

## DR. CHALMERS AT GLASGOW.\*

THIS volume details, as we anticipated in our notice of volume I,† “What a man whom his opponents ridiculed as a fanatic and a madman was enabled to accomplish in the good city of St. Mungo.” Chalmers’s first sermon at Glasgow was preached for the Society of the Sons of the Clergy on Thursday the 30th March, 1815, but his admission to the incumbency of the Tron church did not take place until Friday the 21st July following, when he was introduced to his flock by the Rev. Sir Henry Moncreiff. According to the Scottish mode of induction, the new pastor stood in the face of the church whilst Sir Henry delivered a long pastoral charge, and after the service was over he placed himself at the principal door of exit, shaking hands with his people as they went out; “an immense number,” he says, “I had to do this with, and sometimes I got three hands in my *loof* at once.” Amongst the persons who were present at that service was Simeon of Cambridge.

Glasgow won upon Chalmers’s heart but slowly. At first he was overwhelmed with callers, and invitations to dinner, and a great variety of secular business, and the duties connected with visiting an overpowering number of poor. His affections were at Kilmany, and he was for ever yearning after news of every body there. “It will give me great pleasure to have *immediately* a letter,” he remarked to one of his correspondents in his former parish; “let it be long and closely written, and rest assured that it cannot be too particular. Every one piece of information respecting any one either of the parish or village will interest me greatly. Crowd all the intelligence you can think of into the letter, for I have a great appetite to know and hear respecting you all. . . . I beg you will write your letter more closely than I have done, and do it on a long sheet if you have it.” He printed a farewell address to his flock

at Kilmany, and that work over, and his family established in their new place of residence, he set himself vigorously to learn and discharge his city duties; but, although he soon got interested in his work, and surrounded himself with a troop of most devoted friends, Glasgow was never able to bind him with the strong cords of such an affection as he entertained for the secluded Kilmany. There every resident, whatever his station in life, was intimately known to “the minister.” His breast was the depository of the history, and often even of the most secret passages in the history, of every one of them. And there was almost the same acquaintance on the other side. The relationship between pastor and flock was, in many instances, of the sincerest, tenderest kind. Something of a family character pervaded it. How different was all this in Glasgow. On the one side was the intercourse, often pleasant, but at best unconfidential and restrained, which was carried on at the dinner tables of the wealthy portion of his flock; on the other side the continual visiting of a vast mass of demoralised and ever demoralising town-poverty, with the unwinding of all its untruths and wily stratagems and drunken hypocrisies. In neither of these divisions of his new labours was there any substitute for the simplicity of his intercourse with the Kilmany peasantry. Whatever in Glasgow could in any degree aspire to that character was to be found between these extremes, and in that middle region even at the very first—within the first month of his residence at Glasgow—Chalmers’s warm heart picked out a youthful member of his congregation, Thomas Smith, son of a well-known Glasgow publisher, as the object of a singular attachment. For the few months of this young lad’s life Chalmers devoted himself to the great work of christianizing his affections with a zeal and affectionate interest of the most ardent kind. The

\* *Memoirs of the Life and Writings of Thomas Chalmers, D.D. LL.D. by his son-in-law the Rev. William Hanna, LL.D. Vol. II. 8vo.*

† *Mag. for February 1850, p. 151.*

family of this young man (who was then only twenty years of age) had interested themselves in Chalmers's appointment. The new pastor was soon introduced to them. Pleased with the intellectual and gentle character of the son, Chalmers invited him to become the companion of his daily walks. That beginning of friendliness was followed by appointments at stated periods for reading the Holy Scriptures and prayer; and when absence, or any other circumstance, interfered with these customary meetings, there ensued a constant correspondence upon religious topics. This sudden attachment seemed to promise long continuance and to bear much earthly fruit. But it was a friendship as brief as it was beautiful. In January, 1816, Mr. Thomas Smith was seized with pulmonary illness. Chalmers's kindness was increased, and his attentions and anxieties were redoubled. Day by day, in the midst of avocations innumerable, he either visited him or wrote to him, and not seldom did both. But the bolt had been sped from an unerring bow. On the 2nd May the young disciple bore away to heaven probably the first fruits of Chalmers's Glasgow ministry, and left upon the affectionate heart of his friend and pastor a deeply abiding impression of "how soon bright things do fade."

On the 21st February, 1816, the senate of the University of Glasgow unanimously conferred on Chalmers the degree of Doctor of Divinity, and shortly afterwards he was elected by the Glasgow presbytery one of its representatives in the General Assembly. There, upon a pending question about pluralities, he made a great speech, of which it was stated by Jeffrey, who listened to it, that it reminded him more of what one reads as the effect of the eloquence of Demosthenes, than any thing he had ever heard. He also preached before the Lord High Commissioner that sermon in which he introduced his celebrated comparison between the wonders revealed by the telescope and the microscope. The text was from Psalm viii. 3, 4. He was combating the infidel objection that astronomy, by disclosing the existence of an infinity of worlds, had so lowered the importance of this earth that it

was not possible to suppose that the Almighty could have lavished upon it all those attentions which are presupposed in the notion of a redemption by the sacrifice of the Saviour. Dr. Chalmers admitted to the letter the notion that this world was as nothing in the immensity above and around it.

"We give you," he says, "but a feeble image of our comparative insignificance when we say that the glories of an extended forest would suffer no more from the fall of a single leaf than the glories of this extended universe would suffer though the globe we tread upon and all that it inherits should dissolve."

After piling argument upon argument in refutation of the objection against which he was combating, he proceeded as follows:—

"It was the telescope that . . . put infidelity in possession of the argument against which we are now contending. But about the time of its invention another instrument was formed, which laid open a scene no less wonderful, and rewarded the inquisitive spirit of man with a discovery which serves to neutralize the whole of this argument. This was the microscope. The one led me to see a system in every star; the other leads me to see a world in every atom. The one taught me that this mighty globe, with the whole burden of its people and of its countries, is but a grain of sand on the high field of immensity; the other teaches me that every grain of sand may harbour within it the tribes and the families of a busy population. The one told me of the insignificance of the world I tread upon; the other redeems it from all its insignificance, for it tells me that in the leaves of every forest, and in the flowers of every garden, and in the waters of every rivulet, there are worlds teeming with life, and numberless as are the glories of the firmament. The one has suggested to me that, beyond and above all that is visible to man, there may lie fields of creation which sweep immeasurably along, and carry the impress of the Almighty's hand to the remotest scenes of the universe; the other suggests to me that, within and beneath all that minuteness which the aided eye of man has been able to explore, there may lie a region of invisibles, and that, could we draw aside the mysterious curtain which shrouds it from our senses, we might there see a theatre of as many wonders as astronomy has unfolded, a universe within the compass of a point so small as to elude all the powers of the microscope, but where the wonder-working God finds room for the exercise of all his attributes, where He

can raise another mechanism of worlds, and fill and animate them all with the evidences of His glory. . . . They, therefore, who think that God will not put forth such a power and such a goodness and such a condescension in behalf of this world as are ascribed to Him in the New Testament, because He has so many other worlds to attend to, think of him as a man. They confine their view to the informations of the telescope, and forget altogether the informations of the other instrument. They only find room in their minds for His one attribute of a large and general superintendence, and keep out of their remembrance the equally impressive proofs we have for His other attribute of a minute and multiplied attention to all that diversity of operations, where it is He that worketh all in all. And when I think, that as one of the instruments of philosophy has heightened our every impression of the first of these attributes, so another instrument has no less heightened our impression of the second of them—then I can no longer resist the conclusion, that it would be a transgression of sound argument, as well as a daring of impiety, to draw a limit around the doings of this unsearchable God; and, should a professed revelation from heaven tell me of an act of condescension, in behalf of some separate world, so wonderful that angels desired to look into it, and the eternal Son had to move from His seat of glory to carry it into accomplishment, all I ask is the evidence of such a revelation; for, let it tell me as much as it may of God letting Himself down for the benefit of one single province of His dominions, this is no more than what I see lying scattered in numberless examples before me, and running through the whole line of my recollections, and meeting me in every walk of observation to which I can betake myself; and, now that the microscope has unveiled the wonders of another region, I see strewed around me, with a profusion which baffles my every attempt to comprehend it, the evidence that there is no one portion of the universe of God too minute for His notice, nor too humble for the visitations of His care."

At the conclusion of this magnificent passage, which is a fine example of Chalmers's gorgeous style of oratory, we are told that there ran through his enraptured auditory a suppressed but perfectly audible murmur of applause—an occurrence probably unprecedented in the delivery of a sermon.

During the year 1816 Chalmers preached his celebrated series of *Astronomical Discourses*. They were

delivered in the Tron church during certain Thursday services at which it was then the custom that the clergy of Glasgow should preach in rotation. Such was the attention they excited, and the general anxiety to listen to the wonderful preacher, that, our author tells us, "the busiest merchants of the city were wont on these memorable days to leave their desks, and kind masters allowed their clerks and apprentices to follow their example." The old reading-room where the Glasgow merchants were accustomed to assemble, was situate opposite to the passage which led up to the Tron church. As soon as the gathering crowd upon the pavement gave token, long before the bell began to sound, that the congregation was assembling, the reading-room was deserted, and so continued during two of the best business hours of the day. Nor did these sermons fail when tried by that which is ordinarily the preacher's severest test, publication. So hazardous did it then seem, as a commercial speculation, at Glasgow, to publish a whole volume of sermons, that Chalmers's friendly bookseller hinted at the propriety of having recourse to a subscription. Chalmers declined the suggestion, and the book was sent forth into the general market on the 28th January, 1817. In ten weeks 6,000 copies were disposed of, and nine editions were called for in twelve months. It ran a race with one of the series of the *Tales of My Landlord* which was published about the same time, and the great Scottish novelist and the great Scottish preacher divided the attention of the world between them. Never had any similar volume such popularity. "These sermons," remarked Hazlitt, never inclined to speak too favourably of such compositions, "ran like wildfire through the country . . . and were to be met with in all places of public resort . . . We remember finding the volume in the orchard of the inn at Burford Bridge, near Box Hill, and passing a whole and a very delightful morning in reading it without quitting the shade of an apple-tree."

The book attracted the attention and won the admiration of such men as Canning and Mackintosh; it was reviewed in a congenial spirit by Fos-

ter; and finally, it secured for its author a triumphant reception in the metropolis. He came up to London to fulfil a three years' engagement to preach for the Missionary Society at Surrey Chapel. Old Rowland Hill stood at the foot of the pulpit stairs, many of the most eminent preachers in England were present, and the vast area was filled to overflowing. His sermon was one of his finest efforts. In the middle of it he was quite exhausted and overpowered; he sat down; two verses of a hymn were sung; and he then resumed his exciting theme. Within a few days afterwards he preached for the Scottish Hospital and the Hibernian Society, and then escaped from an admiration which almost overwhelmed him. Canning, Wilberforce, Huskisson, Lord Harrowby, and many other celebrated men, went in crowds to hear him. Canning was affected even to tears. At first he felt uneasy at Chalmers's manner and accent, but all drawbacks were soon forgotten. He was completely over-mastered, and declared that he had never been so captivated by any oratory. "The tartan," he exclaimed, "beats us all." Chalmers was present at the Royal Society, and in the House of Peers; and made the acquaintance of many of the leading men both in London and in various parts of England.

Chalmers was not a mere tinsel preacher. His pulpit influence was a marvel of the most extraordinary kind, a triumph of eloquence of the grandest character; and it was of the greater value because his sermons were of a nature to attract the highest and most intellectual of the community. In his person, Christianity lifted up her head amongst statesmen and orators and philosophers, and set before them her sublime and wondrous themes in language commensurate in dignity and power with their importance; in his preaching she dared the philosophical infidel to the attack, met him upon his own ground, and, taking her stand upon Bible principles and Bible teaching, convinced mankind of the hollowness and want of wisdom which lies at the bottom of all the sophistry of the unbeliever. All this was most important: far, very far, be it from us to underrate it in the least degree, but

Chalmers lived to do something more than this, and in our judgment even something better than this, and more useful.

At the Tron church he was the single pastor of seven thousand souls. How could he attend to them? In any circumstances it was impossible, but in those in which he was actually placed the attempt was ludicrous. As the head of an important parish, calls innumerable were made upon his time for all kinds of secular business. It was thought in Glasgow that nothing could be properly done without the attendance of a certain number of ministers.

"They must have four to every funeral, or they do not think that it has been *genteelly* gone through. They must have one or more on all the committees of all the societies. They must fall in at every procession. They must attend examinations innumerable, and eat of the dinners consequent upon these examinations. They have a niche assigned to them in almost every public doing, and that niche must be filled by them or the doing loses all its solemnity in the eyes of the public. There seems to be a superstitious charm in the very sight of them, and, such is the manifold officiality with which they are covered, that they must be paraded among all the meetings and all the institutions."

Chalmers broke loose from all this thralldom, and set himself heart and soul to do the proper work of an evangelist. He found that the steaming and fermenting mass of vice and wretchedness, and, at that time, of dangerous disaffection, which existed in the lower part of his parish, furnished only 100 children to the Sunday school. He called his congregation to his aid. He parcelled out his parish into small districts. He established in it *forty* Sunday schools, allotting to each a certain number of houses;—some 30 or 40, according to circumstances. Every close and every wynd had its own school under its voluntary teacher, generally some tradesman, clerk, or professional man, stirred up by the all-subduing energy of Dr. Chalmers. The arrangement was explained to the parents in every district, and they were solicited to send their children. What was the result? There was scarcely a single family which did not take advantage of the offer. In twelve months, instead

of a hundred children under tuition, he had *twelve hundred!*

The more intimately he became acquainted with the actual condition of the labouring population, the more was his spirit stirred within him at the enormities consequent upon the then existing system of parochial relief. He burned to tell the world what he knew and felt upon that important subject, but his labours at Glasgow left him no leisure for anything but the customary routine of duty: his week's work being ever begun with a Sabbath, as in his case it might be ironically termed, whose labours too often exhausted him for several days afterwards. Aware how much he was overworked, the people of Stirling invited him to fill their ecclesiastical premiership. This offer brought matters to a crisis; Chalmers hesitated about its acceptance, and, being appealed to by his Glasgow congregation, he stated his difficulties. They instantly consented to do every thing in their power to lessen them. They agreed to give him a regular assistant who was to do half his Sunday duty and relieve him through the week, and they would have built him another house and increased his income, if he would have allowed them to do so. The offer of the assistant he thankfully accepted, and, amongst the gentlemen who subsequently filled that office, we may mention here, by way of saving any recurrence to the subject, that Edward Irving was one.

Chalmers's next literary effort consisted of two articles in the *Edinburgh Review* upon Pauperism, and his next movement was based upon the same anxiety to get at the bottom of that all-important question which had set his pen in motion in the *Review*. A new church had been built in Glasgow in a district which was erected into a parish—St. John's, and Chalmers was elected to fill it. The church was larger than the Tron, and the population scarcely smaller. Why then did he accept the charge? Simply because, being an entirely new and separate jurisdiction, he might there put in practice those schemes for parochial management which had grown up in his mind as the result of his experience at the Tron. His first care was to erect schools. The day after the

church was opened he organized an education committee. A subscription was set on foot, and 1,200*l.* was speedily raised. In nine months the first school was opened under two efficient masters. It was established upon the principle of giving the best possible education at the lowest possible charge. Rich and poor were alike invited to send their children. There were no free scholars. One fee was paid by all. Each scholar came upon the same equal and independent footing, and, while the education was so brought down in its terms as to be accessible to the poorest, it was at the same time such an education as the very wealthiest might prize. In Scotland Chalmers had not to combat against many of those objections in opposition to which this system of tuition is making its way in England, but even there he found it necessary to enlarge upon the great moral and social benefits of an entire equality in those privileges of education which belong to our common nature. To the customary question—for what purpose such kind of education for the labouring classes? he replied, after showing many purposes for which it was *not* intended—“It is to turn an ignorant operative into a well instructed operative; to stamp upon him the worth and the respectability of which I contend he is fully susceptible, though he rise not by a single inch above the sphere of life in which he now moves; . . . it is not to hoist as it were the great ponderous mass of society up into the air, where it could have no foundation to support it, but, supposing that mass to rest and be stationary on its present basis, to diffuse through it the light both of common and of Christian intelligence.”

The first school was opened on the 18th July, 1820. It was instantly crowded to overflow, even although the masters arranged to teach in distinct classes double the number of pupils intended. In less than a month another subscription was entered upon; 1,000*l.* was soon raised, and another school was erected. The two together accommodated 419 scholars, and at the end of four years—which was the period of Chalmers's incumbency of St. John's—a third was in the process of erection, capable of accommodating

374 scholars more; so that he left his parish with school-accommodation of the very best kind for no less than 793 children out of a population of 10,000 souls. And he did not merely set these schools on foot; they were the subject of his constant supervision.

"His visits to the school, remarks one of the teachers, "were almost daily, and of the most friendly description. In all states of weather and in every frame of mind he was there; depositing himself in the usual chair, his countenance relaxing into its wonted smile as he recognised the children of the working-classes. Again and again, looking round upon them from his seat, his eye beaming with peculiar tenderness, he has exclaimed, 'I cannot tell you how my heart warms to these bare-footed children!'" And he was as kind to the teachers as to the children. "He never once interfered in the management of the classes. In every thing pertaining to the internal management of the school I was allowed to take my own method. . . . He seemed of all men I ever was professionally acquainted with, best to understand that the teacher is not to be considered as a mere drudge, a beast of burden who may be treated as one pleases, well to-day and scurvily to-morrow, as the whim of his employers may dictate."

During the two years that Irving was Chalmers's assistant—perhaps the busiest of their lives—there were three public services every Sunday at St. John's church and one in a school-house, all which were shared alternately between the two ministers. They also shared the business of parochial, house-to-house visitation, in which Irving was most efficient. The visitation was concluded by a lecture in the evening to the families who had been visited during the day; and

"These local week-day undress congregations, assembled in a cotton-mill, or the workshop of a mechanic, or the kitchen of some kind accommodating neighbour, with their picturesque exhibition of greasy jackets and unwashed countenances, and hands all soiled and fresh from labour turning up the pages of unused Bibles, had a special charm for Dr. Chalmers, and, all alive to the peculiar interest and urgency of such opportunities, he stirred up every faculty that was in him while he urged upon the consciences and hearts of such auditors the high claims of the Christian salvation."

But these were only as it were a beginning of the public labours of Dr.

Chalmers. His most effective work in parochial management was accomplished like his Tron Church Sunday schools by lay-agency. The parish of St. John's was divided by him into 25 districts called proportions, each of which embraced from 60 to 100 families, and was placed under the management of an elder and a deacon. The former superintended its spiritual interests; the latter its temporal affairs, and especially the management and relief of its pauperism. In each district there was one or more Sunday schools, male and female teachers to the number of between forty and fifty being engaged in the work, besides which there were classes for adults. Every Monday morning Dr. Chalmers's breakfast table was open by general invitation to all the persons who formed parts of this great machinery, and whoever had anything to report thus found easy and immediate access to the fountain-head. There were also the ordinary meetings of the kirk-session, monthly meetings of the deacons, monthly meetings of the Sunday school teachers, monthly meetings for missionary purposes, and frequent meetings of the educational committee. All these meetings were punctually attended by Dr. Chalmers; entire liberty of remark and suggestion was felt and exercised by every one; the humblest or the youngest was heard with attention and respect; every body was put at his ease, and felt that within his own district he was trusted and confided in, at the same time that his vigilance was quickened and his exertions animated by friendly supervision and support. Besides all these opportunities of intercourse, there was perpetual correspondence by letter—a hint, a report, a message, a suggestion, a query was constantly winging its way between Dr. Chalmers and his local agents—"a shower of billets" is the phrase by which this constant epistolary intercourse is here described. To sum up all under this head—special invitations to tea were sent from time to time, in turns, from Dr. Chalmers's house to all the persons engaged in this good work, and that with such frequency, that there was scarcely one of them who was not invited to the Doctor's house once every six weeks. Who

can wonder that under such management it is said of these local agents by one of themselves, "I never saw any set of men who were so animated by one spirit and whose zeal was so uniformly sustained. The Doctor was the very life of the whole, and every one felt himself as led on by him, committed to use his whole strength in the cause of that good God who had in His mercy sent us such a leader."

But Dr. Chalmers's greatest triumph was in the management of the pauperism of his district. It had hitherto cost about 1,400*l.* *per annum*, of which sum about 480*l.* had been collected at the church doors. Chalmers proposed, in effect, that his kirk-session should relieve the city of the collection and expenditure of the whole 1400*l.*, provided the 480*l.* *per annum* were given up to their management and expenditure. The proposal being accepted, the first thing was to institute a thorough investigation into the circumstances of every pauper, which was effected through the deacons, each of whom would have little difficulty in coming at the truth respecting the families in his own small district. The fund was at once relieved by the detection of frauds innumerable. The line was drawn between the deserving and the undeserving poor. The former were helped in poverty and out of poverty in a great variety of ways in which no public board could act half so effectually as an active and intelligent individual. Friendly advice was often found to be all that was needed to prevent the honest and industrious from sinking into the gulf of destitution, or when they had sunk into it, to raise them out of it. In the administration of the necessary money payments the poor were taught that (except in the case of the utterly helpless) everything depended upon character. The vicious and the drunken, the idle and dissolute, were denied any right to share in the profits of the industrious, but sympathy and kindness and all friendly aids were brought to the encouragement and assistance of those who were in real want. The scheme turned out to be in operation more frequently a contrivance to prevent pauperism than to relieve it, and the pecuniary result was, that under this management the 1400*l.* *per annum* was reduced to 280*l.*

*per annum*. At the end of four years the kirk-session had 900*l.* in hand, of which they were allowed to expend 500*l.* in the endowment of the third parish school.

Amidst all this round and whirl, as it would seem, of continual parochial occupation, Chalmers's literary labours were not discontinued. In November 1820 he published a volume of Sermons "On the application of Christianity to the commercial and ordinary affairs of Life," and continued quarterly a series of papers on the Christian and Civic Economy of Large Towns. In these last publications he developed his views upon the subject of pauperism and pauper management, and, having in 1822 fully explained the Scottish bearings of that great national question, he determined to deal with it in reference to England. With this view he bent his steps southward, and upon the spot, and in various parts of England, collected information from parochial officers and persons of eminence who had devoted themselves to the consideration of the subject. This visit very much enlarged his English acquaintance. Wherever he went he was received with the greatest kindness and distinction. He became intimate in the houses of many eminent English people, and was enabled to test and rectify his views of what is essentially our only good society: not, that is, the society of persons of mere wealth or aristocratic distinction, or of pleasure-seekers, but of those earnest, simple-minded, and yet highly intelligent people who are in heart zealous to promote the general welfare, and are conscious that their money and their time are talents for the employment of which they will one day have to render an account. Such people (thanks be to God!) abound more and more amongst our higher classes.

Chalmers's return to Glasgow was followed, after the lapse of a few months, by the severance of his connection with that busy city. He had been previously tempted by six offers of parochial preferment in various parts of Scotland, but in vain; no parish charge could lure him from St. John's. The seventh offer was that of the chair of Moral Philosophy in the University of St. Andrew's. The proposal was made to him on the 16th

November 1822. It was an offer of learned leisure, of studious retirement, of immunity from those overwhelming parochial cares under which his health was rapidly giving way. The income was 300*l.* per annum—less than that which he derived from St. John's; but the other inducements were too captivating to be resisted, and, after eight weeks' consideration, he signified his willingness to accept the appointment. He was instantly and unanimously elected. We will not dwell upon his Glasgow leave-takings. The city of St. Mungo did herself infinite honour by the way in which she parted from the great preacher and Christian philosopher. He went thither against opposition and amidst scorn and ridicule. He lived it all down, and left the great emporium of Scottish commerce, bearing with him many honourable tokens of universal respect, admiration, and affection, and having given throughout the whole of its population an incalculable impetus to Christian instruction, and to that social improvement which is mixed up with the progress of Christianity, and cannot exist without it.

The volume before us contains many interesting personal traits, and a chapter devoted to the subject of Chalmers's domestic life and his correspondence with his relatives. There are many things upon this subject which we should like to extract, but our space has long been exhausted, and we can only commend them to the attention of our readers, with one exception, which relates to his habits and manner of composition. In that respect Chalmers was an example to all literary men. Wherever he chanced to

be, he possessed the power of isolating himself from surrounding objects and concentrating his thoughts upon whatever subject he had in hand. One of the grandest of his astronomical discourses was jotted down in a small pocket-book with borrowed pen and ink, in strange apartments, where he was liable to interruption every moment. In this way he never lost a moment. If a friend whom he desired to see was absent from home, his note-book was called into requisition whilst he awaited his return; and even in a friend's drawing-room, in the midst of continual disturbance and excitement, sentence after sentence was thrown off, of compositions which bear the clearest marks of continuous and uninterrupted thought.

This book is, in our judgment, a very delightful and important one. In many respects the whole face of society has altered during the twenty years which have elapsed since Dr. Chalmers was at Glasgow, but the changes which have taken place have only tended to make more and more important the labours of an earnest and energetic clergy. The power which in the present condition of our labouring population they have in their hands for weal or woe, and the responsibility which follows the possession of that power, are things the bare idea of which is almost overpowering. If a clergyman desires to know how that power may be exercised so as most to promote the glory of his Master and the well-being of his fellow men, let him turn to these volumes and study the life of Dr. Chalmers at Glasgow.

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#### GREAT LITERARY PIRACY IN THE PRAYER BOOK PUBLISHED BY THE ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY SOCIETY.

We have received the following letter from Mr. A. J. Stephens. In a matter in which so grave a charge has been made against Mr. Stephens, and apparently so fully proved, we are of course ready to give him a full oppor-

tunity of vindicating himself. We therefore insert his letter. On any other ground we do not feel that we should have been justified in giving it space, or troubling our readers with its perusal.

LETTER FROM ARCHIBALD JOHN STEPHENS, ESQ.

MR. URBAN,  
IT is clear that the reputation of

Sir Harris Nicolas has not in the minutest degree been enhanced by the