

We have said that Dr. Cunningham was a great man. He was one not merely of the greatest men in the Free Church, to which he belonged, but in the Church at large it may be truly said that he had few superiors or even equals.

He was born in 1805, at Hamilton, from which place his family afterwards removed to Dunse. He studied at Edinburgh, and having received license as a Preacher of the Gospel, he was ordained in Greenock in 1830, as assistant and successor to Dr. Scott, of the Middle Church. In 1834 he was translated to Edinburgh as Minister of the College Church. After the disruption in 1843 he was appointed one of the Professors of the New College, in which he afterwards succeeded the lamented Dr. Chalmers as Principal.

Dr. Cunningham was justly regarded as one of the *Master Theologians* of the day. He had thoroughly studied the system, and might indeed be regarded as an embodiment of the old orthodox theology. It has been remarked that his mind was in many respects like that of Calvin, and certainly no one was better able to expound or defend the doctrine with which Calvin's name is generally associated. As a debater he stood in the very first rank, and was a most powerful, but at the same time an honorable and highminded antagonist. As a Professor, he was highly esteemed by his students, who could not but profit by his luminous and logical prelections. As a Christian, he was characterised by a large measure of simplicity and humility, and was not only respected but beloved by all who had the privilege of his friendship. During the struggle which preceded the disruption, few sustained such a prominent position as Dr. Cunningham, to whose powerful advocacy the Free Church was largely indebted for the hold which her principles took of the mind of the Christian community. After the disruption, Dr. Cunningham, with Dr. Burns, visited the United States and Canada, as deputies of the Free Church, for the purpose of expounding her principles and enlisting the sympathies of Christians in general, and especially of Presbyterians in America. Dr. Cunningham was highly esteemed in America, and had many warm friends and sincere admirers there.

Few now of the leading minds, that guided the great movements which took place nearly twenty years ago, are spared to the Church. May God in His mercy raise up one instrument of power and usefulness as He removes another; and may He sanctify to those who remain, the sad bereavements with which He is visiting the Church from time to time. Few events have ever happened to draw forth more general sorrow throughout the Free Church especially, than the removal of Dr. Cunningham.

From many pulpits eloquent tributes to his memory were paid by sorrowing colleagues and brethren. The following extracts are from a sermon by Dr. Guthrie. He preached from Isaiah 57 c., 1 v., "The righteous perisheth and no man layeth it to heart," and in the course of his remarks said—

"The Church can suffer no loss that, in the proper sense of the word, the world can call irreparable. That is my comfort under the calamity that has not only filled our homes but our hearts with gloom. William Cunningham is dead, that most loving and most loved of men. I saw him yesterday lie stretched out in cold death upon his bed. But Jesus liveth and liveth for evermore. I shall never forget this, I hope, in this place, nor shall I turn this pulpit into a place for flattering any man. But I may be permitted, in a word, to express my love, my veneration, my affection for him whose loss we mourn, and in a sense whose loss the Church has suffered.