

SCOTLAND IN THE OLDEN TIMES.

Among the reminiscences to be found in Dr. Duff's "Life," the following, though not flattering to Scotland, may be truly spoken of as a "reminiscence" not likely to be found in any memoir of the future, for such a state of things as described could not now be met with in the most outlying and least civilized parish in that country:

"But for reminiscences such as those of Dr. Duff it would be incredible to what extent not only heterodox but profanity, intemperance, and other immorality found a place among the moderate ministers in rural districts, especially in the Highlands and Islands, to which public opinion never penetrated. Many of them among themselves avowed theological opinions contrary to the Confession of Faith, the contract on which they claimed to hold their livings. At the upper end of a long strath in the Highlands lived a parish minister who was scarcely ever known to be sober. Business took him frequently to the other end of the valley, where he had to pass a distillery. It was the frequent sport of the owner to tempt the poor wretch, and then placing him on his pony with his head to the tail send him back amid the derision of the whole people, a man supporting him on either side. Another parish was a preserve of smugglers, whose rendezvous was the kirk, where the little barrels of Highland whisky were concentrated before despatch to the south. The isolated spot was the terror of the gaugers, for whom the hardy inhabitants, banded together, were long more than a match. A new minister was presented to the parish—a man of great promise and considerable scholarship. His one weakness was a passion for the violin. Through that he fell so low that when his parishioners assembled at the inn they sent for the minister to play to them, and even carried him off when well drunk to a house of doubtful repute, where the revelry was continued. On one occasion he fell into the peat fire, where his limbs became so roasted that for six months he was laid aside, and he was lamed for life. His brethren resented the scandal only by refusing to allow him to attend the Presbyterian dinner, and by denying him all help at communion seasons. Brooding over these insults, he resolved to adopt that form of retaliation which would be most disagreeable to colleagues, some of whom differed from himself only by being greater hypocrites. He sent to the neighbouring cities for the most evangelical Gaelic ministers to assist him on fast and sacrament days. The result was that the smuggling parish became not only a new place, such as all the success of the Excise could never have made it, but the centre of light to the whole Presbytery. The people flocked from a great distance to hear the grand preaching in their own tongue. The drunkard's successor appointed under the Veto Act was a godly man, and when the Disruption came the whole parish left the Established Church.

A POLICEMAN'S TESTIMONY.

A number of young men were one day sitting round the fire in the waiting-room at the Normanton station of the Midland Railway, talking about total-abstinence societies. Just then a policeman came in with a prisoner in handcuffs. He listened to the young men's conversation, but did not give any opinion. There was also in the room Mr. Macdonald, a minister of the gospel, who, hearing what the young men were saying, stepped up to the policeman and said:

"Pray, sir, what have you got to say about temperance?"

The policeman replied:

"Why, all I've got to say is that I never took a tottaller to York Castle (prison) in my life, nor to Wakefield House of Correction either."—*Band of Hope Review.*

THE PREDICTED FATE OF THE EARTH.

The Apostle Peter, in his second epistle announced the time when "the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat; the earth, also, and the works that are therein shall be burnt up." What has modern science to say to the possibility of a

catastrophe such as that shadowed forth in a comparatively unscientific age, eighteen centuries ago? Mr. R. A. Proctor, writing in his latest volume, "The Flowers of the Sky," remarks:

"It is no longer a mere fancy that each star is a sun—science has made this an assured fact, which no astronomer thinks of doubting. We know that in certain general respects each star resembles our sun. Each is glowing like our sun with an intense heat. We know that in each star processes resembling in violence those taking place in our own sun must be continually in progress, and that such processes must be accompanied by a noise and tumult, compared with which all the roars of uproar known upon our earth are as absolute silence. The crash of the thunderbolt, the bellowing of the volcano, the awful roaring of the earthquake, the roar of the hurricane, the reverberating peals of loudest thunder, any of these, or all combined, are as nothing compared with the tumult raging over every square mile, every square yard, of the surface of each one among the stars."

He proceeds to describe with considerable circumstantiality, two appearances witnessed in the heavens within the last few years—in 1860, when the tenth magnitude star (that is, four magnitudes below the lowest limit of the naked-eye vision), in the constellation of the Northern Crown, suddenly shone as a second magnitude star—afterwards rapidly diminishing in lustre; and in 1876, when a new star became visible in the constellation Cygnus, subsequently fading again so as to be only perceptible by means of a telescope. After noting the conclusions deduced from the application of the most improved instruments to these observations, Mr. Proctor, whose authority is second to none among astronomers, remarks:

"A change in our own sun, such as affected the star in Cygnus, or that other star in the Northern Crown, would unquestionably destroy every living creature on the face of this earth; nor could any even escape which may exist on the other planets of the solar system. The star in the Northern Crown shone out with more than eight hundred times its former lustre, according as we take the highest possible estimate of its brightness before the catastrophe, or consider that it may have been very much brighter. Now, if our sun were to increase tenfold in brightness, all the higher forms of animal life, and nearly all vegetable life, would inevitably be destroyed on this earth. A few stubborn animalcules might survive, and, possibly a few of the lowest forms of vegetation, but naught else. If the sun increased a hundredfold in lustre, its heat would doubtless sterilize the whole earth. The same would happen in other planets. Science knows nothing of spontaneous generation, and believers in revelation reject the doctrine. Science knows nothing of the creation of living forms, but believers in revelation accept the doctrine. Certain it is that if our sun ever undergoes the baptism of fire which has affected some few among his brother suns, one or other of these processes (if creation can be called a process) must come into operation, or else our earth and her companion worlds would forever after remain devoid of life."—*Sunday Magazine.*

"IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME."

All praise to Him of Nazareth,
The holy One who came
For love of man, to die a death
Of agony and shame.

Dark was the grave; but since He lay
Within its dreary cell,
The beams of heaven's eternal day
Upon its threshold dwell.

He grasped the iron veil; He drew
Its gloomy folds aside,
And opened to His followers' view
The glorious world they hide.

In tender memory of His grave
The mystic bread we take,
And muse upon the life He gave
So freely for our sake.

A boundless love He bore mankind:
O may at least a part
Of that strong love descend and find
A place in every heart!

—William Cullen Bryant.

CHRISTIAN GENTLEMEN.

In order to benefit men, the believer must be in some respects like them. He should be courteous, gentlemanly, polite, in his course with them. Paul did not think it beneath him to use language of the greatest respect to Agrippa, and he called Festus "most noble." He was in the highest sense of the word a gentleman, and whether you find him on the deck of the storm-tossed ship, or in the judgment hall, or on the sea-shore with the elders of Ephesus, you see in him the same self-adjustment to the circumstances of men which won to him the hearts of all; and this he did not for his own sake, but that he might bring them to the Lord. Now here is an example for us. Some think, apparently, that their Christianity gives them a right to set all social distinctions at defiance, and by way of asserting their equality to all, they treat all with contempt. Under pretence of being faithful, they are simply impudent, and under

colour of asserting their brotherhood, they are only impertinent. They have no regard for politeness, and despise everything like courtesy. While again there are those in the wealthier circles who cannot endure the poorer, and treat them with disdain. Now all that conduct is utterly inconsistent with Christian principle, and shews that they who are guilty of it have entirely misunderstood the teachings of the Scriptures. The leading principle of the spiritual life is love, and where that exists there will be genuine courtesy and kindness. There may or there may not be polish—that is in itself a small matter—but what is of far higher importance, the reality will be there. The gentle life will manifest itself; and whether he wear the finest broadcloth or plain homespun, the man who shews that will have a right to

The grand old name of gentleman,
Defamed by every charlatan,
And soiled by all ignoble use.

—W. M. Taylor.

A WORD TO GIRLS.

A terrible tragedy occurred recently in Baltimore which, contrary to our usual custom with regard to tales of crime, we repeat for the consideration of every young girl among our readers.

It was the history of a young girl, beautiful, innocent, and carefully guarded; the idol of her father and brothers. Her mother, however, was dead, and her head was filled with romantic dreams of a hero who was to come and rule over her life.

On her way to and from school, she met a handsome, dashing fellow, who eagerly sought her acquaintance, managing to throw a kind of mystery over their meetings.

He was vulgar, false and cruel, but he had brilliant eyes and well cut features. What more would a girl of sixteen demand in a hero?

The friendship lasted for years; he gained an absolute control over her. She hid her love for him from her fond old father and brothers; he eloped with her finally, but refused her marriage. The girl came home to die. Her eldest brother pursued her lover, shot at him repeatedly but failed to kill him. Later, the villain met her gray-haired father, and when the feeble old man, maddened by grief, threatened him, he shot him dead.

Now here is a young girl dead, before she had fairly tasted life, her old father murdered, and her brothers left homeless, all for her indulgence at first in silly, reckless romance.

It is natural for you to think of love, girls. God meant you to love and to marry. But He meant you to do it with the blessing of your father and mother upon you. Trust the love that has watched you from the cradle, as being truer than that of the young fellow who has known you but yesterday. If his feelings for you must be kept out of their sight, depend that there is something tricky and unclean in it, and if he tries to draw you into deceiving and mocking them, you may be sure that he is no "hero," but a man who will lead you into a path the gates of which open into the grave.—*Youth's Companion.*

"TIME TO GET UP."

There is no doubt that if an instrument could be invented to indicate the various degrees of difficulty people experience in getting out of bed in the morning, it would have to be graduated from zero up to a very high figure indeed. Many persons know absolutely nothing of any difficulty of the sort; they turn out of bed with the alacrity of a bird, glad even that it is time to get up; while others have to fight a battle more or less severe the moment they open their eyes every morning.

We purposely describe the difficulty as that of getting out of bed, because it is to a very great extent a mechanical difficulty. When a man was once rallying another on his weakness in this respect, he said, "Why don't you make up your mind to it?" The reply was, "Make up my mind to it! oh, that is easy enough; I have done that a hundred times; but what I can't manage is to make up my body to it." It was a facetious way of putting the matter, but it really did exactly describe the main difficulty.

A person goes to bed with his mind fully made up to rise in the morning at the proper time, whenever that may be. He knows very well he ought to do it, and that it will be better for him in every way if he does do it. Entrenched in this virtuous resolution he falls asleep; but when he awakes a dull sense of inertness weighs him down, and if he stops to think about getting up he finds that inclination has usurped the place of reason, and that if there is one thing under the sun more ridiculous than another, it is the idea of getting out of bed just then.

So powerless often is the resolution at the waking hour, that we have heard of a man whose determination to get up was so decided, that he contrived a machine to pull the clothes off him at a certain hour, actually getting out of bed only to put them back and get in again.

There must, of course, be an effort of the will, but it should be an instantaneous effort, there should be no deliberation on the subject, no time given to meditate on the propriety or otherwise of getting up, no going over in our mind the pros and cons of the question. Directly we begin to think we are almost sure to lie abed, but when we refuse to think we are much more likely to get up.

And so the advice we give to every one who finds it very hard work to get up in the morning, but wants to master the weakness, is,—make up your body to it, and turn out *instantly* without a moment's pausing.—*Cassell's Magazine.*