

of God in grace always avails itself of the work of God in nature. And St. Columba did what all good and wise men would do under similar circumstances. He availed himself of the gift, and strove to consecrate it to the service of his God.

And, strange and instructive it often is, to observe how acts and events reappear and repeat themselves in human history—how the present is a modified past, as the future will also be a modified present. We often hear of something new, which, after all, is but something very old, coming up before us in new clothing. Almost all the modern phases of Infidelity, and the apparently new and startling discoveries of unbelievers, may be found in old, musty volumes, which few think of reading, and which have long been regarded as dead, and buried for ever. Many of our most popular writers and thinkers are indebted, for not a few of their wisest sayings and happiest thoughts, to writers who have been for centuries dead. Much that is highest and most beautiful in architecture, in painting and in poetry, has been handed down to us from a remote age, as the production of a time generally regarded as a season of darkness and semi-barbarism. Many of our best sermons and most satisfactory defences of the Faith may be found as far back as the days of the Christian Fathers, and the writings of Augustine and Chrysostom. The truth seems to be that the ages do not differ so much as is generally supposed. Genius, in all ages, is much the same, and must produce similar results. The grace of God is always the same, and, operating on the same principles of the human soul, must produce results not materially different. To illustrate this fact, and point out the wisdom of the missionary of Iona, we adopt a case which many of our readers may fully understand, and which may shew in a somewhat striking light, how two good men, thrown far apart in history, may be brought close to each other by deeds of piety and wisdom.

About a century ago, the first Celtic missionary landed on our shores, to preach the Gospel to his expatriated countrymen in the solitary backwoods of Pictou. About twelve centuries before that period, the first Celtic missionary of the cross landed on the Island of Iona, to preach the same Gospel to their ancestors in the lonely Hebrides. A century ago, the song of the woodman mingled with the ring of his axe, to wake the echoes of the forest. Twelve centuries earlier, the song of his forefathers mingled with the wild cry of the sea-birds, to wake the echoes of the gray cairns and lonely caves of the Western Islands. At both periods, the Celt loved his song; at neither period did he sing the songs of Zion. In the eighteenth century, the song was at least "of the earth earthy," while in the sixth, it certainly soared no higher. Both those missionaries were men of genius, who knew the power of song and could admire

its sweet numbers while they deplored its want of spiritual life and teaching. Both knew that it was vain and wicked to attempt to arrest its flow; both strove to make it flow in its proper channel, and not without success. To the works of genius, they added the words of grace. The wild harp was not hung idly upon the willow, but made to give forth the sweet songs of Christian life and Christian experience. Many a log cabin resounded with the praises of Redeeming Love, where, but a little before, they re-echoed the chaunting of a Bacchanalian Song, or the frivolous burden of a Love-ditty. In the sixth century, the homesteads of their ancestors were made vocal with the praises of warriors and the deeds of heroes, but St. Columba strove to represent Christ as the Chief of Heroes, "even He who trod the wine-press alone," and brought salvation and deliverance, while he also pointed out the heroic virtues of humility and forgiveness, shewing that "he who ruleth his own spirit is better than he who taketh a city." Both have left us, but their names and memory remain. Both handled the harp skilfully here, and gladdened many an anxious spirit with their melody, but they cast it aside for that golden harp, whose strings shall never become broken, but shall for ever give forth the sweetest sound.

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On the Reformation.

THERE are few events to which we are more indebted for benefits, sacred and civil, than the Protestant Reformation; and few epochs which we should more set up and date from, than its era;—for then was mediæval darkness swept away, and a bright day of truth ushered in which yet shines on Church and World. The Protestant may not soon forget that event, for it was the era of liberty and the charter of blessings; and even the Catholic has cause to acknowledge its service, while the Church-man of every name must bless God for it, as it gave him an open Bible and reformed Church, and right to worship God according to his conscience, none making him afraid. Hence are we glad to see that the subject is getting attention in the Christian Association in Halifax, and that a series of lectures is being devoted to its consideration.

But let us enquire why it should be called a Reformation, and how it was brought about, that we may be better able to appreciate its importance. We have had civil revolutions, but this was not one of them; political restorations, but this was a revival of the truth. "Where was your Church before Luther arose?" asks, in triumph, the Romanist. The question is similar to "Where was your face in the morning before it was washed?" It was there, but it was foul; it was there, but it was in sleep. So the Church was there,