

tribes are handed over to a rebel and a runaway.

What led to Solomon's apostasy? And what, again, was the ulterior effect of that apostasy on himself? As to the origin of his apostasy the Word of God is explicit. He did not obey his own maxim. He ceased to rejoice with the wife of his youth; and loving many strangers, they drew his heart away from God. Luxury and sinful attachments made him an idolater, and idolatry made him yet more licentious: until, in the lazy enervation and languid day-dreaming of the Sybarite, he lost the perspicacity of the sage, and the prowess of the sovereign; and when he woke up from the tipsy swoon, and out of the swine-trough picked his tarnished diadem, he woke to find his faculties, once so clear and limpid, all perturbed—his strenuous reason paralyzed, and his healthful fancy poisoned. He woke to find the world grown hollow, and himself grown old. He woke to see the sun bedarkened in Israel's sky, and a special gloom encompassing himself. He woke to recognize all round a sadder sight than winter—a blasted summer. Like a deluded Samson starting from his slumber, he felt for that noted wisdom which signalized his Nazarite days; but its locks were shorn; and, cross and self-disgusted, wretched and guilty, he woke up to the discovery which awaits the sated sensualist; he found that when the beast gets the better of the man, the man is cast off by God. And like one who falls asleep amidst the lights and music of an orchestra, and who awakes amidst empty benches and tattered programmes—like a man who falls asleep in a flower-garden, and who opens his eyes on a bald and locust-blackened wilderness,—the life, the loveliness, was vanished, and all the remaining spirit of the mighty Solomon yawned forth that verdict of the tired voluptuary:—"Vanity of vanities! vanity of vanities! all is vanity!"

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Sketches from Church History.

SCOTLAND.

Knox and his Times.

THE Reformation had made very considerable progress in Scotland before John Knox, who has always been designated "the Scottish Reformer," openly declared himself in favour of Protestantism. The young and amiable Hamilton had already worn "the crown of the martyr," for nearly twenty years. Many had been strengthened by his dying testimony and his heroic example, boldly to meet death at the stake, rather than worship the Virgin, or acknowledge the Pope as the Vicar of Christ. Among this number was the godly, eloquent, self-denying Wishart, the beloved minister of the people and the honoured servant of God. Amid those wild scenes

of martyrdom, the troubles of the Church grew and increased. The Earl of Arran, appointed Regent by the Protestant Barons, too soon deceived them, and returned to the Romish Church. New and more general and oppressive laws were enacted against "Heretics," until the people, no longer able to endure their sufferings, resolved to rid themselves of the yoke of the oppressor. Goaded on to madness, the Reformers arose in their fury—attacked and took possession of the Castle of St. Andrew's, murdered the notorious Cardinal Beaton, and threw him over the wall as a spectacle for the crowd assembled around the castle. This act only served to strengthen the hatred of the Romanists against the Reformers, and to lead them to seek revenge and redress. Certainly the Kirk, like a storm-lashed ship, had drifted into troubled waters, and required the care and skill and energy of no ordinary pilot to bring her safely through the surrounding dangers. Humanly speaking, whoever could do it must have a brave heart and a steady hand. The occasion called for prompt and decisive action, and much energy and zeal in bringing her out of danger to enjoy rest and peace. And such a pilot was Knox,—bold, resolute, fearless,—grasping the helm firmly, holding it manfully and bravely, until death relieved him, and another stood up in his stead.

How strangely has the strong, rough, earnest life of her Reformer impressed itself on the character of Scotland and her Reformation. For the mind of Knox was undoubtedly the moulding mind as well as the moving mind of this stirring and eventful period, and the influence of that mind is still and shall long be felt wherever Presbyterianism is known and admired. Surely Scotland may justly assign him a very high—nay, the highest place among her great names. If Wallace delivered his country from the yoke of England, under Divine Providence Knox delivered her from the more grinding oppression of Rome. What the one effected by the deadly sweep of his good broad-sword and the mighty strength of his great arm, the other accomplished through the skilful use of the sword of the Spirit—the Word of God, and by powerful appeals to reason and conscience. Indeed, those principles for which Knox contended and for which the worthies of the Kirk afterwards were imprisoned, banished and put to death, were principles that have moulded, to a great extent, not merely the future of Scotland, but, to a certain extent, of the whole civilized world. The early Reformers in Scotland were far in advance of their age. They laid hold of a great principle to which the Church of the Covenant afterwards adhered through danger and death. They saw the connection between two portions of man's nature, or rather between two of those relationships in which man is placed upon earth. They saw that Civil Liberty could never go hand in hand with