

phenomenon, and that a visit to the barber would be a decided improvement. His whole personal appearance would go far to mar his popularity, and destroy his chance of success. No amount of striking originality or impetuous power would atone for the uncouthness of language or manner. The gracefulness of manner and ease of style—the nicely turned sentences and carefully balanced periods (and perhaps we must also add the skill and neatness of the tailor), would go far to blast the prospects of the great Knox, when his rival is a very commonplace youth whose brain never conceived an original idea, and whose eye never penetrated beneath the surface of his subject. Indeed, the language of Knox would sound strange and uncouth to modern ears, although they were by no means hypercritical. So great has been the change in our language since that period, that no modern congregation could be much benefitted by the rapid and fervid eloquence of the Scottish Reformer. As a specimen of his manner and style, we transcribe a portion of one of his letters, which, by comparing with a modern production, will enable us to form some idea of the singular transformation of our language for the space of time indicated. “I am traduceit,” he writes, in a letter to the Queen Regent, “as an heretick, accusit as a fais teacher and seducer of the pepill, besydis either opprobies, whilk (affirmit be men of wardlie honour and estimatioun), may easelie kendill the wrath of magistratis whair innocencie is not knawin. But blissit be God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who by the dew of His heavenly grace, hath so quenchit the fyre of displeasure as yit in your Grace’s hart (which of late dayis I have understand) that Sathan is frustrate of his interpryse and purposis. Whilk is to my hart no small comfort; not much for any benefit that I can resave in this miserable lyfe by protection of any earthlie creature (for the cup whilk it behoveth me to drink is apoyntit be the wisdome of Him whois counsallis are not changeable), as that I am for that benefit whilk I am assurit your Grace sall resave.” But if the style and language of Knox would be unacceptable to modern ears, the subject-matter of discourse and his peculiar treatment of the subject would be at least equally strange and unacceptable. The above extract, although by no means very smooth, yet is far from being uncourtly. It is, however, one of his mildest productions. The following addressed to the same Lady and Queen, breathes a different spirit. The Regent complained of the language used by Knox and others of the Reformers against herself and her religion. Knox replied, “they merely proclaim and cry that the same God who plagued Pharaoh, repulsed Sennacherib, struck Herod with worms, and made the bellies of dogs the grave and sepulchre of the spiteful Jezebel, will not spare mislead princes who authorize the murderers of Christ’s members in this our time. On this manner, they

speak of Princes in general, and of your Majesty in particular.” “But why should preachers meddle with state policy at all?” said the Regent. To this Knox replied, “Elias did personally reprove Ahab and Jezebel of avarice, of idolatry, of murder; Esaias, the Prophet, called the magistrates of Jerusalem, in his time, companions of thieves, princes of Sodom, bribe-takers and murderers; Christ called Herod a fox; Paul called a high priest a painted wall, and prayed unto God that He should smite him, because that, against justice, he had commanded him to be smitten.” Many such, and even much fiercer and stronger statements, from the sayings and censures of our Reformer, might be quoted, but let the above suffice. They all point to men and circumstances very different from those of the present. Knox, as a Preacher and a public man, would not now be popular as of old. He had his work to do in another and a different age, and he did it nobly and well, for the age required such a stern, strong, uncompromising workman. Any close imitator of him in the present would be born three centuries too late. Not only would his language and appearance be strange and unnatural, as he laboured and taught among his countrymen, but his views would be antiquated, and his opinions and ideas far behind those of the age. Many of the Presbyterians of the Present would strongly object to the Church services in the days of Knox and his immediate successors. They would have certainly found a *Liturgy* used in the Presbyterian Churches. Prayers were read Sabbath after Sabbath. Part of “the Book of Common Prayer” was read to Knox on his death-bed. It is a fact that on the forenoon of the day when Jenny Geddes distinguished herself in St. Giles’, by hurling the stool at the unfortunate Dean, Knox’s Liturgy had been used. The cause of the old dame’s wrath was evidently not because the Dean used a Liturgy, but because he used that of the celebrated Laud, or, at least, a copy of the same. Her objections to this Liturgy were of a two-fold character. First, it savoured of Popery, and second, it seemed to say that henceforth Scotland must give way to England. The patriotism, as well as the piety of this mother in Israel, seemed to nerve her arm for hurling the missile. The English Liturgy, or the Prayer Book of Edward VI., seems to have been the first in use in the Scottish Church. Afterwards, “the order of Geneva” was adopted. Lastly, the Liturgy of Archbishop Laud was attempted to be forced upon her acceptance, but how vain the attempt, history testifies. Gradually, however, the reading of Prayers became unpopular, and, finally, was wholly discontinued. The Church did not prevent such reading by Legislative enactment. The usage died a natural death, and finally disappeared, until an attempt has been made, lately, to revive it. And, whatever the view of the Church may