

attracted by it. But any unfavourable impressions produced by his manner soon passed away, and the judicious and the pious soon relished the fulness of gospel truth, which he set forth before them in "good and acceptable words." By some it has been said, that in his preaching, the "strong meat" predominated to an extent, which rendered it unsuitable for the bulk of ordinary hearers. But the best proof of the general adaptation of his preaching is to be found in his congregation, which continued not only their attachment to himself personally, but which always felt the warmest admiration for him as a preacher, and continued to listen with increasing eagerness and delight, to his ministrations till the very last.

XIII. OLD AGE AND JUBILEE.

Thus years increased upon him. He had for some time passed the three score and ten, which form the allotted period of human life, still he was able to go out and in, discharging the various duties of his station. But his old age was what the scriptures emphatically call "*good old age*." It was an old age in a great measure free from bodily infirmity, in which the senses were left in perfection, and the mind was still strong, vigorous and cheerful. In his worldly circumstances he was free from the harassing cares of his early years. He dwelt among his people, and enjoyed largely their esteem and affection, while in every part of the Island and in other portions of the church where he was known, his name was mentioned only with the most loving veneration, while among his brethren in the ministry he was both loved and venerated as a father. But especially was it pleasing for him to contemplate the state of the church on the Island then, compared with what it was when he came to it. "At that period," said the Rev. R. S. Patterson writing a few years ago, "the country presented the appearance of an almost unbroken forest. Only here and there, at wide intervals, might be seen a few solitary settlers, dwelling for the most part in poor log huts with a little clearing around them. The moral and religious condition of the people also was very affecting. The few that made any pretensions to piety, were as sheep scattered abroad, having no shepherd. The labors of the Rev. Mr. Gordon had been short, and much impeded by his increasing debility, even while they did continue. There was therefore little else than a moral waste when Dr. Keir arrived. But how great the change which he has lived to witness! Instead of a dense uninterrupted forest, he sees an extensive, cultivated country; instead of a few lonely huts, numerous and comfortable habitations, instead of a handful of