

"I would willingly allow that arm to be chopped off by the shoulder, if I could see her to night." I endeavoured to point out to him the folly of speaking in such a manner. He then told me the reason why he fretted so much. He thought it possible that he might die, and he was leaving his wife in poverty, whereas, had he been a sober man, he might have left her comfortably provided for. He has been a non-commissioned officer for ten years. His wife was piously inclined, but he laughed and mocked at her piety, and by his drunken habits nearly broke her heart. When this war was spoken of, he thought it would all end in smoke; but, when the trumpet called them to march to the field, he found himself deceived. He has seen thousands cut off around him, and has fanned with a newspaper his comrades dying of cholera, without a thought of anything but a burning desire to be led on to battle, and not to lie rotting in camp. The Lord hath now shown him his past sinful life. I did not conceal from him what I thought, and what the Bible says of his sins. I reminded him that I was of the Church of Scotland, and was expected by the Church of England chaplains to confine myself to my own people. He replied that he thought the difference between us hardly worth mentioning, and that he would just as soon have me to minister to him as any one else. I then offered prayer shortly, and, when I was about to leave him, he grasped me by the hand, and said repeatedly, "The Lord bless you." "The Lord reward you." His gratitude seemed almost unbounded. Thus we see many of the bravest heroes of our battles weeping like children at the foot of the Cross.

Went on board 2 ships now receiving invalids for England. It is truly a happy sight to see the men going Home. I spoke to many, begging to rejoice with them. One told me he had learned, since this war began, to trust only in the Lord, and through the whole campaign he had never forgotten to commit himself to His constant keeping, and that, especially since he had been sick, he had not ceased to advise his comrades to cease to do evil and to learn to do well.

COMMUNICATION.

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[For the Presbyterian.]

MEMOIRS OF THE HALDANES.

(Continued from page 107.)

The search after perfection in ecclesiastical connections, as well as in individuals, seems to be, in this world, a vain and fruitless one. As long as men are endowed with differently constituted minds; as long as human passions mingle their dross with the pure gold, so long the perfect purity and beautiful unity of which we so fondly dream must, like the philosopher's stone, evade the grasp of its most eager pursuers. Even where, for a time, the desired result seems attained, and all appears fair and beautiful, experience too sadly shows that the elements of variance and contention are but temporarily hushed, and will break forth with renewed vigour.

Such too soon proved to be the case with respect to the association which, under the auspices of the Haldanes and their clerical friends, had separated themselves from other Churches with the view of enjoying purity of communion and unalloyed Christian fellowship. At first all seemed prosperous. Aided by the munificent liberality of Robert Haldane, spacious places

of worship, filled with earnest and attentive congregations, and administered to by faithful pastors, sprung up in the principal cities of Scotland. Zeal, piety and harmony seemed to shed their happy influence over the new sect. But the invariable rule held true even in the ecclesiastical paradise. Discussions concerning frequency of communion, plurality of elders, and similar minor points sprung up and caused much painful difference of opinion. These differences might have been settled, but a new and unexpected event struck the final blow at the prosperity of Scottish Congregationalism, and shattered the goodly fabric which bid fair to rise to so lofty a height. This event was the conversion to Baptist sentiments of the two brothers who had been the prop and main-stay of the infant Church. With our views upon the subject of Baptism we cannot of course approve of the steps which they took; but we must respect the scrupulous integrity of men who, while fearing that their public usefulness might be injured by the course they were about to pursue, nevertheless unhesitatingly took the path which their conscience pointed out. And, while we regret that in this instance conscience should have so far misled them, we cannot withhold the tribute of admiration to the Christian tolerance and freedom from sectarian bigotry, which led them to refrain from efforts to proselytism, and to keep their peculiar views in due subordination to their one great aim,—the promotion of the glory of God.

It was, however, far from being the desire of the Haldanes that their change of sentiment should be attended by a disruption in the Church. They saw no reason why they might not still unite in the worship of God with those from whom they differed on the particular point of Baptism. But most of those who had hitherto been their colleagues were not disposed to go to such a length of liberality and refused to maintain a connection with Anti-Pedobaptists. The greater part of Mr. J. Haldane's congregation, it is true, still clung to a pastor whose change of views did not, in their opinion, incapacitate him from breaking to them the Word of Life. But for the most part the two brothers found themselves cut off from the intimate communion of those who had in former times been their helpers and fellow-workers, and with whom they had often "taken sweet counsel." Nor was the separation unalloyed by feelings of bitterness, greater in some cases than the occasion demanded. On the painful disagreement between Mr. Haldane and Mr. Ewing we do not wish to dwell. Much might doubtless be said on both sides. At this distance of time we have not the means of deciding accurately the merits of the case, and we willingly turn from this clouded page in the history of the good man to records of a more pleasing character.

During the twelve years which had

elapsed since Mr. Haldane's departure from Airthrey his residence had been fixed in Edinburgh. Now, however, finding the retirement and relaxation of country life a necessary relief to his tasked energies, he purchased for a comparatively small sum the large but neglected estate of Auchingray in Lanarkshire. Here in the seclusion of rural life he spent the next six summers, preaching frequently at Airdrie in the neighbourhood, and spending his leisure time in the preparation of a work on "The Evidences of Christianity." This book, first published in 1816, has received the approval and sanction of such men as Dr. Andrew Thomson and Rowland Hill.

While the elder brother was thus employing his pen in the service of Christianity, the energies of the younger were not less earnestly devoted to the same cause. Though much occupied with the necessary duties of his pastoral charge, and with the formation of the Edinburgh Bible Society in 1809, yet occasional sermons in the suburbs of Edinburgh and the adjacent villages, as well as at Buxton and Harrowgate, whither he went for the restoration of his wife's failing health, testified to his earnestness in "redeeming the time."

The winter of 1819 was marked by one of the severest afflictions which he was called upon to sustain,—the death of his beloved wife. He deeply felt the blow, but, while sorrowing, faith enabled him to rejoice in the prospect of a blissful re-union beyond the grave.

The failure of the projected mission to Hindostan had not in any degree damped the missionary ardour of Robert Haldane. For some years his thoughts had been directed to a field scarcely less necessitous than the heathen Benares. It was the continent of Europe, which was at this time fettered in the chains of a rationalistic and almost infidel theology. To this scene of spiritual destitution he resolved to direct his labours, and accordingly in October, 1816, Mr. and Mrs. Haldane left Edinburgh for Paris. At Paris however they were not encouraged to remain long, so he soon turned his steps to the city of Calvin.

To the poet, to the lover of nature in her manifold and various forms, the name of Geneva calls up glorious visions of a landscape to which the massive grandeur of "the Monarch of Mountains;" the lofty pile of Jura; the placid and beautiful lake which reflects in its translucent waters the effulgent clouds which in the rich summer sunsets crown Mount Blanc with a halo of glory; and the vine-covered banks of the "arroy Rhone" contribute to render the scene one of the fairest that Earth can afford. And to him who delights in historical associations Geneva is equally abundant in interest. The place where Calvin preached the Truth as it is in Jesus, and led the van of the battle against the fulminations and anathemas of Rome; the asylum of John Knox and his brave band of exiles; the abode of Farel and Beza—