

CHAPTER VIII

1841-42

CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

THE General Election of 1841 was a great excitement for the moment, but it did not engross me long, and it had comparatively little permanent effect upon my opinions. With the same year, however, by another path, my public life began—the occasion when I first took an active personal part in the controversies of my time, and when, in one of these, I made my earliest appearance as an author.

In 1841 a new interest awoke which for the moment absorbed all my attention, and was yet totally unconnected with any of the questions which then divided Parliamentary parties. From both of these, in that interest, I was at once divorced, with abundant opportunities of seeing how ill-informed and how prejudiced politicians may be when any question comes upon them with broader and deeper issues than those with which they have been accustomed to deal. This experience had a lasting effect upon me. It saved me from any too close partisanship in the mere game of party. With politics, indeed, in the highest sense of that word, the new question had not only some connection, but it was inseparably interwoven. It concerned the whole functions and duties of States or Governments in their relation with individual rights, and especially with the constitution of the Christian Church. This is an immense subject. It involves a great many questions of history, both general and local, and questions not less numerous of law, both

human and Divine. I must stop for a while in my narrative to explain what this new interest was—how it arose, and the effect it had upon me. Englishmen almost universally, and only too many Scotsmen, are as ignorant on the subject now as they were in 1841.

For about eight or nine years before 1841 an agitation had been going on in Scotland to procure some modification of the system of lay patronage in the appointment of parish ministers in the Established Church. This had been a very old subject of contention in Scotland. It had been the cause of more than one secession from the Established Church. The subject had been from time to time continually cropping up. Boswell records a conversation with Dr. Johnson upon the subject in 1773, in which the arguments, as they stood then, are very fairly, though by no means completely, discussed. But new life had been given to it by political influences in the years 1830-1832. It has been often recognised that the movements of opinion which culminated in the passing of the first Reform Bill were among the causes which, in the English Church, started the Oxford Movement. Churchmen in England had been always inclined to sacerdotalism, and when rough and sometimes rude hands were laid on bishoprics in the name of reform, a reaction was begun in favour of what are called High Church opinions, which ran a memorable course, and the effects of which are by no means yet exhausted. In Scotland the same excitement took a wholly different direction—that of reasserting the claims of Christian congregations to have some effective voice in the choice of their own minister. For a good many years this movement was slow and gradual. It attracted no attention in my quiet home at Ardencaple. I do not recollect ever hearing it mentioned there during the years between 1830 and 1841. My native parish was perhaps hardly the place where it was likely to seem important. The more religious-minded members of that congregation had seen one of the most saintly

ministers of the Church given to them by the exercise of lay patronage; and they had seen, too, that they were deprived of him in the exercise of that very spiritual jurisdiction of Church courts which was being so determinedly asserted in the rising contest. It was not, therefore, likely that they would regard those courts with any special reverence, or as constituting any very perfect agency for remedying defects in the system of lay patronage. Meantime the movement went on in the annual Assemblies of the Church, until in 1834 an Act was passed by the General Assembly forbidding the inferior courts to induct any minister into a parish if his appointment was objected to by a majority of the male heads of families in full communion with the Church. This Act was called the Veto Law, since it placed a power of veto in the hands of the congregation against any very unacceptable minister. Thereafter the question was raised in the civil courts whether the Act was competent, or whether it was *ultra vires* of the Assembly, without the consent of Parliament. Here, obviously, a wholly new issue was raised. The Act of the Assembly was simply an order or a direction issued to subordinate courts in the discharge of a purely spiritual function—that of ordination. A denial of any right to issue such an order might evoke a claim of the civil courts to issue a counter and a mandatory order on the discharge of that unquestionably spiritual function. And this is what did actually happen. The action of the civil courts in attempting to coerce the ecclesiastical courts in the matter of ordination produced at once a burst of indignation on the part of the Church, and half Scotland was in a flame.

The flames would have been still more rapid and violent had it not been for this, that there was obviously a real difficulty in the circumstances of the case. Both of the possible alternatives did violence to some principle acknowledged by both parties. The ordination of ministers to a cure of souls was undoubtedly a purely spiritual function. So also was

the judgment on the necessary qualifications for ministerial duty. On the other hand, the enjoyment of a benefice was quite as undoubtedly a secular privilege. If the two were inseparable, then either the civil courts must coerce the Church in the function of ordination, or else the Church could abolish the statutory right of patronage in parochial benefices. The old constitutional law of Scotland had solved the difficulty with perfect logic by enacting that the Church courts would forfeit the endowment if they rejected qualified presentees. This violated no principle of spiritual independence, whilst it placed the Church courts under heavy recognizances not to take any course in the exercise of that independence which was at variance with the civil law. But the civil courts, assuming the inseparability of cure and benefice, were, on the one hand, asserting their own absolute supremacy over both, and were ordering Church courts in the matter of ordination. The Church courts and Assemblies, on the other hand, were denying this power absolutely, and were defying its injunctions. Politicians who had no conception of the forces which lay behind the controversy, or of the very existence of any Christian Church except as erected and created by statutes and enactments, were shouting themselves hoarse over what they called the duty of 'obedience to the law.' The air was thick with speeches and pamphlets on the subject, and it was becoming evident that some amendment of the civil law of patronage was an absolute necessity, if the Established Church of Scotland was to escape the danger of being broken up.

It was not until matters had reached this stage that I began to give to the controversy any serious attention. The few casual observations I had heard about it in its earlier stages were all adverse to the popular view. My father, as Duke of Argyll, was one of the very largest holders of patronage in Scotland. He did not naturally sympathize at first with a movement which would damage, if it did not abolish, this right in the

disposal of parochial livings, however little he might value it personally. The current of feeling, therefore, by which I was surrounded was leading me, so long as my mind was merely passive, in the direction which was adverse to the course and to the claims of the Church Assemblies, and in that current I might easily have drifted to wrong conclusions, as so many of my class unfortunately did.

If there is any use at all in autobiographies, it is that they should reveal those personal elements which count for so much in the opinions and in the conduct of men, and therefore I must say a few words here in explanation of some of these in my own case. Some, perhaps many, of my contemporaries in my later years have thought me very confident in my opinions, and very aggressive in my expression of them. And this impression may naturally arise from a few facts which have been conspicuous. But there are other facts needing to be placed alongside of these, which strangers could never see, and which, perhaps, they could not easily believe. Out of the innumerable difficult and complex questions which every active mind must come across in life, a very few only can be thoroughly explored. As regards these few it is possible to reach the most assured convictions, and it may be not only justifiable, but a positive duty, to express such convictions with all the certainty which is felt; whilst on all other questions less thoroughly studied, and even on these, whilst yet the study of them is incomplete, it may be quite consistent to maintain an habitual attitude of reserve. This has been my own case. I have never had any natural tendency to a dogmatic temperament. On the contrary, I have always had an ingrained liability to doubt, and a disposition to accept all received opinions with great reserve. From my earliest years I have been always listening to what Tennyson calls 'The Two Voices,' and very often to many more than two. A receptivity only too sensitive has been often to me a

real embarrassment. And so it was that a casual reply made to me on one occasion, by a very ordinary man, on the questions then pending in the Church of Scotland, was the starting-point of new convictions on the subject. I determined to study it for myself, and with this view I did by instinct what I have ever since done on principle—I determined to procure and read all the original documents which were authoritative on the question. I at once bought a copy of the Scottish Acts of Parliament, and read carefully every one bearing on the subject, from the Reformation in 1560 to the Union in 1701. I procured copies of the two Confessions of Faith which were embodied in the statute law. I got copies of the Books of Discipline adopted by the Church after the Reformation, and I read every line in all these authorities which bore upon the subject. What I found soon interested me intensely. But it was absolutely incompatible with my uninstructed preconceptions, and I soon saw that those whose lead I had been inclined to follow were both ignorant and illogical in a high degree.

It was most creditable to my father's public spirit, as well as to his perceptive powers, on a subject with which he had not been familiar, that in the very first year after his succession to the dukedom in 1840 he became more and more favourably disposed to the action of the Church. He had taken a house in Edinburgh for the winter months of 1839-40, and had there come in contact with the intellectual focus of the agitation, as well as with many friends, who were all earnest supporters of the policy of the General Assembly. He put himself in communication with some of those men who were its agents, and with much public spirit he made up his mind that, if others failed to do so, he would himself introduce a Bill into the House of Lords which might bring the law of patronage into harmony with the constitutional rights of the Church and of the people. In the meantime, however, this duty was taken in hand by the Earl of Aberdeen.

My father's long retirement from public life had separated him from public men. Lord Aberdeen, on the contrary, was then a leading power in the Conservative party. Most unfortunately, his Bill fell entirely short of the minimum required to satisfy even the most moderate claims of the Church, and the undoubted principles of her established constitution. The General Assembly of 1841 accordingly rejected his Bill, as offering no satisfactory compromise. My father then felt it to be his duty to take up the task. He worked hard to frame a Bill which would settle the controversy on a reasonable basis. I threw myself with the deepest interest into all the communications which went on with this great object in view, and made myself as much master as I could of all the law and of all the history of the case. This was an education in itself, and to explain my first appearance in public I must give some account, however short, of the very singular facts, and the not less singular principles, which appeared to me to be established, by undisputable evidence, as fundamental in the constitutional history of Scotland.

It is, of course, a familiar fact that the Reformation took place in Scotland under conditions wholly different from those under which it took place in England. Sovereigns of great, if not of supreme, power, together with Parliaments which were acquiescent, if not obsequious, effected the whole changes which were made in England. In Scotland the corresponding changes were brought about entirely by the people — by the people, however, in the fullest sense of that much-abused word. The Sovereigns were hostile. The Parliaments were irresolute. Scotland had the worst possible Parliamentary constitution. Its forms placed all initiative exclusively in the hands of the Crown. When, therefore, the great body of the people had embraced with passion the new opinions, they found no recognised organ in the State through which they could speak their mind. They had to

make one. This necessity threw them back on first principles, and on first facts, as these appear in the simple but telling narratives of the New Testament. They were thus led to a great idea. That idea was nothing less than a fresh and powerful conception of the origin, of the nature, and of the functions, of the Christian Church. As regards its origin, they conceived it to be historically an organic and visible society founded by Christ Himself. As regards its nature, they conceived it as consisting of the whole body of the believing people, and not of merely any priesthood or any ministry. As regards its functions, they conceived them to be independent of all secular authorities in the whole sphere of religious teaching and of spiritual government. And this great complex idea they did not merely entertain as a speculative opinion, but held it to be an indisputable fact in history, and in principle to be self-evidently true. They immediately, as if instinctively, embodied it in determined conduct, and in founding systematic organs of continuous activity.

They started an Assembly, called the General Assembly, which, within its own sphere, was virtually a Parliament. It not only contained lay members, including many of the most powerful nobles, but at first it was actually more lay than clerical. It never ceased to contain a large lay element, and so completely did it aim at national representation, that all the royal burghs in the kingdom had, and still have, the right of sending members to its annual session. It was this great body which kept alive the spirit of constitutional liberty, when in Parliament it was feeble, fitful, or extinct. After desperate struggles, it secured a statutory recognition of its own conception of itself—of its foundation, and of its authority, and of its powers. This recognition was embodied in solemn and successive Acts of Parliament of the highest constitutional authority. Through political convulsions of every kind and degree, advantage was

taken of every favourable opportunity for securing this result. The leading men in the first Assemblies were, to a large extent, also the leading men in Parliament, and when the Reformers were compelled to have recourse to arms, so wholly did the leaders represent a religious contest that the name by which they were known was, 'The Lords of the Congregation.' When they possessed themselves of supreme power in the State, they did not indeed do all that the mass of the Reformers desired to be done, but they adopted all their fundamental principles and they embodied the new Confession of Faith in an Act of Parliament, which declared it to be the Confession of the nation. In this Confession there was not one word said about Presbyterianism or Episcopacy, just as there was nothing about this distinction in the Articles of the Church of England.

The Reformers in Scotland were too busy with more important matters, respecting the nature of the Christian Church, to think much of any question respecting the mere gradation of its ministers. They were engrossed by a conception of the Church which identified it as closely as possible with the nation. Its Assembly was different from its Parliament only because the two bodies dealt with subjects in their own nature different, and because the composition of the Assembly was more freely chosen, more comprehensive of all classes, and therefore more completely representative. The General Assemblies of the Church of Scotland, unlike the Councils and Convocations of all other Churches, were proud and tenacious of a constitution which was not merely representative of the clergy, but embraced all ranks and classes of the Christian people. They were fully conscious that in this broad popular constitution lay the real sanction of their authority, and the one great secret of their power. It was a constitution which, if it were adopted all over Christendom, would confer a power and reality which it does not now possess, on the ambitious title

of 'The Catholic Church.' In addressing the civil Government in 1574, the General Assembly reminded the Regent, as a fact, that it was an Assembly 'of the whole general Church of this realm, as well of all members thereof . . . in such measure that the most noble thereof, the highest estate, have joined in their own persons the Assembly as members of one body, concurring, voting, authorizing all things there along with the brethren.' And to this idea of the nature and constitution of the Christian Church they gave effect, not only in every Church court, but in the fundamental units on which all organized societies must rest. In every parish the minister was to be associated with elected representatives of the congregation, which, as a body called the Kirk Session, was to have an important part in his own appointment. Thus, from top to bottom of the edifice, the whole building was a system of constitutional government, founded on the rights and privileges of the whole Christian people, and to every class of that people its own special duties were assigned. It cannot be denied that this was a grand conception of the nature and constitution of the Christian Church. Nor can it be denied that this conception had been practically lost to Christendom. And yet the Scottish Reformers neither had, nor claimed to have, any merit of originality in devising it. They never put it forward, or even thought of it, as their own invention or their own discovery. On the contrary, they emphatically declared that they simply saw and found it in the narratives of the New Testament. But there were three things concerning this conception of the Church in which the Scottish Reformers stood alone—first, in the thoroughness and absolute conviction with which they entertained it; secondly, in the immediate and automatic action which they took upon it, in embodying it in an appropriate machinery of constitutional courts; and, thirdly, in the successful demand they made upon the State to recognise both the rightful

existence of these courts and their independent powers. It was this success that placed the Parliaments of Scotland in a position as unique as that occupied by her Church.

If the Assemblies of the Church stood alone in the claims they made, the Parliaments of the nation stood not less alone in the response they gave. No other Parliament in the Christian world embodied in its legislation any similar acknowledgments, or gave effect to them in any similar provisions of statutory law. Through the long period of 121 years—from the Reformation legally accomplished in 1567 to the Revolution in 1688—the completion of this constitutional system was a subject of continual contest. Every attempt to resist or to undermine it, or to repeal it, was triumphantly resisted, and the defeat of every such attempt was always signalized by some new confirming law. Not once or twice only, but four times, under varying circumstances and conditions, confirmatory Acts and treaties were passed, adopting bodily the Articles of Faith drawn up by the Church Assemblies, declaring those bodies to be the only legitimate authorities on all spiritual matters, defining what these matters included, and finally providing, at the Union with England, against any future interference on the part of the new United Parliament with the older Scottish legislation on this subject. In violation of this stipulation in the Treaty of Union, an Act of the United Parliament was passed during the reign of Queen Anne, in 1712, restoring the power of lay patrons in the appointment of ministers. It was one of the measures taken, by a Government notoriously inchoate and reactionary, against any assailable outwork of the Protestant succession. It was protested against by the Established Church, and was an undeniable breach of the Treaty of Union. Yet it was on this unconstitutional Act, and on it alone, that all the adverse decisions of the law courts had been based.

The result of all this singular history appeared to

me to leave no doubt whatever of the urgent duty of Parliament to modify the statute of Queen Anne, so as to bring it into harmony with the action of the General Assembly in giving a veto to congregations on the appointment as pastors over them of unacceptable men. It had come to this as the only alternative, if a great disruption of the Established Church was to be averted. All arguments on the mere legal aspects of the case had been exhausted in 1840 by two successive decisions of the supreme judicial courts in the previous year, 1839. In a conflict of jurisdiction between the civil and ecclesiastical courts the civil courts had, very naturally, decided in their own favour. This is the only kind of question on which law courts can never be absolutely trusted. They are always under an invincible bias to maintain their own power. The only wonder was that so many of the best and most distinguished judges overcame this bias, not that there was a considerable majority who were manifestly swayed. When such pre-eminent men as Lord Jeffrey, Lord Cockburn, Lord Moncreiff, and the venerable Lord Glenlee, all affirmed the power of the General Assembly to pass the Veto Law, and denied the right of the civil courts to interdict their proceedings under it, independent minds might well be satisfied. When the question had been referred on appeal to the House of Lords, one other influence, even more fatal than professional and official self-assertion, was added to the courses operating in that supreme tribunal. That influence was Anglicanism. I have never yet met an Englishman who could understand, or even conceive, that idea of the relations between Church and State which was embedded and embodied in the Constitution of Scotland. John Bull, with all his great qualities, is a very parochial creature. What he has never seen in his own experience, within his own part of the kingdom south of the Tweed, he cannot see elsewhere, even when it may stare him in the face. In this case it was all the more difficult for him, because there

were identities of phraseology concealing fundamental differences of meaning. Although in his own occasional Church services there is a passage—not much used—recognising in the abstract that the Church means ‘the whole body of the believing people scattered throughout the world,’ he seldom hears that passage read, and, when he does hear it, never dreams of giving to the abstract definition any concrete interpretation. He never thinks of the Church except as an institution established by civil law, represented by strictly legal courts, and having the political Sovereign as over all persons and in all causes supreme. Practically, he never thinks of the Church except as represented by its ministry or its priesthood. When he hears of a General Assembly of the Church, he can never get out of his head a mere Convocation of the clergy. Still less is it conceivable to him that such an Assembly should have been, as it often was in Scotland, a far more complete national representation than the Parliament, and should have been acknowledged by that Parliament as possessing by natural and Divine right an independent jurisdiction in all spiritual matters. All those ideas were incompatible with inborn Anglican preconceptions, and where Englishmen found a single statute, even although passed since the Union, which could be quoted and used as overriding a whole series of older constitutional laws so strange to them, they made that statute a supreme authority. It seemed impossible, therefore, to move the mass of prejudice and ignorance which was determining their opinions and their conduct.

All this I saw, and I saw not less clearly another influence which was reinforcing the stolid resistance of Anglican ideas, and that was the influence of Anglicized Scotsmen. In all other matters I have always been of opinion that the union of the two Parliaments of England and of Scotland was an unspeakable gain to both countries, but especially to Scotland. But in this one matter of the Church,

the effect of English academical education and of the faults and defects of the Presbyterian form of worship had so alienated a large portion of the Scottish aristocracy that they were as ignorant and as unsympathetic as the born John Bulls, in all matters respecting the constitution of the Established Church.

During the session of 1840, when on the steps of the throne, I used to hear the Earl of Aberdeen frequently urging the Whig Government to enforce the law against the Church Assemblies—which meant, to compel them to exercise purely spiritual functions at the order of the civil courts. And this eminent Scotsman never seemed to be even conscious that there could be a question about the power or the right of the civil courts to do this, nor did I ever hear him even allude to the series of constitutional laws which had expressly denied any such assumption as illegitimate, and a violation of the essential rights of the Christian Church. When such ignorance or contempt of notorious facts and of written documents of authority were displayed by Scotsmen of great reputation, it was hopeless to expect Englishmen to accept ideas absolutely new to them. Then, again, mere political Toryism added its share of power over the minds of many, and the affinity of the right of patronage in Scotland to the same rights in England—all tended to swell the resisting forces against concession to the Church Assemblies.

It is, however, remarkable that when the Duke of Wellington had read a very able statement of the case for the Church, his masculine understanding grasped at once the right solution. He said that the proper thing to do would be, so to alter the civil law of patronage as to harmonize it with the rights of the Church, and leave her spiritual independence unimpaired. If this wise counsel had been followed, there would have been no secession. But, most unfortunately, Lord Aberdeen obstinately refused to make his Bill answer to this description. My father then made the attempt,

and drew up a Bill which he introduced early in May, 1842, accompanying it with a short but clear and temperate statement of the case. His Bill gave the right of objection to a presentee to the whole male communicants of the parish, in this being a more popular measure than the Veto Law of the Church Assembly. On the other hand, however, it kept in the hands of the Presbytery of the province the power of overruling the objections of the people, if these seemed to arise from factious or improper motives. My father now waited, as Lord Aberdeen had done in his own case, to see how his proposal would be received by the Church. He had a triumphant success. A motion in the General Assembly of 1842 to accept my father's Bill as a settlement of the question was carried by the overwhelming majority of 185. With a folly which can never be sufficiently deplored, a Government, calling itself Conservative, refused to take advantage of the great opportunity, and declined to allow my father's Bill to pass. It was impossible for him to carry it against such opposition. It was in support of my father's course, and whilst his Bill was being prepared, that I felt impelled to take the field myself. I was aware that I had some advantages. I had not been exposed to the prejudices due to an English education. My father was known to be a Conservative in politics. He was, moreover, one of the very largest holders of Church patronage in Scotland. All these circumstances were among the elements in the case, and in my own position, which encouraged me to write.

My first pamphlet avoided all argument on the mere interpretation of Queen Anne's Act of Patronage, as an argument which had been determined by the law courts in their own favour. It avoided, on the other hand, all merely theological phrases, which had not been directly adopted in Parliamentary enactments. But it gave at some length the constitutional history of the Established Church, and it insisted on the duty of

Parliament to step in by just legislation, and to harmonize the statute of patronage with other laws of far more fundamental importance. Its title made this discrimination plain, and emphasized the comparatively secular and strictly constitutional character of the argument. That title was, 'Letters to the Peers from a Peer's Son, on the Duty and Necessity of an Immediate Legislative Interposition on Behalf of the Church of Scotland, as determined by Considerations of Constitutional Law.' It was written when I was eighteen, and published in January, 1842, or about three months before I had reached my nineteenth birthday.

As a literary effort, and as a good argumentative statement of a strong case, my letter commanded an immediate success. It speedily passed through two editions, and it elicited from many friends, and from not a few opponents, the warmest congratulations.

The responsibility of refusing the compromise offered by my father's Bill certainly lay with Sir Robert Peel's Government, and in that Government mainly, as I have always believed, with Lord Aberdeen. The love and reverence with which in later years I came to regard Lord Aberdeen cannot prevent me from deploring now, as I deplored at the time, the course taken by that distinguished man in 1840-1842. There is not the slightest reason to doubt that, if the Cabinet had assented to the Bill, it would have been easily passed through both Houses of Parliament, but Lord Aberdeen, as the most distinguished Scotsman in the Administration, was blindly followed, with fatal consequences.

It was universally said at the time, and it has been since admitted by his son, that Lord Aberdeen was himself much led by the opinion and advice of the then Dean of Faculty, afterwards Lord Justice Clerk, John Hope. He was an able, but by nature a headstrong and overbearing, man, who was full to the brim of passionate prejudice against the rights claimed

by the Church Assemblies. He had himself been a member of the General Assembly, and was one of the most prominent leaders of the minority. He was the author of the most extreme pamphlet published during the whole controversy on that side of the question. It was specially addressed to the ignorance and prejudices of the English Tories, and in particular to rousing the alarms of the owners of Church patronage in England. It concealed entirely, or slurred over, the statutory declaration of spiritual independence as a Divine right of the Christian Church. It identified all such claims with those of priestly domination, although the element of sacerdotalism was absolutely wanting in a Church which rested entirely on the full participation of the laity in every claim it made. It finally called on the Government to enforce the law—that is, to compel the Church courts to exercise the power of ordination at the bidding of lawyers like himself. No worse advice than his could have been followed. Whoever may have been Lord Aberdeen's chief adviser, his opposition was decisive. It prevailed even over the apparent disposition of the Duke of Wellington to act effectively on the principle of concession. My father asked for his support in a personal interview and by letter. Here is the Duke's reply :

‘MY DEAR LORD DUKE,

‘I told your Grace in conversation what the view was which I had taken in the discussion on the Scottish Church: that I was a consenting party to the measure proposed by the Earl of Aberdeen; for which I would have voted, if it had ever come to a vote in the House of Lords.

‘If your Grace should propose any other measure, I will consider it with the attention due to anything from your Grace. But I approve of the course which Lord Aberdeen has taken, even to this day. And I beg leave to decline, out of doors, and in writing, or even orally, to discuss any other measure: and the opinions which I entertain on these questions. They have given me the greatest pain. About a quarter of a century has now elapsed since

the Prince Regent, afterwards George the Fourth, called me from the command of the army abroad to take my seat at his Council. Scotland was then, as termed by my poor friend the Earl of Liverpool, the best-conditioned country in the world. I have frequently quoted these words in concurring with the truth of the observation. She is now on the eve of the greatest misfortune that can happen to a civilized country: unless a merciful Providence endows the leading men of all classes and professions, with moderation and sense, to induce and to enable them to avoid it. We are on the eve of a civil religious war, in the operations of which all the violent passions of the most violent men will be brought into play! Entertaining this opinion, as I do sincerely, I recommend to all that have any influence and any knowledge upon the subject to give it their best attention. I will attend to any measure that may be proposed for discussion, but I cannot be a party to the introduction of any one.—I have the honour to be, etc.

This curious and interesting letter is thoroughly characteristic of the old Duke. The sense of military subordination to the Government of the day in all civil or political questions was habitual with him, and was intensified at this time by his long connection with the Conservative party, which had so recently climbed to power. Sir Robert Peel, in the peroration of the great speech to the House of Commons which he delivered on the occasion of his first addressing it as Prime Minister, had placed in the front rank of his grounds of hope and confidence the support of 'that wonderful man' the Duke of Wellington. It was therefore, perhaps, hardly to be expected that on a question with which the Duke was not really familiar he should feel able to act on his own first impressions, which were in favour of exactly such a course as that embodied in my father's Bill. It will be observed that in the Duke's letter not one word is said against that Bill upon its merits. He had simply put himself in the hands of the Ministry of the day, and specially in the hands of Lord Aberdeen. In doing so, as so often happens, he was really putting himself in the

hands of a violent and a very inferior man, who had acquired over Lord Aberdeen an influence which is unintelligible to me. It is clear from the short but excellent memoir of his distinguished father by Lord Stanmore (the Honourable Arthur Gordon) that Lord Aberdeen himself was personally disposed to go a good way farther than his own Bill to meet the views of the Church, in which case he must have consented to some such Bill as my father's. But the vehement opposition of the Dean of Faculty, Hope, seems to have overborne his own wiser inclinations.

I rejoice that I have lived to see and to take an active part in the total repeal of that law of patronage which was the only statute which interfered with the old fundamental laws of Scotland in respect to the claim of its Church to a genuine and effective spiritual independence. But this will come in my way to deal with in that later time of my life to which it properly belongs.

I must now, however, return upon my steps a little to notice some incidents in my life in 1841 and 1842, which had more or less influence upon it in the coming years. During my father's residence in Edinburgh in the winter of 1839-40 I took some first lessons in oil-painting from an artist of the name of Montague Stanley. These lessons went no further than to enable me to understand the management of the brush and the handling of the material, and the making of the medium then called 'macgilp.' At many intervals of my later life the oil-painting of landscapes has been a great enjoyment and relief to me as an interruption in more serious work. One circumstance about it has often struck me very much. I have entirely dropped it during long intervals of time, and resumed it again. And on these occasions I have always found myself more advanced than when I left off. I attribute this entirely to the educating effect upon the eye of just so much knowledge of the art as kept me in a continual habit of observation as to the colouring of Nature, and

of speculation as to how it could be approached. I have always felt that, if I had had time and opportunity to devote myself to it, I should have attained a not inconsiderable proficiency. On the other hand, I had no turn for portraiture, or even for the drawing of figures, and the absence of these from my landscapes has always been one among many other deficiencies.

In November, 1841, I took it into my head to enter the University of Edinburgh as a student, for the purpose of attending certain classes, particularly that of Natural Philosophy, the Chair then held by Professor J. D. Forbes. Accordingly, rooms were taken for me and my tutor, Howson, in Charlotte Square, and I duly matriculated at the college. My plans, however, came to grief. I was at that time, as I have been all my life, delicate in health, and especially liable to severe colds. The climate of Edinburgh did not agree with me, and after attending Forbes' lectures for a few weeks I was laid up with an attack which was accompanied with distressing earache. Only one other incident of that time in Edinburgh has retained a place in my memory, and that was a visit to Howson by William Faber—afterwards the well-known Father Faber, one of the earliest seceders to the Roman Church, and the author of many well-known additions to our collections of sacred poetry. He struck me at once as an interesting and attractive man—very good-looking, with eyes of a fine blue, set in deeply hollowed sockets, an aquiline nose, and a general expression wild—imaginative—unsettled.

The year 1842 was memorable to me from the excitement about the Church Question, my own pamphlet, and the failure of my father's Bill. But interests more personal were identified with its summer and its autumn months. I have already referred to the principal service for which I was indebted to my first English tutor, Howson, who opened to me a wider field of literature than that in which I had roamed when a boy. Among the authors to whom he intro-

duced me was Dr. Thomas Arnold of Rugby. The thanks of my life are due to Howson if it was for this alone. It was to Arnold's ' History of Rome ' that my reading was first directed. I fell at once under the spell of Arnold's most attractive genius. It would be difficult to define it, but it must always be difficult to define the influence of a very noble and a very powerful personality upon other minds. We can only feel it as a fact. It is rare indeed that in the sphere of history such an influence can be exerted. But Arnold's love of truth shines as almost a passion in all his writings, and I was strongly drawn to them accordingly. The character of his Christianity was a real help to me, not being untroubled, as I have already explained, by the intellectual difficulties which beset all spiritual beliefs. The type of that Christianity seemed to me different from anything I had met with before. It was little concerned with abstract doctrinal conceptions, which, however important in their own place, were too much the continual subject of controversy among the Churches, and especially in Scotland. It consisted mainly in an absolute faith in, and an unbounded devotion to, a Divine Person. Christianity claims to be an historical religion. That is to say, it claims to have been revealed in facts of the world's history truthfully recorded and truthfully interpreted. Here was a man of great intellectual power, with whom history was, not merely a chief interest, but a passion; who spared no pains to get at the truth of it in all things; who loved to follow the great German Niebuhr in cross-examining and sifting the legends of early Rome, and in divining the nucleus of facts from which these legends had been developed—here was this man accepting the narratives of the New Testament with all the fulness of a man's convictions and all the simplicity of a child's belief. Of course I could not know in 1840-1842, before his memorable *Life*, by Arthur Stanley, had appeared, how wonderfully this characteristic came out in all his letters and in his private

journals. But it had been impressed upon me indelibly by such of his writings as were accessible to me. He was in no sense a party leader. He was not what would ordinarily be called a great preacher. He had none of those gifts of oratory which captivate the multitude. Neither had he a specially gracious personality, having in society much shyness and reserve. He had strong opinions, and he was one of the most resolute opponents of what was then called the Tractarian Movement at Oxford. But it was not this that constituted his attraction. That which he said he valued above all other qualities in youth was 'moral earnestness,' and it was precisely that which distinguished himself in the highest degree.

It was therefore with great interest that, in the spring of 1842, I heard that Arnold had written to my tutor, offering to him a vacant mastership in the great school of Rugby. In June I took Howson with me to pay a visit at a country-house near Campsie, and at the railway-station a letter was put into his hands, announcing that Arnold had died very suddenly on the previous day. The shock it gave us both I have never forgotten, and Howson thus lost his contemplated appointment in the public school of Rugby.

In September, 1842, the Queen, with the Prince Consort, paid her first visit to Scotland. My father thought it his duty to go to Edinburgh to attend Her Majesty's Court held at Dalkeith. I was appointed to command the Celtic Society, which mustered in Highland dress for the same purpose. Beyond the beauty of the scene in Princes Street, Edinburgh, down which we had to march, I retain no very distinct recollection of any of the ceremonies. They seem to melt into, and, as it were, to be absorbed by, many later attendances on the Queen, both in Scotland and in London. But a very different scene followed, of which I recollect the minutest details. The Queen was to visit Taymouth, and before leaving Inveraray for Edinburgh I had received a very kind invitation from

Lord Breadalbane to be one of his guests on the occasion. Accordingly, I took an outside seat on a coach which ran to Perth. I was glad to see a part of Scotland entirely new to me, of which, however, I now recollect only two points—the Lake and Castle of Lochleven, on which I looked with intense interest as one of the prisons of the unfortunate Mary, Queen of Scots; and, next, the first view of Perth and of the Valley of the Tay from the top of the Moncreiffe Hill. I thought it a view of surpassing beauty, and it is one which in the present day no stranger sees. Railways do not ascend, as roads often did, to the tops of hills, and many of the most striking landscapes of the world are now lost to the traveller. That view of Perth, and of the richly-wooded plain in which it stands, with the winding Tay, is said to have so struck the Roman legions that they exclaimed in ecstasy, 'Ecce Tiber!' The Tay is in many ways a far more beautiful river than the Tiber. But, on the other hand, the colouring of Italy and its sky are unapproachable. But as at that time these were unknown to me, the landscape was of a kind absolutely different from anything I had ever seen, and remains indelibly impressed upon my memory.

From Perth I took a private carriage to drive to Taymouth, and finding that Mr. Charles Baillie, one of Lady Breadalbane's brothers, was going the same way, I offered him a seat in my carriage, and we had a most agreeable drive to our destination.

There was a large and brilliant company assembled at Taymouth to meet the Queen, amongst whom was the Duchess of Sutherland and her eldest daughter, Lady Elizabeth Leveson-Gower. The Duchess treated me with marked kindness, and I speedily fell under the influence of the irresistible attraction she exercised over so many, and which made her one of the most charming women of her time. My friendship with the Sutherland family dated from this period, and led, rather more than two years later, when I attained my

majority, to my marriage with Lady Elizabeth, whom I met there for the first time. Lord Aberdeen, who was then Foreign Secretary in Sir Robert Peel's Cabinet, was also among the guests at Taymouth on this occasion. He was one of the most distinguished men in Europe, a trusted friend of all the Continental Sovereigns in the great contest with Napoleon, and had a wide reputation for culture of all kinds.

On the day of the Queen's departure, it was arranged that many of the party should go up to the western end of Loch Tay in boats, whilst others, who were going on with the Queen to Drummond Castle, were to go by road along the shores of the lake, ascend Glen Dochart, and then descend Glenogle to Crieff. I was among the boating-party to the head of Loch Tay.

One of the beauties of Taymouth is a broad green terraced walk from the castle along the river-banks near the point where it issues from the lake in a broad and silent, but deep and rapid, stream. The walk is bordered by fine beech-trees, and the banks are adorned with barberry-bushes hanging their scarlet berries over the dark water. On the north the scene is framed by the finely-wooded steep called Drummond Hill. A little flotilla of boats awaited us near the arches of the bridge which carries the road over the river at its exit. I remember nothing of those who made up the party in the boat in which I went, except that one member of it was Sir Robert Peel. I have already expressed the respect and admiration in which I held him, and I was anxious to meet him in private life. In that sphere, however, his manners were so reserved that only those who were admitted to his intimacy could fully enjoy his conversation. The handsome boat in which we were seated happened to be called the *Galley of Lorne*, and the conversation at one moment turning on the ancient galley form of vessels, I recollect expressing great admiration of its picturesqueness, and adding that I should much like to see one built on the old model. Sir Robert sur-

prised me by asking gravely, ' But what would be the use of it ? ' We all landed at Auchmore, a shooting-lodge belonging to Lord Breadalbane, where there was a wonderful luncheon for the Queen, the Prince, and the whole party. We saw her drive off to Drummond Castle, and then returned in our fleet of boats to Taymouth. It was altogether a splendid pageant. But what impresses itself most on me now, writing fifty-five years later, is the sad recollection that of all that brilliant company there are, so far as I know, only three survivors now—the Queen, the Dowager Lady Ellesmere (then Lady Mary Campbell), and myself.