

ministry, and settled at Luss, a parish beautifully situated on the romantic banks Lochlomond. In this delightful and sequestered spot, he enjoyed a favourable opportunity for pursuing his studies, which he did not fail to improve, his whole time being occupied with the discharge of his more active pastoral duties, or with his books : and his enlightened and discriminating mind well knew how to make all his literary pursuits subservient to the interests of religion, and of his own professional improvement.

This promising young man was not allowed to continue long in the secluded situation of a country minister. His talents and piety were soon taken notice of in the neighbourhood of Luss, and by many in the surrounding country, who had the opportunity of becoming acquainted with his worth. His unaffected piety made him acceptable to the friends of religion, his learning and ingenuity to persons of improved intellect, and his modest and cheerful temper to all who enjoyed his society. Having occasion sometimes to preach in Glasgow, which he did with universal approbation, he received a call from the congregation of North West parish, to succeed the Rev. Mr. Anderson, well known for his writings in defence of the Presbyterian form of church government. He was admitted to that charge in 1723, to the great satisfaction of all concerned. He was now introduced into a field of arduous labour and extensive usefulness, but which did not allow him so much time for study as he formerly enjoyed. It was, however, well adapted for one who had previously laid so good a foundation, and who had sincerely devoted all his time and talents to the work of the ministry. His activity and pious zeal carried him through a great deal more of useful work than many could have done. His calls to visit the sick and the dying were uncommonly frequent, and his experience in the exercises of the divine life led him to be often consulted by persons under the influence of deep concern about their eternal interests. In order to promote the spiritual interests of his Highland countrymen, he preached once every month to them, in their own language ; a privilege which must have been considered of high value, no Gaelic chapel being at that time in existence in the city. In every benevolent scheme he took an active and prominent part. He most efficiently assisted in concerting measures for the regular maintenance of the poor, and promoted, with successful effect, the erection of the city hospital. In all plans and endeavours used for suppressing vice and impiety, he was a principal mover ; and heartily countenanced a society instituted at that time in Glasgow for prosecuting criminals and reformation of manners. But if his zeal and activity were so great in regard to matters of outward reformation, they were still greater in regard to the interests of inward and vital religion. Nothing gave him so much joy as its advancement, and when the remarkable revival commenced about 1742 in several places of the west of Scotland, he was invited by the ministers in whose congregations the uncommon religious concern chiefly appeared, to visit and assist them in their most important and delicate

labours. Being fully convinced that the extraordinary religious excitement which at that time prevailed was of God, he did not consult his own ease, nor even his reputation ; but while some of his brethren stood aloof, he was at great pains to procure and communicate well attested accounts concerning the progress of religion both at home and abroad. He had several correspondents in Boston and in other parts of New England, whom he greatly esteemed and loved, particularly Abiel Walley, Esq., the Rev. Messrs. Cooper, Prince, and the celebrated Jonathan Edwards. He communicated the results of his correspondence freely to his religious friends at home, and wrote largely and particularly to his American correspondents what intelligence he could procure of the state of religion in Scotland. So much was his heart in the work, that he met once a week with some of his Christian friends residing in Glasgow and neighbourhood, for mutually communicating religious intelligence, and to converse on divine subjects. At this period of active exertion in his various pastoral duties, he greatly encouraged societies for prayer, and assisted them with his advice and co-operation. Several years afterwards he was the chief originator and promoter of a general concert for prayer, which was united in by great numbers both in Great Britain and in her American colonies ; in recommendation of which, his friend, the Rev. Jonathan Edwards, published a tract, entitled 'An humble attempt to promote explicit agreement and visible union of God's people in extraordinary prayer.'

Toward the latter part of his life, Mr. MacLaurin felt, in common with the Willisons and other pious men, peculiar anxiety regarding the peace and prosperity of the Church of Scotland. He had all along, during the course of his public ministry, used his utmost endeavours to prevent strife and division, but not with such successful effect as a lover of the peace of the Church, and a devoted friend of divine truth could have wished. He was, however, at great pains in procuring, by his influence, the peaceable settlement of vacant congregations, as appeared partly from papers found among his manuscripts, and from circumstances well known to his Christian friends and brethren in the ministry. While he was far from encouraging an unreasonable opposition among the people on the one hand, he was decidedly adverse, on the other, to the intrusion among them of ministers to whom, from conscientious motives, they were opposed. An appointment to the office of the holy ministry by ordination, he considered a solemn and very important business, which ought not on any account to be made subservient to political measures. He was persuaded that the great design of the sacred function—the edification of the body of Christ—could never be promoted by such violent means as fixing a pastoral relation in the face of an universal opposition ; and, therefore, the violent and arbitrary methods he had seen pursued by a dominant majority in the Church, in not only authorising such settlements, but, as in the case of Mr. Thos. Gillespie of Carnock, deposing from the holy ministry those who, for conscience' sake, had refused to take an active part in them, made a