

Second—How they have been, and still may be preserved.

The primary, and by far the most influential of the means employed in raising the spiritual defences of our Fatherland, was the BIBLE; and a system of domestic and public instruction, founded on free access to the "word of God;" or, in other words, the "Church in the House," and the "Church in the Land."

FIRST—THE CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

Scotland—we repeat it—has long been distinguished among the nations of the earth. But for what has she been distinguished? In what does her glory consist? Chiefly in this—That she has publicly, distinctly, and decidedly acknowledged and honoured God, as the supreme Ruler of the Universe; and through his written word sought his protection and guidance. The Bible is the spring of all her blessings—the charter of her people's rights—the foundation of her privileges—from it flows forth their social happiness—upon it rest their future hopes. Its truths, incorporated with their thoughts and feelings, fostered their moral energy, and guided their enterprise. No business of importance was undertaken without consulting the oracles of God. No journey was commenced until "over its sacred pages kneeling," the countenance and protection of Heaven were invoked. Its truths cheered their toils and hallowed their joys. Before the outspread Bible—as from a holy altar—ascended the morning and evening sacrifice of prayer and of praise. The Bible was the literature of Scotland. There was none of that ephemeral literature then, which now, pandering to vulgar and ignoble tastes—as it often does—exerts such a baleful influence on the mind. There was little literature of any sort, except a few standard works of practical theology: the sweet pastoral song that cheered the toils of her hardy sons; and the fireside tales that banished tedium from the long winter nights. But God, and God's word, were the spring of all their thoughts and reflections. The Sabbath readings and Sabbath ministrations were the subjects of meditation for the whole week. The ploughman on the lea, and the shepherd on the hill, pondered the truths of God's word, and tested the doctrines founded on them, with profound and reverential awe. The mind, however narrowed and confined in respect to the world's frivolities, was expanded and enlarged in divine things. Hence the lofty piety, the deep reflection, the stern integrity and cautious thoughtfulness of the Scottish mind.