

by the evaporation of its dynamic element,¹ the redemptive aspects of the gospel—the historic Christ and the eternal indwelling Spirit, who causes the mystic Christ to “come again” and take up His abode with the watchful disciple. It is here that “Moderatism” in all ages has failed; not in its moral emphasis. In fact, if the Moral Ideal be the distinctively Christian one, it carries along with itself its own motive power. For motive power is not a mere “divine frenzy”; it is divine “truth” seen as such. And if any desire to realise the force of this, let them steep themselves in the very sunshine of those fine chapters of the *Kingdom of God*, in which Professor Bruce unfolds Christ’s Idea of God and of Man, and he will ever after understand what Christian Ethics owe to the “theology of Christ.” Yes, after all, we are but coming to appreciate more fully Vinet’s profound aphorism: “Christianity is morality sown in the soil of Grace.”

¹ Note the frequency of the term “power” in the Epistles.

With hearts glowing afresh under the stimulus of the great gospel ideas of God as Love indeed, made most manifest in Christ, and of Man as the object of solicitude to such a God, let us thankfully open our eyes also to the garnered wisdom as to love’s true issues and aims, which Dr. Smyth’s *Christian Ethics* so amply presents to our regard; and then, awaking from all spiritual listlessness, press on to realise the prayer of the great pioneer in this, as in other phases of the Christ-like life: “And this I pray, that your *love* may abound yet more and more in *knowledge* and all *discernment*.”²

² Phil. i. 9. One cannot help admiring the insight of Wesley, when he fixed on “perfect Love” as the synonym of Christian Perfection. Too often, no doubt, his ideal has been suffered to degenerate into something like mere emotionalism, sadly lacking in ethical conscience. All the more grateful should we feel for the new study of Christian Ethics as such, to give definite ideals to Divine Love, and so to “make it through constant watching wise.” From such an interpretation, especially in these days of revived zeal for Christian Perfection, we may hope for the noblest results, in characters that shall supply the true Christian Apologetic.

The Public Worship of Presbyterian Scotland.¹

BY THE REV. D. DOUGLAS BANNERMAN, D.D., PERTH.

THE Rev. Charles G. M’Crie’s Cunningham Lectures deserve a very cordial recommendation to your readers. The author leads us over a wide field. Beginning, in his introductory chapter on “Celtic and Anglo-Roman Worship,” with a glance at the Druids in the pagan past of Scotland, he ends, in the last “note” of his Appendix, with two meetings, still in the dim future, to be held by the “Scottish Church Society” in May and November next. His object is to give an impartial historical account of the origin, growth, and development of the order of public worship which has prevailed in this country from the Reformation to the present day, whenever “Scotland has been free to carry out her chosen and beloved Presbyterian polity and ritual.”

Within the limits and under the conditions which Mr. M’Crie has laid down for himself, he has done his work faithfully and well. After an interesting sketch of the state of things in Scotland

as regards worship previous to the sixteenth century, he describes, in successive chapters, the formative period of the Scottish Reformation, as influenced in respect of worship by the Anglican Prayer-Book in its different forms, and by the Service-Books of Frankfort, Strassburg, and Geneva; the period of the Scottish Book of Common Order; the period of the Westminster Directory and the Covenanters; the period of the Revolution, and “Decadence in Worship,” as in other things, during the eighteenth century; and the period of “the Modern Renaissance,” especially in the second half of the nineteenth century. Fifteen “notes,” several of them being of considerable length, form the Appendix. In it such topics are dealt with as the Scottish Service for Visitation and Communion of the Sick in the twelfth century, the Scottish Collects on the Psalms in the sixteenth century, the Offices of Reader and Exhorter in the Church of Scotland, Revisions of the Westminster Directory in England, Australia, and Tasmania, the Communion Office of the Westminster Directory, theologically and historically considered.

¹ *The Public Worship of Presbyterian Scotland, historically treated.* The Fourteenth Series of the Cunningham Lectures. By Charles G. M’Crie, Minister at Ayr. W. Blackwood & Sons, Edinburgh and London. 1892.

The style of Mr. M'Crie's book is generally clear and good. There are occasional marks of haste, very excusable on the part of a minister in a county town, conscious possibly that his ordinary work was getting into heavy arrears while he put his Cunningham Lectures into final shape. In a second edition, our author will probably remodel a few awkward sentences, such as that which fills the first thirteen and a half lines of p. 308. We trust he will avoid such barbarisms as "so he reminisced" (p. 48). He will also correct one or two of those petty slips which are unavoidable to mortal man in traversing so wide a field, such as that on p. 146, where he says that "*the fifth*" of the Articles of Perth enjoined "the observance of the *four* holidays." It was the *second* Article, and Mr. M'Crie has forgotten Ascension Day. But these are very small and exceptional things.

This work has the great advantage of being written by a man thoroughly interested in his subject. "I kent your Grace's heart wad warm to the tartan," Jeanie Deans says to the Duke of Argyll, to excuse herself for having kept her plaid about her, when she came to plead with him in London for her sister. Mr. M'Crie shows an admirable fairness to all sides, as he makes his way across the well-trodden battlefields of Scottish Church history; but we feel that his heart warms to John Knox, the Covenanters, and the Seceders. It is with evident relish that he notes "John Knox, his mark," in the "Black Rubric," abhorred of High Churchmen, which remains to this day at the end of the Communion Office in the Anglican Prayer-Book. There is an underglow of personal interest, in which perhaps all his readers will not share, in our author's faithful description of Ralph Erskine's "Smoking Spiritualised," and of the cautious stages by which "Scripture Songs and Hymns"—"human" or otherwise—won their way in the different sections of the Secession Church (pp. 296-309).

Mr. M'Crie has wisely availed himself of the newest light thrown upon his theme by recent publications. In his pages we see for ourselves the worship of the Scottish Church at different dates in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries through the eyes of such "early travellers in Scotland" as Sir William Brereton of Cheshire; Kay, the naturalist; Thomas Morer, the rector of St. Anne's, Aldersgate; and other contemporary witnesses.

Much ignorance still prevails in many quarters

as to the principles and practices of the "Second Reformation" period in Scotland with respect to worship. It will probably still come as a surprise to some of Mr. M'Crie's readers to learn from his impartial pages that it was not because prayers were being *read* in St. Giles that Jenny Geddes threw her stool at the Dean; that among the "novations" against which Alexander Henderson and the Covenanters contended were the prelates "interdicting morning and evening prayers" in the churches; and that Scottish country ministers of that period, like Robert Baillie of Kilwinning, were grieved to find that "yeomen of their flock," under *English* influences, were being led to doubt "the lawfulness of read prayers," and "to scunner at" the Lord's Prayer, the "Gloria Patri," and "the Belief" or "Apostles' Creed" in public worship.

May we suggest to Mr. M'Crie that one deficiency in his work might be supplied with advantage in another edition? He gives us no account of the rise and development of the Scottish Sacramental Fast-day, and other arrangements for special preparation before the Communion and for thanksgiving after it. This peculiarly Scottish institution grew up by degrees about the middle of the sixteenth century in the time of the Covenanters. It found such general acceptance in the Church that it lived, and had a powerful influence, down almost to our own day. It still survives in the Highlands, and to a certain extent in some Lowland districts of Scotland.

To any intelligent student of Church life and worship, as differently developed in different parts of Christendom at different times, this old Scottish Communion system presents some very interesting and suggestive features. It marks one of the few points on which the Scottish Reformers departed from the general consensus of reformed Christendom. In Switzerland, France, Holland, and Germany the Reformed or Calvinistic Churches observed, in one way or other, the five great days historically associated with the leading events in the life of our Lord and with the Advent of the Holy Spirit. In almost every case, Easter, Pentecost, Harvest-time, and Christmas were the Communion seasons, and Good Friday was kept as a day of religious fasting. The five Christian anniversaries were distinctly recognised and approved in the Second Helvetic Confession, the most widely adopted and most authoritative of all the Confessions of the Reformed Church in Europe.

Knox and his brother Reformers in Scotland did not see their way to agree with Calvin and Beza on this point, and had therefore to qualify their otherwise cordial acceptance of the Second Helvetic Confession by a slight and very gently worded dissent as regards its approval of the Christian festivals. This was repeated—and naturally with greater emphasis—in the beginning of the seventeenth century, when King James VI. and Archbishop Laud sought to force the Five Articles of Perth upon the Scottish Church. But it is a significant fact that in the very next generation a new series of fast-days and Christian festivals was set up in Scotland under the auspices of such men as Samuel Rutherford, Robert Blair, and John Livingstone, and continued to flourish for nearly two centuries. It affords a strong practical proof that such religious “occasions” will be found helpful by all Christians for spiritual life, when we find that the one Church of the Reformation which did not fall in with the views and practice of the Reformers generally, as regards the historic Christian festivals, was yet led, as it were involuntarily, by the instincts of Christian life and the results of Christian experience, to develop an institution of its own, which reproduced almost all the best features of the institution which it rejected, and was essentially a combination of religious fasting and religious festival.

The old Scottish system of Communion seasons has now, in the Lowlands at least, given way to change of circumstances and social conditions in the country. The Sacramental Fast-day and the Thanksgiving Service have disappeared. In many towns absolute uncertainty prevails as to when the Communion will be held in any of the different Churches. The elevating sense of Christian unity of feeling and experience at one time among many fellow-worshippers, which was part of the strength of the old Scottish system, is thus lost; and there is, for the most part, no compensating gain of a wider fellowship in thought and feeling, in prayer and praise, with Christians all over the world at the returning historical anniversaries of the great Christian facts of our Lord's death, resurrection, and ascension, and the coming of the Holy Ghost. The Scottish Churches, in short, seem in danger of “falling between two stools,” losing the advantages of their old seventeenth century system of Christian fasts and festivals, without gaining the advantages of the older system adopted at the Reformation by the Presbyterian Churches of the Continent.

It would have been well if Mr. M'Crie had brought out the historical facts bearing on this question, whether he saw his way to indicate any opinion upon it or not. Taking it as a whole, however, this work worthily fills a place which has been empty hitherto. It is a full, reliable, and interesting handbook of the Scottish department of the general subject of the worship of the Church. The admirable accuracy of citation and reference which characterise this volume, and the fulness and precision of its index, would have rejoiced the hearts of such masters in the field of Scottish ecclesiastical history and antiquities as the late Dr. Thomas M'Crie and Dr. David Laing.

There is room for some competent scholar to render a corresponding service by giving us a historical handbook—necessarily more condensed, but on somewhat similar lines—of the worship of the Reformed Churches on the Continent and in America. Ebrard laid a good foundation for this, nearly fifty years ago, in his *Reformirtes Kirchenbuch*. There are German works of more recent date which go so far in the same direction, such as H. A. Köstlin's excellent *Geschichte des Christlichen Gottesdienstes*, published in 1887. But there is need for something of this sort in English to serve as the complement to what Mr. M'Crie has given us, to show, for our guidance in this country, both the strength and the weaknesses of the worship of the Reformed Church, as developed elsewhere than in Scotland.

We cordially agree with Mr. M'Crie in the brief but well-considered sentences with which he concludes his work (pp. 353–8). In these he expresses, on the one hand, strong disapproval of anything which would “render Presbyterian worship *liturgical*, in the sense of making it the unvarying and prescribed worship enjoined in a prayer-book, mediæval or modern,” and of arranging the service on a Sacramentarian basis. On the other hand, Mr. M'Crie, speaking with the authority which he may justly claim on a subject which he has made so much his own, bears decided testimony against every unintelligent attempt to limit the lawful development of “the laudable form and ritual of the Reformed Church of Scotland,” as Archbishop Grindal called it in 1582, on the lines of its historic and confessional principles, and in the light of its own experience and practice in the past, and those of sister Reformed Churches on the Continent and elsewhere, “holding the Presbyterian system.”