

his testimony with a permanent impress, and paved the way for the still more large and effective range of the labours and preaching of Knox in the fourth and crowning period of the Scottish reformation. The career of that great man first in his native land, afterwards in France and Switzerland, then in England, and finally in Scotland again, it requires volumes to pourtray. He led the van in powerful and most successful preaching, in drawing up the articles of the faith as held by the reforming band; in planning and carrying out most judicious and decisive schemes of high principled development, in standing up before the great ones of the earth in defence of doctrines dearer to him than life; in organizing at once the "congregation" and the "covenant," and in rearing impregnable barriers against the revival of popery. During all these periods, the light of reformed truth diffused itself with a steady radiance over the length and breadth of the land, and at length the cause of Protestantism may be said to have triumphed in every part of Scotland, and, nearly, in the Highlands and Islands. Many subordinate concurring causes helped on the work, and the public political events of the times were wonderfully overruled by the wise providence of the great Head of the Church, for laying her foundations deep, and for giving to her whole structure a massy firmness of parts.

In 1560, peace was proclaimed between France, England, and Scotland; and on the departure of the English and French troops, public thanksgiving was ordered by the "congregation," for the nation's signal deliverance. That representative body of noblemen, barons, landed proprietors, and burgesses, substantially, if not formally possessed all the power; but they did not take one step without consulting Knox and the reforming clergy. Superintendents for districts, and ministers for particular charges, were, on August 20, 1560, nominated. When Parliament assembled, the "mitred members of it, the Bishops and Abbots, as Knox tells us, "spak naething;" and any opposition from other quarters was soon overruled. A comprehensive Confession of Faith, in twenty-five articles, was presented as the deliberate belief of the Church and of the land; and after full debate, generally embraced and solemnly ratified by the "three Estates." The Mass and the Pope's jurisdiction were solemnly abolished by public deed. Nevertheless, the appeal to Queen Mary, still in France, was unsuccessful, and fear came over many. The value of such a man as Knox, assisted by Erskine of Dun, Goodman, Spottiswood, Row, Sandilands, Glencairn and others, was then signally proved; and as David Calderwood says in his history: "The preachers assured men, that God would perfect his own work, for it was not theirs, but his own; exhorted the professors to proceed in reformation of abuses, and planting the ministry; and then commit the success to God, who is able to dispose of Kingdoms. The godly," he adds, "had scarcely begun to call for help of God, and to show some signs of obedience to his word, when he sent a