

profitable, we cannot but express our regret that it has been so long in obedience. So soon as we received your esteemed communication of date 25th December, 1848, we had arranged forthwith to acknowledge it; and, if we have been longer in effecting our purpose than is properly consistent with friendship's terms, it is not, be assured, that we do not rejoice at the relationship established between us, or do not reckon it a signal privilege to be told of your sympathies and regard. Might we not do much, by brotherly intercourse, to provoke one another to love and good works; and by mutual communications regarding the answer which the Lord is returning to our petition—"Thy kingdom come," be adding to our "wisdom" for the solemn work of "winning souls," as well as, perhaps, be "helpers of one another's joy." Let us hope that, henceforward, our correspondence may be regular and frequent, so that not even this session, though now so far advanced, much less a future one, may be allowed to pass without an interchange of sentiments of interest and affection.

We are glad to hear of the efforts you have been making in behalf of your countrymen who are the subjects of the Man of sin; and of the tokens with which you have already been encouraged, of God's countenance and blessing. Determined aggression on Antichrist's domain is surely a duty to which the churches of the Reformation are specially bound; and all the more at a time when the enemy is so active in extending his dominion to the ruin of men's souls. Though we are no longer engaged in this enterprise directly, it is not certainly from being indifferent to its importance, but from finding ourselves unable, consistently with other claims, to maintain a separate agency in the field. Those of our fellow-students who belong to Ireland, make it, as becomes them, their peculiar work, directing their efforts to the spiritual welfare of their poor countrymen at home, and also co-operating in the scheme which has been instituted here for the spread of Bible truth among the multitudes of them within our own city. That scheme is one of the most hopeful for counteracting popery which has hitherto been devised; for though it has as yet had but a brief trial, much good is believed to have resulted from its operations.

Your account of the City Mission work in which you are engaged personally, we have perused with deep interest. Most cordially do we concur with you in the estimate you have formed of the importance of such labours—convinced, as we are, that, whether we regard the benefit to the visitor himself, in the moral training to which he is thus subjected, or the blessing he may be privileged to convey to those with whom he comes in contact, a student of Divinity could not occupy a portion of his time more profitably. We are very prone to persuade ourselves, however, that this is not our province, and that for us, in our present circumstances, practically to put forth evangelistic effort, is neither expedient nor warrantable. But to entertain and act upon such a notion as this is but to mislead ourselves, and give a triumph to the great adversary of souls. For what can be more advantageous, on the low ground of prudence even, than to be initiating ourselves now into what is to be the work of our whole future lives? And if, much more, we have been brought to realize, as the regenerate only do, the value of an immortal soul, and taught to "know the terror of the Lord," can we fail to feel deeply for the outcasts and degraded for whom, alas! so few are caring; and as far as our duties as students permit, go and beseech them to be reconciled unto God. It is to this department of the Missionary field that we have been obliged, of late, as an association, almost exclusively to confine ourselves, maintaining a catechist, as we began two years ago to do, in connection with the West Port mission. The condition of the masses in all our large towns, now exciting the anxiety even of the most thoughtless, gives to this enterprise a peculiar importance; and the remarkable success with which it continues to be attended, would seem to demon-

strate that the "Territorial System," of which this is an illustration, and with which the name of Chalucers will forever be associated, is the method by which, above all others, we should set ourselves to reclaim our abandoned population. The Church, it is to be feared, has but little regarded the cry which their sad case has so long been addressing to her; but if she would maintain what she has already won, much more, enlarge and extend her conquests, it behoves her instantly to meet this enormous evil, and, in earnestly beseeching and confidently expecting that the Church's Great Head will prosper her labours, effectually check and counteract it. On us, then, who are looking forward to being engaged as her ministers, will devolve a great responsibility with reference to this object. Unite with us, dear brethren, in supplicating grace that we may be enabled to act up to it—that, taking hold of the strength of Him who is Almighty, we may address ourselves to this undertaking, and be honoured as the instruments of spreading throughout our land, the seeds of Divine truth, and of making it, indeed, as the garden of the Lord.

In being unable, from the low state of our funds, to do anything, during the past year, for the cause of missions in India, we have cause not only for deep regret, but also for deep humility. When the Church is making such efforts in behalf of this great object, it would well become her students surely to be foremost in the work—manifesting, by self-denying conduct now, that the true missionary spirit animates them, and that should God ever honour them to engage in His service, it will be as entirely consecrated to it—as ready to go whithersoever He may send, to do whatsoever He may command, and to suffer whatsoever He may appoint, with unreserved submission to His will. To India, beyond every other foreign field of labour, he seems to be inviting the regards, pre-eminently—of the Free Church of Scotland, calling upon her by the sight of its myriads sunk in heathenism, by the signal success vouchsafed in the past, and by the great and encouraging prospects for the future, to go in and possess the land. God grant that she may not prove unfaithful under such an appeal. May she be found responding to it by increasing in prayerfulness and faith, and by exerting herself more and more devotedly in behalf of the good cause; and may many be prepared to go forth from her midst to spend and be spent in that land for Christ's name's sake, until at length the Sun of Righteousness, with healing in his wings, may arise and shine on it, throughout all its borders.

Praying that you may grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ,

We remain, dear brethren, yours sincerely,

In name of the New College Missionary Association,

ROBERT G. BALFOUR, *President.*

WILLIAM K. MITCHELL, *Secretary.*

HISTORICAL ESSAY ON THE CULDEES.

Read before the Missionary Society of Knox's College.

[CONCLUDED]

The following historical facts, besides showing the exemplary zeal and activity of the Culdees in their missions to England, will speak for themselves in relation to this part of the subject. The ancient kingdom of Mercia, in England, containing the counties of Chester, Nottingham, Derby, Stafford, Salop, Northampton, Leicester, Lincoln, Huntingdon, Rutland, Warwick, Worcester, Oxford, Gloucester, Buckingham, Bedford, Hereford, and part of Hereford, was converted to Christianity by Finnans, Diuma, Ceollach and Fiumher, Irish Culdee Presbyters. The kingdom of Northumberland, which contained York, Lancaster, and the northern parts of England, and extended a considerable way into Scotland, was chiefly

converted by Aidan, another Irish Culdee Presbyter. Ebor, Middlesex, and Hereford were re-converted by Cedd, another Irish presbyter, after they had relapsed into paganism. In short, the early ecclesiastical histories unite in proving that the greater part of England was planted with churches, by these zealous and active Christian ministers, who had no other ordination to their office, except what they received at Iona. And this state of things did not exist for a short period only, but for several hundred years, during which, England continued to be supplied by the Culdee institutions, with bishops educated and ordained solely by presbyters. The following extract from the venerable Bede, will afford us some idea of the ordinations which took place at Iona. It is the ordination of Aidan whose name we have just mentioned: Oswald (an English prince) sent to the elders of the sects amongst whom he had been baptized, that they might send him a bishop, by whose doctrine and ministry the nation of the Angles, which he governed, might be instructed in the Christian faith and receive the sacraments. The presbyters of Iona accordingly sent him Cormac, whom they ordained to that office; but as his manners were too austere, he failed in conciliating the affections of the people and was obliged to return. Upon his arrival at Iona, the Presbyters met to receive his report,—which Presbyterial meeting Bede thus describes: "Cormac in the assembly of the elders, made relation, how that in teaching he could do the people no good to the which he was sent, so much as they were folked that might not be reclaimed, of a hard capacity, and fierce nature. Then the elders began to treat at long, what were best to be done." While they were thus deliberating about what ought to be done, Aidan, one of the brethren present, and who probably was only hitherto a student or teacher of secular learning among them, arose and addressed them, offering his opinion on the subject under consideration.—Bede thus continues to describe the circumstance: "All that were at the Assembly, looking upon Aidan, debated diligently his saying, and concluded that he above the rest was worthy of that charge and bishoprick; and that he should be sent to instruct those unlearned Paganims. For he was tried to be chiefly garnished with the grace of discretion, the number of all virtues. Thus making him bishop, they sent him forth to preach. From this island therefore," continues Bede, "from the college of these Monks, was Aidan sent to the province of the Angles, who were to be initiated into the Christian faith, he having received the degree of the Episcopate."

I cannot refrain from giving one other testimony in confirmation of the fact we are attempting to illustrate. It is part of a speech delivered before the Pope's Legate, in 1176, by Gilbert Murray, at that time a young clergyman of the Scottish Church, when popery, at that period gaining the ascendancy in England, was desirous of bringing the Church of Scotland into subjection to the Archbishop of York, and the kingdom of England. "It is true," said he, "English nation—thou attemptest, in thy wretched ambition and lust of domineering, to bring under thy jurisdiction thy neighbour provinces and nations, more noble, I will not say in multitude of power, but in lineage and antiquity; unto whom if thou wilt consider ancient records, thou shouldst rather have been humbly obedient, or at least laying aside thy rancour, have reigned together in perpetual love; and now with all wickedness of pride, that thou shewest without any reason or law, but in thy ambitious power, thou seekest to oppress thy mother the Church of Scotland, which from the beginning hath been Catholic and free, and which brought thee, when thou wast straying in the wilderness of heathenism, unto the safeguard of the true faith, and way of eternal life, even unto Jesus Christ the author of eternal rest. She did wash thy kings and princes in the laver of holy baptism; she taught thee the commandments of God, and instructed thee in moral duties, she did accept