

THE
TERCENTENARY BOOK.

COMMEMORATIVE OF THE COMPLETION OF

THE LIFE AND WORK OF JOHN KNOX, OF THE HUGUENOT
MARTYRS OF FRANCE, AND THE ESTABLISHMENT
OF PRESBYTERY IN ENGLAND.

CONTAINING AN ACCOUNT OF THE "TERCENTENARY CELEBRATION"
AS OBSERVED BY THE PRESBYTERIANS OF PHILADELPHIA, NOV.
20, 1872; THE ORATION OF PROF. S. J. WILSON, D.D., LL.D.,
AND HISTORICAL PAPERS OF THE REV. R. M. PAT-
TERSON, THE REV. J. B. DALES, D.D., AND
THE REV. JAMES McCOSH, D.D., LL.D.

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY THE REV. HENRY C. MCCOOK.

ILLUSTRATED

PHILADELPHIA:
PRESBYTERIAN BOARD OF PUBLICATION,
No. 1334 CHESTNUT STREET.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1873, by
THE TRUSTEES OF THE
PRESBYTERIAN BOARD OF PUBLICATION,
In the Office of the Librarian of Congress, at Washington.

VERMONT
WASHER
L. S. C. A. S. C.

WESTCOTT & THOMSON,
Stereotypers and Electrotypers, Philada.

SHERMAN & CO.,
Printers, Phila.



John Knox

JOHN KNOX.

AN ORATION

BY THE

REV. SAMUEL J. WILSON, D.D., LL.D.,

PROFESSOR OF BIBLICAL AND ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY IN THE WESTERN
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY, ALLEGHENY, PA.

JOHN KNOX.

AT the beginning of the sixteenth century Scotland was wrapped in the densest gloom of intellectual and moral darkness. Feudalism, ignorance, superstition, licentiousness and tyranny—the worst elements of the Middle Ages—held brutal sway throughout her borders. The bishops and abbots, with half of the wealth of the realm in their coffers, outranking princes and nobles both in dignity and power, and setting at defiance alike the laws of God and man, outraged every principle of virtue and every dictate of decency. Priests and friars, bestial in their stolid sensualness, filled the land like the frogs of Egypt. There were friars white and friars black and friars gray—friars of every hue and habit and description, and friars everywhere.

Monasteries and nunneries were counted by the hundred, and each several one of them was a leprous plague spot. The investigation into the condition of monasteries in England which was ordered by Henry VIII. disclosed a corruption

as festering and loathsome as that upon which fire and brimstone were rained in Sodom. The state of morals in the Scottish monasteries was, if possible, worse.

The people had these bishops, abbots, priests and friars for their teachers, leaders and examples in holy living. "The priest's lips no longer kept knowledge;" and when immortal souls "sought the law at his mouth," they were tantalized with dead forms in a dead language, which were as destitute of the spirit and grace of the gospel as a mummy of the pyramids, wrapped in cere-cloth, is destitute of warm, pulsing blood and stirring passions. The Bible was almost as unknown as one of the lost Sibylline books. The pulpit was obsolete. Instead of the sermon were substituted gossip, scandal, ribald jest and obscene comedy. By means of excommunication, anathema and interdict—the most terrific ecclesiastical machinery ever invented—the clergy tyrannized relentlessly over the souls and bodies of men. Priests ground the faces of the poor as systematically and as sedulously as though they had been called of God and ordained of men for this specific service. The Church, which should have been the friend and helper and teacher and lifter-up of the people—which should have been quick to discern their wants and swift to avenge their wrongs—used all its power to keep them in

ignorance, to foster their superstitions and to add to the bitterness of their burdens.

This apostate Church, winking at every species of vice, and tolerant of all forms of iniquity, "breathed out threatenings and slaughter" against all who ventured to question her authority or dared to seek for light and truth. For all such she had the ready argument of tyrants, *fire and sword*. Men were burned at the stake for having the New Testament in a language in which they could read and understand it. Yet this vast despotism, with all its elaborate machinery of oppression, was impotent to arrest the progress of the truth. It could burn men with balls of brass in their mouths to keep them from preaching the gospel in the flames, but it could not destroy or paralyze the truth for which these men died.

But the day of Scotland's redemption was drawing nigh. The echo of the voices of Wickliff and Huss sounded faintly along her shores. By and by she caught glimpses of the light which had been kindled in Germany, Switzerland and France.

A youth of twenty, with the blood of earls and dukes in his veins, invested with a high ecclesiastical dignity from his childhood and with a long and brilliant line of promotion open before him, began to feel the stirrings of the ne

spirit that was abroad among the nations, went to Germany, sat at the feet of Luther and Melancthon at Wittenberg, and caught the enthusiasm of the eloquent converted Franciscan monk, Francis Lambert, at Marburg, and returned to Scotland all aflame with zeal to preach the gospel. One afternoon a fire was prepared in front of the old college in St. Andrews, and this young man—only three-and-twenty years old—died at the stake as only one of God's heroes can die, and then history wrote, in ineffaceable characters, the name of the proto-martyr of the Scottish Reformation—*Patrick Hamilton*.

As had been predicted, "the reik of Patrick Hamilton infected as many as it blew upon." From his ashes sprung men armed with the panoply of the gospel. The hierarchy could burn men, but these very burnings kindled a light which could not be put out. A learned and eloquent evangelist arose in the person of George Wishart. When he preached, crowds hung upon his words, spellbound, by the hour. If churches were shut against him, he preached in the streets, on dikes or from city gates. His voice rang like a trumpet through Scotland. It was one of the few truly brave and grand voices that have been heard in this world, but it was soon quenched in fire. On the gentle slope in front of the castle of St. Andrews, the sea sounding his requiem,

George Wishart gloriously sealed his testimony with his blood. His persecutors, fearing that eloquent, clarion voice even in the flames, stopped his utterance by tightening a cord around his neck. Through the tapestried window of the castle, reclining on luxurious cushions, Cardinal Beaton witnessed the martyrdom, glutting his lecherous eyes with the agonies of this illustrious witness of the truth.

The Hierarchy, wielding the tremendous power which had been won for it by Hildebrand and Innocent III., bearing two swords, the temporal as well as the spiritual, insolently lording it over prince, priests and people, and setting its face like a flint against all enlightenment of the intellect or soul, exercised a most cruel and heartless despotism. Its spirit was devilish. So long as its magnates could roll in wealth, so long as they could pamper their lazy bodies on the hard earnings of the poor, so long as without restraint or let or hindrance they could indulge their brutal lusts and passions, they were content; but rather than lose an iota of their ill-gotten and ill-used power, rather than have the people read the word of God for themselves, they would see Scotland lighted from one end to the other with blazing stakes and fagots. They had the power and they used it savagely. Their inquisition for those who dared to preach Christ was as keen

and unerring as the scent of the bloodhound. Every voice that was raised in behalf of truth and righteousness was stifled in fire. Every kindling of light was trodden out in blood. To have the love of Christ in the heart, and to dare proclaim it, was swift and sure destruction.

Whence, then, can deliverance come? Where can be found a man strong enough and brave enough to grapple with this gigantic despotism, whose mighty power has been the steady growth of ages? Has God in his quiver one such arrow? Has he, in all his kingdom, one such champion hero?

A tutor in the family of Douglass of Langniddrie, who had been a teacher of philosophy at St. Andrews, until, becoming disgusted with the jargon of scholasticism and the corruptions of papacy, he abandoned the one and renounced the other, became the devoted follower and chivalrous sword-bearer of George Wishart. When Wishart was arrested, he advised the tutor to return to "his bairns," as he could no longer be of any service to him. Very reluctantly, and only after earnest remonstrances, the tutor followed this advice. Besides teaching the classics, he exercised his pupils daily in the Holy Scriptures and indoctrinated them theologically by catechetical instruction, and at stated intervals these catechisings were public.

The times were now fraught with momentous issues, and events big with the destinies of peoples crowded thick upon each other. A few months only after the day upon which Cardinal Beaton, lounging on his velvet cushions, had witnessed from his window in the castle, with undisguised satisfaction, the burning of Wishart, his own lifeless body, covered with the gaping wounds of assassins' daggers, was hung as a public spectacle from that identical window.

The tutor of Douglass, together with his pupils, took refuge in the castle of St. Andrews, which was then held by the enemies of the late cardinal. Here he was soon recognized as one who was eminently fitted to become the teacher and leader of men and of princes, rather than to be the tutor of boys. When the judgment of his friends in this regard was solemnly announced to him, and he was adjured to undertake the work of the ministry, he burst into a flood of tears, shut himself in his chamber, and for days was overwhelmed with the profoundest grief. Through the importunity of friends, and partly through the impertinence of a certain champion of the papacy, he was at length constrained to enter the pulpit in defence of the truth. It was a memorable day in Scottish history when he first preached in the parish church at St. Andrews. Brave men held their breath as they listened to his bold and

sweeping utterances. Such preaching had not been heard in Scotland for ages. "Others hewed the branches of the papistry, but he struck at the root." Some rejoiced and took courage, some doubted, some hoped, some feared, many were furious, but all felt that there was a new power in the world, while a few chosen spirits recognized JOHN KNOX *as the ordained champion and leader of the revolution then beginning in Scotland.*

By the aid of French forces the castle of St. Andrews was reduced, Knox was taken prisoner, was loaded with chains and confined as a galley-slave. Through hardship, exposure and sickness his body was reduced to a skeleton, but his spirit remained invincible. Once the galley on which he was confined came in sight of St. Andrews, and the spires of the city being pointed out to him, he was asked if he knew the place. With kindling eye he replied: "Yes, I know it well, for I see the steeple of that place where God first opened my mouth in public to his glory, and I am fully persuaded, how weak soever I now appear, that I shall not depart this life till that my tongue shall glorify his godly name in the same place." We admire the indomitable spirit of Julius Cæsar, who threatened to their faces to crucify the pirates who held him in their power as a prisoner; but these words of Knox, in the condition in which

he then was, breathe a grander courage than that of Julius Cæsar.

Released from the galleys, he spent five years in England as an asylum from persecution, and as a preacher in Berwick and New Castle he was "mighty in word;" as chaplain to Edward VI. he "stood before kings;" as a court preacher he was as plain and fearless and searching as Latimer; as a theologian he was consulted in regard to the Book of Common Prayer and the Articles of Religion; as a divine a brilliant line of promotion was open before him in the Anglican Church. Edward VI. proffered him a bishopric, and any dignity in the English Church was within his easy reach; but he could accept none of these without the sacrifice of honest and well-grounded convictions, and he therefore relinquished them all "for conscience' sake," and remained loyally and heroically true to these convictions in spite of gold and glory. He remained poor and untitled; but is there a title on earth that would add any dignity to the simple name JOHN KNOX?

When that "idolatrous Jezebel, mischievous Mary of the Spaniard's blood," came to the throne, Knox was compelled to flee from England. He went first to France, thence to Switzerland and thence to Germany. His exile on the Continent forms an important segment of his life, for it threw him into contact with other Reformers

from all parts of the world, and afforded him time for study and mature reflection. In the matter of the church at Frankfort, he had an opportunity of testifying publicly against the false and pernicious principles upon which the English Reformation was conducted, and, in consequence, he again proudly accepted exile rather than sacrifice or compromise a jot or tittle of his honest convictions. But the most important feature of this part of his life was his intercourse with John Calvin at Geneva. These two great men, whose influence has struck deeper into the currents of history than any other two men then living, entertained the most ardent esteem and friendship for each other. Although Knox at this time was fifty years old, he pursued his studies at Geneva as diligently and enthusiastically as the merest tyro. This seems to have been the sunniest part of his stormy life. He was engaged in congenial studies and he was surrounded with congenial companions, yet he relinquished these studies and the society of congenial spirits in Switzerland, and returned to Scotland just so soon as he felt that he could be of service there.

Back once more in his dear native land, he preached day and night, almost incessantly, and the *word grew mightily*. No part of his life was more fruitful of great results than this brief sojourn in Scotland at this time. His clear vision

pierced through all disguises, shams and compromises. His sharp, incisive judgment penetrated to the very core of the issue. To him all compliance with papal ceremonies was treason to the cause of truth. With a steady hand, which never missed its aim, he at one blow cut the last tie that bound the hesitating Reformers to the papacy. Thus early in the struggle he settled, at once and for ever, the policy of the Reformation in Scotland. There were to be no compromises, no temporizing expediences. The work was to be genuine and thorough. At this time, when almost totally hidden from the world and unknown to it, he laid deep and immovable the foundations of the Scottish Reformation. His glowing earnestness fused the floating, incoherent elements of Reform into consistency, symmetry and strength. A master-hand was on the helm, and the noble ship, responding to his touch, assumed that course which she held triumphantly to the end. All ecclesiastical history since that day is a vindication of Knox's policy of the Reformation. It is the only true policy.

Called to the pastorate of the English church in Geneva in 1556, Knox returned to Switzerland, where he remained for two years. While there his time was occupied in preaching, in pastoral labor, in working upon the Geneva Bible,

and in uttering his terrible "Blast of the Trumpet against the Monstrous Regiment of Women."

In the mean time the queen regent of Scotland, "crafty, dissimulate and false," having thrown off her cunningly woven disguises, took the first step toward the total extirpation of the Reformation in Scotland by summoning the Protestant preachers to stand their trials at Stirling. The queen regent, Hamilton, archbishop of St. Andrews, and Beaton, archbishop of Glasgow, notwithstanding bitter and rankling jealousies among themselves, had joined hands for the purpose of crushing out Protestantism utterly. The plans were all matured. The plot was ripe. The mine was about to be sprung. At this supreme crisis the man whom God had been preparing, by a long and severe discipline, to be one of his ordained instruments in great achievements, steps suddenly upon the scene. Elijah was kept hidden in obscurity until he was to confront Ahab. Moses had a forty years' discipline in the wilderness, and came from the deserts of Midian to stand before Pharaoh. Moses and Elijah were no more really chosen, ordained and prepared ministers of God to act in great crises of the Church than was John Knox. In slavery and in exile his nature was seasoned and toughened to the texture of true heroism. In his public catechisings at Langniddrie, he first trained to popu-

lar speaking that voice which afterward shook thrones and dashed to pieces the schemes and policies of kings, queens, princes and nobles.

On the invitation of certain noblemen he returned to Scotland "in the brunt of the battle." His appearance at Edinburgh, as sudden and as unexpected as the appearance of Elijah at Samaria, created among his enemies as great a panic as though it had been the invasion of a hostile army. A good man in earnest, and with a good cause, is as "the chariots of Israel and the horsemen thereof," mightier than armies and navies. Although under sentence of outlawry and liable at any hour to be arrested and executed, Knox resolved to stand with his brethren at Stirling and share their dangers and their fate, "by life, by death or else by both, to glorify God." But from this threatened danger the Lord preserved both him and them.

Amidst the throes of incipient civil war, and in verification of his own prediction while a galley-slave, he returned to St. Andrews. The archbishop peremptorily forbade his preaching in the cathedral, and threatened that in case he should dare to do so he would be shot down in the pulpit by the soldiers. In defiance of the archbishop's threat, and in spite of the remonstrances of his friends, he yet preached.

This was the very crisis and pivot of the

struggle. At Augsburg the princes saved the Lutheran Reformation, when the theologians would have compromised or surrendered. Knox, by his splendid intrepidity, saved the cause in Scotland, when nobles as brave as the bravest would have yielded to the demands of the archbishop. John Knox at St. Andrews is a figure as grand and towering as Martin Luther before the diet of Worms.

The effects and results of Knox's preaching at this time were marvelous. In the three days at St. Andrews—the primal see of Scotland—popery was utterly overthrown, the Reformed worship was set up, images and pictures were torn from the churches and monasteries were demolished. Knox's doctrine was as fatal to popish superstition as the fire which ran along the ground in the plague of the hail was fatal to the vegetable gods of Egypt. Wheresoever that doctrine went—and it ran very swiftly—popish power and popish idolatry, with all the paraphernalia thereof, melted before it.

In less than a month after his triumphal appearance at St. Andrews, Knox's voice was ringing among the rafters of St. Giles and of the Abbey Church at Edinburgh. Chosen at once as pastor of St. Giles, he entered upon his labors in that church which his name has made historic throughout the world, and where "his tongue



OLD ST. GILES, EDINBURGH.

was more than a match for Mary's sceptre," and where so often "his voice in an hour put more life into men than six hundred trumpets could."

During the trying vicissitudes of civil war, Knox was the one pillar of strength upon which Scotland leaned with her whole weight. Wise in counsel, utterly fearless in action, mighty in the resistless torrents of his eloquence, the nation turned to him instinctively as its God-given leader. With a price upon his head, with hired assassins waylaying his path, ever at the post of duty and of danger, "careless of his own carcass," thinking only of his dear Scotland, in the darkest extremities of perilous times waking the expiring courage of heroes with the trumpet peals of his eloquence, he fought the good fight bravely through, until within one year peace was proclaimed, popery was abolished by act of Parliament, and a confession prepared principally by himself was adopted. There never was a nobler fight or one that was more signal in its achievements. A complete revolution was accomplished, popery was abolished, the Reformed Church had a firm status and a complete Presbyterian organization. The battle was really gained. Henceforth the struggle was to maintain the ground which had been won.

A more dangerous power, however, than fire and sword was now to be encountered in the in-

sidious influence of a brilliant court which had as its centre the beautiful and fascinating Mary Stuart. The eagle eye of Knox perceived at once the point of danger, and Mary, on the other hand, as soon discovered the one power which stood in the way of the accomplishment of her designs. Knox was summoned to Holyrood, and in a long conference Mary tried her best to intimidate and awe him. She might as well have tried to shake Salisbury crags with the breath of her nostrils.

When the news of the massacre of the Protestants at Vassy in France reached Holyrood, Mary had a grand ball to celebrate the event. On the next Sabbath, Knox thundered in St. Giles against those who "were more exercised in fiddling and flinging than in reading or hearing God's most blessed word, and those who danced as the Philistines their fathers danced, for the pleasure which they take in the displeasure of God's people." Mary sent for Knox the next day. He retracted nothing, but told the queen to her face that her uncles, the Guises of France, "were enemies to God, and spared not to spill the blood of many innocents," and then let her understand very distinctly that "it was not his vocation to stand at her chamber door and to have no further liberty, but to whisper his mind in her Grace's ear." That voice was for Scotland and the world.

"He departed," as he tells us in his "*Historie*,"

“with a reasonable merry countenance.” “He is not afraid!” whispered the papists as he passed. Turning upon them, he replied, “Why should the pleasing countenance of a gentilwoman affray me? I have luiked on the faces of many angry men, and yet have not been affrayed above measure.” That man could not be frightened. Next, Mary plied all her exquisite art to flatter him, but in this she succeeded no better.

Times grew critical. Many of the nobles were proving recreant. Knox sacrificed some of his dearest and sweetest friendships rather than yield an inch or an iota to the growing encroachments of the papacy. In his estimation one mass was worse for Scotland than a hostile army. The nobles were ready and anxious to compromise. Parliament was pliable and plastic in the hands of Mary. Knox alone stood in her way. He, therefore, must be silenced or be put out of her way somehow.

For the fifth time Knox was summoned to the palace. In a torrent of tears and a tempest of passion, Mary stormed and railed at him. Carried beyond all bounds of prudence, she at last spitefully exclaimed: “What are you in this commonwealth?” Grandly Knox replied: “A subject born within the same, madam; and, albeit I am neither earl, lord nor baron within it, yet has God made me—how abject soever I am in your

eyes—a profitable member within the same; yea, madam, to me it appertains no less to forewarn of such things as may hurt it, if I foresee them, than it doth to any of the nobility.”

There is not in history a nobler answer.

For writing a circular letter, which he was authorized to do by the General Assembly when any exigency demanded such a measure, he was arraigned and tried for treason. He made a brave and able defence, and to the bitter disappointment and chagrin of Mary, he was acquitted. The queen had learned that Knox could not be intimidated, neither could he be flattered, or cajoled, or wheedled into compliance with her wishes. She had also discovered that she could not have him beheaded for treason in Scotland.

She next entered into a conspiracy by which, through a wholesale slaughter of the Protestants, she hoped to get rid of her enemy. A league had been formed between the pope and the Guises, by which Protestantism in France was to be utterly rooted out by force. To this infernal bond Mary set her fair and jeweled hand, and that brought Scotland within the fatal scope of the league. But there is a wheel within a wheel. A jealousy between Mary and her husband, Darnley, and the consequent murder of Rizzio, turned the fierce currents of history into other channels,

and Scotland was saved from the horrors of a massacre such as that of St. Bartholomew.

Under the regency of Murray the Church had peace, and the revolution of 1560 was ratified. There was still a strong and vicious papal party, but by firmness the regent kept down all insurrections until he was taken off by the hand of an assassin.

Under the regency of Lennox there was civil war. The castle of Edinburgh was held at this time by the queen's forces, and these forces were under the command of the apostate Kircaldy of Grange. Overwhelmed with grief on account of the death of his beloved Murray, Knox had been smitten with apoplexy, and was no longer able to walk to church or to ascend the pulpit without help. Yet he was as watchful and fearless as ever. Not liking the reports which he received of the preaching in St. Giles, Grange came down to church one morning with a band of desperate men to intimidate the preacher. The old man rightly interpreted their presence as a threat, and, his infirmities forgotten for the time being, his wonted fires flamed forth again; and leveling his thunders right at Grange, he made the very shingles on St. Giles tremble.

His friends now feared for his life. The castle was full of Hamiltons, all thirsting for his blood. He was shot at through the window of his own

house. But he was totally unconscious of fear. At length he was prevailed upon to leave Edinburgh, on the ground that his longer continuance there would involve the lives of his friends. He went to St. Andrews.

James Melville, who was then a student, has preserved for us in his diary a very graphic account of the habits and appearance of the great reformer at this time. He brings the scenes vividly before us. We see the tottering old man walking and sitting in the yard at St. Salvator's college, calling the students around him, exhorting them to be diligent in their studies, to know God and his work in the country, and to stand by the "gude cause." With his heart yet young, we find him encouraging the students by his presence at a play which was acted by them on the occasion of the marriage of one of their regents. We see him in his great weakness creeping to the kirk, "slowly and warily," with a "furring of martics about his neck," a staff in one hand and his trusty servant supporting him on the other side. We see him lifted bodily by two men into the pulpit, and then leaning wearily upon it for support. We hear his tremulous, faltering, uncertain tones as he opens the text; we listen as he "proceeds moderately for the space of half an hour;" and then entering upon his application, he warms and glows until he makes



THE HOUSE OF JOHN KNOX, EDINBURGH.

the students "grew and tremble so that they cannot hold their pens to write," and kindling with the rush and momentum of his thought, the spirit triumphing over the half-dead body, we see the shriveled limbs become instinct with life and energy, and the whole man "so active and vigorous that he is like to ding the pulpit in blads and fly out of it."

Providence opened up the way for his return to Edinburgh before he died. He returned according to an earnest invitation, and on the express and emphatic condition that he "should not temper his tongue or cease to speak against the men of the castle."

Once more he is back in his old pulpit, but his voice can no longer fill St. Giles. To accommodate him with a smaller audience chamber, the congregation prepared for him the Tolbooth church. While these preparations are in progress, I invite you to accompany me for a little while to the Continent.

When Knox was driven out of England by "Bloody Mary," he found a grateful asylum in France, where he formed many intimate and ardent friendships. Perilous times cement kindred spirits.

While Luther was lecturing on philosophy at Wittenberg, the venerable Lefevre in France, through the study of the Epistles of Paul, had

reached the central doctrine of the Reformation, justification by faith. Briçonnet, bishop of Meaux, occupied the same theological ground. When, therefore, this doctrine was proclaimed in Germany, France responded to it with a quick and live sympathy. The leaven of the gospel spread rapidly from the professor in her great university to the peasant in the furrow—from the prince by the throne to the mechanic at his bench. Margaret of Valois, queen of Navarre, the witty, the accomplished and the beloved sister of Francis II., was in full sympathy with the Reformation, and for some time she carried the sympathies of her royal brother with her. But it was not to be expected that the enemies of the gospel would quietly witness these rapid conquests without putting men to death “for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.” As in other countries, so in France, persecutions raged fiercely. Loaded with every opprobrious epithet, charged with crimes as atrocious as those which were laid against the early Christians by the pagans, subjected to tortures as refined in cruelty as those of Nero, in spite of fire and steel and the *balançoir*, the noble band of martyrs and confessors in France heroically maintained their course, singing psalms at the stake, “glorifying God in the fires,” bearing their testimony to the truth, until their enraged persecutors, in order to silence them, cut

out their tongues and flung them, yet quivering, into their faces. In the sixteenth century, France was the bloodiest theatre of persecution of any country in Europe save one.

Yet the blood of these glorious martyrs only fertilized the soil for the propagation of the truth. The smoke of their sacrifice disseminated the principles for which they died. The Scriptures were translated into French by Olivetan, the relative of Calvin. The Psalms, turned into metre by Marot, "the poet of princes and the prince of poets," were sung at the court and on the fashionable promenade of Paris, and were hummed even by King Francis himself. The printing-press was busy. It teemed with books and tracts. Tracts were scattered like autumnal leaves in the streets of Paris.

A placard against the mass was one night posted on the walls of the principal cities throughout the kingdom, and even on the king's own door. Francis was infuriated when he thought of the insult against his own majesty, and was alarmed and horrified when he thought of the insult against the holy sacrament. As a public expiation for this latter offence, he ordered a solemn procession, which in its object, its spirit, its incidents, its grotesque blending of extreme devoutness with savage ferocity, is one of the most unique in history. Everything possible was done

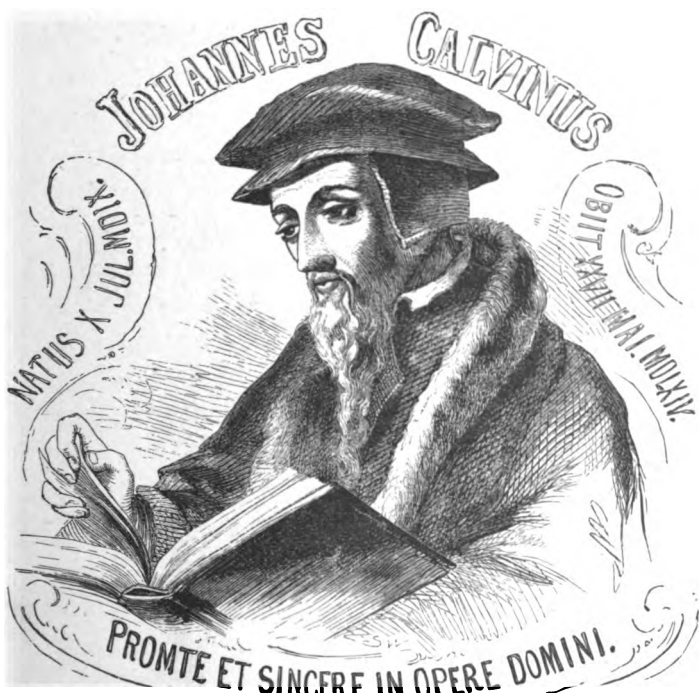
to make it the most imposing spectacle of the kind which had ever been witnessed in France. The highest dignitaries in Church and State, emblazoned with the insignia of their offices, adorned the ranks. Every shrine in Paris was emptied of relics, and the procession was graced with all the treasures of the reliquary, from the crown of thorns to the beard of St. Louis. Under a canopy borne by princes of the blood, the host was carried by the bishop of Paris. In six public places on the route of the procession as many altars were erected for the repose of the sacrament, and beside each of these altars there was a scaffold, a pile of fagots, and an iron beam, so arranged by means of pivot and pulley that it could be raised and lowered at will. When the head of the procession reached these altars successively, a Reformer was tied to the end of the beam, and by a see-saw movement was plunged again and again into a bath of fire. These awful dippings were so timed that, the ligaments being consumed, the victim dropped into the blazing pile just as the king was devoutly kneeling at the altar in adoration of the host. The misguided, maddened populace bowed down in the streets to worship bits of wood and dead men's bones, while, at the same time, they morbidly luxuriated in the exquisite tortures of those "of whom the world was not worthy." Strange extremes meet in human

nature! This spectacle engendered a morbid taste for public slaughterings, which has many times since converted France into an Aceldama, a field of blood, and which has had as its legitimate results the guillotine of the Revolution and the awful butcheries of the Commune, three centuries later.

A French refugee in Basle heard with keenest pain reports of the awful sufferings of his friends in France, and his indignation was kindled to a white heat when the persecutors, with the king at their head, attempted to palliate the atrocities which they were committing by publishing the basest calumnies against both the opinions and practices of the Reformers. He determined that these traduced and persecuted people of God should be vindicated. To this end he wrote a little book, and in a bold and immortal address dedicated it to Francis II. This was the first edition of what the world now knows as Calvin's Institutes, the noblest apology ever penned by an uninspired man.

The Institutes of Calvin at once gave consistency and symmetry to the Reformed Church in France; and, in spite of sceptre and sword, cemented by the blood of martyrs, it grew strong, until it published its own apology, in its doctrines as crystallized in the Confession of 1559. At this time, a single step in the right direction would

have emancipated France from the thralldom of the papacy, but she knew not "the time of her visitation." Behind the throne, upon which sat a poor, weak, sickly, uxorious boy yet in his teens, stood the Lorraines, with the duke of Guise at their head, and they with consummate ability and craft and utter unscrupulousness wielded the powers of the government for the suppression of the gospel. It was an ominous conjunction—the gloomy despot, Philip II., on the throne of Spain, the duke of Guise behind the throne of France, with Mary Stuart, niece of Guise, as wife of the puppet king, and the mother of Mary and sister of Guise as queen regent of Scotland. It was a conjunction which portended evil, and it brought upon France "a day of wasteness and desolation," a time when God's people "were scattered and peeled, meted out and trodden under foot;" a time when every sanctuary of safety and of right was ruthlessly invaded and wantonly desecrated; a time when clustering villages of peaceful, thrifty, God-fearing citizens were razed as though they had been dens of wild beasts, and with an overthrow so utter and complete that not a stone was left to mark the spot where they had been, nor a human being to tell the story of their destruction; a time when rivers in their courses were dammed up with the bodies of slaughtered saints; a time when the lords and ladies of the court regaled



JOHN CALVIN.

themselves daily, amidst pleasantry and repartee, by witnessing, from the windows of the palace, the mortal agonies of tortured martyrs; a time when the atmosphere of the court became pestilential from the stench of blood; a time when little children at their plays talked about and familiarized themselves with the thought of death by martyrdom.

The massacre of Vassy, in open and utter defiance of the edict of January, which has been called the Magna Charta of religious liberty in France, demonstrated to the Protestants the absolute necessity of self-defence. Longer non-resistance would be suicidal. They rallied, therefore, under the standards of their renowned leaders Condé and the Colignis. Jeanne d'Albret, queen of Navarre, put her young son Henry into the ranks as a soldier, and pawned her crown jewels to raise money for the war. Charlotte de Laval, urging her husband, the admiral Coligni, to take up arms in defence of the suffering Protestants, was asked by him: "Are you prepared to endure confiscation, flight, exile, shame, nakedness and hunger, and what is worse, to suffer all this in your children? Are you prepared to see your husband branded as a rebel and dragged to a scaffold, while your children, disgraced and ruined, are begging their bread at the hands of their enemies? I give you eight days to reflect

upon it; and when you shall be prepared for such reverses, I will be ready to set forward and perish with you and our friends." Charlotte instantly replied: "The eight days are already expired. Go, sir, where your duty calls you. Heaven will not give the victory to our enemies. In the name of God I call upon you to resist no longer, but save our brethren or die in the attempt." The admiral was in his saddle the next morning. There were heroines as well as heroes in those days.

The baleful theory of uniformity—the theory that there was only room in France for one Church, and that the Roman Catholic Church—divided the nation into two hostile camps and plunged the country into a series of civil wars. Spain sympathized with and aided the Catholic party, Philip II. urging upon France the policy of extermination which he was carrying out in the Netherlands. England and the Netherlands sympathized with and aided the Protestants, the latter country sending her immortal prince of Orange to take the field. It was a struggle great and memorable both in the principles at stake and in the distinguished leaders on each side. It was the genius, heroism and godly enthusiasm of the Bourbon and the Coligni on the one side, and the Machiavellian craft, intrigue and devilish hate of the Guise and the Medici on the other.



WILLIAM OF ORANGE.

Wars follow each other in rapid succession. "Blood toucheth blood." The fields Dreux, St. Denis, Jarnac, Moncontour and Arnay le Duc rendered the valor of the Huguenots historic. Condé and D'Andelot are dead on the field. Then there comes a lull in the din of battle, a short respite from war. Negotiations are going on concerning a marriage alliance which is to unite the two parties and give lasting peace to France. The admiral Coligni is invited to the court, and has repeated interviews with the young king Charles IX. He urges upon Charles the policy of uniting France and the Netherlands in an alliance against Spain. Catharine, the queen-mother, on the other hand, used all the witchery of her power to thwart that policy and to poison the mind of Charles against Coligni.

One loves to dream of the results that would have attended the policy of Coligni. France Protestant and in alliance with the Netherlands, and the allied armies of the two countries led by such men as the prince of Orange and Coligni! What a different history of Europe we would be reading to-day, and what a different map of Europe our children would be studying to-day!

The admiral Coligni was at this time the head and soul of the Huguenot party. He had gained the ear, and by his frank, high-toned Christian chivalry was rapidly winning the heart, of King

Charles. The queen mother, her son the duke of Anjou and the young duke of Guise took the alarm. Charles must be rescued from the potent influence of Coligni at all hazards, and these three spirits balk at nothing which will further their plans. They resolved upon the assassination of the admiral, but through unsteadiness of aim the assassin only succeeded in severely wounding him. The conspirators had hoped to destroy the Huguenots by striking down their illustrious chieftain. In this they were foiled. They then determined to compass their ends by a general massacre, which was to begin with the Huguenot nobility then assembled in Paris on the occasion of the marriage of the gallant Henry of Navarre with the sister of Charles IX. The beginning being made in Paris, the massacre was to become general throughout the provinces.

Catharine, with all the magic power which she exercised over her children, and with all her consummate Medician art, began to work upon the king to wrest from him the fatal order. She appealed, in turn, to every motive and passion. With exquisite skill she touched every spring of his being—his fears, his suspicions, his pride, his vindictiveness, his vanity, his jealousy, until, maddened, phrensied, in a delirium of rage, vexation and mortification, he exclaimed with a horrible oath, that since they thought it right to kill the

admiral, he was determined that every Huguenot in France should perish with him, so that not one should be left to reproach him with the crime.

This happened an hour before midnight. Arrangements were instantly completed for the murdering to begin the next morning. The signal was to have been given from the great bell of the Palace of Justice at daybreak, but Catharine, in her impatience and nervousness, ordered the tocsin to be sounded from the belfry of a neighboring church an hour and a half earlier. Then Catharine and her two sons, Charles IX. and the duke of Anjou, stole to a window of the Louvre and tremblingly peered into the dark and quiet streets. All was as still as death until they were startled by a single pistol-shot. A sudden spasm of remorse seized the guilty trio, and they sent word to Guise that he should proceed no further with massacre. But it was too late. Guise, with his leash of sleuth-hounds, was already well on his way to the hôtel of the admiral. The soldiers who had been stationed to guard the hôtel betrayed their trust, and became the eager accomplices of the murderers. Awakened by the noise at the gate and in the halls, Coligni, yet weak from wounds, had arisen from his bed, had thrown around him his dressing-gown and was sitting in an arm-chair when the assassins entered. He did not move. There was not the

tremor of a muscle. There was not the quiver of a nerve. He looked into the faces of those desperadoes as calmly as though they had been his children coming to kiss him good-night, and regarded their naked swords and daggers with as much composure as though they had been the arms of his mother extended to embrace him. One of the most desperate of these desperate men was wont to say that he had never seen man meet death with such constancy and firmness.

The assassins made swift and thorough work of it. In the court below, Guise and a few of kindred spirit sat upon their horses. Up from the horsemen comes the eager, impatient cry: "Have you done it?" "It is over," was the reply that dropped from the window. Again comes up the cry: "But here is Guise, who will not believe it unless he sees it with his own eyes. Throw him out of the window." And the gashed body of the best and the greatest man then in France was thrown down upon the pavement of the court beneath as though it had been the carcass of a dog. Not yet satisfied, Guise dismounted, stooped down, and in the darkness of the early morning peered into the face of the dead hero. The face being bloody beyond recognition, Guise coolly took his handkerchief from his pocket, wiped the blood from the features and again scrutinized them narrowly. "'Tis he. I know him," he said, and as he rose

gave the body a kick, then vaulting into his saddle, and shouting, "Courage, soldiers! We have made a good beginning. Now for the others!" he galloped from the court-yard.

The blood of the great, the good, the immortal Coligni was the first that was shed in this awful massacre. His body was afterward subjected to every indignity and insult which satanic malignity and ingenuity could suggest.

The preparations and arrangements for the massacre were extensive, elaborate and complete. They were made by those who had a genius for laying snares and weaving nets and setting traps and achieving success in murder on a grand scale. Ever since the great procession of expiation under Francis II., the people of France had been undergoing a continuous education which was fitting them to become actors in tragedies of horror. The inflammable populace of Paris were as ripe for a carnival of blood as tinder is ready for a spark. The houses of the Huguenots were all marked. The papists had as a badge a strip of white linen round the arm and a white cross in the cap, while in the windows of their houses flambeaux were burning for the double purpose of designation and of giving light to the murderers in the streets. The signal was sounded from every steeple in the city. "Kill! kill! Down with the Huguenots! Down with the Hugue-

nots!" were the watchwords. Suddenly, Paris was converted into hell. The halls and staircases of the Louvre were slippery with the best and noblest blood in France. There was no more pity for the toothless babe than for the bearded man. Dead and dying bodies rained from the windows. In some places blood reached the shoe latches. But I draw a veil over the horrible, sickening details.

Fast as couriers could carry the news, the hellish contagion spread throughout the provinces. In each city and town and village the scenes of Paris were repeated, until, according to some estimates, as many as one hundred thousand were slain. And certainly it will not lessen our sad interest in this awful tragedy to know that the victims of it were Presbyterians in doctrine, worship and discipline.

When the news reached Spain, Philip II. was beside himself with joy. He regarded the massacre as the highest possible exemplification of Christian virtue. At Rome the pope and cardinals went in state to church and had *Te Deums* sung and masses said in honor of the event; and genius, in the person of Vasari, was employed to perpetuate the memory of it by a painting on the walls of the Sistine chapel, and there, on those walls, stands that painting, the damning evidence of the pope's complicity in the massacre. A

medal was also struck to commemorate the event. But when the news reached England, the court went into mourning, and Queen Elizabeth did herself and her nation immortal honor by administering a stinging rebuke to Charles IX. through his ambassador. When the news reached Edinburgh, Knox was overwhelmed with grief, because many of his personal friends had been slaughtered. Once more the old man was carried to the pulpit and lifted into it, and then he poured out the red-hot lava of his indignation against the perpetrators of the hellish outrage, and denounced the judgments of Heaven against the cruel murderer and false traitor, the king of France, consigning him to the eternal "execrations of posterity to come." This was one of his last public services. After this he preached the installation sermon of his colleague and successor in the Tolbooth church. That was his last public service.

In devout meditation, in hearing God's word, in joyously entertaining his friends—for Knox was eminently a genial and social man—in counseling his session and his colleague, in trying to reclaim Kircaldy of Grange, in solemnly admonishing Morton, who was about becoming regent, in taking affectionate leave of relatives and friends,—the few days that remained to him on earth were occupied. With exclamations and ejaculations drip-

ping with the very myrrh of the gospel constantly on his lips, he lay waiting till "God's work was done." With a clear intellect and an unclouded spirit he triumphantly ended his "long and painful battel."

In the middle of a paved street in Edinburgh the passer-by reads, upon a square stone, this inscription :

J. K.
1572.

Beneath that spot, over which now trundles the commerce of a great city, were once laid the remains of him who "NEVER FEARED THE FACE OF MAN."

He has been dead these three hundred years. During all this time history has been busy with his life and his character. These have been fiercely assailed and eloquently defended. For three centuries his work has been speaking for him with ever-increasing volume of meaning and of eloquence. He needs no other monument. He needs no other apology.

He is charged with rudeness and coarseness toward the elegant lady, Mary Stuart queen of Scots, but there is absolutely nothing in the records to justify such a charge. He was firm—firm as the Pentland hills; he was inflexible—inflexible as the fully-developed, storm-strengthened oak; and having learned, as he tells us, from

Isaiah and Jeremiah, to "call wickedness by its own terms, a fig a fig, and a spade a spade," he did speak in all plainness as both his "vocation and conscience craved," but always with dignity and courtesy, nevertheless. With some soft sentimentalists it is an unpardonable offence that he should have made Mary weep and "shed never a tear himself." Hear his own defence: "Madam, in God's presence I speak; I never delighted in the weeping of any of God's creatures—yea, I can scarcely abide the tears of my own boys, whom my own hand corrects, much less can I rejoice in your Majesty's weeping; but seeing that I have offered you no just occasion to be offended, but have spoken the truth, as my vocation craves of me, I must sustain, albeit unwillingly, your Majesty's tears rather than I dare hurt my conscience or betray my commonwealth through my silence." If that be coarseness, perpetual thanksgivings to God that John Knox had the grace to use it! "Better," said Regent Morton, "that women weep than that bearded men be forced to weep."

But I submit that such a man as this is not to be measured by the rules of etiquette or by the laws of gallantry. Knox had more serious business than playing the courtier. Every time that he stood before Queen Mary he carried the spiritual destiny of millions on the tip of his tongue.

He was there to defend truth which had taken hold of every fibre of his being. He might have pleased Mary, but by doing so he would have betrayed the cause of Protestantism in Scotland, and that would have involved the cause of Protestantism in England. So long as Elijah the Tishbite and John the Baptist need no apology for coarseness, John Knox shall need none.

But suppose he had faults? They are but specks on the surface of the sun. The sun makes the earth rich in all beauty and fertility, notwithstanding, and Knox made Scotland "blossom as the rose." "Knox is the one Scotchman to whom of all others his country and the world owe a debt," says the weird hero-worshiper, Thomas Carlyle.

It was not for nothing that John Knox had for ten years preached in Edinburgh and his words had been echoed from a thousand pulpits. His was the voice which taught the peasant of the Lothians that he was a freeman, the equal in the sight of God with the proudest peer or prelate that had trampled on his forefathers. The murders, the adulteries, the Bothwell scandals, and other monstrous games which had been played before Heaven there since the return of the queen from France, had been like whirlwinds fanning the fires of the new teaching. Princes and lords only might have noble blood, but every Scot had a

soul to be saved, a conscience to be outraged by these enormous doings, and an arm to strike with in revenge for them. Elsewhere the plebeian element of nations had risen to power through the arts and industries which make men rich; the commons of Scotland were sons of their religion, while the nobles were splitting into factions, taking securities for their fortunes or entangling themselves in political intrigues; the tradesmen, the mechanics, the poor tillers of the soil, had sprung suddenly into consciousness with spiritual convictions for which they were prepared to live or die. The fear of God in them left no room for the fear of any other thing, and in the very fierce intolerance which Knox had poured into their veins they had become a force in the State. The poor clay which, a generation earlier, the haughty baron would have trodden into slime, had been heated red hot in the furnace of a new faith. Thus historians who have no sympathy with Knox's creed are constrained to recognize the inestimable value of his work and his teachings. Such services as he rendered to his country and to the world might condone for a little rudeness in the presence of a woman whom he believed to be, and whom history has adjudged to be, a murderess.

He is charged, moreover, with intolerance. But of what was he intolerant? Of error and corruption that were rank and pestiferous, of tyr-

anny which treated the soul of man as a mere plaything of kings, lords and prelates. He did well to be intolerant. He could have done nothing less, and have remained a true man. His intolerance consisted simply in his carrying out unflinchingly the only principles upon which a reformation worthy of the name could have been achieved in Scotland.

His Presbyterianism was not derived from Geneva. He did not learn it from John Calvin. He found it where Ulrich Zwinglius found his Presbyterianism—in his Greek Testament. He made the discovery when he was teaching his “bairns” at Langniddrie. His views on this subject were fully matured when he was in England, before he had ever seen Calvin. And so strong were his convictions on the subject that the offer of a bishopric could not tempt him to modify his policy in the slightest. He and those who aided him in preparing the Book of Discipline, as Row said, “took not their example from any Kirk in the world—no, not from Geneva—but drew their plan from the sacred Scriptures.” Knox, therefore, could make no compromise with popery without a total betrayal of principles in defence of which he counted not his life dear unto him.

And this Presbyterian system of doctrine and government is the strongest and safest defence

against popery which has ever been reared. Knox detected the weakness of the English Reformation. Events have amply justified his fears and vindicated his views. The Anglican Church has, in a measure at least, become a training-camp for the papacy. In the great reaction against the Reformation which was directed by the Jesuits, Presbyterianism saved Protestantism. It formed a bulwark against which the maddened waves beat and dashed and broke in vain. Had Knox faltered in Scotland, Protestantism would have been swept from England as the whirlwind sweeps dry leaves from the highway.

The time may not be far distant when the decisive struggle will be between the armies of Antichrist and the compact and serried hosts of this our beloved Presbyterianism. Contemplating, therefore, the life of Knox, one of the grandest ever lived on this footstool of God, and catching inspiration and enthusiasm from our theme, let us close up our ranks and stand firm, ready to repel assault or to charge to victory.