

dolence, but whose eyes grow weary by the bedside of the sufferer, and long and think of the soft couch. Away with such pretenders, keep them in the name of humanity from violating the sanctity of human suffering, and deepening the pangs by the sight of one aping the air of the true messenger. Keep away those whose prayers are prayerless—whose devotion is artificial—who it may be are never seen by you, to gladden and widen, and purify the beatings and human cravings of an unsatisfied heart in the hour of health, and while buffeting with the temptations of the world, but who only like ill-omened birds, appear in the time of suffering. What power, we say again, in heart-felt sympathy—in human love, living, active, ardent, and untiring. The love of a mother for a child—of a Howard for the outcast, of a Florence Nightingale for the sick soldier on his poor couch. The power of love is indeed divine—an emanation from Heaven. Let us pray for it, search after it, practice it, and thus seek our reward, not from the world, but from the poor in spirit, the sick, the friendless, and the unfortunate.

TER-CENTENARY OF THE REFORMATION IN FRANCE.

In May 1859, was celebrated the tri-centenary of the Reformation in France; and I think that it is fitting that it should thus have preceded our commemoration. It was from Geneva, after long intercourse with Calvin and Farel—Frenchmen both, that Knox arrived in Scotland, in the year 1559, to fight like a God-inspired man the battle of the Scottish Reformation. And to no country does Protestantism owe more than to France. In Calvin alone, she gave a world blessing. As the historian Saint Hilaire well showed in his speech at the Paris ter-centenary, Luther had indeed the glory of *founding*, but Calvin of *organizing* the Reformation; and that if Luther in his horror of Popish *despotism*—the State—had gone to the opposite extreme, and in some respects *secularized* the church; Calvin on the contrary had immovably established the pregnant principles of its absolute independence and co-ordinate jurisdiction; the Church being supreme and untrammelled in spiritual things, and in *spiritual things only*. These were and are the fundamental principles of the Church of Scotland. She has testified for them when no other great Church has dared to do so: and she can afford to smile at the boisterous mouthings of petty assailants, who in comparison with her are but of yesterday.

The whole history of the Church of Christ in France is full of terrible scenes and stirring episodes, of manful struggling and pious working. In the second century after Christ we have the glorious martyrdoms of Lyons and Vienna. In the middle ages came the Albigensian and Waldensian persecutions. And in the history of the Reformation, France plays no unimportant part. Her geographical position is intermediate between the great Protestant and the great Roman Catholic countries,—between the great northern nations, where the whole national life and intellect embraced the doctrine of a free gospel and a free justification, and Southern Europe, where Protestantism was crushed out before it could strike deep root, though even there it took a wider hold than is generally supposed. And corresponding to this geographical position of France, is the spiritual position she held during the sixteenth century. Two great systems of teaching then struggled all over Europe for ascendancy in fierce death-gripe conflicts, whose oscillations shook dynasties. The vast preportion of all the worth, nobleness and piety of France was Protestant: but the truth had not leavened the masses as it had throughout Germany; nor did the powerful and centralized government of France give it time to take root and spread; and so amid woes and horrors innumerable, the craft and butcher policy of the Guises and of Catherine de Medici triumphed. On St. Bartholomew's Eve was murdered half the national life of France; and the remaining energies of Protestantism were weakened at the very heart by the recantation of its leader, Henry IV. Enough of strength, however, was left to it to effect in the Edict of Nantes a fair compromise by which it obtained all that it ever asked for—a fair field and no favor. But next came, in 1685, the Revocation of its *Magna Charta*, that same Edict; when its 800 churches were closed, and its 640 clergymen were silenced; and tens of thousands of the best-workmen in France were driven from their country.

Worse persecutions followed. The Dragounades excited resistance. Then came the beautiful and romantic deeds of the Cevennes risings; where at many a Drumclog, among wild glens, and hills, and rocks, the troops of the "*grand monarque*" were routed by Cavalier and his untrained peasants and shepherds. In how many points does this history resemble that of our own Covenanters! The meetings in the desert were just like our conventicles on the hill side and the moor. The Cevennes, as well as our own forefathers, had their godless troopers and fierce Halzells to fight with, their thrilling stories of fell murder or providential escape to tell over to their children's children. Now, thanks be to God, the persecutions of both Churches have passed away: they were fiery while they lasted, but each was as the fire-chariot of Elijah, carrying many to the Church in heav-