

The Life
Of
John Knox

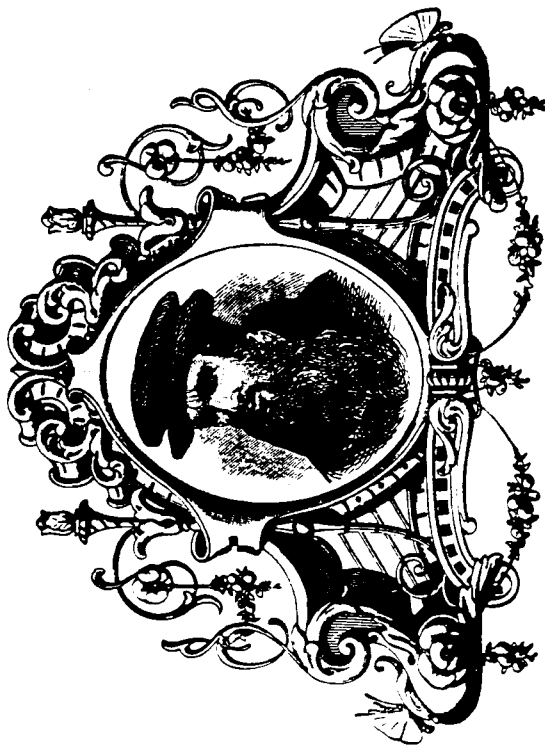
John Howie

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PORTRAIT OF JOHN KNOX.

John Knox.

JOHN KNOX was born at Gifford, near Haddington in East Lothian, in the year 1505. His father was related to the ancient house of Ranferlie. When he left the grammar-school, he was sent to the university of St Andrews to study under Mr John Mair, a man of considerable learning at that time, and had the degree of Master of Arts conferred upon him while very young. He excelled in philosophy and polemical divinity, and was admitted into church orders before the usual time appointed by the canons. Then laying aside all unnecessary branches of learning, he betook himself to the reading of the ancients, particularly Augustine's and Jerome's works, with which he was exceedingly pleased. He profited considerably by the preaching of Thomas Guillaume, or Williams, a Black Friar of sound judgment and doctrine, whose discourses led him to study the Holy Scriptures more closely, by which means his spiritual knowledge was increased, and such a zeal for the interest of religion begotten in him, that he became the chief instrument in accomplishing the primitive reformation.

He was a disciple of George Wishart, (as the reader has already seen in the account of his life), which procured him the

hatred of the Popish clergy, who could not endure that light which discovered their idolatrous darkness.

After the death of Cardinal Beaton, he retired into the castle of St Andrews, where he preached to the garrison for some time; but the castle being obliged to surrender to the French, he became their prisoner, and was sent aboard the galleys. Having made his escape about the year 1550, he went to England, where he preached for several years in Berwick, Newcastle, and London, with great applause. His fame at last reached the ears of King Edward VI., who offered him a bishoprick, which he rejected, as contrary to his principles.

During his stay in England he was called before the Council, and required to answer the following questions:

1. Why he refused the benefice provided for him at London?
2. Whether he thought that no Christian might serve in the ecclesiastical ministrations, according to the laws and rights of the realm of England?
3. If kneeling at the Lord's table was not indifferent.

To the first he said that his conscience witnessed to him that he might profit more in some other place than in London. To the second, that many things needed reformation in the ministry of England, without which no minister did or could discharge his duty before God; for no minister there had authority to separate the leprous from the whole, which was a chief part of his office; and that he refused no office which might in the least promote God's glory and the preaching of Christ's Gospel. And to the third he replied, that Christ's action was most perfect; that it was most safe to follow His example; and that kneeling was a human invention. The answer which he gave to this question occasioned a considerable deal of altercation betwixt the Council and him. There were present the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Bishop of Ely, the Lord Treasurer, the Earls of Northampton, Shrewsbury, etc., the Lord Chamberlain, and the Secretaries. After long reasoning, he was desired to take the matter into further consideration, and so was dismissed.

After the death of King Edward VI., he retired to Geneva; but soon left that place, and went to Frankfurt, upon the solicitation of the English congregation there, whose call to him was dated 24th September 1554. While in this city, he wrote his Admonition to England, and was soon involved in troubles, because he opposed

not one without the other—Elizabeth would have been flung from off her throne, or have gone back into the Egypt to which she was too often casting wistful eyes.—Ed.]

His works are, "An Admonition to England;" "An Application to the Scots Nobility, etc.;" "A Letter to Mary the Queen Regent;" "A History of the Reformation;" "A Treatise on Predestination;" "The First and Second Blasts of the Trumpet;" a Sermon, delivered August 1565, on account of which he was for some time prohibited from preaching. He left also sundry sermons, tracts, and other unprinted manuscripts.



PORTRAIT OF WILLIAM MAITLAND OF LETHINGTON.

influence was on a smaller scale. The time has come when English history may do justice to one but for whom the Reformation would have been overthrown among ourselves; for the spirit which Knox created saved Scotland; and if Scotland had been Catholic again, neither the wisdom of Elizabeth's Ministers, nor the teaching of her Bishops, nor her own chicaneries, would have preserved England from revolution. His was the voice which taught the peasant of the Lothians that he was a free man, the equal in the sight of God with the proudest peer or prelate that had trampled on his forefathers. He was the one antagonist whom Mary Stuart could not soften nor Maitland deceive; he it was that raised the poor Commons of his country into a stern and rugged people, who might be hard, narrow, superstitious, and fanatical, but who, nevertheless, were men whom neither king, noble, nor priest could force again to submit to tyranny." "The reaction when the work was done, a romantic sympathy with the Stuarts, and the shallow liberalism which calls itself historical philosophy, has painted over the true Knox with the figure of a maniac. Even his very bones have been flung out of their resting-place, or none can tell where they are laid; and yet but for him Mary Stuart would have bent Scotland to her purpose, and Scotland would have been the lever with which France and Spain would have worked on England. But for Knox and Burghley—those two, but

the English liturgy, and refused to communicate after the manner it enjoined. Messrs Isaac and Parry, supported by the English doctors, not only got him discharged from preaching, but accused him before the magistrates of high treason against the Emperor's son Philip, and his wife, Queen Mary of England; and to prove the charge, they had recourse to the above-mentioned Admonition, in which they alleged he had called the one little inferior to Nero, and the other more cruel than Jezebel. But the magistrates, perceiving the design of his accusers, and fearing lest he should some way or other fall into their hands, gave him secret information of his danger, and requested him to leave the city, for they could not save him if he should be demanded by the Queen of England in the Emperor's name; and having taken the hint, he returned to Geneva.

Here he wrote an Admonition to London, Newcastle, and Berwick; a letter to Mary of Guise, Dowager of Scotland; an Appeal to the nobility; an Admonition to the Commons of his own country; his First Blast of the Trumpet against the Monstrous Regiment of Women, and other works. He intended to have blown this trumpet three times, if the death of Mary, the Queen Regent, had not prevented him; understanding that an answer was to be given to his first blast, he deferred the publication of the second, till he saw what answer was necessary for the vindication of the first.

While he was at Geneva, he contracted a close intimacy with John Calvin, with whom he consulted on every emergency. Towards the end of harvest 1554, he returned home, upon the solicitation of some of the Scots nobility, and began privately to instruct such as resorted to him in the true religion: among whom were John Erskine of Dun, David Forrest, and Elizabeth Adamson, spouse to James Baron, burgess of Edinburgh. The idolatry of the mass particularly occupied his attention, as he saw some men remarkable for zeal and godliness drawn aside by it. Both in public and private, he exposed its impiety and danger; and his labours succeeded so far, as to draw off some, and alarm many others. In a conversation upon this subject, at the laird of Dun's house, in Forfarshire, in presence of David Forrest, Robert Lockhart, John Willcock, and William Maitland, junior of Lethington, he gave such satisfactory answers to all the objections which were started by the company that Maitland ended the conversation, saying, "I see very well that all our shifts will serve nothing before God, seeing they

stand us in so small stead before men." From this time forward the mass was very little respected.

John Knox continued a month at the laird of Dun's, preaching every day; the principal gentlemen of that country resorting to his ministry. From thence he went to Calder House, the residence of Sir James Sandilands, where the Earl of Argyle, then Lord Lorn, and Lord James, afterwards Earl of Moray, heard his doctrine, and highly approved of it. During the winter he taught in Edinburgh, and in the beginning of spring went to Kyle, where he preached in different places. The Earl of Glencairn sent for him to Finlayston, where, after sermon, he administered the Lord's Supper, and then returned to Calder.

The people being thus instructed, began to refuse all superstition and idolatry, and set themselves, to the utmost of their power, to support the true preaching of the Gospel. This alarmed the inferior Popish clergy so much, that they came from all quarters complaining to the bishops; whereupon Knox was summoned to appear in the Black Friars' Church of Edinburgh, on the 15th of May following. This appointment he resolved to observe, and accordingly came to Edinburgh, in company with the laird of Dun, and several other gentlemen; but the diet did not hold, because the bishops were afraid to proceed further against him; so that, on the same day that he should have appeared before them, he preached to a greater audience in Edinburgh than ever he had done before. The Earl Marischal, being desired by Lord Glencairn to hear Mr Knox preach, complied, and was so delighted with his doctrine, that he immediately proposed that something should be done to draw the Queen Regent to hear him likewise. He made this proposal in a letter, which was delivered into her own hand by Glencairn. When she had read it, she gave it to Beaton, Archbishop of Glasgow, saying in ridicule, "Please you, my Lord, to read a pasquil."

About this time, 1555, he received a letter from the English congregation at Geneva, who were not in communion with the congregation of that name at Frankfort, in which they besought him, in the name of God, that, as he was their chosen pastor, he would speedily come to them. In obedience to this call, he sent his wife and mother-in-law before him to Dieppe, but by the importunity of some gentlemen he was prevailed on to stay some time behind them in Scotland, which he spent in going about, exhorting the several congregations in which he had preached to



JOHN KNOX'S HOUSE, HIGH STREET, EDINBURGH.

His faithfulness in reproving sin, in a manner that showed he was not awed by the fear of man, made up the most remarkable part of his character, and the success wherewith the Lord blessed his labours was very singular, and is enough to stop the mouth of every enemy against him.

[The following remarks by Froude in his admirable work, the "History of England," will be read with pleasure by those who desire to see the character of two of Scotland's greatest worthies relieved from the aspersions which have too long been cast upon them. Of Regent Moray he says, "In all Europe there was not a man more profoundly true to the principles of the Reformation, or more consistently, in the best sense of the word, a servant of God;"—and to Knox he bears the following noble testimony: "No grander figure can be found, in the entire history of the Reformation in this island, than that of Knox. Cromwell and Burghley rank beside him for the work which they effected, but, as politicians and statesmen, they had to labour with instruments which they soiled their hands in touching. In purity, in uprightiness, in courage, truth, and stunless honour, the Regent Moray and our English Latimer were perhaps his equals; but Moray was intellectually far below him, and the sphere of Latimer's

pain to me, which is the beginning of eternal joy." In the afternoon, he caused his wife to read the 15th chapter of 1st Corinthians. When it was ended, he said, "Is not that a comfortable chapter?" A little after, "I commend my soul, spirit, and body, into Thy hands, O Lord." About five o'clock in the evening, he said to his wife, "Go, read where I cast my first anchor." This was the 17th chapter of John, which she read, together with part of Calvin's sermons on the Ephesians. They then went to prayer, after which Dr Preston asked him if he heard the prayer. He answered, "Would to God that you and all men had heard it as I have done; I praise God for that heavenly sound;" adding, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." His servant, Richard Bannatyne, hearing him give a long sigh, said, "Now, sir, the time you have long called to God for doth instantly come; and, seeing all natural power fail, give us some sign that you live upon the comfortable promises which you have so often showed to us." At this speech, he lifted up one of his hands; and immediately after, without any struggle, as one falling asleep, he departed this life, about eleven o'clock at night. Finishing his Christian warfare, he entered into the joy of his Lord, to receive a crown of righteousness, prepared for him and such as him, from before the foundation of the world.

He was buried in the churchyard of St Giles, now that square called the Parliament Close, upon Wednesday the 26th of November 1572. His funeral was attended by the Regent Earl of Morton, other lords, and a great multitude of people of all ranks. When he was laid in the grave, the Earl of Morton said, "There lies one who in his life never feared the face of man, who hath been often threatened with dag and dagger, but hath ended his days in peace and honour."

John Knox was low in stature, and of a weakly constitution; which made Mr Thomas Smeaton, one of his contemporaries, say, "I know not if God ever placed a more godly and great spirit in a body so little and frail. I am certain, that there can scarcely be found another in whom more gifts of the Holy Ghost, for the comfort of the Church of Scotland, did shine. No one spared himself less, no one was more diligent in the charge committed to him, and yet no one was more the object of the hatred of wicked men, and more vexed with the reproach of evil speakers; but this was so far from abating, that it rather strengthened his courage and resolution in the ways of God." Beza calls him the "great apostle of the Scots."

be fervent in prayer, frequent in reading the Scriptures, and in mutual conferences, till God should give them greater liberty. The Earl of Argyle was solicited to press John Knox's stay in this country, but he could not succeed. Knox told them, that, if they continued earnest in the profession of the faith, God would bless these small beginnings, but that he must for once go and visit that little flock which the wickedness of men had compelled him to leave; and being thus resolved, he went immediately to Geneva. As soon as he was gone the bishops summoned him to their tribunal, and for non-compearance, they burned him in effigy at the cross of Edinburgh; from which unjust sentence, when he heard of it, he appealed to the nobility and commons of Scotland.

Upon the receipt of a letter, dated March 10, 1556, subscribed by the Earls of Glencairn, Erskine, Argyle, and Moray, Knox resolved to return to Scotland. Committing the care of his flock at Geneva to John Calvin, and coming to Dieppe, he wrote from thence to Mrs Anne Locke a declaration of his opinion of the English service-book, expressing himself thus: "Our Captain, Christ Jesus, and Satan His adversary, are now at open defiance, their banners are displayed, and the trumpet is blown on both sides for assembling their armies; our Master calleth upon His own, and that with vehemency, that they may depart from Babylon; yea, He threatened death and damnation to such as, either in their forehead or right hand, have the mark of the beast; and a portion of this mark are all those dregs of papistry, which are left in your great book of England (viz., crossing in baptism, kneeling at the Lord's table, mumbling or singing of the litany, etc., etc.); any one jot of which diabolical inventions will I never counsel any man to use."

He was detained in Dieppe much longer than was expected, which obliged the Scots nobility to renew their solicitations; which he complied with, and arrived in Scotland on the 2d of May 1559, being then fifty-four years old. He preached first at Dundee, and afterwards at Perth, with great success. About this time the Queen Regent put some preachers to the horn, prohibiting all, upon pain of rebellion, to comfort, relieve, or assist them; which enraged the multitude so, that they would be restrained neither by the preachers nor magistrates, from pulling down the images and other monuments of idolatry in Perth: which being told to the Queen Regent, it so enraged her that she vowed to destroy man, woman, and child in that town, and burn it to the ground. To execute this threat, she

caused her French army to march towards the place; but being informed that multitudes from the neighbouring country were assembling in the town for the defence of its inhabitants, her impetuosity was checked, and she resolved to use stratagem where force could not avail her. Accordingly she sent the Earls of Argyle and Moray to learn what was their design in such commotions.

Mr Knox, in the name of the rest, made answer: "The present troubles ought to move the hearts of all the true servants of God and lovers of their country, to consider what the end of such tyrannical measures will be, by which the emissaries of Satan seek the destruction of all friends of religion in the country. Therefore I most humbly require of you, my Lords, to tell the Queen, in my name, that we, whom she in her blind rage doth thus persecute, are the servants of God, faithful and obedient subjects of this realm; and that the religion which she would maintain by fire and sword, is not the true religion of Jesus Christ, but expressly contrary to the same; a superstitious device of men, which I offer myself to prove, against all who in Scotland maintain the contrary, freedom of debate being allowed, and the word of God being the judge. Tell her from me, that her enterprise shall not succeed in the end; for she fights not against man only, but against the eternal God." Argyle and Moray promised to deliver this message; and Knox preached a sermon, exhorting them to constancy; adding, "I am persuaded that this promise (meaning the promise she had made to do them no harm if they would leave the town peaceably), shall be no longer kept than the Queen and her Frenchmen can get the upper hand;" which accordingly happened, for she took possession of the town, and put a garrison of French in it. This breach of promise so displeased the Earls of Argyle and Moray, that they forsook her, and joined the Congregation. Having assembled with Erskine of Dun and others, they sent for John Knox; who, in his way to them, preached in Craill and Anstruther, intending to preach next day at St Andrews.

This design coming to the ears of the Bishop, he raised a hundred spearmen, and sent a message to the Lords of the Congregation, That if John Knox offered to preach there, he should have a warm reception. They, in their turn, forewarned Knox of his danger, and dissuaded him from going. He made answer, "God is my witness that I never preached Jesus Christ in contempt of any man; neither am I concerned about going thither; though I would not willingly

these two last nights upon the troubled kirk of God, despised in the world, but precious in His sight. I have called to God for her, and commended her to Christ, her head; I have been fighting against Satan, who is ever ready for the assault; I have fought against spiritual wickedness, and have prevailed; I have been as it were in heaven, and have tasted of its joys." After sermon several persons came to visit him; one asked him (upon perceiving his breathing shortened), if he had any pain? He answered, "I have no more pain than he that is now in heaven, and am content, if it please God, to lie here seven years." Many times, when he was lying as if asleep, he was in meditation, and was heard to say, "Lord, grant true pastors to Thy church, that purity of doctrine may be retained. Restore peace again to this commonwealth, with godly rulers and magistrates. O serve the Lord in fear, and death shall not be troublesome to you. Blessed is the death of those that have part in the death of Jesus. Come, Lord Jesus, sweet Jesus; into Thy hand I commend my spirit."

That night, Dr Preston having come to him, and being told by some of his constant attendants that he was often very uneasy in his sleep, the doctor asked him after he awoke how he did, and what made him mourn so heavily in his sleep. He answered: "In my lifetime I have been often assaulted by Satan, and many times he hath cast my sins in my teeth, to bring me to despair; yet God gave me strength to overcome his temptations; and now that subtle serpent, who never ceaseth to tempt, hath taken another course, and seeks to persuade me that all my labours in the ministry, and the fidelity I have showed in that service, have merited heaven and immortality. But blessed be God that He hath brought to my mind that Scripture, 'What hast thou that thou has not received?' and, 'Not I, but the grace of God, which is in me,' with which he hath gone away ashamed, and shall no more return. And now, I am sure my battle is at an end, and that I shall shortly, without pain of body or trouble of spirit, change this mortal and miserable life for that happy and immortal life that shall never have an end."

Having some time before given orders for making his coffin, he rose out of bed (November 24) about ten o'clock, put on his hose and doublet, sat up about the space of half-an-hour, and then returned to bed again. Being asked by Campbell of Kinzean-cleugh if he had any pain, he answered, "No pain but such as I trust will soon put an end to this battle—yea, I do not esteem that

to say that it shall be well with him." The truth of this seemed to appear in a short time thereafter; for it was thought that Lethington poisoned himself, to escape public punishment. He lay unburied in the steeple of Leith, until his body was quite corrupted; but Sir William Kircaldy of Grange was, on the 3d of August next, executed at the Cross of Edinburgh. He caused Lindsay to repeat Knox's words concerning him a little before his execution, and was much comforted by them, and said to him on his way to the scaffold, "I hope, when men shall think I am gone, that I shall give a token of the assurance of God's mercy to my soul, according to the speech of that man of God." Accordingly, when he was cast over the ladder, with his face towards the east, and when all present thought he was dead, he lifted up his hands, which were bound, and let them fall softly down again, as if praising God for His great mercy towards him.

Another of John Knox's visitors desired him to praise God for the good he had done. He answered, "Flesh of itself is too proud, and needs nothing to puff it up;" and protested, that he only laid claim to the free mercy of God in Christ among others. To the Earl of Morton, who was then about to receive the Regency (the Earl of Moray being dead), he was heard to say, "My lord, God hath given you many blessings; He hath given you high honour, birth, great riches, many good friends, and is now to prefer you to the government of this realm. In His name, I charge you that you will use these blessings better in time to come, than you have done in time past. In all your actions seek first the glory of God, the furtherance of His Gospel, the maintenance of His church and ministry; and then be careful of the King, to procure his good, and the welfare of the kingdom. If you act thus, God will be with you; if otherwise, He shall deprive you of all these benefits, and your end shall be shameful and ignominious." This threatening, as Morton to his melancholy experience confessed, was literally accomplished. At his execution, in June 1581, he called to mind John Knox's words, and acknowledged, that in what he had said to him he had been a true prophet.

Upon the Lord's day, November 23, after he had lain for some time very quiet, he said, "If any man be present, let him come and see the work of God;" for he thought (as was supposed) then to have expired. His servant having sent for Mr Johnston of Elphinstone, he burst forth into these words, "I have been in meditation

injure the worldly interest of any creature, I cannot, in conscience, delay preaching to-morrow, if I am not detained by violence. As for fear of danger to my person, let no man be solicitous about that, for my life is in the hand of Him whose glory I seek, and therefore I fear not their threats, so as to cease from doing my duty, when of His mercy God offereth the occasion. I desire the hand and weapon of no man to defend me; only I crave audience, which if denied to me here, at this time, I must seek further where I may have it." The Lords were thus satisfied that he would fulfil his intention, which he did with such boldness and success, and without interruption, that the magistrates and people of the town, immediately after sermon, agreed to remove the monuments of idolatry; which they did with great expedition.

After this, several skirmishes ensued between the Queen Regent and the Lords of the Congregation. But at last the Queen sickened and died, and a general peace, which lasted for some time, was procured; during which the commissioners of the Scots nobility, were employed in settling ministers in different places. John Knox was appointed to Edinburgh, where he continued until the day of his death.

The same year, 1560, the Scots Confession was compiled and agreed upon; and that the Church might be established upon a good foundation, a commission and charge were given to John Knox, and five others, to draw up a form of government and discipline. When they had finished it, they presented it to the nobility, by whom it was afterwards ratified and approved of.

But the progress which was daily making in the Reformation soon met with a severe check, by the arrival of the young Queen Mary from France, in August 1561. With her came Popery, and all manner of profanity; the mass was again publicly set up; at which the religious part of the nation were highly offended, and none more than John Knox, who ceased not to expose the evil and danger of it on every occasion. On this account the Queen and Court were much exasperated; they called him before them, and charged him as guilty of high treason. The Queen, being present, produced a letter, written by him, wherein it was alleged, that he had convoked her Majesty's lieges against law; whereupon a long reasoning ensued between him and Secretary Lethington upon the contents of said letter; in which Mr Knox gave such solid and bold answers, in defence of himself and doctrine, that at last he was acquitted by the

Lords of the Council, to the no small displeasure of the Queen and those of the Popish party.

John Knox, in a conference with the Queen about this time, said, "If princes exceed their bounds, they may be resisted even by power, for there is no greater honour and obedience to be paid to princes, than God hath commanded to be given to father and mother. If children join together against their father stricken with a frenzy and seeking to slay his own children, apprehend him, take his sword and other weapons from him, bind his hands, and put him in prison till his frenzy overpass, do they any wrong, or will God be offended with them for hindering their father from committing horrible murder? Even so, madam, if princes will murder the children of God, their subjects, their blind zeal is but a mad frenzy. To take the sword from them, to bind them, and to cast them into prison, till they be brought to a sober mind, is not disobedience, but just obedience, because it agreeth with the Word of God." The Queen hearing this, stood for some time as one amazed, and changed countenance. No appearance was at this time of her imprisonment.

After the Queen's marriage with Henry, Earl of Darnley, a proclamation was made, in 1565, signifying that, forasmuch as certain rebels, under the colour of religion (meaning those who opposed the measures of the Court), intended nothing but the subversion of the Commonwealth, therefore it charged all manner of men, under pain of life, lands, and goods, to resort and meet their Majesties at Linlithgow, on the 24th of August. Upon Sabbath the 19th, Darnley came to the High Church of Edinburgh, where John Knox preached from these words: "O Lord our Lord, other lords beside thee have had dominion over us." In his sermon, he took occasion to speak of wicked princes, who, for the sins of a people, were sent as scourges upon them; and also said, "That God set in that room, boys and women, and that God justly punished Ahab and his posterity, because he would not take order with the harlot, Jezebel." These things enraged Darnley to a very high degree. Knox was immediately ordered before the Council, and went thither, attended by some of the most respectable citizens. When called in, Lethington signified that Darnley was much offended with some words in his sermon, and ordered him to abstain from preaching for fifteen or twenty days; to which Knox answered that he had spoken nothing but according to his text, and if the Church would command him either to speak or refrain from speak-

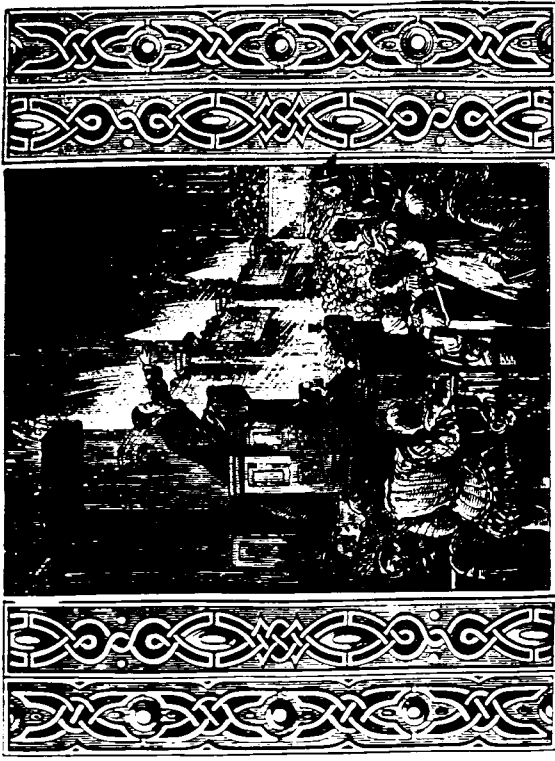
according to my power, to gain them to Christ; that I did forbear none of whatsoever condition, I did it out of the fear of my God, who placed me in this function of the ministry, and I know will bring me to an account." Then he exhorted them to constancy and entreated them never to join with the wicked, but rather to choose with David to flee to the mountains, than to remain with such company.

After this exhortation to the elders and deacons, he charged Mr David Lindsay and Mr James Lawson, to take heed to feed the flock over which the Holy Ghost had made them overseers. To Lawson in particular he said, "Fight the good fight, do the work of the Lord with courage and with a willing mind; and God from above bless you, and the church whereof you have the charge, against which the gates of hell shall not prevail." Then by prayer he recommended the whole company present to the grace of God, and afterwards desired his wife, or Richard Bannatyne, to read the 17th chapter of John, a chapter of the Ephesians, and the 33d chapter of Isaiah daily, since he was unable to read himself, and sometimes he desired part of John Calvin's sermons, in French, to be read to him. One time when reading these sermons, they supposed him to be sleeping, and asked him if he heard what was read? He replied, "I hear, I praise God, and understand far better."

One day after this, Mr David Lindsay coming to see him, he said, "Well, brother, I thank God I have desired all this day to have had you, that I might send you to that man in the Castle, the Laird of Grange, whom you know I have loved dearly. Go, I pray you, and tell him from me, in the name of God, that unless he leave that evil course wherein he has entered, neither shall that rock (meaning the Castle of Edinburgh, which he then kept out against the King) afford him any help, nor the carnal wisdom of that man, whom he counteth half a god (meaning Maitland of Lethington); but he shall be pulled out of that nest, and brought down over the wall with shame, and his carcase shall be hung before the sun; so God hath assured me." When Lindsay delivered this message, Kircaldy seemed to be much moved; but after conference with Lethington, he returned, and dismissed him with a disdainful countenance and answer. On reporting this to Knox, he said, "Well, I have been earnest with my God acent that man; I am sorry that it should so befall his body, yet God assurth me there is mercy for his soul. But for the other (meaning Lethington), I have no warrant

brother, otherwise you will come too late); meaning that if he did not come speedily, he would find him dead; which words had this effect on Mr Lawson, that he set out immediately, making all possible haste to Edinburgh; where, after he had preached twice to the full satisfaction of the people, the 9th of November was appointed for his admission unto that congregation. Knox, though still weaker, preached upon that occasion with much power, and with the greatest comfort to the hearers. In the close of his sermon he called God to witness, that he had walked in a good conscience among them, not seeking to please men, nor serving his own or other men's inclinations, but in all sincerity and truth preaching the Gospel of Christ. Then praising God, who had given them one in his room, he exhorted them to stand fast in the faith they had received; and having prayed fervently for the Divine blessing upon them, and the increase of the Spirit upon their new pastor, he gave them his last farewell; with which the congregation were much affected.

Being carried home that same day, he was confined to his bed, and on the 13th of the month was so enfeebled, that he was obliged to lay aside his ordinary reading of the Scriptures. The next day he would rise out of bed. Being asked what he intended by getting out of bed, he replied, he would go to church, thinking it had been the Lord's Day, and told them that he had been all the night meditating upon the resurrection of Christ, which he should have preached on in order, after the death of Christ, which he had finished the Sabbath before. He had often desired of God, that he would end his days in teaching and meditating upon that doctrine; which desire seems to have been granted to him. Upon Monday the 17th, the elders and deacons being come to him, he said, "The time is approaching for which I have long thirsted, wherein I shall be relieved and be free from all cares, and be with my Saviour for ever; and now, God is my witness, whom I have served with my spirit in the Gospel of His Son, that I have taught nothing but the true and solid doctrines of the Gospel, and that the end which I purposed in all my doctrine was to instruct the ignorant, to confirm the weak, to comfort the consciences of those who were humbled under the sense of their sins, and to denounce the threatenings of God's word against such as were rebellious. I am not ignorant that many have blamed me, and yet do blame my too great rigour and severity; but God knoweth, that in my heart I never hated the persons of those against whom I thundered God's judgments; I did only hate their sins, and laboured,



JOHN KNOX IN ST GILES, EDINBURGH.

ing, he would obey, so far as the Word of God would permit him. Nevertheless, for this and another sermon which he preached before the Lords, in which he showed the bad consequences that would follow upon the Queen's being married to a Papist, he was, by the Queen's order, prohibited from preaching for a considerable time.

It cannot be expected that we should enumerate all the indefatigable labours, and pertinent speeches, which, on sundry occasions, he made to the Queen, nor the opposition which he met with, in promoting the work of Reformation. These will be found at large in the histories of these times.

The Popish faction now found, that it would be impossible to get their idolatry re-established, while the Reformation was making such progress, and while John Knox and his associates had such credit with the people. They therefore set other engines to work than those they had hitherto used, sparing no pains to blast his reputation by malicious calumnies, and even making attempts upon his life. One night as he was sitting at the head of a table in his own house, with his back to the window, as was his custom, he was shot at from the other side of the street, on purpose to kill him. The shot entered at the window, but he being near the other side of the table, the assassin missed his mark. The bullet struck the

candlestick before him, and made a hole in the foot of it. Thus was He that was with him stronger than they that were against him.

John Knox was an eminent wrestler with God in prayer, and like a prince prevailed. The Queen Regent herself had given him this testimony, when upon a particular occasion she said that she was more afraid of his prayers than of an army of ten thousand men. He was likewise warm and pathetic in his preaching, in which such prophetic expressions as dropped from him had the most remarkable accomplishment. As an instance of this, when he was confined in the castle of St Andrews, he foretold both the manner of their surrender, and their deliverance from the French galleys; and when the Lords of the Congregation were twice discomfited by the French army, he assured them that the Lord would ultimately prosper the work of Reformation. Again, when Queen Mary refused to come and hear sermon, he bade them tell her that she would yet be obliged to hear the Word of God whether she would or not; which came to pass at her arraignment in England. At another time, he thus addressed himself to her husband, Henry, Lord Darnley, while in the king's seat in the High Church of Edinburgh: "Have you, for the pleasure of that dainty dame, cast the psalm-book into the fire? The Lord shall strike both head and tail." Both King and Queen died violent deaths. He likewise said, when the Castle of Edinburgh held out for the Queen against the Regent, that "the Castle should spue out the captain (meaning Sir William Kircaldy of Grange) with shame, that he should not come out at the gate, but over the wall, and that the tower called Davis Tower, should run like a sand-glass; which was fulfilled a few years after—Kircaldy being obliged to come over the wall on a ladder, with a staff in his hand, and the said fore-work of the Castle running down like a sand-brae.

On the 24th of January 1570, John Knox being in the pulpit, a paper was put into his hands, among others containing the names of the sick people to be prayed for; the paper contained these words, "Take up the man whom you accounted another God," alluding to the Earl of Moray, who was slain the day before. Having read it, he put it into his pocket, without showing the least discomposure. After sermon, he lamented the loss which both Church and State had met with in the death of that worthy nobleman, showing that God takes away good and wise rulers from a people in His wrath; and at last said, "There is one in the company who

maketh that horrible murder, at which all good men have occasion to be sorrowful, the subject of his mirth. I tell him, he shall die in a strange land, where he shall not have a friend near him to hold up his head." Thomas Maitland, the author of that insulting paper, hearing what Knox said, confessed the whole to his sister, the Lady Trabrown, but said, that John Knox was raving, to speak of he knew not whom; she replied with tears, that none of John Knox's threatenings fell to the ground. This gentleman afterwards went abroad and died in Italy, on his way to Rome, having no man to comfort him.

John Knox's popularity was now so well established, that the Popish party, finding it impossible to alienate the hearts of the people from him, began now openly to work his destruction, fortifying the town and castle with their garrisons. They vented their malice against him by many furious threatenings; upon which he was urged by his friends to leave Edinburgh for his own safety, which at last he did, in May 1571, and went to St Andrews, where the Earl of Morton (who was afterwards Regent) urged him to inaugurate the Archbishop of that See. This he declined, with solemn protestation against it, and denounced an anathema on the giver and receiver. Though he was then very weak in body, he would not refrain from preaching, and was obliged to be supported by his servant Richard Bannatyne, in going to church; when in the pulpit, he was obliged to rest some time before he could proceed to preach, but before he ended his sermon he became so vigorous and active, that he was like to have broken the pulpit to pieces.

Here he continued till the end of August 1572, when the civil broils were a little abated, upon which, receiving a letter from Edinburgh, he returned to his flock. He was now much oppressed with the infirmities of old age, and the extraordinary fatigues he had undergone; the death of the good Regent, the Earl of Moray, had made deep impression on him; and when he heard of the massacre of St Bartholomew at Paris, and the murder of the good Admiral Coligny, these melancholy news almost deprived him of his life. Finding his dissolution approaching, he prevailed with the Council and Kirk Session of Edinburgh to concur with him in admitting Mr James Lawson as his successor, who was at that time Professor of Philosophy in the College of Aberdeen. He wrote a letter to Mr Lawson, entreating him to accept of this charge; adding this postscript, *Acciterā, mi frater, aliqui sero venies* (Make haste, my