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NORMAN MACLEOD

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NORMAN MACLEOD

BY

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FAMOUS SCOTS: SERIES

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The designs and ornaments of this volume are by Mr. Joseph Brown, and the printing from the press of Morrison & Gibb Limited, Edinburgh.

NOTE

My cordial gratitude is due to Mr. William Isbister—'best of smokers'—for allowing me (and that with so good a spirit) to quote from the *Memoir of Norman Macleod*. The present piece will not have been written in vain, as the saying is, if it sends readers to that entertaining quarry.

I have also to thank Mr. J. C. Erskine, Hope Street, Glasgow ('Be calm, Erskine'), for furnishing me with certain letters never before published, specimens of which will be found in the text.

The extracts from the Queen's books are made with Her Majesty's gracious permission.

J. W.

Manse of Drainie, *April* 1897.

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INTRODUCTION

If any modern minister has a place, though it were the least, among the worthies of his nation, he must have been a surprising personality. When Scottish life was based on Calvinism, and there was a Stuart deforming the Kirk at the sword's point, a preacher might rise to be a leader of the people, if not a virtual ruler in the kingdom. From Knox to Carstairs the line of famous Scots (such as they are) is black with Geneva gowns. But for two hundred years the Protestant spirit has gone all to democracy and the march of intellect, while the clergy have stood by the vacant symbol, exiled—

> 'From the dragon-warder'd fountains
> Where the springs of knowledge are,
> From the watchers on the mountains
> And the bright and morning star.'

So the Church has come down in the world. Her affairs are her own, and subject to journalistic irony; with few exceptions her leaders, for all the noise they may make in their day and generation, have only to die to be forgotten. One calls to mind certain men who were not in holy orders, mere sages or poets, and knows them for the real teachers of their times. In Norman Macleod the hero as priest reappears, but at some cost to the clerical tradition. Making little of dogma, and less of rites, he went deep down into the common heart for his ground of appeal, and on his lips love, divine and human, was a tale to move the philosopher and win the crowd. His work in the world was to make men good after the pattern of Jesus, and to that work he brought a burning belief, a boundless sympathy, and rare oratorical and literary gifts. One in the throng at the funeral of this great minister was heard to say, 'There goes Norman Macleod. If he had done no more than what he did for my soul, he would shine as the stars for ever.' And the like might have been confessed by thousands; nay, many who never heard his voice nor saw his face were better for the rumour of such a man. His name went from the Church to the nation, and over all English-speaking lands; and with that of Chalmers has endured.

CHAPTER I

1812-1837

DESCENT—BOYHOOD—STUDENT YEARS

Nothing astonished Dr. Johnson so much, when he was roving in the Hebrides, as to find men who lived in huts and quoted Latin. These were the ‘gentlemen tacksmen,’ and no more remarkable tenantry was ever seen on any soil. What they did for agriculture I cannot say; as much, perhaps, as their destroyers, who made a solitude and called it sheep: but they had bread to eat and raiment to put on (though they *might* sometimes sleep with their feet in the mire), and their praise is that they sent forth a splendid race to the fields of honour. Their sons, scant of cash, yet with the air of nobles, thronged the colleges, nor was there any career in which laurels were not won by men from the mountains and the isles. Picture some judge or general gazing at the ruins of a shieling, and then sneer at the old Highland tacksmen. From this class Norman Macleod was descended. His great-grandfather, the earliest ancestor of whom we have any record, lived in Skye, at Swordale, [12] near Dunvegan Castle, about the middle of last century. The tradition is that he was a good man and the first in his neighbourhood to introduce family worship. His dearest wish was to see his first-born a minister of the Church of Scotland. The estate of the Laird of Macleod was then a sort of feudal Utopia, in which the ruling idea was the advancement of the youth. There was a conspiracy of education. After the schoolmaster (a good hand at the classics for certain) came a college-bred tutor, who was maintained by a number of families in common. Then the Chief made interest at the University for his lads, and in the vacations entertained the professors at his castle, where they met their students as fellow-guests. No wonder so many notable lines sprang from Skye, if, as was said, these students were all gentlemen.

Norman Macleod, Swordale’s eldest son, having finished his studies for the Church, acted for some time as tutor in his native district. Thus he was at home in *September 1773*, and, being a favourite at Dunvegan—you understand? Yes, he met Dr. Johnson. ‘And he used to tell, with great glee, how he found him alone in the drawing-room before dinner, poring over some volume on the sofa, and how the doctor, before rising to greet him kindly, dashed to the ground the volume he had been reading, exclaiming in a loud and angry voice, “The author is an ass!”’ In the following year this young man was preferred to a parish which to name is to spring all the [13] romance of the Highlands,—*Morven*. Upwards of six feet in height, and of a noble countenance, the stranger from Skye would be welcome as at least ‘a pretty man’; but was there none, in that land of seers, to foretell how this minister should reign in Morven, and his son after him, each for half a century or more, and how he should be the founder of a clerical dynasty that would last for ever? Norman the First presents a rare figure in an age in which the clergy were noted for anything but ecclesiastical zeal. He had all the culture that was going, but did not prefer Horace to David, nor Virgil to Isaiah, and could hate fanaticism without reducing religion to a cauld clash of morality. He was the ideal of a Highland minister, daring the stormy strait and the misty mountain, swaying the wild Celtic heart by tender or fiery appeals, and drawing the poor and the troubled to his door from the remotest glens. The living was of the smallest, but he acted upon the precept, ‘Do what you can, and leave the rest to God.’ He had a large family of sons and daughters, and there were various workers and dependents settled on the glebe. So at Fiunary, above the rocky shore of the Sound of Mull (not far from the inn where the Lad with the Silver Button had to go from the fireside to his bed, wading over the shoes), there was a little community by itself, living a beautiful and wholesome life. The glebe was a scene of cheerful industry, and, labour done, the bagpipes would be skirling. In the manse there might be a tutor and [14] a governess, but the daughters were their own dressmakers, and the sons worked in their father’s fields. But the chief part of their education was play; they all rejoiced in the open air, and Morven entered into their blood. The boys went fishing and sailing, hunted

the wild cat and the otter, and roamed the heather in quest of game. By the winter hearth what singing of Gaelic songs! The minister himself played the fiddle, and liked to set his children dancing of a night. In this family religion was no formal lesson: it was the atmosphere they breathed.

One summer day in the closing year of last century, General Macleod, chief of the clan, visited the manse of Fiunary, and took away with him to Dunvegan his young namesake, the minister's eldest son, Norman the Second. Nothing could have been more delightful to the boy, who cared little for study, preferring any day the seas and the hills, and was already at sixteen a Highland patriot, with his head full of the legends of that old castle in the shadow of which his ancestors were born. The reception by the clan, especially the piping of a Macrimmon, was never to be forgotten. During his stay at Dunvegan, where he was treated like a son, he met many chiefs, some of them distinguished soldiers home from the wars. So he returned to Morven more a Highlander than ever, and with a double measure of the martial spirit that was then abroad in his native county. He joined the Argyllshire Fencibles, and rose to the [15] rank of corporal! If this is an anti-climax, suppose that he was moved less by military ardour than the love of manly exercises. At all events it was as an athlete that he chiefly excelled in his youth. The glory of his college days was that in physical contests he alone could rival John Wilson, who was to be known as Christopher North. And remembering the influences by which his character was moulded at home, have we not here the promise of a fresh type of the Christian priest? After serving for about two years as assistant at Kilbrandon in Lorn, he became in 1808 minister of Campbeltown. Hardly was he settled in his place when a little crisis occurred in which his mettle was revealed. The sacrament of the Lord's Supper was at hand, and Macleod thought it necessary to have services in the open air as well as in the church. His fellow-presbyters, all but one, refused to assist him in what they regarded as juvenile folly. Nothing daunted, the young minister had a tent set up, and on the Sunday morning preached to four thousand. In the church he held five communion services, while his friend in turn officiated at the tent. Towards the close, when the church was crammed,—passages, stairs, and all,—some of the fathers and brethren appeared, but their proposals of help were declined. In a short time his popularity had become such that, when there was a rumour of his going away, the dissenters offered to contribute, equally with his own people, for the augmentation of his stipend. He was to rise to honour in the [16] Church, and be adored throughout the Highlands; but long before he died he was effaced by his son.

At Aros, in Mull, lived Mr. Maxwell, the Duke of Argyll's chamberlain, a person of note in his day and place, and a fine man at home. He traced his descent to a youth who had fled from the Border, all the way to Kintyre, before the soldiers of Claverhouse; and in his choice of reading (for one thing) he betrayed the Lowland strain. His daughter Agnes passed her early girlhood in Knapdale, where she was educated by old songs and ballads, and the rapture that was on the lonely shore. For the rest (not to speak of the inevitable finishing in Edinburgh), imagine Aros such another home school as Fiunary. The two houses stood facing each other on opposite sides of the Sound, and the minister's son—Leander in a boat—married the chamberlain's daughter.

The eldest child of this pair, the third Norman, who may be called Norman the Great, was born in Campbeltown on June 3, 1812. From his earliest years he was remarkable for ardent affections, the eager interest he took in everything, and the humour and imagination with which he seized his little world. Talking and telling stories at the nursery fire, his tongue never lay. When only six he could mimic various characters of the town; and, later, he had an attic fitted up, in which he and his companions acted plays. For study he had no [17] aptitude, and at the burgh school the classics were ill taught; but he entered with a will into the life of the boyish community, making passionate friendships, contending with the 'shore-boys,'—those raiders of the playground,—and heading expeditions against the French, and chasing pirates in a punt. But his great delight as a boy was to visit the vessels at the quay; he would spend hours on board, learning the name and the use of everything, and consorting with the sailors,—all in a world of romance. Other savours of life on the ocean wave he had in society, which abounded in naval officers, some attached to the revenue cruisers, some 'half-pays' who had,

perhaps, fought with Nelson. There also were two or three retired soldiers of distinction, and as many aristocratic spinsters (drifts from the county), living on their annuities, and the sheriff with his top-boots and queue. These, with several old families of the place, and the usual dignitaries of a burgh, were the quality; and, cut off as they were from the rest of the world (Campbeltown being then as an ocean isle for isolation), they make a quaint picture, like a set in some ancient novel. Norman mixed in this company, and the heroes of the services, and the queer old maids—he *saw* them every one, and was glad. Not less did he mark the fishermen's sons, with their 'codlike faces and huge hands like flat-fish,' or the fools and beggars that were the heroes of the streets. This varied and stirring [18] experience, which was of inestimable account in the making of the man, fell in with the ideal of training that had been set at Fiunary.

But in Campbeltown the boy could not grow up to be a Highlander after his father's heart; so in his twelfth year he was sent to Morven. The old minister was now gone, and his youngest son was reigning in his stead. Norman was boarded with the parish schoolmaster, his business being to learn Gaelic and get acquainted with the peasantry. Many an evening he spent in some hut,—the floor the bare earth, the ceiling a roost for hens; around the fire (which was in the middle of the apartment, the smoke escaping through a hole in the roof) a group would gather,—the lasses knitting, the lads busking hooks; and, heedless of the storm, they made the hours fly, telling tales and singing songs of their land. He gloried in the shore, and was to be seen perched upon a rock, fishing the deep pools. With his relatives, again (who claimed him when the school-week was over), he wandered on moor and mountain, or if they went sailing in the Sound, they would sometimes camp for the night on some distant island, and see the loveliest dawns.

Here the romance of Norman's boyhood came to an end; he was to exchange Morven, not for ships and sailors, but for a far other environment in the Lowlands. In 1825 his father was presented by the Crown, on the recommendation of all the principal heritors, to Campsie, a parish in Stirlingshire, within twelve miles of Glasgow. [19] The minister accepted the living for the sake of his family, but it cost him some pangs to leave his congregation. 'I preached my farewell sermon,' he says in his fragment of autobiography, 'and could I have known beforehand the scene which I then witnessed, and the feelings that I myself experienced, I do believe that no inducement could have tempted me to leave them.' In his new parish there was a large manufacturing population; yet he might almost have forgotten that he was not in the Highlands, the rural part being a mountainous wild, and the manse near that goal of excursions, Campsie Glen. The church was a wretched little structure, and away in the country; but the minister set to work, and, after much trouble, had a new one built in the town. For the sake of his countrymen, of whom there were many in the parish, he held special services in their native tongue; and it was during this period of his ministry that he began his career as a literary apostle to the Gaelic-speaking race.

Of Norman as a boy in Campsie there is nothing to tell, except that he attended the parish school; nay, and there is a letter in which he complains, with a twinkle in his eye, of having salmon and legs of roasted lamb crammed down his throat. 'O my dear mamma, it is only now that a fond mother is missed, when dangers and misfortunes assail us.' Hardly less meagre is the record of his early college life; indeed, before we get a full view of the student he is a [20] man, and the strange thing is not that he was undistinguished in his classes, but that (so far as appears) he was not even interested in the academic scene. In 1827, when he entered the University, the old College of Glasgow—now a railway station—and the old High Street—now a sanitary thoroughfare—were as they had been in the days of Andrew Melville,—the one with its hoary walls and turrets, the other with its picturesque narrows; and in the grounds there was still that 'sort of wilderness' where the duel of the two Osbaldistones was stopped by Rob Roy. But Norman, the most voluminous of diarists, has no word of the history or romance of the place; nor of his fellow-students, though he might have remarked one Tait (already with the grave brows befitting an archbishop), and a certain youth in homespun, with wild eyes and flaming hair, George Gilfillan; nor yet of his professors, among whom at least three were worthy of note,—Sir Daniel Sandford, the brilliant

Grecian and fervid orator, Robert Buchanan, of whom, under the name of ‘Logic Bob,’ reminiscences may be heard to this day in manses, and one less distinguished in his place, but likely to be remembered longest, because he was the friend and biographer of Burns, Josiah Walker. Macleod was nicknamed ‘the sailor’; he wore the dress and affected the gait of a Jack tar. For learning, he dabbled in science and read poetry, especially Shakespeare and Wordsworth. At home, whither he repaired on the Fridays, he was [21] all fun and frolic, and carried mimicry so far that he would speak in any character but his own. ‘Cease your buffoonery,’ his father wrote, and (unkindest cut of all) ‘I was much pleased with the manner of the Stewart boys.’ But this humour was an extravagant form of that sympathy which was to make him great. Good Stewart boys! ‘on’y,’ as Long John says, ‘where are they?’ In after years Macleod bitterly regretted his neglect of scholarship, feeling himself at a certain disadvantage in an age of intellectual ferment. But every man to his vocation, and that of Norman Macleod was the therapeutics of religion. For that he was unconsciously preparing himself by his absorption in the panorama of existence. He knew he was to be a minister, but he could never have been the man his country admired, had his boyish thoughts been focused on his destination, and not taken up with comrades, and the appearances of life.

Soon he was to hear, in the lectures of Chalmers, a trumpet call. Having finished the curriculum of Arts, he proceeded in 1831 to the Divinity Hall at Edinburgh, where, at the feet of the first of Scottish ministers and men, he awoke to the seriousness and mystery of life, and anticipated with joy his part in the evangelical crusade. Chalmers, alike by his teaching and his character, was singularly fitted to be the spiritual master of Macleod. Almost at once they recognised each other for kindred natures, and the sympathy of the [22] pupil was repaid by the professor’s trust.

Another influence at this period went to deepen his religious feelings, the death of a brother. He had that passionate attachment to relatives in general which marks the Celt, and between Norman and James there had been a peculiar bond of affection. On the last occasion of their meeting, Norman had engaged in prayer (for the first time in company), and the invalid had said, ‘I am so thankful, mother; Norman will be a good man.’ The death of James was not only an awful blow at the moment, it marks an epoch in the other’s life. Immediately after the bereavement, Norman wrote—’I know not, my own brother, whether you now see me or not. If you know my heart, you will know my love for you, and that in passing through this pilgrimage, I shall never forget you, who accompanied me so far.’ Nor did he ever forget; again and again, and long years after, he recalled that pale face, and thought of immortality.

On the recommendation of Chalmers, Macleod had been appointed tutor to a young English gentleman, the son of Henry Preston, of Moreby Hall, Yorkshire. In the spring of 1834, at the close of his theological course at Edinburgh, he went with his pupil to Weimar, carrying letters for the ducal Court. These were from Lady Vavasour, who had drilled him ‘how to speak to Her Imperial Highness the Grand Duchess, sister to the late Empress of Russia.’ [23] The Court of Weimar! that was indeed a change. But there and thereabout he was to be for a whole year, mixing in the very society which, a few years before, had been adorned by Goethe. ‘There are indeed many advantages for young men here,’ the seer wrote to Carlyle in 1828, ‘especially for those of your own country. The Double-Court of the reigning Grand Duke and the Hereditary Family, at which they are always kindly and generously received, constrains them by this mark of distinction to a refined demeanour at social entertainments of various kinds.’ Imagine Norman waltzing at the State balls, dressed in cocked hat and sword, with silk stockings and buckled shoes, and haunting the gardens, the cafés, the theatres, and the glorious park ‘where the nightingales never ceased to sing.’ Nevertheless he kept his head, constituting himself mentor (always a favourite rôle of his) to the young English residents. As he observed the German laxity he called for a new Luther, though he condemned the contrary vice of the Church at home, that would measure his piety by his reading a newspaper on Sunday. He made excursions, one as far as the Tyrol, in the course of which he visited the picture galleries of Vienna, Munich, and Dresden. But the great event of his life in Weimar was his falling in love with the Court beauty,—’La Baronne,’ he calls her,—which he

did in a fashion of poetic worship, worthy of a hero of romance or song. For years afterwards, let him hear old Weimar tunes upon the [24] piano, and his heart will overflow with thoughts that he cannot utter; a German waltz, and his brain will reel.

In the autumn of 1835, after a residence of some months at Moreby Hall, where he mingled with the local squires, and met certain legislators fresh from St. Stephen's, he entered the Divinity Hall at Glasgow. But he did not now cross the quadrangle as if it were a ship's deck. For one thing, he was no longer an idle student, but rose at unearthly hours to grind, or if he did not, his conscience put in for damages, which took the form of pages of eloquent remorse. Besides, he was a great handsome fellow, and, not to speak of his inner life,—so vitalised by various experience,—he had seen more than most Scottish students. Add his conversational powers and boundless vivacity, and he should be something of a lion in college society. He became the leader of the Tories, and it was in that capacity that he had his first taste of fame. At the Scottish Universities there falls to be elected by the students, once in three years, an honorary official called the Lord Rector. The candidates are usually leaders in the rival political camps. In Glasgow there seemed to be no chance for a Tory,—men like Jeffrey, Brougham, Cockburn, and Stanley having carried the day time out of mind;—but in 1836, under Norman Macleod's leadership, the Whig tradition was broken by the triumphant return of Sir Robert Peel. At the Peel [25] Banquet, which is almost historical, as the rise of the Tory tide dates from the oration delivered by the honoured guest, Norman made his first public appearance, replying to the toast of the Conservative students. 'I think I can see him now,' says Principal Shairp, 'standing forth prominently conspicuous to the whole vast assemblage, his dark hair, glossy as a black-cock's wing, massed over his forehead, the purple hue of youth on his cheek.' His speech was striking, and impressed even Peel. Thus, if the first period of his college career was obscure, the last ended in a blaze of glory.

The family were now resident in Glasgow (his father having been translated to St. Columba's), and in the house a number of young gentlemen, some of them boarders, pursued their college studies under Norman's supervision. The scene of their work was 'the coffee-room,' and it was always a great moment when their tutor burst in upon them from his own den, radiant with life and joy. Among them was John Macintosh and John Campbell Shairp. Macintosh had come from Edinburgh with the laurels of first pupil of the New Academy. In Glasgow College he was at the head of all his classes, and his scholarship was not more remarkable than his piety. He was the sort of boy that takes all the prizes, including the prize for good conduct. As for Shairp, there is no one with a knowledge of the best Scotsmen of the last generation but reveres [26] and loves the memory of that gifted and high-souled man. Though Macleod was more impressed by the saintly Macintosh, he found in Shairp, owing to the wider range of their mutual sympathies, a fitter companion. They were both Wordsworthians. Macleod could tell how his enthusiasm had once carried him to Ambleside, how he had seen and talked with the poet, how the old man had appeared in a brown greatcoat and a large straw hat, and had read 'in his deep voice some of his own imperishable verses.' The two students, many a night under the frosty starlight, walking home from the Peel Club (of which Macleod was president), kept firing at each other quotations from their favourite bard.

For Wordsworth's poetry Macleod had been prepared, because its materials were within his own emotional experience. Passage after passage only interpreted and defined for him feelings which he had long known in the presence of wild nature. Of the influences that went to form his moral constitution not the least marked was that of Highland scenery. Even amidst the gaieties of Weimar, he would shut his eyes, and, whistling a Highland tune, see the old hills. The autumn after he was licensed—1837—the last before his life-work began—was spent in Morven and Skye. He speaks of 'passionate hours in the lonely mountains,' and, to judge from his journal, his excitement in these scenes was wonderful, varying from ecstatic delight to solemn awe and worship. On a peak of the [27] Coolins he burst out singing the Hundredth Psalm. Along with this must be taken his keen consciousness of the hereditary associations. During his holiday he preached in 'the same pulpit where once stood a revered grandfather and father.' 'As I went to the church,' he writes, 'hardly a stone or knoll but spoke of something which was

gone, and past days crowded upon me like the ghosts of Ossian, and seemed, like them, to ride even on the passing wind and along the mountain tops. What a marvellous, mysterious world is this, that I in this pulpit, the third generation, should now, by the grace of God, be keeping the truth alive on the earth, and telling how faithful has been the God of our fathers.’

CHAPTER II

1838-1843

LOUDOUN—NON-INTRUSION CONTROVERSY

Just after his return from this tour, Macleod was presented, virtually at the instance of Chalmers, to the living of Loudoun, in Ayrshire. On March 5, 1838, he was ordained. From this time onward his private journal is largely the record of religious introspection. With the other earnest ministers of that period, he took up the feelings and the language of the old Puritans. One cannot forget Robertson, on his appointment to the charge of Ellon, pacing the room for hours in the silence of the night, 'and, all unconscious of being overheard, praying for mercy to pardon his sin and grace to help him in his embassy for Christ.' This is good to know, but a little of it goes a long way. When my brother has entered into his closet and shut the door, I do not wish to spy upon his spiritual straits, or listen at the keyhole to his penitential groans. That Macleod, on assuming his first ministerial charge, deeply felt his responsibility, is clear from his doings as well as from his diary. The young minister had never [29] doubted the truth of the religion which, more by example than by precept, had come down to him from his fathers. And the doctrines of Christianity were to him not merely true, they were vividly realised in his heart and imagination. In criticism, at this time, his highest flight was to name certain antinomies of Calvinism as nuts to crack. On the other hand, in his frank acceptance of the goodly world, and in his passion for characters (which was such that he would go scouting for the ludicrous), he seemed to have more of the humanist than the saintly temperament. Nothing could have been more alien to him than the plaint of a latter-day poet—

> 'Strange the world about me lies,
> Never yet familiar grown,
> Still disturbs me with surprise,
> Haunts me like a face half-known.'

And he had met in Germany, somewhat to his astonishment, men who danced on a Sunday, and still showed Christian graces; nay, men who were reverent and pious, though they could not have subscribed to the Westminster Confession.

The parish of Loudoun is a broad green wooded valley, through which runs the Irvine Water, celebrated in song. At one end, on a pleasant slope, the towers of the castle shine out above the trees; at the other, several miles distant, lie the villages of Newmilns and Darvel, where the mass of the population resided. The farmers were [30] a sturdy, pious race, as befitted the descendants of the Covenanters; but in the weavers Macleod encountered a new and formidable type of sinner. The eighteenth century had spoken to their fathers; on matters of religion their authority was Tom Paine; of politics, Robespierre qualified by Chartism. Thus the minister, whose business, as he conceived it, was to pilot souls to heaven, had no sooner taken the helm than he found himself among rocks and breakers. He was little of a politician, and no priest, which was fortunate, as a formal defence of the Church or of Toryism against such antagonists would have been the worst tactics; but, being a *man*, he got hold of many of the weavers in the end. "Poor souls!" he could say; "how I do love the working classes!" and that was a note he never lost. Besides the human, he approached them on the secular ground. On geology, which was then a fine new weapon to the adversaries of the Church, he gave a course of lectures which made a sensation, particularly among the hand-loom atheists, many of whom became communicants.

The moral condition of Newmilns was terrible in the young pastor's eyes, and he would sometimes despair, thinking that all his efforts were in vain. There was in him some touch of the divine yearning, 'O Jerusalem, Jerusalem!' If he woke in the night-time, he communed with God. Far from flagging, the ambassador for Christ piled agencies on means, and, as it were, took the place by storm. The church was crowded to suffocation; he preached on week-days [31] in various parts of the parish, instituted Sunday schools, prayer meetings, and meetings for young men; and, for the sake of the

poorest of the poor, held services to which none were admitted who wore good clothes. In the course of a year he would visit several thousand families, and as in public he denounced evil-doers in general, in private he singled them out for rebuke and exhortation.

In his Loudoun ministry there is just perceptible an official smack, a note of externality; he has not yet entirely freed himself from the mechanical theory of salvation. For example, he was much taken up with the work of winning or, if need were, extorting confessions of repentance and faith from dying unbelievers. There was one with whom the zealous young ambassador strove hard, all to induce the invalid to speak. 'Before I go have you nothing to say?' The man lifted up his skeleton hand and panted out—'No, no, noth—nothing.' At a later period Macleod would rather have sympathised with the poet, who wanted no priest—

> '—to canvass with official breath
> The future and its viewless things,
> That undiscovered mystery
> Which one who feels death's winnowing wings
> Must needs read clearer, sure, than he.'

The manse of Loudoun is a little way out of Newmilns, in the direction of the castle, and overlooking the road; on one side, a pretty garden, and at the back the glebe, a beautiful brae. In that very house Robert Burns once spent a night. Coming down in the morning, he was asked whether he had slept well. 'I have been praying all night,' the poet answered; 'if you go up to my room you will find my prayers on the table.' He had been thinking of the sweet life of the household and all he might have been. But this tradition did not move Macleod; indeed, at that time he was unjust to the poet, as what cleric was not? Invited to take the chair at a Burns Festival in Newmilns, he replied (disloyal to Wordsworth for once) that he could not, dared not, as a Christian minister, commemorate such a man. [32]

His life at Loudoun, notwithstanding his professional industry, was full of brightness and charm. Much of his leisure was passed among his flowers, or he went into the woods and sat listening to the birds. In the winter evenings, to his sister Jane, who kept house for him, he read aloud from the works of Shakespeare, Scott, and, a new writer, Dickens; and she in turn entertained him with German sonatas and Gaelic songs. At Loudoun Castle, then inhabited by the Dowager Marchioness of Hastings, widow of the celebrated Governor-General, he was not only a welcome guest, but a trusted friend. His conversational gifts might account for his acceptability at the tables of the great, but he was never the mere diner-out, still less the nice chaplain. In any company he would speak, when occasion offered, from the heart to the heart, and it was at first startling to see the laugh die out of the face of the big jolly parson, and hear sudden lessons or tales that shook the inmost soul, and drew the awkward tear. Lady Hastings gave him the key of a vault in Loudoun Kirk where lay the right hand of her dead husband, which had been sent from Malta; and, sure enough one morning, as the Marchioness lay dying, he was summoned to fetch the relic that it might be buried in her grave. [33]

The 'coffee-room fellows' held reunions at Loudoun. Referring to one of these, Shairp says: 'We wandered by the side of the Irvine Water, and under the woods, all about Loudoun Castle, and Norman was, as of old, the soul of the party. He recurred to his old Glasgow stories, or told us new ones derived from his brief experience of the Ayrshire people, in whom, and in their characters, he was already deeply interested. All day we spent out of doors; and as we lay, in that balmy weather, on the banks or under the shade of the newly-budding trees, converse more hearty it would be impossible to conceive.'

Through Shairp (who was now a student of Oxford) he was kept abreast of the Tractarian movement; not to his peace of mind, for he was protestant and presbyterian to the core. Once, while staying at Moreby, he had attended a magnificent confirmation ceremony in York Minster, but his raptures over the stained windows and 'the great organ booming like thunder through the never-ending arches' suddenly vanished in the recollection of a sacramental scene which he had witnessed in the Highlands—'no minster but the wide heaven, no organ but the roar of the eternal sea, the church with its lonely churchyard and primitive congregation.' So far from having any leanings to High Churchism, he saw no harm in a layman [34]

administering the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. Another sign is that, Highlander as he was, he had no sympathy with the Jacobites; he said that Charlie was never his darling, and spoke of the low cunning and tyrannical spirit of the Stuarts. The Anglo-Catholic movement he simply abhorred. 'Well,' he wrote to Shairp, 'what think you of Puseyism now? You have read No. 90, of course,—you have read the article on Transubstantiation,—you have read it! Great heavens! is this 1841?' Shairp, who wet his feet in the rising tide, piped in vain to his friend about the greatness of Newman. Macleod could not understand a beautiful soul who spent his mornings in idolatry, a sage of the nineteenth century for whom the only question was—Anglican Church or Roman?

Into what hole, Bezonian? speak or die.

Protestantism is more than a creed. Men may rail at the Scarlet Woman, and yet, in the matter of ecclesiastical claims, be little Beckets. In the non-intrusion controversy, such as it was in the end, Macleod's attitude was partly determined by his dislike of sacerdotal pretensions. Since the law courts had declared the measures of the General Assembly illegal, the non-intrusionists [35] intrusionists had set themselves up against the judges, and in the course of their defiance were justifying, by word and deed, Milton's saying, that 'new presbyter was just old priest writ large.' The question was not now of patronage, but of the Headship of Christ, the crown-rights of the Redeemer; practically the old quarrel between priests and kings.

As to the necessity of checking the power of the patron there was not from the first any difference between the two sides. Everybody recognised that the people, having won political freedom, would have a voice in the appointment of ministers. To patronage, indeed, the Scots never consented, were never reconciled; they always looked upon it as a wrong, they could always say, 'An enemy hath done this.' Both Knox and Melville asserted the right of the people to elect their ministers, and the Kirk, as often as it had the chance, got rid of patronage. The evil seemed to be cast out for ever at the Revolution, but in 1712 it was surreptitiously restored. The Act of Queen Anne, which was nothing but a Jacobite intrigue, handing over the Kirk to the Pretender's friends, was introduced behind the nation's back, and passed in spite of the strenuous opposition of the General Assembly. For many years and in various ways the Kirk tried to get it repealed. In a single decade there were upwards of fifty disputed settlements before the courts, and about the middle of the century the dissenters numbered a hundred thousand. To make [36] matters worse, the party which, under the name of Moderates, systematically championed the patrons, rose to absolute power in the Kirk. Before a presentee could be settled he had to receive the call, a document in his favour signed by the heads of families: this the Moderates treated as a mere form, and minimised it more and more till they got quit of it altogether—except the name. Ministers were inducted with the military at their back. At length, weary of the struggle, the people gave in, and the descendants of the Covenanters endured intrusion almost dumbly for twenty years, under the iron rule of Robertson. As Dr. Chalmers said in his grandiose way: 'The best, the holiest feelings of our Scottish patriarchs, by lordly oppressors, sitting in state and judgment, were barbarously scorned.'

After the French Revolution the awakening of man's spirit, extending from letters and politics to religion, led in Scotland to the rise of the Evangelical party. They had lofty notions of ecclesiastical authority, and manifested their pious zeal in prosecuting men whose holiness was qualified by originality, such as Macleod Campbell, whom they incontinently deposed. But, for all that, they were the best of the clergy, because they were in vital earnest with the highest things.

What was their policy on the question of intrusion? In some way it should prevent the patron from thrusting in a minister against the will of the congregation. The General Assembly of 1834, the first in which the Evangelicals outnumbered the Moderates, conferred upon [37] the majority of heads of families (being communicants) the right of vetoing, without assigning reasons, the settlement of a presentee. Now it is conceivable that one might be eager for reform, and yet disapprove of the Veto Law. To be sure it was fitted to stop intrusion, but, as the records of its operation show, it would have led to another evil, the vetoing of presentees on trivial and absurd

pretexts, rejection for rejection's sake. Popular election entails complete responsibility, but when men have to take their ministers from a patron, and yet can refuse one presentee after another without saying why, they will be apt to use their licence to make up for their slavery. This were hardly worth remarking but for the assumption, conveyed in many an oration, that the policy was as admirable as the principle which it embodied. Let the non-intrusionists have all the praise of meeting, in some sort, the just claim of the people.

The General Assembly, however, had gone beyond its powers. Both the House of Lords and the Court of Session pronounced the Veto Law to be *ultra vires*, the judges holding that the presbytery was bound to take on trials any presentee to whom there was no objection on the ground of morals, scholarship, or doctrine. Notwithstanding this, the General Assembly stuck to the veto. So there would be rejected presentees demanding, in accordance with the law, to be taken on trials, and presbyteries at their wits' end, pulled one way by the General Assembly, and another way by the [38]
civil Court. The General Assembly ordered the presbytery of Strathbogie not to take on trials a certain presentee who had been vetoed. The presbytery obeyed. But the Court of Session declared the order of the General Assembly to be illegal. Thereupon the presbytery, by a majority of seven, admitted the presentee. For that the seven were deposed. And now came the event which was the cause of the Disruption. The minority in the General Assembly, failing to see how it could be rebellion to obey the law of the land, treated the deposition of these men as null and void. The question then was, which of the two sides was the Church of Scotland? Parliament, all the time, was trying to reconcile parties by changes in the law, but as it always insisted on making the presbytery the final judge of the fitness of presentees, the non-intrusionists would not hear of legislation.

It was not till near the end of the struggle that the minister of Loudoun turned his eyes upon the field. The thunder of the captains and the shouting had been long in his ears without stirring him to action. He was all in his vocation, the cure of souls,—the mystery of existence ever for him insurgent, whether he looked on life and death, or remembered his days upon the hills. 'I wished,' he said, 'to keep out of this *row*, and to do my Master's work and will in my dear, dear parish.' Some clerics are listless in religion; but when a question of church politics is raised, alert as a horse at the sound of the trumpet. Macleod hated controversy, and said it was the worst [39]
way of doing good. Of the two parties in the Church he might have sung, 'How happy could I be with *neither*!' In him the opposing types were blended; he had all the humanism which marked the one,—the love of letters, the relish of things, the superiority to clerical prejudice,—with all the zeal of the other for the cause of the gospel. But, called to choose between extremes, he preferred 'the cold gentlemanly Moderate' to 'the loud-speaking high professor.' And the non-intrusionists were claiming to be the only true Christian ministers in the land, nay more, the chosen of Heaven. They declared that they were raised up by God, they called themselves the fitting instrument of the Lord. They invaded the parishes of the Moderate clergy, and preached, telling the people that now, for the first time, the gospel was in their ears. 'The Lord Jesus Christ,' they said, 'will have left the Church when we go.' In a pamphlet written by Macleod, 'A Crack about the Kirk for Kintra Folk,' which had a large sale, *Saunders* observes: 'I ken mony that are foremost eneuch in this steer that in my opinion hae little o' the meekness and gentleness o' Christ.' He must have been thinking of the minister who said that 'the devil was preparing a cradle in hell for the opposition.' Everything in the popular cause was exaggerated. Patronage was 'earthly, sensual, devilish'; *vox populi, vox Dei*, and no mistake. The struggle against the civil courts was 'one of the most illustrious conflicts for the spirituality and liberty of [40]
the Church of Christ of which any record can be found either in modern or in ancient times.' What Macleod could least endure in the non-intrusionists was their sacerdotal temper. They insisted on remaining in an Established Church, while flying in the face of the law by which it was established. The Headship of Christ was bound up with the resolutions of the General Assembly, and to obey an order of the Court of Session was to crucify the Lord afresh.

As for patronage, Macleod was probably willing that it should be abolished altogether, but he could not support the veto in defiance

of the declared law of the Church. 'I'm desperate keen for gude reform,' says *Saunders* again, 'and would like the folk to hae mair poo'er, but I would like to get it in a legal way.' Macleod believed that the Establishment was necessary for the religious welfare of the country, and saw nothing that was worth the risk of its existence. Not till it became evident that the non-intrusionists were bent on destroying the Church did he join in the conflict. 'It will be our bounden duty,' one of the leaders had said, 'to use every effort that if we be driven out, they shall be driven out too; it is our bounden duty to bear this testimony that the Church ought to be established on the principles which we are contending for, or that there should be no establishment in the land at all.' When things like that were being said, Macleod, in alarm, plunged into the whole literature of the controversy. The position he reached was this, that when there was a dispute as to the privileges granted by the State [41]
to the Church, it was for the civil court to interpret the terms of the contract. He became one of the Forty, a set of Independents, whose chief distinction is that they promoted parliamentary legislation for the reform of patronage. While opposed to the revolutionary policy, they were not Moderates, for they countenanced some of the acts of the majority. They were as little for Erastus as for Hildebrand.

A non-intrusionist deputation came to Newmilns. Macleod allowed them to harangue in the church, but he took care to be present, and when they invited the auditors to sign certain resolutions, springing up, he asked the people to wait till they heard from their minister the other side of the question. 'The evening came, and the church was crammed with all sects and parties. I do believe I never had a greater pressure on my soul than I had before this meeting. I did not so much possess the subject as the subject possessed me. Between anxiety to do right and a feeling of degradation that I should be looked upon by even one Christian brother as inimical to the Church of Scotland, not to speak of the Church of Christ, I was so overcome that during the singing of the psalm—

> "Therefore I wish that peace may still
> Within Thy walls remain"—

I wept like a very child. I spoke, however, for three and a half hours, [42]
and not a soul moved!... The result has been most gratifying. Of ten elders not one has left me. The people are nearly unanimous, or at all events so attached to me personally that they are about to present to me a gold watch and an address from all parties.'

About the same time (February 1843) circumstances compelled him to take action in the presbytery. Along with the Veto Law the Chapel Act had been passed, giving seats in the church courts to the ministers of non-territorial charges. The House of Lords had just declared that also to be illegal, when the Presbytery of Irvine met to elect commissioners to the General Assembly. The minister of Loudoun happened to be Moderator. Should he allow the chapel ministers to vote? There was more in his mind than the law; 'it was the avowed intention,' he says, 'of the High Church party to get the majority in the Assembly by means of the *Quoad Sacras* ... and then, as the Assembly of the National Church, to dissolve the connection between Church and State, excommunicating those who might remain.' Refusing the illegal votes, he set up a separate presbytery; and here was the first actual split in the Church.

Of all the members of the General Assembly who witnessed or took part in the procession from St. Andrew's Church on May 18, 1843, there were none more sorrowful than the minister of Loudoun. But ere the day was over a little indignation came to his relief. 'How my soul rises against those men who have left us to [43]
rectify their blundering, and then laugh at our inability to do so!' Principal Tulloch has said that the act of secession would always be deemed heroic in the history of Scotland; but Norman Macleod, who, unlike the other, was an eye-witness and in the thick of events, wrote in his journal immediately after the Disruption: 'The great movements, the grand results, will certainly be known, and everything has been done in the way most calculated to tell on posterity (for how many have been acting before its eyes!): but who in the next century will know or understand the ten thousand secret influences, the vanity and pride of some, the love of applause, the fear and terror, of others, and, above all, the seceding mania, the revolutionary mesmerism, which I have witnessed within these few days.' For himself he felt how much easier it would have been to go

than it was to stay. ‘Never,’ he wrote, ‘did I have such a fortnight of care and anxiety. Never did men engage in a task with more oppression of spirit than we did, as we tried to preserve the Church for the benefit of our children’s children. The Assembly was called upon to perform a work full of difficulty, and to do such unpopular things as restoring the Strathbogie ministers, rescinding the Veto, etc. We were hissed by the mob in the galleries, looked coldly on by many Christians, ridiculed as enemies to the true Church, as lovers of ourselves, seeking the fleece; and yet what was nearest my own [44] heart and that of my friends was the wish to preserve the Establishment for the well-being of Britain. While the “persecuted martyrs of the Covenant” met amid the huzzas and applauses of the multitude, with thousands of pounds daily pouring in upon them, and nothing to do but what was in the highest degree popular; nothing but self-denial, and a desire to sacrifice name and fame, and all but honour, to my country, could have kept me in the Assembly. There was one feature of the Assembly which I shall never forget, and that was the *fever* of secession, the restless, nervous desire to fly to the Free Church.’ In the course of one of his speeches in the rump Assembly he exclaimed: ‘We shall endeavour to extinguish the fire which has been kindled, and every fire but the light of the glorious gospel, which we shall, I hope, fan into a brighter flame. And the beautiful spectacle which was presented to us on Sabbath evening, in the dense crowd assembled here to ask the blessing of God on our beloved Church, enabled me to distinguish amid the flames the old motto flashing out, *Nec tamen consumebatur*. We shall try to bring our ship safe to harbour, and if we haul down the one flag, “Retract: no, never,” we shall hoist another, “Despair: no, never.” And if I live to come to this Assembly an old man, I am confident that a grateful posterity will vindicate our present position, in endeavouring through good report and bad report to preserve this great national institution as a blessing to them and to their children’s children.’

The Free Church was always in his eyes ‘just an outburst of [45] presbyterian Puseyism,’ and undoubtedly its rise was marked by a clerical reign of terror. Mr. Skelton testifies: ‘The air of Edinburgh is generally bitter with Calvinism, and in 1843 it was particularly inclement. The Free Kirk, having just made a heroic sacrifice, were naturally rather out of temper. Cakes and ale, consequently, were quite at a discount. The re-enactment of the old sumptuary laws of the Puritans began to be talked of again. The national beverage was interdicted. Young professors could not be permitted to indulge in promiscuous dancing. The presbytery thundered hoarsely against the profanation of the Sabbath as practised on Leith Pier, or round Arthur’s Seat. The slightest sign of independent vitality, intellectual or religious, was sourly repressed by a party in which the secular intolerance of the democracy was curiously combined with the spiritual pretensions of the hierarchy.’ ‘A gloomy fanaticism,’ writes the father of Norman Macleod, ‘followed the breaking up of the Established Church, and perhaps in no part of the country did this bitterness exist more strongly than in the Western Islands. In Skye, especially, it led to dividing families, and separating man from man, and altogether engendered strife which I fear it will take years to calm down.’

Although too young, even if he had been fit, to be in the front of the battle, the minister of Loudoun was notable among the remnant; and with his repute, besides, as a pastor, it was no wonder that he [46] was besieged with offers of livings. He refused the first charge of Cupar, Fife; the Tolbooth and St. John’s, Edinburgh; Campsie, Maybole, St. Ninian’s. He accepted Dalkeith. Then he learned how much his people at Loudoun were attached to him. Many whom he had thought rocks sent forth tears. At the church gate, after his farewell sermon, there was a mournful crowd; and as he walked home he was waylaid by watchers, who seized his hand, and invoked upon him the blessing of God.

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CHAPTER III

1843-1851

AFTER THE BATTLE—DALKEITH—EMBASSIES—EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE—DEATH OF JOHN MACINTOSH.

That he should have chosen Dalkeith when he had the chance of going to Edinburgh has been remarked as strange. 'I prefer,' he said in explanation, 'a country parish to a town, because the fever and excitement and the kind of work on Sabbath days and week days in Edinburgh would do me much harm bodily and spiritually.' This is not enough, and indeed, though he did not state them, he confessed that he had other reasons. As the citadel of a glorying dissent, Edinburgh would scarcely be inviting to a man of his temperament. And it is clear that his mind had been stirred to its depths by the secession. At Dalkeith he would have leisure for reading and reflection, and yet be close to the headquarters of the Church.

Of all those who remained in the Establishment, none saw more clearly, or more deeply deplored, the havoc that had been made by the Disruption, than the minister of Dalkeith. He had started [48] joyously upon his career, intent on proclaiming the gospel of brotherhood and love, and, behold, the Church rent asunder, those that were brethren at daggers drawn, and all over the land, even to the family altar, embittering divisions! To a mind like his it seemed horrible to stand for ecclesiastical principles at such cost to the kingdom of God in the heart. Never for a moment had he any misgivings as to the side which he had taken in the great controversy. Nay, he thought that, after all, the Establishment might have been in the end more irrevocably shattered had the High Church party remained within. He veered between angry lamentation over the coldness and indifference of the Moderates, and aversion from the faults of the new zealots—'vanity, pride, and haughtiness that would serve Mazarin or Richelieu, clothed in Quaker garb; church ambition and zeal and self-sacrifice that compete with Loyola; and in the Highlands specimens of fanaticism which Maynooth can alone equal.' If the Establishment was a water-bucket, the Free Church was a firebrand. At the same time he perceived only too well what was good in the host that followed Chalmers. He was in full sympathy with them in their devotion to the evangelical cause, and groaned in spirit to think of forces, supposed to be in the service of the one Master, divided and hostile, all for what he called old clothes. He saw the seceders popular and victorious,—theirs all the energy, all the faith; while the Kirk was [49] not only outwardly broken, but chill and listless within,—her ministers the old Erastians, or raw recruits suddenly promoted to posts they were unfit for and looking more to their stipends than their work. Among other instances of the prevailing torpor, he noted with particular dismay that the Church gave no sign when Peel proposed to endow Maynooth. Alone among the Established clergy he called a meeting and got up a petition against the bill. In his journal he wrote: 'I declare solemnly I would leave my manse and glebe to-morrow if I could rescind that terrible vote for Maynooth. I cannot find words to express my deep conviction of the infatuation of the step. And all statesmen for it! Not one man to form a protestant party, not one! God have mercy on the country!' On the question of policy it is probable that he changed his mind, but there is nothing plainer to the student of his journals than that to the last he had for Popery, and for every semblance of Popery, a perfect hatred. For him the Establishment was nothing if not a bulwark of Protestantism. 'The Church of Scotland,' he said as late as 1850, 'is daily going down hill.' Yet he felt certain that no voluntary association, for all its waving of banners and flourish of trumpets, was capable of grappling with the spiritual needs of the country. How was the National Church to be revived? The aristocracy had but one thing in view—the landed interest; Peel was a trimmer; [50] there was nothing in mere numbers. What was wanted was an *inner work* in the hearts of clergy and people. 'If we were right in our souls,' he wrote, 'out of this root would spring the tree and fruit, out of this fountain would well out the living water.' Two vows he took, one that he would devote himself to the reviving of the Church, the

other that he would do his utmost to promote unity and peace among all who loved Christ.

At Dalkeith, for the first time, he came in contact with the submerged ranks. These he overtook with the help of his congregation, which he developed into a society of Christian workers. He went about preaching in the wynds and closes. At various strategic points he opened mission stations, the walls of which he got hung round with placards of the Lord's Prayer and the Ten Commandments, and pictures from the life of Christ. Many had no clothes to appear in, and when the Duke of Buccleuch offered to pay for a missionary, the minister showed that money would be better spent in employing dressmakers and tailors. Visiting was to him a romantic expedition, such was the interest of his days among his 'brothers and sisters.' There is a little incident that recalls the characteristic inventions of his tales. 'On coming home this evening, I saw a number of boys following and speaking to, and apparently teasing, a little boy who, with his hands in his pockets and all in rags, was creeping along close by the wall. He seemed like a tame [51] caged bird which had got loose, and was pecked at and tormented by wild birds. I asked the boys who he was. "Eh! he's a wee boy gaun' aboot beggin', wi'out faither or mither."' The minister took him to the manse, and consigned him to the housekeeper to get washed and dressed. By and by 'the door was opened, and in marched my poor boy, paraded in by Jessie,—a beautiful boy, clean as a bead, but with nothing on but a large beautiful clean shirt, his hair combed and divided; and Jessie gazing on him with admiration, Mary Ann in the background. The poor boy hardly opened his lips; he looked round him in bewilderment. "There he is," said Jessie; "I am sure ye're in anither warld the night, my lad. Were ye ever as clean afore?" "No." "What will ye dae noo?" "I dinna ken." "Will ye gang awa' and beg the night?" "If ye like." "No," said I, "be off to your bed and sleep."'

He was led to ponder the social as well as the religious problem presented by life in the slums. In the events of the year of revolution he took a keen interest. 'The Chartists are put down,' he remarked scornfully, seeing with Carlyle that the matter would by no means end with the victory of the special constable. 'Snug the joiner,' he observed, 'is a man as other men are, having a body finely fashioned and tempered, which in rags shivers in the cold, while the "special" goes to his fireside, with triumph draws in his chair, saying, "The [52] scoundrels are put down." We demand from them patience while starving—do we meet their demands for bread? Special! what hast thou done for thy brother? Ay—don't stare at me or at thy baton—thy brother, I say! Hast thou ever troubled thyself about healing his broken heart as thou hast about giving him a broken head?' He rejected the remedies of the politicians—reform of taxation, high wages, the suffrage,—holding that the only cure lay 'in the personal and regular communion of the better with the worse—man with man—until each Christian, like his Saviour, becomes one with those who are to be saved.' Such was the spirit in which he toiled among the poor. In the east as in the west he at once made a reputation. It was a common thing for divinity students to walk out from Edinburgh on a frosty Sunday to see and hear Norman Macleod.

He was no sooner settled in Dalkeith than he began to take part in the reparation of the ecclesiastical agencies that had been ruined by the Disruption. Of these the chief was in his eyes the India Mission. In 1844 he went, as one of a deputation, to the north of Scotland, in order to organise societies for the furtherance of female education in Hindostan. This was the first of a long series of religious embassies which compassed the round earth. Thirty associations were formed, but he returned from the tour lamenting the general apathy.

The year following he was charged, along with his uncle the [53] minister of Morven, and another, with a more distinguished errand. In the Colonies, wherever there were people connected with the Church of Scotland, the Secession had been felt; shrieks of *Veto, Cæsar, Headship*, mingled with the strokes of axes in the backwoods. The deputies were for British North America; their business was to preach, and to explain the action of the constitutional side in the recent conflict. To deal with Highland exiles who so fit as the famed Macleods of Morven? And such an expedition would peculiarly suit Norman, involving the delight of ships and foreign countries, and having an object that excited his religious enthusiasm.

On the outward voyage (which was from Liverpool in June) he found in one of the berths a dying man, and conversed with him about the state of his soul. The invalid owned that his mother used to speak to him every day about these things. ‘Poor fellow!’ writes Norman; ‘perhaps it was in answer to her prayers that in his last hours he had beside him those who spoke to him the truth’; and ‘I am very thankful that I did not delay speaking to him,’ was the minister’s thought, as ‘the coffin slid down and plunged into the ocean.’ But in Macleod the gay and the grave alternated in a manner that bewildered, if it did not shock, the pious stranger: one moment he would be in tears with sacred emotion, the next he was capable of raptures of gladness just for life’s sake. Nor of his [54] sincerity either way was there ever, on the part of those who knew him, the shadow of a doubt. In social circles, and particularly among fellow-voyagers, he was always the dominant spirit, brimming with genius and good humour, and so expansive and sympathetic that every one was almost immediately his friend. When the ship reached its destination, the passengers drank the health of the deputies with three times three.

At Washington he had an interview with the President, Mr. Polk, —’a plain man, of short stature, rather dark complexion, large forehead, and hair erect’. But what he was in search of was a slave-market. He was directed to a certain private house. ‘With my own eyes,’ he thought, ‘shall I now see the strange sight—a brother-man for sale.’ Through a large gate, grated with massive iron bars, he was admitted to a courtyard. On one side, in the cellars of the owner’s dwelling, was the abode of the men; on the side opposite was a small barrack for the women. A female carrying a child at once accosted him, beseeching that if he bought her he would buy her child. ‘Five hundred dollars,’ said the master, puffing his cigar, while an old negress cried from the outside to the slaves, ‘Keep up your heart, keep up your heart.’ Norman sickened at the sight. Here was slavery in its most mitigated form, and yet the impression made upon him ‘by *seeing* instead of hearing was overwhelmingly bitter. Men and women,’ he wrote, ‘my brothers and sisters, bought and sold, without crime—without their consent—slaves for life—slaves [55] from childhood;—it was enough.’ During the American war he declared that the British sympathy for the South was to him an inscrutable mystery.

In the States he was not slow to pick up hints for his future work from Sunday School Unions and Mission Boards; but that the customs of a foreign country are not to be inferred from a surface glance, he learned by an incident which he never forgot. He had mounted the box of a coach, and was surprised to find the driver seated at his left hand. ‘Just as I had noted the great fact that “all drivers in America sit on the left side of the box,” I thought I would ask what was gained by this. “Why, I guess,” replied Jonathan, “I can’t help it; *I’m left-handed*.”’

In Canada he had the hardest work that had ever fallen to him, speaking almost every day for two or three hours, and that, perhaps, after a drive of thirty miles over the worst roads. But, perched on a lumber waggon, coat and waistcoat discarded, blouse and straw hat on, and in his mouth a good cigar, he was busy taking in the primeval forest—the tufted heads of the trees far up in the sky, the sunshine on the leaves, the sudden appearance of strange fires, the chop-chop-chop of the pioneer’s axe in the weird silence, and the clearance with its fine fields, cattle with tinkling bells, and happy children. Sometimes, joining a group of Highlanders, he would pretend to be an Englishman, and would quiz them about their [56] savage language till he had roused their wrath, and then, to their amazement and delight, roll out Gaelic as good as their own. The ecclesiastical atmosphere was the same as in the old land. ‘This angry spirit of Churchism,’ he says, ‘which has disturbed every fireside in Scotland, thunders at the door of every shanty in the backwoods.’ For himself, in explaining the Church question, he avoided all personalities, and gave full credit to his opponents, insomuch that a Free Church preacher who (unknown to the deputy) attended one of the meetings confessed that he could not find fault with one expression. Controversy was hardly possible when those stalwart scions of Fiunary met the exiles face to face; indeed, in most places it was more a carnival of Celtic sentiment. At Picton in Nova Scotia the presence of the deputies attracted Highlanders from all the surrounding country; on a Sunday morning the bay was dotted with coming boats, and pedestrians, horsemen, and all sorts

of vehicles, streamed into the town. There was a service in the open air. ‘The tent,’ writes Norman, ‘was on a beautiful green hill, overlooking the harbour and neighbouring country. When I reached it I beheld the most touching and magnificent sight. There were (in addition to the crowd we had left in the church) about four thousand people here assembled! John had finished a noble Gaelic sermon. He was standing with his head bare at the head of the white communion table, and was about to exhort the communicants. There [57] was on either side space for the old elders, and a mighty mass of earnest listeners beyond. The exhortation ended, I entered the tent and looked around; I have seen grand and imposing sights in my life, but this far surpassed them all. As I gazed on that table, along which were slowly passed the impressive and familiar symbols of the body broken and blood shed for us all in every age or clime—as I saw the solemn and reverent attitude of the communicants, every head bent down to the white board, and watched the expressions of the weather-beaten, true Highland countenances around me, and remembered, as I looked for a moment to the mighty forests which swept on to the far horizon, that all were in a strange land, that they had no pastors now, that they were as a flock in the lonely wilderness—as these and ten thousand other thoughts filled my heart, amidst the most awful silence, broken only by sobs which came from the Lord’s Table, can you wonder that I hid my face, and “lifted up my voice and wept”? Oh that my father had been with us! what a welcome he would have received!’ At various spots he met men from Mull and Morven, who had known his father and his grandfather, and near Lake Simcoe Dr. John Macleod found a woman who, the moment he entered her house, burst into tears. On her plaid she wore a brooch which he recognised; it had belonged to that noted domestic the henwife of Fiunary, and this was the henwife’s sister. What sad and solemn partings there were with the [58] exiles! In one place two old elders put their arms about Norman’s neck, and imprinted a farewell kiss on his cheek. For him, however, such scenes opened no new sources of emotion; it was more that at the age of thirty-three he could say: ‘I have had peeps into real Canadian life: I have seen the true Indians in their encampment; I have sailed far up (one hundred and fifty miles above Montreal) the noble Ottawa, and seen the lumber-men with their canoes and the North-westers on their way into the interior, some to cut timber, and some to hunt beaver for the Hudson Bay Company; I have been shaken to atoms over “corduroy” roads, and seen life in the backwoods; and I have been privileged to preach to immortal souls, and to defend my poor and calumniated Church from many aspersions.’

During this visit there came to him rumours of a movement for a world-wide union of Protestants. His heart leapt up when he beheld a rainbow in the sky. For two years at least the Evangelical Alliance was the leading interest of his life. From the preliminary Conference, held at Birmingham in April 1846, he wrote to his sister about one of the happiest evenings he had ever spent on earth. ‘What a prayer was that of Octavius Winslow’s! It stirred my deepest feelings and made the tears pour down my cheeks.’ There was developed in him a new love for his ministerial brethren. ‘I felt like a man who had brothers, but they had been abroad, and he had [59] never seen them before.’ The Alliance was formed in August at the Freemasons’ Hall, London, in an assembly composed of a thousand representative Christians from America and the Colonies, and from almost every country in Europe. The project sprang from a common desire on the part of certain evangelical men all over the globe to combine against infidelity and Rome. An annual week of prayer in various cities throughout the world, in Britain an annual conference, a general conference once every lustrum in some European capital, reports from branches on events touching religious liberty: such were the methods by which these good men proposed to bring about the golden year. And so vigorous was the Alliance in its youth, that it negotiated the release of religious prisoners in various lands, and was the means of abolishing in Turkey the death-penalty for renouncing Islam. So at least we are told. There was doubtless at first a powerful tide of Christian sentiment; light there was little or none. ‘When our Saviour’s eyes,’ said the president, ‘witnessed your entrance into this room, He witnessed a sight that, since the early days of Christendom, has not been presented to the eyes of God or man.... And is there not another class of eyes which may be said to be upon you? Is not the eye of the Jew upon you? Are not the eyes of

the heathen upon you? They know not yet of your meeting: but upon the result of your meeting much of their interests may be [60] suspended. But, brethren, there are other eyes upon us. We have reason to think that no such gathering as this would take place, and principalities and powers and evil spirits not be watching for our halting; and we cannot doubt that they would triumph, if the spirit of love should fail, or the spirit of wisdom not be granted to us. And out of the Church angels learn lessons of wisdom (Eph. iii. 10); we cannot then doubt but that the eyes of angels are directed towards us.' A few days later he told the Conference that he had been in the committee-room, and 'he was persuaded he did not overstate the case when he said that the world's interests and the interests of humanity were trembling in the balance.' At a point in the speech of a certain professor the editor interjects, 'The respected speaker here paused, evidently overcome by his feelings.' The orator 'hoped brethren would pardon him for so unmanly an expression of his feelings. He was not a man of tears on any other subject but that which concerned religion and its great interests: but from his childhood he never could refrain from tears, when his own personal salvation, and that of others, was at stake. On that subject he confessed he was a perfect child.' Did Norman cry, *Hear, hear*? On the contrary, he also would be *greetin'*. The time came when he not only left the Alliance, but used the word Evangelical as an epithet of sarcasm and reproach. Meanwhile, he was one of the chief figures, being a member of the business committee, a frequent chairman of [61] devotions, and an occasional debater. What he prized in the meetings was the prevailing love and harmony; and to sit smoking in a group of Germans, Frenchmen, and Americans, all united by the bond of a common religion, was delightful to his peculiar soul. Another good thing he owed to the Alliance—the privilege of visiting Prussian Poland and Silesia. Along with Mr. Herschell of London, he was sent to look into certain progressive movements which had been reported from these countries. By the year 1847 he had seen the working of different ecclesiastical systems, from the borders of Russia to the Canadian backwoods, and from the Thames to Lochaber. The result was to deepen his attachment to the Church of Scotland.

How Norman Macleod was orthodox, and yet might care for religion in a magnanimous way, not as an ecclesiastic but simply as a Christian, should now be plain. And in the chosen leisure of Dalkeith, inquiring after modern knowledge, he grew at least in mental susceptibility. He came under the influence of his heretical cousin, John Macleod Campbell, a deep and holy man; and of Thomas Arnold, in certain respects a kindred soul; and even of Emerson, whom he hailed 'thou true man, poet of the backwoods.' He was getting on. But the advance was in spirit and feeling, not in religious belief. Here he was still at one with Macintosh, the friend of his heart. What had become of the scholar? In 1851 he lay at [62] Tübingen, dying. After his studies at Glasgow he had gone to Cambridge. There he had led a painfully diligent and ascetic life. He had thrown in his lot with the non-intrusionists, and had assisted Dr. Chalmers, his idol, in the experiment at the West Port. At the manse of Dalkeith he had been a frequent visitor, but in 1848 he had proceeded to the Continent, never to return. His correspondence reveals the wonderful affection he had for his old comrade. He calls him his 'dearest Norman,' his 'beloved Norman,' whose letters are sweet to him as violets among moss; speaks of his open-mindedness and loving counsel; salutes him as a friend to whom he owed many of the happiest hours of his life, much mental development, and not a few faithful and well-timed warnings—a friend the thought of whom brightened his future. 'Think of you? Yes, yearn to see you, dear, dear Norman.' When the tidings that Macintosh was dying reached his friends in Scotland, Macleod immediately set out for Tübingen. He was detained on the Rhine for twenty-four hours by a thick mist, and, as it happened, it was two o'clock in the morning when he arrived in the town. He hurried to the hotel and went at once to the invalid's door. There he stood in breathless silence, listening to a hollow cough. Next day he learned from Mrs. Macintosh that John was sinking fast, and that he had received his relatives on their arrival with a strange coldness, as if he hated seeing them. She durst not enter his room without an invitation. [63] Pondering this mystery, Norman asked himself, among other questions, was it possible that Satan might thus tempt the saint ere the final victory of Christ was achieved? He sent a note into the sick-

room, desiring to know at what hour his friend would see him. The answer was, ‘Come now.’ The student, muffled in coat and plaid, was seated on a sofa, reading. His eyes flashed under his long black hair with an ‘intense and painful lustre.’ With loving gestures he welcomed his friend, and in a scarce audible voice said, ‘I am holding communion with God,’ and they were both silent. More perplexed than ever, the visitor went out. Not long afterwards he returned, and told the news from home, and recalled scenes out of the old days. The mystic, awakening at last to the world, mentioned an hour at which he would be glad to have another meeting. So he was brought back completely to his old self. He had been mentally disturbed by his mother’s arrival, because, thinking that he might recover, he had wished to conceal his state from his friends. At Cannstadt, whither he was removed, he would sit of an evening ‘with closed eyes, and head drooping on his breast,’ listening in silence to old Scottish tunes—’Wandering Willie,’ ‘The Flowers o’ the Forest,’ ‘The Land o’ the Leal’; and, again, with an air of absolute confidence, he would whisper his prospect of soon meeting Chalmers. ‘My spirit,’ wrote Norman, ‘felt no less than awed before him.’ The companions took farewell of each other on the 11th of March, and a few hours afterwards the sufferer was dead. [64]

In July Macleod was inducted to the Barony Church, Glasgow. A month later he was married to Catherine Ann Macintosh, the sister of his friend.

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CHAPTER IV

1851-1860

THE BARONY PARISH—MACLEOD AS PASTOR—AS PREACHER—HIS SYMPATHY—POSITION IN THE CITY.

The minister of the Barony—henceforth for many years commonly called ‘young Norman’ to distinguish him from his father—was a shining exception to the prevailing type of the Established clergy, if not the rising hope of those who looked for the rebuilding of the National Zion. The Free Church, popular from the first, was going on prospering and to prosper,—her tabernacles set up everywhere cheek by jowl with the parish kirks. Now was the true gospel heard in the land. As to the ‘bond’ Establishment, inhabited by a godless residuum, seekers of the fleece, worldlings and slaves, the only wonder was that it kept up the pretence of being a Church, when it was visibly tottering to its fall. Gradually the religious public heard of this Norman Macleod, a minister of the Auld Kirk, who outdid the new evangelists on their own ground. In the movement for a world-wide federation of Protestants his enthusiasm went far beyond [66] theirs; he was as much devoted as they were to the cause of foreign missions; in pulpit unction he surpassed them: if their voices quivered, his shook; if their eyelashes were wet, his cheeks streamed with tears.

Than Macleod, when he left Dalkeith, no pastor was ever better equipped for such a charge as the Barony. The parish consists, along with some rural territory, of large districts scattered far and wide over the city, and contained, in 1851, a population of 87,000, for whom, besides attending to his own vast congregation, the minister had religious ordinances to provide. Most of the inhabitants belonged to the working class. Now Macleod had persuasive eloquence and a captivating personality; to make Christians of the common people, whom he loved for their virtues and their hardships, had been his ‘one aim, one business, one desire,’ both in Loudoun and Dalkeith; and the Barony, as a sphere of ministerial service, presented no problem which his experience had not prepared him to encounter. The preceding incumbent, when dying, had recommended him as the one man fitted for the post, and the congregation, to whom ‘young Norman’ had been known from his Loudoun days, were eager for his appointment.

The spirit of Macleod’s ministry is partly to be traced to the influence of Chalmers, and, when he began his work in the Barony, the celebrated example of his early master in the neighbouring parish of St. John’s must have been in his mind. These two pastors [67] were equal in their sincerity, equal in their zeal for the evangelisation of the masses, equal in their capacity for work. But whereas Chalmers surveyed the condition of the people like a statesman, and had his principles and plans of amelioration, Macleod saw mainly the individual, and thought most of a moral change. Of the social question Chalmers grasped the economic side, and, in relieving the poor upon a theory, the science of the thing had as much interest for him as the philanthropy. Macleod had more love of human nature, a greater patience with persons, a kindlier eye for the average man. Chalmers had more head, Macleod more heart; which is not to indicate defect in either, for as Macleod was one of the shrewdest, so Chalmers was one of the tenderest of men. The minister of St. John’s, with all his social and religious enthusiasm, hankered after intellectual pursuits, and was glad to escape from the Gallowgate of Glasgow to the academic cloisters of St. Andrews. Macleod, in the maturity of his powers, wanted a world of men. The pastorate of Chalmers, however, was still a vivid tradition, and could not fail to instruct and inspire the new minister of the Barony.

Dwelling on the high grounds of the West End Park, Macleod could see from the back windows Campsie Fells, from the front the forest of shipping at the Broomielaw. His habit was to rise early, summer and winter; and it was always a moment of exhilaration, [68] with something even of romance, when he heard the first blows of labour ringing in the sleeping city. ‘People talk,’ he wrote, ‘of early morning in the country, with bleating sheep, singing larks, and

purling brooks. I prefer that roar which greets my ear when a thousand hammers, thundering on boilers of steam vessels which are to bridge the Atlantic or Pacific, usher in a new day—the type of a new era. I feel these are awake with me doing their work, and that the world is rushing on—to fulfil its mighty destinies, and I must do my work, and fulfil my grand and glorious end.' And he thought, with mingled pity and admiration, of the workers in yard and factory, in forge and mine, and far away upon the rolling sea. Whether from unbelief or disrespectability, many working men shunned the churches, and looked askance at 'the lads in black.' Ah! if they only knew, thought Norman, what peace and happiness would come to their homes by their acceptance of the Saviour. He was a sort of Walt Whitman in canonicals. But how was he to reach the masses scattered through his enormous cure? In his hands the Barony congregation became what every muster of converts was in the days of the apostles,—a society for Christian work. Worship, meaning ornate services and the exaltation of the sacraments, is a mediæval invention. Norman Macleod held that Christianity was instituted for the ritual of good actions. Indeed, for æsthetic and ceremonial (since there must be forms) he had too little care. Of the [69]
Barony Church a certain noble lord remarked, 'I have seen one uglier'; and once Macleod had to admonish the congregation in these terms: 'Scripture commands us to sing, not *grunt*; but if you are so constituted that it is impossible for you to sing, but only grunt, then it is best to be silent.' But here were people who met to engage in practical beneficence, not for the luxury of sensuous emotion, or the hundredth hearing of a good advice. 'A Christian congregation,' he says, 'is a body of Christians who are associated not merely to receive instruction from a minister or to unite in public worship, but also "to consider one another and to provoke to love and good works," and as a society to do good to all as they have opportunity.... The society of the Christian Church, acting through its distinct organisations or congregations like an army acting through its different regiments, is the grand social system which Christ has ordained not only for the conversion of sinners and the edification of saints, but also for advancing all that pertains to the well-being of the community.'

Having made himself personally acquainted with his congregation, he organised, with the kirk session for the centre, an army of workers, by whom the religious, educational, and social needs of the parish should be met. The population was caught in a sort of missionary network. By means of meetings, for which given agents were responsible, the minister came in contact with his parishioners in every quarter. He set up numerous Sunday schools, [70]
and himself taught a Bible class. For four chapels which, on being transferred from the Free Church by a legal decision, had been left empty, he furnished both pastors and congregations. In the first ten years of his ministry, from funds which he collected, six churches were built. He had a large staff of missionaries. Not content with efforts for the welfare of the Church within his own parish, he kept his people in constant touch with the foreign field, and annually raised from the congregation, which was one of the poorest in the city, large sums for the conversion of the heathen. Nor was this all. He provided school-buildings for thousands of children; with evening classes for adults, where husbands and wives were to be seen at their A B C. He started congregational savings banks, and (to keep men out of the public-house) refreshment-rooms attractive with books and amusements; in which things, as in others more conspicuous, he was a pioneer.

The best organisation would have been of little avail but for the spirit and life communicated to the workers by their chief. They were sustained and quickened by his personal influence, which was at once paternal and commanding, by his catching enthusiasm, by the example of his own intense and unsparing activity, and, above all, by the power of his pulpit ministrations. His church was crowded; and here was no organ, no stained glass, no mystical ceremony. Preaching has in these days fallen into discredit, insomuch that it is blamed for the emptiness of churches; and the [71]
foolishness of preaching is obvious enough, since with some ministers Christianity is lost in idolatry of the Church, and some are more zealous for orthodoxy than for religion, and others have no creed at all. There would be no outcry against preaching if the clergy had anything to say. Half a century ago, before the age of evolution had set in with its irony and sadness, it was possible to be

a great preacher, and yet have nothing to tell but that ‘old, old story’ which has reconciled millions to their lot on earth these eighteen hundred years. ‘There is a Father in Heaven who loves,’ so ran Norman Macleod’s confession of faith, ‘a Brother Saviour who died for us, a Spirit that helps us to be good, and a Home where we will all meet at last.’ See him in the pulpit, a man of majestic presence, and entirely without airs and graces; intense in look and voice; as natural in his utterance as one conversing with friends; not an orator conscious of his periods and tones, but an envoy too full of thrilling tidings to have a thought for self. The effect was great, sometimes tremendous. Many a man and woman, reaching the open after a sermon by Norman, found themselves as it were in a different world, so changed was their moral vision. I have in my eye a certain youth who, one Sunday, the bells ceasing when he was in the High Street, and yet a long way from his usual place of worship, strayed into the Barony. The Doctor himself was in the pulpit—bearded, bronzed, and dilated to a giant’s girth. The sermon was on [72]
God’s love to man; it was simple, and delivered for the most part in the tones of talk, yet when that accidental hearer came out upon the streets, the face of things wore ‘the light that never was on sea or land,’ and at his heart there was a vague uplifting joy. Not long afterwards, in another church, that youth heard Macleod again. The preacher had been somewhat suddenly called upon, and the congregation did not know, till the afternoon, that the evening service was to be conducted by the minister of the Barony. Yet the church was crowded in every part, even to the topmost steps of the pulpit stairs. When the Doctor (emerging from a door behind) faced the throng, it was with a roving glance, in which there was something of alarm. For a while he read his sermon, and here and there you might see some flagging of attention. Suddenly he raised his head, and began to give an illustration. From that moment onwards, for three-quarters of an hour, he held the vast audience bound as with a spell; his utterance waxed rapid and passionate till it became a torrent, yet less in the manner of oratory than of excited conversation. There was one overwhelming burst about the goodness of God in building the beautiful world for our house, its roof the starry infinite, its cellars stored with coal, and iron, and gold. Dean Stanley, a fastidious judge, declared of a sermon of Macleod’s that ‘it was all true and very moving’—the *ne plus ultra* of
praise—and that he did not know ‘the man in the Church of England [73]
who could have preached such a sermon.’ ‘The greatest and most convincing preacher I ever heard,’ is the confession of Sir Arthur Helps. According to an Indian critic, his preaching was ‘the perfection of art without art,’ ‘he spoke as a man to men, not as a priest to beings of a lower order,’ his effectiveness was due to ‘truth and honesty, guided by faith and unconsciousness of self, and expressed in manly speech face to face.’ His power in the pulpit seems unparalleled when to such testimonies is added the success and fame of his discourses to the poor. These were delivered in the Sunday evenings of winter. None but persons in working clothes were allowed to pass into the church. It was no uncommon thing for gentlemen to borrow fustian for the nonce; and they must present themselves with a slouch, and their hair pulled over their brows, lest the detective elders should penetrate their disguise. One such impostor had himself rigged out in ‘the cast-off working dress of a coach-builder—a dirty coat, a dirty white flannel vest, striped shirt, and cravat, and Glengarry bonnet.’ ‘I stood,’ he says, ‘waiting among the crowd of poor men and women that were shivering at the gate, biding the time. Many of these women were very old and very frail.... Poor souls! they were earnestly talking about the Doctor and his sayings. I conversed with several working men who had attended all the series from the first, three or four years back. I
asked one man if they were all Scotch who attended. He said, “All [74]
nations go and hear the Doctor.” ... “A’body likes the Doctor,” said another. One man, a labourer, I think, in a foundry, said “he kent great lots o’ folk that’s been blessed by the Doctor, baith Scotch and Irish. I ken an Irish Catholic that wrought wi’ me, o’ the name o’ Boyd, and he came ae nicht out o’ curiosity, and he was convertit afore he raise from his seat, and he’s a staunch Protestant to this day, every bit o’ him, though his father and mother, and a’ his folks, are sair against him for’t.”’ None of the cushions or books were removed from the seats, and the witness says that the decorum was as good as at the regular service. ‘In reference to the mother and grandmother of Timothy, the preacher made a grand stand for character, which made the poor man next to me strike the floor

several times with his feet by way of testifying his approbation. Had the Doctor's remarks on the subject been delivered from a platform, they would have elicited thunders of applause.' If one realises the scene from the pews to the pulpit, one can understand from the following appeal to prodigal sons, commonplace as it is, the effect of these discourses. 'Oh, could he only see, and had he a heart to understand, the misery which his loss has created in the paternal home! He is bringing down the grey hairs of his father to the grave. The mother who bore him, and loved him ere he could know of the existence and unconquerable strength of her affection, has no rest day or night, thinking of her absent boy, and pouring forth her soul [75] in agonising prayer, as she would her lifeblood in death, to bring him back to her heart and home.'

Beyond question Norman Macleod was one of the most sympathetic men that ever lived; nay, in his generation (if you will) the supreme sentimentalist of Christendom. He has tears for dogs and cats: of a horse that he rode in Palestine, one day of killing heat, he says, 'I wish he could have known how much I pitied him'; and of the camel, 'The expression of his soft, heavy, dreamy eyes tells its own tale of meek submission and patient endurance ever since travelling began in these deserts. The poor "djemel" bends his neck, and with a halter round his long nose and several hundredweight on his back paces along from the Nile to the Euphrates, making up his mind to any amount of suffering, feeling that if his wrongs could not be redressed by Abraham, he has no hope from Lord Shaftesbury.' In the scene of man's life his spirit eagerly responded to every challenge. Dull he could not be, never recovering from the surprises of existence. So, with his interest in his fellow-creatures, which was both human and religious, he sometimes found himself in strange situations. Pritchard, the poisoner, he attended in the prison and accompanied to the scaffold. He would not give up the worst, and sometimes, beneath false notions, headlong impulses, and brutal vices, he discovered a heart, and, by the magic of love and insight, [76] surprised the lurking virtue. The secret of his influence with the working folk was that he felt no difference from their social position, but spoke to them on the ground of common humanity, without affected familiarity or priestly airs. For him class distinctions vanished in view of the general lot of moral beings. His experience was that the lower and the upper classes were very much alike. The poor came to him, but a lady of the Court could say that if she were in great trouble Dr. Norman Macleod was the person she would wish to go to.[1] The preacher, then, might see his audience in rags, and fancy ranks of purple, but his thought would be, 'O sickness, pain, and death! what republican levellers are these of us all!'[2] There is a zeal for the people, a worship of humanity in the abstract, which brings a cheap glory. The poet who sings of freedom, the politician with his bill for the establishment of universal happiness, may turn away in disgust from the first grimy specimen of the suffering race. Macleod's sympathy was for the individual there before him, Tom, Dick, or Harry, whom he claimed as a brother. He knew what touching affections and fidelities might lie behind the roughest exterior, and in the worst he still recognised a man. He fraternised with the sons of toil, shaking the horny fist, weeping on the brawny neck. In many a working man's experience, it was a [77] revelation and a turning-point, when the great genial Doctor, posted at the humble fireside, opened up the beauty of the Christian life. But often in the lives of the poor he found an unconscious splendour of virtue that pierced him to the heart. He saw a sister supporting, by her sole industry, an old father and a delicate brother, till she just lay down and died. One winter day he was summoned to the bedside of a working man who had hanged himself, but, having been cut down in time, was reviving; and the sinner had excused himself to his wife as follows: 'Dinna be ower sair on me. It was for you and my puir bairns I did it. As an able-bodied man, I could get nae relief from the parish, and I didna like to beg; but I kent if I was deid they would be obleeged to support my widow and orphans.' Always, when Macleod told that story, he went into an ecstasy, shouting, 'That man was a hero!'

Considering the moral and material plight of the masses, he took up, first, the question of drinking. At Dalkeith he had written *A Plea for Temperance*, in which, while recommending total abstinence to all inebriates, and in certain cases to men of sober habits, he argued that there was nothing unchristian in the temperate use of alcoholic beverages. In Glasgow he had the teetotallers down on him for that;

and still more for a speech which he made in the General Assembly, vindicating the working classes from the charge of drunkenness. [78] The spectacle of the rich citizen, expert in vintages, raising his glass, 'the beaded bubbles winking at the brim,' and denouncing the toilers for taking their drop of whisky, filled him with scorn. But he warned men from the public-house; if they must have a dram, they should take it in the bosom of their family, after saying grace!

For the cure of poverty he looked to no outward nostrum, but to a union of ranks through the general development of Christian life. He was not apt to quarrel with existing institutions, putting his trust, like the mother of 'wee Davie,' in 'acts *out of* Parliament,' Yet he could exclaim, 'O selfish pride! O society, thou tyrant!' and when his foot was on his native heath he was a regular Radical.

> 'You don't mean to say that you would turn away those people?' asked Kate with astonishment.
>
> 'What people do you mean?' inquired M'Dougall.
>
> 'I mean such people as I have met in Glenconnan—your small tenants there!'
>
> 'Every man Jack of them! A set of lazy wretches! Why should I be bored and troubled with gathering rent from thirty or forty tenants, if I can get as much rent from one man, and perhaps a great deal more?'
>
> 'But you will thereby lose the privilege, Captain M'Dougall, the noble talent given you of making thirty or forty families happy instead of one. In my life I never met such people! Yes, I will say such real gentlemen and ladies; so sensible and polite; so much at their ease, yet so modest; so hospitable, and yet so poor!'
>
> 'And so lazy!' said Duncan; 'whereas in the colonies, where I have [79] seen them, they get on splendidly, and make first-rate settlers.'
>
> 'How does it happen that their laziness vanishes then?' asked Kate.
>
> 'Because in the colonies they can always better their condition by industry.'
>
> 'But why not help them to better their condition at home? why not encourage them, and give them a stimulus to labour?'
>
> 'Because, Miss Campbell, it would be a confounded bore, and after all it would not pay,' replied M'Dougall....
>
> 'But surely, surely,' she continued, 'money is not the chief end of man.... I can't argue' (Kate goes on), 'but my whole soul tells me that this question of sacrificing everything to the god Money is an idolatry that must perish; that the only way for a man truly to help himself is to help his brother. If I were old M'Donald, I would preach a sermon against the lairds and in favour of the people.'
>
> 'Might I ask your text, fair preacher?' inquired M'Dougall, with an admiring smile.
>
> 'Why,' said Kate, 'the text is the only thing about it I am certain would be good; and the one I would choose rings in my ears when I hear of the overturning of houses, the emptying of glens, and the banishing of families who have inhabited them for generations, and to whom every rock and stream is a part of their very selves.'
>
> 'But the text, the text, my lady?'
>
> 'My text would be,' said Kate, '"Is not a man better than a sheep?"'[3]

The descendant of the tacksman was fond of quoting the lines—

> 'From the dim shieling on the misty island
> Mountains divide us, and a world of seas,
> But still our hearts are true, our hearts are Highland,
> And we in dreams behold the Hebrides.'

[80]

Destitution in towns, however, seemed to involve no indictment of the social structure; there was nothing for it but charity. As one of the administrators of the Poor Law, Macleod did good work, procuring the adoption of the boarding-out system; but it was for those whom legal relief might not reach that his heart bled. 'There is many a desolate cry of pain,' he wrote, 'smothered within the walls of poor homes, like that of mariners in a sinking ship, who see no sail within the wide horizon.' To aid the deserving poor he declared to be one of the highest objects that could engage the attention of good men;—one of the highest, doubtless, but one of the most illusory, for the deserving poor you shall hardly discover, they put on such a prosperous face. He canvassed various plans, from New York to Elberfelt; but vain was his dream of building a bridge between east and west by charity,—the wary remorse and discount of the Vandals.

The working men of Glasgow more than once testified in a body to the good he had done them. Silver and gold they had none, they

said, but they would retain for his kindness a lifelong gratitude. When in 1857 his wife was lying as it were at the point of death, 'hundreds,' he wrote, 'called to read the daily bulletin which I was obliged to put up. But everywhere it was the same. Free Church people and people of all Churches called. Men I never spoke to stopped me; cab-drivers, 'bus-drivers, working men in the streets, asked after her with much feeling.' Many a time a surreptitious [81] hand would be thrust into his, and in a moment gone. All the forenoon his house in Bath Street was besieged with suppliants of various kinds. For refuge he had a small study fitted up in the laundry, and there he would be sitting, pen in hand, pipe in mouth, now joined by a privileged visitor, now summoned to deal with a conscience or a thumb. His name was oftener heard in common talk than that of any other man, and was seldom more than 'Norman.' Stories about him were current in Glasgow. One day a U.P. minister was requested to visit a family whom he did not know. Thinking that they might be new adherents, he went to the house, which was up three flights of stairs. A man was lying very ill. After praying, the minister asked if they belonged to his congregation. 'Oh no,' said the wife, 'we belang to the Barony; but, ye see, this is a catchin' fivver, an' it would never dae to risk *Norman*.'[4]

There was always, however, a religious section not just very sure about Norman Macleod, he was so unlike a consecrated vessel,—his face never long enough, the whites of his eyes unseen, the whole show of him dashed with secularity. He was no saint in the sailor's definition, 'a melancholy chap who is all day long singing of psalms.'[5] 'As for sadness and gloom,' he says somewhere, 'in [82] accepting *all* things from our Father, I will pay no such compliment to the devil.' How he shocked the Pharisees! and among his chance hosts during lecturing tours there were simple souls whom his unclerical mirth bewildered. One such, a country provost, at whose house he had sat talking and telling stories till two o'clock in the morning, remarked, with a shake of the head, 'He's no' the man I thocht he was at a'.' Of his professional brethren the only type he could not bear was the prim priest. Once, on the way to a railway station, accompanied by several of the local presbytery, he had told a Highland story, not omitting the 'tamns.' They had all laughed but one, a celebrated prig, who had kept his mouth pursed and his eyes on the ground. Macleod whispered to a neighbour, 'Man, wouldn't it be fine to see—— drunk?' At the Burns centenary celebration in Glasgow he was the only minister who appeared, though many had been invited. He did so at the risk of his reputation, for religious opinion was up against the movement; and, on the other hand, resolved to mark the evil in the poet's influence, he anticipated the howls of the Burns maniacs. He spoke of the noble protest for the independence and dignity of humanity expressed in the heroic song, 'A man's a man for a' that,' and showed what the poet's intense sentiment of nationality had done for the Scottish race; but of the immoral verses, 'Would God,' he exclaimed, 'they were never [83] written, never printed, and never read!' Macleod was a man of simple purity of soul. Challenged once at Stockholm to go to the theatre, he consented to be one of the party, but no sooner had the ballet begun than he was observed to be hanging his head, with a pained expression on his face. Soon he rose and went out. When his friends rejoined him in the hotel, and one of them chaffed him for leaving the performance, 'Sir,' he thundered, 'are you a father? How would you like to see your own daughters——?' Yet if ministers are now amongst the foremost in proposing the immortal memory, it is largely due to Norman Macleod; and was it not all in the spirit of Burns, his after activity in hacking at the links of our Puritan fetters?

'It's a queer trade our trade,' a minister's wife used to say, with a melancholy sigh, and she never explained. 'Fine profession ours,' remarked a gay licentiate, 'if it were not for the preaching and the visiting.' Some are no pedestrians, but good pulpiteers, and *vice versâ*: some avoid Church courts; others glory in them. Macleod not only attended to all departments of a minister's work, but availed himself of every official privilege, if it implied service to the Church or the community. Early in his Barony period he became a distinct force in the General Assembly, and that in two directions,—ecclesiastical liberality, and the India Mission. If the Establishment, he argued, was to have a future, it must recognise the tide that was surely breaking down the ecclesiastical barriers which stood in the [84] way of the secular advance. Hence he advocated, to the horror of

the House, the repeal of the theological tests for university professors. But it was in connection with the cause of the heathen that his name rose in the religious world. He preached every year for the London Missionary Society, and when he spoke in the General Assembly on the Mission Reports there was always a crowd.

CHAPTER V

EDITOR AND AUTHOR

Pursuing his aim of putting life into the Establishment Macleod had, in 1849, started a little paper, the *Edinburgh Christian Magazine*, which may be described as a miniature plan or first sketch of *Good Words*. Its circulation did not exceed five thousand, but 'the blue magazine,' as it was called, was no mean agent in the revival of the drooping Church. While yet minister of Dalkeith he was frequently seen about the office of the publishers, Messrs. Paton & Ritchie, in George Street, Edinburgh; but after his removal to Glasgow the editorial instructions were given in correspondence with the head printer, Mr. J. C. Erskine. That gentleman writes: 'Usually he was behind time, and I had consequently to poke him up about the middle of each month. But we were always on the best of terms, and I always felt honoured as well as delighted in being associated with so lovable a man and having the privilege of his acquaintance.' These are some of the letters, in whole or part:—

(1) Erskine,—I have worn crape for two days for you, having made up my mind that you were out of print, or in Death's *Index Expurgatorius*. What has become of you? Well, the concern must pay, *but* the proof-sheet must be corrected or the whole article cancelled, as I MUST not give the facts from a private letter in *that* style. Delay the publication if you like, but put it right, or let the concern of P. & R. perish! [86]

(2) Erskine,—You know what it is to be done up in sheets, with a second volume in the Press. Have patience! I *bind* myself to be ready by the 20th, though at present I am a blank sheet.

(3) [September 1851.] Excellent Erskine, Prince of Printers,—this is to intimate my intention of being in Edinburgh on Monday, and visiting your den about twelve, or so, when we shall complete all arrangements. I think I am in excellent time, and am backing slowly into the old rails, when you need rail no more! The matrimonial switch gives a wrong turn. The number may be easily discovered which marks *your* marriage,—it is full of blunders of the Press! a perfect *type* of your hallucination!—N. McL.

(4) [Monday, 11 A.M., September 23, 1851.] I shall never transgress more if the firm forgive me, and the demons do not seize me and hotpress me. As a married man, Erskine, you should know something of the difficulties married men have experienced, since the days of the Patriarch of Uz to those of Paton & Ritchie, from wives. I will send off more MS. by post in the afternoon, and I shall see you on Monday between one and two. Don't throw vitriol on me. Keep the printers off!

The next refers to the birth of his first child:

(5) My first volume is out on Friday—bound in calf-skin, with cloth-*guilt* on the back and front, and very small type—less than a 64mo. Author and Publisher doing well. But I do not expect the sale to be great for eighteen years. I hope then some great London firm will purchase it for a handsome sum. I cannot, however, complain of the delivery by the trade as yet! I send you MS. All must be printed, and some more beside. Be calm, Erskine.

(6) Master Erskine!—*You* should have duly informed the editor of the *Christian Magazine* that you had no sermon, seeing that a parson had pledged himself to send one a month ago, and I was under the impression that it was 'all right' until, coming up tonight from the coast, I found all was wrong. I send you—1. A MS. sermon—I cannot read it, but perhaps my friend the Interpreter in the printing-office can; 2. A printed sermon for a *patch* in case you are too late. If you print the MS. you must *not* put in the name—just sermon and text. I wrote it at a sitting, and it is imperfect—very. I leave this on Monday at 2 for the coast. Direct to Shandon, Helensburgh. If you have not enough, make up by extracts from the printed sermon. [87]

'O Erskine, Erskine!
Had I but served my Parish as I have my Printer,
It would not thus have left me in my misery!'

The following reply was sent to an invitation to the editor to grace a social meeting of the workers in the printing-office of Messrs. Paton & Ritchie:—

(7) [B.'s Refreshment Rooms, 10th January 1853.] My dear Messrs. P. & R.,—I must go to Edinburgh early in February. I cannot afford—so hard are my Publishers—to go in January. Besides, feasts without alcohol are like grates without coal. The man who, in this weather,

> can be pleased with lemonade and become poetic on ginger-pop, is fit for murder. He is wanting in the essential attributes of man. He can have no stomach or nerves, and far less heart, while his brains must be vapid as our friend's Paste—he of the punch-bowl, I mean. Let Erskine by all means have unalcoholic swipes until his finger-ends distil foam, and his eyelids weep pure water. Let every teetotaller, if he pleases, sit all night up to his neck in a barrel of water, but do give something to cool the poor demons!—Yours truly, Author of 'A Plea for Temperance.'

The *Christian Magazine* gave way to *Good Words*, which was started in 1860. His assumption of the editorship proved to be the most important circumstance in Macleod's career. Religious papers [88] were the worst in existence, written by narrow saints, not incapable of theological malice, and ignorant of the world and of the age. *Good Words*, while leading men 'to know and to love God,' was to represent various schools of Christian thought, and make a point of human interest and scientific instruction. He had his eye on the intelligent mechanic, whom the evangelical prints repelled. The magazine was the mirror of the editor's mind, full of spirituality, yet taking in with relish the outer world. For the most part the religion was manly and bracing, but there was enough of another kind to suit the feebler souls. And in the narratives (not to say novels) many a maiden aunt, who thought fiction in general of the devil, snatched a fearful joy. Poor as the early numbers were, *Good Words* was successful from the first, reaching in two years a circulation of a hundred thousand. But the editor had to contend with virulent opposition on the part of the awful good. The stories were positively secular! Then the association of Tulloch and Stanley, Kingsley and Caird, covered the whole enterprise with suspicion. If Macleod did not give up these dangerous men he was to be crushed. And what could be said for a paper, supposed to be fit for Sunday perusal, which admitted articles in astronomy? Christian parents should not allow their children to handle on the Lord's day a magazine that made so much of pagan luminaries like Jupiter and Mars. Private [89] remonstrances poured in; the paper was tabooed by religious societies; the *Record*, an English champion of the faith, kept up for months a savage attack; and the General Assembly of the Free Church was overtured to sit upon *Good Words*, which it did, much to the increase of our circulation. The editor held his ground, only redoubling his anxiety to keep out 'every expression that could pain the weakest Christian.' Rather than publish a novel of Anthony Trollope's, in which the pious characters were all made odious, he paid an indemnity of £500. Art and morals alike may sneer, but Macleod's compromise was well considered and justified in the result. The storm blew over, and another step was gained for religious freedom. *Good Words* carried the name of Norman Macleod over the English-speaking world, and had a vogue in the remotest Hebrides. Principal Tulloch once met in the mountains a man who, on learning the traveller's name, said, 'I know you from *Good Words*.' The numbers were so cherished that households generally had them bound, and to this day the early volumes are held precious in many a Scottish home. The sight of one of the old familiar pictures still sends a thrill through thousands, recalling the quiet Sabbaths of their childhood, dear old rooms, and faces they shall see no more.'

Before he became the editor of *Good Words*, Macleod had published little that was of interest outside religious circles. *The* [90] *Earnest Student*, doubtless, has considerable merit as a biography, and is written with a tender grace; but it suffers from the inherent unfitness of the subject for extended treatment,—an uneventful life and a character wanting in colour. To say that it deserved a place beside the *Life of M'Cheyne*, to which it bears a resemblance, would be high praise. In the mass of his contributions to *Good Words* there is, of course, much that need not be criticised. The sermons put one in mind of the student who, being asked why he was not going in for the ministry, answered, 'I don't want to spoil my style.' His records of travel were eagerly read when they appeared, having a certain interest from the person of the adventurer, with humorous and graphic touches; but to give permanence of charm to the account of voyages and journeys requires all the arts of a Kinglake or a Stevenson.

Enough remains to entitle Norman Macleod to a certain recognition in Scottish letters. Among the 'Character Sketches' there are some striking portraits—*Mr. Joseph Walker*, for instance,

the highly respectable man, who never drank, never cheated, never lied, and yet ‘could do a very sneaking, mean thing.’ That is a subtle study, vigorously composed. As a writer of fiction it is remarkable that Macleod should be forgotten, when work similar to his, only duller, is boomed over all the earth. His stories, it is true, have a set religious aim, but that should be no offence in days when the most [91] belauded fiction is nothing if not didactic, nay, when the novel is made a pulpit for the promulgation of moral heresy. If art in fiction is to be strangled, religion may as well be the executioner as the last indecency. The evangelical tale, no doubt, is usually in a sense immoral, not only taking mere church piety for the height of human perfection and setting up as its reward material success, but deliberately distorting, in the name of Jesus, the truth of nature and the facts of life. Macleod purposed to write stories which should be religious, and yet do no violence to reality. And his characters are plainly genuine, except, perhaps, the hero of his first attempt—*The Old Lieutenant and his Son*. Ned is to be a sailor and an exemplary Christian. Fall he does indeed, but not very far, and we know for sure that the author will set him up again at once, and higher than ever, on the plane of paragons. A sea-captain may be a good and pious man, but if, like Ned, he has chosen his profession at the cost of a mother’s tears, driven by the need of adventure—

> ‘God help me save I take my part
> Of danger on the roaring sea:
> A devil rises in my heart
> Far worse than any death to me’—

there will be in him still some nobility of irrepressible impulse, some leap of the spirit unawares. Macleod’s usual method, however, is to take some unregenerate character—a wild tramp, a godless seaman, [92] an express ecclesiastic—and reform him, not by religious admonition, but by living influences that seize upon the better feelings. In his Vanity Fair the evangelists are the affections. Thus in *Billy Buttons* the captain and crew are humanised by the accident of having upon their hands, in the middle of the Atlantic, the care of a new-born infant; the father of Wee Davie is made another being by his wife’s cry over the little coffin:—’O Willie, forgi’e me, for it’s no’ ma pairt to speak, but I canna help it enoo, and just, ma bonnie man, just agree wi’ me that we’ll gi’e oor hearts noo and for ever to oor ain Saviour, and the Saviour o’ wee Davie’; Jock Hall, the outcast in *The Starling*, thinking that he hates everybody and that everybody hates him, is made a new creature through the kindness and encouragement of an old soldier, who, when the bird cries, *A man’s a man for a’ that*, drives the lesson home, ‘And ye *are* a man; cheer up, Jock.’ Macleod’s good people are no hymn-book pietists, but, like those of Dickens, gentle and true. And his stories are entertaining, so that the most bigoted agnostic might put up with the religion for the sake of the amusement.

The most prevailing quality of Macleod’s fiction is the pathos, and though one must be a Christian to feel it all, there is much that no humane reader will be able to resist. To be sure the occasion is always simple and ordinary, never such, for instance, as the elaborate decline of a consumptive scholar in his garden-chair; and [93] the cause of these tears may be only a remark or a gesture. Under the restrictions of *Good Words* he could not do his best as a humorist, yet he permitted himself to be thoroughly Scottish and provoke hearty laughter. Within a modest range he displays real genius in the portrayal of character and the rendering of Scottish conversation.

The Old Lieutenant, begun in *Good Words* before he knew it was to be a story, and continued without sight of an end, is disjointed in the narrative, and loaded with extraneous matter; but the elder Fleming is like one of Thackeray’s men, and, of the domestics of the good old days when the social bond was not cash payment but affection, where, outside of Scott, will you find a more delightful type than Babby? When Ned was about to leave home for his first voyage, ‘no one saw the tears which filled her large eyes, or heard her blowing her little nose half the night.’ After Ned’s marriage, his father, inviting the young couple to visit the old home, says simply, ‘I think that Babby will expect it.’ Babby has a tongue in her head, and is never so eloquent as when she rails at the new minister. Under the old one she had felt many a time ‘jist mad at hersel’ that she wasna a better woman.’ ‘But this chield Dalrymple that’s cam’ among us! Hech, sirs! what a round black crappit heid he has, like a

bull-dog's, and a body round and fat like a black pudding; and the [94]
cratur gangs struttin' aboot wi' his umbrella under his oxter,
crawin' like a midden cock, wha but him, keep us a'! an' pittin' his
neb into every ane's brose wi' his impudence. And syne he rages
and rampages in the poopit, wi' the gowk's spittle in his mouth,
flytin' on folk, and abusin' them for a' that's bad, till my nerves rise,
and I could jist cry oot, if it wasna for shame, "Haud yer tongue, ye
spitefu' cratur!" And again,—"Eh, I was glad ye werena married by
Dalrymple! He routs in the poopit like a bull, and when the body's
crackin' wi' ye, he cheeps, cheeps like a chirted puddock." "A
what?" asked Kate. "A squeezed tade!" replied Babby; "d'ye no' ken
yer ain lang'age? And as for his sermons, they're jist like a dog's
tail, the langer the sma'er."' If Ned is partly made to order, the crew
are real old salts. Their conversation finally recalls Flint's
buccaneers, as when one (a milder Israel Hands) remarks, 'But
what, suppose I makes up my mind, do you see, to go ahead, and
says, as it were, says I, I'll not pray, nor read the Bible, nor give up
my grog, nor anything else, nor be a saint, but a sinner, and sail
when I like, and where I like, and be my own captain—eh?'

Macleod's best effort in fiction is *The Starling*. Art demands some
abatement of the happy close; there is didactic and explanatory
matter that might well be spared; and the episode of the quack is an
astounding excrescence. But it is a fine and touching story, and [95]
shows that the author possessed the distinctive power of a novelist.
The starling was the pet of a little boy called Charlie. It could say,
'I'm Charlie's bairn,' and 'A man's a man for a' that,' and whistle a
few bars of the song, 'Wha'll be king but Charlie?' To feed the bird
and hear it speak and sing was the bairn's delight. He was the only
child of his parents, a pious and happy couple, the wife young, the
husband a retired sergeant of the army, back at his old trade of
shoemaker. The boy died, and there was the bird still repeating its
remarks and tunes, and daily becoming dearer to the bereaved
parents for Charlie's sake. One Sunday morning, the starling being
dowie, the sergeant hung out its cage at the door, for the sun was
shining and the air sweet. Immediately the bird began to pour forth
its budget; and a crowd of children gathered about the cage, and
the street rang with their delight. Suddenly appeared the minister!
at sight of whom the children fled, tumbling over one another and
screaming in their fright, so that windows were thrown up, and
mothers came flying into the rout, and there was a terrible ado. The
Rev. Daniel Porteous, who was on his way to church, was
scandalised at such a desecration of the Lord's day. But what was
his horror when he found that the prime offender was the sergeant,
one of his elders? To the good couple, who looked up to Mr.
Porteous with awe, and whose standing in the congregation was
their greatest honour, the minister's anger was no light matter; the [96]
wife was in distraction, the husband grave and puzzled. The clerical
decree was that the starling should be destroyed. This the sergeant,
with all deference, refused, whereupon the minister went away,
uttering vague threats. But as the poor wife seemed to think it their
duty to obey, her husband said, 'If you, that kens as weel as me a'
the bird has been to us, but speak the word, the deed will be
allowed by me.' And he took down the cage, consenting that the
other should put an end to the bird. 'I'm Charlie's bairn,' exclaimed
the starling. The wife thought that the killing should be the man's
work, but you see that she is beginning to waver, and when her
husband lays his hand on the bird, saying, 'Bid fareweel to your
mistress, Charlie,' she sprang forward with a cry, and prevented the
deed. The sergeant was suspended from the eldership for
contumacy, and shunned in the village like a leper. But it all comes
right in the end. The motive of the tale would seem to verge on the
ludicrous; a single false or strained note, and the whole thing were
ruined; yet—call it literary skill or the unconscious art of perfect
sympathy—the treatment is such that there is no improbability, and
for the starling—as one might have felt when Marie Antoinette was
in the cart, if it were a question whether some force might not come
dashing up a back street to the rescue, so the reader feels when the
fate of the bird is trembling in the balance. The minister with his
scorn of the feelings and worship of church principles; his sister, [97]
who is like himself, only adding malice; the hypocritical elder who
confesses, 'There's nane perfect, nane—the fac' is, I'm no' perfect
masel''; above all, the ne'er-do-weel, Jock Hall,—are depicted to the
life.

That Macleod's fiction has particular merits none will deny,

though the critic, making the most of the defects, might say that his stories fail as wholes. His best achievement is perhaps *The Reminiscences of a Highland Parish*. This, at any rate, is a book, and it justifies the saying in *The Old Lieutenant* about the Highlands:—'In all this kind of scenery, along with the wild traditions which ghostlike float around its ancient keeps, and live in the tales of its inhabitants, there is a glory and a sadness most affecting to the imagination, and suggestive of a period of romance and song.' The earlier chapters, describing his grandfather's patriarchal home and the open-air education of the boys and girls of the manse, form a complete and charming piece—the idyll of Fiunary. There are exciting adventures on the misty hill and in the furious Sound.

> What a sight it was to see that old man, when the storm was fiercest, with his one eye, under its shaggy grey brow, looking to windward, sharp, calm, and luminous as a spark: his hand clutching the tiller—never speaking a word, and displeased if any other broke the silence, except the minister who sat beside him, assigning this post of honour as a great favour to Rory during the trying hour. That hour was generally when wind and tide met, and gurly grew the sea, whose green waves rose with crested heads, hanging against the cloud-rack, and sometimes concealing the land; while black sudden squalls, rushing down from the glens, struck the foaming billows in fury and smote the boat, threatening with a sharp scream to tear the tiny sail in tatters, break the mast, or blow out of the water the small dark speck that carried the manse treasures. There was one moment of peculiar difficulty and concentrated danger when the hand of a master was needed to save them. The boat has entered the worst part of the tideway. How ugly it looks! Three seas higher than the rest are coming; and you can see the squall blowing their white crests into smoke.[6] In a few minutes they will be down upon the *Row*. 'Look out, Ruari!' whispers the minister. 'Stand by the sheets!' cries Rory to the boys, who, seated on the ballast, gaze on him like statues, watching his face and eagerly listening in silence. 'Ready!' is their only reply. Down come the seas, rolling, rising, breaking; falling, rising again, and looking higher and fiercer than ever. The tide is running like a race-horse and the gale meets it; and these three seas appear now to rise like huge pyramids of green water, dashing their foam up into the sky. The first may be encountered and overcome, for the boat has good way upon her; but the others will rapidly follow up the thundering charge and shock, and a single false movement of the helm by a hair's breadth will bring down a cataract like Niagara, that would shake a frigate, and sink the *Row* into the depths like a stone. The boat meets the first wave, and rises dry over it. 'Slack out the main-sheet, quick, and hold hard: there—steady!' commands Rory, in a low, firm voice, and the huge back of the second wave is seen breaking to leeward. 'Haul in, boys, and belay!' Quick as lightning the little craft, having again gathered way, is up in the teeth of the wind and soon is spinning over the third topper, not a drop of water having come over the lee gunwale. 'Nobly done, Rory!' exclaims the minister, as he looks back to the fierce tideway which they have passed.

[98]

But what one least forgets is the figure of the aged pastor taking farewell of his flock. Blind he was, and lost his bearings in the pulpit, till the beadle, old Rory, who had accompanied him from Skye fifty years before, went up and turned him round so as to face the congregation.

[99]

> And then stood up that venerable man, a Saul in height among the people, with his pure white hair falling back from his ample forehead over his shoulders. Few and loving and earnest were the words he spoke, amidst the silence of a passionately devoted people, which was broken only by their low sobs when he told them that they should see his face no more.

All Morven is in the book,—scenery from the heather to the waves, life from the manse to the shieling, mixed with strange old legends and romantic tales.

Was Norman Macleod a poet? Pre-eminently so, said Principal Shairp, relying on Wordsworth's paradox. But that is a broken reed. Expression is the final cause of poetry, *the form's the thing*. Now, from Macleod's habit of misquoting the finest lines it would seem that his love for poetry was not a poet's love. Still in his verse he could stumble on such rhythm as this—

> 'Ah, where is he now, in what mansion,
> In what star of the infinite sky?'

and in the conclusion of a piece about a grey-headed father seeing his children dance, there is a gleam of real poetry—

‘But he hears a far-off music
Guiding all the stately spheres,
In his father-heart it echoes,
So he claps his hands and cheers.’

[100]

The hymn ‘Courage, brothers,’ has a telling ring, though only of rhetoric; and in a song that had the honour of a place in Maga he has roughly rendered the spirit and atmosphere of the roaring game. But his cleverest achievement in rhyme is ‘Captain Frazer’s Nose,’ which we are told was written during violent pain.

Oh, if ye’re at Dumbarton fair,
Gang to the castle when ye’re there,
And see a sicht baith rich and rare—
The nose o’ Captain Frazer.

Unless ye’re blin’ or unco glee’t,
A mile awa’ ye’re sure to see’t,
And nearer han’ a man gauns wi’t
That owns the nose o’ Frazer.

It’s great in length, it’s great in girth,
It’s great in grief, it’s great in mirth,
Tho’ grown wi’ years, ‘twas great at birth—
It’s greater far than Frazer!

I’ve heard volcanoes loudly roarin’,
And Niagara’s waters pourin’;
But oh, gin ye had heard the snorin’
Frae the nose o’ Captain Frazer!

To wauken sleepin’ congregations,
Or rouse to battle sleepin’ nations,
Gae wa’ wi’ preachin’s and orations,
And try the nose o’ Frazer!

Gif French invaders try to lan’
Upon our glorious British stran’,
Fear nocht if ships are no’ at han’,
But trust the nose o’ Frazer.

[101]

Jist crack that cannon ower the shore,
Weel rammed wi’ snuff, then let it roar
Ae Hielan’ sneeze! then never more
They’ll daur the nose o’ Frazer.

If that great Nose is ever deid,
To bury it ye dinna need,
Nae coffin made o’ wood or leed,
Could hand the nose o’ Frazer.

But let it stan’ itsel’ alane,
Erect, like some big Druid stane,
That a’ the warl’ may see its bane,
‘In memory o’ Frazer!’

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CHAPTER VI

BALMORAL

If the cry for vital being—

> ‘Tis life, whereof our nerves are scant,
> More life, and fuller, that I want’—

ever came from Norman Macleod, it was answered only too well; like a certain prayer for rain, which was interrupted by a ridiculous flood. Not only were his activities immense and various, but there was always an expenditure of corresponding emotion; nay, and what in the life of most men would have been simply an event was in his a crisis, what was a fleeting image with others was with him an indelible impression.

He was summoned to the unique ordeal of ministering to the newly-widowed Queen.

About twenty years before, during a visit to the West of Scotland, Her Majesty had for the first time attended a presbyterian service, on which occasion the preacher was Norman Macleod, the high priest of the Highlands and minister of St. Columba’s. His son first appeared at Balmoral in 1854. The invitation of the minister of [103]
Crathie he had refused (having in hand a special service at the Barony), but was informed that it had been sent at the instance of Her Majesty. He preached without any notes a sermon never fully written out, which he had delivered fifteen times. The Queen wrote in her Journal: ‘We went to kirk as usual at twelve o’clock. The service was performed by the Rev. Norman M’Leod of Glasgow, son of Dr. M’Leod, and anything finer I never heard. The sermon, entirely extempore, was quite admirable: so simple, and yet so eloquent, and so beautifully argued and put. The text was from the account of the coming of Nicodemus to Christ by night, St. John, chapter iii. Mr. M’Leod showed in the sermon how we *all* tried to please *self*, and live for *that*, and in so doing found no rest. Christ had come not only to die for us, but to show us how we were to live. The second prayer was very touching: his allusions to us were so simple, saying after his mention of us, “Bless their children.” It gave me a lump in my throat, as also when he prayed for “the dying, the wounded, the widow, and the orphans.” Every one came back delighted: and how satisfactory it is to come back from church with such feelings! The servants and the Highlanders—*all*—were equally delighted.’

In the evening he was sitting on a block of granite within the grounds, when he was aroused by a voice asking whether he was the clergyman who had preached that day, and found himself in the presence of the Queen and the Prince Consort. This was his first [104]
meeting with Her Majesty, and it was only for a moment.

On the next occasion, two years later, he dined with the royal family, and afterwards had some conversation with the Queen; referring to which he says, ‘I never spoke my mind more frankly to anyone who was a stranger and not on an equal footing.’ This he did, because he perceived that Her Majesty was anxious to go to the root and reality of things, and abhorred all shams. His sermons had a peculiar fascination for the Queen. Of the recorded estimates of Macleod’s preaching, that of Victoria, if the warmest, is not the least discerning, and will be a telling memorial when the sermons are forgotten.

The Prince Consort died at the close of the year 1861. In the May following, the Queen came to Balmoral. She sent for Norman Macleod. What a moment! How was he to deal with stricken Majesty —

> ‘Her over all whose realms to their last isle
> The shadow of a loss drew like eclipse,
> Darkening the world’?

It was purely as a minister of religion that he had the honour of his sovereign’s command. The truth of God, as he believed it, the same message which a hundred times he had spoken to bereaved wives in the lowliest homes, that, and nothing other, would he carry to the royal widow, whom he should regard only as ‘an immortal being, a sister in humanity.’ Their first meeting was at divine service, and if [105]

the occasion was a trying one to the preacher, it was evidently exciting to the Queen. 'Hurried to be ready,' so runs the royal Journal, 'for the service which Dr. Macleod was kindly going to perform. And a little before ten, I went down with Lenchen and Affie (Alice being still in bed unwell) to the dining-room, in which I had not yet been.... And never was service more beautifully, touchingly, simply, and tenderly performed.... The sermon, entirely extempore, was admirable, all upon affliction, God's love, our Saviour's sufferings, which God would not spare Him, the blessedness of suffering in bringing us nearer to our eternal home, where we should all be together, and where our dear ones were gone on before us.... The children and I were much affected on coming upstairs.' After dinner he was summoned to the Queen's room, and there, after some conversation about the Prince, he told about an old woman in the Barony who had lost her husband and several of her children, and who, on being asked how she had been able to bear her many sorrows, replied, 'When *he* was ta'en it made sic a hole in my heart that a' other sorrows gang lichtly through.' When Macleod recalled this period, he would express the whole burden of it in the solemn murmur, '*That May*.' He has written: 'God enabled me to speak in public and private to the Queen in such a way as seemed to me to be the truth, the truth in God's sight—that which I believed she needed, though I felt it would be very trying to her [106] spirit to receive it. And what fills me with deepest thanksgiving is that she has received it, and written to me such a kind, tender letter of thanks, which shall be treasured in my heart while I live.'

In the spring of the following year he was for several days a guest at Windsor. 'I walked,' he says, 'with Lady Augusta to the mausoleum to meet the Queen. She had the key and opened it herself, undoing the bolts; and alone we entered, and stood in solemn silence beside Marochetti's beautiful statue of the Prince.'

With the royal family he was both a social favourite and a trusted counsellor. To Prince Alfred, who seemed to be particularly attached to him, he once gave this advice,—that 'if he did God's will, good and able men would rally round him; otherwise flatterers would truckle to him and ruin him, while caring only for themselves.' Both sons and daughters, when residing on the Continent, had flying visits from this chaplain. One Monday he left Glasgow for Windsor; thence, on royal errands, he proceeded to Bonn and Darmstadt; he was back at Windsor on the Friday: and on the Sunday following, it may be added, he preached three times in the Barony Church.

The Prince of Wales (with whom he sometimes stayed at Abergeldie) once put in a plea for short sermons. Said the Doctor, 'I am a Thomas à Becket and resent the interference of the State'; and sure enough, at the first opportunity, he preached for three-quarters [107] of an hour, only so well that His Royal Highness wished it had been longer. To show how much he was thought of at Court, it may be mentioned that one day he was at Inverness to meet the Crown Prince and Princess of Prussia, the next (which was a Saturday) at Balmoral, and for half of the following week with Prince Alfred at Holyrood. But here is the crowning instance: 'The Queen sat down to spin at a nice Scotch wheel, while I read Robert Burns to her, *Tam o' Shanter* and *A man's a man for a' that*, her favourite.'

Her Majesty never forgot what Dr. Macleod had been to her in the time of her desolation, but extended her confidence, nor failed to take an interest in his personal cares. Some of the truest and most touching words ever written of Norman Macleod are from the pen of Queen Victoria.

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CHAPTER VII

1860-1866

TRAVELS—BROAD CHURCH MOVEMENTS

No minister, whose hands were full at home, ever travelled more or further, whether as tourist or apostle, than Norman Macleod. At least once a year on an average he spent time on the Continent. In the summer of 1860, with a view to preach to the Scottish artisans residing at certain places in Northern Europe, he started for St. Petersburg. Elsinore, where he landed in honour of Hamlet, he was disappointed to find no 'wild and stormy steep,' but a quiet little wooden town, full of fish and sailors. By almost everything in Russia he was disgusted. There for the first and last time in a foreign country, things failed to engage his interest. He visited the various churches of the capital, and notes St. Isaac's as 'great in granite, magnificent in malachite, and hoary in nothing but superstition.' In the Kazan he saw many flags that had been taken in war, and never an English one in the collection! The islands of the Neva pleased him; but the best scene of all was where he could study Russia and [109] mankind, the bazaar. Of a mammoth, the skeleton of which he saw in the museum, he remarks, 'It died before Adam was born,' and this in *Good Words*, where there was to be nothing to pain the weakest Christian! The hotels were 'filthy, the police villains, the palaces shams, the natives ugly,' which strain, quite exceptional for Macleod, was due to his hatred of the Russian system. At Moscow, however, he was fairly captivated by the Kremlin. Wherever a number of his fellow-countrymen could be got together he held services, and once a woman took his hand, saying, 'My heart is full, I canna speak.'

His next visit abroad, two years later, was to Italy, and the change from St. Petersburg to Venice is marked in the finer tone of the record. 'We went in our gondolas about nine at night beneath the bridge of the Rialto.... Palaces and churches were steeped in the calm brilliancy of the southern night. There was a silence such as could not reign in any other city on earth. A whisper, one's very breathing might be heard. Every palace was visible as in daylight, and, except for the forms of dark gondolas which glided past, or a few lights that like fireflies darted amid the darkness of the mysterious water-streets which opened into the Grand Canal, the city seemed as if dead.'

In February 1865, accompanied by his brother Donald and the publisher of *Good Words*, Alexander Strahan, he set out for [110] Palestine. Soon after leaving Marseilles they encountered a terrific hurricane, which in all its fury Norman witnessed from the deck. Landed at Malta, he wandered about in the moonlight till three in the morning, and, what with forts, streets, palaces, batteries, bright almost as day, it was like a dream. From Malta onward the voyage was just what the traveller loved, calm and restful, far beyond the postman's knock, which seemed a portent created by fever. According to his custom when on shipboard, he preached in the forecastle, everything free and easy, the men sitting about or lying in their hammocks. Alexandria was a new world, the mysterious East, full of charm and fascination. Whether in coffee-room or bazaar, all was as a fancy fair got up for the amusement of strangers. His wonder and awe in sight of the Pyramids may be taken for granted. He thought to climb to the top, but twenty steps sufficed; he would not risk a vacancy in the Barony by going one yard further; so there he sat, getting 'a whiff of the inexhaustible past,' as he looked towards Ethiopia and the sources of the Nile. During the sail to Jaffa he sat upon a Moslem, taking him for the fore jib, and much he admired the man's patience under the pressure of the event. Once in Palestine, and beholding the abundance of the orange, what a paradise, he thought, for Sunday school children! See him on the road (a horse under him) rejoicing that 'from felt hat downwards he has no trace of the ecclesiastic.' [111] He had taken with him (instead of powder and shot) a musical snuff-box, and when the tent was pitched near a village, it was great fun to spring the miracle upon the crowd. Listening first with fear, they took courage by degrees, and 'it was truly delightful to see the

revolution which those beautiful notes, as they sounded clear and loud through the Arab skull, produced upon the features of the listener. The anxious brow was smoothed, the black eye lighted up, the lips were parted in a broad smile, which revealed the ivory teeth, and the whole man seemed to become humanised as he murmured with delight, "Tayēeb, tayēeb" (good, good).' But his staple resource for the amusement of the natives was fireworks. Nothing could exceed their surprise as the squib went whizzing up into the starry night. On the top of Neby Samwil, 'every face was turned towards Jerusalem. The eye and heart caught it at once, as they would a parent's bier in the empty chamber of death. The round hill, dotted with trees, the dome beneath, the few minarets near it,—there were Olivet and Jerusalem! No words were spoken, no exclamations heard; nor are any explanations needed to enable the reader to understand our feelings when seeing, for the first time, the city of the Great King.' Again, of his entering in, 'I took off my hat and blessed God in my heart as my horse's hoofs clattered through the gate.' Both within and without he went exploring, Bible in hand. The party saw Jordan and the Dead Sea, from Bethlehem [112] proceeded through Damascus to Samaria, and broke up at Beyrout.

In a hotel at Athens one evening, Principal Tulloch, lying in bed, was startled by the bursting in of Norman Macleod, 'as large as life, and bluff and sunburnt from a tour in Syria.' To this meeting, at which the two leaders discussed theology and ecclesiastical affairs till midnight, were doubtless due in part certain events which make 1865 the most memorable year in the history of the Church since the Disruption.

By this time it was evident that the Secession had in a manner failed. As a voluntary institution, indeed, the Free Church was flourishing in the eye of Europe, but it was not for this that the Candlishes and the Cunninghams had taken off their coats. The 'bond' Establishment was to perish, and they, on their own terms, were to get possession of the National Zion. Behold, the Church of Scotland was risen again! For ten years its destiny had hung in the scales; but in the middle of the fifties, the most popular preacher in Glasgow was the minister of the Barony, and the minister of Lady Yester's, Edinburgh, was the first pulpit orator in the land. Norman Macleod and John Caird had convinced the astonished people that within the old walls also the real gospel ring was to be heard. To these might be added one who, in a less conspicuous position, by the beauty of his character and the devotedness of his life, rendered as noble service,—the elder Story of Roseneath. The rising generation of parish ministers could not fail to catch the new tone, [113] and if they were spurred on as well by the example of their dissenting brethren, not a few were giving points to their instructors. To set the Church upon its feet, once it had shown signs of recovery, no one did more than Professor James Robertson, who was of a wonderful zeal and courage, strong in intellect and will, in spirit, if not in doctrine, liberal,—a man singularly forgotten. He took up the work of church extension begun by Chalmers, only where the master had looked to the State the pupil was for nothing but subscriptions. In a dozen years he had raised more than half a million of money, with which about a hundred and fifty parishes were erected. But nothing so much showed that the Church was alive as its activity in the foreign field. By the old Moderates (although it was a Moderate who founded the India Mission) the project of converting the heathen had been scouted as a vagary of fanaticism. That the Church could now bear the test of interest in dark continents was chiefly due to Macleod. So everywhere but in the Highlands the word went,—'There's life in the Auld Kirk yet.'

Religious activity was one thing; but there was a movement of more historic import. Evangelicalism, which was a reaction from the inanimate orthodoxy and the elegant scepticism of the eighteenth century, had revived religion at some expense to freedom and the rights of intelligence. The non-intrusionist clergy were to Macaulay [114] 'a sullen priesthood,' and Carlyle talked of 'the Free Kirk and other rubbish.' Nor were the leaders of the Establishment more the children of light; they showed perhaps a worse spirit in their resistance to every political measure that threatened ecclesiastical privilege. Zion was to be restored, and all good souls were putting in bricks; but when intellect and the progressive spirit went into the business, there began developments that were not in the bargain. The modern note was first heard in the call for a frank recognition of democracy. Then an avowed reformer arose in the person of

Robert Lee, the minister of Old Greyfriars, to whom, more than to any other, the form of the renaissance is due. In the Ten Years' Conflict this warrior had taken but little interest, for on all sacerdotal claims he looked down with a cold contempt. A devout man he was at heart, and if he had a passion it was for the Scottish Church; but with the clerical mind he had absolutely nothing in common, bringing to every question an understanding wholly free from the prejudices of his order. So in the General Assembly, where for eight years he made a great figure, he might any day have said in the language of the hymn, 'I'm but a stranger here.' A century before he would have been at home with the Robertsons and the Blairs. Having little humour or imagination, he could see nothing in his opponents but ignorance and bigotry. Nor would he condescend to any tricks of conciliation. Facts and logic he would give, nothing [115]
more. A few savoury phrases, a sanctified outburst, an expostulation trembling on the apparent verge of a sob (which is the favourite device of impugned conveners) would have gone far to mollify the opposition; but nothing of the kind ever came from the minister of Old Greyfriars. Evangelical he was not, and would not pretend to be; rather he seemed to take a dry delight in marking the obscurantism of the cloth. Of missionaries he said: 'They fancy there is no Word of God but in the Bible, and show daily that they have no faculty to find it even there.' For some reason or other he would not pray to Christ. Instead of the boasted Endowment Scheme he would have preferred (thinking of the interests of learning and culture) a few big prizes. He spoke against 'fanaticism' in the approved tone of the literary Whigs; and when he points out 'the intellectual errors' of the Covenanters, we seem to be listening to Mr. Buckle. In short, he was a superior person, meeting his opponents with an enlightened sniff. For all that, Robert Lee was admirable—always just to the intellect, a hater of humbug in the very citadel, and the most dauntless heart. He served the Church of Scotland well. Wiser than most of those who set themselves to undo the effects of the Secession, he perceived that there was more wrong with the Church than pious works could cure. He objected to the law of patronage, as inviting disputes; he objected to the Confession of Faith because, [116]
by the advance of thought and knowledge during two hundred years, much of it had been antiquated; he objected to the church services, they were so rude and bare. His design was to bring about reforms in worship, doctrine, and government. Beginning with the first of these heads, he had an organ introduced into Old Greyfriars; he caused his congregation to kneel at prayer and stand to sing; and he used a liturgy. Our forefathers, it is true, wanted no such forms; a moor, a hillside, was temple enough for them; and the moral estate summed up in the word *Scotch*, a significant word in the world these three centuries, is the monument of these worshippers. The soul of Puritanism was gone, and yet the innovations raised an ecclesiastical storm. That many were favourable to them was indeed clear from the first, and Lee had virtually triumphed, when a new set of leaders, mainly to stop the mouths of the dissenters, came to the attack, and the whole absurd controversy was renewed. Lee gave in only so far as to read his prayers from a manuscript, but a watch was set upon him, for he was suspected of heresy as well; and one day Dr. Pirie reported to the Assembly with horror that the minister of Old Greyfriars had, on the previous Sunday, delivered 'a terrible onslaught on effectual calling.' But this was a feeble hunter when compared with Dr. Muir, who roundly said that the devil was at the bottom of the whole affair. 'I don't wish to be thought a terrorist. I don't pretend to be prophetic; but it is most evident to [117]
me that the work that has been begun and carried on so far has been begun and carried on under the sinister influence of the great enemy of the Church—that enemy who has always set himself in opposition to the truth as it is in Jesus, and to the work of conversion—*I mean Satan himself*.' Owing to an illness that befell Lee the case was suspended; he died, and it was never renewed. The persecution of the reformer of worship is perhaps the meanest passage in the history of the Kirk. The inquisitor of old, standing for the faith of a thousand years, and his victim, kissing the New Testament, are tragic figures both; but to read how Robert Lee was harassed and maligned into his grave, because he would not pray *extempore*, is like a bad novel—no dignity in the action, no poetic justice in the catastrophe. All which he contended for he won. If an Englishman may now witness a presbyterian service, even in the Highlands, without holding his sides, and in the capital may almost forget that he is north of the Tweed, the credit, such as it is, belongs

to Lee. But it must not be supposed that in this reformation there was any aping of Anglicanism. Lee stood by the historic Church of Scotland, which he thought as good as any in Christendom. The Puseyite priests he regarded with disdain, dubbing them 'poor, silly, gullible mortals.' And Norman Macleod, speaking as one of Lee's party, said explicitly, 'There never was a greater delusion than to [118] imagine that the wish to have an organ or a more cultivated form of worship has anything to do with Episcopacy.'

Macleod had in the main supported Lee from the first, not that he was an enthusiast for the innovations, though he called them improvements; but in all such matters he was for ministerial freedom, and, as a general principle, he held that the Church should be moulded to meet the wants of the country. In the great debate of 1865 he said: 'It is on the broad ground of our calling as a national Church and the liberty we have as a national Church that I would desire to entertain with kindness and thoughtfulness all these questions, when we are asked by any portion of the people to do so.' The spirit of the General Assembly seemed to him a far greater evil than its decisions. 'There is but very little freedom,' he sighs.

Before the year was out, striking his own blow for liberty, he was to provoke such an outcry as had not been heard in the land since 1843. Scottish religion has always been of a Jewish cast. The Reformers were nourished on Deuteronomy, and the Covenanters, far from turning the other cheek also, hewed Ammon hip and thigh. But in our Sabbath, such as it was of old, and even within living memory, the best evidence that we are the lost ten tribes is to be found. As late as 1834 the General Assembly uttered this lament: 'Multitudes, forgetful of their immortal interests, are accustomed to [119] wander in the fields.' The presbytery of Glasgow, impelled by a public agitation against the running of trains on Sunday, issued a pastoral letter in which the sanctity of the Lord's day was based on the Fourth Commandment. Now this did not suit the views which the minister of the Barony had for years been putting before his congregation. He read the pastoral from the pulpit, as in duty bound, and then tore its argument to tatters. In defence of his action he delivered before the presbytery a speech which lasted for nearly four hours. No abstract could give any idea of this harangue, the effect of which depends on vigorous and racy expression. Christians had nothing to do with the Sabbath. What could be more absurd than to talk about the continued obligation of a commandment which no Christian kept? But the Judaical spirit was preserved. On Sunday Highland ministers durst not shave, or they shaved on the sly. A certain deacon had gone to fish in the outer Hebrides. Sunday came; he produced a ham, and asked that some of it should be cooked for breakfast. The landlord cut slices till he came to the bone. Further he would not go; to saw on Sunday was a sin. In Glasgow we got parks for working men—men who rose at five in the morning, drudged during the day, and came home weary at night; and we had hitherto practically said to these men, in the name of the Sabbath of the Lord, 'Kennel up into your wretched abodes!' We [120] must not take a cab, or have a hot joint, or let children amuse themselves in any way,—all because of the Fourth Commandment. We were told that no man who went in a train on Sunday could have in him the love of Christ. And how by such teaching morality was corrupted! Some would go for a walk, believing it to be wrong; others would slink out by the back door. Yet the strictest Sabbatarians relaxed surprisingly when they were abroad, as if what was sinful in Glasgow was quite innocent in Paris. The Decalogue could not be identical with the moral law, for Christians had changed the day named in the commandment, whereas the moral law could not be altered even by God. What had we to do with a covenant made with Israel, a covenant involving both the past history and the future prospects of the Jewish nation? The Mosaic economy, Decalogue and all, had been nailed to the cross of Christ. But who could abrogate a moral duty, or make right and wrong change places? 'I should be ashamed not to declare before the world that one intelligent look by faith of the holy and loving Christ would crush me to the dust with a sense of sin, which the Decalogue, heard even from Sinai, could never produce.' To go to the Jewish law for a rule of conduct was like going from the sun at noonday to the moon at night. Nothing could have a properly moral significance, if it was not contained in the law of life which was in Christ.

The plea for Sunday, which forms the second part of his [121]

argument, is powerful in its way, but it fails to show that the Lord's day is a scriptural institution; the question as to what is lawful or unlawful being left to 'the common sense, right spirit, and manly principle of Christians.'

There was an immediate hurricane over all Scotland. Macleod awoke one morning and found himself infamous. Anathemas were hurled from almost every pulpit. Every newspaper and many magazines took up the question. Scores of sermons came out, nearly all for Moses. There were innumerable squibs,—the cleverest in prose *The Trial of Dr. Norman Macleod for the Murder of Moses' Law*, by David Macrae, in verse the lines by Edmund Robertson which Dr. A. K. H. Boyd has brought to light, beginning—

> Have you heard of valiant Norman,
> Norman of the ample vest—
> How he fought the Ten Commandments
> In the Synod of the West?

Caricatures appeared in shop windows. His clerical brethren passed him without recognition, one of them with hisses. 'I felt at first,' he wrote, 'so utterly cut off from every Christian brother, that, had a chimney-sweep given me his sooty hand, and smiled on me with his black face, I would have welcomed his salute and blessed him.' With the common folk it was probably the word *Decalogue* that did all the mischief. What it was they did not exactly know, but [122] it was an awful thing, the Decalogue, like the Equator; and 'Norman Macleod was for daein' awa' wi't,' as, with scared faces and bated breath, they told one another in the streets. Sending his speech to the printer—his old friend Mr. Erskine, who was now settled in Glasgow—he wrote—

> My dear Erskine,—Are you mad? If you are too mad to know it, let one of your devils tell it to me, and I actually will believe the demon. I am mad, and I would like to be in the same cell with you. Cell! It is all a *sell* together! We are sold to Donkeys, and for *them* we write, and so must consider every word, as if it was a thistle for Donkeys to eat! Do work off as fast as you can, or the people will believe there is no Decalogue, or that I am a devil—like yourself.

Principal Tulloch pronounced the speech 'noble and remarkable,' but Lee (one of whose foibles it was to suppose himself extremely politic) called it 'an escapade,' and regretted the 'injudicious language, the unnecessary shock to the pious feelings of many good people.' This is how he would do it: 'The observance of the Lord's day rests on *no authority of Scripture at all*, but the said observance, when it can be shown to contribute to the general good of the community in soul and body, has been sufficiently vindicated.' Lee delivered four long sermons on the Sabbath question, apparently without effect. With Macleod it was one big burst and done with it; an escapade, if you will, but settling the business, so that the first day of the week has never been the same since. For some time it was considered probable that the valiant Norman [123] would be deposed, but, after all, the presbytery contented itself with an admonition (which he told them he would show to his son as 'an ecclesiastical fossil'); and in the General Assembly, contrary to all expectation, his name was never mentioned! 'Most wonderful!' he says, 'most unaccountable!' And so it was; he had not retracted a syllable, nay more, he had distinctly stated in the presbytery that he departed from the Confession of Faith. The Sabbath affair was a skirmish; the battle was to be fought on the relation of the creed to the Church.

This question was in the hands of Principal Tulloch. In the General Assembly of 1865, Pirie had declared that the Confession was 'the truth of the living God,' but Tulloch had said, 'With the spirit of the seventeenth century the Church of Scotland cannot identify itself.' A few months later he published an address on *The Study of the Confession of Faith*, which is a remarkable piece, every word weighed, and every word in its place. He begins by brushing aside, as utterly worthless, all such knowledge of the Confession as is confined to the letter, asserting that, to be properly understood, the Confession 'must be studied both philosophically and historically.' The manifesto of a party, it reflects all the peculiarities which that party had gathered in the course of a struggle for ascendancy, insomuch that a historical student, well versed in the Puritan movement, could tell, by the internal evidence alone, the decade in which the document was put together, and the men who [124]

had the chief hand in the work. Further, many of the ideas used in the Confession to explain the mysteries of Christianity were borrowed from the philosophy of the age. The Confession is the embodiment of the opinions of a certain theological school, which was peculiarly under the influences and the prejudices of the period. To claim infallibility for such an instrument is the worst kind of Popery—'that Popery which degrades the Christian reason while it fails to nourish the Christian imagination.'

Macleod cheered Tulloch on, breaking into verse—

'Brother, up to the breach
For Christ's freedom and truth;
Let us act as we teach,
With the wisdom of age and the vigour of youth.
Heed not their cannon-balls,
Ask not who stands or falls;
Grasp the sword
Of the Lord,
And Forward!'

CHAPTER VIII

1867-1872

INDIA—THE APEX—THE END

The vision of millions upon millions in the far East worshipping idols had long haunted Macleod's imagination, and, with his sense of apostleship waxing as the years went on, heathendom became more and more to him a mystery and a horror. The Asiatic was a man: reach his heart, it was the same as ours, and must open to the religion of humanity. To Macleod's stamp of Christian the whole idea of foreign missions was peculiarly congenial; every enterprise in that field, whatever Church had the credit, he hailed with enthusiasm. In 1858, when Angell James was appealing for a hundred missionaries to go to China, Macleod sent forth, in the *Edinburgh Christian Magazine*, a voice to the British Churches:—

> Let us say in justice to our own deep conviction as to the momentous importance of this subject—to the grandeur of the cause which our revered father advocates—to the sense we entertain of the clear and imperative duty of the Church of Scotland at this crisis—that we bid him God-speed with all our hearts; and express our firm faith that these hundred missionaries and many more will soon be in the [126]
> field, *with some contributed by our own Church*, to take part in this glorious enterprise about to open for the establishment in China, so long enslaved by Satan, of that blessed kingdom which is righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

The Church of Scotland had a footing in India, and it was there that his interest was fixed. There be rosy thousand-pounders whose eloquent wails over the dearth of missionaries draw handkerchiefs in the ladies' gallery, and if the cynic says that the command is not 'Get others to go' but 'Go *ye*,' it is good exegesis and a palpable hit. But Macleod was busy among the heathen at home, and from 1864, when he was made convener of the India Mission, his mind was possessed with the thought of an embassy to Hindostan. The Sabbath question arose, and, expecting ostracism, he gave up his prospect; indeed, a section of the committee, as he afterwards learned, moved for his resignation. The General Assembly, however, in 1867, upon advices from Calcutta, requested him to visit India. 'How strange and sudden,' he wrote, 'that I, who two years ago was threatened with deposition and made an offscouring by so many, am this year asked by the Assembly to be their representative in India!' Among his acquaintance far and near, high and humble, the news that Norman Macleod was going to India created a sensation. The Queen wrote: 'his life is so valuable that it is a great risk.' He received letters from Stanley, Helps, and Max Müller. The presbytery gave him a dinner, at which the chair was taken by the [127]
chief Sabbatarian. Fifty private friends, including ministers of all denominations, entertained him at a feast. He in his turn held a luncheon, in the course of which he perambulated the tables, speaking the befitting word to each of thirty guests. Portraits of himself, his wife, and his mother, painted by Macnee, were presented to him; and four hundred working men gave Mrs. Macleod her husband's bust in marble. There was a general feeling that he might never return. 'Come life or death,' he said of his undertaking, 'I believe it is God's will.' For several weeks he had worked so hard, and gone through so much excitement, that when he started he was utterly worn out; and throughout the tour, from first to last, he was afflicted with a swelling of the limbs.

Fortunate he was in having for his fellow-deputy Dr. Watson, the minister of Dundee, who thought with him on religious matters (though *pawky* to the point of genius) and was kin to him in spirit. To hear these two in the parts of Highland drovers was, by all accounts, the greatest treat in the world. After a short stay in Paris, where Macleod preached, and got a collection for the expenses of the deputation, on the sixth of November they embarked at Marseilles, having chosen the overland passage. Macleod was charmed with the coast scenery about Toulon; Corsica and Sardinia reminded him of the Western Highlands; but in all the Mediterranean there was no sight that affected him so much as the [128]
house of Garibaldi. At Alexandria he learned from his old dragoman,

whom he happened to meet, that travellers, ever since the advice given in *Eastward*, were examining the backs of horses and mules before they bought them, so that Meeki, able to cheat no more, had taken to another trade. Thus Macleod had for certain done one good thing in his life. On the voyage down the Red Sea, having once preached for an hour with the thermometer at 90°, he got a warning of what might be in store for him in India. ‘At the close,’ says Dr. Watson, ‘he was almost dead; his face was flushed, his head ached, his brain was confused, and when he retired to his cabin the utmost efforts were required to restore him.’ Old Indians poured jugs of iced water over his head. Yet, referring to the heat, he could write home, ‘I just thaw on, laugh and joke, and feel quite happy.’ One morning he got up at three o’clock, and in ‘a white Damascus camel-hair dressing-gown’ sat on deck, sneering at the Southern Cross. According to his wont he was taken up with his fellow-passengers, among whom were soldiers who had fought in the Mutiny, young officers on their way to Magdala, civilians who had governed provinces and spent years among the remotest tribes, politicians, journalists, and adventurers. Unlike his companion, he had a cabin to himself, and, in the course of the voyage, it was more and more like a pawnbroker’s shop. One day Watson perceived in the chaos a [129] decent silk hat with its sides meeting like a trampled tin pan. ‘Man,’ said Norman, by way of explanation, ‘last night I felt something very pleasant at my feet; I put my feet on it and rested them—I was half asleep. How very kind, I thought, of the steward to put in an extra air cushion! and when I looked in the morning, it was my hat.’ In the bustle of the preparations for landing at Bombay he was heard crying, ‘Steward, did you see my red fez?’ ‘Is it a blue one?’ ‘No!’ roared Norman, ‘it’s a red one. If you see it, bring it, and if any fellow won’t give it up, bring his head along with it.’ So Watson writes to Mrs. Macleod. Macleod, for his part, complaining to Mrs. Watson of her husband’s inextinguishable laughter, declares, ‘But for my constant gravity he would ruin the deputation.’ He was presented with an address, signed by the captain, the officers, and the whole of the passengers, ‘expressing their grateful sense of the peculiar privilege they had enjoyed in his society and his ministrations.’

At the first sight of India, a land so full of romantic and mysterious interest, Macleod as a Briton, and still more as a Christian, was strangely moved. The working plan of the deputies may be stated in a dozen words: Bombay, Madras, Calcutta, with a loop of travel at each. In one city as in another Macleod had much the same round of triumphs and of toils. He conferred with missionaries of different Churches; inspected colleges and schools; [130] and, accompanied by the highest aristocracy, both native and English, delivered sermons and addresses to enormous crowds. The Brahman worship he took pains to study, and made a point of quizzing the most cultured Hindoos. Socially he was treated as if he had been the special commissioner, not of the General Assembly, but of the Crown. Governors, military commanders, and bishops gave dinners and receptions in his honour. He was never well, but the killing fatigue at the centres was relieved by the trips to inland stations. From Bombay the deputies went to Poonah and Colgaum, whence returning they visited the caves of Karli. Sir Alexander Grant—afterwards Principal of Edinburgh University—at whose house Macleod met a select party of educated natives, has left this testimony: ‘He talks to them in a large, conciliatory, manly way, which is a perfect model of missionary style. I had the most charming talks with him, lasting always till 2 A.M., and his mixture of poetry, thought, tenderness, manly sense, and humour was to me perfectly delightful. I had no idea his soul was so great.’ At a bungalow on the road to Colgaum he had what he calls a dangerous encounter with a snake. He had wished to see a real cobra, and Dr. Watson reported that there was one outside basking in the moonshine. So off went Norman with his Lochaber crook. ‘Slowly and cautiously I approached, with uplifted staff and beating heart, the spot where the dragon lay, and saw him, a long grey monster! [131] As the chivalrous St. George flashed upon my mind, I administered a fearful stroke to the brute; but from a sense of duty to my wife and children rushed back to the bungalow in case of any putting forth of venom, which might cause a vacancy in the Barony, and resolved to delay approaching the worm till next morning. Now, whatever the cause was, no one, strange to say, could discover the dead body when morning dawned. A few decayed branches of a tree were

alone discovered near his foul den, and these had unquestionably been broken by some mighty stroke; but the cobra was never seen afterwards, dead or alive.... Why my friend laughed so heartily at my adventure I never could comprehend, and have always avoided asking him the question.' Their route to Madras was by sea to Calicut, and across country by rail from Beypore. In their excursions from Madras they went two hundred miles, as far as to Bangalore. At Calcutta, where they arrived about the middle of January, Macleod, for the first time, received the impression of the imperial power of the British. Thinking of Government House, he says: 'I have trod the gorgeous halls of almost every regal palace in Europe, from Moscow to Naples, and those of the republican White House at Washington, but with none of these could I associate such a succession of names as those of the men who had governed India.' He got on terms of friendship with the Governor-General, Lord Lawrence, but a State dinner, given on account of the deputies, he [132] had to forego. His health was giving way, as was inevitable from the high pressure at which he had been working in a burning climate. Nevertheless he went about the business of the embassy. One day, when he had been three weeks in Calcutta, he spoke at a morning meeting; held an examination in the General Assembly's Institution, and addressed the students in the great hall; was the chief guest at a luncheon; and in the evening, at the most brilliant public dinner ever held in the city, delivered a great speech. That night 'the bull,' which had been 'after him all day,' caught and tossed him, and there was a sudden end to his work in India. From a kind of noble vanity he had, Macleod could never bear to have the appearance of shirking a task. Next morning, tolerably well with his way of it, he telegraphed home, 'Off for the Punjaub'; but at a conference of doctors it was decided that 'it would be attended with danger to his life should he persist in his intention of continuing his tour to Sealkote.'

Before quitting India he took a holiday excursion. He had seen the Red Indians in their encampment, he had been on the summit of the high tower at Moscow, he had sat on the Mount of Olives, he had floated in a raft upon the Danube; and now, behold him threading the lanes of holy Benares, mounted on an elephant! He saw the marble glories of Mohammedan Agra, and examined all the [133] famous scenes of the Mutiny, especially Delhi, where his heart glowed as he remembered Nicholson. From Delhi he returned direct to Calcutta; whence, on board of an old man-of-war, in company with Lady Lawrence and her daughter, he sailed for Egypt. One little incident of the voyage is worth remembrance. He had been very attentive to the sailors, not only preaching in the forecastle on Sundays, but at other times reading to them selections from his sea stories. Now at Aden they had shipped an African boy who had been taken from a slaver, and when Macleod was about to leave the vessel, a deputation of the crew approached him, leading the little negro by the hand. 'And now, your Reverence,' said one, 'I hope you won't be offended if we name this here nigger boy *Billy Buttons*.'

Cairo and the Pyramids once more; then home by Malta, Sicily, Naples, and Rome.

Notwithstanding many predictions, he had come back, and in apparent vigour; but his health was undermined, India had done for Norman. Though to a certain section of the clergy he was still an object of suspicion, his magnificent services could not be denied, and, besides, in the Indian undertaking—his years and his physique considered—there was a gallantry, a derring-do, that stirred men's spirits finely. So, on his first rising to speak in the General Assembly, after his return, he received an ovation. His speech, giving the results arrived at by the deputation, lasted for two hours, [134] and, in an intellectual point of view, is perhaps the highest of all his works. There is a thorough grasp of the whole problem of the conversion of the Hindoos, with splendid ability in the presentation. Of the contest against the system of caste he says:

> I hesitate not to express the opinion that no such battle has ever before been given to the Church of God to fight since history began, and that no victory, if gained, will be followed by greater consequences. It seems to me as if the spiritual conquest of India was a work reserved for these latter days to accomplish, because requiring all the previous dear-bought experiences of the Church, and all the preliminary education of the world, and that, when accomplished,—as by the help of the living Christ it shall,—it will be a very Armageddon: the last great battle against every form of unbelief, the last fortress of

> the enemy stormed, the last victory gained as necessary to secure the unimpeded progress and the final triumph of the world's regeneration.

He shows how the evangelising methods with which we are familiar at home are inapplicable in India. 'One of the noblest and most devoted of men, Mr. Bowen of Bombay, whom I heard thus preach, and who has done so for a quarter of a century, informed me in his own humble, truthful way,—and his case is not singular except for its patience and earnestness,—that, as far as he knew, he had never made one single convert.' In insisting on education as the first means all authorities are now at one with him; but his other idea, that in India the various Christian sects should forget their differences, and aim at a native Church, which should be [135] independent of Western creeds, is still a devout imagination.

> Is the grand army to remain broken up into separate divisions, each to recruit to its own standard, and to invite the Hindoos to wear our respective uniforms, adopt our respective shibboleths, and learn and repeat our respective war-cries, and even make caste marks of our wounds and scars, which to us are but the sad mementoes of old battles?[7]

He foresaw a time when for idols would be substituted Jesus, the divine yet human brother; for the Puranas the Bible; for caste Christian brotherhood; and for weary rite and empty ceremony the peace of God.

The Moderatorship, which is the presidency of the General Assembly, is the highest office in the Church. The appointment lies with the members, but in practice the retiring dignitary, on the opening day, names his successor, who has in fact been chosen six months before at a secret conclave. Some such arrangement is necessary, as the Moderator has to wear an antique and elaborate scheme of apparel. Supposing the General Assembly were to reject the nominee, picture the situation! There behind the door would be [136] the proud one, giving the last touch to his ruffles, casting a final glance at his buckled shoes, while a gentleman in mere coat and trousers was marching to the Chair! On the whole the college of Moderators has proved an excellent body of electors, and seldom has it done itself more credit than in promoting Norman Macleod. In 1869 he was, to be sure, the chief man in the Church, but the old Moderators were just the persons who would be most shocked by his view of the first day of the week. In offering to so recent a culprit the greatest honour which the Church had to bestow, they showed no little magnanimity, even were the idea of muzzling him not altogether absent. 'I should like to be at the head of everything,' Norman had said in his youth, and though too good a man to sacrifice any of his moral being to ambition, undoubtedly he was fond of power. The Moderatorship he at first, both by word and letter, refused, chiefly on the ground of his desire for freedom in the expression of his opinions. But of course it was all right!

During the session of the General Assembly the Moderator has an exciting round of social duties. Every morning he entertains a number of the clergy and their wives to breakfast, and at the dinners and receptions in Holyrood Palace he is the principal figure, next to the representative of the Sovereign. But the great event for the Moderator is the closing address, which he delivers about [137] midnight to a mixed crowd. After that comes the most impressive scene of all, when they stand and sing—

> 'Pray that Jerusalem may have
> Peace and felicity;
> Let them that love thee and thy peace
> Have still prosperity.'

Speaking of the creed Macleod was so vague (mindful of the old hands after all) that he might as well have passed the matter off with one of his favourite quotations—

> 'I would that my tongue could utter
> The thoughts that arise in me!'

But of his oration there is one part that, were it only known, would grow in importance the more the cry for disestablishment was heard. The age, he says, is against, and rightly against, monopolies of every kind. To defend a State Church on the ground of treaties is idle; the question is whether it satisfies the nation. Nor does he

argue for the preservation of the Establishment on any such ground as the need of a placard on the nation's door, *Religion recognised within*. Voluntaryism is not only insufficient to meet the spiritual wants of the country, but involves the dependence of the clergy. On the other hand, the Church exists for the people, and has no interests apart from theirs. When it ceases to have the general confidence it loses its right to the endowments, which are held in trust for the common good. A national Church should therefore be [138] comprehensive, and that to the furthest limit compatible with its existence as a Christian institution. Every ecclesiastical question, whether of government, of worship, or even of doctrine (provided only that the essential faith be kept) should be decided with a single eye to the national interest. Were he living now, Macleod would probably advocate the union of the presbyterian Churches at any cost to the Establishment except the loss of the teinds.

He was no sooner released from the General Assembly than he was off to Berlin, where he fixed missionaries for the aborigines of India. Home again, he resumed his peregrinations in the country, with 'a fire in his bones for a Mission and a Church on the point of perishing.' Oh it is wonderful, after his so strenuous day, to see the passion and hurry with which, in spite of the burden of the flesh, he struggles onward in the falling of the eve. His religious feelings and aspirations grew more and more absorbing and intense. As his life seemed not for long in this world, he thought the more of the next. Education beyond the grave, progress everlasting, was the favourite conception of his closing years.

In 1871, having an acute attack of gout, he was ordered by Sir William Jenner to take the waters at Ems. Towards the end of the year he owned to himself, for the first time, that he was unequal to his tasks. The least thing exhausted him, he could not sleep. Early in [139] the following spring he went to St. Andrews to address the students. 'We were all struck,' wrote his old friend Shairp, then Principal of the University, 'by his worn and flaccid appearance.... After describing very clearly and calmly the state of the mission and its weakness for want of both fit men and sufficient funds, his last words were—"If by the time next General Assembly arrives neither of these are forthcoming, there is one who wishes he may find a grave!"' A few weeks later his infirmities had so increased that he was compelled to give up the India Mission. One more effort to rouse the Church he was resolved to make, were it his last. When in the ensuing General Assembly he rose to speak, the House was crowded and as still as death; it was clear to all that the warrior of God would soon enter into rest. His utterance was so rapid as to beat the reporters, but the speech was said to be the finest he ever made. The most striking passage is one rounding off his argument that the Westminster Confession was not for India:—

'Am I to be silent lest I should be whispered about, or suspected, or called "dangerous," "broad," "latitudinarian," "atheistic"? So long as I have a good conscience towards God, and have His sun to shine on me, and can hear the birds singing, I can walk across the earth with a joyful and free heart. Let them call me "broad." I desire to be broad as the charity of Almighty God, who maketh His sun to shine [140] on the evil and the good: who hateth no man, and who loveth the poorest Hindoo more than all their committees or all their Churches. But while I long for that breadth of charity I desire to be narrow—narrow as God's righteousness, which as a sharp sword can separate between eternal right and eternal wrong.'

On his birthday he wrote to Shairp: 'As I feel time so rapidly passing, I take your hand, dear old friend, with a firmer grip.' That day, by his express desire, his family were all gathered round him. As husband, father, brother, son, never man was more devoted. After two weeks of restlessness and want of sleep, suddenly the end came. About midday on the sixteenth of June, reclining on the sofa, he uttered a cry. As his wife sprang to his side, he sighed and passed away.

The news that Norman Macleod was dead sent a thrill through the nation. His funeral was the most imposing ever seen in Glasgow. At the services, which were held in the Barony Church and in the Cathedral, ministers of different denominations took part. There were between three and four thousand in the procession, including magistrates, sheriffs, and professors, all in their official robes, and two representatives of royalty. As far as to the outskirts of the city

the route was thronged with spectators. An old woman, blinking in the brilliant weather, was overheard saying to herself, *Eh, but Providence has been kind to Norman, gi'en' him sic a grand day for his funeral*! He was buried beside his father in Campsie. There are monuments: a tablet at Loudoun; a statue near the site of the old Barony Church; and two stained windows at Crathie, the gift of Her Majesty the Queen. [141]

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"The writer has given us in brief compass the pith of what is known about an able and patriotic if somewhat dogmatic and impracticable Scotsman who lived in stormy times.... Mr. Omond describes, in a clear, terse, vigorous way, the constitution of the Old Scots Parliament, and the part taken by Fletcher as a public man in the stormy debates that took place prior to the union of the Parliaments in 1707. This part of the book gives an admirable summary of the state of Scottish politics and of the national feeling at an important period."

The *Leeds Mercury* says:—

"Unmistakably the most interesting and complete story of the life of Fletcher of Saltoun that has yet appeared. Mr. Omond has had many facilities placed at his disposal, and of these he has made excellent use."

The *Speaker* says:—

"Mr. Omond has told the story of Fletcher of Saltoun in this monograph with ability and judgment."

Of THE BLACKWOOD GROUP, by Sir GEORGE DOUGLAS,

the *Scotsman* says:—

"In brief compass, Sir George Douglas gives us skilfully blended together much pleasantly written biography and just and judicious criticism."

The *Weekly Citizen* says:—

"It need not be said that to everyone interested in the literature of the first half of the century, and especially to every Scotsman so interested, 'The Blackwood Group' is a phrase abounding in promise. And really Sir George Douglas fulfils the promise he tacitly makes in his title. He is intimately acquainted not only with the books of the different members of the 'group,' but also with their environment, social and otherwise. Besides, he writes with sympathy as well as knowledge."

FOOTNOTES:

[1] See *More Leaves from the Journal of Our Life in the Highlands*.

[2] From *A Peep at Russia*.

[3] From *The Old Lieutenant and his Son*.

[4] Other names have been associated with this anecdote, but Norman for my money.

[5] From *The Old Lieutenant*.

[6] Cf. Tennyson's line, so much praised by Mr. Swinburne—

'And stormy crests that smoke against the sky.'

[7] Cf. Professor Max Müller: 'From what I know of the Hindoos, they seem to me riper for Christianity than any nation that ever accepted the gospel. It does not follow that the Christianity of India will be the Christianity of England; but that the new religion of India will embrace all the essential elements of Christianity I have no doubt, and that is surely something worth fighting for.' (Letter to Norman Macleod in *Memoir*, vol. ii. p. 257.)

TRANSCRIBER’S NOTES:

—Obvious print and punctuation errors were corrected.

—The nice title page has been retained as an illustration.

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