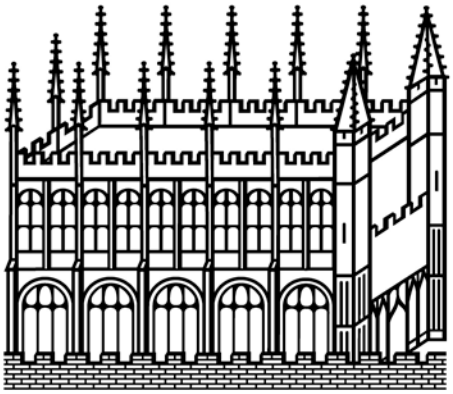

THE LIFE
OF
JOHN MACDONALD, D.
"The Apostle of the North"

BY

ROBERT MACGREGOR

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JOHN MACDONALD, D.D.

1779–1849.

He liveth long who liveth well,
All other life is thrown away;
He liveth longest who can tell
Of true deeds truly done each day.

CHAPTER I.

Early Days.

JOHN MACDONALD, the subject of our sketch, was born on the 12th November 1779, in the parish of Reay, a wild stretch of country on the northern coast of Scotland, cut lengthwise into two nearly equal parts by the boundary line between the counties of Sutherland and Caithness.

James Macdonald, his father, had, when a peasant lad of eighteen, resolved to devote his life to the service of his Maker. His circumstances made it impossible for him to enter the ministry, but, by long and careful study of the Scriptures, he had

qualified himself for the office of catechist and lay-preacher, and it was in this capacity that he was brought northward from Criech, on the Dornoch Firth, by the Rev. Alexander Pope, to work with him in his extensive parish of Reay.

Mr Pope—a relative and namesake of the great poet, to visit whom he rode on his pony, in 1732, all the way from Caithness to Twickenham and back—had been settled in this parish since 1734. At that time "the parish was," says Dr Hew Scott, "almost in a state of semi-barbarism, the natives in general being grossly ignorant, disorderly, and intractable." Mr Pope at once set about building a new church, but though he was a powerful and excellent preacher, few of his ungodly people would come to listen to him. Possessed, however, of great bodily strength, "he used to drive his graceless parishioners to church with a stick when he found them engaged on Sundays at games out-of-doors;" and by the time James Macdonald came to Reay, the minister had succeeded in working a great reformation in his parish.

After a few years' earnest work in Reay, the catechist resolved to leave Scotland for America with his first wife and family. Dr Kennedy has

graphically painted the incident that prevented this project being carried out, in these words:—

"An emigrant ship had been caught by a storm off the Caithness coast. She was hastening towards the frowning rocks that fence the northern shore. Almost all on board were on their knees, uttering loud cries for mercy, and some were driven by the storm to pray, whose oath had been loudest in the calm. Sitting quietly among them was James Macdonald, unruffled, hopeful, and resigned. One of the passengers, observing him, said—"You hardened, godless man, why don't you pray?" "I pity those," was James' answer, "who never prayed till to-night." The vessel was dashed on the wild lee-shore, but all on board escaped. They were bound for America: and thither James Macdonald had resolved to emigrate with his wife and family; but this was his first and last attempt to leave his native land."

Soon after this disaster the first Mrs Macdonald died, and in 1775 the catechist took for his second wife a daughter of John Mackay, a man of high Christian character, who lived near him. This second wife was the mother of the future "Apostle of the North," and he was her second child.

The day on which John Macdonald was born wa
Halloween, according to the old style by which High
landers still go in holding this and other notabl
days in the year. His father was busily engaged o
this day in a distant part of the parish, and th
young members of his family took advantage of hi
absence to join in the fascinating round of amuse
ments this festival affords to those who do not, lik
the worthy catechist, look upon them as degradin
and noxious superstitions. While all the member
of the catechist's household were thus absent, hi
second son was born. Mrs Macdonald was carefull
attended to in her illness by one of her neighbours,
widow, who became so attached to the child, tha
she earnestly begged of its parents that, when th
boy was old enough to leave his mother, she migh
be allowed to take him home to her own house, an
have him as her own child, at least for some years
His parents consented to this, and when John wa
weaned, the widow became a second mother to him
He remained under her care for five years, the con
stant object of this good woman's attention an
prayers. Each night as she put the boy to bed sh
prayed aloud for his welfare, and Dr Kennedy say

her prayers made so deep an impression on Dr Macdonald's memory, that even in his last years he could recollect some of her petitions.

There is a story told of the baptism of Dr Macdonald, which shows us a specimen of a class of ministers, unfortunately not unique in the Scottish Church of last century. Mr Pope being away in bad health, the catechist had to go to the minister of a neighbouring parish to get his son baptized. On a cold December day he and his wife went with the infant to that minister's manse, but they found he was from home; he had started in the morning for a day's shooting, and was not expected to return before evening. There was nothing for the Macdonalds but to turn back, and cross the moor again to their home. When they had gone some distance they met the minister in his shooting attire, and he decided, instead of taking them back to the manse, to make short work of it by baptizing the child on the spot. Breaking with the butt of his gun the ice on a frozen pool, the minister sprinkled some of the water on the face of the boy as he repeated the solemn words of consecration, and completed a baptism in which many have seen "a presage of Dr

Macdonald's future work as the great field preache
of his day."

John Macdonald remained, as we have said, unde
the widow's care until he was nearly six years old
He then returned to his father's house, where for th
next three years he was employed as the herd-boy o
his father's cows on the large stretch of commo
pasture land, which the tenants of a Highland town
ship have allotted to them for grazing ground, i
addition to their arable "lots" or crofts. On to thi
common herding ground many boys are brought b
their duties, and it thus becomes one of the grea
playing fields of a district. Among these boys young
Macdonald soon became a ruling spirit. His thorough
good temper, his quick and hearty laugh, and th
spirit of fun that ever glanced from his merry blac
eyes, made him a most pleasant companion; whil
his daring and activity, his ingenuity in inventing
games, and his skill in music, combined, with th
other qualities, to make young Macdonald the leade
of the bare-footed and bare-headed laddies in kilts
who were the active, if not very careful, herd boys o
the hamlet.

In John's ninth year, he began his education i

the parish school of Reay, then taught by Mr William Munro, of whom Dr Macdonald afterwards wrote:—"He was my first and last teacher, and, under Providence, my best friend in prosecuting my education. I entered his school in June 1788, and commenced Latin in May 1791. He taught me without a fee."

The catechist seems originally to have had no intention of making his son a minister. His wish was that Mr Munro should give the lad only an elementary education, content if his son could read, write, and reckon; but both the parish minister and Mr Munro saw there was good stuff in the catechist's son, and the schoolmaster, sure the boy would do him credit, began to teach him "the rudiments" in 1791.

It was one of the best features of the old parish school system in Scotland, that on the school-room benches sat side by side boys of all ranks in society. The sons of the lairds and big farmers might go to town schools for the finishing touches before matriculating at college, but they got the groundwork of their education along with the sons of ploughman and cottar, to the mutual benefit of all.

So it was in the Reay parish school. Several of

the sons of neighbouring proprietors were under Mr Munro's care, and among them two sons of the Laird of Bighouse, an estate now belonging to the Duke of Sutherland, but in those days the seat of an ancient branch of the family of Mackay.

The two Bighouse boys began their Latin "rudiments" on the same day as the catechist's son, but clever John Macdonald's thirst for knowledge soon carried him so far ahead of his class fellows, that Mr Munro saw that, in justice to him, he should be promoted to higher work than the Mackays were fit for. For some time the teacher felt a perhaps natural enough hesitation in pushing the catechist's son forward, while the laird's boys had to be left behind; but when Mrs Mackay became aware that her sons were acting as a drag rather than a stimulus to John Macdonald, she behaved like a sensible woman, and not only encouraged Mr Munro to do his clever pupil justice, but engaged Macdonald to come to the mansion-house every evening to assist her sons in preparing their lessons for the next day. Not only was this of advantage to him in a pecuniary way, but "the privilege of being brought in contact with more refined society and habits, counterbalanced the dis-

advantage of his having to drag two dunces after him through the difficulties of the Latin grammar."

As John Macdonald grew older, his eagerness to learn increased. His father's cottage being small, and its one public room being liable to visits of neighbours and other interruptions that distracted the attention of the young and ardent student, he begged the assistance of a kind and handy man, and the two built a little room at the end of the catechist's cottage, to which John removed his bed and his books, and in this little study he was able to give his undivided attention to his lessons during a set portion of each day.

He soon began to have other occupation for his scanty leisure hours besides helping the Bighouse boys in their evening tasks. Both at school and afterwards at college, mathematics was the secular study he most excelled in, and his cleverness at arithmetic while in the Reay parish school, made many of the neighbouring farmers and factors employ him to help them in making out their annual accounts.

Mrs Innes of Sandside — one of the principal estates in the district—hearing of the lad's cleverness and perseverance, took a great interest in him.

For a considerable time he lived almost entirely at Sandside House, as assistant to the factor in keeping the accounts of the estate, and it was while here that John Macdonald met with an adventure that very nearly changed the whole current of his future life.

In 1797, Mrs Innes sent him with a letter to the house of a gentleman near Thurso. There happened to be a recruiting party at Thurso at that time, Britain then was at war with France and Spain, and men must be got for the army by almost any means, fair or foul. "Sergeant Kites" were at every fair and gathering of the country people up and down the land, beguiling strapping lads with tinsel visions of glory, and stirring up their martial ardour with the rousing strains of pipe and drum.

Such a party did John Macdonald fall in with after he had delivered Mrs Innes' letter. The lad, himself no mean performer on the bagpipe, heard here music such as he had never listened to before. The sergeant had set all the lads and lasses in the place dancing to the lively strains of his fifers, and young Macdonald eagerly joined in the dance, till so excited did he get with the merriment and the sergeant's blandishments, that when the amusements

of the evening were over, the catechist's son had, almost without knowing it, the King's shilling in his pocket.

The recruiting sergeant, when parting with him at night, said to him—"You are now enlisted to serve your king and country, and in the morning you must come along with me to a Justice of the Peace to be attested." Reflection, now that it seemed too late, came upon the lad: he saw how foolish he had been, and what a price it was likely he would have to pay for his evening's fun. Luckily for him, the magistrate before whom the sergeant brought him to be sworn-in was the gentleman to whom he had brought Mrs Innes' letter. This gentleman knew nothing of John Macdonald, but at breakfast he happened to mention what a smart recruit from Reay the sergeant had enlisted on the previous evening. Among the guests at his table happened to be Mr George Mackenzie, minister of the neighbouring parish of Olrig, who asked if the Reay recruit was the young man who had come the day before with the letter from Sandside House. When Mr Mackenzie ascertained that it was he, he at once said—"He must be released; he is the son of James

Macdonald, the Reay catechist, and his parents in-
tend to send him to college." Good Mr Mackenzie
immediately went to the officer in charge of the
recruiting party, and begged of him to release his
recruit. His petition was backed up by the magis-
trate, and at last the officer consented, and John
Macdonald was allowed to return to Sandside a wiser
man for the narrow escape and seemingly accidental
circumstances that thus prevented the future "Apostle
of the North" from being a soldier.

Young Macdonald was now eighteen years of age
and as good a classical and mathematical scholar as
the Reay schoolmaster could make him. The winter
session of King's College, Aberdeen, was approach-
ing, and it was time for the young man to pack his
trunk and face the long journey that separated his
home in the north of Caithness from the university
city on the Dee. The interest of his Sandside
patroness had procured for him one of the bursaries
that have helped so many poor students at Aberdeen
University to rise from small beginnings to high and
honourable positions.

Thus provided for, mentally and bodily, he matri-
culated in the Arts Faculty at Aberdeen in Novembe

1797. In his first session, when the work done in the lecture-rooms is in the easier classical authors, Macdonald, though not perhaps quite the most distinguished student, was very nearly so; but in the second year, when Aberdeen students begin their mathematical work, his special aptitude for calculation bore him far ahead of all his class-fellows.

There is a story told of him in connection with this mathematical class that well illustrates his habits of concentrated attention to his work, and the absorption of his mind in any duty he might be engaged in.

Professor William Duncan, who occupied the Chair of Mathematics at that time, was accustomed, when he reached the higher branches of his subject towards the close of the session, to give out some specially difficult problems to his students, which he expected only the best of them to solve. As these problems increased in difficulty as the end of the lectures drew near, one by one the students who had been solving them dropped out of the contest, until at last John Macdonald and one other were the only solvers left of the whole class. One day the Professor gave out an extremely difficult problem, which Mac-

donald spent a whole evening over in a vain endeavour to solve. It became so late that he had at length reluctantly to lay it aside and go to bed. Next morning, to his great surprise, he found on his desk the problem correctly solved and neatly written out in his own hand. The fellow-student who shared his room with him, told him that he had risen during the night, written out what he found on his desk, and then returned to bed. When he brought his exercise to Professor Duncan, he found it quite correct, and complimented him on his solution of such a difficult problem.

We have seen above what an influence music had over John Macdonald. From his earliest years he had an intense love for it, and in his herd-boy days on the common, the strains of John's bagpipes greatly contributed to the amusement of the merry guardians of the hamlet cattle. The great pipe, harsh and forbidding to Lowland ears, has always charms for the Celt. It was Macdonald's favourite instrument, and on leaving home for Aberdeen in 1797 "it was carefully packed in his trunk," Dr Kennedy tells us, "and doubtless furnished many a pleasant interlude amidst the busy studies of the

session. In leaving home the next year the pipe was forgotten, but recollecting, after reaching Thurso, that he had left his favourite behind, he returned to his father's house to fetch it. Before the following session higher matters began to occupy his attention, and the pipe was that year left purposely behind. His father, in order to try him, wrote to inquire what would be done with the pipe. 'Just what you think right,' was his answer, well knowing what treatment his idol was likely to receive at his father's hands. The old man no sooner received this license from his son than he went to fetch the pipe from its place, and laying it on the block, he plied with right good will the axe on its chanters."

It would have been strange if this young man, having lived all his life under the precept and example of his father, had not early had strong religious tendencies, but it seems to have been only in the vacation between his second and third college sessions that he was guided into a firm faith and belief in the truth. The works of the American, Jonathan Edwards, and the earnest preaching of Mr Robertson, then missionary at

Achreny, afterwards minister of Kingussie, greatly aided the old catechist's endeavours to bring this about. After this religion had ever the chief place in his thoughts and in his studies.

CHAPTER II.

License and Ordination.—Translation to Edinburgh.

AFTER a distinguished college career of eight years, John Macdonald was licensed to preach the Gospel by the Presbytery of Caithness, on the 2nd of July 1805. His first sermon was preached shortly afterwards, but there seems to have been little promise in it, or in its immediate successors, of the future power that attracted crowds to listen to his fervent oratory. At first he was diffident and nervous. A knowledge of the great interest felt in him, and the expectations of his success entertained by those who honoured and revered his father, may have helped to increase his nervousness and misgivings, but an expedition he undertook at this time was useful not only in overcoming this, but in giving him a foretaste of the great work in which he afterwards became so famous as "The Apostle of the North." This was an Ossianic tour through the North-Western

Highlands, which he undertook at the urgent reques
of the patriotic Sir John Sinclair of Ulbster, s
famous for his many public-spirited undertakings
The Highland Society of London had appointed
committee, of which Sir John was nominated presi
dent, to superintend the publication of the Ossiani
MSS. in Gaelic. To this work Sir John prefixed
dissertation on the authenticity of the Gaelic poems
and it was to help him in writing this that he asked
the young minister to ascertain to what exten
Ossian's poems were still recited, and traditions o
the Fingalians still existed in the Highlands. How
Mr Macdonald fared in this quest we see from hi
own words:—

"In the whole course of my travels in the High
lands, I did not meet with an individual, so far as
recollect, who did not hear of the race of Fingal, and
to whom the names of Fion, Ossian, and Oscar, were
not familiar, even though they could not repeat the
poems and tales of these heroes.

"Persons, in the different counties through which
I travelled, who never had any intercourse with each
other, repeated the same tales and poems with very
little variation.

"That there existed such a race as the Fingalians, that their time was in remote antiquity, and that the poems of Ossian are genuine, are as firmly believed in the Highlands as the truth of any tradition whatever. Learned and unlearned, young and old, agree in this."

While diligently searching in this way for evidence of Ossianic remains, Mr Macdonald did not forget other and higher calls on his services. In every parish that he visited he preached as often as circumstances would permit, and he had many opportunities for exhortation and conversation with boatmen, and guides and others, as well as meetings in the evenings. In at least one case he had good assurance that words thus spoken bore good fruit, for a girl who had guided him across a wide moor, and whom he had exhorted to remember her Creator in the days of her youth, came to him twenty years after, at the end of a sermon he preached at Contin, and said that the words spoken on the Assynt moor had made an abiding impression on her heart. Mr Macdonald, on inquiry, found that all who knew her regarded her as a truly Christian woman.

On Mr Macdonald's return from this tour, in

November 1805, he was appointed to the mission of Achreny and Halladale, close to his old home at Reay. Though the district under his charge was extensive, comprising parts of the parishes of Halkirk and Watten in Caithness, and all the Sutherlandshire portion of Reay parish, his income as missionary was very small, and the cottage he lived in very lowly. Yet he found a good woman willing to share his lot with him, and, in January 1806, the young missionary brought home to his humble manse his first wife, Miss Georgina Ross, of Gladfield.

Further preferment soon came to Mr Macdonald, for not very long after his marriage he was made missionary minister of Berriedale, in the parish of Latheron, Caithness-shire. The scenery of Berriedale is very grand. Close to it on the north comes the southern end of the mighty cliffs and stacks that form so magnificent a feature of Caithness coast scenery, while to the south rise the precipices of the celebrated Ord of Caithness. Though there is now an excellent manse there, in Mr Macdonald's day the missionary's cottage was little, if anything, better than the dwelling he had left at Achreny. So in- it, and so exposed to the fury of the

stormy Caithness winds, that, as Mr Macdonald was taking his last look at it when removing his household on his translation to Edinburgh, its roof was torn off by the fury of a storm that was then blowing, and scattered about on the ground. Well might the old catechist, who had come to assist his son at "the flitting," say, "John, I think it was high time to leave Berriedale."

With practice and greater confidence, Mr Macdonald had improved considerably as a preacher during the eighteen months he had now been a minister, though he did not even yet excite among his Caithness hearers very high expectations, and certainly none of the future eminence he was to reach. So satisfied, however, of his qualifications was the Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge, that, towards the end of 1806, they offered him a presentation to the Gaelic Church in Edinburgh, which he accepted, and accordingly he left his romantic district and roofless manse, as we have seen, in December 1806, and was inducted minister of the Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge's Gaelic Church in the capital in January 1807.

Many of our readers may remember the old

Gaelic Chapel, with its inscription, "The Lord wil provide," standing in what is now Chambers Street opposite the Industrial Museum, before the building was swept away to make room for the Improvemen Trust's fine new street. In this chapel, then, th earnest young Caithness divine began his ministry i 1807. What difficulties and painful trials beset hi in the early part of his new sphere of labour hav been well described by Dr Kennedy in these words:—

"In the new sphere on which he now entered the experience which Mr Macdonald had acquire could not be of much avail. True, it was a Gaeli charge; his hearers in Edinburgh were Highlanders but they were in a city, removed from all the re straining influences to which they had been wont t yield, and in contact with temptations which foun them unwary and unskilled. They had come fro all districts in the Highlands, and were of all clan and of all coteries, and they carried with them i their local prejudices and jealousies many element of division. A few of them, successful in busines became purse-proud, and ambitious of a positio which their want of education unfitted them t occupy. Others, finding it easier, amidst greate

laxity of opinion and of conduct, to make a creditable profession of religion, thrust themselves forward into positions in the Church which they would not have ventured to lay claim to before. To manage such a congregation wisely, to refrain from giving unnecessary offence, and yet to deal faithfully with all, required no ordinary skill. There were then, however, among the Highlanders in Edinburgh, not a few pious men, whose character all respected, and who united all their influence in strengthening the hands of their minister. With their help, and by his own amiable disposition, easy address, and growing pulpit power, he was enabled to consolidate the congregation into a compact body, with the lines of section blotted out, and all animated by the warmest feeling of attachment to their minister, till the proposal of introducing an English instead of one of the Gaelic services began to be mooted.

"The introduction of an English sermon each Sabbath becomes always a necessity at a certain stage in the life of a Gaelic congregation in a large city. The young born in the city grow up in ignorance of Gaelic, and some, who once could speak it by not using, lose it. Some of the older members of

the congregation affect to be too genteel when they become rich, and must try, by rolling their tongues in barbarous Scotch, to rub the Gaelic off them. Others, anxious to have their families along with them in the house of God, must go to other congregations, if an English service is not provided for their children in the Gaelic Church. The strength of the congregation is weakened if these forsake it. The minister, too, likes to preach in English as well as in Gaelic. Outside his own congregation are some who like the Highland preaching, when it is given them in a Lowland tongue, and the presence and influence of these is an accession. So there must be English: it cannot be kept out. And the pure Celts are sure to resist its introduction. Many of them think that the preaching is not worth a hearing if it is not in Gaelic. Some think that a slight is cast on the only language which they speak, and on the land which was their birth-place, and they stand up against the Saxon tongue as their sires once rose against the Saxon rule. A few who derived spiritual profit by the Gaelic sermons, are unwilling to lose one of the diets by which they were ...ed to be fed. There is always, therefore, a

risk of serious division whenever the English service is first introduced, and Mr Macdonald had painful experience of this during his ministry at Edinburgh."

At length this vexed question was settled by Mr Macdonald arranging to preach Gaelic sermons in the morning and afternoon, and an English sermon in the evening of every Sunday. Even with his careful preparation of all his discourses, this pulpit work was but a small part of the zealous minister's labours. He organized weekly prayer meetings; delivered a lecture on a night of every week; held district catechizings periodically, and assiduously visited his people in their own homes. Nor were his labours confined to his own congregation. His fame as a preacher having greatly increased, other people than those of the Gaelic Chapel wished to listen to his "searching and fervent, as well as sound and lucid," sermons. He had very often to go to Stirling and Glasgow, where regiments of Highland militia were stationed, to preach to the soldiers, and demands multiplied for his services in other Scottish towns. With all these calls on his time, it is wonderful how he managed so to arrange his hours that he could always devote to study the time he

had set apart for it in his weekly programme of duties. Precise and methodical by nature, he was always in the habit of mapping out his hours of work, so that duties seldom jostled one another in his daily labours. Mr Ogle, the publisher, had placed at his service a room in his house to be used as a study, and hither he retired for a set time weekly to read and compose without disturbance.

His old friend, Sir John Sinclair, was then in Edinburgh, and at his house Mr Macdonald met all the highest and best of Edinburgh society. These social gatherings were both pleasant and profitable to him; "he had no such advantages before, and, eager to acquire knowledge, he was resolved to make the most of them. He carefully read such works as he heard these great men criticise and commend, and thus attained to be abreast of the leading minds in general information; and he acquired a facility and accuracy of expression in English which greatly contributed to his future usefulness."

For nearly seven years Mr Macdonald led the life of a zealous and devoted city minister,

with only occasional visits to the North, where the wonderful development of his powers as a preacher excited the astonishment of all who heard him. His heart, however, seems always to have been with the people of his own native hills and glens, and, in 1813, when an opportunity of returning to the Highlands offered itself to him, he readily accepted it, and from this time forward we find him in his right place, labouring without ceasing in the sphere for which he was best adapted

CHAPTER III.

Translated to Urquhart.—Evangelist.

WHEN the godly Charles Calder, the minister of the Ross-shire parish of Urquhart, died, Mr Duncan Forbes, of Culloden, the patron, determined to leave the choice of a successor to the parishioners themselves. They consulted the Rev. Dr Mackintosh, minister of Tain, who strongly recommended to them Mr Macdonald. Dr Mackintosh's recommendation was supported by Hector Holm, a leader among "the Men" of Ross-shire, under whose hospitable roof John Macdonald had spent many a night on his journeyings to and from Aberdeen University. Hector Holm had liked the lad from the first time he saw him, a stranger seeking food and shelter under his roof on one occasion when the Invergordon ferrymen could not venture to cross for a storm. As he knew the young man

better, his liking grew, and with it profound respect for the minister's piety and worth.

On such cordial recommendations from men on whose judgment they placed the greatest reliance the people of Urquhart were quite satisfied, and on their unanimous petition Mr Forbes presented Mr Macdonald to the parish, and he was accordingly inducted on the 1st of September 1813.

Urquhart, or rather, "the united parishes of Urquhart and Logie Wester," lies on the southern shore of the Cromarty Firth, from which it rises with a uniform slope to the ridge of the Mullbuy. Its own natural scenery is tame, but it commands magnificent views of the grander landscape of the Wester Ross mountains. Very commonly this many-named parish is called Ferintosh.

The Rev. Charles Calder, Mr Macdonald's predecessor in Urquhart, had been a most faithful and exemplary minister. Under his care his parishioners had made great progress in religious knowledge and in moral conduct; and when Mr Macdonald went there, he found much evidence of the fruit borne from Mr Calder's public services, and the constant meetings up and down his parish for religious in-

struction. The pious labours of his predecessor, and the veneration in which his memory was held by his people, were spurs to the young and active new minister, that not only should there be no falling back among the people, but an increase in their stores of spiritual wealth. "The new pastor," says Hugh Miller, "at once took up and vigorously handed on the message which his predecessor had so successfully spread;" and so successful was he in this, that Mrs Calder, while rejoicing in the good attending his labours, said it was a trial to her to look back on what seemed in comparison the unfruitfulness of her husband's ministry, but Mr Macdonald assured her that "what you now see, is the upspringing of the seed which your husband sowed. The farmer sends his best man to sow the seed; but the field once sown, he sends any boy who may happen to be at hand to harrow it. The field must be harrowed as well as sown, but the sowing is the more important work. It was thus 'the Lord of the harvest' dealt in appointing work for your husband and for me. He, the skilled labourer, was sent to sow the good seed, and I, the novice, was sent after him to do the lier work."

On the 18th August 1814, Mr Macdonald's first wife died. When she fell ill her husband was about to start for Caithness, to see his old father, and preach for the minister of Reay. Mrs Macdonald apprehending no danger from her illness, urged her husband not to set aside his engagements on her account; but though he yielded to her wish, his anxiety about her was so great, that after going a short part of his journey, he returned home again. Mrs Macdonald a second time pressed him to resume his journey, but he was only absent a few days when his wife became alarmingly ill, and suddenly expired. The messenger sent with the sad news of her death met the anxious husband on his journey homewards, after as short a stay as possible in Caithness. The communion season at Urquhart had been fixed for the week after his return, but his elders suggested to him that, under the circumstances, the communion services should be postponed; but, unfit as the bereaved husband felt for his share of the work he would not let his affliction interfere with the commemoration of the Saviour's death, and so, within one week, he had to lay his wife's remains in the grave and engage in his first communion services in Urquhart.

Those who are familiar with the Highlands know how the people gather to the services of the holy communion, not only from the parish itself, but from all the neighbouring parishes, and frequently from very considerable distances. No church could ho'd the crowds that assemble, and accordingly, while the building is opened for those who choose, the great mass of the hearers arrange themselves on some gentle slope before a portable pulpit, from which a succession of ministers preach to them sermon after sermon, with hardly any interval, during the days from Thursday to Monday or Tuesday.

When Dr Macdonald's name became famous as the Apostle of the North, enormous numbers of people came to his communion services. "It has been computed," says Hugh Miller, "that not less than fifteen thousand souls have assembled at the sacrament at Urquhart, and to that stirring scene men have been known to journey on foot not less than a hundred miles from their homes."

So it was at this Urquhart sacramental season. Though eighteen hundred people have often been crammed on ordinary occasions within the walls of the simple, plain parish church near the sea-shore, at

these communion gatherings the services were held outside in "the Burn." On this occasion an immense crowd of people gathered from all quarters. "As many as ten thousand were in 'the burn' on Sabbath. To this vast multitude Mr Macdonald preached that day. 'I will betrothe thee unto her for ever' was the text. From the very commencement of the service there was an unusual stillness in the congregation, and all seemed under the spell of an unwonted solemnity. They knew the preacher's affliction, and they could not even look on him unmoved. His sorrow touched their hearts, and his self-denial, courage, and devotedness to the service of the Gospel appealed powerfully to their conscience. Few eyes were tearless in that vast assembly: and when, in the evening, he appealed to the unconverted, commending to them the love of Jesus, urging on their acceptance His offer of marriage, and warning them of the danger of refusing His advances, the hearts of many sinners were pierced."

For more than two years after his wife's death Mr Macdonald devoted his labours nearly entirely to his own parish, though the awakening that followed from his earnest efforts spread through most of the

adjacent districts. It was not until 1816 that we find him throwing himself specially into the wider field of evangelising, that earned for him the title of Apostle of the North. Mr Findlater, a missionary at Ardeonaig, on Loch Tayside, had heard of the good work he was doing in Ross-shire, and wrote Mr Macdonald, begging him to come to Breadalbane to preach at his next communion. Mr Macdonald gladly agreed to go. Tidings of his arrival, and of the wonderful effects of his first sermon at once spread through the district—"news," says Mr Campbell, of Kiltearn, "which excited an ardent desire to hear the extraordinary preacher, and to witness scenes before unheard of in Breadalbane; while some desired to experience such influences themselves as were felt by others. The result was that the most of the Glenlyon people were in Ardeonaig on Sabbath." Mr Macdonald preached several other sermons during this visit to Perthshire, and the good fruit that followed his labours made "Glenlyon and Breadalbane ever after green spots in his memories of the past," and "often cheered him when his heart was fainting in the toil of later and less fruitful years."

From this time forward, then, for the thirty-thre remaining years of his life and ministry, Mr Mac donald was pre-eminently an evangelist. His ow parish had been so well cared for by his predecesso and himself, that it could spare a part of his tim and labour for other places. The other agencies fo religious instruction that he had set agoing i Urquhart were of so complete a kind, that th minister could, with every confidence, devote a par of his strength to less favoured localities. Th population of his parish at this time was under thre thousand souls, dwelling in a rectangle, about te miles long, by three and a-half miles broad; yet i this small area no fewer than three catechists wer employed by the kirk-session, and six Sabbath even ing schools were held in the different districts of th parish, "all of which," Mr Macdonald tells us, "ar well attended, and are successful in conveying to th rising generation, as well as to others, much importan Scripture knowledge."

By the year 1817, the extra-parochial calls fo his services had already so increased, that for a con siderable part of the year he was oftener out of hi parish than in it; indeed, during the summer an

autumn months he rarely preached in his own pulpit. At first, when his people might not have heard him once for six weeks, they were disposed to murmur, and think it hard that their beloved minister should be so often and so long away from his own parish, but they became more reconciled in time, on account of the good he was doing elsewhere, and was thankful that Urquhart had a minister of whose services all were anxious to have a share.

When he was asked to officiate at a parish some distance from home, he, on his homeward journey, tried to preach to the people of every parish he passed through. Some churches were locked against him; many ministers did not approve of week-day services and "vagrant preaching;" others would on no account admit, on Sunday or Saturday, "the wild man of Ferintosh" into their pulpits. "But he would not be baulked. On the nearest spot to the forbidden ground on which he had license to preach, he would assemble the people of the recusant parson, and preach to them *en passant*, on one of his evangelistic tours."

In this second year of Mr Macdonald's evangelistic work, this opposition to his preaching became the

subject of a reference and complaint to the Genera Assembly.

On his journeys to Aberdeen Mr Macdonald ha to pass through the district of Strathbogie, after wards to become so well known in the ante-Disrup tion annals. Here "moderatism, in its coldest an most secular type," says Dr Robert Buchanan, "ha the seven parishes all to itself. The etiquette of parochial establishment made it something like breach of church order for one minister to intrud upon the domain of another without his leave even when his sole errand might be to preach th Gospel. . . . An eminent and much blesse servant of God, the Rev. John Macdonald, of Ferin tosh, having chanced to pass through this steril region, felt 'his spirit stirred in him,' like Paul i Athens, when he saw the deadness which reigne around. And, more alive to the worth of immorta souls, and to the power and preciousness of Christ than to questions of clerical privilege or parochia subdivision, he took his stand at the highway-side and made Strathbogie ring with the glad sound o the everlasting Gospel." He afterwards preached i a Dissenting chapel there, when the Presbytery tool

up the conduct of "the vagrant preacher" from Ross-shire, and sent up a complaint against him to the General Assembly, at whose meeting the Presbytery were heard in support of the reference, and Mr Macdonald in explanation. The Assembly, by a majority, made a general declaration "that the conduct of any minister of the Church who exercises his pastoral functions in a vagrant manner, preaching during his journeys from place to place in the open air, in other parishes than his own, . . . is disorderly and unbecoming the character of a minister of this Church," and enjoined Presbyteries to see that no countenance be given to such meetings as might injure the interests of religion, and disturb the peace and order of the Church. No reference to Mr Macdonald was made in this deliverance, nor does it appear to have had any effect on his future conduct as the great Apostle of the North.

CHAPTER IV.

Second Marriage.—Home Life.—Visits St Kilda.

ON the 11th of May 1818, Mr Macdonald brough home to the manse of Urquhart, Janet, th eldest daughter of Kenneth Mackenzie, of Millbank to be a second mother to his three children, and faithful and loving wife to himself.

Mrs Macdonald was a most exemplary woman one whom all the minister's friends rejoiced to se him wed. His friend, Mr Findlater, of Ardeonaig well expressed the general feeling when he wrote:— "I have to congratulate you in the most cordia manner on the happy prospect of being united to lady of such accomplishments and such eminen piety."

By his first marriage Mr Macdonald had three children, two sons and a daughter; and seven children by his second marriage.

"It was said, but it must have been by one who

was more anxious to speak smartly," Dr Kennedy tells us, "than to speak truly, that Mr Macdonald was never 'from home' but when he was 'at home.' None would have said so who had seen him at his own fireside. If he spent but a small portion of his time at home, it was only because he loved his Master better than his family, and the service of the Gospel better than the comforts of domestic life. There was no man who could make home more pleasant, and was more disposed to do so, and could more enjoy the happiness of the family circle. Retaining still a father's place, he could be at the same time a companion to his children, making his conversation an enjoyment to them, as well as an instruction. He brought all the fresh interest of a student to bear upon the school-work of his boys. And yet, while interested for the time in his affairs of home, he could easily relinquish it, with all its cares and comforts, when called to preach the everlasting Gospel."

While at home, Mr Macdonald took an interest in directing the various labours of his glebe and garden, and other necessary things connected with his establishment. His being a united parish, there

were two glebes attached to the living when he went to Urquhart, each of which was at a considerable distance from the manse and from the other. To obviate this inconvenience Mr Macdonald, soon after his admission, got both these distant glebes "excambed," or exchanged, for land contiguous to the manse. Rather more than half of this new glebe was moorland, but in his short intervals of leisure he drew out plans for the improvement of this, and succeeded in bringing into cultivation a large part of it.

Always methodical in his habits, he had drawn out the following "rules for the employment of time each day" for his guidance when at home:—

From 7 to 9 A.M.—Private devotion.
„ 9 „ 10 „ —Family worship and breakfast.
„ 10 „ 3 P.M. —Parochial duties, studies, &c.
„ 3 „ 4 „ —Dinner.
„ 4 „ 5 „ —Study.
„ 5 „ 6 „ —Tea, and conversation.
„ 6 „ 9 „ —Private devotion and study.
„ 9 „ 10 „ —Family worship and supper.
„ 10 „ 11 „ —Private devotion.
„ 11 „ 7 A.M.—Sleep and dressing.

That is to say—

For private devotion and study, . .	8 hours.
Meals, family and parochial duties, for each four hours, ...	8 „
Sleep and dressing, ...	8 „
	24 hours.

"The form of this table, and the mode in which the day is divided, are," we are told, "quite characteristic. His love of precision would have made him quite uncomfortable unless he had discovered that he had divided the twenty-four hours into three equal portions, and that a distinct work had been assigned to each of them."

Up to the year 1822, Mr Macdonald's evangelistic tours did not carry him further away from his happy home than Aberdeen, or perhaps now and then Edinburgh or Glasgow, as the turning point in a very lengthened journey; but in this year he went, if not his furthest, certainly his most novel and dangerous expedition hitherto.

Early in July of this year, 1822, the Rev. Dr Campbell, of Edinburgh, on behalf of the Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge, wrote to Mr Macdonald, directing his attention to the mission of St Kilda, and making a proposal to him, "which," he writes, "from your well-known principles and feelings of love to our common Lord, and to the souls of men, and from your habits of itinerating, I should incline to think would not fail to be agreeable to you." This proposal was that he should go to this

remote island in the following August. The time was short, but Dr Campbell assured him the necessities of the islanders were urgent in the extreme, and that if no minister went in August, "the poor St Kildaites must be destitute of spiritual instruction for another year."

This cry of "Come over and help us" was one that the zealous evangelist had no power to resist. Within six weeks of the receipt of Dr Campbell's letter, Mr Macdonald had set out on his journey to the remote islets of the west—much the most westerly piece of Scottish ground:—

> Whose lonely race
> Resign the setting sun to Indian worlds.

About forty-three miles straight out in the Atlantic from Shillay in the Outer Hebrides, lies the group of rocky islands, the largest of which is named on the map St Kilda, but is called by its inhabitants Hirt (pronounced Hirst)—the island Grey Morag in the "Lord of the Isles" speaks of to Edith of Lorn:—

> "Daughter," she said, "these seas behold,
> Round twice a hundred islands roll'd:
> From Hirt, that hears their northern roar,
> To the green Islay's fertile shore."

The largest island—the only one of them inhabited—is about three miles long by about two miles broad. Nearly all round its coast fearful cliffs rise up, perpendicular as a wall, from the deep water. In two places only is landing possible, and even there, only when the weather is calm. Towards the south-east is the small bay that is the usual landing place, and on the slope facing it the inhabitants congregate in a small village, built in a crescent shape, with cottages that, though now rather improved, were, at the time of Mr Macdonald's visit, built in the usual style of west Highland cots, of loose stones embedded in turf and earth, and thatched with straw, bound down with straw or heather ropes, and weighted with stones, lest the fury of the frequent gales should blow the whole covering away.

In a valley between two towering cliffs, is the arable land where this industrious community grow their scanty crops. Each family has here its croft, where oats, bere, potatoes, and a few common vegetables are carefully cultivated; but the great source of maintenance of the islanders is the myriads of sea birds that swarm on the cliffs of their desolate home. "The air here," says Maculloch, "is full of

feathered animals, the sea is covered with them, the houses are ornamented by their feathers, and the ground is speckled by them like a flowery meadow in May."

To obtain the birds—from whose feathers, oil, flesh, and eggs the natives derive their only income—is a dreadful occupation, but habit has made the danger so familiar as hardly to be thought of, or thought of only as a pleasant spice of romantic excitement, varying the monotony of life. Working in pairs, the hardy Hirtman fastens a rope securely round his body below his arms, and, grasping another in his left hand, lowers himself down the face of a mighty cliff, and trusts his life to the coolness and nerve of his companion, who grasps with hands and feet the cords above. Swinging in this way along the face of the precipice, striking his feet against the rock now and then, or springing from side to side as fearlessly as if on the plain below, the bird-catcher gathers his eggs, or collects his load of sea birds, till he can carry no more, when the trusty hands above draw him up.

The birds that yield most profit to the St Kilda man are the solan goose and the fulmar petrel. This

fulmar breeds in no other part of the United King dom, but it swarms on the grassy ledges of the S Kilda cliffs. The people eat its flesh and eggs, an sell its feathers and the fine oil it yields. This o the birds secrete in their stomachs, and often spit i the faces of the spoilers of their nests. When th birds are taken to the top of the cliff the men squeez the oil from their bills into a vessel, and as it is equa to whale oil for burning in lamps, it forms one o their chief sources of income.

In 1697, when we get our first account of thes islands, the population was 180. When Mr Mac donald visited it in 1822 the people numbered 10 and they have continued to decrease since then, til now, owing to a disease that attacks almost all th children soon after birth, the population is onl about 75.

All the earlier accounts of the visits to the island concur in saying that the people were distinguishe for their kindness to strangers, affection for eac other, decency and sobriety, piety and industry; bu though Mr Macdonald could cordially endorse nearl all this good character, in one most important poin he found a falling back. "It grieves me to say," h

tells us, "and I took pains to ascertain the truth, that, among the whole body, I did not find a single individual who could be truly called *a decidedly religious person*—that is, one who has felt the influence of the truth on his soul, and who exhibits that influence in his life and conversation."

In the journals which he afterwards published, and which form nearly all the works his busy life gave him leisure to issue from the press, he describes his labours in this most interesting field on this and three subsequent visits. Abundantly blessed were these labours for the good of the St Kildaites.

He landed on the chief island on Monday, the 16th September 1822. He was accompanied by Mr M'Lellan, the agent of the proprietor, who annually went to the island with supplies, and to carry back the produce of the natives' arduous toil.

At once he began his work, preaching to all the inhabitants in the schoolhouse at six o'clock in the evening of his arrival. He was much pleased with the attention the people seemed to give to the Word of God during this first sermon.

Next day, finding that, owing to the harvest and business with Mr M'Lellan, the people could not

conveniently assemble before six in the evening, he fixed upon that hour as his week-night meeting hour during his stay. During the day he visited the people at their harvest labours, or at their sheep "plucking"—for so they remove the wool from their flocks, shearing being unknown to them—and, by conversing familiarly with them, he became acquainted with their views and habits, particularly in regard to religion.

Gradually, under the influence of his powerful preaching, the people became more and more evidently impressed, but the nearer the end of his necessarily short stay approached, the more the good man became concerned for his new flock. "I feel," he writes, "that I ought to let slip no opportuity of speaking to the people on their spiritual concerns: that I am in a manner accountable for them in the day of the Lord; and that ere another messenger may visit them, there is every moral certainty that some of those I now see will be in eternity. How overwhelming the thought, if these perish for ever, and perish through my negligence! Felt, in consequence of this impression, more than an ordinary concern for their salvation, and prayed to God for them."

After the services of his first Sunday in the island, doubts and discouragements assailed him. It seemed to him that "a general decay of impression marked almost every countenance;" but while this made him, if possible, redouble his exertions, a circumstance, trivial in itself, yet important, as indicating the anxiety of the people not to lose a single service, that happened on the Monday, both pleased and encouraged him. "Some time before the hour of sermon, it became doubtful, owing to the boisterous state of the evening, whether the lamps would burn in the house, and therefore, whether there could be sermon. This was no sooner rumoured abroad, than a number of active young men among them immediately set about repairing the roof, and in half-an-hour made it quite comfortable, adding, 'There shall be sermon, indeed,' and 'We shall not lose a single night.' This eagerness on their part both pleased and encouraged me much."

On the 26th September, Mr M'Lellan said that if the wind and weather served, he hoped to be able to leave St Kilda next day. This intelligence made Mr Macdonald's hands full of work on this last day: he first examined the people on the Catechism, and

then preached twice. At his last sermon, both he and his congregation were much affected at the thought of parting. With an earnest exhortation to them to remember what they had heard since they met, he concluded the labours of this visit, "having preached to the people thirteen times, besides other services and repeated conversations with them on the momentous concerns of eternity. What the result is," he adds, "He alone knows, who has said, 'My word shall not return to me void;' but I can with truth say that I enjoyed much comfort in the work, and that I hope my poor 'labours shall not be in vain in the Lord.'"

Mr Macdonald had hardly reached home, and allayed the mutual anxiety that the total want of communication for so long a time between him and his family and flock had caused to be felt, when he again set off on a journey. His destination was Edinburgh, when there was again a vacancy in the Gaelic Church. He had been asked to dispense the sacrament of the Supper there, and so eager did his reappearance make his old congregation feel to have him back as their minister again, that the Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge begged of him

to accept their unanimous call, and made him an offer of increased stipend that would have made the change, in a pecuniary sense, very advantageous. On the 19th November 1822, he writes to his wife:—"I was offered £400 a-year if I would come back to the Gaelic Chapel, but though the translation might be desirable for the sake of a rising family, how could I part with dear Urquhart?"

During this visit he preached a sermon under the auspices of the Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge, in connection with his visit to St Kilda, which excited much interest, and was afterwards published along with his Journal of the Mission.

CHAPTER V.

Missionary Sermon in London.—Revisits St Kilda.

MR MACDONALD'S services in St Kilda, and his previous labours as a preacher in aid of the funds of the Scottish Missionary Society, made his name prominent as that of an ardent friend of the mission cause, and accordingly, early in the following year, he got a letter from the Secretary of the London Missionary Society, asking him, in name of the Directors, to preach one of the annual sermons, on behalf of the Society, at their meeting in London in May.

"He had not then acquired," we are told by Dr Kennedy, "the facility and accuracy as an English speaker to which he afterwards attained; he feared that unfounded expectations might be cherished by those who already spoke and wrote of him as the great Evangelist of the North; and, with his modest

estimate of his own attainments, he could not bu shrink from agreeing to the request of the Society But, years before, he had resolved never to decline a invitation to preach if he could possibly accept of it. Accordingly he accepted the invitation, and in du season set out upon the journey to London—not s easy an undertaking in 1823 as it is now.

It was his first visit to the great metropolis, an he found it in what he calls the "Season of religiou dissipation" of the annual May meetings. Writing to Mrs Macdonald, he tells her—"I have been ver much occupied, though not in my usual way. Both on Sabbath and on week-days I have been a regular and, I have the vanity to add, a most attentive hearer I have not yet attempted to open my northern mouth in the great and polished metropolis." After hear ing sermons from the Bishop of Gloucester an others during his first days, "on Tuesday I attende the meeting of the Church Missionary Society, whic was very interesting. On Wednesday, at a meetin of the British and Foreign Bible Society, I seeme to myself, for a time, to have been transported to th very suburbs of heaven. The scene was truly elec trifying. To have seen and heard Wilberforce, Van

sittart, Teignmouth, Gambier, and others, plead so warmly and ably the cause of the Bible, and giving the sanction of their rank and talent to its spread in the world, would have given joy to any heart not shut up against every benevolent, not to say religious, feeling. . . . I have heard sermons every day of this week preached on behoof of these and other institutions."

Referring to his own sermon, he thus writes to the anxious and loving hearts in Urquhart:—"My own share of the public labours is soon to come on. If this reaches you in time, think of me on Thursday evening in Tottenham Court Road Chapel, and pray that I may be strengthened with strength from on high, and that the Redeemer may bring glory to Himself through my poor labours. This is all I desire; and neither fame nor human applause."

On the Friday he writes:—"Last evening, through the kindness of the Lord, I discharged the leading duty for which I came to London. Though surrounded by upwards of three thousand strangers, a tithe of whom were clergymen, I have reason to praise the Lord that I was enabled for an hour and a half to speak with considerable ease and freedom.

. . . The subject was the outpouring of the Spirit the text, Acts ii. 17, 18. I delivered the sermon without any notes, and felt more at ease on that account."

After this sermon calls for his services poured in upon him, and during the rest of his stay in London he was busy in his old congenial work of constant preaching. "I have more calls to preach than I can possibly accept," he writes. He sat down at the Lord's table one evening with many clergymen and others. Mr Rowland Hill presided. "He seems indeed," says Mr Macdonald, "to be bearing fruit in his old age. 'They have almost expelled me,' said Mr Hill, 'from the communion of the Church, but they cannot expel me from the communion of the Lord's dear people—no, neither here nor hereafter.'"

As time went on, his thoughts made him long for home:—"I have now met," he writes, "and mingled with many Christians in London. This is indeed a season of religious dissipation. I enjoy it as yet, but would soon tire of it." His communion season in Urquhart was drawing near, and though in all the arrangements for the necessary supplies for this he had an able substitute in his wife—"in all these

things you will have to act the *clergywoman*," he writes to her—yet he longed to be back in the Highlands again, where, for the next year, he was busily occupied in his usual work again.

During all these two years his thoughts were continually turning to St Kilda, and his uncompleted work there. An opportunity offering itself in the summer of 1824 for another visit, he eagerly availed himself of it, and early in May he landed on the island for the second time.

"We had no sooner appeared in sight," he writes in his Journal, "than the people flew down to the shore to meet us, and stood in a body on the shelving rock on which we were to land, to receive ourselves and our little bark. We had no sooner effected a landing than they all pressed around me, and grasped my hand each in his turn, when I thought they would have wrung the very blood out of it."

The record of his labours during this second visit is much the same, in its general outlines, as that noticed above in his first visit. The people met once a day for service, as before, and, in addition, Mr Macdonald daily held "an exercise, somewhat resembling family worship, when I would read a

chapter of Scripture, and make some observation on it, calculated to instruct them in its meaning and to point out the improvement they should mak of it." This lecture he fixed for from seven to nin in the morning, and his sermon hours from six t eight at night. In consequence of the Gaelic schoo which had been established in the island, he foun that several of the young people could read the Nev Testament, and parts of the Old, while some olde people had learned to read a little. This was great benefit to them in hearing public instructio and, in conversing with the people, Mr Macdonal found them much more intelligent and better in formed than when he was formerly among them The want of a regular Gospel ministry was a sad los to them, but, on the whole, Mr Macdonald felt mor encouraged on this occasion than on his former visi After three weeks' incessant labour among th islanders, Mr Macdonald had to leave. The sorrow ful scene at parting was re-enacted. Amid tears an cries he bade them farewell. "I felt sorrowful in deed at parting with them, and could not but thin of them very often since. I could compare my fee ings at the time only to those of a father separatin

from his family. But it was consoling to me to think that they were under His care, 'who neither slumbers nor sleeps.'"

The want of a minister permanently stationed in St Kilda was the cause of much anxiety to Mr Macdonald. The Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge had agreed to send them a minister when the necessary buildings were erected, and, after a third visit to the island in 1827, he threw himself with characteristic energy into the scheme for procuring funds to erect a church and manse in St Kilda. He travelled all over Scotland, preaching and making collections wherever he went, until at last the necessary amount was gathered together. To his great joy, as well as that of the poor islanders, the church and manse of St Kilda were built, and a minister, the Rev. Mr Mackenzie, was appointed to the charge. In 1830 Mr Macdonald accompanied Mr Mackenzie and his family to the island, to introduce him to his people.

Great was the joy of the remote islanders when they again welcomed their beloved evangelist, and during the days of his short stay they joined in the services with the greatest heartiness and devotion.

On the 12th July 1830, Mr Macdonald bade his final farewell to the islanders for whom he had worked so well, consoled with the thought that at length the poor people were provided with a devout and pious minister, and a house of God, "in which there was reason to hope His Gospel would be preached, and His ordinances administered, for generations to come."

Of Mr Mackenzie and his labours, it may be interesting to add the testimony of a visitor to St Kilda in 1842:—"The good minister," writes Mr Wilson, the ornithologist, "is teacher and writing-master (literally, prime minister), as well as priest, and seems to leave nothing untried to ameliorate the condition of his flock, whether by enlightening their spiritual darkness, improving their worldly fortunes, or, as Dr Johnson would have said, raising them in the scale of thinking beings." If any people should be religious, it is this sequestered community. "Elevated on his rock," says Dr Macleod, of Glasgow, "suspended over a precipice, tossed on his wild ocean, a St Kilda man can never forget his God—he hangs continually on His arm;" and it is gratifying to add, that the good seed sown by the Apostle

of the North and others still bears rich fruit. "They can all read the Gaelic Testament," says Mr J. Sands, "they are sober, industrious, decent, and courteous. Although the bravest of the brave when engaged in their dreadful trade of fowling, they are peaceable amongst each other, and never fight. Crime is unknown."

CHAPTER VI.

Visits Ireland.—Learns Language.—Evangelistic Labours.

DURING his stay at the May meetings in London, Mr Macdonald writes one day:—"This day I have just returned from the meeting of the Hibernian Society. The Duke of Gloucester was in the chair. The narrative read and the speeches delivered all tended to impress the audience with a deeper interest in long-neglected Ireland." A deep interest felt in the active mind of our evangelist for any cause prompted him to apply to it, when opportunity offered, his characteristic course of treatment.

In 1827, the Rev. Robert Daly—then Rector of Powerscourt, in Wicklow County, but afterwards Bishop of Cashel—anxious that the Gospel should be preached in their native language to the Irish-speaking population of his district, applied to Dr

Daniel Dewar, then one of the ministers of Glasgow, to obtain for him a Gaelic-speaking evangelist for work in this much neglected field. Dr Dewar at once bethought him of Mr Macdonald, but when his letter reached Urquhart, in March, the evangelist was just about to start on his third visit to St Kilda. He could not defer this journey, and yet he was most unwilling to decline the invitation to Ireland. After weighing the matter over and over again in his mind, the difficulties in the way of undertaking both expeditions seemed too great. The double expedition would necessitate his being away from his own flock for at least five months; but he was so unwilling to decline such tempting work, that he asked Dr Dewar to let the matter remain an open question till his return from St Kilda, when he would give a definite answer.

Mr Daly gladly agreed to wait for the great evangelist's leisure, and as August was not only the most suitable month for the work in Ireland, but the most convenient for Mr Macdonald, he eagerly accepted the invitation for that date.

Nothing could better illustrate the indomitable perseverance of the man, and the way in which

ardour for his Master's cause made him overcome the greatest difficulties, than this Irish expedition. The first barrier in the way to success in his projected work was, to all appearance, a sufficiently serious one. Though a first-rate Gaelic scholar, he knew very little of its brother tongue spoken by the native Irish. Though these two Celtic languages, in their literary aspects, are very closely akin, the accent and pronounciation of Irish, especially in the south, are very different from Gaelic. Irish, too, is still printed in the old Irish character, of which Mr Macdonald was ignorant.

On his arrival in Dublin, early in August, he at once began overcoming this preliminary obstacle of acquiring the language. "I foresee difficulties in the way," he writes to his wife, "owing to the difference of our dialects, and to my being obliged to study the old Irish characters, in order to be able to read the Scriptures to the people in the only form in which they will allow them to be read to them. A greater difficulty arises from the influence of the priests over the lower classes."

After spending a few days in Dublin and Kilkenny—"a town," he writes, "famed for its fire with-

out smoke, its water without mud, and its streets all of marble, with a population of 34,000, of whom the Roman Catholics are to the Protestants in the proportion of twenty-four to one"—he went on to Clonmel and Cork. In neither of these places was he able to do much beyond reading and conversing with some Irish teachers. "At first it required all the attention in listening, and all the deliberation in speaking, of which we were capable, to catch each other's meaning. The dialect spoken here—that is, in the southern districts—is far more difficult to understand than that spoken in the north, the latter approaching very near to our Scotch Gaelic. On this account I conceived, and I stated so to my friend Mr Daly, that it would be more to the purpose to send me to those districts where my Gaelic would be best understood. His answer was—'In the north there has been something already done, but the south has not yet been touched.' I acquiesced, of course, in his opinion."

He began preaching in the town of Bandon in the last week of August. It was then a town of 12,000 inhabitants, of whom two-thirds were Roman Catholics. After a few sermons here and in the

surrounding villages, he became more familiar in the use of Irish, and his preaching showed more and more of the power and fervour that characterized his Gaelic discourses. At first Protestants only attended his services, but gradually Roman Catholics in increasing numbers began to brave the wrath of their priests to listen to preaching and doctrine so different from what they had been accustomed to. Many of them were affected, and some came to him to talk about religion.

From Bandon he made two journeys in different directions along the southern coast. "During the first of them," he writes to Mrs Macdonald, "I travelled each day from ten to twenty Irish miles and preached in the evening in a town or village and sometimes in country places where there were only a few scattered farm houses and miserable huts. The people in all these places assembled uncommonly well, and discovered an eagerness to hear the Word. I preached to them in both languages, and generally the same discourse, in order that such of my hearers as had a smattering of English might better understand my Gaelic. During this tour I had conversations with not a few Roman Catholics

regarding the Scriptures and the Gospel method of salvation; and I could perceive that their faith in their own system is tottering, and that their consciences tell them that matters are not right. But alas! they are ignorant of the Scriptures, and are not allowed by their priests to read or to hear them. Oh! I feel for them, and could weep over their sad state. They are desirous to hear me, but they must not be seen in doing so. They come, therefore, only at night; and when they come, they skulk into corners, and into the darkest parts of the apartments in which we meet. . . . My public preaching during this tour has had the effect, I could perceive, of creating much speculation among the people, and of leading them to think, and to talk together of the things which they have heard. This is reckoned a good sign."

The second tour had for an object the holding of Bible Society meetings in the different places in support of giving the Scriptures to the natives in their own language. Many sermons were preached, and the little party "returned from this excursion ed by our labours, but comforted in our minds ous to give glory to God for what had been

done. It was particularly consoling to us that so many hundreds of Papists attended in every place. To get them to hear the Word at all from the mouth of a Protestant, is a mighty object gained; and particularly so here, a part of Ireland, which, in the language of Mr Daly, 'has not been touched.'"

When the priests saw the work that was being done, and that hundreds of their people went to the places where "the heretic from Scotland" preached, they became alarmed, and resolved to make an effort to counteract any impression he might have produced. They sent an agent, "a smart looking, tall young man about twenty-five years of age," who, at the end of a service Mr Macdonald held near Bandon, stood up and begged to be heard for a few minutes. He got full permission, and, after reflecting on the preacher's Irish, he said his only object there must be to make proselytes, and that he had better have remained at home. "He then launched out into the subject of Catholic Emancipation, on which he delivered a warm philippic, casting the blame on the Protestants of their just rights being withheld from Catholics." After speaking for twenty minutes, he sat down amid expressions of disapprobation from

the congregation. Mr Macdonald replied calmly that he came to Ireland not to make proselytes, "but, if possible, to make converts to the Redeemer by preaching to sinners the way of salvation through Christ." He declined to discuss Catholic Emancipation, a political subject, foreign to his duty, the place, and the Sabbath evening; "but," he added, "there is an emancipation, of a more important kind, for which I plead—emancipation from sin, Satan, superstition, error, and delusion." "Thus ended the discussion, and all retired quietly," says Mr Macdonald. "I had to travel three miles to my lodging. My driver told me he was afraid that I would be waylaid. But the Lord preserved us."

Thus ended his visit to Ireland. His experience there made a deep impression on him. "I hope," he writes, "I shall carry Ireland in my spirit whithersoever I go, and remember her before the throne of grace."

CHAPTER VII.

Death of Father.—Hard Work.—Anecdotes.

IN 1830, Mr Macdonald's father, the worthy catechist of Reay, died, at the age of ninety-five. During the last eight years of his life he had entirely lost his eyesight. His second wife, the evangelist's mother, had died before he became blind, and when this second calamity befell him, Sir John Sinclair, who had always been his good friend, wished him to come to Ulbster Castle, where quiet apartments awaited the blind widower, in which he might spend his last days in peace and comfort. The old man, though grateful for Sir John's kind offer, preferred to end his days in the cottage where he had lived so long, and it is here we get these glimpses of him when his son visited him for the last time, during one of his Missionary Society tours in the north. "On Saturday, March 6, 1830, took a trip to see my father; found people assembled for

prayer in his house when I arrived, and joined with them in the duty. This prayer meeting, I was happy to learn, was some time ago transferred to his house from another place, owing to his inability to attend it elsewhere, and is now regularly once a fortnight kept in his house. He moderates the meeting, and points out the psalms to be sung and the chapters to be read, though he long ago lost the use of his sight. I was pleased to hear him do so on the present occasion. After the people dismissed, I had a long conversation with him, and was happy to find his mind entire, his spirit lively, and his faith firm on the Rock." In the following week Mr Macdonald writes:—"Called on my father for the last time; spent some time with him. We were mutually affected at parting, not knowing whether we should see one another again on this side Jordan; he sent his thousand blessings to my wife and family, and 'May we meet,' he said, 'where we shall not part.' The parting with my dear aged parent has made me rather dull this evening for study; but the thought of meeting him in a better place comforted me." In a short time after this visit the old man's pilgrimage on earth was at an end.

In Mr Macdonald's busy life, one may almost say that there was no time for sorrow; as years passed over his head, his devotion to his Master's work seemed continually to increase. "I find it agreeable to myself," he writes to his son during an evangelistic tour, "to be thus occupied in my Master's work wherever I am, and would feel out of my element were it otherwise. There is a dear female friend of ours at home, who, if she were near you, and looking over your shoulder, cast her eye on this latter clause, would immediately say, 'That is perfectly true, when you cease to preach we may order your coffin;' and were I beside her, I should say, *Amen.* If it be the Lord's will, let me live and die in His work, and not survive my labours or usefulness."

What was the extent of these labours we can judge from these statements of his biographer. "On Sabbath, when at home, he always delivered three sermons. Once a month he preached regularly in Inverness and Dingwall, and for a considerable time, statedly in Invergordon. In not a few places he was invariably present on communion occasions, usually preaching every day, besides giving to many ministers occasional and more limited assistance. He often

went on excursions to various parts of the Highlands, preaching as he went. During three months of each year he preached, on an average, two sermons a day; and in no year of his life, in Ross-shire, did he preach fewer than three hundred sermons. He preached upwards of ten thousand times during the last thirty-six years of his life, and never delivered an unstudied discourse. This was not owing to his confining himself to a set of sermons which he constantly repeated, for he has left among his papers skeletons of discourses on almost every text on which a sermon could be written, besides notes of lectures on the Gospels and other parts of Scripture." During these thirty-six years, "more perhaps was done," says Hugh Miller, "in spreading the savour of Christ's name than had ever been accomplished by a single minister of Christ in modern times; scarcely excepting Wesley, Whitefield, or the matchless men of Wales."

Even in those days of improved communication throughout the Highlands, travelling in many places is still sufficiently arduous. What then must have been the physical exertion needed of Mr Macdonald, in whose days not only were there no railways and

few coaches, but a great part of the country was no
opened up by any roads, except bridle paths or rougl
country tracks, impassable by any wheeled carriag
weaker than a cart. Accordingly, in many of th
longer journeys of his earlier career, he had eithe
to ride or to walk most of the way. Blessed as D
Macdonald was with a strong, active frame, an
most excellent constitution, it yet needed all th
power of his unflagging zeal to carry him over thes
long and toilsome journeys in his earlier years, bu
in time his frame became so inured to fatigue an
exposure, that, even when he was an elderly man
hardly any journey possible to be gone over o
wheels in a day made him too fatigued for his even
ing service. For example, in 1835 he had a ver
severe illness. Whenever he was able to go abou
again, he started from home on a visit to Bread
albane. On the 9th September he left Kingussie
after an early breakfast, and drove on to Coiseville
a distance of forty-five miles. "Owing to the hilli
ness of the road for a great part of the way," h
writes, "both the horse and driver seemed prett
tired when we reached Coiseville. The driver, afte
swallowing a little bread and milk, immediatel

threw himself into his bed, and fell into a profound sleep, out of which the sound of singing and prayer performed at his side, and to a houseful of people, could not move him. James remained still as a statue," while the evangelist, who was then nearly fifty-eight years old, and still weak from recent illness, was not too tired to preside over the services the people had gathered to attend.

Not only did his health run risks from his frequent exposure to cold and rain and excessive fatigue, but on several occasions his life was in great peril from storm and flood. On one occasion, his biographer tells us that, when on his way to preach to a congregation in Morayshire, he reached the ford of the Findhorn when the river was in flood. The friends who accompanied him urged him not to attempt the crossing, but a congregation waited on the other side to hear him preach the Gospel, and there was no other way of getting to the other bank of the river, so he resolved to try the ford. He had scarcely plunged into the swollen waters, when both horse and rider were carried away by the stream. Dr Macdonald managed to keep his seat in the saddle till the water shallowed on a sandbank in

the middle of the river, a considerable distance bel
the place where he had entered it. On to this ba
the horse managed to scramble, and there they
mained till ropes were thrown out by the people, w
were anxiously watching the adventure from t
bank, and who thus pulled both horse and ric
safely to land.

For many years he rode about from place to pla
on his tours on a black mare, which soon became
well known and as easily recognized up and dov
the country as her master. "If my mare cou
speak," he once said, "she would say, 'The Gosp
may be good, and to others it may do good, but
for me, I am ten times tired of it." In his lat
years, "a comfortable gig, drawn by his trust
'Paddy,' conveyed him," says Dr Kennedy, "on h
frequent journeyings. He was fully more carefu
about 'Paddy's' comfort than about his own. H
has been known, oftener than once, after a fatiguin
journey, to use the scythe in mowing a suppe
for the horse before looking out for a supper fo
himself."

Several anecdotes are told by his biographer o
incidents in his frequent travels, one or two of which

we may give here:—During one journey he caught cold severely, and refusing to delay for rest and some necessary means of cure, he became at last seriously ill. The pores of his skin became so closed up, that the usual means of producing perspiration entirely failed, and to induce this was deemed essential to his recovery. His old friend, Hector Holm, heard of his illness, and went to see him. When Hector found out what was required for his cure, he went about among the houses around the manse, and asked the inmates to assemble to hear a lecture from the minister. The people immediately collected, and when the kitchen of the manse was full, Hector went to Dr Macdonald's bed-room, and told the minister that the people were assembled and were expecting a lecture. Dr Macdonald, who had known nothing of Hector's proceedings, said that he could not rise to speak to them. "But will it not be hard," replied Hector, "to send them away without a word?" "But how can I manage to speak to them in my present state?" Holm, seeing that the minister had begun to consider how this opportunity could be used, suggested that he should sit up in bed wrapped in blankets, while the people sat in

the passage outside the bed-room, and that he should read and expound a passage of Scripture. To this Dr Macdonald at once agreed; and so the people came, and the minister began to address them. Becoming interested in his subject, his usual fervour warmed him up, and before the lecture was concluded, he was wet with copious perspiration. He then lay down, slept quietly all night, and awoke quite well in the morning. Hector used to say that he was the best physician Dr Macdonald ever had. "A dose of preaching was the only prescription he gave." This his patient had often found to be a delight to his heart, but on this occasion it was a cure to his body also.

"During his frequent travels, Dr Macdonald came in contact," says Dr Kennedy, "with all descriptions of persons; and, owing to his unconsciousness and tact he could easily adapt himself to all their various phases of character without compromising his position as a minister, or laying his own peculiarity aside."

Longfellow tells a story about a once notorious Cardinal, who, on being offered a pinch of snuff by the late Pope, Pio Nono, quickly replied, "That is a vice I am not guilty of." "Exactly, my dear

Cardinal," retorted the Pope, "if it had been a vice, you would have learned it long ago." Equally ready was the retort of Dr Macdonald in very similar circumstances. On one of his journeys to the south the Doctor travelled in a stage-coach with a major of the army. Dr Macdonald, who liked his snuff, after taking a pinch, offered, as is the custom of snuffers, his box to the officer. "I am not given to these minor vices," replied he in a rude tone, and with an oath. "Of course not," retorted the minister, as he quietly put the box back into his pocket, "the *major* vices better suit your taste."

While Dr Macdonald was crossing Kessock ferry once, along with Dr Kennedy's father, the minister of Killearnan, among their fellow-passengers was a drunken exciseman, at whose feet a dog was lying. When the gauger saw the two ministers, he lifted up the dog, and went over to Mr Kennedy, holding the animal in his arms. "Will you christen this child?" asked he. Mr Kennedy, much horrified, at once bade him go away. The exciseman then presented the dog, with the same question, to Dr Macdonald, who immediately rose up, and asked, "Do *you* acknowledge yourself the father of what

you now present for baptism?" The gauger, drunk as he was, saw that he was caught in his own snare and, with a wild look at the ministers, he flung the dog into the sea, and skulked back to his seat amid the jeers of the rest of the passengers on board.

On another occasion, his calm presence of mind and quickness of resource, were of great service to him in a situation of some danger. As he approached the village of Auldearn, in Nairnshire, on a dark winter night, two men suddenly sprang upon him, one of whom seized his horse's bridle, while the other, grasping Dr Macdonald's arm, demanded his watch and purse, offering him the robber's usual stern alternative. "This was not the reception I expected," said he calmly, "on coming to preach at Auldearn." When the robbers heard this, one of them immediately said to the other, "This is Macdonald; we had better let him alone;" and then they disappeared in the darkness as suddenly as they had come.

CHAPTER VIII.

His Son.—D.D.—Disruption.—Gaelic Moderator.—Last Days and Death.—Publications.

OF all his large family of ten children, his son John, his first born, was probably the one that occupied the largest part of Dr Macdonald's heart. He had watched with the fondest interest his career as a distinguished student at school and college, and when his boy became an able and successful minister in London, the letters they exchanged prove the deep love borne for one another by father and son—"the distinguished father of a hardly less distinguished son," as Hugh Miller says.

While Mr John Macdonald was in London his father visited him several times, generally for the purpose of assisting him on communion occasions. At these times, as well as when he preached in dissenting places of worship elsewhere in England

great numbers were attracted by the fame of his name, though we know, from Hugh Miller and others, that in English sermons he was sometimes constrained, and not perfectly at ease, and that his English preaching at no time could be compared with the force and vigour of his Gaelic discourses.

His son was a frequent assistant at the great summer communion services at Ferintosh, and as Dr Macdonald grew older, he became more and more desirous that his beloved John should be established in some parish in the North, where their opportunities of meeting might be more frequent than was possible while he was in London. One or two places in Scotland were open to the young minister, but his own strong desire was to offer himself as a missionary of the Church, to carry the Gospel message to some of the nations that had not yet been visited by it. While Dr Macdonald was hoping that he might consent to come to Scotland, he received a letter from London, in which his son asked his advice about going abroad as a missionary to India. It was a most difficult question for a loving father to give an impartial decision upon. He knew that his son, now thirty years of age, and

of a delicate constitution, was ill fitted to bear th fatigues of a missionary life under the burning su of India. His own ardent desire was that Joh should go on with the labours at home, in which h had already been so successful; but he tried to la aside all paternal feelings, and thus concludes a lon letter, ably discussing the arguments for and agains his son's project:—"You can easily perceive the lean ing of my mind, but I wish you not to be further le by it than it appears to you to be in accordance wit the Law and the Testimony." Later on, when h knew his son's mind was made up to go, he writes —"Your pamphlet has silenced us all. Those wh take but a worldly view of matters may not feel con vinced, but all spiritual Christians must."

Many years after, when the evangelist was ap proaching his sixty-eighth year, he wrote his las letter to his son:—"My bowels yearn over you," h writes, "whenever you come before my mind, an that, I must say, is often enough. I never bend th knee but I think of you, and endeavour to remembe you before my God. But my writing time is ove My hand shakes, and gets stiff and heavy, so that i costs me much time and labour now to write a page

and, owing to the slowness of the pen, my ideas often make their escape, and leave me little to record. Yet I have great cause of thankfulness; my general health is as usual, and the quantity of labour which I am enabled to go through, both at home and abroad, is at least at, if not above, par with me."

In 1847, while Dr Macdonald was preparing to enter the pulpit in Glenlyon, during a visit to Perthshire, a letter was put into his hand. "Intent on his work," says his biographer, "he put the letter unopened into his pocket. Next day, as he was travelling to Edinburgh, he recollected the letter and on opening it, read the tidings of his son's death. A few groans from a father's wounded heart, and a few tears from a fond father's eyes, and the Christian triumphed over the man, and with his heart he said 'It is well.' On reaching home he preached from these words in his own pulpit."

In 1842, the Apostle of the North received the degree of D.D. from the University of the City of New York. It was a subject of much comment at the time that the University in whose halls he was so distinguished a student should have left it to this trans-Atlantic body to thus recognize the evangelist

whose fame was so universal, and his labours so blessed to thousands.

The "Ten Years' Conflict" between the two parties in the Church was now approaching a crisis. As the Non-Intrusion question came to the front, Dr Macdonald became more and more identified with the movement. In November 1842, he attended the meetings of the Convocation in Roxburgh Church, Edinburgh, and appeared in the pulpit of St George's along with Dr Chalmers. Accompanied by his neighbour, the Rev. H. Allan, of Kincardine, he made two tours in Sutherlandshire early in 1843, by desire of the Convocation Committee, to communicate information to the people on the position of the absorbing question of the day. "His prominence," says Dr Hew Scott, "previous to the Free secession, has been said to be the cause which led so many ministers in the North to join in that movement."

On 24th May 1843, Dr Macdonald, on adhering to the Protest, and signing the Deed of Demission, was declared to be no longer a minister of the Established Church, in which he had laboured so long and so faithfully. He cheerfully forsook the old manse of Urquhart, and removed with his family

to a small cottage in its vicinity; shortly afterwards he took a larger but not more comfortable cottage in which he remained until the Free Church manse was ready for his occupation, and in it he spent the home share of the last three years of his life.

During these years, though he was approaching the allotted span of three score and ten, "there was no abridging of his labours," says his biographer, "no decay of his mental vigour, and no waning of his fervour in preaching the Gospel. His sermons were shorter, but this was owing to their greater conciseness; and if there was less energy of manner, there was an accession of unction in his preaching. He delivered at that time a sermon which he himself called his 'miniature discourse.' After an introduction he announced two heads, spoke on each of them, and applied the doctrine to three classes of hearers, all within ten minutes. A minister who heard that sermon, and who marked the time which the preacher occupied, declared that in that short time he had delivered as much matter as would ordinarily be spread over an hour."

When, on the 21st of August 1845, a meeting of the General Assembly of the Free Church was held

in a large wooden pavilion erected in Farraline Park, Inverness, Dr Macdonald was appointed joint, or rather, Gaelic Moderator, along with Dr Patrick Macfarlane, of Greenock. "As Gaelic Moderator of the Assembly at Inverness, Dr Macdonald was," says Hugh Miller, "obviously in his element, as the great patriarch of the North."

At the opening of the Assembly he preached a Gaelic sermon from Acts xvii. 6. "When he announced and read his text," says Dr Kennedy, "there were few Gaelic-speaking hearers in the hall who could refrain from smiling. Many, who could not understand a word of Gaelic, remained during the Gaelic service. These, observing the excitement caused by the reading of the Gaelic text, were eager to find out the passage in their English Bibles, and were certainly not less excited than the Celts when they were directed to the words, 'These, that have turned the world upside down, are come hither also.'" Dr Macdonald's reason for choosing this text was, that he had been told that when a prominent parish minister in the North heard of the intended meeting of the Free Assembly in the Highland capital, he had sneeringly said, "So these,

that have turned the world upside down, are coming hither also."

So many of those interested in the proceedings of this Assembly knew no English, or understood Gaelic so much better than that language, that Dr Macdonald was most useful in explaining to them, at intervals, in their native tongue, the proceedings of the Assembly. He preached, too, once or twice, and though the reporters of the southern newspapers could put on record no estimate of what they could not understand, they praised the Gaelic singing, which "was remarkably sweet and touching," says the *Witness*, "and was much admired."

The last entry in Dr Macdonald's journal is in October 1848, and records his labours during an expedition to Greenock, in which he had, as was his custom, held services at every place on the journey he could. On his return home, in the end of October, he continued for some time to work as usual among his own and neighbouring congregations. About the New Year, however, an ill-fitting boot caused an apparently slight wound on his foot, but so trivial did the sore seem to him, that he went on with his usual work, until his foot became so in-

flamed that he could no longer leave his room. His friends, in different parts of the country, hoping that perfect rest and good medical advice would soon restore him to his usual vigour, agreed to supply his pulpit for some months. "All that skill and kindness could suggest was done towards arresting the progress of disease in the foot, but in vain," says his biographer. "Mortification set in. A medical consultation was held. Six medical gentlemen were present, who had to decide in rather peculiar circumstances. The patient was one whose fame was in all the churches, and for the issue of whose illness thousands waited with intense anxiety, and around the house in which they met were gathered scores of stalwart men, each with a cudgel in his hand threatening to prevent by violence a surgeon's knife from touching their revered pastor's limb. Uninfluenced by the threats of the excited crowd, the doctors decided that the amputation of the limb ought not to be attempted, further than the removal of the part which mortification had destroyed. But the virus passed into his system, and he became delirious, and occasionally unconscious. At last he lay, for a few hours, merely breathing, till he

fell asleep in Jesus, on the evening of April 18th, 1849."

His body was laid in the old churchyard of Urquhart, beside the grave of his predecessor, Mr Calder, amid the tears of the immense gathering of people who had attended his funeral.

Dr Macdonald's personal appearance has thus been described:—"Short in stature; his complexion dark; his physical frame compact, instinct with animation, and showing no traces of ailment or infirmity; his face, with features well defined and regular, showing no peculiarity that weakened the force of its impression as a whole; a brow broad and high, and eyes dark and quick of glance, kept expressive by an active intellect, and ever beaming with fresh love and cheerfulness."

Though a man of great natural ability, Dr Macdonald's devotion to his work as an evangelist gave him little time to prosecute researchs into fields of study that had not a direct bearing on his beloved work, but, for his better equipment in this, his reading was extensive, and his quick memory made its results always at his command for the instruction of his hearers. It was as an evangelist he attained his

eminence. To him preaching was no toil. He was so devoted to it, and so happy in it, "that the day of which he wearied most was the day on which he did not preach;" and yet he has said, 'I never went to the pulpit without fear, and I never left it without shame." Hugh Miller said of him—"As a preacher, there are hundreds of thousands in Scotland, England, and Ireland, who have been roused by his appeals. His theology was of that solid and substantial character, which is represented by such works as those of John Owen and Jonathan Edwards."

In social converse, Dr Macdonald was a most agreeable companion, from his ready wit, his pleasant manners, and spontaneous cheerfulness.

Though Dr Macdonald's busy labours as an evangelist left him little leisure for work as an author, he did publish a few volumes. In 1825, appeared a sermon on "The Righteousness of God;" in the following year he corrected an edition in Gaelic of Boston's "Fourfold State;" these, with [illegible]ls cf his visits to St Kilda, and the [illegible]ched in connection with these visits, the prose works of his pen. Any

leisure he had for literary work he devoted to the composition of Gaelic poems, a volume of which he published in 1848. "Though he had poetic taste," says his biographer, "he lacked poetic skill; though he could admire genuine poetry, he could not produce it."

We shall conclude this sketch of Dr Macdonald's life and labours by quoting some English verses from his pen, suggested by the stanza in Campbell's "Hohenlinden:"—

Few, few shall part where many meet;
The snow shall be their winding sheet,
And every turf beneath their feet
Shall mark the soldier's sepulchre.

MORAL.

But happy he, when thus laid low,
Whether on sea, or earth, or snow,
Who finds that all his scenes of woe
Have disappeared rapidly!

Who, wafted on angelic wing,
Enters the palace of his king,
There to dwell, and e'er to sing
The glory of his victory.

To dwell with him: removed afar
From hateful strife, and din of war,
Where sin and sorrow never mar
The streams of his felicity.

Where many ransomed sons shall meet
To part no more—the scene's complete.
Hence, then, far hence, thou winding sheet,
Give place to Immortality!

Let rising glory chase away
The shades of night, and nightly sway,
And usher in the blissful day
That measures long eternity!

SHORT LIST OF PUBLICATIONS

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