

pal charge. To his clergy, whose character stood very low when he arrived amongst them, he was ever attentive, courteous and kind. By treating them always with respect, he taught them to respect themselves, and thus they became insensibly wiser and better under his care; while his own active and zealous discharge of his duties, which were not confined to superintendence, but extended to preaching from parish to parish, gave double force and efficacy to those friendly suggestions and prudent regulations by which he sought to improve their character and to stimulate their exertions. In his ordination and recommendation of ministers he was particularly conscientious and circumspect. "It is vain," he would say, "for any one to speak of divine things without something of divine affections. An ungodly clergyman must feel uneasy when preaching godliness, and will hardly preach it persuasively. He has not been able to prevail upon himself to be holy, and no marvel if he fail of prevailing upon others. In truth, he is in great danger of being hardened against religion by the frequent inculcation, if it fail of melting himself." In the steady and conscientious discharge of these high duties, and in the exercise of every Christian virtue, the first years of his office were spent; exciting the love and admiration not only of his diocese, but of all Scotland, and winning by degrees the reluctant applause of the covenanters themselves, who were constrained to acknowledge that a double portion of the apostolic spirit had fallen upon him.

Notwithstanding his exertions, however, the cause of episcopacy made no progress. His mild and apostolic views were neither appreciated by the government at home, nor seconded by his coadjutors in Scotland. New measures of coercion were resorted to in proportion as the former were found ineffectual, and the abolition of presbytery was pushed forward with a zeal and intolerance, which would not have been justified by the rooting out of heathenism, till at last, in 1665, Leighton, despairing entirely of the cause, while so conducted, took a formal leave of his clergy with a determination to retire from his bishopric; lest by his continuance on the bench, he should appear to sanction measures at which his understanding and his conscience equally revolted. Before he took this step, however, he went to London, and obtained an audience of the king, in which he pleaded the cause of his countrymen so pathetically and effectually, that he returned to Scotland with a promise that the ecclesiastical commission, at that time proceeding with great harshness, should be revoked, and that fines and imprisonments should be no longer had recourse to for forcing the consciences of his subjects. Under this promise, he returned to Scotland, and resumed the duties of his diocese. But this prospect he was not suffered to enjoy long. It was the king's misfortune, that his counsels, swayed as they were by profligate and designing men, were never pursued with any steadiness and consistency. The plan