OX

A NEW ZEALAND APPRECI-ATION.

BEING A LECTURE DELIVERED IN HAWERA PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, ON MAY 21st, 1905, THE DAY OF SPECIAL COM-MEMORATION, AND PUBLISHED BY REQUEST.

BY

A. H. TREADWELL, B.A.

HAWERA.
C. O. EKDAHL, CAXTON PRINTING WORKS.

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PREFACE.

This Address upon John Knox is published by request of a number of the members of our congregation who heard it delivered. They have been pleased to express appreciation of it and a desire to possess in permanent form a memorial of the occasion. It is only this earnest request that has persuaded me to hand over the manuscript. For I know that much which is worthy has lately been published on the work of the great Scotchman. But that which has a local interest is sometimes read and appreciated when that which is infinitely better, but lacks the local colouring, is passed by neglected. So that I can hope that the reading of these pages will deepen the gratitude of some to God for our present day privilege of light and liberty: our heritage from the Reformers some of whom "resisted unto blood striving against sin," and also that it may awaken in the minds of some of our young people a desire to know more of the great men of the sixteenth century who were so valiant for truth, and of those Presbyterian principles which they emphasised. Should this be the result I shall be very grateful.

The Manse,
Hawera.
May 29th, 1905.

"There was a man sent from God whose name was John. . . By faith he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and by it, he being dead yet speaketh."—John vii., 6 and Heb. xi., 4.

THAT a man should be remembered by a nation with gratitude and admiration centuries after his life work was accomplished argues the nobility of his nature or the value of his life and mission. Such is the constitution of this life, where thousands hourly come and go, that only one here and another there can be celebrated and remembered. We remember, as the history of the world developes, only those who are markedly prominent either for virtue or for vice. From the plain of our common mediocity we look back and up in admiration or in horror and condemnation, as the case may be, on the giants of the centuries—whether they were gigantic on behalf of good or evil.

To-day, wherever Presbyterianism, that form of doctrine and polity to which we give allegiance, has established itself, the memory and name of Knox are being enshrined and commemorated in gratitude to God and loving admiration of the man. For the words of our text are true of Knox equally as they were true of John the Baptist. He was sent of God to Scotland, as the Baptist was sent to Judea, to prepare the way of Jesus,—to open up a way to the knowledge of God's Word, His Life, His own and only way of salvation, to very largely contribute to the securing of that liberty of conscience and worship which is the heritage of enlightened lands to-day.

Among other qualities wherewith an overruling Providence endowed John Knox, to help him through his life and in his mission, was the ability to discern the future. Once and again

in the darkest passages of his experience he seems to have had the clearest admonition of the course which subsequent events would follow. He knew that the mists would lift from round his footsteps and the sunshine in God's providence later on appear. He knew that the generation of his day, where religious feeling and contention were so pronounced and strong, could not do him full justice. And toward the close of his life he wrote words, prophetic words, which may well be recalled at this hour of celebration: "What I have been to my country, albeit this unthankful age will not know, yet the ages to come will be compelled to bear witness to the truth."

How grandly these words of prophecy find their fulfilment at this present hour. Knox knew that in the light of longer distance the disinterestedness of his actions, the unselfish devotion of his life would surely find acknowledgement. But surely he never had a vision of a time like this—that in lands as yet undiscovered his name should one day be singled out for special honour, that churches of the reformed faith, far across the sea, should join heart and voice with the historic church of Scotland, in acclaiming him the father and the founder of their faith. To-day, as we celebrate, with the name of Knox, the spread of Reformed Doctrine and very specially that doctrine as it is embodied in our Presbyterian Polity, we are also proclaiming the fulfilment,—large though still partial,—of the prophecy by Jesus of His kingdom as the mustard seed. The seed was sown, or resown at the time of the Reformation by a devoted band of patriots and Christians—Luther, Zwingli, Melancthon, Bucer, Calvin, Cranmer, Ridley, Latimer, Knox—each in his own land and sphere, and the tree has so developed that we in far off lands find safety and religious liberty under the branches of it.

That a man should achieve such eminence as to leave his name written large and clear upon the page of history a combination of unusual circumstances is demanded. Not only are there required innate greatness of mind or heart or both, but also there must be a suitable occasion for their manifestation and

development. It was because the times religiously and otherwise were so sadly out of joint that the Reformers had their opportunity of service. We live in times which are easy from a religious point of view, and the tendency of them is to produce nothing which is heroic. Every man may worship God according to his conscience, or his want of conscience, under his vine and fig tree to-day. That is a liberty, conceded equally to all—this toleration—which is one of the fruits of the Reformation and the consequent better understanding of the word and mind of God. But the Reformers had to face scripture ignorance of the most complete kind, and overcome it in themselves and others. They had to oppose themselves to mediæval superstition and to a priestly autocracy and tyranny which had been long triumphant. Hence the nobility of their sacrifice and the eminence of their service.

Let me give you a sketch of the state of Scotland at the time of Knox's ministry. It is taken from a source (McCrie's History) altogether reliable. But of necessity I make it very short. It shows how truly it has been said that no country more needed the Reformation than did Scotland. But "from the depths to the heights." In no country was the Reformation more thorough in its character. In none has its result been more durable and evident. So we honour John Knox to-day. The historian says, amongst other things regarding the state of the country,—"Through the blind devotion and munificence of princes and nobles, monasteries, those nurseries of superstition and idleness had greatly multiplied in the nation; and though they had universally degenerated and were notoriously become the haunts of lewdness and debauchery it was deemed impious and sacrilegious to reduce their number, abridge their privileges, or alienate their funds. The kingdom swarmed with idle, ignorant, luxurious monks, who, like locusts devoured the fruit of the earth and filled the air with pestilential infection; priests white, black and gray; canons regular and of St. Anthony; Carmelites, Carthusians, Cordeliers, Dominicans, Franciscan Conventuals and Obser-

vantines, Jacobins, Premonstatensians; monks of Tyrone and of Vallis Caulium; Hospitallers or Holy Knights of St. John of Jerusalem; nuns of St. Austin, St. Clare, St. Scholestica and St. Catherine of Sienna, with cannonesses of various clans. The ignorance of the clergy respecting religion was as gross as the dissoluteness of their morals. Even bishops were not ashamed to confess that they were unacquainted with the canons of their faith, and had never read any part of the sacred Scriptures, except what they met with in their missals. Under such pastors the people perished for lack of knowledge. That book which was able to make them wise unto salvation and intended to be equally accessible to 'Jew and Greek, Barbarian and Scythian, bond and free' was locked up from them, and the use of it in their own tongue prohibited under the heaviest penalties. The religious service was mumbled over in a dead language, which many of the priests did not understand and some of them could hardly read; and the greatest care was taken even to prevent catechisms composed and approved of the clergy from coming into the hands of the laity." "Never," again says Dr. Brown of Edinburgh, "was there a country more in need of the Gospel than Scotland at that time. Over wide districts the nobles had been ruling like little kings, often in defiance of all the laws, and the people were sunk in rudeness and ignorance. Popery had left a sad legacy (he is speaking of the year 1560) of gross immorality and superstition, into the unsavoury details of which we need not enter. A New Zealand writer says:—"The total population of Scotland at that time was somewhere about a million. The nobles lived in strongly built castles, set on bold headlands, or on frowning crags. Each one had his own circle of retainers loyal as satellites to their planets: slow enough to till the soil, but ready to leap to arms at the call of their chief. They lived in miserable hamlets within easy reach of the castle walls. St. Andrews was the largest city in the land with a population of about 20,000—Edinburgh had about 8,000 inhabitants. Glasgow was an insignificant place of

about 5,000 souls. The high officials of the church held also many of the principal offices of the state. . . . The church had about half the wealth of the whole nation at its disposal. In proportion to the resources of the country the Scottish clergy were the richest in Europe. As a consequence the common people were the poorest; they had perforce to become scavengers and fared badly." (Young Men's Magazine.)

A few simple facts these, incontrovertible, which show at once the necessity for and the source whence sprang the Reformation of Religion. After the darkest night the morning dawns. God has always had earnest souls in every generation, who not content with idle ceremonial have sought after His own mind and heart. And so now into this darkness of poverty, ignorance, superstition and immorality the rays of the light of the Reformation slowly begins to penetrate. One nation helped another. For the picture given of Scotland at the time religiously and socially was but one of many such pictures to be seen in different lands. Similar causes will produce similar results. And the iron yoke of Rome and its priestcraft was on the neck of many European nations, and the spirit of restlessness was wide spread. In Germany, in Switzerland, in France, in Holland, in England, in Scotland, simultaneously moved by the Holy Spirit earnest souls were feeling after God if haply they might find Him. And they assisted one another both directly and indirectly. Says a recent writer on the word of Knox speaking to the children of our congregations:—"Twenty-one years ago the Protestants of Germany celebrated the four hundredth anniversary of the birth of Martin Luther, and in 1905 Scotland is to celebrate the same anniversary of her greatest religious reformer, John Knox. Luther and Knox were in many respects very different men yet the work they did for their respective countries was at bottom the same. It was owing to Luther more than to any other of his countrymen that the majority of the German people became Protestants, and to Knox more than to anyone else is it due that Scotland became a Protestant

nation. The two anniversaries should be thought of together, for not only was the work of Knox and Luther the same in its main result but what the one did could not have been thoroughly done without the other. Had the Reformation not taken place in Germany it is very unlikely there would have been a Reformation in Scotland. But on the other hand, if there had been no Reformation in Scotland, there is good reason to believe that the Reformation in Germany might have been suppressed and the religion of Rome again been restored in that country."

It is to Scotland and the struggle for religious purity and liberty—carried, happily, by God's grace to a successful issue —that our thought turns just now. Many men seeking God's glory and humanity's highest good played a great part in that long drawn-out struggle. Some of them sealed their testimony with their blood and in the flames. But whilst their names are well-nigh forgotten by succeeding generations who are indebted to their testimony and struggle, the name of Knox is everywhere at least familiar. For he was throughout it all in the very "brunt of the battle," a conspicuons and dominating personality. Often in personal danger, threatened, persecuted, attacked, he yet lived to the good age of sixty-seven and died peaceably a natural death.

In trying, in connection with his name and work, to give some account of the Reformation, which we now commemorate, I am very conscious that this can only now be done in the most inadequate and sketchy manner. All that time will permit is a hasty reference to the more salient points of his life and history. I can, only in a very unsatisfactory manner, refer to the different spheres of his activity and the more outstanding incidents which led onward to the Scottish Reformation. But if this have the result of making us more grateful unto God for the wise and overruling Providence which led once again a true church out of the wilderness of ignorance and superstition and corruption; if it cause us to estimate even a little more highly the religious privileges and

liberty of these latter times—our heritage from the Reformers —then our time will not have been spent in vain.

Knox, like other of the Reformers, came out of the ranks of the Roman priesthood to lead in the struggle for truth and liberty. Everyone knows the story of Luther's conversion, of how in his cloister cell he heard the declaration of the Word of God—"The just shall live by faith"—and of how thence-forward he abandoned his word righteousness, his Church righteousness, for the righteousness which is in Jesus Christ. Similarly, Calvin, that "majestic" personality, teacher and reformer of those times, was trained for the Roman priesthood, though he afterwards abandoned that project for other pursuits, even previous to his "sudden conversion" as he named it, through the instrumentality of the Word of God. Similarly, again, it was in the seventeenth chapter of St. John's Gospel, that so beautiful intercessory prayer of Jesus, that Knox found light for his reason and peace for his soul with God. As he lay a-dying in 1572 he asked his wife to read to him this chapter "in which he had first cast anchor." You cannot read even cursorily the history of the Reformation without observing the determining and formative influence of the living Bible. The work of the Reformation in England and Scotland was greatly aided by the spread of Tindale's Bible. It is related of that scholar and reformer that on one occasion he had discussion with a Roman divine "recounted for a learned man." Tindale drove him to this rash assertion, "We were better without God's laws than the Pope's!" To this Tindale rejoined, "I defy the Pope and all his laws. If God spare my life, ere many years I will cause a boy that driveth the plough shall know more of the Scripture than thou dost!" Tindale lived to accomplish the task of translation which he had set before himself. He gave the Scripture to England in the vernacular, and spite all efforts of the Roman Church to suppress it the translation spread through Britain and greatly aided the work of the Reformers there. But Tindale paid for his devotion with his life. He was strangled and burned at Antwerp in 1536.

Of the influences which helped to make Knox the man he was and directed his energy into the path which he followed up, it may be well to say a word or two. One of these was his secular education; his training in one of the Scottish universities. "We know the name of only one of his teachers, but he was the most famous man then living in Scotland. His name was John Mair, or Major as he called himself in Latin, and he was born in the same country as Knox and also educated in Haddington School. Major had studied at the University in Paris and had written many learned books, all in Latin, which had made him well known both in England and on the Continent. It was therefore a great honour and privilege for a Scotch student to have Major as his teacher. There is nothing to tell us what Knox thought of Major, but there is one thing Knox learned from him he would not be likely to forget. In his books Major speaks almost as severely as Knox himself afterwards did against the neglect of their duties by the clergy of that time. When a student heard the most learned man in Scotland expressing such an opinion it must have set him thinking of what he saw going on in the church around him." But to this world-wisdom and philosophy was added a beautiful testimony of Christian faith in the making of the Reformer. "The person to whom our Reformer was most indebted was George Wishart, a gentleman of the house of Pitterow, in Mearns. Being driven into banishment by the Bishop of Brechin for teaching the Greek New Testament in Montrose, he had resided for some years at Cambridge. In the year 1544, he returned to his native country. Seldom do we meet in ecclesiastical history with a character so amiable and interesting as that of George Wishart. Excelling the rest of his countrymen at that period in learning, of the most persuasive eloquence, irreproachable in life, courteous and affable in manner, his fervent piety, zeal and courage in the cause of truth, were tempered by uncommon meekness, modesty, patience, prudence and charity. In his tour of preaching

through Scotland, he was usually accompanied by some of the principal gentry; and the people who flocked to hear him were ravished by his discourses. To this teacher Knox attached himself and profited greatly by his sermons and private instructions." Their friendship and intercourse was not destined to last for long. Wishart was apprehended by Bothwell at the instigation of Cardinal Beatoun of St. Andrews and was strangled and burned at the stake. Beatoun had planned the same fate for Knox but his intention was frustrated by his own assassination. "A conspiracy was formed against his life and a small but determined band (some of whom seem to have been instigated by resentment for private injuries and the influence of the English Court, others animated by a desire to revenge his cruelties and deliver their country from his opression) seized upon the castle of St. Andrews where he resided and put him to death on 29th May, 1546." That Knox was privy to their purpose, as has been suggested, has been thoroughly disproved; that he disapproved of the deed when done is by no means so certain. They were stern times in which he lived. Justice was not to be obtained from Church or State. Even the Reformers approved of stern measures which it is easy to condemn to-day. Knox was forced by stress of circumstances to take refuge with the party who had attacked the Cardinal in the Castle of St. Andrews. Here they were besieged by the Scottish Regent. Unable himself to reduce the fortress, he invoked the aid of the French King and the garrison was speedily compelled to surrender. Knox was promised his liberty in any other country than Scotland, but the promise made was ruthlessly broken. He was compelled for about nineteen months to serve as a French galley slave. "In France it was the custom to punish heretics and at the same time to make use of them as galley slaves, and this was the life to which Knox was now condemned for nearly two years. No life more frightful can be conceived. The galley slave was dressed in a shirt of the coarsest canvas and a jacket of

serge, cut in such a way that he could use his arms freely in rowing. When he went ashore everyone knew him for what he was by his coarse frock, his little cap and his close-cropped hair. From four to six slaves were chained to one bench, on which they sat and rowed during the day and under which they slept at night in all kinds of weather. If any poor wretch grew weary at his toil, an officer stood ready with a whip to remind him of his duty." But in this calamitous situation the spirit of fortitude never deserted him. He felt strongly that God would preserve him and yet utilize him to His Glory. To take one illustration:—"While they lay on the coast between Dundee and St. Andrews, Mr. (afterwards Sir) James Balfour, who was confined in the same ship, desired him to look on the land and see if he knew it. Though at that time very sick, he replied: 'Yes, I know it well! For I see the steeple of that place (St. Andrews) where God first opened my mouth in public to His glory, and I am fully persuaded, how weak soever I may appear, that I shall not depart this life till that my tongue shall glorify His godly Name in the same place!'" How amply this prophecy was fulfilled his subsequent history is witness. Knox was released after nineteen months of this hardship on the representation of the English Parliament and his ministry in England then began.

This is a fact worthy to be remembered that Knox, though his name is for ever honourably associated with the Reformation in Scotland and the rise of Presbyterianism there, helped forward also the Reformation in England and to some extent modified the developement of the Episcopacy in that land. I cannot trace the course of his work as a preacher, in that land, of the Reformation doctrines. Enough to say that evidence of the Divine power and blessing was clearly on him and his ministry, and that he received high honour in his own person. It is interesting to note the different attitudes of the Tudor sovereigns towards the Reformed doctrine and how that attitude modified the history of the times. Henry VIII.

was opposed to the power of the Papacy in England, but his opposition was largely due to selfish, lustful motives. He was equally opposed to any thoroughgoing Reformation which would have denied him headship in the Church and asserted the spiritual supremacy of Jesus Christ. But when Knox did his work, one of much purer morals and more disinterested motives was on the English throne, the pious and gracious Edward. He was with the Reformers heart and soul, and early recognised the value to their cause of the personality of Knox. It was by his intercession really that Knox was delivered from the galleys. It was by the exercise of his influence that Knox became a mighty preacher in the North of England. Edward honoured him by appointing him one of his six special preachers. And more, let this fact be well noted by some who would disparage him, he was offered and declined an English bishopric—the Bishopric of Rochester. Knox declined it, not apparently at that time from any specially patriotic motive; not because of hope, subsequently realised, that he would be signally used and honoured by God in Scotland, but really from conscientious reasons on the point of government and discipline within the Church. Knox was already, and this prior to his visit to Geneva and his intercourse with Calvin, a Presbyterian in faith. He believed in the Scriptural validity of the two orders, the Deacon and the Elder, Presbytery or Bishop. For the Bishop of the Episcopalian Church, head over other ministers, he found no warrant in the Word of God. And yet he stood on terms of intimacy and friendship with Archbishop Cranmer, the famous reformer and head of the English Church. "By the famous Archbishop Cranmer he was even consulted regarding the service book of the Church of England and it was chiefly owing to Knox that an important alteration was made in it. In the service book it was said that communicants were to kneel when they took the Sacrament, but Knox maintained that this would imply that the bread and wine were actually changed into the body and blood of Christ and that they thus

became objects of superstitious worship, as was the case in the Church of Rome. Chiefly owing to Knox, therefore, words were inserted in the book which distinctly said that the bread and wine remained what they were and that it was idolatry to think otherwise." (Hume Brown.) These alterterations gave great offence to the Roman Cathotics. "In a disputation with Latimer, after the accession of Queen Mary, the Prolocutor, Dr. Weston, complained of our countryman's influence in procuring them, 'A runnagate Scot did take away the adoration or worshipping of Christ in the Sacrament, by whose procurement that heresy was put into the last communion book; so much prevailed that one man's authority at that time.'"

And now, briefly again, I would glance at Knox's ministry in still another land. On the lamented death of Edward, lamented at least by the Reformed Party, he was compelled by the solicitation of his friends to seek an asylum from the wrath of Mary on the Continent. I do not intend follow him step by step from place to place. I might speak of his ministry in Frankfurt, unhappily interrupted by feud amongst Reformers who had sought asylum there from different lands, I might speak of his happier ministry in the comparatively safe resting place, Geneva; but what I do wish to mention, because its importance in the ministry of Knox cannot be overestimated, is his introduction to and his subsequent deep friendship for John Calvin. When John Knox met John Calvin it was as the confluence of two streams which were to become a mighty river, refreshing the Kingdom of God. John Knox was already Presbyterian in his convictions and his teaching—we have seen it; his intercourse with the master mind, Calvin but strengthened the faith he had received. Calvin was Knox's junior slightly, but as a deep thinker and a scholar he surpassed him. On the other hand, so far as natural disposition went, Knox had the advantage at least for a Reformer, living in those stern times. He was ready ever to be right in "the brunt of the battle." Calvin, how-

ever, was naturally of a quiet and retiring disposition and only the entreaty and prophetic denounciation of his friends forced him to the foremost rank of the Reformers. But as a scholar Calvin easily excelled. He had studied of the wisdom of men. He had drunk deep of the well of Holy Scripture. And at the early age of twenty-seven he wrote his famous work "The Institutes of the Christian Religion." It was a work "the pre-eminent value of which was immediately recognised, not only by the friends of Protestantism but also by its enemies who called it "The Koran of the Heretics." It embodies that system of Doctrine—the predestinarian system we may call it—with which his name ever since has been associated in the Church. Calvin had a very deep sense of the majesty of God, a very keen sense of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and these two thoughts combining in his wonderful knowledge of the Word give that distinct colour and inclination to his teaching which makes it to be "Calvinism." The influence of this master mind on Knox is very apparent in the First Scot's Confession which was drawn up by the direction of Parliament and afterwards adopted when Romanism was finally overthrown. I would take this opportunity of saying that, whatever may be said in the way of criticism and disparagement of the system of Calvin—and it is not the deepest thinkers who are most ready to cavil at it—judged by its fruit, it will stand the test of time. No other system of theology has been able to produce so manly, virile, and consecrated a type of Christianity. But Knox learned other things from Calvin beside his particular reading of the Word of God. In the simple language of one I have already quoted: "From Calvin Knox learned many things which were afterwards of great use to him in Scotland; as, for example, how to build up a new church, and to define the duties of ministers, elders, deacons and congregations, which which was precisely the work that Knox was called upon to do in his native country."

In the year 1559, Knox returned to Scotland. His return and the establishment of the Reformed Religion, by his efforts and that of others, was greatly aided by certain political events. Mary of Lorraine, Queen Regent and mother of Mary, Queen of Scots, while professing great toleration for the Reformed doctrine, had quietly been scheming to reduce Scotland to the subordinate position of a mere French province, an appendage of the King of France. Against this most unpatriotic effort Scotchmen of all creeds combined, Roman Catholics and Protestants, together. The result was civil war. The ultimate result was the overthrow of Roman Catholicism in Scotland and the establishment of Presbyterianism as the national religion. "In 1560," says Dr. Thomas Brown, "when the Lords of the Congregations had succeeded and the way was cleared by the withdrawal of the French troops, the Scottish Parliament met in Edinburgh (1st August) and almost by instinct statesmen and churchmen at once fell into the right position towards each other. A petition signed by all ranks of the Scottish people had been presented, asking the abolition of Papacy, but Parliament wanted to know what they were to put in the place of Roman error. It was not their part to formulate a Confession of Faith. Knox and some of his friends were called on. The work was gladly undertaken, and certainly they did not keep Parliament waiting. In four days the confession was ready, a strong straightforward statement of Bible Truth, in harmony with the standard of the other Reformed churches, and much less complex than the Westminster Confession of later date. "The scene," says Dr. Brown, "is described by Knox: 'Our confession,' he says, 'was publicly read, first in the audience of the Lords of the articles, and afterwards in the audience of the whole Parliament, where were present not only such as professed Christ Jesus, but also a great number of adversaries of our religion, such as the before named bishops, who were commanded in God's name to object if they could. Some of our ministers were present standing on their feet, ready

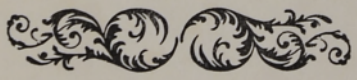
to have answered.' A day was appointed, 17th July, 1560, for voting. Our Confession was read, every article by itself, over again. And the vote of every man was required. The only adverse vote came from three noblemen. 'And yet,' Knox goes on, 'for their disassenting they produced no better reason but 'We will believe as our fathers believed.' 'The Bishops (Papistical, we mean) spake nothing.' These bishops, we should remember, had before their eyes the spectacle of Knox standing on his feet with his friends behind him ready to answer. The sight may have been enough—they spake nothing." Subsequently, the first meeting of the General Assembly was held at Edinburgh in the Magdalen Chapel—"the old grey tower of which may still be seen where it stands at the head of the Cowgate and marks the locality of that great historic event, when in December, 1560, the brave band of six ministers and thirty-four elders came together and constituted themselves the Supreme Court of the Reformed Church of Scotland. It was the first meeting of that Assembly which has done so much to make Scotland what it is. Knox and his friends prepared the Book of Discipline, setting forth the Presbyterian form of church government in its leading features. It was derived, they were careful to state, not from Geneva or France but directly from the New Testament." With these two documents before us—the First Confession of Faith and the First Book of Discipline—we can understand clearly the mind and conviction of the Fathers of Our Faith in the sixteenth century. But I cannot now speak more about these documents. I shall hope at some convenient time, and that shortly, led to it by consideration of this work of Reformation, to speak of the leading features and characteristics of our Presbyterian system. Let me just say that our Church, established thus in Scotland after a long drawn-out struggle, has ever been zealous to maintain two positions. On the one hand, as against the priestly doctrine of the Mass, she has asserted the one final, adequate, all-sufficient sacrifice of our High Priest,

Jesus, 'the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world.' On the other hand, in contradistinction to the Erastianism, the doctrine of patronage, accepted by some other of the Reformed churches, she has asserted the sovereignty of Jesus, despite nobles, parliament or monarch, in His own spiritual realm. Jesus Christ, exalted, is the one King and Head of our Church.

I do not attempt to trace the subsequent history of Knox onward from this hour of triumph. To do that would be to tell of the struggle between the stern Scotch preacher and the beautiful, self-willed, voluptous Mary, Queen of Scots. Her tragic and fascinating story is the happy hunting ground not only of the historian but also of the poet and novelist. Knox, whose life had been a daily peril, in the providence of God, seeing his efforts and ambitions largely crowned with success, quietly passed away. Over his grave, the Regent Morton pronounced the well known eulogy: "Here lies one who never feared the face of man."

Friends, why do we recall these events to-day? What is the object of this wide spread celebration? Is it that we may blow into a flame again the embers of that fire of religious strife which has burned so brightly down the ages? Surely no! We remember that one of the blessings accomplished by the Reformation is just religious toleration. We remember the Apostolic injunction, "As much as lieth in you live peaceably with all men." We respect the religious principles of all our fellow citizens, wherever honest conviction is asserted. But let us see to it that our liberality does not degenerate into a dull, dead indifference. Let us give no countenance to the easy-going attitude of the present day which looks ever complacently on all the churches and says "There is no difference." Between the Ritualist and the Evangelical there is a difference of conception and of attitude deep and vital. Their different relation to the sacrifice of Jesus puts them far apart. We honour John Knox to-day because of his disinterested devotion to the cause of truth and liberty. It was

because he, and others like him, gathered, a solid little phalanx, in the sixteenth century round the standard of the Word of God, that the freedom of the evangel and the freedom of worship is conceded to us to-day. Let us hold fast, grateful unto God and these His devoted servants, to the privileges which they won at such a cost. Material prosperity as well as intellectual freedom and spiritual health are the consequence of warm attachment to the principles of the Reformation. Let us hold fast these things, so that no conjunction of adverse circumstances will ever make us let them go. We thank God for the open Bible, we thank God for the freedom of the evangel and we thank him for the liberty to worship on the Sabbath, according to our light and conscience. And we, knowing something of what he did, thank God for John Knox, that Father and Giant of the Reformation. Let us try to be his worthy disciples, and in these latitudinarian times to be still more worthy disciples of our common Master, Jesus, who honours us as co-labourers in the great work of the Gospel.



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