

Church in Scotland. On the 27th December 1869, was celebrated in every parish in the land the three-hundredth anniversary of the event. The interval between the two dates is the historical period of Scotland. Before the 16th century, it was a land of fables and traditions, of heroic deeds and stormy passions. Then it came forth full-grown, and took its place as a power in the world. It sent forth its sons to teach and to lead in old worlds, to discover and colonise in new. Knox was the founder of that new family of Scotchmen which has so flourished in the world from that day to this. He was a true king of men. Like John the Baptist, the atmosphere of courts could not corrupt him. When queen and barons, priest and prelate, thought only of their selfish interests, he spoke for the people, for education, for freedom, political and religious. As true a man as ever lived, brave as Luther, patriotic as Wallace, was our John Knox.

What has Scotch Protestantism done during the last 300 years? Not so much in Scotland as might have been expected from its vitality. It has not converted to the national type of Presbytery the upper classes, who are, almost to a man, Episcopalians. It has not Protestantized those ten thousands of Irish Romanists who have flocked to its shores. It has not even rooted out the powerful remnants of Popery that ever since the Reformation have possessed many fair portions of the land,—in Glenlivet, Moidart, Dist, and in the South as well as in the North. It has not been sufficiently generous and expansive to keep the whole family united under one roof-tree. And why has it thus not fulfilled its complete mission? Because when it became powerful, it was the first to deny its own spirit and principles. It became intolerant and persecuting. It bound itself by inelastic bands like those which it had indignantly cast off. And when the days of proscription and persecution had passed, the punishment of such unfaithfulness remained upon it. Thus does every institution as well as every man reap as it sows. But if in Scotland it has not done so much, out of Scotland it has done more than was ever anticipated. It has made Scotchmen proverbial for the qualities of sound thinking and steady acting, for reverence and uprightness. Look for them in positions of trust, or where self-control and sagacity are needed, and you will be sure to find them: for example, on board of our great steamships, whether on the Curlew line, on the Mediterranean, in the Turkish navy, or elsewhere, should no one else be Scotch, the engineers are sure to be so. Sailing down the Danube, you will hear little but broad Scotch from that section of the officers. And if any of my readers ever visit Lake Como, they need not brush up their Italian to speak to the engineer. The dialect of Lanarkshire will be much more acceptable. Three hundred years had come and gone

since the Reformation, and it was a fitting time for the Presbyterians of Scotland to pause and take a steady look back on the past and forward into the future. They had to thank God for blessings, to reproach themselves for shortcomings. They were summoned to forgive and forget, to bury rivalries and hatreds, to shake hands with each other, and pray God for the larger heart and the "wider day." In many parts of Scotland this was done, and done well. In other parts, sectarianism with its hard shibboleths was too rampant. Some months before, the Free Church had tried to get up a celebration which it would have all to itself; and the same men who headed that one were the chief obstacles to worthily celebrating the day that the whole Presbyterian heart of the nation had agreed upon. But in Glasgow, the great capital of Presbyterianism, the harsh notes of hydra-headed sect were hushed for the occasion, and there was none so bold as to awake them. A half-holiday was almost universally given and taken, and in the afternoon there was service in all the churches. In the evening a magnificent meeting was held in the City Hall, at the close of which it was announced that the representatives of eight different Churches had been present. There were only four thousand people in the Hall, simply because not another person could get even an inch of standing room. There was present the vast proportion of the wealth and intelligence, the worth and nobleness of old St. Mongo's city. Three ministers of the Established Church (Dr. Hill, Dr. McLeod, and Mr. Cochrane) took part in the proceedings; two of the Free Church; and two of the U. P. body. Of course I cannot here attempt to give even an outline of the addresses delivered. Dr. McLeod gave what was without doubt the speech of the evening. It was fair and manly, for it paid all homage to Romanism for the good it had done; and that I am sorry to say is a thing that very few Protestants ever do. He spoke of the unity of Protestantism as a real thing underlying all outward differences. Is it the unity of a living Church, or of a dead churchyard that is desired? The unity of spirit of the vast audience in the Hall, or the unity of corpses stretched out, head to head? For thus diverse is the unity of Protestantism from that of Popery.

I was never present at a more interesting meeting. It was surely a "sign of the times" to see on the same platform the representatives of the great Protestant Churches, manifesting the union spirit if not making an outward union, and speaking to each other in love instead of in "gunpowder speeches." It was surely a striking fact to see the precedence and leadership admitted to our national Church by all, and in that very city in which some years previously Mr. Spratt says a man could not live unless he were a Free Churchman. Such meetings are surely harbingers