

advantages of the time and place did not promise much, and performed still less than they promised. The Parochial Schools were sufficiently rudimentary, but were better than no schools at all. William Fraser exhausted the resources of three of these schools, two in the Highlands and one in the Lowlands, and though they did not carry the youth of the parish far on the road toward a liberal education, they at least taught the art of reading, and put into the hands of all who desired to use it, a key that would unlock the treasures of literature.

If education in the parochial school was defective, the moral and spiritual condition of the people was still more deplorable. The family of Mr. Fraser belonged to the Established Church of Scotland. At one of the schools he attended his teacher was an elder of the church and also a catechist, but he did not consider it inconsistent with his position as teacher, elder and catechist, to amuse and encourage his scholars, by entertaining them with a cock fight once a year, and finishing the exercises of the gala day with a dance in the school house in the evening. Under such influences what could be expected but the merest formalism in religion, and by the amusements to which the young were invited, the training of the baser passions of vitiated human nature to a deeper degradation ?

When about sixteen years of age it pleased God, who works when, where and how He sees fit, to stir up young Fraser's conscience to a sense of sin and danger. The immediate instrument of this awakening was some portions of the Divine word, brought home to his dark heart by the Holy Spirit with great power. Then began the struggle between the old idea in which he had been brought up, that he had been engrafted into Christ and His Church in infancy, and therefore would be finally saved, and the truth which glowed on the pages of the Bible, and forced its light with ever increasing clearness on his conscience, that he was a guilty sinner who deserved to perish. While in this perplexed and uncertain state of mind, he heard the Rev. Peter Grant, Gaelic preacher and poet, whose poetical compositions are music to the ear and delight to the heart of Highlanders, preach a sermon which took from him all doubt of his own spiritual loss, destitution and helplessness. Under the