

hotly debated—of the use of the English Liturgy by the early Scottish Reformers beyond all controversy.

It was not to be expected that Knox, who had stood out against the introduction of the English Prayer Book into the service at Frankfort, would look with favour upon its use by the Scottish people. In the letter of instruction written from Geneva to his Protestant countrymen we accordingly find him recommending an order such as was then observed among the Genevan brethren. This letter is so well expressed that we must find space for a rather lengthy quotation :—

"Your beginning," says the Reformer, "should be by confessing of your offences, and invocation of the Spirit of the Lord Jesus to assist you in all your godly enterprises. And then let some place of Scripture be plainly and distinctly read, as much as shall be thought sufficient for a day or time. In reading the Scriptures, I would ye should join some books of the Old and some of the New Testament together, as one of Genesis and one of the Evangelists, Exodus with another, and so forth ; ever ending such books as ye begin, as the time will suffer ; for it shall greatly comfort you to hear that harmony and well-timed song of the Holy Spirit speaking in our fathers from the beginning. It shall confirm you in these dangerous and perilous days to behold the face of Christ Jesus, and His loving spouse and Church, from Abel to Himself, and from Himself to this day, in all ages to be one. Like as your assemblies ought to begin, with confession and invocation of God's Holy Spirit, so would I that they never finished without thanksgiving, and common prayers for princes, rulers, and magistrates ; for the liberty and free passage of Christ's Gospel ; for the comfort and deliverance of our afflicted brethren in all places now persecuted, but most cruelly within the realm of France and England ; and for such other things as the Spirit of the Lord Jesus shall teach you to be profitable either to yourselves or yet to your brethren, wheresoever they are."

This letter was written some time before Knox's final return to his native country, and it is important to note that the Order of Geneva appears to have been used in some places before its formal sanction by the ecclesiastical authorities. The evidence of this we shall presently see.

It was in 1559 that Knox returned for the last time to Scotland. The Reformation had already made considerable