



JOHN O'GROAT'S HOUSE.

John O'Groat's house, a memorable place in the parish of Cannisbay, in this county, perhaps owes its fame less to the circumstance of its local situation at the northern extremity of the island, than to an event which inculcates a useful lesson of morality. In the reign of James IV. of Scotland, three brothers, Malcolm, Gavin, and John O'Groat (supposed to have been originally from Holland,) arrived in Caithness with a letter from that Prince, recommending them to the countenance and protection of his loving subjects in Caithness. These brothers bought some land near Duncansby Head, and in a short time, by the increase of their families, eight different proprietors of the name of Groat possessed these lands in equal divisions. These eight families lived peaceably for a number of years, and established an annual meeting to celebrate the anniversary of the arrival of their ancestors on the coast. In the course of their festivity, on one of these occasions, a question arose respecting the right of taking the door, the head of the table, and such points of precedency, each contending for the seniority and chieftainship, which increased to such a degree as would probably have proved fatal in its consequences, had not John O'Groat, who appears to have acquired great knowledge of mankind, interfered. He expatiated on the comfort they had hitherto enjoyed, owing to the harmony which existed among them; he assured them that as soon as they appeared to quarrel amongst themselves, their neighbours, who had till then treated them with respect, would fall upon them and expel them from the country; he, therefore, conjured them by the ties of blood and mutual safety to return quietly to their several homes, and pledged himself that he would satisfy them on all points of precedency, and prevent the possibility of such disputes in future at their anniversary meetings. They all acquiesced, and departed in peace. In due time, John O'Groat, to fulfil his engagement, built a room distinct from all other houses, in an octagonal figure, with eight doors, and placed a table of oak of the same shape in the middle. The next meeting took place; he desired each of them to enter by his own door, and to sit at the head of the table, he himself

occupying the last. By this ingenious contrivance the harmony and good humour of the company was restored. The building was then named John O'Groat's House, and, though nothing remains but the foundation of the building, the place still retains the name, and deserves to be remembered for the good intention and sound judgment which gave it origin.—*Caithness Chronicle.*

BRUCE AND THE SPIDER.

The following legend will bear to be frequently reprinted:—

“One morning, during Bruce's sojourn in the Castle of Raghery, he was lying in bed, musing on his bad fortunes and frequent defeats, when his attention was arrested by a spider endeavouring to fasten his web to a particular point. The insect made three attempts in vain; yet nothing daunted, he made a fourth, in doing which he seemed nearly to have exhausted his strength, but he was successful. This little incident struck the Bruce very forcibly; for he, too, had made three attempts to gain the Scottish throne, and was beaten in three battles. The spider's persevering example and consequent success encouraged him to muster his scattered forces and make one trial more. He did so, and gained the battle of Bannockburn. In grateful commemoration of this event, it is said that no one of the name of Bruce will ever kill a spider.”



CRUCIFIXION OF JESUS CHRIST.

When the Saviour had grown up to manhood, he began to do a great deal of good in the world. He healed the sick, the lame, and the blind, and raised the dead to life. He also told the Jews of all their wickedness; and for this reason they hated him and resolved to kill him.

Christ had twelve disciples, and one of them, named Judas, was hired by the Jews to betray him. When Jesus sat down to eat the Feast of the Passover with his disciples, he told them that one of their number would betray him. This, said he, is the last supper that we shall eat together. He then went out to the Mount of Olives to pray. While he was there, some armed men came to take him. Then Judas went up and kissed him. This was the sign by which he was to let them know which was Jesus.

The soldiers then seized Jesus and took him before Pontius Pilate, then governor

of Judea. But Pilate could find no wrong in him. However, the Jews insisted that he should be put to death; and they mocked and scoffed him and spit upon him.

Finally, Pilate yielded to their wishes and the Saviour was led out to be crucified. When nailed upon the cross, he prayed for all his enemies, and then died. Two thieves were also crucified with him; one on his right hand, the other on his left.



Thus died our divine Saviour. He died to save us from punishment for our sins, and to secure our eternal happiness. Thanks be to thee, gracious Redeemer, forever and ever!

AN INDIAN'S THEOLOGY.

A white man and an Indian were both brought under conviction for sin about the same time. The Indian, whose conviction was pungent, soon found joy and peace in believing, while the white man continued in darkness and distress for a long time. Seeing the Indian one day, who enjoyed the sweet consolations of religion, “Why,” says the white man, “should there be such a difference?—Why has God forgiven yours sins while I go mourning? I have done all that I can do, but find no comfort.” “Suppose,” says the Indian, “there come along a great prince. He holds out to you a suit of clothes, and says, ‘Here, take these, and welcome!’ You look around, feel ashamed, and say, ‘No, my clothes pretty good yet; they do little longer, thank you, sir.’ Then the prince, rather angry, say, ‘Here, Sam, take the suit.’ I look; my old blanket all rags, cold, and dirty; ‘thank you, thank you, kind sir! Poor Indian now be warm and happy.’”—*Wes. Meth. Mag.*

TIME LOST.

One of the sands in the hour-glass of time is, beyond comparison, more precious than gold. In nothing is waste more ruinous, or more sure to bring unavailing regrets. Better to throw away money than moments; for time is much more than money. As we lose our days, we incur an increasing risk of losing our souls. “The life-blood of the soul runs out in wasted time.” The years which have winged their flight have gone to be recording angels; and what is the “report they have borne to heaven?” Will the record testify for us or against us, when the throne of the Son of Man shall be set, and THE BOOKS SHALL BE OPENED?