

This led to a process of deep and painful conviction both as to his condition as a sinner before God, and the position he occupied as a pretended teacher of the way of salvation, in regard to which he now felt he was nothing better than a "blind guide."

In this unhappy, yet not unhopeful state of mind, he is said to have continued for a somewhat lengthened period, till at last he entertained serious thoughts of resigning his charge, and allowing the parish to be declared vacant. It, however, pleased the Lord that these severe soul exercises should in due time lead to the man's decided and unmistakable conversion. And from that date, till the close of his ministry, he manifested a zeal and devotedness to the cause of Christ such as have been rarely equalled, and scarce ever surpassed, by any country pastor,—in illustration as well as in proof of which, many interesting narratives are related to this day in the district in which he had lived and laboured. To not a few of these it has been our privilege to listen, as rehearsed by the pious highlander of the North; and two at least of the stories, *Luke Heywood*, and *The Highland Kitchen-Maid*, have not only found their way into print, but been much appreciated and widely circulated throughout the civilized world.

In Hector McPhail's conversion and the circumstance which led to it, as well as the effects which flowed from it, we see a striking instance of God's mysterious and wonder-working providence, whereby he so frequently causes great and important results to arise from what to us may seem the most unlikely means. The pious young wife of the unconverted minister could derive no good, but the contrary, from her husband's discourses; but yet, was it not a bold step in her to desert his ministry as she did? What could be more calculated to irritate and wound his feelings, and perhaps breed family dissensions between them which might lead to the worst consequences? True; but her spiritual interests she regarded as superior to these considerations, important as they were; and she durst not attempt to please even her husband, if, in doing so, she must offend God, and bring darkness, if not death upon her soul.

Reader, if ever you should be called upon to face the alternative of choosing between worldly expedience, on the one hand, and

duty to God and your soul on the other, do not hesitate in the matter, but have grace to pursue the right course, and leave consequences with the Lord. "Unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness"—*Gospel Trumpet*.

ON TRACTS AND TRACT DISTRIBUTION.

A very cheap, easy, and successful way of fishing for men, is by means of tract distribution. This means of usefulness is within the reach of every one who desires to do something for the Lord; the daily walk or drive will afford a ready fishing ground,* with this advantage that it is sure to swarm with fish. The author knew a man who fished a good deal in this way, and it is to be hoped not without success. On one occasion our diligent friend saw a pair of breeches hanging up to dry, and quick as thought he popped a tract into the pocket, let us hope with future edification to the owner; when the wind was favorable he flew them over the walls of the gardens of persons who would not be likely to take them by hand; sometimes he twisted them into the shape of a penny bag of sugar, or an ounce of tea, giving them a good twist at the bottom, and a neat turn in at the top; then again by doubling and redoubling, them until they were no larger than a child's marble; and tying them compactly together, he used to shoot them through the shop doors as he walked by, and behind the counters, when a favorable opportunity offered; we have known him when waiting at a railway station insert them between the paper and the sugar loaf lying there to be sent to a neighboring grocer; a rent in the paper affording a favorable opportunity; and many a poor gate-keeper upon the railways has received in the white shower which flew towards him out of the window of the train as it flew by, gospel messengers able to save the immortal soul. It is astonishing what can be done by practice. Our indefatigable friend attained to great skill in shooting his tracts and gospel pellets; in his line, he did as well as many a member of a rifle corps, making a good score upon coal wagons, market baskets, railway stations, and even through the hole of a street lamp, which the gasman had laid down for a moment, as it wanted some repairs. Whenever our friend saw any building going on, there he

* In the Memoir of Francis Lewis Mackenzie, a young man of great promise, we are told that "a number of tracts selected and arranged for different ages, from adults down to the infant were in his coat pocket, as left by him, when he undressed for the last time." What a sweet evidence of readiness to be about the Master's business in daily life; laying down the garments of daily life and the Master's work together, to put on bright raiment and enter into rest.