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A FEW SHORT YEARS.

BY AGNES SMITH.

A few short years—and then
 What changes Time hath wrought!
 So strange they seem, we scarce can deem
 The world, our life, ourselves are aught
 But one long, fitful dream.
 The clouds that fly
 Across the sky,
 Waves tossed upon the sea,
 Shadows that pass
 Before a glass,
 Our fitting emblems be.

A few short years—and then
 Where are the hopes that shone
 When youth with flowers inwreathed the
 And earth had but one music tone [hours,
 Of joy for us and ours?
 The rainbow's hues,
 The morning's dews,
 The blossoms of a day,
 The trembling sheen
 On water seen
 More stable are than they.

A few short years—and then
 Where is the adamant chain
 That passion wrought, and madly thought
 Nor time nor change could ever strain
 Till life's last strife was fought?
 A rope of sand,
 A gossamer band;
 The filmy threads at e'en
 The spider weaves
 Amongst the leaves
 A firmer bond had been.

A few short years—and then
 Where is ambition's pile,
 That rose so high against the sky,
 O'ershadowing all around the while
 With its proud boast might vie?
 A shadow's shade,
 A card house made
 By children for their play;
 The air blown bells
 That folly swells
 May vaunt a surer stay.

A few short years—and then
 Where is the mighty grief
 That rung the heart with torture's art,
 And made it feel that its relief
 Time's hand could ne'er impart?
 A stream that's burst,
 And done its worst,
 Then left the heaven more clear;
 A night more dread,
 With morning fled,
 These sorrows now appear.

A few short years—and then
 What of our life remains,
 The smiles and tears of other years,
 Of passion's joys, of sorrow's pains,
 Ambition's hopes and fears?
 A faded dream
 To-day they seem,
 Which memory scarce can trace—
 But seals they've set
 Shall time not yet
 Eternally efface!

Chambers' Journal.

INDEPENDENTS AND BAPTISTS OF SCOTLAND.

Having given you brief sketches of the three great religious bodies of Scotland, something must be said of the Independents and Baptists. Since the time of Cromwell, there have been a witnessing few in this country, who have contended that no Christian congregation was subject to "any jurisdiction under heaven."

John Owen, Caryl, and other chaplains of the Parliamentary forces, together with the officers and soldiers, spent no small part of their time in publicly expounding the Scriptures to wondering crowds. Preaching soldiers, rare sight! They have left no successors. The seeds of Independency were at this time sown, but a great many years elapsed before a church was regularly organized. In the year 1725, John Glas, minister of Tealing, "bore testimony" that the church of "Jesus, King of martyrs, was no political or national church," and soon afterwards, an Independent church was organized, and he became pastor. In 1750, the first Baptist church was formed.—Sir William Sinclair, Baronet, was the pastor. This church is still in existence at Keiss, Caithness.

The churches, both Baptist and Pædobaptist, growing out of these, held peculiar views in regard to the eldership, requiring that every church should have two or more ministers, and in practice, if not in theory, objecting to their support. The members also met to harangue each other on the Lord's day, instead of listening to discourses from their ministers. Sir William Sinclair, after administering the Lord's Supper, used to gird himself with a towel, and wash the members' feet. Love feasts and kisses of charity were indulged in on various occasions. Most of these churches, called Old Scots Independents and Scotch Baptists, at present differ from regular churches in nothing, it is believed, but in requiring a plurality of elders, and devoting a part of the Lord's day to mutual exhortation.

Near the close of the last century, the religious state of the greater part of Scotland was deplorable. The numerous churches of various names were spiritually dead. At the same time, it will be remembered, the churches in England were awakened, the "go ye all into the world" began to be understood, and while the eyes of Christians were turned to the heathen, home was not forgotten. Provoked to good works by their English brethren, a few choice spirits in the Church of Scotland began to labour for the multitudes around them—a people professing religion, united with the church, yet knowing nothing of soul Christianity. James and Robert Haldane, Wm. Innes, Grerille Ewing, and Jas. Aikman engaged personally in the work, preaching daily in various towns and villages, and with much success. Messrs. Innes and Ewing were both ministers of the Establishment. The tours made by James Haldane and Mr. Aikman were very extensive, reaching far into the Highlands. Rowland Hill, Burder, and Bogue, hearing of the good work, came to their assistance. The Haldanes and Aikman were laymen, and lay-preaching, while it excited the curiosity of the people, was very offensive to the regular clergy. But this was not the only ground of offence. Sinners were converted unto God.

The various synods issued their bulls, and finally, the General Assembly took the matter in hand, and solemnly warned the people of Scotland to shun "the artful and designing men." The disgusting bigotry thus displayed caused many to abandon the Establishment; and first and foremost were the brethren above named. Rowland Hill at that time said:

"Brethren, we will shine all the brighter for the scrubbing we have got from the General Assembly."

The course of the Assembly, while it helped the cause, made the task of preaching in the open air more burdensome. Fellows of the baser sort, led on by gentlemen (?) and ministers of the Establishment, were in the habit of disturbing the services, after which the preacher would be arrested for inciting a riot. In the year 1800, Messrs. J. Haldane and Campbell, preaching on the west coast, were seized, and

escorted by the military, 35 miles, to the Sheriff of Argyleshire, who, knowing a little more of law than their over zealous accusers, at once discharged them. They immediately hastened back, and much to the mortification of the clergyman, who had caused their arrest. Mr. H. preached from the words:

"The things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel."

Manifestly so; for Mr. Campbell shortly afterwards visited the place again, and while he preached, on his right hand sat the sergeant of the guard, a *new man*, and on his left the minister's agent, also converted.

This system of petty annoyance did not work well. Conversions multiplied. "The artful and designing men," under whose ministry members of the church were converted, must be put down. A bold move was projected. Nothing less than the abduction of some of the more active of the itinerant preachers. In but two cases did the conspirators succeed. Mr. McArthur, a Baptist, while preaching in a village, on the west coast, was seized by a band of ruffians, commanded by J. Campbell, Esquire, bound hand and foot, and carried to a press gang, by which he was impressed as a seaman in the navy. After a detention of five weeks, the whole affair having been laid before the Admiralty, Mr. McArthur was liberated.

Another preacher having been kidnapped, it became necessary to teach those over zealous churchmen a little law, to show them the practical workings of the Toleration Act. Mr. McArthur therefore brought an action against Campbell, the gentleman who aided and abetted the ruffians, and obtained heavy damages. After this decision preachers were unmolested. To oppose the gospel was what these fellows had undertaken—to oppose the law of the land was more than they bargained for; in fact, it threatened to be expensive.

In December, 1798, the first Congregational church was formed, and James A. Haldane elected pastor. The members at once adopted the principle of pure communion. Mr. Aikman, one of the original members, speaking of the organization, said:

"We felt the necessity of being separated in religious fellowship from such societies as permitted *visible unbelievers* to continue in their communion. This was a yoke under which we had long groaned."

This yoke still oppresses Presbyterians here of every name.

From this time Congregationalism advanced steadily. In two years there were 14 churches organized in different parts. Within five years, Robert Haldane expended more than \$150,000 in erecting chapels for them. A Theological Seminary was established; Messrs. Ewing and Innes being tutors, and all the expenses being defrayed by Mr. Haldane.

Some eight years after the formation of the first church, both the Haldanes came to see that there was no warrant in Scriptures for infant baptism, but there was a warrant for the baptism of believers. They were believers, and must obey their Lord. They were baptized. It was a sad blow for the Independents as such. The separation, on both sides, was painful. Mr. Innes not long afterwards came to the same conclusion, and was baptised likewise. Mr. Haldane's church, reorganized at this time, is not the oldest regular Baptist church in Edinburgh. Christopher Anderson's church was organized some four or five years the soonest. In addition to the brethren above named, a half dozen or more preachers, who united with the Independents when the body was formed, have since become Baptists. Among them, Mr. Aikenhead, of Kirkcaldy, and Dr. Maclay, of New York, may be mentioned. The Independent churches number

over one hundred. Considering their number, they are a very efficient body. They are united, and their leading men are Wardlaw and Alexander. No more need be said.

There are some 130 Baptist churches in Scotland, it is said. I am sure, there are not 50 regular self-sustaining churches; I don't believe there are 30. Baptists in many, perhaps, most, parts of the world, are hated; here they are despised. The people of Scotland, next to life, cling to infant baptism. Should a parent refuse or neglect to have the ceremony performed upon his infant, his neighbors would regard him as little less than a monster, and would hold no intercourse with him. I am speaking of Presbyterians. The people believe, that a child, dying without baptism, is lost. The ministers preach against such sentiments, but without effect. To be sure, they don't agree about what the ceremony *does do* for the babe, but one thing is certain, they agree it *don't* save it.

And yet, this opinion of the people, while it enables the churches to make a fair show, destroys all true prosperity. Their churches are full, and all *seems* well. Seven-eighths of each congregation are members. But alas! such members! An excellent Free Church minister, a few days ago, was deploring the impurity of their churches, and said, "They will never be pure so long as the people think baptism is a saving ordinance. They join our churches for *no other reason in the world* than to get their children baptized."

No wonder the Baptists don't flourish in Scotland. Still, "speaking after the manner of men," they might have been stronger. As we have seen, more than 40 years ago, the flower of the Independent ministry became Baptists—men widely known and honored.—Had there been union, had ministers given any attention to the land lying between their own flocks and the far off heathen, a different story might have been told. Their churches have been independent with a vengeance.—Ishmael's independence! However we must not judge them. The regular Baptist churches and their ministers have done much for themselves, and much for the heathen, and I should add, their Highland mission: or, as it is called, Mr. Haldane's mission, has done a glorious work in the far North. Seventeen of the churches—a few of them quite weak—have united in what, with you, would be called an Association. It was formed six years or more since, and called the Baptist Union of Scotland. Most of the old and strong churches have frowned upon the movement. Many of the brethren belonging to the Union are charged with being *very moderate* Calvinists, and the old churches are charged with *ultra*-Calvinism. But there is more than the difference of doctrine dividing them. The Union ministers are nearly all young men. It is not the case with their opposers. Both parties are to blame, no doubt. The young men have been too fast, far too fast. The others as much too slow. It was a small matter at first; but union between the parties, after so long a separation, seems next to impossible. It is a pity. Whatever some of the doctrines of some of the Union ministers may be, and I believe them unscriptural, the spirit and enterprise of the little body is much to be admired. The Union's Theological Seminary has nine students. After making many inquiries, I learn that there are but two open (or loose) communion churches in Scotland—the church in Cupar, and Dr. Innes', in this city. *Edinburgh, March, 1850. G.M.V.*

Submission of Philip IV. of France to the Pope.

The kings of the earth "gave their power and strength to the beast." Rev. xvii. 13.

Abject indeed was their consequent degradation. It was no unusual thing for the Ro-

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