

ble, inlaid with jasper, surrounded with a radiance and glory, and the following inscription :—

'Hic de Virgine Maria Jesus Christus natus est.'

To the right of this, and at the distance of seven paces, is pointed out a low recess, hewn out of the rock, raised two feet above the floor, and scooped in the form of a manger, where the infant Jesus lay, which originally belonged to a caravansary or inn. This is also paved with marble. Here, also, lamps of silver are always in a state of illumination; but, alas! faint symbols of that blessed light which, rising here, shed its healing influence on the nations. I saluted on my knees the place of the Nativity, as observed by pilgrims, although no kind of ceremony was necessary to enhance or express that sense I entertained at the moment, of those eternal obligations which, in common with the whole race of mankind, I was under to that now glorified and exalted Being, who, in this most remote corner of the earth, entered upon his state of humiliation, suffering, and obedience, even to the death of the Cross."—*Rac Wilson's Travels in the Holy Land, &c.*

LIFE OF JOHN KNOX.

Extracted from M'Gavin's Life of the Reformer.

If those men whom Providence has destined to be instructors and benefactors to their fellow-creatures, had some presage of future eminence in their infant countenance, as Moses seems to have had, there would be no subsequent controversy about the place of their birth, their parentage, or education, as every circumstance of their early life would be observed and carefully recorded. But in this, as in other respects, the future is wisely concealed from human eyes. Persons born in the middle and lower classes of society, are known only within a small circle at first; and before they can distinguish themselves by any great enterprise, they are often placed in situations where no one knows who were their parents, or where they were born. Every one, if he pleased, might leave on record some account of himself; but persons of distinguished merit are the last to think that the world would care for their early history; or, by the time that they have become distinguished, their hands are so full of important business, that they have no time to think, much less to write about their childhood and youth, which they remember to have been vanity.

Knox died in the year 1572, aged sixty-seven; so that he must have been born in 1505. The place of his birth is not certainly known, but it is generally agreed to have been in or near Haddington. There is nothing known with certainty of his ancestors, ex-

cept what he relates in his history as having said to the earl of Bothwell. "My great-grandfather and father," says he, "have served your lordship's predecessors, and some of them, (meaning his ancestors) have died under their standards." "These words," says Crawford, "seem to import that Mr. Knox's predecessors were in some honorable station under the earls of Bothwell, at that time the most powerful family in East-Lothian." But every man in Scotland must have had honorable ancestors, if that is to be inferred from the simple fact of having died under the standard of some powerful chieftain. David Buchanan, the first editor of Knox's entire history, affirms that his father was a brother's son of the house of Ranferly in Renfrewshire, and the fact of his connection with that family is admitted by Dr. M'Crie, who informs us that his mother's name was Sinclair, which name he sometimes affixed to private letters instead of his own, in times of danger and persecution.

He who has risen by his own merit to the first rank in society, and to a conspicuous place in the history of his country, may give himself little concern about the rank of his parents, provided they have honorably filled the place, however low, which Providence assigned to them. But that Knox's parents were not of the lowest rank, appears from their being able to give him a learned education, which must have incurred considerable expense. He was put to the grammar school of Haddington, and afterwards sent to finish his education at the university of St. Andrews. There is a fact not mentioned by any of his biographers, except by the writer of this, in a note to the late edition of the *Scots Worthies*. "In the records of the university of Glasgow, anno 1520, John Knox appears in the list of matriculated students, when, if it was our Reformer, he must have been fifteen years of age, a proper enough time for his appearing in that character; and this was probably an intermediate step between his leaving the grammar school, and going to St. Andrews, for there is no doubt of his having studied there." It is probable enough that he might spend a part of his youth with his friends in Renfrewshire, and that they would give him the advantage of attending a seminary so near at hand.

At St. Andrews, he was the fellow-student of the afterwards celebrated George Buchanan; and it was well for both, that they had for their preceptor John Mair, or Major, a man who was considerably in advance of his neighbors, in useful knowledge and liberal thinking. Knox, while very young, received the degree of Master of Arts, and before he left the university, he became a teacher of scholastic theology, which Melchior Adamus, as quoted by Crawford, says he did with great authority, and was in some things more happy than his master; and David Buchanan adds, that he was advanced to church-orders before the time usually allowed by the canons. At this time he was a mere popish priest; but he had acquired too much light to suffer him to remain in the darkness of the cloister.