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THE LIFE OF GEORGE BUCHANAN.

If we draw so much on the attention of our readers in presenting them with biographical sketches of eminent men, it is not because we feel it an easier task to pen these than a dissertation on some ordinary topic in religion, but because we are convinced that, in regard to edification they are usually more profitable. It is well known that the Scriptures are largely made up of the lives of individuals, and doubtless for this reason, to shew us specimens of human character in every variety of kind and condition, that our understanding may be exercised, and we may, when descending into the world, be better prepared to cleave to what is good, and avoid what is evil. The following sketch, for the materials of which we are indebted to the learned labors of Dr. Irving, of Edinburgh, refers not to a clerical man who may be supposed to seek the advancement of the true faith, because he is pledged to do so by virtue of his profession, but to a man who made literary studies the chief business of his life—and who, in the midst of many temptations to forsake the right path, and to chime in with the church of Rome, was faithful in using the talent committed to him, and bore a very plain testimony against its many errors and corruptions. He was an instrument, subsidiary no doubt, but still useful, in giving such help as he could, in that great struggle in which Knox and other eminent men were engaged, about the middle and end of the sixteenth century. And though literary objects too much engaged his mind to warrant us assigning him the same rank with them, there can be no doubt that he

was an useful ally in promoting the same work. This sketch has cost us some trouble in translating, for the behoof of our ordinary readers, certain portions of Buchanan's poems into such measure as a somewhat literal rendering would admit of—but we shall not think it unworthily bestowed if we have succeeded in making them better acquainted with the life of a man who was the ornament of the age in which he lived, and who was the first to teach the men of his generation those principles of freedom, which have since been embodied in the British Constitution.

George Buchanan was born in the parish of Killearn, in Stirlingshire, in the month of February, 1506. His father inhabited a small property there, called Mid-Leowen, or more commonly "the Moss," but dying early, he left his family, consisting of five sons and three daughters, in straitened circumstances. The mother, however, struggled hard, and, by the blessing of God, all the children grew up to mature years. George was the third son, and is said to have received the rudiments of learning at the public school of Killearn. The locality where Buchanan was born has become a subject of interest. Stirlingshire is one of the most delightful counties in Scotland in modern times—but in these early days, when cultivation had made less progress, "the Moss" was probably descriptive enough of the farm of Mid-Leowen. And Dr. Irving informs us that the house in which he was born has been twice rebuilt "during the lifetime of the present proprietor, Mr. William Finlay, who has now