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Biographical Notices.

SKETCH OF THE LIFE AND CHARACTER OF JOHN MITCHEL MASON, D.D.S.T.P.

[From the statements exhibited in the late funeral sermons, by the Rev. Mr. Snodgrass, Dr. McElroy, &c. &c.]

DOCTOR MASON, was the son of the Reverend Mr. John Mason, Pastor of the Scotch Church in Cedar Street, New-York. This venerable man was a native of the town of Mid-Calder, in the county of Linlithgow, in Scotland. He was connected with that distinguished and pious body of the Seceders from the church of Scotland, which was usually known by the name of Antiburghers. Not long after his licensure by a Presbytery in that connexion, he was ordained with a particular view to a pastoral charge in this city. And leaving his native country, he arrived in the year 1761, became the pastor of the Scotch Presbyterian Church in Cedar Street, and resided among them, greatly respected and eminently useful, until his death, in the year 1792. He was a man of sound and vigorous mind, of extensive learning, and fervent piety. In regard to his scholarship, it is re-

corded of him, that at the age of 20 years, he spoke the Latin language, with as much ease, and with nearly as great elegance, as he did his mother tongue; and that at the age of 24, he taught Logic, and Moral Philosophy with reputation, in the Theological Seminary of the Antiburghers, at Abernethy, in Scotland. As a preacher, he was uncommonly judicious and instructive; as a pastor, he was faithful and diligent; as a friend and companion, amiable, benevolent and generous.

Dr. Mason was born in the city of New-York, on the 19th of March, 1770. In his early days he was a sprightly youth, full of vivacity, but never vicious—fond of application to study—and always, in every respect, in the foremost rank among his associates.

His elementary education he received under the general superintendence of his father in New-York, and at New Brunswick, and Basking Ridge, N. J. where his father spent some portion of his time, during his exile from N. Y. while it was in the possession of the British. And such was the wisdom and faithfulness of this superintendence, that he always acknowledged himself indebted to it for the discipline of mind to which he attained in after life. Great pains

were taken with his early education, in disciplining his heart, as well as his mind. He was the child of many prayers, and of faithful parental instruction, and it would seem that the labor thus bestowed in faith and piety, was richly and speedily rewarded; for when *ten* years of age, he was the subject of deep religious impressions. He has often remarked incidentally, that at that period, he took Ralph Erskine's "Faith's Plea upon God's word" to the garret of his residence, and read, and wept, and prayed. Speaking once of a fast day, as it was kept in his father's house, he remarked; 'On such occasions we used to *fast*; and we were painfully instructed how to search our hearts before God; and if we did it not ourselves,—our father would search them, for us.'

Having laid a good foundation for future eminence as a scholar, he entered Columbia College in this city, and was graduated in the month of May, in the year 1789. He was then a little more than 19 years of age, and is remembered by some of his class-mates, who still survive him, as having been a peculiarly fine *classical* scholar,—distinguished also for his powers of declamation, and his talent for *disquisition*. He delivered the *valedictory* address to his preceptors and fellow-students, and retired from his collegiate life, loved and respected by all who knew him.

At the age of seventeen, and two years before he was graduated he made a public profession of his faith. And shortly after leaving College, his views were directed to "*the ministry of reconciliation*."—His course of preparation for this office was commenced, and continued for a while, under the advice and direction of his venerated parent. During this period he devoted himself, with an uncommon degree of application, to the study of the Greek language; and thereby obtained that accurate know-

ledge of its idiom and structure, which was afterwards turned to such a useful account, *in expounding* the writings of the New Testament. At the same time, he did not neglect the original language of the Old Testament; and was careful, as opportunity served, to enlarge his acquaintance with all those collateral branches of study, which had a direct bearing upon his qualifications for the sacred office. He retained, even to the last, amid all his infirmities, his love of Hebrew criticism. During the winter he spent in Fulton Street, in the absence of his son in law, Dr. Knox, who was in the Island of St. Thomas, the writer of this, having occasion, one morning, to call on him to announce the death of his beloved friend Dr. Waugh of London,—found his venerable friend with a multitude of Hebrew books about him, actually labouring, at the moment, to renew his acquaintance with the Hebrew of the writings of Moses!

In the year 1791 he left his native country for the land of his fathers, to perfect his education at the University of Edinburgh. He there attended the lectures of those professors who were immediately connected with the study of theology. And to all of them he was greatly endeared, as well on account of the Christian character which he exhibited, as on account of his respectable attainments in literature and science. Among these the Rev. Dr. Hunter regarded him with peculiar affection, as did also the Rev. Dr. John Erskine.

It was during his residence in this University, that his *mind* and *manner* began to assume that peculiar mould, which they afterwards took; and that the foundation was laid for that easy and manly eloquence for which he afterwards became so conspicuous. It was here he became associated with *three* men, who, like himself, have since risen to distinc-

tion in the Christian Church; and with whom he contracted an intimacy, which ripened into friendship. They possessed kindred minds—were prosecuting similar studies—and were actuated by one spirit. They were the Rev. Dr. Greville Ewing, now of Glasgow, Mr. W. Innes, formerly of Dundee, and subsequently of Edinburgh, and the Rev. Dr. John Dick, author of the well known and excellent essay on “the Inspiration of the Sacred Scriptures.” Supported by these companions in study, he often came forward in such a manner as greatly to signalize the clearness, strength, and comprehensiveness of his mind; and, at the same time, to exhibit his decided adherence to the doctrines of divine grace, as opposed to every other Gospel which was falsely so called. As affording one conspicuous opportunity for this, it was required of every student of divinity, to deliver, in the progress of his course, *fixe exercises*—a *lecture*, a *homily*, and *exegesis*, in the Latin language, a *critical disquisition*, and a *popular sermon*. And, the better to accustom them to public speaking, and critical investigation, they were called upon at the delivery of these exercises, to canvass the merits of each other’s discourse. In this department of duty, he was as faithful and fearless, as he was active and conspicuous. On one occasion, (it is related of him,) after the delivery of the discourse appointed for the day, he was observed to remain silent much longer than was usual for him at such times, apparently absorbed in thought, and hesitating whether to express his opinion of the performance or not. At length, he was appealed to, by the presiding Professor, and asked, whether he had any remarks to make. He arose and said, “I admire the sermon for the beauty of its style—for the splendour of its imagery—for the ingenuity

of its sentiments—and for the point of its argument:—But, Sir, it wanted *one thing* ;” and then, pausing, until the eyes of all were fixed upon him, he added, “It needed to be *baptized* in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, to entitle it to the name of a *Christian sermon*.”

It was in this Institution, that he and his three associates became distinguished speakers.—And to the training, which they received there, may, in a great measure, be attributed that natural and forcible style of address for which they all became remarkable, after their entrance upon the active duties of the ministry.

While proceeding in this course of intellectual and moral training, however, a severe dispensation of Divine Providence occurred, which rendered it necessary that these chosen companions should separate, and that Mr. Mason should return to the country of his birth. Towards the close of the year 1792, he received the distressing intelligence of his father’s death. And the Church in New York having directed their attention towards him, as a fit successor to their lamented Pastor, he was recalled to be placed over them as their “overseer.”

His licensure took place towards the close of 1792, and he was ordained and installed in the month of April following. In this situation, he continued to discharge his public and pastoral duties, with industry and faithfulness, until the year 1798, when he resolved upon appealing, through the medium of the press, to the Associate Reformed Churches of North America, on the subject of greater *frequency*, as well greater *simplicity*, in the celebration of the Lord’s Supper. Until then, it had been the practice of this denomination, as it still is of many of the Presbyterian Churches in this country, and in Scotland generally, to commemorate the Redeemer’s death only

twice, and some places only *once* in each year. It was at this time he published *Letters on Frequent Communion*, in which he advocates the importance of a more frequent attention to this ordinance—endeavours to disprove the expediency of days of fasting and thanksgiving, and answers the objections which were likely to impede the progress of his argument over the minds of others. The effect of this appeal is best understood from the fact, that most of the Churches belonging to this denomination, soon began to relinquish their ancient practice, and have since been in the habit of celebrating the Lord's Supper *four* times, and in other cases, *six* times each year.

In the beginning of the 19th century, he proposed to himself the idea of a public Theological Seminary, to be established by the authority, and to continue under the superintendence, of the General Synod of the Associate Reformed Church. And after digesting and maturing a plan, he finally carried it into operation, under his own immediate agency and influence, in the year 1801. This was the first Institution of the kind ever established in the United States of America.—And, for its prosperity, he laboured and sacrificed much, and persevered in his successful endeavours to uphold and extend it, as long as his health, and the vigour of his mind enabled him to continue the work. At its commencement, he was appointed by the Synod the Professor. Under their sanction he visited Europe for the purpose of procuring a library—returned after an absence of almost a year—and continued to discharge the duties of this office, until his health became so much impaired as to admonish him that his Master's business, in this respect, was accomplished.

In connexion with the duties of this office, he still retained the pastoral charge of the Scotch Presby-

terian Church in Cedar Street, until the spring of 1810; when, in consequence of the too limited size of the building, and other circumstances, he resolved on the enterprise of forming a new congregation. And in view of of this enterprise, the Presbytery dissolved his pastoral relation in May, 1810. The site of the building was selected in Murray Street. And during the time of its erection, his infant congregation held their assemblies in the Presbyterian Church in Cedar Street, under the pastoral care of Dr. Romeyn.—This Church was opened in the summer of 1812, and a dedication sermon, preceded by the reading of Solomon's prayer at the dedication of the first temple, was delivered from the passage, "The glory of this latter house, shall be greater than the glory of the former, saith the Lord of Hosts."

In addition to the labours of this enterprise, connected with the duties of his Professorship in the Theological Seminary, he accepted the office of Provost of Columbia College, in this City, in July, 1811. This situation he retained for five years, and here he underwent a degree of severe mental exertion, which few could have endured, for the same length of time.

During *five* days, in each week, he attended to his classes in College, from twelve o'clock until half past one;—then he met his Theological students at two, and remained with them until half past three.—And besides this, he employed a part of every Saturday in hearing and correcting the discourses which they were appointed to deliver. All this labour he underwent, in addition to the painful discharge of his pastoral duties.

But these labours even his peculiar vigour of body, and energy of mind could not long sustain. In 1816, he found his health so much impaired, that a voyage to Europe was deemed necessary to relax his mind and recruit his health. On the 7th of July

he preached his farewell sermon from Rev. iii. 11.—He returned from Europe in Nov. 1817, into the bosom of his family and friends, greatly improved in health; and entered afresh upon the discharge of his Professional, as well as Pastoral duties. But it was not long before his friends, and beloved people began to perceive with anxiety, the symptoms of returning exhaustion and weakness. Early in the summer of 1819, he had a slight *paralytic* affection, which, however, passed away, and left him in the enjoyment of tolerable health. This attack was repeated, in the month of September. He was advised by his physicians to discontinue his public services for some time. In conformity with this advice, he allowed an interval of six weeks to elapse before preaching again. And then, resuming his place, he continued to “feed the flock of God, over which he had been appointed overseer,” without interruption, until *the memorable event* which occurred on the 27th day of February, in the year 1820. On the Sabbath previous to this, his morning discourse had been peculiarly excellent and tender;—a large amount of *feeling*, as well as of *mind*, had been expended upon it. And, in the course of the subsequent week, he was observed by all the members of his family, to be in a state of uncommon depression, both of body and of mind.—And when the Sabbath arrived, he commenced the services under an obvious depression of spirits, as well as of bodily weakness. After the introductory exercises, he read the twenty-seventh chapter of the Gospel by Matthew, on which he was lecturing in course. He had entered upon the exposition of the passage: but finding himself unable to proceed, he raised his hand to his head, and, bursting into tears, he informed the congregation that the disorder, under which he had been labouring, had so impaired the

powers of his mind, that he could not command them. He uttered a very short prayer—gave out three verses of the fifty-sixth Psalm,—and then pronounced the benediction.

After this event it became obvious to his congregation, as well as to all around him that his health was effectually impaired.—And unwilling that *this*, or any other circumstance should induce him to seek a dissolution of his pastoral connexion with them, several attempts were made to procure a collegiate pastor to assist him in his labours.

These attempts however were not successful; and, in the mean time, his strength had so far revived, that, on the first Sabbath of the ensuing October, he again resumed his pulpit duties by entering upon an exposition of the First Epistle of Peter.—And this exposition he continued, with but few interruptions until he finally resigned his charge into the hands of the Presbytery, on the 25th day of October, 1821.

Previous to this event, he had received an invitation from the Trustees of Dickinson College, in Carlisle, Penn., to preside over their Institution. And supposing that such a situation might employ him usefully, while its demands would not be more than equal to his strength: and supposing that a removal from the eastern damps of the ocean to the interior, would be beneficial to his health; he accepted this appointment. Farther experience, however, soon convinced him that even to the duties of this station, his health was inadequate. And, in the fall of 1824 he resigned his presidency, and returned to this city, among his immediate friends. During much of the time which has since elapsed, he enjoyed a comfortable state of bodily health.—But, during the last year, the remainder of his strength was obviously wasting away. On the Friday preceding his death, a returning paralytic affection, admonished his surrounding

friends, that the time of his departure was at hand. From that time the difficulty of his articulation was so far increased, that little could be understood,—*enough*, however, to show where the anchor of his hope was fixed; and to convince those around him, that the rod and the staff of the Chief Shepherd were comforting him, as he was entering the valley of the shadow of death. In reply to a remark which was made by one of his friends, that there was but *one* source of consolation in his trying situation, he answered emphatically, “*Yes, there is but one source of consolation, but that’s enough.*” And, in answer to the question whether Jesus the Saviour, was still precious to him, he replied, “*He is, He is.*” These, it is believed, were among the last intelligible words which he uttered. And, having thus finished his course, “he took his departure for the heavenly world, at half-past 8 o’clock on the morning of Sabbath, Dec. 27. 1829; and in the 60th year of his age. In the twinkling of an eye, he was withdrawn from all the sorrows and sins of this mortal life, and conducted by “the Righteous Judge,” to take his seat “with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of God,” in the everlasting Sabbath of glory!

He was followed to the grave by the clergy of our city, and a very great body of citizens, who came to pay their last respects to one who had been the honour of his country, and the glory of our city. It was pleasing to the clergy of all denominations, to see Bishop Hobart among the pall bearers of Dr. Mason. They had in their day, each of them, resolutely defended their own tenets, and forms of Church government. Now, in death, controversy and feuds were forgotten. And the venerable survivor, displaying to the world, the dignity of a christian example, mingled his sorrow with that of the religious com-

munity, over the great and good man who had fallen in the midst of us.

Before the remains were lowered down into the vault, the Rev. Mr. Mc Cartee pronounced an eloquent and moving eulogium over his late beloved preceptor and friend.

As a man Dr. Mason was altogether of a more princely mould, than even the majority of great men brought into competition with him, on the theatre of action. He was bold and animated in his manner; keen and comprehensive in all his views, and qualified to subserve the interest of the kingdom of Christ, on a large scale.

And at the same time, in the more retired walks of social, and domestic life, there was no kinder and more sympathising friend—no more agreeable and instructive companion,—no more tender and affectionate husband—and, especially, no more fond and anxious parent.

His piety was eminently lively, tender, and affectionate, and marked by strong faith in the promises of God; and, at the same time, by deep feeling, in relation to every thing which was calculated to excite the emotions of the heart. An incident, illustrative of this among many others, occurred the evening preceding his departure to Europe, in 1816. “I have often thought,”—said he to a friend,—“and preached of the character of Jesus Christ, as the Lord, *the Keeper*; but now that I am about to leave my family, I can realize the meaning, and feel the full value of the title.” In a few minutes afterwards, he took leave of his family, one by one: and then, gathering them together, he took his seat beside the partner of his life, and his aged mother, and invited them to unite with him in singing the hymn, entitled, “*The Lord will provide.*” He raised the tune, and continued to sing with a steady and unflinching

voice, until he arrived at the closing verse,—“When life sinks apace, &c.

At this moment his lips quivered, and the tears of affection started from his eyes. He clasped his hands together, and dropped his head upon them; as if engaged in mental prayer; then, rising from his chair, with his hands still clasped, he lifted his face upward, and exclaimed, “*God! the God of my fathers! my own God! and the God of my seed! bless my family.*”

Owing to the numerous and pressing avocations of Dr. Mason, his writings are not numerous. He has not left any one great work. He wrote, besides *Letters on frequent communion, A Plea for Sacramental communion on Catholic principles*,—(which has given occasion to many and severe animadversions.) He wrote also *Sermons, Orations*; and very many valuable *Essays* and masterly *Reviews*. The last appeared in the *Christian's Magazine*, a truly meritorious miscellany, which he conducted for four years, with great usefulness to the Church, and glory to himself.

We have said that Dr. Mason was a great man. Upon whatever his mind exerted itself, it left the impress of gigantic might. Power was his attribute: power of intellect, power of feeling. He was capable alike of the sublimest thought, and of the deepest pathos. In the pulpit was witnessed and felt, the force of his impassioned eloquence. There was majesty in his personal appearance. His figure was erect, his countenance beaming with intelligence.—The moment he ascended the sacred desk, you felt that you were in the presence of no ordinary man. He displayed a mind thoroughly disciplined, a master of language, master of his theme. His whole soul was melted into tenderness, illustrating and adorning all his positions with the most apt and rich and glowing imagery. The finest feelings of the heart were touched, and you were convinced, awed, and subdued. Probably no man ever possessed the power in so high a degree, of doing what he pleased with his audience. How often has the smile been seen, one moment, to play upon the faces of his whole congregation, and the next, perhaps, by a transition, deeply serious, and touchingly

tender, their whole souls were awed, and the starting tear betrayed the pervading emotion.

Was this owing to his stupendous intellect? No. It was owing, in part, to the fact, that he never spent his own strength, or his people's time, on subjects of comparatively little importance. He was for getting rid of the vices that are in the world, before he would trouble himself with its follies. And accordingly “Jesus Christ and him crucified” was the grand theme of all his ministrations. And it was owing, farther, to his thorough acquaintance with human nature, with the various springs of human action. Having studied *man* as well as his *Bible*, he knew the avenue to the human heart; he knew how to reach the sinner's conscience, and to make him tremble; and also, how to administer consolation to the wounded spirit.

He was a man, moreover, of great tenderness of feeling; of exquisite sensibility. Placed in circumstances calculated to call forth prominently other features in his character, being often obliged to defend himself against the attacks of envy, if not of malignity; this trait has not, perhaps, been generally accorded to him. But that he possessed it in an eminent degree, all will attest, who were honored with his confidence, and friendship. And let me remark here, that this is unquestionably one of the most valuable natural qualities in a minister of Jesus Christ. In fact, the man who is destitute of it, is, from the very nature of the case, almost disqualified for the services of the sanctuary. The sympathy of the Great High Priest of our profession, is one of his leading characteristics. It was owing greatly to this feature in the character of our departed father that he was so acceptable a visitant at the bed of the sick and dying. It was owing greatly to this, that he was so capable of administering comfort to the afflicted; of binding up the broken hearted. In this, some of you know how he excelled. Seeing the affliction of one of you announced in a distant paper, he writes thus:

“And is that sweet babe removed at last? And are the cords of a mother's affection, rendered more tender and more strong by former apprehensions and suffering, torn asunder? What shall we say? It is the Lord! Soft and subdued must be a Christian's grief under the stroke of his hand. He would not have taken your infant son from you, if he had nothing better to give you. One thing is certain and to know it is worth more than the world is worth, that take what he will, he never will take away his loving kindness. He will chasten his children with rods, and their iniquity with stripes, but he will not cease to be *their* God. Oh! the consolations of that word, that mighty word, *my God; my own God!* More than tongue can utter, or heart conceive, is comprehended in its sweeping import.”

It was owing to this feature in his character, also, that he felt so sensibly under his own

family afflictions. On the death of a beloved daughter in 1822, his anguish was acute. He gave vent to his grief in a flood of tears. Among other expressions, he uttered the following; "My morn was joyous, my noon was brilliant, but clouds and shadows rest upon the evening of my day." And when, shortly afterwards, he was called to part with a most interesting son, his sorrow was no less pungent. On that occasion, when the companions of the youth had lifted the bier to convey his remains to the tomb, all his sensibility was moved; and under the impulse of insuppressible emotion, raising his hands, he exclaimed, "Tread lightly, young men, tread lightly, you carry a temple of the Holy Ghost." And two months after that event, he writes to a highly esteemed friend, "I recall with anguish the *mementos* which my poor history furnishes. My personal misfortune, my sweet Catharine* who left me for her place on high, my beloved James taken away in youth, and vigor, and promise! Oh! I heard his death groan—I saw him *die*—I saw him, and without his reason, to tell me before he went, that through his Redeemer he was going home. The wound is very deep, and very sore, my tears still flow, my heart still bleeds; Oh! pity me, I am very weak. The blossom, the blossom of my hopes gone! cut down in its richest bloom; yet I hope, and I hope not without good reason, that it is transplanted to a kindlier soil, to shed fresher fragrance in the paradise of God."[†]

Dr. Mason was *generous*; generous perhaps to a fault. To know that a fellow being was in *need*, was enough with him, to call forth his sympathies and aid.

He was guileless, unsuspecting, ingenuous. And with these qualities, we are not to be surprised, if in a world like ours, he was sometimes exposed to the machinations of spirits, more selfish, and less noble than his own. But he has been known to say, that he would rather be imposed upon ten thousand times, than submit to the *excruciating torture of suspicion*.

He possessed great *intrepidity of character*. I know not that he feared ought but sin and his God: certainly the frown of man he regarded not.

He was liberal in his views and feelings. Though strongly attached to that exhibition of scriptural doctrine, made in the Westminster Confession of faith, and to the form of government in the Church, of which he was a

member, and strenuous and powerful in the defence of them, yet, wherever he recognized the image of his Master, he loved it.

His erudition was solid, various, extensive, accurate; and all his endowments and attainments were baptized in the spirit of Christ.

As a *Biblical critic* and an expounder of the sacred Volume, he stood, perhaps, unsurpassed by *any*.

Equally distinguished was he as an *instructor of youth*. His great and peculiar excellence, in this department, was the admirable faculty he possessed, of evolving the powers of the mind, and of bringing all its energies into well directed activity. The grand object at which he aimed, (and no man was better qualified to accomplish it,) was to teach his pupils to *think*.

His whole mortal course has been confined within sixty years: but the service he rendered was of no ordinary amount. The day of Jesus Christ will declare what multitudes were converted by his ministry, and what multitudes more were edified and comforted. Nearly one hundred individuals were trained by him for the service of the sanctuary: all of whom have published, or are now publishing the gospel of God our Saviour.

I cannot close without adverting to the goodness of God towards his servant, of whom I have been speaking. There was much mercy in his dealings with him; *step by step* was he reduced, and thus, he and his family and friends were kindly and tenderly prepared for their separation. Gradually was he unfitted for the occupations and enjoyments of life, until almost every thing but the direct communications of the Saviour's grace and love, was gone; these however remained. As the Lord met with Moses, on Pisgah's top, before his departure, and talked with him there as a man talketh with his friend, and showed him all the country of Canaan stretching before his eyes, in beauty and verdure: so we have reason to believe, he met with our departed friend, and gave him some sweet prospects of the Canaan that is above. For on the very day before his release, he could affirm, that his God and Saviour was a sufficient resource, and that he then found him precious to his soul.

Let this be the consolation of his family and friends. They sorrow not as those who have no hope. And there is another respect, in which his covenant God dealt very mercifully with him. *Always* had he regarded vital religion as "the one thing needful," the object of supreme importance; and his anxiety on this subject with respect to his family was very great. In the days of his greatest outward prosperity, when his children were growing up to maturity around him, he has with tears of solicitude declared, "I ask not for them the great things of the world; but, oh!

* See the Mag. of the R. D. C. vol. ii p. 65.

† The death of this interesting and beloved youth, was made the occasion of an extensive revival of religion in Carlisle College, which resulted in the conversion and introduction into the ministry, of many of his companions.

that their souls may live! For *myself*, blessed be the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, I have no fears, but, *my children, my children.*" God was pleased to spare him until two of these children had passed before him to glory, until two more were preaching the unsearchable riches of Christ, and all of them had avouched his God as theirs.

Well might this dear and venerable man say, then, *Now lettest thou thy servant depart, in peace, according to thy word, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation.*

DAVID DALE ESQ.

In our number for January, we had prepared an extended memoir of this pious man. It was consumed, in the late fire, and unfortunately the copy also has been destroyed.

David Dale was, in his time, perhaps, the richest commoner in Scotland. This princely estate was made by his ingenuity, and industry, in establishing Cotton Mills, and in improving the machinery for spinning cotton. His main establishment was the New Lanark Cotton Mills, a *little city* itself, near the falls of the Clyde, above Glasgow, some thirty miles.—The manner in which this eminent man filled up the hours of his time, was singular. At one time he might be seen in his Banking establishment, at another in his Cotton Mills, or in his manufactories; then, at noon, in the seat of justice, dispensing justice with strictest impartiality. He was usually called the *Glasgow Benevolent Magistrate*. And then, in addition to all this;—for he was a holy and devoted christian, in the evening you might see him in his own church, in his own pulpit, preaching as a christian minister, to an assembly of Christians. He was strict in his adherence to the tenets of the old puritans of England. He held their form of church government, usually called independency. He was strictly evangelical in all his doctrines. When a youth at College, I have heard this venerable man officiate. And though at that time, young and thoughtless, I have not forgotten the impressions made on my mind. His venerable figure in the pulpit, with his neat pocket Bible in his hand; his simplicity, dignity, earnestness, his touching strains of eloquence,—all tended to arrest and chain down the attention. I heard this man of princely estate, and dignity in office, once deliver a discourse, in all the simple charms of Bible eloquence, on the divinity, office, and gracious work of the Holy Ghost.

Now, there is one incident in the history of this man, who was in his time, the richest commoner of Scotland, and, I venture to say, among the holiest men in Glasgow.—He died in peace full of days, and the comforts of the Holy one. He left his estate to his children. He had been the foremost, in his life time, in

contributions to every Christian and humane institution. It was indeed a matter of wonder to some, how, in his earlier days he ever could afford to give so often, and so great donations. He used to say to his friends, "I can very well afford it. I have a little shovel with which I shovel out. But God has a large shove with which he shovels it in to me!" Nor was he less benevolent when he died. His will displayed the extent of his noble and charitable benefactions. But, Christian reader, hear the painful incident to which I allude. The great body of that princely estate went to his daughter. It was her lot, alas! to be married to *Robert Owen*. And, now, in the mysterious and unsearchable Providence of God, that wealth, gotten by the pious and praying DAVID DALE, who loved the Christian religion as he loved his own soul,—is now in the hands of Robert Owen, and R. Dale Owen, so well known, in their associations with the notorious *Frances Wright*, to propagate the scepticism and Atheism of the day! Was it well, or ill, for the Christian cause, that David Dale died rich?—Let the rich answer this question.

Religious Communications.

DR. RIPLEY'S HALF CENTURY SERMON.

Mr. Editor;—I have just been reading, with some interest, a "Half century discourse, by Ezra Ripley D. D. of Concord Mass." That Church, it seems, was planted in A. D. 1636, by the learned and pious Mr. Peter Bulkeley, a non-conformist Minister, who was driven by Laud, from his native land. In this Church at Concord, a line of six ministers, of the puritan faith, preceded Dr. R. Mr. Emerson was the immediate predecessor. In his days, and in the year 1776, he and his Church renewed their covenant before the Most High, after the manner which characterised the best and purest times of all the Reformed, and the Puritan Churches, in Holland, France, England, and Scotland. Mr. Emerson was surrounded by Deacons of eminent piety, zeal, and orthodoxy. There were schools in every part of the Town, in which the pure doctrines of the Reformation, as they are extracted from the Holy Bible, were carefully taught, and impressed on the young minds. This was eminently the case in the Churches of New England from early times, down through the reviving days of President Edwards. In the Town of Concord, we have learned, there were as many as eight or ten schools, sometimes twelve.—In each of these, the pupils were faithfully taught the pure doctrines of the Gospel. The Assembly's Catechism was made the leading catechism.