

much earthly peace or comfort; and therefore there is a great danger of men's groping about in the dark for consolation—laying hold of anything in that shape that comes within their reach, and oftentimes holding fast what is *unequal*: and then again it often happens that when those things which they had taken up as certain do not come to pass, they are more and more discouraged.—The apostle begins by telling the Thessalonians about the Roman heresy, which should corrupt the professing Church until she should apostatize, and finally be made drunk with the blood of the saints. The character given here of this mystery of iniquity is very awful, and evidently applies to the Roman Antichrist. There are doubtless many Antichrists to which the description may have reference; but that it emphatically applies to Rome in the first instance there can be no doubt. Notice what is set before us in the 10th, 11th, and 12th verses:—"And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie. That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." This teaches us that God in righteous judgment would allow, and did allow Satan to put forth his power to deceive and ruin souls. Nothing is more remarkable than the place in which the abomination that maketh desolate was to be set up. It was not among the idolatrous heathen, nor among the open enemies of Christ, but in the temple of God, in the midst of the professing Church itself, which teaches us clearly that the judgments of the professing Church are more awful than any other, because the sin of hearing the Gospel without obeying it is greater than any other. The deceitfulness of Rome is tenfold worse than any of the abominations of the heathen, and her judgments will be more tremendous. Why? To show that there is no place where God so hates sin as in His own Church: "You only have I known of all the nations of the earth, therefore will I punish you for your iniquities."

Ah! yes, beloved, we may be preparing ourselves for that—remembering that, when judgment does begin at the house of God, it will be the most awful of all. There is no place where men will be more readily given over to delusion, and to the belief of a lie. There were few Churches more honoured in early days than the Church of Rome; and so now, because it has fallen from Christ, it has become a golden cup in the hand of Satan, by which he maketh the nations drunk: that cup is going the round of the nations now, to the great amazement of many of the world's wise children. Many professors wonder at it too, and cannot comprehend how men, in the nineteenth century, should be drinking of all the delusions of the dark ages—they think they can easily, by their own natural power and intellect avoid all those deceits, and that it is a simple thing for men to judge, by natural wisdom, between truth and error. My dear friends, those who think so will be taught something else ere very long: nothing will save a man from being carried away by the deceivableness of unrighteousness, but the simple receiving of the love of the truth; and let it be remembered that none but those who have received the truth in the love of its most humbling—most Christ-glorifying—sinner-abasing, God-exalting parts, are in the least secure from being carried away by the mystery of iniquity, which seems threatening to overflow the whole land, and to take possession of the temple of God. It is by the truth alone that men are saved; and a heart new created in them, to love, embrace and keep close to the truth, is the only defence against error of every kind. It is not a wise head, but a sanctified heart, that will save a man from the most awful delusions, and from the most deep and wily deceits that Satan ever devised. See that ye love the truth for its own sake, for the danger of being

carried aside by error is never greater, than in a place where the work of God has been extensively carried on. When the Spirit ceases to work there, those people who have not the genuine love of the truth, lose their appetite for the plain preaching of it altogether. They are driven back and forward, as the chaff before the wind, and then, when the hour and power of darkness is, and when temptation rushes in, they are quickly carried away by Satan's devices, and by the lying wonders which he has received power to perform on the earth. The devil's power has been, is now, and will yet be so great, and the manifestations of it are so new and numerous, that the time appears to be drawing nigh when they will deceive, if it were possible the very elect. Yes, my brethren, and to prevail against them at all, we need be of the very elect. Men often think they will be saved by belonging to a particular congregation, association, or church, pure, as they call it. Ah, yes! they cry out, as Satan cries within them, "The Church! the Church!" Not perhaps the Church of Rome, or even the Church of England, but still it comes to the same thing—it is always the Church, just as of old, "The temple of the Lord! the temple of the Lord! the temple of the Lord are these!" Ah, brethren, beware! beware! No class is, perhaps, for this cause, so near to the strong delusion of Satan as those among whom great things have been done, and who have passed through glorious times of the Lord's right hand without receiving the truth. Look at the Jews, whom God singled out to be the object of his chief blessing. A remnant was indeed saved, according to the election of grace; but, as a nation, it was not so. Because they hardened their hearts, God sent them strong delusions, and Paul declares that their ears were dull of hearing, and their eyes they had closed, so that they could not see Him to be very God, who was the only begotten of the Father. That delusion is not broken after eighteen hundred years, except in a very few cases comparatively,—and shall the righteous Judge of all the earth act on a different principle towards us now? Ah! He will not. He does not, as we have too fearful proof around us. Brethren, I warn you. We see not yet, I believe, the end of these things: "God shall send them strong delusions that they shall believe a lie."—Oh, it is an awful thing to be deluded in matters of eternal consequence, in things of the soul, where heaven and hell, and life and death are in the question; but how far more awful when God Himself sends the delusion, for then, alas! it comes with the power of a Divine permission; it comes over the soul without the opposition of a check or restraining power of any kind. It is the work of Satan, as all the works of darkness are; it cannot proceed from the Father of Lights, for in Him is no darkness at all. Its cause and origin is far removed from Him who is the fountain of life, and yet it is, as it were, an act unopposed by Him as the God of Providence.

DEATH OF DAVID MAITLAND MARGILL CRICHTON, ESQ.

Another great and good man has fallen in Scotland—the late David Maitland Margill Crichton, Esq., the proprietor of Rankiellour, in Fifeshire. Mr. Crichton was descended from the Maitlands of Lauderdale, which family has produced many illustrious names, amongst whom were the celebrated Earl of Lauderdale, and the late Sir Frederick Maitland, who was the paternal uncle of the deceased. The subject of our Memoir, and whose death we deplore, was possessed of great sturdiness of intellect, of extensive erudition, and of high powers of oratory. But he was more. He was a true Patriot—a thing rarely to be met with in the present day, and he was, besides, a devoted Christian Philanthropist. All his talent, his time, and his means were dedicated to the promotion of the welfare of mankind, in the highest sense of the term. Long an

Elder of the Church of Scotland, he laboured with an assiduity seldom equalled, and with a perseverance the most unflinching, in promoting the views espoused by the Evangelical party, which views he held to be the views entertained by the foremost of Scotland's Reformers. But we would rather let the *Edinburgh Witness* speak forth his praise, and delineate his character. None had a higher appreciation of the excellencies of Mr. Crichton, than the talented Editor of that Journal, and these are beautifully portrayed in his paper of 19th July. We give below a few extracts:—

"Mr. Makgill Crichton, like so many of his ancestors, was a man of a singularly vigorous mind; and he soon became, in the work of Church Extension, one of the most effective conductors of Chalmers. The sagacious leader of evangelism in the Scottish Church soon learned to appreciate his character, and greatly to love the man. We question whether for any of his associates, either at this time or during the after struggle, he possessed a more genial regard than for the laird of Rankiellour,—his beau ideal of a Scottish Presbyterian gentleman of the seventeenth century. In almost the last conversation with which we were honoured by this greatest of modern Scotchmen, he referred affectionately to Mr. Makgill Crichton, a man of great singleness of aim and a fine chivalric spirit. And very highly, in turn, was Chalmers appreciate by Mr. Crichton; it would seem, as if by a sort of free masonry, they so thoroughly understood one another, that not a shade of misunderstanding could pass over their intercourse, which continued as long as Chalmers lived; and after his death, the survivor ever continued to cherish the profoundest reverence for his memory, and to treasure up every remembered fragment of his wisdom, as part of the patrimony of the Free Church. On the commencement of the Church struggle, Mr. Crichton unhesitatingly chose his side, and did what might be well deemed an impossibility in the case of any other man,—redoubled his efforts. Few of our readers can have any adequate idea of the wearing-out character and extent of his labours at this time. He was known in the Ecclesiastical Courts as a vigorous and formidable debater; but the business of the Church as conducted in her courts, eventful and pregnant with consequences as that was, bore a character of but secondary importance at this special stage of the contest;—the primarily important work of the period was the awakening and rousing of the country; and we do not hesitate to say that in this work no one accomplished so much as Makgill Crichton. His position as one of the privileged classes,—his standing as a layman,—his transparent straightforwardness of purpose,—and the manly and rousing style of his eloquence,—constituted elements of power which were combined in no other individual on the side of the church. And never was there a man who less spared himself. For month after month, and year after year, the miles which he travelled on his important business so indispensable in the struggle, were to be reckoned by thousands, and the meetings which he held by hundreds; till at length there were few parishes in Scotland in which his rousing voice had not been heard. We remember conversing, several months ere the *Witness* had commenced its career, with the late Mr. Stewart of Cromarty, on the general indifference manifested by the people at that time to what was so essentially their own cause. "I am afraid," he replied "the people do not quite comprehend our ecclesiastical mode of stating the question; but I am informed we have at least one man whom they understand thoroughly,—the noble-hearted laird of Rankiellour. When he addresses them, even the very lords of the rural parishes soon begin to beat the floor with their feet."

"The laird of Rankiellour had a noble and tender heart; and well was the fact known in his neighbourhood by the poor cotters who now