted it an honour to be allowed to carry a sword before his master, stood forth immediately to wield the

spiritual sword which had fallen from his master's grasp, and to wield it with a vigour and trenchant execution superior even to his.' God sent them comfort after him, as he said.

It belongs to my successor to tell of the triumph and portray the character of him whom Mr Froude has pronounced to be 'the grandest figure in the entire history of the British Reformation.' All that I must attempt, in closing, is to give the briefest account of his preliminary labours.

Knox was born at Giffordgate in Haddington in 1505, and matriculated at the University of Glasgow in 1522. From that date up to 1545, when he appears as sword-bearer to Wishart, his life is to us almost a blank. Like Elijah the Tishbite, he comes into view only to enter on his public work. Whatever his early training may have been, he had by this time thoroughly mastered the subjects in controversy between the two Churches, and possibly, as Bayle supposes, the writings of the two greatest doctors of the Western Church. 'He received his first taste of the truth' from his fellow-townsman, Thomas Guillaume, one of the Regent's chaplains, as he received his political principles from his early instructor, John Major, also a native of East Lothian. Ever since he had cast in his lot with Wishart, he had been so harassed, that but for a refuge unexpectedly opened up, he would have found it necessary to leave Scotland. This refuge was the Castle of St Andrews, which the conspirators had determined to hold, and in which numbers of those friendly to the Reformation and the English alliance had already taken shelter. Knox arrived about Pasche, 1547, in charge of the sons of certain lairds in East Lothian. At that time there was a truce between the citizens and the 'castilians,' as they were called. The reforming citizens had access to the services in the castle, and the chaplain of the garrison at times made his way into the parish church and preached to the people. Knox resumed there the system he had followed with good effect in East Lothian, expounding in a colloquial manner the gospel of St John, and making his pupils give account of their catechism

in public, that even people who could not read, by hearing it often repeated, might gain familiarity with it.

His great abilities as a teacher, and his wonderful gift of persuasive speech, soon attracted notice. Private efforts failing to move him, a formal call to the ministry was addressed to him from the pulpit by the chaplain in name of the rest. Yielding to this, he soon made full proof of his ministry not only before the rude garrison of the castle, but before the doctors of the University and the citizens in the parish church. By his sermons, catechisings, and disputations, the new doctrines gained a hold on the minds of learned and unlearned which they never really lost. But times of trial were to come ere the cause should finally triumph. They who had taken into their hands 'the sword of God' were made to suffer by the sword, and had to surrender the castle to the representative of the French king. Those who had come to it for shelter, as well as those who had conspired against the Cardinal, were dealt with as criminals of the worst class. For nearly twenty months our Reformer had to work in chains on board the galleys. Even then he maintained unshaken faith in God; but he would have been more than human if the iron had not entered into his soul, and traces of the sternness thence arising had not long been visible in his character. Early in 1549 he was released by English influence. He was sent to Berwick, where he was as near to his countrymen as it was safe for him to go, and where many of them were able to resort to him. He preached not only to the garrison and citizens of Berwick, but also throughout the northern counties, proving himself a true successor of those early Scottish missionaries who had originally won over to the Christian faith the Saxons of Northumbria.

His fame as a preacher and defender of the new doctrines spread southwards, and he was appointed one of the royal chaplains. In the autumn of 1552 he preached with great power and faithfulness before the court of Edward VI., and with his fellow-chaplains aided in the revision of the English Articles

and Prayer-Book. He refused a bishopric and a London rectory, and continued to labour devotedly as a preacher unattached. He had a presentiment that the time he would have to do so would be brief, and he improved it diligently. When 'the bloody Mary' succeeded to the throne, Knox, as a foreigner, was especially warranted to leave the country and reserve himself for happier times; and he did so when it was only not too late. The few years he spent abroad were to be richly blessed to himself and his fellow-exiles. He at least had not gone there to have his views of doctrine or church order changed, but to have his spirit refreshed by counsel and communion with brethren, and nerved for further achievements in the service of their common Lord. He would have settled down to quiet study in Geneva, but Calvin persuaded him to go to Frankfort as pastor of the English congregation there; and on disputes arising in it, he secured an asylum for him and his Puritan brethren beside himself. Knox returned to his native land to pay a short visit to his friends, and to bring his wife and her mother to Geneva. But he was obliged again and again to prolong his visit. The cause of the Reformation had made quiet progress in the immediately preceding years, without the voice of the living preacher or any agency but the private study of the Scriptures and the circulation of hymns and poems. 'If he had not seen it with his own eyes, he could not have believed it.' Night and day they sobbed and groaned for the bread of life, and now his preaching came to them in demonstration of the Spirit and with power, and was greatly blessed to many in Angus and Mearns, in Ayrshire and the Lothians, and other parts. He administered the Lord's supper to them, persuaded them to give up attending the Popish worship, and bind themselves to uphold the truth, and defend their brethren who did so.[1] He urged the Queen Regent to undertake the reformation of the Church, but with-

[1] Knox's *History*, vol. i., page 251.

out success. He urged the nobles to do their duty, and promising to return when they deemed the time had come for this, he at length departed to his charge at Geneva. Before he left, he had been summoned to appear before the bishops, but this summons was 'cast.' Soon after his departure, he was summoned again, and in his absence was condemned and burned in effigy.

Archbishop Hamilton, who had succeeded Beaton as primate, continued to hold council after council, to make feeble and fitful efforts for the revival of the Church—to provide a catechism and other helps for the priests in their work, and to execute with rigour the laws against heretics. But all availed not to save the Church or stem the tide which had set in. Time was when reasonable concession and speedy reform might have done so. Patrick Hamilton and Alexander Alesius had come pleading for the free circulation of the Word of God, and the free preaching of the great truths it contained; and the one had been burned, the other forced into exile. George Wishart had come to reiterate the plea, and to contend for the right doctrine and administration of the sacraments; and he also was put to death. Willock and the reforming nobles had come even in 1558 to plead for a *minimum* of reform, which if granted, might have saved the old organisation, and brought the new life into it, as in England. But this too was refused. The gnarled old tree was rotten to the core, and could not take in the fresh sap. And now came Knox, not to 'sned the branches,' but to lay his axe at the root of the tree and cut it down as a cumberer of the ground. 'It was not a smooth business,' as Carlyle says, 'but it was welcome surely, and cheap at that price; had it been far rougher on the whole, cheap at any price as life is. The people began to *live;*' and as another has it, from being one of the rudest, poorest, most turbulent races in Europe, became one of the most educated, prosperous, orderly, and upright.