

Presbyterianism in Britain appeared conspicuously as an educational agency as early as the year 563, when the brave and godly Irishman, St. Columba, crossed from his native shore to the Island of Iona, on the west of Scotland, and there established a training school for teachers and missionaries. These Culdees, or lovers of God, were good liberal and energetic Presbyterians, who set up schools and various Christian institutions in many parts of England Scotland and Wales. They pushed their work and continued to do battle against ignorance, superstition and barbarism till about the middle of the thirteenth century; and no impartial student of history can fail to admire their self-denial, skill, perseverance and heroism, while being opposed thwarted and persecuted by the Monk Augustine and his allies under Pope Gregory the Great. At last they were forced to succumb about the year 1297, but not until they had made an illustrious record fully entitling them to be regarded as the precursors of the great European Reformation—the harbingers of the Lollards, the followers of Jerome Huss and Wickliffe.

The leading reformers of the sixteenth century were Presbyterians, and it is well known that every man in that army of giants was an educator—Martin Luther, Melanethon, Zwingle and John Calvin, that man of imperial intellect

and influence, whose thinking has permeated the current of christian opinion and education in succeeding centuries more than that of any other man of the period. Who was he? The modern father of Presbyterianism, who in the Fourth Book of his Christian Institutes elaborated and established our Polity substantially as it stands to-day in all parts of the world. And it is superfluous to speak of his pre-eminence as an educator.

But passing from the European Continent, I venture to say that Presbyterianism at this period was gathered as an educational force into a focal point in my native country, Scotland. After John Knox had returned from banishment and from sitting at the feet of Calvin as his teacher, he proceeded, by the grace of God, to deliver his country from ignorance and tyranny. He set up the frame work of our Presbyterianism, exalting Jesus Christ as King and Lord of all. He established the Parish Church and School side by side. The Church, in his judgment, was no more essential than the School. And what have not these two institutions—the School and Church, done for Scotland; and what has not little Scotland done through their influence for the whole world? After Palestine, where the Son of God appeared as the great Teacher of our race, where is the country under the sun of the same limited area that