

And there were incidents that made him sure, not that God was in the affairs of men generally, but that He was a factor in his own life particularly. Two of these will suffice:

On his first visit to Glasgow as a lad of 19, he and his two brothers, who were at the time working in Glasgow, decided on the evening before one of the big holidays that on the next day they would go by the Steamer "Telegraph" down the Clyde to Helensburgh. On the morning of the holiday, for some reason or other, they changed their minds and instead took a long walk together. The "Telegraph" that day was blown up, through the bursting of the boiler, as it lay at the Helensburgh pier, and many were burned, scalded, drowned. This narrow escape of the three brothers was always associated in Mr. Blaikie's mind with God's providence in his life; he could never doubt hereafter that "the Lord reigneth." One of the most telling incidents of his life was in connection with his later experiences in Glasgow. In 1857, a wealthy man, named Mr. Alexander A. Ferguson, who was about to establish a business in India, offered him an agency in Bombay. He consulted Mr. Thomas Wilson, by whom he was employed, who said to him: "John, this is the chance of a life, you ought to accept it." Whilst he was making preparations to go to India, the Indian Mutiny broke out, and the door, which seemed to stand so wide open, was closed in his face, and his plans were necessarily changed. A higher Power than his had shut-to the door. And so, when the next year in his room in the hotel in Toronto, he had that Sabbath morning the vision of One who bade him "fear not," it was the vision of One in whose watchful care he had already learned to believe and trust—One who had already proved Himself a real factor in the moulding of his life.

Perhaps the chief characteristic of Mr. Blaikie's life was his calm, his repose, his confidence.