

James Melvill in his autobiography, describes his studies at the University of St. Andrews under the Primarius Mr. James Wilkie (A. D. 1572); and adds—"bot the graittest benefit I had of him was his daylie doctrine at the prayers in the Kirk, everie mornng." Various other proofs of the practice referred to might be given from the literature of the period.

On the Sabbath, there was wont to be one full morning service for adults in the order already described. In the afternoon there was a Catechetical exercise for the young. So late as 1652, the General Assembly "recommends that every Lord's Day, when the people do most frequently convene, some competent portion of the Catechism be explained before the whole congregation (without prejudice of the preaching); and that in this publike catechotick instruction the points that are handld be propounded by question, to be answered by some called up for that purpose." Is not the modern neglect of 'catechising' a change for the worse?

II. *As regards Sermons.*—We do not laud the sermons of the Reformers as complete models for the present time, but we assert that they are better models than the sermons of later Divines in the 17th and 18th centuries. As in other countries, so also in Scotland, the Reformers zealously betook themselves to the original mode of preaching—the exposition of consecutive Scriptures. Their lectures, if uncouth in dialect, were at all events vigorous and racy; and their sermons were fearlessly directed to the sins and wants of their own age and country. In the pulpit they were not tedious. James Melvill heard John Knox at St. Andrews, and took notes of his lectures on the Book of Daniel. He thus describes the habit of Knox as a Preacher:—"In the opening up of his text he was moderat, the space of an half houre; but when he enterit to application, he maid me sa to grew (shudder) that I could nocht hab a pen to wryt." Nothing can be more judicious than this management of a sermon—half an hour spent in exposition, followed by a fervent "application" for ten, fifteen, or even twenty minutes.

The long intricate discourse on a verse of Scripture, or clause of a verse, with a hundred divisions and subdivisions, and "uses," occupying probably two hours in the delivery, belongs to a later period than the Reformation. It appeared among the English Puritans of the 17th century, and was learned from them by the Scottish Preachers of the end of the 17th and of the 18th century. Favorable specimens exist in the published sermons of the Erskines, Durham, and Traill. But how much better than these are the Lectures of Knox on the Sixth Psalm, and on our Lord's Temptation; or those of Rollock on Christ's Passion and Resurrection; or Bruce's Sermon on the Christian Race; or Binning's discourse on "What God is to us"!

The Scottish taste for long didactic sermons is an acquired, not an original taste. It was formed in comparatively recent times, under an inferior school of Preachers. The alleged taste for dry abstract sermons, if there be such a taste, dates only from the last century, and is one of the many evils introduced by the frigid "Moderates."