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ARTICLE III.

ROBERT LEIGHTON: THE APOSTOLIC ANGLICAN PRELATE OF SCOTLAND.

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II.

It must not be supposed that Leighton had stood alone in his protest against the violent proceedings of Sharp and Rothes. Many of the Episcopal clergy of Scotland were much offended at them. They perceived that the prejudices of the people were increased and intensified by them. "I happened," says Burnet,

"to be settled near two of the most eminent of them — Mr. Nairn and Mr. Charteris, who were often importuned to accept bishoprics. Mr. Nairn was one of the politest clergymen in Scotland, and was the most eloquent of all our preachers. He considered the pastoral function as a dedication of the whole man to God and his service. In a word, he was the brightest man I ever knew among all our Scottish Divines."

Of Mr. Charteris, Burnet gives this characterization:—

"He was a man of composed and serene gravity, but without affectation or sourness. His conversation arrested attention and begot composedness in all about him, without frightening them, for *he made religion appear amiable.* He had read all the lives and epistles of great men carefully; he had read the fathers much, and gave me this notion of them; that in speculative points for which writers of controversy searched them, they were but ordinary men; their excellence lay in that which was least sought for — their sense of spiritual things, and of the pastoral care. In these he thought their strength lay. He often lamented, not without some indignation, that due care was not taken to set out their ideas of the sacred function [of the Christian ministry]; of the

preparation of mind and inward vocation with which men ought to come to holy orders, the heavenly temper and the constant application to the doing of good, that became them. He was a great enemy to large confessions of faith when they were imposed in the lump as tests."

"It was a great happiness for me," says Burnet, "that I fell into such hands in those early days of my ministry, with whom I entered into a close and particular friendship; they both set me right and kept me right." Burnet was then a young man only three and twenty, but observant of the character and the conduct of most of the Scotch bishops. This was his opinion of them as a class (only Scougal, Bishop of Aberdeen, a man of rare temper and great piety, and Leighton were excepted):—

"They were not only furious against all that stood out against them, but were very remiss in all the parts of their function. Some did not live within their diocese; and those who did seemed to take no care of them. They showed no zeal against vice: the most eminently wicked in the country were their particular confidants. They took no pains to keep their clergy strictly to rules, and to their duty; on the contrary, there was a levity and a carnal way of living among them that very much scandalized me."

BURNET'S AUDACIOUS ACT.

"Upon all this," Burnet says,

"I took a resolution of drawing up a memorial of the grievances we lay under by the ill conduct of our bishops. That no other besides myself should have a share in any trouble it might bring on me, I communicated it to none. I laid my foundation in the constitution of the primitive Church, and showed how they had departed from it by their neglecting their dioceses, meddling so much in secular affairs, and above all, by their violent persecuting of those who differed from them. Of this I writ out some copies, and signed them and sent them to all the bishops of my acquaintance. Sharp was much alarmed at it, and fancied that I was set onto it by some of Lauderdale's friends. I was called before the bishops and treated with great severity.

"Sharp called it a libel. I said, 'I had set my name to it, so it

could not be called a libel.' He charged me with the presumption of offering to teach my superiors; of reflecting on the King's putting them on his Counsels. I said, 'I found no fault with the King for calling them to his Counsels, but with them for going out of their proper province and giving ill counsel.' He broke out into a great vehemency and proposed to the bishops that I should be summarily deposed and excommunicated, but none of them agreed to that. By this management of his the thing became public. What I had ventured on was variously censured, but the greater part approved. Lauderdale and all his friends were delighted with it, and he gave the King an account of it, who was not ill pleased at it."

The King resolved, on account of the bad state of things there, to put Scotland into other hands. In a letter to the Earl of Rothes, he ordered him to direct Sharp to stay within his diocese, by which, Rothes reported to Lauderdale, "he is strangely cast down, yea, lower than the dust." "Till he submitted," says Lang, "and adopted a policy of leniency, he was baited and derided." But early in the year 1667 there was a change toward him. Lauderdale let him know, that "bygones might now be bygones" (referring to an old attempt made by Sharp to discredit him with the King); and the King was induced to write to the repentant prelate with his own hand an assurance of his continued favor. Sharp was elated and told Lauderdale of his joy at the sight of the impression of the King's diamond seal (which Prince Charles Edwards was to lose in the Highlands). His repentance was brief; he quickly returned to his former insolence.

THE EARL OF LAUDERDALE.

In the preceding pages, increasing prominence has been given to the name of Lauderdale in the affairs of Scotland. He resided most of the time in London at the English Court, the chief Counsellor of the King in regard to Scottish affairs. Though Middleton and Rothes were the successive royal Com-

missioners in Edinburgh, presiding as the King's official representatives at his Privy Council there and at the sessions of the Scottish Parliament, nevertheless, Lauderdale, because of his influence and authority with the King, was practically the governor of Scotland through those years, though residing in London. "He had bided his time," says Lang, "in London; as a quondam Presbyterian of the most zealous, he could not easily take part in the early repressive measures; he allowed Sharp and Rothes time to run their course, undermining them at Court, through his private suggestions to the King."

In 1667 he became the actual Commissioner (Rothes having held the office three years), and removed to Edinburgh.

It is proper that we should pause awhile in our narrative to describe this man, as historians have portrayed him.

As they represent him, the Earl of Lauderdale was one of the most singular men of his time. Burnet is particular in describing his character and personal appearance:—

"He made a very ill appearance; he was very big, his hair red, hanging oddly about him; his tongue was too big for his mouth, which made him bedew all he talked to, and his whole manner was very rough and boisterous, quite unfit for a Court.

"He was very learned, not only in *Latin*, in which he was a master, but in *Greek* and *Hebrew*. He had read a great deal of divinity and almost all the historians, ancient and modern, so that he had great materials. He had with these an extraordinary memory, and a copious, but unpolished, diction. He was abject to those he saw he must stoop to, but imperious to all others. He had a violence of temper that carried him often to fits of madness in which he had no self-control. If he took a thing wrong, it was a vain thing to study to convince him. That would rather provoke him to swear, he would never be of another mind. He was to be let alone, and perhaps he would forget what he had said, and come about of his own accord. He was the coldest friend and the violentest enemy I ever knew."

About this time Lauderdale came under the spell of a fascinating woman,— Lady Dysert,— a famous beauty. She

was a woman of strong intellect and various accomplishments, with remarkable brightness of wit and vivacity in conversation. She had a restless ambition, lived extravagantly, at great expense. Lauderdale, who married her as his second wife, delivered himself up to all her humours and passions,—to her likes and dislikes. In his earlier years he seemed to despise wealth, but later, through her influence, apparently, he gave himself up to luxury and sensual indulgence, by reason of which he ran into great extravagance of living and stuck at nothing necessary to support it. He built near London on the bank of the Thames, out of the plunder of Scotland and the bribes of France, what was regarded as the most luxurious of villas. She sold all places in the government and was wanting in no methods that would bring them money. "In his earlier years," says Burnet, "he had deep impressions of religion on his mind, but he soon wore these out so entirely that scarce any trace of them was left." In short, he now became another sort of man from what he was in the former part of his life.

"His great experience in affairs, his ready compliance with everything that he thought would please the King, and his bold offering of the most desperate counsel gained him such an interest with the King that no attempt against him nor complaint of him could shake it, till a decay of strength and understanding forced him [the King] to let go his hold. Whereas some, by a smooth deportment have made the beginnings of tyranny less discernible and unacceptable, he, by the fury of his behavior, heightened the severity of his ministry, which was liker the cruelty of an inquisition than the legality of justice."

Macaulay's account of him, briefly given, accords with Burnet's. Speaking of him as one of the five members of King Charles' Cabinet, known as the infamous "Cabal," the historian says, "Lauderdale, loud and coarse, both in mirth and anger, was, perhaps, under the outward show of boisterous

frankness, the most dishonest man in the Cabal. . . . He was now the chief instrument employed by the Court in the work of forcing Episcopacy upon his reluctant countrymen, nor did he in that cause shrink from the unsparing use of the sword, the halter and the boot."

These accounts of Lauderdale agree with Sir Walter Scott's picture of him in the thirty-fifth chapter of "Old Mortality," where he is described as presiding over the Privy Council of Scotland when engaged in the examination of the prisoners brought before it.

Under the rule of Lauderdale, Leighton now passed, and continued to a considerable degree subject to his authority, as long as he labored at his task in Scotland. This task, instead of growing easier, grew harder every year.

"*A Policy of Indulgence*" was adopted for the "outed ministers," to lure them back. The "outing" of them had been easy; now every effort was made to restore them to their pulpits. A letter from the King ordered that "peaceable outed ministers be restored, or appointed to vacancies, receiving stipends, if collated [i. e., presented] by bishops. But conventicles were to be dealt with severely." Two and forty ministers were thus "*indulged*" at one time. This policy seemed at first to work well. Woodrow and Burnet agree in saying that it was accepted joyfully. "The indulgence," says Woodrow, "must not be reckoned part of our sufferings." But Lang says: "The indulgence did more to split the Kirk into hostile parties than the sword of Claverhouse did to break the spirit of Presbyterianism." The reason was that the "indulgence" closed the mouths of those who received it against hostile criticism of Episcopacy. "Reinstated ministers were in future forbidden to utter their stinging testimonies. The Kirk was thus deprived of her favorite

weapon, still longed for. They preached only the doctrines of Christianity; they did not preach to the times." Their flocks complained, and deserted anew their Churches for conventicles.

The "Indulgence" was also displeasing and odious to the prelates and clergy as contrary to the law restoring Episcopacy, and as giving up the distinctive marks, advantages and assumptions of Episcopacy for the sake of winning the Presbyterians. The Conformist Synod of Glasgow therefore "made a sputter," says Woodrow, by drawing up what the King called "A New Western Remonstrance" against the Indulgence. The King, informed of it, demanded Archbishop Burnet's resignation, as he was chiefly responsible for the Synod's remonstrance.

To legalize Burnet's removal and to make the Indulgence legal, an Act Asserting the King's Supremacy was passed by Parliament. It declared, that "the Settling of all things relating to the external government of the Church was a right of the Crown; and that all things relating to Ecclesiastical meetings, matters and persons were to be ordered according to such directions as the King should send to his Privy Council, and that these should be published by them and have the force of laws." Sharp did not like it, but durst not oppose it. Leighton objected to the Act and got some words altered in it. He thought it might be stretched to ill ends; yet he voted for it, not having sufficiently considered the consequences that might result from the Act; for which he was sorry afterwards.

Many of the best of the Episcopal clergy — Nairn and Charteris, in particular — were highly offended at the Act. They thought, "it plainly made the King their Pope." The Presbyterians, on their part, said, "it put him in Christ's stead; that the King already had too much power in the matters of

the Church, and that nothing was more ruinous to the ministry than their servile dependence upon Courts." Lord Tweedale said, "it was only designed to justify the Indulgence." Leighton was sure the words "Ecclesiastical matters" were not in the original draught agreed upon, and Lauderdale was suspected of inserting them.

By the Act of Supremacy the King could turn out bishops at pleasure, and Alexander Burnet was the first to feel the effect of it. "He bore his disgrace better than he had done his honors. He was too remiss in that which was properly his business; for he neglected the spiritual part of it."

Leighton was chosen to fill his place, of Archbishop of Glasgow. "He was held in great esteem for his piety and moderation among the people, as to which the Presbyterians themselves could neither reproach nor equal him, albeit they hated him most of all his fraternity, 'because he had deserted them and drew many into a kindness for Episcopacy, by his exemplary life rather than debates.'" When he undertook in the beginning to be a bishop he had opposed all violent courses whereby men were forced to comply with the present worship beyond their persuasions, and he had granted a latitude and indulgence to those of his own diocese before the King had allowed any by his letter. This made the world believe that he was author to his Majesty of that public indulgence. The statesmen were well satisfied to have it so believed and thought his principles of toleration made him a fit instrument in their present undertaking. Therefore the Earl of Lauderdale and the Earl of Tweedale ("the ablest and worthiest man of the nobility," says Burnet) urged him to accept the See. But he was strongly averse to it and resolutely declined it at first. Only the hope of being able to achieve an accommodation between the opposed parties induced him at length to consent

to the proposal and to take the part assigned him in what he afterwards called "a drunken scuffle in the dark."

Having consented, Leighton was summoned to London by the King for a special conference with him. He set out upon his journey with small hope of success in the task involved. The diocese of Glasgow was the largest in Scotland, covering one fourth of it, and was the most torn by religious disturbances. The differences between the two parties had been so far irreconcilable and grown, in fact, more acute, and with a true prescience of the future he felt they were likely to remain so in spite of all that he could do.

In London, Leighton put on paper his "scheme of accommodation," and the King ordered Lauderdale to make an experiment in toleration, by the enactment of laws in harmony with this scheme. The following things were to be insisted upon: Sharp, the Primate, was "to allow and authorize the transportation to vacant pulpits of such ministers as shall be lawfully presented to any of the churches within the diocese of Glasgow" and approved by Leighton; no minister was to be "molested for his private opinions as long as he behaved peaceably and orderly"; the Presbyterians were to cease harping upon the obligations of "the Covenant," and must stop frequenting Conventicles upon pain of severe punishment.

Leighton having obtained the King's assent to his plan, at once set about its execution. "Though meek as a dove he did not lack the wisdom of the serpent." His first step, says Pearson, "was to generate such an atmosphere in his diocese as should favor his work of conciliation — a general atmosphere of holy charity suitable to the medicinal process he had instituted for restoring the spiritual health of the country." In order to this, he deemed it best that he should re-

move to Glasgow, the affairs of which See he administered at first from a distance.

As soon as he had established himself in Glasgow, he held a Synod of his Clergy. His predecessor, Burnet, had employed a violent method to force the people to attend the ministrations of the illiterate, unspiritual, and, to some extent, immoral rectors and curates who filled the pulpits of the diocese. As might have been expected, their churches were deserted, and they, themselves, were despised, insulted, and, in some instances, assailed when abroad in the darkness of night. The Presbyterians said that the criminals were vulgar ruffians, merely; but this view was not taken by the Clergy, and they loudly complained to their Archbishop of their maltreatment, and demanded redress.

"Leighton," instead of resorting to the methods of his predecessor to compel the people to attend church and respect their ministers,— the methods of censure, fines, and imprisonment,— "exhorted his Clergy," says Burnet,

to practice the Christian remedies of forbearance, conciliation and prayer; to consider themselves the ministers of the Cross of Christ, to bear meekly the contempt and ill usage they met with, as a cross laid upon them for the exercise of their faith and patience, to suppress the appetite of revenge, and humble themselves before God for the faults which had turned the people against them. This was a new strain to the Clergy; they had nothing to say against it, but it was a comfortless doctrine to them."

So they went home little pleased with their Archbishop. They were indignant at the implied suggestion that it was their fault chiefly, that they had been maltreated.

Leighton was to demonstrate that he was not easily discouraged. "Grieved at the low state of his Episcopal Clergy," says Aikman,

"he looked with an eye of longing regard at his former esteemed

and pious copresbyters, and visited several of the 'indulged' ministers, for the purpose of persuading them to listen to propositions of peace; but he found the truth of Solomon's observation, that a brother offended is harder to be won than a strong city, and their contentions are like the bars of a castle. He told them that some of their number would be soon sent for from Edinburgh, where conciliatory terms would be offered them; that they would be met in sincerity and without duplicity; and that if they in return would cordially acquiesce in what would be proposed, the concessions would be turned into laws and all the vacancies would be filled up with their brethren."

The ministers who had suffered severely and were well acquainted with the character of the Scottish rulers, both civil and ecclesiastical, whose whole conduct toward them had been a uniform system of oppression and deceit, received the Archbishop's communications with great coolness. They suspected the proffer to be, what we now know it to have been, upon the part of the government, a snare to entrap and divide them; and they answered with prudent caution, that "it was a matter of general concern to the whole body, in which they as individuals could do nothing."

This reception disappointed Leighton and he began almost to lose heart in a negotiation where he had to struggle with tyranny and insincerity on the part of the government and well-grounded suspicion and conscientious scruples on the part of the sufferers. But he did not give up his endeavors. At his request, Lauderdale wrote to some of the most eminent of the "indulged" ministers in his diocese — Hutchinson, Wedderburn, and Baird — commanding them to attend a conference before himself at Holyrood Palace, in Edinburgh, August 9, 1670, at which they would meet two of the most eminent Scotch nobles of the Privy Council — Kinkardine, who, Burnet says, "had solid principles of religion and virtue, which showed themselves with great lustre on all occasions," and Tweedale (above alluded to) with Leighton and

Patterson, afterward Archbishop of Glasgow. Sharp declined to be present, because of his repugnance to the concessions offered.

Leighton opened the business of the Conference by sadly "deploring the religious divisions that existed in Scotland and the mischief they had wrought. Souls were perishing while they were contending over matters of little importance. He was so singular as to think that a life of goodness and devotion — not a perpetual strife about nonessentials — was the essence of Christianity. He, therefore, implored them to do severally, in coöperation with himself, all that lay in their power to bring peace and religious concord to their distracted land, regardless of the things wherein they differed from the Episcopal Church and the civil government. For his own part, he was convinced that from the days of the apostles there always had existed an order of bishops superior to presbyters in the Church, and that complete equality among clergymen had never been heard of until the preceding century. By his 'plan of accommodation,' however, they would not be required to surrender their opinion on that point, while they might unite in preaching the Gospel and carrying on all the ends of their ministry. They had *moderators* as a matter of convenience, not as a divine institution. The *King might name them* and *make* them *constant*, without any encroachment upon their rights such as should break the peace of the Church. Blessing them with imposition of hands when they entered upon their office did not imply any invalidity in their previous ordination as ministers, nor confer upon them any new authority."

Hutchinson, their most learned man, who acted as spokesman for his party, replied, that "their opinion respecting a parity among ministers was well known; that the presidency now proposed had formerly served to introduce a lordly dominion in the Church, and that however inconsiderable their present pretensions were, they might serve to pave the way for future higher demands. He therefore requested time to consider and consult with his brethren."

A second meeting was therefore appointed for the following November (as a continuation of their Conference). At this time they dined together by the Lord Commissioner's invita-

tion. After dinner, Lauderdale joined them in the hope that his presence might bring the parties sooner to a mutual agreement; but he found the Presbyterians unyielding in their determination to stand by their principles. This so angered him that he was with difficulty restrained from one of his violent outbursts of passion, by which he was wont to overwhelm his political opponents.

Leighton, however, persuaded him "to keep quiet and hear what the non-Conformists had to say for themselves." He was naturally haughty and irritable, and found it hard to brook, and was apt to misconstrue, conscientious scruples with consistent plain dealing. He imbibed, therefore, on this occasion a very unfavorable opinion of the non-Conformists, and it required all Leighton's fine temper and management to prevent him from handling them roughly.

Leighton, on his part, labored to convince them of the truth so eloquently set forth and defended by Richard Hooker in his "Ecclesiastical Polity," that

"in establishing a form of Ecclesiastical government we are free to institute offices of which the inspired volume furnishes no precedent, provided nothing contrary to the orders of Christ and to the spirit of his religion be admitted, and that by submitting to the Episcopal form they would not bind themselves to comply with anything repugnant to the dispensation of the Gospel, nor to tolerate any encroachment on the pastoral functions.

"If, however, they scrupled to allow of fixed presidents nominated by the sovereign, or if they apprehended that along with the presidency some more exceptionable jurisdiction would accrue to the bishops, against these contingents they should be at liberty to enter a prospective protest in as full and public manner as they pleased. Such latitude being granted to tender consciences, he thought the sacrifices it remained for them to make could only be refused by fastidious squeamishness, or vexatious obstinacy; and he conjured them to weigh the whole matter as in the presence of God, without respect to party or popularity."

No answer, or none of any consequence, was returned at the

time to this impressive address; but the next day Hutchinson went with his colleagues to the Archbishop's chamber, and there argued against the propositions submitted to them the preceding day. Thus the Edinburgh Conference ended without producing any advantage to the Archbishop's plan of accommodation.

The Presbyterians, we are told, were not the only opposers to an adjustment, although, perhaps, the only conscientious ones. Sharp was violently opposed to the "accommodation," since by it "the negative vote [of the bishop] was to be let go." "Episcopacy," he exclaimed, "was undermined by Leighton's scheme!" And the inferior, incompetent Clergy, Burnet tells us, "hated the whole thing," for they thought, "if the Presbyterians were admitted into Churches, they themselves would be neglected." With good reason, for they were like bad eggs — unwholesome and unpalatable for diet — whereas, in the opinion of the Duchess of Hamilton, "a woman of great piety and great parts," says Burnet, "the Presbyterian ministers were good men; they were blameless in their lives, devout in their way, and diligent in their labors."

Undiscouraged, notwithstanding the failure of the two sessions of the Edinburgh Conference, Leighton now tried the experiment of sending chosen Episcopal preachers of ability and repute among the Churches of his diocese to argue with the Presbyterian people in favor of the "scheme of accommodation" proposed. "The Episcopal Clergy in the West," says Burnet, "could not argue much for anything [because of their lack of mental discipline and intelligence], and would not at all argue in favor of a proposition they hated." He engaged, therefore, six divines of that persuasion of superior ability and of a high character, "to perambulate the country to preach to the vacant churches, and explain to their hearers

the ground of the 'accommodation.' These preachers were called the 'bishop's evangelists.'" We have already been introduced to four of them: Gilbert Burnet (then, for a short time, filling the chair of Professor of Divinity at Glasgow), Charteris, Nairn, and Aird.

Their meetings were generally attended, but not crowded. They had to do with a people who, though of humble condition, understood the subject and were capable of arguing and quoting texts of Scripture which they had learned related to the question discussed. "They were vain of their knowledge, conceited of themselves, and full of a most entangled scrupulosity," says Burnet.

"We staid about three months in the country, and in that time there was a stand in the frequency of the Conventicles. But as soon as we were gone, a set of those *hot* preachers ["Welsh, Cargill, Blackadder and others," says Lang] went round all the places in which we had been, to defeat all the good we could hope to do. They told the people the devil was never so formidable as when he was transformed into an angel of light."

Men detected in attending the meetings of those "hot preachers" engaged in rousing the passions which Leighton was trying to allay, were fined, imprisoned, or banished. But, notwithstanding the hazard, they were attracted to them in increasing numbers.

The government and the Council retaliated by fresh Acts of severer punishment. In July-August, 1670, the Parliament passed a "Clanking Act," by which holders of field Conventicles were to be punished by death, and another Act which ordered subjects of the Reformed Religion to attend the regular Clergy's ministrations.

The government, instead of assisting Leighton in his efforts for pacification, greatly hindered them by this course. "A wise and honest policy," Pearson justly says,

"would have suspended all severities. It would have hushed the storm of persecution which was so unpropitious to calm deliberation and amicable convention. But instead of this being done, there came forth in the very crisis of the negotiation an atrocious bill against Conventicles, contrived to pass harmlessly over the heads of Roman Catholics, but to alight with deadly force upon Protestant non-Conformists. This edict was hurried through Parliament with such indecent haste that Leighton was not apprised of it, till the time to oppose it was past. True to his manly independence, he now severely commented upon it with Lord Tweedale, and declared, that the whole complexion of it was so contrary to the common rules of humanity, not to say Christianity; that he was ashamed to mix in council with the contrivers and abettors of such Acts."

"The Contrivers" of them, as is usually the case, did not accomplish their purpose of suppressing the Conventicles, which they endeavored to abolish. "Meetings of this kind," says Lang, "went on, and culminated nine years later at Drumclog, and in the rising which followed, which Claverhouse and his dragoons vainly tried to subdue."

What Lang calls "the Second Indulgence driven like a wedge into the Presbyterian body," was used by Lauderdale at about this time. "He called upon me all of a sudden," says Burnet, "and put me in mind of a scheme I had previously suggested to him, of putting all the 'outed ministers' by couples into vacant parishes, so that instead of wandering about the country to hold Conventicles, they might severally be fixed to a certain abode, and every one might have the half of a benefice." Leighton approved of the plan; comparing it to "gathering into a chimney, where they might burn safely, the coals that were scattered over the house and setting it all on fire."

Lauderdale set about it immediately, and the benefit of this Indulgence was extended to forty more churches. This plan, if followed, as to doubling the outed ministers in a parish and

of confining them within their parishes, would probably have laid a flame that was spreading over the nation. "But Lauderdale's way," says Burnet,

"was to govern by fits and starts, and to pass from hot to cold. So this plan of doubling them, which was the chief part of our scheme, was neglected, and those who were not provided for went about the country holding Conventicles very boldly.

"Sharp and his instruments took occasion from this to complain that the Church was ruined by Leighton's means, and I had my share in the charges. Great numbers met in the fields. Men went to those meetings with such arms as they had and we were blamed for all this. It was said that we did certainly design to ruin and overturn the Constitution."

Another meeting with the Presbyterians was arranged for at Paisley on the 14th of December, 1670. The Archbishop with Professor Gilbert Burnet of Glasgow, and another clergyman, had there two long conferences with about thirty of them. The following account by Burnet comprises the substance of what was said and done:—

"Leighton laid before them the obligations that lay on them to seek for peace at all times, but more especially when we already saw the dismal effects of our contentions. There could be no agreement unless on both sides there was a disposition to make some abatements and some steps towards one another. We were willing to make even unreasonable ones on our side; would they abate nothing on theirs? Was their opinion so mathematically certain that they could not dispense with any part of it for the peace of the Church and the saving of souls?"

Leighton urged this question upon them, "Would they have held communion with the Church of God at the time of the Council of Nice, or not? If they should say not, he would be less desirous of entering into communion with them, since he must say of the Church of that time, '*Let my soul be with theirs!*' If they said, they would, then he was sure they would not reject the offers now made them, which brought Episcopacy much lower than it was at that time."

One of the most learned among them had prepared a speech full of quotations, to prove the difference between the primitive Episcopacy and ours at present. "I was full of these matters," says Burnet; "so I, at Leighton's request, answered the speech, and every one of the quotations; either controverting the facts asserted, or impeaching the conclusion drawn from them, with advantage too evident to be denied by their own party; and, it seemed the person himself thought so, for he did not offer one word of reply."

Nothing definite, however, was effected at this meeting towards the establishment of peace. At their request, at its close, Leighton gave them in writing the propositions that they had discussed. At parting he desired them to reach as soon as they could some final decision, as their answer would shortly be called for. It was given in the following January in Edinburgh. Hutchinson, speaking for his whole party, returned, says Leighton, this short and dry answer: "We are not free in conscience to close with the propositions made by the Bishop of Dumblane" (not recognizing his elevation to the See of Glasgow).

Being requested for an explicit statement of their reasons, the Presbyterians excused themselves from further argument on the subject, implying that nothing would satisfy them short of the extinction of Episcopacy in Scotland.

Asked to submit propositions of their own as a basis for further negotiation, they declined to do this, basing their refusal on the oath of "the Solemn League and Covenant." "The Covenant, the Covenant," was their watch cry.

Aikman gives the following account of the origin and significance of the "Covenant":—

"The duplicity of Charles I. led to the great Civil War, and forced Scotland and England to join together for mutual preservation

from threatened prelatical tyranny. They did so in an agreement in 1643, known by the name of 'The Solemn League and Covenant,' in which they had pledged themselves to endeavor uniformity in religion according to the Word of God, and the extirpation of prelacy; and this in the form of an oath was forced upon almost every inhabitant of Scotland. But when this 'Covenant' was framed there was no Episcopacy in Scotland, only in England; so that the conditions which made it binding then had changed, and its obligation had ceased. Designed originally as a shield of the confederates against tyrannical oppression by consolidating their union, this Covenant had now become a nurse of strife and sedition, a barrier against peace, since it had ceased to be a bond of concord."

Leighton, perceiving that further effort on his part was useless, solemnly addressed the stiff-necked company before him in this wise:—

"You have thought fit to reject our overtures without assigning any reason for your action and without suggesting any healing measures in place of ours. The continuance of the divisions, through which religion languishes, must consequently lie at your doors. Before God and man I wash my hands of whatever evils may result from the rupture of this treaty. I have done my utmost to repair the temple of the Lord, and my sorrow will not be embittered by compunction should a flood of miseries hereafter rush in through the gap you have refused to assist me to close."

Leighton, in view of all this, concluded that he could do no good for either side.

"He had gained no ground on the Presbyterians, and was suspected and hated by the Episcopalians. So he was resolved to retire from all public employments and spend the rest of his days in a corner. He could not perceive on scrutinizing his heart, that he was prompted to this step by successive disgusts, by wounded pride, by secret indignation at Providence, or by his natural propensity to a quiet, studious and contemplative privacy. Was it not a duty, rather than a fault, to renounce a position barren of usefulness, for one more favorable to prayer and meditation? He was now growing old and infirm. The dressing and undressing of his soul [as he used to call devotional exercises], was the business to which his few remaining days ought to be consecrated. He longed to escape, if only into the air among the birds, from the ungrateful service, which he had not declined when summoned

to it by the exigencies of the Church; but from which he now held himself discharged; as it was become evident after a trial of over thirteen years that no good could come from his remaining in it."

He could not therefore be restrained by Burnet's attempts at dissuasion, but followed Lauderdale to Court and begged leave to retire from his Archbishopric. The Duke would by no means consent to this. So he desired that he might be allowed to do it within a year. Lauderdale, to be rid of his importunities, moved the King to promise him, that if he did not change his mind, as they hoped, he would within the year accept his resignation.

Having gained this point, Leighton went back to his charge delighted, saying to his close friend, Gilbert Burnet, that now there was but one uneasy stage between him and rest. Accordingly, as soon as the year was completed he hastened to London and laid down his Archbishopric, in 1674, which was restored to its former possessor, Alexander Burnet, whose deprivation of it had greatly offended the English bishops.

HIS RETIRED LIFE.

After his resignation he resided for a short time in the College of Edinburgh. From there he retired to Broadhurst, a demesne in the parish of Horsted Keynes, Sussex, belonging to his sister, the widow of Edward Lightmaker, Esq., and with her he resided till his death, ten years later.

Shall we accept his estimate of his endeavor to amalgamate Episcopacy with Presbyterianism in Scotland, as a complete failure? Was it true or just to himself? Certainly not. Browning's words are true:

"The aim, if reached, or not, makes the life";

and Lowell's saying,

"Not failure, but low aim is crime,"

confirms this opinion.

Those years of heavy crosses and disappointments, of humiliation and seemingly fruitless endeavor, which he likened to a "drunken scuffle in the dark," in which there was no light of intelligence, or clear perception on either side, of what was required to give peace to the distracted realm; or, if there was knowledge of the remedy, there was no disposition to use it; those years in which he thought he was doing no service to the Church of God or the cause of religion were, in fact, very fruitful years and productive of great, immeasurable benefit to the world.

1. The aim thus persistently cherished ennobled his character. "You cannot dream yourself into a character," says Froude. "You must hammer and forge yourself one." But forge and hammer and anvil imply a series of hot fires. Without these flames rekindled again and again, the character will not have the malleability or temper requisite to its being shaped aright. The careful student of Leighton's life can detect evidences of the sanctifying effect on him of his trials. These made great his life by perfecting his holiness. They illustrate the truth of Bronson Alcott's saying: "We mount to heaven mostly on the ruins of our cherished schemes, finding our failures were our successes."

2. But his own growth in holiness was not what he had chiefly in view; that was only incidental to the predominant aim he cherished, of promoting the spiritual and religious welfare of Scotland through the unification there of the Church of God viewed in the large. It cannot be questioned, we think, that in this aim, Leighton achieved a final, though tardy, success.

"Make your failure tragical by the earnestness of your endeavor," says a deep thinker, "and then it will not differ from success." His failure was "tragical" enough, every thought-

ful person will say, now that the hot atmosphere which, in his day, warped the clear judgment of the people concerned as to the truth and the right side of the conflict, has cooled to a proper temperature.

"He was a man apparently 'born out of due time,'" says Dr. William M. Taylor.

"He sought to live above the 'mad whirl' and 'dim confusion' of the world, and was ever a lover of peace. With very definite views of his own, both in theology and other matters, he did not care to fight for their supremacy, and was much of the same mind as he [Richard Baxter] who said, 'I had as lief be a martyr for charity as for faith.' He had not the qualities needed to fit him to be a leader even in the best of times, much less in that seething and tempestuous age into the middle of which he was sent. The temptation which had allured him to consent to become a bishop was the hope that thereby he might act as a mediator between the two contending parties. . . . He honestly attempted to construct a platform on which both might stand, and he conducted the affairs of his diocese in a way that was studiously conciliatory, while he held himself aloof from all the cruelties which were committed by Sharp and others in the name of loyalty and religion. But in all this he pleased neither party. By the Presbyterians he was regarded as a traitor, and by the Episcopalians he was treated as a trimmer. But the fineness of his spirit and the thoroughly evangelical character of his works have redeemed his name from the reproach which contemporary combatants cast upon it; and now that the smoke and din of the battle have passed away, his influence as a preacher is felt by ministers of all denominations more than that of any man of his generation. Indeed, his name marks the beginning of a new era in the history of the Scottish Pulpit."

Presbyterians and Episcopalians alike, now, extol his saintly virtues as a man, his administrative wisdom as a bishop, and his rare ability as an expounder of the Sacred Scriptures and a preacher.

This thing, in particular, distinguished him as a preacher — his observance of the principle of *personal adaptation of the truth to the hearer.* He held that

"to secure for truth its fitting place and its due influence in the soul, it is desirable to remove prejudice, to appeal to whatever in the soul comes nearest to it, to establish for it a friendly relation to something which is there already, and thus to get it to move sweetly and freely among the springs and motives of our being." "Therein," says Dr. Taylor, "he was in advance of all who came before him. He abode by the old truths, but he put them in an attractive form, and brought all the resources of a great learning, all the treasures of a fine fancy, all the unction of a devout heart, and all the beauty of an occasionally exquisite style, to bear on their illustration and enforcement."

From this emphatic and appreciative estimate of Leighton by Taylor, himself a real Scotchman of the highest repute, in which estimate he followed that of his renowned teacher, Dr. John Brown, we are warranted in saying that Archbishop Leighton's work for the religious welfare of his countrymen was highly successful and productive of good.

Its general effect upon the Scottish people has been that of a potent social leaven, which, operating gradually, but perceptibly through several generations, has softened their religious differences and transformed the rough features of the Scottish character, as shaped by John Knox and his stern discipline, into something that appears sweeter, more refined, and loveable, though in its fundamental qualities the character of the Scotch people remains the same — firm and solid, as typified in the granite of their native hills. The refinement imparted to it by Leighton's influence and example has not made it inferior as material for character building, but more beautiful, as the stone mason's art polishes and beautifies the granite.

The teaching of his life is an everlasting encouragement to well doing, regardless of worldly success and reward. But it *has not failed of its reward.* As John Ruskin says, "Every noble life leaves the fibre of it interwoven in the fabric of the world." All classes of Presbyterian Scotland show traces of it.

The labors of this good man were fruitful of good also to the Episcopal Church of Scotland, with which he had cast his lot. He was observant of its faults and defects, and he toiled, not in vain, to correct them. Bishop Burnet says, he looked on the state of the English Church with very melancholy reflections; because of its defects of administration; because of its inadequate discipline, which he held to be a matter of prime importance; because of her hasty and incautious ordination of ministers, whose qualifications for the office had not been ascertained; and because of the insufficiency of many livings for the maintenance of their incumbents, on account of which some of the clergy were driven to keep ale houses for their support — *the very men who should have strenuously endeavored to keep themselves and others out of them.*

His notions of what was proper and becoming in the clergy were like those of George Herbert, and he could not and would not let such things go unrebuked. "The parson," he would say with Herbert, "should be careful to avoid all visible sin, *especially that of drinking, because it is the most popular vice.* By having fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, he disableth himself of authority to reprove them; for sins make all equal whom they find together, and then they are worst who ought to be the best. It is not for the servant of Christ to haunt inns, or taverns, or ale houses, to the dishonor of his person and office."

He was no unsocial ascetic, however; but a genial companion and devoted friend. This fact is illustrated by the following anecdote: A friend calling upon him one day for the pleasure of his conversation, found him away from home, and learned by inquiry that he was gone to visit a sick Presbyterian minister on a horse which he had borrowed of the Catholic priest.

This suggests his broad charity and tolerant spirit, to illustrate which his biographer, Pearson, gives this pertinent paragraph:—

"We have seen in the narrative of his public conduct how firmly he withstood the severe measures set afoot to produce a uniformity of worship in Scotland. Swords and halberds, tongs and pincers, were very unfit instruments, in his opinion, for advancing the science and practice of religion. 'The Scripture tells us, indeed, of plucking out a right eye for the preservation of the whole body; but if the eye admit of a cure, it should rather be preserved; only let its cure be committed to the dexterous hand of the kindest oculist, and not to a mere bungler, who would mar instead of healing. For himself, he would suffer everything rather than touch a hair of the head of those, who labored under such pitiable maladies as errors in faith must be accounted: or, if he did meddle with them, it should be with such gentle touch as would prove the friendliness of his disposition and purpose.' 'I prefer,' he has been heard to say, 'an erroneous honest man before the most orthodox knave in the world, and I would rather convince a man that he has a soul to save, and induce him to live up to that belief, than bring him over to my opinion in whatsoever else beside. Would to God that men were but as holy as they might be in the worst of forms now among us! Let us press them to be holy, and miscarry if they can.' Being told of a person who had changed his persuasion, all he said was, 'Is he more meek, more dead to the world? If so, he has made a happy change.'"

From what has just gone before, it will be rightly inferred that Leighton set far higher store upon real piety than upon theological learning. Though himself one of the most learned men of a very learned age, and encouraging his clergy to value human erudition, he put no excessive value upon it. He was accustomed to remark, quoting these words from Seneca, "*Non opus multis literis ad bonum mentem,* but to be established in grace and replenished in spirit."

On this account he was a diligent, untiring student of the Holy Scriptures. The Bible which he had for daily use was proof of this. Its well-worn pages, with marginal notes and references to the Church Fathers, showed how intimate and

scholarly was his acquaintance with it. Its truths nourished and exercised his soul, vitalizing its spiritual faculties and renewing their strength. He often lamented that so many Christian people, instead of feeding upon them with real delight,— ruminating on them leisurely and with intelligent appreciation of their value and importance,— only glanced at them hurriedly, as a duty to be performed, but not heartily enjoyed. Of the book of Psalms he was especially fond, and would sometimes speak of it as "a bundle of myrrh, that ought to lie day and night in the bosom."

For a similar reason, he highly valued the public worship of the Sabbath and the Prayers and Collects of the Prayer Book, and the observance of the Sacred Days of the Christian year. They were to him *vitalizing* means of grace, and by reason of his faithful use of them, his religious character had a stamp of genuineness that was unmistakable.

3. Two things were the evident fruits of these studies and observances,— uncommon pastoral efficiency, and preparedness for the summons of death.

Leighton, as we have already intimated, was a true Spiritual Shepherd. Men found him a good guide in spiritual darkness, and a comforter in sorrow and trouble. He fed upon God's truth, not as a selfish indulgence, but to be empowered by it for well doing. He went about doing good, like his divine Master, exemplifying His loving kindness by a similar love in his own daily practice.

Like Goldsmith's village pastor, he was "in his duty prompt at every call."

"Often would he bewail the proneness of Christians, to stop short of that perfection, the pursuit of which is enjoined upon us; and it was his grief to observe that even good men are

content to be 'low and stunted vines.'" In correction of this general laxity,

> **"He tried each art, reproved each dull delay,**
> **Allured to brighter worlds, and led the way."**

But in his pastoral admonitions and ministerial fidelity there were never heard tones of impatience or scolding. He was always gentle, and the success which attended his ministry of the Gospel proves good the saying of a wise New England writer, that "the only way to speak the truth is to speak lovingly. Only the lover's words are heard," which is something worth remembering by parents and teachers and friends, as well as by preachers.

His sympathetic feeling and skill as a comforter for those in affliction because bereft of dear ones is shown by a letter to his brother-in-law, Mr. Lightfoot, then mourning over the death of a beloved child:—

"It was a sharp stroke of a pen that told me that your little Johnny was dead, and I felt it truly more than, to my remembrance, I did death of any child in my life time. Sweet thing, and is he so quickly laid to sleep? Happy he! Though we shall no more have the pleasure of his lisping and laughing, he shall no more have the pain of crying, nor of being sick, and hath wholly escaped the trouble of schooling and all the suffering of boys, and the riper and deeper griefs of upper years, this poor life being all along nothing but a linked chain of many sorrows and of many deaths. Tell my dear sister she is now so much more akin to the other world; and this will be quickly passed by us all. John is but gone an hour or two sooner to bed, as children used to do, and we are undressing to follow. And the more we put off the love of the present world and all things superfluous beforehand, we shall have the less to do when we lie down."

HIS LAST DAYS.

Little is recorded of what occurred in those ten years spent by Leighton at Broadhurst. We are only told that he was much occupied with deeds of charity and labors of love; that

he preached frequently in the pulpits to which he was invited, and that here, as in all his other abodes, the poor and the ignorant were objects of his pastoral care.

He was keenly observant of the character and work of the Church of England, as manifested during those years in that part of the land where he resided. In his labors of love he showed the lukewarm clergy what manner of men the ministers of Christ ought to be. It was a time of religious coldness, dead formalism and moral corruption, injected between the strict austere Puritan notions and practices of the commonwealth and the earnest evangelism of the Wesleys. "He looked on the state the Church of England was in," says Burnet,

"with very melancholy reflections, and was very uneasy at an expression then much used, that 'it was the best constituted Church in the world.' He thought it was truly so with relation to the doctrine, the worship and the main part of our government. But as to the administration, both with relation to the Ecclesiastical Courts and the pastoral care, he looked on it as one of the most corrupt he had ever seen. He thought we looked like a fair carcase of a body without a spirit — without that zeal, that strictness of life and that laboriousness in the Clergy that became us."

In his preaching to the common people, he avoided jading them with discourses beyond the measure of their understanding or their patience; for "'tis better," he said, "to send them home still hungry than surfeited." He was no advocate, in general, for crude and abrupt exposures of unpalatable truths. Of the performance of a writer who had entitled his book "Naked Truth, Whipped and Stript," he remarked, "It might have been better to clothe it."

He saw nothing praiseworthy in the roughness, *misnamed honesty*, of those preachers, "who would rather overturn the boat than trim it." One of his prayers was, "Deliver us, O Lord, from the errors of wise men; yea, and of good men."

Of his preparedness for death, we have many proofs. To

him, we are told, death had lost its sting, and it was become a pleasant theme, giving occasion for some of his most cheerful sayings. "He would compare this heavy clod of clay, with which the soul is encumbered, to the miry boots, of which the traveller gladly divests himself on finishing his journey"; and he could not disguise his own wish "to be speedily unclothed, instead of lingering below till his garments were worn out and dropped off through age." He would say pleasantly, that he had his "night cap on," and rejoice, "that it was so near bedtime, or rather, *near the hour of rising, to one who had long lain awake in the dark.*"

Pointing to the children of the family one evening, who were showing symptoms of weariness and importuning to be undressed, he said, "Shall I, who am threescore and ten, be loath to go to bed?" This world he considered a state of non-age, and the land of mature men the land afar off. No apothegm of uninspired wisdom pleased him more than that of Seneca: "*Illa dies, quam ut supremam metuisses, eternitatis natalis est.*" His readiness to depart arose from his earnest desire to "see and enjoy perfection in the perfect sense of it." "That consummation," he would say, "is truly a hope deferred; but when it cometh, it will be a tree of life." Impatience for it was restrained by profound submission to the divine will. This alone prevented an excessive desire for the moment when *his soul, completely fledged, should spring into its proper element.*

In the following extract from a letter written shortly before his death we find the longing of his soul expressed:—

"I find daily more and more reason without me, and within me yet more, to pant and long to be gone. I am grown exceeding uneasy in writing and speaking, yea, almost in thinking, when I reflect how cloudy our clearest thoughts are; but I think again, what other can we do till the day break and the shadows flee

away, as one that lieth awake in the night must be thinking? and one thought that will likely oftenest return, when by all other thoughts he finds relief, is, *when will it be day?*"

The event so ardently longed for, and for which he was so well prepared, occurred in London, June 25, 1684, when Leighton was engaged in an act of mercy in the discharge of his pastoral function, to which he was summoned by his dear friend, Gilbert Burnet. The circumstances under which Leighton was called to London form an interesting episode in Burnet's History. Lord Perth, who, as Scotch Justice General, had actively participated in all the atrocities of the times in the persecution of the Presbyterians in Scotland, had come to London to be invested with the office of Lord Chancellor, "to which," says Burnet,

"he had long been aspiring in a most indecent manner."

"In him I saw how ambition could corrupt one of the best-tempered men that I had ever known; who above ten years together seemed to me incapable of an immoral or cruel action, and yet was now deeply engaged in the foulest and blackest of crimes. I had not seen him for two years, but I hoped that still some good impression had been left in him. When he came to London to be made Lord Chancellor, [the reward of his iniquity, from which, now in his grasp, he Judaslike recoiled] I had a very earnest message from him desiring by my means to see Leighton. I thought that angelical man might awaken in him some of those good principles which he seemed once to have, and which were now totally extinguished in him. Accordingly, I writ so earnestly to Leighton that he came to London.

"At his coming to me I was amazed to see him at above seventy look so fresh and well, that age seemed, as it were, to stand still with him; his hair was still black and all his motions lively: he had the same quickness of thought and strength of memory, but, above all, the same heat and life of devotion that I had ever seen in him. When I remarked to him upon my first seeing him, 'how well he looked,' he told me he 'was near his end, for all that; and his work and journey were now almost done.' This, at that time, made slight impression upon me. He was the next day taken with an oppression, and, as it seemed, a cold and stitches, which was pleurisy. The day after, Leighton sunk so, that both speech and

sense went away of a sudden. He continued panting about twelve hours, and then died without pangs or convulsions. I was by him all the while. Thus I lost him who for so many years had been the chief guide of my whole life."

By his death in London, he realized an oft-expressed wish.

"He used often to say that if he were to choose a place to die, it would be in an inn; it looking like a pilgrim's going home, to whom this world was all as an inn, and who was weary of the noise and confusion in it. He added that the officious tenderness and care of friends was an entanglement to a dying man; and that the unconcerned attendance of those that could be procured in such a place would give less disturbance. He obtained what he desired; for he died at the Bell Inn, in Warwick Lane."

His remains were conveyed to Horsted Keynes, the parish in which he had spent his last years, and were interred in an ancient chancel of the church, with no other pomp to hallow his obsequies than the attendance and the expressive tears of the surrounding neighborhood.

The following epitaph was placed on his tombstone:

"DEPOSITUM ROBERT LEIGHTONJ, ARCHIEPISCOPI GLASGUENCIS APUD SCOTAS, QUI OBJT XXV DIE JUNIJ ANNO DMJ 1684. AETATIS SUAE 74."

"That angelical man," his friend, Bishop Burnet, called him, as the remembrance of him came back to mind many years after his death. So, the writer of this study, which Burnet's reminiscences have illustrated and informed, has been made to think of him through the information thus obtained; and so, unless he has unskillfully handled this material, he intends that his readers should think of him whom we have just placed in his grave at Horsted Keynes; for, as an old couplet truly declares:

"The sweet remembrance of the just
Shall flourish when he sleeps in dust."