

wonder is that the Reformers met with such an amount of cordial sympathy from the masses, and that the Reformation in Scotland had been so speedily and harmoniously effected. Under God, we must impute it to some dim recollections of the purer teaching of the Culdees, and to the grievous yoke of Romanism becoming so heavy to bear that it could be carried no longer.

The Reformation period in Scotland was emphatically a stormy time. The Reformers were, for the most part, stern, bold men, and not a few of their actions were highly characteristic of such agents. To say that all who took a leading part in this glorious movement were actuated by the purest motives, would certainly be saying too much. To say that nothing was done, during the transition period from Popery to Protestantism, which had been better undone, would also be an exaggeration. Like all great human movements, it exhibited a diversity of actions and a variety of motives. Selfishness played its part, even in this holy work. Some of the Nobles saw the immense wealth of the Church, and wished its overthrow that they might gain something of the spoils. Yet Knox and his principal associates were honest and disinterested, as well as earnest, and consequently, stormy although the time was, still it was health-giving. Indeed History seems to show that such a storm is often necessary, and that it is the agent, in the hand of the Almighty, for bringing about his purposes of mercy. This holds true within the domain of the Church, as well as of the world, both social and natural. We may always observe that, before a thunderstorm, the atmosphere is unusually heavy and languid. Not a leaf moves in the forest. There is a strange calm and listlessness and deadness reigning everywhere, and over all things. We can neither write, nor think, nor exert ourselves without an effort. The heavy clouds stand above us in dense masses, as if too lazy and languid to roll away, and the air becomes pestilent. But, suddenly there comes a crash. The lightning glimmers and darts across the skies. Volley after volley, from heaven's artillery, roars through the clouds, and the tempest sweeps through field and forest. But the storm soon blows over, and a brighter and fresher beauty returns to earth and sky. And, it is quite possible that the wild tempest has left some desolation in its footprints. It may have shattered the lofty pine in the forest or the shady elm in the vale. It may have laid its hands on some noble edifices and stately structures, and overturned them, yet who does not thank God for the thunderstorm? It is the agent of the Almighty for purifying the atmosphere. It may bring loss to the few, but it brings blessings to the million. It carries new vigour, and health, and life to ten thousand homesteads, and joy to ten thousand hearts. Its voice may be clothed in terror, but its message is that of an angel

of mercy. And is not the same true of those thunderstorms which so often are to be met with in the moral and political world? War, in itself, is certainly a terrible calamity and a frightful spectacle. Yet, when nations become socially and politically corrupt—when the atmosphere in which they move is pestilent and deadly, some terrible agency seems necessary for its purification. Let selfishness, and avarice become rampant, let the worship of Mammon as chief God, and "money-making-at-any-price" become the national characteristic, then who would not say, "welcome war, with all its horrors, rather than that this state of matters should always continue. If, otherwise, honor and honesty must become empty names of things long dead—if those virtues, once regarded as something more sacred and dearer than life, can only flourish after such terrible disasters as follow in the train of war, then let it come and welcome. Yet the Moral Governor of the world is the Head of the Church. And shall she escape while the world suffers? Most assuredly not, if she be not utterly forsaken. Let her fall back again into the state in which the dawn of the Reformation found her, and again she must suffer, and again be purified, in the furnace of affliction. Let Protestantism lose its vitality—let it drift away from its early faith and its open Bible—let it become a dead body without a living, earnest, evangelical spirit, and it must soon find itself back, far back in History, ready to meet the fiery trials of a second Reformation.

During this stormy period of wild commotion, men and motives were jostled together in a strange chaotic mass. Scotland, as we took back upon it during those early days of the Reformation period, appears like one of her stern old castles, furnished with all the appliances of modern luxury, but overthrown by some mighty convulsion of nature, all lie strewn and jumbled together in strange confusion. Massive blocks of granite and fragrant articles of ornament or costly gems, the Baron's broad-sword and his lady's fan, instruments of war and implements of peace, are scattered hither and thither in universal disorder. Yonder comes the Mailed Soldier sheathed in armor. Beside him walks the pale-faced Reforming Minister in Geneva gown and cap. The one carries his Sword and the other bears his Bible, for Sword and Bible alike are to be used for the destruction of Error and in the defence of the Truth. And both Baron and Preacher exert a powerful influence over the popular mind. The one, as their feudal chief, commands them to second the work of the Reformation. The other appeals to the authority of the Divine Word, the sword of the Spirit, and reasons from the Holy Scriptures that the Church of Rome is a Church of Error and of Sin.

At the period of the Reformation, feudalism was still very strong in Scotland, and hence we find that the faith of the feudal lord be