

John Knox Preaching Before the Lords of the Congregation.

BY SIR DAVID WILKIE.

Knox preaching before the lords of the congregation is one of those pictures which forms in one view most of the leading characters of an epoch in a nation's history. Knox is an incarnation of the spirit of the Reformation, the power that crushed Mary Stuart and delivered Scotland from Rome. His convictions were stern and immovable, and in carrying them out neither danger nor scruples deterred him from the most decisive action. In the contest with Mary, the beauty and charm that had more or less effect on all around her, on him was powerless. His deep, concentrated zeal for the cause he represented rendered him hardly fair and at no time tolerant in his judgments on her actions. In his sermons and prayers he indulged in a freedom of expression which the Queen bitterly resented. He had no sympathy with the moderate men of his own party. The penetrating shrewdness of his perceptions were unobscured by any taint of self-interest or touch of commiseration, and the course of history may with some force be held to have justified the position of unyielding opposition which he took to the Queen's party, including Murray Maitland and other friends of the Reformation.

In his sermons Knox's language was plain and homely to a degree. He had learnt, he says, to call wickedness by its own name;—"a fig, a fig; a spade, a spade." His spirit was dauntless and danger stirred him like a trumpet. A hostile audience called forth all his powers, and his energy and vehemence of delivery were tremendous. It is related of him that in his old age, when worn and debilitated to the last degree, he had to be assisted into the pulpit by his devoted servant, the good Richard Ballenden, and on his first entry had for some time to sustain himself by leaning on the sides, "but ere he was done with his sermon he was so active and vigorous that he was *lyke to ding the pulpit in blads and flie out of it.*"

For this picture Wilkie made long and careful preparation. It was his first attempt at what has been called the "grand school" of painting—attempts which Mr. Ruskin holds to have ruined him. No doubt the foundation of Wilkie's fame will always rest on his inimitable representations of Scottish life and character. His works of this class will always have a unique value and prove of as unfailing interest as those of Hogarth. But few will be willing to admit Ruskin's dicta as applied to this picture of Knox preaching. It rarely fails to arouse the interest and enquiry of all who see it, and Dr. Waagen, the great German critic whose cosmopolitan judgment is rarely at fault, holds this painting, "for size and richness of composition, one of Wilkie's greatest works."

The lady in the center of the picture has often been supposed to be Queen Mary of Scotland, but that is a mistake. It is a portrait of the Countess of Argyle, the illegitimate sister of the Queen. The first Catholic prelate behind the ladies is Archbishop Hamilton, with Kennedy, Abbot of Crossrayne, whispering in his ear, and next to them, Beaton, Bishop of Glasgow. The group of four noblemen in front are the famous Murray (the good earl who was assassinated), the wily Morton, the Earl of Argyle, and Cunningham, Earl of Glencairn. In the gallery is represented George Buchanan, one of the most famous scholars of his day and a bitter opponent of Mary Stuart, his unhappy Queen. The age was one of strong convictions and desperate conflicts, in which the lives of the leading contestants often hung upon the fate of their cause.

Bethink thee of something thou oughtest to do and go and do it, if it be but the sweeping of a room or the preparation of a meal or a visit to a friend.—George MacDonald.

MINNIE MAY'S DEPARTMENT.

A Plea for Our Skirts.

I lately came across the following poem, which I fancy echoes a very general sentiment:—

Wail of the Anti-Bloomerite.

We hear so many rumors
About wearing of the bloomers,
That we feel inclined to ask—
Why should women try to mask
Her own sweet and lovely sex
And with men's her clothes perplex?
Why the flowing lines pervert
Of fair woman's graceful skirt?
Why the groanings and the rants
Because we can't endure those—*pants*?

Why should they wear balloons,
Just like pumpkins or full moons?
With a waistcoat and cravat
And a mannish-looking hat?
Oh! lovely fair ones, *why*
Is all this thus, we cry!

Just take an average girl,
And two suits of clothes unfurl.
Dress her first as woman fair—
Don the other,—then compare!

If you only knew how sweet
Is dear woman—when we meet
Her—in her modest dress arrayed,—
A truly *woman* maid,—
Oh! surely soon these rumors
Of the ugly, clumsy Bloomers,
Would no longer woman vex,
And she'd prefer to keep her sex.

With the author of these lines I most cordially agree. It is really surprising to observe the im-

Firstly, because the list is endless, and secondly, because I have arrived at the word "skirts." There lies the rub. Those dear ladies, the Bloomerites, are not satisfied with the dress *menu* which I have enumerated, but they must abolish "skirts." This most suitable and graceful of all woman's dress must flee, and in its place shall reign the ponderous bloomers! One argument advanced is: "Impossible to ride a bicycle gracefully or safely with a skirt." This humble writer happens to know that one of the finest lady bicyclists, who has wheeled hundreds and hundreds of miles, in Europe and America, considers that a properly-made skirt offers no sort of impediment to good and safe riding. The anti-Bloomerite poem I have quoted speaks a wholesome truth, although jestingly. A *woman cannot look womanly without a skirt!* Let undergarments be divided if you like—indeed much comfort may be derived therefrom—but have a skirt outside. A short skirt (that is, to about the ankles) for walking, especially in bad weather, is highly to be commended; but the shortness I name is enough. Look like a woman! What is there to be ashamed of? If there is any radical change in dress, let our brothers have a chance. Strange it is that so few men (in fact, are there any?) want to look feminine and so many women want to look masculine!

FRANCES J. MOORE.

Recipes.

VEAL CROQUETTES.—Mince the veal, season it, and moisten with white sauce, then heap it in small shells or pattypans; sprinkle with bread crumbs, and bake till brown.

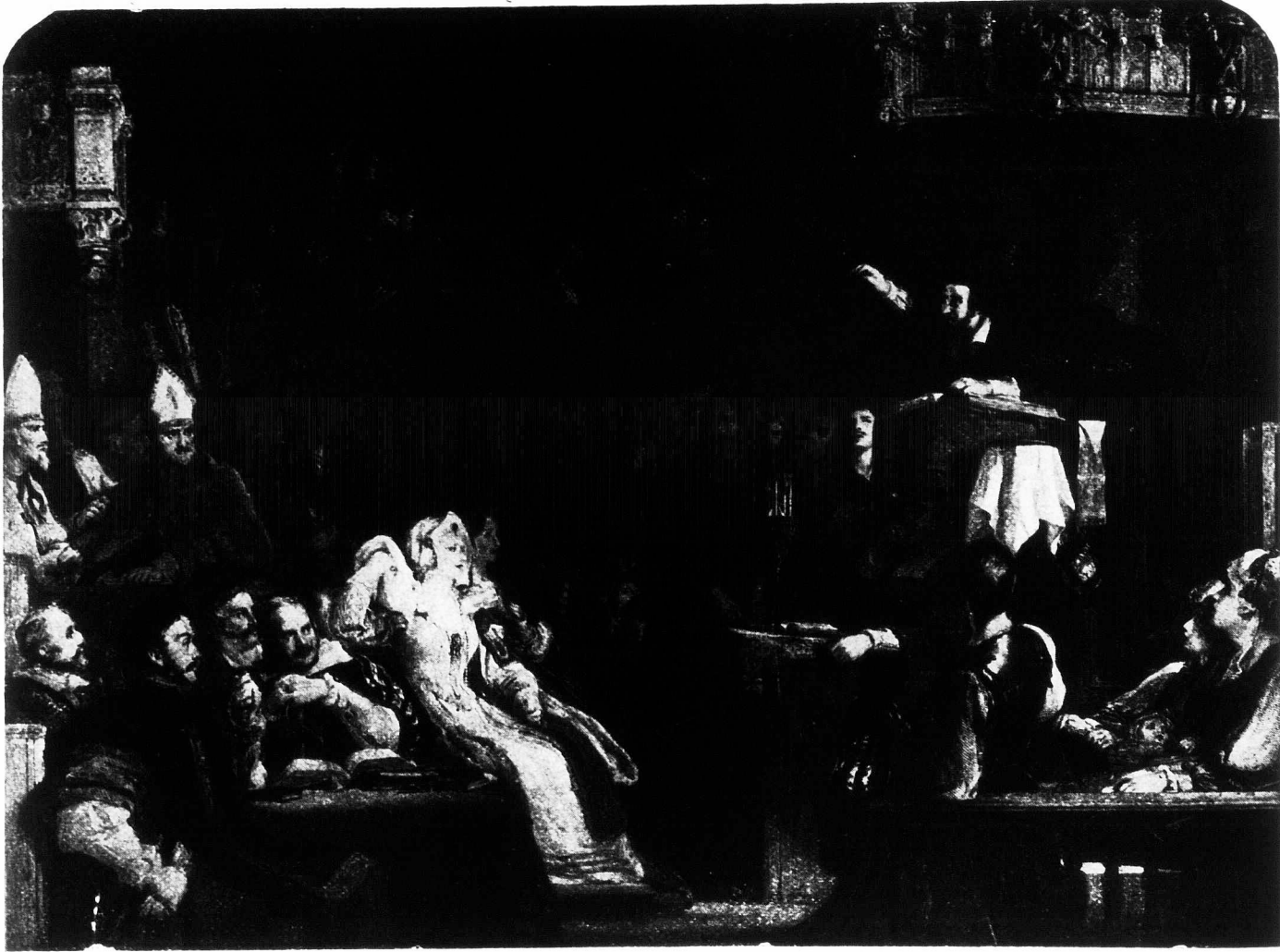
LAMB CROQUETTES.—Boil two large tablespoonfuls of rice in stock until it has absorbed the liquid and is quite tender; then spread it on a platter and brush over with a little meat glaze. Make six croquettes of lamb in the same way as the veal, brush over with meat glaze and pile them on the rice; season with green peas or beans.

CHICKEN CROQUETTES.—Mince enough cold chicken to make a pint of meat; add two or three mushrooms and half a pint of white sauce; stir with the meat until the sauce is melted; add the beaten yolks of two eggs and salt and pepper to taste. When the mixture has become nearly cold, form into deep, round croquettes, and brush over with the yolk of an egg beaten in a teaspoonful of milk. After this, roll in dried, sifted bread crumbs, and fry.

STEWED PINEAPPLE.—Take a ripe pineapple, cut into small pieces and cover with sugar. Let stand a few hours, then pour all the juice off; add more sugar, and boil it until it assumes the consistency of syrup, then pour it over the fruit—the latter must not be cooked—and serve cold.

TO PRESERVE STRAWBERRIES WHOLE.—Procure large, firm strawberries—not too ripe—and hull and weigh them. Take an equal weight of sugar, make a syrup, and when boiling hot, put in the berries, a few at a time. Boil about twenty minutes, then seal in small jars.

HOME-BREWED BEER.—Home-brewed beer is a delicious drink in summer. In filling the bottles great care must be exercised that they are not filled too full or they will burst when fermentation sets in. Fill up just to the neck. To make home-brewed beer, proceed as follows: Measure four teacupfuls of brown sugar, four tablespoonfuls of ground ginger, and a two-quart basin full of fresh hops. Place the hops and ginger together, cover well with water, using three or four quarts, and boil for an hour. Then strain, pour the liquor into a kettle, add half a cupful of molasses, and boil for half an hour. Put the hops, ginger and sugar in a crock holding four gallons, put in the hot liquor, fill the crock with water, and add a cupful of yeast. Set the liquor in a warm place for eight or ten hours to ferment; then skim and bottle, tying the corks securely. Beer bottles with rubber corks are best. In two days the beverage will be ready for use. Be careful in opening, as the beer will be "heady." Beer made in this way will keep all the year round.



JOHN KNOX PREACHING BEFORE THE LORDS OF THE CONGREGATION.

mense amount of spare steam expended by women on dress discussions. Not by all women, happily. There is still quite a large majority who prefer to retain the garments suitable to their sex. Now, if the poor men were to make some protest against their habiliments, it would not be so much a matter of wonder. Think of a man's dress, and the small amount of change there is in it! No matter what complexion a man possesses—what hair—what eyes—what height—what breadth—he must wear the regulation clothes. He can't choose a color to suit him, poor fellow! Sometimes he may venture on a becoming color for his tie—his blazer—his cap—his summer sash; but take his every-day suit and his dress suit—what monotony! I am sure he must often read, with envy, of the velvet doublets and "fetching" waistcoats and hose worn by our ancestors, and gaze, with a hopeless heart-sinking, upon the pictures of that far off youth.

I read lately—*apropos* of the bicycle craze—that "trousers must go." Let them go, by all means, the ugly things! Knickerbockers and stockings are twice as picturesque. I hope a good time is coming for the "sterner sex"—[Which is the "sterner sex," by the way, for things have got somewhat mixed of late?]. And now, *why*, *why* all this fuss amongst the women? If there ever was an age when lovely woman could array herself in any way she pleased, truly this is that age. Color—shape—grace—everything! Tailor gowns—empire gowns—dark colors, light colors, one color, a dozen colors; big sleeves, no sleeves; little hats, big hats; long skirts, short skirts—Here I must pause.

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