

banish human idols from the pulpit, and restore the doctrine of Christ and Him crucified. I have no wish to excite any angry feelings against Roman Catholics. I admire their denominational zeal, their regard for sacred things, and their kindness to strangers; but I cannot be ignorant of a system which withholds the Holy Scriptures from the common people, sets up many mediators instead of one, and puts the priest and the church in the room of the Saviour and the Bible.

Two centuries have passed away without any celebration of this event. The stormy times of Church and State did not permit it; but the ages of darkness and blood have passed away, and conflicting elements have returned to repose. We have now a clear sky, and the star of Bethlehem is in the ascendant. Reformation principles are spread over many lands. Romanism is trembling for an existence and the cry will soon be heard, "Babylon the great is fallen, and shall rise no more."

At the time of the Reformation, kings and Popes were contending for the empire of the world; the people were ruled by the throne and the church, they were trodden down by an iron priesthood, and their rights were disregarded. The chief offices of State were held by the clergy, and nearly one half of the landed property belonged to the Church. The inmates of monasteries and nunneries wallowed in wealth, and like the flies of Egypt on the banks of the Nile, fed and fattened on corruption, while the country was sunk in deep poverty, and swarmed with beggars. The Bible was locked up in a language known only to the learned, and dealt out in such portions, and with such interpretations as priests thought proper. It was like a well of fine water, so deep that the common people could not reach it. The minds of men were chained by an infallible church, and the grossest darkness overspread the land. The Reformation has given us an open Bible, and the liberty of thinking for ourselves. It has banished senseless rites from the pulpit, and given us the doctrine of justification by the merits of Christ through faith alone, and sanctification by His spirit.

The Church of Scotland has passed through the storms of persecution, and been reformed from Popery and Prolacy, and in the seventeenth century had acquired a high degree of purity. We are not blind to her errors and defects, but she has been a bulwark of Protestant Christianity and a fortress of sound doctrine for three hundred years, and may still be regarded as one of the fair daughters of the Reformation. Like other churches, she has had her dark as well as her bright days, and the hard law of patronage has driven some from her ranks. But it is gratifying to reflect that when dissenters withdrew from her communion, they seceded not from the church herself, but rather from a ruling party in her, and they took with them her

doctrine, mode of worship and government, and professed themselves ready to return when existing evils were removed. I was in Scotland in 1834, when the voluntary question was causing great excitement, and the whole country was like a pot of soda-water. Strong combinations were formed for the destruction of our National Zion. Many good men, such as Dr. Wardlaw, Dr. Heugh and Dr. King were in the front of the battle, men who for their apparent piety ought not to have joined the ranks of the ungodly, in seeking the destruction of the beautiful house where our forefathers worshipped. I had no sympathy with them, and it appeared to me an unholy sight, to see the white flag of the gospel, the red flag of Popery, the dark ensign of infidelity, and the presumptuous pendant of Socinians all flattering side by side against the Established Church. The Covenanters and the Original Seceders alone stood firm, and refused to dip their flags to such reformers. They accomplished nothing, and the question is at rest.

In 1844, I was again in Scotland soon after the disruption. The Free Church was then all-powerful, and a man could scarcely live in Glasgow unless he was a Free Churchman. In steamboats and rail cars I was often asked the question "are you bond or free?" I avoided the question by telling them of an Irishman who in the time of a great revival here was asked to what party he belonged, replied, "that he had never seen a religion but that he could turn his hand to."

The Church of Scotland at that time reminded me of a noble ship which had been in a storm, and lost its spars, but under the conduct of the good pilot had regained the harbor, and we hope that under the fostering care of heaven, she may continue for many ages to spread scriptural truths over the hills and valleys of Scotland.

"Breaths there a man with soul so dead,
Who never to himself hath said,
This is my own, my native land."

I love Scotland, not because her mountains are noble and her valleys are beautiful, but because she is consecrated with the tombs of the martyrs, and flowered with their blood. I have slept for nearly half a century in Nova Scotia, but my dreams are all in Caledonia, and in the visions of the night often visit the ivy-mantled towers and fairy haunted glens where my forefathers dwelt. Scotland is the land of Sabbath and Sabbath bells. I think I hear the cottagers skirling up the Bangor at their evening devotions, or streaming away on the Sabbath morning to hear the Word of God at the tent on the hillside.

The benefits of the Reformation are universally felt in Scotland, and we may well remember it with gratitude and joy. It is the purity of the standards of our National Zion, and the fidelity with which ministers have discharged the duties of their office which have