CHALMERS LECTURES

THE CHURCH IN THE HIGHLANDS

OR THE PROGRESS OF EVANGELICAL RELIGION IN GAELIC SCOTLAND, 563-1843

BY

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καὶ γὰρ εἰ παρελήλυθεν
ὁ τῶν πραγμάτων καιρός, ὁ τοῦ
γε εἰδέναι τὰ τοιαῦτα καιρὸς
ἀεὶ πάρεστι τοῖς εὖ φρονοῦσιν.

DEMOSTHENES, *De Corona*, § 48.

THE COLUMBAN-CELTIC CHURCH

I

THE part of Scotland in which I purpose to trace the progress of Evangelical religion is sufficiently marked off by its physical features, and aptly described as the Highlands and Islands.

When its inhabitants come into the light of history for the first time they are found to be Celts by race and speech, and are referred to by Roman writers as Caledonians—a name which at a later date is used with a limited meaning in the designation ' Caledonians and other Picts '—but from the beginning of the fourth century they have been invariably called Picts.

The state of civilisation to which they had attained at the time of the delimitation of their territories by Roman walls cannot have differed much from what then existed among their kinsmen immediately to the south of those lines. The pages of Tacitus show that

the men who gave battle to the Roman legions at Mons Grampius knew a good many of the arts of peace and war; but the mind stands appalled at the thought of what it meant for them to be cut off—and that for more than three centuries — from all peaceful touch with the higher civilisation for which the Roman Empire then stood, and more especially from the gracious influence of the Evangel.

It is impossible to prove that even the name of Jesus was known in Pictland till after St. Ninian built his 'White House' on the Solway, sometime between 397 and 400. Bede (673-735) commits himself to nothing regarding an early evangelisation of the Picts beyond the familiar and cautious statement that 'the Southern Picts who dwelt on this side of the mountains had embraced the Faith through the preaching of Bishop Ninian.' That, along with what he relates as to Ninian having built a stone church which he dedicated to St. Martin at a place 'appertaining to the province of the Bernicii,' is all that we can rely on as historic fact regarding the opening period of the history of Christianity in North Britain. To interpret

aright Bede's words just quoted, we must bear in mind that his conception of North Britain was got from Ptolemy's map (127-151). There was no other map of Scotland in existence then, nor for centuries thereafter; and although to us it looks like a caricature in which west is changed into north and east into south, it was, in Bede's time, held to be of unquestionable authority. A glance at it convinces a reader of to-day that Bede's Southern Picts occupied the territory which lies between the estuary of the Tay and the opening of the Moray Firth—the whole of that region being on 'this side,' *i.e.* on Bede's side, 'of the mountains.'

Students of history and archæology have cherished hopes of being able by a closer study of traditions and place-names to add to what was already known of Ninian's labours among the Picts; and although, at present, that line of investigation does not promise positive results, it will not readily lose its fascination. If the eye follows the east coast on a modern map of Scotland, beginning at Arbroath, where there is a dedication to Ninian, that is the first of a long series of dedications to

him extending to Ninian's Isle in the Shetland group.[1]

One of the dedications in point is in Glen Urquhart, on Loch Ness-side, where a cell, a well, and a *lios* (enclosure), are associated with Trinnean, the Gaelic for Ringan or Tringan, which are known to be variants of Ninian. The patron saint of the glen is Drosdan—a common Pictish name.[2] In the neighbouring parish of Glenmoriston there are floating traditions of an early missionary of the name of Erchard, whose *clachan*, seat, and well are still pointed out. His bell is said to have been preserved in the churchyard of that parish well into the nineteenth century.[3]

The author of *Urquhart and Glenmoriston* claims those three as the first Christian missionaries in the valley of the Ness. In

[1] Arbroath, St. Vigeans, Stonehaven, Pitmedden, Methlick, Rathven, Bellie (Fochabers), Culbin (Dyke), Nairn, Glen Urquhart, Balconie (?), Nonakil (Rosskeen), Fortrose (?), Navidale (Sutherland), Wick Head, South and North Ronaldshay in Orkney, Ninian's Isle in Shetland, all being at strategic points within easy access of each other.

This list does not exhaust Bishop Forbes's incomplete list. Some of these dedications must be given up. See *Historians of Scotland*, vol. v., Intro. xiii.-xvii.

[2] Mackay's *Urquhart and Glenmoriston*, p. 321.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 324.

view of the other dedications referred to, it is possible that early missionaries may have visited and preached in those glens as suggested; but the details and colouring of the traditions must, I think, belong to a later age. The influence of Ninian's labours is known to have been very transient; whereas the mention of crofts, *clachans*, seats, and bells, demands time for development, and suggests stability and peace, for which the position of those glens in the immediate neighbourhood of one of the chief strongholds of druidism was particularly unfavourable. It must also be taken into account that there is nothing on the pages of Adamnan to indicate that there had been even a temporary break in the heathen darkness that lay on those glens, before the first visit of Columba thereto in 565.

Among the possible pre-Columban missionaries to the Northern Picts mention may be made of St. Barr, or Finbarr, the patron saint of Dornoch; but nothing is known of him beyond the facts that a church at Dornoch, and another in Caithness, with a chapel in Easter Ross, are dedicated to one of that name; and that a yearly market which was

known as Barr's market, was held at Dornoch till recent times. Indeed, everything connected with the name may be put in the same category with the supposed image of him which the inhabitants of the Island of Barra venerated at the beginning of the eighteenth century.[1] There is no agreement as to the age in which he lived, nor as to whether there had been more than one missionary of that name in those northern parts. No one can say for certain whether Barr was a native of Whithorn, of Caithness, or of Erin. He cannot be identified with either Barr of Cork or Barr of Moville. It is, however, safe to conclude that some unknown man of that name had so lived and preached the Gospel in those regions as to have impressed their inhabitants with the sanctity of his character and the sincerity of his purpose.

II

When we turn to the western mainland and islands for vestiges of pre-Columban missionaries, we step on firmer ground and enter a clearer atmosphere. No one doubts that Christian agents both accompanied and

[1] Martin's *Description of the Western Isles*, p. 92.

followed the Scots of Erin, who took possession of Kintyre, Knapdale, and Lorn, about the beginning of the sixth century—for the inhabitants of the Irish homeland of those immigrants had adopted the Christian religion before then.

It is also accepted as historic fact that Irish missionaries communicated the knowledge of salvation through Christ Jesus to the inhabitants of some of the Western Isles before Columba's arrival. Brendan and Kieran founded monasteries on Tiree and Aileach before that event. We are invited to go still further back. Trenholme, in his well-told *Story of Iona*, mentions, as Skene also does, that in an ancient life of St. Bridget reference is made to a 'priest named Ninidh of Mull, who, when revisiting Erin in 523, administered her last communion to the celebrated saint.' He suggests that Kilninian, formerly known as Kilnoening, in Mull, may be named after the said Ninidh.[1]

But any lights that penetrated the spiritual and moral darkness which brooded over the Highlands and Islands of Alba, previous to the 12th May 563, were A.D. 563.

[1] Trenholme's *Story of Iona*, p. 16.

feeble and flickering. On that day, however, Columba took possession of one of our smaller isles, and made it a centre from which the light of the Gospel sent its cheering rays to every isle of the west, and into many a far-reaching glen of the mainland.

A man like Columba, of royal descent, and already held in high honour as a founder of monasteries, would doubtless have been in communication with his relative, the king of the Alban Dalriada, as to many things connected with his mission, ere setting forth from Derry. A place of residence would have been chosen; temporary buildings would have been erected; and at the outset of the voyage Columba's pilot would have been instructed to steer either for the stronghold of King Aidan, at Dunadd near Crinan, or for the isle which till then had merely been one of the

> '. . . group of islets gay
> That guard famed Staffa round.'

That isle, with its 2000 acres—500 of them being arable—and rising at its highest point to little more than 200 feet, has ever since been known as I,[1] or, when more definitely

[1] I is pronounced like ē long.

characterised, as I Cholum Cille [1]—the ' Ioua insula ' of Adamnan, whence our Iona, some unknown copyist having mistaken the u in Ioua for an n. Than Iona no better position could have been chosen for Columba's purposes. It was comparatively safe, being a small island, and far from the mainland ; for the days of the marauding Vikings were not yet. It was also central, having an archipelago of inhabited islands within sight of it, while the mainland was readily accessible to the monks in their coracles by many sea-lochs.

If we fix our attention on the men who, along with their great abbot, were entering on their apostolic enterprise, we observe that every man of them is in the prime of life. High purpose is stamped on every brow. No headdress is worn, and each has the front part of the head shaved. They wear sandals and are clad in serviceable, close-fitting tunics, with long and hooded over-robes, made of white woollen cloth.

We can, in imagination, walk through their unpretentious village. The small church, or oratory, with its side aisle or exedra, is

[1] The Celts of Erin and Alba knew him as Colum or Calum of the Church.

was with water only. The sign of the Cross was used, but they had neither crucifix nor image. They laid stress on public confession of sin, and their discipline was severe; but auricular confession and penance, in the Roman Catholic sense, they had not. They practised fasting, and observed the period of Lent, fixing the date of Easter according to the eighty-four years' cycle which had been in use in the whole Western Church till the close of the fourth century.

We can imagine what a hive of religious and industrial activity Iona became. The services of the oratory were neither too numerous nor too burdensome. The hum of the schools might be heard all day long. Copyists and illuminators of MSS. were busy.[1] Trades and industries common to the period, and which the community needed, were carried on. Boat-building and tillage demanded attention. Their harbour was also busy. Fishers and seal-hunters moved about in small boats. Cargoes of corn from Tiree, and of timber from Lorn, had to be unshipped. Visitors of all ranks came and

[1] The ornamentation of their books was of a high and distinctive character.

went. Preachers were sent out to evangelise, and hermits in their coracles sailed to, or returned from, their solitary ' deserts.'

The master mind of the lively community was the great abbot—the famous founder of monasteries; the earnest evangelist; the gifted bard, and the skilful writer and illuminator of MSS., who could take pains to win the attachment of his white horse, but whose temper was impetuous.

III

Columba meant all along to attack the ' Jericho ' of Pictish druidism on the Ness, with as little delay as possible. As soon, therefore, as he got his monastery into working order, and had given attention to the pressing needs of Dalriada, he carried out his memorable visit to King Brude, taking with him two Irish visitors—Abbots Comgal of Bangor and Cainneach of Achaboe—who, being Picts, were specially qualified to aid him in the chief object of his journey.

Adamnan's collection of prophecies, miracles, and visions fails us here as a source from which to learn what we most desire to know regarding that visit; yet, as Burton

sententiously puts it, 'small facts are to be found in the telling of the large fictions.'

From various sources we gather that the religion of the Picts of Alba was a kind of nature-worship. They adored the sun, and used fire in some of their rites. They believed in the existence of beings like men, but not of the human race. Such were their *daoine sithe* and *uruisgean*—the fairies and brownies of later ages—who could be benevolent or malevolent, according to their whim. They regarded wells, rivers, tarns, glens, and mountains as haunted by these creatures of the imagination which are now the plaything of poetic fancy, as 'the banshee of the waters,' and 'the brown man of the muirs.' Their druids were mere wizards, much after the fashion of modern African rain-makers. They claimed to have power over the elements, and to be able to interpret omens. Being a kind of secret society, and in possession of more useful knowledge than was common, they became a caste whose members stood for the priests, doctors, schoolmasters, and historians of the tribes.

The approach of the three stately white-robed and psalm-singing abbots to King

Brude's residence, near Inverness, may well enough have seemed to the tribesmen like a visit of the princes of Fairyland; but Adamnan's description of the visitors obtaining an entrance into the palace by means of a series of miracles, is only another way of saying that they were unwelcome.

Broichan, the chief druid, regarded their presence as a challenge. He was therefore prepared to put forth the best efforts of himself and his assistants to retain the confidence of king and people; but Columba was ready to face their age-long deceptions. He drank water from their deadliest well, and defied the spirit of the well by washing his hands and feet in its waters. He ordered one of his attendants to swim across a pool of the river Ness, which was believed to be the habitat of a voracious creature—*aquatilis bestia*, Adamnan calls it—for Columba knew it could be nothing more terrifying than an otter, or, at the worst, a furred and whiskered seal that might on occasion swim up with the flood-tide.

Readers of the tales in the *Book of Armagh* which relate the encounters between St. Patrick, on the Hill of Slane, and the druids

not, in any effective sense, influence the territory which lies to the north of the Caledonian valley.[1]

Elena, a sub-monastery of Iona, is believed to have been in Islay, or on a small isle close to its north-west coast. Columba had also a foundation—if not more than one—in Tiree. Magh-Luinge was certainly one of his; but that Artchain was also his is questionable. Other famous abbots such as Comgal, Brendan, Findchan, and Moluag, were also attracted to that island, largely on account of the fertility of its soil. While the purpose of having such communities in Tiree was primarily religious, farming was also carried on by them, and it is known that some of those religious houses were occasionally used as penitentiaries. In the Isle of Skye Columba established two mission centres—one at Snizort, and another on an island in the bay of Portree. Of the extensive ruins at Monkstadt, in Trotternish, Skye, nothing is known.

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whom King Laoghaire of Meath brought with him from Tara, will have observed that they belong to the same class of legends as Adamnan's description of what took place at Inverness. In each case we have the legend in the proportion to which it had time to grow, before being committed to writing. Adamnan gives his tale in the form and size to which it had attained at the end of the hundred years that separated his time from that of Columba's visit to King Brude.[1]

Of the conferences between the king and the abbots, or of how or when—if at all—King Brude became a professed Christian, or of arrangements for founding a missionary institute at, or near, Inverness, we learn nothing from Adamnan. Subsequent history shows that the druidism of the Picts, so far as it held the place of a religion, fell quickly before the doctrines of Christianity, and that its power, as such, was broken; but that, so far as its votaries professed to deal with the occult, and to be able to give others power to avert harm or to inflict it, by spells and

[1] All those tales of wonder-working are due to the accretion of legend around simple facts.

enchantments, it was long-lived—if it be even yet quite dead.

Columba appears to have repeatedly visited Inverness, and if the legend written in Gaelic on one of the parchment leaves of the *Book of Deer* be based on fact, he must have travelled and preached as far to the east as Buchan. Dedications to him are found at Petty, Kingussie, Auldearn, and Aberdour, and he may have been present in those places; but with the exception of a dedication to him in Glen Urquhart and another at the head of Loch Arkeg, on the west coast, no other can be located on the north side of the Caledonian valley till the Pentland Firth is sighted.

The dedications on St. Coomb's isle, in the Pentland Firth, and at Dirlet and Olrig, in Caithness, may have been links of communication between the Western Isles and the Broch of Deerness. There was also a dedication to St. Columba in the parish of Clyne, in Sutherland. The question as to whether the St. Coomb, Colm, or Colman, of the province of the Catti, was, or was not, the saint of that name who is commemorated in Buchan, remains still unsolved; but, in any case, it is beyond question that Columba of Iona did

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Columba, and other like-minded missionaries from Erin, is certain, for almost every rocky isle of the west bears evidence of its having been used by them as a ' desert ' or hermitage. Ruins of their *clachans* or stone huts are found on Troda, Fladachuan, and the Shiant Isles, in the Minch ; on St. Kilda and the Flannan Isles, in the North Atlantic, and on Sulasgeir and Rona, several leagues to the north and north-east of the Butt of Lewis.

The monastery of Aileach—a mile-long isle off Easdale, and commonly known as Elachanave—that is, Aileach-an-naoimh (Aileach of the Saint), was founded by Brendan, and became Columba's favourite retreat, if they are correct who identify it with Hinba. On it we have our best-preserved, though seldom-visited, ruins of a Columban monastery. The chief factor which led to the choice of that particular isle of the Garvelloch group, presents itself at once to the visitor in the perennial spring of water which is known as ' Columba's Well.' The church or oratory (25 feet by 15) which is built of a slaty stone, has a square-headed door in the western gable, and a small window in the eastern one. It looks as if it had got grey and weary in

waiting to be roofed, for hardly a stone of it is out of place after those thirteen hundred years. A small underground structure, like a sunken well, with low walls and floor of slabs, may have been a place of penance. I have ventured into it ; but only a collier would care to sit on his heel within it for any length of time. On a slope, facing the sun, there are ruins of two bee-hive cells, one of which had evidently been a large double one, while the other was small and single. If the visitor cares to inspect the graveyard, the ruins of the kiln, and of what had been the comfortless cells of the monks, listening the while to the swish and moan of the restless sea, he will soon be quite prepared to meet ' Virgnous the Anchorite ' himself—so lonely, eerie, and other-worldish is the place.[1]

' Cormac, the navigator,' was a contemporary of Columba, and did not sail the stormy North Sea in vain, if it was to him that Orkney owed the settlement on the Broch of Deerness.

St. Donnan, although a contemporary of the Abbot of Iona, had no connection with him or his monastery. Adamnan refers to

[1] Adamnan's *Life of St. Columba*, book III. ch. xxiv.

a visit which Donnan paid to Columba, to ask him to become his soul-friend,[1] and tells us that Columba declined, ostensibly on the ground that he foresaw red martyrdom before Donnan and his monks; but it may really have been because he disapproved of his mode of evangelising. Donnan had no fixed settlement. His monks and he moved about in a body of fifty or more, which was in itself enough to make them unwelcome, if not suspected visitors. His mode of working was to tell off his disciples—singly or otherwise—to labour for a time in selected districts. His progress is traceable in place-names from Wigtown to Caithness. The names of fifty of his monks are known. Kildonan, in Sutherland, seems to have been his headquarters for some considerable time; after which his course can be traced to Eigg.

There are conflicting accounts as to the place and manner of St. Donnan's death; but it is generally held that he and his community were massacred on the island of Eigg in 617—most probably at the hands of early Scandinavian 'pirates of the sea.' [2]

[1] Anamcharaid, or Confessor.

[2] Zimmer and Bugge. See Henderson's *Norse Influence on Celtic Scotland*, pp. 11-12.

More important than any of the missionary institutions yet mentioned—Iona excepted—is that which was founded by Luag, or Moluag, on the island of Lismore, sometime after 565. The number of dedications to him which exist in Mull, Morven, Raasay, and Tiree witness to the success of his mission in the isles and on the western seaboard; but his evangelising efforts seem to have had most success in the north-east of Alba. The Rev. A. B. Scott, minister of Kildonan, Sutherlandshire, who has brought an acute and discriminating mind to the study of Moluag's life and work, carries his readers pleasantly along with him as he traces the progress of the earnest abbot, first to Rosemarkie in Ross, where he founded a sub-monastery destined to have an interesting history of its own; and from there to Mortlach in Banffshire, from which he extended his sphere till, as Mr. Scott thinks, it touched a Pictish mission in the province of Buchan on the east and a group of churches of British origin in the valley of the Dee.[1]

[1] There is a dedication to Moluag at Wellhead, in the parish of Dyke, near Forres. When the sun breaks through dark clouds in the west old people thereabout say—'There's Moluag's rift.' I have this from Mr. George Bain, author of the *History of Nairnshire*.

IV

The first chapter of the history of Iona closed on the 9th June 597, when in his seventy-seventh year Columba entered into his rest. The many agencies which the famous abbot founded and superintended in Erin and Alba, were carried on wisely and successfully by a line of successors chosen from his own tribe or kinsfolk.

The Golden Age of Iona may be said to have culminated in its successful mission in Northumbria, East Anglia, and Mercia, which had the island monastery of Lindisfarne as its base. It seemed indeed, for a time, as if the Columban Church was to cover the whole of Britain with its mission centres — so rapidly did it spread, and with such beneficent results. Yet its triumphant progress in those parts was destined to be short-lived.

It was in Northumbria that the Columban Church came into collision with the Roman Catholic Church for the first time. A.D. 664. Although the points of difference between the two Churches, which were disputed at the Council of Whitby (664), were (1) the form of the tonsure, and (2) the method

of fixing the true date of Easter, the root question, all the while, was whether the Bishop of Rome was, or was not, the head of the whole Christian Church. If he really was that, then in the opinion of the Roman Church there was no room for nonconformity to it in the smallest jot or tittle. The Columban advocate, Abbot Colman, in failing to take his stand on the ground that our Lord's words to St. Peter are figurative, and not to be taken literally, fell helplessly into the trap laid for him by his astute opponent, Wilfred of York.

King Oswy, on hearing it corroborated by Colman that the Lord Jesus said to St. Peter, 'I will give unto thee the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven,' instantly announced that he resolved to be on the side of him who has the keys. There was no more to be said; the conference ended; but the age-long strife between the two Churches was only beginning.

The ease with which the Romanising party obtained their dialectical victory at Whitby, encouraged them to hope that, by the instrumentality of their easily made convert, King Oswy, they might both Saxonise and Romanise the whole of Alba. As a matter

of fact the Saxons did, shortly thereafter, subdue the Picts, and held them as tributaries, till in 685 the Scots and Picts temporarily united their forces against them, with such crushing effect as to make the battle of Dunnichen, in which the Saxon king and most of his army were slain, one of the famous battles in early Scottish history.[1] The Saxons were thereupon driven south of the Forth; and a Saxon bishopric, of the Roman order, which had been founded at Abercorn, and placed under Bishop Trumuin in 691, ceased to exist. Those were not experiences which were likely to move the Picts and Scots to slacken in their attachment to their own Church, or to the customs and forms peculiar to it.

Whether, and to what extent, the arrival and settlement, on the western seaboard of Alba, of strong contingents of Irish monks, between 664 and 685, had A.D. 671. to do as consequents with the defeat of the Columbans at Whitby, can only be surmised. Maolrubha of Bangor arrived in 671—seventy-four years after Columba's death—and two

[1] Dr. Mitchell's *History of the Highlands and Gaelic Scotland*, p. 98.

northern boundary of Argyll. Nearly one thousand years after his death, Maolrubha was remembered in Wester Ross only as a heathen deity, to whom sacrifices were offered yearly at Loch Maree.

St. Congan, with his sister Kentigerna, and her son Fillan, were contemporaries of Maolrubha, and took up mission work in the wild region between Lochalsh and Ardnamurchan. In 688 Adamnan, the biographer of Columba, and his eighth successor as Abbot of Iona, conformed to the two disputed Roman usages; but failing to carry the members of his monastery with him in that matter, he withdrew almost entirely from Iona, and became an ardent and successful advocate of those same usages elsewhere. He laboured much in Breadalbane, where he founded the great monastery of Dull. He is commemorated in Glenlyon and on Loch Tay-side. There is also a dedication to him in the parish of Cawdor, Nairnshire.[1] Adamnan was a man of high character, and next to Columba the most influential of the Abbots of Iona.

It may have been he who induced St. Fillan

years later he erected his monastery at Applecross. He was an Irish Pict, and that may have determined both his coming and his choice of a site; for Applecross commanded the entrances into Pictland, and was also within easy reach of the Northern Hebrides.

Maolrubha became the evangelist and organiser of missions among the Picts of Ross, Sutherland, and Caithness as well as of Skye and the Long Island. He is widely commemorated; but as he had no biographer all we know of his long ministry of forty-nine years at Applecross, and of his monastery and successors, is summed up in a few Irish annals covering a period of 131 years.[1] His monastery at Applecross became famous and wealthy. It is said to have had the right of sanctuary within a radius of six miles. The tradition is, that the whole region between Lochcarron and Loch Broom was gifted to it by the Scots, who had by that time made Loch Broom the

[1] 671. Maolrubha of Bangor sailed to Britain.
673. Maolrubha founded the Church of Apurcrossan.
722. Maolrubha died at Apurcrossan, in the eightieth year of his age.
737. Failbe of Guaire, heir of Maolrubha of Apurcrossan, was drowned in the deep sea with his sailors to the number of twenty-one.
802. MacOigi of Apurcrossan, Abbot of Bangor, died.
Annals of Tighernac and of Ulster.

to remove from the district of Lochalsh to Tyndrum in Perthshire, where he founded his monastery, having first placed his mother, Kentigerna, in a religious house for women on an island in Loch Lomond. The strath in which his monastery stood still bears his name. His pool is also pointed out in the river near by. His bell is in the Edinburgh Antiquarian Museum, and so is his famous *cograch* or pastoral staff.

Blane, Mund, Fillan of Strathearn, and Machar are little more than names, yet they and many other Irish missionaries did so impress the people among whom they preached Christ that the public opinion of those distant ages canonised them in place-names which neither wars nor revolutions have effaced. In doctrine, discipline, and manner of worship they were at one with Columba and Maolrubha. In government our earliest Church was entirely abbatial—the rule of each abbot being confined to his own monastery and such sub-monasteries and preaching stations as belonged thereto. No such thing existed as an ecclesiastical supremacy of Iona, or official primacy of

sub-monasteries as stated. The same is true of the other great abbots.

One of the darkest periods in Scottish history since the introduction of Christianity thereinto began with the reign of King Nectan. The fabulist and legendmonger have filled it up with the kind of fiction that became popular in a later age. What may be accepted as historic fact, is that King Nectan adopted the Roman usages in 710, and that he ordered his subjects to do the same. As to the Edict which he is said to have issued in 717, ordering ' the expulsion of the family of Iona across Drumalban,' there is reason for doubt. The statement regarding it is based solely upon an entry in the *Annals* of Tighernac, who lived in Erin in the eleventh century, and died there as late as 1088. The entry was therefore made three hundred years after the event which it purports to register. It was afterwards copied into the *Annals of Ulster*, which were not arranged into their present shape till the middle of the fifteenth century. It was also inserted in the *Chronicles of the Picts and Scots*—a twelfth-century compilation.[1]

A.D. 710.

[1] *Collectanea de rebus Albanicis*, pp. 209-11.

Over against so unsatisfactory a source as that we place the complete silence of Bede regarding the Edict. As Bede was a contemporary of Nectan, and also the recorder of his adoption of the two Roman usages already mentioned—besides being one of the monks of the monastery of Jarrow, of which Ceolfrid, the correspondent of King Nectan, was then abbot—he must have known of the Edict, and could hardly have failed to refer to it, if it ever existed.

The date on which the monks of Iona conformed in the matter of Easter has also been rather indefinite—716 being commonly given. Bede writes (chap. iv. book III.), that 'their old manner of keeping Easter continued to be followed at Iona till the year of our Lord's incarnation 715,' and then goes on to say that 'the most reverent and holy father and priest, Egbert, . . . corrected their error, and reduced them to the true canonical day of Easter.' That might be taken to mean that the change was made in 715. That was not so, however, for in chap. xxii. book v., the venerable historian informs us that 'in 716 Egbert, coming among the monks of Hii (Iona), was joyfully and honourably received.'

Egbert may have made followers for himself at Iona from the outset; but further on in the same chapter Bede writes that 'in the year 729, in which the Easter of our Lord was celebrated on the 24th April, he (Egbert) performed the solemnities of the Mass,' and adds that 'he died that same day.' Bede pursues the subject, saying: 'It was a wonderful dispensation of the Divine providence that the venerable man not only passed out of this world in Easter, but also when Easter was celebrated *on that day on which it had never been wont to be kept in those parts.*' Bede also tells us that Egbert congratulated himself on being 'continued in the flesh till he saw his followers admit and celebrate with him that, as Easter day, *which they had ever before avoided.*' That fixes 729, and not 716, as the year in which the majority of the monks then in Iona conformed to the Roman computation for the date of Easter. And even then, and for long thereafter, there was a nonconforming body in Iona.[1]

[1] See Skene's *Celtic Scotland*, vol. ii. pp. 175 and 280-1.

V

So far as annalists and chroniclers throw any light upon the affairs of the Picts and Scots, during the obscure period which then set in, they show both nations distracted by internal strife. That Selbach, King of the Scots, abdicated in 723, and that Nectan, King of the Picts, did the same in the following year, and entered a monastery, are generally accepted as historic facts.[1] Nor is there ground for questioning the statement that although the struggle for conquest between the Picts and Scots seemed to culminate about 734-6,[2] the two nations maintained a separate existence in 781, when Fergus, King of the Picts, died.[3]

A.D. 723.

For all that took place during the sixty-two years that followed we may accept the statement of Sir Herbert Maxwell that 'any glimpse afforded by the Irish annals show Dalriada as a province subject to the Picts, but incessantly and violently striving to regain independence.'

It was a calamitous time for the Christian

[1] *Scotland under her Early Kings*, vol. i. p. 15.
[2] Mitchell's *History of the Highlands*, p. 111.
[3] *Annals of Ulster.*

religion in the particular field which we have before us. The woes of its monastic mission centres and stations culminated in those ages of terror, in which Danes and Norwegians varied their internecine wars, and plundering expeditions, by sudden raids on some unresisting monastic community. It had been well for the harmless monks if other eyes than those of the poet's fancy had seen

> 'Watchfires burst across the main
> From Rona, and Uist, and Skye,
> To tell that the ships of the Dane
> And the red-haired slayers were nigh.'

From 794 till 986 the story of Iona is but a record of savage outrages by Dubhgalls—black strangers or Danes, and somewhat later by Finngalls—white strangers or Norwegians, relieved by an occasional reference to the heart-moving devotion of survivors of the Christian brotherhood in relighting the ancient lamp. The terse and cold *Annals* of Tighernac, and of Ulster, Buelan and Innishfallen, are the principal sources from which our Celtic antiquaries culled the few scraps of traditional information we possess regarding Iona in those centuries of dread.[1]

[1] 794. The devastation of all the Isles of Britain by the Gentiles.

All the religious centres in the Isles, and on the western mainland border, were devastated. The Northern Hebrides were almost swept of inhabitants, the few who were left being reduced to a state of servitude. Dr. Henderson in his *Norse Influence on Celtic Scotland*,[1] founding on the evidence of place-names, concludes that in Lewis and Harris 'the Norse invasion was tantamount to a migration which practically issued in the removal of the Gadhelic stock,' and that 'four to one is not too high a reckoning as to the proportion of Norse to Gadhelic names in Lewis.' In the Inner and Southern Hebrides the proportion is less.

In 843 the pall that covered the mainland of Alba for more than a hundred years is temporarily lifted, and we behold the un-

795. The devastation of I Columcille.
798. The spoliation of the isles . . . between Erin and Alba.
802. I Columcille burnt by the Gentiles.
806. The family of I (68) slain by the Gentiles.
825. The martyrdom of Blathmac by the Gentiles in I Columcille.
829. Diarmat, Abbot of I, went to Alba with relics of Columcille.
831. Diarmat came to Erin with relics of Columcille.
Translated from *Chronicon Hyense* in *Historians of Scotland*, vi. 337.

[1] Page 19.

expected and almost incredible sight, of a united kingdom of Picts and Scots, with Kenneth MacAlpine the Scot on its throne —an important and formative fact. That masterful monarch lost no time in establishing his court at Scone—the old capital of the Pictish kingdom. He also set about the erection—or rebuilding as it may have been—of a church at Dunkeld, with a view to its being the principal church of the united kingdom, as Iona had been the mother-church of the Dalriadic Scots. King Kenneth almost certainly meant thereby to proclaim his purpose of having the Columban Church as the Church of his kingdom; and that he meant it to be as independent of the Roman Church as his kingdom was independent of Northumbria and Strathclyde.

The annalists give us an interesting glimpse or two, later on, of how Church matters were moving. In the reign of Constantine—Kenneth MacAlpine's grandson—an assembly was held on the Mòd-Hill of Scone (906) in which State and Church were represented by the king on the one side, and Cellach, Bishop-Abbot of St. Andrews, on the other. All parties are said to have sworn 'to protect

the laws and discipline of the faith, and the rights of the Churches, equally with the Scots' —the last clause meaning, apparently, that the Picts and Scots were from that time to be on complete equality. It reads like a national confirmation of the freedom which King Grig is said to have given to the Scots sometime before his death in 893. In 903, Dunkeld was destroyed by the Vikings, and from that time St. Andrews became the principal church of the united kingdom of the MacAlpine dynasty.

VI

The eleventh century marks 'the beginning'—as Cosmo Innes puts it—'of a brighter period, and the opening of a new era.' As soon as the Church stands out in the clear light of history, two things in connection with it arrest our attention: (1) its organisation has been modified, and (2) its extensive lands have been largely alienated and secularised.

We meet with lay-abbots who discharge no religious function, and we find monasteries in possession of communities of married clerics. The lay-abbots own wide stretches

of what had been monastic lands; whilst the married clerics are also landowners, who can pass on their lands and ecclesiastical offices to their sons. Nothing of that sort appears in all the earlier glimpses we get of the Columban Church, yet such changes therein might be anticipated should a state of decay or laxity of discipline set in. For the Columban monasteries were tribal institutions, supported by maintenance lands gifted by the tribes acting through their chiefs; and as the Church had then no legal corporate existence, we might expect that in cases of internal decay, or of devastation by war, its lands would revert to the tribes and chiefs who had given them for a purpose which had the good of the tribe in view. There was no one else who could claim them; and should any such monastery be refounded it would lie entirely with the tribe and its chief to make such arrangements for its maintenance as suited themselves. And if we add to these considerations the clear evidence we have that married clergymen were numerous in the Roman Church, which bordered with the Celtic Church at the Forth, we have a condition of things which was well

fitted to produce the changes referred to. The chiefs, or the heirs of the original founders of the monasteries, as the case might be, would retain the Church lands, and assume the title without the office of abbot. At the same time portions of the said lands would be set apart for the maintenance of the monasteries—care being taken that in them also the principle of heredity would rule both as to offices and lands. No clearer proof of the decadence of the Columban Church can be adduced.

The *Book of Deer* proves, however, that those changes were not general. Till the twelfth century the monastery of Deer was maintained on Columban principles—the same being probably true of Turriff, Mortlach and Clova.

The scantiness of reliable sources of evidence, however, makes it difficult for us to form a just estimate of the extent and value of the work which our old Gaelic Church accomplished. The heathen darkness in which the earliest Irish missionaries found the people of Alba was appalling; yet no other men were so well adapted for the high enterprise which they undertook. The two

peoples sprang from a common stock, and spoke dialects of one language. Their social and political conditions were much alike, and besides, the peculiar monasticism which the Irish monks brought with them, fitted easily and readily into the tribal system of the Picts.

The defects and weaknesses of the type of monasticism which they practised are flagrant. Its form of government was not after a New Testament model. No real bond of union existed between the heads of its different monasteries. They had no General Council. No representative body met to gather and give expression to the mind of the Church on any matter. Columbanism afforded no scope for initiating movements bearing upon the moral and spiritual good of the nation, such as the translation of the Scriptures into the language of the Scots, the general education of the people, or the formation and oversight of properly organised congregations or districts. Encased as it was in unchangeable customs and forms, it was quite incapable of dealing effectively with the spiritual, moral, and educational requirements of a nation.

Yet, withal, we owe very much to our oldest Church; all, indeed, that stood for Christianity in Gaelic Scotland for five hundred years, and with all its defects we can only think of it with gratitude and affection. Its early agents especially, and some of its later missionaries, like Duthac of Tain, who probably laboured in Ross-shire towards the end of the Columban period, lived up to the light they had. They taught the truths that are essential to salvation. Their standard of religion and morals was the Bible. They led lives of simplicity, devotion and self-denial. They sought neither honours nor wealth. They sailed stormy seas, and trod wolf-haunted forests to bring the message of salvation through Christ to the living and the dying. They were all things to all men that they might save some.

LECTURE II

THE MEDIEVAL CHURCH

1068–1560

THE MEDIEVAL CHURCH

I

THE systematic and steady process of bringing the Gaelic Church into complete conformity with the great Church of the West may be said to have begun in the 'councils,' as Turgot calls them, which were held between the queen and some of its leaders. Of one of those 'councils' we have a pretty full account.[1] On the one side we see the royal and gracious lady Queen Margaret, 'with a very few of her friends,' and on the other, the representatives of the Gaelic Church, with King Malcolm Ceanmòr as President.

The king also interpreted, the reason assigned being that 'he knew the English language quite as well as his own'—his own being Gaelic—for, at that time, although Malcolm's sway extended to the Tweed, the

[1] *Life of St. Margaret*, edited by William Forbes-Leith, S.J., p. 44.

Firth of Forth was the southern boundary of Gaelic-speaking Scotland. To the north of that line the spoken tongue of chiefs and people was Gaelic ; and their Church was the old Gaelic Church of Alba, with such modifications as time had brought. The Lothians had already been incorporated with the Roman Catholic Church, and were therefore not represented, except as a part of that Church in the bi-lingual councils in point.

The chief subjects discussed were : (1) the day of the week on which the Feast of Lent should begin ; (2) the duty of partaking of the Lord's Supper at Easter, and the necessity for uniformity with the Catholic Church as to the mode of its observance—avoiding ' some sort of strange rite said to be observed in certain parts of Scotland ' ; (3) the reverence due to the Lord's Day on which the Scots had been accustomed to do ' every kind of worldly business ' ; and (4) the custom of marrying within certain relationships. By the phrase ' many other inveterate customs '—all of them presumably out of conformity with the Church of Rome—Turgot covers things which can only be guessed at. He sums up the results of the

said ' councils ' rather sanguinely, by affirming that ' the Queen's opponents, giving up their obstinacy and yielding to reason, willingly consented to adopt all she recommended.' [1]

As to the Feast of Lent, because the Celtic churchmen thought they should imitate our Lord by fasting for forty consecutive days,[2] rather than have a break in their fast on each Lord's Day in Lent, and because they merely continued to do what the whole Church did in earlier days, they were accused of being ' the only persons acting in opposition to the authority of our Lord Himself, and the tradition of the whole Church.' [3]

The Gaelic churchmen are said to have alleged that the observance of the Lord's Supper at Easter was neglected by them for fear of eating and drinking unworthily ; but if their acting so, on the ground of an erroneous interpretation of the words of Scripture,

[1] *Life of St. Margaret*, p. 52.

[2] ' This period of fasting was designed to furnish the Christians an opportunity of preparing themselves by a more moderate indulgence of the sensual appetites, by abstinence from the pleasures of the world, and by the diligent reading of God's Word, to enter more worthily upon the celebration . . . of the Holy Supper.'—Neander's *Church History*, vol. iii. p. 408.

[3] *Life of St. Margaret*, p. 46.

cannot be defended, neither can the teaching be approved which Turgot reports as having been addressed to them, 'that cleansing from sin is attained by chastened penance, by trying fasts, by almsgiving and tears.' [1]

There must have been a strong reason for the silence which was maintained regarding 'some sort of strange rite.' We know that the Columban Church called the Lord's Table an altar, and the Supper itself 'the sacrifice of oblation.' We believe also that it was frequently celebrated without participation except by the celebrant. But may they not have occasionally shown the Lord's death by partaking of bread and wine, using, the while, a simple and brief Gaelic ritual?

Whilst the laxity which is said to have prevailed among the Celts as to the observance of the Lord's Day cannot be excused, it may be to some extent explained. The Jewish Sabbath—the seventh day—continued to be regarded by the early Christians as a day of rest, whilst the first day of the week was observed as a day of gladness in commemoration of the Resurrection. It was not till after 425 that the first day came to be

[1] *Life of St. Margaret*, p. 43.

generally observed as the Christian Sabbath ; for in that year the Roman Emperor forbade the holding of spectacular exhibitions on that day, and the Council of Laodicea enjoined its proper observance.[1] There was evidently a loud call, in Queen Margaret's time, for improvement in the important matter of Sabbath observance.

The marriage custom, which the Scottish clerics permitted, whereby a man might marry his stepmother, or the widow of his brother, might be looked for among the Picts, whose unwritten law it was that hereditary succession followed in the *female line* ; but the custom was not unknown in Erin and South Britain.

Nothing was said at those ' councils ' about the celibacy of the clergy, or the appropriation or assumption of Church lands by lay-abbots. Those points could not appropriately be discussed before King Malcolm Ceanmòr, who was himself the grandson of a lay-abbot—Crinan of Dunkeld—and, besides, his own son Ethelred may at that moment have been, as he certainly was at a later date, the lay-abbot of Dunkeld.

[1] Neander's *Church History*, p. 405.

The features of the Church which was represented in those 'councils' seem strangely familiar to us. It might have been the abbot and seniors of Iona of the sixth, instead of the representatives of the Scottish Church of the eleventh century who were there. Changes there had been, but on the whole the Church's identity was strikingly maintained. For four hundred years the Catholic or universal Church, as it styled itself, had lamented the condition of the Church of Alba as being outwith 'Holy Church,' yet, after all the efforts put forth to bring the Scottish Church—as I shall henceforth call it—into conformity with the great Church of the West, here it is before us, in the last quarter of the eleventh century, answering to what Cumine, Adamnan, and Bede placed on record as to its distinguishing peculiarities. In the opinion of the Roman Church which was now in the field and ably represented by Queen Margaret and her friends, the Scottish Church consisted entirely of nonconformists—Cèle Dè or Culdees. Turgot does not use any of those names, but the people for whom they stood were there.

got a place in the common speech of the latter as Culdee, which was their best attempt at pronouncing the name. On the other hand, and to show how tenacious of life an adopted name of that sort may be, the word Saxon was at the same time taken over by the Celts into their speech in the familiar form of *Sasunnach*, a name which, when using their mother-tongue, they have ever since applied indiscriminately to Norman, Saxon, or Fleming—indeed they do so still in speaking of a person hailing from across the Scottish border. While, to all others, Saxony is to-day a part of Germany, to the Gael *Sasunn*, or Saxony, is still where it was to his ancestors a thousand years ago—between the Tweed and the English Channel.[1]

In the *Life of St. Margaret* we have the undisputed evidence of Turgot as to the representative character of those who had convened to meet the queen, and as to points —or some of the points—on which they, as representing the Scottish Church, differed from the diocesan Episcopal Church of Rome.

[1] The Highlander has no word in his mother-tongue for England but *Sasunn*, or for Scotland but *Alba* or *Albainn*. *Alban* is but a mis-spelling of the word *Albainn*.

The name Cèle Dè, *i.e.* the God-espoused,[1] was applied at first to such persons as hermits, whose devotion to the things of God impressed the public mind; but in course of time its application was widened, till we find it applied to the entire membership of a monastery as readily as to a community of hermits or to a solitary in his stone hut. It was a self-chosen Gaelic or Irish general name by which Scottish Gaels spoke of persons who separated themselves, or had been set apart, to the service and worship of God, and who bore the visible mark thereof in the tonsure. Other names such as abbot, monk, hermit, reader, and monastery, had been Gallicised, and were in every-day use; but the euphonious and suggestive name Cèle Dè includes all religious persons, without distinction of order or rank, in much the same way as St. Peter addresses all believers as 'a peculiar people . . . the people of God.'

When the Picts and Scots came into touch and commingled to some extent with the Saxons of Lothian, the Gaelic name Cèle Dè

[1] In the Gaelic Scriptures the word spouse is invariably rendered by the word *ceile*.

And manifestly it was not a sect, or a few communities of fanatics, but all that stood for Christianity in the Scottish nation north of the Forth that had to be brought into conformity with the Roman Church.

It is impossible to name a single monastery or religious community in Gaelic Scotland—save one to be presently referred to—which was not at that time in possession of Cèle Dè or Culdees. Although the abbots of St. Andrews had for some time been given the courtesy-title of Bishops of Alba, or of the Scots, they were in reality only bishop-abbots of the St. Andrews monastery of Culdees. They were certainly not diocesan bishops, and could not in any effective sense be bishops of the whole kingdom. The similar institutions at Dunkeld, Abernethy, Brechin, Dunblane, Monymusk, and every other monastery that can be named between St. Andrews and Dornoch were in the hands of the Culdees.

The fair-minded and learned Professor Grub gives the results of his investigations in this particular field. 'To hold simply,' he says, 'that the ancient Columbites were, in many instances, the direct predecessors

of the Culdees, and that the rule of the former differed no otherwise in most respects from that of the latter than a system in its original purity differs from the same system in its corruption is not repugnant to authentic historical testimony, but rather receives confirmation from it.' He does not name any Scottish monastery of that age that was not a seat of the Culdees—nor has any one else been able to do so—yet he punctiliously guards himself against being understood to believe or to say 'that all the Scottish monasteries were seats of the Culdees.' The discovery of the *Book of Deer* as he was writing his valuable history may have made him ultra-cautious.

What Professor Grub unreservedly commits himself to is: 'That the great religious establishments which existed in the middle of the ninth century were still kept up in the beginning of the twelfth, and, with the exception of Iona, were all seats of the Culdees.' That is an important and weighty statement. I shall refer to Iona presently. Meantime let me say, that if the great religious establishments, and the community of hermits on one of the islands of Loch Leven, were samples of what existed elsewhere, and if

they, and the solitaries or hermits who were 'all over the country,' as Turgot testifies, did not form integral parts of the Scottish Church, then there was no such Church. Writers who are still obsessed by preconceptions of a Church existing in the Scotland of Malcolm Ceanmòr, other than that of the Culdees, have to fall back upon probabilities as to what might be found in remote and unknown parts of the country.

No one questions that it was the Scottish Church, by its representatives, that met the good queen in conference; but all the Scottish churchmen who were there met, and presumably all whom they represented, adhered to Columban forms and customs. All the monasteries of which anything is known were manned by Culdees. The hermits on an island on Loch Leven, and all the solitaries of whom any knowledge can be got, were also Cèle Dè or Culdees.

Grub, as has been observed, mentions Iona as the only one of the great religious establishments that was not a seat of Culdees in the beginning of the twelfth century. The fact is, that little is known of Iona between 843 and 1100; yet that little deserves to be

looked into. After Kenneth MacAlpine removed some of the relics of Columba from Iona into his new church at Dunkeld, about 849, Iona ceased to be a mother-church, and became a sub-monastery, first of Kildare, and afterwards of other Irish monasteries. Mention is made of an Abbot Feradhagh of Iona (865-80),[1] in whose time the Irish annals record that: 'The shrine of Columkill, and his reliquaries in general, were taken to Erin for refuge from the foreigners.' They further bear that an Abbot Flann of Iona died in 891, but nothing is heard of a successor to him for forty years.[2] After the death of Earl Thorfinn (1064) Iona came somehow, for a time, into the hands of Malcolm Ceanmòr. It was then that Queen Margaret restored and partially re-endowed its monastery; yet at that very time the coarb of Iona, *i.e.* the heir of its abbacy, was an Irish layman.[3] Such was the condition into which the grand old fane had fallen. Abbot Duncan of Iona, or Dunchadh Mac Mic a Mhanaich, *i.e.* the son of a son of the

[1] Trenholme's *Story of Iona*, p. 71. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 71.

[3] 'In 1070 an Abbot of Iona, MacBaetan, was killed by a son of the Coarb of Columkill.'—Trenholme's *Story of Iona*, p. 76.

monk, died in 1099.[1] That is all we know about him.

The curtain falls again at that time, and remains down for sixty-five years, which brings us to 1164—well past the time mentioned by Professor Grub. Irish abbots would no doubt rule Iona after their own fashion, which, according to the history of Armagh, was often disorderly enough. It was not till the Synod of Cashel, in 1172, that the north of Ireland was 'reduced,' as Stokes puts it, 'beneath the supremacy of Rome.'[2]

III

One cannot lay down the *Life of St. Margaret* without realising something of the breadth and depth of the chasm that separated the Scottish from the Roman Church of that day. The fact that the queen's 'few friends' were English Roman Catholics, sent down on the queen's request by Lanfranc, Archbishop of Canterbury, puts it beyond doubt that the business of absorbing and assimilating the Scottish Church with that of Rome was at last fairly begun.

[1] Trenholme's *Story of Iona*, p. 77.
[2] Stokes's *Ireland and the Celtic Church*, p. 343.

Malcolm's kingdom was at that time small and in its infancy; indeed, it has been suggested that we may regard the 15th August 1057 as its birthday. The Norse held the Western Isles, along with a strip of the mainland, and all they cared for beyond the Moray Firth, while Moray had still its own semi-independent Mòrmaor.

The enterprise and zeal of the Roman Church anticipated the extension of the kingdom northwards, by moving the king to appoint bishops of Moray, Ross, and Caithness, which he did, although there is no evidence of their having been welcomed, or of their having succeeded in organising an ordered ecclesiastical government in any of those regions, till they had become parts of the feudalised kingdom. The ever-watchful Roman Church, through the influence of the King and Church of Norway, had also got two Norse clerics appointed bishops of the Norwegian dominions in Scotland—one of the Isles, including Man, and the other of Orkney.

The ordered and effective progress of the Roman Church on the Highland mainland may be held to have been contemporaneous

with the extension of the feudal kingdom. A beginning on that line was made at Dunkeld—the Gate of the Highlands—as soon as the troubles connected with the succession to the throne after the death of Ceanmòr permitted. No difficulty was met with there, as the Church lands of its Culdee monastery were in possession of the Crown—Ceanmòr's son Ethelred being its lay-abbot, with the secular title of Earl of Fife. The learned and judicious Bishop Dowden cautiously writes : 'We find Cormac Bishop of Dunkeld between probably 1127-1129.'

The same Cormac had in all likelihood acted till then as head or prior of the Culdees of Dunkeld. It was, therefore, easy to make him bishop of the new diocese, and to appoint the monks, or some of them, to be canons of the cathedral, as the plain Culdee Church would from that time be styled. The diocese extended westwards, in effect only, till it touched the Norse sphere of influence in Lorn, although nominally it included all Argyll from Kintyre to Loch Broom. Some such transformation was carried through previous to 1127-29. In 1200, or a little earlier, that diocese was divided into two by

native chiefs. Those great houses were built by strangers, and were without exception occupied either by foreigners or southerners. The Church organisation in the county and diocese of Moray was in course of time crowned by the erection of a cathedral at Elgin (1224), which, while it stood complete, was second to none in the kingdom. Nowhere else in Scotland were the feudal State and the Romanised Church more imposingly in evidence.

Ross

Much had still to be done by both State and Church. Facing the southern shore of the Moray Firth, a wedge-like promontory reaches out into the North Sea for more than thirty miles from the head of the Beauly Firth. That district is Ross. It had often been temporarily joined to Moray, as the frequent use of the double name 'Moray and Ross' implies. It had been for ages a hinterland into which refugees from Moray could easily find their way at Chanonry Point, or at Kessock Ferry. Scottish kings might march through it with their armies without meeting an armed opponent; yet all

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the Pope, on the petition of Bishop John, who desired to be relieved of the western portion of it, ' because he did not understand the language of the people of those parts, and because they knew only their mother-tongue.' He suggested the appointment of his chaplain, Harald, as its first bishop, and the suggestion was acted upon. Local tradition has it that Bishop Harald had his seat, for some time, at what is still called Kilespicerailt, *i.e.* the Church of Bishop Harald in Muckairn.

Moray

The rich province of Moray, which then extended from the river Spey to the water-shed between it and Argyll, did not really become an integral part of the kingdom of the sons of Margaret till after the battle of Stracathro in 1130, when Angus, the last semi-independent Mòrmaor or Rì of Moray, was slain along with three thousand to four thousand of his men. The province was soon thereafter forfeited to the Crown, and portions of its rich lands were divided[1] among King

[1] Kings Alexander II. and III. made similar donations of Moray lands to churchmen and laymen.

David's favourites, who were chiefly gentlemen of foreign descent. That led to the erection of a line of castles with feudal baronies attached, that stretched from the river Farrar to the Spey. Freskins, Bysets, De Fentons, De Grahams, Grants, Comyns, and others were put in possession of the greater part of it, and thereby the tribal system was displaced by the feudal.

Several centres of population along that line were then made burghs, some of which were afterwards raised by William the Lyon to the position of royal burghs, enjoying valuable privileges. Tradesmen and merchants of different nationalities settled in those towns; foreign knights brought their foreign men-at-arms and other followers; so that French, Flemish, and Saxon may have been as commonly heard on their streets as Gaelic.

The Roman Catholic Church, which had previously held but an uncertain foothold in Moray, then struck root deeply and spread rapidly. Religious houses were erected at Beauly, Inverness, Pluscardin, Elgin, Kinloss, and Urquhart-in-Moray, all of which were richly endowed from the spoils of the old

native chiefs. Those great houses were built by strangers, and were without exception occupied either by foreigners or southerners. The Church organisation in the county and diocese of Moray was in course of time crowned by the erection of a cathedral at Elgin (1224), which, while it stood complete, was second to none in the kingdom. Nowhere else in Scotland were the feudal State and the Romanised Church more imposingly in evidence.

Ross

Much had still to be done by both State and Church. Facing the southern shore of the Moray Firth, a wedge-like promontory reaches out into the North Sea for more than thirty miles from the head of the Beauly Firth. That district is Ross. It had often been temporarily joined to Moray, as the frequent use of the double name ' Moray and Ross ' implies. It had been for ages a hinterland into which refugees from Moray could easily find their way at Chanonry Point, or at Kessock Ferry. Scottish kings might march through it with their armies without meeting an armed opponent; yet all

the while they possessed no effective rule therein.

David I. appointed as Bishop of Ross (between 1128 and 1131) a cleric bearing the potent name of MacBeth, but with disappointing results. The whole province seethed with the spirit of insurrection—the MacBeth and MacHeth factions being responsible for their own share of it. At length a rebellion led by Donald Bàn MacWilliam, who claimed to be the heir of Duncan, the son of Ceanmòr and his first wife Ingibiorg,[1] gave William the Lyon his opportunity; and although his first expedition to Ross to suppress it, in 1179, was unsuccessful, because he found no one to give him battle, he returned in 1187 and finally crushed Donald and his cause.

Ross was then formed into a county of Scotland, with Ferquhar MacIntshagairt, son of the priest, and believed to have been the lay-abbot of Applecross, as its earl; and at that same time it became, in fact, as it had been for some time in name, a diocese of the Roman Catholic Church, with the bishop's seat at Rosemarkie.

[1] Daughter—not widow—of Thorfinn. See Henderson's *Norse Influence on Celtic Scotland*, p. 33.

Caithness

The extensive moorland region beyond the line of the Dornoch Firth and the river Oykell had still to be incorporated with the Scottish feudal State. That whole territory was then known as Caithness, the land of the Catti. The writs of the Scottish kings did not run freely in that lawless region till after the death of the last Norwegian Earl of Caithness in 1231. Sovereignty was claimed and sometimes exercised there by Scottish kings, but it existed in reality only for the time during which any one of them could stay there with an army.

At the beginning of the thirteenth century, that whole region was a hotbed of misrule. The tales that have come down to us of the savage treatment of Bishop John, at the instance of Earl Harald the Elder, and of the revolting punishment which Pope Innocent III. ordered to be inflicted upon the tool of the real perpetrator of the outrage, are so barbarous and conflicting that no useful purpose would be served by relating them.[1] The burning of Bishop Adam, in 1222, by some

[1] *Orkneyingà Saga*, Introd., pp. 43-4.

of the farmers of Caithness, for increasing his impost on their butter by fifty per cent., is but another proof of the lawlessness which prevailed.[1] The first of those outrages brought down William the Lyon at the head of an army, as the next brought Alexander II.; and although the accounts we have of the doings of those kings fail to beget in us either respect for their sense of justice, or for their modes of dispensing it, there can be no doubt that their expeditions hastened the incorporation of those parts with the feudal kingdom.

Between 1203 and 1214 Hugh Freskin, of the great De Moravia family, held the Suder or Southern part of Caithness for the king, and in 1222 his son, Sir William, occupied the same position; but some time after that, probably in 1231, the earldom was divided, and Sir William Freskin became the first Earl of Sutherland. Until the episcopate of the Earl's relative, St. Gilbert De Moravia (1222-45), we find no proof of the existence of either civil or moral order beyond the river Oykell. The work of conforming the organisation of the Scottish Church to that of Rome was then completed. It took 150

[1] Torfaeus, p. 179.

years to do, and was accomplished without more harshness than was inevitable.

The formation of parishes, or Baptismal Church territories, as they were sometimes called, made great progress during that period. The number of parishes was largely determined by the willingness of the owners of the soil (1) to provide the necessary buildings, (2) to set apart the customary half davoch of land, and (3) to give their tithes. The parochial system of tithing grew out of the idea that all are bound to consecrate a tenth of their income. It was not created by statute, but was, till the time with which we are now dealing, an entirely voluntary matter.[1]

Churches were built by preference either on the sites of old Columban places of worship, or conveniently near to the residences of the chiefs and great barons. Some of the parishes in the northern counties were of vast extent; yet it must be admitted that the medieval Church was favourable to the division of parishes, whereas the Reformed Church of a later age yielded too readily to the policy

[1] There was a sanctuary at every baptismal church extending thirty paces from its walls on all sides.

of uniting contiguous parishes—sometimes as many as three—in order to save the pockets of the landowners.

IV

While the Kingdom of Scotland was being thus feudalised, and having its old Church conformed to the Diocesan Episcopacy of Rome, another wholly different set of ecclesiastics began to swarm into it from across the Border. Not contented with the power secured to him as the head of the Diocesan Episcopacy, the Pope must needs have an army of others, who, because they had to live under fixed rules, came to be known as regulars. Old forms of monasticism were brought under his direct control, and the formation of new orders of monks encouraged. The earlier orders of St. Augustine and St. Benedict were remodelled and fostered.

Some of these orders were represented in the Highlands and Islands. The Benedictines were specially patronised by those semi-regal potentates, the Lords of the Isles, who founded religious houses of their order at Iona, Saddel, Oronsay, Colonsay, Scarinche

in Lewis, and Rodel in Harris. They had similar houses at Strathfillan in Perthshire, and at Urquhart-in-Moray. The Benedictine monks affected Art and Letters, and were often on that account styled 'the gentlemanly Order of Monks.'

Kinloss Abbey near Forres, a house of Cistercians—an offshoot of the Benedictines—was founded by David I. in 1150. It was richly endowed with lands and fishings that had belonged to the old Celtic chiefs of the province. As time proceeded it was further enriched and embellished. Its resources were such as sufficed for the entertainment of King Edward I. of England for twenty days in 1303. Edward III. also stayed there for a time with a considerable army in 1336. Some of its abbots were men of note—the most illustrious of them being Robert Reid (1528-53), afterwards Bishop of Orkney. It was he who brought the famous scholar Ferrerius from Piedmont to teach its inmates.

Another order that was much in evidence in the Highlands was that of the Valliscaulians—also a branch of the Benedictines. Its members were virtually hermits. Their rule

bound them to silence. They were not permitted to go beyond the walls which enclosed their buildings, gardens, and fish ponds. Their three houses in Scotland were on the Highland mainland, and were built between 1230-33. One of them was at Ardchattan in Lorn. It was founded by the 'MacDougall' of the day, in 1230, and seems to have provided a comfortable living for members of that clan.[1] There is a blank of two hundred years in its history. King Robert the Bruce is said to have held some kind of parliament within its walls. The enigmatical epitaph on a gravestone, in its churchyard, will doubtless continue to puzzle visitors in trying to make out whether the office of prior at Ardchattan did, for a time at least, descend from father to son or not.[2]

Beauly Priory, another house of the same order, was founded and endowed by Byset of Lovat in 1231-2. It was meant for seven

[1] See Chisholm Batten's *History of Beauly Priory*, p. 147.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 153. 'The following inscription in old Irish characters occupies the sides and margin: Hic jacent nati Somerledi MacDougall Duncanus et Dugallus, hujus monasterii successive priores, una cum eorundem patre matre et fratre Alano, quorum Dugallus hujus monumenti fabricator, obiit Anno Domini MCCCCII.'

monks.[1] The only bright chapter in its history is the last, for in 1530 it had as its prior *in commendam* the famous Robert Reid, already referred to as Abbot of Kinloss. He woke up the sleepy community. Till his time the priory does not seem to have been completed. He rebuilt the tower and the prior's house. Some of its priors are said to have interested themselves in teaching. One of them is reputed to have made Hugh, Lord Lovat, 'a good scholar and a saint' in the fifteenth century. In the *Chronicles of the Frasers* it is said to have been, in the early part of the sixteenth century, 'the only school in the North.' That is an exaggeration. It could not have stood very high as a school at that time, or it would not have been necessary for Abbot Reid, its prior, to send, as he did after 1530, one of his Kinloss monks to teach its inmates. When the celebrated Ferrerius was making Kinloss Abbey famous as a school, five young monks from Beauly were sent to it to benefit by his instructions. We are in possession of discourses, published afterwards by one of

[1] Eight monks were provided for after the Reformation.—Chisholm Batten, p. 247.

them—Adam Elder—who rewarded his famous teacher by giving him a good deal of monkish abuse.[1]

Pluscardin was the only other house of that order in Scotland.[2] It was erected by Alexander II. in 1230 in the peaceful vale of St. Andrews, near Elgin. Its site, like the others of the same order, was chosen with an eye to its suitableness for its intended purpose. No spot was better fitted to foster the feeling of retirement and repose; but 'mind is its own place,' and despite its charming surroundings Pluscardin's story—like that of the neighbouring Benedictine Priory of Urquhart which was ultimately joined to it—is blurred and blotted like that of many another so-called religious house.

The sole representative of the Order of St. Augustine which existed in the Highlands was the Abbey of Fearn, in Ross-shire. It was an offshoot of Whithorn, and was founded and endowed by Ferquhar, Earl of Ross in 1227. Its original site was at Fearn, parish of Edderton, on the Dornoch Firth, from which it was removed after a few years

[1] See Stuart's *Records of Kinloss*, p. 62.

[2] S. R. Macphail's *Religious House of Pluscardyn*.

to the richer soil of Easter Ross—carrying its name with it.

Its monks were a kind of farming community, and were known as the White Friars. What is called the Kalendar of Fearn is in possession of the Duke of Sutherland, at Dunrobin. It consists of six vellum leaves, with writing on both sides, and although darkened by age, it is in good preservation. Its blank spaces have been filled in with local notes, as in the case of the *Book of Deer*. It cannot be said to be of much value.

All those orders were monastic; their members being confined to their monasteries. By their vow they renounced the world and all private property, but were allowed to receive donations for 'the weal of the Church.' They thereby became wealthy, haughty, and too often vicious.

At the beginning of the thirteenth century the papal authorities sanctioned a new kind of 'regulars,' who were to move freely among the people, and to teach, heal, and help, as well as to preach to them; while they were meant to continue poor and to beg for their bread. Such were the friars,

a kind of medieval Church Army. It was expected that by means of those bare-footed and corded friars, the Church would regain the credit which it had lost by the scandalous conduct of the earlier orders of regulars. Their two most powerful orders were the Dominican and the Franciscan—or the Black and Grey Friars. Both were known in the north of Scotland, although their work therein was limited and slight.

The Black Friars had houses in Inverness and Elgin. Their church and friary at Inverness were built in 1233, and stood fronting the river, on the north side of the present High Parish Church. Within their friary they wore white robes, but outside they added a black cloak — hence their popular designation of Black Friars. Their church, being meant for preaching, was large, and being without pews, was well adapted for gatherings of importance. The lists of its friars, which are extant, show a membership of never more than five. They itinerated widely. The small island of Cava in the Pentland Firth belonged to them. They may have used it as a retreat. They probably had to confine their labours to the

parishes bordering upon the northern firths, and northwards to Shetland, till they learned to speak and preach to the Gaelic-speaking people.

In 1559 the prior and friars, foreseeing that they could not escape the treatment which was being meted out to other houses of their order in the south of Scotland, deposited their silver vessels, charters, and other valuables in the care of the provost and magistrates of the town ; with the result that those articles were never accounted for.

By order of the Privy Council, the rents from lands and fishings which had belonged to the friary were applied after the Reformation ' to hospitalities (hospitals), scholis, and other godly uses, as shall seem best to Her Hienes (Queen Mary) by adwys of the counsale.' Of their house in Elgin not much is known.[1]

There had been a movement for the founding of a house of Grey Friars in the cathedral city of Elgin about 1230-34, when an endowment was placed in the hands of the Bishop of Moray for the purpose. The

[1] Shaw, in his *History of Moray*, mentions that the Black Friars had also a convent in Forres (p. 262).

endowment consisted of the lands of Kattepool (Cadboll), and a quarter of Pitkenny, both in Ross-shire, which had been given to the church by William, Earl of Ross, as an expiation for his pillage of the churches of Pettyn (Petty) and Braculi (Bracley) adjoining; but it was the rule then, between the two orders, that they should not co-exist or compete in any town. The erection of a Grey Friars' house in Elgin was therefore delayed, and the rents of the above-named lands were used in support of two chaplains in the Elgin Cathedral. That alternative had been provided for by the donor.

In 1479, however, what is called 'a magnificent convent of Grey Friars' was built in Elgin. Its history is almost wholly unknown. Curiously enough, its ruins came back into possession of the Roman Catholic Church in 1891, when they were purchased by the sisters of the Convent of St. Mary of Mercy in Aberdeen. The church has since then been carefully restored through the liberality of the late Marquis of Bute.[1]

Nothing of importance or interest can be

[1] William Bryce Moire's *Grey Friars*, ch. ix. pp. 361-2.

ascertained regarding the minor houses, of which mention is met with as having existed at Dornoch, Cromarty, and Kingussie.[1]

The practice of attaching small religious houses to wealthy ones, or to cathedrals, and of giving them to church dignitaries, indicates decay. The great tithes[2] of country parishes were often diverted from the purpose for which they were given, in order to maintain titled Churchmen in ease and luxury elsewhere. It is estimated that of the one thousand or so parishes, into which Scotland was then divided, seven hundred had been appropriated to bishops and religious houses—poorly paid vicars being left in charge.[3]

The creation of Collegiate Churches—so called because each of them had a number of priests attached to it who were graded very much as in a cathedral—belonged to the close of the medieval period. There were three such churches within the Highland line —Abernethy-on-Spey, Kilmun, and Tain— none of which left a record of usefulness.

[1] The first two were occupied by Red Friars or Trinitarians. Of the Kingussie house we have no reliable information.

[2] The tenth part of the direct produce of the ground.

[3] Cunningham's *Church History of Scotland*, p. 79.

There were not many nunneries in Gaelic Scotland. The Benedictine nuns had a well-endowed house on Iona, with a subordinate one at Carinish, North Uist. They seem to have taken good care of their lands. Mention is found of houses of religious women on small islands on Loch Tay, Loch Lomond, and Loch Awe.

Hospitals for the treatment of sickness and disease, especially of leprosy, which was then a prevalent malady, and hospices for the shelter and entertainment of travellers, were among the humane institutions which the Church was instrumental in setting up. The hospital at Elgin combined the entertainment of travellers with the maintenance of poor and infirm persons. The Earls of Sutherland owned a hospital at Helmsdale which one of them [1] gifted to the Abbey of Kinloss. Another at Rathven, or Rothvan, was partly endowed from the benefice of the parish of Kiltarlity,[2] near Beauly. Several Spittals or Spiddals—*i.e.* hospitals or hospices—can be located between Caithness and Glenshee.

[1] Walcott's *Monasticon*, p. 278.
[2] Chisholm Batten's *History of Beauly Priory*, p. 25.

V

Next to the chief end for which the Church of Christ exists, nothing is of more perennial interest than the education of the people. The reasons which made it necessary for the Columban Church to have schools in connection with its principal monasteries continued in force. Young men had to be prepared for the priesthood. The service of praise demanded a certain standard of education. The copying of MS. books had to go on continually. Each cathedral and monastery must, on that account, have had in its better days both a school of music and a school of letters based on Latin, which was then the language of learning. That such schools were attended by others than aspirants to office in the Church is beyond question.

Some of the regular orders gave learning a high place. The Dominicans and Franciscans began with a co-ordinated system of education for their students, rising from primary to general schools, at which degrees were taken—although, of course, the High-

lands presented too limited a sphere for anything like that. The Black and Grey Friars would have had schools at Inverness and Elgin, and it may be assumed that the Elgin Cathedral school would strive to be abreast of those of the Friars. Dunkeld, Dornoch, Rosemarkie, Lismore, and latterly Iona were episcopal sees, and therefore at one time or other educational centres of some sort. The Benedictines and other religious houses in the isles, already mentioned, would also have had schools; and so would the Collegiate Churches if they were to train novices and choristers.

Here and there a kindly parish priest might voluntarily teach some of his young parishioners, but of a parochial system of education there is no proof. Burghers engaged in trades and commerce knew the need and value of education, and took care to provide it for their families by taxing themselves for the purpose wherever the Church failed to supply it. The result was that when some of the Highland chiefs and members of their families could, on the eve of the Reformation, neither read nor write, the northern burghs could show a fair

proportion of their inhabitants who could do both.[1]

So far as my particular field is concerned, I believe that the oft-quoted testimony of Pope Alexander III. fully applies to it. In the preamble of a Bull addressed to King James IV., authorising the erection of Aberdeen University in 1494, he gives as his reason, based no doubt on evidence placed before him, 'that in the northern or north-eastern parts of his (James IV.) kingdom there are certain places separated from the rest of the kingdom by arms of the sea and very high mountains in which dwell men rude and ignorant of letters and almost barbarous . . . so ignorant of letters that not only for preaching the Word of God to the people of those parts, but also for administering the sacraments of the Church, proper men cannot be found.'

[1] Of fifteen persons who subscribed a document at Inverness in 1560, eleven wrote their own signatures—the hands of the remaining four being led. In 1580 a paper was signed at Inverness by twenty-two individuals with their own hands, and by nineteen with their hands led by the Town Clerk as notary public. In 1584 ten persons, including six fishers, were able to write.—See William Mackay's introduction to his extracts from the Burgh Records of Inverness.

As to Tain, see MacGill's *Old Ross-shire*, p. 57.

VI

To a Church, as to every other institution, a testing time will come sooner or later. A Church must bear to be tried and judged by the fruit it bears, the kind of men it produces, the character it evolves, and the cumulative influence it exercises in elevating and refining the intellectual and spiritual life of the people. May we not then ask, How can the Medieval Church in the Highlands bear to be tried by that test? It is admitted that it had in its written creed the fundamental truths of our religion; that pious souls had lived in its communion, and that there were men of learning and high character among its clergy and people; but the essential and saving truths of Christianity were largely hidden under imposing rites and ceremonies. It left the Word of God, as it found it, *locked up* in a foreign tongue. No Gospel, Epistle, or even chapter, had been translated into the language of the Gaelic-speaking people. Its priests formed a caste and were a law unto themselves. No layman dared summon a priest into a law court on any charge. The higher clergy assumed

superiority over the nobles and gentlemen of the kingdom. They owned baronies and held their baronial and commissary courts. The Church altered the marriage law to suit its own interests, and it condoned violations of that law for money.[1]

An hour with Bishop Dowden on the Medieval Church will put it beyond dispute to any one that the Vatican was in those days the largest, the busiest, and the dearest shop in Christendom. Appointments to bishoprics and abbacies had to be paid for. The archbishopric of St. Andrews, for example, cost 3300 gold florins, and the abbacy of Montrose 1980 florins.[2] The Medieval Church burnt the best of men, like Patrick Hamilton, and the best of all books, the Bible. Popes and Cardinals trafficked in dispensations (1) for defect of birth; (2) for defect of age; (3) for holding more than one benefice; (4) for marrying within forbidden degrees; and (5) they blasphemously presumed to sell to men or women the power of giving plenary absolution to the dying.[3]

[1] Dr. Hay Fleming's *History of the Reformation*, ch. ii. pp. 39-31.

[2] Bishop Dowden's *Medieval Church*, p. 326.

[3] *Ibid.*, pp. 31, 280, 331.

When 'pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness,' led the Medieval Church in Scotland to divorce morality from religion; to put the absolution of the priest in place of the justifying act of Jehovah; to emphasise union to itself instead of vital union to Christ, and to commend the administration of multiplied and perverted sacraments instead of the quickening and sanctifying power of the Holy Ghost by the Word, all the magnificence of its cathedrals, the pomp of its ceremonies, the perfection of its organisation, and the superabundance of its material resources, could not keep it from sinking into the state of moral and spiritual degeneration of which the Highlands and Islands still contain so many crumbling and warning monuments.

At last streaks of light pierced the darkness. Copies of Wycliffe's English Bible, followed by Tyndal's and other versions, as well as by some of Luther's writings, found their way into Scotland by every seaport between Thurso and Berwick, making it clear to their readers that Romanism was 'a vast conspiracy against the civil and religious liberty of mankind.' Churches of

A.D. 1542.

the Apostolic type—churches in the house—were formed by nobles and peasants, and increased in number and influence, till in 1542 the volume and strength of public opinion were such that an Act of Parliament was passed granting to the people of Scotland the privilege of having 'baith the New Testament and the Auld in the vulgar toung, in Inglis or Scottis.'

LECTURE III

THE REFORMED CHURCH

1560–1650

THE REFORMED CHURCH

I

As soon as the Bible came to be read and studied by considerable numbers of the people of Scotland it became impossible that things could continue as they were. Its readers could judge for themselves whether that which had passed for religion among them was founded on Biblical authority or not; and on being convinced that it was not, there was only one course open to them. They discarded Roman Catholicism, and resolved to take the Word of God as their Rule of Faith, and to have a Church conformed thereto.

That resolution moved certain of the more influential men in the kingdom to prepare a solemn bond or band, known as the 'First Covenant,' subscription to which bound them, and all who followed their example, to stand or fall together in the struggle for religious liberty. Its pur- A.D. 1557.

port was as follows : ' We do promise before the majesty of God, and His congregation, that we, by His grace, shall with all diligence continually apply our whole power and substance, and our very lives, to maintain, set forward, and establish the most blessed Word of God and His congregation . . . we shall maintain the whole congregation of Christ, and every member thereof, according to our whole powers . . . unto which Holy Word and congregation we do join us, . . .' etc.

The generally accepted date of that important document is 3rd December 1557.

Soon thereafter the Reformers, as they came to be called, sent proposals to the Queen-Regent asking ' that the worship of God, prayers, and sacraments might be had in the vulgar tongue ; that scandalous ministers might be removed, and that the people might have the choice of their own ministers.'

Thus did they assert their liberty in things spiritual. Two years later a further important step was taken in what is known as the ' Second Covenant,' agreed to at Perth on 31st May 1559, to the following effect : ' The congregations of the west country, with the congregation of

A.D. 1559.

Perth, Dundee, Angus, Mearns, and Montrose, being convened in the town of Perth in the name of Jesus Christ . . . confederate, and become bound in the presence of God to concur and assist together in doing all things required of God in His Scriptures, and with their whole powers to destroy and put away all things that do dishonour to His name so that God may be truly and purely worshipped.' Similar action was taken at other centres.

From that time the cause of the Reformation made rapid progress. A Protestant ministry was established in several of the chief cities and towns of Scotland before the 2nd December of the same year (1559). Only one more step was needed. The Convention or Parliament passed Acts in August 1560 casting off the jurisdiction and authority of the Pope; annulling all former Acts in favour of the doctrines and practices of the Roman Catholic Church; forbidding under heavy penalties the saying and hearing of Mass, and adopting 'The Confession of Faith' drawn up by Knox and others. So it was that the Roman Catholic Church in Scotland was cast down from its position as a State Church.

The ever memorable event had been anticipated and prepared for; and by none more selfishly than by some of the dignitaries of the Church of Rome in the north. Queen Mary's refusal to ratify those Acts did not in the least affect the fact of the Reformation or retard its progress in the Highlands and Islands. In the dioceses of Argyll and of the Isles, as well as in those of Caithness, Ross, and Moray, the framework of the Church of Rome collapsed at once.

A.D. 1560. James Hamilton, Bishop of Argyll, and commendator of the small Abbey of Saddel, in Kintyre, became a Protestant, and voted for the Reformation in the Parliament of 1560.

Of the diocese of the Isles John Campbell was bishop-elect. He was one of the Campbells of Cawdor in Nairnshire. He also became a Protestant, and acted with the Reformers in the aforesaid Parliament.

Robert Stewart, Bishop of Caithness, of whom it is alleged that he had never been in priest's orders, was also a Protestant. At the Reformation he stood deprived of his office for political reasons. He was restored in 1563, and received a commission from the

General Assembly ‘ to plant kirks within his own bounds.’ He is often styled Earl of Lennox and Bishop of Caithness ; but from 1580 he is always referred to as Earl of March. He retained the title of Bishop of Caithness till his death in 1586.

Henry Sinclair, who was afterwards President of the Court of Session, held the temporalities of the Bishopric of Ross in 1558. He adhered to the Roman Catholic Church. In the Parliament of 1560 he took his seat as Postulate of Ross, as his title had not then been completed by the Pope. One of our historians writes of him—‘ that the Reformed Church said he was not far from the Kingdom of God, and that some of the friars asserted that if he took not heed to his doctrine he would be the destruction of the whole estate of the Church.’ Knox, on the other hand, calls him ‘ a perfect hypocrite, and perjured enemy of Jesus Christ.’

The heads of the three great religious houses north of the Beauly river—the Abbey of Fearn, the Collegiate Church of Tain, and the Priory of Beauly—became Protestants. Walter Reid, Prior of Beauly, was a distinguished and influential Reformer.

'Master John Hepburn, of Beinstoun, who was son of Patrick first of Beinstoun, who got the lands by charter dated 26th November 1478 from his father Patrick, first Lord Hailes.' On Hepburn's shocking depravity, shameless debaucheries, and fraudulent impoverishment of the princely temporalities of his see, I shall not dwell. He remained a Roman Catholic. He and three of his many sons were cited for treason on 1st October 1567. He continued to reside in Spynie Castle, and 'defied the Reformation alike as to his estate and his morals.'[1]

II

Although papal supremacy had then become a thing of the past in Scotland, its disestablished clerics were treated with much consideration. All holders of benefices who adhered to Roman Catholicism were secured in a right to two-thirds of the annual value of the same for life.

The monks, on the other hand, were provided for on a scale based upon the greater or less affluence of the particular house to which they belonged. The monks of Kinloss

[1] Bain's *History of Nairnshire*, p. 223.

General Assembly 'to plant kirks within his own bounds.' He is often styled Earl of Lennox and Bishop of Caithness; but from 1580 he is always referred to as Earl of March. He retained the title of Bishop of Caithness till his death in 1586.

Henry Sinclair, who was afterwards President of the Court of Session, held the temporalities of the Bishopric of Ross in 1558. He adhered to the Roman Catholic Church. In the Parliament of 1560 he took his seat as Postulate of Ross, as his title had not then been completed by the Pope. One of our historians writes of him—'that the Reformed Church said he was not far from the Kingdom of God, and that some of the friars asserted that if he took not heed to his doctrine he would be the destruction of the whole estate of the Church.' Knox, on the other hand, calls him 'a perfect hypocrite, and perjured enemy of Jesus Christ.'

The heads of the three great religious houses north of the Beauly river—the Abbey of Fearn, the Collegiate Church of Tain, and the Priory of Beauly—became Protestants. Walter Reid, Prior of Beauly, was a distinguished and influential Reformer.

Nicolas Ross, who was both Abbot *in commendam* of Fearn Abbey, and Provost of the Collegiate Church of Tain, sat in the Parliament of 1560 among the peers, and voted for the Reformation. He was, however, the kind of man of whom no Church would boast. He got himself legitimated by royal letters in 1543, and had the same done for four of his sons the following year.[1] He then proceeded to make them wealthy at the Church's expense.[2] To his eldest son he conveyed the lands of Dunskaith in 1544; to another he gave Meikle-Raynie, Balblair, and other smaller portions in 1559; and to a third in that same year he conveyed the lands of Easter and Wester Geanies. The interests of the fourth son would doubtless be well secured, for the Abbot of Fearn and Provost of Tain had more than lands to dispose of.

Before leaving home to vote for the Reformation, Nicolas Ross placed the relics of St. Duthac in the keeping of his chief—Ross of Balnagown—taking him bound to deliver them to him or his successor or heir, when

[1] See their names in Dr. Hay Fleming's *Reformation in Scotland*, p. 565.

[2] MacGill's *Old Ross-shire*, pp. 5-7.

'Master John Hepburn, of Beinstoun, who was son of Patrick first of Beinstoun, who got the lands by charter dated 26th November 1478 from his father Patrick, first Lord Hailes.' On Hepburn's shocking depravity, shameless debaucheries, and fraudulent impoverishment of the princely temporalities of his see, I shall not dwell. He remained a Roman Catholic. He and three of his many sons were cited for treason on 1st October 1567. He continued to reside in Spynie Castle, and 'defied the Reformation alike as to his estate and his morals.'[1]

II

Although papal supremacy had then become a thing of the past in Scotland, its disestablished clerics were treated with much consideration. All holders of benefices who adhered to Roman Catholicism were secured in a right to two-thirds of the annual value of the same for life.

The monks, on the other hand, were provided for on a scale based upon the greater or less affluence of the particular house to which they belonged. The monks of Kinloss

[1] Bain's *History of Nairnshire*, p. 223.

asked for, or to pay 2000 merks,[1]—so low had the miracle-working relics fallen in value.

The said relics consisted of '(1) Ane hede of silver callit St. Duthac's hede; (2) his chaste blede (breastbone) in gold; and (3) his ferthyr (or shrine) in silver gylt wt gold.' [2]

In the diocese of Moray, Walter Reid (already referred to as the Prior of Beauly) was abbot of the wealthy Abbey of Kinloss.

Sometime between September 1560 and February 1561 Alexander Dunbar, Prior of Pluscardin, died, so that his office was virtually vacant at the Reformation. He was a cleric of the Nicolas Ross type. Before his death he diminished the property of the priory to provide a dowry for his daughter; nor did he neglect to provide for his sons, the names of three of whom are known.[3]

Of the northern Church dignitaries I have to mention one other—the notorious Robert Hepburn, Bishop of Moray. Bishop Dowden points out that he has been wrongly regarded as a son of Patrick, first Earl of Bothwell, and states that he was really brother and heir of

[1] MacGill's *Old Ross-shire*, p. 9. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 9.
[3] Macphail's *Pluscardyn*, pp. 121, 126, 127. Dr. Hay Fleming's *Reformation in Scotland*, pp. 520 and 556.

—a wealthy abbey—received each 50 shillings yearly for clothing, 8d. a day for flesh meat, and 2d. for fish. A yearly sum of £12 was paid to the community for fire, butter, candles, spice and lenten food.[1]

The Beauly monks got 40 shillings yearly for habit money, for meat 3d., and for fish 2d. daily, with a yearly allowance 'for fire, butter, candles and spice,' but none for lenten food.[2] In both cases the monks were allowed to live in their monasteries, and to have the use of their large and fertile gardens with other amenities. Five monks were similarly provided for at Pluscardin.

The question as to how far the people of the Highlands and Islands can be said to have cast off Roman Catholicism cannot be very accurately answered. The clan system, which so greatly retarded civilisation in those parts, was then in full power, and probably at its worst. Whilst the Lords of the Isles held sway, something approaching to order prevailed among their vassals; but after that lordship was forfeited to the Crown in 1493 general disorder prevailed. The

[1] Stuart's *Records of Kinloss*, p. 159.
[2] Chisholm Batten's *Beauly Priory*, p. 247.

Macdonalds, Macleans, Macleods, Mackenzies, Camerons, and minor clans were thrown on their own resources. Endless feuds and frequent clan fights followed. It may, however, be said that, as a rule, the clans followed their chiefs in religion as in other matters. An event which told heavily against the power of Roman Catholicism in the northern counties happened in connection with Queen Mary's 'Progress' thereto in 1562. Till then the House of Huntly had semi-royal pomp and power in the north.

The Earl of Huntly had, according to Bishop Leslie of Ross, planned that the queen would land at Aberdeen on coming from France to occupy her throne. He and others subscribed an engagement to the effect that they would meet her there, with an army of 20,000, with which she might overthrow the Reformation, and assume the government as a Catholic sovereign. The queen refused to fall in with that plan. She also declined to visit the haughty earl at his castle of Strathbogie, although she passed within a few miles of it. Huntly retaliated by ordering the royal castle at Inverness to be locked and barred against her. That led

A.D. 1562.

the Protestant clans—the Frasers, Munroes, and Mackintoshes, with the Black Baron of Kilravock, chief of the Roses—to rally round their sovereign, thereby gaining her gratitude; whereas Huntly was put to the horn, and fell at Corichie, near Aberdeen. No heavier blow than that could have befallen the Roman Catholic cause in the north. Huntly and all the cadets of his house, including the Earl of Sutherland, had their estates forfeited for a time.

Sutherland and Caithness, on the whole, became nominally Protestant, although the two earls remained Catholics. Mid Ross and Easter Ross, where the influence of the Munroes of Fowlis and of the Rosses of Balnagown was dominant, threw off Romanism. The House of Kintail, rising rapidly to great power on the ruins of the Lordship of the Isles, also threw in its lot with the cause of the Reformation. The Mackintoshes, following their chief Lachlan Mòr,[1] became Protestants. The Baron of Kilravock, already referred to, rather prided himself on his absolute neutrality in religion; which meant, at any rate, that no one could say he was a

[1] Note A, p. 128.

Roman Catholic. The Tutor of Cawdor was a staunch Protestant, and so were the other chief Barons of Moray. To crown all, Queen Mary conferred the earldom of the province on her step-brother, James Stewart—'The Good Earl'—who was a tower of strength to the cause of the Reformation.

The principal clans of the Isles had no scruples about casting off Roman Catholicism. South Argyll did so at once. The Earl of Argyll was a prominent leader in the Reformation; and all the heads of its religious houses became Protestants. Nor was it a temporary movement, for nearly fifty years later the chiefs of the Isles held on Iona the Mòd by which 'The Statutes of Icolmkill' were enacted, and ratified by solemn oaths.[1] The first of them provided that proper obedience should be given to the clergy (whose number, much diminished by the Reformation, it was proposed to increase), that their stipends should be regularly paid; that ruinous churches should be rebuilt; that the Sabbaths should be solemnly kept, and that in all respects they should observe the discipline of *the Reformed Kirk*, as established by Act of Parliament. At

[1] Note B, p. 128.

the same time several branches of the mainland MacDonalds, along with the Camerons, the MacDonnells of Glengarry, the Chisholms of Strathglass, and many of the inhabitants of a strip of country extending through Badenoch from Strathbogie to Glencoe, and of another broader strip between Glenfinnan and Kintail, adhered to the Roman Catholic Church. In some of those parts it is indigenous till this day. In the Northern and Outer Isles, although the organisation of the Medieval Church had fallen to pieces, we can find nothing in its place except a mixture of nature-worship, Norse religious customs, and wild orgies connected in some cases with the name of Maolrubha, the great Celtic missionary, who by that time had become a mythological person.

The Reformed Church was then face to face with the stupendous undertaking of supplying religious ordinances throughout the length and breadth of Scotland. But how was it to be done, especially in the Highlands and Islands ?

The General Assembly of 1560 appointed five superintendents for as many districts, including Argyll and the Isles, to see to the planting of kirks, and the admission of suit-

able persons as ministers, exhorters, and readers. No such provision was made for the northern counties till 1563, when Robert Stewart was restored to the temporalities—*i.e.* the lands and heritages of the diocese of Caithness, of which he had formerly been bishop—and was appointed commissioner for the same. He squandered the said temporalities, whatever else he did. John Grey of Fordell assisted Bishop Stewart for some time before 1570; for he was in that year reappointed assistant-commissioner for Caithness. In 1574 Robert Grahame, minister of Killearnan, Ross-shire, succeeded him as conjoint commissioner for Caithness—he being at the same time Archdeacon of Ross.

Donald Munro was appointed commissioner for Ross in 1563, when Robert Pont was raised to the same office in Moray. Munro is first met with as Provost of the Collegiate Church of Tain. He resigned that office in 1541. He appears later as a pluralist—being 'High Dean of the Isles,' and Rector of Uig in Lewis. At the Reformation he was either vicar or parson of Kiltearn.

Mr. John Carswell, superintendent of Argyll and the Isles, was a scholarly man of high

character. He began his ecclesiastical career as a monk of Iona, and appears as rector of Kilmartin in Argyllshire shortly before the Reformation. He accepted appointment from Queen Mary as titular Bishop of the Isles in 1564, and in 1566 he was formally appointed Bishop of Argyll and the Isles—thereby forsaking Presbyterianism, and incurring the Assembly's rebuke. He had great influence among all ranks and classes in Argyll and the Isles. It will always stand to his credit that he translated Knox's Liturgy, or Prayer Book, into the language of the Highlanders. It is surmised that he also translated Calvin's Catechism into Gaelic, although it was not published till 1631—long after the bishop's death.

As might be anticipated, there was no rush for admission into the ministry of the Reformed Church. There were few indeed who could seek appointment, except Roman Catholic clerics professing conversion to Protestantism, and of them very few except the friars could preach. The Church therefore found it necessary to form four classes of religious teachers: (1) superintendents who were to see to the planting of kirks and

the making of suitable arrangements for the provision of Gospel ordinances in allotted districts; (2) ministers who were found fit to discharge all the duties of the ministerial office; (3) exhorters who might comment on the Scriptures which they read; and (4) readers who were to confine themselves to the reading of prayers and of Scripture portions.

Another difficulty the Church had to face was that of finding support for either ministers, exhorters, or readers. The Reformed Church had too sanguinely hoped to be put in possession of the whole teinds as they fell in, on the demise of the Roman Catholic beneficiaries, and made it known that with the teinds they meant to provide (1) an honest provision for ministers and their families; (2) relief of the poor who neither can, nor may, travel for their sustentation; and (3) the endowment of schools and universities. But instead of getting the teinds they were put off with an Act of the Convention of Estates, in December 1561, setting forth that one-third of the ecclesiastical benefices should be bestowed on the ministers and the Crown, the other two-thirds to go unbroken to the disestablished beneficiaries.

It will be seen at a glance that when the proportion of the one-third that would be needed 'for the support of the Queen's majestie,' and—to quote the Act—'to enterteny, and sett forwart, the common affairs of the countrie,' was deducted from that third, the surplus wouldn't amount to much. As a matter of fact, the ministers got little, as is proved by an Act of Assembly passed in 1567, which states that 'the ministrie has been lang defradit of their stependie.' Such maintenance as they had came mainly from the freewill offerings of their people.

When we think of the scarcity of suitable men for the ministry; of the way in which the miserable pittance promised for their support was withheld; of the difficulties of travel and the incessant feuds which distracted the Highlands, we cannot but wonder that so much was done by way of supplying Christian ordinances.

In 1567 there were in the Synod of Ross the commissioner, and one who is designated as vicar and reader, along with three ministers, five exhorters, and fourteen readers. In the Synod of Caithness and Sutherland there were, besides the com- A.D. 1567.

missioner, four ministers, nine exhorters, and nine readers. In the Synod of Moray, along with the commissioner, there were eight ministers, eighteen exhorters, and twenty-two readers. By the year 1576 the number of ministers had greatly increased, and exhorters ceased to be heard of. If we add three ministers, three readers, and one exhorter who laboured in the Gaelic-speaking district of Breadalbane, we have some idea of the equipment of the Reformed Church in the Northern Highlands.[1]

The diocese of Argyll and the Isles is not included in any of our early Church registers. It is thought probable that in those parts ministers' stipends were paid out of the Bishop's teinds; indeed, the ministers of that diocese kept entirely aloof from the Presbyterian Church and its courts. They seem to have been satisfied with the Episcopal oversight of Carswell and his successors. In 1568 we find the Assembly petitioning the king 'that the bishops, commissioners of Argyll and the Isles, may be subject to attend on the General Assemblies, and to keep their Synodal Assemblies, as other parts of the

[1] *Register of Ministers*, 1567.

realm, since otherwise they appear as exemit out of his dominions.' [1]

We have no Church records of Argyll and the Isles before 1638, nor is there trace of a Protestant minister having been placed, or recognised as such after conversion from Romanism, in any part of the Outer Hebrides before 1576, except a Ronald Anguson at Uig in Lewis, and a Donald Macmillan in South Uist, said by Bishop Knox to have been ' a very auld man in 1626.'

In the Isle of Skye, Malcolm Macpherson was presented to the parish of Duirinish in 1566, and collated by Bishop Carswell—both of which deeds were confirmed by Queen Mary in 1567.[2]

Mention is also made of one Fingon Makmullen, in Iona, within the same period. A better state of things existed on the mainland of Argyll, as can be gathered from other sources than Church registers. Kilmorie, Kingarth, Dunoon, Kilmartin, Craigneish and Inveraray were supplied with Protestant ministers, who were probably of the Carswell persuasion previous to 1576. The district of Lorn had two ministers at that date : one

[1] *Book of the Kirk,* vol. ii. p. 661.
[2] Hew Scott's *Fasti,* vol. iii. p. 123.

at Ardchattan, and another who ministered to the united parishes of Lismore and Appin. If there were others the keen search of Dr. Hew Scott failed to discover any trace of them.[1]

Ministers were not numerous in those days, and certainly they were not rich. For many years after the Reformation one hundred merks per annum, equal to £5, 11s. 1⅓d. sterling, was considered a sufficient stipend. A reader got 20 pounds Scots, or £1, 11s. 1⅓d. sterling, a year. In 1581 it was proposed that 'besyde (omitting) the diocie of Argyll and the Isles of quhilk bounds rentalls never was zit (yet) given up,' the 924 kirks should be reduced to 600, the stipends being modified in four degrees :—

	£	s.	d.
One hundred at 500 merks a piece .	27	15	6⅔
Two hundred at 300 merks a piece .	16	13	4
Two hundred at 100 lbs. a piece .	8	6	8
One hundred at 100 merks a piece .	5	11	1⅓[2]

III

The public worship and congregational government of the Reformed Church were of the simplest kind.

[1] Hew Scott's *Fasti*, vol. iii. part 1., on Synod of Argyll.
[2] Woodrow's *Miscellany*, vol. i. p. 327. A merk = 1/1⅓ stg.

Carswell's translation of Knox's Book of Common Prayer was used in Argyll as a model, if not read word for word. In the bi-lingual districts, bordering on the northern firths, the English Book would be used and understood; but in the purely Gaelic parishes of the north, where Carswell's Irish version could not be understood, the minister or reader would translate the English into Gaelic as he read. Long afterwards that practice was common in regard to the Gaelic Bible. As late as 1773 the venerable minister of Coll told Dr. Samuel Johnson that 'he did not use the Irish (or Gaelic) translation of the New Testament Scriptures which had been lately published, because he could make the text more intelligible to his auditors by an extemporary version.'

Elders and deacons had their places in the Reformed Church from the outset. The mode of electing men to those offices, and the duties connected with them, may be illustrated—so far as the Highland burghs are concerned—from the records of the Burgh Court of Inverness.

At a meeting of that Court held 17th

October 1562, it was resolved—'that thair be eldaris and deaconis chosin to oursie and cause puneiss the faultis contrar to the law of God, sic as fornication, adultery, drunkardis, bakbyttaris, commoun sklanderaries, and all wther sic wycis (vices) as contrar to the command of God, and that the almes may be collectit be the deaconis, and distribute after thair conscience, to the natyve puyeris (poor) of this burgh, quha may nocht conqueiss (gain) thair lewying wtherwais.' [1]

Four days later (on the 21st October 1562) 'four men were electit and chosin eldaris for the space of ane yeir,' and the same number of 'deaconis for ane yeir,' by the Burgh Court; and on 18th March 1564, 'the Prowest, Baillies and Counsell, with express counsal and assent of the haill communitie being present for the time being, ryplie awsyit wyth assistance of the commissioner of Murray, and the minister of Inverness,' 'statut and ordanit' as to Church attendance at 10 forenoon and 3 afternoon, defaulters to be fined 'for the first falt' 12 pence, rising to 10s. Scots for each fault above the third,

[1] *Records of Inverness*, New Spalding Club, vol. i. p. 93.

and 'this to be collectit by everie ane of the Deaconis in his quarter.' [1]

It was also 'ordained' on that date, that henceforth 'on the first Sundaye efter the heid curt of Michaelmass, sum honorabill and discreit persons, that feiris God, should be chosen as eldaris, to the number of four at least, and deaconis also to the number of four.' The town was to be divided into four equal parts. The elders and deacons were to care for the manners of the inhabitants, and the education of youth. The deacons were further charged with the special care of the poor.[2]

Presbyteries were evolved—it is almost needless to say—from what was called the 'exercise,' at which ministers within reach of each other met for mutual benefit in the study of the Scriptures and points of doctrine. In 1576 those 'exercises' (chiefly if not wholly confined to the Lowlands) were recognised as part of the organisation of the Church. Some of them were formed into Presbyteries in 1579. A proposal to erect Presbyteries of Caithness, Dornoch, Chanonry,

[1] *Records of Inverness*, vol. i. p. 113.
[2] *Ibid.*, vol. i. p. 114.

Tain, Inverness and Elgin was made in 1581 ; but I can find no evidence of their having been formed before 1583.

Its struggle against the Crown's claim of supremacy greatly weakened the Church, and hindered its progress on every side ; although it must be noted that in its contentions with the Regents, during the minority of James VI., the Church in the matter of the Tulchan Bishops [1] got the best of it—notwithstanding the pliability of many of the ministers. That was largely owing to the able leadership of Andrew Melville, Principal of the Glasgow University, and later of the University of St. Andrews—a brilliant scholar, and second only to Knox as a Church leader—who took a foremost part in the preparation of the Second Book of Discipline which became one of the standards of the Church in 1578.[2]

The Church's power was at that time such that when the Assembly of 1580 ordered all persons holding the precluded office of bishop therein to resign, they did so—with five

[1] The Tulchan regime lasted from 1572 to 1592. Its bishops were really Presbyterian ministers on whom the title of bishop was conferred. That brought to them a small portion of the Episcopal revenues, whilst the lion's share went to the nobles.

[2] It was engrossed in the Church Register in 1581.

exceptions. But James VI. was not long on the throne till he light-heartedly took up the cause of Episcopacy, and began a contest with his Presbyterian subjects which was destined to last for four reigns, and to end disastrously for his house. By the 'Black Acts' he overturned all previous legislation in favour of the Church, and got his own jurisdiction declared to be supreme in any matter, however spiritual. No Church court could meet without his permission. All beneficed persons 'were ordered to subscribe an obligation to their ordinary bishop or commissioner appointed, or to be appointed, by his Majesty.' Border troubles, however, and the return of the banished lords at the head of an army, along with the dread of forfeiting the succession to the Crown of England, brought the royal despot to his senses, for a time, and the Black Acts were not enforced.

His Majesty then appears in a new rôle, as the patron and eulogist of Presbyterianism. He agreed to the great Acts of the Parliament of 1592, which annulled the Black Acts and acknowledged the spiritual jurisdiction which the Church

A.D. 1592.

claimed to possess directly from her Divine King and Head; but patronage was still retained, and so was the right of the king to call General Assemblies—two fatal reservations.

Were it not that the interest of Protestant Christianity was involved, the intermeddling of James in Church matters would appear like a mixture of tragedy and comedy. At one time he plots to get the Assembly to meet in places where he can reckon on majorities to do his will. At another time he is banishing the Church's leaders and setting up Courts of High Commission. Yet, after all the pain and suffering he caused by forcing his bishops on an unwilling people, it must have been galling to him to find that he only invented a form of Church government which both Catholics and Protestants despised.

With all the see-sawing that went on between Presbytery and Episcopacy, the incumbents of many Highland parishes could hardly tell, at any particular moment, what form of government existed in their Church —nor did some of them care very much.[1]

[1] From 1592 to 1610 the Presbyterian Church was established by law; but from the Glasgow Assembly of 1610 to that of 1638 the government of the Church was Episcopal.

They were more concerned about the chronic disorders that prevailed at their doors. Each clan at that time was a small state in itself. Its chief was to all intents its king. The clansmen never knew when they might have to stand to arms. Never were the Highlands in a state of greater unrest, and never was there more need for a wise and strong king; but James VI. was neither. He was certainly inventive and clever, but in dealing with the Scottish Church, and in devising means for the preservation of order in the Isles, he was singularly unfortunate. He had success in the colonisation of Ulster; but his plan for a similar experiment in the Island of Lewis—which the Macleods forfeited in 1599 because of inability to produce title-deeds—was disastrous, especially so to the Fifeshire 'adventurers' whom he got to undertake it; while his final, but happily abortive, agreement with the Earl of Huntly for the extermination of its inhabitants was inhuman.

In other steps which he took to pacify the Western Isles,[1] any success he had was

[1] Gregory's *History of the Western Isles*, pp. 314 and 315, and Mackenzie's *History of the Hebrides*, pp. 187-9.

attained by entrapping the leading chiefs who met, in obedience to his proclamation, at Aros Castle in Mull on 17th August 1608. His agents succeeded in getting them on board a warship, ostensibly to hear a sermon by Bishop Andrew Knox, but really to be made prisoners. Such conduct was wholly unworthy of a king, but quite in keeping with what Burton characterises as 'that chronic system of mendacity and deception which he chose to nourish as kingcraft.'

Yet James VI. did one very good turn for the North Highlands, although quite unintentionally, in banishing Robert Bruce of Kinnaird to Inverness in 1605. Mr. Bruce's ministry in the bi-lingual capital of the Highlands was signally owned of God. Although he could hardly find lodgings in the town on his arrival, and was once shot at on the street, yet he returned good for evil by never losing an opportunity of preaching Christ and Him crucified. He was, indeed, the first preacher of distinction who proclaimed a full-orbed Gospel to the people of the northern counties. His first period of banishment to Inverness lasted for eight years (1605-13). During that time he was free

to move about, and preached at Fortrose, Forres, and elsewhere; but when banished to Inverness a second time in 1622 he was ordered to confine himself to the town and four miles round it. That of course did not debar the people from coming to him. The biographer of Dr. Mackintosh of Tain has recorded the tradition that 'not only from Inverness and the country lying on the south side of the Moray Firth, but from Ross and Sutherland across several ferries, earnest persons used to come to hear him Sabbath after Sabbath.' His second period of banishment, though brief, was particularly fruitful.

Whilst the king was harassing and dividing the Scottish Presbyterian Church we have abundant evidence of the tireless activities of the Roman Catholic Church in the Highlands. Monks of several orders were in the field. The Jesuits sent their highly disciplined forces to the front, with the object of bringing about a counter-Reformation. Their men came, as their historian Bellesheim tells us, 'disguised as domestic servants, or as sailors, physicians, or merchants.' Among them were men of noble families. Father Gordon is credited with the conversion

of his nephew, the Earl of Huntly, and is accused of having been an active agent in organising the rebellion of the Catholic earls.

In 1600 a College was erected in Rome for the education of students for the priesthood in connection with the Scottish Mission. A small seminary which was founded at Tournai, and was moved from one place to another, was finally fixed at Douai in 1612. The monasteries of Ratisbon, Würzburg, and Madrid sent picked men to Scotland. The Franciscan Order reported in 1628 that they had in the Hebrides 10,269 converts; and in 1638 a certain Father Heggerty claimed that he had himself reconciled 2229 of the inhabitants, baptized 1222, and married 117 couples. In the same year a Mr. John Ward reported 1074 converted, 191 baptized, and 31 couples married.[1] Mention is made by Bellesheim of an Irish priest who 'reconciled to the Church the father of Glengarry, over ninety years of age and a born Protestant.'[2] One wonders that there was a Protestant left in the Isles or on the western seaboard.

[1] Bellesheim's *History of the Catholic Church in Scotland*, vol. iv. pp. 69-70.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 83.

IV

James VI. kept Scotland and its Church in a state of continual unrest, threatening and relenting, scolding and praising alternately, till his death on 27th March 1625. His son, Charles I., was a man of a very different type. If in anything he resembled his father it was in his determination that the royal will should be supreme in Church and State. So far as Scotland was concerned, he began his reign like one infatuated, by ordering a proclamation to be made at the Cross of Edinburgh to the effect that the grants of tithes and benefices which his father had made were to be resumed by the Crown. He next set himself, with the help of Archbishop Laud, to invent a brand new ecclesiastical establishment for Scotland, with a new Liturgy, a new Book of Canons, and new shapes and colours of clerical costume. But just as the cope-stone was about to be placed upon the dazzling erection, on Sabbath 16th July 1637, and within the Cathedral Church at St. Giles, as all the world knows, the exclamation and action of a common

A.D. 1625.

huckster proved to be the first gust of a storm that hurled the whole fabric to the ground. In the Highlands a less exciting comedy was acted at Fortrose—the boys of the Academy taking the leading part.[1]

The Scottish nation was now fairly roused. Multitudes flocked to the seat of government, and the Scots Privy Council of the day—thoroughly frightened—agreed to the proposal of the wise and far-seeing men who stood for the liberty of the Church in all things spiritual, that the several classes who were represented by the four estates of Parliament should choose representatives with whom the Privy Council should confer. A few of the nobles, two gentlemen of each shire, one minister of each Presbytery, and one burgess of each royal burgh were chosen, and these in turn elected four persons from each class. In that way four tables or committees were formed. It was also arranged that there should be one principal table chosen from the chief men of the other

A.D. 1637.

[1] The boys of the Fortrose Academy entered the Cathedral before the service began, and carried away every copy of the Service Book on which they could lay hands to Chanonry Point, and there tore them and threw them into the sea.

four. Those tables sat constantly in Edinburgh to watch affairs.

Then came the National Covenant, prepared with great skill and wisdom by Alexander Henderson, minister of the country parish of Leuchars, in Fife, and Archibald Johnston of Warriston, a young Edinburgh advocate; whilst others helped to revise it. The first part of the document consisted of what is known as the King's Covenant; the second enumerated the Acts and Statutes of Parliament in favour of the Church, and the third was a renewal of the nation's protest against innovations that had no warrant of the Word of God, and were contrary to the Church's confession. It closed with a solemn vow to defend the dread Sovereign of the Kingdom. That vow was to cost the Highlands and Islands of Scotland dear. A.D. 1638.

Not only was the Covenant largely signed in Edinburgh and other chief centres, but copies of it were carried to all parts of the kingdom. It was eagerly signed in Argyll. In Moray it was signed by Brodie of Brodie, Brodie of Lethen, the Laird of Grant, Innes of Innes, and Hay of Lochloy. The Baron

of Kilravock and the Laird of Glenmoriston also adhibited their signatures to the historic document. Lord Lovat signed it, and 'The Mackintosh,' being from home, wrote to give assurance of his concurrence. The clansmen followed the example of their chiefs.

In Ross-shire Lord Seaforth, the Laird of Fowlis, and the Laird of Balnagown, with many heads of minor houses, and a large percentage of the inhabitants, became Covenanters in name at least.

The Earl of Sutherland, a young nobleman of twenty-nine, though sometimes described as of venerable age, is said to have been the first to subscribe the Covenant in Greyfriars' Church; but although he signed it sometime or other, on one of the copies thereof, his name cannot be found on the original ram's skin. He had doubtless signed a blank copy or copies, before they were sent to the north for signature, and that may have originated the story. Lord Reay also signed it; and in Caithness the Master of Berridale, who took such an active part in procuring signatures to it in Moray, Inverness, and Fortrose, did the same. Innes of Sandside, and Sir James Sinclair—both of Caithness—signed

it also. Many signed it for reasons of expediency, prominent among them being Lords Seaforth and Reay.

Notwithstanding many defections, the signing of the Covenant, and the gatherings held in connection therewith, had a great educative influence on the people of the north. The true nature of the Church of Christ, and its relation to Him as its only King and Head, were brought before them as never before. The straths and glens were stirred by the new and uplifting cry, 'For Christ's Crown and Covenant.'

As an immediate result the northern province was fairly well represented in the historic Assembly of 1638, which met shortly thereafter in the cathedral of Glasgow. The Presbyteries of Forres, Inverness, Dingwall, Tain, Dornoch and Caithness sent up between them fourteen ministers and nine elders. Among the elders were Sir James Fraser of Brea, in the Black Isle; the Master of Berridale, grandson of the fifth and father of the sixth Earl of Caithness; the Hon. George Gordon, brother of the Earl of Sutherland, and Sir Thomas Mackenzie of Tarbat.

It was then Argyllshire came into line with

the rest of Presbyterian Scotland by sending the ministers of Inveraray, Kilmore, and Kilmun; with Alexander Campbell of Kilmun and the Provost of Rothesay as representative elders.[1]

The Earl of Argyll had not gone to that Assembly as a representative elder, but was present in attendance on the King's Commissioner. After the Lord High Commissioner declared the Assembly to be dissolved, and took his departure, the venerable court, which had been constituted in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, refused to dissolve till its business was finished. It was then that Argyll — afterwards known as The Great Marquis—cast in his lot with the Covenanters.

A complete clearance was made by that Assembly of all the Acts passed in favour of Episcopacy and the royal supremacy since 1606. The Church got its Assembly in 1639 with the king's sanction, but met in Aberdeen the following year and conducted its business without his consent. Meantime

[1] A Synod of Argyll was erected by that Assembly to consist of the Presbyteries of Kinloch, Inveraray, Kilmore, and Skye—the last-named then included the Small Isles and the whole Outer Hebrides from the Butt of Lewis to Barra Head.

Charles I. had drawn the sword to threaten his Scottish subjects; to find, however, that a covenanted nation defied him; and to such purpose that, after the Peace of Berwick, he came to Edinburgh in 1641 and ratified the National Covenant, and sanctioned all the Acts of the Assemblies of 1638, 1639, and 1640. Common sympathies and dangers drew together many of the best men in England and Scotland, and among the immediate results of their conferences and correspondence were the historic Westminster Assembly of Divines, and the signing of the great document known as the Solemn League and Covenant. The said Covenant, entered into by the two kingdoms for mutual defence of their liberties, was a remarkable document, grandly conceived and nobly expressed. It is indeed difficult to imagine a more impressive scene than that which was witnessed in St. Margaret's Church, Westminster, on 27th September 1643, when the Assembly of Divines, the Scottish Commissioners, and the members of the two Houses of Parliament, with uncovered heads and uplifted hands accepted the Covenant article by article on solemn oath. Yet the spirit of the

age ran through it; the conception of the three kingdoms becoming one in doctrine, worship, discipline and government was one of dazzling splendour, but it was like the image which Daniel saw in a vision whose head was of gold and whose feet were part of iron and part of clay. The aim of the League was to be obtained by the extermination of all who opposed it, and by the discovery and punishment of all incendiaries and malignants. Toleration had not then taken root in British minds.

The troublous period which ensued I shall only allude to. The Covenanters were divided in the north as elsewhere. The defection of George, Earl of Seaforth, and of Lord Reay, after the battle of Auldearn, brought woful suffering on their tenants and neighbours. What is known as 'Seaforth's Remonstrance' took no notice of the Covenant, and characterised as unlawful the steps which had been taken to preserve the religion and liberties of the nation. It described the proceedings of Parliament as rebellious, and called upon the country to invite the king to Scotland. It concluded with a form of oath.

Seaforth was immediately declared a rebel by the Scottish Estates of Parliament, and was excommunicated by the Church. He quickly humbled himself to ask forgiveness from State and Church, and his petition was granted on condition that he should do penance in sackcloth within the High Church of St. Giles—which he did. Nobody ever trusted Seaforth after that. He went abroad and never returned. He is believed to have instigated, by correspondence from the Continent, the foolish rising of 1649 known as 'The affair of Kessock and Balvenie.' The civil war ended in the tragedy at Whitehall, which Scotland did all it could to avert and unanimously condemned.

Meantime, though in disheartening circumstances, the Presbyterian Church was making progress. New Presbyteries were formed and grouped into Synods. Strenuous efforts were made to secure for the Highlands, as a whole, a Gaelic-speaking ministry. The step taken by the Privy Council in 1616, towards providing a parochial system of education, had been followed up in 1633 by an Act which made that system part of the law of the land, and a burden on the land-

owners. Laws for school management were framed by the Assemblies of 1638 and 1642. Reading, writing, and the elements of religion were the branches to be taught; but Gaelic was proscribed as if it bred malignancy.

The Assembly of 1646 resolved 'that the knowledge of God in Christ be spread throughout the Highlands and Islands; that an order be procured that all gentlemen, who are able to, shall send their eldest sons at least to be bred inlands . . . that ministers and expectants who can spread the Irish language (Gaelic) be sent to employ their talents in those parts . . . that Scots schools be erected in all parishes . . . that all ministers and ruling elders that have the Irish language be appointed to visit those parts.'

To secure Gaelic students for the ministry, the Assembly of 1648 resolved that 'boys of good genius should be put to school and trained up in learning,' and that every parish should pay towards their maintenance.

Better still, the members of the Synod of Argyll set themselves to the noble work of translating the Scriptures, and other Christian literature, into the language of the Gael. The first fifty psalms were translated

and published by them in 1659. They also published a translation of the Shorter Catechism, of which the earliest copy known to Reid, the author of the *Bibliotheca Scoto-Celtica*, was one of the second edition published in that year, and which contained also the Ten Commandments, the Lord's Prayer and the Creed.

At last it seemed as if the ill-used and ill-ruled Highland people were about to have schools within reach of all; Bibles in their homes and an evangelical ministry in their parishes; but sudden tempests have often wrecked rich argosies within sight of port.

NOTE A (page 97).

When a Commission from the Assembly came north in 1597 to arrange for the planting of kirks, Mr. James Melville, one of the Commissioners, recorded in his diary as to Lachlan Mòr that therein 'MaKintoshie warred all the rest, wha meitting us at Ennernes sett down the plat of all his Kirks with sufficient provision. . . . "Now it may be thought I am liberall," sayes he "because na Minister will venture to come amangs us, therefor get me men and sey (try) me and I will find sufficient caution for safftie of ther persones, obedience to ther doctrine and discipline, and guid peyment of thair stipend,"' etc.—James Melville's *Diary*, pp. 433-4.

NOTE B (page 98).

The chiefs and gentlemen who met the Bishop at this time were—Angus MacDonald of Dunyveg; Hector MacLean of Dowart; Donald Gorme of Sleat; Ruari MacLeod of Harris; Donald MacAllan Vic Ian of Ilanteram (captain of the Clanranald); Lauchlan MacLean of Coll; Lauchland MacKinnon of that Ilk; Hector MacLean of Lochbuy; Lauchlan and Allan MacLean, brothers-german to Dowart; Gillespick Macquarrie of Ulva, and Donald Macfie in Colonsay.—*Collectanea de rebus Albanicis*, i. 119; Record of Privy Council, 27th July 1610.

LECTURE IV

THE PERSECUTED CHURCH

1650–1701

THE PERSECUTED CHURCH

I

In the early morning of the 23rd June 1650, a Dutch man-of-war was observed riding at anchor off the mouth of the river Spey, while six other vessels carrying the same flag cruised in the offing. Such an unusual event caused great alarm among the villagers of Garmouth. Their fears were calmed, however, on seeing an unarmed party being rowed ashore. Friendly signals from the boat put the onlookers so much at ease that one of them—the ferryman of the place—waded into the shallows to offer his broad shoulders to any who wished to get ashore dry-shod. A.D. 1650.

The first to take advantage of the offer was a young man of twenty, to whom the boat-party paid the utmost deference. The young man was Charles II., the proclaimed but uncrowned King of Scotland. Among the gentlemen of his retinue was Lord Brodie,

who knew the district well. Before landing the Prince signed both the National Covenant and the Solemn League and Covenant. Tradition adds that, after landing, he repeated the hollow mockery in the House of Innes near by.

On New Year's Day following, he was crowned by the Earl of Argyll at Scone, where the 'honours of Scotland'—the Crown, Sceptre, and Sword—were still guarded. On that high occasion Charles again pledged himself to the two Covenants; but the only part of the historic documents which he and many of his subjects found it convenient to remember, was the oath with which the National Covenant concluded:—'We promise and swear that we shall, to the utmost of our power, with our means and lives, stand to the defence of our dread sovereign.'

The cry of 'King and Covenant' was then raised, and that, along with the desire of many to be on what they deemed the winning side, drew thousands to the royal standard. Yet somehow the very presence of Charles II. begat division, distrust, and disaster. After the defeat of the Scottish army at Dunbar,

a spirit of sheer infatuation seemed to take possession of all parties in State and Church.

The King's advisers recommended that the army should be open to all who could bear arms, irrespective of their religious views. Against that proposal a body of influential persons drew out a formal 'Remonstrance' advising the Committee of Estates 'to adhere to the King only in defence of religion and liberty, and that, if he should forsake the counsels of the Church and State, and be guided by malignants,[1] he be removed from the exercise of government.' This Remonstrance was condemned by the Committee of Estates as scandalous.

The Church then entered the fray. The Commission of its Assembly met in November 1650, and at first approved, but before the close of its sittings, condemned the Remonstrance — a course which drew forth many dissents.

The same Commission met again within a month to answer a question submitted to it by the Scottish Parliament, viz.: What persons shall be permitted to take arms

[1] All who refused to sign the National Covenants were so called.

against the sectaries? The answer the Church gave took the form of a 'Resolution' to the effect that 'all fencible persons, except the excommunicated, forfeited and professed enemies to the Covenant, may be employed.' That split the Church into Resolutioners and Protesters. More than that, the same Commission of Assembly, in April following (1651), gave as its opinion that Parliament might admit to public offices and places of trust all subjects, provided the guilty did undergo discipline. That gave plenty of work to the Highland Presbyteries. Crowds of mock penitents, who had violated their covenanting oaths, flocked to them for discipline, in order to qualify for preferment in the public service.

The Assembly met in St. Andrews on 16th July 1651, but removed almost immediately to Dundee on learning that Crom-
A.D. 1651. well's army had entered Fife. It only sat for three or four days in all, yet in that time it condemned the Remonstrance whilst it approved the Resolution; it also condemned the Protesters—deposed three of them, and suspended one. It further ordered all the Presbyteries of the Church to ask

the opinion of their members concerning the Remonstrance and Resolution, and the lawfulness of that Assembly—a new kind of Inquisition.[1] That order occasioned serious division in some of the Highland Presbyteries. In the Presbytery of Dunkeld—which then included Breadalbane, and was largely Gaelic-speaking—the Protesters, who numbered seven, withdrew and formed a separate Presbytery.[2] Five ministers and three elders of the Synod of Moray protested against the Assembly's resolution, but did not separate.

The Presbytery of Dingwall was at that time greatly reduced in numbers, as the ministers of the parishes of Dingwall, Fodderty, Contin, Urray, and Kiltearn had been deposed at different times—some for declining to sign the Covenants, others for subscribing 'Seaforth's Remonstrance,' or for taking part in 'Hamilton's engagement.' The cautious and diplomatic remnant of the Presbytery met on 19th August 1651, and reported that in obedience to the Assembly's orders they had used diligence 'to try if any

[1] Pinkerton's *Records of the Kirk*, pp. 626-43.
[2] No minutes of this Presbytery are known to exist.

within their paroches were contrarie to the public resolutions of the Kingdom, and that they could not get certaine knowledge of any.'

The Assembly of 1651 may be said to have been the last Assembly of the Scottish Presbyterian Church for thirty-nine years. An Assembly was held in Edinburgh in 1652, but its lawfulness was called in question, and in the following year as soon as the Assembly met it was dissolved by one of Cromwell's officers. No meeting of Assembly was permitted in 1654, nor after that till the Revolution Settlement. Kirk-Sessions, presbyteries and synods were not interfered with. Presbyterians had more liberty under the Commonwealth and Protectorate than they knew how to value.

The restoration of Charles II. evoked an unrestricted jubilation and revelry, both in England and Scotland, which boded no good. Shortly thereafter Middleton—an ex-pikeman and soldier of fortune—was sent to Scotland as Lord High Commissioner, having been made an earl for the occasion. The first Scottish Parliament in the reign of Charles II. began its sittings on 1st January 1661, and passed Acts at an

A.D. 1660.

unprecedented rate, one of which decreed 'that the King alone can call and hold and prorogue all conventions and meetings.' Assemblies were not mentioned—they were included in the 'all.' An Act Recissory, which followed, declared that 'the pretended parliaments of 1640-1649, and all Acts and deeds passed and done in them, were null and void.' In a word, all that successive parliaments had done in those years in favour of Presbyterianism was cancelled. The Church was left without Confession, Catechism, Directory, or Book of Discipline, so far as the cognizance of the law of the land was concerned. Patronage was *ipso facto* restored, and as if to show the spirit that prevailed, it was enacted 'that the 29th of May be forever an Holy Day as to the Lord'—the said day being the anniversary of the restoration of the king who misruled the triple kingdom.

In a letter, directed by the king to Douglas, one of the ministers of the Church, which was to be communicated to the Presbytery of Edinburgh, and was read thereat on 3rd September 1660, he declared: 'We do resolve to protect and preserve the government of the Church of Scotland, as it is settled by law,

without violation, etc.' The meaning of that was obvious, yet in twelve months (5th September 1661), the Lord Chancellor presented to the Scottish Privy Council another letter from the king in which he stated: 'We, from our respect to the Glory of God . . . declared to those of your Council here, our firm resolution to interpose our royal authority for restoring of that Church to its right government by bishops, as it was by law . . . during the reigns of our royal father and grandfather of blessed memory, and as it now stands settled by law.'

The Privy Council carried out the will of the despotic king in an Act restoring the Episcopal government of the Church. That act was followed immediately by another which declared that all ministers ordained since patronage was abolished in 1649 till 1660, had no right to their livings; but that if, by a certain day, they obtained presentation from the patrons and ordination from the bishops, they would be allowed to continue in their positions. This resulted in nearly 400 ministers going out or submitting to eviction and deposition. Some had been deposed in the previous year (1661) for regard-

A.D. 1662.

ing the Protest as just and reasonable—conspicuous among them being Thomas Hogg of Kiltearn, the proto-sufferer in the north of Scotland.

Synods, presbyteries, and kirk-sessions were suspended until they should be revived as bishops' courts, a step which was speedily taken; but it was one thing to change the government of the Church and quite another thing to get the Scots to recognise what they regarded as a new Church. That was quickly discovered by the ruling party, and in 1663 an Act was passed to compel attendance at the Church on pain of being heavily fined. A landowner who failed to attend was subject to a fine amounting to one-fourth of his year's rent, a farmer or a burgess to a fine of one-fourth of his movables, and so on in a descending scale.

The whirlwinds of persecution were then let loose. The days of Sharp and Middleton had come, while those of the notorious Ross-shire MacKenzies—Cromarty and Rosehaugh—and of Claverhouse, Turner, and Dalziel, were not far off. A profligate Court poisoned and debased society. Masters of casuistry and intrigue held the reins of public affairs.

Righteousness was at a discount. In the words of Bishop Burnett: 'It was a maddening time when the men of affairs were always drunk.'

II

I shall now endeavour to show how the ministers of the Highlands and Islands acted when the testing time came. They had to choose between conformity to an Episcopal form of Church government, imposed upon them by the arbitrary will of the king, and deprivation of office, living, and status.

To the Synod of Argyll belongs the premier place among the Highland Synods, by right of suffering endured at that time in defence of the sole Headship of Christ in His Church.

The Presbytery of Inveraray had then five parishes, with six ministerial charges—the parish which included the county town being a double charge. It so happened that the parish of Knapdale, in that Presbytery, had been vacant for two years, as its minister, Dugald Campbell, had been sent to Lochaber in 1659 to organise Church work there; but not liking his position and surroundings, he quietly left Lochaber and returned to his

still vacant charge in May 1661. He alone of the ministers of his Presbytery conformed to Episcopalianism. One of the remaining five who adhered to Presbyterianism appears not to have been 'outed'—probably through the influence of the Earl of Argyll.[1]

The Presbytery of Dunoon had nine charges, all occupied. Hew Scott writes of one of its ministers, Donald Morrison of Strachur: 'whether he conformed or not does not appear.' Of the remaining eight, four conformed, and four were deprived.

There were eight ministerial charges in the Presbytery of Kintyre, that of Campbeltown being a double one. Three were vacant. The ministers of the other five charges declined to conform and were deprived.[2] All the charges in what is now the Presbytery of Islay and Jura were then vacant, so far as Church records show.[3] In the Presbytery of Lorn two ministers were deprived, and five conformed.[4] The whole Presbytery of Mull conformed. I have not discovered that any other minister in the

[1] Archibald M'Callome, Glassary, Scott's *Fasti*, vol. iii. p. 7.
[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 17 to 34.
[3] *Ibid.*, pp. 52 to 58.
[4] *Ibid.*, pp. 59 to 76.

Isles, or on the western seaboard of the mainland, declined to conform. All were imitators of the Vicar of Bray.

In the Synod of Caithness there was a complete change of ecclesiastical affairs. Montrose, on landing at Duncansby in Caithness, eleven years before the time we have now under consideration, presented to each of the ministers in the county a form of declaration in favour of the restoration of Charles II., which they all signed, with the exception of William Smyth of Bower, whom Montrose is charged with having treated very cruelly on account of his refusal—a charge which Dr. Craven tries to soften down in his *Diocese of Caithness*. The ensuing Assembly deposed the majority of that Presbytery for their conduct; but the sentence of deposition could not be given effect to, as the Assembly stood deprived of the right of meeting, under the Commonwealth and also during the Protectorate of Cromwell.

In 1662, under the new Episcopal regime, the deposed Caithness ministers were restored to their legal position—William Smyth of Bower, referred to above, being evicted. The whole county became then nominally

Episcopalian. All the ministers in Sutherland conformed, but the Earl and Countess stood firmly for Presbyterianism, and used their great influence to prevent persecution.

The most interesting parish in the Sutherland of those days was Durness. Alexander Munro, son of the Laird of Kitwell, Kiltearn, and a convert of Robert Bruce of Kinnaird, was settled in Durness as a Presbyterian minister, early in the seventeenth century. He found the people of his parish grossly ignorant, having neither Bibles nor ability to read them. But knowing their fondness for singing, he translated portions of Scripture into Gaelic metre, and set them to tunes which took the people's fancy. In that way they soon became familiar with the essential truths of revealed religion, and with gratifying results. Those paraphrases, popularly known as 'Munro's Verses,' were sung at private gatherings for generations. Some of them are still preserved.[1] Munro was succeeded by his son Hew, an Episcopalian, who was a tolerant and good man. Not only did

[1] They were written phonetically. Some of them are preserved in Macrae's MS.

See Dr. Morrison's article on 'Ministers of Tongue,' *Gaelic Society of Inverness,* vol. xi.

he refrain from reporting the presence in his parish of an 'outed' Warwickshire minister, George Squair, but actually connived at his preaching the Gospel to the people as soon as he had acquired some knowledge of Gaelic.[1]

The Synod of Ross showed very badly in the day of trial. Thomas Hogg had, as we saw, been already deprived and deposed, and only four other ministers of the county adhered to Presbyterianism. Thomas Hogg stands out conspicuously. His success in the Gospel, his marked ability, his wisdom as a counsellor, and above all his consistent piety made him a great power for good. His deposition, wandering, imprisonment, and banishment, on the one hand, and his restoration to his parish in 1690, with his appointment to be one of the king's chaplains on the other, were among the varied consequences to him of his noble stand for truth and liberty.

John MacKillican, minister of Fodderty, Andrew Ross of Tain, and Thomas Ross of Kincardine, with Hugh Anderson of Cromarty, were the other ministers of Ross who declined to join the King's Church in 1662. Anderson,

[1] An ancestor of the Rev. Dr. Aird of Creich in Sutherland.

being a man of distinction as a scholar and preacher, besides being a landowner in his own parish, and on friendly terms with Sir John Urquhart, its principal heritor, was allowed to continue in his position till in 1675 he took part in the open-air communion of the Covenanters at Obsdale, near Invergordon. He was then evicted; but for him that only meant that he went to live on his estate of Udale in the west end of his parish. He was restored at the Revolution, and helped to reconstitute the Presbytery of Ross.

At that time, and for more than one hundred years thereafter, the parish of Ardersier, although in the province of Moray, was one of the parishes of the Presbytery of Chanonry and Synod of Ross. John M'Culloch, its minister, had been deposed for nonconformity in 1662. That gives us—if we include Thomas Hogg—five 'outed' ministers in the county of Ross, and six in the Synod.

Besides those eminent Ross-shire fathers, two young men of that county and period deserve to be mentioned among the sufferers for conscience' sake—James Fraser of Brea,

in the Black Isle, and John Fraser of Pitcalzian, in Nigg, Easter Ross. The story of James Fraser of Brea is well known—his early struggle to get a university education, his conversion at the age of eighteen, his turning aside from the study of law to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel, and his casting in his lot with the sufferers. He received licence to preach from the Field Presbytery of Moray.[1] His minute and severe introspection and apostolic earnestness were a stimulus and a challenge to succeeding generations. After the Revolution he became minister of Kinross.

John Fraser, who was afterwards minister of Alness, in Ross, was also a sufferer in the reign of Charles II. Having found his way to London about 1680, he seems to have been in close touch there with Baptists and other nonconformists, as well as with Scottish Presbyterian refugees. Early in 1685 he was apprehended at a conventicle addressed by the famous Alexander Shiells, and as a Scotsman, was sent for trial to Edinburgh,

[1] The 'outed' ministers of Moray and Ross constituted themselves in 1672 into a Presbytery which came to be known as the Field Presbytery of Moray.—Macdonald's *Covenanters in Moray and Ross*, p. 106.

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where he was sentenced, first to imprisonment in Dunnottar, and then to transportation to labour on the plantations of New Jersey, in the service of a man who was known as the Laird of Pitlochie. The said laird having died of fever, as did also his wife, and many others during the voyage, there was no one who had a right to claim Fraser as a convict labourer on the ship's arrival. He was therefore free to preach, and did so as opportunity offered, till his return to Scotland at the Revolution. He then became minister of the parish of Glencross; but as he knew Gaelic, and Gaelic-speaking ministers being scarce, he was translated to Alness in his native county, and inducted there on 19th November 1696, in face of the determined opposition of the Episcopalian parishioners.

Although the number of Ross-shire ministers who declined to conform was small, a large and influential body of landowners and other persons of influence in the county, resisted the king's claim for supremacy in spiritual matters. In that resistance the Munroes of the House of Fowlis led, but many gentlemen of other names appear in

the list of Ross-shire Covenanters who were then fined for nonconformity.[1]

The Synod of Moray, too, had its consistent Presbyterians in those days, but among the ministers they were few. George Innes, minister of Dipple, and Harrie Forbes, minister of Auldearn, anticipated their deposition by making a voluntary and ready demission. Thomas Urquhart at Essil, James Urquhart at Kinloss, and George Urquhart at Glass, ministers, were deposed in 1663 for refusal to conform.[2] Alexander Fraser, minister of Daviot, in the Presbytery of Inverness, was similarly dealt with in 1672. All the other members of that large Synod conformed to the Church of Charles II.

That some of them were ill at ease in so doing is proved by the fact that when the test of 1681 was presented to all incumbents of parishes for their signatures, eight min-

[1] Munro of Fowlis, ... £3600 Scots.
Mackintosh of Connage, . . . 3600 ,,
Mackenzie of Kilcoy, ... 6000 ,,
Donald Fowler of Allan, ... 2400 ,,
Hector Douglas of Mildarg, . . . 2400 ,,
Walter Innes of Inverbreckie, . . 2400 ,,
Ross of Invercarron, ... 1200 ,,
Andrew M'Culloch, burgess of Tain, . 1200 ,,
and many others.—Wodrow's *History*, vol. i. p. 274.

[2] Shaw's *Ecclesiastical History of Moray*, p. 335.

isters of that Synod at once demitted their charges, rather than swear to a document which set forth that: 'The King is the only supreme governor in all causes, civil and ecclesiastical, and that it is not lawful for subjects upon any pretence to enter into Covenants and Leagues . . . or to endeavour any alteration in the Church or State as now established.'

III

The new Church which Charles II. thrust upon the Highlanders, in common with the rest of his Scottish subjects, invites our close attention. Its public services were conducted almost exactly as in Presbyterian times. No liturgy was in general use. Ecclesiastical vestments were not worn, as a rule. The Lord's Prayer was repeated, and the doxology sung; but that had been done in the public worship of Presbyterian Scotland since the days of Knox. It was seldom that a MS. was seen in the pulpit, and prayers were usually extemporaneous. There was no altar. Communicants sat at tables. Parents in receiving baptism for their children repeated the Apostles' Creed,

or assented thereto; but that, or its equivalent, was nothing new. Kirk-sessions usually met every Lord's Day. Presbyteries were only in abeyance till bishops were placed over their dioceses, when they resumed their functions as if nothing had happened. Candidates for the ministry were taken on trial by the Presbyteries, and if found qualified ranked as expectants. The moderator of each Presbytery was chosen by the bishop of the diocese, and was a 'constant' or perpetual moderator. Each bishop presided over his Provincial Synod. 'The exercise and addition' was kept up. Church discipline was severe and often degrading, with its jougs, sackcloth, and stools of repentance.

Ministers were presented by the patrons; and 'ordination, collation, and institution' were received privately at the bishop's cathedral. 'Trials' were then prescribed and heard, after which a public settlement was carried out in Presbyterian form, even to the detail of calling for objections 'at the most patent door of the Church.' These points show how plausibly it could be argued that no change of importance had been

made. The bulk of the people really saw none.

The Sacrament of the Supper was seldom administered in Highland country parishes under the Episcopal regime. The necessary vessels and linen cloths were often lacking, and when needed had to be borrowed. In the parish of Loch Broom, the Lord's Supper was only administered once in seven years; at Fodderty, once in twelve; and at Glenurquhart not once in twenty-four.[1] Churches were often without pulpit, desk, or glazed windows; and their earthen floors were in many cases used for burial purposes.

Fighting and drunkenness were not unknown within churches and churchyards on the Lord's Day. 'In 1672, two lairds—Martin MacGillivray of Aberchalder and Alexander MacKintosh of Farr had a "ploy"—as the minute of the Presbytery has it—on the Lord's Day within the Church of Dunlichity. In the same year John M'Doir was accused of drunkenness and fighting in the Church of Kiltearn; and in 1680 Andrew M'Andrew was found guilty of striking a man

[1] Mackay's *Inverness and Dingwall Presbytery Records*, Introduction, p. xxi.

within the Church of Urquhart of Ferintosh.'[1] At Forres on 11th December 1672, D. Cuming, minister of Edenkillie, stated to his Presbytery 'that he did sadly regrate that there did fall out a greivous miscarriage the last Lord's Day. . . . As the people were coming out of the Church, one of Dunphail's servants, Thomas Miller, coming forth out of the Church having a gun in his hand . . . Robert Cuming and James Ogilvie fell upon him without any provocation, and gave him severall strocks with batons which occasioned a great uproare. Afterwards the said Robert Cuming having drawn his sword . . . occassioned many swords to be drawn.' Miller wisely stayed within the barred door of the church, and by the intervention of the minister further trouble was prevented for that day.

Complaints were frequently made to Church Courts against persons who had 'dishaunted' or ceased to attend church. Witching and charming were severely punished. In that matter the civil authorities were as much to blame as the ecclesiastical courts for the

[1] Mackay's *Inverness and Dingwall Presbytery Records*, Introduction, p. xxv.

savage treatment of poor creatures—generally females—who were believed to possess, or who, as was sometimes the case, imagined that they possessed occult powers. The burning of a witch or wizard usually took place on the Lord's Day and drew crowds.[1]

Ignorance, superstition, and spiritual apathy abounded, while in some places the relics of Celtic paganism held the field. On a small island on Loch Maree, so called after St. Maolrubha of Applecross, crowds from far and near gathered on the 25th August in each year to offer a white bull in sacrifice to him, under the name of Mourie.[2] In 1678 the Church Courts did their best to suppress those rites, but with little success.[3]

[1] The last victim in Scotland of that species of human ferocity is said to have belonged to the parish of Loth in Sutherland. Burt's account of it is that: 'In the beginning of the year 1727 two poor Highland women (mother and daughter), in the shire of Sutherland, were accused of witchcraft, tried and condemned to be burnt.' The daughter escaped from prison, but the dreadful sentence was carried out in the case of the mother, solely on the ground that she would not or could not say 'Our Father which art in Heaven'—in Gaelic of course—but 'Our Father which wast in Heaven.' She was therefore held to have confessed herself a daughter of the devil.

[2] *Inverness and Dingwall Presbytery Records,* Introduction, p. xxxvii.

[3] Lunatics are known to have been brought there for healing as late as 1852 and 1858.—Dixon's *Gairloch,* p. 151; *Inverness Courier,* 4th November 1852.

The same saint was known in Lewis as Mulony or Mulvay, and idolatrous worship was offered to him there at the Butt till 1700 and probably much later.

In milder forms the Loch Maree pagan cult survived well into the nineteenth century. Cavalcades and horse races were a striking feature of religious festivals in many of the Western Isles at the beginning of the eighteenth century. The popular addiction to those amusements seems to have been a survival of Norse customs. Games, in which the horse played a part, were kept up by Protestants and Catholics alike, at Christmas, Easter, Good Friday, and Michaelmas.

IV

Meantime in Moray and Ross there was no abatement in the active persecution of one body of Christians by another. Things came to a head, however, on 22nd January 1685, when a Commission of the Privy Council arrived in Elgin with full power to stamp out all opposition to King Charles's model Church. The Commission consisted of the Earls of Errol and Kintore, with Colonel George Munro of Culrain, Ross-shire—a rough pro-

duct of the continental wars. Tradition has it that the first act of the Commission was to order the erection of a new gallows. From 200 to 300 nonconformists were summoned for trial. The poor among them were imprisoned. The preachers were banished, except one who had some wealth, and he was heavily fined along with offenders of the landed class. The Laird of Grant was fined in a sum of £42,500 Scots, James Brodie in £24,000, Brodie of Lethen in £40,000, and many others in smaller sums.[1] Intimation of the king's death broke up what has been called the Elgin Inquisition; but the demise of Charles II. only served to open the way for his Roman Catholic brother James, who as the Duke of York was already too well known in Scotland.

While that was the state of matters in Ross and Moray, some other parts of the Highlands helped to fill the ranks of the 'Highland Host,' which over-ran and harried the Covenanting counties in the south-west of Scotland in 1678. It was a new experience for those Highland caterans to find themselves in the king's service, with a high value set

[1] Wodrow's *History*, vol. iv. p. 193.

upon their propensity for taking what did not belong to them. On royal authority, robbery was made a lawful and honest calling. They listened with amazement as their officers read, translated, and explained to them that they were authorised 'to take free quarter, according as our Privy Council or their Committee shall think fit to order, and if need be to seize on horses for carrying their sick men, ammunition and other provisions . . . and for their encouragement we hereby indemnify them against all pursuits, civil and criminal, which may at any time hereafter be intended against them for anything they shall do in our service by killing, wounding, apprehending or imprisoning such as shall make opposition to our authority.'[1]

Those professional robbers killed no one, but they faithfully cleared all that west-land of its best horses, and of as many other valuables as they and those same horses could carry. The good Wodrow writes: 'You could have seen them with loads of bedclothes, carpets, men and women's clothing, pots, pans, gridirons, shoes, and other furni-

[1] Wodrow's *History*, vol. ii. p. 379.

ture.'[1] Yet they were mere tools in the hands of Charles II., the Earl of Lauderdale, and Archbishop Sharp of that ilk.

A servile Scottish Parliament acknowledged James VII. to be king without insisting on his taking the Coronation Oath. The Cameronians were led by this omission to withhold their allegiance; and by and by, goaded on by his cruel conduct, they renounced and defied him. On account of that attitude, when an Act was passed in 1687 abolishing the last of the Penal Statutes, the king excluded field-preaching and conventicles from the benefit of it—meaning thereby to make an end of the followers of Richard Cameron. The tables were turned, however, when on 5th November 1688 the Prince of Orange landed at Torbay. James fled immediately, and along with him, absolute monarchy took its departure; while to the Cameronians fell the honour, some months thereafter, of organising a volunteer force of their own number at a critical moment in our national history, and hurling back the wild rush of a temporarily victorious Jacobitism at Dunkeld.

[1] Wodrow's *History*, vol. ii. p. 413.

On 11th May 1689, William and Mary were proclaimed in Edinburgh as joint sovereigns of the Kingdom of Scotland—having already been crowned King and Queen of England. On 22nd July of the same year, an Act of the Scottish Parliament was passed abolishing 'Prelacy and all superiority of any office in the Church in this Kingdom above Presbyters.' It was further enacted (25th April 1690), 'that all those Presbyterian ministers, yet alive, who were thrust from their charges since the first day of January 1661, or banished for nonconformity to prelacy . . . have forthwith free access to their churches; the present incumbents to remove betwixt and Whitsunday next to come.' At the same time the Act of Supremacy was rescinded. Then the Act ratifying the Confession of Faith, and settling Presbyterianism, became law on 7th June 1690. The Government of the Church was to be exercised by the restored ministers 'and such ministers and elders only as they have admitted, or received, or shall hereafter receive.' They, or their representatives, or visitors appointed by them, were allowed 'to try and purge out all

A.D. 1689.

inefficient, negligent, scandalous, and erroneous ministers by due course of ecclesiastical procedure.' Patronage was abolished—provision being made for compensating the patrons—and, according to an Act passed on 19th July, 'the heritors of the said parish'—*i.e.* of a vacant parish—'being Protestants, with the elders, were to name and propose a person to the whole congregation, to be either approved or disapproved by them.' Such was, in brief, the Revolution Settlement.

The months between 7th June and 'the third Thursday of October following'—which was the day fixed by Act of Parliament for the first meeting of the General Assembly of the re-established Church—were so vigorously utilised by the restored ministers that when the Commissioners who had been appointed thereto met in the High Kirk of Edinburgh, they numbered 182 persons—116 ministers and 66 ruling elders.[1]

Mr. Gilbert Rule represented the University of Edinburgh—of which he was Principal—as an elder, although he was at the same

[1] *See* MS. copy of the Acts and proceedings of the General Assembly of 1690 which is in the Library of the University of Glasgow.

time minister of Greyfriars' Church. Representative elders were also sent up by several cities and burghs.

Dr. Cunningham, of St. Andrews, states, in his *Church History of Scotland*, that 'there were no representatives from the North,' [1] while even Professor Grub writes that 'nearly the whole Kingdom beyond the Tay was unrepresented.' [2] The representation of the Northern Synods was certainly meagre, yet the facts are that the Synod of Aberdeen sent two commissioners; the Synod of Moray, eight; the Presbytery of Chanonry, two; while the Presbytery of Dornoch also sent two. The Synod of Glenelg sent none; but that of Argyll sent eight representatives.[3]

The king and his advisers, who urged brevity and moderation on all who had to do with the business of the Assembly, had no cause of complaint in either respect. Among the timely and useful Acts which that Assembly passed, the most important was that which appointed two Commissions, with ample powers, to see to the reconstruc-

[1] Vol. ii. p. 177 (note).
[2] Grub's *Ecclesiastical History*, vol. iii. p. 323.
[3] *See* Note C, pp. 170-1.

tion and adjustment of Church affairs—one on the north side and the other on the south side of the Tay. Many of the duties laid upon those Commissions could not be discharged without incurring adverse criticism.

The state of feeling between the Church and the Crown was at that time so strained, that until 1694 no other General Assembly was held of which authoritative minutes have been preserved. An Assembly did meet in 1692, but after lengthy discussion of a letter which the king presented to them, by his commissioner, expressing a desire that all ministers should be admitted into the Established Church who were willing to subscribe the Confession of Faith, they firmly declined to assent thereto. And when at length the disappointed commissioner dissolved the Assembly—reserving to the king the right of appointing the date of its next meeting—its members showed that the spirit of 1592 and 1638 was still alive in them, by intimating, through their moderator, that the Assembly would next meet 'on the third Wednesday of August 1693.' Burton writes of that Assembly that 'so unsatisfactory were its proceedings, to any party,

that they were blotted out of the precedents of the Church.' [1] Hume Brown tells us that 'The Acts of the Assembly were burned in 1701, but a copy was preserved and afterwards inserted in the edition belonging to the University of Edinburgh.' [2]

The king delayed giving his sanction to the holding of another Assembly till he thought he had the Presbyterian ministers of Scotland at a disadvantage. He made it a condition of their taking their seats in the Assembly of 1694, that each of them should take a new oath, known as 'the Assurance,' which was to the effect that William and Mary were monarchs, not only *de facto*, but also *de jure*. Jacobite Episcopalians would not swear to that, nor would Presbyterian ministers take a civil oath like that in order to qualify for any ecclesiastical position. A threatened disaster was averted, however, by the prompt and influential intervention of Carstairs, although probably in a less dramatic way than is commonly told. The king dispensed with the oath, and thereby secured a peaceful and useful

[1] Burton's *History of Scotland*, 1689-1748, vol. i. p. 226.
[2] Hume Brown's *History of Scotland*, vol. iii. p. 22 (note).

Assembly. Not till then did the re-established Church feel that its position was anything like secure.

V

The work of reconstructing the Presbyterian Church in the Highlands was onerous and pathetic. There exists a minute of a meeting held by Presbyterian ministers in Argyll, after the indulgence of 1687, which begins: 'The small remnant of the Presbyterian ministers, yet extant, after the public troubles, and residing within the bounds of the Synod of Argyll, being six, and three known as residing in Glasgow, etc.' [1] Those nine were the sole survivors of the eighteen deprived and evicted ministers of Argyll. Their number would probably be still smaller in 1690 when the work of reconstruction began.

When the Act disestablishing Episcopacy was applied in the Synod of Argyll, nine incumbents declined to conform, or to take the Oath of Allegiance, and deserted their charges. Five were deprived for not praying for the King and Queen. Two demitted

[1] Brown's *Memorials of Argyle*, p. 383.

office, and immediately thereupon conformed to Presbyterianism, and were reinstated. Of the others, one, on being deprived, renounced Episcopacy, and was received into the local synod. Another did not conform to Presbyterianism, but continued to minister to his flock and was maintained by their free-will offerings. In the case of the parish of Glenorchy in that Synod, when the Presbyterian minister, who had been deprived of his charge there in 1662, was sent by the newly restored Presbytery to preach in his old parish with a view to his re-settlement, he was ordered to depart, and was escorted to the boundary of the parish by twelve men with drawn swords, preceded by two pipers playing 'The March of Death.' In that way Dugald Lindsay retained the benefice of Glenorchy parish as an Episcopalian minister, despite the law, till his death in 1723.[1]

Of the Western Isles it may safely be said that it was not till after the Revolution Settlement that Presbyterianism began to be understood and accepted by their inhabitants. John Bethune, minister of Bracadale, Skye, 'was the first in that island who dis-

[1] Scott's *Fasti*, vol. iii. p. 67.

pensed the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, from the time of the Reformation, according to the Presbyterian form.'[1] Angus MacQueen of Sleat, in Skye, was deposed by the visitors of the Synod in 1694; but he ignored the sentence, and held his position till he died. Another Skye minister, Donald MacQueen of Snizort, was deprived for non-jurancy; but he followed the example of his namesake in Sleat, and defied the Church authorities.[2] There were at that time but two parishes in Lewis, and both their ministers—Allan Morrison of Barvas, and Kenneth Morrison of Stornoway—conformed to Presbyterianism.[3]

Turning our attention now to the north of Scotland, we find that the nine clergymen of Caithness declined to become Presbyterians. Andrew Munro of Thurso, who had left his charge there in 1662, returned to it under the Act of 1690, and was from that time till his death in 1693, the only Presbyterian minister in the county. A Commission of Assembly was appointed in 1697, with power

[1] Scott's *Fasti*, vol. iii. p. 122.

[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 129 and 131.

[3] *Ibid.*, pp. 144 and 146. *See* also Mackenzie's *History of the Outer Hebrides*, p. 527.

to form a Presbytery of Caithness. It was to consist of four ministers: William Innes, translated from Carnock to Thurso; Alexander Steadman, translated from Beith to Wick, with John Munro at Reay, readvised by this Commission to a share of the Church Government; and George Oswald, ordained by the Presbytery of Edinburgh at appointment of the said General Assembly minister of Dunnett.[1] The last named took his seat in the Presbytery in September 1697, but there is nothing to show that Steadman ever went to Wick.

In the county of Sutherland, as there had been no eviction, there could of course be no restitution. All the incumbents in the county refused to conform to Presbyterianism, but took the Oath of Allegiance and retained their benefices.

The state of matters in the Synod of Ross can be briefly told. Of its Episcopal incumbents, nine were deprived for declining to take the Oath of Allegiance, or for refusing to pray for the Queen and King: one demitted his charge, and one offered to submit to Presbyterianism, but was not accepted.

[1] Beaton's *Ecclesiastical History of Caithness*, p. 135.

Nineteen held their benefices without submission till their removal by death.[1] The last of them died in 1727.

The Presbytery of Ross was not reconstituted till 1693. Two ministers, Hogg and MacKillican, who had survived the Revolution, died before that date, and M'Culloch of Ardersier had demitted on account of infirmity. The new Presbytery consisted of Hugh Anderson of Cromarty, and William Stewart of Kiltearn (recently settled), and along with them, three Morayshire ministers acted as assessors. That state of matters existed until the Presbytery was reconstituted as the Presbytery of Ross and Sutherland. At a meeting of the new Presbytery on 26th September 1694, there were present Anderson of Cromarty, Stewart of Kiltearn, Walter Dunoone of Golspie, and William MacKay of Dornoch, ministers; with David Ross of Balnagown, Sir Robert Gordon of Embo, and Robert Gray of Tallach, ruling elders.[2] Those four ministers, and a few elders, constituted the equipment of the Presby-

[1] One parish was vacant, and of another there was no account. *See* Dixon's *History of Gairloch*, p. 146.

[2] Bain's *History of Ross*, p. 248.

terian Church in the counties of Ross, Sutherland, and Caithness, in 1694.

In the Synod of Moray, which extended from Lochaber to Strathbogie, matters were no better for Presbyterianism. Angus MacBean, minister of the First Charge at Inverness, after a brief ministry of four years, renounced Episcopacy on 23rd October 1687, and joined the Covenanters—a line of conduct for which he was imprisoned once and again, though in broken health. He was at last released from prison by an Edinburgh mob in December 1688. Two months thereafter he died at the early age of thirty-three.

Alexander Fraser of Daviot, who had been deposed for similar reasons, survived the Revolution Settlement, and would have been restored to his parish had it not been that his name was by mistake omitted from the Act of Restoration. The survivors of the ministers of that Synod who demitted their charges in 1681 were held to have no claim to be restored.[1] Of the three evicted ministers of the Synod, the two who survived—James Urquhart of Kinloss and George Meldrum of Glass—were restored to their parishes in 1690,

[1] Scott's *Fasti*, p. 260.

and for the time being those two were the only Presbyterian ministers recognised by law within the bounds of the Synod.[1] As Alexander Dunbar, minister of Auldearn, and John Stewart, minister of Urquhart, sat in the Assembly of 1690, they must have been received previous to October of that year.

The state of ecclesiastical parties in the Highlands at that time may be briefly summarised. (1) There was the Church established by law, consisting of the survivors of the evicted or 'outed' ministers along with those whom they had admitted, including Episcopalians who took the oath and became Presbyterians; (2) there were the Episcopal ministers who took the Oath of Allegiance, while they declined to conform, and who therefore held their benefices by law although they did not constitute a Church; (3) there was the considerable body of Scottish Episcopalians who were at that time organising a self-sustaining Church consisting of persons who, from conviction, were both nonconformists to Presbyterianism and non-jurants; and (4) there were considerable numbers of Roman Catholics.

[1] Shaw's *History of Moray*, pp. 377-78.

Although the Presbyterian Church of Scotland was then free from a despotic royal supremacy, and had for a short time the ordering of its own affairs, the ecclesiastical sky was clouded, and the indicator of a falling barometer pointed to stormy.

NOTE C (page 160).

COMMISSIONERS to the General Assembly of 1690 from the four Synods of Argyll, Moray, Ross and Sutherland, and Caithness:—[1]

Synod.	Presbytery.	Minister.	Elder.	Parish.
I. Argyll, . .	(1) Dunoon,			
	Mr John M'Laurin.	M.		Kilmodan and Glendaruel.
	Sir John Campbell of Ardkinglass.		E.	
,,	(2) Campbeltown,			
	Mr. Duncan Duncanson.	M.		Campbeltown.
	Mr. John Cunison.	M.		Kilbride.
	Mr. John Darroch.	M.		Kilcalmonel and Kilberry
	Mr. William Hamilton, Brymer (?).[2]		E.	
,,	(3) Inveraray,			
	Mr. Alexander Gordoune.	M.		Inveraray, second or Lowland charge.
	Mr. Dougall Campbell.	M.		Kilmartin.

[1] Taken from a MS. copy of the Acts and Proceedings of the Assembly of 1690, now in the Glasgow University Library. The parishes have been identified in Dr. Hew Scott's *Fasti*.

[2] Illegible in the MS.

Synod.	Presbytery.	Minister.	Elder.	Parish.
II. Moray, . .	(1) Strathbogie,			
	Mr. George Meldrum.	M.		Glass.
	Mr. Alexander Duff of Beacro?[1]		E.	
,,	(2) Forres,			
	Mr. Alexander Dunbar.	M.		Auldearn.
	Mr. John Stewart.	M.		Urquhart.
	Mr. James Urquhart.	M.		Kinloss.
	Mr. Mark Mavor.		E.	
	Mr. John Campbell of Moy.		E.	
	Town of Elgin,			
	William King, Provost of Elgin.		E.	
III. Ross and Sutherland,	Chanonry,			
	Mr. Thomas Hog.	M.		Kiltearn.
	Mr. John M'Culloch.	M.		Ardersier.
IV. Caithness, .	Dornoch,			
	Mr. Walter Dunoon.	M.		Golspie.
	The Earl of Sutherland.		E.	

The following statement shows at a glance how the other Scottish Synods acted :—

The Synod of Merse and Teviotdale	sent	14	Ministers and	8	Elders.
,, ,, Lothian and Tweeddale	,,	25	,,	15	,,
,, ,, Perth and Stirling	,,	10	,,	5	,,
,, ,, Dumfries	,,	8	,,	2	,,
,, ,, Galloway	,,	7	,,	6	,,
,, ,, Glasgow and Ayr	,,	27	,,	15	,,
,, ,, Fife	,,	11	,,	7	,,
,, ,, Aberdeen	,,	1	,,	1	,,

The three Synods of Glenelg, Orkney and Shetland, Angus and Mearns did not send a single representative.

[1] Illegible in the MS.

LECTURE V

THE DECLINING CHURCH

1701–1796

THE DECLINING CHURCH

I

THE chief event of the reign of Queen Anne was the Union of the Parliaments of England and Scotland in 1707. Those who favoured that project clearly foresaw that the Church of Scotland would regard it with uneasiness and concern. Such a union would mean for that Church that, instead of its being in alliance with a State whose Parliament consisted mainly of Presbyterians, it would have to do with a legislature chiefly composed of Episcopalians whose sympathies would naturally be with their co-religionists. A.D. 1707.

The time was therefore one of anxiety and perplexity for the leaders of the Church. But under the guidance of the shrewd and experienced Carstairs, they were led to take up a position of such strict reserve and neutrality as won for them the respect of statesmen of both countries, and, in parti-

cular, convinced English statesmen that without the concurrence of the Scottish Church the desired union could not be consummated.

The immediate fruit of that conviction was the Act of Security, which was perhaps more than the best friends of the Church had hoped for, as it certainly was more than its opponents liked. The Act set forth: 'That by the late Act of Parliament for a treaty with England for a union of both Kingdoms it is provided that the commissioners for that treaty should not treat of or concerning any alteration of the worship, discipline, and government of the Church in this Kingdom, as now by law established, which treaty being now reported to the Parliament, and it being reasonable and necessary *that the true Protestant religion as presently professed within this Kingdom, with the worship, discipline, and government of this Church should be effectually and unalterably secured*: therefore her Majesty with the advice and consent of the said estates of Parliament, do thereby establish and confirm the said true Protestant religion, and the worship, discipline, and government of this

Church, to continue without any alteration to the people of this land in all succeeding generations.'

On the 16th January 1707 the queen's commissioner touched the Act of Union with the royal sceptre, and at the same time, and as inviolably bound with it, the Act for the Security of the Church. Shortly thereafter the Act was approved by the Parliament of England and Scotland, and obtained the royal assent; yet within a little more than five years the so-called Act of Security was found not to be worth the paper on which it was written, as a protection of the government of the Church 'to continue without any alteration.'

Both Houses of the British Parliament seemed then to set themselves to humiliate and injure the Scottish Church.

The reversal by the British House of Lords of the decision of the Court of Session, in the case of Greenshields,[1] was keenly resented, chiefly on the ground that English prelates should have a say in revising or rejecting decisions of the Court of A.D. 1712.

[1] James Greenshields was an Episcopal clergyman at Edinburgh, who, for using the *Book of Common Prayer* in public

Session that affected the prestige of the Church of Scotland. Nor did the Toleration Act of the following year (1712) fully mend matters. It rightly and justly gave freedom to the Episcopal Church in Scotland to do everything proper to it as a Church in its own way; but at the same time, the Act had two aspects which gave offence. On one hand it provided that the Presbyterian ministers should subscribe the Oaths of Allegiance and Abjuration—the latter of which contained a promise to maintain the succession to the throne as defined by the Act of Settlement, one of the clauses of which required the sovereign to be of the Communion of the Church of England. On the other hand those Oaths bound the Episcopal clergy to pray for the Queen's Majesty, the Princess Sophia of Hanover, and all the royal family. That was a bitter morsel for all who held that the true king was 'over the water.'

As a matter of fact the Oath of Abjuration became almost a dead letter. The majority

was summoned before the Presbytery of Edinburgh, who sought the sanction of the magistrates to forbid his preaching. When this was granted he was by their order imprisoned. The Court of Session refused to grant him redress, but on his appealing to the House of Lords he was released.

of the Presbyterian ministers took it, but an influential minority did not. Carstairs saved the situation seemingly; but a cleavage was made in the ranks of the ministry which endured for generations.

The baneful meddling of Parliament went further. In that same year (1712), on the motion of a young Scottish Episcopalian—Murray of Stormont—a Bill for the restoration of patronage in the Church of Scotland was introduced in the House of Commons, and rapidly passed through all its stages. Appeals and remonstrances were in vain. 'The chain was forged and rivetted' that was to gall and seriously disable the Church for a period of 160 years. That may be called a counter-Act of Security, for it certainly meant that in many parishes Jacobite lairds, and not the members of the Church, should have the choosing of ministers.

II

In the north of Scotland the working of the obnoxious Act became apparent at once. It became law on 22nd April, and on the 4th of June, when the Presbytery of Chanonry

in Ross-shire met to ordain and settle Alexander MacBean as minister of the parish of Avoch, Sir Kenneth Mackenzie of Scatwell lodged a notarial protest against his admission beginning: 'I, Sir Kenneth Mackenzie of Scatwell, undoubted patron of the parish kirk of Avoch, understanding that this presbytery now met at Rosemarkie intends to admit one Mr. Alexander MacBean a probationer to be minister . . . without any presentation . . . by me . . . notwithstanding my right is restored to me by ane Act passed in this session for restoring the right of patronages . . . therefore I doe protest etc.' [1] The ordination and settlement were carried out in face of that document, but the Episcopalians of Avoch would not recognise MacBean as parish minister. Indeed, they made it so disagreeable for him that on 21st October of the following year he removed to Douglas.

In the Northern and Western Highlands the nonconforming Episcopalians, who continued to hold their livings in large numbers, scouted the authority of Presbyteries, and even defied the State authorities. John

[1] MacGill's *Old Ross-shire*, p. 44 (No. 88).

Dempster, minister of Lairg in Sutherland, was deprived by the Privy Council on 7th November 1689 for not reading the Proclamation of the Estates, and for praying for the late king, in disregard of the law, yet he continued in his charge till he died about 1705.[1] His neighbour, Walter Ross, minister of Rogart, was summoned before the Privy Council on the same date and on a similar charge. His case was continued till the first Thursday of January following, but it was not then prosecuted, and he retained his position as Episcopal parish minister of Rogart for 31 years.[2]

After the passing of the Act of 1712, allowing Episcopal dissenters to use the English Liturgy, most of the surviving Episcopal ministers acted thereupon and conducted their public services according to the ritual of the Church of England.

Some of the Highland Presbyteries still tried to deal with flagrant cases of inefficiency. In 1718 the Presbytery of Tongue held a visitation of the congregation of Alexander Gray, Episcopal minister of Assynt, and 'required him to give in his demission, which

[1] Scott's *Fasti*, vol. iii. p. 339. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 342.

he was prepared to do till his wife and children came in a furious manner and pulled him out by the shoulders.' The only ministerial duties which Gray performed, during the remaining nine years of his life, were those of solemnizing marriages and administering baptism—the latter ordinance being administered from his bed.[1]

There were other cases in which the patron and the parishioners—being Episcopalians—got ministers of their own persuasion settled in parishes, or intruded, as the Presbyterians called it, in open violation of the Act of Settlement. Thus Finlay Macrae was settled at Lochalsh, as late as 1695, without taking the oath prescribed by law. Although he was deprived in 1716 that was not because he was an Episcopalian, but because he incited his parishioners to rebellion.[2]

Some patrons, convinced that they had no moral right, declined to exercise their legal title to making presentations to benefices; others were not so scrupulous and the tone of the Church declined. Patronage became a fetish to men who thereby found their way into the ministry.

[1] Scott's *Fasti*, vol. iii. p. 329.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 105.

III

As the story of the Church established by law is followed, it becomes increasingly difficult to justify or even to account for some of the Acts which were carried by majorities in its Assemblies. The spirit which prevailed showed itself in the Assembly's dealing with the 'Auchterarder Creed,' as well as in the controversy regarding the book known as *The Marrow of Modern Divinity*; and more particularly and injuriously in the Act anent Calls (1732), which cost it some of its best men. We might like to forget the Assembly's conduct in dealing with the Presbytery of Dunfermline by making one man, Thomas Gillespie of Carnock, bear the punishment which the majority of the Presbytery equally deserved; but we would then lose Gillespie's memorable words when he was made the scapegoat for the majority: 'Moderator,' he said, 'I humbly submit to the will of Providence, but rejoice that to me it is given in Christ's behalf not only to believe in Him but also to suffer for His sake.' [1]

[1] Hetherington's *History of the Church of Scotland*, p. 661.

Whilst the highest court of the Church was thus exercising a withering and disintegrating influence on the cause of religion, its living Head was graciously pleased to interpose in sovereign mercy. In the populous district which has Cambuslang for its centre, such moral and spiritual wonders were wrought by the Spirit of God that those who thought religion was but a synonym for ecclesiastical forms and shibboleths were overawed. The indisputable effects could only be accounted for in the words of St. Peter on the day of Pentecost: 'Jesus . . . being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the father the promise of the Holy Ghost hath shed forth *this*.' The cloud of blessing, from which such enriching showers fell, moved northwards through Kilsyth and Campsie till it reached the base of the Grampians. About that time a similar visitation was enjoyed in Easter Ross and the Black Isle. Let us visit some of the favoured spots.

The first Presbyterian minister of Rosskeen was Daniel Beton, inducted there on 24th January 1717. In a communication to Robe's *Monthly History*, in 1744, he reports

that he had encouragement in his work from the outset, but that for reasons which seemed to him sufficient he delayed the administration of the Sacrament of the Supper in his parish till 1722. He then saw his way to admit six or seven persons to the Table of the Lord. 'There was a pleasant appearance,' he says, 'of good in the parish for nine or ten years thereafter—the number of serious persons increasing.' From '1732 to 1742 things were much at a stand. But from the harvest of 1742 to Martinmas 1743 there came a surprising revival and stir among the people.' Many came under concern. Young and old were influenced for good. Beton gives an interesting account of a meeting in the east end of his parish which was attended by about twelve persons of from nine to fifteen years of age. They met in the house of a pious widow on Lord's Day and Monday evenings; 'when they exercised themselves in prayer by turns, and in singing and conferring about what they heard in public.' [1] A.D. 1722.

The minister of the parish of Kilmuir

[1] Robe's *Monthly History* for 1744, No. vi. p. 45.

Easter at that time was John Porteous, the most popular and highly esteemed minister in the county of Ross in his day. The cause of the Redeemer flourished around him. In one somewhat isolated part of his parish there were so many praying and singing 'pilgrims of the Heavenward way,' that it came to be known as 'the Nest of Thrushes.'

A time of spiritual quickening was also enjoyed in the neighbouring parish of Nigg, where John Balfour was minister. In communications made by him to Robe's *Monthly History* in 1744, he states that the revival of religion in his parish had been on the advance since the year 1730, though for the most part gradually. But in 1739 awakened persons applied to him every day in the week. Ten praying societies were formed in the parish and met every Saturday. Not one in forty who made a religious profession was known to fall back. For several years the civil magistrate had no crime to deal with in the parish, and the Kirk-Session had little else to do but to consult about the religious concerns of the parish. 'It is specially to be remarked,' he says, 'that the people were very diligent and industrious in their callings,

and more forward in the business of their husbandry than their neighbours in other parts of the country.' In 1745-1746, although the Rebellion was afoot, he was able to report: 'Things proceed in my parish as formerly.'

In 1743 George Wood of Rosemarkie reported as follows: 'Since the Communion here in July last, the bulk of the congregation seem to have a desire after instruction, and a knowledge of the Gospel, much greater than formerly. There are now about thirty persons of different ages and sexes, who since that time have come under convictions and awakenings of conscience through the Word. On conversing with them I have found several who have been under a gradual work of this sort for a good time before. There are now four praying societies in different parts of the parish, some whereof meet weekly, some once in two weeks, besides a general meeting with myself once a month.'[1] Similar accounts might be given regarding the parishes of Logie-Easter, Alness, Resolis, and Avoch.

A like experience was vouchsafed to

[1] Robe's *Monthly History* for 1744, No. vi. p. 47.

several congregations in Sutherland. Golspie was specially favoured. Walter Dunoone, who had been useful and zealous as a preacher of the Gospel in Moray and Ross in the persecuting time, was inducted minister of Golspie in 1690, and laboured faithfully till he entered his rest. He sowed, and another reaped. His successor, John Sutherland, communicated a touching letter to Robe's *Monthly* in August 1745. 'When our hopes were almost gone,' he writes, 'the great and bountiful God . . . was pleased to breathe on the dry bones . . . upwards of 70 persons came to me . . . under exercises of soul.' [1]

Rogart shared the visitation. And at Lairg, John Mackay, translated from Durness in 1714—a minister of the muscular type, and withal a pious and scholarly man—'laboured with zeal and success for forty years, promoting the civilization and the conversion to God of a rude and ignorant populace.' He was gladdened in the evening of his life 'by seeing his labours crowned with success, and the work of the Gospel flourishing and triumphant.' [2]

In 1724 the extensive parish of Durness

[1] Robe's *Monthly History* for 1745, No. v. p. 130.
[2] Scott's *Fasti*, vol. iii. p. 339.

was divided into three—Tongue, Eddrachillis, and Durness—each division being blessed with a Gospel minister. The principal heritors of the county—the Earl of Sutherland and Lord Reay—declined, as a rule, to exercise their right of presentation, and allowed the people to choose their own ministers. But Gaelic ministers being very few in number, it sometimes fell to a Presbytery to choose and call from a distance a minister—*jure devoluto*. It was in this way that J. S. was translated from Kilmonivaig to Farr in 1734. No patron could have made a worse choice. He was a mere worldling. He became tenant of several farms which he made his first care. His parishioners neglected Church attendance, and set up meetings of their own which were not in every case wisely or profitably conducted. In his time took place what is called 'the lapse of Halmidary,' of which there are two versions. One is to the effect that Hugh Mackay, tacksman of Halmidary, the leader of the meeting, got so excited on one occasion that he proposed to imitate Abraham in offering up his son.[1] The other

[1] *Book of Mackay*, p. 185.

is that the sacrifice was to be made to Satan,[1] who was believed to be visibly present in the form of a raven, which was seen sitting on one of the cross beams that supported the roof of the house. The spell was broken, and a tragedy prevented, either by the interposition of the child's nurse, or by the protest of a pack-merchant who opportunely called at the house. The former version is the more generally accepted.

The outstanding personality among the ministers of Caithness, from 1734 to 1782, was Alexander Pope of Reay, a scholarly man, and a devoted and successful minister of the same type as Mackay of Lairg, and, like him, possessed of great strength which he was ready to use when occasion demanded. He found Reay 'in a state of semi-barbarism, the people being grossly ignorant, disorderly and untractable'; but his long ministry of nearly forty-eight years was greatly blessed to the moral and spiritual elevation of his parishioners.[2]

In Wester Ross it was found next to impossible to settle Presbyterian ministers for

[1] Rev. H. Mackay, Strathy, in *Transactions of Gaelic Society of Inverness*, vol. xx. p. 99. [2] Scott's *Fasti*, vol. v. p. 367.

many years after the Revolution. The ministers to whom the people had been accustomed made little distinction between one form of Church government and another. Take, for example, the case of Roderick MacKenzie, who was settled at Gairloch in 1649 as a Presbyterian minister. When Episcopacy was established in 1662 he became an Episcopalian; and when the tables were turned at the Revolution he reverted to Presbyterianism. John Morrison, who became minister of that parish in 1711, alleged in a petition which he presented to his Presbytery that: 'In going to preach he was interrupted at Kinlochewe by the tenants of Sir John MacKenzie of Coul, who laid violent hands on him and his servant; rent their clothes; made prisoners of them; and kept them three days in a cottage full of cattle and without meat or bedding, the first two days.' The people refused to recognise him, and he was translated to Urray in 1716. It was only in 1721 that James Smith agreed to take charge of the parish. His settlement turned out to the benefit of the morals and religion of the people.[1]

[1] Dixon's *Gairloch*, p. 65.

At Lochcarron, Æneas Sage met with no better treatment. In his petition to his Presbytery for an 'Act of Transportability' we read: 'Four nights before my ordination some of the country people set fire to the house where I was lodged, when they thought that two ministers from Skye were with me.' [1] He was for a time under the necessity of carrying arms, so threatening were the looks of his parishioners. One of the many legends which gathered round Sage's name sets forth that when on one occasion he asked the local factor for his overdue stipend he was answered by a challenge to fight; but no sooner had the factor drawn his sword than the minister parried his thrust, closed with him, threw him on the floor, shivered his sword, and thrust his head up the chimney—and held it there till he declared that the stipend would be paid.

Argyllshire had some excellent ministers in the first half of the eighteenth century. Rev. John Maclean, minister of Killean—1728 to 1743—had the reputation of being one of the most pious divines of his day. Daniel Campbell, minister of Glassary, a great sufferer from rheumatic gout, who for

[1] *Inverness Scientific Society and Field Club*, vol. iv. p. 239.

twenty-two years was only able to preach sitting in a chair, gives a very remarkable account of the way in which he discharged his duty as a minister of the Gospel notwithstanding his limitations.[1]

IV

Next to the provision of Gospel ordinances for the Highland people, the most important matter was their education. Acts of Parliament bearing on that subject can easily be quoted, but it is unlikely that full effect was being given to any of them. The Highlanders, generally speaking, were not only indifferent about education, but disliked it. Their dislike was not lessened by the knowledge they had, through hearsay, that the Education Act of 1616, ratified in 1631 and 1646, set forth as one of its objects : 'That the Irishe (*i.e.* Gaelic) language, which is one of the chief and principal causes of the continuance of the barbaritie and incivilitie among the inhabitants of the Isles and Heylandis, may be abolished and removit.' That education was shamefully neglected, a few facts and figures will show. Taking

[1] Scott's *Fasti*, vol. iii. part 1., pp. 8-9.

the Presbytery of Inverness as one that should give a good account of itself, what do we find? Before the Revolution the Burgh had a grammar school of long standing, and the rural parishes of Kiltarlity (1671), Kirkhill (1682), and Petty had each a parish school; but the large parishes of Moy, Dores, and Croy had none. 'Most of the Inverness parishes were without parochial schools for twenty or thirty years after Culloden.'[1]

In the Dingwall Presbytery the parish of Ferintosh had a school in 1649, and in the following year Kilmorack secured one. 'In July the minister and elders of Kiltearn promised to join Alness in erecting and maintaining a joint school for these parishes; and next year the latter found a schoolmaster in Mr. Donald Monro.' The Burgh of Dingwall had a school in 1663.[2]

In the Presbytery of Tain, outwith the county town, educational matters moved slowly. Kilmuir-Easter appears to have had a school in 1707, yet it was reported to be without one in 1716, as were also Logie-Easter and Rosskeen. Fearn and Tarbat

[1] *Inverness and Dingwall Presbytery Records,* Introduction, xlvi-li. [2] *Ibid.*

were looking for schoolmasters in 1707—seemingly without success. But by 1758 all the parishes in that Presbytery had legal schools.[1]

If we exclude the Burgh of Fortrose with its academy, and perhaps Cromarty, of which there is no mention in the Presbytery record, there was no legal or parish school in the Presbytery of Chanonry in 1718; but in 1721 all its parishes had schools except Killearnan, where the minister got his after a legal process which went on for six years, and in 1725 ended in his favour in the Court of Session.[2]

In all Wester Ross no school of any kind existed before 1724, when a S. P. C. K. school was opened in Gairloch, and had to be closed four years later for lack of pupils. That parish had no legal school till about 1730.[3] In the Outer Hebrides there was no school, but one in Stornoway—'at which Latin and English were taught.'[4]

[1] Rev. C. MacNaughton, Clerk, Presbytery of Tain.

[2] Rev. A. J. Macdonald, Clerk, Presbytery of Chanonry.

[3] Dixon's *History of Gairloch*, p. 67.

[4] Mackenzie's *History of Outer Hebrides*, p. 530. 'The oldest existing Minute Book of the Presbytery of Skye goes back only to 1786. A Register commencing with the year 1746 contains no information as to schools.'—Excerpt from a letter received from Rev. K. Ross, Clerk of Presbytery of Skye.

Turning to Sutherlandshire, a somewhat better state of things existed. Lairg had a parish school before 15th July 1707; Dornoch had one in 1716; Tongue was in a like position in 1731; and Durness and Eddrachillis followed in 1733. Golspie and Clyne had each a parish school in 1734, and Kildonan had one in 1748. Creich got one in 1759; but it was not until 1760 that legal schools were set up in the parishes of Farr, Rogart, and Assynt. On 28th November 1757, Hugh Gordon of Carrol undertook to get a school built in the parish of Loth.[1]

In Caithness, Wick, Thurso and Canisbay had each a legal school in 1706, but in 1772 the parish of Reay was still without one.[2]

If we extend our inquiry along the Caledonian Valley, towards the west, we discover that while the S. P. C. K. and the Royal Bounty Committee had agents within the bounds of the Presbytery of Abertarf in 1758, there was no parish school in all that wide region. As late as 1772, Boleskine (then connected with Abertarf), Laggan, and Kilmonivaig were without legal schools.

[1] Rev. David Lundie, Clerk, Presbytery of Tongue, and Rev. D. Munro, Free Manse, Ferintosh.

[2] Calder's *History of Caithness*, p. 221.

Glenurquhart was looking for a schoolmaster in that year, as Mr. Grant of Grant had promised £10 towards his salary.[1]

In the Presbytery of Lorn the only parish or legal school, in 1750, was at Glenorchy. Oban had no school in 1758, although 'MacDougall of Dunolly' was urging the need of one.[2]

The Presbytery of Inveraray had no parish schools at that date, but steps were being taken for their erection. The Burgh of Inveraray set up a Grammar School in 1606, at the expense of the Common Good—the teacher's salary being met by a collection from gentlemen in the neighbourhood.[3]

The following extracts show how things stood in the Presbytery of Mull. Under date 22nd April 1756, the Presbytery 'Taking into consideration the state of their bounds for want of parochial schools, and their being threatened with a deprivation of the charity schools . . . a petition was addressed to the Commissioners of Supply,' etc. That seems to have had little im-

[1] Rev. W. C. Flint, Clerk, Presbytery of Abertarf.
[2] Rev. A. Duff, Clerk, Presbytery of Lorn.
[3] Rev. D. Clark, Clerk, Presbytery of Inveraray, and Strong's *History of Secondary Education*, p. 123.

mediate effect, for on 15th March 1758 a letter was read from the S. P. C. K. stating 'that the charity schools would be instantly withdrawn unless the parochial schools formerly insisted on by the Society were forthwith established.' [1]

In Kintyre Presbytery, which then included Arran, Islay, Jura, Colonsay, etc., the parish of Gigha was the only one that had a legal school. The Presbytery resolved in November 1758 to apply to the Heritors and Commissioners of Supply to establish schools in every parish within their bounds.[2]

One does not like to imagine what the state of the Highlands and Islands in the eighteenth century would have been, in the matter of education, but for the splendid work of the Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge—the history of which should be better known than it is. I can do little more than refer to it.

About the beginning of the eighteenth century certain events occurred which directed attention to the necessities of those parts, and also suggested ways of meeting

[1] Rev. W. Mackintosh, Clerk, Presbytery of Mull.
[2] Rev. Angus J. MacVicar, Clerk, Presbytery of Kintyre.

them. Martin's *Voyage to St. Kilda*, and his *Description of the Western Isles*, had just been published; and it was then (1701) that the two beneficent English Societies, known as 'The Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge,' and 'The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts,' were formed.

Martin's account of St. Kilda has a pathetic interest. He found on the lonely isle three small chapels—one of them, Christ's Chapel, being 'covered and thatched.' The other two, dedicated respectively to St. Columba and St. Brienan (Brandan), were in ruins. Of Christ's Chapel, Martin writes: 'A brazen crucifix lies on the altar not exceeding a foot in length . . . they have it in great reverence though they do no kind of adoration or worship to it; nor do they either handle or see it, except on the occasion of marriage and swearing decisive oaths, which put an end to all strife, and both these ceremonies are publicly performed. . . . The inhabitants, young and old, come to the chapel-yard every Sunday morning—the chapel not being capacious enough to receive them: here they devoutly say the

Lord's Prayer, the Creed, and Ten Commandments.'

Piquancy was given to Martin's tale by what he told of a native impostor, named Roderick, who succeeded in making himself a person of importance in his native isle. He calmly announced that John the Baptist had come to him with new revelations. He forbade the use of the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, and the Ten Commandments, and instead of them prescribed ' diabolical forms of his own.' He became an incarnation of evil. He affected to have received power to speak in an unknown tongue—a gibberish of his own invention. The parish minister of Harris, who was present along with Martin and MacLeod's factor, dealt with the man, and got him to admit the imposture. He was therefore sent to Dunvegan, and sentenced by MacLeod of MacLeod to banishment from St. Kilda for life.

Martin's story might well seem to its readers like a description of a small world, no better than the one we know, which he had discovered amid the fogs of the Atlantic, and it certainly stirred the public conscience to good effect. A few Edinburgh gentlemen

were moved in 1701 to devise means of benefiting the people of the Western Isles and of the Highlands generally. They laid their plans well and wisely. They secured the countenance of the General Assembly in 1704, and in 1709 they were formed into a corporate body, by letters patent, under the designation ' The Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge.' Their first school was opened in St. Kilda in 1710. As 1712 is often given as the year in which the Society opened its first five schools, it may be well to quote from their report of 1744: ' In April, 1710, they (the Society) gave a commission to Alexander Buchan to be schoolmaster in the island.' Buchan, who had already been five years in St. Kilda as catechist, was returning to be the ordained minister and also the schoolmaster of the St. Kildians. In 1719 the Society had forty-eight schools. They numbered one hundred and nine in 1737, and in 1758 they had increased to one hundred and seventy-six—most of them being in the Highlands.

Under a patent granted by George II. in 1738, schools of industry for the teaching of spinning, weaving, dyeing, knitting and

sewing were started; and so adaptable to the requirements of the Highlands were the rules of this excellent Society that we find it, from 1743 onwards, helping schools of agriculture —as at Callander—and paying wages to a blacksmith, a shoemaker, a cartwright, and a ploughman to instruct the people in their respective trades and industries at suitable centres. As its funds increased, the Society supported a number of catechists and ordained missionaries. To the same Society belongs the credit of leading the way in Sabbath-school teaching—it being a rule with them 'that the master shall spend a considerable part of the Lord's Day with his scholars in praying, singing psalms, reading the Holy Scriptures and catechising.' That was fifty-six years before John Pounds was born.

For many years the success of the Society was hindered by a rule forbidding the schoolmasters to teach Gaelic; but as soon as it was proved by experience that the best and quickest way of teaching Gaelic-speaking children to learn English is to teach them first to read Gaelic, and then to teach them English through Gaelic as a medium, the

progressive Society adopted that plan in all their Highland schools, and with marked success.

In 1725 steps were taken that issued in the formation of another agency that proved beneficial to the Highlands. The Government was approached for a contribution to the support of assistant preachers, in response to which an annual grant of £1000 was made. That came to be known as the Royal Bounty, and was administered by a Committee of the General Assembly. At a later period the grant was doubled, and used to excellent purpose in maintaining preachers and catechists in necessitous parts of the Highlands.

V

As to the Churches other than the Church of Scotland, which were represented in the Highlands and Islands, the disestablished Episcopal Church has the first claim on our attention. From the preponderating number of its adherents at the Revolution, it might reasonably be expected to continue to be a strong Church, if not the strongest in numbers in the Highland field; but it

was neither wisely guided nor well organised. Although the king was a fanatical Roman Catholic, and no lover of any Protestant Church, the Episcopal bishops, on learning that William of Orange was ready to come to deliver these realms from the rule of a Roman Catholic sovereign, addressed a letter to King James VII., assuring him of their firm and unshaken loyalty, praying also 'that his enemies might be clothed with shame,' and expressing their hope 'that God, in His great mercy, might preserve and deliver him, and give him the hearts of his subjects and the necks of his enemies.' The terms and spirit of that letter opened the eyes of the nation to the antipathy of its signatories to the Resolution that none but a Protestant should be placed on the throne.

So closely was the Scottish Episcopal Church identified with Jacobitism, that it continued, although not without hurtful controversy, to receive appointment of its bishops from 'the King in exile,' and after his death from his son, the Pretender. Such conduct greatly weakened it, and it still further isolated itself from the other Protestant Churches by the position it took

up (as the result of another controversy within its own borders), regarding what was known at the time as the usages. Those were four in number: (1) mixing water with the wine in the Communion service; (2) commemorating the faithful departed at the altar; (3) consecrating the elements by a special invocation when celebrating the Lord's Supper; and (4) using an 'oblatory prayer' before distribution—a prayer in which the consecrated elements were offered to God as the body and blood of Christ.[1]

The Scottish Episcopal Church drew still further away from other Protestant Churches by its approaches to the Eastern Church, with a view to union,[2] a line of policy which resulted in a humiliating repudiation of its overtures.[3] Many of its clergy were also found to be seriously implicated in fostering rebellion, a discovery which excited the wrath of Cumberland, and explains while it does not condone his conduct in destroying

[1] Grub, vol. iii. p. 388.

[2] Through Arsenius, Metropolitan of Thebais, who was then in England.—Grub, vol. iii. p. 400.

[3] The Eastern prelates maintained that the true faith lost by Papists and Luthero-Calvinists was to be found among the Oriental Christians alone.—Grub, vol. iii. p. 402.

many Episcopal chapels. It was its attitude to the House of Hanover that brought upon it the vindictive proscribing Acts. The first of the Acts provided that 'if any person should exercise the function of pastor or minister in any Episcopal meeting-house in Scotland, without registering his "letters of orders," taking the oaths required by law, and praying for the king and royal family by name, he should, for the first offence, suffer six months' imprisonment, and for the second be transported to some one of his Majesty's plantations for life.' Any person who attended an unlicensed Episcopal meeting, without giving information within five days, could be fined or imprisoned. A peer guilty of this offence was disqualified to sit in Parliament, and a commoner was in like manner disqualified to serve in the House of Commons. The second Act made the orders of the Scottish Episcopal Church unlawful. Their holders were subject to imprisonment if they dared to exercise any ministerial function. That was downright persecution, and stands condemned.

After Culloden the influence and membership of the Church declined so rapidly in the

Highlands that in 1777, when it was proposed to appoint a bishop over the united dioceses of Moray and Caithness, the only surviving presbyter of that Church, who could be found between Inverness and the Pentland Firth, was Mr. Allan Cameron at Arpafeelie in the Black Isle.[1] Only in the Black Isle and in the parishes of Daviot, Boleskine and Appin, Argyll, were Gaelic-speaking Episcopalians to be found in any considerable numbers. Itinerant preachers conducted occasional services wherever a few worshippers could be got together.

VI

The cause of the Roman Catholic Church continued to be zealously promoted. Bishop Nicolson, who had been brought up a Protestant, and had as such held a professorship in the University of Glasgow for thirteen years, was a man of capacity and zeal. When he entered upon his duties as Vicar-apostolic for Scotland in 1697, he found ten Jesuits, four Benedictines, and twenty-three secular priests on the Scottish mission of his Church.

[1] Grub, vol. iv. p. 89.

From a report given in to the General Assembly of 1701 we get the following statistics as to the condition of the Roman Church in the Highlands and Islands :—

'1. South Uist and Barra—the people nearly all Papists.[1]
2. Canna, Rum, and Muck—all Papists.
3. Knoydart and Morar—all Papists except four.
4. Arisaig, Moydart, and Glengarry—all Papists except one man.

In these places there were in all about 4500 Papists.'[2] 'There were six priests and only five ministers in the whole Presbytery of Skye,' which at that time embraced the whole Outer Hebrides.

There were many Roman Catholics in Lochaber, in Strathglass, and along the belt of country reaching from Braemar to Glencoe. Bishop Nicholson, who laboured indefatigably till his death in 1718, is said to have confirmed 3000 persons during one of his visitations to the Western Highlands and Islands.[3] It was estimated that there were at that time

[1] Martin's statement as to the inhabitants of Barra being Protestant in 1700 is incorrect.

[2] Bellesheim's *History of the Catholic Church of Scotland*, vol. iv. p. 163.

[3] *Ibid.*, vol. iv. p. 177.

in the district of Braemar 'some 500 who were ministered to by the Fathers of the Society of Jesus.'[1] A seminary for the education of priests was opened at Scalan in the Braes of Glenlivet in 1712. Nothing weakened that Church so much as its self-identification with the cause of the exiled Stuarts. When 'Prince Charlie' unfurled his standard at Glenfinnan, it was blessed by a Roman Catholic bishop, Hugh MacDonald, a son of the laird of Morar. The full cost of that tactical blunder could only be fairly estimated after Culloden.

The seminary at Scalan fell into disuse for a time, but was reoccupied for a short period till its removal to Aquhorites in Aberdeenshire. There was another seminary at Eilan Morar, for some time prior to 1746, when it was transferred to Burblach, whence it was moved first to Samalaman and thereafter to Lismore.

Large portions of the Northern and Western Highlands had not become integral parts of the kingdom, so far as the administration of law was concerned, till after the grim hour at Culloden. It was then that the clan system

[1] Bellesheim, vol. iv. p. 178.

was broken, and hereditary jurisdiction terminated. The great chiefs and barons—on compensation being given them—were deprived of the power of 'pit and gallows'; and the smaller barons were on like conditions deprived of their more restricted powers. It was a new thing for the Highlanders to have law administered among them by salaried sheriffs, as justly and impartially as in Midlothian or Middlesex.

VII

Meanwhile the Church of Scotland failed to realise that it was being rapidly weakened and disintegrated. Patrons were getting things their own way; settlements of unacceptable ministers were being forced, and that often involved unseemly violence, as it invariably meant loss of members. The people of Moray were becoming quite familiar with such intrusions. One was carried out at Elgin in 1735; another at Duffus in 1737; a third at Urquhart in 1739; a fourth at Auldearn in 1747—secessions following in every case.[1]

[1] Secession congregations were formed at Moyness (Boghole), Forres, Howford near Nairn, and at Inverness, between 1747 and 1788.

The same ecclesiastical plague broke out in Ross-shire in 1752, when Patrick Grant of Duthil was presented by the Crown to the parish of Nigg against the will of the parishioners.

For four years the Presbytery of Tain was engaged with his case: (1) in dealing with a charge of drunkenness brought against him —unproved happily; (2) in attempting to get the parishioners to agree to his settlement; and (3) in endeavouring to persuade the General Assembly not to proceed in present circumstances to his settlement as the inhabitants of the parish were extremely averse thereto.[1]

When the Presbytery, in obedience to the Assembly, did carry out Grant's induction, very few of the parishioners attended the humiliating function. They worshipped in neighbouring churches, and for a time received baptism for their infants at the hands of Fraser, minister of Alness, who as proprietor of Pitcalzian was one of the heritors of Nigg. But that could not continue without involving him in trouble, and acting on his advice, the leaders of the congregation

[1] Scott's *Fasti*, vol. iii. pp. 320-1.

applied to the General Associate Synod of Perth to be taken under their oversight. That was agreed to and carried out in 1764.

About the same time secession began to strike root in Caithness. So dissatisfied were many of the people in that county with the preaching they heard in their parish churches, that, about 1770-72, two secession congregations were formed—one at Thurso, and the other at Newton, near Wick.[1]

Turning to the Western Isles, we find a deplorable state of matters. Church fabrics were neglected, and had in many cases become ruins. The ministers owed their positions to the lairds, and on that account did not insist either on repairs or on rebuilding. The people were sunk in poverty, ignorance, and superstition. They had no voice in ecclesiastical, parochial, or political affairs; and any religion they had was often 'the religion of the yellow stick'—which meant the laird's religion.

In Dr. Samuel Johnson's *Journey to the Western Isles*, in 1773, we have the testimony

[1] The preaching tours of Mr. Buchanan of Nigg are said to have led to their formation.

of a shrewd observer who disliked Presbyterianism and hated Calvinism. 'Through the few islands which we visited,' he says, 'we neither saw nor heard of any house of prayer, except in Skye, that was not in ruins.' There was no church in Raasay, but 'the people had a right to a service every third Sunday.' He found that in the Island of Coll the only meeting-place at the command of the courteous old minister was a room, and, as the learned traveller puts it, 'the room of a hut is not large.' The ministers whom he met were men of culture and learning. In referring to them he writes: 'I saw not one in the Islands whom I had reason to think either deficient in learning or irregular in life; but found several with whom I could not converse without wishing, as my respect increased, that they had not been Presbyterians.'

Of spiritual life and evangelical activities in the Isles at that time there is no evidence from any source. But a few years after the 'Journey' the waters were graciously troubled in Nether Lorn. In 1777 John Smith, afterwards Dr. John Smith of Campbeltown, Argyll, was appointed successor

and assistant to the minister of Kilbrandon.[1] He was an able and scholarly man, and on the suggestion of the pious Lady Glenorchy, who sometimes resided in Ardmaddy Castle near by, he translated Alleine's *Alarm* into Gaelic; and while so engaged read to his people from the pulpit each Lord's Day the portion of it which he had translated during the week, the result being a religious revival. On his removal to Campbeltown in 1781 the seriously-minded parishioners set their hearts on securing an evangelical minister as his successor. They were, however, disappointed —the presentation being given to one whom they could not welcome. A written protest which they presented to the Presbytery was thrown back to them; but taking it up they nailed it to the church door and seceded. That led to the formation at Kilbrandon of the only congregation which the Reformed Presbyterian Church had in the Highlands previous to 1838-39, when a small number of persons who favoured Reformed Presbyterian principles formed a congregation at Pultneytown, Caithness. So the disintegrating process advanced.

[1] Scott's *Fasti*, vol. iii. p. 69.

It was reported to the General Assembly of 1766 that there were 120 meeting-houses (dissenting churches), with 10,000 worshippers, in Scotland; a state of matters which so alarmed many of the supporters of Principal Robertson's policy that many voted against him in support of a mild motion to the effect that 'as the abuse of patronage had been one chief occasion of the progress of secession, it is overtured that the General Assembly will be pleased to consider what methods may be employed to remedy so great an evil.' The motion, however, was lost by 99 to 85, and the Assembly thus determined to do nothing to prevent the secessions, which in central and southern Scotland steadily increased. A.D. 1766.

Yet dissent did not make much progress in the north and west. Although there were in many parishes persons who declined to hear ministers whom they did not regard as sent of God, they did not forsake the church but attended the ministrations of evangelical ministers who were within their reach. In other cases meetings which had been set up in the persecuting time, or during the period of revival already alluded to, were

conducted by acknowledged lay leaders—some of whom were men of exceptional gifts. On the re-establishment of Presbyterianism such meetings with the 'men' who conducted them were informally recognised, especially in parishes in which Episcopal incumbents retained possession of buildings and benefices for life, and where Presbyterian ministers could only preach occasionally. Those meetings were the *nuclei* of the congregations which in course of time filled the parish churches.

The so-called 'Order of the Men' arose in that way, and acquired a recognised though not an official place. There were diversities of gifts, education, and common sense among the 'men' as among other classes. Some of them were carried off their feet by the adulation of their followers. On the ridge of the Black Isle early in last century a gathering of persons presided over by a layman of the name of MacCulloch, came to be known as those who held the 'Knockbain Creed.' MacCulloch and some of his followers became fanatical; and like contemporaries of our own developed faith-healing and exorcism in a measure that

brought them into trouble and led to a close of their meetings.[1]

In contrast with such extravagances was the position taken up by some of the leading laymen of Ross. Some of them ceased to attend their own parish churches, either on account of the teaching which they heard or because of the unworthy character of the ministers who occupied the pulpits. Others without taking that step formed societies which met in private houses for prayer and mutual edification. These men were not 'Seceders.' They went to hear the ministers of their choice; but knowing that they laid themselves open to criticism, they drew out a document headed 'Invergordon Ness, 17th September 1788.' 'We are aware,' they said, 'that our meeting together out of different parishes will be misconstructed, but so far as we know ourselves we have no devisive views in it; nor do we make a faction and we desire to give none offence; but if the following of our duty give offence we cannot help that,' etc.[2]

[1] The writer had this from Dr. Gustavus Aird of Creich.

[2] The original members were Charles Ross; Daniel Denoon, Fearn; John Gair, Logie; John M'Nuctar, Logie; Donald Mitchell, Kilmuir; George Ross, schoolmaster, Calrichie;

These 'men,' and, in fact, the great majority of the 'men,' were loyal supporters of evangelical ministers; and as the latter increased in number, they secured the attachment and valuable help of almost all the 'men'—thereby checking the disintegration and decay of the Church. There were a few Separatists in the north, but, as a rule, those who might be so regarded made it their aim to walk circumspectly. There were others who took pleasure in railing against ministers as a class, and whose pride and censoriousness were conspicuous; but such are never far to seek.

When such questions as 'Have I been born again?' 'Am I in Christ?' 'Have I everlasting life?' exercised a large number of persons, the Friday fellowship or 'question meeting' at Communion seasons gradually came to have a place which in popular esteem was second only to the Lord's Day services.[1]

The 'question meeting' was really meant to help the catechumens; to solve the

Hector Holm, Invergordon; Hugh Ross, Rosskeen; Alexander Munro, sen., and Alexander Munro, jun., Kiltearn; and Robert Findlater, Drummond.—*Memoir of Robert Findlater*, p. 27.

[1] Monthly 'question meetings' were an established institution in Sutherland in 1727.

difficulties of inquirers; to bring out and emphasise Scriptural marks of saving grace; and to encourage timid and ready-to-halt believers. If on the Friday—the 'men's' day—some of the speakers aimed, or seemed to aim, a shaft or two at the pulpit, that did no harm and no offence was taken. The best and wisest of the ministers tolerated freedom of speech on that day. Indeed, one can hardly overestimate how much the cause of true religion in the north of Scotland owed, under God, to those pious persons who were known as the 'men.' If they got sound evangelical doctrine preached by earnest and spiritually minded ministers in idiomatic Gaelic they were not ill to please. It was not always unsound theology that made it difficult for them to 'thole' the preaching. Sometimes the occupant of the pulpit through defective knowledge of Gaelic would, all unwittingly, distort the Scriptures by an outrageous translation. On an occasion like that it was not an unheard-of occurrence that one of the men—his acoustic nerves irritated by bad Gaelic, and his religious sense wounded by an erroneous translation of the Bible—made for the church door.

LECTURE VI

THE AWAKENING CHURCH

1796–1843

THE AWAKENING CHURCH

I

THE closing years of the eighteenth century were years of unrest and portent. The human intellect was keenly and inquiringly awake. New phrases found their way into common speech. Strange mottoes and unfamiliar badges came into use. The social atmosphere was electric, and things could not continue as they had been.

That other spirits than the Spirit of God were abroad was proved by the awe-inspiring upheaval in which a nation maddened by oppression rose against a despotic king, an effete nobility, and a proud hierarchy. But whatever sympathy was at first extended by Scotsmen to a former ally, as France had been, it turned into horror when it became evident that the demon of atheism was directing the frightful orgy. Every institution was on trial. Materialistic philosophy and religious formalism stood condemned.

Yet it is from that ominous period that we shall trace the gradual development of a great spiritual awakening of the Highlands and Islands; and therein —as in many other notable beginnings— very unlikely instruments were used. James Alexander Haldane, captain of an East Indiaman, begins to study the Bible on board his ship, and writes in after days: 'I have no doubt that God began a work of grace in my soul on board the *Melville Castle*.'[1] His brother Robert—a retired naval officer and wealthy landowner—was on his own testimony, 'aroused from the sleep of spiritual death by the excitement of the French Revolution'; [2] and sometime thereafter 'found the consolations of the Gospel.' Our attention is next directed to an ironmonger's shop in the Grassmarket of Edinburgh, where John Campbell, its tenant, is working out plans for printing and circulating Gospel tracts—with many another beneficent project.

A.D. 1794-5.

Again we observe what seems to be but an ordinary and everyday event—two young

[1] *The Lives of R. and J. Haldane*, 5th edit., p. 66.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 75.

men on a riding tour through Perthshire. They reach Moulin (Pitlochry) on a Communion Saturday, and attend a church service, after which they proceed to Blair Athole; but finding no room in the inn return to Moulin and accept the hospitality of the parish minister. Conversations between the young men and their host result in a radical change in the minister, regarding which he enters in his diary: 'It was no revival, for I had not lived till then.' The minister was Alexander Stewart, known in after years as Dr. Stewart of Dingwall, and, later, of the Canongate, Edinburgh. On the following day, at the Communion services, one of the visitors, the Rev. Charles Simeon, of Cambridge, an honoured minister of the Church of England, 'delivered two discourses besides serving a table in English.' His companion was James Haldane.

From that day the glens and straths that radiate from Moulin began to show first the blade, then the ear, till the full corn in the ear was reaped in the joyful harvest of the Moulin Revival. One of God's spring-times had come, and early flowers like these ushered it in. The cogitations of John

Campbell of the Grassmarket resulted in the formation of a Scottish Tract Society, and within a short time the products of his printing-press were being distributed in thousands between Edinburgh and Orkney by James Haldane and his friends.

The Edinburgh Foreign Missionary Society was set on foot in 1796 with Campbell as one of its directors. His own words enable us to trace its origin. Writing to a friend he says, 'The formation of the London Missionary Society composed of Christians of all denominations had a most electrifying effect on the Christians of the north. We were like men that dreamed.' The Highlands also felt the thrill, and within four years the Northern Missionary Society was formed, with Dr. Mackintosh, minister of Tain, and Donald Fraser, minister of Kirkhill, as its leading office-bearers. It had a splendid record. Many gave money to the enterprise, and as time went on, some gave themselves—notably John MacDonald, junior of Ferintosh, who became the brilliant coadjutor at Calcutta of the still more eminent Moulin Highlander, Alexander Duff.

A.D. 1796.

The Edinburgh Gratis Sabbath School

Society was formed in 1797, and again Ross-shire followed the lead of the capital. Robert Findlater, merchant at Drummond, Kiltearn, opened a Sabbath School in 1798, and equipped it with a good circulating library. A.D. 1798. But the red-letter day of modern Highland evangelism is the 11th January 1798, for on that day was formed in Edinburgh 'The Society for Propagating the Gospel at Home,' the directors of which were a dozen laymen—nine of whom followed secular pursuits. They were of various denominations — the Haldanes themselves being members of the Church of Scotland. It was not their purpose at the outset 'to extend the influence of any existing sect,' far less to form a new one, and as long as they adhered to that purpose their success was phenomenal.

The records of the various tours of James Haldane and his comrades are well known. Classes for training evangelists were opened in Dundee, Edinburgh, or Glasgow, as opportunity occurred; and from them preachers were sent out after two years of training, with the Bible in their hands, the Evangel on their lips, and their hearts aglow with

love to God and men. The progress of their mission can be traced from the valley of the Forth to Callander and Balquhidder; along the Tay and its tributaries by Strathearn to Crieff; and by Dunkeld, Tullymet, and Aberfeldy through all the straths and glens of Breadalbane. Needless to say, there was opposition; but the wilderness blossomed notwithstanding.

From the head of the Garry at Dalnaspidal the missionaries, as they came to be called, crossed into Moray, preaching and singing the good news from hamlet to hamlet down through Glentruim, Badenoch, and Strathspey—so long accustomed to 'the fiery cross' —and leaving praying societies behind them. They also evangelised the 'Laigh of Moray.' One of the Haldane tabernacles, to accommodate 1500 sitters, was erected shortly thereafter in Elgin. They had much success at Forres, Nairn, Inverness, Avoch, and Fortrose. They were also well received in Ross and Sutherland, although they did not there detach many from the Established Church. James Haldane's labours in Caithness by God's blessing produced great and permanent results. In the Western Highlands and Islands much 'fruit unto holiness' was also

reaped by the agents of the Society. Their efforts in Arran, Kintyre, Cowal, Lorn, and the Isles as far north as Skye, met with an almost apostolic success—though it was but for a short time.

The resolution of the Haldanes and others to form a Church in Edinburgh on the principle of congregational polity, which they carried out on 3rd February 1799, gave the good work a check, for it seemed to detach them from the Presbyterian Church, which at that time held 'sects' in low esteem; but what permanently crippled the Society was the internal controversy which arose in connection with the baptism by immersion of Robert and James Haldane in 1808. The numerous small congregations which had been formed by its missionaries in the Highlands and Islands were seriously affected. In some cases whole congregations called themselves Congregationalists or Independents, while others as unanimously became Baptists. In other cases, congregations were divided, and the cause, as a whole, was weakened.[1] A.D. 1799.

[1] Kennedy of Aberfeldy and Inverness; Campbell, Oban; Peter Grant, Strathspey; the Dewars of Nairn and Avoch—fruits of the awakening—were eminent soul-winners.

II

That the Church of Scotland shared in the awakening was made manifest by the increasing number of evangelical ministers who occupied its pulpits, and the growing number of earnest and devout men and women who sat in its pews. Yet the attitude of the General Assembly towards the men who were being used in the Awakening was most regrettable. Take, as an example, its response in 1799 to the overtures from the Synods of Aberdeen, Angus and Mearns anent vagrant teachers and Sabbath-schools. The Assembly unanimously approved of the adverse overtures and prohibited ' all persons from preaching in any place within their jurisdiction who were not licensed.' The same Assembly issued a peevish Pastoral Admonition which begins : ' Dearly beloved brethren, you well know that it has been prophesied in Scripture, that in the last days perilous times were to come, when many false teachers should arise—scoffers walking after their own lusts—and when men would turn away their ears from the truth.' It denounces those ' who, assuming the name

of missionaries from what they call the Society for the Propagation of Religion at Home . . . acted as universal and itinerant teachers, and superintendents of those who are established the teachers of religion by the Church.'

The indifference of the Church towards Foreign Missions, in the early part of last century, is only too well known: yet the spiritual thermometer was steadily rising within its borders. Trumpet voices were heard on all sides commanding attention to the true nature and calling of the Church of God, and condemning the style of preaching that drew upon it the taunts of David Hume. From 1810, Dr. Andrew Thomson influenced his Church and generation for good. Thomas Chalmers became an evangelical in 1811; and in 1815, when translated from Kilmany to Glasgow, he came to the front at a bound, or as the younger M'Crie puts it, 'this meteor shot up suddenly into our horizon.' Around those great leaders were gathered from the north as well as from the south a group of evangelicals such as the Church of Scotland never before had in its ranks.

A.D. 1810.

The best proof of the reality and beneficent influences of the Awakening is found in the new agencies which it moved the Church to devise and maintain. I shall refer only to those which directly influenced the Highland field. First in time, and as I think first in importance, came the Edinburgh Gaelic School Society, 1811, the aim of which was to supplement, not to compete with, what was already being done. Its agents were to teach Gaelic exclusively. Each of them was to work in one locality for a period of three years, and then to move to another necessitous district for a like period. Young and old flocked to those schools. In 1825 the Society had 77 schools with 4300 pupils.

A Glasgow Gaelic School Society was formed in 1812, with a view, at first, to its being auxiliary to the Edinburgh one; but the majority of its supporters came to be of opinion that they ought not to confine themselves to the teaching of Gaelic. They therefore maintained a separate existence, and in 1825 had 48 schools in which both English and Gaelic were taught. The Inverness Education Society, formed in 1818, with auxiliaries in Aberdeen and Dumfries,

supported—though with some difficulty—65 schools in which also both languages were taught.

Problems to which former generations had shut their eyes and ears were at last being earnestly dealt with. It was then that the Established Church really awoke to its responsibility for the education of the youth of Gaelic Scotland. The General Assembly of that year (1825) received a report from a committee which it had appointed ' to inquire as to the existing means of education and religious instruction throughout Scotland—particularly in the Highlands and Islands.' That committee, which opened its first two schools in 1826, was made a standing one. In 1827 it had 35, and in the following year (1828) it maintained 70 schools — most of them in the Highlands.

In his report to the Assembly of 1828 the Convener of the Committee, Principal Baird of Edinburgh University—than whom the Highlands seldom had a wiser or a more zealous friend—showed that in 1704 the Commission of Assembly had been instructed to raise a Fund for the support of additional schools in the Highlands, and that those

instructions had been renewed two years later, with no effect. He proceeded to point out that in 1708 an Assembly Committee had been appointed to inquire as to the success met with in obtaining subscriptions for that object, but of which no account had been rendered; and that in 1709 such sums as had been raised were transferred to the S. P. C. K. by instructions of the Assembly. For 115 years the proposed undertaking had not been begun.[1] In response to this reminder and appeal, the sphere of the Assembly schools was enlarged so as to embrace more than the Highlands—Gaelic being taught wherever needed.

As the Highland people acquired ability to read, the demand for the Scriptures in their own tongue increased. No Gaelic literature existed except in manuscript form earlier than 1567, when Carswell's Gaelic version of Knox's Prayer Book was published. Calvin's Catechism came next in 1631, and the Shorter Catechism in 1659. The first fifty psalms were translated by

[1] Report of General Assembly Gaelic Schools, 1828, App., pp. 22-4. In 1832 they numbered 315, yet the convener pleaded for 384 more between permanent and itinerating schools.

members of the Synod of Argyll and published in 1659.[1] The whole psalter, in Gaelic, was procurable from 1694 onwards. Kirk's edition of Bedel's Irish Bible, in Roman letters, was printed in 1690; but few Highlanders could read it. In 1767 the S. P. C. K. printed 10,000 copies of the New Testament, which had been translated into Gaelic by James Stewart, minister of Killin. The same patriotic Society published, at long intervals, a Gaelic translation of the Old Testament in four parts between 1786 and 1801. An amended Gaelic translation of the Old Testament was on sale in 1820, and a complete copy of the whole Bible was published in Gaelic in 1826. It was not till 1828, however, that the sacred volume could be purchased at a price within reach of all.

III

The above rapid survey of the principal agencies which furthered the evangelisation of the Highlands, in the early part of last century, may serve as a background against which the progress of the Awakening within the Church of Scotland can be traced. Gaelic

[1] See p. 127.

Perthshire had enjoyed the earnest ministries of James Stewart of Killin, and of Dugald Buchanan,[1] a successful lay missionary of the S. P. C. K. at Rannoch ; [2] as well as of Calder, minister of Weem, Stewart of Moulin, and the agents of the Haldane Mission, till the storm of internal controversy already referred to scattered what the simple-minded and devoted John Farquharson and others had reaped and bound into sheaves. Yet the scattered harvest was gathered again when the man of the hour entered the field in the person of Robert Findlater, an ordained missionary of the S. P. C. K., who began his work in Breadalbane in 1810, having charge of the combined stations of Ardeonaig and Lawers. He had encouragement from the outset, and in 1816 a wave of quickening power lifted multitudes into the light and liberty of life in Christ. One of his chief assistants on Communion occasions—John

[1] He spelt his name Dougal. See *Forfeited Estates Papers*, p. 228.

[2] The factor on the Strowan estate, referring to his being directed to pay to Mr. Buchanan £7 sterling 'for one year only,' adds that so much money cannot be better bestowed than on Mr. Buchanan, who does wonderfully as a catechist, and has every Sunday an audience of above five hundred people.—*Forfeited Estates Papers*, p. 222.

MacDonald, minister of the Gaelic Church, Edinburgh, the future Apostle of the North —began about that time to be mightily moved by the Spirit of God towards his special calling as an evangelist. Donald MacGillivray, another ordained missionary of the S. P. C. K., did the work of an evangelist with great success in Strathfillan and the surrounding straths; and later as parish minister, first at Lochgoilhead and afterwards at Kilmallie. From 1824 MacAllister made Glenlyon a centre of evangelistic influence, which extended northwards till it touched the region in which Robertson and Shepherd of Kingussie, with Mackintosh Mackay of Laggan, laboured successfully.

But while there are few more thrilling stories than those of the repeated revivals in north Perthshire, the Highlands have other holy fields. The names of many an island and mainland parish on the west of Scotland recall the triumphs of the Gospel. Goatfell in Arran, for instance, which arrests the eye of the most indifferent *voyageur*, suggests to the student of evangelical religion the visit of James Haldane and John Campbell in 1800, of which the Congregational

Church at Sannox on the eastern slope of that mountain is a memorial. When Arran was first visited by Haldane and Campbell, the state of religion therein was very low. They preached in all its villages and country districts, and were instrumental in preparing for a period of sowing and reaping which afterwards gladdened the heart of Peter MacBride, minister of Kilmory, and of which his friend, Angus MacMillan, left a cautious and informing record. Bute shared the blessing—though in a less pronounced degree. The Chapel of Ease at Rothesay was a place of resort every Lord's Day, both for experienced Christians and for anxious inquirers from every part of the island, during the ministries of Mr. John Robertson (1799-1810), afterwards of Kingussie ; of Alexander Flyter (1811-20), and of Alexander Stewart, better known after 1824 as Stewart of Cromarty.

From those isles we look across to Kintyre, once noted as a place of refuge for the persecuted, some of whose descendants kept the Gospel lamp burning. In the town of Campbeltown there was an influential congregation of the Relief Church in the early

part of last century. A congregation of the same denomination—still a vigorous one—held its own at Southend, in face of irritating opposition, and was strong enough in 1798 to build and to fill a church seated for five hundred persons. There seems to have been but little vital godliness elsewhere in Kintyre. The unimpeachable testimony of the Rev. Dr. MacLeod, once of Campbeltown, and later of Campsie and St. Columba's, Glasgow, as to the deplorable condition of the Presbytery, need not be repeated here.

It is amusing to read in the *Lives of the Haldanes* of the irascible major, in scarlet hunting coat, who arrived on horseback at James Haldane's first open-air service in Kintyre—too late to prevent his preaching, but in time to announce loudly that the magistrates had resolved to allow no more field preaching, and that he would be at the next place of meeting to see the resolution given effect to. The fiery major had courage enough to get there, but he could not meet the steady eye of Haldane, the ex-naval captain, who some years earlier quelled an incipient mutiny on board the *Dutton*, East Indiaman, at Spithead. Haldane

carried out his day's programme of four meetings at as many places. He then, along with some of his friends, accompanied an escort of volunteers to the residence of the sheriff, who—after a half-hearted examination, in which he found them fully as well acquainted with their legal rights under the Act of Toleration as himself—summarily disposed of the charge of field-preaching by saying—'Gentlemen, you are at liberty.' From that moment Kintyre was open to all preachers of the Gospel, and within a few years, four congregations of Independents were formed within its bounds.

In Nether Lorn the Reformed Presbyterian congregation, formed at Kilbrandon in 1787, continued to exercise an influence for good; none the less so because the parish church rang once again with the Gospel of the Glory of Christ. The Presbytery of Lorn had at that time evangelical ministers not only there, but also at Oban, Kilchrenan, Ardchattan, and Glenorchy; while to the agencies in Mull, the Macleods of Morven, Norman Macleod and his son John, contributed their able and evangelical influence during the hundred years of their successive ministries.

IV

The interest increases as Ardnamurchan Point is rounded. We leave behind us, on our left, the Suderies of the House of Somerled, in which more was then done by Baptists, Presbyterians, and Independents for the promotion of personal religion, than perhaps ever before. To the east is the Roman Catholic region between Loch Shiel and Kintail. In front we have the Small Isles, and on the horizon the black teeth of the Coolins betoken our approach to Skye—the winged isle of mist and legend.

In 1805 John Farquharson, the Breadalbane evangelist, preached for some months in Skye with Portree as his centre. Crowds gathered to hear him, open-air preaching by a layman being a novelty; but the only known fruit of his mission was the conversion of a blind man named Donald Munro, who from that time led a consecrated and useful life. He had been deprived of his sight by smallpox in childhood, and had learned in youth to play the violin so well that he became the parish fiddler. Having a remarkably retentive memory, well stored

with large portions of Scripture and with the Shorter Catechism, he was, on attaining manhood, appointed parish catechist. After the change in his character and life, he refused to supply music at the people's revels, and indeed came to be regarded by those in authority as unfit for his office of catechist. This led to his being invited to take up the duties of catechist at Kilmuir, Trotternish, on the invitation of Donald Martin, minister there, who had shortly before become an earnest evangelical. The joint labours of minister and catechist in that parish were zealous and fruitful, till interrupted in 1808 by the translation of Martin to the Chapel of Ease at Inverness—now the East Church. Munro was then free to itinerate, and, as living witnesses to the power of the Gospel increased in numbers, a central prayer-meeting instituted at Snizort was largely attended, till—sometime after the split in the Haldane Society—a Baptist preacher appeared, and persuaded eleven members of the meeting to receive baptism by immersion. The meeting was then dissolved; but Donald held on his way praying, catechising, and exhorting, as he found opportunity. The settlement of

John Shaw, an earnest evangelical, as minister of Duirinish, in 1811, gladdened the heart of the blind evangelist; and in 1812 a marked awakening followed their joint labours in the northern parishes of Skye. In the following year Shaw was translated to Bracadale.

Meantime Roderick Macleod, the future evangelical leader of Skye, lived the life of a worldling. He had graduated at Aberdeen in 1815, was licensed in 1818, and ordained missionary in 1819 at Lynedale—part of his father's parish of Snizort. It was there that he experienced a spiritual change, after which he had much success as a minister of the Gospel. In 1823 he was admitted parish minister of Bracadale.

Within a brief period, the Gaelic Bible, the preaching of Martin, Shaw, and Macleod, and the prayers and exhortations of Blind Munro, overthrew the ecclesiastical formalism of Skye. Persons of tender conscience were constrained to decline to receive the Sacraments at the hands of ministers whose conduct—as they thought—belied their profession. On the other hand, Macleod thought it his duty to delay the administration of Baptism to the infants of ignorant and care-

less parents, until he had shown them what Baptism means, and to whom it is to be administered. His strictness gave rise to complaints and appeals to the Presbytery, and as his brethren in that Court had no sympathy with his views they resolved to coerce him. His refusal of baptism to a certain parishioner was reported to the General Assembly by his Presbytery; and in one form or other, his case engaged the attention of the Church Courts for three years. In 1826 his Presbytery suspended him from all the functions of the ministry, and proceeded to serve him with a libel. The case was, however, disposed of in 1827, when an influential Committee of Assembly made a full investigation, and received from Macleod a declaration which the Assembly unanimously accepted. It was thereupon agreed 'that the whole process relating to Mr. Macleod is now at an end, and there is no room for any further proceedings.'[1] Macleod lived to become the most highly esteemed and influential minister of his time in the Western Isles. Blind Munro died in 1830 greatly lamented.

[1] *Memoirs of Dr. Chalmers*, vol. iii. p. 167.

The far-stretching group of islands known as the Outer Hebrides, or Long Island, now claims our attention. When Dr. MacDonald of Ferintosh, the Apostle of the North, was on his first voyage to St. Kilda in 1822, he was storm-stayed at Rodel, South Harris; and as his custom was, he lost no time in sending out runners to announce that he would preach at a fixed hour and place. At an evening service held on the same day John Morrison—a direct descendant of the hereditary armourers of 'Macleod of Harris'—obeyed the call of Christ. Many of the parishioners had shortly before then forsaken the parish church, for reasons which need not here be given, and were sunk in ignorance and carelessness. Out of a population of '3000 there were not,' according to the Old Statistical Accounts, '200 who could read English, nor one at all who could read Gaelic alone'; but with the conversion of Morrison—a skilful blacksmith, an accomplished musician, and a gifted bard—the awakening of multitudes in Harris and the adjacent islands began. He who had led in their revels now led in the service of God. In 1828 he received a commission as cate-

chist from the S. P. C. K., and so gained enlarged opportunities of serving Christ. The smith of Harris—' Godh'na Hearradh ' —will be held in lasting remembrance. The Rev. Dr. George Henderson, who edited the two volumes of Morrison's Gaelic poems, wrote of him that ' he lived in a lonely nook of a remote isle, apart from the learned and the great . . . a witness of the all-embracing love, and died the death of a saint, at Leacli in Harris, 6th December 1852 ' ; and that ' in Rodel, the Westminster of the Isles, they laid him to rest amid the low, supplicating voice of psalm and prayer . . . the snow-capped hills of Harris in the background, with the eternal Hebridean sea murmuring its last farewell.'

Dr. MacDonald visited St. Kilda in 1822 at the request of the S. P. C. K., by whom a succession of ordained missionary teachers had been maintained there since 1710. Temporary difficulties, in connection with securing an adequate salary and a suitable dwelling-house for the missionary, had arisen. Dr. MacDonald became so interested in the St. Kildians that, besides collecting the greater part of the money required for the

necessary buildings, he revisited the lonely isle in 1824, 1827, and 1830. He saw the fruits of the Gospel appearing, and on his last visit had the satisfaction of introducing the Rev. Neil Mackenzie as ordained missionary teacher. The people of St. Kilda have ever since maintained a record in morals and religion unexcelled—so far as I know—by any community of its size. Dr. Norman Macleod, of St. Columba's, Glasgow, who visited the island in 1839, and assisted at a Communion service, writes: 'As to the Sabbath day, it was one to be held in remembrance. I thank God I was there. I have not passed a sweeter day on earth.'[1]

The awakening in Lewis was remarkable. The extensive territory known by that name had but two parishes, Stornoway and Barvas, previous to 1722, when it was divided into four—Lochs and Uig being the new ones. It had not been without good ministers before the revival. Colin Mackenzie, minister of Stornoway (1798-1815), is said to have been 'one of the best of men'; while Donald MacDonald of Barvas (1790-1812) and his

[1] *Norman Macleod of St. Columba's*, p. 167.

successor, William Macrae, are described as exemplary and highly esteemed pastors. But the 'set time' had come; and the means chiefly used by God in preparing for a very rich ingathering were the Gaelic Bible, the Gaelic schools, and the Gaelic schoolmasters.

Shortly after Gaelic schools had been opened on the west side of the island, a movement of a religious character appeared. For a time it was attended by strange phenomena—swooning and clairvoyance—but these, when firmly discouraged, ceased, and the saving results of the Holy Spirit's work remained. The year of the swooning —'bliadhn' an aomaidh'—is still remembered.

From 1824 the settlement of evangelical ministers in Lewis was largely due to its devout proprietrix—the Hon. Mrs. Stewart Mackenzie of Brahan, daughter and heiress of the last Earl of Seaforth. Two parliamentary churches were added to the equipment of the Presbytery, one at Knock and the other at Cross in 1829, and were declared in 1833 to be parishes *quoad sacra*. Schools were also set up where they were most needed. The revival of religion which began at Uig,

under the ministry of Alexander Macleod —translated from Cromarty in 1824—spread rapidly over the island.

V

I shall now ask you to accompany me to some of the parishes of our northern mainland. The landscape which opens out before the north-going traveller, on emerging from the strath of the Spey, is familiar to many. In the counties of which portions appear in the varied and far extending view, Christian people were privileged by the ministrations of eminent preachers during the first half of last century. The parishes which bordered upon the northern firths would indeed have been a delectable land, but for the malign influence of patronage.

In 1809 a presentation to the parish of Fearn was issued in favour of Hugh Ross, of the Gaelic Chapel, Cromarty ; but a large majority of the parishioners were opposed to his settlement. On the arrival of the Presbytery of Tain to induct Ross, things looked so threatening that by the advice of the sheriff, who was present, the function was deferred till an appointed day. When that

day came there was no one to offer opposition. The people had resolved to regard their parish as vacant, and to disregard the induction. The intruded minister appealed to the Presbytery, asking them 'to strengthen his hands in the parish.' His appeal was sent on to the Synod of Ross, by whom a resolution was passed forbidding the ministers of the Synod to administer the Sacraments to any of the 'Fearn Seceders,' or to call upon any of them to pray or speak at fellowship meetings. Robert Findlater, of Kiltearn, criticised the resolution in an ably written pamphlet, signing himself 'Seceder.' This publication by a layman summoned the people of the northern counties, so to speak, to become judges and jurymen in the case. Mr. Downie, of Urray, the mover of the resolution, replied to Findlater in a tract styled 'A Lash for the Seceder,' which called forth a crushing rejoinder.

While the Ross-shire Highlanders were being thus educated as to the evil of patronage, another case arose at Creich in Sutherland. After the death of George Rainy, who was minister there from 1771 till 1810, a presentation to the living was issued in favour

of Murdo Cameron, who had assisted Rainy for a time; but the parishioners, although they liked Cameron in private life, thought him unfit to be their minister. They therefore took no part in his settlement, and withdrew, almost in a body, from the parish church, and maintained services at their own cost for the following thirty-two years, adhering to the Established Church till the Disruption.

The intrusion of an unacceptable minister at Kiltearn, in 1816, still further emphasised and exposed the evil of patronage. The body of the parishioners declined to accept the man of the patron's choice—irreproachable and kindly though he was—and erected a chapel in which services were maintained till the death of the intruded incumbent in 1841, when they all returned to the parish church.

One other case may be mentioned, as it is unique. In 1821 the first Roman Catholic proprietor of the Lovat estates since the Reformation presented to the parish of Kiltarlity, by his Commissioner, a certain Colin Fraser, missionary at Fort Augustus. The people were indignant at the idea of a

Roman Catholic choosing a minister for them. Some of the parishioners took the case to the Court of Session, and secured an interdict in their favour from the Lord Ordinary (Meadowbank), on the ground that the patron had neglected to take the oaths to Government, and to sign the formula against Popery. That judgment was recalled by Lord Kinnedder. The case passed into a contention between the Presbytery and the Synod, whose position the Assembly had sustained, and it ended in the settlement of Fraser, in face of a protest by the majority of the ministers of the Presbytery. The protesters were called to the bar of the Assembly of 1824, and rebuked by the Moderator.

VI

Meanwhile the Church of Scotland was being steadily influenced by the Awakening, which continued to spread like an incoming tide, and a great change was noticeable in the tone, spirit, and aim of the Assembly. In 1829 the Church sent to India, as its first missionary to the heathen, an ardent young Highlander from Moulin, who became the

world-famed Dr. Alexander Duff, of Calcutta, whom some of us remember well—the man of the gleaming eyes, lofty brow, and prophetic fervour. That honourable though belated step was taken on the initiative of Dr. Inglis, the able leader of the Moderate Party.

Home Mission work was also being pressed forward. The success with which the Scottish people agitated for the extension of the Parliamentary suffrage could not fail to raise the question of their rights as members of the Church. So little share had congregations in the choice of their ministers, that instances could be quoted in which 'calls,' signed by a single parishioner, had been sustained. The presentation of the patron was regarded as the essential thing, and, indeed, proposals had been made to dispense entirely with the call.

In 1832 eleven overtures from Synods and Presbyteries were laid on the table of the Assembly, urging that measures should be adopted 'to restore the call to its constitutional and salutary efficiency'; one of the overtures coming from the Presbytery of Tain, and being supported by Alexander

Cameron, minister of Edderton. In reading the debate to which those overtures led, it is amusing at this distance of time to observe the deference with which patrons and patronage were referred to from both sides of the House. Cameron, for instance, strongly disclaimed any intention of interfering with the law of patronage, although his overture bore—'that no minister shall hereafter be inducted to the pastoral office of any parish, unless a call . . . be signed in his favour by at least one-half of the male heads of families.' All that the reforming party, at this stage, aimed at was the regulation of the law of patronage and of the law of calls, so that these two might co-exist. The Lord Justice-Clerk twitted the evangelicals for putting forward a few overtures 'whose tendency was to injure the rights of patrons, and to deprive them of the power vested in them by the law of the land, instead of going forward in a manly way to Parliament praying that the law of the land should be altered.' Some of us may say 'tis pity they did not take him at his word; but the truth is that they were not prepared for so bold a step.

Dr. Chalmers himself had still some distance to travel on the question of patronage. In the next Assembly (1833) a twelve hours' battle was fought over the subject of restoring the call to its proper place—Dr. Chalmers leading on the 'Evangelical' side, and Dr. Cook of St. Andrews on the other. It was then that the pregnant phrase, 'a veto by a majority,' fell on the ears of the House, as the champion of the religious liberties of the people developed his argument. 'He was inclined,' he said, 'to prefer to any other change the continuance of the existing patronage, with a veto by the majority of the people, and his motion would explain what he meant by majority.' Dr. Chalmers meant to work towards his ideal—as he afterwards put it—'by a series of successive ameliorations.' But the non-intrusion war had begun, and men learn and unlearn quickly on the battlefield. The meaning attached to the phrase 'a veto by a majority' is shown in the following condensed view of his motion, which he read in the course of his speech. 'It is the opinion of the Assembly that no minister shall be intruded into a church, contrary to the will of the congrega-

tion, and that the dissent of the majority, with or without assignation of reasons, shall be of conclusive effect in setting aside nomination.' [1]

From the other side of the House Dr. Cook moved that the General Assembly 'declare that it is by the law of the Church, sanctioned by the law of the land, competent for the heads of families, in full and regular communion with the Church, to give in to the Presbytery . . . objections of whatever nature against the presentee, or against the settlement taking place—that the Presbytery shall deliberately consider these objections, and that if they find them unfounded, or originated from causeless prejudices, they shall proceed to the settlement; but if they judge that they are well founded they shall reject the presentation.' That proposal would have placed the power in the hands of the Presbytery. Majorities of male heads of families being communicants, or even whole congregations, might protest, and yet, in view of the Presbytery, their protest might be held to be of no more value than if only one person objected. Dr. Cook carried his

[1] Assembly Speech, 1833. *Report of Proceedings*, p. 31.

colours to victory that day; but it was for the last time, and by a majority of only 149 to 137. In the Assembly of the following year (1834), what came to be known as the Veto Act was carried on the motion of Lord Moncrieff. The banner of the Evangelical party, who stood for the 'Headship of Christ,' and 'the rights of the people,' now waved over the Church, and important and heart-stirring events followed each other rapidly.

Before the Assembly of 1834 rose, a motion was carried directing its Commission to make new applications to the King and Parliament for the redress of the grievances of patronage. The 'Chapel Act' was also passed, giving to Chapel ministers a place in Church Courts. The same Assembly appointed Dr. Chalmers convener of its Church Extension Committee. So eager were the people to help in that movement that gifts poured into the Church's Treasury. Within one year, 65 new churches were erected, or in process of erection; within five years, 176 new churches were added; and by 1841, the number rose to 222, and the giving for that purpose amounted to

about £305,000. It was more significant still that before the close of the Assembly of 1834 a letter was laid on its table from the Moderator of the Antiburgher Church, anent union with the Church of Scotland.

While the Awakening was thus showing its growing strength, a storm was brewing. The party who had ruled the Assembly for long realised that their power in the Church was lost, and formed a plan whereby they could still control some, at least, of the affairs of the Church. They would make the Supreme Civil Court their reserve force, which they could call to their help as occasion required. They had not forgotten words spoken by Hope, the Dean of Faculty, in 1826: 'The Presbyterian religion,' he said, 'and the Presbyterian form of government are in this country the creatures of the State, and both derive their existence and their doctrines as well as their powers from Parliament, and it is impossible that they should derive it from any other source.' The seed then sown was now to bear fruit after its kind. Lovers of religious liberty looked on in amazement as a minority of the Assembly, relying upon a majority of eight to five in

the Court of Session, thwarted every effort which the Church, by increasing majorities in its Assemblies, put forth to assert or reclaim, as the case might be, the rights belonging to it as a Church of Christ.

VII

No sooner had the Veto resolution been sent down to the Presbyteries of the Church under the Barrier Act, than a determined and sustained attack was made on the rights and prerogatives of its Courts in the settlement of ministers over vacant congregations. I shall mention some of the cases in which the Highlands were specially interested.

It had been a principle of the Church from the Reformation ' that it appertaineth to the people, and to every several congregation to elect their own ministers ' ; yet in the case of Auchterarder (14th October 1834), whose Presbytery bordered with the Gaelic Presbytery of Weem, although only two persons out of a population of 3000 signed a call to the presentee of Lord Kinnoull—Mr. Young —the Court of Session declared that in rejecting him the Presbytery acted illegally. Before the case ended, the House of Lords

as Appeal Court decided that if the Presbytery of Auchterarder continued to disobey the Civil Courts they would be held liable in damages to the amount of £10,000. So convinced was Lord Cockburn—one of the judges who formed a minority of five in the Court of Session—that the decision of the Civil Court intruded upon the sphere of the Church, that he entered in his journal 'that if the Auchterarder case had occurred in 1638, or at any time for a century afterwards, the patron would have been set in a white sheet at the Church door, the presentee deposed, and the Court of Session excommunicated.' [1]

The campaign of intrusion was pressed northwards into the partly Highland Presbytery of Dunkeld. The minister of the parish of Lethendy applied in 1835 to the Crown, with whom the patronage of the parish lay, asking for a colleague and successor, and suggesting that his assistant—a Mr. Clarke—should be presented. That was agreed to; but when the Presbytery of Dunkeld met for the signing of a call, a majority of the male heads of families in the congregation

[1] Lord Cockburn's *Journal*, vol. i. p. 216.

opposed the proceedings, and accordingly the induction of Clarke was prohibited by the terms of the Veto Act.

Shortly thereafter, the aged minister died, whereupon Clarke raised an action to compel the Presbytery to 'take him on trial.' Meantime, however, the Crown had issued a new presentation to a Mr. Kessen, who was known to be acceptable to the parishioners. That led to interdict upon interdict, in face of which the Presbytery, acting on instructions from the Assembly's Commission, ordained and inducted the man of the people's choice. Clarke then complained to the Court of Session, who by the normal majority cited the Presbytery of Dunkeld to its bar, for having given obedience to the General Assembly rather than to the Civil Court. The judges did not venture to imprison the ministers of Dunkeld, nor did they affirm that they could undo the spiritual act of ordination and induction; but like the judges mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles, they conferred, saying 'What shall we do to these men?' and after four days' deliberation, they resolved to rebuke them and let them go.

This portentous Erastian development must needs cross the Grampians. In 1837, at Marnoch, in the Presbytery of Strathbogie, only one parishioner, the innkeeper, signed a call to the patron's presentee, a Mr. Edward; yet a majority of the Presbytery, although suspended by the Assembly in consequence, went through the travesty of ordaining Edward in the absence of the entire population of the parish—not even the one parishioner who had signed his call being present. The function has been well described by the eloquent author of the *Memoirs of Dr. Chalmers* as 'an ordination altogether unparalleled in the history of the Church, performed by a Presbytery of suspended clergymen, on a call by a single communicant, against the desire of the patron,[1] in face of the strenuous opposition of a united congregation, in opposition to the express injunction of the Assembly, and at the sole bidding, and under the sole authority of the Court of Session.'

I may refer in a sentence to the experience of the people of Daviot, near Inverness.

[1] The trustees of the Earl of Fife presented another candidate.

When a vacancy occurred in that parish in 1839, the bulk of the parishioners set their hearts on having Archibald Cook as their minister; but were made to feel the power of a Court of Session interdict, and were driven into a secession which lasted till 1843 when, through the Disruption, they secured the minister of their choice.

An important factor in stirring and maintaining the enthusiasm of Scottish Evangelicals, was the appearance in 1840 of the *Witness* newspaper, having as its first editor Hugh Miller, whose lucidity and fulness of knowledge were persuasive with the general public; while the brilliance of his style captivated lovers of literature. A.D. 1840.

VIII

Notwithstanding the injury which was being done to the cause of religion by those heartless intrusions, the Gospel could not be bound. Ministers of outstanding gifts occupied many coigns of vantage throughout Gaelic Scotland, and numbers were daily added to the Church.

Rev. Duncan MacNab, of Campbeltown, Kintyre—a master of Assemblies—with Peter

MacBride, of Rothesay, were the leading evangelists of the Isles of the Clyde, of Kintyre, and of Knapdale. Messrs. Pearson of Kilmeny and Cameron of Kilchoman kept the lamp burning in Islay; while Lorn was well supplied with earnest ministers. We have had a glimpse of what was going on in Skye. In Lewis, MacLeod of Uig was supported by John MacRae Mòr, Finlayson, Cook, and Matheson—men who sowed with the one hand and reaped with the other.

The region between the Grampians and Dunnet Head had several preachers of renown. . . . Drs. MacDonald of Ferintosh and Charles MacKintosh of Tain, with the Kennedies of Dornoch and Redcastle, Fraser of Kirkhill, Stewart of Cromarty, Sage of Resolis, Forbes of Tarbart, Gunn of Watten, Taylor of Thurso, the MacKenzies of Tongue, Farr, and Lochcarron, Shepherd of Kingussie, MacKay of Clyne, Carment of Rosskeen, were among those who experienced the joy of harvest.

Needless to say, Dr. MacDonald, the Apostle of the North, towered above all the preachers of Gaelic Scotland. 'He was of middle height and of dark complexion. He

was dressed after the fashion of the day in a long black cassock, and skin-tight trousers — or trews — which showed off his fine manly figure to great advantage,' wrote an interested hearer. 'I remember,' writes one who knew him well, 'the thrill of that emotional and powerful voice.' A great Church leader says of him: 'He was the Whitefield of Scotland. . . . The proudest and most powerful chieftains of the Gaelic race never possessed such a mastery over the clans with "the fiery cross," or the wild pibroch, as belonged to this humble minister of Christ. . . . Ten thousand people have often been swayed as one man, stirred into enthusiasm, or melted into sadness, by this mighty and faithful preacher's voice.' [1]

Although the Awakening had not then covered the whole of Gaelic Scotland, it was continually spreading. A great movement began in 1839 at Tarbat, Ross, on a Communion Sabbath. Eye-witnesses have described to the writer scenes in which both Bochim and Berachah were illustrated—multitudes weeping and multitudes rejoicing.

In the parish of Duirinish, Skye, an awaken-

[1] Dr. Buchanan's *Ten Years' Conflict*, p. 537.

ing began suddenly, without the support of the parish minister, in the Waternish district, where Norman MacLeod, Gaelic schoolmaster, had been teaching and exhorting for some years. Daily meetings were held there for a considerable time, but eventually they were removed to the village of Stein, and afterwards to Fairy Bridge, which, though in itself little better than a desert, was central for the people of the parishes of Snizort, Duirinish, and Bracadale, who met there every mid-week in thousands. Harris, Tiree, Mull, Lorn, and Kintyre were similarly favoured; and Loch Tay-side was once more the scene of 'the wonderful works of God' during, and after, a visit from the apostolic William Burns.

The brotherly unanimity which then existed among professing Christians throughout the Highlands and Islands was sustained by a similarity of experience, by oneness in love to the Saviour and His cause, and by agreement as to the true nature of the Church of Christ and His sole authority therein. A verbal profession of faith was held of little account, if it did not co-exist with a life that could bear the scrutiny of friend and foe.

The routine of the ordinary services did not seem to suffice, and meetings for prayer were multiplied. In many parishes testimony, or question meetings, were held monthly or quarterly: and when we add to these the sacramental five-day Conventions we can account for the almost complete harmony which prevailed in Ross, Sutherland, and Caithness, and to a large extent in the shires of Inverness, Perth, and Argyll, when the Church crisis became acute. To them, 'thus saith the Lord,' was an end of all controversy. They stood where St. Peter stood when he said, 'We ought to obey God rather than men.'

IX

While the normal work of the Church thus prospered, its rights and liberties as a Divine institution were being resolutely defended. A more careful study of the Bible, a clearer apprehension of the character and rights of the Church, and a fuller acquaintance with its history, constrained increasing numbers of its ministers and people to contend for Christian liberty, in the matter of choosing ministers, as an evangelical principle; and for freedom in the Courts of the Church to

act, in all spiritual matters, as they were responsible to its King and Head.

The position which the Church took up, in its reply to the answer of H.M. Government to its Claim of Right, was that 'the four great branches of jurisdiction—the civil, the criminal, the fiscal, and the ecclesiastical—belonged to separate supreme tribunals, independent of each other; the first three branches *conferred*, the fourth *ratified* by the State; and the appellate jurisdiction of the House of Lords extending only over two, the civil and the fiscal.' [1] In the debate in the House of Commons on Mr. Fox Maule's motion regarding the Church of Scotland, 7th March 1843, Mr. Rutherford (afterwards Lord Rutherford) stated that the Church maintained, 'we have an independent jurisdiction, supreme in itself, not under the control of any other jurisdiction, but subject only to the control of Parliament; and that jurisdiction extends to and embraces all things spiritual. The Court of Session of Scotland is also a supreme tribunal, independent, not to be controlled within its own

[1] Minute of the General Assembly Special Commission in reply to the answer by Her Majesty's Government. (p. 6.)

province, responsible only to the State ; that jurisdiction extends only to things civil. There is another tribunal, the Court of Justiciary, independent and responsible to no other authority but the State, and the jurisdiction of that Court is over things criminal. We claim for ourselves that we shall retain this separate and independent right over things spiritual, subject to no control but that of the State.' The temporalities of the Church, on the other hand, were recognised to be within the sphere of the Civil Court. The Church quoted Acts of Parliament which enacted that the sovereign's supreme judicial power should ' no ways be prejudicial to the privilege that God has given to the spiritual office-bearers of the Church, concerning heads of religion, matters of heresy, excommunication, collation and deprivation of ministers.' It was also shown that the Confession of Faith was ratified by statute, setting forth that the Divine Head of the Church ' hath therein appointed a Government distinct from the civil magistrate, and that the government of the Church by General Assemblies, etc., is the only government of Christ's Church within

this Kingdom.' Accordingly the Church held that as the Court of Session was merely co-ordinate with the General Assembly, each having its own sphere, its intrusion into the Church's sphere was 'an encroachment in violation of a national settlement.' It was indisputably the law of the Church 'that no pastor be intruded in any of the offices of the Kirk contrary to the will of the congregation to whom he is appointed.'

On the other hand, the Court of Session acted upon the view that the Church is nothing more than a creation of the State; that its ministers, as officers of the State, are bound to carry out the orders of the Civil Court even if they bear upon the purely spiritual function of ordination; and further that the State has the power to determine who shall be, or shall not be, members of the courts of the Church. The Church was now preparing for the inevitable; but as Paul carried his case to Cæsar, in order to exhaust the resources which Providence placed within his reach, so the Church of Scotland carried its case from the Court of Session to the Government of the United Kingdom, on the ground that it is the duty

of the State to mediate between contending judicatories. The Church's Claim, Declaration and Protest, prepared by Mr. Murray Dunlop, and adopted by the Church, was transmitted to Parliament, and replied to in a letter written by Sir James Graham, the Home Secretary. The significance of the letter is defined in its concluding words: 'Her Majesty's Ministers, now understanding that nothing less than the total abrogation of the rights of the Crown and of other patrons will satisfy the Church, are bound, with firmness, to declare that they cannot advise Her Majesty to consent to the grant of any such demand.'

The Church as such took no further step in approaching Parliament. It came about, however, that three petitions[1] were sent up to the House of Commons, and presented by Mr. Fox Maule, Mr. Campbell of Monzie, and Mr. P. M. Stewart respectively, praying that the determination of the Government not to interfere in the question at issue in the

[1] One was from the Presbytery of Linlithgow, another was sent by the London Wesleyan body, and a third from a place the name of which the reporters who had been sent to secure 'a Faithful and Impartial Report' did not hear.—See Report published by the Edinburgh Printing and Publishing Co., 13th March 1843.

Church of Scotland should not be acted upon. A two days' debate ended in the rejection of Mr. Fox Maule's motion, that the House should go into Committee on the subject, by 211 to 76. Scottish members voted in favour of the Church's Claim by 25 to 12. Lord Campbell raised a futile discussion on the same subject in the House of Lords, with a like result.

The conditions on which the alliance between the British State and the Church of Scotland could continue, being then made clear, it remained for those who contended for the Church's rights and privileges to say, by deed as well as by word, that 'while continuing to be dutiful and loyal subjects they must decline to take part in their betrayal.' Meanwhile no one could with certainty forecast how men could bear the wrench of leaving comfortable homes, endeared by hallowed associations, and with no certainty as to where some of them could get a roof to cover the heads of those nearest and dearest to them, or whether they would have congregations to preach to; yet when the hour came, although many drew back, 474 ordained ministers of the Church of

Scotland—101 of them being from the Highlands and Islands—severed their connection with the State by withdrawing from the General Assembly, on May 18th, 1843, 'to a separate place of meeting,' the Moderator having first read a calm and dignified protest which concludes with the words: 'We are not responsible for any consequences that may follow from this our enforced separation from an establishment which we loved and prized—through interference with conscience, the dishonour done to Christ's crown, and the rejection of His sole and supreme authority as King in His Church.'

By signing a deed of demission those ministers divested themselves of an aggregate yearly income of £100,000. Their act of separation stands out as one of the great events in the history of Scotland. Its spiritual force thrilled the evangelical Churches of Christendom, and has survived to the present day. In the splendid galaxy of Scotsmen of piety, talent, and learning, who were act and part in the Disruption, the highest place belongs by universal acclaim to THOMAS CHALMERS.

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