

To dear Katie Allardice

in loving memory of my dear husband  
of the happy days of her mother &  
me, in the long ago days.

from C. M. Charteris



PHOTO: MURRAY EDWARDS

*Emeritus* PROFESSOR CHARTERIS, D.D., LL.D.  
(1898)

President of the Young Men's Guild of the Church of Scotland



THE LIFE OF  
ARCHIBALD HAMILTON CHARTERIS

D.D., LL.D.

PROFESSOR OF BIBLICAL CRITICISM AND BIBLICAL  
ANTIQUITIES IN THE UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH;  
CHAPLAIN TO THEIR LATE MAJESTIES QUEEN VICTORIA  
AND KING EDWARD, AND ONE OF THE DEANS OF  
THE CHAPEL ROYAL OF SCOTLAND; MODERATOR OF  
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF 1892

BY

REV. THE HON. ARTHUR GORDON, M.A.

WITH PORTRAITS

HODDER AND STOUGHTON  
LONDON NEW YORK TORONTO

TO  
MRS. CHARTERIS  
HER HUSBAND'S TRUE YOKE-FELLOW  
IN ALL HIS LIFE AND WORK  
PRESIDENT OF THE WOMAN'S GUILD  
OF THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

## P R E F A C E

MANY of the friends of the late Professor Charteris have desired some permanent record of the part which he played in the ecclesiastical life of Scotland. The Rev. Dr. J. A. Graham, missionary at Kalimpong, had hoped to frame this biography, and took with him to India the bulk of the materials—chiefly a vast multitude of letters, which he was at pains to arrange in consecutive order—but overwork and impaired health compelled him reluctantly to abandon a task most congenial to his loyal heart. In these circumstances Mrs. Charteris appealed to the present writer, who, though conscious of little qualification, felt it a duty to attempt such a memoir as the Church of Scotland was entitled to expect, standing as she does on the threshold of a new era. He trusts that, with all its shortcomings, this book will in some measure attain this end. He has tried to treat Dr. Charteris' many-sided activity, using the topical rather than the strictly chronological method, in chapters dealing with separate subjects, which were often concurrent in time.

The author's angle of vision is frankly that of a minister of the Church of Scotland, and one part of the design has been to throw much-needed light from that standpoint upon certain passages of recent Church history which affect the relations of the Church of Scotland with the other Presbyterian Churches. He hopes the general effect of what is here disclosed will make for peace; and, while he has not withheld adequate treatment of disputed matters, he has studied to avoid all offensive imputa-

tion of motive, and to base a sober narrative upon the unchallengeable facts of history. To ensure accuracy—the first requisite of all history—it has been thought best to supply in many cases the *ipsissima verba* as penned or uttered. Only late in life, when his health was enfeebled, did Dr. Charteris yield to the wishes of friends that he should prepare the sketches of autobiography which are included in these pages. Everything possible has been done to utilise the materials derived from other personal and authentic sources, in order that what Dr. Charteris was, and thought, and did, might be unreservedly set forth.

The writer accepts sole responsibility for everything now published, but has to acknowledge much indebtedness for kind and patient assistance. Mrs. Charteris has made available all information within her reach, and has welcomed reference to her loving recollection upon many details. The entire chapter on 'The Professor at Work' has been generously supplied by the Rev. Professor Thomas Nicol, D.D., with intimate knowledge from student days onwards. He has also given valued advice, besides correcting the proof-sheets to their great advantage. The Rev. James Robertson, D.D., LL.D., *Emeritus* Professor of Hebrew in Glasgow University, has also laid the author under similar and great obligations. The Rev. Professor Cowan, D.D., D.C.L., has kindly looked over those chapters which fall within his Church History province, and the Rev. Wm. Robertson, D.D., of Coltness, those on Christian Life and Work subjects, and both offered helpful suggestions. The Rev. Dr. Archibald Fleming of St. Columba's, London, has throughout been a valued counsellor. Both the Rev. Dr. Elder Cumming and (the late) Sir Alexander Kinloch of Gilmerton—members of the Anti-patronage Committee—were so good as to read over the two chapters dealing with the abolition of



patronage, which were composed after careful consideration of the official records and correspondence drawn from many sources. Special thanks are due to Miss Mitchell, who kindly permitted the use of a large number of letters from and to the late Rev. Professor A. F. Mitchell, D.D., of St. Andrews, Dr. Charteris' constant confidant. Principal Oswald Dykes and Dr. A. Taylor Innes, advocate, were two of his fast friends, whose lamented decease during this year makes it an even more imperative duty gratefully to acknowledge their ready courtesy, and to express no merely formal regret that the latter especially has not been spared to see the consummation of that honourable reunion which was increasingly deemed by him practicable as well as desirable. To still surviving friends, such as the Rev. W. Jardine Dobie and David Murray, Esq., LL.D., Glasgow, and to the late Principal J. Marshall Lang, D.D., of Aberdeen, the author owns himself indebted for most kind contributions; also to many others who brought stones to this memorial cairn, whether these are visible on the outside or have helped to build it up from the inside.

It is a great satisfaction to be permitted (by the kindness of Mr. James Thin) to print at the end the address on 'Some Types of Student Life,' which supplies as attractive and characteristic a specimen of the Professor's composition as ever proceeded from his pen.

DRUMEARN, HERMITAGE DRIVE,  
EDINBURGH, *September 1912.*



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## CHAPTER I

### EARLY DAYS

Birth—Parentage—Home—School at Wamphray.

MANY lives have been written, and Lord Neaves has sung, of the 'sons of the manse,' so often found pre-eminent in their several professions; and none more distinguished than the minister-sons. But this book seeks to perpetuate the memory of a son of the school-house, which also has made many notable contributions to the ranks of the Scottish ministry. It would be strange were it otherwise. Since the days of Knox, and universally since the Scottish Act of Parliament 1696, the goodly vision of the parish school, standing as a rule in close proximity to the parish church, and administered till 1872 by the parish minister and heritors, symbolised the indissoluble link between religion and education, by whose joint influence Scottish character has been built up in all its most vital, precious, solid, and enduring elements.

Archibald Hamilton Charteris was born at Wamphray on 13th December 1835, in Wamphray school-house, where his father was schoolmaster. These two facts are the key to his whole life. To his last day he was a son of the school-house; and, if it were possible, he was also even more devotedly a son of Wamphray; nothing ever took the place of his native parish in his loyal heart. Its simple ways, its isolated ideas, its primitive opinions were all dear to him. Impressions drawn from his early surroundings, his parentage and upbringing, were interwoven with his very nature; no one who knew him and knew Wamphray but felt that he remained all through his life a Wamphray boy. Those who do not know may be tempted to ask what was the great difference between



## 2 ARCHIBALD HAMILTON CHARTERIS

Wamphray and any other quiet little Scottish parish. Situated in Upper Annandale, Dumfriesshire, the parish of Wamphray in those days contained a population of about four hundred and fifty, now reduced to three hundred and sixty-nine. It consists of a fine wide strath or dale, at the bottom of which flows the river Annan. Its eastern boundary is a mountain range whose summits possess elevations of from 800 to 2000 feet. Another ridge not much lower runs parallel to the higher along the centre of the parish, but is cloven by the vale of Wamphray Water debouching to the west. The slopes are beautifully wooded; while three cascades bearing the names of the Pot, the Washing Pan, and Dubb's Caldron give character to the little glen. Such were its outward features. What was it which gave it individuality of another kind?

For one thing, in Dr. Charteris' youth almost everybody was related to everybody else. An 'incomer,' a person who neither by birth nor marriage belonged to Wamphray, was nearly unknown. And for another thing, in these early days there was in Wamphray no deep distinction between landlord and tenant. Their laird was indeed their chief, loved and revered, but he was also kinsman to many of the inhabitants, largely one in blood, and certainly one in interest and aim with the people. It was well that young Charteris was born and reared under a fine example of the old *régime*, where scenery and atmosphere, tales and ballads of the old freebooting times, and traditions of the Covenanters and their persecutions had become part and parcel of the very being of the inhabitants, and combined to give to Wamphray its altogether indescribable old-world charm.

Then, again, none who had known it could ever forget the warm-hearted, simple yet dignified courtesy of the parishioners; whether it were at a winter reunion, when they went happily home through the dark, holding each others' hands, one of the party—often the schoolmaster—chivalrously walking all the way in the 'sheugh' or ditch with a light to keep the others straight; or whether, in

the lovely summer evenings, they wandered up the glen, listening to Border songs, till they came on the green slopes of the high rounded hills where the sheep were feeding.

The old farm-houses and cottages are still there with all the old friendly hospitality ; the old names are now borne by sons and grandsons. Wamphray is little changed compared with most places. Yet Moffat, the metropolis of the district, is only seven miles off ; and even to Wamphray every now and then along the highway (which follows the lines of a Roman road) comes thundering a motor-car, alarming and scandalising the neighbourhood.

The Wamphray estate has passed since the twelfth century to many different lines of proprietors. There were successively the families of Avenel, Graham, Carlyle, Corrie, Kirkpatrick, Boyle, Scott, and Crichton. The Johnstones<sup>1</sup> owned it from 1476 to 1747. After the Johnstone era the Earls of Hopetoun were the lairds for fifty years ; Sir W. Fettes, whose money built Fettes College, Edinburgh, was the proprietor for about a dozen years ; the Rogersons owned the place for seventy-three years ; and the Jardines since 1883. The ancient days of raids by our 'auld enemy' from England are happily ended. Only the ballad entitled 'The Lads of Wamphray' keeps alive the memory of 'The Galliard gay' done to death by the Crichtons, and the terrible revenge taken by his clan in 1593. Civil war no longer troubles the parish, as when Charles II. halted and dined at Poldean beside the great monolith when marching into England before the defeat of Worcester Field ; or as when the laird of Wamphray espoused the Jacobite cause in 1715, and had to skulk in hiding till his escapade was forgotten ; or as when Lord George Murray and Prince Charlie's Highland followers sought from sympathetic hands refreshment for man and beast upon their march

<sup>1</sup> Sir Walter Scott has represented their 'gentle' sway in the *Fair Maid of Perth*, when the typical freebooter, who dealt so harshly with poor, vain Oliver Proudfoot, exclaims : 'You want to know my name ! My name is the Devil's Dick of Hellgarth, well known in Annandale for a gentle Johnstone. I follow the stout laird of Wamphray, who rides with his kinsman the redoubtable Lord of Johnstone.'



#### 4 ARCHIBALD HAMILTON CHARTERIS

to Derby. Law and order have done their work, with the Reformed Religion for their weighty sanction; and the Wamphray lads have settled down

‘To plough the heath, uproot the weed,  
Enrich the soil, and drain the mead,  
Till flocks and herds in plenty feed  
In fertile flowery Annandale.’

The church, which was rebuilt in 1835, stands at a pretty bend above the left bank of Wamphray Water, probably upon an ancient site, and is supposed to cover part of the precincts of a Druidical circle. Two of its parish ministers are specially worth remembering. ‘John Brown of Wamphray’ was ordained in 1655, but suffered banishment to Holland in 1662. He ordained Richard Cameron, the celebrated Covenanter, and was a noted divine, critic, and linguist. Thomas Douglas, the preacher at Drumclog Conventicle, when the dragoons of Claverhouse were put to flight with serious loss, led a charmed life till the Revolution of 1690, and passed his last five years as minister here in peace. These facts throw a significant light on the deep vein of Covenanting feeling latent or patent in Dr. Charteris’ nature.

His lineage must not escape our notice. He never alluded to it, following in this respect the admonition of his father, who used to say: ‘If you do not add further lustre to your name and pedigree, do not mention either.’ With the help, however, of a recent edict issued by the Lyon King of Arms to a descendant, who went to Canada and often told her grandson ‘there was no better blood in Scotland,’ we can trace his pedigree to an ancestor, Sir John Charteris of Amisfield, in the county of Dumfries, who died in 1615. The family intermarried with the Maxwells and the Douglasses of Drumlanrig. Sir John’s second son was Robert Charteris of Kelwood, Bodisbeck, and Duchray, who married Barbara, daughter of Robert Maxwell of Dinwoodie. Their son was William Charteris of Duchray, who died in 1684. His son was Alexander Charteris in Mickle Duchray; his eldest son again was

John Charteris in Broomhills, Wamphray, who married Margaret Murray, and died in 1810. Their third son was Matthew Charteris, who married Jean Learmonth, and died in 1841. He had two sons and three daughters. The elder son was John Charteris, schoolmaster of Wamphray, who married Jean Hamilton. They were the parents of the subject of this memoir, Archibald Hamilton Charteris, and of two other children—Matthew, born 4th September 1840, M.D., Edinburgh, 1863, and Professor of Materia Medica and Therapeutics in the University of Glasgow from 1880 until his death in 1897; and Mary, who died at Edinburgh in 1906.

Archibald Hamilton, the maternal grandfather, hailed from Torthorwald, came to Broomhills Farm in 1814, belonged to the Preston branch of the Hamiltons, a Covenanting family, and used to relate with pride how he rode knee to knee with the poet Robert Burns in the Dumfries Yeomanry. His younger brother James, afterwards minister of New Abbey, was one of the squad who fired over the poet's grave at his burial, in St. Michael's churchyard, Dumfries.

John Charteris was generally called 'the master' (pronounced 'maister'), never the 'Dominie.' All accounts agree on two points, that he was a splendid specimen of the highest type of the old parochial teacher, a class to which Scotland owed (but seldom paid) an immense debt; and that he was utterly devoid of selfish personal ambition. He might have said with the Shunammite: 'I dwell among mine own people.' Seeing that his son has limned his portrait, the present writer will confine himself to a few pertinent gleanings. Having drunk in all the instruction which Wamphray school provided in his boyhood, John Charteris then attended Applegarth school, where, under a University man, he greatly extended the range of his subjects of study. The beginning of his life-work was made at Kirkmichael; but Wamphray school fell vacant in 1823, and he was appointed assistant and successor. His predecessor retired upon an allowance of £16 a year, deducted from the minimum statutory salary of £23,



## 6 ARCHIBALD HAMILTON CHARTERIS

which left the magnificent remuneration of the remaining £7, the school fees (probably amounting to £25), and a house and garden. In addition he had the privilege of taking boarders, but no extra accommodation was provided.

By 1834 the £7 salary had risen to £18, the statutory minimum having been raised to £34. Not till 1839 did Mr. Charteris receive that salary. He was repeatedly offered better paid situations, notably through Professor Pillans, but he deliberately elected to remain in his native parish, where we are told the pupils all appeared very much alive to the benefits of education. Well they might be, for in that little hive of industry all willing workers received an education not inferior to that of any High School or Academy in the land. It is not suggested that the standard of Wamphray prevailed in all the parish schools of Scotland, but it did in many. All the children were thoroughly drilled in the 'three R's,' and were likewise taught the Bible and the Shorter Catechism; while those who were fit for the higher branches received such instruction as is impossible now under the burdensome restrictions of the present code. They went forth thoroughly equipped for University studies, and often achieved marvellously successful careers in the wide world. Of course the personal equation counted for much. As Dr. John Pagan, a grateful scholar, has said :—

'The special interest of Mr. Charteris' life was the work of his school. Any personal or pecuniary advantage to himself from continuance of attendance at school to qualify for the University or other openings in life had not the slightest influence with him. He would have given his time and his work as cordially and ungrudgingly to any of his pupils, without fee or reward, who gave promise of gifts for professional or commercial life, as he would have given to those who possessed ample means to recognise whatever service he rendered. It seems in these times very wonderful that from a parish with so limited a population, for the fee of five shillings a quarter, pupils could be prepared to pass direct to the University, and at once take a position as good as those who came from the amply endowed and staffed educational institutions in the leading centres of population. He never professed to teach what he did



not know, and no gratification was deeper to him than to conduct others into the paths over which he himself had gone.'

Mr. Charteris held advanced views on the higher education of girls. He was a quiet, unassuming man, yet of a strong personality, manifestly pervading the life of the parish for good. Realising that education was not finished when a boy left school at twelve or fourteen, he instituted a Debating Society—locally styled 'The Gabbing School'—which was attended by all classes, and which greatly elevated the standard of local intelligence among farmers, shepherds, tradesmen, and labourers, who were all active members. It became a centre of social life, and may be said to have antedated the Young Men's Guild. The master's temperament was cool, but he joked heartily and was very witty. He had many laughs, from hearty to satirical. Nobody 'got the tawse' in school after being promoted to the Latin class. Kindly persuasion was the rule. Above all things the master hated a tale-bearer. He was the inspirer, often the participant, in games, such as football and swimming. His favourite hobby was gardening combined with bee-keeping. An amusing example given of his martyrdom to supposed duty is that on his marriage day he drove to Broomhills after school hours, when the rite was solemnised, and he resumed work in school next morning!

It would be unpardonable to overlook the fact that the many qualities which in his narrow sphere proved Mr. Charteris to be a born leader of men were deeply rooted in personal religion of the old-fashioned Scottish type. That was the main factor in his character. Religious instruction is a very different thing from mere historical and literary teaching about the Bible. It was the former added to the latter which the youth of Wamphray so long enjoyed. Holding the offices of Inspector of Poor and Session Clerk, then almost invariably held by the parish schoolmaster, Mr. Charteris was also an elder of the Parish Church. The Rev. Charles

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Dickson was minister from 1823 to 1853, a fine preacher, a scholar, and a good business man. He espoused the side of the Non-Intrusion party, but did not leave the Church of Scotland in 1843, adopting the policy of the middle party, nicknamed by their opponents, from their number, 'The Forty Thieves.' No doubt his attitude was largely due to a numerous signed petition, framed and promoted by Mr. Charteris, entreating him to consider well the ecclesiastical situation on constitutional lines, and not to be carried away by secession fever or fear of reproach.

Full statistics regarding the success in life of old pupils of the school are not available, but it is known that in Mr. Charteris' time it turned out no fewer than ten ministers, nineteen doctors, eleven teachers, as well as many most successful business men. One wonders whether this record has ever been beaten from so small a population. It is believed that on the benches of no other school in Scotland could there have been found simultaneously seated three boys destined in turn to preside as Moderator over the General Assembly.

Dr. John Pagan of Bothwell, whole-hearted and zealous, was the first; Dr. John Gillespie of Mouswald, 'the Minister of Agriculture for Scotland,' was the second, equally honoured and admired by king and peasant. His eldest brother David came to Wamphray school *after* being dux of Dumfries Academy. Dr. Gillespie always warmly acknowledged the gifts of his old schoolmaster, whose son comically records: 'He once made an eloquent speech in the Assembly about my father, in order to contrast me with him!' The third moderator is the subject of this memoir.

His impressions of youthful school-days will be welcome: 'Until I was six years old I had no regular lessons from my father, but was taught in snatches of time by the elder pupils in the school. At six I began Latin, which I liked, and also English grammar, which I hated. It was a very simple grammar too. It was almost impossible for a child running in and out of the school-room at will to avoid picking up some bits of instruction,



and I have heard that I could read the New Testament to my dying grandfather when I was three years old. In later years I have constantly regretted that I was taught so early. My knowledge, such as it is, has always been unsystematic and fragmentary: just miscellaneous "bits."

'My remembrances of school are very distinct, and are no doubt compounded of impressions received at various dates. I can see the scene distinctly. My father, always eager and energetic, sometimes in the desk, sometimes moving about, organising classes, or hearing how they got on with the monitors. There were about a dozen "Latin Boys" sitting in a row along from the desk to the stove, who had two lessons from the master every day, and who helped him as monitors for several hours. Their second lesson was partly prepared in school, and they worked at arithmetic and wrote their copy-books at stated hours. I do not remember that any of them usurped or claimed any authority. They were recognised as the master's delegates, and the chief effect on them of their being in some power was that they tried, and were expected, to live up to their responsible positions. All the school was proud of their attainments, and as one by one they went off to College they carried with them the good wishes of all the rest. It may well be supposed that a small school-room with one hundred and twenty pupils of all ages, from the child of six to the young farmer who had come back to fill up some of the gaps in his previous education, and every one doing something—several classes going on at the same time—was not a demurely dull or silent place! I should say there never was a school-room less dull. It was full of energy, suggested and regulated by the master, who scorned the idea of sparing himself, and whose energy was infectious. Some educational theorists say that to have advanced pupils prevents a master from attending to beginners and young children. They do not take into account the effect of spirit in causing activity. There was no child who was not proud of the prowess of boys and girls who could read Latin and Greek,

and who was not willing to find some of those pundits occupied part of every day in giving him some of his lessons. There is an immense loss of such spirit when the teacher does all, or has only professional assistants. The pupil teacher is quite another thing from the teacher pupil. I have seen many schools, and I have never seen one where the average pupil made quicker progress, or where the dull child was more stimulated and helped to do his best, than in Wamphray school when I was a pupil.

‘Of course most of this was due to “The Master.” It would be absurd in me to try to write of my father as though I were a calm observer of his character and labour; though he was unconscious of his character, and his labours he never felt to be a burden. His whole heart and soul were in his school; his sympathy united him to every one. No man ever brought on small or stupid pupils so well. The little girl who had come to learn the alphabet felt that he loved her, and wanted to help her in her struggles to put names to letters, and the letters together; and she did not think it a hard thing to learn where every one was learning. The big lad, all but ready for College next November, was proudly conscious of the master’s gratification when he gave a vigorous translation of Homer, or did not let all the felicity of Horace slip away without imitation. The school was full of working pupils, and the longest day was never tedious. Nothing that could brighten us was forgotten; every comical thing was greeted happily; and through all the day’s work ran a prevailing sense of duty. The work was always closed with prayer: a prayer in simple (frequently scriptural) words, which we could understand; and then there was a rush to the football field, which the kindness of the farmer of Wamphray Gate made us welcome to use. It was true football—only the foot might touch the ball, unless, indeed, some lucky fellow caught it full in the air, and then he had one kick, for which the rest were honourably bound to give him room and no disturbance. He was bound to fling it up and catch it on his toe as it came down.



'We were the strongest school in the country parishes of Upper Annandale, and we beat every school in the big matches which were played every winter. Keen objections were sometimes taken by our opponents to Wamphray school reckoning on its lists big lads who had been "hired" during the previous summer, and were only regular pupils for the winter half-year; but scrupulous correctness was observed in only counting those as "real scholars" for the match who were actually in regular attendance for a term. Our prowess became so famous that other schools sometimes shied at the contest. I remember one day when we were to meet Kirkpatrick Juxta in Poldean Holm beside the Roman Stone, and at the appointed hour we were there eager for the fray, but no opponent appeared. At last one solitary scout came, who said that they had seen and counted us from among the bushes on the brae at the opposite side of Annan Water, and fearing our strength had gone home. He was asked to join us in a friendly game among ourselves, and did so. During the game, however, he said or did something wrong, and one big boy took him and held him by the waistband of his trousers over the Annan, until he said in a loud voice, while we all crowded round, "Of a' the lads that I do ken, the Wamphray lads are kings o' men." And after reciting this braggart motto from the old Border ballad the discomfited scout was sent away to publish over his parish the prowess and the pride of the Wamphray lads. The master himself was afterwards told, and his verdict was that it would have been better to treat the poor stranger more kindly.

'But I am wandering from the school. John Paterson's book<sup>1</sup> of "Wamphray" tells of the wide curriculum of a Wamphray boy in the school. Before we left school we had read as much Latin and Greek and Mathematics as made it easy for us to pass the junior and enter the

<sup>1</sup> Wamphray has been described in a careful book by my cousin and class-fellow, John Paterson, who has said much I might have liked to say. He, with the help of Dr. Pagan, has traced the history of the 'Latin' boys who entered professions. (Published by Halliday, Lockerbie, 1906, now out of print.)

second class at the University; though many took the junior from modest diffidence. We could have passed any ordinary examination in Virgil, Livy, and Horace in Latin; on Homer, Anacreon, and several plays of Euripides in Greek. With Euclid we were quite familiarly acquainted, and with Algebra up to the Binomial Theorem. French we could read easily. All the clever girls learned it also; but, although my father had been the favourite pupil of Surenne (a noted teacher in those days, whose books were in wide circulation), the pronunciation which our Annandale tongues made to do duty for French left much to be desired. We read German fairly well. We went through a course of Navigation. We were taught to measure fields and draw plans of the farm we measured. One of us, having been thoroughly grounded in Mensuration in this way, but with no other training, became the able surveyor of the land of a wide and populous British colony.

'It was a great day when the Presbytery came to examine the school. The master gave them books, and, as a rule, left us to our fate, unless some sympathetic minister begged him to show what a class could do. Admiring parents sat round the school-room, and saw how brightly their bairns acquitted themselves. It was a great thing for a school like ours to be governed and examined by educated men. Parish school boards are unable to examine the school; and the government inspector's visit makes naturally a dull, quiet day.

'It may be asked where and when my father had learned all that he taught us. I do not know. His early days must have been days of hard work, and his extraordinary memory seemed to let nothing pass away. When we were reading Homer or Euripides or Livy, I, who was beside him in the house and school all day, never once saw him prepare our lesson in Latin or Greek beforehand. Algebra and arithmetic were as natural to him as spelling English words. Our simple faith that he could show us how to work out the geometrical problems that had beaten us in Euclid, how to solve the Quadratic Equations



with Surds that had fairly beaten us in Algebra, or how to translate the queer sentences in Horace's Epistles or in Tacitus, was always justified. I don't think he ever saw a "crib," unless perhaps in German composition. He was an unassuming scholar and a wonderful teacher, and the parish was proud of him: so well it might be. When the day came that the parish minister (Mr. Wight) told him he was dying, I heard him say: "Well, I have had a healthy and happy life, and if God calls me away I am ready."

'If I were asked wherein lay his power as a teacher, I would say—first, in his knowledge; secondly, in his sympathy, for he sympathised with every one in the school, young and old, and every one knew it; and thirdly, in his abundant humour. Not only good humour, but sense of fun which gave him a due regard for proportion, as well as a keen and killing power of exposing absurdity.

'It is not mine to analyse my father's character; but I wish to record my conviction of what his native parish owed to his devoted life. On his grave near the church, where his ancestors had been elders since soon after the Reformation, is a beautiful Iona Cross erected by his pupils, with an inscription written by one of the ablest of them, Dr. John Pagan of Bothwell.

'My friend, Mr. John Wight, architect, designed the monument, and made it a link with local memories as well as a Christian symbol, by directing the sculptor to copy at its base a quaint design of the Tree of Life springing from the wounded and chained body of The Serpent. This symbolic carving is on an old stone above the belfry door of Wamphray Parish Church, and was brought there from the old Pre-Reformation Church up the glen.'

Among intimate friends Dr. Charteris used to tell of a characteristic counsel given him by his own father on his death-bed, which he never forgot. Perhaps mindful of a kind of preaching that magnified and harshly interpreted the terror of the Lord, while it failed adequately to mirror forth the kindness of His mercy, the old man

said: 'Make it easy for them, Archie!—as easy as you can—when they wish to enter the kingdom.' 'The master' did not mean to lower the standard which through life he had himself held so high, or to recommend the Mohammedan excuse: 'God is minded to make His religion light unto you, for man was created weak.' Rather was he echoing Christ's words about the easy yoke and the light burden, and hinting at the omission of man-made commandments, then not seldom insisted on, as of equal Divine authority and obligation.

Like so many men who come to distinction, Dr. Charteris was singularly fortunate in his mother. Called, by her own mother's death, early to play an eldest daughter's part in her father's household, superintend servants, cook food, and attend to thorough cleanliness in matters of dairy work and produce, she acquired, and she plainly required, the qualities of the virtuous woman who 'looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness.' She was pre-eminently what is called a good manager, perhaps the greater power in guiding the family. She added prudence and reticence to her faculty of decision; was above mixing in parochial gossip or taking part in passing squabbles, could laugh quietly at the funny side of storms in a tea-cup, and ably seconded her husband's *dictum* that 'a professional man should keep all doors open, and when occasion served give a serious advice always to make for peace.' But she was not a wife and mother merely providing for physical needs: she first impressed on her son's young mind the saving truths of religion and the meaning of the Church of God. The greater part of her reading was about the Church and its ministers; and the gist of her serious conversation, if it did not begin, generally ended on that subject. She first instilled the truth about the duty and privilege of helping Missions into Archibald's heart, and one can picture the pair—the mother and the little boy of six—expectantly trudging the seven miles to Moffat to hear the fervent Dr. Duff tell in glowing language the story of heathen India's needs, and his



great Missionary Institution at Calcutta. Warmly did she welcome the day when a missionary work party was commenced in Wamphray, and gladly did she open her two parlours in the new school-house to receive willing fellow-workers. It was the joy and glory of his mother's life that her son should be a minister and leader in the Kingdom of Jesus Christ.

A. H. Charteris was baptized in the school, where the Sunday services were held while the Parish Church was being rebuilt. He is described in early days as a most interesting child, rather small for his age, not shy, but very sensitive. He could read a French fable at five. When about eight he tackled from choice Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*. One who first knew him then remarked the slight occasional hesitation in his speech which in after-years helped to make his sermons so very effective in delivery, and noticed a certain sedate gravity which gave promise that he would be an earnest student. But we must not imagine him as one of those prodigies of goodness who live with difficulty and die young. He is described as full of animal spirits, fond of running in the Glen barefooted; and with a strong spice of mischief and human frolic; a bright, active youngster who took a leading part in football and other games. He was also a fine swimmer and a plucky rider. His happy and healthy boyhood was passed in a climate favourable to the cultivation of flowers. His cousin and he used to take their Latin books into the garden and learn their lessons there, a liberty conditioned, at times, by the promise to report to the master when the bees were 'casting' (swarming).

About his future profession he was never in doubt; he always said he would be a minister, and his highest early ambition soared only to being minister of Wamphray. In due course he excelled in the Debating Society, his chief rival there being David Gillespie.

The old school by the roadside, if beautiful for situation, and having the Glen for its playground, was indeed of

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modest dimensions, when contrasted with the spacious dwelling-house and excellent class-rooms provided in the 'sixties of last century; but it was in the humbler edifice that Mr. Charteris did his great work. That consists of two orthodox cottages solidly built in line, with a small addition added later for boarders. The box-bed, where two professors were born, is proudly pointed out by the worthy blacksmith and his wife who inhabit the 'but and ben.' For the old school-room is now the parish smithy, and in the mind of any visitor who recalls the long procession of those whom in other days it sent forth thoroughly equipped for life's warfare, it may well conjure up the lines of Robert Louis Stevenson, peacefully construed concerning home-leavers and home-keepers:—

' And as the fervent smith of yore  
 Beat out the glowing blade,  
 Nor wielded in the front of war  
 The weapons that he made,  
 But in the tower at home still plied his ringing trade;  
 So like a sword the son shall roam  
 On nobler missions sent;  
 And as the smith remained at home  
 In peaceful turret pent,  
 So sits the while at home the mother well content.'

It was a first principle with the son through his whole life that everything pertaining to the old home and its dear inmates had the first call, and must be attended to whatever happened. Leisure for many a year he had none to give; but if time were needed it must be found or made. He himself might be absent, a wandering planet, but home was the centre round which he revolved, and to which all his thoughts tended. To his father and mother while they lived there could be no more dutiful son; and when his father died on 11th September 1871—failing sight came upon him before then—Archibald still more was everything to his mother—husband, son, factor, nurse, all in one. Clever active woman though she was, it was her delight to lean upon him for everything. 'We'll see what



Archibald says, 'was generally her final decision. It was a family joke that never a nail was knocked into the wall between his short though frequent visits.

Mrs. Charteris was very proud of her cottage, which her son had built chiefly to be ready for them when the 'master' should retire from his school. Alas! it was only just ready for roofing in, when they had to send down to tell the men to stop working the day the 'master' died. He had taken a keen delight in watching its erection from his bedroom in the handsome modern school-house, and one day he pathetically said: 'Oh, Archibald, I would have liked to sleep just one night in the house you are building for me!' But that was not to be. In the spring of the following year Mrs. Charteris and Mary moved into the beautifully situated 'Trinlen Cottage,' which henceforth represented home to the whole family circle.

In regard to the spiritual experiences of the lad, on the subjective side little is known, and nothing can here be said about any time in particular when he began to be consciously religious. It would appear that his piety was of that wholesome type which ought to be considered normal in the case of those who have been trained with wise discrimination in spiritual things. There was nothing precocious about it, only the opening and expanding of his whole nature in mind, heart, and soul, and a continual deepening and development under the impression of the great spiritual realities of life here and hereafter. He speaks of the Rev. Charles Dickson's sermons as 'only formal and far-away discourses, though from an admirable man.' Evidently they did not greatly appeal to him, and at times, perhaps, that active mind and quick eye were counting the cobwebs in Wamphray church. He welcomed the coming of the Rev. George Wight to be assistant in 1853—he was ordained and became minister of the parish in March 1854—and continued to regard that respected and still surviving minister as a life-long friend. It was during Mr. Wight's assistantship, at the age of eighteen, that A. H. Charteris

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ratified his religious choice and received his first communion.

His student friend, Dr. J. Oswald Dykes, the distinguished preacher of Regent Square, London, and first Principal of Westminster (Presbyterian) College, Cambridge, has noted: 'Dr. Charteris, although at no time a narrow ecclesiastic, and whose personal friendships were unaffected by a difference in Church connection, remained through life a strong National Churchman. In some measure I have thought this might be traced to the surroundings of his earlier years. Whatever argument maturer reflection brought to sustain his attachment to the Church of Scotland, he probably drew it, to begin with, from sentiments in part hereditary, in part inspired by the spot where he spent his youth. When I chanced, a good many years ago, to pay a hurried visit to Wamphray (a visit which was for me a sort of pious pilgrimage), I took it, in its peaceful, unchanged isolation, for the ideal of an upland Scottish village of the olden time. Withdrawn from traffic, and grouped about its parish kirk, manse, and school-house—the symbol at once and the centre of its higher life—it spoke of higher influences which once bred in the peasantry of Lowland Scotland the best type of their old-fashioned piety and intelligence. I thought I understood better, on seeing the place of his upbringing, a certain cheerful, unspoilt simplicity which to the last made the character as well as demeanour of my friend specially attractive. But I also thought I could understand how a strong charm had grown up, associated in his mind with the ancient National Kirk of his native land—a charm inseparable from the traditions of its soil, and drawn from days before the advent of ecclesiastical dissent or division, while as yet the Kirk stood alone to mould the thinking and the manners of her rural parishioners.'

## CHAPTER II

### LIFE AT COLLEGE

Edinburgh University—Professors—Fellow-students—Diary—Divinity Hall—Life in Edinburgh—Ministers and Preaching—Receives Licence.

IN November 1849, before he had reached his fourteenth birthday, the Wamphray boy, who had seen the Caledonian Railway line laid in his school-days, and had welcomed the first train running on it, passed by it to new experiences in the Scottish capital; and the home-loving lad had perforce to seek lodgings, and a comrade to share them, at such a rate as his slender finances could afford. The expenditure of every shilling required consideration, and rigid economy was the order of the day. Those were not the times of Carnegie students, and the University fees alone made a big hole in the available resources.

A few jottings from letters form a revelation of the *res angusta domi*:—

'£8 will do me just now for class tickets and matriculation, and I have plenty of change for some time. The library I do not need as yet until salary time, so you need not send any more, but just write me.'

Such items as the price of cheese, tea, and sugar frequently occur, and reports are made of the perverse wearing-out of shoes and trousers. Both wants were supplied from Wamphray:—

'The shoes are beautiful and a very good fit; if they have any fault it is that they are not strong enough for a tatterdemalion like me.'

An invitation to a wedding-party elicits the comment:—

'The supper was a magnificent spread, but I had to turn out in a pair of white kids. The ladies were all, or nearly all, in



what is termed full dress, but which always seems to me dreadfully like half ditto. A capital evening we made of it, and I got on swimmingly in the quadrille.'

A great institution was the weekly or fortnightly box from home, which saved town prices for washing, and produced supplies (even potatoes) far superior in flavour to anything that money could buy in town. Its coming is regularly and gratefully acknowledged, as :—

'My box came to-day. Everything in tip-top order. Never saw less breakage, even the oatcakes all unfractured. Eggs whole except one, which I broke myself in unpacking; but I have it in a cup for a fry.'

Again:—

'My last bit of cake will be swallowed before this letter is posted. I am very sparing of them: "better long something than soon naething."'

His generous heart throbs with anxiety many a time for the dear ones at home. The little invalid sister is often mentioned. Tutoring was a source of earned income through his Arts and Divinity course, and it is to be feared that, as so often happens, the double burden of College work and of tutoring considerably impaired his constitution.

'Is not all this providential? about eight hours' tutoring if I wished it, whilst scores of poor fellows have nothing. Of course four or five hours will be my utmost. Though I am more favourably situated than most students, there is a feeling of outsidiness in tutoring which I cannot get over. I dinna like it.'

Yet with lodgings to pay, and valuing the glorious privilege of being independent, he accepts the situation.

He chiefly corresponds with his mother, who has more time for letter-writing, but his father is never forgotten. Glances are given of what would be likely to interest him:—

'Professor Pillans gave a very good opening lecture on the duties, qualifications, and emoluments of parish teachers. He advised us all to sign petitions, which will soon be forthcoming, in favour of abolishing the Fiars Law and raising the salary.'

'Professor Blackie did thunder it off. He proved that for students of Divinity, Law, and Medicine(?) the essential requisite was a knowledge of Greek. He cut all Presbyterianism in so far as Greek knowledge was concerned, but admitted that while we found no Scottish Thirlwall or Grote, we did not find an English Chalmers. He said that was because they were ardent and devoted; and according to the good old angelology "The seraphim who love stand in a nearer ring to the throne of God than the cherubim that know." He then addressed teachers, telling them on their bended knees to ask of God the gift of being men as well as scholars, and to remember that the learned scholar was not the pedant. It was an able, striking lecture; anything but an infidelic performance.'

The same day (2nd November 1852) he gives impressions of a political oration by the M.P. for Edinburgh.

'Macaulay appeared very weak, but got stronger as he went on however, until he stopped from weakness. He adverted feelingly to the death of "the glory of the Commons" and "the glory of the Lords," Peel and Wellington, since last he was in Edinburgh. He then spoke of the changes in Europe during the last five years. Why was Britain safe? Because here we have regulated freedom. Here we desiderate none of the Socialisms, Communisms, or any of the other isms, the very English for which is robbery. He cut up the contradictions of "My Lord *Darby's*" party, and finished by repudiating universal suffrage even with secret voting; proving his point from France. In France four years ago we looked in vain for government: now we look in vain for freedom. He was against much extension in the franchise, but for its regulation; by the by he mentioned also Walpole's proposition of giving militia men a vote. He said that in that case the qualification for eighty thousand voters, who got off in five years but still retained a vote, would be youth, poverty, ignorance, a roving disposition, and five feet two. It was an eloquent or rather elegant speech.'

In Professor Aytoun's class an essay plainly cost him pains, and he writes:—

'It is an imaginary speech of the Earl of Angus, advising James IV. not to invade England. I am very decidedly displeased with the performance. It is a very difficult subject. I must make him gruff as he really was—yet, his fire subdued by age and the presence of his king. Then I have historical mementoes of his speech which are beautifully contradictory. Buchanan gives a long account of it, but it is in my opinion too whining for "Old Bell-the-Cat." Aytoun, too, makes it worse, for

although the event took place on Flodden Field, we are to fix it at Linlithgow, before the army set out. But I can't help it. I will, if time permits, write the poetry too, if well, since I am discovered to have "genius" in that line!

'Sermon tasting' was naturally indulged in by students looking forward to the ministry. In his first year Charteris reports:—

'I last night had the pleasure of hearing the celebrated Candlish. I never saw any man look as abrupt and ill at his ease in a pulpit. But he gave us a splendid sermon about the simplicity which is in Christ contrasted with the subtlety of Satan. A very good subject, and a very good sermon, but scarcely so good as I expected from the man.'

Little did he dream of future relations between them when he penned this appreciation:—

'I heard the great Caird on Wednesday. It was first rate. He really deserves his reputation, great as it is.'

Without entering into details, it may suffice to say that our student, moved by the instinct after excellence, and perhaps to justify his father's expectations, overworked himself in these College days, suffered from repeated breakdowns, and once had to sacrifice a session.

When at home for the vacation he helped his father's pupils in all subjects taught. A successful business man in England thus testifies:—

'He imbued us with a taste for literature, was most patient and painstaking, and never spoke harshly or looked cross. The only sign of displeasure at our stupidity was the solemn droop of his eyelids over his kindly eyes.'

On 19th October 1854 he begins a diary with the motto, 'If we cease to register or communicate our thoughts we shall soon cease to think.' It contains some passages of extraordinary illumination regarding his character, while others are introspective, and full of morbid self-analysis. It is a striking contrast between the natural humanity and buoyancy of youth and that spiritual stringency which in those days was often impressed upon the young by their seniors, as indicative of a right religious frame of



mind. For the most part it is too intimate for reproduction.

Sometimes it takes a mundane form:—

'WAMPHREY, *October 31st.*—Another long gap. The idle man has least time. It is human nature. To-morrow, I believe, we start for Edinburgh. Yesterday made my *début* in field sports at a coursing match. At first I felt as if the saddle were not my sure habitation, but I'm not easily unhorsed, and soon galloped like a buck! We had some good sport. At night I was at Shaw, where we had a very pleasant party. I feel my ear for music improving very much. If I had a little instruction I think I could learn to dance. But am clumsy and awkward in my carriage. . . . Am I fit to be a minister? Mr. John G says: Every man should lead a minister's life, and the man who is not fit for a minister is not fit for anything good. True enough, but this merely proves that no man should be other than a Christian: it by no means proves that non-Christians should be ministers.

'The desire to be a successful talker and story-teller has frequently led me astray; sometimes in company I feel it a punishment to open my mouth, and at other times I could go on long enough. I suppose most men are made up of contradictions and variable in their humour. I think it a great mistake to consider any man's character as simple, or to imagine every one riding at all times on his hobby. Some people perhaps think me inconsistent because I at times am serious and quiet-looking, while I frequently am almost uproarious in my exuberant spirits. But whatever faults I have, I cannot admit this to be one; it is merely giving scope to that element of my disposition which for the time predominates. The perpetually alike are occasionally dissembling.

'Was yesterday to my surprise made secretary of the University Missionary Association. I have been shamefully negligent of my duty in previous years, and this seems an opportunity of somewhat redeeming my errors. Have felt uneasy and not piously inclined to-day. Although feeling my dependence on God, have been unable to compose my mind sufficiently. Lord, I am weak; help me!'

The tutor had at least one experience of boys under his charge who were 'trying it on,' and records:—

'Battles with but little truce. I am now completely master of the boys as far as open resistance goes, but the victory is achieved at the expense of being disliked. Their secret ill-will has kept me unhappy; but my mind is made up to firm uncom-

promising decision in my teaching. Kindness had failed, and gentleness was repaid by insult; good nature construed into timidity; at last it ended in open rebellion. I may lose my place, but I must do my duty, and leave the rest to a higher hand.'

Throughout the diary there is an attempt to reach the 'balance rarely right adjusted' between the duties of religion, subjective and objective; and one finds the acknowledgment that while the performance of good works becomes superficial and void of power unless it be continually inspired from the heart enlarged by the love of Christ, yet is there an equally fatal facility for the soul to shrivel up (unless it be careful to maintain good works), by becoming lost in self-admiration or palsied by valetudinarian fears. From the dangers here hinted at our student was delivered by his active, sympathetic nature.

At the end of his fourth session Charteris, who would not for a hundred pounds have gone through such another winter, and whose nerves suffered from examination fright no less than from ill-health, took the B.A. degree, and was all ready with the two extra subjects for the M.A. degree, but sudden illness made him leave the examination and go home. He took the full degree in 1854.

Among his fellow-students in Arts who came to eminence (besides those named by him) may be mentioned Sir Charles U. Aitchison, Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab; Sir Charles Logan, Depute-Keeper of the Signet; Marcus Dods, D.D., who died Principal of the New College, Edinburgh; Frederick Crombie, D.D., Professor of Biblical Criticism in St. Andrews; The Very Rev. T. B. W. Niven, D.D.; Dr. George Smith, editor of the *Times of India*, latterly Secretary of the Free Church of Scotland Foreign Mission; Rev. Alexander Williamson, D.D., of West St. Giles Parish, Edinburgh; and Rev. John Laidlaw, D.D., Professor of Divinity, New College, Edinburgh.

Epitomising the influences of his teachers, in later days Dr. Charteris put on record:—

Professor Pillans (Humanity) widened my mind.

Sir William Hamilton (Logic) opened my eyes.



Professor Wilson ('Christopher North') fired my soul.

Professor W. E. Aytoun showed me literature.

Professor James Robertson (Church History) gave me an ideal of a faithful Churchman.

Professor Robert Lee (Biblical Criticism) was a model of caustic clearness.

Principal John Lee (Divinity) was an Encyclopædia with a warm heart.

Diligent application gave our student a high and worthy place in almost every class-list. Professor Pillans, for example, awarded him this certificate:—

'He stands in the foremost rank of all the pupils I have ever had for every quality to be desired of a student: uniform propriety of conduct, unremitting attention in the class-room, industry at home, and ability far above common. His name appeared twice in the prize list of his first session, and four times in that of last year.'

He also presented him with Cicero in twenty volumes as a parting prize, and inscribed the first: '*Ob merita magna et varia.*' The dear old Professor considerably embarrassed him when, on grounds of health, he pressed acceptance of a tutorship in a south of England rectory where there were nine children, and advised his *protégé*: 'You should not preach till you are thirty, or you will be condemned to fatal mediocrity; whereas you may——' But the prophet failed to forecast that he would succeed Caird at three years under thirty.

There is no trace that our student belonged to any of the College societies except one. Dr. J. Oswald Dykes remembers that they both joined a society which formed then a rendezvous for students from the south-western counties.

'The Dumfriesshire and Galloway Society met in those days in a hired room exactly opposite the gates of the University, and was, unless my recollections be biassed, carried on with a good deal of liveliness. It was just at the time when a group of minor poets, dubbed the "Spasmodic School," was making a little stir in literary circles; and I recollect with what zest its merits, with other literary matters of the day, were canvassed by the callow critics of the little club.'



The only subject known to have been there discussed by him was this: 'Ought there to be a new version of the Bible?'

The only society connected with the Divinity Hall which then excited much interest was the University Missionary Association. It met on Saturday mornings during the winter session, having for its office-bearers and committee mostly the leading students of theology. After the "Ten Years' Conflict" it had been considerably weakened, but by this time it had regained much of its old influence; and was contributing towards the maintenance of a missionary abroad, and performing direct missionary work at home. It greatly helped to resuscitate the Church in Edinburgh, where the congregations were almost all depleted after the secession. One among them, the historic old Chapel of Buccleuch, had fallen into dilapidation. Now it was resolved systematically to visit the district which afterwards became the parish of Buccleuch. The kirk-session of St. Cuthbert's delegated their powers of appointment to the Missionary Association, in view of their having undertaken to provide the larger part of the minister's stipend. With great judgment the Association appointed a most efficient minister, the Rev. Alexander McLaren, to whom they gave a loyal support. Large congregations soon began to resort to the old church. It was the first indication that the tide of popular favour had turned, and heralded the restoration of the Church of Scotland's old prestige in Edinburgh. Among the faithful band who patiently promoted this movement Charteris took a prominent part; and it was largely on this account that, despite his youth, he was elected to the Presidency of the Association the year before he finished his theological course. This was regarded as the most distinguished position in connection with the practical work of the Divinity Hall.

As a student he gave the general impression to others of earnest and conscientious perseverance, that he was forecasting the future with unswerving sagacity, and preparing himself by every means open to him for the

clerical career. It was already a special note in his character that 'applied Christianity' is the only kind that really counts. And drawing his analogy from the kindred science of medicine, translated into an art, he cherished bright dreams of 'Clinical Divinity'—dreams which in after-life became the achievements of his waking hours. The earliest beginnings of leadership are certainly found in these old Buccleuch days, and in efforts to compel the indifferent to come in. It is curious that Dr. Charteris himself has left no allusion to this formative side of the Divinity Hall period.

His own reminiscences may now be given in consecutive order:—

'At Edinburgh University I was the youngest student of my year; and the next youngest was Nicolls, who became a physician in England, and had a chequered history, containing a big defeat and a splendid subsequent victory over self and circumstances. The third youngest was Robert Herbert Story, who was entered as fifteen, though I find from obituary notices that he was born in January 1835, so that he was not quite a year older than myself. His father was an old friend of Professor Pillans, I believe, and he sat in state on the platform on the venerable professor's left hand as class censor. A few months ago I had two letters from Story. His last illness was upon him, and he wrote kindly, suggesting, among other things, that it would be delightful to begin life again "under dear old Pillans," and saying some things I was glad to hear from him about my work since those days. On the right sat James Brodie, a very able blind student, who had a little table in front of him whereon he could rest his big books with their embossed print.

'There is much I could say of University life in those days, and much that comes back to me that I would fain tell. Most of the lessons I learned, apart from student technicalities, are in my lecture on *Types of College Life*, published at the request of Sir William Muir and the students in 1893.

'College life really meant for us beginning under



Pillans. There was not one of us who was not somehow revealed to all the rest in the "Humanity" class-room where Pillans taught. At this moment I could place almost all my class-fellows in the seats they had in that room. All I knew of them in later days was foreshadowed in the boys and lads then beside me. Though Byron, under a mistake as to an article in the *Edinburgh Review*, which he supposed Pillans had written, embalmed him as "paltry Pillans," there was nothing paltry about our professor. He was an accomplished scholar, and especially a splendid translator. I have never heard or read such renderings as his were of Cicero's sonorous periods, and Tacitus' epigrams, and Horace's matchless felicities of phrase. He made Latin literature sparkle with life, and become a part of our inmost "humanity." If sometimes we would smile inwardly at his discursive description of outside things (the "parallelogram of forces" seemed to him, as it is, a wonderful fact in the science of the universe, whereas we thought it in those days a bit of elementary mechanics), yet ere we were men we realised that every day he gave great help to the growing mind. He was one of the three professors who made my life; and I shall never forget as long as I live the dear old scholar who taught me how to draw strength and guidance and abiding pleasure from the literature of Rome.

'The next professor to whom I owed much was Sir William Hamilton. I am told—I have heard some of his favourite pupils say it—that his system is exploded, that he attempted to join Kant and Thomas Reid in a blend which was impossible, that he tried to measure the infinite by bringing it into consciousness. It may be so, though sometimes I wish he were here to show his critics that they misunderstood him. At all events he opened our minds: and though familiarity with great names turns a young head so that we were ready to think that we could put Plato and Aristotle, and the schoolmen, and David Hume and Cousin right, it was not Hamilton's fault. He was a reverent, if not a humble



man: and he taught us reverence in our view of the universe of God, and in view of our complex human nature. It is a great thing for a young man to bow before his teacher with unfeigned reverence and admiration. We did not believe that any one in ancient or modern times was so great a philosopher as the man of colossal learning and of imperial powers of mind, at whose feet we were privileged to sit from day to day. A great Scotsman was Sir William Hamilton, full of the spirit of his covenanting ancestry, a Christian believer, and as a man courteous to the humblest, fearless of the most imposing. He had lost power in his side some years before I saw him, and it was in itself a lesson of patient endurance to see him slowly dragging himself up the long spiral stair to his class-room, lines of pain drawn deep across the grand forehead, though no trouble had dimmed the eagle eye. Ignorant beforehand of his way of conducting his class, I had not secured the note-book of some previous student, and therefore could not rise and give an account, practically a report, of the bygone lectures, which was his method of examination and exhibition. I found too late that the note-books of John Cairns, and Henry Calderwood, and John Veitch, and others were the briefs from which the other men spoke when called up. So I never dared to rise when he took from the urn beside him the initial letter of my name, and asked if any of the "C's" would rise.

'Shoolbred and I met alternately in each other's lodgings on the days of lecture, which were thrice a week, and wrote out the lectures together, fighting over all the ground as we went. I think I could pass a reasonable examination on those lectures even now. They entered into the very heart of my mind.

'I should like, on mentioning his name, to say a word of my dearest college friend Williamson Shoolbred, to whom I owed more than I then knew or can now tell. He was twenty-two when he entered the University, having been previously in business. He was unquestionably the first man of our year, and it was an unspeakable privilege for

a boy of fourteen to be made the friend of a man, and such a man. We often debated, but never once did we quarrel or even wrangle. I remember Richard Stothert—a fine fellow who afterwards became a Free Church missionary—saying that it was wonderful how Shoolbred and I had so much to say to each other every day. Shoolbred was a good classic, a very able mathematician, circumspect in metaphysics, and long-sighted in science. I remember Professor W. E. Aytoun said on his class ticket accompanying the medal in Belles Lettres: "It gives me pleasure to thus add my testimony to those which Mr. Shoolbred has won from my other colleagues in this University." If any of us had written that in a class exercise for Aytoun, a big pencil stroke would have transfixed it! But the unusual form of testimony was well deserved. Ah me, I am an old man, and my friend has long been dust. It was my privilege, as Dean of the Faculty of Divinity, to present him to Chancellor Inglis for the degree of D.D., and to say that one of his fellow-students might speak for all the rest, and say this man, who had left his native land to carry the gospel to Rajpootana, was the first man of our year. He had not only drawn the Hindoos and Mohammedans to sit at his feet, but had, by magnificent letters printed in the home magazines, done more than any other man to rouse and guide the United Presbyterian Church to exertions and achievements in foreign missions which distinguished it above all other Scottish Churches. And when he came back to us bronzed and worn, and the degree was conferred on him amid great applause, the hour of my old friend's graduation was perhaps the gladdest hour I ever spent in the University. Shoolbred began college as a Seceder, a Voluntary, almost a Chartist: and it was good for me, who had been a hereditary Conservative, to learn the other side from one who was full of humour as of conviction. Now and again from India he wrote to tell me how he had come to rejoice in every proof of vitality in the Established Church, as, for example, the endowment scheme, and how much less he had come to think of the principles that



divided Scottish Presbyterians. So also it was with my friend of later days, Henry Calderwood.

'I never was a student under Professor Wilson. In my boyish dreams I had wondered if I might one day get a grasp of the hand of Christopher North whose wonderful *Noctes* seemed to me the very triumph of literature and fun. But he was ill; was never once in his class-room that session; and though I got the silver medal in the class, the names of Principal Lee and Professor W. E. Aytoun, who conducted the class, seemed poor substitutes for the leonine hero of my dreams. Yet in after days both were kind to me; and I do not forget their kindness.

'Kelland I never really liked. He was sharp, impatient, and satirical. I never forgot his thinking that Shoolbred and I copied each other. It must have been that I copied Shoolbred, as he was a far better mathematician than I was! Yet the only time we ever were equal was in the examination for M.A., when we took care to sit as far apart as the examination-room would allow; and our being bracketed together was comical and satisfactory.

'What shall I say of Aytoun? Ignorant of his industry (which his Memoirs reveal), we thought him an easy, careless, *bon vivant*—who was ready to yawn when he began his lectures—yet with a great gift of expression, so that his dissertations day by day were a literary treat, as good as Thackeray's *The Four Georges*. We were proud when he took half-a-dozen of his class lectures to London and delivered them to a brilliant audience amid great enthusiasm. *The Times*, which had given a full synopsis of them day by day, began a leading article with something like this. (I write from memory.) "Our eloquent and impassioned visitor from the far North has come and gone. He may take his harp and summon his clansmen, and tell of victories over Southern nobles and blue-eyed maidens greater than those that were won by The Bruce."

'He welcomed my first little Essays for his class, saying he remembered my papers in Moral Philosophy; he once



read a poetical translation of mine to the class as "very good indeed, nay, excellent; I do not think this could be beaten," and the fellows used to tell me I was sure of the medal. But I was not. I was only third, and the Professor said: "Mr. Charteris has some roughnesses in which he still persists, though I told him of them at the beginning of the session." I have the papers now, and sure enough there are the said roughnesses! I was at the time rather stung by his severe manner, and nearly went to tell him that my composition was bothered by having a dozen leeches on my head, while I was writing a "letter by Portia to Brutus," and a "Speech of the Earl of Angus to King James' Council of War before Flodden." I rather think his severe manner in describing my work came from his disappointment, which had its root in kindness. I never met Aytoun again, except at the Burns Centenary Dinner in Ayr in 1859, when he was croupier, and I sat on his right hand and returned thanks for "the Clergy." He was unspeakably generous; and amused and alarmed me by telling the big party that I was a poet whom he had trained. I write many a bad sentence, but I never know of one being bad without trying to correct it, as I would have liked to do to please that bright, gifted, earnest man who disliked roughnesses.

'Of the other teachers in the Faculty of Arts I need not speak in detail. George Dunbar, who had written a big Dictionary, taught us Greek; Blackie came in at the end of my course and I enrolled on his class, but seldom attended. In later days I came to know well that wisest and most laborious of men, and was an undistinguished but regular member of the Hellenic Society. He once asked me why, when he said a wise thing, the public cried out, "It is only Blackie"; whereas if some commonplace man had said it, the public would have cried out, "How true and profitable!" I don't know whether Blackie, the Greek scholar, will be remembered long, but Blackie the brave, clear-headed servant of Jesus Christ, and follower of the Apostle Paul, will never be forgotten by those who knew him. I am proud to have his inter-

leaved and annotated Greek Testament which Mrs. Blackie gave me after his death. He was intensely human, and some critics imagine that his humanity was cultivated at the expense of his Greek, but this is surely a great mistake. The best of Greek poetry and philosophy had been taken into his heart and made a permanent part of his character. He could not abide a pedant or a prig; he sometimes let himself go against some pretentious chopper of words, but he generously appreciated every scholar. I do not think he had patience enough to write a dictionary; but he could have written a notable commentary on Plato or St. John's Gospel. Those of another generation who would learn what was his power over young men will be rewarded if they will read his book on Self-Culture. Those who wish to see his easy command of English ought to read his Book of Dialogues written for his class.

'One day, after a year of rest in the country to recover health from the stupid overwork of 1852-3, I entered the Divinity Hall. I had been examined for entrance by the Presbytery of Lochmaben, and an excellent examination it was. Perhaps not on that occasion, but for several successive years, I had the privilege of reading Hebrew at the examination to a gifted Hebrew scholar, an elder in the presbytery, Mr. Bell Macdonald of Rammerscales, a very eminent linguist, whose translations of Scottish lyrics into various tongues were feats that caused much wonder. I remember that the most notable was a translation of "A man's a man for a' that" into Hebrew and other tongues. His gifts were, of course, not tested by my poor Hebrew; but I remember that he was very kind and gentle. He was one of several men I have known whose literary memorials are scarcely even indications of what they might have written for the benefit of their fellow-men. Is it modesty, or indolence, or lack of method that keeps them from making books?

'Mindful of customs in the Arts, I had three note-books under my arm for my three classes. John M'Murtrie asked



me what they were; and his playful smile, that still comes so easily to his kind face, lit him up as he said: "You won't need note-books; you will find it bad for the mind to attend the Divinity Hall." That was not quite true, though note-books were not of much use except in James Robertson's class-room and Robert Lee's. Of the dear old Principal I have elsewhere written more fully than I can write here.<sup>1</sup> No one could attend his class without feeling the fascination of his literary style, his extraordinary command of the words of Scripture, and the astounding minuteness and accuracy of his knowledge of books. If we asked for some information on any subject he was always ready and right. "You will find good writing on that in vol. iii. of ———'s Works, page 370," or "See Turretin, Book iv. Chapter 7," and so on. I revere his memory. On one occasion, however, he heard some talking in his class-room, and looking severely down on Robert Wallace and myself, who were sitting together, he seemed to us to be rebuking us as the culprits. We were quite innocent, so I wrote on my note-book, shoving it in front of Wallace, "What shall we do?" The answer was prompt: "*Obsta principiis*, pitch into the Principal." We went to his private room at once, where the dear old man nearly took us in his arms, and told us that his invariable custom was to look at the part of the class-room most distant from the offenders when he uttered any rebuke! Some of his criticisms on students' discourses come to my mind.<sup>2</sup> Every reader of a discourse opened the meeting of the class with a short prayer, and the Principal once said: "I have hitherto omitted

<sup>1</sup> See *Life of Robertson*, chap. xi. pp. 288-9.

<sup>2</sup> "Wallace's sermon was on an ordinary comprehensive text. I think it was "God so loved the world." In course of treating his subject he came to describe the Deluge, and said of the inhabitants of the world at that time, "they saw not the Angel of destruction who, with one hand on the sluices of the great deep, and the other on the open windows of heaven, waited but the nod of Omnipotence to waken on the merry-making earth the hurl of a hundred floods." "Stop, Sir," cried the Principal from his high desk, and his cry was an agonised shriek. "Stop, Sir." And Wallace was not allowed to finish his sermon that day. He swept Newton-on-Ayr before him as with one of the hundred floods when he gave it in full some months afterwards."



to say that I expect a student not to read a written prayer here, and that, if he do read it, he will not slavishly copy it from the Church of England Liturgy." The reader of that day became famous afterwards, elsewhere and otherwise. On another occasion the reader had spoken very familiarly and slightly of famous divines, and the gentle old Principal said, "After all, I agree with Calvin and the other commentators who went before you."

'The class-room of Biblical Criticism was the most lively of them all. Dr. Robert Lee was a man of culture who knew the world. He was a man of power in social intercourse. His lectures were clear, instructive, tolerant, and decided. It was curious to see the volume in which they were handsomely bound brought in and laid on the desk by his stately servitor, and then read straight on as they had been for many years before. But they always seemed to express his mind thoroughly; no doubt they did. He was kind to good students of whatever shade of opinion. Even the most unwilling to learn were compelled to attend and pick up something. His knowledge of the New Testament in Greek and English was quite remarkable and impressed us greatly. Though he failed in no duty of his class-room, we were aware that his keenest interest was in his attempts to make the forms of Presbyterian worship more decorous and more attractive than they had come to be in the quiet two hundred years bygone. For the improvement of worship he fought strenuously and with rare ability, till he won the victory which was not quite acknowledged in his lifetime. The storm and stress of the conflict wore him out; he was struck by paralysis; and it was latterly pathetic to see him, a broken man, striving to restrain his still eager mind in the months that passed ere he sank to rest. He made me the tutor of his able and amiable son, who died in the military service of Government after a very short time in India. Of all that happy household in 26 George Square, that I used to know so well, not one remains. Men often speak of Dr. Robert Lee as though he were only a pre-eminent debater, adroit in

fence, unerring in aim, cynical and sarcastic; but they would be more just if they also knew how he longed for peaceful times, in which the tabernacles of the righteous would be full of joy and melody. He has left his mark on the Church of Scotland, and all British Presbyterianism.

'Another aspect of the Churchman was seen in the classroom of Church History. Perhaps I ought not to speak here of James Robertson, but if I am to tell of what influenced my life, I must name him with reverence and love. Unquestionably he was the ablest champion of the Church in "The Ten Years' Conflict." I like to quote Hugh Miller's generous description of him as the "second name and the first man of his party"—he became the leader of the Church after so many of her eminent sons had gone out to form the Free Church. He did not change any of his opinions. A learned and able friend of my own<sup>1</sup> recently attempted to make out that he had been always in heart a Free Churchman. He was no such thing. He had been in all the struggles and conflicts as eager for missions and as self-sacrificing in pastoral duty as any other admirer of Duff and Chalmers could be; and when he was settled in his academic chair he began to infuse new life into the disheartened and shattered Established Church.

'My heart soon went out to the strong thinker and good man who was our professor, and my life has been moulded by the convictions that grew under his influence. Robert Lee and James Robertson made the Church of Scotland; and we left the Hall influenced by both. They were true to the old ideal of the Divinity Hall as the training school of the future ministers. Neither of them led us into details of work; but our after-lives became what they had taught us to become. They both gave impulse and impetus, which is what young men need. Robertson was regarded by us all as much the stronger man; and so he was.

'Of the Divinity Hall as a whole, I do not agree that it was "bad for the mind." On the contrary, it gave us time for thinking. We looked back and forward. There was little drill; but we naturally worked according to our

<sup>1</sup> Dr. A. Taylor Innes. Answered in *Life and Work*, January 1904.



liking. My liking was for Church history, and I read many books that I do not forget. Milman and Neander were the best books in Church history; some of the old English divines were also delightful. Particularly Barrow's sermons and Horsley's works and John Smith's discourses come to mind. In criticism De Wette made a deep impression; not to the extent of permanent conviction, for he was changeable as well as candid. F. W. Newman's *Phases of Faith* and J. A. Froude's *Nemesis of Faith* were of course much discussed in our daily conversation round the fire in the library; and I do not think that either of them carried us away. I have sometimes wondered what made us all pretty orthodox; and I have come to think that it was especially James Robertson's visible consecration of his life.

'Frederick Crombie (afterwards Professor in St. Andrews) was the oldest of us, and incomparably the best scholar and best-read man. One day he said, when we were sitting in judgment, as was our wont, on our teachers: "When Robertson examines me I know that I am in the grasp of a giant." Robert Wallace, the strongest and most original of us, speaking of class attendance, said: "The other classes are mere imprisonment, but Robertson's is imprisonment with hard labour." Certainly Robert Lee kept us on the alert.

'Looking back, I now see that one of the best things of the "Hall" was that our minds were allowed to grow. There were frequent oral examinations in Robert Lee's class; an oral examination once a week or so in Robertson's; only once an examination of any kind in the Principal's class during my three years of regular attendance. There was no written examination in any class save Hebrew. It was curious that in that solitary examination of which I speak the dear old Principal, who could not endure our speculating, asked me whether I thought man would have been promoted in the scale of being, if he had not fallen. I was astounded, but managed to reply that I knew no Scripture statement to the contrary. And the old man said nothing more about it, but asked some other questions. Our minds were not allowed to rust, however. The Principal made us



read all our six discourses to him, as prescribed by the Church, and it was amazing how keen he was as a critical listener. A slip in our Latinity, an error in any citation, brought him down upon us at once. There were three or four essays each session in Robertson's; all on subjects where thought was required: and the topics themselves, together with the Professor's benign but searching remarks, often led to a Socratic dialogue, which did much to further our progress and make us consider our ways.

'As I look back, and the ghosts of my class-fellows gather around the fire, I see how long I have lived, for almost all have long been in the grave. By far the most capable of them all was James Wilson, afterwards my successor in St. Quivox, an unrivalled mathematician, a good student in every department, but inclined to be indolent. He was now my most intimate friend. He was a queer, quaint, unconventional man of a tender heart. We sat together in all the classes. I remember, when we were reading Genesis in the Hebrew class, he said of Jacob's devices for getting the better of Laban, "I really cannot stand this; Jacob is becoming quite intolerable." It was as if he had never heard of Jacob's peeled sticks before. He spoke in a loud whisper, which probably even our too gentle Professor (Liston) heard. When we entered the class at the beginning of the session, Wilson said to me, "You need not try for the first prize for scholarship; I am going to take it. You may have the essay prize if you like"; and of course he was first in both examinations.

'Then there was William Paul, son of the honoured minister of St. Cuthbert's, Edinburgh. His career ended after a few years in the parish of Whitekirk. He was a very able, hard-working, and trustworthy man, never really young except in his love of his friends, one who bade fair to add to the honour of his progenitors, the Pauls and the Balfours. All manner of stories used to be told of his finding difficulty in conversation when he called on sick parishioners, because he lacked small talk. When he was dying of sore disease, which he bore with unflinching

patience, he sadly said, "If I get better, I shall be able to talk to sick people."

'Then there was Robert Herbert Story, who died a few weeks ago, Principal of Glasgow University. In youth, as in age, his was a fresh, keen mind, full of humour, and capable of scorn. He was loyal in his affections, and resolute in avowing his convictions. We had begun together in Pillans' in 1849, and were again in the Hall. We were generally on opposite sides, being victims of the Scottish tendency to look chiefly on the things wherein we differed. In those days, as through life, we were not really far apart; and many times we found ourselves together, especially of late years. But he followed Robert Lee as I followed James Robertson.

'Then there was John M'Murtrie, who came into the Hall a distinguished student with special eminence in culture, as Pillans' favourite and Aytoun's medallist; the same gentle, poetical, quaintly humorous, high-aiming spiritual man he is to this day. It is easy to see the touch of the man who could happily translate Horace, and sing of the web of Penelope, in his graceful records from month to month of the work of Missions, and his penetrating but never painful appeals to his fellow-Christians to be up and doing in the harvest field of the Kingdom. He is the only survivor of the circle of my intimate college friends.

'They were happy days those Hall days. Much reading and endless talking, in my own case abundant private teaching of able pupils, skating on Duddingston Loch, Saturday walks with the "peripatetic philosophers," lectures and readings by Thackeray and Dickens, splendid acting in the theatre by Macready and Murray, and Charles Kean, Phelps, and Helen Faucit, and Vandenhoff and Toole and Matthews; wonderful singing also by Clara Novello and Sims Reeves; grand political speeches of Macaulay and Adam Black; great sermons by Guthrie and Caird, and Lindsay Alexander, Candlish, and Maxwell Nicholson; and then the initiation into Sunday school and Home Mission work in St. Stephen's and the Tron—all come up before me, and I am for a few minutes young again.



‘One strong attraction of Edinburgh to a country boy was the preaching which guided us into responsible life. My first communion had been in Wamphray in 1853 under the parish minister and the Rev. George Wight. In the early years of my college life I sat in Lady Yester’s Church, where seats were reserved for students. Dr. Caird had newly left when I entered College in 1849. His successor was the Rev. W. H. Gray, and every Sunday evening I sent to my mother some such notes as I could write out of his eloquent and affectionate sermons. After having heard only formal and far away discourses, though from an admirable man, it was a big lesson to hear a minister preach who spoke as one that had something to say upon which he expected us to act. Even now I could repeat portions of his sermons that impressed me. To be near my pupils I joined the congregation of Dr. William Muir in St. Stephen’s in 1854. Dr. Muir had been the leader of the Intermediate party in the days when the Church was rent by the Non-Intrusion Controversy. No one had any doubt of his spiritual life and evangelical power. He was very kind to me, lending me books and telling me good stories, and making me welcome at his breakfast table. I taught in his Sunday school, and had for colleagues in it many who became my friends for life. I do not know that there is any one now in the ministry just like Dr. William Muir. He was splendidly handsome and highly cultured, an exceedingly clear expositor, full of sympathy with a young minister, a popular preacher, and an unrivalled teacher of young people, who clustered round him as a clan is attached to its chief. His was the fate of all who take middle ground in days of conflict. He was distrusted by most men on both sides, yet he was the personal friend of men in both parties. He told me that he still had in his desk a pamphlet which Dr. Chalmers wrote to “crush” Dr. Candlish, and which he prevailed on Chalmers to withhold. It was said that Lord Aberdeen and the rest of the Peel ministry depended on him, when the question was how far they should go in yielding to the party that afterwards became the Free



Church. Dr. Chalmers on one side, and Lord Aberdeen on the other, felt the power of his beautiful character.

‘When my teaching brought me back to the old town, I joined the Tron Church, then under the ministry of Dr. John Hunter and Dr. Maxwell Nicholson. Dr. Hunter was another example of the men whom in my old age I think of as having no successors like unto themselves. Of an old family, rather proud of his ancestors, well read, endowed with real humour and a clear mind, fastidious in manner as in phrase, sensitive yet resolute, he was, in the pulpit and out of it, a Scottish gentleman who adorned the doctrine he taught. He also had stood somewhat between the two parties in the Church, and he used to tell with fun and pathos how an old minister friend of his youth, who had joined him in a walk every Saturday for many years, failed him after the 18th of May 1843 when the Free Church went out; and when he called on his friend to ask if he was not to keep the tryst and walk as usual, he found opprobrious epithets hurled at his head. They never walked together again; and no wonder.

‘His colleague, Dr. Maxwell Nicholson, an eloquent preacher, often startlingly eloquent, always clear as a bell, fearless, humble, hard-working, was my dearest friend among the ministers older than myself. His children regarded me as an elder brother, and Mrs. Nicholson and he made me consider their house my home for many years on my occasional visits to Edinburgh.

‘I had the honour of preaching his funeral sermon in St. Stephen’s. His beautiful face, his devoted life, his splendid preaching come often into my mind as blended in a lovely picture of times gone by. Of his head and his heart there is proof visible, though inadequate, in his three volumes of sermons, especially one called *Rest in Jesus*. I heard him preach several of them; the greatest being, “My son, give Me thine heart.” I think I hear him describe the heart set free from sin and going God-wards as like the mother dove, captive, then the moment she is free, “swift as the arrow from the twanging bow,” making straight for the home of her affections.

'The University course in those days extended over nearly eight years. The ordinary course might have been run in seven years,—four in Arts and three in Divinity,—because one of the Divinity sessions was called "partial," which meant that one enrolled but did not attend throughout. In my case there was added a session devoted to Natural History and sundry miscellaneous private classes, Italian and German being among them. Professor Allmann was a brilliant lecturer on some parts of the wide domain included at that time in Natural History. His lectures and talks during the excursions, devoted to the simplest forms of marine animal life, can never fade from any old student's memory. Word pictures came from him as he spoke. I have never seen or heard of such etchings. I was anxious to study Geology and Mineralogy, Robert Chambers' *Vestiges of Creation* having troubled our minds on the subject of the origin and history of life on the earth.'

At last the time arrived, long looked forward to and sedulously prepared for, when the whole brood of contemporary Divinity students became full-fledged probationers or expectants for the ministry. The Scottish Church only licenses such to be preachers of the Gospel after they receive the full stamp of the Presbytery's approval; the preacher is only ordained when presented and found qualified (in those days), or elected and appointed (nowadays), to a particular parish or sphere of labour. On 24th February 1858 Charteris was licensed in company with his friend Robert Wallace. It may surprise those who know anything of their subsequent careers to be told that while the former was somewhat severely handled and criticised by certain members of Presbytery who suspected him of heterodoxy, the latter passed with flying colours, preaching a most evangelical and ultra-Calvinistic discourse. The Rev. A. H. Charteris, as we must now call him, had aspirations after the career of a foreign missionary, which was medically forbidden on grounds of health. An Indian chaplaincy was offered to him, but declined. In those days the office of assistant minister was almost unknown,

unless the minister of the parish required a substitute by reason of inability to perform his duties, or of his absence on leave. The helpful noviciate, through which almost all young ministers pass nowadays, thus finds no place in the life-story now in process of being told.



## CHAPTER III

### AT ST. QUIVOX

Appointment—Arrival and Doings—Intimacy with the Campbells—  
His own account—Friendships—Speech on Burns—Departure.

THE fate of the 'stickit minister'—the probationer who gets no further—has often been delineated since the Wizard of the North drew the delightful but 'prodigious' character of Dominie Sampson; and the story always appeals to a sympathetic audience in Scotland. But Mr. Charteris was not to figure in that capacity. He himself tells the circumstances under which his preaching (his third sermon) in Ayr led to his appointment as assistant and successor in the parish of St. Quivox, in the district of Kyle, Ayrshire, which gave its name to some of the earliest Protestants in Scotland, the 'Lollards of Kyle.' The beautiful river of Ayr curves along its southern boundary.

Candid reflections are found in Mr. Charteris' diary regarding the exercise of patronage and popular election:—

'Systems come to much the same thing in all bodies; there is a mighty fund of patronage in Dissenting Churches too; but the difference is that the young minister there preaches before his patrons, who thus give him and his compeers an equal chance. No doubt popular choice is not always well fixed, but neither is the patron's. Better run one's chance by merit than hope on in unpatronised seclusion.'

That, however, was not his destiny. The Rev. Dr. M'Quhae, who succeeded his father ('that cursed rascal called M'Quhae' of Robert Burns, who also specifies 'M'Quhae's pathetic manly sense'), required an assistant and successor. Mr. Charteris accepted Mr. Oswald's presentation after full inquiry as to his acceptability to the people.

His old class-fellow, Robert Wallace, hailed his prospects: 'Hip! Hip! Hurrah! St. Quivox is a splendid place; and you will have capital scope for the practice of oratory, and all the other elements of a vigorous ministry. You will see how Providence has rewarded you for your goodness to me.'

Legal proceedings towards a settlement were not without expense, and 'Caesar' demanded his share, besides requiring from the candidate oaths of allegiance. The Government stamp on a presentation was £1, 15s., along with a £2 stamp on the extract of licence, besides Presbytery dues. The call to Mr. Charteris was signed by four elders and fifty-six members on 29th April 1858. The settlement itself was in all respects harmonious. The factor, an excellent Free Church elder, knew that the best service he could render to the old Church was to help them to some one with youth, vigour, and enthusiasm, who could fan afresh the flame of religion, which in that parish was then very low. We are permitted to give the following narrative by his eldest daughter, Miss Jane Campbell, of Mr. Charteris' arrival and doings in his first parish:—

'I still remember distinctly the day Mr. Charteris first came to St. Quivox. It was a bright afternoon in the spring time. After some talk with my invalid mother he turned to my sister and me, and asked if we would show him the church and the manse, which are close by. We started, two very shy little girls: he took our hands and we set out, rather subdued with our company, and hardly venturing to look up from under our broad garden hats. "Had we the keys?" he asked. "Oh, no—we never thought of the keys, they were only there on Sundays, and John Ferguson took charge of them."

'John, the old Copenhagen veteran, was rather a terror to us, and we would never have thought of going ourselves, or of taking the minister to him. "Then how could we get in?" was the next question. We would take him to a place where we got in, and dismissing any idea of keys or of the inside of the church out of our minds, we took him to our own special entrance to the churchyard, a place in the railing where a spoke was out. In and out by this we went whenever we chose, and why should not anybody else? It never occurred to us that it was rather unusual for the prospective minister of the parish to enter his new charge like a bird-nesting schoolboy. You can imagine it

all. He was making friends with us, as he always did with children, and neither by word nor look did he betray the surprise and amusement he must have felt at the whole proceedings. We took him through the churchyard, showed him the old stone with Adam and Eve on it, and another with a blacksmith's tools, took him round to the minister's door, showed him the manse seat, and the Mount Hamilton seat in front: but said, "*We drive in to Ayr to church.*" My father was a Free Church elder; we even held the reins if we drove with him in the dog-cart.

'My brother Patrick and I attended the ordination, and looked down upon the scene with immense interest. Mrs. Charteris was with us, for it seems to me we felt ourselves in charge of her who had never been there before. And we wondered when she covered her face with her hands as her son knelt at our little table and was ordained to the ministry, which, as we know now, was to lead to such far-reaching results.

'The following Sunday we were certainly at church, and again in the Auchencruive gallery. An unknown minister (Professor Robertson) preached to begin with, and Mr. Charteris sat in the manse seat with his gown on, and then went up to the pulpit and preached. Henceforward we children frankly deserted to the Establishment. Nothing could tempt us to pass its gates: he was our minister, we considered, and we would have no other: even the joy of driving into Ayr was given up.

'Two or three times he invited us to tea at the manse. These were wonderful occasions, for he asked us by ourselves; no grown-up person was there to see that we "*behaved.*" It was *our* tea-party, and he made tea and played games with us. Then by the time we had got thoroughly out of hand my father would come over to fetch us home. Of course his father and mother used to be at the manse sometimes. We hurried over to call upon her as soon as she arrived. Then we considered ourselves free of the garden; we gathered the flowers, and attended to the apple-trees (which we thought better than our own!); and we knew we were welcome.

'Of his preaching I cannot speak, but I know that people came to church. Occasional comers began to come regularly, and others, who had not come at all, found their way. The farm servants came and the miners. Even John Ferguson the beadle began to listen. The new minister sought the people in their homes; so they, and especially the children, got to know him. Thus the short but happy time went on. Then came the woeful day when we first heard of New Abbey as wanting *our* minister. To us children it seemed a complete break with the



established order of things. We held a council of war and came to a resolution—we three elder ones. We had each a £10 note in the bank, and some remark we had heard led us to think that our minister would be better off at New Abbey. Could we not make him better off here? So our resolution was taken, and my brother went to lay it before him. We would give our united funds, every penny we had, if he would only stay. We knew he would listen to what we had to say. It made no difference, alas, as to his going to New Abbey; but he never forgot it. His last sermon in St. Quivox was in summer, and my mother came to hear it. A couch was carried into the manse seat for her, and my father wheeled her over in her chair. More than that I do not remember, and next day he came to say good-bye.

“Your father and mother were the best friends I ever had.” So he told their children in after years.’

From this early ministry, as it appeared to the little girl in the pew, we turn to the memorial left by him who exercised it. ‘The Session of 1858 was nearing a close when one day I met Robert Wallace in the Royal Scottish Academy Exhibition. He had been chosen minister of Newton-on-Ayr, a great nursery of brilliant preachers; the sermon he preached being the remarkable one which Principal Lee stopped when he was reading it in the Divinity Hall. So he grimly told me: also that he was to be married, and he asked me to go to Ayr and preach for William Shaw, minister of Ayr, who was to preach in Newton and “kirk” Wallace and his young wife. So I duly went and obliged my friend. I also gained the friendship of Shaw, a most able and accomplished man, who had been Dux of Edinburgh High School, and of most of the Arts classes in the University. I often afterwards heard him preach. He was one of my dearest friends. My eyes are dim as I think of him. Sometimes when his subject was specially solemn or affecting there was a sustained power, an indescribable charm of voice and manner, a tender touching of the springs of feeling that I have never seen equalled, still less surpassed. Caird, in my opinion, never touched the heart, and Guthrie never controlled the mind of his hearers as did William Shaw. But the friendship of Shaw and a happy afternoon with

Wallace and his wife were not the chief results of my visit. John M'Murtrie's father, Mr. M'Murtrie, Solicitor, Ayr, came to the vestry and told me that he knew I was a friend of his son, and understood I was a candidate for "St. Evoc," a place of which I had never heard. It transpired that a hapless youth who was to have preached on trial in Ayr that day, as a possible minister of St. Quivox, had been accidentally detained on the way. I never heard the details or his name—and I was unwittingly in his stead. The Boswells of Garallan were to report upon him, and they kindly reported on me, to the patron of St. Quivox. St. Evoc is the real name, and the saint (to whom the well in the manse pump is sacred) was St. Evoca. Mr. Alexander Haldane Oswald, conscientious in every discharge of duty, came to Edinburgh to consult Professor Robertson, and then, to my surprise, sent for me to meet him in the Caledonian Hotel; and offered me the living of St. Quivox. It was only the living in prospect, however; my place was to be Assistant and Successor to Dr. Stair M'Quhae, who had followed his father in the parish, ministering for forty years. The father and son had been incumbents for a hundred years. Dr. Robertson had spoken well of me; but I was afraid of the work and responsibility, and I consulted Dr. Robert Lee as to whether I ought to accept. In his kind ironical way he said: "What else would you do? Accept of course. I wish it had been mine to offer you the place, not Robertson." Thus fortified by the advice of my two professors, I went to my first parish.

'I have a mournful pleasure in remembering that Professor Robertson, "the faithful Churchman," in spite of diminishing strength, came from Tweedside to take part with the Presbytery in the solemn rite of the "laying on of hands," and remained to introduce me, preaching from the Redeemer's promise, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." By mistake his sermon, which he meant to read, was left behind in the carriage in which he drove over from Cambusdoon (Mr. James Baird's house), and he spoke its substance straight from the heart in simple but powerful fashion. I have never forgotten



it, nor the wise fatherly counsel he gave me in private, full of the experience of an observant life-time, and of the very spirit of the everlasting Gospel. He taught me to enter upon my work in assured expectation of a blessing; bade me see in every poor, careless collier a disfigured image of God, which might be renewed in knowledge, righteousness, and holiness, by the creating Spirit, through the Word; and, with his own affectionate delicacy, rather suggested than expressed a caution against that distrust of the power of the Gospel to reach men's hearts, which practically means that Christ has died, and the Spirit works, in vain.

'Principal Lee, when informed of my appointment, told me that he had preached his first sermon in St. Quivox fifty years before, and that the Dr. M'Quhae of that day said to him: "You have given us an able sermon, Mr. Lee, but you used two phrases which my people never heard before." Humbly he had asked what those phrases might be. "You spoke of natural corruption and human depravity, which phrases were quite new in my pulpit." This story made me see that a long inheritance of their theology had come down to me; and I left the Principal's house—he lived in the College—more frightened than ever.

'There was another alarming fact. A valued college friend of my own had been assistant to Dr. M'Quhae, and had done admirable work among the colliers in the parish. He began there a long and devoted pastoral life which has enriched the Church of Scotland. The agricultural and the mining parishioners had never amalgamated at all, and the devoted young assistant had been unwittingly a bone of contention among them. I was in literal terror of the colliers. I had never seen one any more than I had seen a Roman Catholic in my life, and I believed that the colliers would stone or taunt me as I went through Whitletts, their village on the high road from Ayr, with 1200 inhabitants. The first time I walked up the long street I kept the middle of the highway (as we used to do in the earlier days when we were afraid of ghosts), so that if an assailant came from either side I would get a start



and run before he could get at me. And I nervously watched the doorways in which curious women stood, each looking quite innocent with a needle and a bit of dirty crochet in her hand. I did not expect to find so many friends in those one-roomed houses as in a short time I found to my great joy. Then, as ever since, Henry Duncan and I had unbroken friendship.

‘But I must give no more college reminiscences. On 27th June 1858 I was ordained Assistant and Successor to the minister of St. Quivox. My income was £120, of which the heritors furnished one half and Dr. M’Quhae the other. The manse is splendidly situated, and the view from the drawing-room window was a perpetual delight. The changing lights on Goatfell and the blue sea between Arran and Ayr made a thing of beauty which is even in remembrance a joy for ever. The heritors were liberal men, and the manse was a suitable residence for a rich minister. Of course I could only colonise a corner of it; but the magnificent outlook was not dependent on stipend: I enjoyed it as much as if it had been my own. The parish included 6000 or 7000 of the inhabitants of Wallacetown, which is a part of the town of Ayr. They were for the most part colliers, and there was a Chapel of Ease in the centre of them, three miles from me. The country population of about 3000 was pretty fairly divided between colliers in Whitletts and farm people in various parts of the parish.

‘The land was very valuable and highly rented. As much as four pounds an acre (lands occupied by farm-roads included in the measurement) was given for one farm when I was in the parish. When I was ordained, potatoes had been taken up and sold, the “shaws” laid in the drills, and turnips sown on the fields. Until that day I had never seen two crops taken from Scottish land in one year. If I remember rightly, the potatoes had been sold for £35 an acre—the purchasers lifting the crop. There were many good farmers in the parish, the chief of them being Mr. John Tennant of Shields, who was a leader of Scottish agriculture. His farm was like a garden,

and he himself a highly-educated, able, humorous, and genial man, the natural leader of the people round him. Farming was not for him the "low pursuit" of which Burns' epitaph tells, but a thing of science and bright attention and wise imagination.

'I would like to tell what my life as a country minister was at that time, fifty years ago. The great fact was the division of the parishioners into colliers and farm people. There was no alliance between the two divisions. There was not even acquaintance. The colliers were little cared for, their cottages were far below the Ayrshire average in accommodation and comfort, and the men themselves were personally unknown outside of their villages. Every farmer's boy thought himself far above the "coalers." Very few of them could read or write. When I went to perform a marriage among them I soon found it necessary to take with me two witnesses (not of the wedding company), who could sign the marriage schedule.

'The very first caller at the manse was a collier who came to ask me to come and "name his bairn." The tradition of baptism being necessary had reached these poor people. This man had kept the child till the new parish minister should come and perform the ceremony. I tried to tell him that in baptism a parent must make promises to show a Christian example and give Christian training, so that my first question was naturally to ask whether my caller was a church-going man. Certainly he was not; and frankly so he said. Trying to find a foundation of knowledge on which to build, I asked him many questions. "Do you know about Jesus who commanded us to baptize?" "Jesus? I have heard the name, but I don't know about him." "What have you heard?" "I heard them speaking about him in the pit." "What did they say about Him?" "Not much. They said: 'By Jesus!'" And that was all the poor fellow knew about the Saviour. The end of the interview was that he promised to come to church every Sunday for six weeks, so as to show that he meant to give a Christian example to his child, whom he loved very much in a wistful ignorant



way. After those six weeks I would baptize the child. He was meanwhile to come to me weekly for instruction. After the baptism he was to continue to attend my class and church, and in due time to become a communicant. He was the first of a growing class. At the end of a year I had sixty married men in the class anxiously trying to take in my Christian teaching, living sober lives, and never absent from church on Sunday. They were pathetically anxious to learn, and although one of the elders said I might as well preach in Greek for anything the colliers would understand, they soon came to take in bits of my sermons. In the class I could soon tell how much or how little they understood. True, loyal, loving souls they were; living a hard and joyless life in the pits.

'After some months the manager told me he was glad to promote some of "my men" to be oversmen and bosses in the pit. At first he had thought that "ministers' work" had no effect on characters. But he had changed his mind on that. It was hard for the collier to be a sober man. When he came home about two o'clock in the afternoon and sat in his tub, and his wife poured buckets of water over him to wash the perspiration and coal dust off, and he got his tea-dinner, winding up with shortbread on which a thick coating of marmalade was spread, and went out in his blue woollen clothes, what could he do but get drink? He could not play at "pitch and toss" all the afternoon, and he could not read. Few of his comrades could read to him; though sometimes one could see a group sitting on the roadside round a paper. It was a weary life. Sometimes his wife and he took a walk round into Ayr, and bought bowls and plates of some blazing pattern, and arranged them on the dresser when they came home. It was by the number of the bowls and other crockery that one could see at a glance, when entering a cottage, whether it was a sober house; and I don't think this ever misled me.

'What could I do? It was clearly through their love of children if at all that the poor ignorant parents could be moved to better things. That love was deep and true. They could not bear to think of ruining the child's life by



setting a bad example, and they learned to pray for power to set a good one. They told their wives of the responsibility under which parents are; and I believe many a stammering prayer went up to God from beside the child's cradle. There was, especially at first, some complication arising from the fact that for a small fee (of, I think, one and sixpence) baptism could be obtained at the Episcopal Church in Ayr, where no parental responsibility was recognised. There was an unhappy ignoring of parents in the Episcopal service; and the sponsors were formally supplied, and did not dream—were not even in a position to be capable—of discharging their vows. This made it often more difficult to prevail on parents to qualify themselves for these sacred duties which cannot be transferred. It was so much easier to go to Ayr and have the infants christened there. But after a little while all who had vaguely counted themselves Presbyterians, and not a few others who had never thought what they were, came to me for the baptism of their children, and lived, as far as I could see, honest, godly lives which made their homes happy.

'As I have said, the agricultural population had no dealings with the miners. The farmers (always excepting Mr. Jennings and one or two others) were working men, the chiefs of their own workers. They led the band on their farms who made Ayrshire like a garden. It was a cheering sight to see them in their well-made clothes on Sunday, heading with their wives the family group; wives whose short-gown and faded petticoat on week-days had been changed for exuberant bonnets or hats, and gowns rich with trimming. They were intelligent people. It was a delight to speak to them from the pulpit. If ever their eye showed wandering attention it was because the speaker had gone astray. They never dreamed of sleeping in church. The one exception was the dear old beadle, who, after he had carried up the Books and had "snibbit" the minister in, slept pretty steadily on the top step of the pulpit stairs with a red and yellow spotted silk handkerchief over his head, which he leaned against the pulpit door. He had been a man-of-war's man, and had seen the

burning of Copenhagen. The only occasion when John kept awake was when I was preaching on the Christian armour. "Old Copenhagen" knew what fighting meant. He did not miss a word of that sermon; and he begged that I should preach it over again every now and then! He had a careless son whom he described as an "outbye saint and a house deevil." John came to tell me that the young fellow had knocked down his mother. "I came and lifted her up, and he hit me. But (said John grinning) he'll no try that again!"

'The people were very kind to me. It had got abroad that the expenses of a Communion season, when strange ministers came to preach on the three days of special services, were considerable, and the farmers saw to it that the young minister had always at those times a well replenished larder: turkeys, geese, chickens, coming thick as quails in the wilderness. Farmers on their way to church used to look into the coal-house on Sunday, after taking their statutory drink at the manse pump, and, if my coal-bunk looked less full than it should be, they brought coals next day. For the coals I was asked to pay, but I never once paid for cartage; and excellent coals were cheap—3s. 9d. a ton at the pithead.

'Besides my own special classes there were Sunday schools. A good Free Church elder had for several years conducted a Sunday school in Whitletts. He and his father-in-law, one of our elders, were lights in a dark place. Eventually a good school-room was built in Whitletts after rather a hard fight, and its accommodation was available for Sunday school and occasional services. The old parish school was situated near the church, and there a large Sunday school was under the ordinary charge of the parish schoolmaster, Mr. James Millar, an elder, Session Clerk, and Inspector of Poor—a wise, able, and devout man. I attended every day and took the senior class.

'One of the most delightful testimonials I ever got was an address presented to me when Moderator of Assembly in 1892 by the surviving scholars of my St. Quivox Sunday school. Their signatures had been collected from all parts



—not only of Scotland, but of Britain—and were pasted on a beautiful parchment and presented to me in name of all the rest by Patrick W. Campbell, W.S., who was at the time Mr. Gladstone's political agent for Midlothian. He smilingly said that it was clear I had not taught politics in the Sunday school! He and his sisters had all the trouble of collecting the signatures.

'The parish had three social chiefs. First of the three was my patron Mr. Oswald, who (as he himself said at an endowment meeting in the old church of Ayr) "drew ample revenues from widespread territories" in Ayrshire and Galloway. He was at one time M.P. for Ayrshire. Once when I was taking a short cut through his garden on my way to visit a sick person, and apologised when I met him, he said: "A minister cannot trespass in his own parish." He had been an early friend of Louis Napoleon, and had the *entrée* to the Tuileries during the reign of that Emperor, who was always mindful of his old friends. A great territorial magnate was Mr. Alexander Oswald, who lived apart from all near neighbours, a man of wide reading, one who had seen many lands, and knew many of their princes. I cannot say that he seemed to take much interest in my humble labour or gave much personally to the poor, but his upright character was an influence for good. He was never in my church except when I preached my farewell sermon. I often dined with him, and met some famous men.

'The other great heritor was Mr. James Campbell of Craigie, a Whig of the *Edinburgh Review* type, a member of the Scottish Bar, a man of literature and much culture; whose house was the first I had ever seen with refinement and luxury blended in the life of a simple Christian home. Before I left St. Quivox he called on me to offer me the parish of Craigie of which he was patron. He also did me the flattering honour of consulting me as to whom I would recommend when I was compelled for myself to decline, being already engaged to New Abbey. He objected very much to one of whom he had heard that he shocked the parish by preaching in shepherd's plaid trousers. He eventually presented a brilliant man whom I knew well.



'The third of the great parishioners was John Taylor Gordon of Blackhouse, who was by inheritance the lessee of the Auchencairn coalpits. He was a W.S., and not really trained in mining. He had been a foe of Mr. Oswald, and had carried a lawsuit to the House of Lords against him on some petty dispute between them, and won it. He came, however, and presided at the ordination dinner which Mr. Oswald gave in my honour to the Presbytery of Ayr. He declared his desire to help me if he could, and from that day, as long as he was in the parish, he was my warm and steady friend. He sat in the Whitletts' gallery in church with his colliers massed behind him. He was a generous supporter of all good movements, and I found a warm welcome in his beautiful home. Reverses came, and for a time stripped him of his wealth; but I was glad to know that he outlived them, and found a flowing tide of prosperity again. By that time I had left the parish.

'How shall I speak of Mount Hamilton—the house separated from the manse by the high road—where I lived almost as much as in my own house? Here dwelt Mr. David Campbell, factor on Auchencruive, the wisest, gentlest, most humorous, and most affectionate of men. What I owed to him I did not then know, and even now I cannot tell; for even now I do not know it all. He was patient with my blunders, always ready to counsel me in perplexity, especially to tell me how to deal with this man and that, always keeping before me the spiritual ends of a minister's work. He was a Free Church elder, but was very often with his children in St. Quivox's church, and the children trotted over with me every Sunday morning to the Sunday school.

'Mrs. Campbell, like her husband, was of an old Scottish family. She had long been an invalid, and always reclined on a sofa. Hers was a bright, amusing mind, and a heart full of sympathy. Almost every day I went in before dinner to tell her all my adventures in the parish. She was like a mother to me, and I remember her pain when my first letter to her after I left began—I knew no better

—with the frigid “My dear Madam.” She had marvellous power of brilliant conversation, including command of ridicule that hit but never hurt. I cannot imagine how her husband and she could put up with a raw boy, who, because he had been seven years at college, had no idea how unfit he was to fill the place of a parish minister. I must have been a sore trial to them many a time from my blundering ignorance of the world. There was no class in college which helped me here: the best part of all the ways I have learned of human life was from Mr. and Mrs. Campbell. She once said to me, ridiculing the painful detail with which my life has always been filled, “You are just like my husband. If I was to tell either of you to tidy up the gravel round the house, you would take up every stone and wipe it with a pocket handkerchief.”

‘I suppose a minister never goes through so many stages of feeling as in his first parish. I was an ignorant student when I went to St. Quivox; I knew not how ignorant. I thought I had seen some of the world and the Church when after a year and a month I left it! Principles of Home Missions, which of course I had got from Chalmers and James Robertson, had been tested by experience in volunteer city work in Edinburgh, and I had plans all cut and dry; the aimless reading of University life had been of late somewhat concentrated; and each day was subdivided for study, visiting in the parish, and visiting in social life, for which last I found many doors in Ayr open to me. At Communion seasons old comrades came and visited me. My father and mother saw me in my own house, and a proud man was I; my dear old grand-uncle from New Abbey came and assisted me at my first Communion. If I had few fellow-workers in the parish, I had abundance of sympathy. The overwork of college told upon me in my exertions, and I was breaking down when the unexpected offer of New Abbey altered all my life. It was not that my sermons were hard upon me. They were truly called for every week, but I went to St. Quivox with five unpreached sermons in my portmanteau, and I came away with seven. I never had an exchange for “stress of

weather," which is clerical for lack of a sermon. I had no science or wise method in my work for the pulpit. I just worked as hard as I could. Once I tried Chalmers' plan of having one sermon better than usual on hands for a month, others being preached meanwhile as they could be made. I was so absorbed in making it that I totally forgot till Sunday morning that I was bound also to prepare an exposition; and in a few feverish hours I had to write some scraps, much less careful than usual, as notes for it. There was no time to write more. There chanced to be a "deputation" in church who had come from a Fifeshire parish. They did not offer me their church that day or ever; but I was told that they had been pleased to speak well to the schoolmaster of my *exposition*, and even said that they were sorry my *sermon* was not up to it. I then learned the lesson, valid for myself, that no continued pains could ever enable me to rise above my level and make a special sermon. From that day I never again tried Chalmers' plan. It was only good for a man who could make a great sermon. I took much pains, however, all my life, even in St. Quivox. I wrote a sermon fully out, and in every case but one it was twice written before being preached; and the other sermon, which was continuous exposition of the Gospel of St. Luke, was preached from notes expanded in delivery. Long afterwards I found that the prince of English preachers in his day, the Bishop of Oxford (Dr. Samuel Wilberforce), recommended young clergymen thus to write one sermon fully, and to preach another from notes. I did not, after a few weeks in Ayrshire, "read" my sermons in delivery. An accident brought this about. One day in Monkton I found my manuscript wrong side up in the Bible. I had intended to read it, but not slavishly. I was too nervous to turn it upside down in face of the congregation, and I resolved to go on without it. I got through, and never again "read" my sermons until my health broke down in Glasgow. It was a serious business for me to "commit" a sermon to memory in my early days. My first sermon cost me eight days, six hours a day, mostly spent on the



Chain Pier at Granton. All the time I was in St. Quivox, the whole of Saturday was occupied with "committing" my sermon, so also most of the years I was in New Abbey. A dissenting shoemaker, who came to join the parish church, told me that his reason was that he "wanted a minister who had nae bother o' preparation, but just stood up in the pulpit and let the thing come frae him." Poor man, I wonder if he would have gone back to the "Frees" if I had told him of my painful processes.

'My remembrances of my first parish must tell something of the cordial Presbytery of Ayr, of which I was a member. The monthly meetings were an inexpressible refreshment and help. The leading men were in their own spheres models for a young minister. Thanks to days of special services or Communion seasons, we often saw and heard them. Dr. John Rankine of Sorn and Dr. Chrystal of Auchenleck were model pastors. William Shaw's faithful cultured eloquence, Robert Wallace's grim poetical Calvinism, and Giffen of Dailly's unwearied uplifting expositions were stimulating. There was an ideal of social life in Dr. George James Lawrie's refined and tender character. From all these I think I learned much, and I name them because they were my intimate friends. There were others who would have been as helpful in guidance if I had known them as well. Dr. Lawrie, whose father's home in Loudon manse has been immortalised by the "lines" Robert Burns left there—"O Thou dread Power that reigns above"—was himself a poet, and his song "D'ye mind lang syne when summer days were fine?" is a fitting memorial of his sunny life.

'Wallace's manse was not quite three miles off, and we met at least once every week. To save the time we often lost in looking for a text, we agreed to preach through the Shorter Catechism, but without making any public intimation that we were doing so. I don't know how long he persevered, but I went on steadily till my removal to New Abbey; and though less systematically, I continued my series a good while longer. At that time Wallace was an extreme Calvinist, and he used to reproach me with being

less rigid than himself. He had always a keen sense of logic, and was not alarmed by consequences if he was driving a train through fact or history or philosophical speculation. He was certainly one of the educative influences that bore on my life; though there was always a point at which we ceased to agree. I could not of course compete with his force, but I had always power to say No somewhere. In St. Quivox manse and New Abbey and Glasgow he was a frequent and a welcome visitor. Once he asked me to baptize a child of his, born when he was minister of Old Greyfriars'. I was surprised and touched when I was told at the font that the child's name was "Archibald!" Very like himself were his first words in the vestry after the service: "My mother's name was 'Archibald!'" I found in his biography that it was her surname. He was for some years my colleague in Edinburgh University, and our relations were always harmonious—as he himself told his students one day, we worked "without collision or collusion." The only time I was ever in the *Scotsman* office I had gone to call on him, and I said in the editor's room: "Wallace, you have very comfortable quarters here." There was a world of meaning in his grim response—"Sometimes." Sure enough his tenure of his quarters did not last long, and he next appeared in Parliament. A prominent politician who can well judge told me that there never was a speech so often quoted or recalled in the House of Commons as Wallace's trenchant assault on Gladstone and everybody concerned, when that statesman, at forty-eight hours' notice, so transformed his Home Rule Bill of 1893 as to make the Irish masters of Ireland's destiny in Dublin, with right also, in full numbers, to control British affairs at Westminster. Wallace's speech, plentifully garnished with his old Assembly jokes, was the most powerful exposure of the audacious injustice attempted; and lost nothing from the fact that he was a convinced Home Ruler himself. In it he crystallised the biography and pictured the characteristics of almost every prominent man (especially if he were an opponent) in a happy and unforgettable epigram. He was never a happy man, never



so nearly happy as when one of his epigrams gave utterance to his humour. It was seldom unkindly; it was always memorable. When he died his brother, in an article in the *Glasgow Herald*, spoke of his wit and wisdom; but I felt that his daughter, in her touching chapter added to his unfinished autobiography, went deeper, when she said she thought most frequently of his misfortunes.

'I have omitted to say that his humour and his dialectic made him for a time a remarkable member of the General Assembly. He quite deliberately made a party whose function was to attack all constituted authorities; and for some years his rising made every one sit up to be an eager listener; but after a while the Assembly felt—and he felt himself—that he was not in sympathy with the work of the Church, so that his vigorous criticisms were not helpful. This made Parliament his natural sphere; and had he reached it earlier or lived longer after he went there, he would assuredly have won an abiding name.'

Concerning the ministry which, in little more than a year, transformed the sleepy parish, a few particulars may be given. The well-filled pews of the typical old Scottish church were a happy index of the attractive power of the Gospel message, manifested also in changed lives. The clear handwriting of some of the sermons then delivered symbolises the simplicity and perspicuity of the preacher's thought. Each discourse aimed at enlightenment, persuasion, or rousing the conscience; and one does not wonder that this primary object of Christian oratory was largely achieved. 'Sermon-weariness' gave place to 'soul-hunger.'

The young minister did not give his people what had cost him nothing, but offered gold that had been tested, intellectually and spiritually, before it was issued in coin from his own mint. Above all, while loyal to the foundation truths that cannot be shaken, he believed in that demonstration and power of the Holy Ghost which alone can make even the ablest witness to Christ's Saviourhood effectual in the heart of man. And there is always present the beseeching note of the true ambassador for Christ. While careful to feed and to strengthen the sheep of the



flock, and remembering the special difficulties of young men and young women, the pastor heedfully obeyed the Great Shepherd's charge, 'Feed my lambs.' He broke the bread of life down small for the little ones, and was rewarded by their loving attention. It is even yet told by an old man how, in his boyhood, Dr. Charteris was a frequent visitor to the day-school, and how 'the children ran to him. He drew a terrible heap of young ones after him!' True love is ever reciprocal. Under his fostering care a Sunday-school library was started and developed into a parish library, for which he made a cogent and elaborate appeal to the whole congregation. Libraries were, of course, not so common then nor books so cheap as now.

Communion Sunday was always a high day, and as one reads over examples, not only of the 'Action sermon' but of the lengthy addresses for 'Fencing the tables' and 'After Communion,' one sees how far the impatient children of to-day have travelled from that leisurely age in half a century; and one can only hope that the amount of spiritual interest and devotion, now so greatly condensed, may be found equally conducive to the nourishment of the inner life. But Christian work was not left to languish in St. Quivox. Instead of the Christmas sermon, so happily prevalent now, the young minister preached, on December 26th, from the favourite text, 'Am I my brother's keeper?' a powerful plea for the Endowment Scheme.

The reputation of the rising young preacher was spreading over the neighbouring district, and his occasional appearance in other pulpits excited much interest, and was cordially welcomed by the various congregations. Professor Henry Cowan, a native of Ayr, relates that

'it was quite a common practice for young people to walk out from Ayr to services at St. Quivox; the personality of the preacher was singularly attractive, and his words were not only earnest but helpful. When he entered the pulpit he looked no more than a boy, but the opening prayer, in which personal religious experience was manifest, at once inspired confidence and secured devout attention. His tone of voice in prayer was marked by chastened reverence without sancti-

monious affectation. The sermon was delivered, for the most part, as if he were having a serious but friendly talk with his congregation; there was no loud utterance, and scarcely any gesticulation: the word "winning" seemed to describe most fitly his preaching. At times, however, there would come a flash of indignation when he was denouncing any sin or vice. As a schoolboy I had occasionally the opportunity of meeting him in private; and I can bear witness, from vivid personal recollection, as well as from the testimony of others, that many outside his own congregation dated their earliest deep religious impressions from his Ayrshire ministry. His personality was an effective influence.

"Amid the young and gay, more grave than they," he united a bright and cheerful manner with unaffected seriousness which prevented any one from forgetting—young though he was—that he was a minister of Christ.

Responding at the Burns dinner (to which he alludes) for the toast of 'The Clergy,' he said:—

'The clergy, like all other Scotsmen, can appreciate the merits of our national poet. We recognise in Robert Burns the poet who raised the standard and purified the sentiments of those songs which the peasantry of Scotland hear on the harvest field, in the rustic merry-meeting, and by their own firesides; the man whose stout assertion of independence and claim of natural equality have done no little to break down the barriers of social caste, and to teach high and low alike to look to themselves for their position, till now even a careless observer may note in the nobles a conviction that

"Honours thrive best

When rather from ourselves we them derive  
Than our progenitors;"

and in those of humble birth an assurance that if they have the gold of a true character, the guinea-stamp can be won, or *wanted*. If along with this there be errors of careless life and thoughtless word, we still do not soil our admiration of genius with approval of the erring man; but as it is the work of our profession to learn the weaknesses of humanity in ourselves or others, we need not live long to learn that if all of us had Burns' fatal facility of matchless expression, there would be many words not less reckless than those which are blamed in him; and it would go hard with the character of the best of us if all the changing impulses, the light and shade of our human hearts, were daguerreotyped like his.'

A striking feature of Mr. Charteris' Ayrshire ministry was the close intercourse, continued from student days,



with his near neighbour, Robert Wallace, a man of vigorous, critical mind, unfettered by conventionality. Both had many gifts; but the future colleagues in the Edinburgh Divinity Hall were destined to lead opposite schools in the General Assembly, and to diverge widely, both in doctrinal standing and in their subsequent careers. Wallace frankly owned later on to a change of position which was only effected gradually; the alteration took place in him, not in the comrade who started side by side with him. In those days they were thoroughly sympathetic, and their friendship stood the strain of later public opposition, though with occasional bickerings and some hard hitting. They frequently corresponded till 1897, when Wallace's last letter returns 'grateful acknowledgment of genuine and effective kindness' for condolences on the death of his wife, in a letter which had given him 'great comfort.'

On 26th November 1859 Wallace wrote:—

'I repose a complete confidence in the cordiality of your friendliness, or friendship rather, towards myself. I rejoice in it, and hope that nothing may ever necessitate its suspension. The way of faithful men is so dark that they cannot afford to let go one another's hand to walk alone. My dear Charteris, up till now I had not perfect confidence in you, and could not give you all my soul. For a spiritually-minded man I thought you somewhat "pawky," but I do not think so now, and wherever necessary I shall be able and ready conscientiously to maintain, that you only do dexterously what others are equally desirous of doing, but cannot do so well.

'I set off on Monday to agitate upon the Endowment Scheme through the Synod of Angus and Mearns. I am to play Sancho Panza to Smith of Trinity College's Don Quixote. I must say I rather relish the idea. Knight-errantry was always beautiful to me, and though I hope not to forget the sacred usefulness of this crusade, yet I cannot help relishing the spice of vagabondism with which it is seasoned.'

Letters to the home circle indicate that absence did not interrupt loving remembrance. A somewhat startling allusion to Wallace occurs, and indicates the spirit even of professional non-combatants in Indian Mutiny days:—

'He said that a hundred thousand sermons would be preached



on the last-day. If all the preachers were handling cutlasses in India they would put down the rebellion.'

Perhaps it was an over-sanguine though sanguinary estimate of ministerial efficiency.

To his mother he writes:—

'Glad your boarding establishment flourishes so. It must be the last year of your having such work for a son of the family.'

Mr. Charteris' narrative may well conclude this chapter: 'My ministry in St. Quivox ended in 1859. I had been only thirteen months there. Dr. Robertson's care for my health made him advise me to accept the offer of New Abbey, which was made to me by the Crown, Mr. Charles Baillie, afterwards Lord Jerviswood, being at that time Lord Advocate. The parish was in a state of unrest; some of it comical enough. The chairman of a public meeting of the congregation reported to the Home Secretary that different motions had been made and voted upon; and added a private note that in his opinion the Home Secretary would do well to disregard the contending motions proposed at the divided meeting. The Home Secretary answered that "he quite agreed with Mr. Copland"; and this answer led to inquiries and information which divided the people still more. The humour of the thing, however, touched the parish; and fun, not fury, prevailed. But it was not a united petition to the Crown that was presented or intimated. On his deathbed my grand-uncle, the Rev. James Hamilton, had told me that he would like me to be his successor; and, though with a heavy heart, I bade farewell to St. Quivox.

'It came under the charge of my dear college friend, James Wilson, brave, strong, penetrating, truthful, wise, who used to take me for walks, cream books for me, criticise my notions, and fling himself into a hearty laugh, sometimes at my jokes, sometimes at my blunders—his clear eyes full of affection all the time. When his son was chosen minister I thought of it as a wreath of loving remembrance laid on his father's grave; and am glad to see him happily leading St. Quivox up the steep but sunlit and blessed pathway to the palace of the Great King.'

## CHAPTER IV

### AT NEW ABBEY

Dr. Charteris' Narrative—The Parish and Parishioners—A New Year's Resolve—Literary Work—Advocacy of the Endowment Scheme—Later Conclusions regarding it—First Assembly Speech—Writes Dr. Robertson's Life—Home Letters—Call to Park Church, Glasgow—Leaves New Abbey.

DR. CHARTERIS' narrative resumes:—'It was a great change to come in July 1859 (as the fifth minister since 1690) from the sea-board of Ayrshire and the sight of the beautiful hills of Arran to the foot of Criffel. St. Quivox was full of mines, and had great people dominating its social life. New Abbey is a purely rural parish, and there was only one resident heritor, who was not a member of the parish church. There was no one to offer luncheon on the day of my induction to the Presbytery, the members of which had come from considerable distances; therefore I asked them to the manse, hastily furnished so as to be ready. This showed how different were the circumstances from those of St. Quivox.

'There were few incidents in my life during the five years of my ministry, but there was a steady current of occupation, and in no other five years of my life have I existed without a doctor's prescription. This was probably due to my being much on horseback. The parish is about eleven miles long with a village at each end, and the village of New Abbey itself, three miles from one end and about seven from the other. It did much for my health: and my riding was among charming scenery, by hill and loch and the green shores of the Solway. It is the loveliest of parishes. The sea is half a mile from the manse when the tide is full: eight miles when the tide is out. Sweetheart Abbey, where Devorgilla, Lady of Galloway in her own right, interred the heart of her

husband, father of the unfortunate Scottish King John Balliol, is exquisite even in its ruins. Devorgilla was a remarkable woman, and as builder of Balliol College, Oxford, of the Old Bridge of Dumfries, and of this Cistercian Abbey, showed her zeal in promoting education, commerce, and religion. The inscription on her tomb ran:—

“In Devorgil, a sybil sage doth dye, as  
Mary contemplative, as Martha pious;  
To her, oh deign, high King! rest impart,  
Whom this stone covers, with her husband's heart.”

‘One of the first things I did was to call a meeting of friends interested in such matters to try to preserve the sacred ruins from falling to pieces through the action of the weather. A very hearty meeting assembled in the manse, among them Thomas Aird of the *Dumfries Herald*, and W. R. MacDiarmid of *The Courier*. We raised about £400 that day, and soon after were beginning to stop gaps in the walls with cement, and to restore some damaged mullions in the windows, when Mr. Oswald (the chief heritor in New Abbey as he had been in St. Quivox) offered to carry out our programme, if we would entrust him with the funds. A question of property arose, as he knew. Inside the walls the ground belonged to the kirk-session, but up to the walls outside it belonged to him and another. It seemed best to let him take up our proposal, though I have never been sure that in so doing we were acting wisely, or that enough was done for the venerable shrine. Decay, however, was arrested, the broken mullions were restored, and Sweetheart Abbey will remain for generations the gem and the centre of the lovely valley where the wise and saintly lady planted it in the thirteenth century. Principal Shairp and Dean Stanley were among the many Balliol men who came to see it in my time, and Shairp's lines remain. They begin:—

“In grey Criffel's lap of granite,  
Rests the Abbey saintly fair,  
Where the wise heart that did plan it,  
Found its sacred lodgment there.”



'My parish work did not begin with any elaborate plans. The Ayrshire labours had so exhausted me that for many months my mind rested in the new manse. Meanwhile I systematically visited my parishioners, many of whom I had known in my uncle's time. Almost everybody belonged to the parish church, and the few who did not were, if anything, more eager to welcome me than "my own people." Up at Beeswing, six or seven miles away, there was a small Free Church, serving a useful purpose for the three parishes which met there, but in the lower and more populous part of the parish the Free Church never had a footing. Mr. James Hamilton was an unwavering man, in ecclesiastical politics a Moderate, in doctrine and work a decided Evangelical, and his faithful ministry of forty-five years left no ground of dissension or dissent, so that I found a united parish. He was a stern Protestant, teaching Protestant catechisms in his Sunday school and Bible-class; but one of my first visitors, an old Roman Catholic woman who asked help, said of him quite truly, "They say he didna like my kind of folk, but he was aye kind to me."

'There had always been Roman Catholics in the parish, the mason, the joiner, and the tailor, and their ancestors for generations had held by the "old faith"; but they were parishioners first and Papists second. They called for my visits in their illness. I officiated at their funerals. My colleague the Roman Catholic priest, trained in Spain, was my intimate friend; and the only letter to the parish, announcing his early death when on a distant journey, was sent to me. His successor, trained in Ireland, was a man of different stamp; an able, but narrow and ambitious man, who had once been in a prominent charge elsewhere: and he gradually altered all the relations between his flock and the parish minister. He passed away, and I believe things have largely fallen into their former conditions. At a mission sale in this manse garden in my successor's time, ten years ago, I met as one of the interested parishioners the retired priest of the parish. I was aware that more than a score of my young Roman Catholic

parishioners were in attendance at the parish schools, and I believe that something like this number had been in attendance since first a parish school was established, without one single case of proselytism or violence done to conscience during all the generations of the past. The parents told the teacher what part of the teaching they wished their children to be exempted from, and in all cases it was done as they desired.

'I not only visited my parishioners regularly, but called them at least once a year to catechetical meetings at schools and large farm-houses. In these meetings I expounded a portion of the Shorter Catechism. I asked the children to occupy the front seat, that they might be catechised, and I expounded the doctrines for the older folks; but several excellent old people, who knew they were strong in the catechism, insisted upon sitting among the youngsters, that I might question them in their turn. In that well-taught parish there were few who chose a back seat in order to avoid questions. It was easy to expound the splendid system of doctrine where everybody knew the words, and I always heard that the people were glad of those meetings. In my next charge I found a mighty difference when I wished to teach doctrine.

'I had a happy time riding up and down the long parish on my pony. It followed me like a dog if I left my saddle and walked a bit. I remember when calling on a farmer, an Original Seceder, who dwelt full seven miles from the manse, that when he learned I had come afoot, he said: "You walkit, sir, I did not think you were such a *predestinarian*!"

'I ought to say that I was sustained in all my work by three faithful elders, wise counsellors of a young minister in every difficulty, and always willing to share his responsibility. It was impossible not to grow in one's opinions when brought into close contact with things hitherto seen at a distance. For example, one of the farmers took me to see a field of oats, about ten acres in extent, into which he said it was of no use to bring a scythe, for the rabbits had eaten all that was worth taking.



He also told me of a clause in his lease which bound him not to complain of rabbits. No wonder that the Scottish farmers voted for their own burning question of ground game, and so helped to compass the destruction of the Irish Established Church. I then learned a lesson in tenant right which I have kept through life.

'In a country parish we can often see things in their naked reality which are not seen, or not remarked, in a town. There was an old man, possessed of considerable means, who made me one of his trustees, a charge which I took for the sake of his grandchildren. I have never seen such a case of absolute slavery to avarice. His only daughter died next door to him, and when the water came through the roof and fell upon her bed, I suggested to him to mend the roof; and he said, "Na! na! many a woman as good as her has had to come on the parish." Her funeral day came, and he and I were next to the hearse. Just when the little procession was about to start he cried out, "Bide a wee," and went into the house where the coffin had been lifted. I followed him, thinking he might be ill, but I found him drawing with both hands the fragments of the funeral bread into a heap which he carefully locked in a chest. Poor old man, his own time came soon after, and I did my poor best to comfort and prepare him. Within a few minutes of the end, he was earnestly trying to speak, and I bent over him to hear his last words. I thought he would be saying something that showed he was softened. What he did say was: "Tell them to buy the murnins in Dumfries; it's a hantle cheaper than at K——'s" (the village shop).

'I have said that the people were a thoroughly trained and thoughtful people. Yet there were times when one found that even among them the religious testimony was not clear. On one occasion when the neighbours were gathered for a little prayer meeting I asked for a New Testament, and the man and wife rushed hither and thither to find one. We thought they were looking for a particular copy, but at last we heard him say: "Jean, where can it be? I saw a Bible when we were flitting."



This was in August, and the flitting had been in the previous May.

‘These stories rather tell against my dear old parish, but as I look back, there come to my mind a thousand proofs of true religion as ruling in New Abbey. I think every man and woman in the parish subscribed for the Endowment Scheme. My housekeeper, a Free Church woman, gave £5; the farmers from £20 downwards. The resident heritor, though an Episcopalian, came to swell our little heap. In the same way, when the distress of the Lancashire cotton operatives made pathetic appeal to every one, the parishioners formed themselves into a committee, and in twenty-four hours gave me (I think) £80 to send to the sufferers. The givers were all farmers and cottars and tradesmen. They were good and honest people, to whom it was my privilege to minister for five years: many, indeed, of my wishes they unhesitatingly carried out: many of them were anticipated. It was a great pleasure to me when they unanimously chose James Stewart Wilson as my successor, and under his long, faithful, and devoted ministry they have grown to better things in support of missions, home or foreign, than those with which they gladdened me.

‘I sometimes tell a story which often amused me when it came to mind. Two excellent old sisters, who owned a small property within the “precincts,” said to me on my first visit to them, “Dinna waste your time, sir, calling on the neighbours, but gie *us* aye a look in when you go by.” I remember when I decided to go to the Park Church one of them charged me, more in sorrow than in blame, for having misled them the previous Sunday by asking the congregation to sing:—

“This is my rest, here still I’ll stay,  
For I do like it well.”

Some still alive in New Abbey remember Mr. Charteris, and recall the cheery effervescence of humour which blended in his speech with the seriousness of his high aim. ‘Every man has corns, if you tramp near enough

his feet,' was one of his sayings. Catching an old parishioner in the act of scattering Indian corn to her poultry, he hailed her with chaffing praise: 'The hand of the diligent maketh rich.' But one day in the commonplace church which Carlyle called 'a Presbyterian dog-kennel,' built on to a portion of the grand old ruined Abbey, in commencing his sermon he very solemnly announced that he would preach 'as a dying man to dying men'; and then went on to preach a sermon which one hearer at least never forgot.

The self-accusing vein in his nature reveals itself in a New Year's Resolve on the first day of 1861:—

'I have been in the past year, indolent, dilatory, shuffling, rash in speech, too familiar in deportment, and neglectful of private devotion.

'I therefore would prayerfully resolve—

'On *greater diligence*, as manifested in vigorous adherence to division of time for labour, recreation, and rest, especially avoiding too great indulgence in periodical literature.

'On *doing at once what is to be done*, especially on not trifling away the time in the morning or close up to the hour of appointments.

'On *manly sincerity and truthfulness*, being careful in my speech neither to promise more than I can perform, nor to state what is not calculated to give a right impression of the truth.

'On *being wary of my remarks*, since I know how apt my facility of expression is to commit me ere I well wot.

'On *being ever conscious of my position* as minister of the parish, and endeavouring to keep all intimacy free from familiarity on either side.

'On *being more faithful to my own soul*, and more assiduous in private devotions, knowing that my work will prosper as my own soul prospereth.

These resolutions, oh my God, give me strength to perform and keep.'

Again, in New Abbey, we find Mr. Charteris throwing

his strength into the pastoral care of the young, giving special addresses to them and fostering the Sunday school; his Bible-class was largely attended by adults as well, in which he made immense use of the faculty of description. He often made sacred topography the scaffolding on which to rear the edifice of religious teaching, utilising Stanley's *Sinai and Palestine* and all available kindred works. A lecture on *Dr. Samuel Johnson* and addresses such as that on *Big Bad Boys and Sabbath Schools* were much in request at the Dumfries Association and elsewhere.

When he preached in Dumfries churches, crowded congregations filled the pews, and sometimes many were even turned away. He writes, 'Would that I were fitter to address such numbers. Sermons of the "high pressure" kind, which evening congregations demand, are not my natural style.'

At the fitting time Mr. Charteris could take up the cudgels for a cause which seemed to call for it. Thus, when a notable Free Church minister, Dr. Julius J. Wood, communicated to the organ of the Evangelical Alliance an article which professed to represent the state of religion in Dumfries, and reflected unfairly and with little charity upon the Church of Scotland, even alleging that her clergy were Arian or Socinian, Mr. Charteris made a gentlemanly and conclusive reply, refuting this uncalled-for series of accusations. And the accuser attempted to extricate himself from an untenable situation by lamely explaining that he had intended his remarks to apply to a state of things that existed forty or fifty years before! No man more candidly owned up to the imperfections of his own Church than he who championed her fair fame when injuriously assailed by sectarian prejudice. He and his old friend Mr. David Campbell discussed the principles involved in the prickly Cardross case with candour and good temper. And he delivered by request, at a Wesleyan gathering in Dumfries, a warm appreciation of the great services rendered to vital and practical religion by their founder John Wesley.



About this time he was also requested to undertake reviewing on congenial subjects for the *Edinburgh Evening Courant*, and contributed two long articles on Dean Ramsay's *Reminiscences of Scottish Life and Character* (6th edition). He rejoiced in the successful progress of the little book, which, though it cannot be considered a very solid contribution to Divinity, must take its place with the few that are destined to remain typical of their class, and which may be imitated by successors, but are not easily surpassed, and are never superseded.

He noted: 'There is one aspect of the Scottish character which the good Dean does not portray; we mean the independence and honest ambition of our Scottish poor. Now we see it pinching a family to give the clever boy his "schul'in'," that he may wag his pow in a pulpit; now suffering in silence the extreme pangs of want rather than utter a word of complaint; and now giving from scanty means a voluntary contribution to keep some distant relative "off the parish." There is many a schoolmaster too, that can tell of pupils whom he taught gratis to relieve poor parents of their burden, and from whom he receives many a token of their gratitude now that they are "men who have risen." He will doubtless testify that, if ever he gave free education to a clever boy, he has been rewarded a hundred-fold in after years.'

Here speaks the son of the Schoolmaster and Inspector of Poor—the Wamphray man.

As a preacher Mr. Charteris had at once come to the front; and he also soon began to make his mark through his remarkable powers of organisation, and of gauging the requirements of the whole population, especially of the working classes. Many of his friends had not yet suspected the gift of which he was master. He early began to realise that every effort must be exerted by the younger ministers to rouse the Church of Scotland to a sense of her duty to the masses in the sight of God. He had learned from Dr. Robertson the watchword, that duty meant not so much assertion of the rights of the Church of Scotland, as endeavour to secure her full efficiency in serving the nation. In a letter to his friend the Rev. T. B. W. Niven, he said: 'Something must be done—

ay, everything must be done—if the old ship is to hold together ten years longer.' He threw himself into Dr. Robertson's great Endowment Scheme with characteristic energy, and became heir in direct line (though happily there were many others) to the principles and enthusiasm of that heroic man, whose herculean efforts and devoted spirit, without doubt, saved the Church of Scotland. Mr. Charteris went wherever he was sent by Dr. Robertson, preaching and addressing meetings for the cause. He kindled first in his own parish a fire that satisfied even the insatiable chief promoter of the scheme, who wrote: 'I expect nothing more from New Abbey: it has done remarkably well already.' From a community far from rich there came in the fourth year subscriptions and donations amounting in all to £144, in sums ranging from £20 from a farmer-elder to eighteenpence from three factory girls. The apostle of the scheme was also its commander-in-chief; his chief of the staff was the Rev. William Smith, Vice-Convener; and a noble band were ready to respond to his call, in organising meetings all over the country. For the south and west, bounded by the Nith, Mr. Charteris was consulted in all his plans for the campaign, helping to procure speakers and taking his full share of work. His power as an advocate of the cause seemed to take possession of him as if by inspiration. Dr. Robertson's trumpet call was not sounded in vain. The territorial magnates of Scotland responded with munificence to his appeal on the ground of social responsibility. The Dukes of Buccleuch and Argyll, the Earls of Eglinton and Seafield, with many men of lower degree, whether adhering to the Church of Scotland or not, were found among the warm supporters of the scheme. Dr. Robertson's letters to Mr. Charteris were concerned with meetings at Ayr, at Newton-Stewart, Stirling, Perth, Aberdeen, Grantown, and Inverness; and they glanced at many individuals who might be approached with probable success.

In the confidence of close friendship towards one 'whom I love with all the affection of a father,' he invited him-



self to stay at New Abbey manse, on his way to Newton-Stewart; but stipulated that 'neighbours, lay and clerical, who may be most likely to take an interest in our object, be invited to dine with you the same day'; also that he should be driven over to breakfast at Munches the following morning, to claim the co-operation of that splendid specimen of a south-country gentleman and willing colleague in the cause, Mr. W. H. Maxwell, M.P. Another ally in good works is named in the now veteran Sir Mark J. Stewart, Bart., of Southwick.

In 1907 Dr. Charteris thus described his chief and his cause:—

'He saw that the nine hundred old churches were quite inadequate to provide ordinances for the increasing population of Scotland, and he set himself to provide means for the endowment of new parishes. Not only to provide a church, a minister, and a stipend—that might have been an empty form—but to fill the whole church in the pulpit and the pew with the spirit of a new ideal, with the resolve to consecrate the Establishment as a means of bringing the offer of the Gospel to every family in the land. At first his work was confined for the most part to committees, and he made them not only sympathetic but enthusiastic; and with their approval and in their name he showered pamphlets of exposition and appeal on all the parishes of Scotland. Then came public meetings—at first, very small; but gradually men of note came to take the chair at them, and able ministers spoke to them. Great congregations showed lists of subscribers far surpassing what had been done by the body of the people in Chalmers' time and for Dr. Duff's India Mission; his own speeches became more ardent, eloquent, and stirring, and the "Endowment Scheme" became a national enterprise. I remember hearing the Duke of Buccleuch say in a public meeting that he almost envied Dr. Robertson his great undertaking (*Memoir*, p. 325), and the chivalrous Earl of Eglinton, Lord of the Tournament, called him the great Apostle of the scheme. By this time many things had changed, and Scotland had



moved far upward since the Endowment Scheme was launched. He himself never allowed that he deserved any credit; he was too modest for that. He always said that it was endowment itself that did it all, because everybody could see that it was the true ideal of a national Church to bring the Gospel to every family—rich and poor—in the land, and to give every minister a sure maintenance through endowment. Endowment was in lieu of the poor parishioners' seat-rents. Every minister thus endowed was a parish minister. Certainly the whole Church was lifted out of the rut of routine, and a splendid spirit of sacrifice was stirred in the pulpit and the pew. The scheme has survived the founder's death, and now there have been 447 new parishes added to the list which existed before.<sup>1</sup> In those new parishes is a population of 2,136,540; the communicants are 247,942. The cost of erection was £1,657,320. The point of distinction is this, that Chalmers said experience showed that money could be raised for church-building, but could not be raised for endowment. Chalmers said it in a united Church, but, in a Church weakened and dispirited in every way by the great Secession of 1843, Robertson proclaimed his conviction that for endowment also the Church and her friends could raise the money that was needed, and the result was a triumphant success.

'Looking back over sixty years since the scheme was begun, I can now see how much less simple was the issue than Dr. Robertson expected it to be. There are various complications. The zeal of other Churches has led to competition of Churches, and a generous spirit has taken the form of rivalry. Then the poor workman is richer than his father was, and often does not need that his seat should be paid for him. The endowment is, therefore, in many places, less needed and less valued than was expected. Yet again, the minimum endowment of £120 a year (which was always too little) is now glaringly inadequate to maintain a parish minister and his family.

<sup>1</sup> In 1912 the number is 465.

The congregation have therefore to make up an income for the minister. They frequently make it up admirably. Almost all the newly endowed churches in great populations provide large stipends for their ministers, and are glad to raise the money. But in so doing they are more like the dissenting churches than the old endowed parish churches. The temptation is to become congregational, rather than territorial. Thus Scotland has, for the most part unconsciously, brought the Presbyterian Churches nearer together in practical working, and has made dreams of re-union matters of practical Church politics. It is not a case of the territorial church annexed by congregational dissent. The dissenting church now frequently aims at being territorial. We, perhaps, too much tend to be congregational. But, on the whole, Dr. Robertson's enterprise brought his Church to a position in which union with her is seen to be possible as well as desirable.

'The chief concern of the Church (which inspired the Act of Parliament in 1844) was to provide parochial position for a chapel, and so to undo the mischief that came of the Church's attempts to make chapels into parish churches by mere fiat of the General Assembly. It has done far more than was expected; inasmuch as it laid the foundation of honest patriotic work. It was not so broad a foundation as it might have been; but even as it is, there is much to be thankful for. It enabled the Church of Scotland, under Dr. Robertson's guidance, to do something to provide against the "peril of an unfulfilled mission."

'Dr. Robertson, when pleading with his friend Lord Jerviswood for aid in making an early and effective demonstration in Edinburgh, said (in 1856): "It is by the attention which she has bestowed on the interests of the poor that the Church has been enabled to rally her broken forces, to attract to her standard not a few powerful auxiliaries, and to re-assure the hearts of all who pray and labour for her peace." (*Memoir*, p. 327.)

'In that same letter Dr. Robertson said: "In the times



in which we live the Gospel is to be successfully preached to the poor only through the instrumentality of an efficient Established Church. A better age may come—I believe such an age will come—but it appears to me perfectly clear that at present an efficient Established Church is the only adequate remedy. . . .”

Mr. Charteris, who had been sent from Ayr Presbytery to the General Assembly in 1859, was in 1860 commissioned from Dumfries. On the former occasion modesty had constrained him to silence, but now (at Dr. Robertson's request) he made bold to second the adoption of the Endowment report, which was moved by Principal Tulloch.

A high-toned and well-reasoned appeal made its mark. Amongst those who sought his friendship from hearing it was Dr. A. F. Mitchell, then Professor of Hebrew, and subsequently of Church History, at St. Andrews, the learned historian of the ‘Westminster Assembly’ and the ‘Scottish Reformation.’ He was one of those shy, reserved men who, as a rule, prefer silence to speech; warmly evangelical in his sympathies, and a lover of the old paths; and his unique authority within his own province made him a reconciling force and a man of real influence in the councils of the Church.

The lamented death of ‘Endowment Robertson’ in the midst of abounding labours on December 2, 1860, when only sixty out of one hundred and fifty parishes projected had been endowed, was not allowed to retard the work which had brought him to a premature grave. The standard that had fallen from his dying hand was anew upreared by the Rev. William Smith of North Leith, who found abundance of ready help from ministers and elders, themselves fired by the infectious zeal of their great chief, and taking for their motto his dying words: ‘It is not the Convener, it is not the Committee that can do this, but the Spirit of the living God.’ They set themselves to complete that monument which the originator would have preferred far beyond ‘storied urn or animated bust’; and by 1870 the tale was completed, and the watchword given for ‘yet another hundred’ churches to be endowed.



Major the Honourable Robert Baillie, a descendant of the martyred Baillie of Jerviswood and the Lady Grisell Hume, who used to carry the needful food (including his favourite sheep's head) to her father lying *perdu* in the vault of Polwarth church in days of persecution, was a man as noble in character as in birth, distinguished by his high-bred appearance, by his tall, slight, soldierly bearing, no less than by his personal piety and real humility. He took a striking and influential part in the proceedings of Church courts; and, in particular, he watched with unwearied care over the affairs of Group III. of the Endowment Scheme, where the provincial quota was speedily raised through his endeavours. The comradeship of 'the Major' in the cause led him and Mr. Charteris to go on deputation to Aberdeen Presbytery, where the soldier backed up his colleague's more elaborate advocacy with one of those short clear speeches which betokened the spiritually minded patriot, and always wrought a deep impression. But this was not Mr. Charteris' first visit to Aberdeen, for he had once before accompanied Professor Robertson on a similar errand. Of that occasion the Rev. John Marshall Lang, then minister of the East Church, who died Principal of Aberdeen University, relates:—

'His appearance and his address at a public meeting made a great impression. All felt that in him they saw a coming man. It was his *début*, at least in the North of Scotland. It was more; to this visit and its consequences he owed the supreme blessing of his life. Afterwards I met him in Glasgow and in Edinburgh, in close intimacy, and his friendship was a constant inspiration.'

Mr. Charteris felt surprise when appealed to by the widow of Professor Robertson to write his life; and she gave him all the letters and papers which were in her possession. A great part of his time during the next two years was devoted to the study of Church history and politics, and to the reading and writing which the preparation of the biography necessitated. Its author tells:—

'I cannot recall these days without thinking of the

constant careful help I got from many—especially from the Rev. Maxwell Nicholson, and from Dr. John Gordon, H.M. Inspector of Schools, and LL.D., a Kirkcudbrightshire man, “honest John Gordon” Carlyle called him—a friend of all the Blackwood band and of De Quincey—a man of great power, wide culture, and a kind heart. Before I was licensed I had looked forward to a country manse, if I should be fortunate enough to get one, as a home of study, where I should take up the dropped stitches of my college life, and especially read largely in the Classics. But I found the daily work, and the calls of the present and the future, quite sufficient to fill my hands and my heart. Tulloch and others said that I spent a long time over the biography, which was true; but I could not think it right to be a mere biographer, when I was pledged to be parish minister; so after the first few months the sermon and exposition were my first concern every week, and all the rest of my time that I could spare was devoted to the book. It was a terrible business cutting it down—like amputation at the rate of a joint *per diem*. I am pretty sure that I would have done better in both departments if I had not tried to do both at once; but I have, alas, always allowed quantity in my work to interfere with quality.’

When the Life of Professor Robertson was published, in April 1863, it showed that Mr. Charteris not only cherished an affectionate, almost filial, admiration for the great man whose career he had undertaken to record, but that he had acquired so profound an acquaintance with the constitution of the Church of Scotland as to be able to trace its history, during the stirring period which that life embraced, with the cool sagacity of the ecclesiastical statesman, and yet not less with the fervour of the pronounced evangelist. In the preface he said: ‘I believe I have been enabled to know him as thoroughly as one man can know another; and I have tried honestly, without fear or favour, to tell the reader what he was.’ The delineation and estimate of his character provided by Mr. Charteris revealed far more than a hard-headed ecclesi-

astic formed of his native Aberdeen granite, and proved that Robertson was no mere keen partisan or syllogism-making machine. He who excelled all others on his side in the great constitutional debates of the 'Ten Years' Conflict' was shown to be a man of thoroughly independent mind, and of conscientious and patriotic aim, a workman that needed not to be ashamed in his intensely laborious gospel ministry, and with a heart that beat true to every Christian call for sympathy and compassion. Indirectly the book itself performed a service of the utmost value to the Church of Scotland. Till then the Constitutional side had been represented by the *Ten Years of the Church of Scotland*, published by Dr. James Bryce in 1850, written from a somewhat extreme position, and more successfully (in the principles set forth) by the Rev. Dr. Alexander Turner's *Scottish Secession of 1843*, published in 1859. Dr. Robertson's Life was now recognised to be the best justification of the party which 'stayed in,' and which refused to wreck the greatest of Scottish National institutions because of the lamentable results of mistaken methods of procedure, such as the Veto and Chapel Acts. It set forth also the true principles by which, on the old historic lines, progress was in the future to be sought, and it was characterised by a genuine catholicity of outlook, which made it clear that its author had disentangled himself from the swathings of sectarian prejudice, and could face a difficult situation in the spirit of kindly Christian hope. The book was extremely well received by his own Church, and did not lack warm appreciation from other sections of the Church of Christ. Even the organ of the Free Church, *The Witness*, which in Hugh Miller's days had been the severe critic of Dr. Robertson, though with a lurking admiration for the man, thanked Mr. Charteris for his record of 'a life worthy of a place among those who have not lived in vain.' Without doubt Mr. Charteris' efficient execution of this pious duty and labour of love went far to win for him the position which he ever afterwards held.

Mr. Charteris' letters to the home circle, written with unflinching regularity, give occasional glimpses into and side-



lights upon his daily life, and a few sentences culled therefrom may be of interest :—

‘I still rise at six when I waken myself, and never otherwise ; I thus get far more work done ; but I find that my work is not kept back by an evening’s unbending in intelligent and educated society—rather the reverse. My rule is to come home the same night, so that next morning is unbroken.’

‘To-night I take the chair at a Ploughing Match Dinner. I am made Secretary of the Synod’s Endowment Committee, which keeps me busy.’

His father is not forgotten ; in 1862 the Education (Scotland) Bill elicits the comment :—

‘The Bill ought to pass, and will pass. There is security now for religious teaching ; and this is all the Church can with good grace claim. We have a special meeting of Synod about it.’

For this Synod he prepared a speech which remained unspoken. His mother was keenly interested in the matter of his preaching. He often consulted her as to his subjects, and sent her his sermon to be criticised.

As his reputation rose in the Church many offers of more important charges came to him—at least a dozen—but there is no need to enumerate them. It would be as reprehensible as a red Indian counting his scalps, or a young lady rehearsing her proposals of marriage. He himself held his peace about them, honestly desiring to remain where he was, useful, happy, and in excellent health ; and he resisted strong pressure to change his sphere.

A vacancy, however, occurred in Park Church, Glasgow, by the appointment of Dr. John Caird, the prince of Scottish preachers, to the Professorship of Divinity in the University of Glasgow.

‘To my surprise (writes Mr. Charteris), just when I had finished but not published my book, a deputation from “Park Church” appeared in church one day, and a few days later Lord Provost Clouston of Glasgow, and some other gentlemen, came to offer me the church. I naturally, and properly, shrank from following Dr. Caird. What decided me to go was my loyalty to Dr. Robertson and the Endowment Scheme. As his disciple I had felt

keenly the anomaly of the two wealthiest churches in Glasgow, Park and Sandyford, being still only chapels, so making chapels rather the fashion; and after anxious consideration I resolved to go, on the one condition that the congregation should endow church and district for territorial work within a year. This condition was at once accepted.'

As may be supposed, so momentous a decision was not reached without full consideration. Dr. John Robertson of the Cathedral wrote:—

What could you not do for the good of the Church and of religion in this city by calling out, as you would do, the moral and the money power of such a congregation, containing very many who may be described as in all respects among the best men in Glasgow? I long for a man in the West-end of the city who would feel that the City is one, and would bring the strength of the West-end to bear on needy localities. Come and put your hand to it.'

Dr. Smith of North Leith advised:—

'Go. If anything is ever to be done for the good cause of Endowment I believe it is to be done, under God, by you.'

Norman Macleod of the Barony, Robert Flint from Kilconquhar manse, and many others encouraged him. Dr. Glover (Dr. Caird's father-in-law) hoped he would not rashly refuse. His successor at St. Quivox bade him be of good heart, cheerily remarking:—

'The Park Church people, I presume, know what they are about. I daresay they don't consider you to be *like Caird*, or expect you to preach like Caird, neither do I; and therefore there is no reason why anybody should be disappointed; you have only to be yourself. The mysticism of Maurice and others has obtained currency, simply from the want of men who can put life into the old theology.'

Above all from Dr. Caird himself, though they were previously unacquainted, came the kindest of letters, containing valuable hints:—

'In common with many here I am most anxious that nothing should interfere with your acceptance of the call and your settlement amongst us.

'I am quite sure, from all I know, that in *your* case the pulpit work would be no severe tax on your energies.'

It goes without saying that in the little school-house at Wamphray the brilliant proffered promotion must have been canvassed with mingled feelings of pride and anxiety, but the schoolmaster's sentence rang clear :—

'Smith's letter is nearly what I think about Park Church. You would be master of the situation, and be able to give a *lever* lift to the Endowment Scheme.'

On St. Valentine's Day, 1863, the Committee of Patrons of Park Church, and those representing the congregation who had unanimously offered the vacant charge, received from Mr. Charteris a letter of acceptance containing this sentence: 'Full of fear and doubt as I still am, I trust it shall be my best endeavour to discharge the duties of a faithful pastorate among you.'

The minister who preceded Mr. Hamilton in New Abbey, and lived to eighty-eight, had been settled with the help of dragoons in Moderate days: yet he became the most popular minister in the Synod. Those that fought against him, 'beguiled by sinister arts at his coming,' would have fought against any attempt to remove him. In these quieter days the less boisterous parishioners bowed with regret to the inevitable.

A single protesting Cassandra voice came from a daughter of his predecessor :—

'You have a great dislike to building on any man's foundation but your own. In St. Quivox I fancy you found none; and here, if there was a foundation you have not built upon it: neither have you razed it to the ground, but have founded a structure of your own, which I shall deplore being left ere it has had time to attain solidity.'



## CHAPTER V

### THE PARK CHURCH PERIOD

'Succeeding' Dr. Caird—Marriage—Port Dundas—Friends—'Sabbath War'—Serious Illness—Travels—Goes to Chair.

THE Park church had been built in 1857, when Mr. John Caird was called from Errol to be its first minister. His celebrated sermon on *Religion in Common Life*, published by command of Queen Victoria, had moved and delighted a multitude of readers; and his exceptional gifts had filled the new church to overflowing. His preaching was the outcome of a profoundly religious and philosophic mind: his language was singularly beautiful and well balanced: each word was the appropriate one, and came in its right place: his voice was musical and sympathetic: he had always a message to give, and proclaimed it like a prophet of old; though he was a shy and unobtrusive man, the typical student and scholar. He disliked Church courts, preferring the cloistered seclusion of Glasgow University, which he adorned as Professor of Divinity and latterly as Principal. After some months' experience of Mr. Charteris as his successor, he wrote:—

'I wish I were as sure of usefulness and success in my new sphere as you may well be in yours. But for neither of us can there be any "backward glances bent."'

The congregation had naturally felt anxiety about supplying the vacant pulpit, but they ratified with alacrity the nomination of Mr. Charteris by a numerously signed call. On 19th and 26th April 1863 he preached his trial sermons, and was formally inducted on 25th June. The Rev. Mr. Aitken of St. Luke's, who delivered the induction charge, said:—

'If you by the blessing of the Holy Spirit concentrate and direct the energies of the congregation aright, the blessing will be felt far and near. The missionary toiling in our wretched

hovels at home, and the missionary far away where truth has not yet dawned, will alike thank God for your induction here this day.'

All of which in measure came to be true.

A living personal link between New Abbey and the Park Church period must be glanced at, which not only charmingly connected them, but brought into the life of Mr. Charteris what he and all his friends deemed its most helpful influence and its crowning blessing. Reference is made in his home letters to 'My good friend Provost Anderson of Aberdeen.'

Sir Alexander Anderson (1802-1887) entered the Society of Advocates in 1827, and was among the most distinguished Aberdonians of last century. To his bold and far-sighted enterprise the remarkable progress of the city during the middle period of that century was very largely due. The Great North of Scotland Railway and the Scottish North Eastern line, connecting Aberdeen with Montrose and Brechin; the North of Scotland Bank and the Northern Assurance Company; the Aberdeen Market Buildings, then the finest in Scotland; the modern water supply from the Upper Dee superseding a quite inadequate local provision; the erection of the New Grammar School and the projection of the present handsome Municipal and County Buildings; the inauguration of the Aberdeen 'West-end' through his provident purchase of Rubislaw estate for feuing ground; the later acquisition of Torry by the Land Association which he inspired and guided, and the planting there of an 'East-end' suburb, which conspicuously facilitated the rapid growth of the fishing industry—these were the chief enterprises which his fertile brain and constructive genius initiated or accomplished. His occupancy of the Lord Provost's chair from 1859-1866 was brilliant. The knighthood bestowed on him, on the occasion of the statue of Prince Albert being unveiled by Queen Victoria, and the presentation of his portrait (the work of Sir George Reid) to the city in 1872, were appropriate recognitions by his sovereign and fellow-citizens of long and signal civic service.

Eager to learn all he could about the early days of his hero, Dr. Robertson, Mr. Charteris sought out the Provost as one who might well help him in his quest. They at once took to each other, and their friendship made great progress in the Provost's town house. The rest of the family, resident abroad for Mrs. Anderson's health, heard with interest by letter of 'the principal young minister' who was his guest. A year later, in summer, they were all staying at Blelack, between the rivers Don and Dee, when the hospitable Provost sent his elder daughter to Aberdeen in order to persuade their friends Captain and Mrs. Balfour to take up their quarters in his town home with their delicate child, and to reconcile a devoted servant of forty years to this invasion. Comfortably settled at lunch, and expecting no one, they were astonished at the unannounced arrival of a portmanteau and its owner. The pleased domestic exclaimed: 'Oh! it's all right, Mr. Charteris will be no trouble. The Provost met him, and bade him come.' That was the introduction of the young couple whose marriage was to turn out quite ideally happy. Yet a year passed before they fully discovered their affinity. One Monday morning in July a large party had climbed the hill of Morven, starting about five o'clock. There he found his fate, and Provost Anderson's family one who was to stand to them in the light of a beloved son and brother.

The wedding was celebrated on 24th November 1863, in the Provost's drawing-room, by the bride's revered old minister, Dr. Forsyth, of the West Parish (of St. Nicholas), Aberdeen. Both bride and bridegroom would have liked to be married in the beautiful old church, famous for its black oak pulpit and pews, its priceless old tapestry hangings, and its statues and memorial stones; but their old-fashioned feelings dictated a quiet marriage at home. They only allowed themselves three days of a honeymoon, spent at Kair in Kincardineshire, after which they started to plunge into the manifold church life and duties which awaited them in the great city of the west. They were welcomed with a wealth of love and kindness which made



them feel and say ever afterwards, that nobody who does not know Glasgow can adequately conceive what real affection and devotion is, as between minister and people. A December letter from Mr. Charteris to his mother said :—

‘The past year has been the crisis of my life, both publicly and privately. May God command His blessing, and hear your prayers. My wife is determined to like Glasgow; and she is succeeding. We had the missionaries to dinner last night to eat your grand goose!’

It occurs to one now what an immense boon a manse—and that near the church—would have proved to both minister and people. Their first abode was a little furnished house, 18 Ashton Terrace—then almost in the country, though now close to the present University Buildings. The first letter addressed to the bride by her father was waggishly inscribed: ‘Mrs. Charteris, Opposite the Haystack, Glasgow,’ and it arrived quite safely! Their second dwelling was in Crown Circus, Dowanhill.

A Free Church friend, Miss Jane MacArthur, arranged the ‘downsitting’ in their first home, and continued their close, tender, and most able friend all their life, playing the part of ministering angel, unobtrusive but ever near. Mrs. Charteris’ cousin was married to Dr. John Robertson of Glasgow Cathedral, that man of massive intellect, tolerant wisdom, and high devotion, who was then crowding the famous High Church; and illustrating, in a time of dismal controversy about non-essentials, those permanent governing truths which controversy is so apt to overlay. Mrs. Robertson as first caller was a kind of prophecy of the marriage of east and west; and she helped her cousin through that friendly but most perplexing ordeal which a minister’s wife is obliged to face, the receiving of troops of unknown visitors who come to offer a welcome and Godspeed.

That well-known and accomplished veteran, Mr. David Murray, LL.D., Glasgow, has kindly supplied his impression of an already telling ministry :—

'Mr. Charteris' style and manner of preaching, his turn of thought, his outlook upon life, his ideals, were of course all different from those of Dr. Caird; but his strong personality and force of character, his sympathy and earnest purpose soon commanded the admiration, respect, and love of his people. On Sundays his strenuous and glowing preaching attracted many strangers, and the crowd which used to pour into the church, filling every pew and passage, showed no diminution.

'His sermons were logical and well ordered; their points were aptly chosen and clearly put. None could mistake what he meant to say, or sit unattentive when he addressed them. He spoke with great earnestness and force, and from deep conviction. He had a ready command of language, much natural eloquence, and a convincing and engaging manner. His hearers were drawn into sympathy with him at once, and were inspired with the same earnestness and conviction that he had himself.'

By subscriptions raised within three months the congregation itself raised the sum needed for endowment; no grant was asked from any Church funds. The Court of Teinds gave what is called Decree of Erection, ratifying the Church's arrangements on 20th July 1864. The parish thus became full-fledged, its minister a member of presbytery, and the barrier which had stopped the progress of endowment in Lanarkshire, and had gone far to break Dr. Robertson's heart, was removed.

Mr. Charteris himself writes: 'So Park Church became The Park Parish: and from the public point of view I was happy. I was very thankful to the congregation for their prompt action, and the kindness they then showed was continued in unstinted measure during the five years of my ministry. It was of course entirely out of the question that I should for a moment aim at being the successor of Dr. Caird. In my first sermon in the church I said, with all my heart, that it would be absurd to suppose that gifts which have only been seen once in the Scottish Church should find their sudden parallel in me. At the Induction dinner I said that I hoped, by honest preaching and faithful working, to do the work of the ministry among them, though I would never even aim at being the successor of Dr. Caird.

'It was a great venture, all the same, for a young man



of twenty-seven, with small gifts and little experience, to occupy that pulpit. First of all, I had to thank the large kirk-session for their unwavering support. They had clustered round Dr. Caird. They were the *elite* of the public men of Glasgow, lawyers, merchants, bankers, retired ministers, active professors; and from the day when each one of them took me round his district on my first visit, they gave me every help in their power.'

Park Parish Church was then even more than now the centre of a high-class residential neighbourhood. Minister and kirk-session had wished to include a district occupied by the labouring classes and the poorer portion of the community; but this could not be without intruding upon the fields of other churches; it was, however, insisted on that a certain number of free pews should be set aside for the use of the poor. As parish minister, Mr. Charteris laboured in season and out of season; he considered it his duty to know every member of his congregation personally, to be accessible to them at all times, to help them with every difficulty and trouble, to encourage them, to sympathise with them. But while in constant personal touch with them by speech or by letter, he did not commit the mistake of making his work among them a one-man ministry. The mainspring and the regulator he might be, but he taught his people to play the part of all the rest of the machinery. Each member of the Body of Christ should be a worker as well as a worshipper: worship should be the highest inspiration for service. He never asked any to do what he himself was not ready to join in; he was comrade as well as leader. His own work upon Sundays was very engrossing. Dr. Caird had made an arrangement with Dr. Norman Macleod of the Barony Parish and his kirk-session to work a large mission district nearly two miles away, and this gave Mr. Charteris the opening which he greatly coveted, to introduce his own wealthy church members to work among the poorer classes; for he felt that the rich, if possible, gained more by this than the poor themselves.

Missionary and Sunday-school work was embarked



upon, and in due time a church was built: now itself likewise a parish church *quoad sacra*. He himself says: 'In classes, meetings, and a hundred ways, the kirk-session and congregation shared my burden there also. It is not possible to over-estimate the effect of this constant upholding by the elders. Two assistant ministers laboured among the poor people there. My wife and other ladies conducted mothers' meetings. We ordained a number of deacons to take charge of the local work, and I did what I could to show my sympathy with what was done.'

His house in Hillhead district was a long way from The Park Church, and as far again from Port Dundas. 'Canonical hours' then in Glasgow meant eleven o'clock forenoon and two o'clock afternoon, between which he interjected a children's service beginning at one. Of this Dr. Charteris says: 'I think my best work was perhaps my children's church. I used to officiate with gown and bands on, as at the other services, preaching on subjects announced on the previous Sunday, and all the children came. I taught them catechetically and asked them to prepare for it. My closest friendships sprang out of that children's meeting: not only with the children themselves, but with their fathers and mothers also. The morning congregation increased very much, and the people told me it was because they were helped by my consecutive expositions of St. Luke's Gospel. I have always had a dread of sermons on nodules of texts, chosen without sequence; and my morning congregation showed how hearers appreciate plain exposition. I saw that my sermons wanted thinking for my audience there, but that my lectures stirred them most. In the afternoon I sometimes preached sermons in series, but usually the subjects were miscellaneous. Of course the days of pressing crowds had gone by, but I had great difficulty in persuading Nelson, the excellent "church officer," that it was no longer necessary to give seven minutes for seating an impatient crowd. The congregation ceased to be a fortuitous concourse of atoms, and came in increasing measure to resemble a busy hive of workers, also a large

family circle. At the close of each public service I had to meet those who desired to consult me about parish or other work, so that I was on the strain from eleven till four o'clock. Then we raced home for dinner, and my wife and I usually went to the Sunday school at Port Dundas at six o'clock. She had taken a great share of the work there, and some of her allies in mothers' meetings, and such like efforts to promote fellowship among rich and poor, are still our devoted friends. Those helpers who survive are not changed in affection: some whose loss we mourn are succeeded in our little circle of friendship by their children.

'I cannot think that my being minister of The Park left such a mark upon it as upon myself. But this one thing I ought to say. The congregation was then one of the richest in Glasgow, or in the Church of Scotland, and it was the most forbearing congregation I ever heard of. Other ministers have been oppressed by their congregations: I was protected and upheld. While I was abroad in search of health, and when I was at home, I found the "potent, grave, and reverend seigniors" really taking thought how to make matters easy for me. I found that the highest type of a Glasgow merchant is a man of education, not only in respect of books—although well-read in them also—but in knowledge of the world, in wise considerate opinions of men and things. He is tolerant, therefore liberal in opinion and generous in his dealings with men. Differences regarding church communions do not hamper or harass them in social relations, any more than differences in commerce; and the narrowness and bitterness which Scotland unhappily nourishes are in my experience almost unknown in the commercial capital.

'The addition of the burden of Port Dundas Mission to the abundant cares of my large congregation, and the continued strain of preaching, proved too much for me, and led to my breaking down in eighteen months, in 1865. I was nine months off work. The generous sympathy of my congregation is an abiding memory. They engaged an accomplished assistant and continued



my own stipend. My first assistant was the Rev. W. Jardine Dobie, now of Kinghorn: a better and kinder curate never was.

'My wife and I went to Sicily and Italy. There were other ministers in Rome with us; but none had letters like mine. They always said how well all was getting on, and expressed anxiety that I should not return till I was quite well. My wife took Roman fever, and as soon as she could travel we came home to London. She went on to her relatives in Scotland. I went to Switzerland with my two friends, Dr. Macduff of Sandyford and Professor A. F. Mitchell, who successively took charge of me with a patience and care of which I was too young and inexperienced to understand the whole meaning. Dr. Mitchell took me to the Engadine, and there my terrible, disabling headaches became at least intermittent. When I returned to Scotland, the heather and the sweet air of Deeside drove them away; and I resumed work in the autumn, but now permanently with an assistant. Mr. Dobie, Mr. (now Dr.) R. W. Weir of Dumfries, Mr. (now Dr.) J. Mitford Mitchell, and Mr. (now Professor) Henry Cowan were my assistants. No wonder that the Park people highly valued them all. Looking back I give thanks that there never was *any* friction: the splendid kirk-session of leading men stood round me and stood by me, though I was no more than a boy. Following, but never attempting to succeed, Dr. Caird, I never preached a great sermon. I never tried, but I could not have made one if I had tried ever so much.'

Happily a man is not always the best judge of his own preaching; and from the Christian point of view the sermon which flows along in sonorous periods, tickles the ear with studied epigrams, or delights the mental eye with coruscations of fireworks, may leave much to be desired. Not to please men, but to commend himself to every man's conscience in the sight of God was the Pauline ideal. Many good judges are of opinion that Dr. Charteris touched high-water mark as preacher; and



if the Divine Teacher's test, 'By their fruits ye shall know them,' be the criterion applied, his Glasgow ministry was fruitful indeed.

A Literary Society was set up shortly after he came to The Park, of which he was president. It attracted many members outside the congregation, amongst others the late Dr. George Matheson, the blind poet-preacher of St. Bernard's, Edinburgh, whose inspired hymn, 'O Love that wilt not let me go,' adorned *Life and Work* in January 1882. The minister was deeply interested in the young men and women, both of The Park and at Port Dundas; taking every opportunity of meeting with them, talking with them, and helping them; and he induced many to take an active part in congregational work, and in the wider work of the Church. Mr. Charteris delighted in discussion, and was an admirable reasoner: a calm and attentive listener: and a most adroit antagonist. In walking with a friend he liked to take up some question of theology or philosophy, or to turn over from every point of view the best method of dealing with some social or Church problem. Such discussions were often continued in his own study after the walk was over, and occasionally induced him to give his friend 'a Scots convoy,' that is, to see him on his way home, till the point was cleared up. He had an excellent memory: when at college he could repeat thirty lines of Virgil after one reading. His facts were always within reach, and he could marshal them with great skill; his argument was always temperate and fair, and was as a rule convincing. He was remarkably methodical also in his arrangements. Everything was thought out in advance, so that, when any particular work was taken up, no time was lost in useless experiment. He had surveyed the field and knew what was required. Every day had its allotted duty, for congregational and parish visiting, meetings of kirk-session, mothers' meetings, Dorcas meetings, meetings of Bible-classes, Literary Society, and the Working Men's Institute at Port Dundas.

In the great work of the many charitable and philan-

thropic institutions of Glasgow he was not able to take a large part; though he is found addressing the Young Men's Christian Association on 'Christ as the Young Man's Model,' and moving the annual report of the National Bible Society. He also preached the annual sermon to the Sons of the Clergy Society in 1867, from the words of St. Luke, chap. xviii. ver. 8. His time was given in the first place to his parish and people, and in the next to the general work of the Church. But he took a sympathising interest in the Grove Street Institute, established by his friend Mr. J. W. MacGill, 'that devoted saintly genius,' then an elder with Dr. Norman Macleod; though he was personally unable to give much assistance. One of MacGill's endless plans for the good of the toiling thousands was to arrange a holiday week for families in Arran during 'Glasgow Fair.' Through the winter each 'steward' got each 'wage-earner' of his party to lay by a sum for this summer excursion. Planning it out made a close bond of union between the 'stewards' and their Port Dundas friends. Many sons of the merchant princes of Glasgow used to tell Mr. Charteris that in no other way could they so easily have got to be really intimate with those working men. To bridge in every conceivable way the chasm that tends to yawn between classes was ever one of his constant aims.

Of Mr. Charteris' Glasgow friends he says: 'Dr. Caird was always kind to me, and quite appreciated my attempts at working as I best could. My nearest neighbour and closest friend was Dr. John R. Macduff, author of *The Faithful Promiser*, *Morning and Night Watches*, and many other well-known books. I owed much to his constant sympathy, his brotherly helpfulness, and the charm of his high-toned, devoted life in his beautiful home. Next to him, and more my co-equal, was James Dodds, then minister of St. Stephen's parish, who recently died minister of Corstorphine. He was a sunny, healthy Christian, full of resource and fun. Since that time, indeed, all the while he was in Corstorphine, he suffered from the disease which at last carried him off, borne



with a patience as bright as his bearing had been in days of health and power.

‘Among the many friends I could mention I must tell something, however inadequately, of what our chief, Dr. Norman Macleod, was to me. I might speak of his humour, his wit, his magnificent mind, his unwearied toil, his high devotedness. But it needs not: they are renowned. It was an education in itself to know him. He is one of the two men of genius I have known. The other was Sir James Simpson. It is not mine to try to describe the greatest Scotsman of his day, but while my little life remains I shall feel glad, even proud, to have had the friendship, and I may say the confidence, of Norman Macleod. His accomplished brother and biographer, who succeeded me in The Park Church, has left an admirable permanent record of the public and private life of the great minister of the Barony. To that brother I may well pay my tribute, the kindest, the most considerate, the most constant of friends, who has always seemed to wish to have me with him when any great event was to take place in The Park congregation. He always says that he even brought me to preach and kill the Fast Day!

‘Some time late in 1865 I went to a meeting of the presbytery of Glasgow on some business connected with the recent introduction of an organ into Park Church, and found myself, quite to my surprise, in the midst of what was soon widely known as the “Sabbath War.” Dr. Norman Macleod had delivered a speech against a proposed Pastoral Letter, recoiling from over-strict views, in which he made a wide distinction between Sabbath and Sunday. His speech was eventually printed as a large pamphlet, in which he sought to vindicate Christian freedom from the obligations of the Jewish Sabbath. He was keenly opposed in his views of freedom by some of the senior members of the presbytery, and wild rumours of a “libel” being called for filled the air. It seemed to me that there was a huge conflict on a hypothesis; and I ventured to speak at an adjourned meeting for which there was time to prepare. Dr. Macleod had argued as



though the Pharisees' perversion of the Sabbath were a fair reading of the Fourth Commandment, and his opponents seemed rather to accept that interpretation of things. I gave all credit to the earnest defenders of the Sabbath of Scottish tradition, but I could not bear to see the foremost man among us accused of assailing religion. In my speech, for which I got more credit and thanks than were due, I tried to distinguish between the Pharisaic glosses which our Lord condemned, and the Fourth Commandment, which He never traversed, and which ought to be treated as a beneficent law made for man. I endeavoured to make clear the attitude of reverence in which I stood when reviewing Dr. Macleod's work, and said:—

“I trust that naught will fall from my lips inconsistent with my affectionate regard for him whose name is a household word wherever our language is spoken or read. It suggests not only the admirable and genial writer, but the faithful minister and the unwearied promoter of the cause of the Gospel at home and abroad. I do not regret that, holding the opinions he did, he should have come here to express them—any less manly course would have been unworthy of him—but I do regret that in order to reach certain practical conclusions he has thought it necessary to follow a course of reasoning which I believe to be unsound and dangerous; and thus while I am sure that he, and all who are like him, will never do anything either on the Lord's Day, or any other of the seven, unworthy of their Christian profession, I am bound to say, he has nevertheless in his speech given an opportunity to many, to practise their irreverence behind the broad ægis of his great name.”

‘Then I went on to reason back to the Fourth Commandment as a day of rest: to be kept as “holy rest” with special regard to the Almighty, who gave it as a blessing to man. I quoted Proudhon, the French Socialist thinker, who found that the principle of a special day of rest every week was sanctioned by physiology, and a necessity to the healthy man. I said that the principle on which I would act as a Christian would be this: that I am to do on the Lord's Day what I feel to be for the promotion of my own spiritual well-being—only under this twofold limitation—on the one hand, that I am not to purchase it at my

fellow-creatures' expense; and on the other hand, that I am not to put a stumbling-block in my brother's way.

‘Such as the principles were, I had arrived at them in my student days, and had preached them in both my country parishes. We carried a motion defeating the party for extreme strictness.

‘The war, however, was not over. Some of the seniors actually still wanted to “libel” Dr. Macleod, and that devoted son of the Church of Scotland was in great trepidation. One who loved his Church less might have better borne it. It nearly killed Dr. Norman. It was left to me to lead the younger men against that mad idea; and the result was a Minute expressing the presbytery's dissent from Dr. Macleod's exposition of Scripture on the subject, which dissent he was to regard as an admonition. He had at the outset said he was bound to receive meekly the admonition of the brethren. We would have spared him that admonition and trusted to argument, but he had committed himself, and so had fettered us.’

In retrospect one notes that the parties differed not at all on practical issues, and marvels at the fuss and fury which Dr. Macleod's great speech roused throughout the land. To libel on a charge of heterodoxy the man who in all Scotland was doing most for religion and the Lord's Day, and whose unique services for working people in working clothes were really solving the perpetual problem of dealing with those who had lapsed from ordinances, was not merely much ado about nothing. It was an absolute travesty of presbyterial oversight. The mediating speech of Mr. Charteris was welcomed by Dr. Macleod, who said:—

‘A great misapprehension has arisen with reference to what it is supposed I said regarding the moral law. There is not one single syllable in that most touching and beautiful speech of my friend Mr. Charteris—not one word which I do not subscribe to.’

‘Thus,’ continues Dr. Charteris, ‘the case ended on the formal proceedings of the presbytery. The great offender was deeply moved, and he beckoned Mr. MacQuisten (later



of Inverkip) and me to go out with him. He called a cab, and drove us to his own house, where Mrs. Macleod received us with much emotion. "All right, Kate, I am admonished, but not asked to be penitent. We called at John Buchanan's, and here is the champagne, which you will share with us. God help the Kirk of Scotland, and all the sane and sound men in the presbytery." One letter (out of many) may reveal Mr. Charteris' courage and resource in a hot corner. To Professor Mitchell he wrote on 28th February 1866:—

'At the second meeting of presbytery I was left alone, and the real instigator tried hard to browbeat and bully me, as being a young man, to abandon my intimated intention of moving an amendment to dismiss their motion for a committee. You may suppose that I tried all other methods before finally saying I would oppose them openly and unflinchingly. I told them that, once committed to public action, they must go on to the end, and not one of them could tell me what they expected that to be. I shall write to Dr. Crawford, and I beg either of you to move to better courses any of our presbytery. Their great object has been to get it referred to the Assembly, or to libel Burns, not Macleod! It was even ludicrous to see how they each drew back (after as a body agreeing to it) from my proposal to wait on Macleod privately, before presbyterial proceedings, to see if he can explain himself. It is the old story, "Who will bell the cat?" Dr. L— threatened me *inter alia* with the opprobrium of heresy if I defend heretics!'

'Some years later, when Dr. Macleod was going to India to inspect the missions, there was a public and real union of all the presbytery. The venerable Dr. Jamieson preached, and Dr. Norman felt that he was as much as ever the pride of the Church. After he came home from India he made some of his greatest speeches. None of them was so great as that he delivered on our hearth-rug to my wife and me. So long as we live we shall cherish the remembrance of the power and pathos, and the longing for the coming of Christ's Kingdom, which the great orator poured into our entranced ears. It was characteristic of him that, when he was full of a subject, he would pour out his soul on it to any sympathetic audience: in the City Hall, in the General Assembly, or in



a little drawing-room. At a later day his dream on his death-bed was, the whole Punjab suddenly Christianised; and such noble fellows with their native Churches and clergy.' This vision is now coming true.<sup>1</sup>

'As soon as the endowment of my church was accomplished I was returned to the Assembly. There was, however, an unfortunate practice in Glasgow presbytery of proceeding by rotation, which is contrary to the law and principles of the Church.<sup>2</sup> Dr. Smith of Catheart was clerk of presbytery, a man of the highest character and a distinguished classical scholar. He set himself to defeat my annual motion, which was that three eminent members should be chosen each year, leaving the others to rotation, or to any other system which found favour. The names I proposed were Dr. Craik, Dr. Macleod, and Dr. Macduff: year by year I was circumvented or defeated—never on the principle involved—and I do not think the motion was ever carried.

'My experience of that presbytery did much to make me well-nigh despair of the working of the Presbyterian system on that pattern. There were, if I remember right, about seventy members at the time—there are now far more—and the monthly meeting was occupied in reading formal documents about proceedings in regard to inductions, investments, and boundaries of new parishes, which our clerk insisted on reading in full court. No one ever listened, unless he had his own axe to grind, or something about his own church was mentioned. Many of the foremost men in the Church were among our representative elders, and would have been glad to take part in the sacred business which ought to have been considered in the presbytery. But they could not spend their day in hearing dry documents read amid a buzz of conversation. I had seen in the cordial presbytery of Ayr much brotherly intercourse, and some real work done: I had

<sup>1</sup> The Indian census of 1911 gave 165,000 who had enrolled themselves as Christians in the Punjab. The percentage of increase during the decade was 431·6.

<sup>2</sup> The Act of Assembly 1698 appointed 'that presbyteries *choose* their Commissioners.'

seen in Dumfries a real diocesan supervision of the parishes, conducted sometimes indeed with too much acrimony: but I have never seen, nor have I seen since, good men's power of doing good so strangled by an indefensible system, or lack of system, such as then obtained in Glasgow. And this was the court of the National Church, charged with the spiritual supervision of the second city in the empire. There were eminent divines—faithful pastors—in Glasgow, men of whom the Church was justly proud; but there was no union for work in the presbytery, and except for registering formal papers the court might almost as well have had no existence. And yet the theory of Presbyterianism is so perfect; the people share in the government of the Church; the system makes for breadth and power and freedom. The freedom to work sometimes (I admit) becomes freedom to let work alone. But all other systems of Church government (Episcopal or Congregational for example) are open to greater objections than is Presbyterianism. Only it ought to be at its best when opportunities are greatest and need is most pressing: and I cannot but feel that it is just there we fail in the subordinate courts. The General Assembly shows presbytery at its best. The Supreme Court is wiser, more enlightened, and more active than the courts below it; and this, I think, comes from the larger attendance and influence of the eldership. Ministers are still leaders, but they have not only to lead ministers, they have to guide the elders also, who not always formally, yet really, represent the people of all the parishes. In my old age I am sometimes of opinion that the elders in the Assembly are not, with some exceptions, such men as their predecessors were thirty or forty years ago; not of such social standing, or even of so wide ecclesiastical influence. Of middle-aged men, Lord Balfour of Burleigh stands alone in living unity with the whole Church, and he is trusted as no layman before him ever was, so far as I know. We have some men of his note and class who are an ornament to the Assembly; but they do not take an actual lift of the business that has to

be done. There is one eminent exception. Of younger men the Master of Polwarth has ever since his ordination been an assiduous, modest, and hard-working member of Assembly, and while supporting all good movements has found a great sphere in the Committee of Social Work, to which he gives a devotion that makes his friends fear for his health.'

In Dr. Charteris' opinion his public ministry was uneventful. It was happily so for the peace of himself and his congregation. He found in Park Church 'the postures' already altered. For long the traditional practice of the Church of Scotland had been to stand at prayer and to sit while singing. Standing to sing and kneeling to pray was in this case quietly adopted, and in coming years became general. Another 'innovation' was the use of instrumental music in public worship. The General Assembly of 1866, which persecuted Dr. Robert Lee for his innocent little harmonium, permitted a congregation, on intimating to a presbytery, which saw no cause to interfere, to introduce the organ itself. Mr. Charteris—who had never pushed an innovation—came to the presbytery as the mouthpiece of a unanimous session and congregation. The organ was first used on 30th September 1866, when Mr. Charteris preached from Hebrews xiii. 15.

Another subject which engaged his attention was the devotional part of public worship, which he was always anxious to make seemly and attractive. To some extent he was in line with the party of reform, but he long held back from membership in the Church Service Society from a constitutional objection, that it had not the 'imprimatur' of the Church, strongly maintaining also the privilege and duty of free prayer. He could be no party to proposals either to forbid or practically to supersede it by a compulsory liturgy, but he desiderated a partial liturgy, for optional use, combined with free prayer, and believed such a combination would be a blessing to the Church. As early as 1864 he expressed a desire for authorised Church forms for baptismal, communion, marriage, and funeral services. His own prayers had been



carefully 'conceived' and written out from the first, and were very different from and shorter than (what Professor Crawford called) 'the diffuse and rambling discourses then often inflicted upon congregations in the name of prayers.' He was an active member of the Committee on 'Aids to Devotion.'

To Mr. Dobie of Kinghorn he wrote in 1867:—

'These liturgical movements are doing away with the distinctive character of our Reformed and Protestant Churches. All the German Churches—the Scottish Church herself at first—had liturgies, but these modern men try to make a liturgy of the same kind as the English, which is a fragmentary liturgy, a combination, or rather a juxtaposition of detached prayers, each complete, and generally ending with some allusion to eternal life hereafter. The distinctively Protestant liturgies are simple, straightforward prayers in keeping with the rest of the service. But you hear many a man imitate the Missal with innumerable uses of the phrase, "Through Jesus Christ our Lord," and round about beginnings of long paragraphs, "O Thou who," etc. The *direct petition* is the Bible form, or the form of all Protestantism, which a glance at any Protestant liturgy (other than the Anglican) will show. I am quite aware that this is in itself a small matter; but I think that all reform should be in the spirit of the thing reformed. You know that I never use the English liturgy. Several reasons combine to make me leave it alone. Robert Lee is right in saying, the one direction of our Church is to give up the Book of Common Prayer. Unless our whole prayers are liturgical, the introduction of a bit here and there makes a manifest incongruity, draws attention to the contrast between a minister's ordinary words and those which he borrows. It is a tacit avowal of what I believe not to be well-founded, viz., that it is impossible to make a prayer without borrowing from the English liturgy. So far is this from being true that I think, for our purposes, it is a literary mistake to have recourse to it, when more suitable helps can easily be found. I envy the English Church the *Litany* and *Te Deum*, and I hope any Scottish liturgy will contain them. They are simple and straightforward, and are not, like almost all the English Collects, so involved in construction (being imitations of a Latin *Ordo Verborum*) as to require great familiarity in order to be understood. I want a partial liturgy, but it should be sought for openly.'

Mr. Charteris would never allow any innovation to be

raised out of its very subsidiary place in the Church's work. 'We have other things to do,' he said, 'in the world, than spend our time and talents as soldiers, in merely discussing the pattern of the camp, while the conflict surges around us.' But he did not agree with the immovable attitude of many old-fashioned Christian folk, whose piety he could not but admire.<sup>1</sup>

A marked feature of Mr. Charteris' ministry was that his doctrinal teaching—like St. Paul's—always had a practical outcome. Miss Jane Houldsworth, Rozelle, Ayr, gives her recollections:—

'My memory of him during the five and a half years he was in Glasgow is connected principally with his weekly Bible Class. He was always so gentle and encouraging, I remember he said one day: "When I ask you a question I shall never despise *any* answer, so you need not be afraid to speak just what you think." That class was a great blessing to us. My youngest sister was then rapidly ripening for heaven, and was much helped by his teaching. Another thing we owed to Mr. Charteris at that time: by his persuasion our mother allowed us to visit among the poor, in the crowded East-end district of Port Dundas. My sisters and myself had wished it, but had not been allowed till Mr. Charteris came. In those days the slums of the East-end were not considered suitable for young girls to walk and visit in. But we got a start in the work through the quiet, almost silent, influence of our new young minister. Our lives from that date began to be much more useful, and *much* more happy. Mr. C. thought the best plan of helping the poor was for a West-end family to take charge of an East-end one. We began with having an orphan brother and sister in our care; and many families in time occupied our thoughts. Our interest and work naturally increased. We owed all this continued and increasing happiness to our faithful minister.'

Mr. Charteris recognised the need, as well as the diffi-

<sup>1</sup> He noted to Dr. Mitchell: 'In the Act on Innovations it is said to be our well-known principle that nothing is to be admitted in the worship of God but what is *prescribed* in the Holy Scriptures; and yet in the last paragraph of the Preface to the *Directory for Public Worship* a distinction is drawn between "such things as are of Divine institution in every ordinance," and "other things we have endeavoured to set forth according to the rules of Christian prudence"; which last are also part of worship. Hooker I have read, of course, on the question; but I did not know we were bound to the extreme Puritan theory as a Church. In sketching my sermon *à propos* of the organ for next Sunday, I have come upon this apparent inconsistency of our authorities.'



culty, of a Christian ministry to the rich, who composed the bulk of his congregation. At first he was quite determined that, in order to get in touch with the men, his wife and he should try to dine out at least three times in a fortnight. There was no stiffness or formality about those entertainments, and no one could feel that they were strangers within the charmed circle, many of whom had known one another intimately all their lives. Most of Glasgow's merchant princes not only then made money within the city, but were actually resident. Nothing could exceed their loyalty to their minister, unless, perhaps, their loving demands on his time; but when the young couple reached their own door the time for relaxation was over; and the minister, whose crowded day might well have exhausted his energies, dived at once into his study to steal a few hours from the night. No wonder that this burning the candle at both ends led to nervous over-strain and frightful headaches at the end of eighteen months; and be it remembered—for it will save reiteration—that from this time onward Dr. Charteris' activity was seriously handicapped by severe illness, which was indeed his thorn in the flesh. What that activity was, in quantity and quality, we are permitted to see through the eyes of his first Assistant, Rev. W. Jardine Dobie:—

'At our first meeting in 1805 I found him lying helpless on his bed, only able to move with the assistance of a cord carried over a pulley. But though prostrated with severe sciatica, he was bright, eager, talkative—full of his plans for parochial work, and with that fine enthusiasm that cast a glamour over everything he took in hand. His recuperative power quickly asserted itself, and before long he was again at the helm, directing all the manifold agencies he had set agoing in "The Park." What a busy life he led in this the heyday of his ministry, and how stimulating it was to come in contact with his unflagging zeal! But how difficult to convey an adequate idea of the ceaseless activity with which these days were spent!

'In the endeavour to picture the "daily round," we must start from the breakfast hour—a special function in his house—where friends and workers were frequently gathered together. The hour was fairly early—generally eight A.M.—but by that time the minister had not seldom been in his study for a couple



of hours, and had done a good spell of work. Devotions followed at the close of the meal; then the day's work was entered on. Visiting lists were made out; hours of meetings noted; special cases discussed and arranged for; and on several mornings every week the invaluable beadle (Nelson) was waiting, to carry letters and get instructions of all sorts.

'Besides the palatial terraces of the West-end there was the poor Port Dundas district, where another Assistant was in constant work, whose labours were not simply supervised, but actively shared by Mr. Charteris. Under his guiding hand the organisation was of the most complete and perfect kind. The Park Church elders had each their district. Ladies from the Park Congregation acted as district visitors and conducted mothers' meetings and sewing-classes. The Sunday school was thoroughly equipped by a band of teachers chiefly drawn from "The Park"; and the mainspring of it all was the minister, whose frequent presence at a week meeting or on Sunday always awoke fresh enthusiasm. When he visited the Sunday school, the glow of welcome on the faces of the teachers was unmistakable; and how responsive the children were! He never failed to hold their attention, and to stimulate them to take an eager part in answering his questions. If it was a meeting of teachers where attention was called to the original Greek with its various readings, or of district visitors, or of collectors, how persuasive he was. He had unmistakably the genius for pastoral work—could plan or organise with rare skill and wisdom; and while keen and successful in enlisting others in Christian work, like a gallant leader he himself always led the way. No one could fail to notice in Dr. Charteris' parochial administration how he had an eye for everything. Nothing was forgotten: nobody was overlooked. Pre-eminent as a Pastor, he was unique as a preacher.'<sup>1</sup>

Among those who 'sat under' Mr. Charteris in Park Church was a future Prime Minister, now best remembered as Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman. Henry must have his joke even then, though at his minister's expense; and meeting him one day at the close of a course of lectures on the Apostles' Creed, remarked: 'Notwithstanding all you have advanced, I remain a Christian still!' By a coincidence the grave closed over the Prime Minister and his Glasgow minister on the same day.

<sup>1</sup> Professor Henry Cowan emphasises two points: that the Assistant was treated rather like a colleague than a subordinate; and the stimulating, suggestive, and heartening influence and independent judgment of Mrs. Charteris.

As a rule the Park people were cheerful givers, and indulged largely in the good-humoured chaff of intimate acquaintances. Once, however, a gentleman, when asked to help the endowment, excused himself by saying: 'Business had lately been very bad'; whereupon the elder, who was accompanying his minister, putting on an expression of deep condolence, said: 'Oh, I am so grieved! I had not even heard that you had put down your yacht!'

Mr. Charteris became seriously ill early in 1865. He could get no quiet sleep, was continually starting up in the night, fancying himself called to a sick-bed. Brain work of any kind increased his headache-pain to agony, and he could neither write nor study. Dr. Caird much regretted, but was not surprised, that 'the unconscionable amount of work you have been tasking yourself to overtake should have had such a result.' Absolute rest, in a warm climate and for a prolonged period, was decided on, despite the patient's indignant and incredulous protests. His wife and he sailed from Liverpool on a ship bound for Sicily, but the voyage throughout was rough and trying. They stayed a fortnight in Palermo, which in those days did not possess 'all the comforts of the Saltmarket,' their hotel dining-room being a sort of vaulted dungeon underground known as the 'catacombs.' It was plainly no place for invalids, in spite of the great piled dishes of mandarin oranges which were the only decorations of the huge table. The exiles bought the lesson by experience that invalids ought not to travel alone. Enchanted with Naples and Castellamare, they drifted to disaster at Rome. Here Mrs. Charteris developed Roman fever with very high delirium, of which the doctors took the gravest view. It was a sore and weary time for her husband. Resolving to escape from the poisonous climate at all costs, they made a dash for Civita Vecchia, hoping to embark at once; but found themselves in even worse plight, and alone. The delirium so much increased that the poor patient had to be locked into the railway compartment, while the minister went into the dirty and much avoided little town to find some place of temporary refuge. He hurriedly returned



next day to Rome, procuring a nurse who had the one merit of knowing some English. A couple of days later, goaded by despair, and as a last resource, the poor invalid, still in raging fever, was dressed, and carried to the steamer, thus escaping with bare life. They not only suffered from unparalleled extortion, but on opening their baggage, for carrying which an amazing charge had been made, they discovered that almost everything of use or value had been taken away. Still their desperate flight was vindicated; for the patient improved, and the malaria disappeared with every hour of the pure sea breezes, so that she was able to travel in comfort by Marseilles and Paris. A few days spent in the French capital inaugurated a close friendship with M. and Mme. Lorriaux of the Société Centrale, or Home Mission of the National Protestant Church of France; which was cemented in later years during his short visits to Edinburgh. When Mrs. Charteris returned to perfect her convalescence in her old Deeside home, her husband was taken into friendly custody by his neighbour, Dr. Macduff, who escorted him on a tour of happy, comfortable sight-seeing in France and Germany. Professor A. F. Mitchell of St. Andrews afterwards relieved guard at Interlaken, and they travelled through Switzerland to St. Moritz, in the lovely valley of the Inn, six thousand feet above the sea. Whether it was his 'proper amount of drinking' of the effervescent iron water, or imbibing the pure air of glacier and mountain, he was able to report a great improvement in his health, to which, without doubt, the loving care and congenial Christian society of his older companion largely contributed. From that date they formed a close ecclesiastical alliance; and Mr. Charteris reposed the utmost confidence in the unrivalled information and shrewd, cautious judgment of the St. Andrews professor. Rarely or never did he take any important step thenceforward without consulting him. Their gifts and temperaments were most unlike, but their theological standpoint and aspirations after Church reunion were nearly identical.

No reasonable space would suffice to tell of the ever-



expanding circle of Mr. Charteris' friends within and without the Park congregation. Dr. John Paul of St. Cuthbert's introduced him to the charge. James Macgregor, Robert Flint, and John Alison assisted at his first communion there. The last-named married the only daughter of Mr. Andrew MacGeorge, a solicitor of literary tastes, known later on as the 'acute pamphleteer,' who published, from the point of view of the Church of Scotland, noteworthy and convincing papers under the *nom de plume* 'Veritas.'

Of highly valued friends in the other camp, Mr. A. Taylor Innes, his academic senior by one year, has kindly furnished some helpful reminiscences of Glasgow days. He says:—

'We scarcely met till twelve years after college, and, as exiles from Edinburgh and Alma Mater, we took to each other at once. Whilst we had some public interests in common, we were not without private ties. On arriving in Glasgow the year before, I had stumbled into the Free Church congregation known as Renfield Church, where the death of the minister almost immediately made room for calling his and my Edinburgh contemporary, Marcus Dods. With him Charteris now renewed acquaintance. It must have been through Charteris that I came to know such Glasgow residents as Campbell of Row, the mild gospeller and keen controversialist of an earlier time, now in his placid and ruddy old age; and Andrew MacGeorge, like myself, a lawyer and a diligent inquirer into the questions of Campbell's and Chalmers' time, with whom I kept in connection till his death at Torquay, partly by correspondence and controversy, and partly through his son-in-law Dr. Alison. But after Dr. Charteris' charming hospitality (which means his wife's, for surely no two people ever lived more absolutely in each other and for each other than those two from the beginning to the very end), no link in that Glasgow time is more memorable than the MacArthur sisters, the younger of whom became known by her work for the Women's College of that city. Keen intellects and warm affections kept them youthful after youth's day was done, and through all their days they had a genius for friendship. And it was not, as genius sometimes is, an arbitrary and self-pleasing preference on the one hand, or an indiscriminating amiability on the other. It was a vivid appreciation of excellence, wherever it appeared within or without the ring-fence of sect or sex or station. But it was so loving and lavish in its Celtic generosity that it always looked, and sometimes seemed

even to create, the merit which it saw. And it bound together that little circle in the "sixties" with a charm far easier to remember than to forget.

'But before we both left Glasgow, Charteris was to lay me under great obligations as the suggester—and in that sense the "only begetter"—of a work I wrote there on the *Law of Creeds*. Some of Dr. Norman Macleod's utterances had raised a Sabbath controversy in the Church of Scotland, and my friend urged me to look into the whole legal side of such matters. I did so, but found no great attraction in the mere effect of this and that Act of Parliament, or symbol of Protestant Faith, upon one particular communion. One day, however, walking homewards in Sauchiehall Street, it flashed upon me that even at common law the same sort of question must arise in every country (and therefore in Scotland) as to the powers and identity of the Christian Church, when there is no Establishment and no statute to complicate the solution. Why not include both sides, established and non-established, in one book? I went straight to the minister of Park Church, and told him I had found my subject, and even my title. Charteris was greatly interested; because he foresaw I should have to treat of the division of 1843, and reunion of his Church and the Free Church was already one of his passionate desires. I was not so keen about it, but even on my side too (before looking into the law of the matter) the hope that I might stumble on a reconciling *via media* was at the back of my mind. Unfortunately, as soon as I had read (for the first time) the whole series of legal decisions of 1843, I came to take a grave view of the impossibility of a Church remaining under them—a graver view in some respects than is given even in the contemporary documents of Mr. Murray Dunlop. For these were written to justify his Church, not in going out but in temporarily remaining in—under its own protest and with its own conditions. I well remember the night I communicated this result to my friend, not without emotion on both sides. It divided our public course, as we both foresaw, for life. But nothing could be more friendly or more chivalrous than his attitude in receiving it on that day in 1866; and down to the close there was no change in that attitude, even under what I now think were sometimes provocative circumstances—no loosening of the firmness of his friendship, and never any abatement of his chivalry of heart.'

A Park Church family with which Mr. Charteris maintained intimate relations was that of Mr. (afterwards Sir) Archibald Orr Ewing of Balliknrain, so long M.P. for Dumbartonshire. His elder daughter Edith was



a particular favourite, tenderly attached till the end; and when his younger daughter—'a child on whom God's seal was set'—died before attaining sixteen years, he compiled from her papers a picture unconsciously drawn by herself, in a little volume, *In Memoriam—Ella*, printed for private circulation to comfort the stricken parents.

A common admiration for Dr. James Robertson led to friendship with Mr. Baird of Cambusdoon. Years afterwards the great ironmaster spoke to Dr. Charteris of Dr. Robertson's last appeal to him, as tears ran fast down the strong man's cheek; lamenting that he could have helped him much more than he ever did, not only with money but with work. But if that was a sore thought to him, the omission was grandly redeemed. His gift of half a million pounds to the Church of Scotland in his lifetime, 'he being his own executor,' was the noblest tribute to the cause of Scottish Home Missions which was ever paid. Dr. Charteris has left on record: 'James Baird was a man of great gifts both of head and heart; and his highest ambition was to serve God.' Amongst the great captains of industry the firm of William Baird and Company has ever been foremost to realise religious responsibility for their workers. Mr. Alexander Whitelaw, M.P., a member of that firm, made time, during many years of a busy life, to be interested in religious instruction both for children and adults. Dr. Charteris and he exchanged innumerable letters; and an illustration of their co-operation is mentioned: 'One of the queerest things in my experience was the endowment of Milton Parish, Cowcaddens. It was a poor chapel, with a poor congregation, burdened with a debt which amounted, through non-payment of interest, to £1100. From various sources means were found to liquidate this. Mr. Whitelaw undertook to endow it and make it a parish, if I could persuade the minister to retire (on a pension), and the people to take back their seat-rents and leave the chapel empty, to be thoroughly renovated before endowment. I was appalled when, through a chink in the door from the vestry, I saw the body of the church



fairly filled on the week-day evening we had asked them to attend. It seemed impossible to get those poor people to look so far ahead as to accept the idea of effacing themselves for a time, in order to secure ultimate good. It was small comfort the beadle gave me when he said, "Ay, a fair congregation; ye see, if I had a decent man in the pulpit, I could keep the church full." The end was that the kindly people made themselves scarce, and Mr. Whitelaw, in his generous, far-seeing way, carried the endowment through. I never approved of some of the clauses in his model Deed of Endowment, and, with no breach of our friendship, we were never in such close alliance afterwards.'

The intimacy between the two young ministers who had begun side by side on the banks of Ayr had been diminished by their residence respectively in Glasgow and Edinburgh, but that friendly feelings continued is manifest from occasional interchange of 'half a Fast-day,' and a sentence in a letter to Professor Mitchell on 20th May 1865: 'Your Swiss plan is the very thing I was longing for. Above all men whom I know in the Assembly I should like Wallace of Trinity College, if he could come abroad with us.' In the beginning of 1865 Wallace was sounded through Dr. Caird about accepting Glasgow Cathedral, and wrote his friend requesting advice and information:—

'Your *Church City Mission* idea is one quite congenial to my notion. . . . Robert Lee makes me almost sure that I ought to go, by assuring me that I shouldn't.'

In the long run Wallace wrote declining St. Mungo's.

The increasing divergence of view, however, between the two is strongly accentuated in a specially frank letter to Dr. Charteris from Rev. Robert Wallace, dated Edinburgh, 22nd July 1868:—

'I cannot but accept in the best spirit and with real gratitude your criticism of my too imperfect discourse. I infer that you suspect me to have lost faith in the leading dogmas of the Church. I confess that the reverence with which I was trained in my youth to regard these doctrines has received a rude shock from the acquaintance which I have formed, chiefly since

I entered the Church, with the modern theology or neology, call it what you will. I cannot speak of this school with the contempt indulged in by many good men. I have felt its assaults on the faith of my childhood to be very formidable, and I have not seen a sufficiently satisfactory repulse effected by conservative defenders. I do not, however, conclude that the assailants are right. I am simply in a state of sad perplexity. I cannot part with the old, because I might find out that I had made a great mistake. I cannot shut my ears against the new. It is too respectable to be refused a hearing and a reply. I am therefore thrown upon inquiry. That inquiry I am prosecuting, and have been for years, with the best of my leisure. It is an inquiry which, when fully gone into, must take a very long time. As yet I cannot tell how it may end. One result, however, I think I have arrived at. It is impossible to justify the vehemence with which many men assert the mysteries of the Catholic Faith. Belief must vary in intensity with the nature of its evidence. And faith, not certitude, is the only attitude of mind which can ever be rationally possible to the great mass of men. But of this result I see many practical conclusions, such as the abolition, or at least extensive modification, of subscription to creeds, and the alteration of the dogmatic part of the tie between Church and State. Meanwhile in my public duty I am perfectly faithful to the decrees of the Councils, explaining of course to my people what I have shortly hinted to you. You said that the Church and cause of the Redeemer would outlive all the attacks of modern unbelief. I am sure it will. But what do you take to be the essence of this indestructible verity? I should add that in the sociological field I see most promising scope for the activity of the Christian thinker, and that I mean to try whether materials for sermons may not be gathered there.'

Dr. Charteris, as Continental Convener, was instrumental in establishing summer services at Geneva in St. Peter's, the church of John Calvin. He persuaded Professor Mitchell to go on that errand, and their first hope was to get the very church where John Knox had preached during his sojourn there. But it was found that that would probably be required for local church purposes; and since then the Church of Scotland has enjoyed the great privilege of holding its summer services in the fine chapel of the Maccabees under the same roof as St. Peter's. Through Dr. Elder Cumming he arranged that a fitting and gracious acknowledgment of this inter-communion



should take the form of a carved oak communion table in Calvin's cathedral. It was cordially welcomed; and the friendly token is to this day pointed out to strangers as the gift of the Church of Scotland.

On the occasion of the consecration of a cathedral at Inverness for the Episcopal Church in Scotland in October 1866, Archbishop Longley declared: 'That Episcopal Church is the only true representative of the Church of England in Scotland.' The *Times* announced that the Archbishop of Canterbury had appeared in the position of a dissenter, and opened its columns to a lively correspondence, to which Mr. Charteris contributed above his own initials. He pointed out this anomaly:—

'The Archbishop has helped a denomination which owns a sister in the Church of Rome (though I believe that sister would not own her), and finds a "schismatic" in the National Church for which prayer—the "bidding prayer"—is offered in his own cathedral. We in Scotland revere the Church of England, and own the charms of her service, although we are not prepared to give up our position, and to become her tributary. But this Episcopal Church in Scotland takes another position, affects territorial titles, calls its chiefs Lord Bishops of this, that, and the other place, preaches about the "sin of schism," of which Presbyterians are said to be guilty, and (most curious of all) tries to make Scotland reverse the teaching of her history.'

Dean Ramsay, that fine specimen of a native Scottish Episcopal dignitary, quoted for its wit and point the rejoinder of his own Bishop Terrot to the Roman Catholic Bishop in Edinburgh: 'I observe you style me "My Lord": I had always thought that the Church made bishops, but that the Crown made lords.' When Sir Henry Ponsonby, Queen Victoria's private secretary, sent a reply addressed to Bishop Eden, styling him 'The Right Rev. The Bishop of Moray, Primus,' he was challenged for so doing; and the Queen then decided, in 1887, that the ascription and assumption of such territorial titles is illegal in Scotland. To give or to take them is therefore a distinct blunder. Dr. Charteris, while maintaining an attitude which logically results from the law and history of Scotland, entertained the heartiest feelings of Christian brotherhood



towards all communions. Perhaps a dash of the Covenanter spirit made him stand aloof even from the approaches of such eminent Episcopalians as Bishops Charles Wordsworth and George H. Wilkinson, whom he greatly admired. To the former he wrote: 'There is no hope of any such re-union as you advocate, until Episcopalians admit the full validity of Presbyterian orders.'

The summer holiday of 1868 might have had a tragic ending for Dr. Charteris, since in that year he narrowly escaped being drowned at Hamburg on his way home. When about to embark he fell through some rotten wood of the old pier: there was a strong current, and he was nearly carried away; but being rescued, he persisted in preaching two days afterwards in Park Church, despite the shock and three broken ribs. It became evident that the strain imposed on his health by his great work in The Park, interrupted at intervals, was too great to be borne with any comfort, and a friendly offer was made to him of a country parish near Edinburgh. Except also for unforeseen difficulties which arose—not affecting Queen Victoria's high opinion of Dr. Charteris' character and qualifications, nor Dr. Norman Macleod's earnest desire to see him appointed to Crathie—there was at one time a great likelihood of his being induced to accept that charge, which had become vacant through the death of Mr. Anderson. But his destiny was otherwise ordered.

The congregation of The Park Church parted from their minister with unmistakable regret, but reluctantly acquiesced in his decision to leave them for a professor's chair. He preached for the last time as minister, on 2nd October 1868, from the closing verses of the Epistle of St. Jude, and conveyed his parting counsels in words of singular beauty and affection to a congregation which showed deep and unconcealed emotion. Among other things he said: 'It is no light matter to give up this noble charge, and with it the most honourable office of the parochial Christian ministry, to which, I thank God and those whom He guided to guide me, I have been dedicated from my earliest years.'

## CHAPTER VI

### THE ECCLESIASTICAL SITUATION

St. Giles' Lecture—The Law of Patronage—How it split the Church—Auchterarder, Marnoch, and Stewarton Cases—Education Question—Bible in Schools—The New Spirit working in Four Directions.

ALTHOUGH the design of this book is to present the biography of an individual rather than a Church history of his time, some account must be given of the movements in which Dr. Charteris played a considerable part.

When his voice came to be influential in the councils of his Church, the ecclesiastical situation was, as it always must be, the resultant of past forces. The ecclesiastical statesman, like the politician, is bound to face the facts as he finds them, and is never himself the creator of a completely new set of circumstances. The tenth of the St. Giles' Lectures (first series of 1881) on 'The Church of the Nineteenth Century to 1843,' reveals the firm grasp which Dr. Charteris possessed of Scotland's religious annals comprised within that period. He walks with sure foot among its intricate controversies, and sympathetically traces its upward progress in works of Christian usefulness. The men named in its pages are to him living beings, real acquaintances, whose motives are not only justly but kindly construed, on whatever side they stand. A quotation may be offered which illustrates his view of the great evangelical revival, and shows it not to have been confined to one side of Church politics:—

'We turn from pastoral work to preaching. There is not much doubt that, in the beginning of the century, the ordinary

preaching was of a cold and semi-philosophical kind ; a teaching of ethics, with Scripture used as an illustration rather than relied upon as authority. But the century was not many years old when a change began, and with wonderful rapidity spread over the land. The work of Simeon and Hill and the Haldanes was no doubt in many cases effectual ; but it would have done little had not causes of more general power been in operation. The French Revolution, which stirred society to its very depths and made all thoughtful men consider their ways, brought the mass of the people to a new study of the Bible, and a new appreciation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. In many men unknown to fame, that change which all the world can read in the life of Chalmers was undergone ; and he who began to teach in sermons easily written, and heard, and forgotten, was striving, ere middle life was reached, to utter the thoughts that struggled within him, and to declare the message of the living God. The brilliant career of Chalmers and the herculean, unselfish labours of Andrew Thomson, were beyond all comparison powerful in guiding this new-born zeal. But the change was not confined to such as they. The party which by tradition bore the name of Evangelical was not distinct, either in doctrine or in practice, from that which inherited the other name of Moderate. While Chalmers was toiling in the wynds of Glasgow, and Thomson was smiting hip and thigh the advocates of the Apocrypha or of gradual abolition of slavery, the chief of the Moderate party was maturing the great project of a mission from the Church of Scotland to the heathen. We all find it easier to give by sight than to give by faith ; but the greater work of directing the sympathy of the Scottish Church to realms unseen was distinctively the work of the Moderates. It was a Moderate of the Moderates, Dr. Bryce, who laboured so hard in India to bring a mission to Calcutta ; and not only was it the wise head of the Moderates at home who planned the mission ; but of those to whom, in 1830, Dr. Duff dedicated his book on India, two-thirds were of the same party. The great missionary records upon his page of dedication the names of the committee : Brunton (convener from the time when Dr. Inglis died), Gordon, Chalmers, Ritchie, William Muir, James Grant, John Hunter, John Paul, and John Bruce, " under whose wise, paternal, and prayerful counsels the missionary enterprise of the Church has hitherto been conducted with such unbroken harmony of design, and such multiplied tokens and pledges of the divine approbation." And of those nine men, only three left the Church in 1843.'

It is not too much to say that within the same compass no more illuminative delineation exists, fairly condensing



the eventful story of these three-and-forty years. His view of the memorable Ten Years' Conflict, though formed by independent study, almost entirely coincided with that of his hero, Robertson of Ellon. Never for one moment would he allow the justice of those extravagant allegations which declared that the constitutional party down to 1843 had laid the Establishment prostrate at the feet of the civil power, and annulled every vestige of liberty in the Church of Christ. He knew his Church's history far too well for that; and always confidently maintained that the spiritual independence of the Church of Scotland was fully guaranteed by the Act of the Scots Parliament 1592, ratifying the God-given liberty of the true Kirk, and that it was revived and confirmed by the Revolution Settlement of 1690, secured by the Act of Union with England, and was never surrendered. In Scotland the baneful Act of royal supremacy 'over all persons and in all causes ecclesiastical' was rescinded by the very first Act of William and Mary in 1690, on the express ground that it was 'inconsistent with the establishment of the Church government now desired'; and the Confession of Faith inscribed upon the Statute-Book that 'There is no other Head of the Church than the Lord Jesus Christ.'

Dr. Charteris' personal inclinations tended from the first towards the Church of Scotland's traditional claim to be freed from the yoke and grievance of patronage, but he could not shut his eyes to the fact that the Church had spoken with two voices on the subject. While John Knox's First Book of Discipline lays down the principle, 'It appertaineth to the people and to every several congregation to elect their minister,' it balances it by the assertion, 'But violent intrusion we call not, when the Council of the Church, in the fear of God and for the salvation of the people, offereth unto them a sufficient man to instruct them; whom they shall not be forced to admit before just examination.' It must be remembered that dissent was a capital crime 'under the papistrie,' and continued to be reckoned a grave offence for long after the Reformation. Toleration, indeed, was unknown till

the Revolution Settlement became law, and was repudiated by almost all parties as sinful laxity. All parishioners were bound to accept the minister of their parish as their spiritual guide, 'To keep their own parish kirk, and to communicate there in Word and Sacrament,' under heavy penalties of civil law as well as ecclesiastical censure. Intrusion was plainly perpetrated, and non-intrusion as clearly violated, whenever a congregation failed to be unanimous; for the minority, whether large or small, was compelled to accept his ministrations, whether acceptable or the reverse. Under what now seems to us this outrageous tyranny, the personality of the minister must obviously have counted for even more than it does now. In the theocracy which John Knox sought to establish over all classes, his claim for popular election of ministers was an ultimate idea, a counsel of perfection which was never literally reached. The General Assembly of 1565 uttered the second voice, declaring :—

'It is not our meaning that Her Majesty or any other patron within the realm shall be defrauded of their just patronages.'

So did also John Erskine of Dun, the Superintendent, that staunch upholder of the Church's jurisdiction and liberty, when he wrote the Regent in 1571 :—

'I mean not the hurt of the king or of others in their patronages . . . providing always that the examination and admission appertain only to the Kirk.'

For the Reformers, as practical men, deemed it imperative to strengthen the authority of the Reformed Church, in order to prevent the intrusion of all unqualified persons. In this they entirely succeeded, and the statute of the Regent Murray in 1567 ordained that examination of admission should be only in the power of the Kirk. No attempt has ever been made to limit the Church's power of 'collation,' that is, of deciding on the whole range of qualification. The Second Book of Discipline was in theory for non-intrusion, but the method really adopted was 'by the judgment of the eldership (which then meant



the Presbytery) and consent of the congregation.' Probably the words of Alexander Henderson, the noble Covenanter, in his treatise of 1641, truly reflect the Church's feeling all along :—

'This liberty of election is in part prejudiced and hindered by patronages and presentations, which are still in use there (in Scotland) not by the rules of their discipline, but by the toleration of that which they cannot amend; in the meantime procuring that in the case of presentations by patrons, the examination and trial by the presbytery is still the same.'

In 1649 the Scots Parliament abolished patronage, and compensated patrons by giving them all the free teind of the parish instead thereof. But with the restoration of Charles II. Episcopacy and patronage came back together, under those 'killing times' of persecution which are indelibly branded on the memory of the Scottish nation. When deliverance was vouchsafed at the Revolution, it was enacted that

'Heritors of the said parish (being Protestants), with the elders, are to name and propose the person to the whole congregation, to be either approved or disapproved by them; and if they disapprove, the disapprovers give in their reasons to the effect the affair may be cognosed upon by the presbytery of the bounds, at whose judgment, and by whose determination the calling and entry of a particular minister is to be ordered and concluded.'

As the Treaty of Union in 1707 confirmed the Acts of 1690 and 1592, 'With the whole other Acts of Parliament relating thereto,' the integrity and liberties of the Church of Scotland plainly included the settlement regarding patronage arrived at in 1690. But the High Church Tory administration of Harley and Bolingbroke, scheming to gratify and forward the Jacobite interest in both countries, resolved to perpetrate a prodigious wrong; and ere the ink of the Act of Union was five years old, by an indecently swift and unscrupulous use of the powers of the united parliament, without the slightest pretence of consulting Scottish opinion, they reversed the well-working policy of 1690, and reimposed patronage in spite of a weighty



protest tendered by Principal William Carstares and other Scots commissioners. The General Assembly showed its sense of the grievance and burden by charging its Commission every year till 1784 to seek repeal, until the same should, by the blessing of God, prove successful. Space does not permit of dwelling on the First Secession of the Erskines. The causes of this cleavage were largely temperamental; but the abuse of patronage, or rather the absence of popular election even in a limited form, was chief among them. They claimed to secede only from the 'prevailing party' in the Church courts, and they appealed to 'the first free, faithful, and reforming General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.'

Then came the years of Moderate ascendancy in the Assembly, when leading men, acknowledging, in the words of Dr. Patrick Cuming, that 'the law of patronage is a hard law,' yet deemed it necessary to enforce it, and to put a stop to what they considered acts of insubordination by presbyteries. Beyond question they fastened the yoke of patronage more firmly, and made it infinitely more galling by a series of decisions which minimised the value of the people's 'call,' and also narrowed the range both of the minister's qualification and of the people's right of objection. Thus when in 1752 the gentle and conscientious Thomas Gillespie, with five other ministers of Dunfermline Presbytery, refused to take part in a forced settlement, Gillespie was singled out and deposed for disobedience. No wonder that many began to despair of a Church which had adopted this disastrous policy, and with mournful steps abandoned her fellowship. The Church of the 'Relief' from arbitrary and high-handed patronage proved by its name that the seceders objected, not to a right relation between Church and State, but to that terribly efficient wedge of cleavage, the Act of Queen Anne. One distinguished Moderate leader, Professor Hardy of Edinburgh, seeking to unite parties in 1782, thus addressed the clergy of the popular interest:—

'We are silent here in our Assembly. We are afraid to fret the sore which, alas! we cannot heal; but we agree with you,

gentlemen, in your sentiments of the law itself; . . . it is a grievance, not such indeed as to justify resistance, but such as will warrant application for redress. When I speak thus I am certain that I speak the sentiments of a great majority of the Moderate interest.'

After 1784 no special action was taken; but in 1825 an Anti-patronage Society was formed outside the Church courts to stimulate the traditional feeling. Dr. Andrew Thomson, the foremost personality and force of the great Evangelical Revival, was never known to hold any other than anti-patronage sentiments. On the other hand Dr. John Inglis, the sagacious leader of the Moderates, now best remembered as the far-seeing founder of the Foreign Mission Scheme, propounded this plan—that the congregation should have three months to name the man of their choice, and if they were unanimous, or if there was no obstinate minority, they were to have their will. Should they remain disunited and divided, the patron's right was to revive for other three months; at the end of which time the right of presentation should vest in the presbytery. But, alas! death snatched away both these great and friendly leaders ere the time was ripe for a settlement. Outside the Church Dr. Thomas M'Crie, the illustrious biographer of Knox and Melville, himself an Original Seceder, magnanimously expressed his best wishes and prayers for the restoration of the long-lost right, and in 1833 advised, 'Without delay petition the legislature for the abolition of patronage.'

A great impetus was doubtless given, by the extension of the Parliamentary Franchise in 1832, to the natural desire of many people within the Church for a more influential voice in the election of their minister; and in February 1834 the House of Commons appointed a select committee to hear evidence. They ventilated the subject, but came to no definite finding, and concluded their report, which expressed veneration and respect, with these memorable words: 'They believe that no institution has ever existed which at so little cost has accomplished so much good.' Meantime the popular and now prevailing



party in the Church had resolved to cut the Gordian knot by her own legislation. The illustrious Dr. Chalmers, throwing his whole soul into the Church Extension Scheme, had come into collision in the vehement Voluntary controversy with the representatives of the Secession and Relief Churches, whose views had greatly altered in the previous forty years. Like other friends of the National Church he sought to vindicate and popularise her so as to increase her power for good.

A widespread impression exists to-day that Dr. Chalmers, and the party which eventually became the Free Church, were from the first the outspoken champions of popular election; and that they consistently claimed the abolition of patronage. There could be no greater mistake. Not only what they did, but what they declined to do, is on record. The celebrated but ill-starred Veto Act was passed on 29th May 1834 by 184 votes to 139 in the General Assembly. It provided that when the majority of the male heads of families, being communicants, dissented without reasons from the nomination of a minister presented by the patron, the nomination was to be held null and void. Its keynote was that *dissent without reasons* prevented any further proceedings in the settlement; so that the presentee was forthwith rejected without any trial of his qualifications by the courts of the Church.

The next day the same General Assembly resolved, by 207 votes against 42, not to petition for the repeal of the Act of Queen Anne. Dr. Duncan of Ruthwell, the founder of savings banks, was spokesman for the majority, and declared that he found a power of putting an end to the evil of patronage without touching the rights of civil parties. The first Lord Moncreiff, who had pioneered the Veto resolution to victory, declared the motion to abolish patronage was 'fraught with the utmost danger to the Church of Scotland,' and was 'most decidedly opposed to the people electing their own minister.' There was a sad irony in the fact that the course which he recommended was to result in rending in twain the



Church which he loved and served with entire devotion. He jealously feared lest the constitutional rights of the Scottish Church should be viewed and construed from the English standpoint, and therefore did not wish to approach Parliament. It was through the Whig lay-politicians almost alone (loth to offend their voluntary allies by legislation) that the Veto Act was made a law of the Church: in perfect good faith, no doubt, and after legal opinions taken: but they were by no means sure of its wisdom. Thus Mr. A. Murray Dunlop, Advocate, who framed the Claim of Right and the Protest,<sup>1</sup> stated in the Assembly of 1835, that he had supported the Veto Act of the previous year, though with much hesitation, having previously entertained an opinion hostile to it; and he had since returned to his first opinion, and accordingly had not voted that year for passing it into a standing law. His objection to it was that it did not give efficiency to the call, which was the only constitutional mode for the people to express their will; while it introduced another principle, the Veto, which, besides being attended by many evils in practical operation, was erroneous in principle, in so far as it acknowledged the presentation by the patron to be a title, not only to the benefice, but also to the pastoral office. Dr. Chalmers' distinct preference had at first been for the proposal that the Church herself, by a new series of decisions, should raise the standard of clerical qualification and suitability for the parish; and should enact that the 'call,' reduced almost to a nullity by a series of lowering decisions during Moderate ascendancy, should be restored. But he was over-ruled; as was also his second and more

<sup>1</sup> Perhaps the best reply to 'the unanswerable Protest' of 1843 is, that it was answered by its own author just ten years before it was written! Alexander Dunlop, Esq., Advocate, published in 1833 a book treating of *The Law of Patronage*. On page 122 this statement occurs: 'The Church submitted to an obligation (became bound to admit qualified presentees), civil in respect of its being contracted towards the civil power, and established by merely civil ordinances. This civil obligation, then, may be by the civil power prevented from being violated; and there seems nothing, therefore, to prevent the supreme civil court from *interdicting the proceedings* of presbyteries in violation of it, *as to the admission of ministers*.' If that be granted, *cadit questio* of 'Encroachments.'

urgent advice, to make immediate application to Government for legislative sanction to the Veto.<sup>1</sup> The Moderate party agreed with Dr. Chalmers' view that the practice which had narrowed 'qualification' to life, literature, and doctrine, was unsatisfactory. They desired the wrong to be set right, rather by the judicial than by the legislative function of the Church. They held that by the law of the Church, sanctioned by the law of the land, objections, of whatever nature, might be given in against the presentee; but that never till the Veto Act had the principle been acknowledged which is embalmed in the couplet:—

‘I do not like thee, Dr. Fell:  
The reason why I cannot tell.’

But far more than mere procedure divided the parties. It was common ground that, ‘To effect the removal of patronage altogether the interposition of Parliament would have been indispensable.’<sup>2</sup>

The constitutional party protested against the Veto for weighty reasons: that it was beyond the powers of the Church alone; was inconsistent with Presbyterian government, the fundamental principles of which are procedure upon reasons, and judicial power vested in the presbytery; that it subverted open trial and judgment upon evidence, the true principles of liberty; that it denuded Church courts of their Scriptural right and duty (‘collation’) to take trial and judge of ministers’ qualifications, and devolved these upon a mere section of the congregation; that in conferring new privileges upon male heads of families alone, it deprived all other com-

<sup>1</sup> Dissenters who were hostile condemned the Veto Act as paltry and inefficient, except for the gendering of strife. They ridiculed the circumstance that while the Countess of Sutherland might appoint to nearly a whole presbytery, the godly Mrs. Janet Mackay was deprived of her privilege of objecting or dissenting against the presentee of the Countess! They agreed with Dr. Cook that the Church had outstepped her province. So true a friend as Dr. M’Crie declared it an attempt to gull the people with a show of privilege, and in unforgettable words spoke about patronage: ‘They say they have muzzled the monster: it is a mistake; they have only muffled him, and they have muzzled the people.’

<sup>2</sup> *The Ten Years’ Conflict*, by R. Buchanan, D.D., vol. i. p. 203.



municants or members of the congregation of their right to give in objections; and that in trenching upon the civil and patrimonial rights of patron and presentee—by an assumption of powers in civil matters repudiated by the Church's standards—it would certainly produce collision with the civil authorities. It has been alleged that the Church majority of that time 'did not propose to meddle with patronage'; and that the Veto 'was not the enactment of new law at all, but simply the declaring of old.' Yet the Veto Act was clearly 'new legislation,' as even Mr. Taylor Innes admitted. In 1825 the Anti-patronage Society had resolved to buy up patronages, compensating the patron. His right was doubtless a solemn trust, but it had also unfortunately, in the eye of the law, a money value, which was seriously diminished by the Veto. The Church never fairly faced that side of things; and to this day many writers persistently and unaccountably ignore it. It was the violation of this civil right, based on statute long tacitly acquiesced in by the Church, which alone gave opportunity for appeal to the civil courts, and compelled these courts to adjudicate; inasmuch as they sit to declare the law and to redress civil wrong.

The Veto Resolutions had not even passed the Barrier Act when Lord Kinnoull, in August 1834, presented Mr. Young to the parish of Auchterarder. That nobleman having become, through his ancestors, proprietor of an ancient abbey now in ruins, but containing some dozen stone coffins, possessed the patronage of as many parishes as coffins; with most of which parishes he had otherwise no earthly concern. Those before him had been called 'Lords of Erection,' and he, by the exercise of patronage in this instance, became the Lord of Erection of the Free Church. As is well known, the presbytery, in terms of the *Interim* Act, proceeded, not to take Mr. Young on trials, but to moderate in his 'call.' The officiating minister preached from the all too appropriate and prophetic text: 'The stone which the builders rejected is become the head of the corner'; and the presentee was promptly vetoed by



an overwhelming majority of the male heads of families. He was slightly lame and lacked the gift of eloquence, but was a useful preacher and an exemplary minister, who in after years overcame the obloquy attaching to his name, and soon gathered back a large congregation. He lived beloved, and died sincerely lamented. The prejudice against him was due to a most creditable prior attachment to one who had already acted as assistant minister. This was the Rev. Mr. Aiken, who remained staunch to the Church of Scotland in 1843, and was for long the noted preacher of Kilmarnock Laigh Kirk. It will be seen that the Veto on the patron's nominee here gave the congregation no help towards that for which the Auchterarder people later petitioned the Assembly, a minister who should be 'the unrestricted choice of the people.' Thus the Veto Act was found to be wholly inadequate (as well as incompetent) on this its first trial; for it gave a congregation no power of initiative, while the effect of repeated rejections of the patron's presentee was only to throw the appointment into the presbytery's hands. When that happened, the Veto Act provided that the male heads of families should have no power to dissent against the presbytery's nominee; which made it appear as if the Church courts themselves were grasping at patronage. Besides, as a method the Veto Act was not only a stab in the dark: it was also extremely provocative. Thus when a minister, in every way unexceptionable, was presented to a parish and likely to be vetoed, the leader of the opposition was asked the cause of their discontent. His answer was, 'I am no' jist free to say.' Asked again, 'Do you object to his preaching?' he replied, 'Oh no! he preaches very well.' Once again, 'Have you any objections to his moral character?' 'By no means, he is a very good gentleman.' 'What, then, is the cause of your discontent?' 'Well then, if you must know, it is just this: the General Assembly has given us the Vetur, and we have a mind to exercise it!' The curious discovery was made in 1875, at the time of awarding compensation for patronage, that Lord Kinnoull's title as 'undoubted patron' of Auchterarder

had never been made up. Consequently he had at that time no right to present Mr. Young!

Judicial utterances have been quoted, even recently, derogatory to the Church’s spiritual independence by those who deliberately or in culpable carelessness withhold the luminous and significant pleading of Solicitor-General Andrew Rutherford, senior counsel for the Free Church party:—

‘When I say that the Church of Scotland is dependent on the State, I do not mean to speak of the Church of Scotland in a spiritual sense, as forming part of that universal Church which consists of all the elect in every age and climate, and under all denominations, that Church to which the promises were made, and which is assured of the guidance of the Spirit,—I speak of the Church of Scotland as a national *establishment*, possessed of privileges and immunities, endowed with property, having an orderly gradation of judicatories in sessions, presbyteries, synods, and general assemblies, and invested with high judicial, and not judicial only but legislative powers. The Church of Scotland in this last sense, *as regards its privileges as an establishment*, is dependent on the State; it is the creature of the State; it derives its being and existence from the State; and I should not know how to address myself to your Lordships in this case, if the necessity of argument constrained me—I do not say to deny—but not distinctly and explicitly to avow a proposition so important to the Constitution.’<sup>1</sup>

It is in the light of, and in answer to, that statement, clearly distinguishing between the Church in its spiritual aspect and the Church of Scotland *quâ* establishment—a distinction too often overlooked or disregarded—that certain objectionable utterances in the opinions of some of the judges—in particular of the Lord President and Lord Meadowbank—must in all fairness be read.

On the other hand, Dean of Faculty Hope,<sup>2</sup> pleading for patron and presentee, said:—

‘As to the true distinction between separating the duties and the jurisdiction of the civil and ecclesiastical courts on the one hand, and on the other of improper interference with the ecclesiastical court, in matters proper for their cognizance, I

<sup>1</sup> Robertson’s *Report of the Auchterarder Case*, vol. i. p. 348.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. i. p. 283-285.

do not ask this court to *find* this presentee *qualified*, or to pronounce *any* opinion on that point, or to review any judgment of the Church upon his qualities,—or to assume any ecclesiastical authority by proceeding to ordain him, if the Church will not. I ask the court to find that the presbytery *must execute their functions* in one way or another:—that they must enter legally and faithfully upon the duty prescribed by statute—that they are bound to take the presentee on trials, and to receive and admit him, *if qualified*. The mode of discharging the duty is left to them. They are not entitled to object on grounds that are not *competent*. But if they enter upon their duty, and if they do try, they are accountable only to God for the discharge of their duty. If they execute their functions—if they take on trial, the State trusts to their honest discharge of duty both to pronounce a finding on the trial, and to admit and ordain if the presentee is a proper person. It is *the refusal to take on trials—the refusal to act* and to execute their functions—which is the wrong here complained of. . . . If found on trial, and after hearing and judging of objections, qualified, the ordination is committed to the Church, not only safely but necessarily, because ordination can come from no unhallowed hand.'

A middle way of escape from the difficulty remained. No Act of Parliament exists which limits the power of presbyteries to judge of qualification, nor did the Court of Session ever decide against the Church's right to reject an unsuitable presentee. That was the policy which commended itself to Dr. William Muir of St. Stephen's, who has been stigmatised as 'the trimming, compromising middleman.' Like Dr. Chalmers, he may have been in error in distrusting the people's initiative, but 'trimmer' he certainly was not. Inflexibly loyal to truth and honour—'too fond of the right to pursue the expedient'—is the character which best describes Dr. Muir. He judged that while acceptability was important, there might yet be cases where the suitable man might not be the acceptable man. Fortunately suitability and acceptability are generally found together, but not in every case. Thus Jehovah's messengers without doubt were all most suitable, yet in many cases unacceptable. A graceless parish, for example, might clamour for a minister not too famous for sobriety: or it might reject one for being an aggressive



teetotaller. The Auchterarder Presbytery might have rejected Mr. Young after fulfilling the constitutional and statutory duty of taking him on trial, and might have found him not qualified because unsuitable in the whole circumstances of the parish. Then they would have been on sure and safe ground, as Lord Cockburn and Lord Chancellor Lyndhurst affirmed.<sup>1</sup> The question of relative suitability comes before a presbytery at every translation of a minister, and its power to decide solely out of regard for the greater good of the Church has always been unchallenged and unquestionable; though Lord Brougham ignorantly blundered in arguing to the contrary in his judicial opinion.

Lord Aberdeen (who was summoned to the rescue) had strong reasons, based upon anxious experience, for disliking the Veto Act. In 1839, as patron of his own parish of Methlick, Aberdeenshire, he nominated a minister distinguished by the highest character and qualifications. But an absolutely groundless report was circulated that the presentee had been guilty of immoral conduct in earlier years. At Lord Aberdeen's desire the presbytery held a strict public inquiry, lasting fifteen hours. It resulted in the complete disproof of the infamous charge, as was admitted by the agent of the accusing parties. Out of 240 male heads of families about 200 dourly declared their intention still to veto, basing their opposition exclusively upon this rumour. Lord Aberdeen was deeply moved, and acted with tactful wisdom. He called a meeting in the parish church, and confessed later that he never addressed the House of Lords with a tenth part of the interest which he then felt. He neither threatened nor entreated, but adopted a grave, though friendly, tone of expostulation. He set before them the manifest injustice and cruelty of their proceeding against the minister, on whom it would have inflicted, if successful, a life-long stigma. He told them fairly that, had he known of the report, he would certainly not have presented him; but

<sup>1</sup> *Cockburn's Journal*, vol. i. p. 185; vol. i. p. 15. House of Lords, 9th August 1842.

that having named him, and being conscientiously satisfied of his innocence, no power on earth would induce him to abandon the presentee. Happily the affair ended prosperously, the opposition collapsed, and the minister lived in the happiest relations with the whole parish till he died universally regretted in 1881.<sup>1</sup>

When his aid was invoked by the Non-Intrusion Committee (of whom only four out of twenty-one entertained anti-patronage opinions), Lord Aberdeen introduced a Bill declaring the presbytery's full and ample power to reject a presentee upon the reasons stated by the people, even when not shared by themselves, giving for illustration the case of a presentee objected to because he had red hair! But it excluded a dissent without reasons. The reasons might be bad, but they should at least be recorded and reviewed; and no doubt he trusted to public opinion that the reasons accepted by Church courts should be solid and substantial. Unfortunately misunderstandings arose, and both negotiations and the Bill were abandoned.

It has been often represented that the Church expressed its willingness to yield to the civil courts in all civil consequences, accepting the position that the patron and the vetoed presentee, one or other, or both, should retain the fruits of the benefice. But such a proposal was quite illusory, for only by being admitted to the charge in terms of law could a minister have 'right to the maintenance, rights, and other privileges by law provided to the ministers of Christ's Church within this kingdom, as they are or shall be legally admitted to particular Churches.' (Revolution Settlement, 1690.) Besides, 'Vacant Stipend' during a vacancy had been assigned to the Ministers' Widows' Fund by Act of Parliament in 1814.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, a vacancy could not have been prolonged without serious injury to religion in the parish, and weakening

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Chalmers visited Haddo House immediately after the induction, and records (*Memoirs*, vol. iv. p. 83), 'Lord A. has had sad work lately with the perverseness of the people of his own parish, threatening to veto a most admirable presentee. At one of the meetings he had with them he himself opened with prayer, to the great delight of all the good in this quarter.'

<sup>2</sup> £1730, 6s. 5d., or nine and a half years' stipend of Auchterarder, was actually so paid.



the presbytery on its ecclesiastical side, as well as in the fulfilment of civil duties, scholastic and otherwise.

The Declaration of Spiritual Independence, moved by the Rev. R. Buchanan in 1838, was axiomatic; save that its last clause—'the sting in its tail'—claimed to enforce compliance with the Veto Act by discipline upon all office-bearers. This was the crossing of the Rubicon; for it implicitly involved the Church's claim to visit with penalties all who would not admit her sole right to determine things which were partly beyond her province as touching civil rights. Thenceforward the Veto Act was assumed to be the mind of Christ, and gainsayers to be rebels against 'the crown rights of the Redeemer.' The opinion of counsel had been taken on its competency about five years before!

The first Auchterarder decision simply declared from the civil side the illegality of the course prescribed by the Church's Veto Law, and that hurt and prejudice had resulted to the pursuers in the action. The second Auchterarder case (and these were the only two appealed to and decided by the House of Lords) sought to obtain a decree requiring the presbytery to perform their constitutional duty of taking Mr. Young on trials, and, on their refusal, sanctioning his claim for damages, put nominally at £10,000.<sup>1</sup> This decision was finally given in August 1842, whereupon the majority in the Church courts, who had acknowledged they might be liable for civil damages, decided that 'they could not go on.'

The question may be asked why the Veto Act was not rescinded by the Church herself. Several answers might be given. In Lord Cockburn's *Journal* (vol. i. p. 331), written in 1842, we find:—

'The Wild are suffering severely and justly for the folly of adhering to the Veto Act after the House of Lords declared it to be illegal. Giving it up would not have been inconsistent with their constitutional principles, however inconvenient it might have been to their policy, or however galling to their pride. Their not doing so is the source of most of their troubles. The great prevalent charge against them is, that

<sup>1</sup> It was eventually settled for £2100.



if they desire an abatement of patronage they ought to concentrate themselves constitutionally on this single point, without defying the civil court, or punishing those whose conscience leads them to obey it; and so they should.'

With this utterance of the distinguished (Free Church) adviser and judge the whole Moderate party concurred, but not they only. Dr. Chalmers had never been particularly wedded to the Veto Law,—regarding it only as a means of hindering bad appointments and making good ones,—and he was willing to advise that the Assembly should repeal it, and confessed it a 'blunder.' The judicial speeches, however, of Lord Brougham and Lord Cottenham in May 1839 considerably changed his policy; for though that question was not really before them for judgment, they seemed in their *obiter dicta* to confine qualification merely to life, literature, and doctrine. Still on reflection, after he had broken off negotiations with Lord Aberdeen, and led the majority of the Assembly in 1840 to reject his Bill, he published a famous pamphlet, within three months, on his own initiative, entitled '*What ought the Church and the People of Scotland to do now?*' It proposed first to repeal the Veto, and acknowledged:—<sup>1</sup>

'The Veto Law would not have been enacted had we foreseen the decision of the civil court, that we made an infringement thereby on civil rights . . . because *pro tanto* it would have severed the temporalities from the cure, and so by stripping the minister of his legal provision, have nullified there the good of a national establishment.' . . . 'We make no surrender of our spiritual independence by giving up the Veto Law when done by our own act; neither do we propose to surrender the cause of non-intrusion. We only surrender one of the expedients by which we had hoped to have provided for it. . . . There ought most certainly at all times to be a ground of judgment put upon a record and stated in the face of day. Well, let this be the ground, not only taken but declared by the presbytery, assuming to itself the right of sitting in judgment on all the circumstances which affect the Christian usefulness of the presentee, and admitting into its free deliberation the state of the call as one of the most important of these circumstances, or material of those *data* upon which its decision can be founded.'

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<sup>1</sup> Pp. 43, 46, 47.

This suggestion is hardly distinguishable from Lord Aberdeen's Bill, but was over-ruled or scouted by Dr. Chalmers' own ecclesiastical allies, and his opinion swung round to active support of the abolition of patronage only in 1842. Driven by the necessity of extricating the Church from her difficulties, he then made common cause with the much smaller party hitherto led by William Cunningham, James Begg, and Thomas Guthrie.

The (7th) Duke of Argyll promoted a Bill which in substance sought to legalise and extend the Veto Act; but apart from its demerits, and its impotence to survive amid political exigencies, the complications created by the tyrannical action of the Assembly majority regarding the famous case in Strathbogie Presbytery, prevented the Moderates from yielding their consent to it. This Marnoch case was the exact opposite of Auchterarder; inasmuch as the seven ministers who constituted a majority considered it, in conscience, their constitutional duty (according to the oath of allegiance taken before their vows at ordination) to 'take the presentee on trials,' and besides, the statutory duty of the presbytery had now been declared. It is quite as illegitimate to misrepresent 'taking on trials' as equivalent to 'ordination' as it is to confound the *complaint* to the civil authority against ecclesiastical tyranny and molestation (which the Reformers taught and exemplified) with an appeal to the civil courts for the *review* of ecclesiastical sentences. The distinction has seldom been pointed out by those writers who unflinchingly maintain the infallibility of the Church courts in these stirring times. The plea of conscience is easier urged than conceded to opponents. The General Assembly visited this breach of ecclesiastical regulations with its condign displeasure, first suspending and then deposing the seven ministers. If the deposition was valid, it likewise implied loss of all ministerial status and emolument, and to us in cooler days it seems 'unnecessary and impolitic' (Lord Cockburn),<sup>1</sup> as well as harsh and unjust: for suspension from their judicial functions, such as afterwards befell some of those

<sup>1</sup> *Journal*, vol. i. p. 285: 1841.

who joined in communion with them, would have answered sufficiently every legitimate end. This course exasperated opinion within and without the Church, and no wonder; for the project of deposing and the duty of excommunicating the whole Synod of Aberdeen, and even the whole Moderate party, was openly discussed. The wheel had come round full circle, and just as the Moderates had deposed the Seceders in 1740, and Gillespie in 1752, so now they in turn were in danger of suffering wholesale deposition at the hands of the Non-Intrusionist majority. When the absolute rupture came to pass in 1843, those who 'stayed in' treated this Strathbogie deposition as null and void, and have been grievously condemned for so doing. In that there was nothing new; for while deposition or excommunication following on acts of proved immorality have ever been regarded in all Scottish Churches as interpreting justly the will of heaven, they have been very generally disregarded as to spiritual effect by those against whom these awful sentences have been pronounced—when they simply resulted from differences of opinion. The Christian commonsense of Scotsmen has asserted itself to discriminate between the two cases. For example, the Erskines (twice), Gillespie, and Dr. M'Crie treated these sentences against themselves as a complete nullity. They certainly were not ratified in heaven.

But it is no part of our present explanatory purpose to award praise or blame to individuals for the calamitous deadlock which ensued. The trained lawyer of to-day considers that the Church of Scotland then, instead of at the beginning seeking a readjustment of its relation to the State, was the first to exceed its own jurisdiction, and invaded the sphere of civil right by substantially encroaching upon the patron's statutory privilege, and violating by a refusal to proceed to its own constitutional duty of 'collation.' Similarly, he would consider that the courts of law had made good no claim to inerrancy in their interpretation, and had actually in some respects, as in the extended Strathbogie interdict case, gone beyond their powers. So far from its being true that the decisions before 1843 fixed the law for all time in a sense hostile to the Church of



Scotland's liberty, it is simple truth that the judges have in every case of complaint regarding discipline since 1843 gone back to the old true principle, recognising it in most explicit terms.<sup>1</sup> As Lord Justice-Clerk Moncreiff declared in the famous Auchtergaven case in 1870—where it was unsuccessfully sought to review the proceedings of the Presbytery of Dunkeld and General Assembly—‘whatever *inconsiderate dicta* to that effect may have been thrown out, that is not the law of Scotland.’

Lord Aberdeen's Act, passed, according to promise, immediately after the Disruption of 1843, was instrumental in legalising the view of the middle party; and was inspired by Dr. Muir, who called it a fuller explication of the Bill of 1840. It was firmly opposed by Lord Brougham, as was natural; for this ‘Act to remove doubts’ effectually ruled out of court those narrow views of qualification which that noble lord had gratuitously introduced into his judicial opinions, though, of course, not into the judicial findings. It recognised only ‘such objections as are personal to the presentee in regard to his ministerial gifts and qualities, either in general or with respect to that particular parish’; but declared that the Presbytery should be ‘entitled to have regard to the whole circumstances and condition of the parish, to the spiritual welfare and education of the people, and to the character and number of the persons by whom the said objections or reasons shall be proffered.’ Under this Act all settlements were carried out down to the abolition of patronage in 1874.

Just as the Veto Act, which sought not only to check but to perpetuate patronage, had proved a bungling way of accomplishing a thing right in itself, so the Chapel Act, passed in the same year, possessed the same inherent fault. The Moderate party were not hostile, and highly approved, but with less rashness, the end equally sought by both sides. They proposed the appointment of a committee ‘to correspond with Government, for obtaining a legislative enactment, through which, with the consent of all parties interested, parishes may be divided, or the districts now attached to Chapels of Ease *quoad spiritualia*

<sup>1</sup> *E.g.* Lord Justice-Clerk Hope in case *Sturrock v. Greig*, July 3, 1819.

may be assigned to them as parishes, when the Church is satisfied that this is proper or necessary for the instruction of the people.' They were deeply impressed with the importance of placing the ministers of these chapels upon a satisfactory and constitutional footing; but men like the clear-sighted Dr. Mearns (who was the instrument of 'Rabbi Duncan's' conversion from sheer atheism) foresaw that unless the sanction of the State was procured, such ministers could acquire no valid right to sit and vote in Church courts, and by doing so would invalidate the proceedings of those courts. It has been lately maintained<sup>1</sup> that this extension of the parish minister's function 'raised no question of any civil interest,' and that the minister's right to rule as well as to teach was the only question involved. But those who affirm this are unconsciously blind to the fact that, besides their intrinsic spiritual jurisdiction, presbyteries had then—and still partially retain—an added jurisdiction in matters civil conferred by statute, as over schoolmasters, the poor, churches, manse, glebes, and graveyards. The Church of Scotland all along believed that in her parochial work the State should co-operate with her in the formation of parishes. Even the Covenanted Assembly of 1639, when Sir Alexander Carnegie of Bonnymoon built a church, and 'did supplicate that it might be decerned to be a distinct paroche,' granted his desire 'without prejudice of any party's civil right, which they reserved to any judge competent.' But the stoutest opponent of this reckless act was the great church extensionist Dr. Chalmers himself, who spoke, and voted, and published a strongly worded pamphlet against the admission of all unendowed ministers into presbyteries—both on the idea that such a measure would entangle and retard the cause of Church Extension; and also on the principle that no ministers were fully qualified for sharing in the deliberations of a territorial establishment who were not in circumstances for territorially pervading their districts. He did not disguise his preference as between status and endowment, that endowment should come first.

<sup>1</sup> *Life of Principal Rainy*, p. 61.



His paramount aim was the cheap Christian education of the common people, to which the personal comfort or dignity of the clergyman, though still important, was but secondary. It is a striking fact that the heritor of Stewarton parish, who raised the action against the Presbytery of Irvine, which had grossly violated, instead of strictly observing, the rules of the Chapel Act itself, was Mr. Cuninghame of Lainshaw, to whom Dr. Chalmers pays a deserved compliment (in his *Parochial System*, page 45), telling of the Sabbath school which he instituted and himself taught in the populous village at his door. It is easy to deduce sinister inferences from the decision of the Court of Session in the Stewarton case. Such legislation as Sir James Graham's Act of 1844, under which four hundred and sixty-five endowed charges have been added to the Church of Scotland, should have been earlier sought, and might readily have been obtained ten years before. The Veto Act and the Chapel Act were twin 'blunders.' Dr. Charteris used to point out the fact that when, in 1833, the Highland Parliamentary charges were suddenly raised by the Assembly to parochial status, 'one solitary dissent, by the Rev. W. R. Pirie of Dyce, remained as a proof of his sagacity and his courage. He was the first in Church and State to see what all Scotland soon learned in bitter experience.'

In the Education question, as a son of the schoolhouse, Dr. Charteris could not but take the liveliest interest. The miserably divided state of Scottish Presbyterians reacted most unfavourably upon this question, where the convictions of the vast majority were really at one. Changes were felt on all sides to be necessary, but in what direction? In a speech as early as 1861, contemplating changes which came only in 1872, Mr. Charteris at New Abbey had dwelt on the duty of demanding, not security for the rights and privileges of the Established Church, so much as security for the religious teaching of the land; and he pressed for a legal enactment supported by the unsectarian Christian conscience of Scotland. His crave was: 'Give us the good man and true for school-



master, the worthy Christian of some denomination; him we can understand, and him we can respect.' He also forecasted the time when Scottish Christians, united in heart for religious instruction, might develop a longing for union in things ecclesiastical as well as in things scholastic. Eager for legislation, and doubtless with a homeward glance, he observed that it was very hard to starve the schoolmaster while the sects fought out their battle. In Glasgow more complicated problems awaited Mr. Charteris, for there and thereabouts the education of the people was most sadly deficient in quantity. We find him called into council by such men as the Rev. Dr. Craik, the Rev. (afterwards Dr.) Archibald Scott, Mr. Alexander Whitelaw, and others, and attending public conferences presided over by the Lord Provost in 1868. His attitude may be correctly represented by saying that he wished the old system of Scotland to be supplemented and not supplanted; that he believed educational difficulties about religion to be manufactured by the politicians, not to have any real existence among the people; for members of all communions sent their children cheerfully and without discrimination to whatever school was nearest, and an unwritten conscience-clause was practically in force. In his opinion government grant combined with voluntary effort could have overtaken the needed task adequately, efficiently, and economically. He was absolutely certain that the threepenny rate suggested as a maximum in 1869 would be utterly insufficient in parishes with large populations; but most deeply of all did he feel that there was real risk of the teaching of religion being elbowed out from the public schools of the future under Privy Council administration.

Just before the Disruption the Church had been nearer to John Knox's scheme as regards her ordinary schools than ever before. She had begun to see that teinds and taxes are not all, and to realise what a mine of wealth there is in the heart of a willing people. One of the first shafts driven down into the latent riches of that mine concerned education. In this connection the Church's

voluntary efforts had been guided pre-eminently by two men, the elder Dr. Norman Macleod and Principal Baird of Edinburgh University, who stirred the whole country by proving that in the Highlands and Islands alone, out of a total population of between three and four hundred thousand, there were twenty-eight thousand between the ages of six and twenty who could not read, and eighty-four thousand of the same age who could not write. Laboriously did they toil for these long-neglected Highlanders; and they gradually succeeded in evoking so great liberality that not only in the Highlands, but everywhere, the country was covered with a network of schools. Immensely to its credit was the contribution of 617 schools made by the Free Church to the country's education. But in prospect of new arrangements, a party arose, more noisy than numerous, who insisted on riding their hobby the dogma of Voluntaryism, and initiated a demand for a system of national instruction, which they styled unsectarian. In May 1847 the new-born United Presbyterian Synod had formulated the claim, 'That it is not within the province of civil government to provide for the *religious* instruction of the subject; and that this department of the education of the young belongs *exclusively* to the parent and the Church.' Of course these extreme Voluntaries did not voice the real mind of Scotland, or even of their own communion; they were like Edmund Burke's half-dozen grasshoppers under a fern making the field ring with their importunate chink, while numbers of great cattle, reposing beneath the shadow of the British oak, chewed the cud and were silent. But this peripatetic and clamorous minority did their best to make Government fancy them a majority, and were noisily backed by their organs in the press; so that when the Gladstone Government brought forward their Scottish Education Bill in 1872, religious instruction in the schools ran no small risk. While repealing all those earlier Acts of Parliament which explicitly or implicitly sanctioned it, the Bill professed neither to prescribe nor to proscribe religion in the public schools. Religion was simply ignored.



Mr. Robert Lowe, then Chancellor of the Exchequer, had publicly declared: 'By paying for secular results, and giving no payment at all for religious instruction, we adopted a system tending very forcibly to the secularisation of education.' Then the Birmingham National League, which advocated the exclusion of religion from the schools, had a certain measure of support on the north side of the Tweed. The Rev. Henry Renton of Kelso and Rev. G. C. Hutton of Paisley, excellent men but thorough-going Voluntaries, stood for the same extreme position; but not they alone. In *Principal Cairns' Life* it is said that 'United Presbyterian opinion, as expressed in Church courts and elsewhere, was distinctly in favour of the maintenance of "use and wont"; that is, the teaching of the Bible and Catechism in the public school.' That is scarcely correct. On 9th February 1872 Dr. Cairns<sup>1</sup> wrote to Dr. R. W. Dale urging him, as Dr. Rainy had done, not to come to Scotland at this time to endeavour to influence her national policy in favour of the Birmingham League movement. He said:—

'Our principles are nearer your position than those of the Free Church . . . we hope to secure a conscience time-table and (1) our Church will use every effort to get the rates, as well as the grants, restricted to secular education; (2) leaving the religious instruction to be controlled by the local boards and paid by the parties actually receiving it; but we are not prepared for any enactment excluding the Bible from regular hours, if the local board shall so arrange it; at least a large body in our Church would oppose this, myself included.'

Dr. Dale's answer from Birmingham, 13th February 1872, showed him to be somewhat puzzled at Dr. Cairns' position:—

'Why should the local board control religious education—how can it control it—if no public money is used to provide it? . . . As the Bill stands public money is to provide for the teaching of religious doctrine, just as it provides for the teaching of grammar and geography. I think that if your friends stand by your principle they will render my visit to Scotland very unnecessary. If they do not stand by it, they will give into

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<sup>1</sup> *Life of Principal Cairns*, by A. R. MacEwen, D.D., p. 545.



the hands of their opponents a weapon the edge of which will cut them sharp and deep when they raise the disestablishment question.'

The voice of the United Presbyterian Church at that time, however, must be taken from its official public utterances; and its Synod on 15th May 1872 reiterated the old dogma of 1847, that religious education of the young belongs exclusively to the parent and to the Church. It seems as though many good men had, by taxing their ingenuity, arrived at the remarkable conclusion, that while it would be wholly wrong for a central Government to organise and offer facilities for religious instruction in the schools, it becomes entirely right when local boards, legally established by the same Government, and chosen by a civil constituency, do precisely the same thing. To most logical minds it would appear that if the State were the opposite of God's minister to men for good, its cloven hoof would be just as discernible in the regulation of a school board as in an Act of Parliament. Dr. William Johnston's motion was carried by 310 to 125 over Mr. Hutton's yet more extreme motion, which deeply regretted that the Synod's voluntary dogma was violated in the Bill, inasmuch as power was left to the local boards, which are civil authorities, to provide for and to regulate the religious education of the young. Only fifteen voted for the previous question; no direct motion supported 'use and wont.'

This question was concurrent in time with the later stages of the negotiations for union between the Free Church and the United Presbyterian Church which began in 1863 and were broken off in 1873. Crowded meetings discussed both questions. The writer of these pages often took delight in being present as a listener to both sides of the two controversies—for the speaking was really good—and well remembers how they reacted upon each other, and how the voluntary attitude or leaning adopted in the education controversy was perhaps the chief reason which ranged many religious people on different sides and in new combinations. The Church of Scotland stood nearly solid for 'use and wont,' asking for some recognition of and

security for Bible-teaching in the schools; while the party in the Free Church who mistrusted the voluntary alliance, and were then far stronger in the country than in the General Assembly, cherished a natural suspicion, and refused to be disarmed. Dr. Begg, Dr. Horatius Bonar, Dr. Hugh Martin, and Dr. Kennedy of Dingwall were amongst those who journeyed 'from Dan to Beersheba,' from Stranraer to Caithness, along with Church of Scotland ministers, with whom they now began to feel they had far more in common than they had once imagined. Professor Charteris believed it his duty to take part in this crusade, the watchword of which was 'The Bible in the Schools.' A letter from Mr. Edward S. Gordon, M.P., Dean of Faculty, to Dr. Charteris, dated House of Commons, 12th March 1870, contains the following proposal, the very same which the Rev. Hugh Price Hughes suggested for England many years later:—

'I object to the local board having it in their power to withhold all religious teaching. I prefer that Parliament should direct the local boards to give religious instruction, consisting of reading and explaining the Scriptures, the Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments, and the Creed. I shall be glad to know what you think as to this. I fear that otherwise a great number of the lowest grade of children will receive no religious instruction at all. We are getting the M.P.'s to sign the Anti-Patronage Requisition; at least one-half have signed. I expect more.'

Dr. Kennedy's words, at a meeting in Edinburgh, speak for themselves (17th April 1872):—

'The position which we were constrained to take up in connection with the education question has been referred to as another indication of our Establishment leanings. As to this, we can surely say that we stand where our whole Church stood ten years ago. If, by a change of views and action, our "Union" friends have thrown us into seeming co-operation with the Establishment, who are to blame? Why is it that while 86 per cent. of the population of Scotland would have the Bible and Shorter Catechism taught to their children, we cannot have the free use of these in our schools, but because the Voluntaries will not allow us to receive it at the hands of the State? I am suspicious of such allies.

On the other hand Dr. Rainy had a difficult team to



drive, and the task of conciliating extreme Voluntaries was apt to result in making his Free Church majority restless.

Though the voice of Scotland was unmistakably in favour of some legislative provision for religious teaching of the young, and a large majority of the electors in Lord Advocate Young's own constituency petitioned for such recognition, Mr. Gladstone's Government refused this reasonable request. The Free Church sent a distinguished deputation, which included Dr. R. Buchanan and Sir Henry Moncreiff. In a minute issued to Mr. W. E. Foster, M.P., Vice-President of the Council, they said :—

'If without prescribing or limiting the instruction in religious subjects which a local committee (that is, school board) may resolve to introduce, the legislature were to agree to a declaration that the practice of having the Holy Scriptures regularly read in all the public schools should be continued, the deputation are persuaded that such a declaration would be welcomed with great satisfaction by the people of Scotland.'

On the same page of the *Daily Review* (the Free Church newspaper) of 6th May 1872 is found a resolution moved by Mr. E. S. Gordon, M.P. :—

'That having regard to the principles and history of the past educational legislation and practice of Scotland, which provided for instruction in the Holy Scriptures in the public schools as an essential part of education, this House, while desirous of passing a measure during the present session for improvement of education in Scotland, is of opinion that the law and practice of Scotland in this respect should be continued by provisions in the Bill now before the House.'

This instruction, before going into committee, so commended itself to a House of Commons with a normal Government majority of 120, and to Scottish members like Mr. Duncan M'Laren, Radical M.P. for Edinburgh, that it was carried by a majority of 216 to 209. The Free Church deputation who had come up to 'lobby' against Mr. Gordon's resolution—which neither prescribed nor limited, and was hard to distinguish from their own minute—did not look comfortable, either in their own opposition to that



resolution or in the result of the division, though the *Daily Review* naïvely adds, 'they remained to the bitter end!' They were biassed against their own proposal by the Union negotiations with the Voluntaries, or fettered by their unyielding demands. The Government, though beaten, resolved to ignore the instruction, and defeated in committee the amendment which embodied it. They accepted, however, an insertion in the Preamble which the Duke of Richmond procured in the Lords (as amended in the Commons), and this substantially effected Mr. Gordon's purpose. In such matters the public memory is short, and, as even a Secretary for Scotland in recent years was found oblivious, it may be well to record its exact terms:—

'And whereas it has been the custom in the public schools of Scotland to give instruction in religion to children whose parents did not object to the instruction so given, but with liberty to parents, without forfeiting any of the other advantages of the schools, to elect that their children shall not receive such instruction, and it is expedient that *the managers of public schools shall be at liberty to continue the said custom.*'

This is the legislative sanction for 'use and wont.' So far have we travelled since then, and so emphatic, so unanimous, has been Scotland's endorsement of that policy, that the official deliverance of the United Presbyterian Synod of 1873 seems well-nigh incredible:—

'They disapprove unanimously of the preamble or declaration inserted in the Bill in reference to the custom as to religious instruction, because not only is the fact which it assumes doubtful, but the declaration itself is inconsistent with the spirit and even with the enactments of the measure.'

It was no help but a great hindrance to the new start in Scottish education that the apple of discord should be thrown at the outset into every Scottish parish, and easily avoidable sectarian friction wantonly aroused. This has happily died down. Very few are now prepared to play into the hands of the secularists. 'Use and wont' is now accepted as the settled conviction of the Scottish people; and a more constructive spirit with a true zeal for education, both secular and religious, has been manifested by

the Churches in joining hands to solve those difficulties in Scotland concerning primary and secondary education, and the training of teachers by Provincial Committees, which may well excite envy in distracted England. Scotsmen have got to know what they want, and how best to get it. To that there is one exception; for in 1872 almost every public body expressed an opinion in favour of a controlling authority in Scotland to preside over Scottish education: a representative National board in Edinburgh. While all the complicated questions of Irish education have long been relegated to a board sitting in Dublin and fairly representing the discordant factions there, Scotland has quietly submitted to the dictation of a phantom board in Whitehall that rarely or never meets, though its decrees are formally announced by its Secretary in the name of 'My Lords.' One does not need to be a Home Ruler in the disruptive sense to feel that the sop to Cerberus of a temporary board for three years was a poor substitute for a permanent National board within our own borders, readily accessible to and in close and living touch with those local boards which are counted worthy to administer education in every Scottish parish. Throughout all these controversies Dr. Charteris took an active and influential part in private consultations as well as in Assembly debates. His course was decided by what he conceived to make for the improvement of primary education on broad Christian principles, and was never ruled by considerations of denominational prestige.

The broadening and modernising movement, beginning in the Church of Scotland, which has largely leavened all Scottish communions within the last fifty years, has had four sides and four prime champions, whose work at times overlapped. The ritual reform was led by Dr. Robert Lee of Old Greyfriars; the doctrinal reform chiefly by Principal Tulloch of St. Andrews; the social and missionary by Dr. Norman Macleod of the Barony; and the practical pioneer of what has come to be called 'Life and Work' was found in Professor A. H. Charteris of Edinburgh. The movement has in the main been undoubtedly beneficial.



It has been used for reasonable liberty and progress. It had to fight its way even more against the unyielding rigidity of ecclesiastical custom, deeply entrenched in the Scottish character of fifty years ago, which an evil tradition had come to idolise, than against any positive law in Church or State. All Presbyterians hold that free prayer is a priceless privilege, a gift of the Spirit of inestimable value, which can never be surrendered. As was once said, 'If all ministers could pray always as some ministers can pray sometimes, that might be the best of all.' Yet every one knows the extreme difficulty of maintaining a high standard of public prayer, and that the liberty of the minister may become the slavery of the people. A partial and optional liturgy was framed and used by John Knox, though he combined it with free and 'conceived' prayer, as when the English Ambassador Randolph tells of 'a marvellous, vehement, and piercing prayer' in St. Giles' for the continuance of amity with England. Dr. Chalmers, like many others, wrote and read his Assembly prayers when Moderator.

Dr. Robert Lee was the first to aim at such improvements as should better articulate a worthy congregational ideal of worship. His own prayers were largely constructed from the Psalms and other Biblical models, and he ended by putting the printed book into the hands of his congregation. This 'innovation'—John Knox himself was accused of 'innovations' by the Roman Catholics!—raised a storm of protest from many good and pious people throughout Scotland. Nor was it diminished when an organ—'the holy Nazarite of God that will not go to the dance nor to the battle'—was introduced in Old Greyfriars' with perfect harmony. Dr. Lee was a 'bonny fighter' as well as fond of freedom; tolerant and reverent in spirit, but not one who suffered fools gladly. Many letters reveal how Mr. Charteris exhausted his powers to dissuade older leaders of the traditional school from molesting Dr. Lee; but his intervention was definitely declined. The Greyfriars' case dragged wearily for years through the Church courts with varying fortunes, and Dr. Lee



literally fell a martyr to the cause; for he was seized with paralysis (when on horseback) shortly before the Assembly of 1867, which was to have concluded his case, and would probably have given judgment against him. Few now question the wisdom and timeliness of his action. All acknowledge in him the organiser of victory. Up to his time the metrical Psalms were chiefly used for praise, and the Paraphrases permitted, sometimes with difficulty. He demanded the chanting of certain prose Psalms and canticles, but doubted if the most diligent search could discover a score of really excellent modern hymns in the English language. The tendency nowadays is too much to discard the Psalms in metre with their rugged majesty, without replacing them with the prose Psalms; yet the hymns and spiritual songs, in praise of a Christ who has come, are surely both legitimate and welcome. An enlarged Hymnal, gathered from many sources, and compiled by representatives of the Presbyterian Churches acting together, would have been too much to hope for forty years ago, and proves that the great uniter of all Christians in worship is common praise.

The Church of Scotland has never been rent asunder by doctrinal division. The men who were pioneers of theological enlightenment within her borders have been believing men, loyal to the central heart of Christian doctrine. Yet the annals of the Church have at times been sadly stained by the causeless deposition of some ministers for unsoundness in the faith. No more shameful case can be named than that of John Macleod Campbell, the saintly thinker whose book on the Atonement is now prescribed to theological students. He was cast forth because he maintained that Christ died for all, and taught the old Reformation doctrine on assurance of salvation. When the din of party strife was partially hushed, the doctrine of the Fatherhood of God began to bespeak its proper place and accentuation in preaching. Certainly it does not bulk in its true proportion in the Confession of Faith, constructed in an age when Divine Sovereignty rather than Fatherhood was the predominant conception of God.

Men were slow to realise it, but the Lord's Prayer shows them to be the inseparable complement of each other. First, 'Our Father.' Then, 'Thy Kingdom come.' And gradually the impression dawned on many minds that the Confession, wonderfully able and often most wise in what it says and refrains from saying, never claims infallibility for itself, but on the contrary disclaims it. After all it is the subordinate standard, deriving all authority from the supreme standard which it aims at representing—Holy Scripture. While it contains all fundamental Christian doctrines, it expresses them according to the ideas and proportion of faith entertained in the seventeenth century, and possesses also the defects of its time. Along with the essential contents of the two Creeds, called the Apostles' and the Nicene, it contains likewise, in elaborate form and with much logic and philosophy, a great deal more, which is largely Puritan opinion and inference from Scripture. It is an elaborate manifesto of Christian belief as entertained by the Westminster Divines.

Was there, then, to be no variant allowed of this seventeenth-century utterance? Was the authority of the dead hands of Westminster to govern men for ever? Had God the Holy Spirit nothing more to teach His Church, leading men into all truth? Can any generation reach absolute finality in spiritual things? Fifty years ago was a questioning age. Science, secular and sacred, was advancing with unprecedented strides, settling some and raising other problems, unsettling many minds. It was not in wanton scepticism but in honest bewilderment, that many people were asking 'What is truth?' It had long been considered almost sacrilege to question the Confession of Faith, and when Robert Lee, John Tulloch, and Norman Macleod began to indicate that every jot and tittle was not to be received as infallible truth, the outcry of pious traditional orthodoxy was deafening. All over Scotland many ministers were afraid of being denounced as 'unsound' if they did not affect and echo a certain theological jargon. Some avoided their natural voice, and cultivated 'precious tones' of unctuous religiosity.



When the Sabbatarian cyclone raised by Norman Macleod was at its height, Principal Tulloch delivered to his theological students an address upon the Confession of Faith, and a discourse upon freedom of debate. He declared that the Confession must be studied historically and philosophically, that it was in its origin and principles the manifesto of a great religious party, which, after a fierce struggle, had gained a temporary ascendancy; and that the popular ecclesiastical notion of Creeds and Confessions as in some sort absolute expressions of Christian truth, *credenda* to be accepted very much as we accept the statements of Scripture itself, is a notion in the face of all theological science, which every theological student deserving of the name has long since abandoned. As to the amount of the ministerial pledge when signing it, he held that it bound a man to the sum and substance of the Reformed doctrine as understood and preached by the living Church—what at another time he called the concatenated system of doctrine—not every little point or expression of opinion. Tulloch was a great teacher of positive truth, emphasising the principle that the Church must depend on the truth, not the truth on the Church; and also the consistent lifelong advocate of conciliation and comprehension.

In the Free Church Assembly of 1866 the Moderator, Dr. William Wilson of Dundee, took up the question of her right and power to alter the Confession, affirming that 'no Confession of Faith can ever be regarded by the Church as a final and permanent document. She must always vindicate her right to revise, purge, or add to it.' But while he spoke thus in vindication of a great principle, he was not at all in sympathy with those who professed already to have discovered that the Confession was not an adequate or proportionate representation of the truth which they found in the Word of God. Those ministers, chiefly in the Church of Scotland, who alleged that the Confession was something less than perfect, had to run the gauntlet at that time, and were assailed with much misrepresentation and reproach.



Many therefore were the cross-currents of opinion and cross-divisions between the Churches. The movement for union between the Free and United Presbyterian Churches was meeting with stubborn opposition from a large minority in the Free Church; and the whole ecclesiastical situation in Scotland was delicate and difficult. Amid combinations so perplexing, various horoscopes were drawn up. None of them, however, have been completely justified in the half-century that followed.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE TOLBOOTH DAYS

Story of the Tolbooth Church—'Clinical Divinity'—The Students' Missionary Association—Church and no Church—Methods and Workers—'The Holly Tree'—The Restorer's enduring influence.

IN the spring of 1869 Professor Charteris found a new home at 44 Inverleith Row, Edinburgh, not on a hill this time, but very open at back and front, and almost in the country. The attractions of quiet and a garden kept him there for three years. In fact, he always went as far into the country as his tether would let him. But the long uphill walk—before tramways were thought of—to his work at the University was a great drawback. At first he attended St. Stephen's Church, deriving unspeakable joy and refreshment from the ministry of his beloved friend Dr. Maxwell Nicholson, 'most devoted pastor, most fearless preacher, most tender counsellor, most trusty of leaders and allies, that I have known in the Scottish ministry'—as he touchingly called him in a sermon preached on the occasion of his death. Quietly to sit in his pew, freed from the burden of overwhelming responsibility, and to listen to the wise and noble teaching of one whom he revered with all his heart, strengthened him for his hard work as Professor throughout the week. Occasionally his lips were opened in the pulpit: most often in sermons to children. But the dropt saying of an old Lawnmarket woman longing for 'a candlestick that could speak for itself' seemed to summon the preacher for aid to a candlestick that had been moved out of its place in the parochial system of Scotland—The Tolbooth Church of Edinburgh, the Victoria Hall on the Castlehill,

with its elegant, sky-piercing spire, the loftiest in the city. His soul was troubled within him by two considerations. He could not abide the anomaly that the Church of Scotland Assembly should have the melancholy degradation of being convened beneath an unendowed roof; and he quickly perceived the opportunity of realising his bright dreams of 'clinical Divinity' in better preparing his students for the Christian ministry.

The Tolbooth Parish dates from 1641, at which time the Tolbooth and the Tron were added to the four parishes of Edinburgh previously established. The boundaries, as originally fixed, were nearly the same as they have been ever since. They comprised the district of the Castlehill (both sides of the street); the Lawnmarket (north side); with the west side of Bank Street on the Mound; and the Johnstone Terrace district; and contained about 2400 inhabitants. Originally the north-west parish of Edinburgh, the Tolbooth—a collegiate charge—had many distinguished ministers. First came Robert Douglas, the head of the 'Resolutioners' in his day. James Kirkton first served it after the Revolution. The two Websters, father and son (James from 1693-1720, and Alexander, 1737-1784), were its popular ministers. The latter, a noted Evangelical and anti-patronage man, took a leading part in originating the Ministers' Widows' Fund. Dr. John Kemp (1779-1805) was well known for his zealous and successful labours as secretary of the Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge in Scotland. Dr. Thomas Randall was for upwards of forty years (1785-1827) the faithful and honoured minister of the Tolbooth; and when he succeeded to the estate of Muirhouse, in Cramond parish, and took the name of Davidson, he became a generous benefactor of the Church. In the Tolbooth section of Old St. Giles' he preached a noble funeral sermon on the famous Dr. John Erskine of Greyfriars', leader of the Evangelicals, and was a strong advocate of Foreign Missions. Little did he dream of giving an Archbishop of Canterbury to the Church of England in the person of his much-respected grandson, Randall T.



Davidson—for the export of Archbishops was then an undeveloped branch of Scottish trade. But the Tolbooth had fallen on evil days. To remedy grievances which were keenly felt in connection with the ecclesiastical rates levied by the city of Edinburgh, the Annuity Tax Abolition Act was passed in 1860. Ecclesiastical Commissioners appointed by it were empowered, on certain conditions, to suppress two of the city charges. One of these was the Tolbooth, with a history reaching back to the closing years of John Knox, for it was in the portion of St. Giles' next to the Tolbooth, boarded off from the rest, that the Reformer used to preach when his voice could no longer fill the great church; in 1828 it was 'uncollegiated,' and the stipend was transferred to the newly erected parish of St. Stephen's. Its last minister in office in 1860, Dr. George Smith, after years of poor health, died in 1866; whereupon the Commissioners sanctioned temporary arrangements for its supply by licentiates. In 1870 another Act of Parliament expressly prohibited the Commissioners from nominating or presenting or endowing a minister, while it allowed them, with consent of the presbytery, to annex the district to any other parish. In short, it abolished the ancient parish of the Tolbooth, but suggested that it might be re-endowed by voluntary contributions. Nothing, however, had been done: the church of the General Assembly was neither parish church nor chapel; and the district was a lapsed parish, an ecclesiastical 'No Man's Land.' It was here, then, that Dr. Charteris stepped into the breach, at once to wipe away a standing reproach and to storm a citadel of religious indifference. It appealed to all that was heroic in his soul, for it was very disastrous that a fine church, situated in the midst of a teeming population of poverty-stricken and non-churchgoing people such as crowded the closes of the Lawnmarket, should be deprived of its endowed ministry. These poor folk had in many cases neither the power nor the desire to provide ordinances for themselves. All the more was the need that the good tidings of the Gospel should be carried to them in their

cheerless homes, so that they might learn its blessed power, and go themselves to hear it: Many of the houses were very old, and those who tenanted them low indeed in the social scale. As Dr. Charteris wrote:—

‘Some of the high houses on the Mound are in reality villages upon the narrow foundation of one tenement. Some of those in the closes leading from the Lawnmarket to the Mound have stairs, that are as dark as night even when the day is brightest, and rooms with families crowded in them where the brightest noon is twilight. To understand the moral and physical misery in which some of our fellow-creatures live, one needs to go and see the hard details, some of which cannot be described. There are other houses in which honest industry and contented comfort are to be seen; and bad as some of them are, there are to be found, even in the worst localities, the well-kept apartment of a Christian widow, or of a godly old couple spending their last days. These make one feel and know that under all circumstances the Gospel is a mighty power to elevate and sanctify human life. The conductors of the present parochial mission have been made to feel—as all similarly engaged have felt—that much of the misery of the world is not only preventable, but remediable; that kindly Christian help given at the right time may keep poverty from becoming absolute destitution, and in other cases may help those who have fallen to find their own feet again; and that there are times and circumstances in the history of many who are deeply sunk in moral degradation, when the servant of Christ can revive in the heart the power of forgotten convictions, and rouse it to the pursuit of eternal peace.’

Only five-and-twenty members remained in the great building, including two elders, Mr. Hodgson Anderson and Mr. Wallace, both old men deeply attached to ‘The Tolbooth’ by their memories of long ago, who were touched to the very heart by the prospect of building up the broken walls of the ancient spiritual temple. The few old people who along with them clung to the church of their youth were equally warm in their gratitude for unexpected help, raised up for them by one who came as the repairer of the breach.

The young Professor in his student days had led the way in filling and equipping Buccleuch Church. He now seized his opportunity, and laid before the University



Missionary Association the needs of the desolate Tolbooth, dwelling also on the reflex benefits which would accrue to the students themselves. He had not much faith in mere lectures on Pastoral Theology, though in their own way quite good, apart from practical training and personal tackling of the problems which present themselves to every serious minister. He did not now appeal in vain; for an earnest band of young men, a large proportion of his class, accompanied him to the first meeting of presbytery in December 1870, and made the joint offer that if that court would entrust to their leader and themselves the fabric of the church, the entire work of the district would be fully undertaken. It was a splendid enterprise, made in strong faith that God, who had put it into their hearts, would enable them to accomplish it; and nobly was their promise redeemed. The presbytery encouraged them, and cordially sanctioned the appointment of a licentiate to act as parish missionary. To this office the Rev. Peter Thomson, B.D. (now Dr. Thomson of Dunning, Perthshire), was appointed. He had been first prizeman in the Biblical Criticism class during Dr. Charteris' first two sessions, and was nominated for the post by the University Missionary Association. Mr. (afterwards Professor) Thomas Nicol was the Home Mission superintendent. Of course most of the students were those intending the ministry, but valued help was received also from students in Medicine, Law, and Arts. From 1870 onwards Professor Charteris preached frequently, and brought together large congregations. The presbytery gave him authority to administer the sacraments, and he became in a very true sense the minister of the district and superintendent of the mission. Like Dr. Chalmers, Professor Charteris had a real genius for applied Christianity. Endowed with much personal magnetism, thoroughly systematic in his methods, and with a firm grasp of the best principles of Home Mission work, he set himself to direct the willing band of volunteers which speedily gathered round him, and (as with Dr. Chalmers) the object-lesson was always designed to prepare the way



for full parochial equipment. His preaching attracted many earnest members of the Church in Edinburgh. Sermons on the Temptation of Christ, on the Coming of the Kingdom, on the Epistles to the Seven Churches, on the Judgment of Christ, still recur to the memory of those who heard him forty years ago. Crowds flocked to listen, for such preaching is rare and always gathers hearers; but the pulpit was with him the fulcrum from which to exert spiritual lever power not only upon a listening congregation, but that they in turn might become living epistles of the truth and spreaders of the light. His aim was ever to bring Christian influence to bear upon the inhabitants of the Tolbooth district, and he chiefly valued outsiders for what help they could afford to those within its borders. On that object he concentrated the attention of all whom he could influence. Difficulties were experienced on the score of overlapping between various Church agencies. With Free St. John's Dr. Charteris was anxious to make amicable arrangements for a proper division of spheres. It was so far secured by their agreeing to work the south side of the Lawnmarket, and the Tolbooth the north side, to avoid competition. Free Tolbooth also, with its church in St. Andrew Square, tenaciously held to the idea that the Tolbooth were intruders; but patience and forbearance got over this more or less by a division of territory. Dr. Charteris well knew that people in the slums sometimes play off one Church against another, to get all that they can from both. He therefore proposed that they should at intervals of every three or six months submit to each other a written list of adherents 'across the border.' It was ever his anxious desire to work in thorough amity with other Christian brethren, and with other agencies for ameliorating the condition of the poor.

In a lecture to the Edinburgh University Missionary Association on 'Church' and 'No Church,' Dr. Charteris lamented that

'the first cardinal point, in theory and practice, with Scottish Churches was never to think of one another except for purposes of opposition. In talking of the great Garden of the Lord to be

cultivated, they never said there were so many zealous workers in it. The only thing they heard of was when some worker had cultivated a tree to a profitable extent, that immediately they had the whole of the workmen bearing down upon it in order to pluck at some of the fruit. Taking Scotland as a whole, it was over-churched and over-ministered. They were wasting strength and wasting money. They had seven hundred men who were not needed in the country, taking it all together, and assuming it to be a Presbyterian country; and taking £300 as the average amount paid to these seven hundred ministers, they had £210,000 of Christ's money flung away: for if it were not needed, of course it was wasted. They were not doing good but harm with their money, for they were contending with one another with it. In the Grassmarket there were seven distinct denominational missions working, without taking account of each other's doings or helping each other. In the Lawnmarket they repeatedly found missionaries from different Churches visiting and not taking any account of each other. As an instance of the effects of this want of co-operation, he mentioned the authentic case of a man who died, and it was found that three different Churches had provided a coffin for his remains. Another instance he knew was that of a woman whose husband had been killed by an accident. It was found that there were seven distinct streams of charity flowing to the widow and her four children; and the distressing result was, that not being able to make a good use of the money, she took to drink, and ultimately became a confirmed drunkard. He believed all the Churches were to blame in this respect. He would now inquire how the "Church" set about to save "No Church." The two principles on which they acted were—to be attractive to the people, and to be hostile to other labourers. Now the very reverse was what was needed; for instead of being attractive they ought to be aggressive, in the Christian sense, and instead of contending with each other, there should be agreement and division of the land. The right principle to follow was that no Home Mission should be worked except in connection with a congregation, to which the inhabitants who were drawn over to care for Christianity could attach themselves—a congregation which not only should send forth its delegates, but the members of which, both men and women, should go out and try to draw people in—a congregation which had a defined territory within which to work, in which territory every inhabitant was known by name and history, and visited as a familiar friend. That was the right principle for working Home Missions, the principle by which the Rev. J. H. Wilson had wrought such wonders in Fountainbridge, and the principle which had also made the



Tolbooth University Mission a wonderful success. So then, "No Church" kept increasing because the Church was acting on the wrong tack. On a Sunday when one saw the large body of people coming forth from a church, he was apt to say—Here Christianity is a mighty power; but when asked what all these people did, he learned that by their united efforts they kept one missionary! He knew that some individuals were doing a great deal, but there was no congregational outcome. There was no attempt on the part of this great body to be an organised living agency for Jesus Christ. It was with sadness that he said they were making religion in Scotland a receptive instead of an aggressive thing; and the consequences were that they were withered at the root, and did not receive as they would if they gave out again. The result of this was that the graces rusted, the Christian Church was comparatively idle, and people were not receiving the comfort of their religion. Christianity to bring in the "No Church" must be aggressive; and Christianity to be properly aggressive must be territorial.'

He concluded by mentioning that they had now four hundred communicants in the Tolbooth church, and that two hundred souls had been added to the church from the mission district.

It was an education in itself to be taken by Professor Charteris to try your 'prentice hand on visiting. You were trysted to meet him punctually at an appointed hour at the foot of a stair or the mouth of a close, and followed him up the spiral stone staircase till he rung, or oftener knocked, at a door. He was always specially punctilious about showing the utmost courtesy even to the poorest, inquiring whether it would be convenient to receive him. Those whose industry brought them comfort always welcomed the visitors, and helped them in their work by putting their best rooms freely at their disposal for meetings among neighbours; those who were in sickness or sorrow received the visitors with a thankfulness that often made them ashamed of the poor words and deeds of comfort they had to offer; even those who were reckless and abandoned never resented, often even hailed the friendly counsel. Dr. Charteris had an instinctive gift of getting in touch even with the shyest, dourest, and most reserved, putting them immediately at



their ease: an unfailing memory for family history, he would put questions about absent ones, and distilled sympathy and encouragement with every word. He never preached at people from the higher plane of the superior person: avoided religious jargon, and yet often elicited facts, or discovered a state of mental anxiety which enabled him to make the visit helpful, and specifically Christian in tone and quality. Gossip about others was rigidly but tactfully repressed; and he never made the mistake of staying too long in any house. When he rose to go an electric tie of Christian friendship bound the person visited to Christian worship, and to him who represented the service of Christ. Thus it was by taking infinite trouble himself, and getting others to share it, that an apparently unpromising field became fruitful, and a mere skeleton congregation became clothed with flesh and blood, and breathed life and vigour. It would scarcely have been possible to imagine a congregation at a lower ebb than was the Tolbooth: yet in two years the Spirit of God breathed upon the dry bones: it lived and stood upon its feet, a living regiment of the great army of the Church of God. The Castlehill and the Lawnmarket became a field of warm-hearted evangelic agency for the ingathering of the degraded and the sinful, though some of the closes were the abodes of vice and crime which often called for the intervention of the police. In his splendidly conceived scheme of practical Christian work the Professor had thorough efficiency in view. If he worked his students hard in the class-room, he worked them reasonably hard also in their district visitation. He was comrade as well as leader, and never asked of others what he was not prepared to do himself. A spirit of buoyant hopefulness in him was very infectious: everybody worked with a will and with genuine enjoyment. The Bible phrase, 'the people had a mind to work,' is an exact description of the fact.

The machinery of organisation employed was of various kinds, and was always being added to by development. To begin with, each visitor had his own district book, in

which he kept a regular diary of his fortnightly visits to his clients. The names of their children, and all particulars of their needs, temporal and spiritual, were jotted down. On this Dr. Charteris laid great stress, and indeed it was specially necessary, for though the mission went steadily on, the individual workers were bound to be frequently changing. It was Mrs. Charteris' part to keep two large volumes, regular ledgers, in which a certain number of pages were devoted to each family in the district, and reports were carefully engrossed to keep them up to date. All important particulars were condensed and recorded: so that in time the Tolbooth Church possessed a family biography of all the inhabitants, and new visitors had this history to look back upon, and to guide them in their dealings with the people. Once a fortnight the Professor presided at a gathering of all the 'Tolbooth Workers'—for that one name applied to all. It might be in the Presbytery Hall, or at a reunion in his own house, when every case of difficulty was considered and decided on, and helpful counsels given.

It was noticeable that Dr. Charteris, in all his work and everywhere, was a great believer in the power of friendly intercourse. In the Tolbooth he had a unique opportunity of proving it. It was not an assembly of people largely strangers to one another, but a community drawn together by many ties: in a great number of cases intimately, even sacredly, acquainted. There was a wonderful spirit of 'camaraderie' amongst those who resolved, by God's grace, to make the work successful. And so it came to pass that many words of counsel and encouragement were spoken to the perplexed and the tempted: vice and sin were attacked in their strongholds with the persistency of Christian zeal and love: stair meetings were organised, open-air meetings were held in grimy courts, services were held (at a third service) within the church building on Sunday evenings with an attendance of about one hundred, to which only people in moleskins and working-clothes, or with shawls over their heads instead of bonnets, were admitted, and



at which the grace and the hope of the Gospel were set before the broken-down and the sinful. Every effort was made to compel them to come in. One plan was for the student visitor to look up—each in his own district—his particular clients, and march them to church with as little ostentation as possible. They were seldom found ready, but, when reminded of their promise, generally ended in coming along. Of course everything centred in the church services; but all the usual, and some unusual methods were attempted.

When in the year 1872 the Rev. Peter Thomson was appointed to Kelvinhaugh, a successor was happily found in the Rev. George Wilson (now Dr. Wilson of St. Michael's, Edinburgh). Under his powerful evangelistic ministry the congregation rapidly increased. The attendance at the congregational prayer-meeting averaged eighty. The Sabbath school steadily grew. A children's church with an appropriate service was instituted. A young men's fellowship society and a Bible-class on Sundays conducted by Mrs. Charteris were well attended. Saturday evening musical entertainments were crowded, while a clothing society, a work society, a savings bank with three hundred and eighty-six depositors, and a congregational library, all played a useful part. A congregational report is seldom lively reading, but the various items which it chronicles all represent time, trouble, and money consecrated not in vain to the cause of Christ. With all this care the work made rapid progress—fully up to expectation. Mrs. Charteris took special charge of the mothers' meeting, which was not a bit like the orthodox and orderly function that generally goes by that name, with an audience solemnly seated in rows, and the speaker in a chair of dignity. It was made thoroughly homelike. The old and delicate settled down nearest the fire, while bright young ladies took a happy living interest in their poorer friends.

Among the true yokefellows a few must be named: Mrs. Aitken, a 'widow indeed,' whose husband had inducted Dr. Charteris to Park Church, came to Edinburgh specially to help in the Tolbooth; Colonel and Mrs.



Allan were stout supporters of every good work; Mr. William Grant, a son of the manse of Cavers, was one of the most enthusiastic young workers forty years ago, and though immersed in business cares, promoted to be Master of the Merchant Company, and a real guide and authority on education, was for long the devoted superintendent of the Sunday school, and continued to the end a loyal comrade and elder. No one could have better told the story of the Tolbooth than he, but he has been suddenly and peacefully called Home, leaving a family who are walking in his steps. His sister, Miss Grant, was invaluable as a succourer of many, and became the devoted wife of that Tolbooth assistant who is now the Rev. Dr. William Robertson of Coltness, second convener of the Christian Life and Work Committee. Dr. Charteris' name for her was 'Phœbe,' after the Deaconess. Lady Liston Foulis, the Misses Thomson (one of whom survives in her ninety-fourth year), and Mrs. Phin, may be named among many staunch friends.

Specially dear to Dr. and Mrs. Charteris was a beautiful Highland girl from Islay, as winsome as she was comely, who always called herself their 'eldest daughter.' They had known her from childhood as a niece of Mrs. Aitken; and with her widowed mother she spent the winters in Edinburgh. Possessed of a singular charm of personality, she was a great power among the aged crones and the poor down-trodden younger women of that Tolbooth meeting. Every face was radiant when 'Miss Nora' came in, and she gave of her best for Christ's cause. When she died, after one week's illness, of virulent typhoid fever, the sorrowing consternation, almost incredulity, in the large family circle of the Tolbooth, was indescribable. 'Miss Nora dead! Surely it is impossible,' ran from mouth to mouth in the lanes and closes of the Lawnmarket. Old students, who had passed on to other spheres of work, wrote to Dr. Charteris, 'Surely it cannot be that it is *our* Miss Campbell's death of which we read in the papers.' But it was too surely she. The light of the place seemed quenched.

A darkness fell on all the happy work, and the glamour which her bright spirit had done so much to cast over it had vanished. Of all the young men and maidens who were dear to Dr. and Mrs. Charteris, Nora Campbell was, and always remained in memory, the nearest and dearest. It was an attachment of rare devotion on both sides. They remembered how she said, 'I had rather hear you even scolding me, than any one else praising me.' They treasured long a little book with the simple inscription, 'To you both, from Nora.' And as she lived with her mother in Argyle Place, the Professor's move to 1 Salisbury Road had promised opportunities of even closer intimacy; but it was not to be. She was not, for God took her. The Tolbooth people never forgot her, and even to this day some warm hearts love to recall her short ministry among them. In the mothers' meeting she and an old Highland woman over eighty used to have grand talks with each other in Gaelic; and once when Mrs. Charteris called them to order, bidding them speak in a language all could understand, old Mrs. MacKenzie archly responded, 'We were speaking of you, my dear! We were not saying any ill of you!' 'Miss Nora' died on 14th December 1873, and on her gravestone in the Grange Cemetery was inscribed, 'An only child, and beloved of many.'

Another important agency in the Tolbooth was 'The Holly Tree.' It was not merely a public-house without intoxicants, like those temperance public-houses which some years later became so common. When it was instituted, it was quite a new idea, and rather of the ambitious order. It aspired to be 'a home from home' to the dwellers in the Lawnmarket; and it was hoped that—as on the Continent—whole families would sometimes adjourn there. There was no end to the hopes and day-dreams about it: and it certainly contributed much to the quiet enjoyment of the neighbourhood, although, alas! there were many then, as now, who seemed unable to enjoy themselves apart from whisky. A whole first flat in a large picturesque, Swiss-looking house with gables to the street, was secured. Great pains



were taken with the painting and decoration of the five rooms: a scarlet dado and white walls adorned one: two shades of sunny green another. The great object was to make it as unlike as possible to the dirty shebeen which it had formerly been. The bill of fare in the refreshment-room was varied from day to day, and every care was taken to have the tea and coffee first-rate. Dr. Charteris appointed a committee of management to help him, but himself superintended every detail, and with other workers often lunched there to make sure things were really right. Admission was free to members and to those who bought food. Just to keep things under control, admission to others was a halfpenny. Mrs. Charteris and Miss Grant undertook the weekly settling up of the accounts between them. The manager and his wife were most deeply interested, and did their very best. Besides the refreshment-room there was a comfortable reading-room, a bagatelle-room with other games, a room to wash the hands, and a little sanctum for writing letters in, which had once been for a short time the bedroom of Robert Burns! The interest that was shown in the venture, and the help that poured in, were quite phenomenal. An oil-cloth manufacturer in Fife, who had once been a poor shop-boy in the Lawn-market, begged to be allowed to present the whole of the oil-cloth needed to cover the old stained floors of the five rooms. He sent and carefully measured them, and fitted the bright linoleum into every corner; and that of itself transformed the place. Then well-wishers gave books, magazines, and all the illustrated and many local papers. Other friends also provided lovely pictures, flowers and flower-pots, chairs and tables; and all round the reading-room was a lining of Austrian Bentwood sofas, on which the weary could recline.

The whole conception of the scheme was to make it like a pretty home, from which the visitors could take ideas for the embellishment of their own humble dwellings. The plan was tried also of keeping stocks of wall-paper which the more respectable people bought, and



many houses were wonderfully cleaned and brightened up in those murky tenements. But alas! the plan had to be abandoned, because no sooner were the houses improved, than the rent was raised. Oh! the pity and the shame of it! Long afterwards, a more radical plan was adopted, when well-disposed ladies bought up and made habitable many slum quarters, letting them at reasonable rates. That would be in Edinburgh perhaps twelve or fifteen years later. The success of 'The Holly Tree' for the time was largely due to the assiduity with which the students and other gentlemen workers in turns gave up their evenings to helping to entertain the visitors. The present writer can say from personal knowledge that many found it a haven of safety amid the storms of life; and can recall a deposed minister and numerous broken-down professional men who frequented it to their great advantage. If it showed nothing else, it showed at least that a public-house without drink could be made popular, which had not been made clear in Edinburgh before. Dr. Charteris reported:—

'If we are asked what we mean by being popular, we answer, that we mean being frequented. We can point in proof of this to a daily average of from three hundred and fifty to four hundred individuals entering the house; sixty to seventy every night on the premises, when the hour for shutting up comes; and eighty on Saturday evenings. But to insist upon such a house being self-supporting from the first is out of the question. We have to create a demand as well as to supply it. Will our old friends help us to keep green and fresh the leaves of "The Holly Tree"?''

When the University Missionary Association had seen the object of re-endowment attained, they went to fresh fields and pastures new in Blackfriars Street, the Old Kirk parish (also a suppressed charge), and St. Margaret's parish.

'The Tolbooth began our extra-mural life in the University,' was one of Dr. Charteris' last written notes. Its machinery was varied and complicated, but the driving-wheel of all was the Professor, who superintended

and guided and inspired the whole. Several generations of students received lessons in the various branches of pastoral activity based upon the territorial work of that revived parish, which they have turned to excellent account—some of them in the most responsible charges throughout Scotland, one in the Scots Church of Melbourne, Australia. It may be questioned whether, in any of the more modern settlements or institutional churches, better or more efficient work for social improvement and the spiritual uplifting of the masses has ever been done.

Sheriff John D. Sym, of Perth, a fellow-elder with Dr. Charteris in the Tolbooth for many years, has noted these characteristics:—

‘To him it was not enough for a Church to be respectable, to open a door for the preaching of the Gospel, to minister the sacraments to those who chose to hear and to receive. He sought to compel men to come in by old ways, and by new ways when old ways did not suffice. There one saw on a small scale what all who knew came to see in the whole field of the Church. He was inexhaustible in invention and resource; and he never wavered because his plans seemed novel or sentimental or defective. Never was he ashamed to bring forward a plan and recommend it, although the faces of his hearers were overcast with doubt, or wore a smile of sarcasm, or were darkened with opposition. Eager and buoyant, however, as he was, he was steadfast against all dubious ways. Thus, when it seemed to others that to get money for good objects one need not be too particular, that a strait might easily be escaped through a bazaar, and by raffling articles at it as quite legitimate charity, he would steadily oppose. He might fail to convince men, but he taught the lesson that sacrifice was what God’s cause in the parish needed first, and not money. “Give,” he would say, “but let it be real giving.” This seemed a high morality and a hard lesson. But it was sound. In his days of eldership, in that Old Town charge, there was no part of Christian work thought beneath the Divinity Professor. Himself a beautiful reader, he wished that others, the youngest and rawest, should take part at a parish tea, and he would give them generous praise. These things have left their mark not only on some lives, but on the congregation for which he so generously gave up his leisure hours. To this day it remains a congregation in which many serve faithfully and joyfully in



good works: in which all are kind and brotherly. Unforgotten by those who worked with him, his hopeful, genial spirit lives even in that part of the congregation that never knew him. His influence in that small corner will not die, as it will not die in the Church.'

It was this faith in him, and in the wisdom and utility of his projects, which mainly made him so successful in raising money. Business men as well as devoted ladies felt sure of getting true and lasting value for their gifts. Mr. David Stevenson, C.E., of Northern Lights fame, was a fellow-trustee for the re-endowment of Tolbooth; and men like his brother Thomas (father of Robert Louis Stevenson), Mr. T. G. Murray, W.S., James Baird of Cambusdoon, and Alexander Whitelaw of Gartsherrie, were among the many who strengthened his hands in providing funds for the Tolbooth endowment. It was found difficult to effect an arrangement with the Government Board of Works regarding the repairs of the fabric. The congregation were bound to pay half, and had to invest £850 in security therefor. In spite of this a permanent endowment of £165 per annum was secured for minister's stipend, and the erection was duly decreed on 23rd June 1873. Dr. Charteris and the others took good care that seat-rents should be low, with a sufficient number of free sittings effectively to serve the poor parishioners. A letter from Mr. James Baird strongly advises that any endowment above the legal scale should be invested 'in Guaranteed Railway Stocks, some of which are as good as any landed property, or even as good as the Teinds—to yield  $4\frac{1}{2}$  per cent.' This is a curious instance of how a shrewd business man and great captain of industry may fail to foresee depreciation in value. The wise policy of investing only in first-rate feu-duties, though with less returns, has been steadily pursued by the Endowment Committee, and has been thoroughly justified.

With the ordination of the Rev. George Wilson commenced one of the most notable and spiritually fruitful ministries of our time. To him succeeded the Rev. Thomas



Nicol, D.D., a staunch original worker in that arduous field, for many years Editor of the *Missionary Record*, and since 1899 Professor of Biblical Criticism in Aberdeen University. He can best tell, from fullest knowledge, of the academic labours of his old Professor, elder, and intimate friend.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE PROFESSOR AT WORK

Appointed Professor—His Conception of Duties and Critical Standpoint—'Canonicity'—Expositions—His Colleagues—Views on Education for the Ministry—Theological Tests—Croall Lectures—Baird Lectures—Reviews Professor W. Robertson Smith's Article 'Bible'—Survey of Field in 1890—Testimonies on Retirement.

THE Chair of Biblical Criticism and Biblical Antiquities in Edinburgh University to which Dr. Charteris was appointed as second occupant was a recent foundation, dating only from 1846. It was endowed with one-third of the revenues of the Deanery of the Chapel-Royal. When it became vacant by the death of the first professor, Dr. Robert Lee, in 1868, feeling was running high in the Church on the subject of innovations in public worship. The heat which was generated in the conflict of principles made itself felt in the contest of candidates for the Chair, Dr. Robert Wallace, then minister of Trinity College, Edinburgh, being supported by the friends of Dr. Robert Lee, and Dr. Charteris by his opponents. Dr. Wallace had acted as deputy for Dr. Lee when he was laid aside by illness, and in that capacity had won the favourable opinion of the students. Accordingly, when the choice of the Crown fell upon the minister of The Park, the appointment met with a storm of criticism. The supporters of Dr. Wallace were loud in their denunciations, and caricatured the choice of the Crown with no little cleverness in various prints, notably in the *Battle of the Chair*. The partisan criticisms were in themselves harmless enough, but they prejudiced the minds of some who were to be students under the new Professor, and made his task more difficult for the first

session or two than it need have been. His own account of the appointment shows the spirit in which he met criticism and set himself to work. In the fragment of autobiography he says:—

‘It was with a heavy heart that I resolved to allow my friends to put forward my name for the Chair of Biblical Criticism in Edinburgh University. I did not myself make application or collect testimonials until I was assured that this was essential as a final step. Here also, as in Park parish, it was my misfortune to succeed an eminent man with whom my convictions and aspirations were somewhat at variance. In the Chair, however, my predecessor had been a personal friend, in whose class I had gained the only prize he gave while I was one of his students, and from whom, I am glad to repeat, I had received much kindness and encouragement.

‘I had rather more than the usual amount of criticism to bear on my appointment. There were anonymous letters, and even poems, which gave an amusing interest to my induction. But every assailant seemed to raise up a friend in my defence. Some letters against me from a country town led to a letter from all the ministers in that place, saying they disclaimed any sympathy with the animus of my detractors. An eminent scholar criticised my opening lecture in a newspaper which had not reported it, save in a very minute notice, and the most learned of Scottish scholars came to my rescue. I said no word in reply, and many of the gibes and rhymes were even amusing.

‘The outside controversy was, of course, known inside my class-room, and the troubles of a young Professor's first year were not unknown to me. Some of the students were as old as myself, and probably in some departments knew more than I did; but in course of time all fell into line. Several of them became Professors in their turn, and some were dead before I resigned. Many of them are now distinguished ministers, and among my most intimate friends.

‘During all that session we lived in Stirlingshire, in a



country house belonging to a Glasgow friend; and although I did not like the daily journeying, I was able to have all my time for my work, except when I was in the train. This made it possible, by dint of beginning at four A.M., to appear with a written lecture at one o'clock on every lecture day. But it was very hard work, and sometimes I wondered if I had done rightly in leaving my beloved congregation for the demure seclusion and the grinding labours of a University Chair. I always hoped that the time would come, after a few years, when I should read my lectures from a handsome volume bound in morocco, as my predecessor had done. That Arcadian restfulness was never attained. The field of criticism was, in my time, in continual flux, and the attempt to make lectures for the present day made new lectures indispensable. Still, after some years a part of the old material was available, and, so far as it went, helped to some rest. But I have stores of lectures which were only once delivered. Looking back I feel that, if I had written more carefully, and only rewritten the old lectures, I might not only have had an easier, but a more useful time. In my last session I found, in the middle of January, that I had not read a single old lecture without rewriting it, and most of those I had delivered were in every sense new. When I told Dr. MacGregor of St. Cuthbert's this, he said in his deep resonant voice, "You should be ashamed to tell it!" and I see something to be said for his opinion. At all events I broke down, and was so tried by ill-health that I resolved to resign, having finished thirty years in my occupancy of the Chair.'

Dr. Charteris, from his very first session, did not disappoint his friends, and ere long succeeded in winning over to a more favourable opinion most of those who were dissatisfied. It soon appeared that his equipment of scholarship for the work of the Chair was ample; that his mastery of the critical problems of that time was equal to all the demands made upon him, and increased in firmness and sureness from session to session; and that he had the power, derived from warm evangelical sympathies and a

varied experience in successful pastorates, of bringing critical questions to practical and spiritual tests, and so of imparting freshness and living interest to subjects that in other hands might have been unprofitable and barren. To him the work of the Divinity Hall, with its discussions of theological and critical questions, was in vital relations with the beneficent and missionary activities of the Church; and from the life and work of the Church there came into the studies of his class-room a sense of reality and practical usefulness.

The Professors of Biblical Criticism in the Universities now devote themselves exclusively to the New Testament; the Chairs are in fact Chairs of New Testament Literature and Exegesis. The Old Testament and its problems are left to the Professors of Hebrew, to whose field they naturally belong. Dr. Charteris, however, strictly interpreting the designation of his Chair as a Chair of Biblical Criticism and Biblical Antiquities, felt himself under an obligation to devote part of the time at his disposal to Old Testament subjects. In the early years of his Professorship he gave literal compliance with the title, and devoted an hour a week to the handbook of *Hebrew Antiquities*, by Prebendary Browne of Chichester, while later he used in oral examination Oehler's *Old Testament Theology*. He also kept himself abreast of the discoveries which were being made in Bible lands, and prepared lectures on the geography, topography, and archæology of Palestine. 'Jerusalem as Explored by the Palestine Exploration Society,' 'Sinai and the Exodus,' 'The Moabite Stone,' 'The Hittites,' among others, were subjects to which he directed the attention of his students. He soon went much further than this. He recalled that when Bishop Colenso was promulgating views of the Pentateuch, which were then regarded as very revolutionary, there was no official voice lifted up from any of the University Chairs to offer either protest or guidance on the subject. He had not been long settled in his Chair when he set himself to a thorough study of the theories of the Old Testament narratives associated with the names of Astruc, Eichhorn, Ewald,



and later of Reuss, Graf, Kuenen, Wellhausen, and others. He considered himself bound to call the attention of his students to these questions. He mastered them himself, and prepared courses of lectures containing full accounts of the various theories, with vigorous criticism of the whole critical standpoint. His own point of view was distinctly conservative; he profoundly distrusted both the methods and results of the advanced school of criticism; but he did not content himself with mere polemic. He wrote and rewrote excellent lectures on the Psalms and the Prophets with a positive and practical purpose, which were found exceedingly helpful by his students. Even when Professor A. R. S. Kennedy became his colleague, a Hebrew scholar of the modern type, and fully equipped for dealing with all the critical problems, Dr. Charteris still continued to use the lectures he had prepared with such labour and care.

Writing in February 1897 to Professor A. F. Mitchell of St. Andrews, he says:—

‘I have been reading hard at Old Testament Higher Criticism, and have come afresh to the conclusion that the “Analysis” is a blunder, and the Old Testament not a discredited fabrication. And I am venturing to teach my students so. I find them receptive. The position of emotional acceptance and dogmatic rejection of the Old Testament, which the Free Churchmen are resting in, cannot be long a resting-place. Dr. Briggs dined here last night. He has analysed the Old Testament to a later date than any other Anglo-Saxon scholar. “Mere literary criticism—nothing historical! Bible all inspired!” He is a most lovable man, but woefully wild as a critic.’

It was, however, to the New Testament that he mainly devoted his energies. At the time when he took up the duties of his Chair the views of the Tübingen school had a wide ascendancy. Starting with the idea that there was a radical divergence between St. Paul and the three leading apostles, St. Peter, St. James, and St. John, Ferdinand Christian Baur reconstructed from that standpoint the entire Christian history. He accepted only the four principal epistles of St. Paul, Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, and Galatians, and the Apocalypse as genuine, placing the



Gospels in the second century, the Gospel according to St. John as late as 150 A.D. From Baur's extreme position his own followers soon recoiled, and when he died in 1860 the reaction against his theory had well begun. In the lecture with which Dr. Charteris opened the Divinity Hall, at the beginning of his third session (1870-71), he gave striking proofs of the decline of the influence of Baur. With characteristic thoroughness he had betaken himself in the summer of 1869 and again in 1870 to German Universities, to increase his familiarity with German, and to gain the personal acquaintance of some of the best representatives of German evangelical thought. In the lecture referred to, which was published and had a large circulation under the title, *On some present day Attacks on Christian Doctrine*, he dealt at length with the teaching of Baur, and called attention to the reaction which had taken place.

'In Germany,' he says, 'the students (who, it is well known, are free to go to any classes they choose) crowd the class-rooms of the orthodox, and desert those of the negative critics. In 1869 I saw crowds sitting at the feet of Beck and Oehler in Tübingen, and during the past summer (1870) I saw the mass of the theological students in Bonn learning from the genial, subtle, and erudite Lange, from the mature and mellow Hundeshagen, and from Christlieb, already of wide repute as a preacher and author, and, if spared, sure to be known as a leader of those who seek to unite true theology with an active religious life. In each of those Universities the representative of Baur lectured to empty benches; and in one of them a certain advanced critical Professor, whose name is well known in Scotland, was forced during the past session to beg some students to make a class for him, that he might get his lectures delivered. He got a class of two! I have reason to believe that similar accounts may be given of other German Universities.'

It may be added that Dr. Charteris was never weary of encouraging his students to make themselves acquainted with the language, literature, and Universities of



PHOTOGRAPH BY J. H. HARRISON

THE YOUNG PROFESSOR  
(1869)





Germany, despite widespread alarm and suspicion of the last-named as seed-plots of thoroughgoing rationalism. 'It is your duty,' he said in this lecture, with special reference to the spiritual danger then believed to be involved, 'to know German theology; and God, if we ask Him, will protect us in the path of duty. It would prove us to be unworthy of our time if we were afraid of studying the current literature of our subject. Besides, I believe, there is as much infidelity in any ordinary library in this country as in all the class-rooms of any German University.' The advice was taken by several of those who listened to the lecture, and next summer semester saw them at Tübingen and other Universities.

Although the reaction against Baur's revolutionary reconstruction of the early Christian history had well set in, the views of the Tübingen school had to be taken into account by any theological teacher of that day who would deal adequately with the literature and exegesis of the New Testament. Dr. Charteris kept this requirement steadily in view in the early years of his professorship. From the first he directed his students to the study of Textual Criticism, making use of Scrivener's *Introduction*, and writing lectures upon the Recension theories of Griesbach and other critics. In his first two sessions he took up the Epistles to the Galatians and Colossians. In connection with the latter, Lightfoot's admirable commentary had not yet appeared. But Dr. Charteris entered into the questions then under discussion with great thoroughness. The school of Baur had declared Colossians to be written in the second century to counteract Gnostic influence. In order to meet this contention and to prove its Pauline origin, Dr. Charteris made a very careful study of the chief Gnostic schools, going to the chief sources in Irenaeus, Hippolytus, and Epiphanius, and making use of the investigations of Dean Mansel and of the French scholar, M. Matter. There are old notebooks still in existence with full accounts of 'aeons' and 'emanations' and long lists of 'syzygies,' attesting the labours of Professor and students to comprehend a move-

ment of thought which had seriously threatened early Christianity. The Gospels of St. John and St. Mark were also carefully studied, with their various problems. One subject upon which the Professor laid stress was the Paschal Controversy and its bearing upon the authenticity of St. John's Gospel. To aid his students in understanding this somewhat intricate subject, he collected the Patristic passages and had them printed under the title, *Helps in the Study of the Paschal Controversy in the Early Church*. It was, however, when he was expounding the Pastoral Epistles, and bringing their teaching to bear upon the work of the ministry, that he seemed to be most at home. He then poured forth the convictions which were most central to his own life, and the truths which had become precious to himself in the work of the ministry; and men got from those warm and sometimes unpremeditated utterances help and counsel which they made their own and treasured through life.

As part of the work of his class in his very first sessions he read with his students Tischendorf's *Apocryphal Gospels*, and gave them a very instructive view of the motives and characteristics of the whole New Testament Apocryphal literature. In due time he wrote a valuable set of lectures on the history of the English Bible. In fact, he impressed upon his students time and again the need for a thorough acquaintance with the English version. He emphasised its unity and uniqueness, and he wrote for the Present Day Tract Series a valuable tract on *The Unique Claim of the Bible to be a Direct Revelation from God*.

In order to help his students to a proper estimate of the New Testament Canon, he introduced the study of Kirchofer's *Quellensammlung*, a collection of sources by a Swiss professor. It was by no means a popular students' book. But recognising the need of a handbook which should supply with tolerable fulness the external evidence for the canonical books of the New Testament, he resolved to produce such a work. It was thus that, with Kirchofer as a foundation, he prepared his work on *Canonicity*,



which from the time of its publication in 1880 was regularly used in the class-room, and which, though now out of print, is by no means out of date. He supplied to the original collection of Kirchhofer valuable introductory chapters on the earliest and most important witnesses, and useful notes, biographical and chronological, to enable the student to understand the bearing of the passages quoted. In its preparation he was assisted by quite a galaxy of old students and other friends. The work was dedicated to the learned Professor W. P. Dickson of Glasgow and Dr. James Donaldson, then Rector of the High School of Edinburgh, and an excellent classical and patristic scholar. Acknowledging a letter of congratulation from Dr. Charteris in 1907, when he received the honour of knighthood, Principal Sir James Donaldson thus refers to *Canonicity*:—

'Your letter of congratulation gave me intense pleasure, and recalled the memory of one of the best friendships I ever formed. "Recalled" is the wrong word, for I use *Canonicity* regularly, and often think of you and the brave efforts you made in connection with it, in spite of bodily weakness. *Canonicity* is a thoroughly good book, and there is no work that has at all superseded it, or can stand in comparison with it.'

The work had a very favourable reception from the learned world. The scholarship and labour that had gone to the marshalling of the numerous witnesses, over and above Kirchhofer's original work, were heartily acknowledged. From French and German scholars it received hearty commendation; and Professor Sanday of Oxford, in his inaugural lecture on 'The Study of the New Testament,' recommended it to students as, along with Westcott *On the Canon*, the most useful text-book for that subject. *Canonicity* only requires to be brought up to date by the inclusion of recently discovered materials, and modified somewhat to bring it within reach of the resources of the theological student, to be a valuable handbook for years to come.

Some glimpses of the Professor as he appeared to his students in the class-room and in his home circle have



been preserved in letters to the manse of Moulin, written by Duncan Campbell, afterwards minister of St. Matthew's, Edinburgh, and alas! too early taken away, who was a member of his first class, 1868-69. His inaugural lecture did not impress his students with any great sense of power, but, says the writer—

'It breathed a delightful spirit, and all his lectures since then have been characterised by the same. He evidently means to work us hard. He is amazingly youthful in appearance, is quite boyish, indeed, beside some of ourselves. I think his appointment must have attracted a good number of students, for the Hall is more numerously attended than it has been for some years. We can count some very superior fellows among our men too.'

The following, written by the same hand, in March 1869, gives a lively impression of the charm of the Professor's home circle:—

'I think I mentioned in my last that I had an engagement at Dr. Charteris' for Monday evening. Dinner hour was six o'clock. There was no one there except Sir Alexander Anderson, his father-in-law, a Mrs. Duthie, and the host and hostess. Dr. and Mrs. Charteris were both very pleasant under their own roof-tree. His manner is exceedingly suave, Mrs. C. is very smart and lively. She is always poking fun at her husband, whom she styles "Archibald," "Professor," "dear child," indiscriminately. I don't think the Professor is altogether pleased when, in the presence of his students, he is styled "dear child!" Mrs. Charteris is very unconventional, but decidedly pleasant and easy to get on with. Lots of badinage, and yet a good substratum of common sense: quite, in fact, one of those women who can make themselves agreeable without an effort.'

Mrs. Charteris' gifts and powers of conversation were something new even to a son of the manse like Duncan Campbell. She could hold her own in any company, as Professor Blackie once learned to his cost. To try whether she had command of the Latin for which her native Aberdeen was famed, he asked her to translate for him the Horatian line,

'*Dulce est desipere in loco,*'

when quick as thought came the rendering—

'How delightful to talk nonsense with Professor Blackie!'

Not only were the host and hostess charming and considerate, but students met at their house the most congenial company. Not to speak of Miss Helen R. Anderson, Mrs. Charteris' sister, afterwards a Deaconess of the Church of Scotland, and Mr. Andrew Anderson her brother, Miss Sophie Charteris, who was born in Corfu and could speak Greek fluently, and her brother Willie (who became Charteris Bey of Alexandria, Egypt), cousins of the Professor, and other relatives, there were to be met there friends they had made on the Continent, young pastors or students from the Fatherland, Huguenots from France, and Waldensians from the Valleys, bringing to us students from Scottish straths and glens the breath of a larger life and the joy of a wider Christian fellowship. And then after the conversation, for without games or even music those evenings were never dull, there was without fail the family worship, simple and earnest, in which it was a means of grace to join before breaking up and going home. These gatherings, when life was young and ideals of Christian service were fresh and unspoiled, are written as with a sunbeam in the memories of those who are spared to look back to them.

While the Professor was brought into close touch with his students in all the work of the class, no part of it showed him to greater advantage, or brought out the quality of the men more surely, than the weekly exposition of a portion of Scripture, prescribed long in advance. This was an exercise calculated to test the capacity of the student in a thoroughly practical direction. Each was expected, as his turn came round, to occupy about ten minutes in delivering what he was supposed to have carefully prepared. The exposition was to be given off without book; if it was read from paper, it was to all intents and purposes a failure. It was a severe test of nerve, and the adequate performance of the task required the difficult combination of brevity and clearness, of conciseness and interest. In his criticism of these performances the Professor excelled. He was always just, and anxious to encourage; but anything like flippancy or



pretentiousness came off badly. His notes of exposition in his class lists seem to fit the men ever afterwards: they appear in most cases really prophetic. 'By far the best, in composition and delivery, of the session,' is his note concerning one who early filled a Professor's chair. 'Read every word: disappointing,' is the description in two cases of the same session, strangely enough both Irishmen. 'Not afraid of any difficulty: thinks he knows,' is said of one well known still in the courts of the Church. Of another the description suits exactly: 'Well spoken; a dash of diffidence would improve it.' Of one who has marked literary power the note is: 'Literary power, felicitous phrase, too *déagé* in manner.' Of a student who is now an eminent philosophical theologian the simple note is: 'Able and clear.' But the preponderance of favourable criticism shows how ready he was to encourage promise and to think the best of his students.

The Professor felt strongly that practical training ought to accompany systematic teaching. He was himself a warm and convinced adherent of the Presbyterian system, and few men knew better the teaching of the great Fathers of Presbytery. He desired his students not only to be evangelical Christians in the best sense, but also devout and convinced Churchmen. Accordingly, when he found a field for their pastoral and practical training in the lapsed parish of Tolbooth, he was entirely in his element. Dr. John Brown, of Bellahouston, eloquently voiced the gratitude of many of these students in words spoken in the General Assembly of 1908 just after Dr. Charteris' death:—

'Professor Charteris was more than the Biblical student and critic: he was also virtually a Professor of Pastoral Theology; and I venture to think there is not a student of his in this venerable Assembly who does not remember something of the wise and practical advice which he gave for the guidance of those who were to become pastors of the Church. Outside the lecture-room his influence was great. He was a great preacher, great in his power of quickly and effectively reaching the human heart. Those of us who had the experience of visiting with him in the houses of the Lawnmarket had an experience which



no student could ever forget, which was not only a privilege to himself, but also became a benefit to his congregation.'

When his students passed out of the Divinity Hall into their work as assistants or parish ministers, he followed them with constant sympathy and helpful counsel. To an assistant in a heavy city parish he writes in 1872:—

'About your own work in preaching: I think the main work of a minister is to expound Scripture, not to teach from his own experience. There is far too much preaching from one's own experience in these days, and crude ethics supplant Gospel lessons. I know that a man should preach what he believes. But suppose a man to believe in the New Testament as a revelation of God's will for man's salvation, is he to point nobody further on towards God than his own standpoint? I don't think that is how St. Paul advised Timothy and Titus to preach. Declare God's will, not your own spiritual experience. You must not misunderstand me, as though I severed preaching from faith, but faith and experience are not identical. If they were, aspiration to things better would be impossible. The things before to which I have not attained, are things revealed by God and accepted by me. How then preach of them? Ah! I like to hear any minister—a young one especially—preaching as though he were gathering lessons from the Word of God for himself as well as for others.'

To an assistant (who upon his recommendation had been elected to a parish in the south) he writes:—

'I am convinced that you will do your best, and that you will be an able and faithful minister of the New Testament. You know that you are not sufficient for these things, but then you go a warfare at other charges than your own. You have a message to deliver; it is not yours; it is God's. It is a tremendous thing to have to do, but it is a blessed thing as well. And if you can keep before you in your pulpit, and what is harder to do, keep before you in your study, that you are a teacher of God's truth, not a discoverer of new ways to eternity, or to honour, you will have a happy experience. A great many men make up their own message in their study, and are surprised that neither God nor man recognises it as having anything divine about it when they are in the pulpit.' He concludes with what is perhaps a counsel of perfection: 'I hope you won't "read." Galloway loves direct address, not tones muffled in folds of paper.'

It was believed in some quarters that Dr. Charteris favoured the type of man whose theological standpoint was his own, and that no other need expect his help in the Church. This was not the fact. The Rev. W. Jardine Dobie of Kinghorn bears very emphatic testimony on this point:—

‘He had a keen insight into character; but also a generous appreciation of a young fellow’s good points. He was naturally desirous that his students should move in thought and sympathy with himself; but he did not at all undervalue their merits if they did not see things as he saw them.

‘Practically all my assistants—their theological standpoint varied considerably—were selected by Dr. Charteris. He used to say laughingly—“It is the only bit of patronage that now remains in the Church.”’

The relations of Professor Charteris with his colleagues in the Senatus, and in the Faculty of Divinity, were of the friendliest description, even if he had sometimes to differ from them on questions of University administration, and perhaps of criticism and theology. With Principal Sir William Muir in particular he found himself in complete accord. Their warm Christian sympathies in common, their preference for the old paths in Biblical Criticism, their interest in every spiritual movement among University students and in Foreign Mission enterprise, drew them together. With Professors Calderwood, Sir Alexander R. Simpson, Sir T. Grainger Stewart, and S. S. Laurie he had many common interests.

When Dr. Charteris joined the Faculty of Divinity in 1868 there was still one of the professors left under whom he had studied, the gentle and polished Orientalist, Professor David Liston. Professor T. J. Crawford, one of the most genial and respected of men and one of the ablest theologians of the day, had just challenged Dr. Candlish on the subject of the Divine Fatherhood, and published his able treatise on the *Fatherhood of God*. He was delivering to the class of systematic theology the admirable lectures on the ‘Atonement’ to which Dr. R. W. Dale, of Birmingham, expressed his great indebtedness in his more



popular work. Professor Stevenson was also a man of gracious temper and great learning, whose quaint phrases and quiet humour lighted up his minute and sometimes ponderous lectures on Church History. On the retirement of Dr. Stevenson in 1873 his place was taken by Dr. Robert Wallace, whose checkered career was one of the most remarkable of recent times. When Professor Flint succeeded to the Chair of Divinity, Dr. Charteris, who had strenuously advocated that ideal appointment, and cherished the highest admiration for his philosophical and theological erudition and his remarkable powers of lucid exposition, hailed his coming with the utmost satisfaction, and found in him a most efficient and helpful colleague for nearly a quarter of a century. The courtly Dr. Malcolm C. Taylor became Professor of Church History in 1877; and is now *emeritus*, and the solitary survivor of the Divinity Faculty of those days. The Chair of Hebrew, after Professor Liston's death, was occupied successively by Professor D. Laird Adams, one of the ablest of Dr. Charteris' first students; by another, Professor Dobie, whose early death in a railway accident deprived the University of a brilliant Oriental scholar; and by Professor A. R. S. Kennedy, whose Semitic learning is universally recognised, and to whom Dr. Charteris became warmly attached, though he could not follow him in his critical views.

On questions of University reform Dr. Charteris held pronounced opinions. On the subject of the education of the ministry he adopted an independent attitude. He took occasion more than once, in opening the session of the Divinity Hall, to call attention to the prolonged period of study required of students intending the ministry of the Church, a period longer than that required of any other profession. In the General Assembly of 1873 he delivered a speech on the subject, which attracted much attention. He wished no lowering of the standard of scholarship, but he urged stricter examinations and a greater economy of time, with a more varied theological curriculum. He was prepared to see the Church of Scot-



land do occasionally what the Church of England often does, take a man of proved character, spiritual gifts and successful experience in some business calling or worldly profession, on trial for licence, without imposing on him a lengthened curriculum of study. The example in the ministry of the Church of England to which he most frequently pointed when speaking of this subject was Dr. W. D. Maclagan, afterwards Archbishop of York, with whom Dr. Charteris had a cordial friendship and frequent correspondence on subjects belonging to pastoral theology, and who began life as a cavalry officer. His views, often expressed in the Assembly, and before the Royal Commission appointed in 1876 to inquire into the Universities of Scotland as to the necessity of widening the Arts curriculum and allowing science and modern languages to count for a degree, anticipated by many years the proposals of the Universities Act of 1889, and the ordinances prescribed by the Commissioners under that Act.

On one subject which came up for determination under the Act, Dr. Charteris found himself at variance with his colleagues in the Faculty of Theology. This was the subject of tests in the University Chairs of Divinity. With the chivalrous confidence in the inherent truth of Christianity which always marked Professor Flint, he had at the opening of the session, 1886-87, pronounced himself in favour of the abolition of all tests in the University Chairs of Theology, and his other two colleagues adhered to his views. Dr. Charteris, knowing the disastrous results of untested theological teaching in Germany, Switzerland, and Holland, was altogether opposed to these views. He held strongly, however, and had for years contended, that a scheme for the recognition and affiliation of the Theological Colleges of the other Churches, by the Universities, was both desirable and practicable. When the Universities Bill of 1884 was before the Senatus of Edinburgh University, he urged the insertion of words empowering the Commissioners to inquire and report as to changes that might be adopted 'with the view of bringing the external Theological Halls

into connection with the Scottish Universities.' When the Universities Act was passed in 1889 the Commissioners received this and other necessary powers. Not only did Dr. Charteris submit a weighty statement of his personal views to the Universities Commission, but he was one of a small committee appointed by the General Assembly to place its views also before it. The Assembly had, by a very large majority, adopted a resolution deprecating any action calculated to impair the existing security that the theological teaching of the Universities would be in accordance with the standards of the Church of Scotland. The findings of the Universities Commission left the Faculties of Theology as part of the Universities, and the Chairs still subject to the old doctrinal tests. It was found impossible to carry out any scheme of affiliation. On the one hand the extra-mural Divinity Halls had then no desire for recognition, except after a measure of Disestablishment; and, on the other hand, the non-theological colleagues of Dr. Charteris let him know that they did not relish the prospect of being swamped, in Edinburgh at least, by an influx of divines! That there is a regrettable anomaly in the existence of so many Theological Halls, and a scandalous waste alike of means and of energy, is universally acknowledged. It will, however, be much mitigated when the two great Presbyterian Churches are made one in an incorporating union.

In 1882 Professor Charteris delivered the Croall lectures. In this lectureship his predecessors were Principal Caird, Principal Tulloch, and Professor Milligan. He took for his subject *The New Testament Scriptures: their Claims, History, and Authority*. He had now an opportunity of expounding in a popular way the principles which guided Christendom, and especially the early Church, in the reception of these Scriptures, and these alone, as canonical; and so presenting an elucidation of the grounds of canonicity which had been lacking in his book bearing that name. The lectures form a valuable supplement to *Canonicity*, and he modestly claimed in the published work that they might 'serve as a popular



guide to the results of an examination of the testimonies arranged in that book.' As far back as 1871 he had written for his friend, Dr. Oswald Dykes, who had just taken over the editorship of *The British and Foreign Evangelical Review*, an elaborate article 'On Canonicity,' to which Dr. Dykes gave the place of honour in the first number of the new series. In the Croall lectures he has much fuller scope. The whole course is well worked out and most instructive, but the interest culminates in the concluding lecture. In it he answers the question, 'Why has Christendom ascribed authority to the Canonical Books of the New Testament?' His exposure of the fallacies and contradictions of the Roman Catholic theory, and his criticism of the views of the Reformers, and of thinkers differing so much from one another as Coleridge, James Martineau, and the Würtemberg theologian, Beck, are very effective. His own investigations lead him to conclusions which are substantially those of the Westminster Confession, but on the way to them he treats with much acuteness the chief difficulties which present themselves to the inquirer. If his answer to the question proposed is not a complete demonstration of the Divine authority of the Scriptures, it is because logical demonstration is not possible where it is not the head alone but the heart also to which the ultimate appeal is made. Professor Briggs in his learned work on *The Study of Holy Scripture*, when discussing views on the doctrine of the Canon held by the Reformers, refers to the view of Professor Robertson Smith given in his *Old Testament in the Jewish Church*, but prefers the following statement of Dr. Charteris:—

'The Council of Trent had formerly thrown down a challenge. It recognised a Canon because of the traditions of the Church, and on the same ground of tradition accepted the unwritten ideas about Christ and His Apostles of which the Church had been made the custodian. The Reformers believed Scripture to be higher than the Church. But on what could they rest their acceptance of the Canon of Scripture? How did they know these books to be Holy Scripture, the only and ultimate and Divine Revelation? They answered that the Divine



authority of Scripture is self-evidencing, that the regenerate man needs no other evidence, and that only the regenerate can appreciate the evidence. It follows from this, if he do not feel the evidence of their contents, any man may reject books claiming to be Holy Scripture.<sup>1</sup>

It is true, as Dr. Briggs admits, that this test does not solve all questions. But uncertainty as to writings which had been regarded as doubtful does not impair the authority of those that have been recognised as Divine from the beginning: it only affects the extent of the Canon, and not the authority of those writings regarded as canonical.<sup>2</sup>

In 1887 Dr. Charteris was appointed by the trustees to deliver the Baird lectures, and chose as his subject 'The Church of Christ: its Life and Work.' It was, in the amplified title, 'an attempt to trace the work of the Church in some of its departments from the earliest times to the present day.' For such an attempt he had prepared himself by careful and exhaustive studies in the constitution of the Church in Apostolic times, in the developments and ramifications of Christian life and Christian service in the early Church and in the Church of the Middle Ages, and in the new organisations which sprang up and flourished in the fresh spiritual life of the Reformation. He had long been a warm sympathiser with the struggling evangelical Churches on the Continent; the Waldenses and the Protestant evangelicals of France and Germany held a high place in his esteem. The lectures bear ample evidence of the fulness of his equipment for the task. But the somewhat vague title under which they were published obscures the fact that in them Dr. Charteris has given an excellent exposition, historical and practical, of the Church's constitution and work, especially on its social side, and in relation to the requirements of Home and Foreign Missions. Unfortunately he was prevented by illness from preparing the lectures for publication after their delivery, and when

<sup>1</sup> *New Testament Scriptures*, p. 203.

<sup>2</sup> Professor Briggs on *The Study of Holy Scripture*, pp. 143, 144.

he did so in 1905 in the greater leisure of his retirement, public interest had taken other directions. Nevertheless his Baird lectures remain a unique work on their subject, containing the results of his wide reading, counsels of high practical wisdom, and his ripest thought as to the purpose and mission of the Church of Christ.

There could have been few scholars at that time better acquainted with the new critical theories of the Old Testament and with the general history of Old Testament Introduction than Dr. Charteris, although his interest in the study was not philological, but literary, historical, and religious. His acquaintance with this department, of what he counted his own proper field, was destined to bring him some unwished-for notoriety and not a little unmerited odium. A new edition, the ninth, of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, was in course of being issued. It contained a number of articles dealing in a modern spirit with the problems of philosophy and religion. The third volume appeared in the end of 1875, and the theological articles of the first three volumes were noticed in a comprehensive review contributed to the *Edinburgh Evening Courant* of April 15, 1876. Several articles were singled out for praise—among them 'The Acts of the Apostles,' by Dr. James Donaldson; 'Apocrypha,' by Professor A. B. Davidson of the New College; and 'Apologetics,' by Professor T. M. Lindsay, not long before appointed to a Chair in Glasgow Free Church College. Of articles by Professor Robertson Smith, that on 'Bible' came in for severe animadversion. 'This article,' the reviewer said in his concluding sentences, 'is objectionable in itself; but our chief objection to it is that it should be sent far and wide as an impartial account of the present state of our knowledge of the Bible.' The whole review was written without the slightest tinge of sectarian bias, commendation and criticism being distributed impartially as the particular articles seemed to the writer to demand.

The article 'Bible,' to which attention was specially called, soon gave rise to grave anxieties in Free Church circles. Here an able and scholarly professor had adopted,



as his own, theories associated up to that time with advanced and rationalistic criticism, and had set forth views regarding the origin of the Mosaic Law and the scope of the teaching of the Prophets, which seemed to many excellent and not uninformed members of the Church inconsistent with the generally received doctrine of inspiration, and even subversive of Holy Scripture. It is no wonder that there was forthwith raised the famous Robertson Smith heresy case. We are concerned with it here because, very early in the discussions which arose, Dr. Charteris was broadly hinted at in the *Scotsman* as the author of the *Courant* review. In fact he was represented as the true originator of the heresy case, and it was freely asserted, and widely believed in Free Church circles, that he had written out of sectarian jealousy to bring discredit upon that Church. There were even those who, entertaining no love for either Professor Smith or his views, thought Dr. Charteris yet more worthy of condemnation, because in his review he had asserted their heterodox character before the world. Professor Robertson Smith himself, in a letter referring to the *Courant*, says of the reviewer that 'his malevolence was probably dictated by ecclesiastical jealousy of the Free Church,' and that he 'expressed himself with so little knowledge and so great an air of authority that one seemed to hear the voice of a raw preacher thrust for party ends into a Professor's Chair.' It would be unkind to the memory of one for whose piety and learning the *Courant* could a few years later express 'deep respect' to make any comment upon such language. Professor Smith, as his biographers tell us,<sup>1</sup> felt he had gone too far. His invective had plenty of vigour, but it 'lacked finish.' He writes to his father: 'It was perhaps a fault to point so clearly to Charteris.' To this the biographers add: 'This may now be freely admitted by Smith's most ardent admirers, some of whom felt at the time that the reference to the Professor's pulpit eloquence was hardly just, and certainly irrelevant.' Dr. Charteris never denied the authorship of the *Courant*

<sup>1</sup> *William Robertson Smith*, p. 199.



review, but he did resent its being said or believed that he wrote the review to start a heresy hunt. Before the review appeared at all, it was known to him that members of the College committee were giving serious attention to the offending *Encyclopædia* articles. And surely, without any such prompting to awaken them to a sense of the peril to truth, there were champions of orthodoxy vigilant and courageous enough in the Free Church to have the question raised and brought to an issue.

Dr. Charteris, as we have seen, sincerely and profoundly distrusted both the methods and the results of much of the higher criticism, and to the end testified against them. He was seeking no sectarian advantage, but only contending for what he believed to be the truth, when out of the fulness of his knowledge, acquired by hard study, he wrote the review. When Professor W. H. Green, of Princeton, issued in pamphlet form a magazine article which he had written criticising Professor Robertson Smith's *Old Testament in the Jewish Church*, Dr. Charteris readily agreed to write a preface to it. Of the allegations and aspersions made upon his Christian honour in the course of the controversy he wisely took no public notice. The charge of 'falsifying,' based upon two slight misprints in a quotation given in the *Courant* article, was of course absurd. Still, he was aware of a cooling of friendship on the part of some in the Free Church whom he greatly esteemed. It was, on the other hand, a real satisfaction to him to join with Principal Rainy, Professor Orr, and Professor Marcus Dods in a public protest against the erroneous teaching of the Berlin professor, Dr. Otto Pfleiderer, in his Gifford lectures in Edinburgh University. Although forbidden by his medical advisers to deliver one of the lectures arranged to answer the chief points in the Gifford lecturer's attack on the records and doctrines of the Christian faith, he presided at the first lecture, which was delivered by Principal Rainy the week after Dr. Pfleiderer had completed his course. The lectures were afterwards published under the title *The Supernatural in Christianity*, with a prefatory statement by Dr. Charteris.

For the greater part of his occupancy of his Chair he was a victim of sciatica, which occasionally incapacitated him for the work of his class. In 1888-89 he was absent for the whole session, during which Dr. Henry Cowan of New Greyfriars', now Professor Cowan of Aberdeen, and the present writer acted as his substitutes. In 1894-95 he was again ordered abroad, and the present writer was authorised by the University authorities to conduct the class.

In opening the Divinity Hall for the session 1896-97 Dr. Charteris took for his subject 'The present state of Biblical Criticism as regards the New Testament.' It was a comprehensive and illuminating review of the critical field, making copious references to the recent literature, and abounding in those happy descriptive phrases which he knew how to coin. Old students were so struck with the condensed newspaper reports that they wrote urging the publication of the lecture, and it had a wide circulation.

There are no signs of failing powers in this able and hopeful survey. But when he entered upon the work of the following session, 1897-98, much of the old vigour and elasticity was gone. He felt less confidence in himself; his admirable memory was becoming treacherous. After February all his power of will was required to carry him through to the end of the session. 'It was a terrible struggle: I expect it is my last class,' he says in a note, dated 24th March, at the foot of his class-list, and it has alongside of it another note, 'Resigned my Chair from May 31, 1898.' By this time he had become more sensitive and easily discouraged. At the close of a previous session (1893-94), when he felt himself unusually fagged and weary, he wrote that it had been the most unsatisfactory of all the twenty-six. He had spoken of this to his class, and his words evoked from one of the members, now an excellent parish minister in the north, this kindly remonstrance:—

'I am quite sure your sensitive conscientiousness has caused you to under-state the value of your work this session. Nobody has been aware of any loss, though it was easy to see you were



often suffering acutely. For myself I can honestly say the work of the class has been, both in widening and deepening, the most profitable since I entered the Hall. You compare it with your ideal ; we simply take it for what it is.'

The fragment of autobiography ends with his account of his resignation:—

'At the time of resigning, I would gladly have cherished the hope of doing some better work, had one been able to anticipate the needful strength for it. But I was aware that serious illness was coming on, and that in all probability I should have to seek a long furlough. I was dispirited partly through bodily weakness, and did not feel that I could undergo the strain of a long conflict with prevalent public opinion in defending what I held to be sound opinions on the formation of the Canon of Scripture. That public opinion has strayed from the path in this matter. Thirty years earlier there was a huge body of opinion bearing against the right of several books of the New Testament to be in the Canon. Not only in Germany, but in France, this was felt. I have lived to see it broken up. The ideas of the Tübingen school are exploded or neglected in our time. Even English scholars were not then sure that Justin Martyr could be cited as quoting or founding upon the Fourth Gospel. All that is changed. The discovery of Tatian's Diatessaron and the fair reading of Basilides have shown that the once current idea of a late date of St. John's Gospel is untenable. And so with some of the Pauline epistles. The common-sense of Christendom has contended that it is impossible to account for the existence of Christianity and of Christendom if the date of the Christian books—of the Gospels in particular—is brought down to some date well on in the second century. I do not know that scholars have brought this about, though Drummond, the eminent Unitarian, has fulfilled his early promise of writing a brilliant defence of the early origin of the Fourth Gospel, and Harnack has found time to drive away the elaborate assailing batteries of Tübingen and their successors from the neighbourhood of the New Testament Canon. These



scholars have focussed the light which came from many quarters, and lit up many a quiet student's workroom. I have lived through this, and it was consciousness of the movement of opinion towards the present calm of conviction which made it necessary for me to write new lectures from year to year. But the Old Testament is not in the same position, nor will it be for some time.'

There was an idea abroad, and entertained even by intimate friends and colleagues, that he placed the Church first and his Chair second in the order of his service. Those who were most closely associated with him and knew anything at all of his reading and toil for his Chair know how unjust was any such suggestion. His pathetic and strenuous remonstrance to a friend, who at the time of his retirement had singled out for praise his other work for the Church, ran thus:—

'If I did not teach my subject I was a failure and a mistake. In my conscience I know much shortcoming, but I do not think—I cannot think—I did anything with all my might, but my subject. I gave to Church work the time which might have been given to leisure or literature, but never time which was due to my lectures, so far as I know. . . . I am aware that for many years I have been a *persona suspecta*, because I think many men mad on Old Testament detrition and dissection. But my attitude was deliberate, the result of study, possibly wrong, but not unreasonably edged with personalities. James Robertson's (*emeritus* Professor of Hebrew in Glasgow University) two books express my meaning quite wonderfully.'

When his resignation was announced, Dr. Charteris was flooded with expressions of sympathy from colleagues and friends and old students, far and near. One of these may be given here from the late Professor Hastie, who was then brilliantly filling the Divinity Chair in Glasgow:—

'No one,' he wrote, 'can regret both the fact and the cause more than I do. Since I began myself to teach theology on my own account I think I have come to appreciate much more fully your method and aim. Every one who understands the difficulty and value of theological teaching, that it is not merely formal and pedantic, but vital and fertile, will thank you more

and more for these thirty years of work in the Chair, and lament that you have had to stop. You may well rest upon it with some quiet satisfaction, and leave its results to grow.'

This testimony from a man of remarkable scholarship, theological erudition, and intellectual versatility, who was not always in sympathy with Dr. Charteris' point of view, to his efficiency and success as a professor, is only the truth. No doubt the tide of critical controversy has flowed in other directions since he entered upon his Chair; new problems have emerged, and new critical methods are being applied; but as far as the New Testament is concerned, very few of Dr. Charteris' critical judgments have been found to be at fault. After all, where there is teaching that makes a permanent impression in influencing and moulding men for the highest vocation of all, it is the personality of the teacher that counts for most. Of his own entire consecration none who came under his influence, and were at all capable of judging, could have a doubt. His Christian consistency and high principle entered into all his relations with his students. He kept before himself a lofty ideal of the Christian ministry, and the work of his Chair was planned and carried out with a view to impress that ideal upon those who were studying under him. He was himself an example of strenuous labour, of thoroughness and accuracy in all critical investigation, of sincerity and reverence in all that concerned the spiritual life. Although always ready to encourage missionary zeal in his students, and often consulted by them as to their duty when called to mission service abroad, he never failed to place before them the practical considerations involved, health, home claims, temperament, aptitude and the like. His own experience of responsible pastorates fitted him to be specially helpful to students and young ministers who came to him with intellectual and spiritual difficulties. Not long before his death a member of his first class, who had served faithfully as minister of a country parish for nearly thirty years, had come up to Edinburgh for consultation in a serious illness. The medical examination yielded no hope



of recovery, and when the sufferer, crushed by the intelligence, was asked whether there was any one he would like to see before returning home, he begged that his old professor should be sent for, though they had not met for years.

In 1899 the University of Edinburgh, which had made him a Doctor of Divinity shortly before he was appointed to his Chair, according to academic custom bestowed upon the *emeritus* Professor the degree of Doctor of Laws. Sir Ludovic Grant, Dean of the Faculty of Law, used no merely formal language in presenting him to the Vice-chancellor:—

‘The regret with which his colleagues took farewell of Professor Charteris last year is partially compensated to-day by the pleasure with which they welcome him back into the University in a new and honourable capacity. Gladly do they avail themselves of the customary privilege which permits them to set the seal of their grateful approval upon the great services rendered to the University by the late Professor of Biblical Criticism. During his thirty years of office Professor Charteris exercised an inspiring influence, by teaching and example, upon those entrusted to his charge, and a wide circle of students hold his name in affectionate regard. Beyond the precincts he is known to theologians, Continental as well as British, as the author of a scholarly work on the early testimonies to the canonical books of the New Testament. But chiefly has he brought prestige to the University by his activity in the Church. I refer not only to his power as a preacher, but more especially to his zealous labours in ecclesiastical councils, which have been crowned by his advancement to the high office of Moderator. It is the earnest wish of his colleagues that he may long be spared to enjoy the honour which they now desire to confer upon him.’

When in 1906 the University of Aberdeen, at its Quatercentenary celebrations, bestowed degrees upon a large number of eminent theologians and men of science from all parts of the world, it conferred upon Dr. Charteris the degree of Doctor of Divinity.

In his introductory lecture opening the session of 1898-99, Professor Robert Flint, his friend of almost forty years and colleague for twenty-two, looked back on their



long intimacy with gratitude and pleasure, and recalled how three of the name of Charteris had taught theology within the walls of Edinburgh University. He said :—

‘What kind of man Archibald Charteris is, you have no need to be told; but one may safely say, I think, that he has rendered to his Church and University services not inferior in number or value to those of either Henry or Lawrence. And as the memories of these two good, pious, and learned men have not yet quite faded away, although three hundred years have elapsed since the former of them began to work and teach, there is no extravagance in supposing that three hundred years hence the writer or teacher of Scottish Church History may be doing justice and honour to the memory and work of the Dr. Charteris of to-day. From almost the very commencement of his ministry he had much influence on the counsels of the Church of Scotland; and few, if any, of her leading churchmen have been more fertile in originating, or more ingenious and persevering in working out, schemes for increasing her prosperity and spiritual efficiency. His ideas and plans have, of course, not failed to meet with criticism and opposition, but also comparatively few of them have not stood the criticism and overcome the opposition; so much so, that there is now no unprejudiced person who will question that his influence as a whole on the Church of Scotland, and on the general spiritual life of Scotland, has been eminently beneficial. There was much in his teaching and work in the Hall admirably calculated to be directly helpful to those under his charge as preachers and pastors. The conclusions at which he arrived were always the results of earnest inquiry and the expressions of genuine conviction. To know how laborious and accurate his investigations could be, one only requires to read the introduction to his *Canonicity*. This most important literary contribution to the study of the special subject of his Chair, to which his Croall lectures may be regarded as a popular supplement, will do him abiding honour.’

## CHAPTER IX

### THE ANTI-PATRONAGE MOVEMENT

Defects in Lord Aberdeen's Act—First Suggestion of Change—Movement launched in 1866—Its Spirit and Aims—Petition to Parliament—Deputation to Mr. Gladstone—Dr. Charteris' Plea for Union—Assembly of 1870—Public Meetings—Fellow-workers.

THE story of the abolition of Church patronage has never yet been adequately told from the standpoint of the Church of Scotland, and has often been grievously misrepresented. It will be relevantly set forth in this biography, for Professor Charteris played a most effective part in the front rank of its advocates. He and Mr. T. G. Murray, W.S., were vice-conveners, under the convener, Dr. (afterwards Principal) W. R. Pirie of Aberdeen. Dr. Charteris had full knowledge of the working of Lord Aberdeen's Act from every standpoint, having been frequently consulted, as letters show, by Lord Advocate Young and Home Secretary Bruce (afterwards Lord Aberdare). In olden days Crown patronage had been frequently used to oblige political friends, sometimes to disoblige political opponents, but in recent times both sides of politics had adopted the principle: 'We want the best man that can be got, who is safe to be acceptable to the people.' When a congregation was nearly unanimous the Crown accepted their nomination, and only exercised its right in case of serious division. It is remarkable that almost all who administered Crown patronage were anxious to be rid of that duty.

People nowadays are apt to forget that shameful scandals not only were possible, but actually occurred, under the Benefices Act. Beyond doubt or cavil there

were numerous excellent patrons within and without the Church, who took conscientious pains to discharge their solemn trust. The Dukes of Buccleuch and Richmond, though Episcopalians, gave themselves as much trouble as did Presbyterians like the Duke of Argyll and Lord Aberdeen. In such cases a disputed settlement seldom occurred. It is sometimes said that patronage was a bond between the Church and the land; but it had no necessary connection with the land of the parish. The patron might never have visited the parish or people, might care nothing about them, might be a member of another communion or an unbeliever. Only Roman Catholics were disqualified from presenting. There was at least one extreme case where a town-council, notoriously hostile to the Church, presented a minister glaringly unsuitable; and then the congregation had to face a prolonged struggle. During the twenty-six years after 1843 there were no fewer than sixty-one cases of disputed settlements, each of them costing from £300 to £800, exasperating the people, engendering bad blood, tearing parishes asunder, bitterly dividing the courts of the Church, seriously occupying their time, and inflicting grave spiritual injury. Thus the South Leith case occupied twenty-four days before the Edinburgh Presbytery. In a Perthshire case a presbytery held thirty-four meetings in disposing of a case, which occupied two days of the synod's time, besides shattering a congregation. In another case fifteen meetings were held by an extremely scattered presbytery; fifty appeals came up to the synod in October, and other twenty-two in April; and the printing alone cost the presentee £80. Many of these cases dragged along for two years. In some parishes the congregation, aware of the enormous expense and trouble which their unfortunate neighbours had suffered, refrained from objecting, and many people seceded from the Church.

Then the decisions of Assembly were lacking in uniformity and were most uncertain. Even a skilled lawyer or expert Church leader could never foretell



results. The admirable Sheriff Barclay of Perth reported that, as things were, any change must be for the better; that no change could be worse than patronage under the Aberdeen Act as then administered. The position of the opposed presentee, if he were a licentiate, and much more if a minister of another charge, was unenviable. He had to face an ordeal of torture, a clerical inquisition, often damaging, and even ruinous. He conducted service on three days before the congregation, and the presbytery had to decide between him and the objectors. He might be rejected for comparative ignorance of Gaelic idiom in the north, a Highland accent in the south, weakness of voice, or any other defect rendering him unsuitable. It was alleged that his prayers were 'too scriptural,' or that they lacked unction; that his discourses were cold, dry, unedifying, and incomprehensible; that his appearance in the pulpit was grotesque and ridiculous; that his manner was cold or hot; that his hands dangled by his sides, or that they were used like a flail; that a lame presentee could not 'loup the ditches.' 'He has an awfu' trick o' ficherin' (fumbling) wi' his waistcoat button!' 'There isna a spark o' animosity in his preaching!' 'He hasna got the Sprott eye!' These objections (taken at random) are not invented. Then there were also undoubtedly occasional cases of cringing to patrons and their factors. All this is wholly forgotten now; but it was once too certainly true, and spiritually disastrous.

Besides, it must be remembered that the Reform Act and the growth of education made congregations unwilling to 'wait and see' whom patrons would send them as ministers, and there were already more than one hundred and fifty of the new *quoad sacra* parishes with popular constitutions, giving evident proof that under wise regulation the election of ministers by congregations was working well in practice. Why should the old parishes lag behind them? Was not a reasonable popular initiative the natural remedy for the scandals that occurred under the Aberdeen Act? Dr. Robert Gillan of St. John's, Glasgow (afterwards of Inchinnan), noted for

his brilliant oratory and gay wisdom, was the first to move, in Glasgow Presbytery, in 1854 and again in 1857 and 1860, for modification, not abolition, but nothing really came of it.

It may be news to many that the man who set the Anti-patronage ball a-rolling is still with us in green old age and honoured retirement, the Rev. (Dr.) J. Elder Cumming, then of Newington, afterwards of Sandyford, Glasgow. The most outspoken supporter of the Anti-patronage policy, as Assembly elder and Liberal M.P. for Fifeshire, was Sir Robert Anstruther, young, manly, loyal-hearted and broad-minded, breezy in manner, and with that slight stammer at the outset which often is united with rippling and spirited eloquence.<sup>1</sup> Only the jaundiced partisan could discover in Dr. Elder Cumming, the clerical father of the successful Anti-patronage movement, the Guy Fawkes of a dark conspiracy. He is known far beyond his own communion as a lover of truth. Mr. Cumming had in March 1866 given notice of a motion, to be discussed on the Wednesday before the Fast day in April in the Presbytery of Edinburgh, overturing the Assembly for some modification of the law of patronage. In spite of advice from friends of Dr. Muir, who wished him to drop it, and with the approval of Dr. William Smith of North Leith, who promised to second him, and of the Rev. Robert

<sup>1</sup> He was once the cause of the most uproarious laughter ever heard in the Assembly. Dr. Gillan was for the time presiding, when Sir Robert, feeling thirsty, swooped down on the tumbler in front of the Chair; and then he gasped, and looked unutterable reproach at its occupant. At first the Assembly jumped to the conclusion, from Sir Robert's facial drollery, that he had caught the presiding dignitary indulging in something a little stronger than Adam's wine! Self-defence by explanation from the Chair was hardly feasible at the time; but it leaked out afterwards that the Church's veteran orator had been ordered cayenne pepper in water for a relaxed throat. No wonder such fire-water arrested the flow of the Fifeshire baronet's speech! Similarly he threw the House of Commons into shrieks of laughter in 1874 by reading a letter from a Fifeshire elector, upbraiding him for supporting the second reading of the Bill, and saying 'You must very well know that it was drafted by the Father of Lies.' He 'had been under the impression that it was drafted by his right hon. friend (Lord Advocate Gordon), and any one further removed from what men generally conceive the Father of Lies to be he did not know.'



Wallace, he determined to persist, and had the satisfaction of seeing it carried, after a full-dress debate, by twenty votes to two. Dr. Robert Lee gave his support, but demurred to that portion of Mr. Cumming's speech which spoke of the probable effect of drawing the Free Church towards the Church of Scotland. At the ensuing General Assembly on 30th May the Free Church anticipated discussion, and, in a scornful speech on the Union Question, Dr. Robert Buchanan declared:—

'I do not in the least blame the Established Presbytery of Edinburgh for holding out to us the notable lure of their new and strange conversion to Anti-patronage principles, though I do indeed greatly wonder who the silly doves can be who are said to have been flocking so eagerly to Mr. Cumming's window.' Admitting that Mr. Cumming's speech had been temperate and courteous, he affirmed, 'But my firm belief is—and it is not founded on mere conjecture—that the strings of that demonstration of his were pulled by hands that had ends of their own, and not of ours, to serve—by hands whose sole aim was to strangle our present union movement.' He also charged the Church of Scotland with 'showing a strong and growing disposition to cast itself loose from the theology of the Reformation.'

In the Church of Scotland Assembly Dr. Smith of North Leith supported Mr. Cumming's overture in the absence of Professor Crawford, and besides stating the many domestic reasons which made it incumbent on the Church of Scotland to seek the abolition of patronage, affirmed that through it—and the probability of success made it worth attempting—the reconstruction of a united Church of Scotland might be achieved. He said it remained a lamentable fact that the same proportion of the population as before—about one-sixth of the whole—were lying out of the reach of all their Churches, and that he believed only a united Church could deal effectually with them. No one knew better about these problems than the Endowment Convener, that born bridge-maker and conciliator, who bade his brethren take the initial step in duty and in Christian kindness. He told them that many



then hearing him might regard all this as a mere utopian dream; but he believed it to be matter of earnest and sincere prayer with many Christian hearts, and that it would be well-pleasing in the sight of God if the attempt were made. As the result of a prolonged debate, the Assembly carried a motion by Dr. Pirie for a committee of inquiry. The biographer of Dr. R. Buchanan affirms<sup>1</sup> that as early as 1865 he received distinct intimation that certain prominent ministers in the Established Church were in active consultation with various parties within his own communion about a modification of the law of patronage, and that these gentlemen were 'in great spirits' about the prospect of a reconciliation with old enemies, and were prepared to go very great lengths indeed. He hints not obscurely that this scheme was suggested, in perfect good faith, by 'one who is held in the greatest respect among all classes in Scotland,' but can imagine the dubious smile with which a man so experienced as Dr. Buchanan would listen to a project so fanciful. And he adds as certain, that the idea was at once set aside as '*preposterous*' by the men who had begun to move on an entirely different line. The reference is doubtless to Mr. Charteris, but both Dr. Buchanan's date and information were mistaken; though it is true that in May 1866 a Free Church gentleman of high standing in Glasgow, and a complete stranger, spontaneously sought an interview with Mr. Charteris, to inform him that the olive branch so decidedly rejected by Dr. Buchanan was what many laymen were eagerly waiting for. So Mr. Charteris wrote to Professor Mitchell, aiming at a wider reconciliation; and if to be 'in spirits' about so good an object be a crime, he would doubtless have pleaded guilty to it. Dr. Cumming, however, makes affidavit that the strings of his demonstration were pulled by no hands but his own. Many minds were converging to the same point within the Church of Scotland, and all were drawn by the supreme motive of anxiety fully to overtake the spiritual needs of the people. In another chapter on Union it will

<sup>1</sup> *Life of Robert Buchanan, D.D.*, pp. 478-9.

be shown in what spirit the abolition of patronage was sought, first, as right in itself, and second, as removing an obstacle—many believed the chief obstacle—on the road towards Presbyterian reunion. While anxious to be of use Dr. Charteris—for health's sake—positively declined to be secretary of the first Patronage Committee, but thenceforward took an influential part in its councils. The committee naturally got in touch by circular with patrons and many representative office-bearers throughout the Church, and discussed various plans to take the place of Lord Aberdeen's Act. For a long time the favourite suggestion was either a return to the Act of 1690, or the formation of a board on which heritors, elders, and congregation should be suitably represented. This method held the field for some years. The first mention of popular election pure and simple, on Church lines, is found in correspondence between Professors Pirie<sup>1</sup> and W. Milligan of Aberdeen and Professor Mitchell, passing in May 1867.

On 5th February 1868 Dr. Charteris brought forward a motion in Glasgow Presbytery embodying the old historic claim of the Church, and humbly submitting to the Assembly that it is desirable to give to unanimous congregations the power of nominating those to whom they would entrust the care of their souls. He pointed out that under the Benefices Act there had been 46 cases of disputed settlement during a certain period of 23 years. In connection with these cases 24 presentees had been rejected, 7 withdrew, and 1 died; and the total cost on a low estimate would have endowed a presbytery as large as Inverness. Characterising the Veto as an unmanly, unintelligent, assassin-like way of proceeding, he could not see how more could be done for the congregation under patronage than the Aberdeen Act did; and asserted

<sup>1</sup> In Dr. Pirie's *Diary* (printed in a memoir for private circulation in 1888) there occurs the following entry, shortly after the Disruption of 1843: 'Lord Aberdeen's Bill is passing with some amendments, but I doubt if it will do much good. If a change is to be made, I really think patronage should be done away with altogether. I am willing to give the Bill a fair trial; but I am in principle a popular election man.'



that there was but one remedy for the evils which had so long afflicted them—to legalise the popular initiative. That system was not an untried one, but was practically acted on at that moment in more than one half of the parochial benefices in Scotland.

A most essential difference between the action of the Free Church party before 1843 and the successful movement of 1874 was this, that the former never suggested extinguishing the money value of the patron's right by compensation: the latter always proposed provision of reasonable compensation to all who should claim it; and Dr. Charteris on this occasion, with correct intuition, put its fair value at one year's purchase of the living. The *Glasgow Herald* gave eight columns of a report. Dr. Smith of Cathcart deemed it inexpedient to transmit the overture, but found no seconder; and Dr. Macduff, far from sanguine and preferring that the trumpet had not been sounded, at least would not lay an arresting hand on him who sounded it. So the great Presbytery of Glasgow, without a division, resolved to transmit. On the same day Greenock and Paisley fell into line. The Assembly of 1868 showed a check to the Anti-patronage movement which was really of the nature of marking time; for between the first motion, advocating immediate steps, and a second, refusing this course, Principal Tulloch's third motion, designed to unite parties in an impartial and comprehensive inquiry, was carried by 154 against 150 votes. The committee appointed, with the Principal as convener, framed queries to be answered by presbyteries, elders, and patrons, which produced a large amount of information, and brought up such plans as (1) a Board of electors; (2) Election by communicants within three months; (3) Veto without reasons; (4) Popular election; (5) Simple repeal of Queen Anne's Act. The solution which commended itself to the committee, after mature deliberation, was the transfer of the power of appointment in each parish to a Board composed of (1) Heritors, being members of the Church; (2) Elders of the Parish; and (3) Male Communicants, in what proportion is not



suggested. Principal Tulloch's illness made it impossible for that distinguished theologian, a Liberal in politics, to continue to direct the cause. But that party considerations did not enter into the minds of its champions in the Church is shown by a letter from Professor Mitchell, of 14th July 1868, declining to support the candidature of an influential elder, Mr. A. Campbell Swinton, the Conservative candidate for the Edinburgh and St. Andrews University seat :—

'I would have pledged myself to vote for him, had he only given a reasonable hope that he was prepared to go along with the Lord Advocate (Gordon) in securing a readjustment of patronage, which I am deeply convinced is the most important and pressing question in regard to the existence and prosperity of our Church—a question which Sir Robert Peel lived to regret he had not attempted more comprehensively to settle before 1843. I am not at all sure that I might not get Dr. Lyon Playfair to promise all I care to ask. You will see Sir Robert Anstruther has done so.'

The dissolution at the end of 1868 swept the Conservative ministry from power, and Mr. Gladstone's first pledge for the disestablishment of the Irish Church was in process of receiving legislative sanction, when Sir Robert Anstruther proposed to move, of his own accord, after Easter, for a Select Committee of the Commons upon Church Patronage. He thought it better, however, to do nothing without taking the Church Committee and the Duke of Argyll along with him. Professor Mitchell, on whose information and judgment he greatly relied, on the whole advised postponement until after the Assembly, and in a letter to Dr. Charteris favouring this plan remarked :—

'If we cannot get to the heart of our dissenting brethren—those of them at least who still value a religious establishment—and with an earnest desire to ascertain what will be the most generally accepted form in which it might be continued—I do not anticipate that any change will do what we so earnestly desire.'

The ranks of Anti-patronage were largely recruited in the Assembly of 1869 when Dr. Pirie, along with the

Moderator, Dr. Norman Macleod, were made conveners, and the votes stood at 193 for, with 88 against, a change. In a speech full of cogent appeals Dr. Charteris reminded the Assembly:—

‘Nor do we seek this reform in our constitution with the view of hurting or disabling dissenting Churches in Scotland; any course of action which had no higher aim than that would soon, and deservedly, defeat its own purpose. If we would prosper it must be by developing our missionary enterprises, by preaching the Gospel more powerfully, by doing, in short, our own Christian duty. In plain words, if you wish our Church to be strong and true, show all her members that they are the members of Christ, that you trust them, that you understand that they, and neither patrons nor presbyteries, are her glory in prosperity, her strength in adversity.’

Two days later it unexpectedly devolved on Dr. Charteris to bring forward a motion which was carried by 185 to 74, authorising the Moderator to sign a petition to both Houses of Parliament for the removal of patronage. Opponents had tried to get rid of it by a side wind, maintaining that the Church could not constitutionally seek abolition until presbyteries, consulted under the Barrier Act, had given their consent. He proved that patronage did not come within the terms of that Act, passed in 1607 to prevent hasty legislation by any one Assembly, ‘in regard to doctrine or matters of Church government, or worship, or discipline’; inasmuch as being partly civil, it was beyond the scope and power of the Assembly alone; and was no essential part of the Church’s constitution, having been imposed from without. So evidently thought Carstares and the long series of Assemblies to 1784, whose views in spirit and in essence they again renewed. He did not anticipate opposition. Not from their friends the patrons, for they approached them with no proposal of confiscation: they offered them just compensation for the value of their rights. Not from the State, for the Church had lost her freedom many years ago because the General Assembly was loyal. Not, surely, from other Churches in Scotland, for they would require to forget that it was because of patronage they left, and



stood apart down to the present moment. Sir Robert Anstruther supported this view, and did not believe, if the Church put itself right with, and showed confidence in, the people, that a Liberal House of Commons would say, 'We will not give you leave to popularise your institutions according to your ancient law; we will keep you in the bonds of 1712.' With reference to the argument on the Barrier Act the opposition could not reply.

'The General Assembly's petition,' wrote Sir Robert Anstruther to Dr. Charteris from London, 'has created immense curiosity in the House. I have shown it to four leading men in the Cabinet, and they are amazed at as well as delighted with it. Moncreiff says he only wishes it had come many years ago! It has been presented this afternoon, amid much cheering. Among the many members of the Cabinet with whom I have conversed, I have not found one who did not approve of the course we have taken. How they may act as a Government is another question. In the meantime Mr. Gladstone has kindly fixed upon Friday to see me upon the subject.'

Sir Robert, on 4th June, declared his interview with the Prime Minister 'most satisfactory.' Mr. Gladstone expressed himself as much interested in the action taken by the Church at this peculiar crisis, and most anxious that the question should be thoroughly ventilated. Sir Robert believed that a sound scheme of compensation would solve the main difficulty, and would be imperatively demanded by Government. He suggested that the committee should mature some clear and definite proposal, possibly that the stipend for one year might provide the money, the presbytery supplying the vacancy.

On Friday, 18th June, Mr. Gladstone received the Church's deputation, of which Dr. Norman Macleod, Dr. Pirie, Major the Hon. Robert Baillie, Mr. (the late Sir Alexander) Kinloch of Gilmerton, T. G. Murray, Esq., W.S., and Mr. (afterwards Sir William) Menzies, W.S., were members, and they were accompanied by thirty-seven M.P.'s (all Scottish but one), including a future Premier, Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman. Scotland then had sixty members;



only seven of these were Conservatives. Dr. Macleod, as Moderator, was spokesman, and said:—

'We are not so much wishing a favour to be done to the Church—we are merely asking that a wrong, a great wrong, should be undone; and we think a measure which is so liberal, so just, so fair, and so far as we know prompted by no selfish or sectarian object, seeking only, as on our souls and consciences we believe, the good of our dear country; we flatter ourselves and earnestly hope it may receive your kind consideration and attention. Our ultimate hope certainly is that the Government shall deal with it in the way we indicate; and I should feel thankful to God if the Government over which you preside with such eminent ability saw fit to introduce a Bill, probably not this session but at least next session, to carry out these views.'

Mr. Gladstone's reply—of course non-committal—ranged over a large number of points. What was fastened on most pertinaciously by unfriendly critics was the remark:

'I think it would be said by those who went through this struggle twenty-six years ago, that the ecclesiastical property should be made over to those who bore earlier testimony to the same principle—namely the Free Church in 1843, and the various seceding bodies now forming the United Presbyterian Church. I am now making the most hostile speech I can in order to suggest points; I am arguing over the whole ground. But what is the attitude held by the Presbyterians who parted from the Church of Scotland? Have the Free Church declared or pronounced any opinion, or what view do they take of the matter?'

Dr. Macleod's natural reply was that he should not like to anticipate the conclusion to which other parties might come, and that that theory (about ecclesiastical property) had never been mooted to any party, or by any party. Dr. Pirie remarked that the Free Church had pronounced no opinion in the matter, but that the mover of this petition in the Assembly (Dr. Charteris), and those who acted with him, did so with the view specially of conciliation towards the Free Church.

It was no uncommon thing for Mr. Gladstone's utterances to be variously construed. He was a master of ambiguity; as when he denied that General Gordon was 'surrounded' at Khartoum, affirming that he was only

'hemmed in.' On this occasion friends and foes were about equally encouraged in their own views. Sir Robert Anstruther wrote to Professor Mitchell:—

'I do not doubt the ultimate success of our measure, but I am anxious that we should not hurry the Government. They cannot speak just now, and in my opinion it would be nonsensical in them to say anything till they have decided upon their line of action. The Statement that was asked for will be a most important document; I hope that you will largely influence the composition of it.'

One thing Mr. Gladstone carefully omitted to recall, that he himself had been one of the Peel-Aberdeen Government of 1843, which had proved deaf to the Church's cry for relief, and had uniformly voted against its claims.

'Forgiveness to the injured doth belong;  
But they ne'er pardon who have done the wrong.'

So far back as 1855 the Duke of Argyll visited him at Hawarden, and they had long and very interesting talks.

'I could see,' wrote the Duke, 'by his manner and his silence that he disliked the Established Church of Scotland—I believe because its position had been one of the great stumbling-blocks of his argument in his famous book on Church principles. He never seemed to me to get over that early association of ideas. I was amused in later years by the involuntary coolness and restraint of his manner in speaking to, or of, any of its ministers.'

The Patronage Committee now set themselves to the preparation of the Statement called for by the head of the Government. Dr. Elder Cumming's draft was the basis of it. From it and notes by Dr. Pirie, that devout and truly liberal business man, Mr. T. G. Murray, constructed a first edition, with some help from Professor Crawford. Elements of battle and of offence were rigidly excluded. Professor Mitchell carefully revised it; and Dr. Charteris, who had returned from a visit to Tübingen, put the finishing touches to the materials thus welded together. They all aimed at its being as generous and kindly as possible towards others, while maintaining their



own consistency. Principal Tulloch,<sup>1</sup> with recovered health, discussed it along with Professor Mitchell, but was of opinion that the effect of it on Gladstone's mind was likely to be the very reverse of what they desired, and would probably rouse him up to search for reasons on the other side. He and Dr. Mitchell rather favoured a Royal Commission—not a Committee of the House of Commons—who might bring both parties before them and get them to speak freely. This suggestion, however, did not commend itself to Sir Robert Anstruther. The Statement on the law of patronage, when published on 28th January 1870, found numerous friends and some influential adversaries. Within the Church Drs. Cook, Craik, and Pearson had maintained a steadfast opposition. Dr. John Cook of Haddington, Principal Clerk of Assembly and son of the old Moderate leader, a splendid business man, genial and deservedly popular with all parties, now published in the newspapers his reasons of dissent from the Statement, which in turn were publicly and powerfully answered by Professor Mitchell. The newspapers which supported the Government attacked the Statement less for what it did, than for what it did not say; but it was forgotten that the Committee had no authority from the General Assembly to lay down a basis for possible union with other Churches; and, indeed, it was plainly impossible for them to interpret the views of other Churches, which lay beyond their province, although the tone of the memorial, expressive of the sentiments of the Church towards other denominations, left nothing to be desired. It was said by assailants outside the Church that to seek the repeal of Queen Anne's Act, with the consent of Parliament and awarding due compensation, was identical action with that proposed by the Free Church party; and that therefore those who now proposed that course were inconsistent, inasmuch as they were the heirs of the old

<sup>1</sup> As Dr. Tulloch's then attitude has been questioned, this suggested alteration in his handwriting may be cited: 'And if patronage were abolished, it may be hoped that one chief obstacle to the approximation or even union of the Presbyterian Churches would be removed.'



Moderate party, and therefore responsible for all three secessions. But did the majority in 1842 believe that *they* were the heirs of those who 'drove out' the Erskines and Gillespie? If not, by what right could they make the prevailing Anti-patronage party now responsible for the acts of their predecessors? It was manifestly absurd to hold the Church of Scotland majority responsible for those of another generation. Few of those who left of their own accord in 1843—not because of patronage at all, as was now sedulously inculcated, but because of encroachments on spiritual independence—were now alive. And it is surely untenable and fossilised doctrine that the views of one generation of men are to bind their successors for ever.

In an outspoken letter addressed to the (hostile) *Daily Review*, Dr. Pirie, dating from Aberdeen on 11th February 1870, wrote:—

'As to the public claims of the Secession, Relief, and Free Churches, it is evidently impossible that we could tell anything about them, simply because we do not know what they are. It is for themselves to state this. . . . Mr. Gladstone substantively asked themselves to state their claims, if they had any; and I for one have waited anxiously for their reply. As they have not replied, Mr. Gladstone is of course justified in assuming that they have no claims which they are prepared to maintain or to substantiate. . . . But I have no hesitation in saying, as an individual, that I am prepared to go very far in order to meet not merely the views but the feelings of dissenters. I am not in this matter contending merely for the interests of the Church of Scotland, but for what I believe to be the interests of the Church of Christ. . . . The people are naturally led to suspect the character of a faith, as to the nature of which even its own office-bearers are so divided, and which admits of such want of kindness and charity. With a view to real and Christian union, I am therefore prepared for great changes, and I am willing to give up much for the sake of giving a practical proof that we still love each other. I believe that through the abolition of patronage we have a glorious opportunity of realising such Christian union, and an opportunity which, if we lose it now, we may be long in realising again.'

It is to be lamented that this strong appeal for a joint settlement was wholly in vain. But the times were not

ripe. Different ideals were then directly in conflict. A twofold union was preferred by the prevailing party in the Free and United Presbyterian Churches to a possible threefold union.

On 2nd March 1870 the Patronage Committee laid on the table of the stated meeting of the General Assembly's Commission their Statement forwarded to Mr. Gladstone, and gave a verbal account of the proceedings of their deputation. When the Commission, though with the still discordant voices of Dr. Craik and Dr. Pearson, recommended the committee to take steps to bring out the mind of the Church and the country, Dr. Charteris, in a remarkably far-sighted speech afterwards printed, maintained that the memorial had not been proved inaccurate, and that the cause had made a great advance. But his feeling was that they were very much done with the days of old parchments.<sup>1</sup>

He made this strong plea for union:—

'I am quite aware that our denominational divisions have caused an increased amount of church extension and church activity; but I am not aware that, with all our multiplication of churches, we have approached to lessening the amount of heathenism which the Royal Commission revealed thirty-five years ago. And in that fact I find a good reason for doing everything in my power to promote Union. When I look abroad over Scotland what do I see? I see 2800 Presbyterian churches—in other words, I see that to each of the ministers of that form of worship which Scotland loves best there is a population of less than 1200 souls. Allowing other Churches to hold their own, it is quite evident that a population of 1200, and an average attendance in church of 400 souls, indicate no great overloading of the willing pastor's shoulders. Surely this is a country where heathenism cannot show its head! So one is ready to say; but, on the contrary, there are some 500,000 of the population who have no church connection whatever. There must surely be something wrong. So many ministers, so many churches, and so much heathenism. Can it be that they are contending more with one another than with the common foe? Or take the great centres

<sup>1</sup> An old and courtly but somewhat deaf leader thought he had said the days of 'old parsons'! and Dr. Wallace wittily and wickedly suggested that these were the days of 'young charters.'



of population. There are in Glasgow 550,000 souls. There are 100 Presbyterian churches, and if there were no other ministers or churches in Glasgow, there would fall to the share of each of the Presbyterian ministers 2000 souls in his territory, and about 950 in his place of worship. But there are 100,000 Roman Catholics, and when we deduct these from the whole population, we leave 450,000 to be operated on by the Protestant clergy and people. Then, allowing an average congregation of 300 to each of the 39 Protestant ministers who are not Presbyterians, and therefore estimating a population of 900 as being under his pastorate, we have still further to take 35,000 from the gross population in order to find what remains for the Presbyterians. We have now a population of 2200, and a congregation of little more than 700 for each minister. Surely here at least, in the great metropolis of the west, we shall find that heathenism has been rooted out. Alas! the most charitable estimate tells you of 100,000 in Glasgow, who are nominal Protestants, but practical heathens. What, then, are the ministers doing? They are incessantly engaged all the hours of the day, and many of the night, in keeping their congregations together; for it is considered there, as almost everywhere, that those who attend his church are a minister's stock-in-trade, and that he must "mind his business." . . . Then, take our country parishes. Who does not know the happy valley with two or three good men, good ministers, all Presbyterians, engaged to do the work for which one is amply adequate; some of them miserably paid, although as worthy of a trebled income as the faithful consecration of competent powers can make any man anywhere? Yet what divides these good men from one another? They are each other's friends in daily life; they share each other's joy; they sympathise in each other's sorrow; they meet at the same sick-beds; they unite in conducting the same funeral services when some neighbour's house has been stricken; they preach the same Gospel, use the same form of worship and government; and are, in short, severed by a line so narrow, that when they do their duty faithfully, they may preach and work for months and years without ever reminding their hearers that it exists. Is it needful, is it right, to perpetuate such divisions and dissensions for years and generations to come? Is it right to tax needlessly the Christian generosity of Scotland in maintaining so many ministers, or is it fair to educated and able men to condemn so many of them to subsist on a pittance so miserable as their income too often is? I really cannot think so.

It is pondering on things like these which has made so many of us join a movement for the abolition of patronage. Patronage was the cause or the occasion of the original severances which



are now bearing such bitter fruit. Its abolition must be the first step towards reunion of those who are really brethren. For our divisions are interfering with everything good. The impulse given by them to church building and church activity has been immense. It has stimulated (not always in a wholesome way) the already Christian people, but there has been no adequate effort made to reach the outlying masses of our own countrymen. . . . Are not sectarian squabbles bearing bitter fruit in *National Education*, when they are making many fall from their old declarations as to the necessity of a measure having religion avowed on its forefront? Are not our divisions bearing bitter fruit in the *Poor Law*? We are all groaning under the burden of that law which has multiplied taxation and hindered charity, and has not blessed the poor and needy. It would not have been needed in its present form, nor have grown up to its present size; it would not even now be so radically unimprovable—were it not a necessary result of the divisions of the Presbyterian Church.

Then again recollect that there is coming upon us fast, very fast, a contest between the defenders and the assailants of all that is essential to the Christian faith; and I do not see how the Scottish Church can rightly enter on that conflict if its different branches continue to be "hateful and hating one another." There is need of a bold, free, and generous handling of the whole *question of Creeds and Confessions*; a handling by those who believe, a handling which would lighten the burden on weak believers, give fair scope to varieties of opinion in things non-essential, and also unmask secret and deadly foes. Yet it is well known among us that the denomination which should first proceed to such a simplification of the Confession as is absolutely necessary, would be shouted at as "heretic" by all the rest. This is not the time for discussing the question; but I am quite sure that it must be dealt with soon, if we are to have strength to defend the citadel, instead of, as now, wasting our strength in skirmishing all along a wide and distant frontier.

On these grounds I am strongly for union; union not at any price, but union at any price short of the sacrifice of principle and honour. On these grounds I lament that the Patronage Statement or Memorial was shorn of its original proportions, and especially that it does not now contain a more explicit assurance that, whether in regard to spiritual independence or anything else, no effort shall be wanting on the part of the members of the present Established Church to bring about a reunion of the old Church of Scotland. I know that there are many things besides principles which keep us apart. There are wounded feelings, for there have been injuries done

and hard words spoken on all sides. But if we all try to bury the past and look to present duty, we shall surely succeed. I daresay many of us have confessions to make. Though I have spoken seldom in this Assembly, I keenly feel how glad I should be to recall at least one unhappy clause which fell from my lips last May. But as to principles. I do not indeed believe, and cannot admit, that the Dissenting Churches have, in consequence of this movement, or on any other ground, any claim in law to a share of our endowments. Some of them have not belonged to the Establishment since the Revolution; some of them left the Church because of patronage at a time when the Church was seeking redress from Government, just as we are doing now; the greatest and the last secession came about not only because of patronage, but because of the persistent adherence of the Non-Intrusion party to what I believe was an incompetent way of attempting to rectify the evils of patronage; and I cannot think that in law any of them have any just claim to our endowments, or to any part of them.

But let us remember that there are questions far wider and deeper than those of parchments and of statutes; there are questions for patriots and Christians; questions resting on moral, not legal, grounds. And in regard to those questions, I would say that though I still believe the best way of approaching them is by the abolition of that patronage which was the cause or the occasion of our rupture, I am, nevertheless, quite inclined to face even now the principles on which they ought ultimately to be solved. If patronage were abolished, I should deem it the duty both of the State and of the Church to make every honourable concession to the seceding brethren, which was consistent with the preservation of existing legal rights; and especially to make any honourable reparation it may be in our power to make for the hardships some of them have had to bear in consequence of the refusal of the Legislature to listen to their petitions before 1843. I believe that the great majority of the members and ministers of our Church are willing that all endowments derived from national funds should be shared, and the old territorial divisions revised, so that all the Presbyterian people of Scotland may be united in one Church. I believe that with union a better Church than any which now exists might be formed, combining endowments, a sustentation fund (grants from which should be dependent on efficiency), and direct congregational contributions for the support of the ministry, based on such a redistribution of territory as to render it easy to overtake that home missionary work which is so sorely needed, but in present circumstances practically impossible. Some seem to fear that any such union would narrow our basis, fetter thought, and give mind and will no sphere



amongst us; but it seems to me that such objections show that the objectors have no faith in their own principles, no knowledge of the force of public opinion, nor any right estimation of the amount of true Christian toleration, which our present divisions choke, and which, in the circumstances supposed, would breathe freely. There would be narrow men and there would be broad men, shallow men and deep men, pretenders and real men, in the united Church as there are in the sections; but the good men would do much more good, and the bad infinitely less harm, than they do now. For these reasons I support this motion, which asks us to proceed vigorously towards the abolition of patronage.\*

Sir Robert Anstruther wrote that this expression of large-hearted and Christian sympathy with our dissenting fellow-Christians will do much to allay bitterness and create a similar loving spirit; and he cordially agreed with it. His brother-in-law, Sir Alexander Kinloch, was delighted to find Mr. Gordon<sup>1</sup> as thorough-going a reformer in Church matters as could be desired; so a meeting was arranged with the Duke of Argyll to talk the matter over, between these three Liberals and the official representative of Conservatism in Scotland.

Mr. Gordon rented Glencorse House and Belwood in the parish of Glencorse, which was served by the Rev. Alexander Torrance, the frail and venerable minister so pathetically described by R. L. Stevenson in *Weir of Hermiston*. His children still recall how Mr. Torrance kissed his hand to them in the Glencorse seat alongside, as he ascended the pulpit stairs, those hands partly covered with the black thread mittens. But his preaching, which acted as a seda-

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Gordon was not the bigoted zealot who 'stood for the extreme Established Church interest in this question' (*Life of Principal Rainy*, vol. i. p. 100), such as he is represented when giving a legal opinion upon Dr. Begg's Memorial in 1873. The four counsel consulted on that occasion, two from each side of politics, agreed in their opinion that the Establishment principle—that is, the national recognition and encouragement of religion and the Church of Christ by the State as such—is part of the Free Church Constitution. And if he did put his finger upon the clause of the 'Unanswered Protest' of 1843, 'firmly asserting the right and duty of the Civil Magistrate to maintain and support an Establishment of Religion in accordance with God's Word,' the House of Lords also, in 1904, found it to be unanswerable. But the legal opinions of careful, cautious advocates are not based on personal preferences, unless the lawyer is a 'Mr. Pliable,' but on full consideration of their clients' interests.



tive to Stevenson's invalid nerves, proved rather a soporific to their child natures; so during six years in the holiday months of summer the family attended Penicuik Free Church, then ministered to by the Rev. Hugh Stewart, a Highland gentleman of the finest Christian texture. One Sunday Mr. Gordon was charmed to find the pulpit filled by Dr. Donald Fraser, an Invernessian like himself, afterwards the distinguished preacher of Marylebone Presbyterian Church, London. In that year, 1867, the present writer can remember him at Belwood as being much interested in seeking a plan of reconciliation; and he fully approved of the abolition of patronage for a first and needful step.

Dr. William Hanna also, the son-in-law and biographer of Chalmers, and author of able and delightful lectures on *The Life of Christ*, was one of Mr. Gordon's most valued friends, and was certainly the man in the Free Church with whom he chiefly took counsel. The writer can asseverate with absolute certainty, having been privileged to be the companion of these two patriotic Churchmen, that, when joining arms for a country walk, they repeatedly discussed with anxious hope the prospects and possibilities of reunion. Dr. Hanna was scarcely likely to aid and abet any project to the detriment or strangling of the Free Church of Scotland; and Mr. Gordon cherished a lifelong admiration for the personal character and noble practical work of the illustrious Chalmers.

The discussions of the General Assembly of 1870 reached a high level on many subjects. Dr. Norman Macleod contributed two of those magnificent speeches which, in the opinion of his brother ministers, did so much to make for a worthy and uplifting conception of the Church's duty. Dr. Charteris, who was not given to thrusting himself forward for speaking's sake, was content with helpful utterances on the Home and Endowment Schemes, and presented his first report on Christian Life and Work, of which we shall have to tell later on. It was the discussions on the Patronage Report and on the Union of Presbyterian Churches which made this Assembly specially memorable.

The official motion was to reappoint the committee, and to instruct them to use all prudent and constitutional means to obtain as speedily as possible a measure for the alteration of the law of patronage. In his speech Dr. Pirie reasserted Dr. Charteris' saying that the days of old parchment reasoning on this subject were past; and, candidly acknowledging that the time was when he supported patronage, remarked that it is the man who adheres to his opinion in opposition to his principles that is inconsistent, not the man who yields his opinion in order to maintain his principles. Dr. Charteris had arranged with Mr. Gordon to come down from London that he might second the motion, and, of course, his standing in relation to the Conservative party had an undisguised significance; but it was as an earnest and convinced advocate of abolition that he asked the Church to adhere to its resolution of the previous year. He had found among members of Parliament something approaching to unanimity, though one or two had refused to commit themselves. He referred to the fact that thirty-seven members of Parliament, and these most influential, had attended the interview with Mr. Gladstone. He could not believe that any Church would oppose the Church of Scotland's desire to bring itself more into conformity with principles which these other Churches held to be right and proper; he could not see on what ground of fairness or religious principle such a position could be taken up by any other Church, and therefore could not suppose it. He did not look upon this question solely with reference to the interests of their own Church, but as a step which might lead, if not to incorporation, at least to co-operation with other Christian Churches. Acknowledging an overruling Providence in that untoward event of the Disruption which had resulted in church extension on a large scale, he dwelt on the fact that with all their churches, Established and Non-established, multitudes were not being overtaken.

He said further:—

‘I beg it to be distinctly understood that the measure which I propose we should adopt is one which I do not look forward to



as leading to the *absorption* merely of members of other Churches in our Church. Nor would I wish that it should in any way—probably our friends may think it very unnecessary caution on my part—lead to undermining these Churches. I look on these Churches as doing great good in this country, and it would be a source of sincere regret if anything done by us should have the effect of breaking up these institutions. And I for one should rejoice exceedingly—I am merely speaking my own individual opinions at present—to see a comprehensive Presbyterian Church in Scotland.'

Dr. Bisset of Bourtie manfully and humorously maintained the *status quo*, and was brilliantly answered by Dr. Gillan; but the chief oratorical honours of the debate rested upon Dr. Norman Macleod, who maintained:—

'We should endeavour to build up a Church, National but not sectarian, most tolerant but not indifferent—a Church with liberty but not licence, endowed but not covetous, and which, because National, should extend her sympathy, her charity, if need be her protection, to other Churches, and to every man who by word or deed tries to advance the good of our beloved country.'

Sir Robert Anstruther, from the Liberal side, said he could fancy how the ears of the Lord Advocate for Scotland would tingle at the sentiments expressed by the Dean of Faculty (Gordon), and promised that gentleman his earnest and conscientious support, if it ever fell to him to propose such a measure. He himself had had a conference a few days ago with Mr. Gladstone, who had asked, 'Is it possible, if you had the conduct of the matter in your own hands—could you honestly say that you could introduce and carry a Bill this year, however much you might wish?' Sir Robert admitted it to be impossible, but said it would be a great neglect of duty if the Government did not attend to the voice of the General Assembly this year, and introduce a measure during next session. Dr. William Smith, also a Liberal, urged his favourite arguments; and declared that we had now a popular Government which could not refuse to give effect to the wishes of the Church of Scotland. The division showed two hundred and forty-one for



Dr. Pirie's motion against the dwindling minority of sixty-eight for Dr. Bisset's.

Not less significant of progress was a letter written to the Moderator by the Duke of Argyll, who, taking this division in connection with the vote of previous Assemblies, could not doubt that it represented the settled feeling and deliberate opinion of the Church. As one of the principal holders of patronage he willingly acquiesced in its extinction by compensation, and desired to render whatever service might be in his power towards a satisfactory solution.

During the following year largely attended public meetings were held throughout the country at various centres, to ventilate and to express the Church's now authorised policy. Within his own constituency Lord Advocate Young announced that he did not see any reason why the Church should not have its own way in the matter, the patrons being agreeable, or their rights being bought up; and that if any legislation should be necessary to accomplish the general will of the Church—not entailing any charge upon the country—such a measure should be favourably considered. At the Edinburgh meeting the Dean of Faculty (Gordon) took note of this fact with great satisfaction, and remarked upon its not being treated as a political movement, but one obtaining support from members of all parties. He read a letter from that distinguished Scotsman, the then Marquis of Tweeddale, who had acted as aide-de-camp during the Peninsular War and at Waterloo to the great Duke of Wellington. He proposed to give the whole communicants, male and female, a voice in the appointment of their minister, and urged this equal right 'because it is they who have satisfied their minister that they have studied their Bible, and thoroughly understand and appreciate the object of their coming to the Lord's Supper, and should thus be capable of judging whether a minister's ministrations would be edifying to them or not.' It was stated that the venerable nobleman (who latterly often lived in Great Stuart Street, Edinburgh)

had presided at the very first meeting to inaugurate Dr. Chalmers' church extension movement.

Professor Charteris was summoned to the Glasgow meeting, and declared that the battle had been so completely won in Church courts as to make public meetings henceforth the field where equal patience and pains would ensure everywhere as complete a victory.

'Not for political ascendancy are we fighting, but to secure efficiency in those Home Missions which, amid the strifes of Churches, have been so fearfully neglected; then would Christ be proclaimed in word and deed as King of the Nations and Head of the Church; then would we be able to point to a revived Church and a religious people as witnesses for Christ's Crown and Covenant. This is our ultimate aim, and I think we shall reach it; for we are fighting no party battle; we raise no political war-cry; and there is no reason why all parties should not help us; why it should be a thing for either Whigs or Tories alone; why the Lord Advocate, whose characteristically incisive words have already shown that to a mind like his our proposals seem fair and reasonable, should not join with our old and tried friend Mr. Edward Gordon in constructing a Bill which shall, in spite of the factious opposition of a few, become the law of the land.'

At the same gathering Dr. Norman Macleod frankly met certain objections:—

'It has been said that this is a mere trap to catch some Dissenters who may be displeased with the Union between the Free Church and the United Presbyterian. I have stated it broadly because I despise the objection. But I do not think that we would set such a net before such birds: I do not think the Scots are so easily trapped as all that. It is pure nonsense. There are various opinions in the Church generally in regard to this proposal. Some say—"We do wish it because we honestly think that it will in the end be a great means of uniting us with other Churches, and we believe such a union as that would be immensely beneficial to Scotland, and that all the little differences that now exist, and the little prejudices that would hinder us individually from working cordially with some men, will pass away when we are lying side by side in the auld kirkyard, and the next generation will be united for the good of the whole country." That is most honestly held, and by no person more honestly than by my friend Dr. Charteris. There are, however, others who say, "To tell the



truth, we are very much afraid that if certain parties were to come into the Church it would put the clock back thirty or forty years; your spiritual independence would be endangered, you would get a great many heresy hunters; and the Church would never approach to the true and right freedom she has now."

In a letter to the Duke of Argyll earlier in the year he answers himself:—

'They tell me that I should be the first man to be shot! But I do not fear this. Indeed I begin to fear much more, lest liberty should degenerate into licence: anyhow, I have confidence in truth, time, and public opinion. . . . Who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this!'

It was certainly no fault of the Duke of Argyll that in 1871 or later a Bill, drafted by the committee in consultation with the Duke, was not tabled by the Government. He himself made public many years afterwards that he had spoken to his colleagues in Mr. Gladstone's own Government, and had then the impression that few, if any, of them would have withheld their assent to a measure which was obviously consistent with Liberal principles as hitherto understood. Possibly the Church was being penalised in 1871 and 1872 for her outspoken resistance on the religious question in Scottish education. In both years a Bill, revised by Mr. Gordon, was discussed by the Duke with Dr. William Smith; and at one time the Duke contemplated introducing it himself as a Scottish peer, apart from its being a Government measure. Lord Rosebery also raised the question on 9th May 1871 in one of his first speeches in the House of Lords, and, in calling upon Government to introduce the desired measure that session, made reference to the scandalous case of South Queensferry, close to Dalmeny, where the Town Council as patrons—seven out of nine being Dissenters—had twice refused petitions from the communicants, and had presented a fantastic person who described himself as endowed with remarkable wit, eloquence, and pathos, and had shown his versatility by



contesting the Parliamentary constituency of Kilmarnock ! That case markedly exemplified the latent evils of the law of patronage. The Duke of Argyll, while thoroughly convinced, could only plead want of precious time. It was now evident to all that no private member's Bill could have the least chance of passing, as only a Government measure could place the interest of the Crown in regard to its patronages at the disposal of Parliament. In 1872 the Duke of Richmond announced, through his clansman, Mr. Gordon, his accession to the movement. In 1873 Lord Advocate Young prepared, by instructions, a Bill dealing, *inter alia*, with this subject, but it never saw the light. Liberals like the Earl of Airlie and Lord Rosebery again sought to rouse the Government, but in vain, and a resolution in the Commons by Sir Robert Anstruther, bespeaking Government legislation, was met by Mr. Gladstone's assertion that it would not be wise or politic for Parliament to pledge itself to alteration till they had something of a definite character to guide them in proposing a substitute. He indicated that Sir Robert might move for a Select Committee of the Commons in 1874. The Patronage Committee of the Church were quite ready to grapple with this new undertaking, had it been necessary. Indeed, some of them had earlier favoured this very method ; and accordingly the acting committee in the autumn of 1873 began to prepare for appearances before a Select Committee. Drs. Pirie, Charteris, and Elder Cumming were already mapping out the field ; and letters tell how the Dean of Faculty put Dr. Pirie in the witness-box (privately), and subjected him to a severe and testing cross-examination. Dr. Cumming had sketched a brief on the historical side, but it was all to no purpose.

For in January 1874 Mr. Gladstone, in petulant and imperious yet calculating mood, dissolved Parliament and issued to the electors of Greenwich that extraordinary election address which made a bid for middle-class support by promising to abolish the income-tax. The present generation may indeed find it difficult to believe

what the cold truth of history here records. Retrenchment and cessation of income-tax seem equally foreign to the minds of the prodigal statesmen of to-day. But we are not tracing the history of general politics. Suffice it to say that the constituencies disregarded the offered bribe, and returned the Conservatives to power with a homogeneous majority of nearly 50 votes. In 1871 Mr. Cardwell had practically offered the Financial Secretaryship at the War Office to Sir Robert Anstruther, but Mr. Gladstone refused his sanction, and said, 'No; Henry Campbell-Bannerman!' As Mr. Gladstone was falling from power he said with a sneer to Sir Robert, 'Well, I suppose you have come up with Patronage in your pocket!' And the latter retorted, defiantly, 'Yes, I guess I have quite as much patronage as you are likely to have for a while.' His conscientious devotion to his Church had nevertheless cost him a legitimate personal ambition.

## CHAPTER X

### THE ABOLITION OF PATRONAGE

Change of Government—Friendly to Change—Dr. Charteris' Share of Efforts—The Bill in Assembly and in Parliament—Helpers and Hinderers—Mr. Gladstone's Onslaught—A Non-Party Majority—Two Prophecies.

MR. GORDON now returned to his former office as Lord Advocate, and the Conservative Ministry faced Parliament in a session curtailed at the outset, and without an elaborate programme. The 'pigeon-holes' were unusually empty of legislative projects. The dovescots of Voluntarism were fluttered on 10th March by a rumour that (as they put it) 'an intrigue was on foot between the Ministry and the Anti-Union section of the Free Church, headed by Dr. Begg, for the rehabilitation of the Established Church of Scotland,' and within a fortnight Dr. Buchanan in Glasgow and Sir Henry Moncreiff had in their respective presbyteries tabled overtures which aimed at explaining and defending the Free Church position, which no one dreamed of attacking. Dr. Buchanan recited, in a long survey and exposition, the grounds of the Disruption, declaimed against persons unknown, who were seeking to get it believed that some small but plausible legislative concession on the subject of patronage would suffice to bring back silly sheep to the comfortable State Church fold, that a wonderful Bill was in preparation under the auspices of the Lord Advocate and others, he knew not whom, and that it was even whispered that the idol-calf now being so cunningly moulded, and which was to tempt them to return into Egypt, was actually to



be made of gold, dug from the mine of the unexhausted teinds! Dr. Begg, in the Edinburgh Free Presbytery, rehearsed how almost the first thing he had done as a minister was to get up a petition against the nefarious Act of Queen Anne, which he would rejoice to see sent to the tomb of all the Capulets; he recalled the sage admonition of Dr. M'Crie, and Dr. Cunningham's motion in 1842, when the Assembly declared that Act the main cause of the evils in which the Church was involved; but while he would rejoice to see the Act rescinded, what the result of that might be, and what the position of the Free Church, was a totally different question. He did not anticipate anything like a sudden amalgamation of the Churches, but would say that in future he would contemplate it with great complacency; for it was a melancholy thing that they should have eighty-two per cent. of the people of Scotland Presbyterians, and yet be torn in pieces. Across the Tweed also, Bishop Magee of Peterborough, the matchless Irish orator, moved the House of Lords against the most intolerable abuses of English Church Patronage; but his proposals only amounted to a very homœopathic measure of reform. Mr. Cross, the new Home Secretary, had won his spurs in the same cause, and was therefore thoroughly sympathetic.

The friends of the Church in Scotland felt that the time had come to bestir themselves. Largely through the unpopularity incurred by the late Government over the Education Bill, nineteen Scottish Conservative members had been returned. Mr. (now Sir) Charles Dalrymple, Mr. A. Orr Ewing, Mr. A. Whitelaw, and Sir W. Stirling Maxwell combined with Drs. Pirie and Charteris and Mr. T. G. Murray to press the Church's claims on a most willing Ministry. Many years later Dr. Charteris (who was five times in London in connection with the Bill) wrote:—

‘I followed Dr. Pirie, whose wise conduct of the Church's case has been too much forgotten. His wisdom, and the zeal and influence of Lord Advocate Gordon and Disraeli's confi-

dence in him,<sup>1</sup> caused the movement to be at last crowned with success. Our next best supporter was Sir Robert Anstruther, who incurred and braved the displeasure of his political chief.

For a few weeks the Liberal Dr. William Smith entertained a lurking fear that the Conservative Ministry would disappoint them as his own leader had done; but such fears were groundless. Yet while the head of the Administration, the Duke of Richmond, and Mr. Cross were wholly favourable, doubts remained concerning the attitude of Lord Salisbury and Mr. Gathorne Hardy within the Cabinet. The Scottish Churchmen, to their surprise, found both fully alive to the state of the case.

Two rocks ahead had to be guarded against. Some English Churchmen were alarmed: Dr. Charteris may tell why:—

‘I wrote many Memorials to M.P.’s and others. Once when all the Conveners were in London, the elder men (and W. J. Menzies) went to the Crystal Palace, and left me to draw up an answer to Mr. Disraeli’s question: “What is the difference between the action of Church Patronage in England and in Scotland?” I worked all day, I wrote half-a-dozen folio pages, showing how in Scotland the congregation’s right of objecting made it perilous to “present.” I said that if in those days a man presented his own or his son’s tutor to a parish, the presentee would probably be objected to—favouritism being suspected, and merit not investigated. Amusement mingled with admiration, when the genius of the Premier boiled down my laborious pages into an epigram, “Sir, the difference is that in Scotland the patron does not, in fact, patronise. That is about an accurate summary of his peculiar position.” English members were instructed and understood.’

But we are anticipating. On 16th May Mr. T. G. Murray could write to his colleague, Dr. Charteris, that

<sup>1</sup> During a four days’ visit to Edinburgh in 1867, Mr. Disraeli had been Mr. Gordon’s guest, and had learned to trust his judgment. By a curious coincidence Mr. Gordon, when a lad of eighteen, had heard Francis Jeffrey, the Lord Advocate of the day, introduce the first Scottish Reform Bill in 1832; and he himself first opened his mouth in Parliament, by Mr. Disraeli’s invitation, to introduce that second Scottish Reform Bill in 1868 under which all still enjoy the Burgh franchise. It also lowered the County franchise of occupiers—now equalised—to £14, and gave Scotland seven more members.



all was safe. The second rock had been avoided. It was the proposal that heritors as such, though not members of the congregation, should be admitted to the electoral roll. This was rightly objected to as unpresbyterian, and because of bringing in outsiders, who besides had no such standing before. All preliminaries being now arranged to the satisfaction of the Church's representatives, the Bill was duly launched on 18th May by the Duke of Richmond, vesting the appointment in the communicants, but in its first form limiting the word to males. It was, however, fully agreed that this should be provisional, and that here, as in all other matters, the approaching General Assembly should be consulted, and its freedom recognised. Mr. J. Badenach Nicolson of Glenbervie, secretary to three Lord Advocates, loyal, shrewd, and wise—one of those Scotsmen with abilities of the highest order who have never got their due from a public that knows little how indispensable they are to the smooth-working of sound administration—wrote to Dr. Charteris thus:—

'The Duke of Richmond's speech was not so good by many degrees as that composed in the *Attic* regions of New Street, Spring Gardens (the Lord Advocate's office). However, after a rambling and hazy fashion he got the House to understand the greater part of his proposals. The debate which followed was eminently satisfactory. Everybody said both *for* and *against* the Bill, exactly what they should have said. I rather think that Lord Dalhousie's speech will help it more than any, both in the Assembly and in the country. Lord Selborne loudly cheered Lord Aberdeen's subsequent declaration, that it surprised him beyond measure how other religious bodies should object to the Established Church being freed from shackles they had themselves thrown off. You may keep the "ladies" in view in your Assembly proceedings; it would not be at all distasteful that they should come in. The Dukes having thrown overboard the Heritors I trust the Assembly won't attempt to restore them. Endeavour to have an exceedingly good debate, and it will help the Government immensely against all comers.'

The young Lord Aberdeen spoke regretfully of the rather strange opposition to the measure which had



come from other religious bodies in Scotland, as if they feared lest the Church of Scotland should increase its hold on the affections of the people. He hoped the effect of it would be not only that, but also at some future period to tend towards union. Lord Aberdeen was in constant touch with Dr. Charteris, and desirous to help.

The reference to Lord Selborne, Mr. Gladstone's friend and Lord Chancellor, recalls the fact that while Dr. Rainy did not care to ask the Free Church Assembly to organise or even petition against the Bill officially, he counted himself at liberty to address Mr. Gladstone—'not, however, in my official capacity'—yet stating that he was Convener of the Free Church Assembly Committee on proposed legislation with regard to Patronage. He did not question the good intention of Mr. Gordon, who was no doubt the architect of the measure; and felt quite sure that all his motives were creditable; but he was disposed to try to engage the interest of a mind like Lord Selborne's on what he deemed the ambiguous provision, declaring courts of the Church to 'have the right to decide finally and conclusively upon all questions which may arise in the course of the proceedings connected with the appointment, admission, and settlement in any parish as minister thereof.' The principal angler eventually secured his big fish and not distant kinsman. But that strong lawyer and Churchman, Lord Selborne, refused to rise to the '*Black Doctor*' salmon-fly, as is evident from his account of the transaction:<sup>1</sup>—

'Dr. Rainy, one of the leaders in the Assembly of the Free Church, sent to Mr. Gladstone a long criticism of the phraseology of a clause in this Bill, which he thought wanting in distinctness, and to the authors of which he did not give credit for sincerity; suggesting that his letter should be put into my hands. Gladstone sent it to me, and at the same time recommended "that very remarkable measure" to my attention; and stated his impression that, if passed, it would lead to a movement for Disestablishment in Scotland, more serious than any that had been known there, and likely to spread its influence into England. Dr. Rainy's letter did not

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<sup>1</sup> *Mémorials of Roundell, Earl of Selborne*, vol. i. p. 356.

impress me; I thought his criticisms captious; and he avowed that, even if what he considered obscure in the Bill were made clear in a sense accordant with his own principles, "little or nothing would be done to remove the inequitableness of the measure, as relating to the position and history of the Free Church"—that "inequitableness" being the concession to the Established Church in 1874, of what, if conceded in 1843, might have prevented the secession which brought the Free Church into existence. This, I have no doubt, was the view of the matter which affected Gladstone's mind. But to me, the proposition that, by the refusal or neglect of Parliament in 1843 to do anything which might have removed the causes of that schism, the Free Church had acquired a vested interest in the continuance of a system of patronage regarded by the seceders as wrong in principle, and by those who had borne it without secession as an encroachment by State legislation injurious to their Church—this proposition seemed to me destitute of reasonableness or justice. . . . I could not reconcile with each other the movements, on those questions, of that extraordinary mind—the only direction in which they seemed to converge was that of Disestablishment.'

Lord Rosebery tendered most earnest thanks to the Government, and said it was matter of regret to him that the late Government, during their long tenure of office, had never attempted to handle and redress this long-standing and most serious grievance.

The scene now changes to the General Assembly, which expressed their great obligation to the Government for the introduction of the Bill now laid on their table, and approved thereof as affording the means of a satisfactory solution. Dr. Pirie's motion was seconded by Lord Balfour of Burleigh, whose first appearance it was. He had joined the committee at the request of Dr. Charteris, and was anxious to do some work for it. He called attention to an undesigned coincidence which no one else had noticed, that the Bill was brought forward on the very same day of the same month which was the witness of the very memorable separation thirty-one years before; and hoped that they had now a prospect of setting at rest, once and for ever, the quarrel which had existed for so long a time and has been productive of most grievous mischief. Dr. John Cook of Haddington and the old Earl of Selkirk, having



liberated their souls, gracefully waived their opposition, and the motion was carried *nem. con.* Upon the long-sought measure—which be it remembered was not a boon forced on the Church by the Legislature—the Assembly then went into committee, after due notice of amendments. The Procurator (Robert Lee) moved an important instruction to the committee safeguarding the liberties and privileges of the Church, and that they should take care that no enactments be sanctioned which might appear, directly or indirectly, to throw doubt upon the supreme authority and jurisdiction of the Church, in regard not only to the trial and admission of ministers, but also to all matters of doctrine, discipline, and government in the Church, as ratified and secured by the ancient statutes. This instruction received unanimous approval. The electing constituency was naturally the cause of some difference of opinion. Sir Robert Anstruther favoured the inclusion of all inhabitants of the parish of full age, and in communion with any Protestant Church. Dr. Wallace had a preference for the whole ratepaying parishioners professing themselves Protestant Christians. Mr. Haggart of Loch Carron proposed the substitution of the word ‘congregation’ for communicants, basing his suggestion on the fact that in certain northern parts of the kingdom there are relatively few communicants compared with adherents. Sir Robert Anstruther’s motion was negatived by 194 to 19; Dr. Wallace’s motion by 213 to 16; and in the midst of some confusion Mr. Haggart withdrew his motion. Dr. William Smith affirmed that a great deal might have been said for the substitution proposed by Mr. Haggart, for in the old Acts and constitution of the Church they would find ‘congregation’ as the common word; a word which, defined by the Church, might answer the same purpose as communicants, and possibly might meet the views of their Highland friends. It was unanimously agreed to delete the word ‘male’ before communicants. The point which raised most feeling was the clause under which compensation to private patrons to the extent of one year’s value of the living should be made a burden



upon the benefice, payable as to one quarter on each of the first four years' stipend, and only to private patrons if claimed. To the Crown, and to all corporations, no compensation was due. But the Assembly realised that security of some sort had to be given, and negatived the objection by 127 against 39 votes. Since then a sum of about £41,500 has been payable to extinguish the civil right of those asking it.

The provision for the 'mode of naming and proposing by means of a committee chosen by the congregation' owes its presence in the Act to the opinion or the advice of two distinguished men, Dr. McCrie and Dr. William Hanna. The idea was to make the process solemn and deliberate, and to check the possibility of a congregation being hurriedly rushed by some man of influence or authority in favour of an unknown candidate. Mr. Gordon used to say that 'the committee should be (1) Eyes to look around for the most suitable man; (2) Ears to hear all they could about him; and (3) The index-finger to point him out to the congregation, to be approved or disapproved by them.' Beyond all question this, and not competitive preaching, seemed the ideal method to the framers of the Patronage Act.

Mr. W. E. Baxter, M.P., asked for a return of communicants only in the Highland districts where the Church of Scotland was weakest; but this was granted to Mr. Ellice in the form of a return for all her congregations. This return proved her to be immensely stronger than her foes imagined. The communicants amounted to 460,464. The Duke of Argyll pronounced his benediction over the Bill on its second reading and in committee, but strongly pressed the word 'congregation' from immemorial usage instead of 'communicants'; and showed that the Parliamentary definition was undesirable, and would be avoided by placing the definition in the hands of the General Assembly, who were disposed to include everybody they could rightly include upon Presbyterian principles. This course commended itself both to the Patronage Committee and to the Government, inasmuch as the whole regulations for

working the Act were always meant to be placed by it in the hands of the Church. Dr. Charteris drew the definition of 'congregation' which appears in the Act; and it recognises the Church's hands to be absolutely free, while exactly answering the situation in the Highlands. Dr. Rainy's biographer<sup>1</sup> says that the Bill was brought in for the transference of patronage 'to even non-communicants also. This last feature (which no true Churchman ever claimed or approved) stamped the Bill as not a concession of Christian rights so much as a piece of popular democratisation.' This is a complete mistake, though often reiterated. Was Dr. Candlish, then, no true Churchman? Writing to Mr. A. M. Dunlop on 31st March 1840,<sup>2</sup> he advocated that the range of callers under the Veto Act must be enlarged, and suggested that others than communicants may be worthy members of a congregation, entitled and qualified to call. He stipulated, exactly as the Act does, for the absolute right of the Church to say who are to be held members of the congregation, and that there must be no civil status independently of the decision of the Church, or privilege claimable against the Church's will. And he suggested the modification chiefly with a view to Highland parishes, as Mr. Haggart and Dr. Smith did in the Assembly. The Patronage Committee and the Government were at one with the Duke of Argyll in resolutely refusing to accept any amendment justly liable to the taunt of Erastianism. They utterly withstood every proposal to include outsiders of whatever sort—even to please Principal Tulloch and Sir Robert Anstruther—though Tulloch thundered about the want of intelligence of political men, and declared: 'The country is going to the dogs for want of brains.' The charge of 'popular democratisation,' therefore, falls pointless. Space would fail us were we to examine all the misrepresentations based on ignorant perversion of the facts. In many publications, some of them founded on a slip of the tongue in the Duke of Richmond's speech, it has been

<sup>1</sup> *Life of Principal Rainy*, vol. i. p. 259.

<sup>2</sup> *Memorials of R. S. Candlish, D.D.*, pp. 117-118.



alleged that 'patronage was not abolished but only transferred.' This is not a mere matter of hair-splitting. The phrasology used throughout the Act of 1874 was deliberately chosen to extinguish, not to transfer, the right of patronage, repealing all Acts involving it, and 'providing otherwise.' 'The right of electing and appointing ministers' is 'declared to be vested in the congregation.' The civil and patrimonial right is abolished: the spiritual privilege remains. And this is not of any private, but of repeated judicial interpretation. No legal authority can be quoted comparable to that of the late Lord President Inglis, who said in the Paisley case (15th November 1878):—

'The leading purpose of this statute is to transfer from patrons to congregations the right and duty of appointing ministers to vacant parishes . . . but this right is essentially different in character from the former right of patronage, and therefore it would be quite inaccurate to say that the Act transfers the right of patronage from patrons to congregations.'

Lord Justice-Clerk Moncreiff also, who gave the prevailing judgment in the New Deer case (25th November 1878), declared:—

'It must be kept in mind, however, what is the precise nature of the right conferred by this statute on the congregation. It is not in any sense a right of patronage. It is not a patrimonial right vested in the individual members of the congregation as defined by the statute, but a privilege conferred on a body purely ecclesiastical, constituted by a franchise, founded on one of the most solemn rites of the Church, to elect their own spiritual pastor. . . . On the one hand it might have been contended . . . that the conditions on which the Auchterarder case proceeded can never occur again. On the other hand it might have been, and has been urged, that since the decisions which followed on that of Auchterarder, the idea of any power residing in the Church which is not directly derived from the Legislature and conferred by statute, is wholly visionary; that not only the right of collation, but all other matters mentioned in the Act 1690, c. 5 (the administration of ordinances, Church discipline, and the like), are the mere gifts of the Civil Magistrate; and it might be, with some show of logic, inferred that when admission to the communion becomes a franchise for the exercise of a civil right, it is necessarily cognizable in all its incidents by the civil tribunals. Without solving these, or the



many cognate questions which might have arisen, *the statute has excluded them* by conferring on the Church courts ample power to regulate procedure under it, and by vesting in these courts, in very comprehensive words, the right of deciding all questions as to the appointment of ministers, and has declared their judgment on them to be final and conclusive.'

Indeed, the only point on which the civil court can be appealed to is in the event of the congregation, through delay, neglect, or disunion, forfeiting its right to elect; when at the end of six months it may conceivably be appealed to, but only to interpret judicially as to which body of spiritual trustees, congregation or presbytery—*both within the Church*—shall elect for that time. Even that can only arise if the presbytery erroneously or unrighteously curtails the time of congregational choice. Dr. Norman Walker alleged that the Act prescribed the rules and regulations by which the Church is to be guided in the filling up of vacancies; which only shows that he did not carefully read the Act; for in opposing it (happily in vain) Mr. Gladstone declared this very provision to be

'an extravagant proposal; and I doubt whether this House should hand over to the General Assembly or to a Commission thereof, the most essential portion of its own legislative power. The learned Lord says that the Bill provides that the sentences of the Church upon all questions that may arise connected with the appointment and settlement of a minister shall be final and conclusive. What is the meaning, and what is the legal intent, of these words? Does the learned Lord intend to commit to the courts of the Church powers not possessed by any voluntary religious communion in the country? I am surprised that the learned Lord, in explaining to the House the nature of the Bill, has not told the House why he is going to vest in members of the Established Church powers which are not possessed at this moment by the Free Church or by the United Presbyterians, who are responsible to the interference of the civil court upon many questions connected with the appointment and settlement of ministers.'

No one can fail to notice how clearly Mr. Gladstone here certified the Church of Scotland's freedom as recognised within her spiritual domain.

In the House of Lords the objections to the Bill were either antiquarian—a few belated growls from a trio of Tory peers—or sectarian, like the objections of Lord Dalhousie. That it was no party measure is proved by the support received from the Liberal leader there, Earl Granville, the Duke of Argyll, Lords Rosebery, Airlie, Aberdeen, and Aberdare. Lord Rosebery, from his Queensferry experience, opposed an amendment in favour of ratepaying parishioners; and the Duke of Argyll refused to commit this matter into the hands of men who might not be Christians at all, flatly telling the House that this sort of comprehensiveness, if carried out, would disgust the other Churches of Scotland, and prevent them all coming together. He said:—

‘There was another thing which he confessed warmed his heart to this Bill as a member of the Liberal party. The Liberalism of Scotland had been an historical Liberalism, founded upon definite conceptions of the nature and genius of the Christian Church, and also of the nature and duties of a Christian State. It had not been a slipshod Liberalism which was indifferent to all principles of this kind, and which believed in a Church without any faith, and in some religion which was every man’s in general and no man’s in particular. It was in consequence of its possessing this character that it had achieved such great things in the history of the country.’

Thus nobly did the great Whig orator vindicate the principles derived from a long line of Covenanting and sometimes martyred ancestors.

No division was taken against any portion of the Bill in the House of Lords. Though read a first time in the Commons, without discussion, on the 17th of June, it was not rushed, as has sometimes been insinuated, but only came up for second reading on 6th July; in fact, Lord Aberdare in the interval asked the Lord Advocate the cause of delay, remarking: ‘Our heroic chief is very likely to turn up and oppose it.’ Meantime, among M.P.’s much discussion prevailed, and a great appetite for information arose. Dr. Charteris took his full share in providing it with food, along with Drs. Pirie and Cumming and Mr. Menzies. In particular, he wrote a temperate and forcible



memorandum, singularly free from the screaming misrepresentations advanced by the 'Scottish Disestablishment Association,' and a draft of specimen Regulations for the Cabinet, such as the Church would be likely to frame. Dr. Rainy and Mr. Hutton were assiduous in their opposition and in the canvass of members. The former made a convert of Professor Smyth, M.P., an Irish Presbyterian, who, in a letter to Dr. Charteris, had confessed to great perplexity of mind, saying he would have liked to see the realisation of a dream of Dr. Norman Macleod—the reunion of Scottish Presbyterians—but was now told that the Bill would only bar the way to such a goal. On such assurances he voted against it. On the other hand, the Rev. Professor Rogers of Belfast headed an influential movement of a large minority in his Church, which opposed the official resolution of its majority, engineered from Scotland. He insisted on recalling their own deliverances before 1843, and how, two days after the Disruption, the famous Dr. Henry Cooke of Belfast had suggested to Sir Robert Peel this remedy—the total extinction of patronage *by purchase*. Dr. Rogers trusted that ere long more sober views would prevail, and that the delusions which had seized some of them in Ireland would soon give place to reason.

In the second reading debate the Lord Advocate gave a clear and candid historical *résumé* of the position, explaining the many respects in which Scottish patronage differed from the English system. He affirmed that the Bill was popular in Scotland, as evidenced by petitions; pointed out that no petition had been presented from the Free Church Assembly against it, and that no one entitled to speak in the name of that Church had opposed it; that so mixed an assembly as Glasgow Town Council had, by twenty-eight to twelve, refused to petition against it—a course which sampled the opinion of laymen. He thought it essential to get patronage out of the way before they could talk of any matter connected with union; that done, he believed the Churches would gravitate towards one another, and he trusted that eventually there would be



one Church of Scotland. This conciliatory speech was met by an amendment moved by a Congregationalist, Mr. W. E. Baxter, for further inquiry and information. It deceived nobody, being construed and meant as equivalent to rejection. He made an adroit bid for the English Tory vote by asking, 'Why not clothe the Church of England with the same tremendous power?' The Bill, he said, was a well-meant attempt, but it came too late. After a high-toned speech from Mr. Charles Dalrymple, Mr. Gladstone rose. Since his defeat Achilles had been sulking in his tent, but had not as yet resigned his leadership to Lord Hartington. Now he sallied forth to curse the Bill—he, the only survivor of the Ministry of 1843, which had proved deaf to the Church's cry for redress! He came freshly primed after a prolonged interview with Dr. Rainy. He adopted every 'dog-in-the-manger' argument, amounting in substance to this, that Dissenters have a vested interest in the defects and abuses of an Established Church. This, which Dr. MacGregor of St. Cuthbert's described as 'the most repulsive doctrine ever fashioned in the brain of Christian men,' he would never have applied to his own Church, but thought good enough for what, in his opinion, was intrinsically no Church at all. The present writer has the most vivid remembrance of that scene; of how he stormed, how he menaced, how he pirouetted, how he hurled his thunderbolts of malediction upon the devoted head of the 'Right Hon. and learned Lord,' until (adopting Disraeli's dictum) one even felt thankful that there lay interposed between them that 'substantial article of furniture, the massive table of the House.' In face of many disclaimers he charged the promoters of the Bill with desiring to strengthen the Established Church by inducing adherents of dissenting bodies to come over man by man. With peerless audacity he, who had opposed a different and lesser proposal, declared that this one amounted to a cry of *Peccavi*, and insisted on restitution. He spoke of

'those people whom *you* drove out of the Established Church, and compelled to find ministers for themselves, to build

churches, manse, schools, and, in fact, to organise and pay for the establishment of a complete system of Church Government. You compelled them to do all this; and now you say, "we are going to adopt principles for which you contended," but you do not offer to take these people back in bodies. If you did this I should entirely approve of the Bill. If the General Assembly will, on terms of fraternal equality, communicate with the dissenting bodies, and endeavour to bring about an union of equality, I will assist them to the full extent of my power. . . . I want to know what the General Assembly has done towards reuniting itself to bodies which it turned out, holding the view which forms the basis of the present Bill.'

And the speech closed with one of those high appeals, which the 'sophistical rhetorician' knew so well how to employ, for purposes of glamour, to the abstractions of justice, propriety, prudence, even decency—as if he had a pocket monopoly of them all.

Mr. Gladstone's passionate orations often reminded one of the Roman amphitheatre, where the gladiator with sword and armour had to encounter on the arena the *retiarius*, fitly typified in this instance by Mr. Disraeli. Rarely were his trident and net more deftly handled than that night: scarcely ever did the out-manceuvred swordsman writhe as under the well-merited punishment he then received. A count was moved during dinner-time, and some one had tramped on 'Dizzy's' gouty foot, done up in a cloth shoe, as the members trooped back at call of the bell. He did not rise immediately, for he needed coaching. First he rallied Mr. Gladstone on banning what his colleagues in another place had blessed, and declared that they had all missed him, himself not the least. He met his opponent's objections to one year's stipend as sheer confiscation by showing that, of four purchases of advowsons made since 1801, the first sold for £2000, the second for £1000, the third for £600, and the last for £300—evidently sinking! But the question was, what they would fetch since 1843, under the Act of the Peel-Aberdeen Ministry to which Mr. Gladstone belonged; and he proved the correctness of Argyll's dictum that one year's stipend was far more than market value. This was afterwards



corroborated by Mr. Robert Reid, M.P. for Dumfries, recently Lord Chancellor Loreburn. He then pointed out the manifest and manifold inconsistencies of the speech under reply.

'The right hon. gentleman says that the Established Church drove out the Free Church. That, however, is not my view of the great struggle. I think the Free Church resigned. They were not driven out, and this places the Established Church in a very different position from what it would have occupied if it had driven the Free Church out. The right hon. gentleman opposite might as well say that we drove him out of office. I say we did not. He resigned; and we are not at all bound to invite him to return. . . . The Free Church left the Establishment; and though I will not say that it was a reasonable act, all agree that it was a heroic act.'

Dr. Lyon Playfair, M.P., sent to the Edinburgh newspapers a long prepared speech, which wound up with a peroration that he could not 'help to open wide the wind gates, so that wild blasts may beat against the Church which I have revered since my boyhood.' He delivered a much shorter one, minus the peroration, but voted against the Bill. Dr. Smith, of North Leith, wrote to Dr. Charteris the day after the debate, adjourned for a week, in these terms:—

'The great danger remains as it was—from honest friends and double-minded foes foisting damaging excrescences on the Bill by way of amendment. Gordon did very well—a little too antiquely historical—but good. Baxter did not make much of it. Gladstone threw all his fire into and made a most able and telling speech, but most unfair and utterly unprincipled. Fraser Mackintosh and Sir W. S. Maxwell both spoke ably; and Disraeli—the more I think of it the more I am satisfied—in a masterly manner—tripping up Gladstone at every point. It seemed at first glance a loss that the debate should be adjourned: a majority of seventy or eighty seemed assured. Now, I think, the result is gain. Gladstone will be better answered next week, and the speaking against us will be exhausted so far before the House goes into committee. Menzies and I stay here meantime. You and Cumming should be here at latest for the adjourned debate on Monday, prepared to stay over the committee.'



On 14th July Dr. Smith again wrote to Dr. Charteris at Edinburgh:—

'You will be pleased with last night's work. Sir R. Anstruther spoke nobly, and showed to the satisfaction of the House the absurdity and untenableness of his chief's position. The Government and the Church go into committee pledged to the Bill only; and judging from Mr. Hardy's capital speech last night, the Government are determined to stick to the Bill pure and simple. Mr. Murray and you must hold yourselves in readiness to take a pull at the oars. We must deliberately consider the course to be pursued in face of some amendments certain to be proposed. Whitelaw has been most loyal, and is strong for sticking to the Bill as it is. Donald MacGregor (M.P. for Leith), though tied by a stupid letter of his to vote against us—really not to vote against Gladstone—worked manfully and strongly for us, and tried hard to speak also for the Bill last night.'

Sir Robert Anstruther's speech maintained that

'nothing had been more remarkable in the debate than this one fact—no man had ventured to oppose the principle of the Bill. Was there any room for the slightest doubt of the feeling of Scotland about the Act of Queen Anne? Dr. Chalmers had said if that Act were repealed "It would light up a moral jubilee in the land." The late Prime Minister had said that the Free Church were driven out. That he denied. Let it not be supposed that he did not appreciate the Free Church secession, or that he yielded to the right hon. gentleman in his admiration for the sacrifices which were made by those who left the Church in 1843. He knew those sacrifices: he knew the pain and grief it was to them to go, and he knew more—the pain and grief it was to those who remained to see them go. Let them not have discord sown among the Presbyterian bodies in Scotland. Let there be nothing to prevent those who left the Established Church from finding the means by which, without dishonour or insult, they might come back again. His right hon. friend (Mr. Gladstone) made a very strong point of the fact of the Free Church of Scotland not having been consulted before the Bill was introduced; but he (Sir Robert Anstruther) should have been glad to hear how that was practicable under the existing state of things—how the Established Church was to approach the Free Church on the basis of a Bill which no one had seen. He contended that it was absolutely necessary that lay patronage should be got out of the way before anything like an approach could, with honour, be made by the Free Church of Scotland.'—(*Hansard*).

Mr. H. Campbell-Bannerman, though he had joined the deputation in 1869, made haste to put himself in line with his party chief; while Mr. Arthur Balfour delivered an able maiden speech in favour of the Bill. Mr. Gathorne Hardy wound up the debate, when the second reading was carried by three hundred and seven to one hundred and nine; two supporters of the Bill, being shut out, just prevented a majority of two hundred. Many notable Liberals such as Sir William Harcourt, Mr. Robert Lowe, Mr. Arthur W. Peel (afterwards Speaker), and Sir Wilfrid Lawson—sixty-five in all—voted for the Bill; and there was a Scottish majority likewise.<sup>1</sup>

Dr. Charteris came up to represent the Church at the delicate stage of committee on 17th July, and wrote home to his wife concerning the sweltering heat:—

'To-day is going to be awful. I do hate London, this wilderness of brick and mortar on which the sun is blazing. I trust the Bill will come on, and that we will get off before Thursday. But the Public Worship Regulation Bill for the Church of England stops the way, and seems to excite great interest. A friend of yours is very angry at Mr. Disraeli for calling it a "Bill to put down ritualism." We have had a long and anxious morning over the Bill. The Advocate is triumphant, and very anxious to use his power kindly. It seems the Free Church have deputations ready to send over the Highlands, to denounce whatever may seem Erastian in the Act. The United Presbyterians (Messrs. Hutton and Renton) have not been seen since they were noticed cooling their souls with soda water after the division on the second reading. Mr. Hutton's lobbying energies were reckoned greatly to have furthered the prospects of the measure.'

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. Rainy's biographer fell into two serious blunders: that the Bill was passed 'against the votes of the Scottish representatives in Parliament,' and that 'only fifteen Scottish members could be got to vote for it.' Dr. Carnegie Simpson has frankly owned and explained this error in a second edition. In point of fact, out of sixty Scottish members thirty-two voted 'Aye,' of whom fifteen were Liberal in politics and seventeen Conservative. Under a strong whip twenty-four voted 'No.' Of the four absent members Lord Elcho (now Lord Wemyss), Cameron of Lochiel, and Mr. Edward Ellice were favourable, while Mr. J. Maitland (Kirkcudbright) was down with fever. These figures prove that the Act was no party measure.



The Scottish Bill passed substantially as presented to the Commons, except that instead of saying that the right of election 'shall' now be in the congregation, it said, it 'is hereby declared to be' in them, making the Act declaratory in form, and negating the Erastian principle of Mr. Campbell-Bannerman, who held that Parliament always must have the right to dictate to, and to interfere with, the Church of Scotland as long as it is the Established Church.

There can be no harm now in stating that a clause to declare anew the spiritual independence which the Church possesses in all things spiritual was framed, and was under consideration of the Cabinet. It was decidedly uncongenial to Lord Chancellor Cairns. That excellent Christian man entertained the Low Church view, still largely prevalent in England, which fears what High Anglicans might do if freed from State control; and upholds that royal supremacy in ecclesiastical causes which still obtains in England, but was happily abrogated in Scotland in 1690. The rest of the Ministry were prepared to pass the clause, if assurances were obtained that it would satisfy those outside the Church. But as no such assurances were forthcoming, and the Church of Scotland had not asked for it, and did not need it, the matter went no further. The Lord Advocate, when appealed to by a Highland member, Mr. Fraser Mackintosh, who desired to add to the clause, declaring finality and conclusiveness, the words, 'as well as upon all other questions with which it is the province of the Church to deal,' urged that historically it was true that before 1843 the civil courts had only adjudicated as they did because the refusal of the presbytery to take a presentee on trial had violated the civil rights of the patron and presentee. Such a state of things could not again occur, because the Patronage Act repealed the express enactments on which these decisions rested. He showed that since 1843 the civil courts had distinctly and uniformly recognised the final and exclusive jurisdiction of the Church courts within their own



province, and illustrated the law by judicial utterances.<sup>1</sup>

He concluded thus:—

‘This being the unquestioned law of the land, and the Bill already providing that in all these matters relating to the appointment of ministers touched by it, the final and exclusive jurisdiction of the Church courts should be fully recognised, I do not think it necessary to insert in the Bill an assertion of the final and exclusive jurisdiction of the Church courts in regard to matters which are not touched by it.’

One point more may be adduced to show Dr. Charteris as the vigilant guardian of the Church’s constitution, yet forecasting the things that make for peace. The civil magistrate (to use the quaint old phrase), as pictured by some, is an oppressive tyrant or a spiteful ogre. A letter is still extant, written on the Lord Advocate’s official notepaper, addressed by Dr. Charteris to Professor Mitchell. It says:—

‘Is there any Act of Parliament which prevents the Church from declaring ministers of other Presbyterian Churches eligible to charges in the Church of Scotland? In other words, does our constitution in any way prevent our decreeing mutual eligibility? If there be, the Lord Advocate would introduce a clause saying, “Nothing in any Act of Parliament shall prevent the Church, if it see good, etc.” The Act 1592, with “bound andstricted,” comes in for consideration. I have said that I do not believe anything prevents us, but as usual I fall back on you.’

Professor Mitchell wired his reply:—

‘Enabling clause I think unnecessary. Better expressly repeal restrictive clause. Recommendation might appropriately be given on model of that in Act 22 of Scots Parliament 1693, that next Assembly should prepare eligibility scheme, and take other steps to promote reunion of Presbyterians accepting Revolution

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<sup>1</sup> By Lord Medwyn in the case of *Sturrock v. Greig* (1849); Lord President Boyle and Lord Ivory in the case of *Lockhart v. The Presbytery of Deer* (1851); and the latest *Auchtergaven case*, *Wight v. The Presbytery of Dunkeld* (1870), in which Lord Justice-Clerk Moncreiff had decided: ‘Within their spiritual province the Church courts are as supreme as we are within the civil, and as this is a matter relating to the discipline of the Church, and solely within the cognisance of the Church courts, I think we have no power whatever to interfere.’

settlement and subscribing confession, as above Act appoints; and enact that in terms of Act 23, 1690, the entry and calling of a particular minister, in terms of Act 1592, and all other matters within its province as there defined, are to be ordered and concluded by the judgment of the Church courts.'

Further advice, however, from Procurator Lee made it clear that the Church has full power by its right of collation, under which in practice ministers of other denominations are admitted. Eligibility had been strongly urged by opponents as well as by supporters in the House of Commons, and those representing the Church felt bound in honour to adopt that attitude. But, as Dr. William Smith wrote to Dr. Charteris:—

'The safer and the wiser course will, I suspect, be to pass the Bill as nearly as possible in its present shape, and then to promote at the instance of the Church every sort of healing and conciliatory measure we can think of. We can then afford, and I think we shall be bound, to be generous.'

The Scottish people have known how to value the boon, and also the spirit of practical and Christian goodwill which prompted it. The question is sometimes asked: 'Why did the Church of Scotland not go to the other Churches before the abolition of patronage with proposals for reunion?' The answer is twofold—(1) That overtures were made to all who seemed in the least inclined to conciliation, and those who received them favourably replied: 'Get the abolition of patronage *first*.' (2) The second part of the answer may be given in Scottish fashion—'Would you have limited your prospects of redress for the Church of Scotland by the chances of the Voluntaries agreeing to seek it with you?' Their adverse decision had been already taken. It was wise and Christian statesmanship to seek peace and pursue it. It would have been the veriest folly to offer your guns for the enemy to spike before ever an armistice was agreed to.

Mr. Gladstone's real estimate of the Act which conferred popular election on Presbyterian lines, and undid what Carstares reckoned a grievance and burden, may be mentioned. Reverting to the subject many years after-



wards in conversation with Sir Robert Anstruther, he remarked: 'That Bill of Gordon's was the cleverest move that I have known in my whole Parliamentary life.' To the 'old Parliamentary hand' it seemed a mere piece of political strategy, an ambushade worthy of all praise for its success. Nothing sometimes proves so disconcerting to the tortuous devices of men who look on all politics as a mere game, as the straightforward 'move' of an honest man. And Mr. Gladstone afforded ample proof many times since then of how impossible it was for his High Church sacerdotalism to measure the depth and intensity of Scottish religious conviction.

It seems worth while to record two contemporary prophecies. Mr. David MacLagan was a devoted Free Church elder. Though his arguments failed to convince Mr. James Cowan, Liberal M.P. for Edinburgh, that he should vote against the Bill, he wrote:<sup>1</sup> 'Old Dr. Bisset of Bourtie was wise in his generation when he said in the Established Church Assembly of 1870: "The period which will elapse between Parliamentary interference about Patronage and Disestablishment will not be a Roman lustrum"' (five years). Dr. Bisset's moderatorial address in 1862 was a wonderful prediction of improvements in worship—in devotion, psalmody, and hymnody—of practices almost universally prevalent to-day, though they created a mighty outcry then. But here his powers of prophecy must yield place to those of a very different man. Mr. (better now remembered as Principal) Hutton, at the Liberation Society meeting in London on 6th May 1874, declared, with more far-seeing authority, that the patronage measure, if put on the Statute-Book, would 'rivet the Establishment on Scotland for another generation.' That was thirty-eight years ago.

The Act of 1874 was the first statute which explicitly recognised the commission of the General Assembly, by entrusting it with the duty of drawing up interim regulations for the working of the new system which came into force on 1st January 1875. In the production of these Dr.

<sup>1</sup> *David MacLagan*, F.R.S.E., p. 119.



Charteris took a lively interest and a helpful part; but from this time sciatica laid him up for many months, crippled him for years, and remained a slumbering foe. Towards the sunset he himself recorded: 'The strain of those years of the patronage conflict left results on my health which I have never lost, but I count them honourable scars.'

## CHAPTER XI

### PRESBYTERIAN REUNION

Visions of Union—Correspondence with Mr. Taylor Innes—Why Overtures were not welcomed—Lecture on 'Spiritual Independence'—Letter from Sir H. W. Moncreiff—The Church of Scotland's Offers in 1878 and 1886—Unofficial Conferences, 1886, 1894-1895—The New Departure.

THE subject of Church Union, especially among Presbyterians, has been long in the air; though it is sincerely to be hoped it will not remain there, but will take embodied form at no distant date. The proposals now before the country differ essentially in their constructive form from anything framed on either side in former days. By lapse of time, and alas! by many 'first-class funerals'—above all by the dying down of prejudice on all sides, and a better realisation of the proportion and perspective of the faith, combined with a true perception of the clamant needs of the Church at home and abroad—the duty and the possibility of union are being brought home to the present generation. It was found possible to achieve it—on a smaller scale in 1839, and a larger in 1847—by the Free Church and Reformed Presbyterians in 1876, as well as by the overwhelming majority of the Free Church and the whole United Presbyterian Church, which formed the United Free Church of Scotland, in 1900. But, as Professor Charteris was ever contemplating that Promised Land of Union which his feet never trod, place must be found for a notice of his visions and long-continued efforts on behalf of it.

In the year before he died he wrote:—

'With Church Union I was much occupied for many



years. The remarkable address of Professor Crawford, as moderator in 1867, contained the first deliberate advocacy of an early reunion of the several branches of the Scottish Church. Dr. Crawford was the first convener of the Union Committee, with Lord Polwarth as his colleague; and on his death I had the honour of being chosen to serve with his lordship. When patronage was abolished, we drafted the first letter the Church of Scotland ever sent to the other Presbyterian Churches. It was sent in 1878 in the form of a minute. Cordial and respectful answers welcomed our approach, and I believe that the brotherly spirit which was then unsealed has never evaporated. Bitterness has hidden its face, or at the least has muffled its voice. If the correspondence did not bring formal union, it did much to promote unity of heart. Mr. Moody's wonderful mission in 1873 also did much to make everybody ashamed of the envy, malice, and uncharitableness which had marked the relations of the Churches of Christ. In thirty years many things have advanced, and now we can thankfully see a prospect of what in those earlier times was but a dream. At last Assembly (1907) I was physically unable even to say "I thank God," though I longed to say it.

'Endowment' Robertson and Dr. Norman Macleod had both sincere aspirations after union; and in 1869, the year of the latter's moderatorship, Mr. Ogilvy Ramsay of Kirriemuir brought up an overture from Forfar Presbytery aiming at union between the Church of Scotland and the other evangelical Churches in the country. On the motion of Sheriff Barclay, seconded by Mr. George Seton, Advocate, and supported by Major the Honourable Robert Baillie, the Assembly in a thin house expressed their deep sympathy and sincere hope that such a time was not now far distant. Although, in the face of invincibly adverse language from that quarter in the then Free Church where successful motions always originated, the Patronage Committee abstained from taking the course of formally approaching that Church and seeking her co-operation, yet judicious individual action was not only permitted

but welcomed. Professor Mitchell, in his lecture on 'Union of Scottish Presbyterians,'<sup>1</sup> said:—

'I deem it my duty further to say this in our vindication, that no sooner did we make up our minds to move for the abolition of this long-standing grievance, than those of us who did so, strove as far as we could to enlist in the cause of reform and reunion the sympathies of Free Church brethren whom we knew; and to ascertain what, in addition to that which we sought, those who had left us would desire to get, in order to open the way for our being once more united in one Church. *The answer given to our private advances was not such as to encourage more public overtures.* . . . It may be said, as it has been, that even though we met with so little encouragement, we need not have desisted so soon from our endeavours. But it was felt by most of us that it would have been a very delicate matter indeed for us to do more, at a time when they were occupied in negotiating another union, in regard to which difficulties had then just begun to emerge. It might have exposed us to misconstructions still more serious than those from which we suffered, and far less honourable to us.'

A striking sample of these important private communications may be given. The late Mr. A. Taylor Innes, advocate, LL.D., most kindly made forthcoming four letters which lucidly tell their own story. Unfortunately no trace of his side of the correspondence can be found; but Dr. Taylor Innes thus endeavoured to explain the circumstances so far as he remembered them:—

'I followed Dr. Charteris to Edinburgh and joined the Bar there in 1870; but before that time my book on *The Law of Creeds* had brought me the acquaintance of Mr. Gladstone, and I was allowed by the leaders of the Free Church—Dr. Candlish, Dr. Buchanan and Dr. Rainy—to express their views (and my own) on critical occasions in the *Edinburgh Daily Review*. It is necessary to state this in order to explain why Charteris was still very desirous to influence me, especially at the time of the Anti-patronage movement—the only time, as I think in looking back, when there was a chance of his friends reclaiming or seriously dividing the Free Church. And even that chance they lost when they resolved in a great meeting of their committee to go on to Parliament without communicating

<sup>1</sup> 'St. Giles' Lectures,' Sixth Series; *The Church and the People*, pp. 297-301.



with the other Church as a party interested. I never saw him more depressed than immediately after this result, which I gathered was due to the strong stand taken by one man (a Church leader now long deceased, but of great and deserved influence) against proposals urged by Charteris and men like the late Dr. Mitchell of St. Andrews. But my only record of that critical time is four letters, written to me by him from Tübingen and Homburg in the summer of 1869. The earlier of them had no particular result (though infinitely creditable to him as faithful Churchman and friend); but a "frank and full" answer from me seems to have stimulated him to a complete "theory" and scheme, which is proposed in his last letter of 5th September. It did not seem to me sufficient, and I have no doubt I told him so on his return, as I did to Dr. Mitchell even earlier. But these letters, with their urgency and earnestness ("Tell your friends that we are profoundly in earnest"), made me shrink from further private responsibility, and I talked over the whole scheme with Rainy (and I think also with Candlish), expressing at the same time my doubt whether the party "profoundly in earnest"—much as I sympathised with it—would be able to thaw the mass around. In any case nothing came of it. Nor did anything conclusive come of the many attempts renewed down even to the close of his life: including that memorable occasion (as it seemed to those outside) when Professor Charteris rose in the Assembly and offered one-half of his Divinity Hall emoluments in aid of any feasible scheme by which Free Church divines might be put on an equal footing with their brethren within. To the end he held his faith in the future, as so many on the other side did too. But all these, having obtained a good report in higher realms through their faith, "received not the promise," God having provided (it may be—I write in April 1909) "some better thing even for us" or those who follow us.

It must be realised that these letters follow the Assembly's resolution and petition to Parliament: also the interview of its deputation with Mr. Gladstone. Dr. Charteris writes from Germany:—

TÜBINGEN, 10th July 1869.

'MY DEAR INNES,—Thank you for trying to make us understand each other's position.

'Don't think it formal that I allude to the paragraphs of your letter in their order.

'You say you were "taken aback by the proposal to go at once to Parliament, as you thought I had been against this." But



you must have been mistaken, for all the advice I gave to Sir Robert Anstruther was to delay his motion until after the Assembly. I told him that a proposal affecting patronage should proceed from it, and that I had no doubt whatever of what the Assembly would do. What I said to Cumming was that this advice should be given to Sir Robert. I wish you had not forbidden us to talk about the matter that night, when it turned up incidentally, for I had no "secrets," and I should have liked an opinion from your point of view.

"You say "it is pretty plain now that an attempt to ignore the other Presbyterians will not do, and that would be a mild description of the proceedings of your Assembly in May." In the same paragraph and in the next, you go on to take exception to some words of mine as having roused the resentment of the Free Church. Surely you have not read the speeches of those who supported the successful motion. I think they are fairly chargeable with making too much of the idea that the abolition of patronage is called for as a step towards union with the Free Church. In my opinion the true position to occupy is that which the Church was taking in vain at the time when the Fathers of the Relief and Secession left it, and which the Church did not take in 1834 (the more's the pity, for it would not then have been in vain), viz. : the position of appealing, as a Church, to the Legislature to undo the great wrong of 1712. To mix up this simple act of justice—in the first stage—with the great and grave question of the "relation of the movement to other bodies outside" will only cause bad blood, make any good result to Scottish religion very problematical, and bring on a mortal fight before the ground is cleared for union. It will be murder, not battle. There are many whom all that will delight, but you are not one of them.

"With this view my speeches are perfectly consistent. But when I spoke on the "dead old mysticism of spiritual independence," I used words which I deeply deplore, and for which I would have at once apologised in public, when they were challenged in the *Daily Review*, had I not thought that the article as a whole was so truculent—not as regards me only (or chiefly)—as to make it impossible for me to do any good by explanation. While I believe that with patronage will historically fall the question of spiritual independence, the words express my meaning very badly, and are not entirely worthy of the occasion, as necessarily hurting the feelings of many with whom I earnestly desire to be on friendly terms. The truth is that I spoke without preparation, for Dr. Pirie was unwell, and, although I protested, I was forced to the front. The burden of the responsibility made me nervous, and I could not command my feelings or my words. The one idea steadily

(far too steadily, but naturally enough) before me was the minority in the Assembly, and my only consolation for having done my work badly in other respects is that I succeeded pretty well in conciliating them.

'The *Daily Review* has taken up a much more worthy position now than it did at first, and if you think it will help matters, I am ready to withdraw my offensive expression in public.

'But I have two things to say. First. That instead of being goaded by my friends to attack or ignore the Free Church, I am sure they must have been vexed by my errors as much as I was. Do you really think that men like Lord Polwarth, and Major Baillie and James Baird, and T. G. Murray, and Drs. Pirie, Mitchell, and Crawford, are unscrupulous plotters, likely to urge a neophyte to spiteful measures? I am sure you don't.

'Second. That even I must be tried by all my speeches and their tone and tendency, and not by one isolated and unsupported phrase. I have no copy here of my speeches, but I know that in the first I spoke warmly of my appreciation of the pure motives which actuated the Church in 1834, and of my "full fraternal admiration of the heroic Christian work of the Free Church"; and in my second speech (moving the deputation) I appealed honestly to the patriotism of the Free Church, saying that I believed its best men would most heartily rejoice in our removing a burden from the old Church of Scotland. I was afraid indeed that the whole affair might become a matter of ecclesiastical politics, and not of Christian feeling; but I shall hope until I can hope no longer, for a better result.

'But do I expect that the present Established Church is to be the Church of Scotland in future days? By no means. You may still believe in my "desire expressed of old to unite all branches on equal terms." It is the desire of my inmost heart, my prayer and my hope, that this will be brought about. There is no sacrifice that I would not make to gain this end: for without it I foresee nothing but anarchy and ruin, twenty years hence, *and for ever*, in Scotland. Although I don't think that we should petition for the abolition of patronage on that ground, I am delighted to feel sure that the success of our petition would be the beginning of reunion on fair and equal terms. This I have said a hundred times.

'But reunion on what basis? Not on political Voluntarism: that is impossible. Are you of the Free Church—we are all Scottish Presbyterians—prepared to unite with us on this common ground, or is there to be a union of others to attack us? You must make your choice now, if the decision is to precede legislation on patronage: and I do not think that even we need to summon more earnestly all the strength of



Christian patriotism to our aid than you do. You may gratify a vindictive feeling (that is only too natural, however sinful) and thereby "spoil our little game," as you may think; but at the cost of alienating for ever from Scottish religion those endowments that have sustained it so long and so honourably, and that ought to belong to it in the future as in the past; for they are needed, every penny of them. On the other hand, now that the National Church has made one very important onward step towards union with you, you may also make a dignified and an honourable advance, not as opposed to ours, not even as parallel to it, but in the direction of a common point of meeting. I do not speak for myself although I speak what I do know, when I say that I wish you would say you are as ready for this as *our Church is*.

'Your difficulty will be (as you know very well) with 'Spiritual Independence,' and it is not a light one. Do you suppose that the actual claim of 1838 will ever be granted by a British Parliament in those days? I don't think you can. See *Law of Creeds*, pp. 263-265. But the basis of an union with each other and the State may be made sufficiently broad to include all the practical good which that claim sought to secure; and I think it could be made so as to save even the honourable scruples of those who have so long borne the consequences of their asserting that claim thirty years ago. I don't think it should be thrown away, as it is likely to be, if—on the ground that patronage is abolished—the Free Church claims a share of our endowments.

'I am done. This is too long a letter; but it is easier to attack than to defend in a short letter. I have not spoken of one thing that is pressing on me more than all others at this moment. Is this movement in our Church to revive a bitterness in Scottish Christian (?) life that was happily dying down? Are you and I—and thousands and tens of thousands like us—to become foes, and so rend the Blessed Body of Christ? Are we to suspect each other of plots and counterplots, and to give our words those fiery points which are "set on fire of hell"? God in mercy forbid!

'Your article breathes a very different tone from that of those which preceded it; for it is broad, frank, and generous, and when you can make such words reach every Free Church family in Scotland, you have not so much a tremendous responsibility as an invaluable privilege, and I know you will ask God for grace and use it aright. You have been fitted for your task by coming to know more of many ministers and members of the Established Church than most Free Church men know; and if you have found in us any good thing, it is your duty for Scotland's sake to let it be known. Such knowledge is sorely needed. We have misunderstood each other a great deal too



long. May He who will rule us in peace, *if we rebel not*, guide us. Again I thank you for writing so frankly.

'P.S.—There are some Free Church students here—as fine fellows as I ever saw—who are grievously ill-informed as to the real state of matters in our Church. If they, and such as they, are to be made to look at us *fairly*, you will need to expand and reiterate the closing paragraph of your article soon and often. It is literally woeful to see what they have thought of us as men, and *professors* of religion.

'P.P.S.—I don't think you can make out *historically* a legal case for the other Churches getting a share of our endowments. Besides you will make bad blood by arguing it. Why not take things as *they are*? and as *they should be*?'

'TÜBINGEN, 15th July 1869.

'MY DEAR INNES,—Just after despatching my long letter to you I received a number of the *Weekly Review*, of Wednesday the 7th, containing three articles, if I mistake not, on the Church controversy. I am sorry to see, in one at least of them, what I take to be the trace of your hand, and it is inconceivable to me that you should be a party to anything of such a tone and temper as these articles—take them for all in all—manifest. You wrote very frankly to me; and I thank you again for doing so. You will not take it amiss that I say to you that, while a political victory may be won by such weapons, a division in the Church of Christ can never be healed by them. Their only tendency is to tempt one to be careless whether it ever be healed or not.

'I can understand that, as in politics, the Free Church may believe it to be to their interest to make no sign of what they want, and to be simply abusive; but—it may be for the last time before all parties are irrevocably committed—I urge you as a valued friend and a powerful man to put *politics* aside and give Christianity a chance. The suggestion that was made to and through Mr. Gladstone that other bodies have a legal right to the endowments won't hold water unless the Free Church give up its "Spiritual Independence" claims: and unless the United Presbyterians show that they can jump back to their position of a hundred years ago—without letting the Church do the same.

'In one of the articles is a statement that "all conciliatory reference" to other Churches was "carefully suppressed" in our Assembly. It is a "mild description of that statement to call it utterly inaccurate. Even in the *Daily Review*, which did not report me at all, and which cut down Dr. Pirie's speech, Dr. Pirie's words are found beginning and ending with very strong statements of conciliation, union, and brotherly kind-

ness. A student lent me an old stray copy of the paper containing the debate on patronage, after I wrote to you, and it quite bears out what I said to you.

'My heart is nearly broken by the style in which the Free Church is again treating the subject. What do you propose? What do you want? I shall do anything in *my* power to gratify you and yours. But you must meet us half way—if the meeting is to take place.

'When I say "any personal thing in my power" I refer merely to my own personal feelings and wishes. I am here far from the scene, and know not how things go; but I do know that, except so far as you are souring them, all my friends and allies are more anxious (if that be possible) than I was, to be on with these severed brethren again.

'But the Church of Scotland, although a petitioner to Parliament, is not a supplicant for mercy from relatives who treat her as though there were no love for her in their hearts. We want to be friends, but we can also fight if need be.

'All this may seem strong, but I write for your own eye, and not for the general public; and it really is very very hard to bear that you of all people should be a partisan in such party work. The one article you sent me was so different.'

'TÜBINGEN, 31st July 1869.

'MY DEAR INNES,—I have waited for two days in hopes of Dykes' promised scheme, and it has not come.

'You say you are "very frank in all your letters," and I cordially admit that, *up to a certain point*, you are!

'Had you not spontaneously said this, I would scarcely have had an excuse for appealing to your frankness. But I make an appeal to you to tell me what you would like best of all to do if you had the power—say of Mr. Gladstone—at your command; and what, speaking practically, you think the Free Church can expect us to propose and do. In regard to this you have never spoken half a word. It is not fair or friendly to fold your arms and say: "Go on, be fair and generous, and I shall tell you by and by what I think of you." If you will give me a shadow or an outline, I promise to respect your confidence most completely, while I shall take means (with your permission, if you give it) to bring the idea under the notice of our committee. If you are in such a position that you *cannot* tell me, I shall deeply—bitterly—regret it, but I can understand things well enough to say no more.

'But observe, this is no diplomatic offer; it is a friend and a Scottish Presbyterian who speaks to another in the name of all that is dear to us both. I have no idea what our committee's Memorial (or Statement) on patronage is to be. But I can put



myself into communication with them, which I have not done, directly or indirectly. I think you assume that we have a deep design. We have none so far as I know, but I assume that we have a real love and respect for our Scottish brethren, which I do not see that your Church reciprocates. I read regularly the *Review*, the *Presbyterian*, and the *Free Church Missionary Record*, and I think the *Review* is the fairest and best of the three; while as a political journal it might more easily be forgiven for writing bitterly than the other two.

‘But I wander. You may decline to answer me. But see the awful difficulties of our position; think of our scattered hamlets; and for Scotland’s sake don’t let punctilio ruin all. Suppose the difficulties to be too many for our Assembly, so that we give up in despair the task of promoting union. You and the United Presbyterians attack us; it will probably be a *Voluntary* attack after the example of the Irish Church; and the Roman Catholic Church and the *Episcopalians* will have something to say; and *suppose* you succeed. Well, what then? What have you secured for Scotland? Heathen rusticity, and episcopal gentility!

‘I still think we should have patronage abolished, and then, as I pledged myself to do, agitate for union; but as another suggestion has been made, I ask with some reason, what do *you* want? There is no difficulty about spiritual independence. What do you propose about endowments, life interests, and future identification?

‘As a friend, as one of the many friends whose heart’s desire is for union, I appeal to you (not as a suppliant, but on the grounds of equity and of your own interests) to help me, and I promise that you shall never regret it. Failing this, I think perhaps there is a way of getting some unchristian gun out for a fight. I shall hope to hear from you.’

‘HOMBURG, 5th September 1869.

‘MY DEAR INNES,—I don’t know how to thank you for your frank and full exposition. I shall only say that it gladdened my heart. Acting on what I believe to be your wish, I sent it two days ago to Professor Mitchell, asking him to return it to me when he had read it. I have written to Dykes. His theory is, as you know, Disestablishment without Disendowment. He writes, of course, in a manly and generous way. Your letter and his roused me from a depth of despair into which intermittent fever and the *Daily Review* had cast me. You don’t know what power of help to us of the Auld Kirk lies in the sympathy of such as you.

‘My ideas have been stimulated, and my theory is complete!!!



I don't say I'll stick to it, and I don't know whether it has any adherent but myself.

'(1) Abolish patronage and proclaim spiritual independence. For this last I would go a long way. *The Law of Creeds* and I nearly agree, but we must go further than either the book or its reader has yet gone.

'(2) Acknowledge the brotherhood of all the children of the original Church of Scotland, also their orders; and declare that henceforth all are equal.

'(3) Declare one Church on the basis of the Confession of Faith, all ministers and elders now recognised in any branch to be entitled to be in it and of it.

'(4) All ministers to be entitled to all places in it—the United Church.

'(5) Get up all unexhausted teinds, etc., and fund them for the common good. Get up a Sustentation Fund more gigantic for the nation than yours is for the Free Church. Guarantee all ministers—as a minimum—what they have now, and double it if possible through development of congregational liberality, and through grants from the Central Fund.

'(6) As many Free Church and United Presbyterian ministers are doing very hard work, it will be primarily for their good to give conditional augmentation grants, *i.e.* conditional on efficiency to be ascertained by inspections, of which the result shall be published.

'(7) A Commission to decide which churches (say in a parish) are to be maintained for the future: ministers of the others of course to have life interests preserved. Said Commission to make territorial division in town and country, and to map out divisions for work.

'(8) Lest (say) Free Church brethren should object to their being on the fund, while present ministers are on the teinds, I would guarantee their income, so that, if voluntary funds fail (which they would not do), it should be made up from (say) my own and all other fixed incomes.

'Would that do? I see no need for Disestablishment: any man being free to take any kind of Church he likes, as in Australia. Every man would at once have access to all funds: if we are disestablished and life interests preserved, even as in the Irish Church, it would be many a year ere our Free Church brethren could enter into any part of the inheritance.

'I am not bound to all that. If it is not generous enough, let me know. I fancy that many Free Churchmen would at once be appointed to livings by the congregations, or their deputies as patrons. I fancy also that all town endowments might be taken from well-off congregations, and the fund used for others. I would agree to any means for benefiting the Disrup-

tion ministers or their families. You must not forget our difficulty in the existence, within our own Church, of men whose personal right to an income which they have done nothing to forfeit is indubitable. They must not be cast off. They must have fair play. I think you have the bones of a plan there.

'Just one word more: tell your friends that we are *profoundly in earnest*, for Scotland's sake, not for our own. I don't write more fully, as I hope to see you in a fortnight or three weeks. I have been appointed Chaplain to Her Majesty in room of the Rev. Dr. Muir.'

These powerful, patriotic, and generous letters, setting forth a new constructive 'Tübingen theory,' very different from Baur's destructive one, express Dr. Charteris' attitude from the beginning of his course to its close. They reveal many of his characteristics as a man of sanguine temperament, ready for broad-minded action. But the fruit was not ripe for plucking. The Mr. Taylor Innes of those days had thought something might be done about solving these problems.<sup>1</sup> Nine months later he wrote that he reckoned that things had taken their course, and must be left to complete their new crystallisation before any interference was possible; or at all events that any effective interference would require to be very powerful and extraordinary—not on the part of divines, but of statesmen.

It is highly significant, that while he talked over the whole scheme with Dr. Rainy (and he thinks also with Dr. Candlish) nothing came of it: doubtless the reason was that they were then in delicate and disputed negotiations for union with the United Presbyterians—for that twofold union then preferred to the larger threefold union. These letters prove this at least, that those leaders

<sup>1</sup> So late as January 1870, Mr. Taylor Innes, in a *British Quarterly Review* article, on page 145 (which he owned in a letter of 2nd February to Dr. Charteris) wrote thus: 'If Parliament (the only body which can really raise the question) were in some effectual way to reverse or explain away the alleged settlement of the essential relations of Church and State made in 1843, there can be no doubt that the Free Church in that case would drop every project and every prepossession for the sake of effecting one great union with all the branches of the Kirk.' On 27th April 1911 he kindly wrote to the present writer, explaining that this article was asked of him by Dr. Candlish for Dr. Allon; and he added: 'I remember that perhaps Candlish—certainly Buchanan—was displeased at my giving equal prominence to union with the Church of Scotland as to that with the United Presbyterian Church. It was a point on which I never quite agreed with Rainy, and on which I take my own line to this day.'



were effectively reached by the private negotiations—which they deemed it best to decline. They raise the question: ‘Why should the action of the Church of Scotland have been regarded as unfriendly to the Free and United Presbyterian Churches at the time? Suppose she were then seeking what they had sought in vain, might they not have said that she was in the right? Might they not have accorded a word of encouragement, possibly of caution? But suppose that Church were seeking it in a better way; and a new generation had come on the field. They were really not seeking the same thing as the Veto Act, were making no claims to deal with civil rights unextinguished by compensation, but something that would rid the Church of a grievance, and set it in a light which they considered right and Christian. The first Constitutional Catechism of the Free Church of Scotland, issued by authority, had objected to the right of nominating or selecting by the system of lay patronage, and its being bought, sold, and inherited like a house, a farm, or a ship. It had asked: ‘*Question 45.* What is the sin of which those who treat a spiritual right or privilege as a piece of secular property, are guilty?—*Answer.* It is the sin of Simon Magus. (Acts viii. 18).’ Dr. Robert Buchanan, when Moderator in 1860, had referred to non-intrusion—the right of the Christian people to be consulted in the choice of their minister—as not then belonging to the Established Church, and declared: ‘When that day comes, it will certainly not be for us to complain that those whom it chiefly concerns should go to Parliament to ask as a precious boon what they formerly repudiated as the greatest possible calamity.’<sup>1</sup> Was the Church of Scotland to be compelled to perpetuate the sin of Simon Magus? Had they forfeited ‘the right which the members of the Established Church enjoy, of endeavouring to correct in a lawful manner what may appear to them to be faulty in its constitution and government,’ as was affirmed when Seceders were received in 1839? The real reason of the *non possumus* pronounced thirty years later was the pend-

<sup>1</sup> *Life of Robert Buchanan, D.D.*, p. 395.



ing disestablishment of the Irish Church, and the hope cherished by many outside the Church of Scotland that her disestablishment would soon follow; and that reconstruction might be triumphantly accomplished upon a purely Voluntary basis.

Professor Charteris was in close touch with his colleague Professor Crawford, who had formulated almost identical proposals, and with Professor Mitchell, whose praise was likewise in all the Churches. The latter wrote to him thus from Brechin on 9th September 1869 :—

‘We should endeavour to put ourselves into communication with leading Free Church people, and try to convince them of our earnest desire for reunion, and our willingness to do everything that honourable men can to ensure it. I thought it my duty to do what little I could myself in this direction. Accordingly I called on Innes, telling him I had seen your letter, and assuring him he was quite mistaken if he supposed the patronage movement was a narrow or selfish one, intended simply to strengthen the existing Establishment. So far from this, I said that if that had been our only object, and we had not felt we owed something to our brethren without, we would not have moved so far or so fast as we had done. I told him that if this desire for union had not been so prominently expressed in our debates as he might have wished, he must remember that *those who, two years ago, ventured to hint at it either in the Established or Free Church, did not meet from the leaders of the latter with the encouragement they had a right to expect*; and that, notwithstanding all this, the resolution come to by our Assembly on the Forfar overture was clear and unmistakable. I added that my chief reasons for wishing such a Committee of Parliament as Sir Robert Anstruther had moved for, were not that additional evidence might be got as to the working of patronage, but that I hoped the speeches made by men in whom both Churches had confidence would guide public opinion in the direction of union; and that such a neutral Committee would be able more effectually to lay its hands on reasonable men and bring them together, while they might by cross-examination stop the mouths of unreasonable men. On the question of union itself, I said nothing in which you would not have entirely gone along with me; I fear I am so far from being in advance, that I am being left behind by many of our friends. I said *we felt no need of any further change than we had asked for, but that we knew others wished something said as to spiritual independence as well as to popular privileges; and that we would not*

*object to try to work the Church on their theory if the Legislature would grant this, provided they would not insist on our accepting it as *jure divino* necessary to the being or wellbeing of a Christian Church; or acknowledging that we were wrong and they right in 1843. I think Innes quite acknowledged that if patronage is abolished and spiritual independence reasserted, "bygones must be bygones," and we must unite on the old historical basis. I have never seen any reason why United Presbyterians should not be included in our plan (and said so), being left free to accept or decline parochial endowments. I should have much pleasure in writing to the Duke of Argyll, if Dr. Norman Macleod does not. I know no public man who in all respects would be so able and willing to help us. I return Innes' letter, hoping soon to see you regarding it.'*

Mr. Taylor Innes had expressed to Dr. Rainy a doubt whether the party 'profoundly in earnest' would be able to thaw the mass around; and the latter, while discerning only two dangers, that Free Churchmen might 'begin to be lured,' and that United Presbyterians might 'feel themselves necessitated to wake up the voluntary controversy again, which would be accompanied with some risks and unpleasantnesses,' apparently believed that the Charteris-Mitchell policy would probably be in a minority in next Assembly. He allowed, however, that the future influence of the Established Church might be with them; and this latter forecast proved true. The sweeping change concerning patronage was not only carried in the Assembly of 1870 by an overwhelming majority, but upon an overture from Forfar, supported by Mr. Robertson (now Rev. Dr. J. M. Robertson, St. Ninians), and after full debate, this deliverance on union was unanimously accepted:—

'The General Assembly desire to record their deep sense of the manifold evils arising from the ecclesiastical divisions of Scotland; and, considering the great impiety and abounding wickedness in the land, which the divided Churches have not succeeded in removing, the Assembly record their hearty willingness and desire to take all possible steps, consistently with the principles on which this Church is founded, to promote the reunion of Churches having a common origin, adhering to the same Confession of Faith, and the same system of government and worship.'

A committee was also appointed, to consider and report



to next Assembly. Dr. William Smith, North Leith, was the mover. He was sure their Assembly sympathised with their friends opposite in the difficult and trying circumstances of their union negotiations. They were passing through the throes of a great crisis, and no one could wish to increase their difficulty. Let them have their sympathy and their prayers. He could have wished that they themselves had not been forced to speak on this subject of union at all, until their friends had passed through these difficulties, and were standing on the same firm and sure ground which they occupied. Mr. Edward S. Gordon, M.P., Dean of Faculty, supporting the motion, said:—

‘I was one of those who saw, with great pain, the Disruption of our Church in 1843. I was then a young man not entitled to take a lead in these matters; but from that time forward, I have ever looked with great interest for the arrival of the time when there might be a reasonable expectation of some proposition being made with a view to reunion with our brethren who left us. I always felt that this was a question which should not be pressed prematurely; for until the desire existed for union, you could not, with hope of success, propose such a measure. But now I trust that we may have some prospect of a successful attempt being made to effect a reunion of the scattered Presbyterian forces of Scotland; and although there may be difficulties, “Where there’s a will there’s a way.” . . . I would fain hope that one of the obstacles—I venture to say the principal obstacle—to a reunion will be removed, if the question of patronage is settled satisfactorily. There is another question, however, which arose out of the discussions of 1843, which is called the spiritual independence of the Church. Now, so far as regards the recognition of our Saviour as the Head of the Church and of the nations, there can be no doubt whatever that the Church of Scotland does hold these doctrines; and I would only read from a sermon, preached so far back as 1861 by the respected son-in-law of Dr. Chalmers, Dr. Hanna, who says: “The controversy between us and the Establishment from which we have retired does not touch the doctrine of Christ’s Headship as taught in Holy Writ, so as to give any true grounds for saying that we uphold and that the Established Church denies that Headship.” The division or apparent difference between us arises not from our denial of these great principles or doctrines, but as to the practical application of some of them, regarding the best or the proper way of carrying them out. . . .



I believe if we come together in a calm and moderate spirit, no one party desiring victory over the other, these difficulties may be surmounted. We should rather be anxious to see whether there is not some common ground of agreement on which rational men may take up their position. . . . If the words of Dr. Smith's motion do not appear so ample and so direct as some members might desire, they must attribute the words used to a feeling of delicacy. I am sure that the sentiments which have been expressed to-day must satisfy our friends belonging to other Churches and the public that there is an anxious, friendly, and liberal desire on our part for a reunion with other Presbyterian Churches. I hope that the result of the proceedings of this Assembly will be to enable us to combine, on some basis of practical and Christian compromise, all who are sincerely desirous for the Christian instruction of the people of Scotland.'

Dr. Pirie and Principal Campbell of Aberdeen, along with Lord Polwarth, spoke in a similar strain. At subsequent meetings of four General Assemblies the same instructions were given, but no results followed.

Evidence of what Dr. Donald Fraser of Marylebone Presbyterian Church was thinking, is found in a letter dated 11th October 1870, addressed by him to the editor of the *Weekly Review*, on 'Presbyterian Union':—

I must ask leave to express my regret that you and other writers from the Free Church side give so very frigid a reception to the sentiments and proposals of Professor Charteris and his friends. The unhappy state of the present union question in Scotland may surely lead men to pause, and consider whether they are really on the right track, and are taking into account all the elements essential to an adjustment of the problem. . . . My conviction remains that the plan now urged is one-sided and insufficient, and tends to obliterate what has been distinctive and peculiarly instructive and influential in the position of the Free Church. . . . I for one shall be no demolisher, believing it our obvious duty and interest to close up all the Presbyterian ranks—in England first, then in Scotland—without any blow of the axe, any forfeiture of prestige or property, or forced humiliation of any branch or portion of the Church. Permit me to add that this subject is momentous, not merely itself and for Presbyterian interests, but as leading us on into greater consideration of the manifestation of the unity of the Catholic Reformed Church in all lands—the sublime ecclesiastical problem for which many minds and hearts are being secretly prepared.'

Another indication which encouraged many seekers after reunion was a letter addressed by Dr. Thomas Guthrie, the most eloquent of Free Church preachers, to the Duke of Argyll, so far back as 24th January 1860, when the Cardross case was troubling the Free Church. It ran in these terms:—

‘Some two or three years ago the Marquis of Tweeddale was so kind as to ask me to have a talk with him on the same subject (union). He was anxious to see the breach healed. I told him then that I did not believe any Act of Parliament could be drawn so as to “redd the marches” between, in all cases, matters civil and ecclesiastical; that, in fact, the disputes about jurisdiction rose up after the battle had begun in another quarter; that the *origo malorum*, the root of all our secessions and disruptions, was to be found in the law of patronage; and that were that Act to be abolished, I believe the great hindrance to union would be removed. Were that done, I would consider the grand end of the Disruption accomplished, and if our having left the comforts and advantages of the Establishment should lead in the end to the restoration of the rights of the people, and more protection than any of the Churches now enjoy against the Edinburgh-made law of the Court of Session, I should be willing that we should vanish, and would think our sufferings and sacrifices had been well endured.’

They were to ‘vanish’ by union surely—not into thin air!

In 1873 the General Assembly issued a pastoral letter on the evils of disunion among evangelical Churches, signed by Dr. Robert Gillan as moderator.

Mr. Gladstone must have known perfectly well in 1874 (when he made the suggestion), that in their then temper it was a hollow mockery to propose that the Assemblies should ‘meet together on terms of fraternal equality, in order to see what can be done to bring about the reunion of the Churches.’ Nor was there any more substance in his offer to do everything in his power to forward it. He had not used his chance. Still, in the House of Commons it was suggested on both sides that the Church of Scotland should show her goodwill by declaring those who had left her in 1843, and all represented by other Presbyterian Churches, to be eligible for election to her parishes; and



this was most cordially done at the instance of Principals Tulloch and Pirie, Professor Charteris and Dr. William Smith. Further healing measures at that time found the Church of Scotland ready and willing; but the attitude of majorities in both of the sister Churches was then wholly irreconcilable.

When the Commission of Assembly met to frame with statutory authority the new regulations for the election of ministers on 18th November 1874, the Committee on Union brought forward a motion resolving to recommend that the General Assembly, without further delay, should formally approach the other Presbyterian Churches in Scotland with a view to union, and that the Church of Scotland should be prepared to consider any basis of union consistent with her historic principles. Sir Robert Anstruther, M.P., moved and Dr. Charteris seconded this finding, which was adopted without a division.

The abolition of patronage was—to put it mildly—mis-called and misrepresented. The impression was given in many publications (we avoid giving names) that it was not a spiritual movement, and did not pretend to be one; that it was no crave of the Establishment, but a political move. Clean contrary to fact, it was unfairly described as a party measure rushed through at the gallop. It was styled a lure. Its object was reabsorption, sheep-stealing, and to dish or strangle the Free Church. Undoubtedly many who were so taught believed these absurdities, and this led to embittered feeling.<sup>1</sup>

But the average common sense of Scottish laymen outside the old Church was felicitously expressed by a working man, who, being asked by his elder to sign a petition against the Patronage Bill, replied that 'it was

<sup>1</sup> One might much more have charged Dr. Chalmers with luring and sheep-stealing because of his *Remarks* of 1839, containing a letter addressed to the dignitaries of the Church of England, p. 110. 'It (the Veto Act) is proving a powerful instrument by which to reclaim Dissenters and bring them again within the limits of the Church. . . . A whole denomination of sectarians has in consequence united with us. . . . They are returning to us monthly, and weekly, and very often in whole congregations.' No wonder that the Seceders of those days felt very sore, and declared that great man's 'scarcely concealed design to be the annihilation of Dissent.'



an awfu' like thing for him to try and keep ither folk frae getting what *he kent* was richt.'

In November 1874, partly to defend his Church against assaults and partly to appeal for the reunion ideal, Professor Charteris chose for the subject of his introductory lecture, *The Church of Scotland and Spiritual Independence*, which went through a first and second edition with notes. Well aware that he was treading on the verge of a volcano, he said:—

'If I seem to awaken old subjects that had better sleep, I pray you not to blame me till you have seen the practical proposals at the close. What I propose to do is to show—

'(1) What the claim of spiritual independence, as it emerged during the "Ten Years' Conflict," meant as a matter of fact; and that, in its extreme form, that claim was unconstitutional.

'(2) That the claim, as thus advanced, was, in its extreme form, not the historical claim of the Scottish Church.

'(3) That "Voluntaryism" is not the way to secure spiritual independence.

'(4) That, in point of fact, apart from Voluntaryism, the Free Church, as separate from the State, has not been able to maintain the plea founded on her claim.

'(5) That the courts of law have, on many occasions since 1843, emphatically proclaimed that the present Established Church of Scotland has a jurisdiction divinely authorised, independent, and supreme; and moreover, that the judges have in recent judgments ignored or withdrawn from certain extreme and indefensible positions taken up by some of the judges before 1843.

'Thereafter I propose—

'(6) To consider the position of the moderate or constitutional party before 1843, and that of the Church of Scotland in our own day.

'(7) To show that the relation of the Government and the Legislature of this country to the Established Church is singularly satisfactory.

'(8) To point to the obligation on all sound Scottish Presbyterians to view with a friendly eye the opportunity of reunion on the basis of the old National Church of Scotland.'

Of course Dr. Charteris did not speak lightly of true spiritual independence. He could have no respect for a Church lacking it: for it is necessary to the very existence of the Divine Society which Jesus Christ lived,

and died, and rose again to establish on the earth. He pointed out that the Confession of Faith makes two statements, which undoubtedly overlap each other; and that it does not attempt to disentangle them by one abstract definition, just because it is impossible to succeed. He quoted Knox and Henderson, Gillespie and Rutherford, as representing the high tradition of the Church of Scotland; discussed the judicial decisions bearing on the question; dwelt upon the dangers of the Disestablishment crusade arising in acuter form, and its effect upon their 500,000 fellow-countrymen living outside of all the Churches; and concluded thus: 'In the present irritated state of the public mind my attempt may fail of its purpose. But I shall trust to see better things, and shall hope that, instead of wasting our strength in taking each other by the throat, we shall show in a United Church, containing more than eighty per cent. of the people of Scotland, such a power for good, such an energy for missions at home and abroad, as Christendom has never seen.'

Dr. Rainy addressed his second public Disestablishment meeting on 8th December 1874, and announced:—

'It was not they who had set the stone a-rolling. . . . Here was the issue. Shall the popularising of the election of ministers by itself suffice as a settlement, and vindicate the continued existence of the Establishment in Scotland? . . . Two men having distinguished places had exerted themselves to show that this Patronage Act should be regarded as a satisfactory settlement—one in the State (the Duke of Argyll), a most eminent Scottish nobleman whom they all admired; and one in the Church, Dr. Charteris, a man of very considerable influence, and each having an earnest desire, no doubt of it, to rally Scottish Presbyterianism on what he believed to be the right platform. Essential Erastianism underlay the views of both, and was regarded by both as essential—the principle of subjection essentially to the State and to the courts of law. . . . It is high time then to bring this to an end. . . . With our views we cannot accept the relation to the State in which the Establishment is placed, without sin. . . . Whatever union can be in Scotland that is Christian, evangelical, edifying, Disestablishment is the preliminary to its being even considered.'<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Edinburgh Courant*, 9th December 1874.



In his notes to the second edition of his lecture, Dr. Charteris emphasised the fact that all attempts at definition of spiritual independence had only shown very clearly its impossibility. Principal Rainy had called it 'practical sea-room.' Sir Henry Moncreiff (in his Chalmers Lecture in 1883) says it is a doctrine of entire dependence on the Lord Jesus Christ, and of implicit submission to His authoritative voice; and that it does not involve a claim on the part of Church authorities to be the sole judges of what is spiritual and what is civil: but assumes on the contrary that the civil and ecclesiastical authorities stand upon an equal footing. Also that in a well-adjusted system the risk of collision and confusion may be very small; and that even where collision does occur, the difference may be overcome in a Christian and a reasonable manner, without compromising the independence of either party. Mr. Taylor Innes says that it can be worked, as the painter mixed his paints, "'With brains, sir," and with something like good faith.' With all of which doubtless Dr. Charteris agreed. But the real freedom of a Church may be a very different thing from its corporate freedom, which may be but another name for an arbitrary corporate self-will, for doing as you please; and that may be raised upon the ruins of individual and personal freedom. The most wonderful organisation known—the Church of Rome—claims the most absolute freedom; but what amount of freedom does she concede to her individual office-bearers and members? Or again, nominal freedom may be so limited by real bonds that, as Bishop Magee once said (in the writer's hearing) of the episcopal office: 'We bishops are theoretically omnipotent—practically impotent.' If the Headship of Christ be vitally true for any man or Church, it must involve utter dependence on His will; but surely His will as revealed. The real difficulty arises on the question who is to decide where the Church's spiritual province begins and ends; and the Presbyterian answers, 'Not the State; for that would be to make the State the arbiter, not *circa sacra*, but *in sacris*. Not the Church

alone either, which is the Papal claim. But, as John Knox held, both together, guided by the Word and Spirit of God, and equally responsible to Him.'

On the question of judicial decisions and *obiter dicta* before 1843, Dr. Charteris presented this dilemma. 'If you go by authoritative decisions only, Sir Henry Moncreiff and Dr. Begg unite in assuring you that they are only two in number (the two Auchterarder cases), and they fall with the Patronage Act. If, on the other hand, you go by *obiter dicta*, the chief of them have been disowned.' Dr. Charteris' whole purpose was to advocate a broadening of the basis of that spiritual independence which the Church of Scotland already had, and to show that such cases as Auchterarder and Marnoch could not recur, if in that way union could be promoted.

Sir Henry Moncreiff sent him a pamphlet which he had written, and in replying on 9th April 1875, Dr. Charteris said:—

'I do not believe the settlement of our unhappy and mischief-working Church divisions to be at all impossible or even improbable, if *we all* approach the subject with a desire to give and take for that purpose. Greater things have been done than we need to do for overcoming the difficulties of Erastianism, and the dangers of indiscriminate endowment. I cannot but express my longing to see you keep the Free Church in the position you thus define. If Voluntarism as a dogma is not essential to Presbyterian union, the old Presbyterian Church may be seen again. If the Free Church will but let us have a trial of the possibility of agreement, all will be well.'

Sir Henry replied to this on 30th April 1875:—

'At present I will only say

'(1) That in the points referred to by you, I cordially respond to your desire.

'(2) That I think any immediate attempt at negotiation between the Churches or their committees would do more harm than good.

'(3) That success in what you speak of must depend on the initiative being taken by the Established Assembly.

'(4) That it would not be wise to attempt to get that Assembly to take that initiative immediately, so far as regards the direct object; but

'(5) That a proposal to appoint a committee for the general



purpose of considering by what means the differences between the Presbyterian bodies might be so far overcome as to draw them more together, and to lead to joint action at least in the acknowledgment of Christ's Kingdom; with instructions to obtain all the available information by correspondence and otherwise, and to report to next Assembly, might show an excellent spirit, might conciliate feeling, might be carried in your Assembly, and might *ultimately* lead to large results.'

Dr. Charteris cordially rejoined, but said:—

'It is not very easy in our Church to be sure of what the Assembly might do. Our units have not the same coherence as yours. But I can truly say that all my friends whose opinions I know are exceedingly anxious to maintain a conciliatory attitude, even although it is somewhat difficult when Disestablishment is the cry that meets them. I hope the Committee on Union will be reappointed with fresh instructions to seek union, and meanwhile to promote co-operation in good works.'

In 1875 there was submitted to the General Assembly the report of its November Commission, which bore that historical considerations ought not to influence men so much as the then spiritual condition of Scotland, which presented the strange spectacle of a nation with eighty per cent Presbyterians, yet with little amity and almost no co-operation. Home Missions to the lapsed were nearly paralysed, and the influence of religion on professing Christians greatly lessened. Dr. Charteris moved the report, and Lord Balfour of Burleigh seconded it, saying that while not sanguine of present success, if they did not try they certainly could not succeed. If they did their best and did not succeed, the fault would not be theirs. Dr. Wallace moved to receive the report; practically to shunt the subject, which he deemed a most quixotic enterprise; and he thought the General Assembly might as well send a deputation to the Pope. The Rev. Archibald Scott was convinced that Dr. Charteris had expressed fully the sentiments of the Church of Scotland, but, since the state of feeling was what it was outside, the motion to approach other Presbyterian Churches was altered to one that 'the Assembly reappoint the committee; and being ready to consider any suggestion

which other Presbyterian Churches may make as to the removal of what they feel to be obstacles in the way of reunion, direct the committee to inquire whether joint action with them at home and abroad can be promoted, and to obtain, by correspondence and otherwise, all available information on the subject of union and co-operation.' From external obstacles the cause made no special progress till 1878, when reports were made of a limited amount of co-operation. At Blantyre, East Africa, for example, the Rev. (afterwards Dr.) James Stewart of Lovedale, whom Lord Milner after long years called 'the biggest human he had met in South Africa,' had helped to start the Blantyre Mission. But it was sadly shown that it was found easier to co-operate with Americans than with Scottish fellow-Christians, and that, generally speaking, the less said and the more quietly done, the better.

It will be seen that Dr. Charteris held his faith in the Union cause in spite of many rebuffs from the majority of those with whom he sought union; and of that spirit of unwillingness which their often violent attacks aroused in the Church of Scotland. A quenchless zeal alone could have endured the severe provocations which naturally cooled many others—even good men and true like Dr. Archibald Scott—from pursuing the enterprise which in 1870 a unanimous Church began. There were at times exciting passages at arms on the floor of the Assembly. He was even charged with finesse and intrigue by those who eventually came to see the Christian justice and high expediency of that attitude of comprehension and conciliation which happily became the right and steadfast attitude of the National Church. Drs. Tulloch and Charteris were the principal exponents of this often thankless duty. Dr. Wallace was the chief spokesman against it. These encounters were frequently irritating to the temper and trying to the nerves; but Dr. Charteris stood to his guns through good and often evil report. He was well fitted for the cut and thrust of Assembly debates, and had unfailing rejoinders for every argument



used against him. In particular, he never forgot that Christian brotherhood bound him to the Church's assailants from without. His plea was always inspired by the words of his hero, Dr. James Robertson:—

‘The Free Church must be brought to feel that it is her interest, as well as ours, that reunion should take place. The greatest difficulty in the way would probably be in framing such a preamble as would suffice to save the honour of those who left us, but I should be prepared on this point to make great concessions, conceiving that in such a case the truest honour would accrue to those who should show the most conciliatory spirit.’<sup>1</sup>

On 31st May 1878 the General Assembly resolved not to stand upon its dignity, but to make a new departure; and accordingly communicated with Presbyterian Churches of common origin, faith, and worship, earnestly wishing to consider what these might state, ‘in frank and friendly conference, as to the causes which at present prevent the other Churches from sharing the trust now reposed in this Church alone.’ They directed their committee to aim at joint action, and to obtain all available information by correspondence and otherwise on the subject of union and co-operation. It was the first direct message sent by the Church of Scotland through official channels to those who had left her; for Churches, when they have a mind, can give the dead cut as severely as individuals. It goes without saying that the replies received before the following Assembly were courteous in tone and considerate in spirit; but they said nothing that was hopeful about early union. The United Presbyterian Church declared it impossible for the Synod to contemplate sharing with the Established Church the trust reposed in it by the State; and as the answer was drawn by Professor Calderwood, moved without a speech by Dr. Hutton, most cordially seconded by Dr. James Brown of Paisley, and regarded as exceedingly judicious by the Voluntary extremist, Dr. Marshall of Coupar-Angus, it admitted of no dubiety. The

<sup>1</sup> *Life of Professor Robertson*, p. 282.

Reformed Presbyterian Church raised an insuperable barrier to union in requiring the 'recognition of the descending obligation of the National Covenant of Scotland, and of the Solemn League and Covenant of the Three Kingdoms.' The United Original Seceders held also the perpetual obligations of both the Covenants. The Free Church required at once a legislative recognition of the view exhibited in the Claim of Right, and of the Free Church as its true representative. So it was evident that there was no encouragement to correspond further for immediate results, and the Assembly resolved to send suitable acknowledgments, and to maintain the attitude which becomes the National Church.

Space forbids rehearsing in anything like full detail Dr. Charteris' various endeavours after union during many subsequent years. The Church question in Scotland had now entered the domain of politics. He never treated it as a political, but always as a supremely religious and patriotic, issue. His correspondence shows how wide was his outlook. Letters from Lord Gordon, Dr. Donald Fraser, Professor Smeaton of the Free Church, Dr. Kennedy of Dingwall, and many others, throw light upon their joint aspirations. Sir A. H. Gordon, M.P., uncle of the present Lord Aberdeen, made a well-meant but impracticable attempt at settlement. Mr. (now Sir) Robert B. Finlay, M.P. for Inverness, was urged by many of his Free Church supporters to bring forward in Parliament a Bill which should re-declare spiritual independence, and transfer to the courts of the Church those powers for the erection of parishes, with or without territorial districts, at present vested in the Teind Court. Never did any public man take up in a more anxious and disinterested spirit the duty of dealing practically with a religious problem. His effort was cordially supported by the majority of Free Church Highlanders; and the Church Interests Committee, on 28th January 1886, passed a series of friendly resolutions, and expressly recommended the Assembly—if the Bill should pass—to enter into friendly conference with the other Scottish Presbyterian Churches,



in order that all might be incorporated into one National Church. But the Home Rule question held the field. Liberal leaders then showed no readiness to help.

Taking advantage of a signal manifestation of national attachment, shown by many enthusiastic public meetings, and petitions from more than six hundred and eighty-eight thousand persons to Parliament against Disestablishment, which also declared in favour of reunion as the alternative, the General Assembly of 1886, on the motion of Dr. Charteris, seconded by Dr. Phin, resolved once more to approach other Churches, inviting them to conference. An overwhelming majority voted for this: less than twenty against it. The Free Church Assembly courteously demurred to union on the basis of establishment, adding that, if points of difference were treated as open for discussion, they would readily accede to such an invitation. But the Church of Scotland did not in these days of battle see its way to waive the limitation above expressed.

We now reach the era of conferences, mostly private, and all unofficial. The present Lord Aberdeen did his best to draw together about a dozen leaders of the three Churches in 1886, but nothing resulted from it. An association for Presbyterian reunion, with Dr. Robert Young (of the *Analytical Concordance*) as chairman, brought together representative men such as Professors Charteris, Laidlaw, and Calderwood, Dr. John Alison of Newington, and Mr. Taylor Innes. But it broke up for the reason that Dr. Charteris and his friends, while quite willing to share, would never agree to give up, establishment and endowment; though they were willing to consider any distinct counter-proposal.

A much larger and more important, though unofficial conference, including many really distinguished leaders, sat during 1894-5; the report of which was published on 6th May 1895. They began their task of deliberative conference on 1st May 1894, in the Bible Society Rooms, St. Andrew Square—the Rev. Professor Charteris in the chair. The Very Rev. Dr. Cameron Lees, Lord Polwarth,

J. Turnbull Smith, Esq., LL.D., and the present writer, are the only survivors of the Church of Scotland group. Dr. Charteris, from University duties and lack of health, was not always present. Certainly this conference registered a distinct advance for the reunion cause. Difficulties arose regarding the adaptation of the great Reformation and Revolution Settlement statutes to the present-day needs of a united Church. On the subject of National Religion the Articles of Agreement of the Free and United Presbyterian Churches, formulated in 1869, were adopted as, *so far*, a reasonable basis from which to start negotiations for reunion, and an additional statement as to National Religion was accepted, expressing only points of agreement, without reference to other points, on which divergence would probably have been found.

The present writer acted on the business committee with Professor Flint and Dr. Alison, and subsequently with Dr. Archibald Scott, for the Church of Scotland; and he had the satisfaction of preparing five resolutions on the prickly subject of spiritual independence. These, along with a sixth resolution by Dr. Flint—affirming the spiritual freedom of the individual, conferred by Christ, which neither civil nor ecclesiastical authorities are entitled to violate or abridge—were scrutinised and adjusted, and finally had the good fortune to be unanimously adopted. In theory at least, no cause of continued division was therein discovered. The high-minded, equitable, and most tactful leadership of Professor Calderwood was beyond all praise. His object (as he wrote to Dr. Charteris) was ‘to lay this grave question on the consciences and hearts of the people,’ and his ‘motto was, not *Delenda est Carthago!* but *Vivat Ecclesia!* the leader of our *Scottish Nationality*.’ No definite scheme of ultimate union was promulgated, though possible readjustments were foreshadowed in no narrow or selfish spirit. A Statement by Professor Flint, concurred in by all the Church of Scotland representatives, was welcomed by a number of elders of all three Churches, as offering proposals which in their opinion had not been met.



Probably the most valuable outcome was number four of a Statement by Professor Calderwood on the possible relations of a united Church to the State. It is put thus:—

‘In the event of reunion of the Presbyterians of Scotland, the British Legislature, on memorial from the Established Church, and concurrence of the sister Presbyterian Churches, may recognise the reconstituted Presbyterian Church as *de facto* the “National Church,” thereby acknowledging that the Scottish nation is Protestant in faith, and Presbyterian in Church government, and that the reconstituted Church stands in historic continuity with the Church of the Reformation, whose position and interests were provided for in the Treaty of Union between Scotland and England.’

It was very characteristic of that hope which sprung eternal in Dr. Charteris’ breast, that he wished the conference, when dissolved, to be called together, if and when expedient. No one was more delighted than he when, in his time of infirmity, Dr. Scott of St. George’s wisely adopted the rôle of leader towards union, and was seconded by the sagacious and trusted Dr. Norman Macleod. It was the end itself he sought, not the honour of attaining it. Dr. William Mair also became a strenuous advocate and auxiliary in the cause. But as there were brave men before Agamemnon, credit should be accorded likewise to the persistent, and though often baffled, yet never despairing pioneer and organiser of victory—who was none other than Dr. Charteris.

For it surely cannot be that Scottish Presbyterians are to be confronted with another *impasse*, another fiasco, after two years of friendly and fruitful official conference between the Church of Scotland and the United Free Church of Scotland. This is not the place to record impressions of how close together their representatives have come on the twin subjects of Spiritual Freedom and National Religion. The proposals now before the Churches and the country—it cannot be too strongly emphasised—constitute an entirely new departure. It is an open secret that, as formulated by the Church of Scotland’s side, they sprang, Minerva-like, from the brain of Mr. Christopher

N. Johnston, Procurator of the Church of Scotland and Sheriff of Perthshire.

Divested of ecclesiastical jargon, they mean a triumph to neither Church, but seek to save the *amour propre* of each, and propose that both should combine to frame a constitution which shall preserve all that is felt to be worth preserving, and serve the Church of the future heir to all the best traditions of the past. Spiritual freedom can thus be guaranteed in all matters spiritual, but always consistently with the Word of God, and in fidelity to the substance of the Reformed Faith—that is, the fundamental doctrines of Christianity; and freedom to modify the constitution can be enjoyed under safeguards provided therein. The ancient statutes will remain untouched and operative, save in so far as they are superseded by the new constitution; and recognition, in the wholly obsolete form which is open to the objection that it appears to unchurch other Churches, would be dispensed with, in favour of a far better mode of expression. Then as the three English Methodist Churches went to Parliament in 1907 to receive statutory recognition as one, the reunited Church would be acknowledged as National, Protestant, and Presbyterian, on the lines suggested by Professor Calderwood.

The reception accorded to the Memorandum which was framed by the Church of Scotland's side of the Joint-Conference (now sitting) was eminently gratifying, and marked a signal advance for the reunion cause. It would be too much to expect that the present-day representatives of the several Presbyterian Churches should ever reach absolute agreement of view concerning critical times of their Church's former history. Nor can they be asked to reckon of little moment the great issues on which their fathers contended. Warned by past divisions they will, if they are wise, endeavour to profit by the lessons of the past, and to avoid every possible occasion of danger and disunion for the future; but they will ask themselves (in the words of Principal Oswald Dykes<sup>1</sup>), 'Is it not time for the forces of disruption to have spent themselves?' and

<sup>1</sup> Sermon at Pan-Presbyterian Council of London on 3rd July 1888.



whether the hour for drawing closer together has not struck. Details must, of course, require most careful discussion; but the broad issue is surely as intelligible to all as the reasons for accepting it should be conclusive. To escape from the present scandalous predicament of over-churching, over-lapping, and jealous competition; so to arrange and concentrate that there shall be no under-churching in the crowded districts to which have drifted the inhabitants of depleted country parishes; to set free (wherever possible) two of the three men who are often doing one man's work; to raise the temperature of a united Church for missions at home and abroad; to husband the Church's resources, so that, while no family at home is neglected, the great command to evangelise the nations shall be increasingly kept in view; these were the aims ever present to Dr. Charteris' mind while he spoke, and wrote, and dreamed of reunion. It cannot be that Scotland will again prove disobedient to the heavenly vision.

## CHAPTER XII

### SPIRITUAL MOVEMENTS

The Work of Grace Without and Within the University—Messrs. Moody and Sankey in Edinburgh—The University Tercentenary—Henry Drummond's Meetings—Revision of Church 'Schemes'—Dr. William Smith's Death—The Pan-Presbyterian Council—Visit to Egypt—Dr. Begg and Dr. Kennedy.

WHILE Dr. Charteris held tenaciously to the principle that the Church should recognise, include within itself, and wisely guide every effort to create and foster spiritual life, he gladly welcomed every movement without her borders which seemed to give promise of real good. And he hailed with rejoicing every attempt at union in meeting the common foes of our common faith. Spiritual stagnation was to him the great enemy which all were bound to attack. When, therefore, Mr. Moody and Mr. Sankey were asked by a representative committee (of which Dr. Charteris and the Rev. George Wilson were members) to visit Edinburgh in 1873, he had first satisfied himself of the spiritual genuineness of their work, and then threw himself into it with characteristic eagerness and hope. He attended an early meeting in Queen Street Hall, and thereafter addressed a letter to the Rev. John M'Murtrie: 'Do try to attend Moody and Sankey's meeting to-morrow in Free Assembly Hall at twelve. Queen Street Hall too small. I had to stand to-day. There is no Plymouthism: but many members of your own and other Church of Scotland congregations. I heard nothing and saw nothing you would not approve of.' Dr. Charteris also brought Dr. Maxwell Nicholson to the noon meeting. The fourth week of special meetings began in St. Stephen's parish church



on Tuesday evening, December 16, 1873, where for three nights the church was crowded by two thousand people. Many ministers of all denominations throughout the country attended. Dr. Nicholson himself presided, and a deep and abiding impression was made. Co-operation among ministers of different communions was then sadly unusual, but in presence of that fear of the Lord which was upon them all, denominational differences were forgotten. Brotherhood in Christ was remembered. The Free Assembly Hall and the Tolbooth were the centre of the movement. The present writer remembers first hearing Mr. Moody, when passages were crowded as never on the most popular Assembly day. Professor Charteris was on his right, Professor Blaikie of the Free Church on his left; and as it began, so it continued. Dr. Charteris and Mr. Moody were greatly drawn to one another, not only by oneness of faith in things fundamental, but by a common aim in practical evangelisation. Moody thoroughly believed in an educated ministry, and quaintly observed that he had never had a College education himself; but, as he did not get it, he was doing the best he could without it. He fully recognised that steady ministerial work in Scotland was what made his mission so successful. Twelve years later Dr. Charteris in a Guild sermon used the illustration:—

‘Of all ministers who preach, there is not one in our day to whom so many souls owe their new life as to Mr. Moody; and did you ever hear of one whose power was so guided by a purpose, strong as a passion, to win souls to his Saviour?’

Nothing loth to give forth his witness, he wrote a four-page article in the *Church of Scotland Record* for April 1874, from which we give these extracts:—

‘If any one had told us six months ago that our still and decorous city would be stirred to its depths by two strangers, we could not have believed the tale. If any one had said that the sectarian divisions which are so visible, not only in ecclesiastical concerns but in social life and in private friendships, would disappear in presence of two evangelists who came among us with no such ecclesiastical credentials as we are accustomed to value most highly, the idea would have seemed absolutely

absurd. And if we had been further told that ministers of all denominations, including those men most highly esteemed for faithful service in their churches, would be found gladly accepting a place of subordination in public meetings and in practical teaching to the stranger from a far country, no one could have given credit to the announcement. Yet so it has been.'

He dwelt on the visible features, on the gradual growth of the movement, tracing the hand of the Lord in preparing the way; acknowledged with thankful appreciation the power of the labours of those men who had come among them as strangers, and ere they left were valued by tens of thousands as the dearest of friends.

'And now let us ask in what respects has the ordinary course of religious life been changed or deepened? We answer, first of all, in regard to prayer. Prayer frequent, earnest, unconventional, expectant, united—prayer full of thanksgiving—has characterised this revival of religion in Edinburgh. Men and women have been awakened to think seriously what they meant by prayer; and not a few have been alarmed by realising the utter want of expectation with which they used to pray, and the surprise with which an answer to prayer was regarded. And many others who did pray because they believed, and who knew that there are special promises to united prayer, have learned how the very attempt to unite with other believers in *importunate* prayer for specific blessings purges the soul of that selfishness which is so often a clog on the prayer that seeks to rise to the ear of God. To many has come a bright new light on the text, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness."

'There has also been an increased study of the Scriptures. It has been found from first to last that the preaching which alone was effective in satisfying or stirring the eager hearts was not preaching about the Bible, but preaching the Bible itself; not that which conveyed the preacher's views of the relations of truth, but that which contained the very words of the Book itself, not indeed strung together at random from a concordance, but yet bound in one chain by as few words as possible of human speculation or reasoning. An eloquent Free Church minister gave utterance to the thoughts of many hearts one day, a few weeks ago, at the noon prayer-meeting, when he said that we are learning to read the "Acts of the Apostles" in a new way; not as past history only, but as a guide to Churches and to individuals under the power of the Spirit.

'I think all who have taken part in, or even have carefully observed, what has taken place in Edinburgh, will agree that



the power of prayer, and the power of the simple Word of God, have been signally manifested in it, apart from all human agencies whatsoever. The living God has witnessed for His word in such a way as few, if any, among us have ever seen before.

'A word or two as to the teaching of Mr. Moody. It is above all things Scriptural teaching, rich with apt quotation and unexpected illustration, which only a devout, life-long study of the Bible as the Word of God could furnish. It is skilfully adapted to the need and peculiarities of the audience; and of all the men I have heard, no one has struck me as having so perfect an intuitive knowledge of what it is proper to say at a particular time. There is great natural ability in his selection of things to say, and in his avoidance of saying what would be of no use. None who understand the difficulty of speaking at once simply and powerfully can fail to see the remarkable gifts of the orator and teacher beneath the unaffected simplicity of his words and thoughts. But above all things, Mr. Moody speaks as a man of conviction. He is God's messenger, telling what is in God's Word: he has believed, and therefore has he spoken. He speaks without thought of self or fear of man—only as one who "knows in whom he has believed." He can condense in a few minutes as much food for meditation as would make several ordinary sermons, and his longer addresses show that when need requires he can take possession of an audience for an hour and more. An address on "Heaven," which he delivered at the close of an "all-day meeting," seemed to me to be the grandest discourse I ever heard from the lips of a Christian teacher. As to his doctrine, I shall only say that the best and most cautious theologians among us are heartily satisfied with the soundness of the theology which Mr. Moody teaches.

'A few weeks have made Mr. Sankey's favourite hymns as familiar to every rank and to every age as those older hymns which we had known best and longest. Poor sufferers in the wards of the Infirmary, lone old men and women in dark rooms of our high houses and back streets, are now cheered in a way no one dreamed of before Mr. Sankey came, by visits from those who do not attempt to preach to them, but only to sing. And that is not all; for we have been led to see that it is a mistake to confine song to utterances of praise or prayer in Christian meetings. We have learned to value more highly its power for instruction, although that is not new. It is as old as David, as old as Moses, but it has received a new impetus among us; and we who are called to "teach and admonish one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs," may well be glad to have been reminded how this may be done.

'And now what shall we say when we look back upon the whole movement in Edinburgh? Although there are some minor details in which I could have wished to see some change, yet, in *all that is essential and really characteristic*, it seems to me to be such that the words which naturally occur are, "It is the Lord's doing, and marvellous in our eyes." In so far as we can judge, a real revival of religion has been granted to us. Men old and grey have sought and found Christ: young men have flung off the thralldom of former sins.

'Sometimes after a sore struggle, sometimes at once, very many have, we verily believe, passed from death unto life.

'All this was brought about without any attempt to awaken excitement or sensation; the old truth was taught purely, simply, and powerfully. If there was anything new to us in its form, there must have been something lacking in what we were accustomed to before, for it was the old appeal—"as though God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." And if we who preach have learned one lesson more than another, it is to throw upon the perverse will of man its true responsibility when the Saviour is offered, "freely offered in the Gospel," for acceptance by every sinner. Some of us have learned that we had spoken of faith as though it were, even at the first, a work, an energising, instead of a simple acceptance of the gift and grace of God; and we have been brought to remember that our own familiar Catechism taught us to "receive" and then to "rest" upon Jesus Christ. We seem all to have learned—God grant that we may not forget the obvious and much-needed lesson—how small are the grounds of difference among Christians, compared with the eternal greatness of the truth by which and for which we all live.

'But we have learned most of all that Christ's Spirit is the life of that Church which is Christ's Body: and the promises of the "Comforter" in John xv., xvi. have been more thankfully and believingly realised. Going fresh from the study of our Bibles to look on what has been done in our city, and trying to examine these things in the light of the New Testament, we can do nought else but avow our conviction that the hand of the Lord hath done this. We do not believe that the work is finished. We have seen it going on; it goes on still. Ministers tell gladly of numbers coming to them under new-born anxiety to know the truth. When the new life is thus flooding the old channels, when the old forms are filled with increased and increasing faith, we may look for great results. We hope and pray and expect that the Church of Christ will be more full of life and power and soundness of mind, bringing forth fruit more abundantly, because realising more fully in the time to



come than in bygone days the conditions of her existence and the true secret of her power.'

In Edinburgh, Dr. Horatius Bonar, the hymn-writer, Dr. Andrew Thomson of Broughton Place United Presbyterian Church, and the Rev. Dr. J. H. Wilson of Barclay Church were among the many with whom Dr. Charteris had great joy in co-operating. When Mr. Moody held a Christian Convention in Glasgow on 16th April for the discussion of practical questions, it met in the Kibble Crystal Palace, the vast building which had been crowded five months before to hear Mr. Disraeli's Rectorial address. After Dr. R. Buchanan had opened with prayer, Mr. Moody announced that Professor Charteris was unexpectedly and unwillingly prevented from being present, and called upon the Rev. Dr. Marshall Lang to read the address which his friend had prepared, introducing the question, 'How may the present gracious movement be advanced, and be directed into the ordinary Church channels?' It was singularly fertile in suggestions.

He ventured to say that the time had fully come for some change in respect of church-going. The Sunday might have, first, a service at twelve (if eleven were too early) for ordinary congregations; second, a children's service at two, the minister presiding, but others helping; third, evangelistic services at six or seven, the last half hour being given to an open meeting, but laymen helping throughout; and fourth, the afternoon to be devoted by the congregation to visiting, or, in certain cases, with a special view to the evening meeting. This was a startling proposal then, when one remembers the cast-iron hours of forenoon and afternoon divine service which so long prevailed.

Dr. Charteris cordially welcomed a return visit of Messrs. Moody and Sankey in the end of 1881. All the more so, as it gave a great impetus to Home Mission work, and, by using the Corn Exchange in the Edinburgh Grassmarket, sought especially to evangelise the very lowest classes of the community. Sturdy beggars, daring thieves, brazen harlots, miserable wrecks of the public-

house—all were there; and many individuals were taken from the fearful pit and from the miry clay, and their feet set on the Rock of Ages. Mr. Moody's fearless, faithful preaching never lacked results; and it has been pointed out how often he enforced the civic and practical duties of Christians, then rarely emphasised.

True to his convictions in favour of the higher education of women, Dr. Charteris for several years conducted a class of Biblical Criticism for the Edinburgh Ladies' Education Association. In the winter of 1874, 141 attended. He was greatly delighted with the interest and aptitude shown, which he deemed not inferior to what he found in his University classes. They sometimes propounded conundrums, and quoted out-of-the-way authorities—Orosius, for example—in a manner that surprised him.

In April 1884 the University of Edinburgh celebrated its tercentenary, which brought together a most remarkable assemblage of men whose names were illustrious in many different spheres of human activity. Professor Flint preached the Commemoration sermon in St. Giles, and nothing impressed the distinguished guests, especially the foreigners, more than the striking blend of religion with unfettered learning manifested in all the meetings. This was particularly noticeable at the special meeting for students, presided over by their chosen Rector, Sir Stafford Northcote. Brief addresses were given by Mr. Russell Lowell, then American Ambassador, Count de Lesseps, of the Suez Canal, Count Saffi, one of the founders of United Italy, Professors Pasteur, Virchow, von Helmholtz, and de Laveleye. Even Robert Browning, shyest of poets, for once became vocal, and made the shortest of speeches. Dr. Charteris always believed that the great spiritual movement which followed among the students was in part due to the up-lift given by the tercentenary proceedings, and the high tone of the addresses contributed by distinguished graduates and visitors. The professors themselves were stimulated, such men as Professors Calderwood, Douglas Maclagan, and A. R.



Simpson leading the way. On the 10th December following, two Cambridge graduates—Stanley Smith, who had rowed 'stroke' in the Cambridge boat, and C. T. Studd, who had captained the Cambridge eleven—addressed a meeting for students; and there was eager curiosity to hear what they had to say concerning that faith which had led them to volunteer for the work of the China Inland Mission. Professor Charteris presided over seven hundred students. Many were profoundly impressed. Then, at three other meetings in January (over one of which Dr. Charteris again presided), it was seen that the manliness of Christianity had appealed to those manly and athletic fellows, and that there must be indeed reality in that power which was constraining them to abandon excellent worldly prospects in order to take up an obscure and arduous post, in seeking to conquer the world for Jesus Christ.

It was at this time that Professor Henry Drummond commenced that wonderfully successful series of meetings which continued over a number of years. He had been drawn to co-operate with Mr. Moody in the great mission of 1873-1875. The writer heard him give eminently helpful addresses of spiritual guidance in London at that time, and afterwards speak, from the heart, touching words of sympathy and hope to the poorest and most degraded at the Edinburgh Free Breakfast Mission on Sunday mornings. He had now arrived at the climax of his influence over young men. Professor Charteris was one of the earliest to discern in him this unique talent, and to enlist for this special service other professors and students too numerous to name. The veteran Indian statesman and educationist, Sir William Muir, was appointed Principal in February 1885, and on the day following his installation he attended and spoke at one of those Sunday evening gatherings in the Oddfellows' Hall. All candid minds admitted that it was a manifest work of God, fraught with enormous possibilities of blessing; for the representative character of the audience guaranteed that it would radiate spiritual influence both near and far. Deputations

of professors and students were sent from Edinburgh to Glasgow, Aberdeen, and St. Andrews Universities, and the movement spread. It became the nucleus of University Christian Associations, and it originated a Holiday Mission. Deputations were likewise exchanged with the English Universities. Dr. Charteris led this new enterprise to St. Andrews and to Aberdeen; and one or two sentences may be given from his letters to Professor A. F. Mitchell of St. Andrews at this time:—

‘EDINBURGH, *February 19th, 1885.*

‘If you are to be here on Saturday night, and are not specially engaged, would you spend it with us? A number of students are coming to a Bible Reading—subject, “Work for Christ.” It really means free conversation. We had twenty-five or thirty last Saturday. It is one of three which have grown out of the wonderful movement in our University, consequent on the visit of C. T. Studd and Stanley Smith. Professor Drummond addresses eight or nine hundred every Sunday in the Odd-fellows’ Hall; and hundreds stay to the “after meeting.” Anxious enquirers—with no excitement—have been guided to peace. It would be a great rest to me if you would come and sit and listen to the lads the while. But I would like on other grounds that you saw them. They are talking of sending deputations to the other Universities; but more about that when we meet.’

‘EDINBURGH, *9th March 1885.*

“‘The fellows” from Aberdeen and Glasgow have quite a cheering a report to give as we had. They could not have had one more cheering. And none of them can look back on so much personal kindness as we all had from Mrs. Mitchell and you. It would have amused you to hear the eloquence of our quiet Canadians in the train on the subject. If you like, S—and T—could go over for a meeting on Sunday. These two sensible fellows would deliver helpful addresses of a teaching kind. All here quite think the Missionary Association the best thing, if it go on.’

After these fruitful meetings a desire sprang up to have a special celebration of the Lord’s Supper for students; and Professor Charteris was asked to take the leading part. Exponents of religious red tape in some quarters frowned upon this, and Professor Drummond was attacked for having countenanced an ‘irregular’ communion, and



for having admitted to it students who were not members of Churches. Dr. Charteris and Dr. Alexander Whyte nevertheless co-operated in this special service on 28th March 1886—all the men who had become Christians being asked to remain and join in the Sacrament. At the closing meeting in March 1887 over six hundred waited—men of various kindreds and tongues. Dr. Charteris celebrated the Communion. Sir William Muir and many Professors were there: some of the students acted as elders, including the leading prizemen. Henry Drummond recorded:—

‘The work has been outwardly very quiet this winter, and none of us had the least idea it was taking such marvellous hold until we gathered round the Communion Table. The members of the Theological Faculty were specially invited, so that all things might be done decently and in order.’

From papers left behind it is known that Dr. Charteris was honoured to perform a like duty in 1887, 1888, 1890, 1891, 1897, and 1898. In notes of one address these words occur:—

‘There is here no question of Church. We are all one in Christ Jesus. Our Communion has no ecclesiastical bearing or pledge. We have thought over it, and have concluded that as we are of many denominations, we might have a Communion belonging to none. There has come in a custom of regarding the Communion as a pledge of adherence to the denomination; but our old Scottish custom was to invite strangers. The distinction was always recognised. It is well to rise above our regimental celebration to this gathering of representatives of the whole army.’

It was during the summer of 1886 that Professor Christlieb of Bonn, a great personal friend, wrote to Dr. Charteris inviting a deputation of students to come over to that German University. And as a result, Professor Drummond, whose book, *Natural Law in the Spiritual World*, had been translated into German, paid a visit there along with a leading medical student. The difficulties were enormous; but at one big meeting he was enabled to present a detailed account of the Edinburgh Students’ movement.

A notable suggestion was made about this time by the Rev. Archibald Fleming, now Dr. Fleming of St. Columba's, London, in a letter to Dr. Charteris:—

'If every Sunday, say at three in the afternoon, our great preachers were to preach to students, a student choir were to sing, and professors were to attend in state in St. Giles' Cathedral, it would be a grand thing. At present there are no more completely pagan Universities in the world than the Scots.'

This plan has been carried into execution in the most catholic spirit, with conspicuous gain to the religious *esprit de corps* of University life.

In the sphere of general Church work, the Presbytery of Auchterarder sent up an overture to the Assembly of 1875 which resulted in the appointment of a special committee to revise the working of all the schemes, and to make arrangements for their improvement and increased efficiency. This is obviously a duty which the Church must undertake from time to time. As Dr. William Smith wrote to Dr. Charteris (who was Joint-Convener with Dr. Pirie):—

'Our Church enterprises ought to be so soundly based and so prudently managed as to be able to stand any amount of fair criticism; and I sincerely hope that some means may be devised for bringing, year after year, upon the work reported the full limelight microscopic inspection of the whole Church.'

Dr. Pirie temporarily retired from the convenership of the Business Committee of the Assembly; and Dr. Smith was appointed for the time to that office, although both repudiated 'leadership' in connection with it. The new convener, to the great regret of all, had undermined his health by his abounding labours. He wrote to Dr. Charteris from his sick-bed on 21st November 1876:—

'I am most grateful to you and other friends for your prayers on my behalf. They have been heard and answered in this respect, that I have from the first and all throughout been sustained in the most delightful equanimity—able calmly to contemplate every issue, and to say, I trust from my heart of hearts, "Father, Thy will be done." I have been greatly touched as well as astonished by the large amount of kindly interest and warm feeling manifested on my behalf from many



quarters. I had no idea of the existence of such feeling. Any work I have done for the Church has been done with little consciousness of self-importance, and with no desire for earthly preferment or reward. I have had an honest and true love for the Church of Scotland, based on a deep-seated conviction that her cause is a righteous and good one, and that its promotion is calculated to secure the highest ends. On this ground I have laboured for her. Meantime, higher and more critical questions are coming more and more to the front. Not the form or the work of the Church, but the very foundations of religion will be the burning subject of controversy for the next decade at least; and I do trust that God may give you health and grace to take a leading and successful part in vindicating the cause of God and of truth.'

This dear friend and gallant comrade soon passed to his rest; and it was Dr. Charteris' hand which drew up a fitting tribute, adopted by the Endowment Committee on 22nd February 1877, to the memory of their second convener, during whose fifteen years of devoted toil two hundred and fifty parishes were erected and endowed. It was small wonder that his life, like his predecessor's, ended at the early age of fifty-seven; just when he had sounded the summons for 'another hundred parishes.' Principal Tulloch, to whom 'Smith of North Leith' had been known in intimate student friendship as 'Pater,' declared from the Moderator's chair in 1878 that he had hoped his comrade would have been the first Moderator chosen from those ordained after 1843; but God had willed it otherwise. The committee on the rearrangement of the schemes made a careful and elaborate survey of the whole subject in a report dated May 1877, and their suggestions were substantially sanctioned by the Assembly. It was a piece of work which required courageous, delicate, and sympathetic handling, and in it all Dr. Charteris took the principal part. One point on which he felt strongly was, that petitioners for endowment should not be allowed to incur debt, of which either interest or capital needs to be paid from the revenues of that church. Also, he was anxious to encourage from the first an increase of permanent endowment—the statutory amount being now wholly inadequate.

The idea of a Confederation, or as the *Second Book of*

*Discipline* calls it, 'a General Council of the haill Kirk of God,' always loomed large before the minds of the great Reformers; though difficulties regarding distance, language, and the sanction of the sovereigns of the various countries for a long time made it impracticable. John Calvin wrote in reply to Archbishop Cranmer's invitation to a conference in London in 1552 to promote unity in doctrine, that if he could be of any use, he would readily pass over ten seas to effect the object in view; and that to bring the separated Churches into one, neither labour nor trouble of any kind ought to be spared. Perhaps the Vatican Council of 1870 helped to remind Presbyterians of this great deficiency, that they had lacked the œcumenical bond, and that, though possessing much substantial unity as a whole, they stood in want of visible unity in their separate parts. Dr. M'Cosh, President of Princeton College, indicated in a sermon preached in May 1870, his longing for a Pan-Presbyterian Council; and his proposal seized on the imagination of Presbyterians on both sides of the Atlantic. Professor Blaikie, Dr. Duff, Dr. W. Robertson of New Greyfriars, Professor Mitchell, Dr. Begg, Dr. Oswald Dykes, Dr. Charteris, Dr. Andrew Thomson, and Lord Balfour of Burleigh, were among the earlier adherents of this policy, which naturally required, ere it took definite shape, many friendly communings on both sides of the Atlantic. A preliminary conference was held in London in July 1875, when commissions were given in, representing twenty-two Churches. Dr. Charteris had taken an influential part in furthering the movement, but was personally unable to attend. It had involved certain rather thorny negotiations, for the relations of the three chief Scottish Churches were then none too cordial. A breeze sprung up in the Assembly when it was first proposed to send Dr. Scott and Dr. Charteris as a deputation to America. Dr. Wallace ridiculed their willingness to go, 'if spared'; and professed he would be delighted to accompany his professorial colleague on a pleasant Pan-Presbyterian picnic. He suggested that in any case great advantage would accrue from the Conference



receiving 'both sides of the question—the candid and the sugar-candied!' Dr. Charteris, retorting that this remarkable amount of personality was not conducive to the Assembly's dignity, avowed that he had thought 'if the Lord will, we shall both live, and do this or that,' was a suitable way of speaking, and he hoped he should always continue so to speak.

The Conference drew up a Preamble and Articles of the 'Alliance of the Reformed Churches throughout the world holding the Presbyterian system.' It was to meet once in three years. Any Presbyterian Church holding the supreme authority of the Scriptures in faith and morals, and whose creed was in harmony with the consensus of the Reformed Confessions, was eligible; but the Council was not to interfere with the existing creed or constitution of any Church in the Alliance, or with its internal order or external relations. Dr. Charteris co-operated with Principal Rainy, Professor Cairns, and others at the Edinburgh meetings to explain and to popularise the project. The first meeting of the Council was held in Edinburgh in July 1877, and exceeded the most sanguine anticipations of its friends. Representatives of fifty-five Churches assembled in the metropolis of English-speaking Presbyterianism; and the discussions were frank, forcible, and amicable. Professor Flint preached the admirable opening sermon in St. Giles, which was an earnest plea for unity of spirit and purpose and counsel in advancing the Kingdom of Christ, especially among those who bear the same name and belong to the same reformed family of Churches. The names of Dr. Philip Schaff, Dr. F. Godet, Dr. E. de Pressensé, Professor Monod, with representatives of much distinction from America, the continent of Europe (including Greece and Spain), and the British colonies, made it a memorable gathering. This General Council has continued to meet triennially or so since then. To Dr. Charteris' great regret he was prevented from attending. He had been asked to read a paper on the 'Harmony of the Reformed Confessions'; but wrote to Professor Mitchell: 'It is as well that I am not to burn

my candle close to Schaff's big lamp.' He was present at the General Council at Belfast in 1884, and contributed a paper on the 'Authority of Holy Scripture in the Early Christian Church.'

At the Council of the Alliance held in London in July 1888 he gave in the report of the Committee on Woman's Work, which was commended by Dr. John Hall of New York, Dr. Schaff, and other authorities. He thought the Council would not fulfil its responsibilities unless such questions, bearing on comparative methods of work in the different Churches, were brought out for discussion. Thus each Church in the Presbyterian family would be served heir to the most approved methods of work in all the rest.

In the spring of 1883 Dr. Charteris was advised in the interests of health to accept a long-standing invitation from his cousin Charteris Bey, and to visit Egypt; but the undertaking was not a success. A stranded vessel in the Suez Canal kept his ship tied up for a week, and he underwent a period of detention at Suez. His verdict was that while the sun was nice in moderation, he found the wind very searching, and rheumatic chills were easily contracted:—

'Meanwhile I am seeing the "great and terrible wilderness" in perfection. Three or four miles from here is the place where Brugsch Bey—the great German archaeologist—says Israel crossed one of the inland seas in which Pharaoh's host was engulfed. He says it was not the Red Sea at all. We passed the place to-day. Some Bedouin with camels were on their way by that very route, the high-road to Jerusalem. I have seen the Peninsula of Sinai, and have myself gathered shells from the Red Sea.'

Thence he returned to Alexandria, but was laid up for the greater part of his visit. When asked what he had principally seen in Egypt he used jocularly to reply: 'A hymn of Miss Frances R. Havergal's, which was opposite my bed.' He saw a little more than that, being able to inspect the forts of Alexandria, battered down by the English bombardment, and many of the ruined buildings.

Another germinating experience is thus recorded:—



'We called on a young naval officer at the German (Deaconesses') Hospital yesterday. It is a beautiful place: so airy, clean, and nice. The Sisters (Kaiserswerth) look such pictures of sonsy, good, German ladies, the very ideal of ministering angels. The hospital is quite at the outside of the town, at Lake Mareotis, and near it are fine boulevards shaded with enormous palm-trees. We climbed a small knoll like the Ladyknowe at Moffat, and saw a fine view. Alexandria is fearfully dilapidated—squares and streets laid level with the ground, and clouds of dust rising from the débris with every passing cab that stirs the air, or even with the flutter of an Arab's long brown robe. I saw a Syce yesterday morning, running before the carriage of his mistress; with his tall pole, his beautiful streaming sleeves like lawn, his sinewy black legs, and his very handsome frame. Altogether he was a picture of grace and speed.'

'Sunday, April 15th.—I have again preached to-day! Mr. Mackie took the opening part of the service. I was able to speak with comfort, and the people thanked me very much. Immediately afterwards there was a congregational meeting, at which a committee was appointed to represent and lead the congregation in aid of the work of the mission. The work did me good. My nervous system was strengthened by the exertion and the excitement.'

He was much interested in the engagement of his cousin Charteris Bey to Miss Williams, one of the Scots missionaries to the Jews. He made out a visit to fascinating Cairo, staying with that cousin's sister, Mrs. Du Port, and wrote:—

'I have seen the Pyramids, and I have been in the bazaars as much as I want to be: and in the Boulak Museum long enough to understand what it is. But I have not seen the Mohammedan University, where there are 10,000 students. It is the missionary propaganda of the Koran.'

He spent some time in a comfortable Nile-boat when the weather grew warmer, inspecting the river and its canals, and gaining some insight into the life of the Egyptian peasantry. He had thoughts of, but had to abandon, a visit to Jerusalem, and wrote:—

'I really never cared to see Jerusalem. I don't care for new buildings as for old ruins, like those of Rome. Every one said I was not up to Galilee. I would rather not set foot in Palestine unless, like M'Cheyne, I could see where "the Mighty One that came to save" walked on the shore and on the water among the blue hills of Gennesaret.'

Accordingly he sailed homeward *viâ* Brindisi and Venice, pleased with his one dip into the Eastern world, and with appetite sharpened for Biblical antiquities. That he did not forget his experiences is proved by a letter to Lord Balfour twenty-one years later, recommending books for his sojourn there: 'As to Egypt, I remember our exchange of words about Rameses. I said the Bible narrative in Exodus does not say Pharaoh himself was drowned. Did you not admire the great despot's big jaw? The day I was in that museum widened my ideas more than any other day in my life.'

Dr. Charteris kept up friendly relations with two men who stood pre-eminent in the Free Church minority of a past generation. Despite a recent unfavourable estimate of Dr. James Begg, his character is safe, at least with those who ever knew him. He was not a 'modernist,' and few would now endorse his saying about the higher criticism being equivalent to the lower scepticism. But in addition to his sturdy independence, oratorical gifts, and Scottish mother-wit, Dr. Begg was straight and consistent. Men knew where to find him. He was not like a balancing Blondin, or a party leader sitting on the fence. He was no idolater of the 'sufficient number.' When he was beaten he cheerily consoled himself with the saying that 'Minorities have been as often right as majorities since the days of Noah.' Scotland owes much to his efforts—such as the sanction of 'Use and Wont in public schools.' His ecclesiastical adversaries imputed to this 'tribune of the people' the meanness of having sold himself to the other side. The imputation was wholly inexcusable. He had hopes, which he frankly expressed in his lectures and speeches, of the adoption of a policy of reconstruction. But it is a complete mistake to suppose him to have played the part of Privy Councillor to the Government on patronage; and he did not have a prevailing voice in the ears of Lord Advocate Gordon, or of the Church of Scotland's leaders, as his opponents imagined. He went up to the House of Commons lobby, indeed, to speak his life-long Anti-



patronage sentiments, in opposition to the wire-pullers of Voluntaryism. He had been introduced, two years before, at his own request, to Mr. Disraeli, who remarked afterwards on his leonine aspect, 'Isn't he a lion of the tribe of Judah?' He held that the abolition of patronage alone was insufficient for reconciliation and reunion. He would have welcomed a willingness on the part of his own Church to propose or acquiesce in further healing measures. But his friends never could be got to say what would satisfy them. While Dr. Charteris and he had their points of difference as well as of contact, each greatly respected the other. Dr. Begg attended various conferences on reunion with leading men in the Church of Scotland, but the conditions were never implemented upon which alone he would have thought it right for himself or his Church to return. Dr. Charteris and he, meeting one day in a tramway car, were tempted to take the high walk round Arthur's Seat. The sun was glinting over Liberton, and Dr. Begg remarked: 'It is a bonny parish, that of mine, which I left in '43.' The union correspondence between the Churches was then going on, and Dr. Charteris, in simple chaff, said: 'We'll maybe see you back there, Dr. Begg, before all's ended.' One can never forget his kindly but decided reply: 'No, that will never be;' and then, with a genial twinkle in his blue eyes, 'I think I'm doing the cause of National religion more good where I am.'

Mr. A. T. Niven, C.A., is now the oldest Assembly elder of the Church of Scotland. That sworn foe of innovations, seeing Dr. Begg five or six weeks before his death, told his intimate friend that he was so disgusted at the prevailing declension that he thought he would die an Original Seceder, as they seemed now to be the only true representatives of the old Church of Scotland. Begg stopped him, and said very seriously:—

'Oh, Niven, don't speak that way; don't even joke about it; your place and influence is in the Church; dissent and complain, and protest, as much as you find necessary, but never think of becoming a dissenter; your influence is in the Church, and you

must not lose it by thinking for a moment of leaving.' He proceeded after a pause: 'Well, I fancy if I had to live my life over again, I should probably do the same as I did in 1843: it was the greatest mistake I ever made. If we had remained in the Church, what a tremendous power it would have become! We would have got all we wanted and a great deal more, and it would have been difficult to estimate our power for good.' Mr. Niven said: 'Well, Dr. Begg, it is interesting to hear you speak on these lines; but is that not just what the poor unfortunate "Forty" did in 1843, whom you regarded as everything that was evil and bad, and I was taught to regard, from the other side, as untrustworthy and worse?'

Dr. Begg replied: 'You are quite right; the "Forty" saw further in their day and generation than either of the two contending parties in the Church.'

On 26th May 1876 Dr. Begg declared that he had never entered an Established Church since the Disruption; he had most rigidly abstained from entering one: he was glad, however, to see the spirit of brotherhood and co-operation springing up. He instanced Dr. R. Buchanan's co-operation with Dr. Munro, parish minister of Campsie, at Rome. This seemly sight for the eyes of Roman Catholics was, however, long to be denied to Protestant Scotland. Innumerable stories were told of and by Dr. Begg. Concerning the overfluent speech of a much-respected friend, which at first promised well but generally ended ill, he remarked: 'He minds me o' a coo my mither had. She was a guid coo, and a grand milker, but when the cog was jist about fu', she aye pit her fit intilt!'

Dr. John Kennedy of Dingwall was truly an 'apostle of the North,' peerless as a Gaelic preacher, and most impressive in English, with his dash of Highland mysticism. Prophet-like in his message, delivered chiefly from the standpoint of the Sovereignty of God, and dwelling on the substance of that fine old phrase 'sovereign grace,' he exercised his great gifts as an evangelist all over the Gaelic-speaking Highlands. He seemed to be traversing them unceasingly. Wherever he was known to be, thousands gathered. No ambassador of Christ had any-



thing like equal power over the Free Church adherents of the northern counties. In those days it excited surprise if the Parish and Free Church ministers walked together at a funeral. One has known a Free Church minister decline attending prayers at a hydropathic on the avowed ground that they were conducted by a 'Moderate minister,' who could have 'no grace.' Under such conditions of feeling—happily now a thing of the past—it was no small concession and condescension for Dr. Kennedy, who carried the keys of the Highlands at his belt, to seek intercourse on equal terms even with Dr. Charteris. Many of the northerners had faith in him as one who had little deviated, doctrinally or ritually, from the old path. Being a professor, he had no church with an organ, painted windows, and other abominations! Accordingly the reluctance, perhaps also the shyness, of Dr. Kennedy was overcome by his Highland courtesy. The writer well remembers when at Strathpeffer in 1879, calling at the old parish manse of Dingwall for the Professor, who had been assisting at the communion there. He was astonished to find that Dr. Kennedy had crossed that threshold to honour Dr. Charteris with a visit. Their conversation was frank, sympathetic, and unrestrained. In a letter to the *Daily Review* Dr. Kennedy had at first announced the belief that the Patronage Bill was 'a colourable imitation of our Free Church banner,' but his honest nature soon put a better construction on the aims of its framers, and he was at this time heartily in accord with reunion aspirations. Dr. Charteris sounded him on innovations then and there: 'Do you really object so very much to hymns and instrumental music?' And Dr. Kennedy rejoined: 'Oh, well, I don't so much mind, if it were not, I fear, the opening of the flood-gates.' The great man came also to Strathpeffer to call for Dr. Charteris; and the lodging-house people showed their reverence by never being able to do enough for Dr. Kennedy's friend. The old Highland loyalty to the chief was, after 1745, largely transferred to the minister; but with sometimes four, and even seven, ministers in a parish, where is it now?

A letter from the noble preacher, dated F.C. Manse, Dingwall, May 10th, 1879, contains these sentences:—

'I have always kept it before my mind as a dutiful thing, in the event of the constitution of the Established Church being thoroughly adjusted, and that its continuance was formidably assaulted, to sacrifice my present Church connection, if thereby I could help to secure the benefits of an Establishment to future generations in Scotland. But the first condition is a *sine qua non*. I would regard the Bill, in accordance with the outlines which I sent to you, to be satisfactory, even *minus* the clause about acknowledging, in case of a vacancy, the Free Church, as the Parish, minister, if a majority of the parishioners adhered to him.'

One of Dr. Charteris' pleasantest memories was that on one occasion when he addressed a meeting in Dingwall parish church on Christian Life and Work, Dr. Kennedy told him, quite unasked, that if he had known in time he would have intimated it and put off his own weekly prayer-meeting to let his people attend; saying also that there was no power in the divisions of Churches to keep those apart who are united in the fellowship of the everlasting Gospel.

A long letter dated Brodick, April 22nd, 1878, from the Free Church minister and famous Gaelic scholar, the Rev. Alexander Cameron, shows a clear comprehension of the difficulties requiring to be surmounted, and a sincere desire for an honourable settlement. It contains this sentence: 'In a scheme of reconstruction, such matters as the alleged "Broad Churchism" in the Established Church and instrumental music would require to be left to the constitutional action of the Church courts, as is the case at present. There is no disposition on the part of any of us, so far as I know, to make a difficulty of these matters.'

Among the note-books in which Dr. Charteris recorded systematically books read and thoughts jotted down for future use, is found this fragment on the Free Church Highlanders, penned in 'the eighties':—

'These men are in some things narrow because they are so intense; but they have at least shown a power of attachment



to their principles which many who hold all things with a light grasp, save self-interest, might well own to be admirable. The time was when those Highlanders had no idea of loyalty beyond attachment to their chief and their clan; but the time came when those very clans were the backbone of the noblest regiments that, side by side with the Lowlander and the Englishman, carried the banner of our free country to victory on many a hard-fought field. It is a great thing to be capable of a loyal personal attachment, a disinterested and self-forgetful devotedness; and that has always been the glory of the Scottish Highlanders. But, again, the principle for which the Free Church Highlander contends is one that he has no selfish interest in: no immediate interest of his of any kind is in favour of his maintaining it. When all the population of three counties rise to declare their determination to maintain the principle of a religious Establishment, we do not estimate rightly what they are doing if we fail to remember that for forty years neither they nor their fathers have been sheltered or blessed by the existing Establishment. Nor only this; but they have their own old ministers inadequately supported, while the parish minister had an ample income, sometimes with only a fraction of the flock to attend to. It is to me a perpetual ground of admiration that those men should rise so loyally to declare that the religion of Christ is the power which must pervade and regulate all life, personal, domestic, social, and civil: and because it is impossible for a nation, pervaded by religion, to do anything without religion, the dogma of those who would sever national action from the recognition of the Redeemer is the dream of men who are shearing religion of its fair proportions and the nation of its true glory. It rebukes the coldness of many of us when those warm-hearted Celts say: "Though we are not so satisfied with every point in the present Church of Scotland that we can enrol in its ranks, we denounce the propaganda which seeks to abolish the Church, and with the Church the national acknowledgment that the Redeemer of mankind is the King of kings, and that His Gospel is the Ark of the Covenant, which is the very heart of the nation's life."

## CHAPTER XIII

### CHRISTIAN LIFE AND WORK

The Christian Life and Work Committee and its Developments.

PERHAPS Dr. Charteris' chief title to remembrance rests upon his manifold labours in the sphere which he himself denominated 'Christian Life and Work.' He showed himself therein pre-eminently both a man of ideas and a practical pioneer. He had noticed a constant leakage in the membership of the Church, caused by the tendency of converts in times of spiritual revival to betake themselves to where they believed they would find a more congenial environment. And he knew that routine may become a besetting fault to which a minister is specially prone. In his opinion the Church was somewhat ignorant of herself and of her powers. Useless reports were annually bound up, delivered, and seldom or never read. He resolved to try to amend this, working on the principles of continuity and cohesion. He saw no reason why converts should receive a heartier welcome in other Churches than in their own, and anxiously aimed at their ingathering and encouragement. A late review by himself tells of many things attempted: 'They are for the most part portions of the programme of the *Committee on Christian Life and Work*, of which I was convener for twenty-five years. They may be said to have sprung from my experience in three parishes in Ayrshire, Galloway, and Glasgow—a mining, a rural, and an urban parish. Perhaps I should rather say they were the result of my experience in the scene of my first ministry in sunny St. Quivox. They are all connected with one another. They began with an attempt to ascertain the progress of Christian



work in this country, to bring ministers and other office-bearers into harmony with evangelistic workers, and to offer pastoral superintendence to such as owed their conversion to God's working through evangelists. Such converts longed for recognition by the Church. It needed them, and when they came in, it was enriched by their zeal. Evangelists had been looked upon as poachers, and not as allies of the ordinary ministry; but the Assembly told us, at our own request, to report on the best means of furthering evangelistic efforts. The committee's central aim was to promote Christian activity on the part of all members of the Church. One thing led to another. Dr. Dale of Birmingham once said that it takes fifteen years to get an idea into the head of a congregation. That could not be said of our old Church, the Church of Scotland. In much less than that time the Church was convinced of the need and the reasonableness of our proposals to develop the work of the membership. Not without challenge and even opposition; but throughout the Church the heart of the people was always with us, and in the General Assembly many eminent ministers and the elders in almost unbroken harmony were on our side, so that every challenge—and there were many—always left us stronger.

‘Owing to the presence and ability of the elders, the Assembly is wiser, broader, and more hopeful than any inferior court. The Assembly authorised our sending certain *Queries to Kirk-Sessions*, in order to elicit information regarding all work done in or by a congregation. The answers, to which many of the ablest ministers devoted great pains, were discussed, classified, and followed in practice throughout the Church. In all this I only bore a part. The committee contained many able and eminent men—ministers and elders—and we all worked with a will. Large results followed. *Deputations* were sent out, *Conferences* were held, *Missions* were founded, and eventually the *Life and Work Magazine*, the *two Guilds*, *Deaconess Hospital*, the *Deaconess House*, the *Guild Library*, *Special Deputies to Herring Fishings*, *Deputies to Farm Servants*, *Mission Weeks*, and many other things came as the results

of proved necessity. For, I think, more than twenty years after the third year Lord Polwarth and Dr. M'Murtrie were my colleagues as vice-conveners, and in some of my absences from illness Drs. Norman Macleod and Blair gave their strong shoulders to lift our burden. Dr. M'Clymont was the originator, and is still the guide, of the Guild Library. For more than a dozen years I had as my fellow-worker the best of administrators, the most assiduous and modest of men, my friend and now my successor, William Robertson. While I deplore my own mistakes, and even see some things in which the united committee failed, I believe that there has been, on the whole, progress in activity, sympathy, and hopefulness. I dare not try to recount the willing helpers we had during those five-and-twenty years. Most of them had arduous work of their own to do, but still they bore much of our burden. There never was a committee which was more sustained by unpaid work. I should like, however, to name the secretaries of the committee. Their names are fragrant—William Frank Scott, early taken, after long illness, from his sermons and his commentaries, to rest in his northern parish by the sea-shore; John Dobie, student, Indian Chaplain, Hebrew Professor, whose sweet, sunny life was ended in a railway collision; David Clement Ruffelle Scott, missionary, architect, statesman, first at Blantyre, then at Kikuyu; W. P. Paterson, whose genius is moulding the Scottish theology of the future; John Anderson Graham, perhaps the most outstanding of modern Indian missionaries; George M'Alpine, wisest and most single-minded of all men who ever made a Church Committee the altar of their self-sacrifice.'

The Christian Life and Work Committee was born and cradled with prayer. In a very real sense it arose out of a monthly prayer-meeting held in the offices of the Church, in which Dr. Charteris and Major the Hon. Robert Baillie took a leading part. These two moved and seconded an overture and motion, which on 29th May 1869 was unanimously accepted by the Assembly: 'That the following committee be appointed to inquire as to the progress of



Christian work in the country; and further, to consider and report as to the best means of promoting evangelistic efforts, and of so guiding those engaged in them as to secure their co-operation with the office-bearers in this Church, in order that the ministry of the Church may be aided by voluntary Christian efforts, and that the pastoral superintendence of her ministers may be enjoyed by those whom such efforts have gathered in—Dr. Charteris, convener.’ Major Baillie made it clear that the promoters acted in no spirit of finding fault with the Church as a body, or with individual ministers, or with the members of the Church; but sought to call forth a vast dormant Christian power in the Church to assist the ministers. He trusted that whatever was done would be in the spirit of him who said, ‘Would God that all the Lord’s people were prophets.’ He had not forgotten Professor Robertson’s remarkable words—‘I would rather cut off my right hand than prevent any Christian man from exercising the gifts which God had given him in the service of God.’ Dr. James Robertson of Whittingehame and Mr. J. T. Maclagan (Foreign Mission Secretary) undertook the secretarial duties at the start. Dr. Charteris had been Convener of the Committee on Correspondence with Foreign Churches, but now resigned that appointment, and in asking Dr. J. Marshall Lang to succeed him expressed the desire to devote all the time which the demands of his University work allowed to the nurture of the infant committee. He saw great possibilities in it for interesting Church courts, but to develop these constant attention and great wisdom were required, and a considerable burden was implied. This forecast was fully justified. Of the clerical members only Drs. J. Cameron Lees, James Robertson (Whittingehame), J. Mitford Mitchell, Henry Cowan, and R. W. Weir survive. Of the first company of counsellors, Principal Pirie was a warm supporter.

‘In the midst of them,’ relates Principal Marshall Lang, ‘sat the wise and enthusiastic professor—a King Arthur among his Knights of the Round Table. But in the Knights there was never the “manner somewhat fallen from reverence.” A more

loyal committee never surrounded a more loyal chief. "Line upon line, here a little and there a little"—the work of the committee developed. Dr. Charteris was too astute to offend against the conservatism of the Church by launching a big and novel scheme. A schedule was prepared, and sent to every minister and several Assembly elders, requesting answers to the following queries:

'1. What is your impression as to the state of religion in general in your district?

'2. What voluntary work is at present actually done by others than ministers, especially elders, in your district?

'3. What do you propose as the best means of promoting evangelistic efforts, and of so guiding those engaged in them as to secure their co-operation with the office-bearers of the Church?

'They prefixed to these queries the deliverance of the Assembly as their warrant for entering on the inquiry, not less delicate than important. They received a large number of returns, but not so large as they desired; only two from Glasgow ministers, one from Edinburgh, and one from Dundee. The attitude of the Church at first was one of apathy, if not of antagonism.'

At the Assembly of 1870 the committee reported that while the multiplication of sects had multiplied the appliances for developing the activity of professing Christians, it had not only not diminished the proportion of practical heathen to the members of Christian Churches, but was one of the chief barriers to the proper application of Christian power in the work of reclaiming them. They declared it to be the duty of the Church to recognise and to encourage those who took up and carried on Christian work in a right spirit and in a fitting way; affirming that no minister of a populous parish could pretend that he himself was able to evangelise it, but should rather call to his aid every willing helper. Without proposing any new order of evangelists, it asked the recognition of the fact that the Holy Spirit of God had been pleased to help evangelistic efforts by others than paid agents, and it further advocated superintendence as well as recognition by the minister and kirk-session in each parish; and that a committee of Assembly should be appointed to take counsel with those who might apply to them, and when necessary to delegate ministers of experience to go to the



aid of such as might desire them. Its last sentence ran thus :—

‘Abundant evidence has been given, that while shallow excitement of ignorant souls will soon pass away unless the craving for spiritual knowledge which it arouses be wisely, lovingly, and continuously met, the awakening of those who have been already instructed is as though a strong man had been roused from his slumber, and were ready to use his strength.’

Dr. Charteris, in submitting the report, avowed that there were many departments of Christian work of which the committee had not spoken, and many methods of directing congregational activity through its whole range on which they were silent. They thought that much information remained to be elicited. Young ministers were often compelled at the very outset of their ministry to face the most complicated problems of life, and to begin as though no one had ever met these problems, or in the course of a lifetime experienced them and solved them; and the committee believed that if the Assembly chose to prosecute such an inquiry, by furnishing the basis of a discussion in the Assembly on such a day as this, a good service might be done to the general cause of religion and the best interests of the Church itself. He should be guilty of affectation if he did not acknowledge that the committee had described rather than defined the subject remitted to them. He quoted one passage of tempered wisdom from Dr. Chalmers’ *Polity of Nations*, commending the generous spirit which was guiding the ministers of their Church in leading rather than hindering lay helpers of proved intelligence and piety. He closed with the warning words of that great home missionary :—

‘Ecclesiastics else may freeze into utter dormancy the best capabilities that are within their reach of Christian usefulness; and thus it is possible for a clergyman, by the weight of his authority, to lay an interdict on a whole host of Christian agency whom he should have summoned into action, and of whom it is possible that each may be far beneath him in the literature of Christianity, and yet each far before him in the instrumental power of making Christians.’

The broad-minded Dr. Norman Macleod of the Barony launched the report with one of his noble speeches, drawn from the rich treasures of his own pastoral experience. He touched on the extravagant addresses and astounding Antinomianism of the spurious revival; and indicated that while nothing might be said against the man who kept aloof altogether, yet if a minister once joined such a movement and then chose to retire, his character could be prayed down, sneered down, whispered down, and lied down. Then he turned to the other side of the question:—

‘While I believe many earnest-minded and God-fearing men have been put in a position as if antagonistic to revivals, yet there is not a man here who is a true minister who does not yearn and long and pray for a genuine revival in his own heart day by day, as well as in his congregation and in his country. In seeking this, and hoping for this, we must remember that we can rely absolutely upon the living Spirit of God to aid and bless us in our preaching and work. The Spirit of God has too often been represented as a shower of rain passing over the country, as if when it has passed any revival must pass away also. Admitting that the Spirit of God, who is a living Person, and worketh when He will, where He will, and as He will, may come down in an extraordinary manner—that there may be Pentecostal days now as before—still I recognise this fact as exceptional, and as intended to quicken our faith in the deeper and more important truth of His abiding presence within His Church. The Spirit who has done such wonderful things at such a place, and at such a time, is not doing so as the rule, but as the exception—like a miracle; the rule being that any one, in any place, at any time, may seek and obtain the Spirit, with all His divine power, from the Father in heaven, even as a hungry child may seek and obtain bread from a father on earth, if he has it to give. It is the crime of unbelief that does not realise this fact. That is the first point—namely, the conviction that we may rely on the Spirit of God. The next is, that the Spirit of God will raise up men as He pleases, to do His work. He may raise them up not amongst the class where we might expect to find them. . . . We cannot, therefore, we dare not, say to the lowest member in this evangelistic work, “We have no need of thee.” He claimed with all humility that, with his worthy elders and missionary, he himself had been carrying on a genuine revival which had been profounder evidence to him of the truth of Christianity than anything else he had ever known. He urged this committee to go on, and fear not to do



their work earnestly. He thought it a great matter that they were trying to find out the best way of doing it. His impression was that the work of this committee was to furnish facts and ideas which the Home Mission would try to put in practice and develop.'

It was the Endowment convener, Dr. W. Smith, who moved the formal motion, reappointing the committee to prosecute their inquiries, and especially in all prudent and constitutional ways to encourage and guide evangelistic efforts. Dr. Bisset and Mr. Swan of Smailholm dissented from the deliverance. Indeed for years men looked askance at the Life and Work Committee as unduly aggressive: some smiled, some sneered, some threatened active opposition. But for skilful pilotage, and the victory which crowns a resolute faith, there were rocks against which the tiny craft might have been driven, or reefs on which it might have been stranded. Principal Lang may speak again:—

'When I recall the history of the cause with which my dear friend's name is associated, I recognise the goodness of the Hand that was on him, and the singular tact revealed in all his actions. He was constitutional in all his procedure. Whatever was issued by the committee was under the authority of the Assembly, and the local Church courts were recognised as the intermediary in all queries. Opposition was thus disarmed; and the response, year by year, to the appeals of the committee became more general and hearty. In 1875 nine hundred answers were received, and the committee could say that these answers were more interesting than in any previous year.'

In subsequent years information was sought regarding various forms of congregational activity, such as prayer meetings, cottage meetings, fellowship meetings, mothers' meetings, Bible classes, missionary meetings, work among those who do not attend the Church, and such like. Other queries dealt with infidelity and scepticism, the state of vital godliness, perceptible spiritual results, the number of unbaptized adults, and the conditions under which parents obtained baptism for their children in Highlands and Lowlands. The subject of Family Worship was considered, and special classes, such as the fisher folk, domestic

servants, and farm labourers, were brought under review. Observance of the Lord's Day, with reference to works of mercy thereon, was not forgotten. Lay agency of different kinds was duly inquired about. National sins, such as intemperance and impurity, were dragged into the light of day. Dr. Charteris (though personally he hated statistics) held a strong conviction that the Church of Scotland should collect, so far as possible, complete statistics in every parish, more especially with the object of ascertaining how many belonged to no church. A query on the circulation of literature and parish libraries brought out a suggestion of great importance—the publication of a parochial magazine. Another query on the supply and qualification of candidates for the ministry and for the mission-field drew out suggestions for lectures on Pastoral Theology and a Missionary Institute, both which proposals have been since realised, though perhaps not quite adequately.

Probably no committee of the Assembly ever endured such a fire of criticism as that of Life and Work, during its early years. It was denounced as inquisitorial, peddling, and interfering. One or two presbyteries were recalcitrant, and at first declined to circulate the schedules; but it was pointed out by Dr. Charteris that under the Assembly's instructions presbyteries were by no means superseded, and that they and individual ministers had full liberty to use the queries only in so far as they thought them right and expedient. Still there were battles-royal more than once in the Assembly, where Dr. Charteris generally managed to procure as champions of his report front-rank men of different schools, such as Professor Flint, Dr. John Macleod of Govan, and Dr. Scott. On one occasion Dr. Wallace proposed to give the committee an easy death by suspension, but was defeated by more than three to one. Before this struggle, in 1875, the convener wrote Professor Mitchell:—

'Do you not think my last year's suggestion a good one, viz., to invite presbyteries to say what questions they severally suggest for the supervision of parishes, and from their replies to make



an Overture and Interim Act? This is, if we survive the struggle which is said to be before us. Will you pray that we may be guided by a wisdom not our own?' When rising to meet a challenge in the Assembly, he whispered to Dr. M'Murtrie, 'Will you pray for me while I am speaking?'

'There are some men in the Assembly with skins a foot thick,' said 'A. K. H. B.' Dr. Charteris was certainly not one of them. Constitutionally sensitive, cherishing a lofty ideal, often diffident, and almost apologetic in manner—especially when the Assembly was hurried and impatient in the transaction of business—he sometimes failed to assert himself sufficiently, and to claim time to do justice to his speeches, which were never trivial or verbose, but always bright, pointed, and argumentative, often illuminating and elevating, making constant appeal to the highest instincts and principles. He was never found unprepared, and had his resources well within call. Though he might often be physically weary, he was never a cause of weariness to others. He never toyed with the subject under discussion, but really grappled with it, and set forth the central and vital considerations affecting it. His argument was often happily illustrated, and moved steadily to its definite and decisive conclusion with adroit and playful side touches, which were not less effective than his knock-down blows. But rarely, even in retaliation, did he excite angry feelings. His words never rankled. As Dr. James MacGregor once said of one whom the newspapers called 'the gentlest man in the Assembly'—'Dr. Charteris would never have a controversial tooth that would bite sore!' If he lacked the unique genius of Norman Macleod of the Barony, if he came behind the majestic presence and moving oratory of John Tulloch, if he laid no claim to the Celtic fire and passion of Dr. MacGregor, matchless for rousing popular audiences, and with a roll that riveted the attention of huge congregations hanging intent on his evangel, warm from the heart; if he 'attained not unto the first three' orators, his place was none the less fixed in council and debate. It may be doubted whether the Church of Scotland was ever richer in outstanding ministers than

during the last generation of the nineteenth century; and no picture of her Assembly would be mentally complete which did not represent Dr. Charteris standing (always on the right side of the table), a thick-set, boyish figure, the head crowned with abundance of brown hair, with bushy eyebrows and slight whiskers, the mobile mouth surmounted with enough of nose to please Napoleon, and the light of enthusiasm irradiating his face, either expounding or commending some new plan of the committee of which he was the incarnate embodiment, or repelling the assault of its adversaries. He was keen, alert, ever ready with rejoinder, the voice never highly pitched, yet always carrying, and with a peculiar and most effective note in it. He faced his audience without a suggestion of tremor; yet to those who knew him he indicated by one or two signs the tug on nerve and brain which he felt. He made his points with remarkable lucidity, and rounded his paragraphs with felicitous phrase. He never declaimed, but had a wonderful gift of persuading those who were at first inclined to doubt the practicability of some novel and unproved, yet valuable, project, which might infringe the sanctities of immemorial custom, or was likely to encroach upon the ever diminishing time at a busy minister's disposal. His exposition might have to wait and pause for a cultured historical allusion; and then the speech, rushing in full spate of cogent, high-toned, convincing appeal, reached its end. As he used to tell his class, 'A good post-boy always keeps a spurt for the avenue.'

His old comrade, Dr. Lang, said of him:—

'Grace was poured into his lips, and it poured through his utterance. But those who listened did not always understand at what a price his power in Church courts and elsewhere was purchased. Health was always the uncertain quantity. When able he was the most patient and punctual of members of the Assembly, in his place "from morn to dewy eve," interested in all procedure, even when it seemed to be dry-as-dust. But he was too often using up his capital—speaking and working when he should have been resting, and needing rest the moment the speech was ended or the work was done.'

The evolution of the committee suggests two marked



stages. There was the Query stage, when the committee was feeling its way, gathering material, and offering no constructive policy. Then there was the later stage, when part after part of the plan of campaign was unfolded, and ministries and potencies, hitherto latent, were called into play. At Dr. John Cook's last Assembly, in 1874, that sturdy constitutionalist said it had struck him that it would be a good idea to instruct this committee, not simply to draw up their own questions, but to remit to them the old Privy Censures Act which was now greatly disregarded, and ask them to draw up such a set of Queries as might bring before the Church exactly what the Church considered the proper duty of ministers. Dr. William Smith strongly supported this view, maintaining that the Privy Censures Act, if dead, deserved a decent burial, and that a proper up-to-date law should take its place. Dr. Charteris, while disclaiming that his committee had ever attempted to declare the whole true work of the parish minister, willingly accepted the remit for consideration; and thus in due time it came to pass that what is now called the Presbyterian Superintendence Schedule—the modernised form which ministers annually use to report their work for oversight by the presbytery, in which, as in the presbyter-bishops of Ephesus, the true episcopate is vested—indirectly owes its revival to Dr. Charteris' committee. He himself believed that the issue of Queries was the best thing they ever did. For these stimulated thought and invited discussion in Church courts concerning the real aims of the Christian ministry. Late in life he said: 'If I were still convener, I would try to issue some new Queries.' The Query stage fell into the background after 1878. Then it was reported that nearly the whole field of the parochial ministry had been covered, and the experience of ministers in regard to parochial organisation and methods of working had been recorded; and it was proposed that the materials obtained should be used in preparing a manual for parochial work. This *Digest of Past Reports* was laid upon the Table in 1881, having been compiled with much care by the Rev. Dr.

George Wilson. It is a valuable booklet, little known and too seldom asked for. Young ministers will find it a perfect *vade mecum*. Copies can still be had.

Dr. Charteris emphasised one practical need, the giving not merely of disjunction (a name horribly accurate sometimes!) but commendatory certificates to those leaving congregations for town or other country parishes—a practice now commendably followed by the great majority. At the centres also there were instituted small boards to which such certificates might be tendered by strangers in cases of perplexity. Individual corresponding members now fulfil this duty with the intention to prevent lapsing.

In the year 1872, under direction of the Assembly, the committee developed a project of sending *Deputations* to parish ministers who might apply for them. Many of the most eminent ministers were so employed at fitting times, and immense advantages resulted from such visits, especially in places far removed from the centres of Church life, where the people felt their isolation, and were apt to think that the Church had forgotten them. Such services left in the hearts of those whom they addressed a sense of closer connection with the common life and work of the Church than they had realised before; and were indeed a means of quickening the circulation of the life blood throughout the membership, upon which, in such circumstances of isolation, torpidity is apt to steal. Nowhere more than in the Highlands was this method of work appreciated. It prepared the way for the creation of the Highland Committee. Dr. Charteris and Dr. Marshall Lang made a pilgrimage to Stornoway, in Lewis; and the Rev. Norman Macleod, Rev. Donald Macleod (then of Dundee), the Rev. Robert Blair of St. Columba's, Glasgow, were specially helpful. The demand greatly exceeded the committee's power to supply it; for it must be remembered that for many years the committee was supported in all its operations by funds from private sympathisers, not from collections authorised by the General Assembly. When they did, at last, receive such



a biennial collection, it was acknowledged by Dr. Phin that they had strong claims to it, and his first reason was that these deputations had produced excellent fruits. Notably in the Highlands were such occasions used to good purpose at Communion seasons, when in those days at least a dozen full services (largely in Gaelic) were provided; and the deputies spoke of the work and progress of the Church to many whose minds had been biassed by misrepresentation. They told their story, without exaggeration and without controversy, sometimes to a thousand or thirteen hundred people. For example, Mr. Blair reported in 1886:—

‘I wish you saw the enthusiasm this created. Several men gathered round me when the service was over to thank me, and said: “You have taken a heavy load off our minds, for we were perpetually assured that the Church of Scotland was decaying everywhere.”’

Again in 1887 that splendid Gaelic preacher and true minister of Christ told that he had just got home from a holiday in the West Highlands—a *holiday* during which he preached twenty-three times, and addressed seven Communion tables!

This is an age of specialism in many departments of human activity, and Dr. Charteris was quick to note and to try to meet the needs of special classes in the community. The *fisher folk* are a people largely by themselves. The boats and their crews, not forgetting the fisher-girls who prepare the herring when landed, cleaning and salting them, naturally go where the fish are; and Dr. Charteris found both ministers to preach and ladies to look after the girls. Formerly ministers were sent, beginning in spring as far afield as Kinsale in county Cork. Castle Bay in the island of Barra had to be supplied in May; then Stornoway; then Lerwick in Shetland; then Balta Sound in the northmost isle of Unst, in the presbytery of Burravoe, which for many years returned Dr. Charteris as its representative elder to the General Assembly. Mrs. Charteris’ family were often at Witchhill (eerie and suggestive name!) close to Fraserburgh,

another great seat of the herring industry, and Boddam was not far off. In the late autumn the east coast fishers find their way for a lucrative season to Yarmouth and Lowestoft, where they have always been distinguished by their excellent reputation, and by refraining from Sunday labour, and their observance of Christian worship. Those toilers of the deep in the exercise of their dangerous calling seem to feel a special need of the support and consolations of religion. Their appetite for preaching betokens anything but 'sermon-weariness.' Up at Wick, for example, a minister deputy would begin his Sunday work by preaching to a forenoon congregation which multiplied itself by seven in the afternoon. He would then betake himself to the wind-swept Brae-head and begin his service, surrounded by a little knot of respected leaders among the fisher folk, whom he would invite to offer prayer. Rarely if ever would 'the soul's sincere desire' be uttered in more reverent, simple, and touching language than in those approaches to God. And when the ambassador of Christ delivered his message he would find an ever-growing crowd, hundreds of eager listeners, apt to complain of being cheated with anything less than a sermon of forty minutes. Then in the evening the huge church with its deep galleries would be crammed with men and women, and the singing would be something to be remembered all through life. As it was there, so it was and continues to be wherever the fisher folk migrate. No class is more outwardly and inwardly responsive than they. Meetings arranged through the week never leave the workers idle. And one particular form of helpful ministry is to tend medically the many hands wounded by the 'gutting knife' and rendered sorer by the soaking brine. Miss K. H. Davidson, deaconess, has given many years of devoted service to this work, and has been instrumental in building a choice rest-house at Yarmouth. Others have been erected at Lerwick and Balta Sound in Shetland. Circumstances are changing somewhat since the sailing boat is being superseded by the steam drifter, but there is ample scope yet, and manifest



gratitude, for Christian work among the fisher folk. Wherever possible the deputies, long guided by Dr. Thomas Young, minister of Ellon, have worked in co-operation with other churches.

Another class to which Dr. Charteris' committee turned their attention were the *farm servants*. Dr. A. Irvine Robertson and the Rev. Hugh M'Master, with representative country ministers, have sought to help them, holding out the friendly hand, though without patronage, to men and women. The bothy system does not represent a high type of Christian family life. It has its hardships and temptations. Many of the young men particularly move about from place to place, and it is difficult for the minister sometimes to get into living touch with them as he would like; so that many ministers have welcomed the coming of a special agent, whether minister or lady deputy, as an opportunity for drawing closer the Christian ties which bind the farm servant class in the large majority of parishes to the Church of Scotland. The relations of master and servant are by no means what they once were, and it is not always easy tactfully to mediate between them. Yet the Church has endeavoured to make friendly appeal to both so far as the needful conditions of work will allow, especially in connection with the care of horses and cattle, so that facilities for attending public worship may be found, and all encouraged to take advantage of them. The Rev. Dr. Gray of Auchterless, himself employed in early days in agricultural work, contributed to the *Life and Work Magazine* during its first years most admirable 'Talks with Farm Servants'; and a good many copies of his little volume still find ready sale. The committee, guided by such men as the late Rev. Dr. Thomas Hardy of Fowlis Wester and the Rev. James Bonallo of Auldearn, have made repeated efforts for the education and uplifting of the vagrant children of that peculiarly difficult class, the tinkers of Scotland. Their wandering habits have enabled them for long to evade unwelcome regulation by Acts of Parliament. Recent legislation happily promises to be more effective,

if it is really put in force. It is a blot upon our civilisation that so many of this class are still unable to read and to write; and the wise minister will seize every chance he gets to reach them, for, though absentees from the house of God, they are as a rule quite accessible to Christian kindness.

A branch of work which from the first Dr. Charteris deemed of high importance, and which under Dr. George Wilson's sub-committee received special prominence, was that of *Mission Weeks*. The idea was to send to parishes where the minister really desired it, and would make due preparation and fitting arrangements, a minister of proved experience in evangelistic work, to present the Gospel in direct and consecutive form, generally from Sunday to Sunday, if possible including both days. It goes without saying that some men have more aptitude for this than others. The ministry which is without it is not likely to be useful: the ministry which has most of it is likeliest to reach human souls with the Divine message. It gives an aim to preaching, it concentrates attention upon truths that are central and vital, it seeks to apply them to mind and heart, conscience and will, to remove prevalent misapprehensions, to meet possible difficulties, to encourage and stimulate the seeker after God, to arouse and guide those who are sleeping in their sins. It is difficult, almost impossible, to generalise about the sort of preaching prevalent over a whole country; yet at any time, and especially in our own time, applied Christianity is the most urgent need of the Church of Christ. The Committee on Mission Weeks has been a constant reminder to all ministers, for their own preaching, that while the Christian teacher is perfectly entitled at times to have regard to portions of his intellectual territory which seem remote, but always in the light of revealed truth, his main concern is with the centre rather than with the circumference, his chief duty to preach the Word made flesh for our salvation. Those who know best about the operations of this section of Dr. Charteris' work would be the first to acknowledge, as he often did, that there is much



Christian work which no man can tabulate, and much Christian life which no man can chronicle.

*Conferences* at important centres throughout the country—sometimes in connection with Synod meetings—were occasionally utilised as rallying points in a particular district for calling attention to the claims of Church work; and it was notable that the committee did not confine its attentions merely within its own limits, but on the contrary did its utmost to foster all important branches of that work, and to widen the missionary outlook at home and abroad. When his health permitted, Dr. Charteris was ever ready to bear a hand in preaching or in special addresses.

Deeply convinced of the power of the Press as an influential auxiliary to the living voice of the pulpit, Dr. Charteris procured the Assembly's approval of the proposal to establish a *magazine* for general parochial circulation. Towards the end of the year 1878 he prepared and issued an introductory and explanatory circular. It pointed out that among the religious penny magazines in circulation, none occupied the place for which this one was designed. All others were addressed to Englishmen, and were full of reference to English manners and customs, which were often very nearly unintelligible to the untravelled Scot. Ministers who had tried them, adding a local supplement, were most impressed with their unsuitableness, and had pressed the committee to speak to their countrymen with a Scottish tongue. They hoped to disappoint the fears of those who thought they might encroach on the sphere of the *Missionary Record*, which was a chronicle in detail of work done by the Church of Scotland through its committees, and was indispensable. They sought to represent the influence of Christian life in all the manifold forms of human activity and concern. The Christian Church had never yet made full use of the mighty power of the Press; certainly the Church of Scotland never had. The Press had made a revolution for good or ill, in every family in the land; but the Christian Church was only beginning to see what could be done

with its help: to prove by reports of congregational work and pastoral letters how much the printing press could do to bind congregations together, and to deepen their interest in the work of Christ both among themselves and throughout the world. It meant an incalculable advance in deeds of love and charity. They could not go on without a circulation of 35,000 at least; their main trust was in the personal efforts of ministers, through their parochial organisation; and they had been encouraged by orders for 25,000 copies before even going to press. 'We shall doubtless have to learn and to unlearn much as experience shall teach us, but we hope to keep before us the one aim, to promote pure and undefiled religion in our beloved land. And we expect the success which we shall do our best to deserve; looking to Him who, we believe, is sending us.' Dr. Charteris, the chief promoter, edited *Life and Work* for twelve months, and saw it safe on the rails. He was much ridiculed at first for saying the magazine could not live with a smaller circulation than 30,000, and that they would get it! At one time the committee met in his absence (for he had broken his arm), and found that the proposed magazine was too perilous a venture, and must be abandoned. He took all the responsibility, but raised a guarantee fund of £3000 to give commercial confidence—it was never needed—and went on with the undertaking. At the outset the committee were their own publishers, and owed much to Messrs R. & R. Clark, Printers, and especially to the late Mr. James Kirkwood, Dr. Charteris' fellow-member in Tolbooth, for help and counsel on the business side of the venture. Mr. David Douglas, Publisher, later rendered substantial service.

January 1879 saw what some called the 'Pink-skinned Magazine,' bearing on its front the symbols of the plough and the anchor, and the title *Life and Work*, 'a parish magazine, published monthly under the sanction of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.' The contents, thoroughly Scottish, began with the introductory notice aforesaid. Next came a sermon on 'The Higher



Life,' by Principal Tulloch, from the text 'If ye then be risen with Christ,' Col. iii. 1, 2. R. M. Ballantyne began his story 'Philosopher Jack : a tale of the Southern Seas,' and it rejoiced in the sole illustration. Dr. J. R. MacDuff contributed a poem on 'The mystery of Child Death.' The novelist, Mrs. L. B. Walford, a daughter of the well-known John Colquhoun (author of *The Moor and the Loch*), sent a story aptly entitled 'The First Cruise of the Good Ship *Bethlehem*; or, His Two Half-Crowns.' Then there were Bible thoughts for the Sabbaths of the month, being texts and quotations from Matthew Henry, Bishop Wilberforce, Rowland Hill, and Dean Alford. 'The Finance of Young Men, by a Country Minister,' followed. A column was filled with 'Hints as to Conduct'; a poem on 'Prayer' by Archbishop Trench; and an explanation of the phrase 'Defender of the Faith.' The sixteenth, the children's page, was written by that veteran juvenile, Dr. W. H. Gray of Lady Yester's—Dr. Charteris' minister of student days—on 'The Little Maid, A Good Example,' and told of the Hebrew slave-girl in Naaman's household. The May number contained number four of 'Talks with the Farm Servants,' and naturally dealt that month with the subject of 'The Term and Feeing-markets'; also a striking article on 'Vanity of Vanities, sayeth the Preacher,' by Thomas Stevenson, C.E. (father of 'R. L. S.'). It is 'a layman's sermon' of the most solemnising kind.

This ecclesiastical 'Pink 'Un' soon distanced all expectation. Its existence was never in jeopardy: 76,000 copies of the first number were distributed by 620 parish and chapel ministers; and the plea for sympathy, prayer, and help was soon answered. In 1880 two new features were begun. The one was a Gaelic supplement with a monthly circulation of 2200, conducted by Dr. Archibald Clerk of Kilmallie, the renowned Gaelic scholar, and the Revs. Norman Macleod and Robert Blair. The other was a supplement for soldiers and sailors, edited by the Rev. John Paton of Dumfries (an old army chaplain), assisted by the Revs. J. Stewart Wilson of New Abbey and R. W. Weir of Dumfries. These two supplements cost £186,

which for the time exhausted the surplus. In 1880 Dr. M'Murtrie became editor; and it was reported the following year that, while publishers regard the third year of a periodical as 'critical,' and are not surprised by a decline in circulation, *Life and Work* had progressed to 85,000, and was reaching 664 parishes through the minister's order alone. The committee claimed that the magazine compared not unfavourably with many periodicals of higher price in point of literary merit: that in their selection of sermons, essays, tales, Christian biographies, poems, and narratives of research or travel in Bible lands, they had in view to help the spiritual life of their readers, to confirm faith, to form character, and make the Scriptures more attractive because better understood.

It would be difficult to speak too highly of the kindness and good offices of those members of the Royal Scottish Academy and other artists who, without solicitation or suggestion from the committee, undertook to furnish during that year a series of illustrations. Those gentlemen, not all belonging to the Church of Scotland, gave this valuable contribution because they believed that the magazine could be a power for good in Scotland, and in true missionary spirit desired to send the influence of the best art into the homes of the people. Very special thanks were due to Mr. (afterwards Sir) George Reid, P.R.S.A. The idea was his first of all, though it was readily taken up by the other artists with whom he put himself in communication. At this time about seventy local supplements were circulated. One minister printed his with his own press. Many were printed locally. The uniform experience of ministers who tried the supplement was that it awakened great interest: that a good supplement generally more than doubled the circulation of the magazine. Some of them were for whole districts, as in Orkney and the Carse of Gowrie, and the magazine was localised in East and West, in Ceylon, and at Buenos Ayres.

*Life and Work* has been singularly fortunate in its editors. Dr. Charteris' old fellow-student, Dr. M'Murtrie, conducted it, with the aid of an editorial committee, to



the end of 1898, Dr. Charteris wrote him thus on 3rd December:—

'Your retirement from the editorial chair severs the last official link between you and me as office-bearers in Church Life and Work. My remembrance of our alliance is one of unmixed pleasure. You were the most loyal of comrades, most calm of advisers, most sympathetic of trusted friends. Your literary tact in the magazine has been marked and manifest. The editor himself wrote far too little. I don't forget the many and anxious times which preceded your editorship, but even in them you were a faithful comrade. I hope you will be happy in your deserved leisure.'

The Rev. Archibald Fleming of the Tron (now Dr. Archibald Fleming of St. Columba's, London) was his able successor till he crossed the Tweed, and in the hands of Dr. R. H. Fisher the best interests of the magazine have been perfectly safe since then. In the year 1900 the General Assembly thought fit to amalgamate the *Missionary Record* with *Life and Work*. No such check was experienced as had been feared, but an upward movement. In its present penny form the main body of the magazine consists of twenty-four pages, to which is added, 'In Far Fields,' the missionary section of eight pages. In its complete form it also contains the Young Men's Guild supplement of six pages, the Woman's Guild supplement also of six pages, and the News of Female Missions of eight pages—at a total price of 2d. The monthly average reported for 1910 was 123,958, the Guild circulation averaged 32,720, and the number of supplements printed alone by R. & R. Clark, Ltd., the Church of Scotland's publishing agents, averaged 120. The 'News of Female Missions' had a circulation of 23,500, while the supplement for soldiers and sailors numbered 1500 copies monthly, and the Gaelic supplement had a circulation of 4600. These figures speak of conspicuous triumph for the little enterprise conceived and commenced by Dr. Charteris thirty-three years ago.

Dr. Charteris felt impelled to resign the Church Life and Work convenership in 1894, acting on imperative medical advice, and the Assembly put on record their sense

of the great service rendered by one who was virtually the originator of the committee, making mention of his wise counsel and unwearied devotion in directing its operations. He was asked to continue in the capacity of honorary convener, as a retiring officer is allowed after long service to retain the title and wear the uniform of his rank. To find a fit successor was no easy task ; but that most dutiful lieutenant and closest ally, Dr. William Robertson of Coltness, familiar with the whole details of its workings, was induced to agree to carry it on upon the same lines and in a like spirit. He has certainly proved no figure-head, and all the members of his committee bear witness to his fine spirit and loyal and laborious work. He perceived that the committee must retain its autonomy and its identity in all its branches of enterprise, and felt the advantage which would accrue from its being in the hands of one with whom Dr. Charteris could advise and consult for its good without feeling that he was interfering with a new dynasty. Fifteen years of true and attached co-operation with the retiring leader were the best guarantee for continuity of policy tempered by independence of judgment.

It is right that one characteristic and generous trait should not pass unobserved. A disappointing church collection happened to bring the spending but never spendthrift committee face to face with a considerable deficit that spring, though receiving much unpaid help and many liberal subscriptions. It was a painful surprise, and caused Dr. Charteris worry and anxiety. A member present relates :—

‘I can well recall his look as he referred to it—the pallidness of his face, the firmness that gathered round his lips, and the tenseness of feeling that vibrated in his voice. His resolution was quickly taken. He would not go to the Assembly with a deficit. Rather than that, he would pay it off himself. The committee, loyal to their chief, could not, of course, hear of such a thing, but resolved to do their utmost by special subscriptions to wipe out the debt, and succeeded. Messrs. R. & R. Clark, publishing agents for the Church, headed the list. His own subscription came second, and many friends bore their share of



the burden; but his wife and he had resolved to meet the debt from their private funds, none the less. The emergency became cause for thankful congratulation, and his successor's heritage was unburdened.'

A faithful colleague in the financial department was Mr. T. J. Wilson, C.A., whose experience, firmness, and courtesy as honorary treasurer, and willingness to spend and be spent, can hardly be overrated. He and Dr. Charteris showed an entirely justified faith in the willing givers who so generously provided the means for their ever enlarging undertakings.

In the year 1886 the committee first prepared the *Church of Scotland Year-Book*, with the cordial assistance of presbytery clerks and others. It contains parochial lists, annually corrected, in which the name of the minister, the population, the number of communicants, the statistics of Christian liberality, and other information, are appended to the name of every parish. The clerk of the committee, then Mr. J. A. Graham, M.A., matured and shaped the design in all its parts. Many special articles from year to year have been of permanent value, setting forth the Church's history and constitution, her work in the parishes, her corporate work at home and beyond Scotland, and all matters pertaining to the ministry, eldership, and diaconate. It is now found so indispensable as a book of reference that the wonder is how the Church got along without it in preceding years. From all quarters it was hailed as a well-timed and valuable publication.

## CHAPTER XIV

### THE YOUNG MEN'S GUILD

Its Genesis—The Thing and the Name—Its Rise and History—The Guild Text-Books—Its Mission and Missionary—'Kim and his Half-brother'—Guild Magazine—Tents and Territorials—Dr. Charteris' Guild Hymn—The Church's Claims on Young Men.

THERE can be no doubt that Professor Charteris was the father of the Young Men's Guild of the Church of Scotland. The Christian Life and Work report, submitted to the Assembly of 1880, made reference to the formation of a Central Society for young men with branches throughout the country, each presided over by the parish minister, as a direction in which their work might be further prosecuted. Existing associations, generally under the name of the Sabbath Morning Fellowship Association, were recognised; but it was pointed out that a union, branches of which might be established wherever possible, would be a much more powerful means of good. Accordingly the General Assembly authorised the committee to correspond with ministers of the Church and to establish a Young Men's Association if found practicable. Thus loomed into view the Young Men's Guild. Principal J. Campbell Shairp of St. Andrews wrote to Dr. Norman Macleod (of St. Stephen's), who had spoken in this sense in the Assembly, suggesting the creation of a Young Men's Friendly Society for Scotland somewhat on the model of the Scottish Girls' Friendly Society; and having for its main object to awaken in young men a due sense of the great evil of impurity of life, and to help them to overcome it. But what he aimed at was an inter-denominational society, while the project that was taking



shape in Dr. Charteris' mind was both wider in scope and different in character. The Christian Life and Work Committee had been engaged in an inquiry, under remit from the Assembly, regarding the encouragement of young men to undertake the office of the ministry; and were at pains to draw up (by the hands of Dr. Elder Cumming) a full list of all the Bursaries at the four Scottish Universities available for those intending the ministry. They also reported favourable replies from many ministers, and submitted an interim constitution for the association, to be called 'The Church of Scotland's Guild, or Young Men's Union.' In nearly one hundred parishes, associations had been either formed already or were promised to be formed, so that when a young man left his home or changed his place of occupation, he might find ready admission to a brotherhood of kindred spirits, who would surround him with associations of good. It is curious to notice that the name of 'Guild' was at first rather suspect, as either 'ritualistic' or 'municipal' in the eyes of those who wholly approved the thing connoted by it.

But Sir Alexander Anderson truly wrote:—

'The "Guild" is a good old name. Men of old times, old and young, stood stoutly by their guilds; and will again. If Charteris takes it in hand it will become a power.'

Even Dr. Lang of the Barony expressed doubt, on the ground that 'Guild,' as hitherto in general use, had other than ecclesiastical associations. But Dr. Charteris vanquished his opposition by telling him that the title had been suggested to him by its application to the Christian Church in a sermon preached before the Lord High Commissioner by a young minister from the north, so far back as 1861. That young minister was now Norman Macleod's successor in The Barony! In a little while it was found that, like Lord Monboddo's primæval man, it had sat upon its tail till it was worn off, and so 'Union' disappeared, and it became 'Guild' pure and simple! So the Guild was sanctioned as a league, whose

objective was to widen the horizon of young men's alliances, and to stimulate the worthy pride which all have in belonging to a noble corporation.

The new Guild or union was cordially welcomed, and the Assembly approved of its interim constitution, instructing the committee to make it as helpful as possible. It took some time to build and equip the vessel, to launch it, and get it under weigh. It was reported to the Assembly of 1882 that the number of associations affiliated was 83, and the membership (so far as reported) 2787. At a conference of delegates in March there had been 92 representatives from 65 societies; and at a public meeting in Edinburgh the same evening, 500 young men attended. St. Andrew's Church, Calcutta, had formed a branch of the Guild, and invited introductions for those proceeding to that part of India. Of course there were difficulties to be surmounted, and explanations to be given; but the methods were purposely made elastic, and every parish could choose what suited it best. It was an attempt, gradually but increasingly successful, to enlist the young men of the Church for fresh loyalty, and more useful efforts on her behalf.

Great meetings in approbation of the movement were held in the larger centres. Glasgow City Hall was crowded in December 1882, under the presidency of Mr. Archibald Orr-Ewing, M.P., who made a notable speech from the city point of view. He spoke of the great number of young men who crowded into the towns in pursuit of employment and to push their fortunes, often with great success. He pointed out the striking fact that by far the larger proportion of the men who had filled the office of Lord Provost since 1834 were not born citizens of Glasgow. Then he turned to the far larger number who came with the bright hopes and expectations of youth, but would have been much better off had they remained in their country homes. He knew of no more lonely or forlorn position than that of a young man who came into a great city without knowing a single friend to guide or defend him, surrounded with



dangers which sadly often proved his ruin. He would fain hope that what they were about to do might greatly alleviate the dangers of these young men. The object of the Young Men's Guild was to make sure that no young man need occupy that solitary and forlorn position. If he came with his ticket of membership from his native place, he would find gathered round him lots of men of kindred spirit and of similar tastes to his own, and with their aid he would have no difficulty in fighting the battle of life.

That was a sample of many meetings of the Guild in annual conference at changing centres throughout the country, both for business and for discussion, which have proved a salutary and stimulating influence of incalculable benefit to the life of the Guild from that day till this. Whithorn on the south and North Yell in the Shetland Isles, Aberdeen on the east, and far away Tyree on the west (with its Bible-class of 145 members, of whom 82 were guildsmen), showed what could be done to rally the young men of Scotland in the cause of Christ and the Church. So the enterprise steadily grew, till, at the thirtieth annual conference held in Bridge of Allan in 1911, the secretary reported a membership of 30,867, enrolled in 658 parochial branches. A central committee of management, elected partly by the Christian Life and Work Committee, and partly by the Guild (through its annual conference and local councils), takes charge of the whole.

Two series of Guild lectures on 'The Young Man and the several relations of his life' were delivered by eminent preachers in St. George's, Edinburgh, and other churches, and duly published in 1883 and in 1886. It is needless to say that the advance of the Guild was by leaps and bounds; and that, after being tested by thirty years' experience, it remains one of the most vital organisations of the Church. True, it has never reached its legitimate and possible limits, for it may rightfully appeal to all the young men of the Church. Dr. Charteris might have made for it the same reply which he gave to Dr. Story's

criticism of the magazine in an Assembly debate: 'We all might be, and ought to be, a great deal better than we are!' Still it has done much, and may do more. After 'A. K. H. B.' had delivered his Guild lecture at Edinburgh, Dumfries, and at his own St. Andrews to two thousand people in the old Town Church, he reported:—

'Our Guild here is large and hearty: the whole thing is an immense addition to the intensive and defensive power of the Church.'

Of course no one would for a moment suggest—Dr. Charteris himself would have repudiated the notion with disdain—that because he first planned and started the Guild, all credit belonged to him for what it has accomplished. It would be absurd to suppose that he and his committee were a kind of electric storage or battery of constant supply from which there radiated light and heat to young men throughout Scotland. His merit, and that of his fellow-workers, consists in pointing out the ideal to be striven for, and organising for the advantages of united effort. Very generally the fire of purpose was kindled in the hearts of two or three, oftenest perhaps of the minister; and it was a cardinal doctrine with the founder that the minister on the spot could do more to make or mar the Guild than any other. It was, and is, a common objection that it involved too much organisation. Undoubtedly some men have more, and some less, of that special faculty. But his reply generally was:—

'We have too much organisation for what we are doing, but not too much for what we ought to do; and if ever we do more we shall need a good deal more organisation than we have now. You tell me that there is a society for everything under the sun: yes, there is; because the Christian Society, which Christ came to found, is often in practice no society at all. It is a collection of units: a number of knots of lazy critics—a widespread hazy sentiment is the only bond of connection. The gossamer nets that stretch from branch to branch in the dewy morning do as much to bind them together as the bonds between members of a church. The first breeze sweeps them, and the bush is dry. Think of the enormous power of the masses of population of a free country who are beginning to realise their might. That is



a power absolutely uncontrollable unless it be self-controlled. You will not control it by using old devices of social consideration, or by appealing to old traditions; though the Scottish youth is a poor creature if he does not feel the power and glory of the ancient times; nor will you control it by new nostrums of selfish altruism or of calculated self-interest. If ever the mass of men is to be controlled it will be from within, and as it grows more conscious of its resistless might, it can never be ruled and guided but by the grace of God that comes in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Therefore the existence of such an influence as the Young Men's Guild is to be looked upon with favour and with hope, because it is upon the right line and taking the right way of doing a thing that greatly needs to be done. Therefore, as a Churchman, I rejoice to see the chivalry of young Scottish hearts finding an army in which it is proud to be enrolled, a cause to which it can give its best ardour in the old Church.

‘These young men have a duty to the sheltering Church—a covenant of salt, and they know it. Her honour is in their hands, and they recognise it. But there is something higher far than even the pride of Scottish blood. These young men serve themselves heirs to a more ennobling heritage; for it is not only the cause of Scotland, but it is the Kingdom of Christ. They say the mass of men is growing more careless and selfish. I know not that. It seems to me to have hopeful bearings toward betterment, that great mass; but whether or not the carelessness be growing, it is something to have ground to believe that the members of this Guild will not increase it, but all will do their very best to lessen it. Our Guild has great possibilities of good. Where will they be ten years hence? Preaching the Gospel in heathendom, or healing the sick in distant colonies, or clearing ground for a garden farm in the primæval forest; or preaching the Gospel, healing the sick; doing honest work in some warehouse at home; or having their brow wet with honest sweat as they do the work of handicraft their fathers did before them in their native village. Who can tell? But if each one of them is a living epistle of Christ, what a wonderful power will the news of Christ in their lives have on the great world of mankind. The Guild is an actual means of good: the minister's right hand, and his help in every good work. Is it perfect? We admit the reverse. It needs to be established in more than one-half of the parishes in Scotland, it needs to draw in more of the young men where it exists, and make the Guild increasingly attractive to them. As James Hogg said of his poem, “Bonny Kilmeny”—“It's no perfect: nothing human is perfect; but I allow that it is as near perfect as anything human can be!” The best of the whole Guild is better than any one branch, and in the conference the delegates

of each branch are so brought into close contact with that which is best, as to go home and stimulate their own branch to higher things. Thus we see—any one can see—how the tone of the Guild is rising.'

The founder was present at twelve of the annual conferences, and he coveted earnestly the best gifts for the Guild. For its motto was chosen: 'We seek the Kingdom of God and His righteousness.' It was a surprise and joy to him when Professor Emile de Laveleye, the renowned political economist, closed his speech to the students at the Edinburgh Tercentenary by bidding them take the Scriptures in their right hand and political economy in their left; and should they ever seem to conflict, then to prefer their right-hand guide. And he quoted the Guild's motto as his last words.

Dr. Charteris discovered a Scottish peculiarity illustrated by the question, 'Where will the Guild be of use? In town or in the country?' Some cautious advisers in cities assured him that he had no idea of the difficulty of establishing the Guild in large towns, since it was so obviously for the benefit of the country; while equally wary country friends told him that their young men would not care for what was clearly a thing of the town. But he reminded the country ministers, who were often complaining of isolation and of being at their wit's end about the young men who left their parish for town, that a letter of commendation gave them their special chance; and he appealed to town ministers whether the newcomers might not be organised to bring in the wanderers, and to make straight ways for the feet of the perplexed of their own age. The Guild was not designed to be a white elephant kept and fed for ceremonial occasions. The extent to which young men were drifting from her was a question forced on the Church's attention, and often deplored. This was the plan propounded to bridge the gulf between the Sunday school and the Communion Table. It aims at bringing the minister and young men into friendly touch, and helping the cultivation of Christian friendship among young men themselves; also the promotion of Bible study, public and



private, and the spread of missionary intelligence and interest. Above all, it inculcates the duty of rendering personal service to the cause of Christ. It assumes that right worship is the prerequisite and inspiration of all true service. It encourages the fellowship meeting, or alternatively the Guild Bible-class for young men, taught usually by the minister or an elder. Intellectual training or discipline may be found in the Literary Society. Athletics and golf are not frowned upon, but play a useful part in the Guild's work: while Psalmody Associations, Temperance Societies, and Rambling Clubs sometimes also find favour.

The General Assembly's Commission on the Religious Condition of the People bore testimony to the fact that:—

'While, of course, there were exceptional circumstances in which it was not the case, yet the evidence submitted to them all over the country served to show that the Guild had been, as it was designed to be, a nursery of the best and most fruitful kind for zealous and intelligent workers in the service of the Church, the Sunday school, and every other branch of Christian activity.'

It is but one spring of the Water of Life that has been found and guided in parishes where it is tried. In some it was not believed to exist: in others it trickled beyond the parish church's bounds. Now it is utilised, and a Guild is found to be as natural a part of a church's organisation as her eldership or her communion roll. It was once thought with alarm that a Young Men's Guild might be 'dangerous' (as dangerous as the counsellors of Rehoboam) to minister and kirk-session; but that bogie has been long laid to rest. It is always constitutionally placed under the kirk-session, and has evoked the enthusiasm and ready help which a living kirk-session will always welcome. It has in a marked degree proved a recruiting ground for the ministry and mission-field. Sixty-seven guildsmen have become missionaries. Guildsmen, in ever-growing numbers, are called to enter the kirk-session: while to subtract Guild members would leave a vast gap in the ranks of Sunday school teachers. Historically also

the name has been justified, for Dr. Charteris used to say :—

‘If we took a word from ordinary use and made it sacred, we were only doing what the Christian Church did in the early days, when it met under the shelter of Roman law as a Benefit Society or a Burial Club: in our day the name is sanctified by sacred use.’

It is of course impossible within our limits even to enumerate Dr. Charteris’ chief fellow-workers in this department. The Church’s foremost preachers willingly responded to his call for Guild sermons. In 1885 the Church Life and Work Committee instituted a system of examinations and essay competitions with prizes—the subjects prescribed being partly Biblical and partly literary, which attracted hundreds of competitors who gave in essays. This of itself exercised a valuable educational influence on thousands in Guilds and Bible classes.

An issue of Guild Text-Books was next arranged for, the subjects being entrusted to men of eminence and competent knowledge. The first was a brief sketch of the *History of the Church of Scotland*, by the Very Rev. Dr. P. M’Adam Muir, now of Glasgow Cathedral. It possesses much literary merit, and fills a niche in popular Church history which for long stood empty. Twenty-one Text-Books in all have now been put forward; those earliest published being on *Christian Evidences*, by Principal Stewart of St. Andrews; *The New Testament and its Writers*, by the Rev. Dr. J. A. Maclymont of Aberdeen (joint editor of the series along with Dr. Charteris); *Life and Conduct*, by the Very Rev. Dr. J. Cameron Lees of St. Giles, K.C.V.O.; *The Old Testament and its Contents*, by the Rev. Professor James Robertson of Glasgow; *Landmarks of Church History*, by the Rev. Professor Henry Cowan of Aberdeen; *The Religions of the World*, by Principal George M. Grant of Kingston, Canada; and *Our Lord’s Teaching*, by the Very Rev. Dr. James Robertson of Whittingehame. Many of these sixpenny booklets have likewise been published in Guild library form, to which ten more have



also been added, including Dr. Charteris' *A Faithful Churchman*, and the *Missionary Expansion of the Reformed Churches*, by the Rev. Dr. J. A. Graham of Kalimpong. The total printed for home circulation now reaches 572,600. A number of these books are each year prescribed for study by different denominations and societies at home and abroad, including the Presbyterian Churches in England, Wales, Canada, and the United States; while different books of the series have, with the permission of the committee, been translated into other languages, such as Gaelic, Welsh, French, Dutch, Portuguese, Hindi, Marathi and Tamil (in India), Malagasy (Madagascar), and even Singhalese. Thus the literary mustard-seed in growth already stretches across the globe.

Mr. M. G. Thorburn, of Glenormiston, was constrained to preside for eighteen years over the Missionary Council; and Mr. W. H. Mill, for ten years honorary treasurer of the Guild, is now Mr. Thorburn's successor, even though bearing for a term the burden of the chairmanship of the Edinburgh School Board. The first secretary of the Guild (for one year) was Mr. W. P. Paterson, student in Divinity, who now, as Professor of Divinity in Edinburgh University, teaches and inspires a large proportion of the Church of Scotland's theological students, and takes foremost rank among Assembly debaters. He has contributed a valuable Guild text-book on *The Apostles' Teaching* (Part I.: The Pauline Theology). On the occasion of entering on his professorial work at Aberdeen he wrote Dr. Charteris from Crieff, 5th September 1894:—

'I am impelled to confess how much I feel myself your debtor, and how unique is my sense of obligation towards you. It was you who made the Church of Scotland known to me, and, as I know it and love it, it is inseparably interwoven with your personality and your work.'

But perhaps his greatest gift to the Guild is this, that as Andrew 'first findeth his own brother Simon Peter,' so he found his Guild brother John Anderson Graham, in the sense of discovering and recommending him for his successor in the secretaryship. That meant a great deal

more than even he knew; for in devotion to his chief and sympathy with his ideas, as well as in efficiency and enthusiasm for the cause, Mr. Graham has been recognised as the Guild's most important asset. He was the very life and soul of the movement during student days, and in him were evolved all the needed qualities of an organising leader for foreign missionary work.

The relation of the Guild to Foreign Missions was first discussed at the Glasgow Conference of 1886; and, indeed, every new phase of work undertaken has been the outcome of a proposal made at one of these annual gatherings. Dr. Charteris presided next year at Galashiels. When the committee of management submitted their report, at first their thoughts turned towards Blantyre, in Africa; but after consultation with the Foreign Mission Committee, Kalimpong was fixed upon as a field possessing a certain desirable individuality of its own. At this juncture Mr. Graham was led, from the conviction of the vital importance of such a mission to the life of the Guild, to offer himself as their first missionary; and all perceived that his previous connection with the branches at home would make him their most eligible representative abroad. At the Kirkealdy Conference of 1888 he offered to go down into the mine if his brothers at home 'would hold the ropes.' Nobly has he persevered since then; nobly have his brothers helped him. It was hoped that they might provide his salary and give something for mission outlays, say £300 or £400 a year; and, as a matter of fact, what began in 1888 with £308 has risen till it is above £1200 a year.

With marked solemnity the Conference unanimously ratified the choice of its secretary after seven years' experience of him, and then knelt together and dedicated both mission and missionary to God in prayer. It was the best thing the Guild had yet done, and has been fraught with unspeakable blessing to all. Mr. Graham's ordination took place in St. George's Church, Edinburgh, on Sunday evening, 13th January 1889, when over a thousand Guildsmen gathered from all parts of Scotland



to stand by their missionary and witness the solemn rite, in that same church where, on 12th August 1829, Thomas Chalmers ordained Alexander Duff, the Church of Scotland's first official ambassador to the non-Christian world. Dr. Norman Macleod delivered the ordination charge, and declared:—

'It was no exaggeration to say that this occasion had no parallel in the history of the Church of Scotland. They could not but regard such an event as an augury of better things to come. They saw in it a sure token of growing missionary intelligence and enthusiasm among all classes of the people. They hailed it as giving promise of a day of nobler toil and more abundant sacrifice for Christ than they had ever seen; and they welcomed as their fellow-labourers the youth of their Church and country who had banded themselves together, not only for the purposes of self-culture, but also to take part in the modern crusade of subjecting the kingdoms of this world to the Kingdom of Christ.'

Mr. Graham at Kalimpong entered upon a field of singular interest. It was an extension of the work of the revered pioneer missionary, the Rev. William Macfarlane, commenced in Darjeeling in 1870. When that devoted man began his work the whole district was virgin soil. The scenery is about the most beautiful in the world—a country of ridges that culminate in the snow-clad range of Kinchinjanga, over 28,000 feet high. The Guild mission occupies what may be roughly described as British Bhutan. Independent Sikkim lies beyond. Mr. Graham himself in his book calls it 'On the threshold of three closed lands,' represented by Nepal, independent Bhutan, and Thibet. The people are of diverse race and tongue and creed: the aboriginal Lepchas, a gentle race, are devil worshippers; the more energetic Goorkhas, from Nepal, who form the bulk of the inhabitants as crofters and labourers in the tea gardens, are Hindus by religion and warlike in character. The Bhot race, nominally Buddhistic, contribute a considerable proportion from its sections of Thibetans, Bhutanese, and Sikkim-Bhutias; the plains at the foot of the mountains—called the Dooars—are peopled by Mechis, Rajbunsis, and Garos. Mohammedans and people of

mixed Asiatic races and religions are also found. The total population for whose conversion the mission works cannot be far off a quarter of a million. Mr. Macfarlane had divided the country into parishes, working it by catechists or native pastors, and the Hindu system of village councils or *panchayats* was ecclesiastically adapted to the Scottish kirk-session, which it in some degree resembled. Each month a central *panchayat*, composed of representatives from the various congregations, is held, much like a Scottish presbytery. Ordinary Sunday services are held as at home, with a weekly prayer-meeting for converts. There are Sunday schools for children and adults, and Guilds for men and women; while open-air evangelistic meetings and distribution of Christian literature are used to bring in the heathen. The Scottish Universities' Mission prosecutes its work of training students for the three divisions of the Eastern Himalayan mission. Most of the humble churches have been almost entirely built by the people themselves. The fine central church at Kalimpong stands like a lighthouse, commanding a wide district. It was erected as a memorial to Mr. Macfarlane, and is typically Scottish in appearance. Dr. Herdman of Melrose, the respected Indian chaplain and Foreign Mission convener, laid its foundation-stone on 24th February 1890. It now greatly requires enlargement. In the Guild division alone, of the threefold Eastern Himalayan mission, there were reported 2193 baptized Christians, of whom 859 were communicants; the baptisms during 1910 numbered 112; day schools, 34; night schools, 32; scholars, 1074; Government grants, £377; European subscriptions amounted to £476; native collections, £18. There are here fourteen parishes, each in charge of native catechists. The Rev. Namthak of Kalimpong is the first called and inducted pastor wholly supported by his own congregation. The schools in the district are under the charge of the mission, the Government Mohammedan inspector of schools having reported that they could not do better than entrust education to the Scots missionaries. The industrial department for women is managed by Mrs.



Graham and the Hon. Mary Scott, with other ladies, and lace-making and embroidery are taught. There is a weaving school; and carpentry and carving are taught. The Darjeeling pulpit of elaborate Celtic tracery pattern was made there.

The Rev. Evan Mackenzie works directly among the Thibetans. He has had the unique experience of being in intimate relations with the two great heads of Buddhism. He accompanied the Tushi Lama on a visit to Calcutta, acting as interpreter; and when the Dalai Lama fled from Lhassa, he greeted him with a Thibetan welcome as he passed Kalimpong to sojourn in Darjeeling.

The Charteris Hospital at Kalimpong, under the medical missionary and missionary nurse, is the centre of a most beneficent work, in which the healing power of the Gospel is shown forth. There is accommodation for twenty-eight patients—the beds, like the hospital, being largely supported by branches of the Woman's Guild. Every catechist is more or less a doctor, carrying with him medicines which strike a blow at the influence of the heathen religious teachers; for their rites and incantations are largely sought after, because of their imagined efficacy in expelling the demons which are supposed to cause the sickness. Associated with the Guild mission is the work in the Dooars, where Rev. Peter Milne, B.D., is missionary minister. He not only supervises an Indian pastor and 13 catechists among 1795 baptized Christians (largely Coolies in the tea gardens), but is also welcomed as he travels to and fro in his capacity of chaplain to the tea-planters. The Rev. T. E. Taylor, whose marriage to Miss Constance Lees was solemnised by Dr. Charteris, died of black-water fever here on Christmas Day 1906, when no fewer than one hundred planters gathered to his funeral. His wife predeceased him, and both are commemorated by medallions at Kalimpong, where their bodies rest in the graveyard beside Mr. Macfarlane, the founder of the mission. Mr. and Mrs. Taylor were among those to whom Dr. and Mrs. Charteris were most deeply attached.

It should be stated that Mr. Graham's great organising ability and practical sagacity led to successive Lieutenant-Governors of Bengal giving to the mission grants of land for instruction in agriculture and horticulture. Best of all, the mission has been in all its departments saturated through and through with the genuine spirit of Christianity. Dr. Richter, the celebrated German authority on missions, informed the present writer that in all his travels throughout India he had discovered no mission more completely equipped or so many-sided, and in all respects so satisfactory, as the Guild mission of the Church of Scotland: and this of course was said with full acknowledgment of the excellent work performed by many other missions. The writer was himself privileged in 1907 to be an eye-witness of what Christianity has done for Kalimpong, and to take part in the opening of the Robertson Hostel, named after Dr. William Robertson, the present wise and laborious Convener of the Church Life and Work Committee, and his late wife and true yoke-fellow, the Miss Grant of Tolbooth days. There the pupils coming to benefit by higher education will indeed be admirably housed.

Another, though an indirect, outcome of the mission was thus described by Dr. Charteris in a Guild letter of 1903:—

‘There has been triumph also in Mr. Graham's great enterprise of the St. Andrew's Colonial Homes, whose object is to raise the hapless Eurasians, for the most part the children of European fathers and heathen mothers. They have long been despised and neglected by Europeans and Indians alike. I have myself often heard good Christians, even missionaries, speak heartlessly and hopelessly of all attempts to admit the Eurasian, even after many generations, to social equality with a European. Our Guild missionary had a higher faith; he did not believe in such “caste.” He founded the Colonial Homes to rear and train the Eurasian children, and to give them a chance in life. Indian papers tell us how Indian governors and statesmen, merchant magnates and brave soldiers, are proud to help the Colonial Homes. They are the greatest new fact in Indian missions. I have twice been stopped on the street by men I did not know, members of other Churches than ours, that they might tell me



that they counted Graham and his work the most remarkable facts that had impressed them in India. The Durbar medal was a fine acknowledgment of his work.’

The Kaiser-i-Hind medal has been followed by King George’s bestowal of a C.I.E. (Companion of the Indian Empire) on the Guild missionary. ‘The Indian Dr. Barnardo’ has had the Christian audacity to tackle a problem which was the despair of Indian administrators, and the reproach of British Christianity. Liberally backed by those in India who best know it, and by those in this country who feel the discredit of leaving the poor British and Eurasian children unassisted, he has conceived and carried out the plan of rescuing these little ones from their squalid surroundings in the sweltering plains, by removing them to the healthy hills at Kalimpong, where they may be built up in body, mind, and soul, and set out in life with every prospect of commencing an honourable career in India or the Colonies. The captain of the training ship where the first group of boys qualified for the Navy told Dr. Graham that they were the most truthful boys under him. Of ‘Kim’s half-brothers’ and sisters, three hundred and fifty are now enjoying the benefits of these Kalimpong homes, in each of which a ‘house-mother’ and an ‘auntie’ care for a large family of twenty-six. The children learn by precept and example the dignity of labour, and are prepared for a strenuous life after school age. No servants are kept, and the ladies inculcate lessons of self-help. Besides being trained by teachers, mostly Scottish, they are taught garden and farm work by a British certificated teacher of agriculture recognised by Government. Presbyterians, Church of England, and Protestant Nonconformists have each one-third representation on the board of management. No religious difficulty exists. The Bishop of Calcutta visits the Homes to confirm young people of his communion. Many touching stories of tragedy are discovered. Thus a Scottish minister found a boy of twelve basely deserted in a miserable native quarter of Calcutta. When he came he had almost no clothing, and his luggage

consisted of a Bible wrapped in a rag. After training, that boy distinguished himself by taking second place in one of the divisions of a Sunday school examination open to all India. Many girls have been rescued from an almost certain and terrible fate. Lord Curzon, the late Viceroy, wrote Dr. Graham on 16th September 1908 concerning 'one of the gravest questions that confront the philanthropist or the statesman. The former is, on the whole, more successful in solving it than the latter, and your efforts, already so successful and so encouraging, deserve the support for which they appeal.' *Emeritus* Professor Sir A. R. Simpson, M.D., wrote of Dr. Graham on 4th October 1908: 'I think I may almost say that my son and I saw no more important and interesting mission work in our tour round the world than his.' The great movement which aims at raising £300,000 for the education of poor Europeans and Eurasians in India owes its existence to pitying love and faith similar to Dr. Graham's, but far more to his brilliant achievements in Christian philanthropy. These homes are studded over the hill above Kalimpong, and form no part of the Church's mission there. Still Dr. Graham is far more than his title of honorary superintendent denotes. Dr. Charteris was his confidant and counsellor in fostering this great scheme, while he continued a generous support to Dr. Graham's primary and proper work in its manifold details.

An important forward step was the publication of *Guild Life and Work for Young Men*, beginning in 1887, a record of news and a literary organ containing articles of special interest to young men. Its circulation, exceeding 32,700, has immensely aided all cognate enterprises, and its popularity has been largely due to Mr. J. W. Douglas of Glasgow, who has edited its twenty-five volumes with conspicuous success. A constant feature has been the letters of the Guild missionary, whether direct from the field or in the shape of furlough notes, which have kept the members always in immediate contact with the joys and sorrows of the mission, its difficulties and aspirations.



The Guild's interest in temperance was not allowed to evaporate in mere sentiment. The convener of its Temperance Council, Mr. W. M. Ramsay, soon discovered an opening, which young men have entered into with great advantage at the summer Scottish camps for Volunteers and (now) Territorials. Guild tents were speedily introduced under military sanction. In them, properly furnished, an abundant supply of magazines and newspapers helps to beguile leisure time. Writing materials are provided gratis, and light temperance refreshments are on sale. The young citizen soldiers find here a link with home, a city of refuge from temptation, and a means of promoting good-fellowship. The wet canteen finds, in consequence, very little patronage, and all ranks allow that discipline and sobriety have been measurably promoted. Lord Haldane, when Secretary for War, gave his strong official imprimatur to these tents, which are now conducted also under a friendly compact with the Guild of the United Free Church and the Y.M.C.A. Enthusiastic Guildsmen gain a hard-working but pleasant holiday in ministering to the wants of their country's defenders, and all expenses are borne without appeal to the national purse. On Sunday evenings, religious meetings with hearty music supplement the Church parades earlier in the day, and attract large audiences: as do the sing-song concerts on week-day evenings.

What is now known as the 'Guild Hymn' appeared first in the Guild magazine for August 1889. Those for whom it was composed will like to know that it was written in the spring of that year when Dr. and Mrs. Charteris were residing on the lake of Como after his prolonged and severe illness, having just parted with the Grahams at Venice. They were staying at that ideal rest-house, the Villa D'Este, which had been a favourite resort of Napoleon the Great. Outside the rocky gardens to the back of the house, full of magnolias and camellias, rise the steep hills commanding lovely views of the finest lake in Europe, and in front lies the exquisite blue water

with little cushioned boats moored at its side. No combination of delightful scenery could make their founder forget *Life and Work*, or give up thinking and planning for his beloved Guild; but one day he tore himself away from congenial company and set off for a solitary sail up the lake in the warm southern sun. With returning health he was longing to do his best to attempt a hymn which might help the young men of Scotland. He had little confidence in his literary gift, and made no claim to poetic inspiration. The hymn was not meant for venerable divines or for acute critics; it was written for young men: it is supposed to be sung by them at the opening of the life-long battle for faith and purity. The idea underlying his lines was this, that the Saviour expects His followers, not merely to accept His grace and be saved by it, but each likewise in His strength to fight against the devil's power in himself and in the world; that the Lord calls His followers not only to safety but to service. Every line is instinct with his deepest conviction, especially the stanza beginning:—

‘ And yet, O Christ, our Saviour King,  
Unless Thou keep us Thine,  
Our faith will soon dry at the spring,  
Our love will shrink and pine.’

These four lines are the very embodiment of his firm belief. Many a time he used to say: ‘If in the morning I have been hurried, and have not taken right time for prayer and for the Bible, I go wrong all the day.’ So this ‘slogan’ (Gaelic for battle-cry) really describes the feeling with which the Guild’s founder looked out on earthly life. To him it was a battle, which he and every other Christian had to fight, and for which each must be daily armed with the whole armour of God. And he prayed that under the shield and power of the Great Commander every Guildsman might fight it out to the end. The hymn itself was first sung at the Dundee Conference of 1889, and was voted a decided success; for, apart from minute criticism of details, there is a swing and a flow in the



verses suitable to an army on an eager and united march. Then the setting in four-part harmony by the late D. A. L. Peace, Mus. Doc., of Glasgow Cathedral, musical editor of the *Scottish Hymnal*, who named his tune 'Guild,' entirely caught the spirit of the words and their refrain. The effect when sung by a vast number of male voices is singularly impressive. Dr. Charteris never expected his verses to be so appreciated, and never asked any committee to insert them in a book. They were requested for the *Christian Endeavour Hymnal* as a helpful inspiration to many, possessing the strong masculine ring so needed in the young Christian life of to-day. Leave was willingly granted. When the *Church Hymnary* fell to be compiled in 1897, Dr. Charteris was not personally knocking at the joint committee's gate, but, without his knowledge, some representatives of the Young Men's Guild pointed out that they desired to have in the Hymnary this hymn, often used at their large conferences and Guild meetings. Critical batteries were unmasked, and various recensions were proposed. Dr. Charteris was not anxious that it should be 'faultily faultless,' and suggested that even 'Rock of Ages,' if critically examined, fails to fulfil every canon of perfection. He made, however, some of the alterations suggested, and deeming he had done enough, wrote half-laughingly, half-seriously, that he 'would not alter another comma.' The Guild, having adopted it as their own, naturally did not want many changes. Accordingly, 'Believing fathers oft have told,' hymn No. 259 of the *Church Hymnary*, will lastingly perpetuate his name.

'Am I my brother's keeper?' was a favourite text for a sermon to young men, but its meaning always included 'my sister's keeper' as well. He was in sympathetic touch with the 'White-cross Army' movement, initiated by Miss Ellice Hopkins, and helped on by the revered and learned Bishop Lightfoot of Durham. Miss Hopkins expressed deep appreciation of a short address of his to the Edinburgh students, saying she had rarely heard anything so exquisitely fit within such brief compass on this thorny and delicate question. Dr. Charteris embodied

the substance of this speech in a leaflet 'To Young Men of the Church of Scotland,' in 1885; and some branches of the Guild added a 'White Cross' section, so that Principal Shairp's suggestion at the beginning was not altogether lost sight of.

Among other methods devised by Dr. Charteris in furtherance of the unity and expansion of the Guild, was the appointment of deputies to visit branches, and to explain its working in parishes which as yet had it not. Guild councils and local conferences were also requisitioned, and thirty-four presbyteries were visited on its behalf. Holiday tours to the Continent were also organised and greatly enjoyed. The New Year's Letter is now an annual institution since Dr. Charteris wrote the first in 1904 as founder and president. The Guild Associate Scheme was commenced in 1896 in order to retain in the ranks those who might remove to places at home and abroad where no Guild existed, and a Workers' Section was commenced in 1897 to deepen a sense of the obligation to serve. This far from complete outline of 'something attempted, something done,' cannot conclude without acknowledgment of the great services of three of Dr. Charteris' most faithful and capable lieutenants. The Rev. Dr. William Robertson of Coltness (convener of Christian Life and Work Committee since 1894) was from the beginning a wise administrator and experienced guide, as chairman of the central committee of management. The Rev. Duncan Campbell of St. Matthews, Edinburgh, served with rare devotion as vice-chairman from 1894 to his lamented death in 1903. His spiritual experience, sound judgment, and excellent literary taste are vouched for by his Guild library volume *Hymns and Hymn-makers*, and his *The Roll-call and other Sermons* was repeatedly placed by Dr. Charteris as only second, in his opinion, to the discourses of the Rev. Dr. John Ker of Glasgow, for unexpected thoughts, ripe wisdom, and insight. On the death of Mr. Campbell, the Rev. K. D. Maclaren, of Cadzow, took his place, and is now chairman.

Dr. Charteris was not insensible to the attractions of



music. He preached at a Guild choir service in St. Giles, on February 23rd, 1890, on 'Praise,' from the text 1 Chron. xvi. 41. His first sentence was:—

'King David was the greatest innovator in worship of whom Scripture contains a record: for he introduced instrumental music to guide popular singing in worship; and he formed the whole tribe of Levi into a guild of various branches, one of which was employed in the musical service of religion.'

Dr. Charteris, when present at the Guild conferences, was ever their life and soul. During its twenty-fifth year he claimed (in Edinburgh) that they had solved some problems and disproved many mournful prophecies. They had shown that young men might form an alliance with perfect loyalty to the Church which sheltered them, and yet maintain their corporate independence and personal individuality. They could now laugh at the lugubrious prediction that they would prefer a cave of Adullam to the slopes of Zion; that either the Guild must be drilled so as to be simply dependent, or that its individual members would go off like globules of quicksilver. No one had foreseen at first to how much the Guild Foreign Mission would lead. It was not languishing, but bourgeoning and growing apace on the Himalayan slopes.

'A Church which spreads the Table of the Lord and the family table beneath the shelter of the goodly tree of our ancestral privileges has a right to more and more intimate service from its young men than any general association can either claim or exercise. He who has never recognised and obeyed the claims of the Church of his birth has no right to forswear them, or neglect them, and betake himself to wider connections. The Church of Christ is the family of the living God, and we are called to our natural place as well-doing sons of that household. That does not separate us from other men, who are doing similar duties elsewhere. If I may speak of my own experience in life, I would say that whatever work I have done for this Church has gained me many friends in other Churches, and has never cost me one. I ask your close attention to some problems not yet solved. First, why are our numbers so small? Partly because our basis is too much confined to the intellectual side. If in theory it is wide enough, it is cramped and limited in

practice. The obligation to write a paper or to deliver an address is one from which the shy lad, who has never been trained to write his thoughts, shrinks, and so he does not join. Sometimes he joins and leaves before the day of his ordeal comes. Then you have lost one to whom you might have done much good, and he has lost an uplifting comradeship that might have been a bulwark in his life. I am not so old as to have forgotten the delights of intellectual battle with my peers: I have felt what a great statesman called the "rapture" of debate: and I know something of what is learned from a thoughtful paper read by a friend. I would have every branch provide for debate and discussion: but grammar and brains and literature do not furnish the whole man, and are not the chief requisites for a Christian life. There is in the tropical mission field a man who came to me many years ago and said: "I have no head, but I have eyes and hands. Can any place be found for me as an intelligent artisan in spreading the Gospel?" The place was found and filled, the not too early brain has been developed; and if his Church is wise he will be ere long ordained a minister, because he is a model of character, and a teacher of eternal truth. Character, conduct, helpfulness are the highest qualifications. Is it failing faith that keeps our numbers down? Are men afraid to own themselves followers of Jesus Christ? This is not only not the case, but the contrary. Far more than when I was young do men and women honour the heroism of one who is an out and out follower of Jesus Christ.

'The great good of the Guild to my mind (wrote the editor of the Guild magazine), is that it furnishes a sphere in which the strongest Christian influences can be brought to bear upon the undecided. You can only get this by getting such young men into the Guild meeting. The Guild is becoming more spiritual every year.' Dr. Charteris preached his last Guild sermon on 25th June 1905 in the parish church at Peebles, from the text, 'God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ': and his last speech to the young men was as chairman of their Guild meeting at Peebles on 8th December 1906.



## CHAPTER XV

### ORGANISATION OF WOMEN'S WORK

The Ministry of Women—Researches and Enquiries—The Pyramid from Guild Members to Deaconesses—Deaconess Institution and Sphere—The First Deaconess—The Pleasance Mission and Hospital—Counsels—The Deaconess Rest.

THERE is scriptural authority for the truth that 'It is not good for man to be alone.' In 1884 a further departure was tentatively put forward for the organisation of Women's Work, which had been often chronicled in the committee's reports. One return from a minister said:—

'The only work in connection with my ministry in this city which I can look upon as especially successful, has been certain mission work undertaken in the East End, carried on by a mothers' meeting, and numbering rather over two hundred. The feature of the work which has been so successful is the evangelistic branch of it: and the success has been, under God, due to the personal dealing with individuals by the ladies in charge and by myself. The results have been very striking—I mean the number of confessed conversions and the changed lives of individuals; and in many cases these have stood the test of years.'

With Dr. Charteris' usual caution and regard for constitutional practice the report in 1885 drew attention to the proposed new departure, which was declared to be a subject of pressing interest. It was pointed out that the Assembly had already sanctioned and regulated Women's Work for Foreign Missions, a movement of great and growing strength, while nothing of the kind had been done for work at home; nothing to train Bible-women in

Scotland, while in England there were many homes for nurses, and training institutions for female mission workers. The time had fully come for the Church to supply her own wants, but the provision and regulation for such special training needed definite inquiry at home and elsewhere. Authority was asked and given for such inquiry, and a definite report with suggestions was brought up next year.

In the meanwhile Dr. Charteris set himself to investigate the principles and practice of Women's Work; and embodied some of his conclusions in his Baird Lectures entitled 'The Church of Christ: its life and work.' These were delivered in Glasgow and Edinburgh in 1887; but their publication was prevented by disabling illness, and they only issued from the press in 1905 (Macmillan and Co., London). He defined the Church according to the New Testament conception as 'The Body of Christ filled with the Holy Spirit of God,' and traced its gifts and functions, as well as its functionaries. It was one of his rooted beliefs that rule had too much absorbed function, to the Church's detriment, both in her unreformed and reformed times; and that the Church of Christ stands free, and indeed ought, in every age to adopt or adapt whatever seems best fitted to fulfil her great commission. He dealt with the ministry of the Word, the care of the poor, the organisation of Women's Work (in chapters vii. and viii.), and the Church's duty to the young. He asked, 'What is the Church we need in these days?' and answered:—

'It is a society of redeemed men and women, banded together to continue and extend Christ's redeeming work upon the earth, bringing sight to the blind, freedom to the captive, the Gospel of God's love to the poor. We can often heal, we can always soothe; we can often break the chains of captivity, we can always minister to those in bonds. And while the heart has woes, and the frame has ills, and society has troubles, there will be the same work of loving-kindness for Christ's people to do as He did in Israel.'

He dwelt upon the sins of drunkenness and uncleanness, and took note of the rising power of materialism all over



the land, as well as the increasing war of classes, and he asserted:—

'The Church, like her Master, will always refuse to be a ruler and a judge, so as to divide the inheritance between contending claimants; but the Church has a message to demand generosity of the men who amass fortunes, a message to enjoin steady industry on the men who are poor, which she has been afraid to proclaim in tones that would be heard above the din of gathering battle.'

He traced the recognition of Women's Work from Phoebe the deaconess, commended by St. Paul (Romans xvi. 1), and the 'Widows' enrolled in the sphere of Timothy's work; and showed how the elegant Roman Pliny, Governor of Bithynia, desirous of ascertaining the truth about Christianity, had reported that he had put to the torture two women who were officially called deaconesses. He quoted the beautiful form of prayer at the solemn service for the ordination of a deaconess, as prescribed in the (so-called) Apostolical Constitutions. He described how the work of a deaconess had naturally flourished more and longer in the Eastern Church than in the West, because of the rigid separation of the sexes among Greeks and Orientals. He touched on the relations of that great bishop and greater preacher, John Chrysostom, with the order, in restricting to the large number of forty the women who aspired to this sacred office in connection with the great church of St. Sophia in Constantinople; and told how two hundred years later the patriarch Cyriacus built a magnificent church in memory of his dead deaconess sister, which was known for centuries as 'The Deaconess Church.' He acknowledged a growing corruption, when the deaconess ceased to go to and fro upon errands of mercy and waited till she was sought out by applicants, or confined her activity to preparing female catechumens for baptism in some central place, becoming something of a sacerdotal official:—

"It is wonderful," he wrote, "how all Christian activity tends to stiffen into formalism, and how in those earnest days robe and ritual and processional solemnity were substitutes for the

lowly ministry of which the Son of Man was the example, and which His first disciples observed and enjoined."

He disarmed the uninformed suggestion of 'Popery' by proving that the deaconess (as Bishop Lightfoot agrees) was not a member of a community, but the officer of a congregation; and that, as the growing admiration of celibacy culminated in the dominance of monasticism, so the female ministry of Scripture was eventually absorbed and abolished. The deaconess then differs fundamentally from the nun, and has a scriptural standing, although the latter succeeded in supplanting her.

Dr. Charteris was not content with historical researches, but took pains by personal investigation to find out what others were doing in this direction. He already knew, by having visited it, the splendid work started by Pastor Fliedner at Kaiserswerth, and when in Egypt the hospital served by deaconesses at Alexandria had powerfully impressed him. Along with Dr. McMurtrie he inspected the great organisations at Mildmay, Harley House (Dr. and Mrs. Grattan Guinness), Dr. Barnardo's Homes, Tottenham (Dr. Laserson's), the London Bible-women's Mission, and the Kilburn (St. Augustine's) Orphanage of Mercy. They spent a night in Manchester, where the superintendent of the City Mission, Mr. J. W. MacGill, an old member of the Church Life and Work Committee, invited all its deaconesses to meet them. The reports of German, French, and Swiss institutions were also carefully studied; and he remarked the kindly human atmosphere of the house at Frankfurt, its 'couthy feeling and the unhurried yet eident look of the sisters.'

Opinion in the Church of Scotland, as represented by the answers to queries, was crystallising in a remarkable manner towards the same conclusions. Many returns showed a general consensus of opinion for reviving the ancient and scriptural order of deaconesses, combined with a Training Institute for women's work; and the desire was widely expressed for a trained worker who should combine the attributes of a capable sick-nurse and the highest type of Bible-woman. It was recognised that





PHOTO. MONTAGU, STURGEON

MRS. CHARTERIS

(1892)

President of the Woman's Guild of the Church of Scotland





a vast amount of consecrated energy exists in the Church, too often running in chance channels of usefulness—sometimes altogether checked and hindered—which might be far better utilised if the existing isolation were broken, and special gifts made specially available for the edifying of the Church. Dr. Charteris accordingly outlined a comprehensive scheme, as instructed by the Assembly, which claimed to be scriptural, practical, within the sphere of the Church's duty, and though new, not revolutionary or novel. It was to be not simply the outcome of the faith of one brave spirit, extraneous to the Church; but for the first time in modern Protestant annals the onward step, for which the Church was ready and the time called, was to be guided by the corporate Church herself, by a system created by her General Assembly, and worked through her presbyteries and kirk-sessions. Enrolment was to be permissive, not compulsory, under elastic conditions which recognised the principles of freedom. Encouraged by the signal favour of the preceding Assembly, Dr. Charteris presented to that of 1887 his scheme for the organisation of women's work, of which the provisional regulations had been previously printed in the Year-Book and Magazine. It was in the form of a pyramid, whose broad base was the Woman's Guild, tapering upwards through Guild leaders and associates to the deaconesses.

The Woman's Guild is an attempt to suffuse with the charities of our holy faith the social relations of those women who are members of a congregation, and to develop in each some one of the powers and functions of members of the one body of Christ. It is not a Young Woman's Guild only, but an attempt to band together all the women in a congregation, so that they may be helpful to each other, and work together for the common cause in Christian faith and fellowship. The Guild leaders were not to be a development of mere officialism, but to seek to develop every form of personal activity among those gifted with time and talents. Dr. Charteris particularly entreated those who wished well to the movement to try to establish this middle grade, and held that to have a branch without

such leaders was only to increase the burden of the minister. Two classes of deaconesses are recognised: *A.* Those whose qualifications have been attested as active workers for seven years. *B.* Those who are trained in the Institution by two years' probation and service. Dr. George Wilson and Dr. P. M'Adam Muir drew up the provisional rules and regulations, of which the Assembly approved and directed that they should be carried into effect. Indeed the scheme had an all too easy passage through the Assembly, and in the following autumn a breeze occurred in the Edinburgh Presbytery which slightly checked the movement. Dr. Phin took exception to what seemed like putting the deaconess above the elder, if she were set apart by the presbytery; and the Church Life and Work Committee, being itself divided in opinion, submitted alternative sets of regulations to the General Assembly of 1888. This resulted in the decision that the deaconess, duly qualified, who purposes to devote herself to Christian work in connection with the Church as the chief object of her life, so long as she shall occupy that position, must apply to be set apart by the kirk-session, who are to intimate their intention to the presbytery.

The first deaconess of the Church of Scotland was Lady Grisell Baillie, who was set apart by the kirk-session of Bowden on 9th December 1888. She was neither young nor a novice, for she had done all that the office denotes in the favoured Border district of Dryburgh during many years. Dr. Charteris said:—

'Her life was unique in my experience as a revelation of happy saintliness, just as her brother, "the Major," led an ideal life as clear as the crystal tones of his voice and the liquid softness of his eye.'

But the unconscious Sir Galahad of the beautiful face and knightly bearing fell asleep on 29th September 1888. Dr. Charteris told in *Life and Work* the services of that unwearied elder, founder of the Border Elders' Union. A poor woman said to his sister: 'He visited me for twenty-two years. He *was* like his Master: he was His very image.'



Deeply affecting is the account Lady Grisell gave of what she called her 'wedding-day.'

'I think you will like to hear about the setting apart of your first deaconess. It was simple and solemn, and will ever be a marked day to me. I was very happy—God only knows how happy—to be permitted afresh to dedicate myself to His blessed service, and give myself wholly to the work of the Church, and to make that my chief object in life, and to be able to make my profession before many witnesses. It was all joy to me. What an honour to be counted worthy of being an office-bearer in the Church of my fathers! I thank God with all my heart, and I thank you, Dr. Charteris. Pray for me, I entreat you, that the grace, wisdom, strength, and guidance I so much need may be given hour by hour. I think you will like to know that the people seemed pleased with the honour conferred on me. They are taking it in this way: that I am to be as far as I can be in my dear brother's place. To keep up his work and to prevent his influence amongst them (which is so *very* great) from fading away. "We want nobody but you to take his place." I look to God with whom are no impossibilities, to cause me, to make me follow the footsteps of His servant, and to strive to carry on his humble, patient, and persevering work. You can well imagine how every heart was touched on Sunday by his absence. Dear, good, frail Dr. Allardyce did his part quite beautifully. For the first time for ages he appeared in the pulpit to begin the service himself, intimating again that Lady G. B. was to be set apart before the blessing. His assistant preached (Dr. A. is not able for much). Before the last psalm Dr. A. said, "Lady G. B. will now come down, and the elders will assemble." I stood in the centre of the church, alone all the time, just opposite the pulpit—the elders on each side. Did not my own dear elder look down on us? Surely our Saviour was present, and would He not let His servant see? First, the Session Clerk read all the papers, every one, and the sentences from your rules. Then Dr. A. went up on to the steps of the pulpit, and put to me the three questions. I raised my head, looked him bravely in the face, and clearly and cheerfully said "I do," "I do," "I do." That was my moment of chief joy, as you will well understand. How delightful to have the chance given one of confessing Christ before men, and how gloriously beautiful to be allowed to say publicly that "His name is all my boast." After my answers Dr. A. pronounced the blessing, "The Lord bless thee" (Numbers vi.), and said I was now "set apart." He then went to the pulpit and addressed me, saying he would not enter on the duties of the office. "You have been doing the work of a deaconess for many years." He then besought me to strive to

follow the example of my brother. He spoke very well, and every one was touched. There was a full church, like on Sacrament Sunday. The dear Admiral, my brother, was much overcome. My feet stood on the same spot where, on the 4th of June 1854, my own dear elder stood when he was ordained. His was an ordination. If his mother's eyes and mine had been opened, we would have seen the Spirit of God descend like a dove and light upon him. There the Spirit did abide. I want your prayers that I too may have a fresh baptism.'

Lady Grisell Baillie, as first deaconess and head of the Woman's Guild, acted as president at the first diet of its conference on 18th November 1891; and none who were present ever forgot the sweet, pleading earnestness and the ringing musical voice that spoke with such winning, imploring attraction: 'Dear friends, God's message to us is—"Go, work to-day in My Vineyard."' Lady Grisell greatly enjoyed her single experience of a conference—so near to her life's close, for she was taken ill with influenza on the 7th December. She asked to have her letters opened, for 'Very likely there may be some one starving, or wanting their rent paid.' The first was a promise to join the Temperance Society, in reply to a circular she had sent; and she exclaimed joyfully, 'My first-fruits!' When some one reminded her, 'Jesus is near,' her reply was, 'I cannot say that He is near; He carries me in His arms—He carries me'—with an intense consciousness of her Saviour's support. On the very last night she repeated, during a temporary rally, the familiar words of the 23rd Psalm; and on Christmas Eve, when every tree and blade of grass was sparkling with the ice gems, as if the earth were in bridal attire, that ministering angel was laid to rest. Her like-minded sister Mary, Countess of Aberdeen, succeeded her as President. Lady Balfour of Burleigh, her daughter, came next; and Mrs. Charteris followed her, and continues President of the Woman's Guild.

It may be well here to state—so far as figures can—whereunto the Woman's Guild has now grown. There are now seventeen provincial councils. The number of branches is now 765, whilst the membership is 53,612, an



increase of 1356 for the year. In the Junior Guild there are 167 branches with 4637 members. There was collected for Church and missionary purposes throughout the year £18,191. Its activities are of the most varied kind, and include, besides the usual departments of congregational work, such enterprises as Health Visitation of Infants, Charity Organisation, Red Cross Movement, Cripples' Leagues, Guilds of Play, and Mission Study Circles. In the Temperance and Guild Cottage at Lasswade, Miss Johnston, D.C.S., has zealously devoted herself, with encouraging results, to reclaiming those women who have become victims of intemperance. Through the year the average number was nine. The Charteris hospital at Kalimpong was built at the suggestion of Mrs. Graham in 1893, as it is supported, by the Woman's Guild. It is a delightful link with home to find the names of parishes or districts painted on panels above the beds, generally with an appropriate text, such as, 'I am the Lord that healeth thee.' Two nurses from home assist the doctor in bearing this testimony to the Saviour-healer. Schools and the industries' hostel afford great opportunities for spreading the Gospel among the women. A general Guild Secretary and Treasurer, with Guild deputies, and Editor of Guild Supplement are indispensable aids for circulating intelligence and maintaining contact throughout the whole organisation. The Guild leaders now number 82, representing 23 parishes; they must have rendered service for over five years, and are enrolled with concurrence of the kirk-session and Assembly's committee. Associates are recognised in positions of isolation, and auxiliary members where there is no parish branch. The idea has taken useful shape among 'the dispersed' Scotswomen in many different parts of the globe. Here also, as in many forms of work originated by Dr. Charteris, the imitation of other Churches has endorsed his methods as most serviceable. The business of the Woman's Guild is conducted by a thoroughly representative committee of management. A single testimony may be offered out of very many. Dr. A. K. H. Boyd of St. Andrews was prevented from

attending the first conference of the Woman's Guild, and wrote:—

'Much as I value the service of the Men's Guild, and great as I regard the Church's obligation to those who originated it (indeed I might rather say to *him* who did so), I look with yet warmer interest to the good work now well begun. The organisation of women's work, religious and philanthropic, has become a necessity: even in a little community like this I have seen the need of it in many ways. I was profoundly interested by the glimpse which, through your kindness, I had in May before last of that centre of works of kindness and mercy in George Square. It was more cheering than I can say to see the same machinery of Christian helpfulness, which has done such gracious work south of the Tweed, naturalised among ourselves; and all that I have learnt of the lines on which you propose to work has made me feel deeply that here something is undertaken which, by God's blessing, must do good to very many, and against which not a syllable can be said.'

In the highest department of the Guild it was proposed to provide a home and training for such women as desire to be qualified and set apart as deaconesses in connection with the Church of Scotland (in this age of many initials represented by the magic 'D.C.S.'): and in that home to receive for a limited period such women as desire to give themselves to mission work, whether in Scotland or abroad, that they may be tested and instructed, though they may not as yet desire to be deaconesses. Special courses of instruction in religious and Biblical subjects are given, along with direct help in the spiritual life through such ministers or others as the Board of Management may appoint. The period of probation and service is not less than two years. Accordingly, a house was first rented at 33 Mayfield Gardens, and opened as temporary premises on 16th November 1887, Miss K. H. Davidson, a Mildmay deaconess, and a member of the Church of Scotland, being temporary head. Headquarters were for two years at 41 George Square, and later the present most suitable house, 27 George Square, Edinburgh, was purchased. The idea was that the order of deaconesses should have its centre there as the Mother-house; and that all details of administration, such as application,



recommendation, and direction should be controlled from there by the Deaconess Board under the Church Life and Work Committee. Those in authority were greatly indebted to Miss Davidson for giving it a start, after which she took up other branches of work, notably in connection with deputations, and that among the fisher folk.

Miss Alice Maud Maxwell, of Cardoness, in the historic parish of Anwoth, who had long been a devoted worker, and had offered herself as a resident, was after full inquiry invited to become superintendent, and consented upon condition that she should first study for six months the working of such institutions in the great London Homes. On 1st May 1888 she was installed in office. A field of operation was found in the old Pleasance of Queen Mary's time, now a crowded outlying district of the great parish of St. Cuthbert's, which the ministers and kirk-session were only too glad to see occupied. All existing missions were scrupulously respected in this fresh field, and there was no overlapping. At first the members of the University Missionary Association here, as in the Tolbooth and Blackfriars Street districts, willingly gave their aid; and better off congregations gladly lent a hand. A novelty may be specified in a 'Fathers' Meeting,' conducted by a gentleman retired from business. A series of lectures was arranged: Dr. Charteris himself gave four on 'How to begin a Mission.' Members, one hundred and eleven in all, were enrolled. The results shown by examination were often extremely satisfactory. Meantime the Pleasance Mission itself was growing in all that constitutes a Christian centre. It should be mentioned that a large proportion of those who enlisted for deaconess work did so entirely at their own charges. The terms for board in the Deaconess House were made very reasonable. The style of 'deaconette' was jocularly coined by Dr. Charteris to denote deaconesses in embryo.

Miss K. H. Davidson and Miss A. M. Maxwell were set apart in St. Cuthbert's on 13th January 1889, when Dr. MacGregor preached upon 'Phoebe,' and gave the prayer of dedication. Dr. Charteris' heart was surely in Edin-

burgh that day, though his body, in impaired health, was in far-off Meran; for that same evening Mr. Graham was being ordained as Guild missionary. He wrote to Miss Maxwell in these terms:—

'Our prayers will join with those rising from grey old St. Cuthbert's. To yourself it is a marked epoch. If I had been at home I would have read to you bits of the letters of your sole predecessor, Lady Grisell Baillie. . . . You don't care much about words: you want to go to the heart of things; and dress and name are of small moment in your eyes. But this thing itself—the recognition of a woman's Christian work as a part of the mission of the Church of Christ—is a very sacred step in advance. It is important for our dear old Kirk: it is very important for you. It gives you no new duty: it does lay a certain amount of new responsibility on you. But the responsibility is lightened by the claim you will thereby have upon the Church which has called you. You are henceforth no solitary volunteer: you are on the staff of the army; and you have a right to sympathy and support from all the others who are pledged to the Leader and Captain. In your own daily duty you have a considerable burden. You feel that you keep watch in the advance guard. "Ye have need of patience." We all need it in this work of yours: but you have identified yourself with the work so that, while others watch from amid their other special work, you have to watch at the work itself: you and the "Home" are one. I have always felt that, in our slow old Kirk and (socially) conservative country, it will be longer before training is recognised than before ordination of deaconesses and organisation of ordinary workers is accepted. So that I know yours is the hardest task. It is some relief to you that the Home is the centre of outdoor work, and by and by you will have maidens round you, all pressing to be servants of the Church as Phoebe was; but meanwhile, just because you have the hardest task, you have also the fullest sympathy, while you labour and wait at the head of our Home. And I wish I could tell you how much I appreciate the way in which you have done all you had to do: with your hand, your head, and your pen. Now God bless you and make you a blessing. I wish you were stronger: I pray you may be strengthened.'

Dr. Charteris was very considerate on the point that deaconesses should not be overworked; that the oil in the virgins' lamps should be renewed, as well as that the talents in the servants' hands should be fully employed. He wrote:—



'I am increasingly convinced that there should be time for solitude, reading, and prayer in all workers' lives, and our Home arrangements should foster and almost compel this; even when some are needed for evening duty the same ones should not always go. A reclaiming and excavating mission is of little use without evening visiting. I might visit, with one or two of your short term boarders, selected cases some evening. But my wife and my doctor must be kept quiet about it.'

Miss Maxwell gave twenty-three years of her life and largely of her means to the deaconess cause, and received from the Assembly warm recognition for her devoted labours. Though now freed from harness, she continues to further that on which from the first her heart was set. In all her intercourse with Dr. Charteris she felt how he trusted his fellow-workers. At first she refused his request to become Head, urging her incapacity from lack of experience, and fearing to wreck his great scheme by what she called her stupid mistakes. But his reply was: 'Come and make mistakes with the rest of us all together, for we are all feeling our way.' She tells:—

'One realised his influence, not only in the big definite things, such as sermons and speeches at large meetings, though full of inspiration and teaching, but in the ordinary things of daily life, when he was with us at meal times, or talking over difficult points. Simple practical remarks dropped by him incidentally were afterwards realised to be the outcome of great general principles which he had made his own. As convener, while keeping his position of authority when required, he always regarded one as a comrade, and showed a real appreciation of one's best and utmost whatever it was. His firmness blended with tenderness was always trying to draw people, rather than to push them, towards the better course. When an obstreperous Sunday-school class had been very rude to the teacher, he insisted that it could not be passed over, and gave instructions that they must apologise to her, adding: "Make it as easy for them as you can!" His clear and deep perception of character, and patience with the weaker side of human nature, were notable features of his own character.'

The Deaconess House was successful, quite up to the measure of Dr. Charteris' expectations, and its Home Mission made a real inroad for the better upon one of the most populous and hopeless districts in Edinburgh; but

the founder felt that for a time his scheme lagged in the congregations throughout the Church. He was a wonderful combination, however, of the dreamer and the man of driving power to make his dreams come true. What Khama called Mr. Chamberlain in connection with South Africa, 'the man who gets things done,' was eminently true of him.

Medical training had to be secured if the deaconess nurse was not to be shorn of one half of her beneficent character. At first training was obtained in nursing in the Royal Infirmaries of Glasgow and Edinburgh. But it came to be seen that for those who in future working days were to be engaged in cottage nursing or abroad, a small hospital was better; for the very reason that, in a great palace of healing, the apparatus is so perfect and the huge staff so well organised as to separate it from all semblance to the circumstances of domestic life. The highest medical and surgical advice was taken. Dr. Barnardo and Mrs. Isabella Bishop, the traveller, likewise approved. Though the hospital was chiefly needed to train deaconesses and other workers for all Scotland, and has indeed drawn largely from all quarters, it cannot be considered superfluous even in Edinburgh, but fills a niche all its own. It exhibits the healing side of the Gospel, and its care for the human body as well as the soul. It is more private and homelike than the great public institutions, and affords better training in the whole art and duty of nursing than a large hospital. It has been conspicuously favoured in its visiting staff, Dr. Claud Muirhead and Dr. John Duncan being the first consulting physician and surgeon respectively; while Dr. G. A. Gibson and Mr. (now Professor) Alexis Thomson kindly undertook to be visiting physician and surgeon; and the same high standard of medical skill has been constantly maintained. Dr. F. D. Boyd, C.M.G., and Mr. W. J. Stuart continue the succession. Dr. Charteris and his committee resolutely set themselves to raise the requisite funds; and in an address delivered by him at the dedication and opening of this (with the exception



of the Waldensian), the only hospital of any Protestant Church in Christendom, it was declared to be entirely free of debt, and that every stone in the building was a direct gift from many Scottish friends. It was reared on free ground by willing hands as ancillary to the training of women, to make them fully qualified ministrants to the ills that flesh is heir to. It is also a memorial of the Church's first deaconess, Lady Grisell Baillie. It bears on its front a legend observed by Dr. Charteris over a Swiss hospital door, that it is dedicated *Christo in Pauperibus* ('To Christ in His Poor'), and its chief aim is to train and qualify deaconesses, foreign missionaries, and other Christian workers for their healing service. Dr. Charteris appealed at the same time in Glasgow for women's work in these words:—

'I entreat you to stop the draining of our best workers away from us, when we need their work so sorely. Our Miss Maxwell was stopped on her way to Mildmay, our Miss Davidson was brought back from it, and both are pleased and thankful to work in the Church of their fathers. They are but the types of a class. There is among us a spirit of devotedness which our ancient ways are apt to crush down. I do not grudge recruits from Glasgow and from our Church, say to the China Inland Mission, but sometimes I wonder whether we drove those eager hearts away from us. . . . I know not why deft and tidy German women, placid and stately English women, bright and capable French women, should crowd the homes of the deaconesses in their several countries, and so few should be found in Scotland. We saw Scottish women at the head and at the heart of almost every great London institution to which the Church sent us to inquire into the methods of working; we found this hospital and that with its "wings" added by Scottish munificence. We grudge them not, but still, were it not better to have begun at our own Jerusalem? It was in this city Dr. Chalmers was told by a woman who could not speak about Christ, "I could die for Him." Will you give your life for Him? Does all this seem Utopian? Is not all our Christian hope in the best sense a Utopia? Do not try to renovate the world and extend the Church with maxims of the mart and commonplaces of prudence. It is they who dream bright dreams that in the end deliver their brethren. You are all dreaming; do not be afraid or ashamed to announce your splendid hopes.'

The hospital was opened on 11th October 1894, and nobly has it answered its purpose. Very many have testified of their own accord to spiritual benefit received through the affectionate ministrations of the Christian nurses, and no trace of 'the religious difficulty' has ever arisen from the sufferers being of different Churches and Creeds. It is impossible to tell how much it has owed to the capable deaconess superintendent in charge, Miss Ella Pirrie, D.C.S., who came with Irish and foreign experience, and has been in command from the first, except during the year when she asked leave to go at her own charges to Kikuyu Mission in Africa to fill a temporary gap at a critical time. The hospital began with three staff nurses and seven probationers: it had twenty-two beds and two cots—some gifted in memory of dear ones, others supported by congregations, single or combined. It has grown by the compulsion of circumstances; for it is now an accepted fact that a technically qualifying certificate for probationers is only valid in an hospital with forty beds. The accommodation for patients and nurses had therefore to be enlarged, and now consists of forty-two beds, including 'open-air' and 'isolation' wards, and the beds in the children's ward. Eighteen are supported by donations or by endowment, and no fewer than two hundred and sixty-four branches of the Woman's Guild sent contributions during last year. Many thank-offerings come from the patients. The men's ward is called after Dr. Charteris. Sir John Batty Tuke, M.D., M.P., President of the Royal College of Physicians, Edinburgh, gave discriminating praise at the first annual meeting, certifying it to be no makeshift, but an efficient institution, well fitted for the treatment of the sick poor. He marvelled at its economy in construction and maintenance, but hinted from experience that the latter was likely to rise. With reference to the deaconess probationers, he declared that if a woman does not show aptitude for the work in six months, and, what is more, sympathy with her work, and if in twelve months she is not an efficient nurse, no amount of training will make



her one; that what the deaconess probationer needs is to live in the atmosphere of disease for a year, to tend and watch the sick and hurt, to observe, to handle, to think under skilful direction; and that the pupils would find there all their requirements fulfilled. He believed that, as in Germany the names of Fliedner and Kaiserswerth were indissolubly connected, so in Scotland would be linked the names of Charteris and The Pleasance.

In nearly all Church of Scotland hospitals abroad there are now nurses who have been trained in the Deaconess Hospital, or who have acted as staff nurses though trained elsewhere—at Ichang in China; Blantyre and Zomba in Africa; Poona Hospital and Orphanage, Gujrat and Kalimpong, all in India. Deaconess Superintendent Pirrie has now five staff nurses with ten probationers under her, while in 1910 the district nursing work looked after 278 cases and paid 3160 visits (130 of these were maternity cases, attended in their own homes). Surgical out-patients received attention to the number of 1714, the attendances being 5648. The average cost per bed is now about £52. The average number of beds occupied per day was over thirty-five, and the average duration of stay of each patient was twenty-four days. This enlarged hospital lays upon its Board of Management the somewhat serious responsibility of providing an income of not less than £2400 a year, and therefore they need increased and continued support. It takes a sum of £1350 to endow a bed in perpetuity: a cot in the children's ward can be endowed for £700.

Dr. Charteris was, especially in his riper years, so emphatically the apostle of women's work in Scotland that it is not remarkable he should have attended nine annual conferences of the Woman's Guild, besides being often asked to preach on his favourite subject, especially in connection with the setting apart of deaconesses. He also frequently gave them addresses of counsel in conference, from which we may glean an occasional sentence:—

‘In every parish you will find kindred spirits who will do you more than justice, and will help you far more than you deserve.

Elijah might have found Elisha far sooner if he had not been moodily going his own ways, and never dreaming of the seven thousand all longing to help him.'

'No function can be too low. Women who washed the saints' feet are chosen by St. Paul for office like yours. From all fanciful fastidiousness, from all social sauciness, from all putting the distance of the road between you and the wounded wayfarer in life's devil-haunted path, the good Lord deliver you.' . . . 'Our Lord went to and fro over the land visiting all towns and cities, and yet how long time He gave to the individual case! Any individual could stop Him and receive all needed attention. How can we reproduce that divine life of work which neglected neither the general nor the special: with neither rush nor rest? How indeed except by constant thought and prayer, so the mind may be in us that was in Christ Jesus; so that we may find time to give special care to special cases, and yet never forget that we have a message for all! Go round the whole—therefore am I sent; take time to help this one—for therefore am I stopped by him or by her.' . . . 'Revive and restore the idea that you were to be not solitary workers, but the organisers of other workers. I once lived in Germany in a house, the mistress of which—a bath-man's wife—assisted the two deaconesses in the town by keeping a list of fifty people who agreed to bear in rotation the cost and care of supplying the wants of the poor to those deaconesses. Two were for each week, and thus the turn of those ministrants came round about once in the half year.'

'In my younger days I attended in Germany the lectures of an eminent Roman Catholic theologian (Hefele), who argued that Luther made a mistake in treating "faith alone" as the centre of the Christian life, and showed how much more complete a definition it is to say, "faith working by love." This seemed to me then, and seems to me still, a valuable suggestion. That definition is better than our usual one, "faith alone, but not the faith which is alone." I cannot think, however, it is all gain that in these days we have passed away so completely from the ancient custom of dwelling upon faith, overstrained though it undoubtedly was. It brought the soul into relations with the Infinite Person of God. It wrought deep in the heart a sense of the awful bigness of sin. It made us look into the chasm which our sins have cloven between us and God, and made us realise what a yawning gulf is between our straying feet and the eternal home of our spirits. It made us look to Jesus, the personal Saviour, as the author and finisher of the faith that saves us.'

'What would be the ideal Guild? It rises before me: the friendly gathering of gentle and simple, old and young, all



knowing each, and each on trustful terms with all, the most special bonds between the young that have received counsel, and the older that have given it; a fragrance of kindness, as if from encircling roses in June, pervades the whole meeting, and the heart says, "These are the disciples of Jesus." We learn from heathen Rome that piety meant affection. The strange, wistful genius of R. L. Stevenson never tired enforcing this. "To make one another happier because we are known to each other, that is religion," he used to say. And religion in our Guild means dutiful affection.'

Dr. Charteris composed prayers suitable for use at Guild Meetings and Mothers' Union Meetings. The Mothers' Union was designed to bind together the mothers of a parish—whether they can come to meetings or not—that they may feel their special parental obligation for the children whom God has given them, may continue in prayer for them, and do their utmost to perform their baptismal vows. It seemed to Dr. Charteris more natural and fitting that this highest duty of woman towards her children should be fulfilled in connection with the Church than with any outside society.

The Woman's Guild hymn, beginning with the line, 'By the hopes we deeply cherish,' was written by Dr. Charteris from the text, (R.V.) Psalm lxviii. 11—'The Lord giveth the Word: the women that publish the tidings are a great host.' This was set to music by the late A. L. Peace, Mus. Doc., to the tune called 'Phoebe.'

The Robertson Orphanage founded by Dr. William Robertson of New Greyfriars, and maintained for twenty years, was handed over to the care of the Christian Life and Work Committee in 1898 to be worked in connection with the Deaconess House. It was conducted by Dr. Robertson's daughter, the late Miss Gertrude A. Robertson, D.C.S. A house was bought in Musselburgh in 1905. Girls between four and nine are eligible, and there are at present the full complement of twenty-one girls. A further extension will accommodate thirty. Dr. Robertson founded both the first Ragged School in Edinburgh and the first Working Man's Church.

Dr. Charteris, with his good wife and sister-in-law, Miss

Helen R. Anderson, D.C.S., were largely instrumental in founding and providing for the Deaconess Rest. He had in view that it was not reasonable to ask a woman in ordinary health, say of fifty-five, to do as much as in her earlier years, although her experience might be valuable in organising and in detached work for a much longer period. He desired a quiet centre where in the evening of their days such might retire to rest, where also those tired or sick labourers at home or from abroad might find the comforts of a home. Experience had taught him that a woman worker, engaged in laborious and continuous Home Mission work, has to bear a strain which no one can bear without precaution and timely rest. Too often long loneliness, anxiety, bad air, and lack of ordinary relaxation break down the most ardent toiler. He proposed to entertain and maintain such workers—primarily the deaconesses—at a low charge, and made foreign missionaries welcome at the house now 'Mayfield Lodge, Dalkeith,' which is a comfortable and attractive home. Being the convener of the committee to which by wise rule deaconesses report quarterly upon their work of whatever kind, he appealed for funds to provide and partially endow this House of Rest, designed to make the Order more attractive to lonely single women. Miss Anderson herself suffered from a sudden failing of the vital powers after a most active and useful life, in which she played the rôle of deputation-secretary and many others, to the Guild's great advantage. The heart-breaking strain of prison work among women in the Calton Jail completely wore her out. An optional scheme for securing pensions to deaconesses owed its origin to Mr. William Grant's anxious and unremitting care for the welfare of the order.

Mrs. Charteris was the first editor of the *Women's Guild Supplement*, but found herself compelled to resign that post in 1901, when ample testimony was borne to her fertile brain, her sympathetic heart, and her ready pen; but still more to her signal services in creating and keeping alive a unique current of intense personal



sympathy between the officers of the Guild and the whole body of its members. The complete organisations comprised in the Deaconess House, St. Ninian's Mission, and the Deaconess Hospital continue to flourish, and are an abiding memorial of their founder.

The whole conception has blossomed out into an Institute of Missionary Training. An essential part of the undertaking, rendered necessary by its increasing success, is what is now known as the Charteris Memorial Church. Dr. Charteris himself had long desired that the Pleasance Mission should be so completed, and no monument could have been erected more accordant with the spirit of his life and work. The total cost of the whole buildings and equipment (including sites) has amounted to £25,470.

About four years ago the Irish Presbyterian Church resolved to follow the example of the Church of Scotland, and started a Deaconess Home and Hostel. Their first lady superintendent was a Scottish deaconess, 'on loan.' Naturally desiring the services of a daughter of their own Church, their choice has fallen upon Miss Elizabeth Beatty, the daughter of an honoured missionary, who had been trained in the Edinburgh Deaconess House. The Church of Scotland follows with interest and hope this new departure by a Sister-Church.

## CHAPTER XVI

### SOME PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS AND FRIENDS

The Inner Man—The Outer Man—Dr. Donald Macleod's Letter—A Succourer of Many—Family Losses—Relations with Queen Victoria.

SOME attempt must be made, however imperfect, to outline if not to enumerate personal characteristics. Many who knew not Dr. Charteris in the flesh may ask what manner of man he was. Of his outward appearance a very good description was given by his former student, secretary, and colleague in the Christian Life and Work Committee, now the Rev. Alexander Marshall, D.D., the influential minister of the Scots Church in Melbourne, Australia:—

'Dr. Charteris is a well-preserved man, just turned three-score; of medium height, but of solid and "bairdly" build; a handsome, strong face (with slight whiskers) surmounted by a high, broad brow; deep-set, shrewd eyes, twinkling with a glance of playful humour, or projecting their gaze in a far-seeing, thoughtful look; an eagle nose, firm lips, and massive chin bear consenting testimony to a resolute, unbending disposition, redeemed from obstinacy and "dour" masterfulness by the kindly, genial smile that plays round the corners of his mouth and almost dimples the cheeks; an air of courtly grace and dignity, relieved from starchiness by a frank, engaging *bon-homie* that at once puts intercourse on the happiest terms; a man with a singular charm to win, and with a subtle influence to command.'

There was never anything extravagant about his dress, nor, on the other hand, was he ever seen slovenly or untidy. He gave one the impression of being neither careful nor careless of such sublunary matters. He was orderly and methodical, while not 'pernickity.' A leak anywhere, a smoking chimney, a loose slate on the roof,



or even a loose stone in the garden-wall, must be put right at once. A rented house was considered equally with his own, and had to be left in spick-and-span condition. In him orderliness was an instinct, rooted in honour.

To describe the inner man is a harder task. His nature was a notable combination of simplicity and many-sidedness: he was vigorous, energetic, broad-minded, and sympathetic, ever blessed with the courage of his convictions. To be an earnest fanatic, seeing no good but in one's own party and lines of thought, is all too common. To be easily tolerant with a nebulous and unthinking charity towards everybody one meets is by no means rare; but to stand firm and staunch to inmost convictions, to see the chosen path and follow it without hesitation or deviation, while granting to others the right to think and to act differently, this is an attitude of mind which, especially in religious matters, belongs to true strength of character. It can be justly claimed for the subject of this memoir. Dr. Charteris as a man was greater than all his activities. His personal love and loyalty to the Lord Jesus Christ was the open secret of his own life and work. His own Church was much to him. The Church of Christ was more. But the Head of the Church was alone supreme over his whole nature and powers. He did not talk religion according to the *patois de Canaan*. He lived it. He never forced a reference to things religious; yet one could not fail to perceive that Christ was his guiding star in everything.

From early days he had cherished a sincere belief in the great governing truths of Christianity, while by no means insensible to their mystery and the difficulties which encompass them. His faith in these objective facts was supplemented by a profound conviction of the reality of those subjective phenomena which acceptance of them produces in the individual soul. He had known for himself and had marked in others that slow or sudden, but enduring and extraordinary change, called conversion on the human side and regeneration on the divine. That

evidence of personal experience which Dr. Chalmers called 'the portable evidence of Christianity' was the prevailing and crowning proof for him. With George J. Romanes, the Darwinian, he would ask: 'What has all the science or all the philosophy of the world done for the thought of mankind in comparison with the one doctrine, "God is Love"?' Immovably planted on that rock, he held to the supernatural calling of the Christian Church, the supernatural life of the Christian man, and the supernatural provision for Christian work. No one who heard him offer prayer in public—still less one privileged to hear him at the family altar—could doubt his utter dependence on the unseen Saviour, Helper, and Ruler of all men, or could doubt that to him prayer was not a conquering of God's reluctance, but a laying hold of God's willingness. Men might cavil at his Church plans, or question the wisdom of his methods of working. Yet manifestly his life was hid with Christ in God.

Holding strongly the truth that all life tends to organise, and that the higher life will seek the more perfect organism, he sought to overcome in his own Church the sense of isolation, and to prove the aphorism that union is strength. He aimed at lifting ministers and people out of the ruts of routine, at irrigating the fair fields of Scotland with the Water of Life, made to flow in unaccustomed channels. It is now generally admitted that no minister in Scotland of our time, perhaps of any time, had at once such gifts of invention and of discrimination. He looked around and abroad for new methods of work which might be grafted on the old productive stock. In this he resembled (without imitating) his well-known friend Dr. W. Fleming Stevenson, author of *Praying and Working*, with whom his intercourse of five-and-twenty years was latterly not by letter, but by taking a holiday together. Of Dr. Stevenson he says what might be truly said of himself:—

'His living force was so great, and he so completely did all his work with all his might, that alike in preaching and visiting and in the multitude of letters which he wrote to missionaries



and on missions, he exerted an unusual influence at great cost of his vital energy. I scarcely understand how he stood the strain so long. It was doubtless because of his peace of mind and purity of heart. There was little inward friction, except when some one disappointed him.'

There was a thorough preparedness in every plan that was conceived in Dr. Charteris' fertile brain, and it was ushered into the daylight with confidence and wise prevision; for he was a master of details. Sometimes proposals concerning 'Ways and Means' would almost take his colleagues' breath away in the committee over which he presided; yet on he went unswervingly; but not so wedded to his scheme as that he would not alter it in parts, if further experience showed this to be advisable. He had the ready wit which quickly adapts means to ends, and can choose or reject with real insight based on the resources of full knowledge. A memory which (unlike the Bourbons) learned everything and forgot nothing helped him much. He also manifested the quality of high courage in all his enterprises. 'The atrocious crime of being a young man,' which he certainly always looked, even when old, was in the early days of his committee often laid to his charge; and sneering objections were raised by some who might have known better. But time was on his side. He met every challenge, and parried every rapier thrust that meant death to his committee, while taking wounds not a few for himself.

He used to tell that he probably studied his speeches (for the Assembly and elsewhere) more after he had delivered them than before! He often spent an hour or two in his bed at night in going over the ground, and seeing what he would have been better not to say, and how he might have put some things more aptly than he had done. The wonderful underlying power of character, in which emotion and will were equally blended, came to the front in the facial expression, which generally told its own story of sanguine hope and triumphant 'seeing his way'; but sometimes of grievous disappointment, if his plans were seeming likely to miscarry. Always definite in his

views, he was true to his doctrinal party, though not popular with those who found themselves 'in the other lobby.'

He added to courage what William Pitt deemed the chief requisite of a prime minister, patience. He saw wherein his Church was lacking, but refused to believe that her defects could not be removed. Yet he had a wholesome impatience of the mere trammels of custom, sometimes as inveterate as 'dustoor,' the curse of India and the child of caste. He agreed with St. Cyprian in this at least, that 'Christ is truth, not custom.' Any one who looks back even for a generation must recall many instances of things deemed sacrosanct because entrenched in old traditional usage. Such were the invariable forenoon and afternoon Sunday services in town and city. Dr. Story pointed out so late as 1882 the strange fact that there was not in the New Town of Edinburgh one parish church open for public worship after four o'clock on Sunday; while the Episcopalians were wiser in their generation. It is different now.

By chance, not by design, a portrait of Dr. Charteris hung in Dr. M'Murtrie's study between those of Thomas Erskine of Linlathen and of Principal Pirie. Not long before the end Dr. Charteris was in this room, and looking at the portraits he said: 'That is right: that is where I stand: just between Thomas Erskine and Dr. Pirie.'

Dr. Charteris' sanguine temperament and buoyancy of spirit and manner much contributed to secure success by inspiring confidence. Yet he had his times of deep depression, but he consoled himself with the promises of Scripture or some good writer thus:—

'We should start no note of sadness in this world, which is already so full of sadness. We should add something every day to the stock of the world's happiness.'

Whether on the crest of the wave or down in its trough, he never despaired of his Lord or of the kingdom and cause which he had espoused. His conspicuous powers of dealing with all classes arose from a wide and



discriminating sympathy. He was sometimes at fault in his judgments regarding individuals: not very often. He could thole and tolerate a good deal in a minister from whom he differed on many important points, so long as he was not downright negative. Himself aglow with the positive truths of revelation, his constant advice was: 'Affirm! affirm! it is time to doubt our doubts and believe our beliefs.'

As a preacher he was not only popular with the many, but prized by divers types of men and women who valued his eminently practical and inspiring messages, delivered with singular clearness of style, simple diction, and remarkable gift of phrase. To the end he remained direct and pointed, and never fired an aimless shot. Many still live who are not ashamed to own that they owe their souls to Dr. Charteris' preaching. Memorable sayings of his come to mind:—

'Conversion is like death; it may not be "sudden," but is always instantaneous.' 'You will say perhaps that what I am preaching is perfection. What if it were? Is it right that we should be so afraid of the word perfection, and so little afraid of the fact of imperfection?' 'The knowledge that is not at once transformed into action tends to nothingness, and quickly occasions sin.'

No one was more considerate of the feelings of others, yet he shrank not from what Disraeli called 'the most dismal duty of humanity,' explanation; and instances are found in his vast correspondence which reveal his faithfulness and gentleness in inflicting the wounds of a friend, and in warning those whom he valued and loved against defects of manner and weaknesses of character. He often groaned over the burden of public meetings, yet was the spriteliest and most pointed of speakers. But he was seen at his best by his own fireside among those he loved. There his speech, always seasoned with salt, was amusing, sparkling, and often brilliant: in drollery, badinage, and quick repartee he had few equals. There was nothing dull or morose about him, even when sciatica held him in its most cruel grip. He could joke at his own expense,

and repeat the jibes of others with full appreciation. One has heard him recite with zest 'The Battle of the Chair,' satirising the circumstances of his appointment.

Dr. Charteris' accessibility to every one who came on an errand should not be overlooked. To ministers and students, friends and strangers, calling at his house, he rarely denied himself. He also conducted a huge correspondence with friends, both at home and furth of Scotland. So strenuous was his varied life that few who entered his study felt inclined to impeach the wisdom for him of Lord Melbourne's warning which adorned his mantelpiece: 'Why can't you let it alone?'

Dr. and Mrs. Charteris were devoted to children, though not blessed with any of their own. The young were always attracted by the professor's sunny manner and eager playfulness.<sup>1</sup>

In a letter dated 17th March 1872, Dr. Donald Macleod, his successor in the Park Parish, and editor of *Good Words*, aptly compares and contrasts their relative standpoints:—

'It is difficult to define accurately my position. In fact I suspect you and I are dogmatically identical, but we *stand back to back*, you facing the intolerant and negative Broad Church, and I the doctrinaire and intolerant Evangelicals. Since I heard your sermon *versus* M. Arnold, and your views several times since, I think we are at one. Only that I possibly accept more of J. M. Campbell's views of the life-meaning of Atonement than you do. Our *faces* look different ways, probably from circumstances and experiences—you have been repelled by one set of sectarians, and I by another. I have often found so little of the spirit of the Gospel among the "High" gentry, so much

<sup>1</sup> Three dignified divines in 1888 paid an afternoon call at a house in Princes Gate, London. One, a venerable St. Andrews professor, often mentioned in these pages (his portrait is Sir George Reid's masterpiece), beckoned the eldest son of the house (aged 5), and took him on his knee. The urchin, devoid of veneration, observing a skull-cap for the first time in his life, addressed the ex-moderator: 'Does 'oo always wear 'oo's hat on in the house?' Without a smile the shy dignitary let him slide to the ground. The *enfant terrible* next came to Dr. Charteris' knee, as invited, and looking keenly at him, remarked: 'Oo's nose is so 'ike *Punch*!' Rarely had one seen two birds brought down so deftly by right and left barrels. But the professor laughed with the rest, and often inquired afterwards for the irreverent but observant youngster.



of passion and injustice and want of kindly, genial humanity; and as a rule I have experienced among the Broad men I have known (with some exceptions) such a fuller and healthier idea of the Kingdom of God, and an openness to convictions and a hearty humanity, that I like them better. I believe you have experienced great unfairness from the one set, and I from the other; and hence we face two ways. I say constantly of you, that in all our dealings, and in all your dealings with Norman, and in all I have known of you, I have seldom known a man more open, and fair, and true. I believe you are as broad, perhaps broader, dogmatically than I, but you can *stomach* more of the phraseologies and ways, and hence associate far more honestly and freely than I can with the other set, who, I confess, often try my flesh if not my spirit. One word more. Forgive me if I say that I think you wrong yourself also. A great many men believe you to be far narrower, and far more reactionary, than you are. If you only knew the fights I have sometimes for you on that score. I believe we are both right, and also very far wrong!’

If it be true that a man is known by his friends, those of Dr. Charteris were not only many but life-long-men of worth and weight. With him it was once a friend always a friend: in the cause of friendship he spared himself no trouble.

Lord and Lady Balfour of Burleigh maintained the closest personal intercourse with him and his wife, who were often visitors at Kennet. Lord Balfour's first speech in the Assembly was in seconding the ‘Christian Life and Work Report’ in 1874. Twenty years later he wrote:—

‘You are certainly my “ecclesiastical father,” and I shall never forget my first talk with you on business. You always tell me what you think, and I know that you do so, which is the secret of all confidence. I don't always take your advice, but it never fails to have effect. And when you are against me I always go over my own views and the course I want to take with redoubled care.’

Many letters passed on the subject of Church Defence and Reunion. Thus on 10th February 1883 Lord Balfour, the joint convener of the Church Interests Committee, wrote concerning a proposed article:—

‘Dr. Alison's article is full of admirable Christian spirit, like everything he says and does; if he chooses to put it forth for

discussion on its merits, let him do so. Not however in the magazine, which is under the sanction of a Committee of Assembly: that makes it official at once. I confess that I think his ideas and proposals absolutely visionary and impracticable: they are far too noble to succeed. If we propose anything at all of the kind, it must be something which we could have a faint hope of carrying. If our friends would only now say distinctly what keeps them out of the Church, I would strive to give it.'

On April 15th, 1889, when Dr. Charteris was abroad, a letter from Lord Balfour contained the following:—

'We have been having anxious times in regard to Blantyre and the African Mission stations generally. There has been great risk of Portuguese aggression; but our Foreign Office has done pretty well, and Lord Salisbury has been very friendly to us. I think I have been able, by God's guidance, to be of use in bringing good information before the Foreign Office just at the right time. We had an excellent interview with Lord Salisbury on Thursday. I got up Scott, M'Murtrie, George Smith, Hetherwick, Moir, and Ewing, and they put the matter very well and clearly in reply to questions.

'You mention the Bishop of Peterborough. I am told he was dining in Mr. Gladstone's company not long ago, and Mr. Gladstone said to him: "I am afraid, Dr. Magee, that, Irishman as you are, you do not approve of our method of dealing with Ireland." "It is not your *dealing* so much as your *shuffling*," was the reply.

'It is always a pleasure to hear from you. Sometimes you encourage me to think things are going well; but more often I am made anxious by your letters, and that is far better for me, because it makes me more inclined to work. I see you ask if I am sound on Teetotalism. Yes, I am "sound," but I am afraid your definition of soundness and mine will not agree. I cannot see my way to coerce my neighbour as to what he shall eat and drink. I will reason with him, argue with him, help him, encourage him, punish him (if he makes himself a nuisance), and punish the seller if he sells to those who are in an unfit state; but I do not see my way to dictate to him. I should not be made any better by being dictated to myself.'

On 23rd December 1894 Lord Balfour wrote:—

'I have wanted to write to you ever since I was at the Deaconess Hospital. I was pleased with my visit, and liked Miss Pirrie, and could see things were well done. I was quite satisfied.

'I do not see where the materials for a medallion of Lady



Grisell could be got now. There is neither picture nor photograph which does her justice in later life. I specially attended the meeting of your old Committee to see how it gets on. I was quite satisfied. The line was excellent: by and by Robertson will be thoroughly up to it. We have had to-night the first of our special joint Christmas services: each year the church has been crowded, and all three ministers have taken part. I ought not to forget to say that we have had this month a special mission fortnight here. Rankine of St. Boswells and Hutchison of Coats were the special preachers. They had full meetings all through, and I hope and trust that good has been done. The former took us all by storm: so quiet and sensible, and yet so cogent in reasoning. I have never heard anything that made a greater impression on me.'

Another staunch churchman and close ally was Mr. James A. Campbell of Stracathro, M.P. Endowment work and the years in Glasgow had made them firm friends and comrades. Mr. Campbell added to an ability which many thought fully equal to that of his brother the Premier—their politics were far apart—a strenuous and life-long devotion to Christian work in every department. He was a well-known figure on the floor of the General Assembly, in latter years directing the Endowment Scheme. In the House of Commons he was the accomplished and respected member for Glasgow and Aberdeen Universities, and what he lacked in oratory was compensated by careful and telling mastery of detail. Above all, his character stood so high that, when Dr. Charteris wished to describe another Privy Councillor, Mr. Thomas Sinclair of Belfast, he could give him no higher title than 'The J. A. Campbell of the Irish Presbyterian Church.' Much correspondence passed between them. Thus in February 1889 Mr. Campbell wrote to Meran:—

'I think there are signs of improvement in the Church in some respects. I wish there were more in others. I am afraid there is great deadness in many places. The Church services, preaching, and the minister's presence in the parish, do not influence people enough—as far as one can judge. The Church is not making an impression on the lives and hearts of people. What is the remedy? I do not say that our own Church is failing to influence the world more than other Churches. But we are no better than our neighbours, if we are not any worse.'

Few laymen did more than James A. Campbell for the spiritual elevation of the Church of Scotland, or more constantly cherished 'the blessed hope.'

Yet more intimate friends of Dr. Charteris were Mr. T. G. Murray, W.S. and his wife. Once every week in Edinburgh they contrived to meet, to consult about Church matters, and often at his beautiful residence of Stenton in Caputh parish. Instead of quoting from a mass of correspondence it seems better to record part of the memorial notice which Dr. Charteris framed.

'Another of the grand old landmarks gone! A member of every committee of the Church on which he had time to act; a subscriber to every scheme, enterprise, and undertaking of the Church of Scotland, or of any part of it, during the last twenty-five years; the unwearied adviser of all, far and near, who asked his counsel; and to his more intimate friends a man of playful wit and genuine humour; a man of prayer, whose whole life was full of duty and was given to God. He had been for forty-one years an elder in St. George's, Edinburgh; he remembered every minister of that Church since it was built. Not less will his stately form and grand head with its glory of white hair be missed in the General Assembly, where for many years he was honoured and trusted. Every one knew that the very fact of his being convener was a tower of strength to our central scheme. In his quiet, hopeful way he yearly stood up to tell how it saved the Church, till one hundred and twenty-two parishes were endowed during his convenership. He fulfilled an early vow and purpose, to set himself free from business after his sixtieth year, and give himself to "Sabbath work" in the seventh decade of his life. Take him for all in all, he was the wisest administrator the Church of Scotland has had in our time. His beloved Stenton was held in trust by him, and the dear partner of his life, for behoof of others. It was a home of rest for all the wide circle of relatives, for dear friends, for foreign missionaries, for weary travellers, and for strangers. It was like a picture, a poem to see him there; the child's playmate, the young people's comrade; the helper of older people as they sat with him in the shade, and talked softly of missions and the blessed hopes of the Christian life. I shall never forget his last words to me, in which he told me that his faith had never failed him, and that he rejoiced with the Psalmist that our sins are "covered." A few hours later, alone with the beloved companion of forty years, who had shared all his counsels and his work, he repeated the 51st Paraphrase, closed his eyes, and passed away.'



When Mr. Murray died in March 1891 the bonds of affection between his widow and her special friends were tightened rather than relaxed. A letter returning thanks for kind birthday wishes contains these words:—

'You say you have nothing to give me! I do not think you know how much you do give me, how often words you have said, or thoughts which have sprung from them, help me on my way! Mr. Marshall (of Caputh) has a pretty constantly recurring formula of prayer in which occur the words: "For the friends Thou hast given us to cheer us on our path in life, we thank Thee." I do not think they ever come without my thoughts darting to yourself! And for all that help I thank you.'

One of Mrs. Murray's 'crosses' was to have to give up two most successful mothers' meetings for the very poorest in the Canongate parish and in the Pleasance, which, with fine mind and generous heart and hand, she conducted till failing strength forbade what she reckoned a high privilege.

Lady Victoria Campbell was another who could never express her sense of 'the tender, strong sympathy of dear Dr. Charteris.' He was one of the two great determining influences of her life, and copious correspondence passed between her and him who (in the old Columban phrase) might be truly styled her 'soul-friend.' Her letters generally began, 'Beloved Professor Pax,' and closed, 'Your affectionate Highland child,' or 'Your grateful associate.' His advice and encouragement helped the work which for so many years that heroic soul, dwelling in so frail a tabernacle, struggled to carry on in her self-chosen ministry to the remote islanders in Tyree and the Ross of Mull. He first introduced her to the right early hospitality of a moderator's breakfast, and to her he wrote:—

'I wish you much blessing in your visit to Tyree; many souls brought nearer to Christ; many untrained recruits trained to fight the battle of the Lord in their own cottage, clachan, and village.'

Though she perceived the value of a woman being set apart by the Church officially to represent her work to

women, Lady Victoria never saw her way to accept his suggestion of becoming a deaconess, in pursuing the call that came to her when looking out of the ruined windows of Iona cathedral.

Dr. Charteris was a familiar crony of the father and mother of Robert Louis Stevenson, and that rising genius was on most friendly terms with him. Mrs. Thomas Stevenson wrote to him after her husband's death, June 30th, 1887:—

'I have been longing to thank you with all my heart for a most kind and appreciative letter of sympathy in the time of my trouble. Both Louis and I liked it so very much. It was so true, such an admirable picture of the good and true man whose loss we mourn. I must now take comfort in looking forward to the time when I too may be permitted to use "the blessed passport," and rejoin him in the heavenly home. What a comfort the "Layman's Sermon"<sup>1</sup> was to me. I like Dr. Story's idea that it is like one of his own lighthouses shining across a stormy sea: it was indeed a light in a dark place to me.'

In the winter and spring which followed his father's death, the novelist himself wrote these two letters from the United States of America:—

'MY DEAR DR. CHARTERIS,—I have asked Douglas and Foulis to send you my last volume, so that you may possess my little paper on my father in a permanent shape; not for what that is worth, but as a tribute of respect to one whom my father regarded with such particular esteem and affection. Besides, as you will see, I have brought you under contribution, and I have still to thank you for your letter to my mother; so more than kind; in much, so just. It is my hope, when time and health permit, to do something more definite for my father's memory. You are one of the very few who can (if you will) help me. Pray believe that I lay on you no obligation; I know too well, you may believe me, how difficult it is to put even two sincere lines upon paper, when all to order. But if the spirit would ever move you, and you should recall something memorable of your friend, his son will heartily thank you for a note of it. With much respect, believe me, yours sincerely,

'ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.'

'MY DEAR DR. CHARTERIS,—The funeral letter, your notes, and many other things, are reserved for a book, *Memorials of a*

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<sup>1</sup> Contributed to *Life and Work* magazine for May 1879. See p. 323.



*Scottish Family*, if ever I can find time and opportunity. I wish I could throw off all else and sit down to it to-day. Yes, my father was a "distinctly religious man," but not a pious. The distinction painfully and pleasantly recalls old conflicts; it used to be my great gun—and you, who suffered for the whole Church, know how needful it was to have some reserve artillery! His sentiments were tragic; he was a tragic thinker. Now, granted that life is tragic to the marrow, it seems the proper function of religion to make us accept and serve in that tragedy as officers in that other and comparable one of war. Service is the word, active service, in the military sense; and the religious man—I beg pardon, the pious man—is he who has a military joy in duty: not he who weeps over the wounded. We can do no more than try to do our best. Really, I am the grandson of the manse—I preach you a kind of sermon—box the brat's ears!

'My mother—to pass to matters more within my competence—finely enjoys herself. The new country, some new friends we have made, the interesting experiment of this climate, which (at least) is tragic, all have done her good. I have myself passed a better winter than for years, and now that it is nearly over have some diffident hopes of doing well in the summer and "eating a little more air" than usual.

'I thank you for the trouble you are taking, and my mother joins with me in kindest regards to yourself and Mrs. Charteris.  
—Yours very truly, 'ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.'

Dr. Oswald Dykes was a friend who sorely grudged that they had so few opportunities of meeting, but they always reopened their intercourse on the old familiar footing. He bears witness:—

'For me an unusual fascination lay in the candour and spontaneity of Dr. Charteris' nature and in his unaffected genial manner. He was one whom it seemed easy to love. Yet beneath his playfulness and utter absence of self-importance, he concealed more real strength both of intellect and of forceful will than casual observation revealed. Such a concealment from the outside public of part of his native power was no doubt added to by the state of his health. Always, I fancy, unrobust and insecure, it is well known how often in later decades it was subject to severe seizures, incapacitating him for long intervals from any public appearance. The wonder is that notwithstanding this recurrent infirmity he contrived to do so much for the spiritual interest of his Church, and to impress his personality so effectually upon its whole work: above all upon a widening circle of younger men, whom he inspired with his own ideas, and enlisted in the carrying out of his favourite

schemes. True it is that Dr. Charteris' influence, beyond that of any other churchman whom I have known, depended on charm of personality. None the less it was the personality of a large and generous nature. He inaugurated a new day for the "Auld Kirk."

Another friend was Dr. R. H. Gunning, a widow's son, self-supporting from his fifteenth year, driven by health to emigrate to Brazil, where he won such a position as to become an influential adviser of the enlightened Emperor, and did much to bring about the abolition of slavery in the wide Brazilian empire. In old age and affluence he returned to spend the evening of his days in his native Scotland. In early life he was an ardent disciple of Dr. Chalmers, and a staunch ally and elder of that great home missionary in building up a Church of living Christians by distinctly territorial work amid the poor and careless of the West Port. He followed out the same line with unusual consistency and open-handed liberality. He had, in his Brazil days, been treacherously shot blind while sleeping. He maintained to the end of his life almost a seeing man's interest in the Old Town missions of Edinburgh, giving munificently (through Dr. Charteris) to the University Missionary Association's work in Blackfriars Street, which became the nucleus of the Old Kirk parish; and to the Students' and the Deaconess' Mission in the Pleasance, because their work also was territorial. The burden of his thought was that localised churches were specially needed not merely where they could be self-supporting, but among the poor, the unfortunate, and the degraded; and not only to offer the salvation of the Gospel of the world to come, but also the good things of this life, domestic, social, and national, with organised comfort, decency, and hope of prosperity. He anxiously desired, as a strong Protestant and Presbyterian, the co-operation of these churches, and wrote to Dr. Charteris: 'You should be the Bishop of my whole scheme, as I believe you are the most earnest for a real reform of lapsed families, religiously, socially, and educationally; for a combination of all is needed for solid, permanent work.'



This Christian doctor also gave of his wealth to found college bursaries. Dr. Charteris spoke the last tribute of respect in March 1900 to this typical Scot, who had influenced many lives in two hemispheres.

To Dr. J. R. Macduff, also, he maintained to the end the warmest attachment. He wrote thus to Miss Macduff on April 27th, 1895, from Munich:—

'To-day we were at the German Protestant service in one of the old Protestant churches. It was the finest sight I ever saw of the kind in Germany. There must have been 3000 or 4000 people present, standing in all the passages, men and women in equal numbers, and the sermon was on "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me?" I was behind a pillar, so could not follow a great part of the sermon, which was evidently pure Gospel teaching. I do not like paraphrasing Scripture. I like best when the preacher draws the straight and simple lessons. The German plan is usually to paraphrase. In Brixen we had to become Roman Catholics! I have learned to look with more sympathy on the best side of Popery, but I do prefer the simple Gospel of Protestantism. The worst of the Continental Protestantism in many cases is, that a man thinks he has done all his religious duty when he protests, *i.e.* says "I am not a Romanist." There he rests. The Protestant Churches—as such—do very little good work. Individuals start up from them, and as individuals do a great deal.'

From Clunyhill, Forres, on September 22nd, 1895, he wrote tenderly inquiring for Miss Macduff after her father's death, and reported:—

'I was sent here to be mended by water-cure. I am engaged to preach in the West Church Aberdeen. It is the last communion of Dr. Mitford Mitchell there, who attended Sir Alexander and Lady Anderson in their dying time; and it is the first communion of his daughter and only child. I don't feel quite up to preaching, but the circumstances are special. I am trying to write a book of *Daily Meditations for Guildsmen*; something like what your father proposed for me in 1865, beside the glaciers in Switzerland.'

On this occasion Dr. Charteris encountered at Forres Hydropathic a young Welsh M.P., Mr. D. Lloyd George, who had not then made his mark. With characteristic discernment he informed the present writer of the pro-

found impression which the Welshman's ability had made upon him: and averred: 'You will hear a great deal of that man in the coming years.' He also noted that the politician, now so high in office, spoke in terms of rather contemptuous disparagement of the capacity of his party leaders.

Dr. Charteris belonged to that none too common class—helpers: he was indeed a succourer of many, deserving or undeserving. He was frequently resorted to by those in spiritual anxiety and distress, and as one 'warmed underneath the Comforter's safe wing,' he was ever ready to 'spread the endearing warmth around.' At Matlock in 1877, when himself suffering excruciatingly, a poor patient with spine complaint, Miss J— D—, had greatly attracted his pity, but his advances at first met with a discouraging response. Meeting her again, however, the next year, an intimate friendship and correspondence began; and to the delight of her father and sisters, the affectionate, although sometimes exacting sufferer, in consequence of Dr. Charteris' method of treatment—a compound of sympathy, exhortation, and banter—improved in an extraordinary degree. It was arranged that she and her sister should visit them in Edinburgh as soon as she had twice walked round her father's big garden, for she had been usually carried from room to room by two men. Her will was so invigorated that the condition was fulfilled next spring. The invalid, who had never paid a visit to friends before, was quite wild with delight, and much the better for accomplishing this new experience. She became a regular contributor to *Life and Work*; and her improvement continued whenever Dr. Charteris' influence could be brought to bear. The strange thing about this friendship was that she belonged to the very highest type of High Anglicanism. Another remarkable case, very able but difficult to help, was that of a young woman whom for years he trained and advanced so that she did excellent work among farm servants. An Edinburgh lady in the extremity of doubt about the unknown God, the Divinity of Christ, and the efficacy of prayer,



turned to him for sympathy and counsel because of a sermon she had never forgotten when he preached on 'God my exceeding joy,' and was so guided and comforted by him that she said it was 'like a helping hand put out in the dark.'

A Scottish Professor wrote :—

'My life is much the richer and better for having known you. Your influence served to awaken a dormant part of my nature, whose culture I believe to be the chief end and glory of this life. First at St. Andrews, in 1884, I felt your power to do me good at its height, and through all these years you have helped me to trust and follow a mystical Presence whose light transfigures common tasks, and whose power no criticism can touch. I venture thus to acknowledge my great debt, that you may never be tempted to suppose that, though a few may seem strangely obtuse to duties you see to be clamant, and though many like myself may seem to be deplorably unfruitful in spite of the vision, the Divine blessing through you is not richly beneficial to many others I know of as well as to me.'

The daughter of a minister and author wrote :—

'A long-ago sermon of yours greatly helped me. It put God and religion in an utterly fresh aspect to my mind. Then the classes in that old Park Church room were such aids to higher life, and left such distinct traces on mind and heart, teaching the need of prayer mingled with daily life—the influence and the certainty of the gift of the Holy Spirit—and growth as an evidence of spiritual life. Perhaps more than all was your simple question, "Are you trying to be good?" Before I ever attended a class I felt something in yourself that made one at least wish to be better. I wondered, "Is Dr. Charteris always like this?" And actually asked Mrs. Charteris one day. She said, "Yes, always." Then I thought, "This is absolutely real."'

An exiled Scot in India voiced the need of many less well off, for a high-class school in the hills where education could be obtained free from those tendencies which unchurch Presbyterians—a very clamant need in India to-day. A poor young licentiate had fallen into such dismal depression long ago that he abandoned hope and cast himself into the Thames. Drawn by Dr. Charteris' strong sympathy, he regained hope in God, for as he said

he did not doubt the efficacy of the saving medicine, but distrusted the steadiness and worthiness of his own hand to administer it. Befriended by the Professor when all others stood aloof, he was carefully tended till he regained his full mental balance, and provided with repeated pecuniary assistance till fit to settle to steady Christian work. These are but samples of many scores of similar acts of one who 'would cheer some lonely brother's heart, some lost one bring again.'

Dr. Charteris' filial affection was keen and constant. His father passed away on 12th September 1871, in the new schoolhouse at Wamphray, in a quiet sleep: his latter end was peace, as befitted his life. His uncle, the Rev. William Charteris, who had given his strength to the Church of Scotland's mission to the Jews (he translated the Shorter Catechism into modern Greek), died at Smyrna on 25th November 1885. Sorrows fell thick in the following year. His beloved mother, to whom he owed so much and whose tender care he so well repaid, died on his wife's birthday, June 29th, aged seventy-seven. She was so hale and vigorous that he hardly realised her frequent warnings that her end was near. Her last illness was painless. She was comforted with the presence of her dear ones, who anticipated no immediate danger; but 'a second paralytic stroke suddenly ended her busy and believing life.' Immediately after her funeral they were summoned from the cottage at Wamphray to the sick-bed of his father-in-law, then suffering from a protracted and painful malady. Lady Anderson died on 13th December, Dr. Charteris' birthday, and not long after Sir Alexander closed his pilgrimage.

In 1885 Dr. and Mrs. Charteris, who had had charge of his namesake and nephew in an emergency, were allowed practically to adopt him as their own boy; and for about ten years his presence was a constant joy and interest to them. He accompanied them when they wintered abroad, chiefly at Meran in 1889, and was later a pupil at the Moravian school of Neuwied on the Rhine. When they were absent from each other, Dr. Charteris often wrote



to cheer and encourage him. And it was no wonder that the dutiful nephew wrote:—

‘Of all uncles who ever stepped, you surely are the best! You simply overwhelm me with acts of kindness, and to be grateful in just measure is quite beyond my poor powers.’

An amusing expedient called the ‘B.M.,’ entrusted to the Moravian school-boy, was a pill-box containing sovereigns, which his uncle instructed him to use in returning to Edinburgh, should his home-sickness prove intolerable. To preserve the secret the box was labelled ‘bolting mixture,’ and sealed. The mere possession of the means of returning was itself sufficient to put running away out of the question.

Special mention falls to be made, with becoming reserve, concerning those relations which Dr. Charteris was honoured and privileged to hold towards good Queen Victoria. It was in November 1864 that he first preached in the drawing-room at Balmoral; and Lady Augusta Stanley was commanded by the Queen to ask that he should write out his sermon for Her Majesty’s perusal. Similar requests were frequent in the years that followed; and more than once it was suggested to him to print a sermon. But in loyalty and duty he asked permission to refrain from doing so. In the year 1869 he was appointed Chaplain to Her Majesty; and in 1901 he was reappointed by King Edward. Queen Victoria frequently remarked that she derived much comfort, not only from his discourses, but from his soothing and sympathetic private intercourse. Her Majesty was especially interested in Woman’s Work; and in January 1883 the Marchioness of Ely, Lady-in-Waiting, was commanded to drive over from Osborne to Ventnor and inquire for the health of Dr. and Mrs. Charteris—a signal mark of favour which the invalids counted very precious. It was characteristic of him that while moving among courtiers he never forgot the old folks at home; and a letter telling ‘all about it’ was always written before he retired to bed. A single quotation may suffice:—

“‘Most Gracious Queen’ is indeed a description of her, were

it not that the word "gracious" implies a condescension which is not quite concealed: whereas Her Majesty's kindness is so real, so simple, and so thoughtful, that one is only too apt to forget how completely she puts royalty aside, and comes down to a young Scottish minister's level. The Queen asked me whether I liked the theology that I saw in Bonn, and why. I said, "I did, ma'am; for it is evangelical and liberal." "Ah," she said, "I agree with you. That is the best kind."

Like others, he noted 'the special charm of the good Queen's face when lit up with a smile.'

Dr. Charteris wrote elsewhere:—

'It is a great thing to have upon the throne of this kingdom and empire a sovereign who appreciates the Presbyterian service and loves the Church of Scotland. She is the first sovereign of whom this can be said. She is not isolated from the ancient nobility of the realm; and I may venture to correct a common misapprehension by saying—not without inquiry—that at this present time the greater number of the Scottish nobility are members or adherents of the Church of Scotland. As they take their rightful place among the people, and at their head, they may greatly accelerate the healing of the breach between classes, and promote a healthy outcome of the unmitigable social tendency of national politics.'

After her death he wrote:—

'I can truly say, as a minister of the Church who had the honour of being presented to her thirty-seven years ago, that she loved the Church of Scotland. Our simple service, our simple Communion service, was to her mind. She was a reverent worshipper, and a patient, observant listener. The Queen knew our Church and all its proceedings. She knew the names and works of all who were prominent. I remember her keen interest in the abolition of patronage, and her hope that it would lead to a union of the Presbyterians of Scotland. The progress of the Church and its usefulness—she knew it all, and knew it sympathetically. All this was personal; it was not official or diplomatic, or merely courteous interest in what interested us. She held, with all the power of her strong mind, a clear and simple creed; and when she spoke of any Church affairs it was impossible not to see that it was as a believer she was speaking, and longing for the coming of Christ's kingdom. And when her sorrows came—when I first saw her the great sorrow of her life had lately come—she clung with simple faith to the promises of the living God. To speak to her was to speak to a bereaved wife, a sorrowing mother, who looked with wistful, expectant



attention for a word of help. There could be no wasted words nor any beating round the bush in speaking to her—not because she was the Queen, but because one felt the power of her trained perception and the quick clearness of her judgment.

Her chief characteristic was her marvellous sympathy. Because of this, every one was a distinct person to her; servants, "neighbours," preachers, she individualised every one. . . . It was largely by this sympathy that her extraordinary memory was made so strong. You had told her this or that: you had identified yourself with some position in your sermon; and she never forgot it. One of the valued gifts I had from her was given to me because it is a likeness of a dead friend of hers, to whom I had been of some little service several years before her death. The Queen remembered the fact, because she loved the friend. . . . Her sympathy was a magnet which drew hearts. After leaving her presence I have often said to myself that the great Scottish general, who had commanded armies, was right when he said: "I am ready to carry a musket for your Majesty." One would have done anything for such a queen.

## CHAPTER XVII

### CHURCH DEFENCE AND CREED REVISION

Rejuvenation after 1843—Rise of the Disestablishment Agitation—Mr. Gladstone's Pledges—The Crisis of 1885—Dr. Charteris as Church Defender—Mr. Menzies' Interview with Mr. Gladstone—Tracts in Defence—Dr. Charteris' Reasons—Creed and Formula.

WHILE the great act of self-sacrifice consummated by those 451 ministers (out of 1203) who left to form the Free Church in 1843, can never be spoken of but with praise and admiration, and while it naturally evoked in many distinguished younger men a desire to devote themselves to its ministry, the allegation that 'the life departed from the Establishment' was a travesty of the truth. The old Church of Scotland reeled under a tremendous blow, but rose again with a stout heart to face much temporary unpopularity, but to fulfil her Christian and patriotic duty. No unworthy words were spoken of those who had departed by chivalrous and indomitable men like James Robertson and Norman Macleod. The continuity of the Church in every sphere of work was fully maintained, and she entered upon a period of constitutional reformation and of steady, healthy revival. About forty years ago the word 'rehabilitation' was not seldom used of the Church of Scotland by some without her borders. The phrase smacks in its associations of prison sentences, telling of the man who has 'done time,' and afterwards has retrieved his character. Rejuvenation would perhaps be a happier word. Anyhow the process which it describes is now at last fully conceded. The Church of Scotland herself can never forget what she owes to those who kept her flag flying, and to the noble



band of younger recruits who pressed forward to join her ranks in times of the utmost stress and strain. It was not against a degenerating or a dead Church that the cry of Disestablishment was first raised, but against a revived and reforming Church, seeking to overtake the long accumulating arrears of undischarged responsibilities, and in this both dutiful and successful. Such men were fighting not merely for the advance of their Church, but as Christian patriots for the triumph of the Gospel.

It is a perversion of history to attribute the Disestablishment agitation simply to the Anti-patronage Act of 1874. It was in the year 1872 that the United Presbyterian Synod appointed a committee on the Disestablishment and Disendowment of the Established Churches in England and Scotland—Rev. George C. Hutton, convener. It was the fateful month of May. By a curious coincidence the same newspaper which contains the report of Mr. Gordon's victory in the Commons, for religious instruction in Scottish schools, also records a lecture delivered by Professor Cairns of Berwick to a crowded audience on the Disestablishment of the Church of Scotland. That much respected and beloved minister, while pleading for his plan as the only path to union and reconstruction, laid greatest stress upon the unorthodox doctrinal tendencies of the Mother-Church, of which an evidence was found in the fact of Dean Stanley having preached in Old Greyfriars' Church. He seriously declared that these tendencies moved him more than anything else to strike for Disestablishment! He referred to the active alliance of the leaders of the Free Church minority with the Established Church on the question of education, and the broaching by the latter of schemes for reconstruction, of which he disapproved. He hailed as eminently wise, courageous, and seasonable the testimony borne by Dr. Rainy and others at a meeting held about a month before, on 29th March, and regarded this as a challenge to the older dissenters to renew their former protest. He therefore willingly embraced the call which not only their example addressed to every Voluntary, but which the requisition

sent to him in the name of honoured friends in his own Church appeared to make imperative. At the meeting in question Dr. Rainy declared himself; and in *The Presbyterian*, which he edited, for May 1872, the following sentences are given as (in large capitals) *The views of Dr. Rainy*:—

‘I have long come deliberately to the conclusion that the Established Churches in this country are an obstruction to good as Establishments, and a furtherance to evil, and that no deliverance is to be expected in the way of reconstructing them; but that the only outget is in the way of Disestablishment and Disendowment. In the first place, I say that I regard these Established Churches as a means of propagating latitudinarianism. . . . The man is shutting his eyes who does not see that the Established Churches are affording a platform for much loose latitudinarianism, and in some cases infidel doctrine and preaching—a platform which it would not have if they were disestablished.’

In the United Presbyterian Synod also of 1872, Mr. Hutton was outspoken enough to say:—

‘He was much distressed when in London to be told by a gentleman who had much acquaintance with all these things, that he was told by an eminent minister of title (Sir Henry W. Moncreiff)—“Sir, when the battle of Disestablishment comes in Scotland, United Presbyterians will not be in the van: they have somehow or other lost their force in Scotland on this question.” He was asked, “Who then will lead the van?” And replied, “The Free Church.” But Mr. Hutton saw no reason why the United Presbyterians should not come to the front and lead the van. He believed that the Moderator’s (Dr. Cairns) lecture would be regarded by many as a signal-gun fired in regard to this matter.’

In the light of those quotations he would be a rash historian who would again repeat the frequent misstatement that Disestablishment agitation was due to the Act abolishing patronage, and dated from the year 1874. One does not wish to multiply quotations, but must record that in the Free Church Commission of March 1886, which considered Mr. Finlay’s Bill, and petitioned against it by sixty to fourteen votes, Principal Rainy said:—

‘If this Bill passed, and if it worked in the way in which it was expected to work, the effect would be simply that the life and work of the non-Establishment Churches should generally



efface themselves in Scotland, and that for the sake of the purposes of the life and work of the Established Church. He believed . . . that such an effacement of their life and work for the purpose of pouring it into the channels of the life and work of the Established Church, such a scheme would be just an incalculable disaster to the Christianity of Scotland.<sup>1</sup>

If he really had long so believed, what becomes of the complaint that the Church of Scotland, from lack of magnanimity and even of justice, refrained from approaching the Free Church officially in 1869, and thereby lost her last practical chance of reunion on an Establishment basis?<sup>2</sup> The Free Church had her own difficulties with her alleged heretics; yet her leaders appear to have imagined that the prevailing type of minister in the Church of Scotland was to be made in the image of one particular 'heretic,' who left no successor. In Lord Salisbury's phrase, they 'put their money on the wrong horse.' The Disestablishment agitation served one good purpose. It welded all sections into one, and emphasised that positive unity of doctrine which exists alongside of legitimate variety of opinion. Church defence brought about a cessation of sectional feeling, which had been more apparent than real; and no one can dispute that Church courts were never more tolerant guardians of reasonable liberty than now. In the Free Church the great personality of Principal Rainy dominated her Assembly and whole procedure—as some thought, too completely dominated it.

The Church of Scotland leaders, foreseeing the coming struggle, were reluctant to precipitate it. In October 1874 Lord Balfour wrote to Dr. Charteris, asking whether a Church Defence Association was not a premature step, and doubting the wisdom of ostentatiously defending what was not then really attacked and in danger. But to Mr. Alexander Whitelaw, M.P., Dr. Charteris had written:—

'It may be doubtful whether any modern Nehemiah will do

<sup>1</sup> *Daily Review*, March 4, 1886.

<sup>2</sup> *Life of Principal Rainy*, vol. i. p. 262.

wisely if he have only a trowel, and not also a ready sword, when enemies interfere with his rebuilding the Temple.'

In 1878 Dr. Charteris had a narrow escape from accident, which might have been much worse than a broken arm; but, though ever holding out the olive branch, he was still able to grasp both sword and trowel. The position of Church Liberals was made a trying one when Mr. W. P. Adam the Liberal Whip, and afterwards Lord Hartington in a public utterance, showed distinct signs of thirling their party to Disestablishment. The Church of Scotland was always in alliance with the State, but with no party therein, and desired to maintain that attitude: for the Church of Christ, as such, should be independent of political parties. Dr. Charteris, while on the whole inclined to Conservatism, had never voted save once, and then against a disestablisher. Now he was prepared, if need be, to put Church before party, and maintained it to be the duty of staunch Churchmen to support a Liberal M.P. like Sir Robert Anstruther against a Conservative official candidate. He wrote this to the Conservative organ, the *Edinburgh Courant*.

When Mr. Gladstone came to Midlothian in 1879 he gave at Dalkeith—to reassure those who thought him ready 'to smuggle the Established Church of Scotland out of existence'—this promise:—

'If it is to be put upon its trial, it shall have a fair, full, and open trial. It shall not be condemned without having been thus fairly tried. The verdict of the country in the far weaker case of the Irish Church was given only after a full trial and consideration; and this is what the Established Church of Scotland justly and fairly asks.'

In 1880 he was again returned to power. Mr. Dick Peddie's Bill for sheer secular disestablishment, and afterwards Dr. Cameron's, were being pressed before the country; every conceivable step was taken to make Mr. Gladstone pledge himself in its support. It was known that he had privately declared there would be no difficulty about the disestablishment of the Scots Kirk. The autumn General Election of 1885 was the most critical



time; it followed the extension of the county franchise with which Mr. Gladstone's party was credited. The Parnellite host aimed at holding the balance in politics, and decided to vote against the man who had consigned their leaders to Kilmainham Gaol. He was striving for Liberal party unity, and unwilling to shed any section. The Duke of Argyll pointed out that Mr. Gladstone's pledges were purely personal and purely provisional, and could not inspire churchmen with any confidence for the future. Nay more, that they distinctly threw on them the duty of looking to the future for themselves.

It was in these circumstances that in October 1885 fourteen hundred and seventy-five ministers, subscribing themselves 'The undersigned Liberal clergy of Scotland,' looked to the great party in the State, of which Mr. Gladstone was the illustrious head, 'to make a speedy end of this religious scandal and political injustice,' alleging that 'The Church of Christ in Scotland is broken in pieces; our immense Liberal majority is perplexed and demoralised.' As the manifesto was largely signed by Baptist, Evangelical Union, and Congregationalist ministers, and fifteen other clergymen, the question arose as to who broke it, and whether Disestablishment cement would mend it! Why had these gentlemen not first united with one another? The phrase, 'a religious scandal,' as applied to the Church of Scotland, fairly roused Dr. Charteris, and in correspondence with him Dr. Ross Taylor admitted that it would have been monstrous in that connection, and that the address was loosely written, and bore marks of impulsive haste. Dr. Charteris comically pointed out that to ask Mr. Gladstone to terminate Scottish Church divisions—if the phrase were thus explained—was Erastian beyond anything he knew; that union would never come save by attraction; and that this, the most painful document he had ever read, would bear bitter fruit for many days. Principal Cairns was the medium of approaching Mr. Gladstone, and while his first plea urged was the religious welfare of Scotland, his second and third were the interest and unity of the Liberal party!

In the Church of Scotland, the Liberal Principal Tulloch, along with Lord Balfour of Burleigh, headed the movement for resistance, and claimed that fair, full, and open trial by which the Church was ready to abide. In his last great speech in the Assembly, Dr. Tulloch moved it as the wind sways the barley field, saying :—

‘ We must stand somewhere, we stand here. We cannot give up the principle of National religion, or parley with assaults on that principle. Presbyterianism is dear to us, and all that is grand and heroic in its tradition. It is the natural form which the National religion of Scotland takes, and we value it deeply ; but it is not more valuable or more a principle of the historic Church of Scotland than that of National religion—that the Lord whom we serve is Head or King of Nations as well as of Churches, and that a National Church is the only true expression of the homage which nations owe the Supreme Head, and of the manner in which Christianity shall pervade all National life and society.’

His peroration was a simple appeal to younger men to bear themselves manfully for the Church they loved and were sworn to defend. Never did a gathering of grown men in the writer's experience exhibit such sincere signs of emotion. Scotland from end to end held crowded meetings, of which, doubtless, politicians took due note ; and Mr. Gladstone made a most dexterous turn in a very difficult situation, of which the chief reason may here be adduced.

Principal Tulloch and Dr. Charteris (then an elector in Midlothian) were at the house of Mr. William John Menzies, finally adjusting the celebrated ‘ Appeal to the people of Scotland,’ penned by the Principal in view of the General Election. It occurred to them, however, that something yet more practical was wanted, and believing that the majority of the electors of Midlothian were with them, they resolved to get a simple declaration (‘ I am opposed to the Disestablishment and Disendowment of the Church of Scotland’) signed as widely as possible. Representatives of each parish were summoned, and the suggestion explained. The electoral roll was not issued till 2nd November, and Mr. Gladstone was announced to



speak on the 11th, in the Free Assembly Hall, specially granted. That left only a week, but they were ready by Monday the 9th. Mr. Menzies drove out to Dalmeny on Tuesday, and asked for Mr. Gladstone's secretary, who was out. After a little time Mr. Gladstone himself came into the room where he had been shown, and Mr. Menzies reports the conversation which took place:—

'I told him that I had come to make an arrangement for a deputation waiting upon him in reference to the Church question. He at once said: "Well, I hope you won't ask for that, for if I see you I should have to see one or two deputations on the other side. I am going to speak on this subject to-morrow, and to see deputations afterwards would be like the day after the fair."

'In these circumstances (I said) perhaps you will allow me to explain to you what the deputation could have said. I then told him that we were exceedingly anxious that this question should be eliminated from practical politics; to which he replied that he "had come to Scotland to preach the unity of the Liberal party," and that he had himself been strongly urging in England that the Church question there should in the meantime be left in abeyance. I then told him that we had no wish to interfere with the newly enfranchised electors as to the manner in which they would give their votes, that we knew quite well that many of them would esteem it a high honour to be able to record their first vote for himself, and that we had no wish whatever to interfere with that; but that he himself had stated that the question was one for the people of Scotland themselves to decide; that we had taken the trouble to ascertain what the views of his constituency on this subject were. I then read to him the terms of the Declaration above quoted, when he said, "Well, that was a very bold course to take: there can be no possible objection to that: now have you your figures?" I then handed him the figures, telling him that the electoral roll had only been out a week, but that we had collected the statistics of thirty-five out of thirty-nine parishes, and that he would find that the Declaration had been signed by more than fifty per cent. of the whole electors on the roll, making no allowance for deaths or removals, in every one of these parishes; and that it had been signed by sixty-four per cent. of the whole electors in these parishes (taken together). Mr. Gladstone's face instantly flushed: he took the papers out of my hands with great avidity, and exclaimed, "This is a most interesting paper, a most valuable paper," and in a few seconds added, "You will find when I speak to-morrow that a

great many fears and a great many hopes will be alike disappointed." He then said it must have taken a great deal of trouble to get up these statistics. I told him that it had; that the time was short, but that we had willing workers who did not grudge a good deal of trouble in so good a cause. He expressed himself in very complimentary terms as to the manner in which the thing had been done, and added, "The fact of the matter is that there is a subject, not yet upon the surface, but which will very soon come to the surface, which will occupy the whole time of the next Parliament, and there will be no time to consider anything else."

'Mr. Gladstone's memorable speech was delivered next day in the Free Assembly Hall, when the leaders of the Disestablishment party were present, and expected him to announce Disestablishment as a part of the Liberal programme. He began by speaking of the English Church, saying that the man did not breathe the air of Parliamentary life who would be able to grapple with the English question, which he relegated to the long vista of futurity; that to raise such a question then would be to sow seeds of disunion while he was labouring for party unity. Then suddenly pausing, he added: "And when I come across the Border, why should I be of a different opinion?" For if he committed himself, English churchmen would in one great phalanx rush to the poll to support the interests of the Church of Scotland. Therefore he ruled it out of practical politics for that Parliament, and left it to a future occasion to deal with. He even declined to support Dr. Cameron's motion, on the ground that "To do this would be to help on the downfall of the Church without the whole subject being put fairly, and apart from other issues, before the people, and without the Church having received a fair trial."'

Professor Charteris' view of this speech (as representing his Church) was thus recorded by a specially commissioned interviewer of the *Daily News*:—

'I expected Mr. Gladstone to say that he would not make up his mind on the opinion of the Scottish people until the result of the General Election should be ascertained. When he found that all Scotland is ablaze, he could not postpone some utterance; and he has now declared, that so far as he is concerned, he pledges himself not to vote for an abstract resolution against the Church; and not to regard a majority of Scottish members voting for such a resolution as conclusive, inasmuch as they will be elected without Disestablishment being a test question. This seems to me to bind Mr. Gladstone, and it would bind any Liberal Government as regards a Bill, but it would not bind



other Liberal members to refrain from pushing and passing such an abstract resolution as Dr. Cameron's; and it does not remove the plank supposed to be nailed down at the Perth Liberal Convention. If Mr. Gladstone had said one good word for the Church of Scotland as a working and growing Church; if he had admitted that her advocates and orators have the whole heart of the nation with them, as seen in the enthusiasm of a thousand meetings, I would have felt that he was really open to sympathise with Scotland's voice, when it speaks for our old Church. But his chilling silence shows that, while his ears are open, his heart is not with us; and when I find him and Lord Rosebery exerting all their eloquence in favour of Liberal unity, without one good word for the freest and most democratic—the most truly liberal—Church in Christendom, I see that they are looking to our foes for support, and to us for inaction. Mr. Gladstone seems to say to us: "Damp your powder: fall away from your ranks." I therefore conclude that we shall be great fools if we do; and I hope we shall not only not support, but shall resist every candidate who will not promise to vote against Disestablishment, howsoever proposed.

'The subject not yet upon the surface' was Home Rule, and history tells how it split the Gladstone government. The first Home Rule Bill was defeated by Liberal Unionists and Conservatives in the House of Commons, and the country, appealed to in July 1886, emphatically endorsed its rejection. After this quieter times ensued for the Church of Scotland; but even during Mr. Gladstone's premiership Dr. Cameron's resolution was defeated by 237 to 125 votes, although he cast his net wide, and pledged no one as to the time for Disestablishment. Dr. Tulloch had died, but when the standard-bearer fell his place beside Lord Balfour was taken by the brilliant orator, Dr. MacGregor of St. Cuthbert's, and Church Defence Associations were vigorously sustained. The duty of the Church to other Churches was never lost sight of; and in the odd thousand of Church Defence meetings, one resolution regularly recognised the many thousands of signatures against the Church's overthrow of those outside her borders, and she maintained not only the duty of defence but the positive policy of conciliation and peace. Thus Dr. Charteris said at Dalkeith:—

'You can never meet enthusiasm successfully with prudential

maxims, or cold logic, or iron force. If you have no means on your side of stirring the blood of men, you had better succumb at once to those who have. They will baffle and beat you. So then, if we would defend the Church, we must have no timid suggestions, no Philistine logic, no cold utilitarian maxims. We must organise the enthusiasm of the Scottish people on behalf of their Church. We must show that the spirit of our fathers is not dead. And who could ask a nobler cause? The old Church was in need of such a time as this. Things went so well with her: she was working so quietly that she was rather torpid: she was so tolerant and considerate that she was becoming phlegmatic. But, now that she is in actual danger, who can be listless that loves her and her truth? The Church is not for the ministers, but for the people. Establishment is far above Endowment. Now, then, what will you do? I say, rally as a Church party; be ready for reunion, if need be for reconstruction, but deal war to the death against Disestablishment.'

Not only were such rousing appeals everywhere employed. At the call of Dr. Pagan of Bothwell, informative lectures were largely provided on the history and work of the Church of Scotland; and the magic-lantern, hitherto deemed a child's toy, now in scientific use, placarded before the eyes of the people a series of conclusive arguments, both novel and weighty, why the spiritual birth-right of the nation should be preserved. On the other hand respected opponents, notably Principals Cairns and Rainy, agitated the country for Disestablishment, like preaching friars. It was in vain that men like Dr. Horatius Bonar had quietly protested against Church courts being used for political ends, maintaining from long ministerial experience that when party politics come in, religious life goes out. In letters, speeches, and magazine articles, Dr. Donald Fraser of Marylebone calmly pleaded that the whole problem of the better arrangement of Scottish Presbytery required larger consideration, generous treatment, and a grand burial of prejudices; that the existing divisions need not be, and ought not to be perpetual. He entreated men to drop the sword of controversy, and instead of pointing the eager finger at one another's defects, to try for a change the way of charity. He insisted that there was no control by the State in



spiritual matters, and that if further security for this were desired, it would be given. He pointed out to any who might hold hereditary endowments so wicked that it would be wrong to combine with a Church that held them, that no such scruple had prevented general Presbyterian Union in Canada and Victoria, where Free Churchmen and United Presbyterians had not dreamed of demanding their secularisation as a preliminary to union. And he lamented the lack of concentration of evangelical life and power, and that so few seemed to care to earn the blessing of the peacemaker.

But still the fratricidal strife went on. Time and interest which rightly belong to religion were employed to its manifest detriment. Dr. Charteris never tired of affirming that divisions among Christians in Scotland, as in Corinth of old, injuriously affected the attainments of the spiritual life. Many good men doubtless thought Disestablishment the best, nay, even the only, road to reunion.

In May 1890 Mr. Gladstone, resolutely set on obtaining a majority for Home Rule, and forgetful of his public statement that it would require a long series of such resolutions as Dr. Cameron's to be conclusive of the opinion of Scotland, declared, upon a majority of Scottish members having twice so voted, though not elected on the Church question: 'We know perfectly well what the opinion of the people of Scotland is'; that the whole thing need not detain Parliament more than two hours to determine what should be done regarding manse and fabrics; that there was nothing that could be grasped or weighed or measured except the advantage of stipend; and that Disestablishment would bind together good men and women kept apart by nothing but the artificial distinctions created by absolute statecraft. He therefore walked straight into Dr. Cameron's net. Dr. Charteris in the *Life and Work* magazine called attention to the grave significance of these declarations, and that Mr. Gladstone was making it impossible for any Scottish Liberal to vote Liberal without declaring for the overthrow of the Church

of Scotland. He recalled how the Church had stood aloof from party politics, which was at once her strength and her danger now; and he asked the question whether the old Church and the highest interests of Christ's cause in Scotland had power enough over the hearts of our people to break the spell, and to draw Scotland away from a venerated leader who called her to historical suicide. He wondered to hear Mr. Gladstone's words from him:—

‘What is there of all that stirs the soul and saves it, of all that purifies a people and exalts a nation, which you can in that rude mechanical fashion grasp or weigh or measure? The Church of our fathers is the embodiment of the faith of our fathers, is the trophy of their triumph; and the national love of the past is not dead, though you cannot reckon it by the rules of Tare and Tret. . . . How can any man holding that the State shall sanctify the Lord's day, and maintain Christian teaching in public schools, and pronounce a number of “inevitable religious decisions,” and make the objecting minority obey those decisions—how can such men declare that the State has no conscience, and must not maintain religion for fear of infringing on “religious equality”? . . . We shall be told that we prolong the evils of strife—whereas it stands in our records that we offer to share our worldly all with our self-banished brothers, if they will only return. We shall be told that Establishment alone prevents the union of Scottish Churches—whereas we know that there is a round half dozen of dissenting bodies all disunited, which, if this were true, would be one Church; and we know also that in America there are a dozen contending sects, though there is not an Established Church. Was it not in America that the backwoodsman said Presbyterianism is “splitty”? We shall be told—nay, we have been told by an eminent assailant—that an Established Church “embitters public life by carrying the divisions of religion into politics” (!)—and we cannot but marvel how any Christian could be brought up in a Church which does not teach men to sweeten their politics by their religion. And when we point to the abolition of patronage as proof that we have in these days put ourselves in line with the ancient claims of the Scottish Church, we shall be told that Mr. Gladstone says, “that he is bound in honesty to say that in his belief the *intention only* was to draw back piecemeal and man by man” the members of the other Churches; but our reply must be that he believes in a fiction and promulgates a calumny. The statesman who framed the Bill for abolishing patronage was the man who had, four years before, seconded in the General Assembly a motion



to promote the reunion of Scottish Churches as Churches. And in 1874, when patronage was abolished, our Commission of Assembly resolved to approach those other Churches directly and tell them we were ready to have union with them: it was union of income and privilege and work. I know something of the proceedings, private and public, which led to the abolition of patronage, and to the proposals for union. I think of the dead men Mr. Gladstone is maligning when he speaks in that fashion, and I say it is a shame that he should asperse the motives of men like Lord Gordon, and Dr. William Smith and Professor Crawford, and Sir Robert Anstruther and Principal Pirie, whose names are in our records as guiding the movement in the Assembly. I think there are only two survivors of those who made the motions for union in that historic year (May 1874-May 1875), and I know well that the reunion of the Presbyterians of Scotland has been the dream and desire of their lives.

'What then shall we do? First, our *political* duty is to say to all disestablishing statesmen, politicians, and candidates: "Hands off the old Kirk of Scotland." Let the Church alone to pursue her peaceful, faithful, duty-doing course. If I have been a Liberal, I shall be a Liberal still; for I deny that this new nostrum is true Liberalism. Men who uphold the Church can advocate the freedom and progress of humanity; she is more democratic than the State, and she is the people's Church; you are not the people's friend if you would pull her down. Second, our *ecclesiastical* duty is first of all to make the Church more powerful for good. We must beware of becoming political even in our day of political danger. We must repair all gaps in her walls with prayer and pains, even though, like Nehemiah, we cannot leave the sword at home. We must extend her missions at home and abroad. We must proclaim the Gospel to Jew and Gentile with a tenderer painstaking than we thought of when we were at ease and in peace. A second duty is to bear in mind the sacrifices our sister-Churches have made for their principles: and the noble efforts by which their cause is still maintained. It is melancholy that our Scottish Churches should deliver themselves over to politicians for a settlement of our controversies. We know each other better, and like each other better, than outsiders like any one of us: and yet we are calling on those outsiders to judge between us. Third, our *personal* duty is to respect our dissenting assailants, even when we have to oppose them. Not ours to ascribe bad motives—those men believe that their duty calls them to disestablish. We must manifest a spirit of forbearance and steadfastness that will prevent the growth of bitterness, of which there is always more than enough in Scotland. God forbid that it should grow even in these trying

times! We must still co-operate on all neutral ground with the men who are arrayed against us in the battle. It will often be hard; with some individuals it will perhaps not be possible, but with the great majority it will be easy enough if we try. May God defend the Right!

In this well-conditioned Christian attitude Dr. Charteris faced the fray which all men saw to be impending. In October 1891 the Young Men's Guild held its meeting at Hamilton under the presidency of that distinguished judge, Lord Watson, himself the son of a Lanarkshire manse. Dr. Charteris said:—

'Every one had to speak for himself, and he was going to speak as a voter; he felt he could not be satisfied to elect a man who would promise merely to keep silent when the question of the Church of Scotland came up. He would vote against any man who would not vote against her assailants. While this attempt to burn his mother's cottage over her head was made, he would not have any one professing neutrality as his representative; but he hoped the Guilds would not be turned into political associations; that would be ruinous to the Guild. It was theirs also to construct a scheme of reconstruction which would consider the self-respect of the ministry, and the loyalty to the ministry of the members of other Churches, on terms which would make it honourable for the acceptance of those outside.'

Dr. Charteris' concluding address as Moderator in 1892 sounded the note of preparation for the coming conflict. At the General Election which followed, however, Mr. Gladstone was returned to power, pledged to a plan of Disestablishment, and prepared to make himself responsible for the support of that plan; but his majority of forty was bound to deal first with Home Rule. In this, as is well known, they were frustrated, when the House of Lords decisively rejected a measure emphatically condemned again by public opinion. In implement of their promise the Queen's speech intimated a measure of 'Jeddart justice,' a Suspensory Bill, the herald of Disestablishment, which designed to withhold their stipends from all ministers who might be elected after its passing. It was to be the slow suffocation of the Spanish garotte. This was the climax of the wobbling career of Sir George Trevelyan, who had resigned office in 1886 rather than



consent to Home Rule, but found an early place for repentance, muttering that the game of law and order was up in Ireland. Eminent in letters, he proved the weakest of Scottish administrators; and the Bill itself never saw the light. When, later on, the gratitude of Churchmen was asked and expected, because a full measure of Disestablishment had not been brought forward, it was wittily said, that it seemed as if the man sentenced to be hanged was asked to be grateful for being accorded the long drop rather than the short drop. A remarkable right-about-wheel movement by the Government took place on the opening day of the Assembly of 1893, though it did not become known at the time. That straightforward Scottish nobleman, the Marquis of Breadalbane, was Lord High Commissioner, and it was discovered, after the rites of hospitality had been exercised at Holyrood on the eve of the Assembly, that his official speech as the Sovereign's representative had a conspicuous blank. Since 1690 such speeches have uniformly contained a pledge to maintain the Church with Presbyterian Government in Scotland. Lord Breadalbane had been no party to the omission, and those representing the Government maintained, what was doubtless true, that it was highly inconsistent and contradictory to promise an instalment of Disendowment in the Queen's speech in Parliament, and to promise to maintain the Church in this time-honoured pronouncement to the Church. But those highest in her counsels declared that they had nothing to do with the hostility, avowed or unavowed, of the transient ministry of the day: that the Commissioner is by Statute the personal representative of the Sovereign: and they hinted not remotely that, unless the customary clause was restored, they would resent this extra-legal affront, and would carry the matter by complaint and deputation to the steps of the Throne. By whatever arguments impelled, it became known to Dr. Charteris (the retiring Moderator) at the Commissioner's levée, that the Secretary for Scotland had been obliged to bend his will. Had he decreed otherwise an unprecedented

situation would have arisen. As it was, while imputing no blame to Lord Breadalbane, the Moderator, Dr. John Marshall Lang, sat awaiting his summons to the Chair, provided with alternative addresses. One was couched in the usual terms of graceful loyalty: the other, happily not required, called most serious attention to the attempted unconstitutional and partisan action, attributable in no sense to a gracious Sovereign, but to the faults of that Sovereign's servants.

Mr. Gladstone began his career with the sentiment: 'It is not option or discretion, but plighted faith which entails upon us the support of the Scottish Church.'<sup>1</sup> In later days of hostility he had promised it a fair, full, and open trial, and 'a dissolution expressly upon her case,' which he afterwards sneered at as an absurd proposition; and now by a scratch majority, procured on the Home Rule issue, he was prepared to take the judgment of Scotland's Parliamentary representatives, although elected on a totally different issue. Despite the glamour of Mr. Gladstone's oratory and the stringency of party ties, that devout and fearless soldier, Colonel Andrew Wauchope of Niddrie, reduced Mr. Gladstone's majority from over 4000 to 690 in 1892, and made him own Midlothian's attachment to the National Church.

The public unveiling of the scandalously immoral behaviour of Mr. Parnell drove a wedge into the Irish party, aroused the conscience of Great Britain, and enfeebled Mr. Gladstone's hands. The House of Lords so plainly reflected the judgment of the country against Home Rule that he did not venture on a fresh appeal to the constituencies; and at his advanced age retirement became imperative. He was succeeded as Premier by Lord Rosebery, and his Government lost no time in serving themselves heirs to the policy of support to Sir Charles Cameron's Bill, 'for which every member of the Government present had voted, and which every member of the Cabinet heartily approved of.' Within a week of their existence the new Cabinet, in the speech from the

<sup>1</sup> *The State in its Relations with the Church*, 1838, p. 245.



Throne, announced their intention 'to deal with the ecclesiastical Establishment in Scotland.' That of course referred to the ensuing session. But 'the best-laid schemes o' mice and men gang aft agley,' or in Christian language, 'Man proposes and God disposes.' The Bill was never even introduced. In the summer of 1895 the Ministry, after shivering on the brink, screwed up their courage and took the plunge into a dissolution. A strange episode may be noted in Lord Rosebery's brilliant and meteoric career. Against his better judgment—for he avowed that he wished with all his heart the three Churches had settled their differences among themselves—differences that no ordinary eye could perceive—and could have found the opportunity to amalgamate once more into the National Church of Scotland—he declared for Dis-establishment, on the ground that he could only know the voice of Scotland on this matter by the voice of its elected members. He raised the hair of distinguished Voluntaries on his platform by the assertion of a conviction that a State has just as much right to maintain an Established Church for its own purposes and in its own interests as it has to establish a standing army. Yet he asserted that the continuance of the Establishment and of the Liberal party in Scotland side by side were coming to be inconsistent, and that every manse of the former was an agency for the Tory party. It was as if the armed burglar, announcing his coming, had a right to count on the householder's neutrality, if not his enthusiastic support! Lord Rosebery's historical imagination failed him for once. Martyrs for Christ's Crown and Covenant had yielded up their lives in the Grassmarket for national religion and the freedom of Christ's Kirk combined. Now near the same spot he abjured their national testimony; and for the alleged political faults of the ministers, unproved and unprovable, he proposed, in defiance alike of Liberalism and logic, to victimise the people. In dealing with the Church of Scotland he promised to be guided by two great principles: one was great tenderness and great indulgence, which irresistibly

recalled Izaak Walton and the worm used for bait, 'as if you loved him'; the other dealt with endowments, the birthright for spiritual purposes of the Scottish people, which were to remain parochial assets for any other beneficent purpose than religion. In effect the stipends would have gone chiefly into the pockets of the landowners, who pay the greater part of parochial assessments in all country parishes. This fragment of the Church's patrimony would have been substantially given to those who never dreamed of asking it, well knowing that it did not belong to them.

The Church refused, however, to play the part of the unresisting victim. She took up the gauntlet in defence, not of the ministers' stipends—the existing ministers were assured of their life-interests—but of the people's rights in all coming time. Most unjustly were the ministers blamed by a great poet-preacher for 'gripping greedily at the teinds,' the very offence which John Knox charged against the avaricious nobility in Reformation days. They had far other ends to serve, valuing them not as a means of living, but as a means of life. Many Liberal Churchmen, seeing danger to be imminent, and feeling that they had been intolerantly drummed out of the party for no crime against Liberal principles, were forced to a momentous choice. They could no longer stifle their convictions, but were bound, though often with a painful wrench, to side for the time with the party which, on this question of cardinal importance, alone represented their conscientious views. The Church Defence Committee multiplied its illustrated lectures and literature, largely in leaflet form.

In the production of this Dr. Charteris took his full share. One of the best leaflets was printed in *Life and Work*. It met an adverse official statement concerning 'Disestablishment, this great reform, for which earnest Christians have been long praying and working, as necessary to the full vitality and fruitfulness of the Christian Churches in the land.' Dr. M'Murtrie, its universally respected and gentle author, pointed out the



delicious assumption that all earnest Christians had been long praying and working for Disestablishment, and showed up this conspicuous example of the confusion of thought between 'some' and 'all.' He frankly and sorrowfully recognised good men among those who lifted the hand against the Church of Scotland, but had they an inkling of the meaning of such a prayer:—

'It is a prayer that more bitter waters of controversy than those of 1843 may be poured out on Scotland: that the Mother-Church may be deeply injured, and the most sacred feelings of its members wounded. It is a prayer that the strongest Church of Christ in this land may become weak, and that a Home Mission co-extensive with Scotland may be crippled. It is a prayer that the freest evangelical National Church in the world, which has given to Scotland a unique position among the nations, may be thrown down never to be raised up again. It is a prayer that the religious patrimony of the poor may be taken away, and that the now independent parishioners in many hundreds of poor parishes may become dependent for their religion on the charity of rich city congregations. Are these the things for which earnest Christians pray? It does not answer to bring political passion into the sanctuary. Every Church that has tried it has suffered more injury than it has inflicted. A Church, or its leaders, or its courts, cannot become an organisation for a political purpose, especially for the despoiling of another Christian Church, without losing spirituality; and this is what Scotland cannot afford. Scotland is proud of its Non-established Churches, of their sacrifices, their liberality, their foreign missionary zeal. This paper is for earnest Christians of all the Churches. They have something better than Disestablishment to pray for. Let them pray that the wicked and wasteful divisions of Scotland's Church may cease, and that union may be obtained on conditions fair to all.'

It is said that an American deacon once offered this 'cocksure' prayer—the word is Bishop Latimer's: 'Grant, O Lord, that we may be right; for Thou knowest that we are very decided!' As Dr. M'Murtrie put it, 'We all want God to be on our side. We are not so eager to be like President Lincoln, who only wanted to be on the side of God.' Men should be always chary of rashly interpreting Providence in terms of their preferences or prejudices; yet they are equally bound to seek a reverent

understanding of God's will in history. One cannot help recalling the prayer framed by that profoundly Christian man, Dr. John Macleod of Govan, whose career as an organiser of Church Defence and Church Reform was cut short when at its best. It besought God, who has made this nation to be a witness for Himself and for His divine revelation, to 'firmly and gently dispose all things, so that, confessing Jesus Christ as High Priest over the House of God, and King of kings and Lord of lords, we may render to Thy Will the obedience of faith.'

If in humble submission and in no partisan spirit one may review the undoubted facts of history, it seems as if in answer to prayer the Divine Ruler and sole Head of the Church had passed His Suspensory Act, in view of a different solution of Scottish ecclesiastical difficulties than any which had occurred to any Church leader of those days: one which might involve 'a right relation between the Church and the State,' and compose that strife among good men which so heavily militates against the Church's truest life and work.

If we ask what the essential notion of Establishment connotes, according to Scottish ideas, many answers might be given. National homage to truth, to Him who is Truth, personified, eternal, divine, and to His Kingdom of the Truth: that was one strand in the manifold cord which bound Dr. Charteris to his standpoint as Scottish Churchman; though of course without that obsolete compulsion of conscience which partly vitiates the form of our ancient statutes to the modern mind. He held that national religion, though no substitute for either personal or family religion, is yet the fitting crown and keystone of both; that with neither justice nor moral competence can the State punish crime, if it withholds the offer of instruction on the whole duty of man. He stood for a 'Free Church in a Free State,' equally remote from the Ultramontane conception where the Church claims to control the State, and the Erastian, where the State claims to rule the Church. Therefore he prized that unique and scriptural alliance of co-ordination and co-operation which



made the Church of Scotland, in his belief, the freest Church in Christendom: which excites the envy of Englishmen and the admiration of the Christian world. Only when the State refrains from persecuting the Church and from ignoring religion, only when it recognises, maintains and supports both, without interfering with the full jurisdiction of Church courts acting within their own province, did Dr. Charteris believe that the right relationship was secured. But in his view, as in that of Dr. Chalmers, high theories were overridden by the practical utility of endowed territorial work, as a means to that increasingly urgent and difficult end, the universal Christian education of the people—especially to preach the Gospel to the poor.

At an early stage of the Disestablishment movement, probably in 1882, Dr. Rainy announced that it was 'now or never.' The phrase was both true and significant. The communicants of the Church of Scotland were returned to Parliament in 1874 as 460,464. In 1884 they were reported to the General Assembly as 555,622. In 1894, 612,411; in 1904, 678,821; and in 1912 there were on the communion rolls 714,915, of whom there communicated at least once during the year 504,495. Whatever subsidiary reasons might be adduced for this continuous advance in dealing with a population which amounts, as provisionally ascertained by the census of 1911, to 4,759,521, and while thankfully acknowledging the splendid Christian work done by other communions—as Dr. Charteris was ever ready to do—the increase must be attributed, under God, to revived life and more diligent work, proving the old Church of Scotland to be (in his favourite phrase) a living branch of the True Vine.

It has always been an honourable distinction of our Presbyterian Churches that they have kept the management of their various Christian enterprises under their own direct control, instead of relegating it to societies more or less sympathetic, yet beyond their borders. Mistakes in policy may occur, for which the Church is

responsible; but at least her Supreme Court can shape a new policy and instantly correct errors. Dr. Charteris was first and last a member of almost every leading committee of the Church. He gave his chief strength (beyond his own committee) to the Endowment and Foreign Mission Schemes, but continued in close touch with the whole range of his Church's activities.

The relation of the Church of Scotland to her creed engrossed his attention for a long period; and, as it is still a live question, deserves some notice. Dr. Charteris' speech at the March Commission in 1870 on patronage and union (see p. 216), gave this among other reasons, that there was need of a bold and free and generous handling of the whole question of creeds and confessions; though he asserted that the denomination which should first proceed to a needful simplification of the confession would then have been shouted at as 'heretic' by all the rest. Principal Campbell of Aberdeen presided over a committee on kirk-sessions appointed in 1870, which travelled some distance in discussing the elder's relation to the Confession of Faith. That was alleged to be a hindrance to some suitable men's acceptance of the eldership; but a too elaborate report struck upon the rock of those two views of the eldership which are known as the *Presbyter-theory* and the *Lay-theory*. Neither of these has ever received the exclusive sanction of the Church; both have been tolerated all along, and were certainly meant to be so by the Westminster Assembly. It was remarkable that the formula for ministers made statutory in 1693 (to ensure acceptance of the creed by such Episcopal ministers as might be received), only remained in force till the year 1711, and was by no means universally observed. Then the General Assembly superseded it by a more stringent formula of its own, which it imposed upon ministers and elders till 1889. It then returned to a formula for ministers almost verbatim the same as that of 1693-4, and contented itself with requiring simple 'approbation' from the elders. During all this time the State in no way interfered in the



matter. Doubtless the State was satisfied that the Church should be Christian, Protestant, and peaceable: with the minute details of doctrine it was not concerned: and the extra-legal formula so long in vogue was never challenged. At a meeting on 3rd March 1872, the Rev. John MacKenzie (the respected son-in-law of Dr. Chalmers) declared that 'the third section of the twenty-third chapter of the Confession of Faith had the doctrine of Establishment written as with a sunbeam': referring doubtless in particular to the word 'settled,' which in the seventeenth century meant that which is 'received and approved by the Assemblies of the Church, ratified and established by our Reforming Parliaments' (M'Crie). On the same occasion Dr. H. Bonar wrote: 'A minister of the Established Church could honestly sign our Free Church formula: much more so than many others. Why should he be excluded from such subscription? Why should he not be eligible to a Free Church congregation?' At first sight this proposal seems startling, till it is remembered that the Free Church formula only required approval of the general principles of the spirituality and freedom of the Church of Christ embodied in the Claim of Right—principles accepted by both Churches, though they once differed in one practical application of them. The subject was ripening in the Church courts from 1877 onwards. Dr. Pirie, the leader of the Assembly, was quite prepared to consider changes on the Confession, but strongly disinclined to any alteration of the formula. Dr. Charteris' view also was that whenever subscription was relaxed it should be in the thing subscribed, not in the formula of adherence to it; and he was reluctant to ask a different subscription from ministers and from elders. On the last day of April 1879, Dr. Charteris moved, and just carried, an overture in the Edinburgh Presbytery asking the Assembly to appoint a committee to inquire into and report upon the relation of office-bearers to the creed. He said that a preliminary inquiry was needed, and some things were better settled in private consultation than in great debates:—

'Controversy sharpens edges. I can enjoy the conflict of a good debate, and no man would wish a fairer field than the General Assembly. But I do not think that unnecessary discussions about the standards of the Church tend to edification any more than to peace. We are the conservators of sound doctrine as contained in the Confession of Faith, and it is neither pleasant nor edifying to have ministers tossing its venerable paragraphs backwards and forwards, as if in a game of battledore and shuttlecock. . . . Therefore I propose that in order to avoid unnecessary controversies, we first of all try to settle this matter in private conference; for the formula for elders is a matter in the power of the Church. . . . Whatever be the test or creed or formula adopted by any Church, there must be in the administration of it a great amount of tolerance and common-sense. Men's minds are not all cut after one pattern; and in cases brought up of dereliction from a standard there would need to be introduced a large allowance of Christian common-sense and toleration. Any Spartan or Draconian law that would make a summary penalty for every offence cannot find acceptance in a Christian Church; and I think that, in administering all these tests or confessions, a spirit of brotherly feeling should prevail.'

So liberal a theologian as Dr. Cameron Lees professed astonishment and jocular alarm at this proposal, which other members declared was too sweeping; but Dr. Charteris replied to the friends who had twitted him with supposed change of view that he had held and expressed identical opinions for twenty years.<sup>1</sup>

In 1888 Dr. Charteris wrote Professor Mitchell, alluding to his Edinburgh overture, and added:—

'I had one from Burravoe Presbytery (drawn by myself) as my basis. Drs. Pirie and Story moved two years later in its very terms. Dr. Phin moved an amendment, and defeated them. I am anxious, like yourself, to avoid that shifty idea of the Word of God "contained" in the Scriptures.'

Dr. Charteris was abroad for health at the Assembly of 1889 when the compromise, for which Professor Mitchell was chiefly responsible, became the law of the Church.

<sup>1</sup> At the same meeting, and doubtless in compliance with the request of Dr. Cameron Lees, Dr. Charteris moved the warm thanks of the presbytery to Dr. William Chambers for his liberality and public spirit in offering to complete the restoration of St. Giles' Cathedral.



But he wrote to his *fidus Achates*, the St. Andrews professor, from Meran on 2nd February:—

‘I am still of opinion that the vital question is the necessary relation of the corporate Church to her creed. I am glad there is meantime an end of the controversy: I don’t believe it will be long still: and I still (even after your argument) think a new creed the best way, though a formula may be more quickly manipulated. It was always a grief to me to be against you in this.’

For a decade or so the Church rested content with Dr. Mitchell’s compromise, but the conviction grew on all sides that the doctrine of the Confession in every jot and tittle could no longer be reasonably imposed upon her ministers, especially since the elders had obtained a large measure of relief. Full inquiries showed that the Act of 1693 no longer represented that amount of doctrinal liberty which the Church desired. The judgment of the House of Lords in the celebrated Free Church case in August 1904 naturally accentuated the feeling that was already uppermost; for, while the legal decision itself hinged upon the Establishment principle and the Declaratory Act of 1892 as a departure from the Confession, one of the seven judges threw out *obiter dicta* which seemed to imply a certain reading of the Confession itself, as if all points therein were of equal obligation. This made it a matter of consequence. On 19th August 1904, Dr. Charteris wrote to Lord Balfour of Burleigh:—

‘The Lord Chancellor ought not to have ordered Calvinism out of the world because he does not understand it. Instead of his long and able speech Haldane ought to have said, as Sir William Hamilton taught us to say—we can prove that predestination is the rule of the universe, and we can prove (at least declare from consciousness) that man’s will is free; we cannot yet and here show how those two are reconcilable. Haldane tried to reconcile them: I think after Hegel: and of course failed. I have never believed in our power to legislate alone as far as our Confession goes. We have other powers. If the Churches were Christian, this would be the time for a united appeal to Parliament to legalise a shorter creed, in lieu of the Confession of Faith for the Church of Scotland, and to authorise dissenting Churches to hold their property with liberty to alter their creeds, *always not against that shorter creed*. I would

make it such that a Church which refused it would not be a Christian Church. This is no new idea of mine. I have always advocated union with other denominations as the means of obtaining a shorter creed. I see no chance of the Churches cordially agreeing in such an appeal to Parliament: and yet the only good thing I see in the turmoil is that Parliament has to be invoked. I think we ought to have let our Commission of Assembly meet: we should have said, "We shall help you all we can: and if you ask Parliament to liberate you and your trust funds from some parts of the Confession of Faith, we hope you and we may seek that relief together, each for ourselves. We are still Calvinists who offer a free Gospel. But we just want to say to-day, 'We are brethren. We have to recall our overtures for union over twenty-five years ago.'"

The formula question was growing more urgent, and demanded much thought. Dr. Charteris wrote to Lord Balfour from Kingswood, Peebles, on 15th November 1904:—

"If we are to have a relaxed formula, and no more, I think the Church of England one would do fairly well. It would not mollify the Lord Chancellor or satisfy Dr. Flint. They both object to the Calvinism of the Westminster Confession of Faith. Flint objects to the "metaphysical predestinarianism of the Synod of Dort," by which he means the Westminster Confession. The Chancellor hates Calvinism, and wishes to fasten it as a stone round Presbyterian necks. I am a Calvinist. I could not pray if I did not believe in undeserved grace and mercy which come when asked for. But I have always held the expression of Calvinism in our Confession of Faith to be ruthless and hard. Wherefore I am, even if alone, in favour of a shorter creed; in which I would state God's great plan of salvation and say nothing about election or predestination.<sup>1</sup> "The secret things belong unto the Lord our God: the things which are revealed belong unto us and our children." Why put the secret things in a human creed?"

The Church of Scotland collectively believed that a policy of sympathetic non-intervention between the Free Church and the United Free Church was likeliest to help forward the religious interests of Scotland. Lord Balfour, her foremost layman, was ready to offer his personal mediation, had that been acceptable to or desired by both

<sup>1</sup> The Scots Confession framed in 1560 refrains from dogmatising on predestination.



combatants; but it was not. Dr. Charteris wrote to him from Peebles, December 15th, 1904:—

‘You speak of making your own position and that of the Church of Scotland clear. Your own position is well understood. The whole public believe that you have done your best, and that failure is not your fault, but a national misfortune. The Church has not spoken, and now I fear it is too late.’

And Lord Balfour rejoined:—

‘It does not seem to me that the policy of the Church of Scotland—the policy of silence—was a wrong one. In my opinion, any attempt to sow dissension in the ranks of the United Free Church would not only have been a wrong policy, but would have failed. Personally, I believe non-interference to have been the right Christian policy, and I could not myself have been a party to any other. As a Church we have nothing to do with the litigation, and it is much wiser for us to keep all our energies for endeavouring to unite on an application to Parliament. You would be surprised if you knew the frankness with which Dr. Rainy and I have been able to meet each other, and I can show you letters, when we meet, couched in terms far too warm for anything I have been able to do in the matter. . . . I agree with you that union ought to come before revision. Personally the goal which I have set before myself is such a relaxation of our tie with the Confession of Faith as will prevent our being absolutely and literally bound to statements which are—and must always be—only matters of opinion and not matters of faith, without our asking for, or seeming to want, such an amount of freedom as would enable us, by a simple majority and at our own sweet will, to cut ourselves altogether adrift from the main tenets of the Christian faith.’

On his sixty-ninth birthday Dr. Charteris tried his hand at a shorter creed, giving the sum and substance of the Westminster Confession of Faith in its *ipsissima verba*. His hope was that the Churches might perceive an opportunity and a call to take *united action* in this direction. It had been the well-founded boast of Scotsmen that no branch of their old Church had made any essential change in doctrine, and he deplored the prospect of separate doctrinal creeds. He knew that a new Confession might be constructed upon another basis than this one, as, for example, on the grand foundation that ‘God is Love’; when Revelation, Redemption, Regeneration, and Resurrection might come into the statement in

natural course and logical sequence. But he deemed it doubtful whether the controversy awakened by any new creed would end in its adoption. He held that the Westminster doctrine, through the Shorter Catechism and the preaching of our ministers, has entered into the very life-blood of the Scottish character, and that it would be a dreadful loss to lose that 'doctrine of Grace' which had been the core of the belief of the best men and women in time past, who loved the hereditary creed of Scotland which enshrined it. Therefore he wished to preserve its essence and much of its form. He wrote to Lord Balfour:—

'I value it also as keeping Scotland in the sacred sisterhood of the Reformed Churches of Christendom. I count this a great thing. There are some who would make the so-called "Apostles' Creed" the only symbol of our Church; and we may freely admit that it narrates many Bible facts; but it is very defective as a statement of doctrine, for it is silent on salvation by the self-sacrificing Christ, and on the doctrine of the Trinity, which was the great attainment of the Church when the giants of mind and heart fought for the faith. Any Unitarian can accept it. All the great contentings of the Church up to the end of the fourth century are forgotten in it. It was probably a recital of the facts of the New Testament used in Baptism, and intended to be supplemented by doctrinal teaching of the Catechumens. The Westminster Divines were too lenient when they described it as "a brief sum of the Christian Faith." Certainly their doctrine is not briefly summarised in it. A supplement it may well be, but surely never a substitute. No doubt it is quite agreeable to the Word of God.

'The Nicene Creed contains both the chief facts and the central doctrines of the Faith, and embodies the priceless truths of the Incarnation and the Atonement of the Divine Son of God; but there is something repellent to the ordinary mind in the hard recital of transcendental doctrines in its references to our Lord Jesus Christ. Still it is infinitely preferable to the Apostles' Creed. The use of it would bring us into a certain relationship with the Church of England, and make us a party to warfare with the Greek Church, but it would not make us nearer our brethren of Reformed Churches. It is laboured in expression, highly metaphysical in statement, and omits many of the doctrines most surely believed among us.'

His own attempt at a selection or abridgment of the Westminster Confession ran thus:—



‘I believe that—

‘1. The Supreme Judge by which all controversies of religion are to be determined is the Holy Spirit speaking in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments.

‘2. There are Three Persons in the Godhead—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

‘3. The Lord Jesus, the Only Begotten Son of God, is the only Mediator between God and man, being very God and very man, yet one Christ, who by His perfect obedience and sacrifice of Himself purchased redemption from sin, and an everlasting inheritance for all those whom the Father hath given unto Him.

‘4. The Holy Spirit effectually draws men to Jesus Christ, yet so as they come most freely, being made willing by His grace.

‘5. God from all eternity did ordain whatsoever comes to pass, yet so as thereby neither is God the author of sin, nor is violence offered to the will of the creatures.

‘6. Men are saved by faith, which is the gift of God, and through faith they can do good works, the Spirit of Christ enabling them freely and cheerfully to obey the will of God.

‘7. God alone is Lord of the conscience.

‘8. All that profess the true religion are, with their children, members of the visible Church, which is the Kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ. Saints are united to Jesus Christ as their Head, and to one another in Love.

‘9. Baptism and the Lord’s Supper are ordained by Christ our Lord in the Gospel, and are the only Sacraments.

‘10. While the bodies of men return to dust, the souls of believers, being made perfect in holiness, are received into the highest heavens, and their bodies, although with different qualities, shall at the last day be united again to their souls for ever.

‘11. God hath appointed a day wherein He will judge the world in righteousness by Jesus Christ, to whom all power and judgment is given by the Father.’

Dr. Charteris would have liked to add, ‘The Fatherhood of God; the duty of missions; and the mercy of God for those who have not heard the Gospel.’ This ‘wee Creed,’ however, drawn up under its necessary limitations, found few cordial adherents as a practical solution of the existing difficulty; and at the ensuing Assembly the Church of Scotland unanimously, upon Lord Balfour’s advice, resolved to apply to Parliament for the alternative policy,

that of framing a new formula. The exigencies of Parliamentary time led the Government to incorporate it as Clause v. in 'The Churches (Scotland) Act' of 1905. It was not till the Assembly of 1910 that the consent of the majority of presbyteries enabled the General Assembly to prescribe the new formula in these terms: 'I hereby subscribe the Confession of Faith, declaring that I accept it as the Confession of this Church, and that I believe the fundamental doctrines of the Christian Faith contained therein.'



## CHAPTER XVIII

### YEAR OF MODERATORSHIP

Moderator-Designate—Installed in Office—Closing Address—Submits to be interviewed—Visits Irish Assembly in Dublin—Homburg—Unveils Statue of Edward Irving—Letter from Rev. M. Macaskill—Church Life and Work Congress at Inverness—Visits Professor Mitchell—‘Some Types of Student Life’—Opening Sermon in St. Giles—Congratulation on Free Church Jubilee.

ALTHOUGH certain of the Church of Scotland's most distinguished sons, such as Principal Caird and Professor Flint, never occupied (from choice) the Moderator's Chair of her General Assembly, it was obvious to all that Dr. Charteris must some time receive that honour. In a letter acknowledging congratulations on his own appointment, ‘A. K. H. B.’ wrote on December 10th, 1889:—

‘Now you must take your work more easily. If I thought it would have the smallest effect, I should send you an essay on *Taking in Sail*. Remember, the Kirk, as of plain necessity, will have you in the chair. You are not only the right man, but the right kind of man. The Life and Work Committee, with all that has come of it, and the Guild, are really grand things to have brought to be. And there can be no question to whom we owe them.’

It was said later that the kind-hearted but sharp-tongued essayist poked his fun when his prophecy was fulfilled in Dr. Charteris' thirty-fourth year of ministry: alleging that the old moderators had nominated him prematurely, lest his invalid life should be snuffed out if the appointment were longer delayed; and that his friends were guilty of breach of promise, ‘for he is living yet!’ All in Scotland well know that the Moderator, as such, wields no personal power over his brethren, while he is their honoured representative and mouthpiece. Formerly the office was only held (and the title given)

during the sittings of Assembly: latterly by royal recognition, acquiesced in by the Church, he is styled 'Moderator of the Church of Scotland' till he retires at the end of his year of office. In Scotland he now holds the high precedence next after the Lord Chancellor of Great Britain.

Dr. Charteris recognised the call to duty and service as well as to honour when the nomination was intimated to him, and accepted with much hesitation, mainly from a fear of proving inadequate to the strain. Congratulations came showering in upon him. Among the heartiest was Lord Balfour's, who wrote:—

'I wish I was going to be Commissioner during your year. I cannot pay you a higher compliment than that, for you know I should hate the office otherwise.'

Besides many comrades within, who deemed the position one to which he was most justly entitled, old friends and students in other Churches, like Dr. Horatius Bonar, Professor Laidlaw, and Dr. Oswald Dykes, hailed the appointment for his catholicity of spirit. Perhaps the most remarkable letter came from the Central Criminal Court, from Robert Wallace, M.P., and breathed

'friendly feeling of a perfectly unmingled character. If I might take the liberty often accorded to old friends I would venture to say, "Do not be too sensitive to apparent attack. Often nothing is meant in reality; and, although meant, is not worth minding." Do not trouble to acknowledge this impromptu scrawl; until, perhaps, I am made Moderator of *my* Assembly. I know no better way of saying, "O Moderator, live for ever."'

David Clement Scott, his favourite student, home on missionary furlough from Blantyre, wrote:—

'I don't think the most self-distrustful man in the whole world could fail to see what he is thought of by the Church, and the thankfulness with which his services are acknowledged. I don't suppose the fact of filling the Patriarchate of Scotland will make you feel one whit older. Not that it is bad to grow old, for there is a kind of Sinai depth into which an aged soul retires; and a letter from such a one, or communication from such an one, comes out of great deeps. God's converse makes



a man very great and "Right Reverend." Perhaps you stand between the young and the old, certainly able to rejoice in the conflict; and yet with a hold of that age and experience which has known Him that is from the beginning; anyway we shall look for a Church benediction, and we know that God has given you power to take it and to bestow it.'

The writer has pride in remembering that he was invited to co-operate with that splendid missionary and mystic in the office then called Secretary, but now 'Chaplain,' to the Moderator of 1892. The serious work and constant social festivities, combined with Dr. Charteris' uncertain health, caused it to be a somewhat anxious time. In preparation he betook himself to Malvern, where sciatica made him feel sometimes quite faint in the prospect. Water cure exorcised the demon more successfully than anything else. There he drafted the Moderatorial address with which he was to close the Assembly. By a coincidence he found Mr. Taylor Innes at Malvern, and they spent a month together with the unfeigned delight of old friends and foemen. Mr. Innes jocularly offered to write the address of the 'Auld Kirk' Moderator, and he in turn offered to revise, and amend, a peculiarly objectionable publication which that gentleman was then seeing through the press. But they united in admiring Gloucester Cathedral and Tewkesbury Abbey, and rejoiced in wandering through the romantic country between the New Red Sandstone of Worcester and the Old Red of Hereford. They only quarrelled about a dish, which was served up so frequently in their hotel that it was known as the 'establishment pudding'; and his opponent admitted that its alleged stodginess might not be wholly due to its name. The 'togger' of his dignified office also fell to be considered. The unique costume of the Moderator, with three-cornered silk hat, is simply a survival of the old court dress of Scotland. Dr. Charteris wrote Professor Mitchell:—

'I shall have woollen stockings under the silk. Boyd said to me last year in St. Giles' vestry: "When you are Mo-dee-râtor a hundred yares hince, I shall tell you how to keep your legs warm!" I wish the inside were as right as the Guilds are

making the exterior. MacGregor and I were at Yester on Thursday, coming back yesterday. Lord and Lady Tweeddale were really very simply kind. I am just finishing my address, so far as I can finish it. I would enormously prize your reading it over in type.'

That true Scotsman and Presbyterian peer, the Marquis of Tweeddale, was again Lord High Commissioner, and Dr. Charteris always gratefully remembered the cordial hospitality and personal friendliness which marked their relations from the first day onwards.

These crowded hours made the Moderator's 'glorious life' no sinecure. By half-past eight in the morning, fully dressed, and with letters read and attended to, he awaited the arrival of his breakfast guests, from one hundred to one hundred and fifty in number. Dr. Charteris was of course assisted, here as always, by his good wife, and their intimate acquaintance with the personnel of the Church stood them in good stead. He elected so to arrange that some missionaries or eminent men of other Churches should be given a chance of saying some helpful words. By half-past ten he was driven in state to the Assembly Hall, to gain a glimpse of the day's business, and to compose his mind for devotion. He was very particular that the praise and Bible lessons should be appropriate to the chief business; and his prayers, fully written out but not read, were markedly reverent, high-toned, and suitable for the Supreme Court in its approaches to God. With the exception of twenty minutes for a hurried lunch, he sat on till the Assembly adjourned about six o'clock. Then he snatched an interval for rest and presented himself in full fig at Holyrood daily for the State dinner, being only released from attendance after ten o'clock, and on reception evenings a good deal later. It was wonderful how he stood the prolonged strain, and only collapsed after the Women's Association for Foreign Missions Annual Meeting and the huge Moderator's dinner on the night following the close of the Assembly.

In prospect of his moderatorship many friends presented him with a testimonial in recognition of personal esteem



and the value of his work. Two other tokens of goodwill were an address signed by fifty-five Sunday School children from his first parish, St. Quivox, and another signed by one hundred and sixty former divinity students. An English Church friend was his guest for some days in the person of the Rev. Professor Stanley Leathes, D.D., of King's College, London, who made sympathetic acquaintance with Scottish Church ways.

Dr. Charteris was delighted to enjoy fellowship with his brother Moderator of the Free Church at Professor Blaikie's reception on the Saturday afternoon, which their mutual friend, Professor John Stuart Blackie, signalled by an ode on 'Christian Love and Unity.'

'IS CHRIST DIVIDED?'—1 COR. i. 13.

'Hail, Christian friends! for now mine eyes behold  
What for long years I sighed in vain to see;  
State Church and Free, the new Church and the old,  
In brothered bonds, from fretful faction free,  
Owning one Lord. Stern visaged wars must be  
Where hostile passions hostile hordes inspire;  
But in the children of one family,  
A common blood drawn from a common sire  
Forbids all hate. O Christ! if I have read  
Thy Gospel truly, lessoned from above,  
Gospel for which thy blissful martyrs bled,  
It means one word, and that fair word is Love;  
This love be mine and yours, and like a spell  
Compose all jars, where Christ-like Christians dwell!'

When called to celebrate the Holy Communion at the official Assembly service in St. Giles, Dr. Charteris preferred not to avail himself of the particular printed form which had been used (first by Dr. Boyd) in the two previous years. While in favour of the idea that the Church should frame such a form for optional use, yet since the Church had not done it, he preferred so to act as not to tie down all his successors to the end of time to that particular form. The prayer which Dr. Charteris used contained words taken from the earliest of all the liturgies, then only beginning to crystallise—found in the 'Teaching of

the Twelve Apostles'—and from the prayer in the Epistle of St. Clement to the Corinthians.

As was natural, the Moderator was warmly acclaimed on leaving the Chair to give in his twenty-second report on Christian Life and Work, and he dealt more particularly with the newer developments, especially those that affected women's work. Like the Speaker of the House of Commons, the Moderator exists to throw light and sometimes oil on the troubled waters of debate, to speak for the House rather than to the House; but his tongue is unloosed at the close of the Assembly, when he can enchant or inflict by an address, the limits of which are only fixed by his own sense of fitness and feelings of mercy. It is not an occasion to ventilate controversial opinions, yet the foremost man for the time is expected worthily to articulate his views of the affairs of the Church over whose supreme court he has been presiding. Dr. Charteris chose for his subject, 'The Church of Scotland: Her Sacred Foundation. Her Functions of Ministry. Her Duty in Danger.'

As became the Professor of Biblical Criticism, he glanced first at the state of opinion regarding the New Testament and the Old, indicating his own unchanged views regarding the latter, that:—

'By far the ablest reply is the work of a scholar of our own Church, Professor James Robertson of Glasgow, who has with competent learning and force, and a quiet humour that brightens his arguments, challenged both the premises and the conclusions of the assailing critics. . . .

'Is it needful to maintain that the Presbyterian Church is within the pale of the Redeemer, is a living branch of the living Vine? Once upon a time our predecessors maintained the exclusive Divine Right of Presbytery, and Anglican apologists were contented to argue that Episcopacy also had a Divine Right. In our day this is reversed. There is, I trust, no minister here who does not believe that his commission to preach the Word and give the Sacraments is at least as good as that of the Pope or of the Archbishops of Canterbury and York. Some of us find security in the perpetual transmission of authority through ordination by presbyters from the earliest days till our own—and that, I believe, is an argument that can be maintained against an Episcopalian. We do not admit that the Apostles had



any successors; the marks of an apostle were never found in any bishop of them all after the Apostolic Age. We therefore deny that the modern “bishop” fills or can fill the place of the Apostle of Christ. We deny that the functions of the deacon of contemporary Episcopacy—who is only a preaching evangelist—represent the functions of the seven men ordained as recorded in the Book of the Acts of the Apostles, or of the deacons whose qualifications are enumerated in the Pastoral Epistles of St. Paul. Thus we can find no warrant in Scripture for the claims of two of the three orders so much insisted upon as marks of the true ministry in Episcopal Churches. The middle order, however, remains—the presbyter-bishop, strangely and wrongly called “priest” in Episcopal Churches—and him we have in all the Churches of the Reformation. The “laying on of the hands of the Presbytery” remains for us as for Timothy of old, and this gives the same validity to our ordination as to that of the Church of England. I say this is a fair argument. But for myself I find a stronger ground in the witness of the Spirit of God in the Church than in any mere succession of officers, whether Episcopal or Presbyterian. It is in the Church that the ordaining power resides—a power sustained by the indwelling Spirit; and from the Spirit, acting through that living Church, the Presbyterian minister holds his commission.<sup>1</sup> There is little said about “governments” in the Scripture promises to the Church, and much about functions and gifts and duties; yet we have occupied ourselves for centuries about what men call “orders” far more than about the Divine orders that were given us to teach all nations. Look at history. God’s Spirit was given to Gentiles, and the claim for previous circumcision had to give way. Even so God’s Spirit is given to Presbyterians, and the exclusive claims of Episcopal succession must give way. . . .

‘This is a year of anniversaries. It is three hundred years yesterday since the Parliament of Scotland re-established the Presbyterian Church (1592); it is four hundred years since Columbus found America (1492); it is about two hundred years since (1693) the fabric of our Church was renewed after the Revolution; and it is one hundred years since William Carey sailed for India to found the missions of Protestant England in the great Empire of Hindostan. What conflicts were ended in each case; what difficulties surmounted; what long struggles begun! . . . One thing which remains to our Church is the

<sup>1</sup> In the Assembly of 1882 Dr. Charteris seconded Principal Tulloch’s prevailing motion for the admission without reordination of a distinguished Congregationalist minister, the Rev. William Horne, and he used similar arguments in its support. But that course has not commended itself to subsequent Assemblies.

portal to all the freedom which she needs. Her freedom from the first lay in corporate and individual action to promote the Kingdom of God. The Right of Free Assembly, as they called it long ago, is the corner-stone of the Church's privilege and power.'

He declared it a commonplace to say that in future the sphere of the Christian Church would be mainly social; that politics would be social; everything would bring into clear relief the distinctness of the units which make up the masses; and that the Church of Christ ought to lead the movement of social progress, which is to help the individual man.

'The work of the Church must be essentially spiritual. The Son of Man was a spiritual power, and He executed a social mission, but so that the spiritual power was always in evidence. He has called men to this infinitely difficult life with promises of infinite power to live it.'

With the address, as illustrative thereof, he reprinted part of the speech on Union, delivered by him in the March Commission in 1870, and an article on Reconstruction published in *Life and Work*, June 1891. According to the custom, he sent copies of it to many friends, and received acknowledgments. Dean Goulburn of Norwich was greatly interested, saying:—

'The idea of a Presbyterian Apostolical Succession is quite new to me, and I have thought about it much. Why not? It works in very well with the circumstance that in the Church of England Ordinal, a bishop alone, without priests to join in the imposition of hands, cannot—or at all events does not—ordain a priest.'

Dr. and Mrs. Charteris prized the friendship of the author of *Thoughts on Personal Religion*, and were repeatedly his guests at Norwich Deanery.

Dr. Oswald Dykes regretted

'the heated and highly electric ecclesiastical atmosphere of Scotland,' and feared the 'question of Disestablishment has first to be fought out on the hustings, and after that—well, the problem of reunion will likely be farther off than ever. The opening of our pulpits to your ministers has been proposed; personally I should have no objection, but it is fair to recollect



that men so admitted by us would be at once eligible for Free and United Presbyterian calls. Our relations with them would oblige us to hear what they had to say about making England a roundabout way of effecting "mutual eligibility" between Establishment and Nonconformity in Scotland! With a kindlier temper in Scottish matters that need not hurt anybody's susceptibilities. Something done—at least one step forward—in your Moderatorship would gratify me at all events.' Next year he wrote concerning his project of the renewal of intercourse: 'Though I don't regret at all stirring the milk, I am not at all sure of getting the cream. I shall try to get my case put fairly before our Church, and then we must trust to good sense and good feeling (and time) to do the rest.' Inter-course was happily resumed in 1909.

Succumbing to the modern tyranny of the interviewer, Dr. Charteris furnished material for an article in *Great Thoughts*. The following sentiments were elicited:—

'Without absolute loss of religious life to itself, a nation cannot adopt that attitude of neutrality towards religion which the Disestablishing party urge it should. It is impossible to be merely neutral, for religion is aggressive, and to attempt to be neutral is really to taboo religion. Theoretical voluntarism may read very well on paper: in practice it is impossible. . . . Of late years there has been an enormous growth of brotherly kindness and charity between our Church and the Free Church. As Moderator I have been asked to open a Free Church; now that would have been impossible twenty years ago.'

Asked how the fact (?) is to be explained that Scotland has produced no great theological works, although its clergy have always had more theological training than those of England, he replied:—

'The over abundance of pastoral work, and the fact that promotion in Scotland always means to harder work, and not as in England to lettered leisure. The average Scottish minister has to work much harder than the English. The English clergyman who works hard is usually not a writer. Cathedral dignitaries do the writing, Lightfoot and Westcott being of course the notable exceptions. The English University professors do not need to work so hard as do our men, who are at once professors and tutors. Our theology comes out in deeds, not in words. But this is a misfortune; we ought to have more curates to share and lighten our work, only that our people do

not care for the curate's pastoral visit in lieu of that of the minister.' . . .

Incessant calls upon his time fell to the lot of the Moderator. "He was unable to cross the Atlantic for the Pan-Presbyterian Council at Toronto, but represented the Church of Scotland, with Dr. Norman Macleod and the present writer, at the Irish Presbyterian Assembly, which met that year in Dublin. He was delighted with the 'Green Isle' in early summer, and the may or hawthorn in Phoenix Park remained engraven on his memory. The burning Home Rule question was exciting keen feeling, and the threatened Irish Protestants read into his presence and speech something more than an ecclesiastical compliment. Lord Plunket, Archbishop of Dublin, fraternised in truly Christian fashion with his own Presbyterian countrymen, and Dr. Charteris was pleased to make friends with that wide-minded Protestant prelate. Unfortunately an attack of illness prevented his accepting Lord Plunket's hospitality at his beautiful place at Bray; but he met with generous kindness from the head of Trinity College, that famous scholar, Provost Salmon, in whose house he made the acquaintance of such well-known Irishmen as Professor G. T. Stokes, the Church historian, and Professor Haughton, the noted wit. He was able to hold his own with any of them in discussion. He greatly enjoyed being shown over the treasures of the library by the Provost. Returning home, he found a telegram awaiting him from Lord Tweeddale, which summoned him to be presented at the royal levée in London. That State homage accomplished, he had dreamed of showing Mrs. Charteris the beautiful Engadine valley where he had benefited so much in Professor Mitchell's company in 1865, and they had both hoped for the same congenial presence; but a crippling attack of sciatica warned him to seek Homburg for waters, which always hitherto had wrought him so powerful a cure. On this occasion Miss Helen Anderson was his fellow-patient, and they made out the usual three weeks. He was under an old promise to visit his constituents in Shetland, and thought the



breezes of the northern isles would make a good after-cure.

Fortified on his return by the strong advice of Professor Mitchell and Dr. Scott, who did not think that the function could have been entrusted to a safer man, this Moderator of Annandale parentage set off to celebrate in its chief town the birthday of one of the most famous of its dalesmen, certainly the most famous preacher who ever rose from among its people; for, with the exception of his life-long friend and early comrade, Thomas Carlyle, no Annandale man was ever so widely known with a fame that is not likely to die. We give one or two extracts from the appreciation which Dr. Charteris delivered at the unveiling of Edward Irving's statue:—

'We are here to do him such honour as we can; for through the mists of the years that are melting away we see the colossal figure of a great preacher, a noble thinker, a fearless man, whose soul was as that of a little child in the readiness with which it hoped all things and believed all things. We follow him from the house where he was born, through college honours, through long and weary years of waiting ere men would listen to his preaching, till he shared with Chalmers the pulpit and the parish of St. John's, Glasgow; and while we learn without surprise that those who were swept before the torrent of Chalmers' magnificent declamation did not for the most part care to soar into the high empyrean above the ordinary thoughts of pulpits with Irving, we also learn that the great curate's massive personality and woman-like sympathy commanded as much respect from the poor and needy, whom he visited in their own homes, as did the wonderful missionary gifts of Chalmers himself. Then we follow him to London, where Canning heard him tell of the orphan family that was cast on the "Fatherhood of God"; and soon the brightest minds of the world's metropolis were proud and pleased to be among the audiences he addressed. They did not come to hear fair and flattering speeches, for, as he said of John the Baptist, "he had to attack the universal custom and likings of men, and all his armoury was his voice." . . . "He strove with all the power that was in him to be a minister of the Gospel," said his faithful friend.

'Sometimes amid recreant Scots, and always wondering Englishmen, he proclaimed the nobleness of the first standards of the Scottish Church, and the peerless honours of her blood-bought freedom. He had learned in his boyhood, as we all learned in Annandale, how deep the red share of persecution for Christ's

Crown and Covenant had ploughed into the Scottish heart; and in the moors and the mosses, where the plover cries to the ordinary passer-by, Edward Irving seemed to hear the Covenanters' Psalms. . . . Long before five in the morning St. Cuthbert's Church was crowded to hear him expound the words of ancient prophecy; and I have heard one who taught me many things tell that after walking sixteen miles to hear him on a hillside in Dunscore, he stood listening to words that seemed to be inspired, and knew not that the preacher had occupied many minutes till he saw that the sun was going down, and found he must have stood for more than three and a half hours. What a marvellous personality that was! What power of sacred fervour that cast the same spell over Cabinet ministers and Scottish cottagers. Then and always a hard student, he built up the fabric of his great orations with infinite pains and care, cultivating his native gift of lofty phrase so that it was the vehicle of lofty thought; and so that in preaching he had not only the true man's satisfaction in speaking the very truth, but also the orator's rapture in the magnetic thrill which moves an audience when noble truth is enshrined in noble words. His whole purpose always was to proclaim and to hasten the Kingdom of God.

'And then we see him in the sore days of calamity and desertion and misconstruction, the same majestic figure as in the former times of popularity and power, but now bearing a burden which I think no other man ever had to bear, for he was cast out from the palatial Church he had built; expelled from the congregation he had drawn out of all parts of the peopled wastes of London; ejected from the Presbytery of London, to which his genius and fame had given all its position in the eyes of men; and here, in his native Annandale, deposed by the Church he loved with a passionate love that was almost idolatry. One harder, heavier blow was yet to come, and it was supreme and final; he was dethroned from his pastorate by those very prophets for asserting whose rights of utterance he had been cast out of the London Presbytery; and though afterwards restored in some sense to the ministry, it was under conditions and with limitations which must have burned like red-hot chains into the very soul of the amazed and suffering man. There are strange old Greek tragedies, familiar to Irving as to all of us in our early days, which tell of men pursued and crushed by pitiless destiny, which visited on them their own and their fathers' sins; but I do not think there is one among them all so weary and grand and heart-breaking as the story of suffering unto death, which is the life of Edward Irving.

'Such was the career of the man whose statue will be henceforth seen in this market-place. I dare not say that Irving was



a greater man or idealist than his two friends, but his was a higher ideal; and, while Carlyle sometimes proclaimed the righteousness of force, Irving's theme was always the force of righteousness; and while Carlyle would bid you listen to the everlasting silence, though no articulate word was to be expected, Irving always proclaimed that in the stillness you would hear the voice of the Living God speaking in the Incarnate Christ, whose words are sayings fresh descended from the porch of Heaven. . . . I do not think that even Chalmers ever proclaimed a new world, a heavenly kingdom of truth, and love, and righteousness, with the same raptured gaze on the Person of the redeeming King as Irving proclaimed it; or that Chalmers ever rose into a strain so high, when depicting the ministry of the Gospel, as Edward Irving did in the prose poem which he delivered as an Ordination Charge at London Wall. "Oh, my brother"; it is all a symphony on those Divine words.

'It is not possible to hold our great preacher guiltless of imprudence in unhappy phrases and subtle speculation which could never be proved or disproved; and his winged words went far and wide, so that the Church was bound to take up the case. Those were days when for all transgressions great and small the tendency was, both in civil and Church law, to inflict the ultimate penalty. So they expelled him, deposed him. One may think that enough would have been done if the courts had joined him in preaching the real humanity of the Saviour of men, and had admonished him to be careful of using words and arguments which could not but seem to simple minds to mean that, in some measure and manner, the Redeemer's person had in it an element of sin. It seems to me that on such occasions the Church does well to state her own belief, and to do no more, save to admonish a gifted and loving son of danger on his path. Our Irving was so loyal and so loving that he would have bowed his manly head to a mother's counsel. Yet now and here we say that, while we do not forget or ignore the aberrations of those later years, we believe no nobler heart ever beat than that which was broken at two-and-forty years of age; no life was ever lived with more child-like faith. Would God that our Church were capable of generous errors like his—and by God's grace were preserved from them!'

In a letter to Professor Mitchell, he writes:—

'It was very touching to see the whole district sending its many thousands to inaugurate the statue, full in view of the Church where Irving was baptized, ordained, and deposed! I was very tired, but had to come to Edinburgh to my colleague's (Professor Laird Adams) funeral. He died after thirty-six hours' illness. Unexpectedly I was pressed to preach the

funeral sermon, and I could not refuse the widow and orphans ; so I went home to Wamphray on Friday night, and came back here late on Saturday. I fear there is little chance of our having those strawberries and cream you offered us on your Sabine farm, and hope the Grampians will serve your purpose as well as the Engadine. I still think of Shetland, and of being back for Dr. MacGregor's marriage on September 6th ; but there are heaps of bazaars meanwhile.'

On 31st August the Rev. Murdo Macaskill, of Dingwall Free Church, communicated with him

'to see if any Scriptural scheme could be devised towards healing our divisions. The vast majority of our Highland people would hail with delight such a consummation—such an end, to our present miserable condition. Any additional pressure put upon their consciences will be sure to drive them away. But they will not go to your Church, nor to any Church, but will start the old conventicle meetings, and discard all Church connection. Is it not then an all-important duty to devise and present such a scheme as would enable these men to come within the pale of the Church of Scotland, whose principles and past history they love so dearly, in order to preserve a pure evangel and bring together all who are true and loyal to the truth of God ?'

It will be remembered that at that time the Declaratory Act was stirring the Free Church in the Highlands to its depths, and resulted later in the extrusion of the ministers of Raasay and Shildaig from church and manse.

On 5th and 6th October 1892 Dr. Charteris as Moderator attended an important Congress on Christian Life and Work at Inverness, and preached the opening sermon on the great missionary charge at the call of his dear friend, Dr. Norman Macleod of the High Church there. He urged :—

'(1) The first and most obvious good of Foreign Missions is that they give the Church of Christ an opportunity for manifesting the Spirit of Christ. (2) They are the best means of benefiting the world. (3) They have furnished a test of personal faith. (4) We owe to them an ideal of individual Christian life. (5) They are the chief means of benefiting the Church at home.'

He pled :—

'What a new life we should get if the doors were wide open,



and we looked out, and then went forth to the "regions beyond"! What a new sense of the proportion of things would come to our enlarged vision! Not a little mistaken theology about Christ the Truth would be outgrown if the Church rose to the conception of Christ the Way and Christ the Life, as we have to preach Him to the heathen. And then what deepening of Christian charity, what a new power in the grasp of the hand of brotherhood. Macaulay said on his return from India: "I have lived so long in a land where the people worship cows, that I do not make much of the differences which separate Christians from Christians!" If we only opened the ears of our heart to hear the cries of a seething heathen mob shouting around some idol's car, it would surely not long be possible for us to care so much which way we turned at some corner on Sunday morning, or to which one we went, of all the many churches where men preach the same everlasting Gospel. Most miserable it is to think that with all our religionism, and grand preaching, and active work in this land, no man dares to point to any Scottish Church as a model branch of the Living Vine.'

Dr. Charteris had never preached in Inverness before, except when invited to a Free Church there the previous autumn; but through his deputation work he was no stranger in many Highland parishes, when he came with no political or polemical motive, but primarily to preach the Gospel, and next to break down barriers of mistrust.

Many notable Churchmen gathered to this Congress, where Dr. Charteris expounded the Young Men's Guild and Woman's Work, and at the end affirmed that, though often present at many conferences, he had never seen one where the intellectual and spiritual tone had been sustained at so high a level.

On 30th December 1892 Dr. and Mrs. Charteris returned home from a delightful visit to Professor Mitchell, and he wrote him thus:—

'Your old University has an *esprit de corps* which is most attractive, and new to me. The lads were heartiness itself. Some time ago I read the whole of the "Gospel of Peter" (as far as now found) to my class. It is a distinctly Gnostic production. The cry on the Cross, "Power, my Power" (instead of "My God, my God"), is a proof of it. And that being so, the future of the Body of Jesus cannot be consistently a matter of great concern to the Peter-Evangelist. I was struck with the

composite character of the document. It vouches for all our four Gospels. I am reading Bruce's *Apologetics* to-day: it is well done: far more condensed than I expected. But he seems to shy most of the questions which arise from the new school of Old Testament Criticism and come into the New Testament. To-morrow I go to Lord Ailsa's to re-open Kirkoswald church.'

Dr. Charteris presided at a meeting of Commission of Assembly held on the 1st March 1893, to emphasise the Church's protest against the Suspensory Bill threatened by the Gladstone Government; but, through circumstances already explained, that abortive measure was mainly a source of ridicule to its authors.

A more pleasant subject presents itself in a sheaf of letters from old fellow-students, rejoicing in his booklet (a web woven with true Christian art) on *Some Types of Student Life*; an address published by request of the Edinburgh University Christian Association in November 1892. The earliest came from Professor Story, who had not always seen eye to eye with him in Church courts, and declared:—

'Taking it up just to see what it was about, I found I could not lay it down till I had read it through. It brought back a great many old memories that after forty years are strangely mingled, half pleasant and half sad. One likes now and again to dwell on them—though to do so reminds me painfully that I never was half such an exemplary student as you were!'

Professor Simon S. Laurie wrote that he thought the address historically valuable. It should be bound and put in the library, where two hundred years hence it would be a valuable 'find' to some professor of the history of education.

Dr. Oswald Dykes confessed to interested pleasure

'not unmixed with envy at your light literary touch and your youthful enthusiasm, in spite of a certain posing as an old man which tickles me. What business have we yet to speak of garrulous age? Your style palpitates with youthful freshness. I wish I were half as young. What you said in your last about your longing to throw off the toils of churchmanship and live for study found an echo here too. To some extent I have gained quiet and leisure by my Chair; and would have slipped the collar of Church work still more had Donald Fraser lived.'



Mr. Alexander Anderson ('Surfaceman') had read it under the influence of stirred-up feelings of pleasure, and wrote: 'When I was reading it, the curious thing was that your voice followed my eyes, word for word, so that I may actually say that I was present when you delivered it.'

Dr. Charteris preached as Moderator in the pulpits of the three parishes which he served. His tenure of the office came to an end on 18th May 1893, curiously enough the very day of week and month that had witnessed the Disruption fifty years before. It found the representatives of the two great parties in very different plight from what they had been then. The Church of Scotland was formidably threatened indeed, but proverbially 'threatened men live long.' The Free Church was entitled to congratulate herself on fifty years of universally recognised progress in spiritual work, and had successfully weathered anxious years of doctrinal controversy. From all sides she was receiving tokens of respect and goodwill. God had greatly prospered the successors of both sides in the ancient controversy. Many within the Church of Scotland were not less willing than those without to speak words of courteous, kindly, Christian felicitation. Dr. Charteris believed that Christian brotherhood should override the difficulties, and that the man who is ever ready to stand on his dignity with supercilious suspicion has seldom a secure foothold.

As retiring Moderator he preached in St. Giles from the text: 'Let the work of this house of God alone' (Ezra vi. 1-7). He made a spirited appeal for a right relation between Church and State in Scotland, maintaining that the true solution had been attained here, and that it needs but little more to bring the working of that relation to absolute perfection. He deplored that so many should have abandoned themselves to despair, and should have advocated the impossible notion that Church and State can co-exist with no relations at all. With pains and patience they and their friends across the way might complete in a reunited Scotland the work which their forefathers advanced so far. He alluded thus to the topic of the hour:—

'We count by centuries in the Church of Scotland, and we do not speak of our Jubilee to-day, but we owe much to the faithful men who stood by the ark of Scotland's covenant Church fifty years ago, when so many of its trusted and honoured defenders forsook it and fled; and we may well remember them to-day. I have nought but respect in my heart for the men of power and fame who marched from this Assembly to rear their own tabernacle beyond our walls, proving their sincerity, though they did not justify their secession; and I have a kinsman's pride in the labours and sacrifices and achievements which constitute the history of the Church they founded; but that does not diminish my loyalty to the men who kept for us in that time of trial the National Church of Scotland. It was hard for them to stand on the old ground when the halo of sanctity and the incense of popular applause were with the men who left it; hard to work and wait under contumely and suspicion. But they did more than stand. . . . All honour this day to those men who were faithful and strong, and re-established the Scottish Church in the hearts of the Scottish nation.'

After opening the Assembly Dr. Charteris had the immense satisfaction of nominating to the Chair his friend of long standing, Dr. John Marshall Lang of the Barony, a beloved fellow-worker in many fields; and ere the day closed he gave notice of a resolution, couched in fitting terms, congratulating the Free Church upon her Jubilee, which he and Dr. MacGregor suitably commended to the Assembly next day for its unanimous acceptance. Christian men universally agreed that their best life belongs to a region far removed from the squabbles and controversies of politics, and that a vigorous and tolerant National Church was doing nothing unworthy of her position in saying to Free Church brethren with cordial sincerity: 'God bless you in God's work.'



## CHAPTER XIX

### HIS WORK FOR MISSIONS AND MISSIONARIES

His friend Shoolbred—As Professor—His Students—David C. Scott—Blantyre — Kikuyu — Lady Missionaries—Deaconesses—Mission advance—The Home House.

A SKETCH of Dr. Charteris' life would be indeed incomplete if it did not include that essential side which related to missions and missionaries, consistently prominent from first to last. The seed was early dropped by his mother into his young heart, and was doubtless watered by Dr. Duff's appeal at the Moffat meeting when he was seven years' old. The missionaries at dinner to eat the grand goose from Wamphray in his first Glasgow year symbolised his attitude all along. He honoured them as pioneers of our most holy faith, coming nearest to the apostles and prophets of the New Testament; and as his influence grew in the Church it was always exercised on behalf of missionaries. It would be tedious to try to trace at any length this side of his Church leadership; suffice it to say that in Assembly, Foreign Mission Committee, and private action, he grudged neither thought nor pen, time nor money, to forward this great cause. When his close friend of college days, Williamson Shoolbred, chose to serve in the United Presbyterian Mission in Rajpootana, his zeal was whetted by their frequent exchange of letters. Those sent by Dr. Charteris, picturing in vignette form the events of home life, have been lost beyond recovery; but one or two extracts may be given from those written by his friend, the honoured Moderator of his Church in 1888, who died in 1896:—

'BEAVER, 7th August 1871.

'I have seen your speeches in connection with several ecclesiastical movements of the day, and have always rejoiced to note that they commend themselves by their liberality and freedom from the besetting sins of Scottish ecclesiastics. Union is contended for by some with a fierceness and rancour more likely to disintegrate than to unite.'

'22nd September 1877.

'MY DEAR A. H. C., the first and best of my college friends, your long and most welcome letter from Aix-la-Chapelle, deeply interesting in all your discussions of things ecclesiastical, filled me with just such a sense of deep gratification as I used to enjoy after an hour's friendly and familiar chat with you in the dear old times. . . . Famine is with us I fear, no longer doubtful, but a dead certainty. . . . God help the poor people! And yet in their blind devotion to their idolatry this threatened calamity has only made them turn with greater attachment to their gods of wood and stone—to seek their intercession with more profuse offerings of gifts and incense. The time has not come yet, but will by and by, when, as in the last famine, they get tired of unavailing supplication, and try the effect of thrashing their gods instead of worshipping them. The next nine months will be a sad and anxious time to us, and there will be need of all hands to help and stay the poor famine-stricken people from starvation. My sense of duty will not allow me to desert my post, even for the very kind proposal of the honour that I have done all too little to deserve (the degree of D.D.). . . . I was deeply interested in your notices of the state of ecclesiastical and theological matters in Scotland. Of late I have seen Marcus Dods' name appearing a good deal before the public, and wondered if it was *our* Marcus Dods. Both he and Professor W. R. Smith, and others in their position, excite my interest and sympathy, because I see them in the throes of just such a mental and spiritual conflict as I passed through more than twenty years ago. These very questions as to inspiration then engaged my deepest thoughts, and shook to their foundations my religious convictions. But I have learned long since that there are a great many questions which cannot be solved but must be simply shelved; and which mind and heart combined, by the light of faith and inward experience, come at last to settle in such a way as that one doubts about them no more, but rests in perfect peace. I concern myself no longer with trying to construct logical and consistent theories of inspiration. It is enough for me that I see, running through Old and New Testament alike, such an ever-brightening and broadening ray of Divine revelation, centering and



culminating in our blessed Lord and Saviour, that I find it impossible to doubt the Book's own testimony regarding itself, that it is from God and inspired by His Spirit. How that inspiration acted, and to what extent, and whether it was always the same in kind, are all questions about which I have ceased to trouble myself. . . . With the witness of my own spirit to the truth of Bible revelation, and the witness which springs from the renewed hearts and purified lives of Hindu idolaters brought to the foot of the Cross, no shadow of doubt dare linger on the grand truths and their heaven-born origin; and, like Paul, I rejoice to say, "I know in whom I have believed."

*'15th November 1881.*

'Yes, dear old friend, dearest to me on earth. We are journeying through life brought into contact with many, but the living touch of loving friendship is given to few. In my heart of hearts you have ever held the first place; and how deeply I have often mourned that your many high duties and your distant and busy life tend always to our drifting more and more apart; but I am yours heart and soul, even as in the old glad days when we chummed together in poor old Mrs. Kennedy's little back parlour, and were as happy and hard-working as the nights were long. But, O man! how your moan over a life which has fallen short of your high ideal speaks conviction to my own heart. If with all that you have done in building up and purifying the Church of your fathers, in training her rising ministry, in sending a stronger and purer thrill of life through her Churches, and in adding solidly to the theological literature of all Churches, you can think that you have need to look back with regret on your past life, how much greater my need of deep humility? I am most deeply interested in all that you write me about the little knot of friends whom you have drawn about you on your course through life. Dykes is a noble fellow, and I knew that you respected and admired him, but I did not know that he stood so dear to your heart.'

*'7th October 1890.*

'We are hoping that the wave of Divine blessing, which your mission under the Punjab hills is sharing, may sweep on to us and gladden our hearts also. . . . Even here we are not unaffected by spiritual deadness and empty formalism, and such centralisation as would reduce us missionaries to a set of automations. I hope your missions are escaping the same line of policy, fitted only to dwarf and strangle vigorous life and effort.'

His last letter dwelt on the perceptibly growing desire

for union among all the Presbyterian Churches of North India, and told how, contrary to their expectation, and without any prompting, the native members voted for it in a body, showing a much greater ripeness of opinion and sentiment than they had been given credit for. A real and helpful union of all the scattered Presbyterians was predicted for the immediate future, which has come to pass and has reacted hopefully upon the Mother-Churches at home.

Dr. Charteris was a voracious reader of missionary information, and thus came to possess a sagacious sense of proportion and perspective in regard to the needs and claims of the various mission fields of the world; while he was able also to gauge with rare accuracy the degree in which they were being met. In his capacity of divinity professor he was wont to exhibit the missionary outlook and duty in no perfunctory fashion. As a New Testament exegete he perceived its primary place both in the Saviour's missionary charge and in the call of the Gentiles by the Holy Spirit acting through St. Peter, as well as in the constant teaching and example of him to whom the Gospel of the uncircumcision was committed. He used to say that St. Paul's life has no meaning except as the leader of foreign missions: that it was the sin of the Jews that they did not believe in foreign missions, rebuked by St. Paul in the words, 'Forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they might be saved, to fill up their sins alway.' On the other hand he held it was the sin of Gentiles that they did not believe in missions to the Jews, also pointed out in the words, 'Now if the fall of them (the Jews) be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles, how much more their fulness.' Consequently it brought great delight to him when fit men offered themselves for foreign mission work.

The Rev. (now Dr.) J. W. Fleming volunteered for the Darjeeling Mission in the Eastern Himalayas. It was a disappointment when he was medically forbidden to go; but another sphere opened in the Scotch Church at Buenos Ayres, where he happily kept his health, and has



persistently developed important Christian work among the scattered colonists. Dr. Charteris with much esteem watched over his career in that arduous but loyal outpost. His fellow-student and brother-in-law, the Rev. Archibald Turnbull, first man of his year, like Dr. Duff, 'took up the cloak,' and stepped forward to fill the vacant place. For more than twenty years, first with the pioneer Mr. Macfarlane, and later with the many-sided Rev. Dr. Robert Kilgour (now the editorial superintendent of the British and Foreign Bible Society), he justified the anticipations of his professor and fellow-students, both in the practical working and extension of the native Church and in drawing to himself the high regard of the many European residents. He did valuable translation work, especially in rendering the Scriptures into Hindi and the New Testament into Nepali. When Lochnagar, the old Scottish mission station, appeared likely to go 'down the Khud' with a landslip, by his efforts and those of others, the present excellent stance and compound near the railway station were secured, and the local position of the mission made impregnable. Mr. Turnbull's home appearances scarcely did him justice. He was better appraised in Darjeeling, where he was best known: there a fine school (costing £1500) keeps his memory green. At home he was prosecuting translation work down to his dying day.

The Rev. T. Edward Taylor, who had been reader in St. Giles and assistant to Dr. Norman Macleod in Inverness, was offered an Indian chaplaincy, but set it aside in favour of a missionary's life at Kalimpong. He had gained the affection of Miss Constance Lees, who told Dr. Charteris that the day of missionary decision was the happiest day of both their lives. He officiated at their happy marriage, and his letters often cheered them; but alas! Mrs. Taylor was stricken with wasting illness. Dr. Charteris wrote on 22nd August 1901 to Dr. Graham:—

'Now I want your kind, wise, frank counsel. Mrs. Taylor is fading at Kurseong. He can't stand three nights and four days at a time in the Terai; how would it do to translate him to Kalimpong? It might save her dear life, and keep his splendid

personality in our mission. I want the Guilds to sustain all the Kalimpong Mission; but the Substitute Fund might continue to maintain Taylor till we raise the necessary fund in the Young Men's Guild. This is not written for his eye, but you may tell him the substance. Dr. M'Murtrie sympathises. M'Alpine is jubilant.'

But her delicacy was not overcome; and, after more than five years of high-toned, brotherly ministry, husband and wife were reunited in a better world.

David Clement Scott of Blantyre and Kikuyu was the missionary who of all others was nearest and dearest to Dr. Charteris. Brought up under Dr. Archibald Scott, then of Greenside, he abandoned excellent prospects in business with the unswerving aim of training himself by the six years' University course to be a missionary to the heathen. In 1879 and the following year he was the sole dux in Dr. Charteris' class, a brilliant student and no mere bookworm. He had to depend on his own exertions during his course, and, as tutor at Mertoun, had the Master of Polwarth for his pupil. Extremely handsome and magnetic in character, he was a splendid athlete, and won a foot race open to all British Universities. As secretary of the Christian Life and Work Committee he was powerful in details, wise in counsel, and full of prophetic vision of what the Church might be. His 'dearly beloved master, professor and friend,' wrote of him:—

'Not in all my life have I had such communion of soul as with this enthusiastic student of Biblical criticism, *facile princeps* in my class, who was above all so wise in looking for and hastening on the day of Christ. Our close friendship never knew a check from that time to the very end. His dream, and my dream for him, was to be a missionary to India. It was obvious that his genuine talent for high mental speculation and his vision of God in Christ might be expected to captivate the finer Hindu spirits, and lead them into the light. But the Church's newly begun mission to Africa was in woeful straits, and it was needful that some strong and hopeful spirit should lift anew the standard of the Cross there. From failures and mistakes, made with the best intentions, much could be learned, but the immediate prospect was dismal enough.'

Troubles at Blantyre had arisen through the unconsidered adoption by the Church of what was undoubtedly



David Livingstone's ideal—a self-governing Christian colony in the heart of heathen Africa. No one knew at the time that British law forbade it, lest the Empire should be embroiled; therefore the Church had to retrace her steps, and sent out David Scott with instructions to abandon territory and jurisdiction, and to begin anew evangelistic, educational, and industrial work among savage tribes. The newspapers scoffed at the choice of one so inexperienced, while owning his chivalrous disregard of personal danger; and many who were well disposed to the cause shook their heads doubtfully, and were inclined to pity the young man asked to perform an impossible task; but Dr. Charteris declared that he had never known a man in whom unselfish Christian devotion, high intellectual powers, the greatest strength of purpose, and the attractiveness of a refined and gentle nature were more happily blended—though he had grudged that his almost unique fitness should be lost to India. David Scott was ordained on 21st July 1881 in St. Giles by the Edinburgh Presbytery, while his old Greenside minister, Dr. Scott, who thoroughly believed in him, reminded him that his dangers could not be greater than those confronted by the great pioneer of the Gospel in Africa, David Livingstone himself. Accompanied by his young wife, he was conveyed in clumsy canoes up the streams, walking round the rapids, and dragging the canoes over the shallows; while goods of every kind were carried on men's backs from the coast. It was a three weeks' toil till they reached the site of the mission, in a region where Livingstone said, 'One can do without quinine.' They soon acclimatised themselves and made friends, consuming long days in talks with native chiefs bent on war. On one occasion Scott and Henry Henderson went to remonstrate with the warlike Angoni, and succeeded in stopping a raid already begun. On another later occasion Scott and his young wife went alone into the camp of a powerful chief surrounded by his warriors, who had sworn a vow to sweep Blantyre bare, with no sign of fear, but well aware of the risks they were running. They sat down to wait till His

Savage Highness should grant them an audience. At last it was granted. David had by this time with marvellous genius mastered the language, and his noble bearing and Christian arguments so impressed and pacified the invaders that peace resulted, and Blantyre, though often threatened, was never again invaded. In their brave toilsome life they were not long alone, for his brother, Dr. William Affleck Scott, joined him in 1889, an ordained missionary with full medical qualifications, who had likewise worked his passage through college. He afterwards married a fearless daughter of Dr. J. Stewart Wilson, minister of New Abbey.

Writing from the *Drummond Castle, en route* for Blantyre, he said:—

‘I was ordained last Sunday—an awfully solemn but most blessed time. Since I have discovered that Christ must be All in All, my tongue has been loosed. It used to stammer and stutter, and fail me when I needed it most. Such a rush to get things ready. What I have taken is mainly what your kindness supplied me with. I have your present of Westcott and Hort, which has been my daily companion this winter. It gives one a very great lift in the spiritual life to have the honour of the Master’s servants’ friendship, who believe in one even when they know one’s faults. The wealth of your kindness makes me ashamed of myself, but I shall pray to be clothed with the new man of whom no one can be ashamed. We all missed you much at Graham’s ordination. I never saw such a sight as St. George’s Church packed from floor to ceiling—even the standing room; and mostly with young men. No one knows how much it means yet; but surely things are pressing on. The time has almost come to storm the fortifications. May we be of those who plant the flag!’

David Scott’s brother-in-law, John Bowie, already engaged in promising and lucrative London practice, was also attracted to join him as medical missionary at Blantyre. Henry Henderson married Mrs. Scott’s sister, and was a permanent member of the staff. Robert Cleland was a real brother in arms at M’lanje. Mrs. Scott, full of enthusiasm, wrote inviting Dr. Charteris to go and see them that he might learn what a ‘credit their com-



munity, and especially her drawing-room, was to Central Africa.'

David Scott's first letter to the professor told:—

'One or two cases of fugitive slaves have occurred, and I have had an opportunity of explaining my position. It would be madness to assert, in the face of Africa's ignorance, principles which they can't understand, and could only misinterpret. Our principles must be lived out, and erroneous ones must be gradually lived down. Oh, may I have grace steadily to express what a true missionary's (or rather what God's) message in a living Christian life really is! Calico and power surround us; we must get out of these grave-clothes, or at least must fill Blantyre with life, and that an overflowing life. Slavery goes on even under the auspices of the Portuguese, who themselves make slaves. The Arab slave-traders pass near Zomba on their way to the coast before the raids. Our attitude has been far more paternal and magisterial than brotherly as yet. Individual influence is powerful, and I want full, real, spiritual, brotherly communion in Blantyre to express itself towards Africa. I wished the other day to be in "Bib. Crit." class again, which I did enjoy, with the kind permission to put in difficulties. The great truths left, after all the sifting, are very precious and life-sustaining. To have been through it and learned so much by heart, to have really known what the manuscripts are, puts one in a much more satisfactory position. I was very glad when you spoke about missions in the class last year, and with God's blessing it might do much good to repeat it. Your paper in *Life and Work* quite revived old memories.'

He who had been sent 'to lay among the heathen, broad, deep, and strong, the foundations of the Christian Church,' was slowly but surely laying the living stones of the glorious temple; but he resolved that the material House of God should likewise be worthy. He read up many books on architecture to prepare his mind; and the result proved one of the marvels of modern missions. It was all his own planning, and except Mr. M'Ilwain's help, it was all wrought and reared by the black men whom he taught. It required an immense number of different moulds of bricks to achieve his purpose, and embodies his profound conviction, retained to the very last day of his life, and that day once more justified, that if he worked with men in their work he could

commend Christ to them as he could in no other way. He was architect, master of works, and foreman of the workers, and all the while was preaching Christ and teaching the Gospel. The church was erected by natives—every stick and stone of it—who had never seen a trowel or a chisel, who knew not mortar. This practical dreamer could make others dream, and teach them how to make it come true. That church, in the centre of a township through which a railway will run ere long from the coast to Lake Nyasa, stands as a constant reminder that the missionary, not the colonist, not even the Christian trader, was the founder of civilisation in Blantyre. Long shall that settlement with its square, its manse, its hospital, its great avenue of gum-trees, and its flourishing out-posts and ramifications of religious influence, 'flourish by the preaching of the Word.' The natives are swift to discern between the genuine and the spurious, and ever ready with apt nicknames. By them he was called with right intuition, 'the white king' of Blantyre, the man whose word could dissuade from war and make peace fruitful. It was the missionaries who gave the British Government the title-deeds of Nyasaland, and largely moulded, under Lord Salisbury's wise administration, the British Protectorate there. David Scott knew the people, and was understood by them. As Dr. Charteris wrote:—

'Somehow, amid all his other work—on roads and wooden houses and masonry, and gardens and coffee crops and cotton crops, and on keeping the books of the mission—he reduced the wild language of the chief tribes to scientific speech, and issued in 1892 his *Manganja Dictionary*. It is a great work. It is no mere vocabulary, but an encyclopædia of the manners and customs and religion of those among whom he lived. To an ordinary man it might have been the work of a lifetime: it was a mere episode in the strenuous career of David Scott. Gospels and dictionary were done (as he wrote) *inter equitandum*; or rather, on his journeyings.

'I must speak of the sad times of the Blantyre mission. They had been a happy band. David and Isobel Scott; W. Affleck Scott and Maggie Wilson, his wife; Henry Henderson and Harriet Bowie, his wife; John Bowie and Sarah his wife;



Robert Cleland at M'lanje ; and the peaceful solitude, the busy mission township, was enlivened with the music of a child. Cleland died in 1890. A mysterious visitation of diphtheria came—we believe it was brought by mosquitoes—and soon Mrs. Henderson's child, and Mrs. Henderson herself, and John Bowie—who rose from his deathbed and girded himself to operate on his dying sister, as he had done some days before for her child, when he caught the poison from the diseased throat—were all laid in the grave in 1891. Soon Henry Henderson, bereft and broken-hearted, sank in the effort to reach home, and is buried at Quilimane. At a later date (1895) Dr. and Mrs. Scott were at Domasi heartening the little beleaguered garrison, and giving wise counsel to the chiefs. Mrs. Scott became worn out from the nightly watches with lamps lit, expecting at any moment the bursting in of the invading force, and a rush for home seemed the only chance of life. Her husband tried to bring her. They halted at Blantyre on their way, and found the brave unselfish Willy breathing his last. Willy had been detained far too long in the mission, his furlough being postponed because no one came to take his place. David asked him if he would come. "Yes, David, I am game for that,"—but in an hour he died. Mrs. Scott reached the coast only to die. She was buried in Mozambique. David came on home, so dazed that he scarcely knew he was alone till he reached the Red Sea.

That closed the first chapter of the great missionary's life. High testimony was borne by Captain (now Sir) Frederick Lugard and Joseph Thomson, the traveller, to Blantyre, as a spot where the advent of the white man may be described as an unmitigated blessing to the natives. Henry Drummond also, in 1884, described it in these words:—

'He did not believe that in any part of the world there was a safer or a more solid foundation laid for a mission than that of the Established Church at Blantyre, and there was no missionary on any staff in the world better fitted for his work, or whose teaching was more evangelical, than Mr. Scott, the head of the mission.'

Dr. Charteris tells of this generous recognition, and adds:—

'What I remember best is his description of David Scott—"as carefully dressed as if he had come out for a walk in Princes Street." Drummond himself, always faultlessly dressed, could appreciate the high resolve of the devoted missionary, who remembered in his outer garb the position of the head of the

mission. Scott's principle was that he represented Christian Scotland, and had to educate the Africans up to recognise our social refinement as well as our spiritual religion.'

With this missionary genius and enthusiast, whether on the foreign field or at home, Dr. Charteris maintained an intimate and sustaining friendship which bulked largely in his life.

Sir William Mackinnon, Mr. A. L. Bruce, and others interested resolved to start a mission (founded by Dr. Stewart of Lovedale) in fulfilment of their territorial responsibilities in East Africa; but difficulties in maintaining it persuaded them to hand over what is now called the Kikuyu Mission, on the Mombasa-Uganda Railway, to the Church of Scotland. Thither, in the true spirit of Christian knight-errantry, went David Scott, with his second wife, Miss Edith Ruffelle, a brave, fragile, loyal woman, of high aspirations like his own, who did not long survive their many hardships. He found in one of his southern tongues—Swahili—a means of communication with the natives; and the self-taught architect, the unwearied toiler at the dictionary, decided upon making it a great agricultural industrial mission. By this method he believed he could best gather the people in for Christian instruction as well as for Christian influence. Also he hoped, by the fruits of their joint labour, to dispense with dependence upon the stinted support from home. Potatoes and beans were to work out his deliverance. He embarked his whole means in the undertaking. When financial trouble came, through the fault of others, Dr. Charteris stood his true friend; and one staunch ally, who had come under his magnetic influence at Kingswood, freed him from immediate anxiety. Malarial fever, however, and a complication of ailments, invaded that splendid physical frame. Struggling under the advance of the fatal disease, he managed to rise and lay the foundation-stone of the new hospital; and was carried to church a week before the end to preach his last uplifting sermon from the text: 'Ye have need of patience.' Still he continued teaching his boys till, on



Sunday morning, 13th October 1907, feeling the end was at hand, he made a great effort, and raised himself in his bed to baptize Karanja, the first convert in Kikuyu. 'My capitans are coming to God, I know; and it is through the work I have got them. Marvellous purposes are in store,' were the last words he ever wrote, on the night before he died. His firm faith in the elevation of the whole man, through an industrial mission up to the deliberate adoption of the Christian pledge, was amply justified on his deathbed. Dr. Charteris, deeply grieving, framed an In Memoriam booklet to summarise the career of his beloved friend and uniquely gifted student, which has been freely quoted above.

While Dr. Charteris maintained by correspondence a close contact with his Church's representatives in the foreign field to an extent marvellous for so busy a man, he kept steadily before him the kindly duty of corresponding with deaconesses abroad, who were expected to send him half-yearly reports of their work. Nor was this a mere matter of form; his letters evince a tender consideration for individuals, and show a memory which rarely needed prompting, as to personal history and specific sphere. Miss Janet S. Beck of Blantyre, and Miss Margaret Christie (whose father, Professor Christie of Aberdeen, had been a valued friend), freely told him of their successes and difficulties. Easter Sunday found him inditing letters which the far-off recipients highly appreciated. Miss Paton, of the Kalimpong Homes, would describe to him the manifold duties of a 'mother' to twenty-five rescued children. Miss Nicol would relate difficulties in school both of acquiring and teaching Nepali, and the joys of itinerating. Miss Jeanie Campbell—'the nice wee child of a Highland manse'—would portray life and work in the Charteris hospital, ministering to patients of various races and tongues.

The Women's Mission at Poona was never long absent from his thoughts, and contained some of his warmest friends. No fewer than four ladies of the Bernard family volunteered practically as honorary missionaries, and have

long given efficient service to the Church of Scotland in different capacities. Miss Eleanor Bernard for thirty-four years superintended the Zenana Mission. Miss Emily began work in 1877, and at a critical period took charge of the Church of Scotland's enfeebled and defamed Women's Mission at Calcutta, restoring its character and prestige; and has since then, with unselfish devotion, conducted the Orphanage at Poona. Her place at Calcutta was taken by her sister Miss Amy, postponing for a year her marriage to Bishop Clifford of Lucknow. And the youngest, Miss Lettice, one of the first three ladies to graduate as M.B., has, since 1885, presided over the Women's Hospital with earnest and untiring skill, often in times of cholera and plague. She even contracted the latter fell disease in her self-sacrificing labours. To the native community at least as much as to those of British birth, the self-dedication of these four sisters of the late Sir Charles Bernard, Lieutenant-Governor of Burma, and nieces of Sir Henry Lawrence of Lucknow, and John Lawrence, who saved the Punjab in Mutiny days, and lived to administer India as Governor-General, has exhibited in different departments significant Christian service for India. Dr. and Mrs. Charteris were ever steadfast upholders of their unwearying but exhausting efforts. In appreciation of his service for mission advance, Dr. L. Bernard wrote:—

'Many people ask for money in such a horrid way, as if the missionaries were beggars, wanting to be supported; as if most of them could not make much more money in other callings. I suppose it is partly because you take such a different tone that you can always get money—possibly because you are always so ready to give it yourself.'

They and their friends gave unstintedly of their means as well as their personal toil. Two other ladies, medically qualified, may be named. Dr. Mary H. Cumming (a niece of Dr. Maxwell Nicholson) reported her arrival in November 1898, and the loving welcome received from this devoted band of workers; and she recounted how Dr. Charteris' thoughtful introduction of her to Principal A. M. Fairbairn of Mansfield College had immensely enhanced



the pleasure of the voyage out. Ere long, alas! she succumbed, after a brief term of service patiently prepared for. Dr. Mary J. Dodds, from Corstorphine Manse, wrote some of the cheeriest epistles which he received, telling how she would like to show him all the brown faces behind the red blankets in hospital, extolling the charms of Indian babyhood, and declaring that Cameron House ought to be one of the very happiest houses in Scotland, because it did so much in the way of making other people happy. Miss Edith Alexander got her full share of letters from her old family friend, though she often spoke distrustfully of her own sincere and honest work, dwelling much on the need for a ministry of intercession. Miss Harvey and Miss Kesting were other deaconesses held in much regard, who reinforced the ranks at Poona.

Excellent letters from far Ichang, on the river Yangtze, came from the devoted nurse of that mission, Deaconess Minnie Bere, who among the Chinese bore the name of 'Bee Showjay' or 'little sister,' and were full of life and zeal. These examples may suffice to indicate the wide range of his missionary sympathies. A letter from Mrs. Hudson Taylor (*née* Geraldine Guinness) asked remembrance in prayer in connection with the preparation of that 'Life' of love and service given to China by the founder of the China Inland Mission.

We have spoken of Dr. Charteris' successes, but have now to tell of his one conspicuous and splendid failure. He often quoted the line, 'Not failure, but low aim, is crime.' The Foreign Mission cause was languishing, and the ill-omened word 'retrenchment' was being sadly spoken. To Dr. Graham of Kalimpong, home on furlough, he wrote from Homburg on 3rd May 1895: 'You came at an awful crisis in Foreign Mission affairs. It is proposed to withdraw from another presidency (Madras), and from £3000 of expenditure. Next year it may be from another mission.' At all costs he prepared to advocate a new scheme called 'Mission Advance,' and pressed it on the Foreign Mission Committee. In 1896, seconding Dr.

M'Murtrie's report, he persuaded the General Assembly unanimously to adopt (in place of the quite inadequate annual church collection) a scheme for a special quarterly distribution of mission literature. It recommended a quarterly opportunity of giving by the visits of distributors of information, not by more church collections. Into this movement he threw his whole soul with deep conviction and unsparing ardour. He was bitterly disappointed when about half of the members of the Foreign Mission Committee did not themselves carry out to the letter these recommendations of a particular method of special treatment. So acutely did he feel the non-acceptance of his views in their entirety by the kirk-session of that missionary congregation, the Tolbooth, that, with keenest regret on both sides, he resigned his eldership there. With characteristic valour he headed deputations to the presbyteries of Glasgow and Hamilton, organised a great meeting in the Music Hall of Edinburgh and elsewhere to advocate the cause, and left no stone unturned to further his zealous aims. The first and the sixth of the quarterly papers on Foreign Mission Advance were cogent pleas from his pen. Although the movement did not secure victory all along the line for his special method, it rallied many to the general standard, and did an enormous amount of good. He had to fight not only hostile critics and prevailing inertia, but also the uneasy fears of rival committees. Never was truer than then a sentence that sometimes fell from his lips, 'We serve a jealous Church.' There was reported to the General Assembly of 1897 the substantial increase of nearly £7000, that one-third of the congregations had more or less distinctly taken up the Advance movement, and that Advance had not hurt any other scheme, but on the contrary had helped them all. The conscience of the Church had been touched. But a set-back occurred in the Assembly of 1898, which Dr. Charteris summarised thus:—

'Terrible majority against. More than half of General Assembly did not vote, because not understanding. No wonder: five motions! There were seven speeches delivered against me, and not one on my side but Lord Balfour's.'



He had emphasised the uselessness of a mechanical schedule without accompanying information, zeal and knowledge in the collectors, and warm, helpful teaching from the pulpit, saying:—

‘A poor scale of contribution can be stereotyped in a schedule as well as in the ladle or a plate. We have got to break up the stereotype of our contributions and cast the worn-out plates into the fire of a new love, melting them down and casting them anew in larger characters for future use; ay, and to keep on doing that at short intervals. If you can, for a worthy object, raise the whole idea and scale, you will reap the benefit for every other object. No case is known to me when Scotland was stirred except by one great aim and passion. And once raised to that, it was raised to everything. What blessing can we expect if we make the Gospel call narrower than its Author made it.’

Baffled in his scheme for the quarterly method of Advance all over the Church, Dr. Charteris instituted another method, which he called the ‘Substitute Fund.’ He approached friends and sympathisers among the wealthy or well-to-do, asking them each to give (in addition to their normal contribution) at least a hundred pounds. Such confidence did he inspire that the sum raised by personal application from 1897 till his death was £19,373. It was instrumental in stemming the tide of retrenchment, and enabled the Church to strengthen her stations by sending out some of her most earnest missionaries. To Dr. Graham of Kalimpong Dr. Charteris wrote in the autumn of 1901:—

‘I am deeply grieved to hear this morning of your mother’s death. It will make a mighty change to you and yours, when you think of the old land—“home.” A wise friend said to me when my mother died that we never know how truly we are mortal until our parents no longer stand between us and the grave. But there is a better side to it. We never know how much hold heaven has upon us until they are there. It seems to me that we are just the next ripple on the stream of the generations flowing on to that sunny sea. I hope we may be able to meet these new demands of yours, but there is one point in your valuable letter with which I venture to disagree, and, being a Scottish ecclesiastic, I naturally begin with it! It is wearing and wasting life that of doing service to the Church in

committees. You want us to go ahead, and I fain would; but the rider cannot go faster than the horse. I now see that is what happened in 1896, the time I tried it hardest. I went over the head of my steed, and the creature kicked me moreover. The Foreign Mission is in debt again; it is unspeakably sad. I have not yet given up all hope of seeing Kalimpong. You will see I am not well. I have steadily gone downhill these two months past. I have lost weight by twenty-eight pounds: my clothes are hanging like a washing on a pole: and I have little hope of recovery. But the Lord knows. I am still to keep at the Substitute Fund. It is impulse we all want. Was not that a good saying of Bishop Welldon: "Here am I—send some one else"?'

At the Woman's Guild Conference in Edinburgh in March 1897, the founder broached yet another project—a home-house for foreign missionaries' children. It had been long near the hearts of Dr. and Mrs. Charteris. Having no children of their own, they were devotedly attached to young folk, especially to the children of missionaries, and deeply realised the bitter hardships of separation between parents and children. As Dr. Charteris wrote:—

'Our religion is surely not to be maintained by the sacrifice of scapegoats. We want to establish Christian homes in India, replacing those great family villages where, as with banyan trees, fresh branches are always striking down into the ground and taking root, while the old remain, growing harder and more hardened; but we surely do not wish to establish these at the price of the ruin of our own mission families. Some of the privations of our missionaries we cannot help, but some can be lightened, and some we can share. Parents and children of the Scottish Church, will you try to make a home for those children? They have to be sent away from the shelter of their parents' roof-tree, not merely because of climate and bodily health, but because where the missionaries work the air is full of heathenism with all its degrading sights and sounds, with its age-old immoralities; and, just because the missionary must be in the thick of the fight, he cannot have his own children always under his eye. His relatives have not always room or time or aptitude for their training. A mere boarding-house is often unsatisfactory; all the more so that in the foreign child's case there is no home to go to during the school holidays. It is a *home* for their children, a Christian home, that the missionary parents want, where such pains will be taken to draw out



the good and amend the ill in the young character as a godly father and mother would take. This is a much higher demand than stated hours of religious instruction with catechism, Bible facts, and ethical maxims. The idea of the projected home is not that of a charity. We propose to offer a Scottish home for about the same outlay as would be needed for them in the unbroken family on the mission field. We build this castle in the air near a great city, with lots of bedrooms where little cots may be stretched. Beside it may be a field where the children can play, and where their own cows graze; big trees where their swings could be hung; an old garden where each wee thing might have its own plot to work in and "keep and dress it," sometimes sowing seeds and tending plants that father has sent home—and yet near some of the schools where instruction is to be had both cheap and good. At its head some deaconess, raised up to be "a mother in Israel," with volunteers to help her.'

Care was taken to learn how other Churches and societies proceeded in the matter. Professor Mitchell, the universal referee, told in one of his last notes (in pencil) how the first committee of the Pan-Presbyterian Council considered the matter, which he strongly advocated; but how Dr. Duff objected to the children of missionaries being cooped up by themselves, and he urged that this difficulty should be minimised.

The 1st of June 1900 saw this new vessel launched which still cheerily breasts the waves. The usual appeal was made and renewed from Cameron House, the inmates of which themselves provided nearly a fourth of a total sum of £3395. A charming old house and garden called St. Margaret's was purchased in Duddingston village and adapted by alterations, the building of a new nursery, and the work of those painters who are the real domestic good fairies—for the reception of a full complement of twelve children. It lies on the sheltered south side of Arthur's Seat, near the old church made famous by the Rev. John Thomson, R.S.A., the painter-minister. Miss Minnie Paterson, D.C.S., was chosen as lady superintendent, assisted by her sister, Miss Paterson, who makes the housekeeping and cooking her chief charge; and as only one servant is kept, while the house is at all times

like the proverbial 'new pin' for brightness, neatness, and comfort, it is plain that the mothering and house-keeping together are no sinecure. Miss Minnie Paterson was driven from the Indian mission field by illness, and carries on this kindred work with peculiar sympathy. The co-operative family numbered ten a year ago, hailing from Calcutta, Kalimpong, Gujrat, and Sialkot in India, Ichang in China, Blantyre in Africa, and British Guiana; and are entrusted to this real home by their parents in grateful confidence.

Dr. and Mrs. Charteris played to those children the part of loving grandfather and grandmother. Birthday greetings from each adopted grandchild yearly cheered his heart, and the beautiful sheaf of letters drew out an acknowledgment in rhyme to each down to his last birthday, though he then pled: 'My Pegasus is old and weak in the knee, and can neither run up a hill which the height of poetry would require, nor can he even kick up his heels as my high spirits would oblige him to do.' Twelve days before his death Dr. Charteris wrote to the Rev. J. Shaw, colonial chaplain at Quetta, India: 'This is Sunday when a cold shuts me up from going to church in the wet: and I was at the home-house with my wife yesterday. You will readily understand that we have recent thoughts of Grace and Nellie Shaw. The house is as full as ever, and all the children are delightful. . . . My nephew, Captain John Charteris, R.E., at Quetta Staff College, wrote me lately, giving a very gratifying and not unexpected account of all your ministry to the soldiers in Quetta. My brother's three boys are all doing very well in their various walks in life. How are you all? Are you any older? I am. I have aged twenty years in the last ten, and am shaky on my feet. My head is clear enough, but objects to being worked. We are on our way home to Kingswood again after six months in Bridge of Allan.' His heart beat warm and true indeed with loving kindness to every human and missionary interest till, twelve days later, it beat no more.



## CHAPTER XX

### THE CLOSING YEARS

Going Downhill—Retirement at Peebles—Doomed and Reprieved—  
Presentation of Portrait—Sudden Call—Tributes.

DR. CHARTERIS had certainly no cause to make the pathetic complaint of his fellow-student and Glasgow neighbour, afterwards Principal Marcus Dods—'Everything in life had come to me too late.' He had early emerged from the ranks, and had never suffered one rejection, as against Dr. Dods' twenty, by undiscerning congregations. The craving for getting 'out of harness, however, came to Dr. Charteris at times; though it was difficult for him to give up any of his cherished undertakings, both from parental partiality and the love of work, innate to his active mind. A letter to the Rev. William Robertson as early as 14th January 1888, shows that talk of resignation was not even then unknown, and incidentally pays a worthy tribute to the deceased Dr. Kenneth M. Phin, Home Mission Convener and leader of the Assembly.

'This great calamity which has befallen the Church makes me very sad. I would rather have lost the fight to him (about deaconesses) than miss him from the battle-field. He was the last of the men I looked up to thirty years ago, when I began life in the ministry; and now one thinks of the generous man, the bold champion, and the antequely courteous Christian gentleman, so big and strong and kind. God is opening a great future to you, though not of harder work. Not the smallest of the advantages I foresee is that I may get out of the way and win my coveted rest. I am ready for anything that will make recasting possible.'

In 1894 Dr. Charteris ceased to preside over, but continued a devoted member of, the Christian Life and Work

Committee. In 1898, with a sore wrench, he demitted office as professor; but an idle life of self-gratification was to him a sheer impossibility. Even in nominal retirement one project after another was originated, or unswervingly pursued, till failing powers and agonising illnesses gradually taught him the lesson that he must refrain from his former all too great expenditure of nerve force. But he learned the lesson slowly. Enfeebled by neuritis, he twice sought relief by the aid of the salt baths at Droitwich, which wrought some amelioration in his condition. Whilst resolutely holding to his policy of Foreign Mission Advance, and personally furthering the 'Substitute Fund,' his eager spirit fretted at the lack of support, as is shown by frequent letters to Dr. Graham of Kalimpong.

'The Foreign Mission Committee are trying to cover up decadence and to deny retreat. I am a tired man: a toothless growler in a forgotten stall! I congratulate you on the evidence that you have "struck ile" in the new Eurasian scheme. Don't overwork yourself: husband the strength God wants you to use, not to exhaust. Almost all good movements rest on one man, and depend on him. In our degenerate days pioneers have no successors.'

About this period more alarming symptoms of ill-health began to appear. When staying with their relatives (the Leslies) in Upper Norwood, Dr. Charteris was seized with sudden and prostrating illness, combined with great pain and high temperature. Lord Balfour of Burleigh, on behalf of Queen Victoria, telegraphed from Balmoral great regret and most gracious sympathy. Dr. Lettice Bernard, home on furlough from Poona, lovingly offered her medical help. The attack passed off: as did also what was diagnosed as a 'premonitory quasi-paralytic enfeeblement of the right side' experienced at Humble House in July 1901. Prior to this he had suffered a 'sore grief in the death of our beloved almost son, Willie Charteris' (Charteris Bey, of Alexandria).

The royal invitation to the coronation of King Edward in Westminster Abbey came to him, with a tempting offer of hospitality from Lady Balfour of Burleigh; but



he declined, on the threefold ground—'I have sciatica: am poor: and hate functions.' Instead thereof he took part, with his fellow chaplain to the king, Dr. MacGregor, in a joyful celebration in St. Cuthbert's, where he had now become an elder.

Residence at Cannes was prescribed for him, and he found a congenial resting-place under the kindly roof of Mrs. Barclay at Urie, with a sympathetic spiritual environment.

A short meditation given there, entitled *Foreign Missions and the Passion for Souls*, runs thus:—

'We know the Redeemer's last words on the earth. He spoke afterwards to Paul and to the seer of Patmos. But He spoke as a king to them. This was the last word of the Redeemer. Why has the Church so little understood it? Because only the Paraclete, the Holy Ghost, can take of the things of Christ and show them to us: and we have thought we knew them when only the sounds and the words have reached us. "Lo, I am with you!" He wishes to speak with us and by us. How would He speak? How did He speak? Think how He wept over Jerusalem a patriot's tears, and you have home missions; how He had compassion on the multitude, and you have His view of the great unbelieving world, the heathen; how He had compassion on this one who suffered in his own person, and that one who suffered in the pain of one near and dear. You see how minutely He cared for single cases, even when He was seeing the end from the beginning of the great plan of Redemption. How far has the Church entered into that mind of Christ? "Passion for souls" is a phrase sometimes applied to a great evangelist; but it ought to be the abiding mood of the Church of Christ. Are His ministers trying to form that passion, and to make it a steady purpose? Do you say that it is best to have a religion of cool conviction without passion? A conviction that moves life must be full of heart, or it is not only valueless for influence on others, but a miserable thing in itself. A disciple of Christ cannot represent the Master with mere cool conviction, if he has a heart. A cool conviction that men are dying for lack of the knowledge we could send them will do little good. But you say, the souls He has made are safe with God. If, however, you never tell them of Him, are you safe with Him? Are you safe if you disobey His last command?' It breaks off with: 'This poor meditation is above my strength. As Wycliffe said: "God grant us all grace to ken well and keep well Holy Writ, and suffer joyfully some pain for it at the last."'

To a youth who was encountering doubts and questionings, Dr. Charteris wrote:—

'I wish I could be of use to you, but I never think any one can help another much in the inner struggles of life. It grieves me much to see how vague and blank everything is just at present with you. God grant the dawn may soon come. Your first letter spoke of difficulties concerning our Lord's divinity and the efficacy of prayer; but your second goes further. Professor Flint's *Theism* and his *Antitheistic Theories* are the best books of our day on these subjects. You must put to yourself the question, "What then?" If there be no living God, the Maker of all things, how came this universe? and how did we ourselves come? It is to me impossible to believe that this world is self-caused. When you speak of trying to ascertain when the Hebrews began to have an idea of God, you are beginning an intellectual inquiry into history. But this is not merely an intellectual matter, nor is it even chiefly intellectual. I am not afraid of the inquiry, but the inquirer would be on a wrong tack if that were all he investigated. Take our Lord's own Life: see what He was: see what He claimed to be: and you are, I think, at the heart of the matter. And, dear boy, remember that truth, if truth it be, does not depend on our approval or disapproval. We are at stake: not the truth. The compass is not less true when some sailor does not trust to it.'

On 29th May 1902, Dr. Charteris wrote to Kalimpong:—

'We are under a shadow to-day. Dr. John Alison died this forenoon. I saw him a week ago, and perceived that the end was sure, but had not thought it so near. He was a wise, well-balanced man, a steady friend and genial humorist. In 1856 John Pagan brought him to spend a day with me and see Edinburgh. We have been friends and allies ever since, and his wife was a Park Church bairn. He was one of the few men who realised that the pulpit is a place for *teaching*. I have not been able to do more than *call* at the Assembly.'

In order to withdraw a little from the hotter regions of temptation to overwork, Dr. and Mrs. Charteris left Cameron House, on the outskirts of Edinburgh, and set up house at Kingswood, Peebles, purchasing a beautiful mansion, situated on the edge of the King's Muir. The property had been anciently granted by King Robert II. to the friars of the Cross Kirk there; so there was a certain fitness in this restored ecclesiastical association. Miss Anderson, his sister-in-law, was henceforth a constant



inmate of the household. They came not as strangers, for they had often been guests at the Hydropathic; and found themselves among old friends, including such warm supporters of the guilds and missions as the Thorburn family. Dr. Clement Gunn, brother of a zealous minister who had studied in the Edinburgh Divinity Hall, was his attached medical attendant. He came prepared for a reception which would unite ceremonious dignity with academic aloofness, and felt delighted surprise when introduced to his future patients by their Christian names. He noted that the Professor in a quiet way enjoyed his cultured retirement, and seemed more like the Dumfriesshire country gentleman: as if he had cast off his University robes, but had retained his Geneva gown. Amongst other things he observed their strong practical interest in the missionaries and their children, who always found a cordial reception under their hospitable roof. When able, he indulged in walks, and would occasionally handle a golf-club; but he would whimsically deplore that he had no hobbies, not even 'the wee sinful fiddle.' Dr. Gunn's personal testimony is here supplied:—

'During the whole of Dr. Charteris' six years of residence in Peebles, his mortal disease was upon him. It is necessary to mention this in order to delineate faithfully his humanity. He was never in normal health, and at times was a great sufferer, enduring terrible agonies. Let it suffice to say that Dr. Charteris tholed pain in a heroic manner. Nothing became him more than his behaviour under suffering. It put his religion, his manhood, his gentlemanliness to the severest of all tests: and they did not fail. Instead, his sufferings brought out his gentleness, his unselfishness, his courteous consideration for those around him. On 21st August 1902, at Mertoun House, he was face to face with death. With something more than professional interest one watched how a great churchman would meet the enemy; and he did so bravely, resignedly. On that occasion as on many others, he rallied in a most amazing manner, and comparatively soon was going about again as usual, not like a man who had but recently emerged from the valley of the shadow. This characteristic often puzzled his friends, but was due to strong vitality, and a light and humorous manner of speaking of his illnesses after recovery from them.'

The most critical, as it was the most prolonged, ordeal was reached on 13th March 1903, when Dr. Charteris came up to London from Bournemouth to consult the most eminent king's surgeon of his time. He had been steadily losing weight, and his power of recuperation was diminishing. He was then directly informed that his tumour was malignant, would prove fatal within three months, and that the condition was inoperable; also that he was far too ill to travel on the Continent. On receiving this sentence of death, he fulfilled an engagement at Cadogan Square, where he lunched with the Scottish Secretary and Lady Balfour, and wrote to Mrs. Charteris: 'Surely they are the kindest people in the whole world.' If Dr. Charteris had been, as many letters reveal, a channel of soothing help and comfort to Lady Balfour's family on many occasions, right nobly did they repay him in his hour of need. Tenderly was he nursed and cared for; and next day Lady Balfour saw him off for Bournemouth.

She wrote:—

'I can only thank you again for much you taught me yesterday and to-day. A great lesson it was, with your anchor not even dragging, and the flag waving cheerily all through the storm. Haste ye back.'

The one ray of hope vouchsafed was a dim one indeed, but the eminent consultant had hazarded the suggestion that the new X-ray treatment might be worth trying. Accordingly they returned on the 23rd March to the kindly care of Lord and Lady Balfour. After three days in bed the patient was able to leave for Glasgow, where he benefited surprisingly and beyond all expectation under the prolonged and skilful treatment of Dr. Macintyre. It was afterwards ascertained that some of the symptoms were due to grave kidney trouble, which was considerably relieved after another acute crisis in the end of August, so severe that again a fatal issue was feared. When it was known how serious was Dr. Charteris' condition, many of his friends gave themselves to fervent intercession on his behalf. Dr. Cameron Lees wrote on 23rd March 1903:—



'My own conviction, drawn from long experience, is that though there are many ways into Gethsemane, there is but one way out of it, that which our Lord took when He said, "Not as I will, but as Thou wilt." Depend on my remembering you constantly at the Throne of Grace. God does wonderful things in answer to prayer.'

From the Alhambra, Grenada, Dr. MacGregor wrote:—

'My dear elder and friend of long ago, you are never forgotten. Twice every day and in the silent watches, my heart goes up to God for you.'

From the clerk's seat in the Assembly Hall, Dr. Norman Macleod assured him:—

'You are not forgotten by old friends and comrades, but remembered by them with undiminished affection. Your work will be increasingly appreciated, and will bear fruit after we have all passed away. I am writing beside the Annandale Moderator (Dr. Gillespie), who asks me to convey to you his heartfelt sympathy.'

Principal Lang of Aberdeen believed it was in answer to many prayers that God was

'causing His sun to shine into your very body, and by its rays to arrest the disease. A Sun, whose brightness is above that sun, is illumining and cheering your spirit inwardly.'

Dr. Elder Cumming visited him in Glasgow when under 'sentence of death in three months,' and records:—

'I had never seen him so quiet, so brave, so calm, or felt that he had come so near to my heart.'

He wrote from St. Andrews on 21st June 1903 to inquire 'whether the light-cure promises still to keep you here, for a help and pattern to many cowardly and selfish men. Doubtless you will agree with me that the backward view of life is the most humbling, and that we begin to feel what it will look like when we find ourselves in Eternity. I had a most interesting talk lately with a parson friend in England as to what we expected when we wakened up after death. We were both clear that there was no lengthened unconsciousness, and that the first overwhelming thought would be—*Christ!* But I think one moment of inexpressible shame will follow. We have come to this old and interesting city, and to-day I preached in the college church again. The last time was at Dr. John Cook's

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Communion service—about the year 1854! Think of it! But God is the same, *only better understood.*'

While undergoing the X-ray treatment at an early stage, Dr. Charteris wrote to Professor Nicol of Aberdeen on 6th April 1903, imparting the anxious news, and praising the kindness of

'my friend Dr. Macintyre, who is the acknowledged leader of X-ray administration in Britain. You have been a steady friend of more than forty years. No fleck of doubt has ever clouded the brightness of my trust in you. I would have liked to prepare with you a second edition of *Canonicity*. It is yours, so far as my wishes go, to do as you like with. I think the New Testament authorities will be questioned of new in coming controversies, so that the book will be needed. I am asked to say an editorial word for Professor W. P. Paterson's Guild text-book: no better book was ever launched. What a grip he has. He takes in everything, and moreover takes it firmly.'

A month later he wrote again:—

'You may have heard that the X-rays have had a marvellous—almost miraculous—effect upon me. My general health is quite renewed. My malady is arrested. We venture humbly to hope for further progress. I was in the valley of the shadow, and had no fear or uneasiness. I wonder if I shall be able to use my so-far-restored health. Grace is sufficient. The prayers of my friends have been heard. May they still be! If you have not read the *Contemporary* for April, please do; and mark on your *Canonicity* some of Jannaris' excellent points. He is most ingenious on *τινα* with no preconceived accent.'

By July Dr. Charteris was able to assure Lady Balfour that 'the magician of the X-rays' was well pleased with his progress, though they wisely continued in constant touch.

On 23rd September the grateful patient was discharged, on conditions of care and caution, and allowed to return to Kingswood, which he had never thought to see again. His diary tells of being at church for the first time at Peebles for nearly a year, and of a deaconess meeting on 12th October in 27 George Square, Edinburgh.

'Pleasant gathering. Some useful work. William Robertson very kind. Afterwards called and saw my sister.'



Next day he was able to walk from Kingswood to Peebles Hydropathic, and to visit his old friends, the Misses Houldsworth of Rozelle.

On Sunday evening, October 25th, his diary relates:—

'After a long absence I was permitted to be at the Lord's Table to-day in a very crowded church. A year ago, and again six months ago, I had no thought of ever being at a Communion table on earth again: even two months ago my life was supposed to be within a few days of the end. Yet I was there—in fair bodily health. With what fitness and with what result? Of course as a theologian, and a man of some experience, I know that I could have no fitness in myself. But was I humble, penitent, and ready to receive? The text was Exodus xx. 24, "I will come unto thee." The preacher several times declared that he had God's peace. My peace is usually a short truce: a brief interval of good when the enemy does not attack me. On the other hand, I feel that Christ is on my side; that He finds it difficult to save me, but that He assuredly will save me. I felt thankful to be allowed to testify to the Saviour who deserves all my gratitude. I felt able to plead His promises to me, in the long time of silent prayer, when the noiseless Communion was going on; and to plead His covenant with me. Alas! mine with Him is sure to be broken. I cannot keep Him, but He can keep me, and He will. With what results? It is too soon to estimate them, but my heart's dearest wish, hope, and even conviction is that Christ will keep me. His infinite compassion will pity me for my stumbling and my falls: will count broken efforts as completed triumphs, choked aspirations as abiding love, and will perfect His strength in my weakness. I felt as though Christ with His pierced hand gave me that broken bread to-day, and said: "Poor disgraceful disciple, begin anew: Lo! I am with you alway; and I shall keep you. Even so, come Lord Jesus; come, and do not go away. Lord, stay."

'The magician of the X-rays' not only showed ceaseless solicitude for his patient, to whom he wrote on New Year's Eve, 1904, that he had fought a good fight as bravely as any man could have done. He could also administer a salutary advice thus:—

'I see you have been writing a paper for the Deaconesses. I remember seeing Lord Kelvin in bed when he was ordered to take three weeks' rest; and he dropped a remark incidentally that he had just written to Sir George Stokes, to say that this would be an admirable time to revise his Baltimore lectures,

which he had been trying to do for eleven years. I hope you see the point in the story. As for writing the paper, if you are fit to write it you are quite able to read it.'

Reporting on himself, Dr. Charteris wrote:—

'I always feel like a man in a steamer who is not actively sick, but hatefully squeamish. There was a man in Annandale (an awful liar) who used to say that he "took out his stamach and washed it, and got on fine; but ance he hung it on a hedge to dry, and the craws took it awa', and he had never had ony digestion to speak o' sin syne." I often wish to get at his first stage! We had Miss Maxwell and Miss Pirrie on Saturday. I had to leave them a good deal and go to bed, but they cheered us up uncommon.'

To the poor of Peebles he and the ladies of Kingswood were ever kind and charitable. Their giving evinced not only liberality but also self-denial. A little lame boy was boarded in the Cripples' Home at their expense; and a deaf and dumb man, whom no one else would employ, was given a room in their grounds, where he occupied himself in sawing such a huge lot of firewood that it lasted far beyond Dr. Charteris' occupancy of the house. Miss Anderson and he were each at the expense of erecting one of two rustic bridges over the Haystoun burn at the Gipsy Glen, which linked up a beautiful circular walk. Thus the ex-Moderator still played the part of Pontifex Maximus.

Correspondence occupied many of Dr. Charteris' hours; and, though he complained of loss of memory, his letters bore small trace thereof. Thus to the widow of the Rev. William Ferguson, military chaplain and missionary at Chamba, India, he wrote on September 8th, 1904:—

'I was grieved to learn that your husband was taken away so soon after I heard of his illness. On my own account I regret that my words of friendship did not reach his faithful spirit; but I am sure his ear and heart were filled with higher and sweeter sounds. He has fulfilled what seems to us a long course; and our human eyes have seen him always doing his duty in the simplest and most direct way. It is, I think, fifty-three years since I first met him. He came up to see my roommate, W. Shoolbred, also a Dunfermline man. He was very handsome, admirably but not demonstratively dressed, had a



black head and an ebony cane; and always talked of God, and duty, and missions. I was a mere boy of about fifteen, and W. Ferguson became to me a hero. He had much to do with giving me a love of missions to the heathen. It is not much to say—for what am I?—but so long as I live he will always speak to my heart. A nobler, more absolutely upright, more loyal and warm-hearted man never breathed. *You* yourself? We wonder much what you will do. You have made God's servant's life glad and strong. You cheered him; you were one with him; and the Master knows it all.'

To the present writer (then abroad) Dr. Charteris wrote on 4th December 1904:—

'A few weeks ago Dr. Macintyre dismissed me as cured; and I began to write to some friends, and to resume the obligations of life. News I have none to give you. Our life here is uneventful. Peebles is just near enough Edinburgh to let me be tormented by summonses to meetings which I *very* seldom attend. I have read Dr. Mair's article to-day, getting the omnibus to take me to the Chambers' Reading-room in Peebles. No one can deny that it is beautifully clear and very able. I have sent him my pamphlet on *Spiritual Independence*, to let him see that he is not (as he claims to be) the first who ever spoke in any General Assembly in behalf of Union as a pathway to revision of creeds. Our Church has behaved very well: has been even too quiet. I wanted a meeting of our Commission in November, just to intimate that we are deeply interested in the present situation, as Christian brethren. I am trying to prepare my Baird Lectures for the Press—delivered in 1888—but it is very doubtful if I shall ever finish my work. Since 1897 I have only preached four times; three of them in the last three months. When you speak of my beginning, or propelling, a movement for union, you make me sadly smile. I am feeble, even senile, and only wake up in bits for a wee while now and then.'

During the winter of 1905-6 Dr. and Mrs. Charteris spent some months at Boscombe and at Brighton. The political turmoil then raging made him wonder whether he ought not to exercise his vote in Scotland. He had strong convictions regarding the Boer War, and would have liked to vote against Mr. Chamberlain; but he could not disentangle him from the Unionist party, which he wanted to support. In his opinion the Irish M.P.'s were equally strenuous and successful in proving that Britain cannot afford to set them free from restraint. On the whole,

therefore, he was not inclined to risk the long journey to Scotland in mid-winter; but early in February he was compelled, from a sad cause, to return to Edinburgh. A letter contains these words:—

‘My sister’s death and funeral have occupied us for some days. Yesterday the last rites were performed at Wamphray; and now my dear wee sister’s body sleeps in her father’s grave, in the old churchyard in the hollow of the hill.’

In April 1906 Dr. Charteris, who was spending some time at Bridge of Allan, sadly shared with Dr. Scott, in St. George’s, Edinburgh, the funeral service of his intimate and revered friend and counsellor Mr. T. G. Murray, W.S.; and had the joy of preparing for his first communion David Graham of Kalimpong, to whom he stood *in loco parentis*. His last sermon to the Peebles Guild on 25th June 1905 was from the text, ‘God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.’ On the 29th of October he assisted the minister of Peebles in the celebration of the Holy Communion along with the Rev. Hugh Drennan, a venerable veteran, who had served as army chaplain both in the Crimea and in the Indian Mutiny. On Sunday, 15th July, Dr. Charteris (also in Peebles parish church) gave the charge in the setting apart of a deaconess. This was his last appearance in that capacity.

In September his wife and he took farewell of Trinlen Cottage at Wamphray, feeling too old to run two houses. They had called on all the people whose fathers and mothers they had known, and thus taken a kindly ‘good-bye’ of his native parish. Mrs. Charteris found it very difficult to give up their little country home; but her husband’s argument was: ‘Just think. Its furniture will make the Deaconess’ Rest ready at once.’ Thereafter he proceeded to Aberdeen for the great celebrations in the end of September, on the occasion of its Quater-Centenary, ‘to be D.D.ified.’ The distinguished consultant, whose sentence had permitted him three months to live, now occupied a very prominent University position, and received the honorary degree of LL.D. But, as Dr.



Charteris was only in the festive city for the graduation day, and left early, the doomed man and his doomster merely exchanged a handshake.

To his nephew and namesake (the following winter) a letter from Kingswood declares:—

'I am in what will be for some time, if I am well, my "tender ord'nar." I have, however, made up my mind that no public appearances are henceforth for me. I did not go to the Young Men's Guild meeting at Greenock, nor to the St. Cuthbert's jubilations over Dr. MacGregor's jubilee. Every little effort is now proved to be too much for me, and I must keep in mind my lesson. All attempts at a second edition of *Canonicity*, which I should best of all things like to do, are abandoned. Nor can I try to complete or sketch some autobiography, as many of my friends suggest. Of my supposed autobiography I have not in ten months written one page. I have not the literary faculty. Sometimes I have thought I might collect and print a few introductory Critical Lectures with my *Sketches of Student Life*, but I doubt its wisdom. "Vixi, si non satis, tamen jucunde." I have had such a happy and prosperous life that I could not wonder if it were more troubled at the end: and yet I hope and hope.'

To be asked to allow his portrait to be painted, and presented to the Church in recognition of good work, is 'the blue riband,' the highest acknowledgment of a Scottish Churchman's services, when he has sought to serve his day and generation. In November 1906 the friends of Dr. Charteris resolved to seek that favour of him. It is a sort of Presbyterian 'beatification' in a man's lifetime: sometimes too long delayed: and preferable to the cold marble bust which has in certain cases proved the alternative.

It was a cheering token of widespread esteem to one who felt: 'I have had ignominiously to drop all work. My bow is broken, and the string is in tatters.' The picture was painted by an eminent R.S.A., who kindly made the sittings as easy as possible by coming to Peebles; and the 'subject' thoroughly enjoyed his personal intercourse with the accomplished artist. Yet he wrote to a friend: 'I wish my portrait were finished. I may be wrong, but I don't recognise in it the man I shave!'

A large gathering attended the presentation, presided over by The Master of Polwarth, the eldest son of his oldest colleague. Dr. Cameron Lees, of whom he spoke as 'the unwavering comrade of all my later endeavours for the Church,' represented the organisation of Women's Work, and told this tale:—

'I am old enough to remember the days when the men of wisdom, who sat around the table of the General Assembly, regarded Dr. Charteris with considerable suspicion, and even called him by that terrible name, "a Radical!" Dr. Charteris was never afraid of anything new, and plied his brush with great vigour among ancient ecclesiastical cobwebs. He brought to view a new conception of Church work from what was then generally prevalent. He believed in the awakening of life first, and then the work would follow—at least that has been my reading of his career. I question whether any minister in our Church since the Reformation has done more to promote her true usefulness than he has done. It is a bold thing to say, but I believe it is true. The brain and heart and organising power were with him whom we are here to-day to honour. All that has been done has had its root in his faith. His works, great and varied, will follow him when he passes to his rest as the trail of light that marks the setting sun.'

The second Christian Life and Work convener, the Rev. William Robertson, and the Rev. Professor Henry Cowan, excellently summarised Dr. Charteris' career without and within the University; Sir Mark J. M'Taggart Stewart, on behalf of the subscribers, unveiled and formally presented the portrait; and it was accepted in the name of the Church by the Moderator, the Right Rev. Dr. J. Mitford Mitchell, his former Park assistant, in language of warmest eulogy. Dr. Charteris, in responding, gave expression to his feelings of deep gratitude resting on a background of amazement that they should have wished his portrait painted for the Church of Scotland, and said:—

'The fact, however, suggests many thoughts to me. At last General Assembly I was, I think, the oldest member. The place seemed sad to me. It was haunted by the ghosts of them that are gone. The old familiar faces are replaced by shadows, and other voices fill the air. In virtue of survival, though not of fitness, I am receiving this honour to-day. I know my work is done. As I look back it seems to me that if my life contains any lesson to an observer, it is a warning against doing many



things at once, and against working without leisure—deliberate and definite leisure. I have had few days of healthy leisure in my life. Rest, which means renewal of vigour, was prevented, and feebleness prevailed.'

He reviewed the various activities which he had attempted in terms already cited, and continued:—

'My wife was always by my side, cheering, helping, saving me, subordinating herself to me; and she is here to-day after all our years of toil together. My life has been busy, but it has attained to little. Handicapped by frequent illness, distracted by want of method, I feel that I have been a toiling blunderer, and I cannot imagine why there comes this bright occasion as I stand in the twilight of the evening of life.'

Amongst unwilling absentees from this function was the Right Hon. J. A. Campbell, and his letter of regret and congratulation contained these sentences:—

'I am happy that you do not reject my suggestion of a short article on old Dr. Robertson's earnest longing for the reunion of Presbyterian Churches. I think it is important to give prominence to the fact that he was among the first, if not the very first, to pronounce in favour of such reunion, and to lay down conditions on which it might be made possible of attainment. As to these conditions, two in number, one of them (the abolition of Patronage) is already met, and the other would be met with comparative ease if only the Churches were heartily in earnest on the subject.'

This article in *Life and Work* for November 1907 proved to be the last of many printed messages from Dr. Charteris' pen. But it contained little more than had appeared in the *Life of Dr. Robertson*.

Increasing consciousness of frailty is manifest in his letters, though it was difficult then to persuade his friends that he was failing. Correspondence with Dr. Graham of Kalimpong, who had formerly expressed 'a great yearning to look upon his face again,' shows what Dr. Charteris' own feelings were:—

'It pains me to say that I am now too old and too anxious for rest to take up (even for Kalimpong) any new project. Perhaps you should pay off all of us old men. Sir William Muir is gone; I am ready to go; Sir Charles Elliot may perhaps give way to Sir Andrew Fraser, and you would start afresh. But my experience in life is that you cannot contrive a Church with a

non-Church committee. I have tried it often, have toiled and prayed for it, but it never succeeds. No Church in particular does quite well. One (good) Church alone does very well: the combination won't amalgamate. I tried it in the Lawnmarket; you (the students) tried it in the Cowgate. It is of no use. They won't give you their strength.'

Happily Dr. Graham's Colonial Homes seem to be the exception which proves this rule.

Two circumstances combined to sadden and age Dr. Charteris, palpably and painfully, in his last autumn. His sister-in-law, Miss Anderson, formerly so blithe and ready of tongue, had broken down and was now well-nigh speechless and helpless, though placid as ever. The stunning news also of Dr. D. Scott's sudden death at Kikuyu, as the climax of all he had suffered, visibly affected the Professor, and left a terrible blank in his life thenceforward.

Writing on 6th November 1907 to his nephew, he said:—

'I hope you will see Professor — soon. You won't see another man of such gentle, willowy, sinewy strength in a hurry. He is another proof, as was seen in the God-man, that feminine attributes are found in the highest type of manhood. My recent illness revealed a septic condition, and I am to anticipate similar attacks from time to time. I fancy the last time won't be very distant.'

In December the family went to Bridge of Allan and found acquaintances in Professor Ramsay, the Leslies, and their old friend Mrs. Alexander Whitelaw. Letters up to the end show the struggle between the nimble-witted, buoyant spirit and the frame 'aging at the rate of three years per annum.' Lord Balfour's faithful Christmas letter lamented the loss of many old Assembly friends, and told of his desire to cherish those that remained, especially one whom he found there in 1874.

From Bridge of Allan they came to Edinburgh, meaning to be at Kingswood again on 15th April, and went to their accustomed lodgings at 58 Melville Street. 'He had ta'en up his latest inn' in that same street where Dr. Andrew Thomson's (of St. George's) sudden death on his own doorstep in 1831 cast all Edinburgh into gloom and regret. The last letter Dr. Charteris appears to have written—in



a very feeble and shaky hand—was on 24th April 1908, to a friend of old standing, the Rev. (now Dr.) Thomas Young of Ellon, and bears upon arrangements for the fishing-stations. It indicates no lack of mental grasp, although strangely enough the last words penned were: 'I find I am too old to do more than dream.'

That same afternoon, as he sat in his chair, alone with his wife and companion of forty-five years, God's call came to him; and with a cry, 'O Katie, my head,' his spirit was released. He succumbed almost instantaneously to a stroke—the result of the rupture of a large blood-vessel in the brain. By this peaceful and blessed translation did the weary servant of God enter into rest.

The newspapers did ample justice to the career of so respected and distinguished a Church leader, and abundant pulpit references expressed high appreciation of his character and of the permanent value of his work.

The funeral took place from St. Cuthbert's, Edinburgh, of which latterly he was an elder (for the Pleasance), and though the hour was the early one of nine o'clock, the church was almost filled. The service was conducted by his old student, Dr. A. Wallace Williamson, and three fellow-workers, Drs. John M'Murtrie, Norman Macleod, and Theodore Marshall, but it was characteristic of him that he desired to be laid with kindred dust in the little kirkyard of Wamphray; and there the last rites were performed by Dr. William Robertson of Coltness.

The inscription on his tombstone, of Aberdeen granite, is as follows:—

'Till He come.'

TO THE DEAR MEMORY OF

ARCHIBALD HAMILTON CHARTERIS, D.D., LL.D.

Successively Minister of the Parishes of St. Quivox, New Abbey, and The Park, Glasgow, and Professor of Biblical Criticism in Edinburgh University, 1868-1898.

Born at Wamphray School-house 13th December 1835,

Died at Edinburgh 24th April 1908.

Through his efforts the order of Deaconesses in the Church of Scotland was restored, and the Guilds of the Church were instituted.

'A man greatly beloved.'

Two typical tributes by laymen may be given here:—

*By the Right Hon. Lord Balfour of Burleigh, K.T.*

'No member of the Church of Scotland will fail to acknowledge that we have lost a great leader. The true notes of the Christian character are loyalty and love of service. When to these are added practical ability, enthusiasm, and that subtle influence which is called power of successful organisation, we have a rare combination of qualities. All these were united in Professor Charteris, and in addition there was an overwhelming attachment to the ideal of a Free Church in a Free State.'

*By the Right Hon. Sir Charles Dalrymple, Bart.*

'No one can hear unmoved of the death of Dr. Charteris. All who know anything of Church life in Scotland, in the last quarter of a century or more, must associate his name with a remarkable stirring and expansion of religious activity. His courage, his fervour, his manifest holiness, his winning earnestness, his adherence to old ways, combined with a fearless zeal for new effort, acted as a tonic and an inspiration on his fellow-Churchmen, and kindled far and wide a splendid flame of Christian enterprise. He was beloved and admired in no ordinary degree, and the best tribute that can be paid to his memory is to perpetuate the varied work which was the outcome of his faith and enthusiasm.'

Many resolutions of sympathy were passed by Church courts, Guilds, and his University: by none more sincere in its appreciation than the Presbytery of Burravoe, 'farthest north' in remote Shetland, which had so long and so continuously commissioned him to represent them in the General Assembly. He had in January thought 'to forsake the tented field; but, feeling better, hoped to attend, though not an efficient combatant.' It would have been for the thirty-eighth time.

On 1st June 1911 the foundation-stone of the Charteris Memorial Church, designed to complete the Deaconess Mission and Training Institution in the Pleasance, was laid by the Lord High Commissioner, Lord Glenconner. Mrs. Charteris was able to be present, as President of the Women's Guild, and thus to witness the commencement of the crowning tribute to her beloved husband's memory. A year later the same nobleman, again representing the



Sovereign, attended the solemn service of dedication, when Dr. Mitford Mitchell delivered a succinct and admirable epitome of Dr. Charteris' services for the extension of the Redeemer's kingdom.

And now our labour of love is ended. We have striven to set down, however inadequately, and as far as possible in his own words, an authentic record of this son of the school-house, to whom Scotland and his Church owes much. He would have been the last to claim that any biographer should place him on a pedestal of perfection, by over praise, or should, by comparison and inference, minimise the labours of other men. We cherish his memory because of his fidelity to the faith once for all delivered to the saints, the 'faith that worketh by love.' He knew no other Gospel. In the strength of it he achieved his life's work, endured his manifold trials, and finished his course with joy. That faith in all its fulness may be ours, as well as his, and he may still be our 'helper in Christ'; for the best legacy a good man can bequeath is the inspiration and example of a consecrated life.





## APPENDIX

### SOME TYPES OF STUDENT LIFE

BY THE RIGHT REV. PROFESSOR CHARTERIS, D.D.

GENTLEMEN,—My subject naturally makes a man who went through it all many years ago begin to wonder how things are now as compared to what they were when he was in it. Your life and your studies, how do they compare with what I used to know upwards of forty years ago? None of you would know all the names that come into my mind when I think of our teachers. They seemed to us giants on the earth. I think that in those days we had more time for intercourse and hero-worship than you have, for our examinations were not so exacting, classes were smaller, and everybody knew everybody else. There were about twelve hundred students in the University in those days. I wonder if Arts students have any idea of the way we looked up to some of those who guided us. The day our first Professor, at the close of his Latin prayer, said, 'Now, gentlemen, having once and for all consecrated our studies in this place by this act of worship, let us seriously begin,' seemed to me to be the most eventful in my life, and I never lost my veneration for the man who said it. It was the Professor of Humanity, JAMES PILLANS, most cultured of men, inimitable translator, charming guide to the beauties of Roman literature, who had been the ally of Jeffrey and Horner, the associate of Scott, the butt of Byron's satire. I have never yet seen one to equal him as a teacher who drew out men's character, and all of us think of our old mates as seated where they sat in *his* class-room, however many classes we attended along with them the same year.

The next year we sat at the feet of the giant head of Scottish philosophy, SIR WILLIAM HAMILTON, and we still count it a privilege to have learned daily lessons from one whom Aristotle might have owned as a brother and colleague. We gazed with affectionate pride at JOHN WILSON, 'Christopher

North,' as with gown thrown back, and eye dreamily fixed on the Infinite, he stood on the platform and soliloquised, sometimes with words of keenness that cut into a subject like a rapier, sometimes in a low mournful cadence like the waves when they rush into a creek on a rocky shore. And when he spoke we boys all resolved to try to be thinkers and poets too! Gentlemen, I have known no personality that has taken away from me the fascination of Sir William Hamilton and John Wilson. In another class we followed with marvel the stately steps of JAMES D. FORBES, who was great on heat, great in glaciers, and is still my ideal of a fastidious Scottish gentleman. We rejoiced in the happy hour every day when WILLIAM EDMONSTONE AYTOUN roamed over the field of *belles lettres* with queer, quizzical, genially cynical wisdom, finding principles to guide us in reading and writing all the days of our life.

I wonder what you Arts men know of those days?

And you medical men? Of all the teachers in this University whom I attended only two survive, one in Arts and one in Medicine; and both are enjoying in the evening of their life the rest they well won. One is DR ALLMANN, who taught me the wonders of the creatures on the sea-shore, and delivered prose poems on the little architects of the coral reef, and on the forms of life beside the iceberg in polar seas; the other is JOHN STUART BLACKIE, whose heart grows younger as his flowing locks grow whiter—*ζήτω, ζήτω*, as he would say himself. But I was to speak of the medical men. There was first and chief WILLIAM PULTENEY ALISON, most benevolent of practitioners, most accomplished of physicians, most fascinating of speakers, the story of whose self-forgetful life, if only it could be written, would be the best *religio medici* for the Victorian age. There was JOHN GOODSIR, whom all my medical friends idolised,—a great, gentle, heroic student, ruling his great classes by the glory of his supreme ability. There was JAMES MILLER, bright-eyed, with fearlessness and fun written all over his handsome face, and seen in every swing of his lithe form. There was JOHN HUTTON BALFOUR, restless yet meditative, a storehouse of facts, a servant of Christ, a lover of mankind. There was JOHN HUGHES BENNETT, combative, incisive, musical, original; opening a new era in clinical teaching, and keeping everything lively that he came near. There was the clear, resolute, epigrammatic SYME, the prince of Scottish surgeons; SIR ROBERT



CHRISTISON, that manly, learned, Christian man, who was the Agamemnon as well as the Nestor of British Medicine till quite a recent day; and SIR JAMES SIMPSON, bright, buoyant, with the eye of an eagle, the grasp of a giant, and the heart of a child, whom the University never quite understood so well as the heart of the people of Britain and all the learned in Europe and America understood him and honoured him. There was GEORGE WILSON, quaintest of teachers, most patient of sufferers, who could rise to all heights of science, and delighted so to rise that he might in the clearer air sing a better song to God. The men I knew at college worshipped those men—Alison and Simpson and Syme and Goodsir and Christison, and the rest. All of them were familiar to my eye: some of them I knew a little in those days: some of them I came to know well at a later time. I have only known as a friend two men of genius—one was Norman Macleod and the other was Sir James Simpson.

Students of law in those days honoured the quiet learning of JOHN SHANK MORE, and the Roman dignity of CAMPBELL SWINTON, and the encyclopædic accomplishments of DR. TRAILL.

The students of theology sat at the feet of the Principal of this University, DR. JOHN LEE, of whom Bulwer Lytton said, 'A thousand rays of intellectual learning are fused in the crown that adorns his brow'; whom Sir Walter Scott owned as his master in Scottish history and Scottish lore; and of whom we used to believe that he could with one day's notice fill any chair in any Faculty in the University; for he was a graduate in every one fifty years before, and had kept up his reading. No such memory for books, and pages of books, and editions, and dates, has ever been within my reach; and no such gentle wit, for it was like Cicero's or Addison's. And there was ROBERT LEE, sharp of fence, biting in criticism, clear in exposition, fast and warm in friendship. And there was JAMES ROBERTSON, who made us all learn with queer shamefacedness that the Fathers of the Christian Church, and the philosophers, and the very Popes, were human beings, with hearts and souls like our own; and who, outside his class-room, revolutionised the ideas of all Established Churches, by teaching them to depend on themselves—while extending the Establishment.

Gentlemen, in the garrulousness of age, I have been recalling

my own student days, though you cannot know much about them. I wanted you warriors who assail the Troy of modern learning, to know that there lived heroes before your brave leaders, of whom I speak with unfeigned respect as my own honoured colleagues, on whom, and on our illustrious Principal, some of you will descant forty years after this to the undergraduates of that distant day. Then you will say, as I now say to you:—

‘Such men I never saw, and ne’er shall see,  
As Pirithous and Dryas, wise and brave,  
Ceneus, Exadius, godlike Polypheme,  
And Theseus, Ægeus’ more than mortal son,  
The mightiest they among the sons of men.’

*Iliad* (Derby), i. 311.

Where are they now, the soldiers of our motley camp, that sat around Troy with me? Some have been proconsuls of the great British Empire, many have served their country, and some have fallen on bloody battlefields; some are ruling on the Bench, some leading in the Senate, some are being bronzed and worn on the mission-field, some are ornaments of the pulpit, some are healing and helping the sick in distant lands or near; some, thank God, are my colleagues, your chiefs. I thought when I began to write for you this lecture, that I could take some of my old comrades as types, and, naming no names, be able to give you a pen-and-ink sketch of men of whom I could say at the close—Their faith follow, remembering the end of their conversation, Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever.

But I have found it impossible. I should have been often too eulogistic; and sometimes, perhaps, have unconsciously abused, by revealing their results, the early confidences of friendship when we ‘all were young together.’

Then I began to look around me in books for some printed portraits of men like those whom I knew. And it has struck me that I might describe certain types of student-life as I knew them, and as we may see them in the published lives of students, mostly of our own University. First of all, there were:—

*I. The students who were just students, class-workers,  
and nothing beyond.*

They were not as a rule an attractive kind of student. We



used to see them, pale-faced, round-shouldered, carelessly dressed, a huge bundle of books, text-books and note-books, under their arms (usually kept together by a big india-rubber band), coming into the square at the very moment the bell rang, and finding their place on the bench with eager anxiety; then the appropriate note-book was selected, and opened at the place; the pencil, sharpened at both ends, was carefully looked at, like the Highland soldier's accoutrement before the battle,—

‘Then we belted on our tartans,  
And our bonnets down we drew;  
And we felt our broadswords’ edges,  
And we proved them to be true.’

Their weapon was only a pencil! When the bell rang at the close of that lecture, they hurried along the quadrangle, and up another of the stairs, not much tidier then than they are now, into another class-room; and then *da capo*, the same thing was done over again. When the days of written examination came, those strenuous men were often at the very top of the lists, and a subdued smile of triumph could be seen struggling for outlet on their weary faces. But they never had time to talk to us; if they went round the Queen's drive it was usually alone, with a pocketful of class formulæ, which were occasionally glanced at, for the poor fellow was preparing for his examination. If ever you were in his room you found it covered with mnemonic sheets of mathematical formulæ, or lists of bones or of the habitats of plants; little sheets covering the bedposts, and making tassels on the dusty bell-rope. I do not think those men ever came to much in after-years. Their bodily strength was worn out with midnight work in poky rooms, and with badly cooked food. Their minds had no room to grow, so many books and lectures were piled upon them. And many of them never emerged from this scene of training into the arena of independent life. They are found, dust and ashes, in country churchyards, where they were buried, with the hopes of their aged parents, amid the sympathy and disappointment of the young men and women whom they had headed at the country school.

The type of this student is HENRY KIRKE WHITE, the son of the butcher in Nottingham. His was a mind full of poetic fancies and high religious aspirations, which were choked and

subordinated to the terrible ambition of success as a scholar. When he was set free from the bondage of hosiery to be a lawyer's clerk, he taught himself Latin (with little assistance), so that in ten months he could read Horace; he learned Greek grammar as he walked to his office; so engrossed was he that 'he became almost estranged from his family'; and that he might read while eating, he took his simple meals apart from the other members of the household. Passionately fond of music, 'this propensity he checked lest it might interfere with more important objects.' With a real vein of poetry, he printed his poems to obtain by their sale the means of prosecuting his studies, and was deeply wounded by the cruelty with which an anonymous critic treated the touching appeal in his preface. When he was converted to true religion, and resolved to devote his life to its service, he carried his frenzy of study into the new ambition. 'He would read till one, two, or three o'clock in the morning, then throw himself on his bed, and rise again to his work at five, at the call of an alarm-clock. Many nights he never laid down at all'; and soon it was clear that either his lungs or his brain would give way. He would so eagerly prepare for an exam. that he was too ill to appear when the day came. Did he walk? Yes, and committed to memory a tragedy of Euripides during his Cambridge walks. With strong medicines he was able to sit out the six days of the yearly examination in his College, and came out the first man of his year—at the price of his life. He said himself, that if he were painting a picture of Fame crowning a distinguished undergraduate after the Senate-House Examination, he would represent her as concealing a death's head under a mask of beauty. His College gave him—fatal gift—a tutor during the long vacation; he sank when he came back; wrote a letter—dear kind soul that he was—to his home to say he was recovering; became delirious, and died; and the letter was found in his pocket after his death.

And what do we remember about him now? Not those tragedies he crammed, and those problems he worked out; but the bits of poetry he wrote in the silent nights when the brain could no longer cram for College, and the letters he sent home, and the prayers he offered, and the love of a pure human soul that burned in him and was crushed and quenched by ruthless ambition. Those bursts remain. Who does not sing—



'Oft in danger, oft in woe,  
Christian soldier, onward go'?

We all know his 'Star of Bethlehem':—

'When marshall'd on the nightly plain  
The glittering host bestud the sky,  
One star alone of all the train  
Can fix the sinner's wandering eye.

'Hark! hark! to God the chorus breaks,  
From every host, from every gem;  
But one alone the Saviour speaks—  
It is the star of Bethlehem.'

Perhaps you know this, too:—

'Oh! I could walk  
A weary journey even to the farthest verge  
Of this big world to kiss that good man's hand,  
Who, 'mid the blaze of science and of art,  
Preserves a lowly mind; and to his God,  
Feeling the sense of his own littleness,  
Is as a child in meek simplicity.'

And many do not remember, or know, that these words are the music of a lyre that sounded as it was breaking beneath the burden of a boy's ambition to be a learned man.

We turn now to another type.

## II. *There were class-fellows who were idle.*

Some of the nicest, most cheerful, and most popular of our fellow-students did not take to class-work at all. Most of them were well off, were rather dandy, frequented Princes Street and the Exhibition of Paintings, or were to be seen cantering round the Queen's Park. Some of them were idle for idleness' sake, and I don't think they ever came to anything. It is not surprising if contemporary biography does not preserve their names.

But some were idle because somehow they got into wrong grooves. Their tastes were strong for other things than the slowly decorous work of a College class. I remember one who gave a patient professor much trouble by his coruscating way of being inattentive. He was always saying clever things, but never on the subject given to us to prepare; and long afterwards he died high in command of the Mounted Police on the Indian frontier. Another one, who had been high at some great public school, wanted to make verses when the work of the

class was to translate a great classic, and he was buoyantly insubordinate to the chair. I met him years after, so preternaturally solemn that I did not venture to ask him what he had done with himself in the intervening years; but by that time he could have given lessons in gravity to any judge on the bench.

A high sense of duty would make a man do his best in any position where, by his own choice and God's good providence, he is placed in life; but that sense is sometimes undeveloped in youth. DARWIN was an idle student here; hated lectures; found all our ways intolerably dull, especially our lectures; they 'talked rubbish' at the Royal Medical Society, and so on. He was not studying at all, I think. He was an unattractive type, idle and selfish. All of us have seen men who 'never did much good at College,' so far as class-work is concerned, that notwithstanding left on every class-fellow a sense of power and promise which has not been disappointed in after-life. Those men were working at something all the time,—something to which their heart went out. There used to be pointed out on the benches of the Hebrew Class-room in this University emblems of the professor being hanged in gown and bands, which, it was said, Norman Macleod had cut in the wood when he ought to have been busy with Hebrew roots. And yet he was NORMAN MACLEOD, working hard at many things, and a favourite of Chalmers, and many more, though he only once gained a prize, and it was in the class of Logic in Glasgow. DR. GUTHRIE tells in his 'Autobiography' that entering College at twelve, and completing his Arts curriculum at sixteen, he gave his mind to nothing but fun and fighting until his fourth year. He was twice in the hands of the College porter and policeman, and in danger of being reported to the Senatus, in his first year; he fought a pitched battle in the quadrangle that same year with some one who bullied him in the Greek Class; he was fined by one of the professors, and 'put on a cutty-stool as a spectacle to men,' during his second session; and yet he was Thomas Guthrie—full of fun and frolic, and fighting, to the end of his Homeric life.

There was also in our own University, once upon a time, a man who was so idle and stupid that he was called the 'Greek blockhead,' who, because he did not know Greek, professed to despise it; and though he did not know a word and scarce a



letter of the language in which Homer wrote, composed an essay comparing Homer with Ariosto, and concluding that Homer was 'wanting in the balance.' He never studied in those days, or cared to study; he was doing all manner of idle things; and yet that man was WALTER SCOTT!

I am afraid that some one may think the idle men have had the best of it when I find there such names in our own century as Darwin, Macleod, Guthrie, and the mighty Walter Scott. A medical colleague told me when I said I was looking for the memoir of some Bob Sawyer, who had become afterwards great, that no such man ever lived. It may be true in medicine, but it is not so in literature. And yet any 'student' who is so only in name, and who would fain shelter himself behind those mighty four, who would fain excuse his misuse of time and talents by pointing to the careless youth of those men of genius, may well hearken to what Walter Scott left on record, after he had given the foregoing account of himself:—

'If, however, it should fall to the lot of youth to peruse these pages, let such a reader remember that it is with the deepest regret I recollect in my manhood the opportunities of learning which I neglected in my youth, and that through every part of my literary career I have felt pinched and hampered by my own ignorance; and that I would at this moment give half the reputation I have had the good fortune to acquire, if by doing so I could rest the remaining part upon a sound foundation of learning and science.'<sup>1</sup>

III. *Still another type is that of students who early in life have chosen a particular pursuit, and are following it out in every available moment and by all fair means.*

All good students are not thus early told off to what in after-days brings them fame and fortune. But there are some who get or who make their bent at the very first. Think of EDWARD FORBES, unable to train himself to take the ordinary medical degree, but enthusiastically accumulating facts about living creatures in earth and air and sea, and sketching all queer outlines of men and beasts in his note-books, especially of his professors, instead of taking notes of the class lectures. He was not preparing to be a doctor, but to be a naturalist.

{ But there is a more academic specimen of what I mean. The

<sup>1</sup> Scott's *Autobiography*, Lockhart, vol. i.

famous anatomist and physiologist, JOHN REID, whose life closed about the time when I entered the University, is a type of the student who is early in life drawn to the study to which he afterwards gives all his strength. It is a strange, sad, bright story. The Bathgate boy threw himself into the study of anatomy with all the zeal of a strong young soul. He felt the fascination of Dr. Alison's wonderful personality, and he resolved to be a student, not a practitioner. When the time came for leaving the classes, he shrank from the idea of private practice. He contemplated it with 'reluctance,' 'almost horror,' and wished he had been a farmer or a grazier instead. He knew he could make money in practice, but he said, 'I could more easily forego the desire of riches than the hope of acquiring knowledge.'<sup>1</sup> So he continued to be a student, studied medicine and surgery in Paris, braved the cholera in doomed Dumfries in 1832, next was Demonstrator of Anatomy to Dr. Knox in Surgeon's Hall, then Lecturer on Physiology. A strong man, who could do his best work when others were in bed; who was content with frugal fare, 'anything that would satisfy nature—and books' (p. 43). President and chief debater in the Royal Medical Society, a strangely student-student all the while; for as an old class-fellow says of him, he was 'unconscious of the metaphysics of science as of its poetry; he travelled by easy stages, counting every pebble on the road, scarcely ever lifting his eye to the glorious scenery around him'; he even 'loved and hoped on principle, that principle being the well-known one of Jeremy Bentham' (p. 62).

Then he was made Professor in St. Andrews University in his thirty-third year. I should be afraid to speak in more than the most general terms of his work in and for science; but both medical and other students in my audience will bear with the simple statement, that while he established many principles and brought to light many facts, in his patient, personal, first-hand work on the human body, in health and disease, in life and death, he made his permanent mark by his discoveries of the true character and functions of the 'eighth pair of nerves' which regulate the functions of the tongue and the throat. Very carefully, with experiment and meditation, did John Reid set about this study; and he had made his discoveries and his fame when in a marvellous providence his own death was caused

<sup>1</sup> *Memoir*, p. 25.



by cancer in the tongue, and every nervous branch that he had traced and tested in the gateway of the system of human life became a centre of long, long agony. When that shock came, he realised what his former life had been. 'I passed with others for a moral man, but God was not in all my thoughts.' 'When he went to Paris in his youth, the thing which he thought could best be spared from his trunk was the Bible his mother had given him; and when he returned to Edinburgh, it was left to gather dust behind the books which were prized and handled.'<sup>1</sup> He was bent on scientific distinction, and he had postponed to a more convenient season a return to his early habit of Bible reading. He never resumed it when Demonstrator or when Pathologist to the Infirmary; but after he became ill he resumed it in Keswick, where he was advised to go alone, in some hope that rest among the hills, with no one to speak to, might perhaps stop the awful disease. It was then that the light which never was on sea or shore shone on his half-awakened spiritual eye; as he walked alone, and looked backwards and onward, knowing only too well what the medical issue of his pain must be, he learned the secret of life—a life which his scalpel had never touched and his keen eye had detected in no morbid tissue. 'In my lonely state,' he says to his wife, 'I have felt that the scientific honours I have been so anxious to obtain are but as dross compared with that enduring peace of mind arising from a full dependence upon God and faith in His Son Jesus Christ' (p. 189). At first he had said, 'If it turn out the worst, I must submit to my fate, as many a better man has done before me'; and at first a great gloom of speechless silence rested on his noble face, so that his weary, stricken countenance haunted the sleepless nights of the loving watchers who saw it. But in Keswick he read the long-neglected Bible with an honest and earnest heart, he prayed a child's simple prayer for guidance, and the Father in heaven, who lets none of us seek His face in vain, came to him and abode with him; and his face, in all subsequent agony, was always lit with peace and joy like that which fills a household when a beloved and honoured guest is within it. I know nothing more touching in literature than George Wilson's picture<sup>2</sup> of those weary months that followed, with the best surgeons and doctors in

<sup>1</sup> *Memoir*, p. 197.

<sup>2</sup> Professor George Wilson's *Memoir of John Reid, M.D.*

Edinburgh and London doing their bootless best to lighten the awful agony. The two who did most were James Duncan—strong, tender, faithful man, second only to Syme, if even to him, in surgery, second to none in medicine—and the great anatomist, John Goodsir. Those two, after frequent hopeless journeys to St. Andrews, with great pressure on their own sorrow, sliced away (at the patient's earnest request) the diseased tongue and extirpated the glands, always to find the dreadful disease breaking out again elsewhere. Those were not days of chloroform, but even for the temporary relief he was willing to bear the sore temporary pain. 'I can assure you (he says to Dr. Duncan) that any amount of temporary pain is a blessing compared with that constant pain to which I may look forward and may soon expect.' And then he waited for the end. But hear what he now says:—'I thank God that He has blessed me with a calm and contented spirit; that I can look to the rapidly approaching period of my dissolution patiently and without murmur. It is not on any supposed merits or good deeds of my own that I build my hope, for I know that these are but filthy rags in the sight of God; but my trust is placed on Him who offered Himself up as an atoning sacrifice, that guilty men might through Him come unto God and enjoy eternal life' (p. 270). Never but once in all these two years was he heard to groan; never even once did his face lose its peace or his heart its gladness. It seems like Polycarp, standing amid the flames and welcoming them—or like the Galloway maidens, singing their hymns of heaven as the Solway tide came over the sands to seal their faith in eternal joy,—this picture of John Reid growing in gladness of faith as he steadily gazed on the last enemy coming irresistibly upon him along those avenues of unparalleled pain. In those days he humbly owned that he had caused to dumb animals more pain than science demanded in his investigation into those very nerves up which his death was creeping; and the tenderness that had made him burst into tears when first he saw the wonders of the great Picture Gallery of France, was set free from superincumbent scientific engrossment to teach lessons of love and compassion to all men.

\* He prayeth best who loveth best  
All things both great and small:  
For the dear God who loveth us,  
He made and loveth all.'



But the chief lesson I draw for us students from this typical life is in his own words :—

‘I am satisfied that I owe my success in life to the firmness with which I attached myself to a particular course of study. But while attending, my dear —, with that steadiness and perseverance to the occupations allotted to us in life, which it is our duty to do, never forget for a moment that there is an eternal state of existence awaiting us, after we have served the ends designed for us in this transitory scene, and that our eternal happiness and misery depend upon the manner in which we have conducted ourselves in this state of probation on earth. May the divine truths of the holy Scriptures be deeply engraven on your heart, and you may safely set all the evils of this world at defiance !’

IV. *It would be unfair to omit another type of student—the man who, though emphatically a student, was still above all things a human being.*

The poetry of this city of poetry, whose hills and hollows are centres of historical romance, and whose monuments are a nation’s memories embodied in stone, open to the eye and heart of a youthful Scot a new world of patriotism and poetry and piety, making him a man.

‘One-half our soil has walked the rest  
In patriots, heroes, martyrs, sages.’

I speak of country boys—most of us were country boys. There were said to be as many students from Dumfriesshire as from Midlothian five and forty years ago; and no other city, no other University could have been to a boy who knew the romances of Walter Scott, and had heard of the philosophy of Dugald Stewart and Burns and Hamilton, what Edinburgh undoubtedly was. There is less academic spirit, less *esprit de corps* here than in the other Scottish Universities; we have no student gowns; we have less corporate life; and sometimes an Edinburgh student thinks of this defect when he is in Glasgow or Aberdeen, or most of all in the old ‘City by the Sea,’ where all the lads are one big family, and *Gaudeamus igitur* is the natural cry. But, on the other hand, there is here the education which comes of a young student being at once recognised as a citizen, with no badge or bondage upon him when he mixes with the crowds that pass along the streets of the Scottish capital; and that

education also which comes from the opportunities of seeing and hearing the famous men in every branch of science, literature, and art, whether they be birds of passage or permanent residents in the city. And if he is not a bookworm he will find on those blessed Saturdays, when for him there rings no College bell, that friendly students and citizens will guide him in longer walks over scenes famous in story,—by old Craigmillar's keep; or round the Braids, where Fitz-Eustace 'raised his bridle hand'; or over Cramond Brig, or beneath the battered towers of Crichton, or through the shades of classic Hawthornden; and in the feast of reason and the play of wit, he will grow up into manhood, rounded and strong.

Looking back over forty years to those College days, it seems to me that some of the influences which penetrated deepest, and wove themselves into the whole fibre of my being, came from the daily walk round the Queen's Drive, or from the long Saturday strolls to Cramond and Queensferry, and Musselburgh and Dalkeith, and from the endless debates round the stove in the Theological Library, and from the occasional walks with my comrades to and from church when some great preacher officiated. The typical Edinburgh student of my time had wonderful opportunities of hearing literary orators, and I suppose you also have. I heard Dickens read his Carols, and Thackeray his Georges, and Macaulay address his constituents. And you who are students here in these days, it behoves you to widen your horizon by taking every chance of seeing and hearing the famous men of your day. You remember how proud a famous man was to say, 'I just saw Virgil,' or how Scott cherished the one occasion when the black eyes of Robert Burns were turned full upon him. We may well be proud of having seen those whose names 'fly through the mouths of men.'

A student of this type usually develops in his time at College such tastes as distinguished him through life. He does not always manifest the special powers concentrated on a special pursuit, which would bring him under the class already mentioned. But he will be something more and better than a man who crams for examinations; he will be a very human figure in the mental gallery of his comrades as long as they live. Sir Robert Christison, the great chemist and toxicologist of after-generations, is seen in the ardent student who, along with Syme and some others, supplemented at home the meagre



experiments in the Chemistry Class-room,—and on at least one occasion, by an unexpected explosion, very nearly terminated prematurely the careers of the great surgeon and the great chemist. That is one side. But there is another. He told me that he was wont, when lying awake at nights, to repeat some long classical passage, such as a book of Milton's 'Paradise Lost,' the third being his favourite, and that he had done this since his student days. Who does not see that the stately march of Milton was kindred from early years to the character of the student, full of manliness, and rhythm, and high reverent faith?

So in the life of one who was an Edinburgh schoolboy, though only for one year of his distinguished youth a student in this University—JOHN CAMPBELL SHAIRP. He knew Latin and Greek, and could surpass his rivals in his mastery of them; but the influence that formed his life was drawn from Coleridge and Wordsworth, so that his Professors in Logic and Moral Philosophy, though he was in each case the medallist, remembered ever afterwards, not the intellectual power, but the spiritual insight, like that of Coleridge, which marked his essays. When Norman Macleod and he walked about on starry nights repeating to each other their favourite passages from the two great poets of the Lakes, they were training each other to touch and stir the heart of Scotland in a coming generation.

It was the humanness of these men that made them what they were. Shairp says of Norman Macleod:—

'A voice that gathered from the misty hills  
And sounding shores of Morven, power intense  
To pierce our listening souls with glorious thrills,  
Blending the past with newer influence;  
Till the whole world, past, present, and to be,  
Before our sight dilated wondrously  
Lit by his shafts of natural eloquence.'

V. *Another type of student was the man who took time to cultivate his soul: in the best cases doing something for others all the while.*

You remember the story of HENRY MARTYN, of whom Sir James Stephen said it 'is in fact the one heroic name which adorns the annals of the Church of England from the days of Elizabeth to our own.' (That was written before Coleridge Patteson lived and died.) The Cornish miner's son who came

out Senior Wrangler in Cambridge when not quite twenty years of age, and who, before he died in 1812,<sup>1</sup> had managed, during five or six years' struggle with illness, to translate the New Testament into Hindostani and Persian, has left behind him a halo of heroism, a sweet fragrance of martyrdom, that has moved the hearts of boys in all lands, and can never die. The story of his toils, the pathos of his broken love, the sad end in loneliness at Tokat, where fever smote him, and there was none to help or care—these things make me feel, as in my boyhood, that Henry Martyn has made the romance of modern missions.

He says himself that the 'intenseness with which he pursued his studies prevented his growth in contrition and in a knowledge of the excellency of Christ'; and the well-meant contradiction of his two biographers does not make me think he was mistaken. All through his College course he was known as the man who 'never lost an hour,' but was always at work: only waging in the later part of his course the awful war we all know between darkness and light in his own soul. 'I obtained my highest wishes, but was surprised to find that I had grasped a shadow.' His father's sudden death was the turning-point. He was stricken at first with terror, and then he was advised to read the Scriptures; then he prayed; and then 'when I saw the offers of mercy and forgiveness were made so freely, I supplicated to be made partaker of the covenant of grace with eagerness and hope, and thanks be to the ever-blessed Trinity for not leaving me without comfort' (p. 18). He did not begin to do any work among the undergraduates or amongst the people around him in Cambridge until after this, when he resolved to offer himself to the C.M.S. I ascribe to this self-engrossment the length and dreariness of his struggle for light.

Turn to another Cambridge student, 'JOHN MACKINTOSH, the Earnest Student,' whose 'life in Cambridge was in all points the student's life, yet he found time to work for Christ.' There is a Sunday school taught and managed entirely 'by the young men of the University, and in this he was a constant and most efficient teacher.' He visited those children in their homes. He also distributed tracts in one of the villages every week: he was one of a band of students who engaged in prayer.

<sup>1</sup> Born Feb. 18, 1781; died Oct. 16, 1812.



And so his was a life of peace. 'The great evil is a forgetfulness of God, who made us to live and move and have our being in Him.' It is no doubt largely due to the genius of his friend and brother-in-law, and biographer, Norman Macleod, that John Mackintosh's uneventful life has become a classic, but there is also something very typical in the eager, holy, brilliant student-life which draws men to it. I pray you to note that he always worked for others: he gave his life, and he left his money, for missions.

Nothing is now clearer in my memory, or has had more influence on my life, than what in the ardour of our studies was a rare and fitful thing—some time spent quite apart from our classes. The Sunday school I taught; the poor I visited; the times of prayer we comrades sometimes had together—not so often as you men have them now—these things stand out and seem green and fresh as oases amid a wilderness of books and papers. Perhaps their rarity makes me remember them better than the things that were constant, and therefore became monotonous routine. Perhaps to some extent this may be so; but not to any great extent. These were just little glimpses of better things granted to us by God, and we grudged the time to enjoy them. The besetting sin of a student's life is its selfishness. He acquires more or less knowledge—for his own self, for his own glory, or for his own degree examination; of necessity so. John Mackintosh, 'the Earnest Student,' said:—'What is the object of this study? If for our own gratification only, it cannot be blessed; it can never make us really happy. But if pursued for Christ's service, that we may use the powers He has graciously purchased for us to promote the knowledge and love of Him in ourselves and others—what a joy and pleasure in them! We may then pray for His Spirit to put us in the right method; and being for Himself, surely He will give it.'<sup>1</sup>

But our duty to Christ, our dedication of ourselves to Him, cannot be paid in bills to fall due when we are somewhere else. You remember how Felix tried an accommodation-bill, but the convenient season is not ours. You and I are under obligation to give of our time, here and now, to our Master's service. Some men will try to beguile us by saying that we are meanwhile acquiring, and afterwards we shall be able to bestow. Ah, my friends, as we acquire it behoves us to invest. The

<sup>1</sup> *Earnest Student*, p. 52.

great inheritance is laid up for us in store, but we secure it by paying a constant premium to the Great Lord and Master. I advocate no relaxing of academic diligence, no rushing to and fro on such spiritual errands as distract us from our present duty; to be cumbered with much serving often breaks the temper as well as troubles other lives besides our own; and I do not respect the man who at the University is not first and foremost, and with all his might, a student. But all the while he has a soul to be saved, a life to be sanctified, and the law of the Life of God is as inexorable as any law which natural science has disclosed in the strata of the earth or in the mechanism of an animal frame. That law is—that we follow Christ, that we seek not our own things but the things of others. He came not to be ministered unto, but to minister. And you, to whom professors minister, to whom relatives minister, to whom vast libraries minister, to whom do you in return minister of such things as ye have? Not for your own sakes at all, but because you are possessed by the sense of others' need; not for the return you will get, but for the relief you can confer; you follow Him

' Who gave Himself most earnestly away,  
Not thinking of the grandeur of the deed,  
But of the souls dying for need of Him.'

You will have your reward if you don't think of it at all; your souls' peace will be promoted if ye are peacemakers for others; your hold of Christ's hand will make you follow whither He draws, where ignorance has to be taught, and pain has to be soothed, and sorrow brightened. Would you like to learn how little you know? Try to teach a Sunday class. Would you like to be sure of your grip of the truth? Visit that artisan who doubts it. Would you like to follow Christ closely? Then you must go where He still goes, as in Palestine—to the needy, the suffering, and the poor.

I must close. I meant to tell of some other types of life. In this very connection I meant to speak at some length of the Isaac Newton of Modern Natural Science, Charles Darwin. He quotes as said of himself that he had originally 'a bump of reverence developed enough for ten priests,' and yet ere the end he had lost all that sense of the Unseen which is a fountain



of spiritual life. He had looked down so long and so earnestly that he had lost the faculty of looking up.

The Duke of Argyll, speaking to him of the wonderful contrivances for certain purposes in nature, which he had himself described, as in orchids and earthworms, said, 'It is impossible to look at these without seeing that they are the effect of mind.' 'I shall never forget,' adds the Duke, 'Mr. Darwin's answer. He looked at me very hard and said, "Well, that often comes over me with overwhelming force, but at other times"—and he shook his head vaguely—"it seems to go away."' But whether at Edinburgh and Cambridge, wasting, as he said, his time card-playing, drinking, shooting, or in after-life, he seems to have spent his strength on the concrete, the visible, the little things of the universe; of which his genius framed the formula of great laws. And yet though he had the 'inward conviction' that the universe is not the result of chance, he let the great law of the spiritual life 'go away,' till to feelings of reverence he was, as he said himself, 'like a man who has become colour-blind.' In his great voyage he praised the missionaries as the best civilisers; and long afterwards he subscribed to missions in Tierra del Fuego, because the natives were the better for them. But still his attitude is a sad one—'colour-blind.'

When Sir James Simpson was dying, and said sadly, 'I have not made much progress in the Divine life; I have been too busy,' he was leaving for you and me a precious legacy. It was a lesson he had learned in life. He was not only absorbed in his profession—discovering, observing, inventing, soothing, and healing—for he found time to be the greatest of archæologists, the keenest of controversialists, the most useful of citizens. But he 'had been too busy.' We who knew him did not read it so. We see the great man on his death-bed saying—"Just as I am, without one plea." The blood of Christ can float a cork or a man-of-war: it can save my soul.' And yet I do not doubt that he said what was true; and that some of Mary's stillness in the Martha bustle would have been a better part.





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