

Ecclesiastical Thralldom. They knew that no portion of man's nature could be in bondage without affecting, to some extent, his every relation. They recognized the sacred rights of the human conscience, and clearly saw the troubles which must roll, like a mighty tide, over the whole of man's being and circumstances, if those rights were disregarded. They clearly saw and understood the true principles of Constitutional government when other nations were merely catching faint glimpses of them as they fitted onwards through the hazy atmosphere of prejudice and superstition. The relation between the *governed* and the *governing*, and the true foundation of all right government, is once and again clearly and boldly stated by the stern and unflinching Reformer in the presence of the Queen of Scotland. In one of those strange meetings between the young and beautiful Mary, and the cold, pale-faced, long-bearded, John Knox, he once and again reminds her, in the most direct and uncourtly manner, not only of her duty and responsibility to her God, but also to her subjects. Soon after Mary arrived from France, the first meeting took place. On Sabbath, Mary, like a good Catholic, must go to Mass in the chapel of Holyrood; but on the Sabbath following, Knox must make the conduct of his queen the subject of his sermon, and a very forcible one it seems to have been. The queen sent for Knox and resolved to conquer him either by kindness and grace or by argument. Cunningham says of the interview:—"The queen began by charging Knox with stirring up her subjects against her mother and herself; with writing a book against the government of women; and with doing all he did by necromancy." In regard to the first charge, he said that he had done nothing more than rebuked idolatry and preached the Word of God in sincerity. In regard to the second, he confessed that he had written the treatise referred to, and that it contained his opinions. "Then," said the queen, "you think that I have no just authority." Knox parried this thrust by stating that philosophers were privileged to entertain speculative opinions opposed to the existing order of things, as was Plato, when he published his "Republic." For himself, he was willing to live as a peaceable subject of her Majesty's government (he said,) and that his book was provoked by the persecutions of Mary of England. "But," cried Mary of Scotland, "you speak of women in general." The Reformer allowed that his argument was general, but urged that seeing it had caused her Majesty no trouble, and was not likely to do so, it was impolitic to stir it at all. Then referring to the charge of necromancy, he appealed to all the congregation to whom he had preached to refute the charge. "But seeing," he concluded, "that the wicked of the world said, my Master, the Lord Jesus, was possessed with Beelzebub, I must patiently

bear, albeit that I, wretched sinner, am unjustly accused." The queen then shifted her ground, and asked if he had not taught the people another religion than that of their prince's; "and how," said she, "can that doctrine be of God, seeing God commanded subjects to obey their princes." Knox had now clearly the truth on his side, and argued that as religion came not from princes, but from the eternal God, so to God only men were answerable for it. He appealed to the Israelites in Egypt, to Daniel and his fellows in Babylon, to Christ and his apostles in the Roman Empire. "Yes," said the queen, "but none of these men raised their sword against their princes." "God," said the stout Reformer, "had not given them the power and the means." "Then, do you think," asked the queen, "that subjects having the power may resist their princes?" "If princes exceed their bounds," said the unflinching Knox, and proceeded to illustrate his argument by the case of a parent seized with frenzy and bound by his children. "At this bold and startling declaration," continues the historian, "the queen was struck dumb. She remained silent and looked so ill that her brother asked if anything ailed her. After a little she recovered herself and said: 'Well, then, I perceive that my subjects will obey you and not me.' 'God forbid,' answered the Reformer, 'that I take upon me to command any to obey me, or yet to set subjects at liberty to do whatsoever pleases them, but my travail is that both princes and subjects obey God.' After this he proceeded to say that it became kings and queens to be nursing fathers and nursing mothers to the Church. 'Yes,' quoth the queen, 'but ye are not the Church that I will nourish. I will defend the Church of Rome, for I think it is the true Church of God.' 'Your will, madam,' said Knox sternly, 'is no reason, neither doth your thought make that Roman harlot the immaculate spouse of Jesus Christ.' When the uncourtly controversialist offered to prove that Rome was a harlot, and that the princes of the earth had committed fornication with her, the queen quietly said: 'My conscience says, not so.' 'Conscience, madam,' said Knox, 'requires knowledge, and I fear that of right knowledge you have but little.'" So much for the first interview between the young, the beautiful and accomplished queen of Scots, and the stern, unbending Scottish Reformer. Already the thorns in her crown began painfully to pierce her smooth brow of the unfortunate Mary; and, viewed in connection with her after-life of bitter misfortune and harrowing privation and suffering, the almost unhuman sternness and strength of the rugged iron Knox seems something like cold-hearted cruelty. His opponent had on her side everything that would naturally win the heart and secure the sympathy of less rugged natures. How differently would she have been treated by the amiable and accom-