

very deep impression upon his mind, as a dismal presage of the decay of vital religion, and of the pulling to pieces our excellent ecclesiastical constitution. Influenced by considerations so powerful, he interposed his most vigorous efforts to stop the progress of such tyrannical and ruinous measures, by writing himself, and engaging able men to write upon the subject; and it was known to his friends that several well written pamphlets, published at this time, made their appearance under his special superintendence.

Notwithstanding that so large a portion of his time was employed in active ministerial duty, and intercourse with his people, there was scarcely any new book of note that made its appearance, with which he had not made himself acquainted; and by due economy of his time he found leisure to study and compose upon a variety of subjects. To account for the remarkable progress he made in the study of sacred literature, it must be considered, that as he had a very quick apprehension, so he was capable of extraordinarily close application to study, attended with a certain persevering earnestness to finish the discussion of every subject he had once begun. It was well known also to his friends, that he generally retired for some time during the summer season to the country, where his studies became both his business and recreation, and that he never seemed to weary of them, nor to relinquish them, unless when other avocations called on him to do so.

It does not appear that Mr. Maclaurin, during his lifetime, published any work bearing his name; but a great number of valuable manuscripts were found after his death, and an excellent selection of them was made by his affectionate son-in-law, the late Dr. John Gillies of Glasgow, and published by him in 1755. This volume of Sermons and Essays has passed through several editions, and has been much read by the religious public, and frequently referred to by competent judges, as a book abounding in sound instruction, powerful reasoning, and persuasive eloquence. Besides this volume, Dr. Gillies published another, containing an elaborate essay 'On the Prophecies relating to the Messiah,' and several sermons. The Doctor, in his memoir of Mr. Maclaurin, gives an enumeration of the principal manuscripts in his possession, and mentions, among others, 'A consolatory letter to Lady Frances Gardiner on the Colonel's death.' This letter has, so far as we know, never been printed; but that it was of high value, is evident from a note of the late Dr. Erskine, prefixed to a collection of letters to the afflicted, published by him in 1790, where he thus expresses himself:—'An excellent letter of the late Mr. Maclaurin of Glasgow, to Lady Frances Gardiner, on occasion of Colonel Gardiner's death, would have been inserted in this collection, if a copy, once in the publisher's possession, had not been lost, and all his efforts to procure another proved fruitless; and, therefore, he will be indebted to any one who will put it into his power to impart it to the public.'

Notwithstanding his incessant application to study, and to the more active duties of his profession, Mr. Maclaurin uniformly enjoyed a good state of health, which was seldom interrupted excepting by some occasional fits of rheum in his head, and a

pain and weakness in his eyes. In spring, 1754, he was somewhat feverish for a few days, but soon recovered, and was so well as to attend the meeting of the General Assembly in May, where he had the pleasure of meeting with the Rev. Messrs. Tennant and Davies, agents for collecting benefactions for the college at Princeton, New Jersey, a design to which he heartily wished success, as he did to every scheme that tended to promote the interests of christianity either at home or abroad; and it gave him great satisfaction to see with what readiness the Assembly granted a collection in aid of the infant seminary. After he came home he had frequently in his hands a small volume of valuable religious tracts by the Rev. Samuel Shaw, one of which is entitled, 'A Farewell to Life,' and peculiarly suitable for the serious perusal of one having his departure from this world in view. About the end of August he complained greatly of the rheum in his head, which, notwithstanding the temporary beneficial effects of medicine, still returned. Having preached on Sabbath the 25th, he went abroad next day, there being at that time some foreigners of distinction in Glasgow, who were desirous of being introduced to him on account of the esteem they had entertained for his learned brother, Colin. He waited upon them with great cheerfulness, and conversed with them in his usual entertaining way. He had engaged himself to wait on these strangers on Thursday, 29th August, but found himself so much indisposed by the pain in his head, that he could not go abroad as he intended. About two in the afternoon of that day, he became suddenly so ill that his memory failed him. On Sabbath, 1st September, though he did not speak with his former distinctness, his discourse, in the intervals of his drowsiness, was in the same heavenly strain it used to be on that day of sacred rest, repeating many comfortable passages of scripture, and improving every circumstance as the means of exciting devotional feeling, taking occasion from the cordials he was using to speak of the 'fruit of the tree of life,' and of the pure water of life. Afterwards his trouble rapidly increased, and carried him off on the evening of Sabbath, 8th September, in the sixty-first year of his age, the end of a Sabbath on earth being to him the beginning of an eternal Sabbath in heaven.

The decease of this able and useful minister of the gospel was much lamented as a great loss to the community at large, and by his own affectionate congregation as a painful bereavement. He was greatly beloved by his brethren in the ministry in general, especially by his colleagues in Glasgow—and what heightened the value of his other talents and christian graces, and endeared him to all who knew him, was that humility and self-diffidence by which he was so eminently distinguished. As a minister of the gospel he was most exemplary. The great subjects of his public discourses were the peculiar doctrines of christianity, which were the comfort and delight of his own soul; and it might be truly said of him, that he 'shunned not to declare the whole counsel of God.' In dealing with the consciences of his hearers, he endeavored, after the apostolic pattern, to convince them of their having broken the divine law, and then to lead them to the blood of Christ which cleanseth