JAMES FRASER OF BREA

Vol. 1
JAMES FRASER OF BREA
1639 - 1699.

His Life and Writings, with special reference to his Theory of Universal Redemption, and its Influence on Religious Thought in Scotland.

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FOREWORD

Dr. Alexander Whyte held that James Fraser of Brea was one of the ablest men in a time of able men, and that his high and abiding value stood in this, that he turned his great intellectual gifts so powerfully to the interests of experimental religion. He confessed that Fraser was one of his prime favourites, and always stood at his elbow beside Augustine, Bunyan, Baxter, Edwards, Boston, Shepard, and Halyburton. Apart, however, from Dr. Whyte's own series of devotional addresses, published in 1911 with the title *James Fraser, Laird of Brea*, no study on any considerable scale either of Fraser himself, or of his theology and influence has yet appeared. References to him, of course, abound in the literature of the period, and since the publication of his works at intervals in the course of the first fifty years of the eighteenth century almost all who have written about the Scottish Church or about the development of Scottish Theology from the time of the Revolution Settlement have had something to say about him, but only a very few of these references are really helpful. The most notable are to be found in Robert King's *Covenanters in the North* (1846), James Anderson's *Martyrs of the Bass*
(1848), James Walker's Theology and Theologians of Scotland (2nd edn. 1888), Murdoch Macdonald's Covenanters in Moray and Ross (2nd edn. 1892), and more recently, Emeritus Principal John Macleod's Scottish Theology in Relation to Church History (1943). But in none of these is Fraser or his theology dealt with at all comprehensively.

It is also a fact that, with the sole exception of the Memoirs, none of Fraser's works has been republished in recent times. Not even his important Treatise on Faith, originally published in two parts, in 1722 and 1749 respectively, has seen a second edition. But the strangest circumstance of all is that his "Philocris" Memoirs are still unpublished. The manuscript, in a perfect state of preservation, is included among the Laing papers in the Library of the University of Edinburgh, and only awaits the labours of someone willing to devote himself to the work of transcribing and publishing a seventeenth century religious autobiography even more interesting than Fraser's published Memoirs.

The present Thesis is an attempt to fill, however inadequately, the curious gap in the annals of the Scottish Church due to this strange neglect of Fraser and his theology. Whatever we may think of his Theory of Universal Redemption the fact remains that Fraser was a great and original thinker whom we neglect to our cost. Everything he wrote deserves the closest study.
In quoting from Fraser's works I have adhered fairly closely to the form in which these first appeared. I have taken the liberty of dispensing with some of his many capital letters; I have modernised his spelling and punctuation, but only where such modification seemed called for in the interests of clarity; obvious misprints have been corrected; but with these few exceptions I have not interfered with Fraser's text. A Bibliography is appended to the Thesis.

I desire to express my grateful thanks to those to whose courtesy and kindness I am indebted for permission to consult books, papers, and manuscripts dealing with the subject of the Thesis. In particular I would mention Dr. H.W. Meikle and Mr. W. Beattie, of the National Library of Scotland; Dr. L.W. Sharp, Librarian of Edinburgh University; Rev. Dr. A. Mitchell Hunter and Miss Erna Leslie, of New College Library; Rev. Dr. John Campbell, of the Church of Scotland General Assembly's Library; Mr. C.A. Malcolm, of the Signet Library; Mr. H.W. Paton, Curator of Historical Records, H.M. General Register House; Dr. W.R. Cunningham, Librarian and Keeper of the Hunterian Books and Manuscripts, Glasgow University; Rev. Dr. R.W. Buchanan, Librarian of Trinity College, Glasgow; Mr. R. Bain, Glasgow City Librarian; Dr. W. Douglas Simpson, Librarian of Aberdeen University; Miss Annie I. Gibson, Librarian of Christ's College, Aberdeen; And the librarians and staffs of the British Museum Library,
and the Scottish Central Library for Students.

I wish to acknowledge a very special debt to the Rev. Dr. Hector Macpherson, Edinburgh, with whose assistance I have been able to ascertain the exact date of Fraser's death. This took place on 13th September 1699 (O.S.), and not on 13th September 1698, the date given in the 1738 edition of the Memoirs, and followed by most subsequent writers. The eclipse of the sun referred to in a note prefixed to the 1738 Memoirs as having occurred on the morning of the day of Fraser's death actually took place on 13th September 1699.

Duncan Fraser

April 1944.
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BRIEF SYNOPSIS OF THE THESIS

I. The main body of the Thesis consists of a detailed analysis and exposition of all Fraser's published works. These are taken in the following order: - Memoirs (1738), Prelacy an Idol, and Prelates Idolaters (1713), The Lawfulness and Duty of Separation from Corrupt Ministers and Churches (1744), Meditations on Several Subjects in Divinity (1721), Some Choice Select Meditations (1726), A Treatise Concerning Justifying Faith (1722), A Treatise on Justifying Faith (174©), and finally, The Appendix to Chapter Five of the last mentioned - Concerning the Object (or Extent) of Christ's Death - in which Fraser's Universalism receives its clearest and fullest expression. The reason for dealing with the works in this seemingly arbitrary order will appear in the course of the Thesis. The examination has reference to Fraser's theology in general, but especially to his Theory of Universal Redemption, implicit in most of his writings and explicit in the Appendix referred to.

II. There follows a discussion of the main sources of Fraser's theology, again with particular reference to his Universalism. These sources are (a) Orthodox Calvinism, (b) The Marrow of Modern Divinity, and the Marrow Theology,
(c) Arminian Universalism, and (d) Amyraldism, and the School of Saumur.

III. Next comes an examination of the effects of Fraser's theology, particularly his Universalism, upon (a) The Reformed Presbytery, in which it led to a breach in 1753, (b) The Associate Synod, where between 1754 and 1757 it occasioned an acrimonious controversy among the Anti-Burghers, ending with the deposition of the Rev. Thomas Mair of Orwell in the latter year, (c) The writings of Adam Gib, who devoted a considerable part of the second volume of his Display of the Secession Testimony to a discussion and refutation of Fraser's Theory of Universal Redemption, and (d) The development of the Double Reference Theory of the Atonement in the Secession Church, and also the theology of men like Thomas Erskine of Linlathen, John M'Leod Campbell, and James Morison, all of whom show affinities with Fraser.

IV. The examination of Fraser's writings is prefaced by a short biography based upon (a) the published memoirs, which first appeared in 1738, and have often been reprinted down to our own time, the latest edition being in 1889, (b) the unpublished "Philocris" Memoirs, in many ways more interesting and more illuminating than the published version, and (c) a large number of contemporary records and documents, such as the Brodie Diaries, Wodrow's History of the Sufferings, the Wardlaw Manuscript, the Memoirs of Hog of Kiltearn, Hog of Carnock, and Boston of Ettrick, the Diary of John Erskine
of Carnock, and the Kirk Session Minute Books of Inverness and Culross.

V. By way of introduction there are two short chapters dealing with Scotland and the Scottish Church, first in the vitally important formative years between 1560, when Scotland definitely broke with Rome, and 1639, the year of Fraser's birth, and then in the period covered by Fraser's life - 1639 to 1699. There is also an Epilogue in which an attempt is made to indicate Fraser's outstanding characteristics as Covenanter and as man.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1639</td>
<td>Fraser born at Brea, Ross-shire. (29th July.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1649</td>
<td>His Father, Sir James Fraser, dies. (6th Dec.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1653</td>
<td>Fraser enters Edinburgh University.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1656</td>
<td>His conversion takes place in this or the following year.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1658</td>
<td>Graduates at Edinburgh. (30th June.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Returns to the north.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1661</td>
<td>Goes south again. (Nov.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Writes some law.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1662</td>
<td>Returns to the north. (Oct.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Is cited south again to answer a creditor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Settles the case for about 12,000 merks.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Binds himself for 8000 merks for his sisters' dowries.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1663</td>
<td>Goes to law with some of his relatives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Is attracted by Quakerism but soon turns against it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Leaves off hearing prelates and curates.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1664</td>
<td>Practically all his father's fortune, about £20,000</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>is by now lost through lawsuits and in other ways.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>His spiritual condition decays.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1665</td>
<td>Throughout this year he is troubled with doubts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Eventually decides to enter ministry. (Towards end of year)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1669</td>
<td>First part (eight chapters) of Memoires written.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1672</td>
<td>Ordained by Field Presbytery of Moray. (Early in year.)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Marries south-country lady. (Latter end of July.)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Summoned for keeping conventicles but fails to appear.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Is denounced as a rebel, and outlawed.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Event</td>
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<tr>
<td>1673</td>
<td>Persecution continues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1674</td>
<td>Again summoned to appear before Council. (16th July.) Again fails to appear, and is denounced as rebel.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1675</td>
<td>Intercommuned with several others. (6th Aug.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>1676</td>
<td>On business in Northumberland. (Early in Oct.) Wife dies suddenly. (Oct.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1677</td>
<td>Apprehended in Edinburgh. (Sunday, 28th Jan.) Examined by the Council, and ordered to be imprisoned on the Bass. (Mon. 29th Jan.) Removed from Edinburgh en route for Bass. (Tues. 30th Jan.) Reaches Bass. (Wed. 31st Jan.) At work on his Treatise on Faith. John Carsteres writes him about his theory of universal redemption. (4th June.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1679</td>
<td>Treatise on Faith completed. (9th July.) Council orders his transfer to Tolbooth of Edinburgh. (19th July.) Liberated on giving bond to appear when called. (18th Aug.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1681</td>
<td>Cited to appear before Council for field-preaching. Citation allowed to sleep. Citation renewed. Ordered to appear before Council on 22nd December. Imprisoned in Tolbooth of Edinburgh. (Six weeks.) (December - January.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1684</td>
<td>Liberated from Newgate. (Jan.) Returns to Scotland. (Early in year.) Again imprisoned in Scotland. (Towards end of year.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>1689</td>
<td>Begins to hold meetings in Culross. (Early in Jan.) Appointed minister of Culross. (13th May.)</td>
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1695 Elected to Inverness Second Charge. (22nd Oct.)

1696 Called to Inverness. (Sept.)
Negotiations eventually break down.
Death of his second wife.

1698 Assisted at Communion in Culross by Thomas Boston. (21st Aug.)
George Mair admitted to Second Charge of Culross. (2nd Sept.)

1699 Fraser dies at Edinburgh. (13th Sept.)

II. FRASER'S WORKS
N.B. Fuller details are given in the Bibliography appended to the thesis.

1713 Prelacy an Idol, and Prelates Idolaters. ? Edin.
1721 Meditations on Several Subjects in Divinity. Edin.
1722 A Treatise Concerning Justifying or Saving Faith. Edin.
1726 Some Choice Select Meditations. Edin.

1744 The Lawfulness and Duty of Separation from Corrupt Ministers and Churches Explained and Vindicated. Edin.
1753 Meditation on I Tim. i. 15. ? Edin.
(a reprint of the first meditation in Some Choice Select Meditations.)

1798 Mémoirs reprinted. Glas.

1830 Christ Died for Our Sins according to the Scriptures.
(a reprint of brief extracts from the 1749 Treatise on Faith.) Greenock.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Publication</th>
<th>Location</th>
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<tr>
<td>1847</td>
<td>Memoirs reprinted. (&quot;Wodrow Select Biographies, ii.&quot;)</td>
<td>Edin.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1873</td>
<td>Gled Tidings of Great Joy to All People.</td>
<td>Lond.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(a reprint of part of the Treatise on Faith.)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1889</td>
<td>Memoirs reprinted.</td>
<td>Inverness.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1889</td>
<td>Creidimh ann an Dis.</td>
<td>Inverness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(a Gaelic translation of a section of the Memoirs.)</td>
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INTRODUCTORY

"Behind him, largely explanatory of both the man and his work, lies the conundrum of his time."

- Buchan's *Oliver Cromwell*, p. 10.
CHAPTER I

SCOTLAND AND THE SCOTTISH CHURCH IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY:

(a) BEFORE FRASER'S TIME - to 1639.

In the opening sentence of his *Oliver Cromwell* John Buchan points out that "a great man lays upon posterity the duty of understanding him" (1). He goes on to say that, in the case of Cromwell, "behind him, largely explanatory of both the man and his work, lies the conundrum of his time" (2). While James Fraser of Brea, the subject of this thesis, cannot be called great in the sense in which the term is applied to the Commonwealth leader, yet he also lays upon us the duty of understanding him if we would grasp the significance of some of the more important movements and trends of thought in Scotland in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries; and in his case too, and largely explanatory of his life and work, there lies the conundrum of his time. To understand Fraser and his place in the history of the Scottish Church and its theology one has to remember the period in which he lived and wrote. In the rapid survey which follows an attempt is made to fill in the background of his life.
Fraser's life falls entirely within the seventeenth century. Born on 29th July 1639, he died on 13th September 1696. Throughout the whole of his life, with the exception of the closing years, Scotland was a sorely troubled land. In the course of the previous century great changes had taken place in both Church and State, but the seventeenth century was to witness a transformation at least as great, and in some respects even greater. When the century opened the Reformation, as far as Scotland was concerned, was scarcely forty years old. It was on 2nd May 1559 that Knox, "the grandest figure," according to Froude, "in the entire history of the British Reformation," returned to his native land after his years of exile. During those years he had spent a considerable time in close association with Calvin, and when he returned to Scotland his mind and outlook were Calvinistic through and through. He came back determined to set up a Church whose doctrine, worship, and government should be based upon Scripture; for him, as for Calvin, Scripture was the one and only touchstone in all matters concerning the Christian Church. "Whatsoever God approveth by His eternal word," he held, "that shall be approved, and whatsoever He condemneth, shall be condemned." Row, the contemporary historian of the Church, claimed that the ministers who shared in the early work of Reformation, "took not their pattern from any Kirk in the world, no, not fra Geneva itself; but, laying God's word before them, made
Reformation according thereunto, both in doctrine first, and then in discipline, when and as they might get it overtaken" (3).

By May 1559 the Reformation movement in Scotland had, of course, passed beyond the initial stage. The English Church was already reformed, and for some considerable time the leaven had been at work north of the Border. But much still remained to be done. "I see the battle shall be great," said Knox, "and I am come, I praise my God, even in the brunt of the battle." What Knox's arrival did was to hasten matters, for he had all the gifts and qualities which the time demanded. Above all he knew how to sway the multitude; it was said of him that "the voice of that one man is able to put more life in us in one hour than five hundred trumpets blustering in our ears." It soon became evident that under his inspiring leadership victory for the new faith was assured, and when in July 1560 the Treaty of Edinburgh was signed by the representatives of Scotland, England, and France, that event, with all its far-reaching consequences, was no more than the logical outcome of all that had happened since Knox's return. Those who were working for a reformed Church were now in an unassailable position.

In August of the same year the Scottish Parliament met in Edinburgh, repudiated the supremacy of the Pope, condemned Mass as an idolatrous rite, forbade its celebration even in private, and repealed all Acts favouring the Roman Church. A new day had dawned for Scotland, and the credit was
largely Knox’s. "He caused the overthrow of the mediaeval Church in Scotland," says Mr. J.G. Fyfe, "but the Reformation of which he was the chief agent was no mere change in dogma, it was a complete transformation from a corrupt and overbearing Church to one which was democratic in government, and simple and sincere in doctrine" (4).

Parliament approved a Confession of Faith – the Scots Confession of 1560 – in which was set forth the teaching accepted by the Reformers, and regarded as "wholesome and sound doctrine grounded upon the infallible truth of God's word." It was the work of Knox and five colleagues, Row, Spottiswoode, Winram, Douglas, and Willock, and followed the lines of earlier statements of the Reformed faith, especially the teaching of Calvin in his Institutes of the Christian Religion, the definitive edition of which had appeared in the previous year. For direction in the practical management of the affairs of the Church there was published in 1561 the First Book of Discipline, to be superseded some twenty years later by the Second Book of Discipline, mainly the work of Andrew Melville, as the earlier book had been that of Knox. "The Second Book differed from the First chiefly in its definite repudiation of the episcopal office," says Professor Rait, "and its insistence on the essential parity or equality of all ministers, and in its emphatic assertion that ecclesiastical authority, 'the Power of the Keys,' is different and distinct from the Civil Power, and
comes immediately from God, 'not having a temporal Head on the Earth, but only Christ, the only spiritual King and governor of His Kirk' (5). For guidance in matters of worship the General Assembly in 1564 sanctioned the Book of Common Order, or, as it is usually called, Knox's Liturgy.

The Reformed Church was well established when Mary Stuart landed at Leith in August 1561. Knox saw no good in her coming; "the very face of heaven, the time of her arrival," he said, "did manifestly speak what comfort was brought into this country with her, to wit, dolour, darkness, and all impiety" (6). Later on he was to say of her: "If there be not in her a proud mind, a crafty wit, and an indurate heart against God and His truth, my judgment faileth me" (7). A devout Roman Catholic the young Queen looked upon the new faith with feelings of horror and loathing, and was in fact pledged to do what she could to bring Scotland back to the Roman allegiance. As Dr. C.G. M'Crie has pointed out, when she landed at Leith she was strong in three things, which never lost their hold upon her mind, nor ceased to influence her policy. "She was strong in her attachment to the Church of Rome, strong in her hatred of Protestantism, and strong in her determination to bring her subjects once more under Roman authority" (8). But when in 1568 she took refuge in England never to cross the Border again Scotland was still firmly Protestant.

Four years later, on 24th November 1572, Knox died,
but other leaders were at hand, ready to step into his place and to safeguard the Church for which he had laboured and suffered through so many strenuous years. Presbytery was safe from Popery. "To the outward eye," says a modern Roman Catholic historian, referring to that period, "Scottish Catholicism seemed hopelessly destroyed, and in fact, it never rose again" (9). The danger from Episcopacy was more real, even before Knox's death the Scottish Church had been compelled, partly in a vain attempt to preserve her patrimony, to accept bishops of a sort - the famous 'tulchans' who had the title but little else that pertained to the office. That arrangement, however, was soon to be challenged.

In 1574 Knox's true successor as leader of the Reformed Church appeared in the person of Andrew Melville, fresh from his labours as a University teacher in Geneva. When he came back to Scotland he came, as Beza put it, as Geneva's best gift to the northern kingdom. As Principal of Glasgow College, and later as Principal of St. Mary's College, St. Andrews, Melville became a real tower of strength to the Scottish Church. "As an ecclesiastical reformer," says Professor Rait, "Melville was the founder of Scottish Presbyterianism" (10). He stood firmly for two things in church polity: (1) the divine right of Presbytery, and (2) the spiritual independence of the Church. Episcopacy he regarded as having no warrant in
Scripture and therefore unlawful. "In an environment where Divine Right was coming to be a watchword," says Professor Hugh Watt, "he, on the grounds of New Testament exegesis, proclaimed the Divine Right of Presbytery. His learned arguments convinced nearly all his brethren; and a Church grew up which accepted Presbyterianism and autonomy as synonyms and regarded both as needful for the proper accomplishment of the Church's task" (11). A modern Episcopalian writer has confessed that "Melville's criticism of Episcopacy in 1584, during his controversy with Adamson, held good for later times as well. He declared that Episcopacy was only an artifice for introducing a new popedom in the person of the king, and that for this purpose the jurisdiction exercised by Christ in the Church had been transferred to the bishops, who were nothing but cyphers and creatures of the king. His words were too true. The connection of Episcopacy with the Stuarts was fatal to the Catholic organisation of the Church in Scotland as a whole. More and more it became apparent that under Presbyterianism certain rights of the people and clergy were recognised, and that under Episcopacy they were denied" (12).

There were, however, some in Scotland who were not prepared to stand aside while Episcopacy was abolished, root and branch. Chief among these was young James VI, who had succeeded to the throne in 1567, and who was now old enough to have ideas and plans of his own for both Church
He had no love for Presbytery, believing, as Milton did later, that "new presbyter is but old priest writ large." Presbytery, he held, "agreeth as well with a monarchy as God and the devil." In 1584 Parliament passed the 'Black Acts' which gave a purely temporary victory to the Episcopalian party by asserting the royal headship over the Church, and the right of the King to appoint bishops and to decide when Assemblies should meet, and which prohibited the ministers from preaching on political topics under the penalty of treason (13). But eight years later, in 1592, and mainly due to the untiring efforts of Melville, both King and Parliament accepted the principles of the Second Book of Discipline, and henceforth government in the Church was by General Assemblies, Synods, Presbyteries, and Kirk Sessions.

With the opening of the seventeenth century the stage was set for a full-scale conflict between James and Melville. James' idea of a Churchman, as Professor G.D. Henderson has said, "was an obsequious Bishop and his idea of a pest was Andrew Melville" (14). "He was a strong-minded, strong-walled man," said Lord Moncrieff, "a man of great sagacity, far-reaching, far-seeing view, who knew men well, who knew how to make tools, and how to use them; - a man of low type morally, but of a high type intellectually, although crooked and perfidious in all his doings: and during his day, in the middle of the most tumultuous and tempestuous times which
Europe ever saw, he contrived to keep peace at home and peace abroad, and pursued his own objects with unrelenting and persistent energy" (15). One of those objects was the establishment of Episcopacy in Scotland. "No bishop, no king," was for him an article of faith. "The bishops," he held, "must rule the ministers, and the king rule both." He could see no place for the Church except as a body subservient to the State, and by the State he meant the King; the control of Church affairs he regarded as no small part of the kingly office. It was natural, therefore, that he should favour Episcopacy for it offered him a convenient method of exercising, through the bishops, that oversight of the Church which he insisted was included in the royal prerogative. Trouble was bound to arise. "Lacking the wisdom of his Tudor predecessors," it has been said of him, "James chose to theorize about the Prerogative instead of contenting himself with using it. His crude assumptions met with a not less crude rejoinder, and the excess of his claim was equalled by the exaggerations of the counter-claim" (16). What was true of James and his claims in the political sphere was no less true of his ambitions in ecclesiastical affairs. But Melville was prepared to withstand any encroachment upon the rights and privileges of the Church. In his opinion the Church could not become subservient to the State without losing her distinctive character. In his famous interview with
James at Falkland in 1596 he had reminded the king that "there are two kings and two kingdoms in Scotland: there is King James, the head of this commonwealth, and there is Christ Jesus, the King of the Church, whose subject King James the Sixth is, and of whose kingdom he is not a king, nor a lord, nor a head, but a member" (17).

Step by step James brought his bishops into the Church so that by 1602 all the thirteen bishoprics were filled. With the union of the Crowns in 1603 his desire to have Episcopacy in the fullest sense established north of the Border grew apace; hitherto there was but the shadow of it, now there must be the substance. To have a uniform system of Church government and practice in both parts of his kingdom he regarded as a very desirable step towards that closer co-operation which he wished to see between Scotland and England. But the leaders of the Scottish Church at last took alarm, and attempted, in spite of the king, to hold a General Assembly in Aberdeen in 1605. James at once took drastic steps to deal with what from his point of view was incipient rebellion, and Andrew Melville, along with several others, was banished from Scotland never to return. By 1610 the king had his wish as far as the Scottish Church was concerned; Episcopacy was established, and the bishops then appointed, as Professor Henderson has pointed out, "were definitely intended by James to be real Bishops, Bishops in valid orders precisely like those of the Church of England"(18).
At the Assembly in Glasgow that year Spottiswoode, titular Bishop of Glasgow, was chosen moderator, and within four months three titular bishops, Spottiswoode, Lamb of Brechin, and Hamilton of Galloway, were duly consecrated in the chapel of London House by the Bishops of London, Ely, Rochester, and Worcester. "Thus," writes Canon Mitchell, "the line of true Episcopal succession, broken in 1560, was restored to Scotland for a time" (19). The Church then set up was a curious amalgam, and produced results which were neither wholly good nor wholly bad. It was, in the late Professor Cooper's words, "a system which combined, on the Ignatian model, presbyterial franchises, and synodical rights with Episcopal oversight - the system under which alone, it has been said, presbyteries performed their executive duties - the system which really gave us our parish schools - the system which certainly produced the brightest galaxy of theologians that ever adorned our northern sky, - John Cameron, John Forbes of Corse, William Forbes, Robert Baron, Alexander Henderson, Andrew Ramsay, David Dickson, Bishops Wedderburn and Maxwell, Durham, Samuel Rutherford, George Gillespie, Robert Baillie, Robert Douglas" (20).

Eight years later, in 1618 - the year incidentally of the Synod of Dort - the Scottish Church had to accept the Five Articles of Perth, by which kneeling at communion, provision for private communion, and private baptism,
confirmation by bishops, and the observance of the Christian year became part of the Church's practice. All these provisions were "English and foreign to the Genevan code: Scotland disliked them, but when they became law there was no further trouble, and, since they were not strictly enforced, they might soon have perished from desuetude. James, indeed, seems to have regarded the Perth Articles as the most he was prepared to demand, and to have guaranteed no increase of English innovations" (21). While the Articles were in a sense accepted by the Scottish Church there were many who were extremely unhappy about the position and bitterly resentful; James was regarded as having interfered unduly in what was the Church's exclusive province, and, a more serious charge, there was the suspicion that he wished to drive the Church in the direction of Rome. Scotland was determined that whatever happened Rome must never again be allowed to dominate the Scottish Church.

James died in 1625 and was succeeded by his son Charles. The new king had no greater love than his father for Presbyterianism, but unfortunately he lacked that father's tact and diplomacy. "James knew Scotland," says Professor Watt, "and had a shrewd sense of the limits to which he could go in translating his theory into practice. His son Charles, with a greater good-will towards the Scottish Church, had no such sense" (22). Professor Rait speaks of Charles' "fatal facility for combining in opposition to
himself all possible enemies" (23). Lord Moncrieff says that "he seemed to combine all the qualities likely to throw a disaffected nation into turmoil and revolt" (24). And Professor R.L. Mackie points out that "with James ecclesiastical questions were matters of policy; he wanted Episcopacy because it buttressed the royal power: with Charles they were matters of conscience; he wanted Episcopacy because he believed that a Church without bishops was no Church at all" (25). Dr. Agnes Mure Mackenzie's summing-up of Charles' character is perhaps as fair as anything that has ever been written or said about him. "He meant well," she writes. "He desired the weal of his kingdoms, felt his responsibility as king. But his mind, for all his sincere love of the arts, his fine taste in them, ran to abstractions: he lacked the grasp of a concrete situation, the sense of what might be done and what was unwise. He could not see another man's point of view, and he would insist upon explaining himself, which is often grave lack of tact in a politician. His life was summed up by two crucial facts - that he was deeply devoted to the religion for which in the end he was to give up three kingdoms, the inheritance of the son he loved, and his life: and he did it more harm than any of its opponents" (26).

Archbishop Laud, Charles' right-hand man, did nothing to ease a situation which grew more and more tense as the reign progressed. Laud is an enigmatical character.
Macaulay's verdict on him was that of all the prelates of the Anglican Church he had departed farthest from the principles of the Reformation, and had drawn nearest to Rome. "His theology," he says, "was more remote than even that of the Dutch Arminians from the theology of the Calvinists" (27).

It was said of him in Scotland that "if ye part his religion in four, twa parts was Arminian, a third part Poperie, and scarce a fourth part was Protestant" (28). James VI. had warned him that whatever he did he should not meddle with the Scots Kirk. "I keep him back," said that shrewd monarch, "because he hath a restless spirit. When three years since I had obtained from the Assembly of Perth the consent to the Five Articles of order and decency, in correspondence with the Church of England, I gave the promise that I would try their obedience no further, anent ecclesiastical affairs, yet this man hath pressed me to incite them to a nearer conjunction with the Liturgy and Canons of England; but I sent him back again with the previous draft he had drawn. He assaulted me again with another ill-fangled platform, to make that stubborn Kirk stoop more to the English pattern. But I durst not play fast and loose with my soul; he knows not the stomach of that people" (29). A more recent writer has summed up Laud's character by saying that "he could not distinguish between essentials and things 'purely and simply indifferent.' Laud was at utter variance with the great mass of the English
people. He put the emphasis upon uniformity in worship when the serious minds of his age were absorbed in spiritual struggles which had nothing to do with ceremonial. He preached the doctrine of one great, unified, comprehensive church, when the popular tendency was towards minute schisms. He was a devotee of ritual, and most of the usages he would have made compulsory seemed to the plain man what Oliver Cromwell called 'poisonous popish ceremonies.' His church courts were so active and meddlesome that the ordinary man's life was made a burden" (30).

Between them the king and the archbishop were destined to cause Scotland much trouble, for neither of them had any real understanding of the Scottish people. Charles' ideal, like that of his father, was an absolute monarchy, which, of course, meant a State-dominated Church. To that Scotland would never agree: her watchword was still 'the spiritual independence of the Church.' Matters came to a head when in 1636 a Book of Canons, prepared by a committee of the Scottish bishops, and revised by Laud and Juxon, was issued to supersede the Second Book of Discipline in regulating the government of the Church of Scotland. Scotland, to say the least, received the book very coldly. "The contents of the book, its origin, and the method by which it was imposed, equally offended all classes in the country. James VI. in all his ecclesiastical innovations had studiously gone through the form of procuring the sanction of the General
Assembly and the Estates, but solely by his own fiat Charles now imposed his Book of Canons on the country" (31)

In the following year what came to be known as Laud's Liturgy appeared and was ordered to be read in all the parish churches in Scotland. The battle was now joined; as W.L. Mathieson has pointed out, "the revolution to which this attempt gave rise was a far more popular movement than the Reformation, comprising as it did, not only the nobles and the middle class, but the mass of the people who had now been touched by a religious enthusiasm to which they were strangers in the days of Knox and even of Melville" (32). Scotland objected to the new Prayer Book, not because it was a Prayer Book - the Scottish Church had long used Knox's Liturgy - but because of its origin and the manner of its introduction, and also because of its suspected Romish tendencies. Row, the historian, giving his reasons for the rejection of the book, says, among other things, that "this Popish-Inglish-Scotish-Masse-Service Booke .... is much more Popish nor the Inglish Booke, and much less Protestant, for severall words in the Inglish Booke, whilk seem opposit to the corporall presence in the sacrament, is left out in the Scottish Booke, and severall most Popish expressions are found in our Booke whilk are not at all in theirs, as any comparing the one with the other may evidentlie perceave" (33). That fine soul, Robert Baillie, confesses that he was content with the Church of
Scotland as he found it in his youth under the measure of Episcopacy introduced by James, but when the new Prayer Book, "the gravius ungracious Service Book," as he calls it, appeared, his feelings changed. "I did conclude," he says, "that their design was wicked, that their intentions were clear to corrupt the Church and to enslave the State, that all their former innovations were but introductory meanes and adminicles for these ends" (34).

"The book, with the canons which preceded it," says Andrew Lang, "had no ecclesiastical sanction, either of all the bishops, or of a General Assembly. The imposition was an Act of sheer royal autocratic papacy; the book, being English, insulted Scottish national sentiment; the changes from the English version were deemed to imply a nearer approach to Rome. Protestantism was in danger. The landowners suspected that Charles meant to recover some of their old ecclesiastical estates for the rebuilding of cathedrals and cleaning of churches; and thus, from the 'rascal multitude' upwards, through every rank and condition of his subjects, Charles gave intolerable offence, and caused extreme apprehension. He lost three kingdoms, and his head, not for a mass, but for a surplice" (35). In this connection it is interesting to note that when in 1744 the Seceders published Fraser of Brea's Lawfulness and Duty of Separation from Corrupt Ministers and Churches Explained and Vindicated they printed as an appendix to it a pamphlet
containing the Reasons Agreed upon by the Reformers of the Church of Scotland, for which the Book of Common-Prayer, urged upon Scotland, Anno 1637, was refused. Of the six reasons advanced the last is perhaps the most important:

"Though a prescript Form of Liturgy were lawful, yet there is no Warrant for imposing one: For, might not able Ministers (at least) make a prescript Form to themselves, which would fit them and their People best? But if it were lawful to impose one, then there is one in this Country already. Ought not that rather be imposed, than any other, seeing it is already established by Parliament, now of a long Time? But now, if a new one ought to be imposed, then it ought to come in by a lawful Manner, by a General Assembly, and Men chosen to make it, that are known to have the Gift of Prayer themselves, and not the Mass-Book translated into English, urged by Antichristian Prelates upon God's People, without Consent of any General Assembly or Parliament, against the Will of all Men, and with no small Offence and Scandal to the Minds and Consciences of such as think all Liturgy unlawful, that is either in the Mass-Way, or inconsistent with the Practice and Peace of the Reformed Churches of Scotland hitherto; and against the Hearts of such as know many Things in the English Liturgy and Canons, which the Practice of neither hath Warrant in God's Word, nor can bring any such addition to the Profit, Honour or Power of the King, that is able to compense the Loss he may make of his good
Subjects' Affections, by commanding such a Change as the urges Liturgy would bring to the Peace of our Church, and the Respect due to the Acts of Parliament, and long Custom, whereby our Church-Discipline, Order and Government hath been established" (36). In a footnote it is explained that the Prayer Book already in the country to which reference is made is "the Form and Order of the English Church at Geneva, which was brought over here, and made use of as a Directory in the Beginning of our Reformation in Knox's time" (37).

Just how far Laud was responsible for the Liturgy is not quite clear. "We have Laud's own statement," says Professor Rait, "that the modifications most bitterly resented were the work of two of the Scottish Bishops, and did not meet with his own approval, and that he himself disliked the introduction of the book without the sanction of a General Assembly" (38). And Canon Mitchell points out that "it was not the work of Laud, but of two Scottish Bishops, Maxwell of Ross and Wedderburn of Dunblane. Laud's work was confined to preliminary suggestion and subsequent revision, and all that was most characteristic in it was done by Scotsmen" (39). The same writer goes on to say that "the idea, canvassed at the time, and not yet extinct, that it was more 'popish' than the English book, proceeded from the inability to distinguish between what is Catholic and what is Roman. The real offence of the book was the
method of its introduction, by royal proclamation at the
market crosses of Scotland, instead of by the authorised
courts of the Church" (39).

On 23rd July 1637, when the new Book was used for the
first time in the Cathedral Church of St. Giles, a riot broke
out; opposition to Charles and his ways with the Scottish
Church was henceforth to be open and vocal, and to increase
steadily in volume. Early the following year the National
Covenant was drawn up, and on 28th February - "one of the
decisive days in the history of the Scottish Church, of the
Scottish people, and even, one might say, of the political
development of Western civilisation" (40) - the signing began
in Greyfriars Church in Edinburgh. The two men who had
most to do with the drawing up of the Covenant - Alexander
Henderson, and Archibald Johnston of Wariston - were now the
undoubted leaders of the Scottish Church. Robert Baillie
referred to Henderson as "the fairest ornament after Mr.
John Knox of incomparable memory that ever the Church of
Scotland did enjoy" (41); Gilbert Burnet spoke of him as
"by much the wisest and gravest of them all" (42); and
Professor Masson called him "one of the ablest and best men
of his age in Britain, and the greatest, the wisest and most
liberal of the Scottish Presbyterians" (43). Johnston was
an able lawyer, an enthusiast in religion, but rather narrow
in his outlook. His uncle, Gilbert Burnet, said of him
that "presbytery was to him more than all the world" (44).
Hume Brown calls him "the Covenant incarnate" (45). The 
National Covenant which these two men drew up was to mean 
much to James Fraser of Brea, whose birth was to take place 
the following year, and to many another like him before the 
century was out. The fruits of it, according to Andrew 
Lang, writing from his particular point of view, "were blood 
and tears and desolation: for fifty-one years common-sense 
did not come to her own again." "The Scottish nation," 
says a more recent writer, with another point of view, "has 
every reason to be profoundly thankful and justly proud that 
the Covenant was signed, for though it 'incarnadined the 
fields, the moors, the streets of Scotland,' .... without it 
the triumph of Presbyterianism would have been impossible" (46).

The National Covenant was in three parts: the first 
was a repetition of the Negative Confession of 1581, by 
which all Romish errors had been rejected; the second 
contained a list of the Acts passed at one time or another 
by the Scottish Parliament against the Roman Church; and the 
third was a declaration that it was the intention of the 
signatories "to recover the purity and liberty of the 
Gospel," and that it was their earnest hope "that religion 
and righteousness should flourish in the land to the glory 
of God, the honour of our king, and peace and comfort to us 
all." If, however, the worst came to the worst the 
signatories were pledged to stand "also to the mutual 
defence and assistance every one of us of another, in the
same cause of maintaining the true religion and His Majesty's authority, with our best counsel, our bodies, means, and whole power, against all sorts of persons whatsoever." The signing of the Covenant went on all over Scotland; seldom had the country been so united. It "embraced all ranks from highest to lowest," says Professor G.M. Trevelyan. "In every parish men signed it, weeping and lifting their right hands to heaven. When the Scots display emotion, something real is astir within them. Indeed the country had not been so moved since the days of Wallace and Bruce" (47). The opposition was almost negligible, though it included the six "Aberdeen Doctors."

As was to be expected the signing of the Covenant both annoyed and alarmed Charles who later in the same year felt obliged to agree to the holding of a General Assembly in Glasgow. When the Assembly met in November the Marquis of Hamilton was there as the king's representative, Henderson was moderator, and Johnston clerk. One of the four commissioners from the Presbytery of Inverness was Sir James Fraser of Brea, son of Simon, the seventh Lord Lovat, and father of the subject of this thesis, so that with the Glasgow Assembly of 1638 James Fraser of Brea, though still a babe unborn, may be said to have come into contact through his father with the Church of Scotland in one of the great moments in her history.

The temper and tone of this Assembly were such that
the king's commissioner soon saw that he could not control it, and promptly declared it dissolved. The Assembly, however, refused to regard itself as dissolved; "Christ," said the moderator, "has given Divine warrants to convocate Assemblies whether magistrates consent or not" (48). The Assembly proceeded to overthrow the Episcopal system, to reject the changes which had taken place in worship, and to restore the whole machinery of Presbyterianism with its Kirk Sessions, Presbyteries, Synods, and General Assemblies. "The chief things that were done in the Assembly," writes a contemporary diarist, "were these: all preceding general assemblies since the year 1605 were declared null, the service-book, the book of canons, the book of ordination, the high commission, together with the five articles of Perth, were all condemned; that covenant which had been allowed in the year 1580 by king James, and this, to be declared substantially one, and that Episcopacy was in the former abjured. The bishops were all deposed, and most part of them excommunicated .... many ministers were also deposed, and commissioners appointed to sit in several places after the rising of the assembly, for deposing the rest that should happen to persist in opposing the work"(49).

Henderson's action in allowing the Assembly to continue to transact business - and such business! - after it had been dissolved by the king's commissioner was one the gravity of which was apparent to all. In the words of
his most recent biographer, it "spelt revolution" (50). The moment at which Henderson refused to dissolve the Assembly at the demand of the king's Commissary," says von Ranke, "however widely the circumstances may differ in other respects, may well be compared with the first steps by which a century and a half later the newly-created French National Assembly for the first time withstood the commands of its king" (51).
CHAPTER II

SCOTLAND AND THE SCOTTISH CHURCH IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY:

(b) IN FRASER’S TIME – from 1639.

James Fraser of Brea was born in 1639, the year after the Glasgow Assembly, and he died in 1699 so that his life, roughly speaking, covered the same period of years as that of Bishop Burnet who was born in 1643 and died in 1715. Of this latter period it has been said that it was “a series of years during which occurred the most memorable events in our national history. In those seventy-two years, Charles the First died upon the scaffold; our government passed through every grade of change from the most open republicanism to the most uncontrolled despotism – there was the despotism of the army and the despotism of Cromwell. It was the era of the war-struggle for supremacy between protestant episcopacy, protestant dissent, and popery, in which James the Second was ejected from the throne, and a new dynasty was admitted. All which events were the consequences of the great principle that came then for ever to be decided – whether the will and the interests of the people, or of the king, are to be most consulted in the conduct of our national affairs” (1).
Charles was not disposed to accept the new situation brought about in Scotland by the Glasgow Assembly. As he saw it the Scottish Covenanting party had openly challenged the throne; and not only was there the challenge of words, for the Covenanters were soon in arms under General Leslie - "that old, little, crooked soldier," as Robert Baillie called him - ready to safeguard with their lives the liberties which the Scottish Church had won for herself. There followed the two "Bishops' Wars," as they were called, and five years later Charles found himself confronted by a still more formidable opposition. In 1643 the Parliamentary party in England, angered by Charles' assumption of autocratic powers, joined with the Covenanters in the Solemn League and Covenant. As Professor Raft has pointed out, the intervention of the Scots in English affairs at this juncture was the result of the adoption by Charles of a policy which "aimed at a complete uniformity between the Churches of England and Scotland. His father had regarded the form of Church government as a thing in itself unimportant from a doctrinal standpoint; Church government, he thought, in any state, ought to harmonize with the Civil government, and Episcopacy agreed best with absolute monarchy. Charles, on the other hand, believed in a divine right of Episcopacy, and he was obsessed by that passion for complete uniformity which has so often worked mischief in human affairs. The Scottish Presbyterians believed equally in the divine right of
The aim of the Solemn League and Covenant was twofold: first, it asserted the rights and privileges of Parliament, and second, it envisaged the establishment of Presbyterianism south as well as north of the Border. Ireland too was included in the compact. It sought to bring the Churches in the three kingdoms to the nearest conjunction and uniformity in religion and worship, to extirpate Popery, Prelacy, and schism, to preserve and defend the King's person and authority in the preservation and defence of the true religion and liberties of the kingdoms, and to bring to trial and condign punishment all enemies of the League and Covenant. "It speaks," says Dr. Agnes Mure Mackenzie, "as a manifesto of the three nations of Scotland, England, and Ireland, binding each to preserve the Church of Scotland and assimilate to it religion in England and Ireland; to extirpate likewise all forms of heresy, including Popery and Prelacy; to maintain the rights of Parliament and the King, discover and sharply punish all 'malignants' — that is, those who oppose the Covenant — and preserve between the three Kingdoms aforesaid an attitude of mutual peace and defence" (3).

Professor Masson, in his Life of Milton, speaks of the League and Covenant as having been "hastily drawn up by Henderson in some room in the High Street of Edinburgh — and it is by no means Henderson at his best." What actually happened was that on the basis of a draft submitted by
Henderson the document was drawn up by a committee of the General Assembly, and the Convention of Estates, together with six delegates from the English Parliament. By both the General Assembly and the Convention of Estates it was received with jubilation, and in the records of Parliament we read that when it was presented to that body on 17th August 1643 the members "did with all their hearts and great expressions of joy and unanimity approve and embrace the same as the most powerful means by the blessing of God for settling and preserving the true protestant religion with a perfect peace in all his Majesty's dominions and propagating the same to other nations, and for establishing his Majesty's throne to all ages" (4). In spite, however, of all this joy and jubilation there were many in Scotland, signatories of the National Covenant of 1638, who looked askance upon this new and very different document. Among them was Montrose. In his defence on the day before his death in May 1650 he said: "The Covenant which I took I own and it and adhere to it. Bishops, I care not for them. I never intended to advance their interests. But when the king had granted you all your desires, and you were every one sitting under his vine and his fig tree - that then you should have taken a party in England by the hand, and entered into a League and Covenant with them against the king, was the thing I judged my duty to oppose to the yondmost" (5).

In July of the same year the Westminster Assembly
began its deliberations, and in these Scottish Presbyterians worked side by side with English Puritans. The Scots who were there as commissioners from the General Assembly were Alexander Henderson, Archibald Johnston, Samuel Rutherford, George Gillespie, Robert Baillie, and Lord Maitland. Kirkton's account of the Assembly is interesting. "Scotland," he says, "slept not all the time of the English war; something very considerable happened both in church and state. The English parliament a little after the king forsook them, in consideration of the lameness of their reformation, both in doctrine and government, thought fit to convene an assembly of divines at Westminster, by whose advice they resolved to reform their church. They called men of all persuasions, some episcopal, some Erastian, and thither also they invited the General Assembly to send their commissioners for assistance. The assembly, to further so good a work, sent Mr. Alexander Henderson, eminent for his grave prudence, Mr. Samuel Rutherford for his heavenly gifts, Mr. George Gillespie, that eminent disputant, and Mr. Robert Baillie, a man for communications, together with the Lord Maitland, afterwards Earl and Duke of Lauderdale, a man of excellent parts, had they been blessed and improved, but as then his reputation was entire. This assembly sat diverse years, and ended rather by a consumption than a dissolution; but in the time they were together, they agreed upon one excellent confession of faith, and two catechisms, with full harmony,
till they came to the government, where they were both
constrained to omit the decision of the great question
concerning the power of congregational elderships, forbearing
for lack of harmony to determine the great question, Whether
a single congregation may excommunicate or not? and when
they came to define the dependence of congregations upon
presbyteries as subordinate thereto, they met with the famous
dissent of the seven independent brethren, so renowned for
learning and piety" (6).

Dr. Twisse, whom Fraser of Brea so often quotes and
with such evident approbation, presided over the Assembly,
and from it there came in due course those great documents
to which Fraser, and the Scottish Church generally, owed so much, the Directory for Public Worship, the Form of
Presbyterian Church Government, the Confession of Faith,
and the Larger and Shorter Catechisms.

Meanwhile civil war was being waged. A Scottish army
went south to fight on the Parliamentary side, and in Scotland
Montrose did what he could against great odds to further the
cause of Charles, until he met with final defeat at
Philphaugh. In May 1646 Charles surrendered to the Scots,
who later on handed him over to the English Parliamentarians.
That the transaction had its sordid side, and that in the
course of the negotiations money changed hands cannot be
denied. 'Jupiter' Carlyle, in his famous Autobiography,
refers to "Dr. David Dickson, a celebrated professor of
divinity in Edinburgh, who was one of the committee who attended the Scotch army in England, in Charles I's time, and got his share of the sum that was paid for delivering the King to the English army" (7). But there is, of course, another side to the matter. "The Scots might have let Charles escape," says Professor Rait, "to return with what foreign aid he could, but they chose to surrender him to the English Parliament, on condition of being paid a portion of the arrears due to them. They were in a difficult position, and it is not a pretty story; but it is more just to say that the English bought him than that the Scots sold him. The agreement included a stipulation that no harm should come to the royal person" (8). A still more recent writer points out that "had Charles complied with their conditions about Presbytery, the Scots would gladly have forfeited the arrears of the English payments and defied English Parliament and English army. They sold their king indeed, but it was for a different price, and one which was never paid - the enforcement, urged by some on prudential and by others on mystical grounds, of an alien church polity which was rapidly becoming anathema to the English nation" (9). On 30th January 1649 Charles was executed. "He was a tragic figure," says John Buchan, "because he was born into times which he could not understand and to a task which was too hard for him" (10). Though not a professional historian Charles Dickens wrote an epitaph on Charles I. which is worth quoting:
"If twelve thousand volumes were written in his praise (as a
good many have been), it would still remain a fact,
impossible to be denied, that for twelve years King Charles
the First reigned in England unlawfully and despottiMcally,
seized upon his subjects' goods and money at his pleasure,
and punished according to his unbridled will all who ventured
to oppose him. It is a fashion with some people to think
that this king's career was cut short; but I must say
myself that I think he ran a pretty long one" (11).

The execution of Charles caused a wave of revulsion in
Scotland, for however much the Scots might differ from the
king in matters ecclesiastical royalist sentiment was strong
north of the Tweed. "They condemned him to die," wrote
Kirkton, referring to the English Independents, "and struck
off his head, to the great astonishment of the world, and
the sad regrate of Scotland, excepting those who had lesed
their relations by his sword. He was a gentleman, because
of his continual misfortunes pitied by most, and admired by
many .... People generally think his greatest unhappiness
was, he mistook wilfullness for constancy, his condescensions
always coming too late, granting unprofitably to his people
to-day that which would have abundantly satisfied yesterday,
and the next day that which would have satisfied this day,
but all out of time" (12). The strength of royalist senti-
ment was seen on the arrival in the country of Charles' son.
A contemporary diarist has left an account of the scenes of
rejoicing to which that event gave rise. "The newis of his landing," writes John Nicoll, "cuming to the knowledge of the Estates of Parliament, sitting heir at Edinburgh, upone the 26 of Junii (1650) lait at night, all synes of joy wer' manifested throw the haill kingdome; namelie, and in a special maner in Edinburgh, by setting furth of bailfyres, ringing of bellis, sounding of trumpettis, dancing almost all that night throw the streitis. The pure kaill wyfes at the Trone sacrificed thair mandis and creillis, and the verle stooles thai sat upone to the fyre" (13). Charles II. was proclaimed king, and on 1st January 1651, after he had been prevailed upon to sign the Covenants, was crowned at Scone. "This day," wrote Baillie, "we have done that what I earnestly desyred, and long expected, crowned our noble King with all the solemnities at Scoone, so peaceablie and magnificentlie as if no enemy had been among us. This is of God" (14).

Cromwell was not slow to take stern measures to deal with the Scots, and within a matter of months was master of the northern kingdom as well as of the southern. On 3rd September 1651 he defeated Charles at Worcester, and for the next seven years to the day he reigned with a more despotic power than any king. The days of the Commonwealth were by no means unhappy or unfruitful years in Scotland. "I verily believe," says Kirkton, "there were more souls converted to Christ in that short period of time, than in any season since the Reformation, though of treeple its duration. Nor
was there ever greater purity and plenty of the means of grace than was in their time. Ministers were painfull, people were diligent; and if a man had seen one of their solemn communions, where many congregations mett in great multitudes, some dozen of ministers used to preach, and the people continued, as it were, in a sort of trance (so serious were they in spiritual exercises) for three dayes at least, he would have thought it a solemnity unknown to the rest of the world .... Also it was found, error made no great progress in all Scotland, the genius of the people being neither very curious nor easily chang'd: so truely religion was at that time in very good case, and the Lord present in Scotland, tho' in a cloud" (15). But it was not long before Scotland as a whole hankered once again for the monarchy, so accordingly it was with a very considerable amount of relief and real satisfaction that the Scottish people welcomed the Restoration of 1660. Lord Clarendon refers to it as "such a prodigious act of providence as God hath scarce vouchsafed to any nation since He led His own chosen people through the Red Sea" (16). John Nicoll, the contemporary diarist quoted above, makes it evident that the rejoicings of the summer of 1660 exceeded even those of that summer of ten years back when Charles first returned to his kingdom. "This Proclamatione ...," he says, "was .... proclaimed at the Mercat Croce of Edinburgh, upone Monday thaireftir, being the 14 of the same moneth (May 1660), with
all solemnities requisite, by ringing of bellis, setting out of bailfyres, sounding of trumpetis, roring of cannounes, touking of drumes, dancing about the fyres, and using all uther takins of joy for the advancement and preference of thair native King to his crown and native inheritance.

Qnaharat also, thair wes much wyne spent, the spoutes of the croce ryning and venting out abundance of wyne, placed thair for that end; and the magistrates and counsell of the toun being present, drinking the Kinges helth, and breking numberis of glasses" (17).

The reason for all this jubilation in Scotland is not far to seek. As Dr. Hector Macpherson has pointed out, "To the average Scotsmen, Republicanism spelt an alien domination, not perhaps oppressive, but galling to the national spirit. The cause of national independence appeared to be bound up with monarchical rule, and the Restoration semmingly implied the recovery to the independence of Scotland. That it was nominal independence only, and that the country was for thirty years to be little better than a northern province of England, did not become apparent until after Charles II. was firmly seated on his father's throne.

The uproarious loyalty which found expression in the convivial rejoicings all over the country was, on the whole, genuine; and if the Protesters - and probably many of the Resolutioners as well - felt some misgivings at the almost unlimited powers given to a king of whose sincerity they
were suspicious, they had still no alternative in their minds to a Stewart restoration" (18).

Scotland was glad to see a king on the throne once more but Charles II. soon put an end to that, and, as Professor R.L. Mackie has put it, "the bells which clanged their welcome from the Edinburgh steeples were ringing in years of even deeper misery and humiliation" (19). Of Charles Professor Pollard says: "The ablest, least scrupulous, and most popular of the Stuarts, he began his reign with two objects: the emancipation of the crown from control as far as possible, and the emancipation of the Roman Catholics from their position of political inferiority; but the pursuit of both objects was strictly conditioned by a determination not to embark on his travels again" (20). With an utter disregard of his plighted word the king proceeded to impose episcopacy upon the Scottish Church, and to sweep the Covenants aside, making allegiance to them treasonable. Bishops were appointed, the episcopal succession being handed on, as in 1610, by England to which four Scottish presbyters repaired to receive consecration at the hands of English bishops. Kirkton with his usual shrewdness exposes Charles' real purpose in restoring episcopacy in Scotland. "The king (even as his fathers)," he says, "was resolute for bishops, notwithstanding his oath to the contrair. He knew well bishops would never be reprovers of the court, and the first article of their catechism was non-resistance. They were
men of that discretion as to dissemble great men's faults, and not so severe as the presbyterians. They were the best tools for tyrannie in the world; for, dree the king what he would, their daily instruction was, kings could doe no wrong, and that none might put forth a hand against the Lord's anointed and be innocent. The king knew also he should be sure of their vote in parliament, desire what he would, and that they would plant a sort of ministers which might instill principles of loyalty into the people till they turned them first slaves and then beggars. They were all for the king's absolute power, and most of them for the universal propriety, and to make the people believe the king was lord of all their goods without consent of parliament: and for these reasons, and such as these, they were so much the darlings of our kings, that King James was wont to say, no bishop, no king; so bishops the king would have at any rate" (21).

There follows one of the darkest and most painful periods in the long history of the Scottish Church. "No part of modern history for so long a period," says Hallam, "can be compared for wickedness of government to the Scots administration of this reign" (22). Charles was determined to repress, if necessary by the most ruthless measures, all opposition to his policy. The Scottish Church must become subservient to his will, and to this end he was ready to use any means no matter how revolting, to employ as his tools men of the most depraved character, and to honour with his
commission agents who showed themselves to be scarcely human.

"The succession of satraps who carried out Charles' commands," says Hume Brown, "could only have been allowed by a prince incapable of conceiving the duties that pertained to his office. Between Middleton, the soldier of fortune, Rothes, the illiterate debauchee, and Lauderdale, the brutal cynic and voluptuary, it would be difficult to say which was most unfit to govern a serious people" (23). In spite of the fact that the form of episcopacy which Charles set up in Scotland was of a moderate kind there were few who would have anything to do with it, and many who were prepared to withstand it even at the cost of their lives. In a manifesto issued by some of the leading ministers of the Church in 1660 it was stated quite bluntly that "episcopacy and other forms are man's devices, but presbyterial government is a divine ordinance." Episcopacy still appeared to many as the direct road to Rome, and Scotland still hated Rome with an intense hatred.

By the Recessory Act passed in 1661 by the Scottish Estates the status quo of 1633 was restored, the proceedings of every Parliament since that year being declared null and void, including for all practical purposes even what had been done by the Parliaments of 1650 and 1651 over which Charles himself had presided; and the King was proclaimed 'Supreme Governor of his Kingdom over all persons and in all causes.' By the Act of 1662 those ministers who refused to accept episcopacy had to relinquish their charges, and no fewer than
three hundred, most of them from the south-west of the country, went out into the wilderness, their places being filled by raw curates, for the most part lamentably ignorant, and in some cases openly vicious. Bishop Burnet speaks of "the new incumbents, who were put in the places of the ejected preachers, and were generally very mean and despicable in all respects. They were the worst preachers I ever heard: they were ignorant to a reproach; and many of them were openly vicious. They were a disgrace to their orders, and the sacred functions; and were indeed the dregs and refuse of the northern parts. Those of them who rose above contempt or scandal, were men of such violent tempers, that they were as much hated, as the others were despised"(24).

"They were mostly young men from the northern shires, raw, and without any stock of reading or gifts," says Wodrow: "these were brought west, in a year or two after they had gone through their philosophy in the college, and having nothing to subsist upon, were greedily gaping after benefices. To such the common people were ready to ascribe all the characters of Jeroboam's priests; and it must be owned great numbers of them were as void of morality and gravity, as they were of learning and experience, and scarce had the very appearance of religion and devotion"(25).

But perhaps the most scathing indictment of these raw curates came from Fraser of Brea. "0! to see what contempt they subject the ordinances of Christ unto, and
how men scunner and egg at their meat being conveyed to them through such vessels," he writes. "I know the curates' preaching hath had more influence on the damnation of poor souls than to converting of them. They are the most scandalous haters of godliness, persecutors, mockers, covetous, drunkards or tiplers, sensual and ignorant" (26).

By the Act of 1663 - known as the 'Bishops' Dragnet' - the people were ordered to attend the episcopalian services; the same year, by the Scots Mile Act, the ministers who had refused to accept episcopacy were compelled to leave the districts in which they had resided; in 1669, the Assertory Act declared the King's "supremacy over all persons and in all causes ecclesiastical," and claimed for the crown "the ordering and disposal of the external government and polity of the Church," as well as the arranging "concerning all ecclesiastical meetings and matters to be disposed and determined therein;" and in 1670 the Conventicle Act made it an offence to hear the "outed" ministers. And so by Acts of Parliament, backed by the ruthless use of force, everything was done to stamp out Presbyterianism, to destroy the Covenanting zeal, and to establish Episcopacy. The methods employed to further these ends were such that even Sir Walter Scott, no great lover of Presbyterianism, confessed that it was "as if Satan himself had suggested means of oppression" (27). And Michael Shields, looking back on those ghastly days, referred to Charles' "cruelty over the bodies of Christians, in
chasing and killing upon the fields many without sentence, and bloody butchering, hanging, heading, mangling, dismembering alive, quartering upon scaffolds, imprisoning, laying in irons, torturing by boots, thumbkins, fire-matches, cutting pieces out of the ears of others, banishing and selling as slaves old and young men and women in great numbers, oppressing many others in their estates, forfeiting, robbing, spoiling, pillaging their goods, casting them out of their habitations, interdicting any to reset them, under the pain of being treated after the same manner" (28).

From time to time minor relaxations in the strictness of the measures against non-conformers gave hopes of better things to come, but these 'blinks' invariably formed the prelude to even more bitter persecution. Indulgences, for example, were granted in 1669 and 1672, by which some of the "outed" ministers were allowed to return to their parishes - upon conditions. But on the whole the situation went from bad to worse until in 1679, following upon the murder of Archbishop Sharp on Magus Muir, the Covenanters entered upon a period of unparalleled suffering under what has been termed "the most foul and damnable persecution which has blackened the history of a civilised country" (29). At Drumclog they defeated Claverhouse only to be themselves routed not long after by Monmouth at Bothwell Brig. From then on those who had been at Bothwell and all who sided with them had to face trials and tribulations such as
Scotland had never known before, and the records of those years are, from one point of view, as painful and heart-rending as, from another, they are gloriously inspiring. Act followed hard upon act, measure upon measure, and restriction upon restriction, all designed to stamp out the rebellious Covenanters, and establish episcopacy. Such was the situation in 1685 when Charles died and was succeeded by James VII. Dr. Hector Macpherson, referring to the thoroughgoing nature of the absolutist claims of both Charles and his successor says that "it is doubtful if there has been in modern history a more determined effort to break the spirit of a large section of a nation or to compel a whole people to bend to an absolute will" (30). Roger Coke asserted that "King Charles left the nation more vitiated and debauched than ever it was by any other king."

The one object of James' short reign seems to have been to re-establish the Roman Catholic faith in Scotland. Of that faith he himself was a fanatical adherent - "a Catholic, as firm as Renwick in his own creed, a dour and marrow and conscientious sailor" (31). He is said to have implored the Jesuits to send him missionaries from their Society "to assist him in the conversion of the nation, which he was resolved to bring about, or to die a martyr in endeavouring it; and that he would rather suffer death for carrying on that than live ever so long and happy without attempting it" (32). Wodrow quotes a letter from a Jesuit
at Liege to a brother of his at Friburgh, which contains a very full account of the expectations and designs of the papists at this juncture. In the course of this letter James is said to have confessed to one of the fathers of the order "that he would either convert England or die a martyr, and he had rather die the next day and convert it, than reign twenty years piously and happily, and not effect it." He is also said to have acknowledged that he was "a son of the society, of whose good success he was as glad as of his own" (33). Charles had also been a convinced Roman Catholic but James differed from him in making no effort to conceal his religious predilections; he might have reigned much longer than he did; been a little more discreet in his actions. As Professor Pollard has pointed out, "half the nation would probably have acquiesced in the growth of depotism under James II, had not the new king ostentatiously ignored the wisdom of Charles II. He began with everything in his favour: a Tory parliament, a discredited opposition which further weakened its case by Argyll's and Monmouth's rebellion, and a great reputation for honesty. Within a couple of years he had thrown away all these advantages by his revival of Charles II's abandoned Roman Catholic policy, and had alienated the Anglican church, by whose support alone he could hope to rule as an English despot" (34).

To begin with the Covenanters suffered as much under
James as they had under his predecessor; for example, mere attendance at a conventicle became a capital offence. But within two years things changed for the better; penal laws against the Roman Catholics were rescinded, and the Presbyterians found that they too were to benefit under the new toleration. Writing of the year 1687 Wodrow says that "in Scotland the former hardships continued upon good numbers of Presbyterians. Heavy oppression remained upon many places in the west and south, during this year several were fined for nonconformity, and good numbers were banished to the plantations in the entry of this year. The justiciary went on in forfeiting of some, and processing others; and we shall meet with part of the old spirit working in the privy council, against conventicles. But the great thing for which this year was remarkable, is the liberty granted by the king, first to the papists, and with them, under restrictions, to the presbyterians, who still refused it, till, after several shapes, in July it came unclogged with any thing gravaminous to their consciences; and this put an end to the sufferings of the greatest part of them" (35). In the Memoirs of the Life of Mr. Thomas Hog of Kiltearn we are told that "the Toleration granted by King James VII, for ushering in his darling, Popery, in July 1687, was what he did greatly dread, and he did still more detest the flattering and disingenuous addresses sent up to that Prince; yet when he understood that other
Presbyterians were improving that liberty with great advantage to their people, and found the infirmities of old age increase upon him, he returned to Scotland about the beginning of the memorable year 1688" (36). By the Indulgence of 1687 all penal laws against nonconformists, whether Presbyterian, Quaker, or Roman Catholic, were suspended, and all were allowed freedom of worship, provided that no disloyal doctrines were preached.

Many "outed" ministers were now permitted to resume their work, and at least the skeleton of the Presbyterian form of church government appeared openly once more in Scotland. But James partly in spite of his relaxations in the matter of religious persecution, and partly because of these relaxations, brought nemesis upon his head, for the English Protestants, alarmed at what they believed, and not without justification, to be his intention of restoring the Roman Church, repudiated him, and invited William of Orange to cross the water and take the throne. His people's fears of James' political ambitions and their suspicions of his ecclesiastical aims combined to rob him of his crown. "The twin objects of James' policy, absolute monarchy and the conversion of England from Protestantism to Popery," says Goldwin Smith, "were thoroughly akin, as the history of Europe has shown; yet, happily for the nation, one crossed and wrecked the other" (37). As Dr. Hector Macpherson says, "Charles II. was Catholic at heart, but realised that for
reasons of State he must carry the Anglican Church and the
bulk of the people with him to make himself absolute.
James II. failed to realise this. He forgot that even to
the irreligious and politically servile Englishman, as well
as to the Anglican clergy and to the Nonconformists, Popery
was an anti-nationalist despotism - odious on both
religious and political grounds. He pursued these two aims -
to make himself absolute and Great Britain Catholic, with
what has been called 'that stupid obstinacy which is so
frequently fatal to a man without talent,' and the
Revolution was due first and foremost to the folly of the
last Stewart king" (38).

William came over to England late in 1688, and two
years later, by the Revolution Settlement of 1690,
Presbyterianism was restored in Scotland; the Covenanters,
after their long and bitter struggle on behalf of the "Crown
Rights of the Redeemer" were at last allowed to worship God
as their consciences dictated. William, it is true,
appears to have had thoughts of continuing to recognise
Episcopacy as the established form of Church government
throughout the whole of the kingdom, in the north as well as
in the south, but William Carstares, a staunch Presbyterian
and one who bore in his body the marks of persecution
endured for his faith's sake, was at hand to save him from
coming to a decision which would have alienated that section
of his people most devoted to him. "William of Orange,"
according to Lord Moncrieff, "was by no means resolved as to the course which he would follow in Scotland. He had been pressed by some of the more important of his councillors not to abolish Episcopacy in this country, and had been warned against the Presbyterian polity as inconsistent with the loyalty and good order which he desired to establish. Fortunately, however, he took the aid of better advisers; and to Principal Carstairs, one of the ablest men who ever took part in the ecclesiastical affairs of the Church of Scotland, we owe it that the question of Church government and doctrine in this country was so peaceably and satisfactorily settled" (59). Macaulay, however, was of the opinion that William himself made the decision that was to mean so much for Scotland. Macaulay had a high opinion of Carstairs certainly; "he was," he says, "one of the most remarkable men of that age. He united great scholastic attainments with great aptitude for civil business, and the firm and ardent zeal of a martyr with the shrewdness and suppleness of a consummate politician. In courage and fidelity, he resembles Burnet; but he had, what Burnet wanted, judgment, self-command, and a singular power of keeping secrets. There was no post to which he might not have aspired if he had been a layman, or a priest of the Church of England. But a Presbyterian clergyman could not hope to attain any high dignity either in the north or in the south of the island. Carstairs was forced to content
himself with the substance of power, and to leave the
semblance to others. He was named Chaplain to Their
Majesties for Scotland; but wherever the King was, in England,
In Ireland, in the Netherlands, there was this most trusty
and most prudent of courtiers. He obtained from the royal
bounty a modest competence; and he desired no more. But it
was well known that he could be as useful a friend and as
formidable an enemy as any member of the cabinet; and he was
designated at the public offices and in the antechambers of
the palace by the significant nickname of the Cardinal" (40).

But when Macaulay comes to speak of the decision to
recognise Presbyterianism in Scotland he shows that he believes
that William was not as dependent upon Carstares as is
usually thought. "It was happy for our country," he says,
"that the momentous question which excited so many strong
passions, and which presented itself in so many different
points of view, was to be decided by such a man as William.
He listened to Episcopalians, to Latitudinarians, to
Presbyterians, to the Dean of Glasgow who pleaded for the
apostolic succession, to Burnet who represented the danger of
alienating the Anglican clergy, to Carstares who hated prelacy
with the hatred of a man whose thumbs were deeply marked by
the screws of prelatists. Surrounded by these eager
advocates, William remained calm and impartial. He was
indeed eminently qualified by his situation as well as by his
personal qualities to be the umpire in that great contention.
He was the King of a prelatical kingdom. He was the Prime Minister of a presbyterian republic. His unwillingness to offend the Anglican Church of which he was the head, and his unwillingness to offend the reformed Churches of the Continent which regarded him as a champion divinely sent to protect them against the French tyranny, balanced each other, and kept him from leaning unduly to either side. His conscience was perfectly neutral. For it was his deliberate opinion that no form of ecclesiastical polity was of divine institution. He dissented equally from the school of Laud and from the school of Cameron, from the men who held that there could not be a Christian Church without Bishops, and from the men who held that there could not be a Christian Church without synods. Which form of government should be adopted was in his judgment a question of mere expediency. He would probably have preferred a temper between the two rival systems, a hierarchy in which the chief spiritual functionaries should have been something more than moderators and something less than prelates. But he was far too wise a man to think of settling such a matter according to his own personal tastes. He determined therefore that, if there was on both sides a disposition to compromise, he would act as mediator. But, if it should appear that the public mind of England and the public mind of Scotland had taken the ply strongly in opposite directions, he would not attempt to force either nation into conformity with the opinion of the
other. He would suffer each to have its own church, and would content himself with restraining both churches from persecuting nonconformists, and from encroaching on the functions of the civil magistrate" (41).

When in 1689 the Convention of Estates met and by the Claim of Right deposed James VII. and offered the throne to William and Mary they demanded the abolition of episcopacy in Scotland, declaring that "Prelacy and the superiority of any office in the Church above Presbyters is and hath been a great and insupportable grievance to the nation, and contrary to the inclinations of the generality of the people ever since the Reformation (they having been reformed from popery by presbyters) and therefore ought to be abolished." By October 1690, when the General Assembly met for the first time since 1653 when Colonel Cotterel with a military force had disbanded it, Episcopacy had been set aside; no longer was it a perilous thing in Scotland to be a Presbyterian; "the spirit of the Covenant had been vindicated, the struggle with the Crown was ended, and the liberty of the Church had been secured" (42).

It is impossible to exaggerate the importance of the Revolution Settlement for the Church of Scotland or to overrate its consequences for the future history and development of the Church. "The Revolution Settlement," it has been pointed out, "marks an epoch in the history of the Church of Scotland. The stormy process which commenced in 1560 had now reached its
conclusion. After a hundred and thirty years of controversy Scotland had at last succeeded in establishing a stable order of things in Church and State .... The Revolution Settlement worked satisfactorily for more than two hundred years. It secured for the Church of Scotland a freedom such as no other Protestant Church has enjoyed - a freedom in which both the Church maxim was protected against the State and the individual member of the Church was protected against tyrannical action on the part of church courts" (43). But in spite of all that the Settlement meant for the Church of Scotland it failed to please the more extreme among the Covenanters - the Cameronians - who felt that full recognition had not been given to all they claimed for the Church; in particular they were aggrieved at the way in which the Covenants were passed over. They objected strongly to the fact that these were not renewed, and they refused to accept an "uncovenanted" king. A further source of annoyance to them was the new toleration manifest throughout the country. These men had suffered under intolerant monarchs; now it would seem that they had a grudge against William because, in their opinion, he was too tolerant. To the Assembly of 1690 William had written that "a calm and peaceable procedure will be no less pleasing to us than it becometh you. We never could be of the mind that violence was suited to the advancing of true religion, nor do we intend that our authority shall ever be a tool to the
irregular passions of any party. Moderation is what religion enjoins, neighbouring churches expect from you, and we recommend to you." The Cameronians and those who thought with them were not prepared to accept this wise advice nor to cast in their lot with their brethren in the Scottish Church. "With them," it has been said, "the idea of a Covenanted nation had perforce to give way to that of a Covenanted remnant" (44).

The vast majority, however, of the Scottish people were well content to accept the Revolution Settlement. Toleration became the watchword throughout the country; Episcopacy existed side by side with Presbyterianism, and apart from vestiges here and there of the old hatreds - the "rabbling of the curates," for example; an incident which while it cannot be condoned can easily be understood - the land knew such peace as it had not experienced for many a long year. And so the seventeenth century, a hundred years of storm and stress, of suffering and slaughter, of intolerance and persecution, of deeds of glory and deeds of shame, came to an end. "It was a century without peace and without charity," says Dr. John Watson, "without insight and without statesmanship, but rich in enthusiasm and courage, also in romantic and picturesque incidents, when Covenanting martyrs took joyful farewell of earthly scenes upon the scaffold, and welcomed death as a bridegroom going to his wedding; and Claverhouse, dying in the hour of victory at Killiecrankie,
was satisfied because it was well with the King" (45).

This was the century, and these the conditions, political, ecclesiastical and religious, in which James Fraser of Brea lived, worked, wrote, and suffered.
"Blessed be the Lord, for my part I have found the Lord in a special way with me in all my sufferings, and I never repent of anything I have suffered for Christ."

- Fraser's Memoirs, p. 303.
CHAPTER III

THE YEARS OF PREPARATION

1639-1660.

Like so many of the leading spirits among the Covenanters James Fraser of Brea belonged to the landed proprietor class. While it is no doubt true that the aristocracy, and the members of the upper classes generally, were on the side of Absolutism, and that the resistance to the Stewarts was for the most part democratic, still it is a fact that a considerable number of those who inspired the latter movement were well-born. The Covenanters, as Lord Moncrieff pointed out many years ago, "have generally been looked upon as a somewhat uneducated, rude, fanatical body of the lower orders, and people seem to contrast them with the better birth and better manners of the Royalists. I believe there is in all this a very great delusion. It is true, that, in the latter part of this period of twenty years (up to the Revolution), most of the higher families had ostensibly, if not sincerely, conformed to the tyrannical government, which they could not resist. But the inception of the Covenanters embraced the largest portion of the upper ranks, and the whole
body of the people. Whatever of birth, of culture, of manners, and of learning or intellectual power, Scotland could boast, was at that time unquestionably to be found in the ranks of the Covenanters" (1). In his Life of Peden J.C. Johnston gives several examples of this. "Like a considerable number of the Covenanting ministers," he writes, "Alexander Peden belonged by birth to the class of the lesser Scottish gentry. John Welsh, the son-in-law of Knox, owned a small estate called Collistoun .... James Guthrie of Stirling, the martyr, was a son of the laird of Guthrie in Angus. Hugh Binning and William Guthrie of Fenwick were the sons of responsible landed proprietors. Gabriel Semple was the son of Sir Bryce Semple of Cathcart. James Hamilton of Cambusnethan was the son of Sir John Hamilton of Broomhill, and brother of the first Lord Belhaven. Robert Melville, minister at Culross, was the son of Sir James Melvil of Halhill. Archibald Riddell was the son of Sir Walter Riddell. John Blackadder was of the house of Tulliallan; he inherited but did not assume the title of Knight-baronet. James Fraser was of Brea" (2).

The subject of this Thesis was the elder son of Sir James Fraser, the first of the family of Brea. Sir James was the second son of Simon, seventh Lord Lovat, by his second wife, Jean Stewart, daughter of James, Lord Doune, son of James, Earl of Moray. The marriage of Lord Lovat and Jean Stewart took place at Falkland in presence of the King and
Queen, and the principal gentlemen of the Frasers, in March 1696. Early in the summer of 1616 Lord Lovat and his wife went south to meet the King who came up to Edinburgh to hold a Parliament there, of which his Lordship was a member. On this occasion his two sons by his second wife, Simon and James, were knighted by his Majesty at the Palace of Holyrood, Sir Simon, afterwards of Inverallochy, being in his nineteenth year, and Sir James, subsequently of Brea, about six years. The latter, who was born in 1610, was the King's godson, and as such is said to have received a handsome sum of money from his Majesty at the time of his knighthood. Liberally educated, partly at home and partly abroad, he grew up to become a very capable man of business, and was most ambitious—inordinately so, according to the family chronicles. During the civil wars of his time he sided with the Parliamentary party against the Royalists, and induced his clan to follow his example, his influence and authority proving of great advantage to the Covenanters. His wife was Beatrix, daughter of Wemyss of Fairkley in Fife. It is on record that in 1647 Dame Beatrix Wemyss, Lady Brea, discharged Alexander Fraser, servitor to the Tutor of Strichen, of the custom wedders of Monieck.

By this lady Sir James Fraser had issue as follows:

1. James, his heir and successor, the subject of this Thesis.
2. David of Mayne, who appears to have had a son called Simon, of whom nothing of an honourable nature has been chronicled.
In a letter of Brigadier-General Grant, dated 8th January, 1715, the notorious Simon, Lord Lovat, refers to this kinsman of his as "that villain Simon who always sold his blood and honour for some pennies of money from Atholl and Prestonhall," and calls him "unnatural and ungrateful to a strange pitch, for, after all his knavery in Scotland, I kept him from starving in France after his being made prisoner at Almanza."  

3. Jean, who married George Bateman, her marriage portion being the lands of Dalcross. She died without issue.  
4. A daughter who married Hector Munro of Drummond, brother of Munro of Fowlis, and left a daughter who married David Cuthbert of Drakies.  
5. A daughter who married a Mr. Mackay.  
7. A daughter who married David Cuthbert, a brother of the foregoing.  

Sir James Fraser owned the lands of Brea, in the parish of Cullicudden in the Black Isle - the parish, which in 1662 was united with Kirkmichael, is now known as Resolis - these lands, at one time belonging to the lordship of Ardmannach, having been acquired, probably by purchase, in 1617 by the Lovat family. He also had property in the parishes of Kilterlity and Kilmorack. During the incapacity of his half-brother, Hugh, the eighth Lord Lovat, and later during the long minority of his successor, Sir James seems to have exercised considerable control over the Lovat estates. A strong Presbyterian, he took the popular side, as has already
been mentioned, against the absolutism of the Stewart kings, and was one of the four commissioners from the Presbytery of Inverness to the famous Glasgow Assembly of 1638, the others being Mr. John Howisoun, minister at Wartlaw (or Wardlaw, now Kirkhill), Mr. Patrick Dunbar, minister at Durris (or Dores), and Mr. Robert Bailie, Bailie of Inverness. He is said to have led the clan during the campaigns of Montrose, on the side of the Covenant, of course; at the battle of Auldearn the Frasers are reported to have suffered heavily. He was for a period in command of the garrison of Inverness. He died at Lovat on 6th December 1649 when entering upon his fortieth year, and was buried at Kirkhill "in great state and magnificence, no less than thirteen trumpets sounding at his funeral," all the forces having joined to bury him with full military honours. He was survived by his widow, who had the lands of Wester Crochell as part at any rate of her jointure, for at Inverness, on 22nd April 1650, we find her letting those lands on lease to Hugh Fraser of Belladrum; and by his two sons, our James, who succeeded him in the lands of Brea, and David, who inherited the lands of Main, and others in Kiltarlity and Kilmorack (3).

From James Fraser's Memoirs we know that he was married at least once. He tells us that his marriage to a south-country lady of some means took place towards the end of July 1672, and that she died suddenly in the latter end of October 1676. We also gather from the same source that
he had children - "the Lord," he tells us, "was pleased to
bless me with children" (4). Scott, in the Fæsti, states
that Fraser's first wife was Isobel, daughter of Sir William
Gray of Pittenweem, and widow of William Hamilton, merchant,
Edinburgh; and that by her he had two daughters, Jean, who in
1698 married, as his second wife, Hugh Rose of Kilravock,
and Beatrice, who married William Burnet, minister of Falkirk
(5). The elder daughter had one son, James Rose, who
succeeded to the lands of Brea. He was Commissary of
Inverness, and Sheriff-Substitute of the county of Nairn,
and married Jean Rose of Braidley. Jean Fraser of Brea died
in 1699. A summons of exhibition, dated and signed on the
28th and 29th of September 1726, refers to "James Rose, only
child in life procreat betwixt Hugh Rose of Kilravock and
Mrs. Jean Fraser, eldest lawful daughter of Mr. James Fraser
of Brea" (6). Shaw, in his Appendix to Hew Rose's Family
of Kilravock, states that Hugh Rose, the fifteenth Baron
Kilravock, had five wives, and that his third wife, like his
second, belonged to the Brea family. She was Magdalen
Cuthbeȝrt, daughter of George Cuthbeȝrt of Castlehill and
Magdalen Fraser, fourth daughter of Sir James Fraser of Brea
(7). Fraser makes no mention in his Memoires of a second
marriage, but in the Fæsti it is stated, though upon what
authority we are not told, that as his second wife Fraser
married Christian, daughter of John Inglis, Minister of
Hamilton, and widow of Alexander Carmichael, Minister
of Pettinain. This lady is said to have died about 1696 (8).

Our James was born at Brea on 29th July 1639. As we have seen he could boast of a notable line of ancestors, but while he was proud of his descent he took still greater pride in the fact that both his father and his mother were deeply religious. To them undoubtedly he owed much of his ardent and abiding love of the things of the spirit. His early years would appear to have been rather unhappy. A delicate child from birth, his life was often despaired of. By nature morose and sullen - if we can accept at its face value his own confession in the Memoirs - he was in many respects not as other children. His tastes and habits, he leads us to understand, were not those of a normal, healthy child. "My disposition," he writes, "was sullen, and I loved not to be dawted, nor to wear gaudy clothes; not had I any wise tales like other children, so that I gave no occasion to my parents to repeat them, as parents usually do with fondness: for though my parents were fond enough of their children, yet my temper was so peevish, that I was no dawtie; only at school I learned well, though now and then I stayed away" (9).

"Dawtie", of course, means a darling or beloved child, and "to be dawted", to be fondled or made much of. His confession goes even further. "Even at this time," he continues, "I showed plainly that I had a will to do evil; for the seeds of wickedness did spring up, and appeared in many vicious, childish tricks; by all which the necessity of
regeneration was evident, and that by nature we are under the power of sin and Satan" (10). In reading these and subsequent confessions one must not forget to make full allowance for the excessive self-depreciation of a man who was at heart one of the humblest of mortals.

Having learned to read English at home he was sent by his parents while still under ten to another county to learn Latin and to be under the care of a pious minister. But his father falling sick and being apprehensive of death sent for him to give him his dying benediction. Sir James, as we have seen, died in December 1649, and the young boy was given over to the care of a chaplain, "a lean and hard-favoured man, and very precise" (11), who remained with him over a year and a half, and during that time brought him up very religiously without, however, making any deep or lasting impression upon him. As Sir James had unfortunately left his affairs in a very embarrassed condition, and as, in addition, Lady Fraser "wished to be out of the way of a cruel enemy who persecuted her" (12), the family was compelled, soon after Sir James' death, to move south, and from that time onward the education of young James was of a perfunctory character. He was never under any one tutor for any length of time, at least never long enough to receive a lasting impression from any of them. He describes the many pedagogues to whom at one time or another his education was entrusted as being "unfit for teaching children, save the last I had" (13). On his own
showing he learned Latin under no fewer than six or seven different teachers. The result was that he was never well grounded in the humanities, but fortunately for him his disadvantages as far as systematic instruction was concerned were effectively offset by a streak of real genius, and in addition there was his keen desire to extend his knowledge in every possible direction. When one remembers what he says about the piece-meal character of his early education it is a little surprising to be told that at the age of fourteen he entered upon his studies as a University student "having become so familiar with the classics as to be able to understand any of them, and to speak Latin almost as freely as my mother tongue" (14). The many apt Latin quotations which one finds in his writings are sufficient proof of the accuracy of the latter statement. It would appear that what he lost in earlier years was more than regained by assiduous application to study later on.

There is some confusion with regard to the University at which Fraser studied. Some authorities say Aberdeen, others Edinburgh. In the published Records of Marischel College, Aberdeen, the name "Jac. Fraser" appears in the list of those in the first class in Arts in 1654, and in 1658 "Jacobus Fraserius" is mentioned as having completed his Arts course, a footnote by the editor adding "of Brea, min. of Culross," though no authority is offered for the identification. In the new edition of the Fasti it is stated that Fraser
"graduated M.A. at Marischal College, Aberdeen, in 1658 and thereafter commenced the study of law" (15). The Rev. D. Beaton in a recent sketch of Fraser's life says that "he entered the University at the early age of 14, and graduated in Arts at Marischal College, Aberdeen, in 1659" (16). It is, however, almost certain that Edinburgh and not Aberdeen was his University. In addition to the fact that on 30th June 1658 a "James Fraser" obtained a University degree there, one need only recall his frequent references in his Memoirs to "going south" and to Edinburgh - Aberdeen is not once mentioned - to feel sure that it was in Edinburgh that he studied and graduated. For example, on page 8 of Memoirs he says, "When I came south, my pedagogue became more rigid to me," on page 10, "I went south again, in order to my going to the college," and on page 60, "I remember, when I came to Edinburgh first ...." No one whose home was in Ross-shire would ever think of referring to Aberdeen as "south."

To judge from the Memoirs his teens were a most unsettled period as far as his mental and spiritual development was concerned. By nature intensely introspective, almost morbidly so, he takes an uncanny delight in examining and laying bare for all the world to see the intricacies of his mind and heart, and from his lengthy account of his feelings and emotions during this period one gathers that he passed through a long and bitter inward struggle before he
found peace. To begin with he was a formalist in religion, to use his own expression. He rested content with "getting some prayers by heart, and saying them in a formal way morning and evening" (17). For a time this semblance of religion satisfied him, but before long he began to neglect even these formal prayers, until God made an assault upon him, and stirred him up to further effort. The second stage in his development was "the zealous performance of some duties, especially prayer" (18). "Before, I had nothing but conned lessons," he confesses, "but now I could bake my own bread" (18). It was the "lean, hard-favoured, and very precise" chaplain, to whom reference has already been made, who led him into this new religious stage; overhearing the prayers which his pupil had learned by heart - the "conned lessons" - the chaplain told him that unless he had got the Spirit of God to teach him to pray he could not go to heaven, and that all other prayers would prove ineffectual. "And, thereupon, a little while after," says Fraser, "he in all his exhortations to me addressed to speak against set forms of prayer, and pressed us that were children to express the pure and real conceivings of our own hearts, though we should but utter five sentences at a time, and that this, coming from the heart, was better and more acceptable to God than many and long prayers taught us by others" (19).

But here again he soon met with failure; and in his spiritual decay he notes no fewer than seventeen distinct
"Yet, notwithstanding of this," he proceeds, "I was not altogether left of God, for now and then I was in some good mood, and the Spirit of God would strive and draw me contrary to my inclinations, so as now and then I would pray and read, and be affected" (20).

The fourth stage in his spiritual development followed when he began to "make conscience of all duties" (21), among them being meditation, the frequent reading of the Scriptures, strict Sabbatarianism, the reading of good books, and the abandonment of all his old sins and ways, such as lying and swearing. This stage was brought to an abrupt end by the reading of one of the good books to which he refers, a volume entitled Seventeen False Rests, which disclosed the vanity of formality in duties, and finally led him to become a seeker, living in hopes that God would reveal Himself to him. The reading of the Confession of Faith confirmed the impression made upon his mind by the Seventeen False Rests. "I was afterwards confirmed in this," he says, "by reading the Confession of Faith, where it saith, 'That though one should form his life never so exactly, according to nature and morality, without Christ he could not be saved.' This was enough; and the Spirit seconding it, convinced me I was quite wrong first, and had never known what true grace was: and besides, despairing ever of myself to come to that estate of grace: all my refuge of lies were shaken, and that which many sermons for a long time could not do, now in a moment
three lines did" (22).

The conversion which came as the fitting climax to these successive steps took place when he was a student at the University. One day his minister gave intimation that he proposed to celebrate the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper on the Sunday following, and he determined to communicate. That decision set in motion in his heart a train of perplexities, doubts, and misgivings. "I had always a reverent esteem of that ordinance," he writes, "and was under the deep impression of eating and drinking my own damnation. I knew I was in an unconverted condition, and that, if betwixt that day, and the next Lord's Day, I were not converted, that I would draw on myself a very grievous evil; and that, eating unworthily, I might give over hopes of ever thereafter being converted. The Lord did therefore put it in my mind, both by ordinary and extraordinary means, to do my utmost endeavour to win to a converted condition; nor was I of the judgment that conversion was within the compass of my own power, but I hoped that, doing diligence, the Lord might help; and for this cause set to work immediately, beseeching God that He would once effectually work upon my spirit, seeing all former means had been used in vain" (23). At times he felt that he was converted, and ready to sit at the Lord's Table; at other times he was thrown back into the depths, quite convinced that he was as far off as ever from genuine conversion. In the end, however, he did receive
what he believed to be a definite assurance that he was converted, and fit to become a communicant member of the Church.

Dr. Alexander Whyte, in one of his Bunyan lectures, says that "there is no subject of study in all the world of study that is so interesting and so important and so urgent as the study of conversion .... No two cases of conversion have ever been altogether alike. Take the greatest of all recorded conversions: take Paul's conversion, and Augustine's, and Luther's, and in our own time take the conversions of Thomas Halyburton, and James Fraser of Brea, and Thomas Boston, and Thomas Chalmers, and it is very remarkable how they all differ in every possible way from one another" (24). Dr. Whyte is not without justification when he includes the name of James Fraser of Brea in that notable list, for Fraser's account of his own conversion is a classic of its kind.

"On Wednesday, by six o'clock at night," he writes, "finding by marks I had read in books that I was not converted, and not getting that extraordinary thing I expected, and withal fully resolved to partake of the Sacrament, I feared that I should eat and drink damnation to my own soul, and then that the remedilessness of my condition would be out of doubt. Sometimes I thought that I would suspend communicating at that time; and if this resolution had prevailed, I would not have troubled myself with religion at
that time: for this was the day of my visitation, and this made me take pains even to eat and drink worthily. Therefore, hoping still for some good, I continued in my resolution; but as I said, when I saw all in vain, and that I met not with what I expected, though I met with more than ever I did before, Discouragements did quite overwhelm me, and fears of drawing on more guilt did load me; and, withal, this apprehension lay heavy on me, and haunted me like a ghost, That it was in God's mind never to do me good: so that fear, discouragement, vexation, and despair, and some horror and grief, did all take hold of me. I resolved to set the next day apart for fasting, and therein to seek God, hoping that these extraordinary means might do something. Hanging, therefore, by the small thread, I went to prayer with many sad complaints; and the Lord, while I was like the prodigal son yet a great way off, ran to meet me. I addressed myself to speak to the Lord Christ, and then was there a Gospel view given me of Him; and some considerations and representations of Christ were brought into my mind, that He was the Mediator, a friend, and Saviour to poor sinners, their only helper, the way, and the truth, and the life, that died for them, and one willing to be reconciled. What shall I say? While I was thus exercised, a marvellous light shined on my understanding, and with the eyes of my mind, not of my body, I saw that Just One in His glory, and love, and offices, and beauty of His person; such a sight as I never did see anything like it, and which
did so swallow me up as I turned speechless, and only said, What is this? And where am I now? The glory, love, and loveliness of Jesus, revealed to me, did very far exceed all that ever I saw or could see in the world, insomuch that there was no comparison. I was drawn by this, and after I had recovered, I said, O Lord, Thou hast overcome me! Heart and hand, and all I have, is Thine; I am content to live and die with Thee. Begone, poor world, and beggarly vanities, and despiteful devil and flesh, I will serve you no longer; I know now of a master and lover to whom henceforth I will dedicate myself. Now are all my doubts loosed; and now I see that I have not sinned the sin against the Holy Ghost. What shall I now do for the Lord? Let heaven and earth, angels and men, praise Him: for He hath looked graciously upon me, and that in my low condition. What am I, or my father's house, that Thine eye should be cast on me? There followed upon this such liberty as I thought I could spend the whole night in prayer. Now was I persuaded that I was converted, and was come to that pitch which formerly I wanted; and all the clouds evenished which were betwixt the Lord and my soul. This continued in its strength only for a quarter of an hour, and then it abated as to its measure, though not altogether; but something remained. After I rose from prayer, I went to the fields, and there sang songs of triumph. I comforted myself in my new condition, and prophesied to myself much more, seeing these were but the beginnings.
Nor did I think that my happiness could be equally by any; and now was I fully content to communicate. I longed for some quiet place to pour out my soul unto the Lord; for I though He would return, but He did it not. I bore the first repulse, hoping that at last the Lord would return. All scruples, fears, and doubts, were banished. I went to bed; and when I was lyen down, Now, said I, sleep securely, and so thou mayst, seeing thou art reconciled to God. Never could I do it one night before; but now let heaven and earth go together. I thought now, no Scriptures for me but such as were directed to saints, and therefore read some chapters of the Second Epistle of Peter, but found little life. This did shake me. I read some on Isaac Ambrose, and some marks he had of worthy communicants, of faith, love, and knowledge, and the evidence of the Spirit shining. I thought I had these marks; yet the withdrawing of my life and glory raised doubts in me, until, by prayer, again I got some of the glory of Christ seen, which revived me. And I was much affected with reading Isaac Ambrose's New Birth, and I thought there was never anything so sweet" (25).

All scruples, fears, and doubts, he says, were banished; but that is not quite true, for later on he makes this confession: "I have been, for a long time after the Lord had indeed shown kindness to me, kept under by a spirit of bondage, through fears, and doubts, and mistakes, under which I have groaned for several years after my first conversion, through
manifold sins and temptations; which did not only take away
my peace, but did much prejudice otherwise: but in process
of time the Lord did dispel these mists and fears, and by His
word and Spirit of wisdom made me see things freely given me
of God, establishing my heart. He discovered my mistakes,
so as now I believe rather that I am converted, and my way
and day is lightsome" (26).

It is noteworthy that in the section of the memoirs
which covers the first twenty-one years of Fraser's life -
1639-1660 - scarcely a single reference, either direct or
indirect, is made to the events which were taking place in
Scotland at that time; and those years, be it remembered,
were among the most stirring and momentous in the seventeenth
century as far as Scotland and the Scottish Church were
concerned. Fraser's apparent indifference to what was
happening around him is characteristic of the man, and explains
much in his writings which would otherwise be difficult to
understand.

Notes appended to this Chapter
A. The Name 'Brea'.
B. The Covenanting movement democratic.
C. The Brea Family.
D. Fraser's early education.
E. Fraser's conversion.
NOTE A.

The Name 'Brea'

The name 'Brea' is variously spelt. The commonest forms are Brea, Brae, Brey, Bray. On the title-pages of Fraser's published works both 'Brea' and 'Brae' are used; in the Wardlaw Manuscript one finds both 'Brey' and 'Bray'. 'Brea' would appear to be the most correct form, as it is also the commonest.

NOTE B.

The Covenanting movement democratic

Dr. Hector Macpherson stresses the more democratic side of the Covenanting movement when he says that "during the earlier stage of the conflict the 'upper classes' were chiefly on the side of Absolutism. The resistance to the tyranny of the Stewarts was, on the whole, a popular resistance; the Covenanting movement was, in the main, democratic. It is true that Blackadder was in his own right baronet of Tulliallan, that Peden was a laird, that Cargill was a lawyer's son, and Welch of ministerial lineage. The born leaders of human progress have never been men who have acted solely from selfish or class interests. Democratic and working-class movements have again and again had leaders from the aristocratic and middle classes. But the evidence is conclusive that the mass of those who attended field meetings and resisted authority generally,
NOTES (Cont.)

belonged to the poorer classes of the community. Wodrow states that the prisoners who were executed after the battle of Rullion Green were 'most of them illiterate persons, of very common education.' As to the social standing of the average Covenanter, the testimony of the government officials who were engaged in the attempt to crush the movement shows clearly that a large proportion at least of those who were in opposition to the Government belonged to the humbler ranks." (The Covenanters under Persecution, pp. 36, 37).

NOTE C.

The Brea Family

The Rev. James Fraser, minister of Wardlaw (Kirkhill) from 1662 to 1709, and author of the invaluable Wardlaw Manuscript, has a good deal to say in that work about the Brea family. The Manuscript was published by the Scottish History Society in 1905 with the title Chronicles of the Frasers. Dr. William Mackay was the editor. Fraser of Wardlaw conformed to Episcopacy. (Cf. pp. 260, 274, 279, 280, 297, 304, 306, 323, 345, 347, 348, 514, 515).

NOTE D.

Fraser's early education

Prof. G.D. Henderson points out that many of the ministers of the time were sons of the manse, brought up in the atmosphere of theological study, accustomed to devout
exercises and to strict attendance upon ordinances. "Other future ministers," he continues, "were privately educated by tutors who acted as secretaries and chaplains in their homes, for a considerable number of those who gave themselves to the ministry in the seventeenth century were sons of lairds, and had in the house as a constant companion one who was interested in theology. Such was the fortune, for example, of Robert Boyd of Trochrig, John Forbes of Corse, James Fraser of Brea." Prof. Henderson also mentions in this connection James Guthrie, William Guthrie, and Andrew Gray. (Cf. Religious Life in Seventeenth Century Scotland, pp. 118, 119).

NOTE E.

Fraser's conversion

"The subcanonical conversions of a high distinction and of great detail," says Dr. Alexander Whyte, "are such conversions as those of Augustine, and Luther, and Knox, and Bruce, and Halyburton, and Cowper, and Wesley, and Chalmers. But the conversion of James Fraser, Laird of Brea and minister of Culross, has so many 'intricacies' connected with it that it ranks in that respect above them all, though his name is not known at all, nor his book read at all."

(James Fraser, Laird of Brea, p. 24.)
On the completion of his University course Fraser returned to the north where he made his home with his mother, brother, and sisters, and where, for a time at any rate, he led a quiet, uneventful life, his time being given over almost entirely to study. But though his spiritual fears had so far been removed by the experiences through which he had passed as a student he was soon called upon to face troubles of a different but hardly less painful kind. The family affairs, which ever since the death of Sir James Fraser had been in a more or less embarrassed condition, now fell into a worse plight than before.

Anderson, in his *Martyrs of the Bass*, enumerates some of the causes of the elder Brae's difficulties. Among them he mentions "his living above his condition; laying out his money, not on the purchase of lands in heritage, but upon mortgage or woodset, a right which by subsequent laws of the land was rendered liable to many inconveniences and alterations; his dealing with broken men, who were in debt to others by prior obligations, so that a great part of such of their
lands as were 'evicted or purchased by him, were revicted from him,' by such creditors as had right anterior to his, and of which he was ignorant; his not sufficiently securing himself in what he had purchased, from his ignorance of law, so that, in consequence of this omission, some years after his death, lands to the value of £80 per annum, were evicted from young Fraser; his lending to the public £2000, for which he had the public faith, but not a farthing of which was ever recovered." But Anderson goes on to point out that what injured Sir James' temporal interests most was "the time he spent in attending to the affairs of his brother Hugh, eighth Lord Lovat, who was very weak, and altogether unfit to guide his own affairs. And after the death of his brother, and his brother's son, the management of the estate of the grandchild, of which he was appointed the guardian, not only took up his whole time to the neglect of his own affairs, but he became engaged as guardian in great sums of money for his pupil, which young Fraser had to pay after his father's death, and only a fourth part of which was recovered. Besides, judging that he would never be called upon to pay these sums of money, for which he had thus become surety, and that what he had laid out for the public was secure, he burdened his estate with several considerable sums as provision to his other children, amounting to £2000 sterling" (1).

Fraser himself tells us a good deal of what he had to
suffer as a result of his father's unbusinesslike transactions. Writing of the early sixties he says, "About this time my outward afflictions began to appear, and the Lord was bringing me low as to my condition in the world, by means of a person who pretended right to all we had in the world, and had some colour of law for it, our securities not being well buckled; and besides, he was an active man. He called me south, being cited for that effect; where being come, and destitute of friends and money, the times being evil, and there being much corruption in Courts, and my adversary being in great favour, and I unwilling to go to, and unskilful in law, and withal being conscious of the weakness of my own securities, I was forced and inclined to agree with him on what terms it pleased himself, giving him much of 12,000 merks, which was a considerable part of my interest; which to the ignorant and unacquainted with my affairs (as all were beside myself) did expose me to much disrespect and contempt, which I was forced with patience to bear, and did make me to sail with a low sail. About the same time likewise, I unadvisedly bound for the sum of 8000 merks for provisions to my sisters, they being to be married, and my mother liferenting all my estate, which was not now above £100 sterling per annum; which sums do daily run on interest, and consume my stock. And much of this I looked on as a punishment of my faults" (2).

Troubles of this kind were to be his lot over a fairly
long period. Of the year 1663 he writes: "Being delivered now from all my fears, and my day clearing as to my spiritual condition and better hopes of temporal affairs, I was anew plunged in a sea of troubles when I did scarce dream of it. For falling out with some of my relations unadvisedly, and egged on by others, anent some civil matters, I pursued them at law, and spent more on it than the matter was worth, and that merely on the account of my credit and reputation. Where there wanted not diligence and success as to my part, but God put visible hindrances in the way, and I was led merely by my inclinations, and did not advise with the Lord" (3). Later on he speaks of being "daily harassed by several persons, so that south, north, east, and west, I could not turn me where I had not a creditor" (4). In the end practically the whole of his father's fortune, which he assures us was at one time considerable, was lost and the family was in sore straits. But even worse than his financial embarrassments, and much harder to bear, was the contempt heaped upon him. "I was the table-talk of the times then," he confesses, "'Behold a man smitten of God.' I was a sign and wonder; the people of God were grieved; my nearest and surest friends forsook and looked strange on me, of whose kindness now I had proof, and whom of purpose I tried, though I knew they would not help me; I was a burden to them, and by them despised. And whoever had any thing to say, did now strike in against me; my
enemies rejoiced, and myself at first was sore sunken. And, to complete all, there was no returning to Him that smote me, and my strokes felled me, and at first I decayed in my spiritual condition; and thus was my spiritual condition from October to January 1665; all things were low both spiritually and temporally" (5).

He analyses at considerable length the causes, outward and inward, of his troubles. Among the former he refers to bad securities, his father's 'cautionary' for others, his father's early death, the unskilfulness and negligence of his trustees, evil friends, and evil times; while the latter, which he regards as the more important, include his own sins, among which he mentions faithlessness, neglect of God, ambition, pride, breach of vows and engagements, and incorrigibleness under ordinances, convictions, and lesser judgments. He also sees in his troubles God's loving purpose to reform and heal him, to humble his heart, and break it, to deaden him to the world, and to friends and relations, to give him experience of His love in delivering him out of all these troubles, and supporting him under them, to fit and enable him to direct and comfort others in their afflictions, to draw him to Himself and to teach him to seek Him more earnestly, to keep him from rotting and dying and to hold him waking, to bring him to learn, exercise, and increase faith and patience, and finally, to keep him with Himself in those times and to preserve him from the snares...
of an evil time.

For six months he continued in this wretched condition, being in abject poverty, deserted by those whom he had regarded as his friends, and never for a single moment safe from arrest, and the dread possibility of a debtor's prison; but in the end he was freed from his embarrassments and permitted to turn his mind to what was to be his life's work.

During his academic course his mind had turned towards the Christian ministry, and for such a career and calling one would have said that he was admirably fitted both by training, and by the experiences through which he had passed, to say nothing of those qualities of mind and heart which from an early age he had shown so plainly. He took up the study of theology with relish, but when the time came for him to make a final decision he found that his way was not clear. His principles were such that he could not accept ordination in an Episcopal communion, and at the moment there was no alternative. "The form of government by bishops, deans, etc.," he writes, "as being of the nature of an earthly kingdom and not like the kingdom of Jesus Christ and being likewise sworn against, and being accompanied with much ignorance and ungodliness, I could not acknowledge, join with, or submit to, and therefore could receive no power from them, and all presbyterial government extinct, cut off and dissolved, I did not see how I could accomplish my vows,"
and did therefore think myself discharged of the same" (5).
Some time earlier he had ceased to attend the ministrations
of the Episcopalian clergy. The passage in which he refers
to this is of importance for the understanding of his
religious development, and must be given in full. "I began
to forsake the prelates and curates," he writes, "and did
forbear to hear them. The steps by which I went were:
1. For a long time I heard without scruple, but never could
I get any good, and I found the outward ordinances do me
less good than formerly; yea, when privately, I got good;
nor could I after examination find any cause in me of this.
2. The curate's preaching did me ill at last, insomuch, that
when I would come to sermon in any frame, I would come from
it dead and heartless; and, when I went indisposed, I would
be far worse. Thus I continued for a long time; and many
times I observed this, but could not imagine the cause: yet
at length I was suspicious that this might be the cause,
especially when withdrawing became a doubtsome case in the
kingdom, which began to be about the time that there was an
act made against it. 3. Suspecting the matter, I began to
examine it; and at first view my affections began to be
engaged for the negative, ere yet my judgment was determined;
and, by looking to it, I found the weakness of the chief
grounds for hearing, by considering that the naked act of
preaching was not an ordinance of God (otherwise women,
madmen, children, yea, and devils, could preach) unless by
men sent. I saw likewise that the Church could not make
choice of them whom God had in His Word discharged. I saw
likewise that we might separate from those that were never
excommunicate. I was convinced likewise that the true
visible Church did not stand so much in the multitude as in
the serious professors of the truths of God; and that these
few, continuing faithful, were rather to be followed than
the multitude. Having laid these principles a door was
opened. 4. I went a good while contrary to my inclinations;
and one day going, I was compelled to return back again, and
durst not for terror go forwards. Upon which I prayed to
God, that if He were displeased with my going, He would give
me some sign thereof, and that He might be pleased to bless
my private exercises; which the Lord did, so as, in one
afternoon while private, I gained more life and knowledge of
God than I did a whole year before; by which I was much
confirmed. 5. About the same time many providential
considerations had influence with me; the universality of
the godly and tenderest leaving them daily; the extraordinary
influence of God's Spirit on myself and others when separate
from them; some sad consequences following such as did hear
them; as likewise, I heard and knew of some under exercise
for hearing of them, which much confirmed me, and made me
think that God did own us in not hearing. I found that
made out to me, 'Be ye separate, and I will be a father to
you.' 6. By searching into the matter as a case of
conscience, I found positive grounds for judging 'withdrawing from them' a seasonable duty; as the frequent commands of God, to 'separate from,' to 'let alone,' and 'beware of,' and 'fell from' corrupt guides. I thought the consequence of hearing to be a hardening and strengthening of them in their courses, and a destruction to the work of God: I looked on it as against nature to join and keep fellowship with such rebels, that were so signally and avowedly against the Lord in arms; and I thought love to God compelled me to leave them. I likewise looked on hearing of them (as it was an act of worship), an owning to the authority of prelates; for 'He that receiveth you, receiveth Me; and he that receiveth Me, receiveth Him that sent Me.' For obedience to officers, when it is active, is an acknowledgement of their authority. I conceived I was otherwise bound by the covenant. And, lastly, I judged my respect to the poor people of God, and who were generally injured for this cause, should make me run into them, and take the same lot with them in life or death, especially seeing they suffered upon that account. 7. Being to die, there was nothing that in my conscience got such an approbation from God as my separation from them. And 8. To confirm all, I besought God by fasting on a day of humiliation set apart on purpose for this effect, beseeching God to reveal His mind unto me in this case; the result of which was, that there were new grounds given me of separation from them, and my former grounds confirmed; so that I continued in s
separation from them to this day. Thus was I drawn from curates" (7).

Fraser's attitude to the curates, and to the conformists, and to the Episcopal Church generally, is dealt with at much greater length in his treatise on The Lawfulness and Duty of Separation from Corrupt Ministers and Churches. This work will receive fuller treatment later in this Thesis, and nothing more need be said about it here. An independent testimony to Fraser's attitude at this time to the curates, and to the question of hearing them, is found in Brodie's Diary where under the date April 17, 1671, we find: "Dr. Gordon, Brey, Petgauni, cam heir. I profited litl. Brea said that the curats wer wors then .... men, nay, then Pharisees, Pilet, or thes that crucified the Lord. I exprest my dislyk of that expression" (8). On Sept. 28, 1671, Brodie writes: "I heard Brey was heir this night, and Mr. Rob. Gilespi, the son of the good Mr. Geo. Gilespi. I had conferenc with them anent the estat of the kirk of God in other places; and alac! so desolat and wast as it is laid" (9). Robert Gillespie who is mentioned here was the son of George Gillespie, one of the ministers of Edinburgh, and at the time in question was sought after by the government for holding conventicles. He was one of the first to be imprisoned on the Bass for this offence.

The ministry being out of the question, as he felt, for the time being at any rate, Fraser turned his attention to
the prospects offered by the law, but soon discovered that a legal career did not fit in with his inclinations, and in the end was driven back upon his earlier purpose. Before, however, finally making up his mind that the ministry was to be his life's work he had to face and settle two questions. There was, to begin with, the fact that the Scottish Church was at that time Episcopalian, and his conscience would not permit him to serve under Prelacy. Presbytery, which he loved, had been driven out; where then could he expect to find scope for his ministry? That problem turned out to be not of primary importance; what really perplexed him was the question, Could he regard himself as indeed called by God to the exercise of the ministry? To the solution of this thorny problem he set himself with his usual intricate heart-searching.

Eventually his call was made clear to him, but only after many days of fasting and prayer. "I was much concerned to know whether I was indeed called by the Lord to the exercise of the ministry," he writes, "or whether any inclination or pressure of spirit I had thereto did proceed from my own fancy; for I can never think that any will discharge this office aright, who hath not a sense of His divine call upon his spirit, or comfortably go about the same, neither can promise himself any success therein: for such as the Lord hath not called, 'nor stood in His counsel,' it is threatened that they 'shall not profit this people.'
Therefore it is of much concernment to us to be clear in this. Yet I acknowledge many are called of Christ to preach who do not know it, but fear they are not; even as many are effectually called who know not so much; and, therefore, it is that both the one and the other live less comfortably. And as many think they belong to, and have interest in, Christ, who really have none; so, many judge themselves, and are judged by others, to be true ministers of Christ, who are not, but idol ministers, never commissioned by Christ. Therefore did I judge it my duty to endeavour to have my call cleared to me, and for this cause have set apart some solemn days, in which by fasting and prayer, both before I entered the ministry and after, I have earnestly besought the Lord for light in this matter, and to clear to me whether He called me or not; and have seriously searched and meditated, and sadly thought on this subject. And the issue of all such deliberations was, that I was inclined to think, from what I could gather from God's Word or Work, that He did call me to 'bear His name, to deliver from the power of Satan to God, to witness for God,' that the works of the world were evil" (10).

He tells us plainly, and at considerable length, the reasons which led him to conclude that God had definitely called him to the ministry. Briefly stated, the considerations which weighed with him were as follows: -

"Whatever talents men have received from Christ, they are
not to lie idle, nor to be kept up in a napkin, but are to be put in use and exercised for God .... He who is not qualified for the ministry, hath not gifts, is not called; and he who is more fitted for this than for anything else, is called of God .... The Lord did by His Spirit apply the general call particularly to my soul .... The Lord, not only by His Spirit working inwardly upon me, but likewise by His Work, did clear that He called me. For my heart was utterly averse to any other study or employment; all attempts, designs, and endeavours to settle in any other station were crushed and broken, and matters in the world went still worse and worse, until I resolved and engaged with the work of the ministry; and from that time I observed the weather turned, and my captivity was turned back .... I vowed solemnly, that if the Lord should clear up my interest to me, and reveal the mystery of the Gospel, covenant of grace, and faith to me, I should then apply myself to the ministry, provided the Lord did answer this in five years. But the Lord in less than six weeks answered it; for in a month or thereabout did the Lord convince me of faith, called me to believe, opened His covenant to me, never left me till I believed it, and thereafter sealed it with the spirit of assurance .... About the latter end of the year 1665, I remember the Lord put this call close to my door, told me I was to be His witness, to testify for Him against the world, to do all the good I could to mankind wherever I was called; and that
I should make this my only work, and be faithful, free, and full in it; that many things needed reformation, and that the Lord would employ me in it .... The ministers and faithful servants of Jesus Christ did solemnly examine my call, and after trial of my gifts and conversation by several exercises and pieces of trial recommended me, being intimately and of a long time acquainted with me, having preached frequently in their hearing, and having given proof of my gifts, were so far satisfied with me, that unanimously, without the least censure, they agreed to trust me in the name of Christ with the dispensation of the Gospel; and this was in the year 1672 .... Lastly, by preaching and discharging my duty otherwise, I myself was watered, my gifts increased, more of the Lord's will was manifested and made known to me, and my labours were blessed to many, to whose heart and case the Lord made me many times to speak"(11 ).

Once the call to the ministry was made clear to his heart and conscience he began to preach, at first within his own family circle, then to a larger number of friends and acquaintances drawn together in private houses to hear his message. He soon proved to be a popular preacher, and before long scarce a single Sabbath passed that he did not hold forth in one place or another. It is interesting to note how he regarded the work to which he was convinced God had called him. "It was not merely to show or discover my gifts," he says, "by letting people know what I could say
from a text of Scripture, that I was called; I had great inclinations of myself to preach and speak from Scripture. Nor was it to baptise or minister sacraments, nor was it the name or title of a minister that I was to take on, or which I did effect most; God did not send me to baptise but to preach. But that which I was called to was, to testify for God, to hold forth His name and ways to the dark world, and to deliver poor captives of Satan, and bring them to the 'glorious liberty of the sons of God.' This was I to make my only employment, to give myself to, and therein to be diligent, taking all occasions; and to be plain, full, and free in this charge. I was called to enter in hot war with the world and sinners, to fight by my testimony against them for God. This was it I was called unto, and unto a conversation suitable thereunto, and to 'take up the gross daily and follow Christ.' I was called to be a watchman, and to take the charge of the care of all my relatives and acquaintances; to be a watchman over and keeper of them, and to be free and faithful in this with every one, and my own soul to lie at the stake to be forfeit if I failed; and this commission might have been discharged, though I had never taken a text or preached formally" (12).

He held that ministers are called to discharge the commission laid upon them by God by public speaking, public and private prayer for those committed to their charge, private exhortation, a godly conversation, and finally, the
writing of epistles or treatises as the Lord shall call or enable them. Of the first he says that ministers should preach the Gospel committed to them 'in season and out of season,' saying nothing but what they 'have received from the Lord Jesus,' and nothing of which Christ is not the Alpha and Omega. Of the second he says that while every Christian is bound to pray for the whole Church of Christ, a minister is in a special manner bound. With regard to the third he confesses that he felt it to be the special type of ministry to which he himself was called. "This is it which I suppose I was most called unto, viz., to take all occasions with all persons in private discourse to make the name of Christ known, and to do them good, and to do this as my only work; and to do it boldly, and faithfully, and fully. And this to do is very hard in a right and effectual manner; to do this is harder than to preach publicly; and to be strengthened, directed, and encouraged in this is that for which I ought to live near in a dependence on Christ, 'without whom we can do nothing,' and of whom is all our sufficiency. In preaching, there are a great many whom we cannot reach, and there are many to whom we have no occasion to preach publicly; we may thus preach always, and speak more successfully than in public, where the greatest part of hearers do not understand the minister though he speak never so plainly. This likewise we are called unto this day, seeing we are by force incapacitate; but oh! how this is neglected! Were
ministers faithful in this, we should quickly see a change
in affairs; but, alas! with grief of heart I speak it, it
is in this thing that I challenge myself most of any; it is
in this that I have most come short, and I suppose it may be
so with others too. The apostles went from house to house" (13).

Of the fourth way in which ministers ought to endeavour
to discharge their commission — a godly conversation — he
points out that example is very powerful, and that by it we
preach most effectually to others. And of the fifth way —
the writing of epistles and treatises — he says that it is a
method to employ when one cannot reach people in any other
way, for example, when one is imprisoned. He himself was
later to resort to this method of proclaiming the message
which God had given him to deliver to the people of Scotland.
Of his particular leaning to private exhortation rather than
public preaching he says later: "I was called more to preach
by private exhortation than by public formal preaching; and
to endeavour the conversion of some and edification of others
by transient occasional discourses. And in the discharge
of this I found more peace of conscience, greater sweetness
and profit, than by preaching of many sermons; yet in this
I was most defective, and to it had least inclination. I
found a private exhortation and instruction, transiently and
occasionally given, do more good than many sermons. And
private exhortation is preaching, and hath the advantage of
public preaching, especially at this time, in this regard, that there is more self-denial, less carnal vain ends in it, than in public preaching; in this occasional preaching, by way of transient discourse, we have occasion given us to make what we say plain, and beat it upon them, and hear what they say" (14).

Before he had reached the age of thirty he had a good deal of work to his credit, and not only preaching. Of those early years he writes: "I wrote a Treatise of Faith, of the Covenant of Grace; I wrote a Treatise of forty sheets of paper, on several subjects useful for the times; I wrote also a Treatise against hearing the curates; as likewise, I wrote this Book of my Life, in which I found marvellous assistance, and found it a blessed mean to warm my heart with love to Christ, to see through many intricacies of my life which were before as a mist to me, and did tend much to my settling. As likewise, the Lord blessed my fellowship so to the south-country professors, that severals of them were awakened; and generally my conversation was edifying, and was someway shining, so that I received much honour thereby; and while I honoured God, the Lord honoured me. I kept Christian fellowship with them, prayed with and exhorted them, which was not in vain, especially in Edinburgh, where I sometimes spake four times in a week. The scope of my discourses was in exalting holiness; against a slight work of grace; against looseness and laxness; against formality; against
sloth and unprofitableness, and pressing them to be doing good; against discouragements and unbelief, and pressing to believe; as likewise, against complying with the prelates and curates, studying to render them as odious as I could, and my pains were not in vain" (15).

By all accounts Fraser soon made a name for himself, particularly in the north, as an able preacher and expositor, and as one who had the Word of the Lord as "a fire within him." Though he was as yet without licence and was not in the habit of preaching except in private houses, wherever it was known that he was to speak great crowds assembled. Apparently his plain, familiar style of preaching, and his apt illustrations and similitudes - his published sermons afford abundant proof of his powers in this direction - went far to interest and edify the common people among whom he was highly popular. He preached in one place or another practically every Sunday. But after a time objections began to be raised to his preaching, particularly in the south where he carried on the work which he had begun in the north. As far as we can gather these objections were on three main grounds. First, there were those who held that it was most irregular that a man who had not been licensed should preach as regularly as Fraser did, and to such multitudes; and not only was he without licence but he had never had any regular training in theology. He might be a most energetic and successful evangelist - and that he was doing great work no one could
deny — but the more precise among the ministers took exception to the manner in which he had entered the fold. In the second place, his devotion to the Presbyterian system was not beyond suspicion. He was not prepared, it would seem, to take the high ground of the exclusive divine right of Presbytery, then generally held by those who adhered to that form of Church government. Indeed he went so far as to confess that to him the difference between the Independents and the Presbyterians appeared so small that he was quite prepared to live in fellowship either with the one or the other. Finally, and most serious of all, his Calvinism was open to doubt. With regard to the extent of the Atonement many held that his views were so unsound as to be positively dangerous, and a menace to that purity of doctrine which was of such paramount importance to all good Covenanters. It is interesting to see that even at this early period he had developed a theory of universal redemption of so pronounced a kind as to brand him in the eyes of some of his fellow-churchmen as a heretic.

Anderson, in his Martyrs of the Bass, has this to say about the charges brought against Fraser, and his defence of himself: "On coming to the south, following the same course as he had done in the north, some of the ministers were displeased, conceiving it to be irregular for him to preach, as he had not yet received licence; nor were they without apprehensions that he intended to form a sect of his own, in
which they were confirmed from hearing that he maintained several singular opinions, and made use of some strange forms of Expression. Accordingly, they appointed one of their number to desire him to forbear a practice which gave offence. The minister did so, and at the same time candidly told him some other grounds of offence his brethren had at him, such as that they heard he was congregational in his views of church government, at least that he was lex in his principles as to presbyterial government, and that they had strong suspicions that he was inclined to Arminianism, because he expressed himself favourable to universal redemption. Fraser, thanking him for the freedom he had used, told him that he did not pretend to an immediate extraordinary mission, - that he abhorred the thought of making factions, - that it was true he expounded the Scriptures and exhorted from them, though he was never formally licensed or ordained; but that he did this because the times were extraordinary, the church being in a troubled state, when ministers could not do things regularly, and that not having freedom according to his judgment to take prelatic orders, he conceived that it was lawful for him, yes, that he was bound, to employ any talent God had given him for the use of His people, - that he was willing to submit himself to the trials of the ministry and to pass in a regular way, and in the mean time to forbear what was offensive to them, - that as to the government of the church, there were so many
godly men amongst the Independents, that he could not but love them, and acknowledge them a true church of Christ, and that the difference betwixt them and Presbyterians being so small, it was indifferent to him to live in fellowship either with the one or the other, - that he abhorred Arminianism in all its branches, and that as to universal redemption, although in a certain sense he maintained a common redemption, yet he acknowledged a special redemption in which none but the elect had interest. This was the substance of what he stated at several times and to several persons for the satisfaction of those ministers, with which at last they were satisfied" (16).

The first of the objections raised against him - that he was without licence - was removed by the action of the Field Presbytery of Moray in giving him "indefinite ordination" in the year 1672. The "outed" ministers of Moray, which then comprised the counties of Elgin and Nairn, the greater part of the county of Inverness, and a portion of the county of Banff (17), though the ecclesiastical unit may not have coincided exactly with the geographical, had formed themselves into a Presbytery, and in the year in question they ordained Fraser and Robert Gillespie, of whom mention has already been made. Anderson says that the year was 1670, and that 1672, which appears both in the ms. of the Memoirs, and in the published copy, is "evidently a mistake" (18). Professor Blaikie, in his article on
Fraser in the *Dictionary of National Biography* follows Anderson (19); the latter, however, gives no explanation of the "mistake" which is alleged to have crept into the *Memoirs*. There is some doubt also as to whether Fraser was the first to be ordained by the Field Presbytery of Moray, or whether it was Gillespie who had that honour. In the *Memoirs of the Life of Mr. Thomas Hog of Kiltearn* (1756) we are told that Hog "was clear against hearing the curates," also that "according to Mrs. Ross (Catherine Collace), he was the main instrument of licensing the first that was licensed in Scotland, without compliance with Episcopacy; and that the first person so licensed was Mr. James Fraser of Brea, we further gather from the original copy of that gentleman's life, wrote by himself, Chap. ix, sect. 1, though that whole section, with several other parts of his life, are omitted in the printed copy" (20). Macdonald, in his *Covenanters in Moray and Ross*, appears to give the most accurate account of all the circumstances surrounding Fraser's ordination. "The outed ministers of the district," he writes, "constituted themselves into a Presbytery; and, after the usual examinations, formally ordained him for discharging all the functions of the ministry (cf. Stevenson's *Life of Thomas Hog of Kiltearn*, p. 108). This took place in 1672. Robert Gillespie also received ordination from the Field-Presbytery of Moray, and apparently, before Fraser of Brea. Under date 10th January 1672, Lord Brodie writes:— 'Mr. Th. Hogg told
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we they had manumitted Mr. Robert Gillespie." And we know from an entry made the following month, that they had not then laid their hands on James Fraser. The ordination of these young men deserves to be noted as marking the first overt act in which the outed Presbyterian ministers, claiming to be the true representatives of the Church of Scotland, asserted its power of self-government by constituting themselves into a Court of the Church to make provision for its continued existence. Nor is it without interest to notice, that the son of the celebrated leader of the Scottish Commission in the Westminster Assembly was the first who received nonconformist Presbyterian ordination in Scotland, and that he received it in our neighbourhood, at Inshoch or Knockoudie. He was also the first who was imprisoned on the Bass Rock for holding conventicles. Thomas Hog seems to have been moderator of this improvised Presbytery .... Who his associates were we can only conjecture. James Urquhart and Thomas Ross were probably of the number" (21).

The references to Fraser's ordination in Brodie's Diary would seem to put the matter beyond question. On 10th January 1672, Brodie writes:— "Mr. Th. Hogg told me they had manumitted Mr. Robert Gillespie;" on the 17th of the same month:— "I heard that ther was an ordour for apprehending Mr. Robert Gillespie, James Fraser, and others, at Elgin. I desir to bear on my hart ther cace towards God, and to be
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Let them also be both hid and ledd;" on the 25th:-
"I heard Meldrum had been at Insoch, seiking Mr. Tho. Hogg;
and his wyf cam heir;" and on the 30th :- "I heard the Bishop
had given ordour to Meldrum to tak Mr. Th. Hogg. The caus
pretended is, the giving manumission to James Fraser. I desir
to consider whither I should labour to get it cleared for
obviating his danger. Lord ! teach and lead me." Then
on 1st February he has this entry :- "I receaved a letter
from Mr. Th. Hogg, shewing they had not manumitted Ja. Fraser." 
(22). It seems clær that Gillespie was ordained early
in January 1672, and Fraser sometime after the 1st February
of the same year.

Fraser's ordination was "indefinite" and that we gather
was quite in accordance with his own inclinations. Both
before and after his ordination he regarded himself as called
by God not to preach to any particular flock, gathered or
ungathered, but to the whole world as opportunity should offer.
The Lord, as he points out, had at that time scattered both
shepherds and flocks, and ministers had to preach where they
could find people (23). He held that "as every Christian,
who is baptized in any particular church, is baptized in the
universal Catholic Church, and therefore hath right to a
visible fellowship with it in all privileges; so he who is
ordained a minister, is a minister of the universal Catholic
Church, and may exercise ministerial acts in any place of
the world, may preach and administer the sacraments, and the
like. I suppose, therefore, the practice of indefinite ordination is very warrantable, that is, of ordaining a minister, though not to any particular charge, especially ecclesia constituenda, or turbata, where ministers cannot stay in one place, and where the universal confusion of the Church doth call for help" (24). He tells us that he had three calls from three different societies of Christians but that he did not incline to fix with any.

From the time of his ordination to the end of his life, even when confined in prison, he continued to preach every Sabbath, the only exceptions being when he was in Blackness, and later in Newgate. More than once his zeal for preaching led him into serious trouble; but he never regretted the step he had taken in accepting licence and ordination at the hands of the Field Presbytery of Moray.

Notes appended to this Chapter
A. The lands of Brea.
B. Fraser's attitude to the Episcopalians.
C. Alexander Brodie of Brodie.
D. The practice of indefinite ordination.
NOTE A.

The lands of Brea

Mackenzie says that "the lands of Brea, which had been appraised from Sir James, the father, became the property of Hector Munro of Obsdale, who by disposition dated the 29th of March, 1671, conveyed them to James Fraser, 'son and heir' to Sir James Fraser." (History of the Frasers, p. 525.)

NOTE B.

Fraser's attitude to the Episcopalians

Fraser's namesake, the minister of Wardlaw and author of the Wardlaw Manuscript, writing towards the end of 1665, says:—"From the year 1660 till now Presbiterians united with us, frequented churches and ordinances without distinction or objection. Captain Beatman and his brother in law, James Fraser of Brey, lived in my own parish of Moniak, heard and wrot my sermons. Mr. Hary Forbes, minister at Aldern, a Presbiterian, sat in our Sinods as Dean of Murray. Many joined south and north without scruple of Episcopall government, all haveing closed with it, took oaths of alleadgange end canonicall obedience; now they must nicely desert us, keep field conventicles, and foment rebellion end scism!" (Wardlaw Manuscript, Chronicles of the Frasers, pp. 463,464.)
NOTE G.

Alexander Brodie of Brodie

We are indebted to the *Brodie Diaries* for a good deal of what we know about Fraser. Alexander Brodie was in many ways a strange figure. Smellie calls him a "temporary - one who tries year in and year out to 'carry his dish level.'"

He says: - "The leaders in the north of the more unswerving party, James Fraser of Brea and Thomas Hog of Kilteern, were now and then in Brodie's society; and they did not fail to reprove his tergiversations and excuses. 'He had an argument' - Thomas Hog is the logician - 'That they who want the qualifications which by Christ's institution should be in a minister, they are noe ministers. I scrupld at this, and broght the example of Judas. I said, A man might be calld lawful minister in some respects, and yet went these qualifications of grace that's needful. He said, that I could be a curat or anie thing.' Indeed, there was cause for the enger of the preacher who was 'steel-true and blade-straight'; but the other who felt its edge did not like it. 'My woful heart kindl'd' - this was on a subsequeint day - 'and I said I did noe less dislyk his severitie in censuring the condition and estate of others, and that he took the keys, and judgd rashlie and rigidlie, and that I could not embrace the opinion becas Mr. Tho. Hog said it, and if he stumbld at me, he might forbear me.' The reader becomes more and more sorry for a man whose faith and love journey
one road, and his advantages and gains precisely the opposite; and who prefers the easier going In Bypath Meadow, even when he knows that he should be out on the King's Highway."

(Men of the Covenant, 1911 edn., pp. 322, 323.)

NOTE D.

The practice of Indefinite Ordination

Dr. C. G. M'Crie refers to the practice of 'indefinite ordination' in connection with the ordination of Richard Cameron in Rotterdam in 1679 at the hands of Brown of Wamphray, M'Ward of the collegiate charge of Glasgow (both of them in exile), and a Dutch pastor from Flanders who had been banished for nonconformity with his own Church, and whom Brown and M'Ward associated with them to constitute a Presbytery. "A keen controversy had sprung up among the nonconformists of Scotland," writes Dr. M'Crie, "as to the propriety of ordaining any one who had not a call to the charge of a particular congregation. Brown of Wamphray had written in favour of 'indefinite ordination,' as it was called, employing twenty arguments and answering six objections. But many of the Presbyterians of Scotland were against the vagum ministerium and some wrote disparagingly of Cameron's ordination styling it 'lame' and stigmatising it as 'contrary to all discipline in our Church.' Cameron himself, however, returned to Scotland in the autumn of 1679 fully assured of the validity of his orders, and proceeded to discharge all
the functions of the ministry, including the celebration of
marriage .... His ordination was admittedly 'indefinite' but
only high churchmen will pronounce it to have been illegal.
The three ministers at Rotterdam met and acted in the name
and with the authority of the Head of the Holy Catholic Church
who had said, 'Where two or three are gathered together in
My name there am I in the midst of them.' They were a
portion of the Lord's Mystical Body and were entitled to
constitute themselves a court of His Church and to take action
as such. And so, although Richard Cameron never preached in
a parish church, never presided over a session, and never sat
in a presbytery of the Established Church of Scotland, he was
none the less an ordained minister of Christ, set apart by
the laying on of the hands of presbyters to preach the Gospel
and administer sacraments to His people who had left the
parish churches and attended conventicles in private houses
and in the open air." (The Church of Scotland: Her Divisions
and Her Re-Unions, pp. 29-31.)
CHAPTER V

THE YEARS OF PERSECUTION

1672–1682.

It is refreshing to read that after his ordination Fraser's life, for a time at any rate, was easier and less troubled. "Though while I was in Scotland," he writes, "I never received nor would take a sixpence for preaching, but lived upon what was my own; yet I prospered much in my outward estate in the world. I cleared my debts, I reserved some part of my estate to my debts, and maintained myself: I married all my sisters, inasmuch that in fourteen years I was better by eight or nine hundred pounds sterling than when I began although there was never a week but I preached twice and sometimes oftener" (1). He adds that all this he looked upon as a token of the Lord's acceptance of his labours.

His marriage, which took place towards the end of July 1672, further increased his happiness. His bride - a Miss Gray, says Alexander Mackenzie (2) - was a south-country lady of some means, and judging by his own account he was most fortunate in his choice of a partner to share his life. His tribute to her makes pleasant reading. "The Lord showed His mercy to me," he says, "in giving me a comfortable and
suitable yoke-fellow, who did me good and not evil all the
days of her life. In her did I behold as in a glass the
Lord's love to me, by her were the sorrows of my pilgrimage
many times sweetened, and she made me frequently forget my
sorrows and griefs, and was the greatest tentation to me of
saying, 'It is good for me to be here;' so that I can seal
to the truth of that, 'An inheritance is from the fathers,
but a good prudent wife is from the Lord, and whoso findeth
her obtaineth favour of the Lord.'" (3). He goes on to say
that her relations were equally kind to him, nor did their
love for him die with her. Many of them were lawyers,
advocates, clerks, and judges, and as one can well believe
they were of the greatest service to one who was so often in
need of the expert advice and assistance which only men of
such training are qualified to give. Fraser concludes his
tribute to his wife by saying that "she was kindly - 'the law
of kindness was in her mouth;' she was prudent and well-bred,
ordered her affairs with great discretion, and by her wisdom
and activity did many things that were fair and lovely to
look on; she was truly religious, and did not only would
comply with me in any good and spiritual duty, but many times
would assist, stir up, and encourage and remember me of my
duty" (4).

James Anderson adds some further details of Fraser's
marriage, drawn most probably from the "Philocris" ms. of
the Memoirs. "Having occasion to go south about some
worldly business, he became acquainted with the lady who soon after became his wife. This lady was a widow, whose first husband, to whom she had several children, died abroad; and if Fraser may be credited in this matter, she was possessed of no ordinary personal beauty and mental qualities. His first acquaintance with her, and the attractions by which she engaged his heart, he thus describes:—"There I became acquainted with the gentlewoman I shortly afterwards married; but I was put upon it by others to make her at least a visit, which I did, and seeing and conversing with her, I cannot say but I liked her, and did I find the Lord allow it, I should gladly have married her; but I could determine nothing until I had sought the Lord in it .... Two visits yet I made her; I came to understand she was of honest extraction, — that she had yearly a dowry about 44 or 45 pounds; she was pleasant and lovely to look upon, of a discreet carriage, well-behaved, witty and prudent, well-humoured, and finally virtuous, and that she loved the best things, and followed them in singleness of heart, though many had a fairer and greater profession than she;""

"To this lady," Anderson continues, "he was united in marriage on the last day of July 1672, having then completed the thirty-third year of his age; and in this new relation he experienced all the happiness which can arise from the union of congenial minds, and from the exercise of every endearing domestic virtue. Writing on this subject long after she
had been laid in the dust, from the fulness of a heart overflowing with tender recollections, he says, with an artless simplicity and truthfulness which are apt to provoke a smile, 'I was not many days married, when I perceived the goodness of the Lord in giving me so good and comfortable a yokefellow. I was fully satisfied in my choice, insomuch that I have several times said and thought, that were all the women of the world before me to choose a wife of, and were I as free as ever I was, that verily I should have picked out mine own wife, J —— G —— , for so she was called, from them all. If our love before marriage needed anything to perfect it, it received that when we were married, nor was her love to me less than mine to her. She was a very good-taking mistress, but I found her a better wife. She had, in a word, extraordinary good qualities, and powerful attractive charms, insomuch that I thought many times she was made to be a meet-help to comfort poor sorrowful man in his wearisome pilgrimage" (5).

Fraser's good fortune was somewhat marred within a few days of his marriage for just as he and his bride were preparing to go north he was summoned to appear before the Privy Council to answer a charge of keeping conventicles. "The Bishop of Murray, in whose dioccy I had preached," he writes, "and a privy counsellor, for some picque he had at my wife, did cause me this trouble. I was herewith troubled; but my wife's friends, to whom I communicated the matter,
dealt with the messenger to take of his summons, and to lay on a new summons when we were in the north, where we were to be in a day or two, and then indorse on the back of his execution, that he found us not, which would make a new summons necessary; and he did so" (6). The welcome respite proved to be all too brief. His enemies caused a new summons to be made out and served upon him in the north two months later. When it reached him he was in some doubt as to how he ought to deal with it. His friends' advice was to answer the Council's citation, but he himself felt guided by God to ignore it, which he did, and thereupon was denounced and outlawed as a rebel. On his return to the south soon after he managed to buy off the privy counsellor who had some spite against his wife. "He fell off," he says, "putting all the blame on the bishop, and was ever thereafter a good friend to me; and having the executions delivered to him, he would never give them up, by which means they came to nothing, and, finally, were altogether forgotten" (7).

For some little time he was left at peace, but again the respite was of brief duration. "After this," he writes, "there was 'silence in heaven for half an hour,' but then the angels of war did sound their trumpets; and amongst other ministers was I sought for, and of new denounced; was many times, while in the south, made to shift my lodging; was frequently in fears and alarms, and preached in great temptations through the lying in wait of enemies; was several
times interrupted in the very act of preaching by soldiers that by orders came to apprehend me; I could get no business done. The Lord by this did only manifest His goodness in preserving and delivering me, rendering enemies who did forbid us to preach inexcusable, by this causing them fill up the measure of their iniquities; my spirit by these tossings was rather distempered and jumbled than bettered" (8).

Alexander Brodie, "the devout north country laird, who hovered on the verge of the Covenanting party" (9), has this entry in his Diary under date 26th August 1673:- "Mr. Tho. Hogg and Brey cam heir, by quhom I heard of the estate of the afflicted servants of God, and that soldiers were made use of to tri conventicles: that ther was much earnestnes efter thes men's ministrie in seueral places in the south. The persecution did encrease, and the desir and zeal of peopl encreasd. I heard ther complaint against Mr. Geo. Hutch(eson), that did not acquit himself befor the Counsel with that fortitude that they expected, and the instructions and cennons which they gev to the ministers" (10). Two months later, on 10th October 1673, Brodie writes:- "I did goe to Leathin on Grant's affairs, and I feard to be an instrument or occasion of his oppression and injustic .... I staid al night at Leathin. Ja. Fraser prayd in the familie. Brey spok to me not to wryt against him to the Presid(ent), and I did promise it" (11).

Towards the end of 1674, and in the earlier part of 1675
the persecution of the Covenanters was intensified, and finally, on 6th August 1675, Fraser along with "some other ministers, gentlemen, and women, yea, some persons of quality" was intercommuned. "But," he adds, "the Lord suffered not this ball, though it hit me, to do me harm. The Gospel still spread, and the people of all sorts ventured to converse with intercommuned persons" (12). Wodrow gives a full account of this intercommuning, and also quotes the actual letters. After speaking of the persecution of certain individual Covenanters, he continues: "But our managers, unsatisfied with this small game of picking up a minister here and there, give a general stroke to most part of the outed ministers, and when they cannot reach the persons of poor ministers and others, resolved to make their lives as bitter and uneasy to them as may be, and to expose them, and such who shall converse with them, to all hazards and difficulties that follow an intercommuning. Many of them, with some gentlemen, yea, ladies, had been last year declared fugitives, but now they go further, and upon the 6th of August, letters of intercommuning are given out by the council against more than a hundred persons, whereof sixteen or eighteen are ministers." Wodrow then gives the names of the ministers, 'James Frazer of Brae,' being among them, and continues: "These letters of intercommuning were the utmost our managers could go upon non-compearance; and by our Scots law every person who harboured, entertained, or
conversed with them, was to be habit and repute guilty of their crimes, and prosecuted accordingly. Perhaps it was every way without a parallel, that so many ladies and gentle women married, should be put in such circumstances; but this was to strike the greater terror on their husbands and other gentlewomen. The ministers here named are such who had been deleted as most active in preaching the Gospel, and the gentlemen and others were such as had supported them most. We heard, the soldiers have commission to pick them all up, where they can hear of them" (13).

Intercommuning was a sentence which had hitherto been reserved for only the very gravest crimes. By it the victims were to all intents and purposes placed beyond the pale as far as civil and social life was concerned. Even their nearest relatives were threatened with the severest penalties if they spoke to them, sheltered them, or gave them the slightest assistance or comfort. But like all extreme measures this barbarous sentence failed of its desired end, for it had the effect of knitting the persecuted party more closely together, while all that the persecutors gained was a deeper and still more general detestation. It is interesting to note how Fraser reacted to the sentence in his own case. Among the persecuted there were some who favoured the taking up of arms against their oppressors, but Fraser was resolutely opposed to any such attempt, and in fact refused to countenance recourse to the sword even when the
persecution was at its worst. The only sword he was willing to employ was the sword of the Spirit. "Some hot-heads," he writes, "were for taking the sword, and redeeming of themselves from the hands of the oppressors; at least I had ground to fear it: but I opposed rising in arms all I could, and preached against it, and exhorted them to patience and courageous using of the sword of the Spirit; and I did not see they had any call to the sword, that 'their strength was to sit still.' And if they did stir and take the sword, they would therewith perish; but if they patiently suffered and endured, God would Himself either incline to pity, or some other way support and deliver them" (14). Later on he refers to "the rash and unwarrantable taking up of arms most unseasonably in the year 1679; when the dissenting party, a good number of them meeting at a conventicle to worship God, being assaulted by armed men, and defending themselves, did kill about thirty men of their enemies" (15).

Writing of the summer of 1676 Brodie has one or two entries in his Diary in which Fraser is referred to. Under date 2nd July he writes: - "Die Dom. - I desir to know the dutie of this day: then I know it quhen I am helped to goe about it aright. That I do not goe to hear Brem nor to ani other place then Penick; whatever may be my sinful infirmiti in this way, search and teach. On consideration of danger, prudenc, or inconvenienc that I forbear to hear in other places, I look to Thee for light; inlighten my darknes, and
mak prudenc, witt, matural parts, moderation, inconvenienci, danger, and al moral or natural considerations be made subject to Thee, and Thy will." On the following day he writes:—
"Brey and Mr. Jhon Hepburn cam heir. I feard distanc even with God's children. His presenc discouradgd from exercis .... Brey was on his journey south." And on the 4th:—
"Brey and Mr. John Hepburn went from this yesternight. We had som conferenc anent hearing, and he said, To hear ministers admitted by prelats was idolatri, becaus the authoriti by which they preached was without warrand from the word. I could not discern idolatri in it, neither in the object of worship, nor in the manner of worship. If I be blind, Lord! piti and open my eys. Evn human mixtur or invention in church government, thogh not lawful yet cannot be concluded idolatri. He said, It was lyk the calves and images" (16).

Late in 1676 Fraser was to suffer a blow even worse than intercommuning; he was indeed heard to say that after it he never knew what it was to rejoice in any outward enjoyment from his heart, and that the whole world looked to him as an empty ghastly room, despoiled of its best furnishing (17). It was the death of his wife, in whom, as we have seen, he had found so excellent a partner. "In the beginning of October 1676," he writes, "having a call to Northumberland in order to do something (which after I enquired the Lord, I was free to do), my wife sickened of a
fever, and some eight or nine days thereafter she died, in vain calling for me during a great part of the time of sickness, who was then some fifty or sixty miles from her, and knew nothing. Letters were sent to me, but came too late, only a day before she died; and, having made what haste I could after I once understood she was sick, I came and found her dead some four hours before. I indeed remember I was, when absent at that time, stirred up extraordinarily to mind her in prayer; and about the very time she was a dying, an extraordinary cloud of horror seized upon me, being then within twelve miles of my journey to our own house" (18). How severe the blow was we can well imagine; life henceforth was to be a much more arduous thing for Fraser. "Now there was an end put to my earthly joys," he confesses, "my sun of earthly prosperity was set, and my nights and 'days of darkness,' and 'years wherein I have had no pleasure in them,' were come; our sun must be overclouded sometimes" (19). But as Robert King, in his *Covenanter in the North*, pointed out, his bereavement was to make him an even more zealous Covenanter. "Now he was free indeed. The noble principle which had all along animated him, had unbounded scope. His affections, having now no earthly lot or stay, flowed onward with all the intensity of his ardent nature toward the objects of his spiritual care. Bold, talented, and popular, he was one of those whom the government specially feared and hated, and he was classed along with other two for whose apprehension
large sums were offered" (20).

All this time Fraser's enemies were unwearied in their attempts to get him into their power. The charges brought against him were those commonly preferred against dissenters at that time. He tells us what they were:— "Dissenting from and nonconformity to, the government of prelacy in the Church; not coming to church to hear such ministers and officers as did officiate by an unlawful (to me) authority; adhering to the persecuted, deserted party, who stood upon their former ground, cleaving to their former principles; and taking upon me to preach without the bishop's authority" (21). He was successful in his attempts to stave off their assaults, but only for a time. The numbers of the dissenters were increasing to such an alarming extent that the authorities decided that sterner measures must be taken against them; the time had come for the rigid enforcement of the terms of the letters of intercommuning. The result in Fraser's case was that some two and a half years after his outlawry as a rebel in the summer of 1674 he was made to feel the full weight of the official displeasure. The bishops stirred up the Privy Council against him, representing him as a person of very disloyal principles and practices. A careful watch — "a particular eye," as he calls it (22) — was kept upon him; he was indeed one of the men, three in all, for whose apprehension a considerable sum was offered. The only real charge, however, that
could be brought against him was that he preached without the bishop's sanction. It was clear to all that in spite of the flimsiness of the indictment made out against him his arrest was now only a matter of time.

He was taken in Edinburgh on the night of Sunday, 28th January 1677. A maid-servant in the house in which he lodged, being bribed by no less a person than the town-major, who in turn had been solicited, encouraged, and importuned by Archbishop Sharp with promises of great rewards and acknowledgements, betrayed his whereabouts, and he was apprehended. The arrest took place while he was conducting family prayers. The time and manner of it are confirmed by the correspondence of Mr. John Fraser, brother of the minister of Petty, which is to be found among the Belladrum Papers. In a letter to Fraser of Belladrum this John Fraser, who was a lawyer in Edinburgh, added a postscript to the effect that "upon the last Lord's Day att night after supper Brea was apprehended by the town major in one Mr. Hamilton's house and committed to the prison qr non of his friends or relatives had access to him qr he was detained only these two nights bygane, and this morning very tymlie (before any of his friends or acquaintance had knowledge of it) he was carried to the Bass together wt one Mr. Mitchell (who is also (said) to have fyred att the Bp.). I am sorie I have no better news to send you of him. I hold it not very fitt to acquaint the lady his mither of it, only I have writn to
Major Batteman yt he acquaint her or not as he thinks convenient and yrfor I care not how few heare the news of it" (23). Major Bateman was Fraser's brother-in-law.

Mr. Mitchell was the James Mitchell who in 1668 had made an unsuccessful attempt to shoot Archbishop Sharp while the latter was driving in his coach in the streets of Edinburgh, and though he made good his escape at the time was recognized by Sharp six years later and arrested. Brought before the Privy Council, Mitchell had been induced to confess his crime under a promise that his life would be spared, but on being transferred to the Court of Justiciary he had been committed to the Bass for safe keeping. In 1676 he had again been brought before the Court of Justiciary, on this occasion on the charge of having been concerned in the Pentland Rising, but though put to the torture of the boot he had refused to make any admission of an incriminating nature, and so his judges had to be content with remitting him to prison. He was confined in the Tolbooth of Edinburgh till 30th January 1677 when along with Fraser he was taken once more to his old prison, the Bass (24).

To return to the events of the 28th January, the night of Fraser's arrest - Archbishop Sharp was naturally elated at Fraser's apprehension, and gave instructions that he should be kept in strict confinement, and not even his nearest friends allowed to have access to him. At five o'clock on the evening following his arrest he was taken before
committee of the Privy Council, examined, and charged "as a seditious person, who did rent the Church of Christ, and was very active to make and keep up the schism; as a preacher in field conventicles, which was death by the law; which they gladly would have me acknowledge, as likewise who they were that empowered me to preach: that I was intercommuned, and despised the law so far as I never made any application to be freed from that sentence: and That I was a person of very bad principles, destructive to all government" (25). Sharp, who was present at the interrogation, charged him with other offences, such as keeping up correspondence with some prisoners in the Bass; he also made an attempt to get him to acknowledge that he judged it lawful upon pretence of religion to take up arms against the king's majesty. To all these charges Fraser gave a civil answer, rebutting some, explaining some, and admitting others. His manner and answers were such that apparently the members of the committee were disposed to deal leniently with him but Sharp prevailed upon them to take a serious view of the case. "I cannot say of any of the committee of the council," Fraser confesses, "but they were all civil and sober persons, of whom, if the instigation and fear of the archbishop had not prevailed with them, I might have been moderately dealt with: but he did, in a bitter invective oration, represent me as a very odious and criminal person to the other counsellors, and aggravated my alleged crimes vehemently" (26).
Sharp was not disposed to show any mercy to Fraser; on the contrary he vehemently denounced him as a demagogue who had been traversing the country disseminating the most seditious principles. "This gentleman," he railed, "seems not at all to be ingenuous with us; possibly he would be more so if he knew the state he stands in, which is not ordinary, for he is of most pernicious principles, destructive to all kind of government, and withal is very active in spreading them, so that there is scarce a conventicle I hear of, but it is still Mr. Fraser who is the preacher; and likewise he is given out to be a man of parts and learning, and therefore the more to be taken notice of, since parts that way improven are most dangerous." To this bitter invective Fraser gave a calm answer taking care however not to address Sharp by the title 'My Lord.' "I have no pernicious principles, I hold; such as you mean may concern either church government or loyalty; as to the first, I fully acknowledge, as it is now established, I have a very great aversion from it; as to my loyalty, I would not care much though you all saw what were in my heart anent it; as to my spreading of them, I have been preaching Christ and exhorting people to mend their ways and repent, and if the doing of that be pernicious I confess myself guilty of it." There is no doubt that Fraser deeply offended Sharp by refusing to give him his title, and for this he was reproved by one of the members of the committee, his refusal being
regarded as a breach of good manners. "You seem," said Lord Halton, "to be of the quaker principles, for though ye give us our due titles, yet my lord St. Andrews, whom his Majesty is pleased to honour, ye give him not so much as he gives you; he gives you Sir, and ye give him nothing at all."

Fraser had of course omitted the bishop's title purposely and as a matter of principle, not simply because he recognized in Sharp the perjured betrayer and remorseless persecutor of the Church of Scotland, but because he believed the lordly titles which the prelates claimed were condemned in the Word of God. He confessed that he was "a rude man," but reminded the members of the committee that he had been called before them for a different purpose than to justify himself on the score of good breeding (27).

Wodrow gives a very full account of Fraser's examination, based mainly, it would appear, on Fraser's own account of the proceedings as contained in the "Philocris" ms. of the Memoirs. "This," he says, "is Mr. Frazer's own account of his examination, and it agrees perfectly well with another account written at this time on short hand, by one present at the examination, as the queries and answers were given; and that the reader may have a specimen of the manner of their captious examinations, I have insert it below" (28). In a footnote he gives this independent description of the proceedings, but as it contains little that is not in the Memoirs it will not be necessary to quote it.
At the conclusion of his interrogation Fraser was again remanded to prison, strict orders being given that he should be kept even more securely than before. His pockets were searched for such things as letters and knives; ink, pen, and paper were taken from him; and all his friends were refused access to him; "Which," he adds, "filled me with some melancholy apprehensions" (29). Yet he was able to write afterwards:- "In my darkness was the Lord a light round about me; Him they could not shut out from me: for that night did I get a most kindly and comfortable visit from the Lord Jesus, and I had one of the most sweet nights I had for ten years before that; and lifted up, by the sense of the Lord's love and favour, above death, sin, hell, wrath, prelates, and Papists, about one or two o'clock in the morning I fell in a sound sleep" (29). A little before six o'clock in the morning he was awakened by one of the jailors who told him to get ready to go to the Bass, this being the decision of the Council. That decision is contained in an Act dated the 29th January, and is in the following terms:—

"Mr. James Fraser of Brea, who is a known keeper of house and field conventicles, and guilty of many disorderly practices, to the disturbance of the peace, and is a declared fugitive and an intercommuned person, being apprehended in the burgh of Edinburgh, upon Sunday night, the Committee having called for him and examined him, he acknowledged his keeping of conventicles in several places; and finding him to be a
person of most dangerous and pernicious principles and practices, they thought fit to send him prisoner to the Bass by a party of guards, until the Council shall take some further course with him. They thought fit also, by the same party, to send Mr. James Mitchell prisoner to the said place." On the 1st of February the "Council, having heard and considered the foresaid Report, approve the same, and the Committee's proceedings mentioned therein; and they discharge the commander of the garrison in the Bass to allow the prisoners therein any servants of their own to attend them, but that he appoint such serving women, for waiting upon them, as he will be answerable" (30).

In company with James Mitchell, and convoyed by a guard of twelve horse and thirty foot Fraser was taken to the Bass, and delivered over to the custody of the officer of that place who commanded as governor a garrison of some eighteen or twenty soldiers. He found the Bass a melancholy place, but acknowledges that during the two and a half years that he spent there as a prisoner the goodness of God became very real to him. He details twelve instances of that goodness, among them, "the comfort and edification of fellow-prisoners, both ministers and others, some there before me, and others brought in since my coming, whose company was sweet and edifying many times to me" (31). Among his fellow-prisoners were Alexander Peden, M'Gilligen of Fodderty, and Hog of Kiltearn. On the whole his stay on the Bass was not as
Irksome as one might suppose. He was not kept a close prisoner, being allowed to take the air daily on the Rock, to converse freely with his fellow-prisoners, and even to receive any of his friends who cared to visit him. He conducted religious services, studied Hebrew and Greek, gained some knowledge of Oriental languages, and read some divinity. In addition he wrote a Treatise of Faith, a continuation no doubt of the work which he began in his earlier days, and which was later on to become his enduring monument as a theologian, albeit a somewhat unorthodox one. Incidentally in his postscript to the Treatise he says that when he wrote it on the Bass he had not the use of so much as one book of which he could make use save his Bible; this is hardly consistent with his statement referred to above that during his imprisonment he studied both languages and divinity. One can hardly carry on such study without books! In addition to his Treatise he wrote, he tells us, some other miscellanies, and several letters to Christian friends and relations. "Thus I spent my time," he writes, "and not without some fruit. But prisons must be prisons, and all afflictions, though never so well sweetened, will be in some measure grievous. Though the Lord was pleased to 'stay His rough wind in the day of His east wind,' and to put a very light yoke upon our necks; yet was it still a yoke, and some bitter ingredients were mixed in this cup, something of the gall and vinegar we found, both that the Lord
might discover and manifest to the world the cruel and unclean nature of the spirit of prelacy, and that our patience and faith might be the better exercised, and our faithfulness to Christ, and, finally, to wean us from the world, and sweeten to us the love of God in supporting under such troubles and delivering us out of them" (32). Along with the "sin, sufferings, tentations, griefs, and sorrows" which he had to bear while on the Bass he mentions "the untenderness of brethren and friends" (33). The latter is probably a reference, as Anderson and others have supposed, to the offence taken by some, notably John Carstares, father of the more famous William Carstares, to the unsound doctrine contained in the Treatise on Faith (34).

In the end he had what he calls "a cleanly unexpected deliverance" (35) from the Bass. Between 1677 and 1679 many attempts were made by his friends to secure his release, but all were in vain. In October 1677 it looked as though he might be liberated. In that month a petition supplicating release was presented to the Privy Council by Robert Traill, Scott of Pitlochie, James Drummond, and Fraser. On considering the petition the Council agreed to liberate the first three on condition that they bound themselves to compear when called, but Fraser was refused release "by the particular spite the primate had against him" (36). Sharp was determined that if Fraser was to be set at liberty he must first submit unconditionally to the
Council, and accept the Council's terms, and these latter were such as Fraser could never accept. On 5th October 1677 the Council, having considered his petition, "granted order and warrant to the Governor of the Isle of Bass to set him at liberty, upon his finding sufficient caution, under the pain of ten thousand pounds Scots, to enter himself in prison when he should be called, and that during the time of his enlargement he should live orderly, in obedience to law, under the pain foresaid" (37). As the government, by 'living orderly,' meant that he was to abstain from preaching either in houses or in the fields Fraser was not prepared to give any such undertaking, and though he was willing to appear when called, the Council, influenced in a great measure by Sharp, refused to liberate him on that bare understanding.

His release, however, did eventually take place. After what he calls "the unhappy, rash and unadvised attempts at Bothwell of some well-meaning people for recovering of their liberties and shaking off the yoke of prelacy" (38), the King granted an Indulgence - known as the Third Indulgence - to all prisoners who had had no part in that affair, or who had been sentenced merely for nonconformity. With eight or nine others Fraser, benefiting by this Indulgence, was removed from the Bass to the Tolbooth of Edinburgh, and on giving security to the Council to appear when called was set at liberty. He refused, however, to give any engagement to forbear field-preaching. The Act of the Council is dated
Edinburgh, 19th July 1679, and is as follows:—"The Lords of his Majesty's Privy Council, do hereby give warrant to General Dalziel, Lieutenant-General of his Majesty's forces, to order such a party of his Majesty's forces as he shall think fit to transport the persons underwritten, prisoners from the Isle of the Bass to the tolbooth of Edinburgh, viz., Mr. Patrick Anderson, James Fraser of Brea, Mr. Thomas Hog, Mr. John M'Gilligen, Mr. John Macaulay, Mr. Robert Ross, Mr. John Law, and Mr. William Bell; ordaining hereby the Governor of the said Isle of Bass to deliver the said persons to the said party, and the Magistrates of Edinburgh to receive and detain them in prison till further order" (39). The bond by which he gained his liberty is dated 18th August 1679, and his cautioner was that good friend of the northern Covenanters, Sir Hugh Campbell, Laird of Cawdor. Sir Hugh became surety for Hogg, M'Gilligen, and Fraser, pledging himself on their behalf to the amount of £1700 sterling—a large sum in those days. It is said that while the west and south of the country were in the agonies of the wild 'Killing Time,' the Presbyterians of the north enjoyed comparative peace, and immunity from extreme suffering, and that for this they were indebted, in a large measure, to the sympathy of the Laird of Cawdor, and the admirable moderation and tact with which he exercised his powers as Sheriff. It is also said that the course which he followed did not advance his interest with the Government (40).
As soon as he was free Fraser resumed preaching, wandering up and down the country, and conducting services as and where opportunity offered. There is little record of his doings during the year 1680, but James Brodie in his Diary for 1681 refers to him on several occasions. On 2nd January of that year he writes: "James Fraser was at Moynes. We expected him heir;" and on the following day: "I read Calvin on Christ's being led to the wilderness and tempted of Satan, and the several kinds of temptations, and the way he breaks and reasons against them, and his victorie .... I was to goe this day towards Inverness to the buriall of M'Intosh his brother. I cam at night to Walder's where James Fraser, and Major Betman, and Mr. Angus M'Pherson wer .... We heard of som nois and stirr at Edinburgh, anent the students burning the Pope in effigie" (41). Two months later Brodie has some further entries in which Fraser is mentioned. On 5th March he writes: "There was apperance of company's repairing heir nixt day to James Fraser. Oh! that I might be made to hear the Lord's voice, and to obey it. Calder staid: Petgauni and his wiff cam heir also." On the 6th: "Die Dom. Ther was omly prayer and singing in the morning, which A.D. went about. James Fraser on 8 Rev. throughout, and 55 Isay. 7, 'Let the wicked forsake his way, &c.'" (42). And on the 20th: "Die Dom. Ja(mes) Fr(aser) was in Moynes. Som of the family went there" (43). In the autumn of the same year
being the 22nd December — the very dead of winter. On 4th December Brodie writes:— "Die Dom. I heard that Calder had got citation before the Council to present Bray, and was resolved to sett out" (45).

Winter and ague notwithstanding, Fraser did appear before the Council, and was charged with "preaching in the fields and without authority .... and venting principles that were pernicious, seditious and rebellious, and tending to alienate the minds of his Majesty's subjects from his government" (46). He was permitted to make a lengthy defence, which he did with considerable skill, and very modestly, though firmly, but all to no avail. Many of the counsellors, it is true, voted for his acquittal, but in the end the decision was left to the bishops, and their sentence was that he should be sent to Blackness, and kept there until he paid the fine of five thousand merks, and gave security not to preach any more. The alternative was banishment. The Council found him, to quote the actual words of their decision, "by his own confession, guilty of a continued habit of keeping conventicles for many months since his Majesty's act of indemnity, and the favour allowed him of liberty forth of the Bass, where he was prisoner for the like disorders; and therefore, conform to the fifth act, Parliament second, session second, Charles the Second, he being an heritor, fine him in the sum of five thousand merks Scots money, to be paid to his Majesty's cash-keeper for his
use; and ordain him to be committed prisoner in the Castle of Blackness, there to remain till he pay his said Fine, and find caution, under the penalty of five thousand Pounds that he shall not preach at conventicles hereafter, or Remove himself off the kingdom, conform to the foreshaid act of Parliament; and appoint him instantly to be carried to the Tolbooth of Edinburgh till he be transported to Blackness, and grant warrant to the Earl of Linlithgow to receive and Retain him accordingly; and, in regard the Laird of Cadell has produced the defender at the bar, ordain him to have his Hand delivered up to him” (47).

The sentence was a severe one. Fraser tells us that many of the bystanders were surprised at its harshness, and that some even of the Privy Council openly averred that he had met with hard measure. The fact that two days before his appearance Argyll had contrived to escape from prison may, as has sometimes been suggested, have made the bishops more bitter than usual. All we know of a certainty is that the sentence was immediately carried out. After six weeks in the common jail of Edinburgh Fraser was conveyed to Blackness where he spent a further seven weeks of sheer misery due partly to the fact that he was confined in a dark, damp and filthy cell, filled most of the time with smoke, but still more to the brutality of the governor.

Once again, as during his imprisonment on the Bass, his friends did all they could to secure his release, and in the
and they were successful. In the absence of the Bishop of Edinburgh, one of Fraser's bitterest enemies, the Privy Council was prevailed upon to grant his release on condition that he should remove out of the country, and not return without the king's or the Council's permission. In the decree of the Council, of date 16th March 1682, the petition is referred to as "a petition of James Fraser of Brea," but as James Anderson has pointed out, these petitions were often attributed in the Registers to the prisoners when in point of fact they were drawn up and presented not by them personally but by some of their friends. In some cases indeed this was done without the prisoners' knowledge. This, it would appear, was what happened in Fraser's case; the petition for his release seems to have been drawn up and presented to the Council by his brother-in-law - probably Major George Bateman, who judging by the frequent references which occur in the Brodie Diaries was much in Fraser's company - but the terms upon which he was to be liberated were acceptable to him, and though he did not altogether relish the prospect of banishment it was at any rate a degree less unpleasant than prolonged incarceration in the Castle of Blackness. On 17th April James Brodie makes the following entry:— "Petgounie and his wiffe cam heir from Lethen; Main and others; James Fraser, and others with him. The land cannot bear such. He prayd in the famely, but was on his way going out of the kingdom" (48).
Fraser's account of his liberation may here be quoted:

"My brother-in-law, unknown to me, presented a supplication to the Council in my behalf, desiring my fine might be remitted, myself ordered to be set at liberty, some competent time allowed me to settle my affairs in Scotland, seeing I was content to submit to their Lordships' sentence of banishment. Which supplication (the Duke of York and Bishop with his brother being away and gone to England) was easily granted by the Council: an order was sent to the governor of Blackness immediately to set me at liberty; a month was given me to settle my affairs; whereupon I was much sooner than I thought set at liberty, and at a time when I little thought of it, and my liberty burdened with no clog or sinful engagement by my cautioner, who only bound that I should remove out of the kingdom (and not return without king or Council's leave) within such a day" (49).

He left Scotland towards the end of May 1682, and after some stops and dangers by sea reached London on 16th June.

**Notes appended to this Chapter**

A. Covenanters in Moray.

B. Sir Hugh Campbell.
Ch. V.

NOTES

NOTE A.

Covenanders in Moray

Shaw, in his History of the Province of Moray, says:-

"Some ministers from Ross, as Messrs. James Fraser of Brea, Thomas Hog, Thomas Ross, John M'Gilligen, &c., were often driven into Moray, and joining the non-conformists there, performed Gospel-ministriations in private and were much regarded and protected by the gentry. The Bishops of Moray were more moderate than other Bishops; yet these ministers were informed against; most of them were intercommuned, apprehended, and kept long prisoners in the Bass, and in other places" (iii, pp. 457, 458.)

NOTE B.

Sir Hugh Campbell

In his Memoirs of William Veitch Thomas M'Crie refers to Sir Hugh Campbell's interest in the Covenanters. He says: "Feb. 6, 1662, Sir Hugh Campbell of Calder was served heir to his cousin-germain, Colin Campbell. He was heritable sheriff of Nairnshire, and was very friendly to the persecuted party. His name appears in the list of persons fined in 1662 for the sum of £12,000 Scots. His engagements as cautioner for ministers amounted to upwards of £1700 sterling" (p. 20.) M'Crie mentions Sir Hugh's kindness to Fraser, and also to M'Gilligen and Hog, for all of whom he acted as surety.
CHAPTER VI

THE YEARS OF PEACE

1682-1699.

Though he had still many trials to undergo, including one, and possibly two, periods of imprisonment. Fraser's life from the summer of 1682 onwards was peaceful compared with what it had been in the previous decade. Exile from Scotland marked its first stage, and that exile was distasteful to him, but while he did not relish the prospect of spending an indefinite number of years away from his native land he recognized that there were worse things than banishment. "Liberty was desirable," he writes, "though in a strange country, and preferable to imprisonment at home. I looked upon wicked folk, though Scotsmen, as the greatest aliens, foreigners, and strangers to me; a godly man in England or Ireland is more my countryman than a wicked Scotsman. Besides, by being at liberty, I should be in greater capacity to glorify the Lord than under restraint, where I could not see a godly person, nor be anywise useful save by a few letters. And I saw much of the mercy of God, that without paying a fine, or engaging to any sinful
terms, the Council should have given orders for my liberation. But notwithstanding of all this, when I thought upon my case, banishment was grievous and burdensome to me: shall I leave then (said I) my native country; shall I leave, and never see mother, children, brethren, sisters, and kindred friends and relations, and spend the residue of my days among strangers, to whom I will be as a barbarian? What care will they take of me? How shall I be maintained? Will any little thing, that after payment of debts my estate can spare, be sufficient for me to live upon in a place where all things are at a dear rate? Truly all those considerations, and such like, did make banishment no light thing to bear, and wish that I never had come out of prison, and in my heart to censure and think hardly of these who procured me my liberty; yea, such thoughts would for some whole nights keep me waking" (1).

This doleful mood passed, and he became reconciled to his fate. "Addressing myself to the Lord," he says, "and pouring out my troubled soul (as it was ordinary for me to do in such cases) to the Lord, I found that this storm calmed; and the consideration of God's providence over and propriety in all places, experience of former favours, and especially that word, 'Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life,' did sweetly stay my heart. And being made and called of God to wander from my fathers' house, and land of my nativity, to a land God would show me,
I laboured to fit myself for my journey, and to 'take up my cross:' and the Lord so blest my endeavours, as in a short time I settled all my civil affairs, and was ready to come away at the time prefixed" (2).

As we have seen he reached London on 16th June 1682. His first instinct on coming south was to forbear preaching and all public work—partly because he was afraid that his Scots accent would be unpleasant in English ears— and to spend the time in an effort to improve his own spiritual condition. But God had other plans for him, and he soon discovered that the best way to improve his spiritual condition was not to devote himself to private exercises but to answer the many preaching invitations which came his way. Very soon after coming to London he was as busy as he had ever been in Scotland. "I did every night preach and pray in a private family," he writes, "where some five or six neighbours at night did ordinarily resort; every Lord's day I preached to a gathered church in fellowship with Mr. C., from whom I had ten shillings for every sermon; at other times I likewise preached to others, but freely" (3).

The "Mr. C." to whom he refers was one of the Calamys. Of the English as a whole he says that he found them to be "as genteele, tender-hearted, and generous people as ever I conversed with. Some of them I found very notional, and much taken up with fancies, dreams, and singular opinions; of these I found some favourable at the beginning; but
despairing to gain me to their opinion, and finding the
aversion of my heart to these fancies, they became my
enemies, and did labour to break my reputation as much as
they could" (4).

Like the Old Testament prophet he found hospitality in
the house of a widow woman, and with her he remained till
about the middle of the summer of 1683. From this good
Samaritan he had lodging and diet free, and while in her
house he prayed, read, and expounded the Scriptures twice
a day. James Brodie has one reference in his Diary to this
year which Fraser spent in London. Speaking of Mr. James
Urquhart, at that time minister of Kinloss, he says, under
date 17th October 1682 :— "He told me what Bray writ to him
from London, and what expectation of troubl was there" (5).

Fraser's months of peace in London came to an abrupt
end in July 1683. On the 20th or 21st of that month, "about
the time that a plot against the king's person and
government was discovered," says Fraser, "and some three or
four days after my Lord Russel's execution" (6), he was once
more apprehended. The plot was the famous Rye House Plot.

Lord John Russell, Colonel Sidney, and others, alarmed at
the influence which the Duke of York had at court, and at the
steps which were being taken, as they suspected, for the
overthrow of the constitution, held secret meetings to devise
measures for excluding the Duke from the throne, and for
preserving the Protestant religion and the liberty of the
subject. It was denied that there was any murderous design in these plottings, but both Russell and Sidney were executed, and many others were imprisoned (7). According to Macaulay "there were two plots, one within the other. The object of the great Whig plot was to raise the nation in arms against the government. The lesser plot, commonly called the Rye House Plot, in which only a few desperate men were concerned, had for its object the assassination of the King and of the heir presumptive. Both plots were soon discovered. Cowardly traitors hastened to save themselves, by divulging all, and more than all, that had passed in the deliberations of the party. That only a small minority of those who meditated resistance had admitted into their minds the thought of assassination is fully established: but, as the two conspiracies ran into each other, it was not difficult for the government to confound them together. The just indignation excited by the Rye House Plot was extended for a time to the whole Whig body. The King was now at liberty to exact full vengeance for years of restraint and humiliation" (8).

Among the Scotsmen who suffered most at this time were Spence, the Earl of Argyll's chamberlain, William Carstares, and Baillie of Jerviswood. Spence after prolonged torture, in which both the boot and the thumb-screws were used, consented to decipher some documents which incriminated Carstares. The latter in his turn was put to the torture
and in the end made a deposition which, though he had stipulated to the contrary, was used with fatal effect against Baillie at his trial. It is said that Carstares might easily have escaped torture had he consented to reveal certain secrets entrusted to him by the Grand Pensionary of Holland; and that the fidelity he showed on this occasion won for him the life-long confidence of the Prince of Orange (9). Fraser was not to suffer as these three did, but he too found that the government were still gravely suspicious of anyone who had ever crossed their path.

But to return to his own story. About the 20th or 21st search was made for suspected persons in a certain house where he happened to be on private business, and as he was known to be a stranger he was put under arrest, and later was taken before the Council. The King and the Duke of York were both present at his interrogation, and in fact took part in his questioning. He was asked if he had known about the plot against his majesty, and replied that he knew nothing of a plot against his Majesty's person or government, nor had he heard anything but what was discovered since that plot had broken out, nor did he know of anything he could make them the wiser by; that he was no public person, nor frequenter of cabals or coffee-houses; that he knew not any one person, either accusers or accused, in that plot; that he always lived peaceably, and was never accessory to any plot or insurrection that ever was; that in his judgment
(which he declared) he was against all violent attempts
against his Majesty or government; and that it was not likely
any who had any such designs, knowing his principles, would
communicate ought to him of it; yea, that he always shunned
discourses of that nature (10). The King then asked him
what he judged of the Archbishop of St. Andrews' murder,
whether he regarded it in fact as a murder or not - Sharp
had been assassinated some four years earlier, on 3rd May 1679,
a month or two before Fraser's release from the Bass. To
this question also his reply was fairly lengthy.
"I answered," he writes, "That for myself I had no accession
thereto, but was very grieved when I heard it; and would
not justify or have had any hand in it for the whole world:
so for me to condemn it as ( and to declare it) murder, was
I not free; for being a doer of the law only, and not a
judge of the law, I conceived it as out of my sphere to
give judgment of another person's actions, whether they were
murder or not; that this I confessed belonged to his
Majesty and officers of justice, who were judges of the law,
but to me it did not; especially being a stranger to that
fact, and legal evidences of the nature, manner, and
circumstances of the same not being adduced, it was hard for
me or any person to give judgment one way or other of the
said fact. And for my thoughts of it, that God had
appointed a solemn court at the last day for judging of
actions, words, and thoughts, before which court alone it
was competent (he thought) to give account of thoughts; and, therefore, referring myself as to my thoughts to that court only, I was not free to give account to any human judicatory whatever of them; to whom yet I heartily submitted in the expressions and actions to be judged. And, finally, though I was not afraid his Majesty knew what were my thoughts in the matter, yet would not be a precedent to any of his subjects to be made to give an account of thoughts judically, especially relating to other persons; and, therefore, to have me excused" (ll).

The third question put to him, again by the King, was, Whether he judged himself bound by the Solemn League and Covenant? and whether he thought there was anything of moral obligation therein? "I answered," he says, "That for my part, I never took that covenant, nor was it ever tendered to me; but what was of moral import in it, I judged I was bound thereto, although I myself never took it; and that, however, the words of the Decalogue and the Covenant were not the same, yet might the Covenant be reduced to it, as materially the same with the Decalogue: that I remembered two chief articles of the Covenant, the one was 'reformation of our hearts and lives according to the Word of God;' and this I thought might be easily reduced to every precept of the Decalogue, each of which tied us to reformation and repentance. Another article I conceived to be in the Covenant was, That we should 'maintain and defend the king's
just privileges, his person, and government; and this, as I judged, might easily be reduced to the Decalogue; so did I judge myself by the Word of God, laws of the land, yes, and Covenant itself, though never taken by me personally, bound to" (12).

Other questions were put to him, such as his acquaintance with several persons, to all of which he replied truly and fully. The Council seemed satisfied that as far as the plot against the king and the government was concerned he was perfectly innocent, but they were unwilling to let him go, and in the end passed him on to the lord mayor with instructions that the latter should put to him the Oath of Allegiance, the Oath of Supremacy, and the Oxford Oath. The test was one which Fraser found very difficult. When the Oaths were put to him he replied that as for the Oath of Allegiance he was willing to take it if that would end the strife; as for the Oath of Supremacy he could not take it without further consideration; while in the case of the Oxford Oath he refused to take it in any condition. We can understand his willingness to take the Oath of Allegiance when we remember that in its English form it was much less objectionable than in its Scottish. It had been drawn up by James VI, to meet, if possible, the views of Roman Catholics, whom he was very desirous of attaching to his government. The Scottish Oath consisted of the Oaths of Allegiance and Supremacy blended together (13). The clause in the Oxford Oath
which he found to be a special stumbling-block was that which prohibited all attempts to make any alteration in the government either in State or Church. As Alexander Mackenzie points out, it was impossible for an honest nonconformist Presbyterian minister to take such an oath while Episcopacy, against which he had been fighting all his life, was still rampant in Scotland (14). The actual oath was: "I, A.B., do swear, that it is not lawful, upon any pretence whatsoever, to take arms against the king: and that I do abhor the traitorous position of taking arms, by any authority, against his person, or against those that are commissioned by him, in pursuance of such commission: and that I will not at any time endeavour any alteration of the government, either in Church or State" (15).

Fraser desired that if he was to be committed to prison it should be for refusing to take the Oxford Oath, and in the end that was the course adopted, though very much against the common serjeant's mind who pressed that he should be committed for refusing all three oaths. An order was drawn up and he was sent to Newgate where he remained for twenty-four weeks. In contrast to his time in Blackness he was exceedingly well housed and treated while in this, the third prison he had known in five years. "Here," he confesses, "I had experience of the Lord's goodness and mercy, which did never leave me. I had, in short while after I came, one of the best rooms in the prison, in which any person might lodge;
a large, cleanly, lightsome, square room it was, and off the
ground as ye come in. The captain and under-keepers were
all very civil to us, carrying both wisely and discreetly.
I kept my health very well all the time I was there" (16).

There were, however, some drawbacks. One was that he
had to share his room with a fellow-prisoner, and so was
deprived of those periods of solitary meditation which were
so precious to one of his mystical nature. He was also
worried because while in prison he had no occasion of doing
good to others. But his greatest trouble was that some of
his fellow-prisoners were notional, unlearned, and obstinate;
the "free-willers," as he calls them, being those to whom he
felt least attraction. "I stood at the greatest distance
with free-willers," he confesses (17). He adds: "We were
abundantly refreshed and supplied by numbers of all ranks
and persuasions (save Quakers) that came in to see us" (17).
More than once in his Memoirs, it is to be noted, he refers
to Quakers in terms less than complimentary. Twenty years
earlier, on a visit to the south in 1663, he had been
attracted for a time by their way of life, but soon discovered
that he had little in common with them. He describes the
incident as follows: - "Taking but too great a liberty to
converse with Quakers, I was, through some of their
insinuations and reading of their books, tempted to join
with them, and a great stir upon my spirit. But going to
pray to God, and recommending my staggering spirit to Him,
the Lord made such a light to shine in my soul from His Word, that did let me see the utter evil of their way, and how cross it was to God's will, the danger and inconsistency of it with salvation, so as I was made to look on them as the greatest enemies to Christ of any He had, and the effects of the wrath of God to punish such as had not received the truth in love" (18).

He remained in prison throughout the autumn and the early part of the winter, and was released towards the beginning of January 1684. Incidentally it is worth noting that the winter of 1683-84 was one of the worst on record in England. In his Diary John Evelyn says that the frost was so severe that coaches, carts, and horses crossed the Thames on the ice, on which booths and shops were ranged in formal streets as in a town. In his Life of Peden Patrick Walker also refers to the long and great frost of that winter (Cf. Six Saints of the Covenant, i, pp. 36,37.)

With his release from Newgate Fraser's personal Memoirs come to an end, and the course of his life from that time till his death, which took place in 1699, is not altogether clear (19). In the edition of the Memoirs in the second volume of the Wodrow Society's Select Biographies, which appeared in 1847, there is a note to the effect that "it is believed that Fraser continued to record the incidents of his life subsequent to the period here referred to; but though frequent search has been made,
Diaries or Journals have been discovered. It is known that he eventually returned to his native country, and was settled as minister at Culross" (20). This is not much more than John Brown of Neddington had said more than sixty years earlier when in 1761 he published his book, The Christian, the Student, and Pastor Exemplified, in which he included an abbreviated version of Fraser's Memoirs. It is there stated that "after the Revolution Mr. Fraser was minister at Culross; and died at Edinburgh, September 1698. His last words were, 'I am full of the consolations of Christ, etc.'" (21).

Since 1847, however, additional sources of information have become available, and it is now possible to give what one has good reason to believe is a fairly accurate though not a detailed account of Fraser's life from 1684 onwards.

It seems fairly certain that he returned to Scotland soon after his release from Newgate in January 1684, though upon what conditions is not known. Under date 16th May of that year James Brodie has the following entry in his Diary:—
"Calder cam heir; was greeing to meet with Mr. Hunt at Elgin. We spoke of Park's business. I went to Forress with him. We mett Mr. James Fraser by the way, by whom we heard of severals made doctors at Aberdeen. Vain and proud man affects a name, and prefers to be call'd divine rather than realie to be such" (22). The chances are that the James Fraser mentioned here is Fraser of Brea. Later on in the
same year, on 30th July, Brodie records:—"I miss'd Lethen, being at Calder, and visited Mr. James Urquhart. I heard that James Fraser (Brey) was again in prison" (23). We do not know why Fraser was again imprisoned but possibly the reason was that he had returned to Scotland without permission from the king or the Privy Council. It will be remembered that when he was banished to England in 1682 it was stipulated that he should not return without such permission. Or it may be that he had resumed preaching without authority.

The following year a Commission appointed by the Privy Council conducted an investigation into the conduct of a number of people in Moray, who were charged with delinquencies of various sorts, including the harbouring of and doing of favours to, a number of vagrant preachers "who were actually in the late rebellion." These preachers are said to have included John Hepburn (later of Urr), and his Friend James Fraser of Brea. Michael Fraser, minister of Daviot, was able to tell the Commission that Hepburn had "haunted Moray." Hugh Fraser, minister of Croy, deponed that Hepburn, "ane outed preacher," had preached both in Croy and Auldearn (24).

Of this period in Fraser's life all that is said in the Fasti is that he returned to Scotland before 6th July 1687, when he was resident within the bounds of the Synod of Lothian and Tweeddale (25). That he was back in
by 1667 is, quite apart from the indications in the
references just given, almost certain for by the middle of
that year a great many of the exiles were flocking back to
Scotland. In three successive Letters of Indulgence that
year - 12th February, 31st March, and 28th June - James VII.
proclaimed his desire that Catholic and Protestant
conformists should have an equal measure of liberty to
follow their respective modes of worship. Of these the
first two were unacceptable to the Presbyterians, but the
third pleased them better. By it all laws against religious
conformity of whatever kind were suspended; all the king's
subjects could worship as and where they pleased, so long
as it was not in field conventicles, and provided that
nothing seditious was preached, and that the meetings were
open to all comers. "The last letter," says Hume Brown,
met their wishes, though its concessions were clogged by
the painful concomitant that they were shared by their
Catholic fellow-subjects. They were now allowed 'to serve
God after their own way and manner,' provided only that
nothing was taught 'to alienate the hearts' of subjects
for their prince. In a letter, which must have been
 eyed with conflicting feelings, they thanked the king
for his 'gracious and surprising favour,' though with a
suspiciency which showed how sorely broken was the ancient
Presbyterian spirit. The Indulgence had results of which
little dreamed when he granted it. It brought home
the majority of the exiled Presbyterian ministers, and it enabled them to put their Church on a footing which gave it a commanding influence in the coming Revolution" (26). We know for a fact that Fraser's friend and fellow-exile, Thomas Hogg of Kiltearn, who had shared his imprisonment on the Bass ten years earlier, was one of those who took advantage of this Indulgence, though not without serious misgivings. In Hogg's Memoirs, published in 1756, we are told that "the Toleration granted by King James VII, for ushering in his darling, Popery, in July 1687, was what he did greatly dread, and he did still more detest the flattering and disingenuous addresses sent up to that Prince; yet when he understood that other Presbyterians were improving that liberty with great advantage to their people, and found the infirmities of old age increase upon him, he returned to Scotland about the beginning of the memorable year 1688" (27).

Early in January 1689 Fraser began to hold services in the meeting-house at Culross in Fife, and on the 13th of May of that year was appointed minister of the parish, the Committee of Estates having sanctioned his use of the church. The previous incumbent had apparently been deprived of his office on account of his refusal to read the Proclamation of the Committee of Estates against owning King James VII., and requiring prayer to be made for King William and Queen Mary. By an act of the Committee of Estates, passed on the 3rd of April 1689, all ministers were expressly
commended to read a proclamation of that date, and publicly
to pray for William and Mary as king and queen of Scotland,
on the days particularly mentioned therein, under the pain
of being deprived of their benefices. A large number of
the Episcopalian incumbents refused to read the proclamation,
and pray for William and Mary; upon which they were
prosecuted before the Privy Council, and nearly two hundred
of them were unceremoniously deprived of their charges. The
trials of these men occupy several large volumes of the
Records of the Privy Council. "This was a piece of policy,"
says James Anderson, "which the Earl of Crawford, a sagacious
old Whig, recommended to King William, with the view of
taking from such of the prelatic clergy as were favourable
to King James VII., that influence against the Revolution
government which their situation, as ministers of the
Established Church of Scotland, gave them" (28).

Fraser's settlement was not without incident. In
defiance of the Act just referred to, the Earl of Kincardine
and the magistrates of Culross, being strong Jacobites and
having the keys of the church, refused on the Sabbath morning
to allow him to enter the building. But at the request of
some of the parishioners two companies of the Laird of
Kenmure's regiment broke open the door between eight and
nine in the morning, and so permitted Fraser and another
minister to enter the church. The Earl of Kincardine
and the magistrates complained to the Lords of the Privy
Council from whom, however, they received little sympathy. They were discharged from troubling or molesting Fraser in the peaceable exercise of his ministerial function. (29).

Of Fraser's years in Culross not a great deal is known. He was a member of the General Assembly in 1690 and again in 1692 (30). But he appears to have led a very quiet life, taking little to do with public affairs. There is, however, an interesting reference to him in the Life of James Hog of Carnock ("Philomathes") which is worth giving. At the Revolution Hog returned to Scotland after some years residence abroad, but like so many others he was reluctant to take the Oath of Allegiance or to sign the Assurance. In the year 1695 when he was minister of Dalserf he had occasion to go to Edinburgh and during his absence his Presbytery - the Presbytery of Hamilton - chose him as one of their commissioners to the ensuing General Assembly, much to his alarm. "When upon his return home he had heard this, he was at once not a little afflicted and surprised, which he represented first by a letter to one of the brethren, and afterwards by word of mouth to the whole Presbytery, who often met on this occasion. He with the greatest earnestness obtested them to reconsider, and alter the choice as to his part, not from any uncleanness he had to sit and prosecute their instructions at that court, so far as might be possible for him, but that he knew well the Government would bring him under trouble, because he wanted the legal qualification,
having declined to swear the Allegiance oath, and sign the Assurance. He therefore entreated his dear brethren not to throw him into a new glame of persecution just upon his return, and firm purpose to live amicably with them. For confirmation of what he advanced, he shewed them that the reverend and worthy Mr. F --- , of B --- , who, as to the oath, was in the same circumstances with himself, and before his refusal of it had been often a member of assemblies, which preceded that imposition, yet was never chosen after the refusal. His great abilities were well known to the Presbytery whereunto he belongs, yet such was their concern that they were loth to give a handle for bringing him to trouble; and Philomathes requested, that the like tenderness might be shewed towards him, who is far more unable to encounter these difficulties than such a valiant champion"(31).

James Hog, it may be recalled, became minister of Dalserf in 1691, and of Carnock in 1699; he was one of the leading Marrow-men, and died in 1734 (32). The Rev. Archibald Bruce, of Whitburn, who edited his Memoirs, adds a note to the passage just quoted to say that the Mr. F --- , of B --- , to whom Hog refers, was "probably Mr. Frazer, of Bree, after the Revolution minister of Culross."

In the following year John Hepburn of Urr, who as we have already seen was a friend of Fraser's, was libelled at the instance of the Lord Advocate before the Privy Council on charges of exercising his ministry without "taking the
Oath of Allegiance and subscribing the Assurance," intruding himself into other parishes, and making unlawful convocations of the lieges. The sentence of the Council was that he should be confined in the town of Brechin and two miles around the same. While he was at Brechin, where he remained for nearly three years, he was much cheered by letters from several ministers, "such as that worthy servant of God, Mr. Ja: Fraser, late minister at Culross, and Rev, Geo: Mair, now minister there" (33).

Fraser's friendship with Hog of Kiltearn has already been referred to more than once. One other reference to Fraser which occurs in Hog's Memoirs may be given. Hog's success in dealing with individuals is distress was well known. On one occasion, "one David Dunbar, who lived at a distance, being in a phrensy, and coming to Mr. Hog's house in one of his roving fits, Mr. Hog caused him to sit down; and having advised with Mr. Fraser of Brae, and some other persons who were occasionally present, what could be done for the lad, some were of opinion that blood should be drawn of him; but, said Mr. Hog, the prelates have deprived us of money wherewith to pay physicians, therefore we will make use of the physician who cures freely, and so he laid it on Brae to pray; but Brae having put it back on himself, he commanded the distracted man, in a very solemn awful manner, to be still; after which he prayed most fervently for the poor man, and he was immediately restored to his right
The Years of Peace

There was another Thomas Hog of whom we read in connection with Fraser. While at Culross the latter wrote to a Mr. Thomas Hog, then in Holland, requesting him to become his colleague and successor. This Thomas Hog is not to be confused with the saint of Kiltearn, though the latter was for a time in Holland. (James Hog of Carnock was one of his fellow-refugees there, and said that he had "had the desirable occasion to hear him preach at the Hague, and his sermons were accompanied with the greatest measure of life and power I have ever had the opportunity to observe in my poor life" (35)). Of Fraser's relations with the less famous Thomas Hog, Macdonald, in his Covenanter's in Moray and Ross, gives the fullest account:— "In the session-house of the Scotch Church at Rotterdam, is shown a painting in oil of a Mr. Hog, one of the earlier ministers of the church. On the strength of this it has been assumed that Thomas Hog of Kiltearn was associated with M'Ward in the pastorate of that congregation. But this is a mistake, though not an unnatural one. We learn from Steven's History of the Scots Church of Rotterdam, that the portrait in question represents John Hog, second minister of the church, with whom M'Ward was associated as colleague in 1676. Curiously enough, however, there was a Thomas Hog in the ministry of that congregation, and he was a man who was not altogether unworthy of being confounded with Thomas Hog of
Xiltearn. He was a son of Thomas Hog, minister of the united parishes of Larbeirt and Dunipace, and nephew of John Hog, whom he assisted for six months of the year 1679. He returned to Scotland after Bothwell Bridge, but had to seek refuge again in Holland, where he landed in 1681. He soon acquired Dutch, and was appointed master of the Latin school of Turgoes. He ministered to congregations of his countrymen at Delft and Campvere successively. From Campvere he was translated to Rotterdam in 1699. The reputation in which he was held is evidenced by the fact that he received calls from Clackmannan, Ayr, and Culross, and was solicited to become Professor of Divinity in King's College, Aberdeén, and was offered a Theological Professorship in one of the Dutch Universities. From a letter of his to Mr. Fraser of Brea, then minister of Culross, it appears that he would have responded to the earnest appeal of his friend to become his colleague and successor, were it not for difficulties about his status. The Church of the Revolution Settlement neglected to pass a 'Mutual Eligibility Act' in favour of the Dutch Reformed Church, with which the Scotch Church at Rotterdam was incorporated, and therefore, his Dutch ordination being ignored, Mr. Hog, to be admitted to a charge in Scotland, would require to knock at the door of the Church in the humble guise of a probationer, and that he declined to do" (36).

In the last years of his life attempts were made to
settle Fraser as one of the ministers of Inverness, but owing to local opposition these proved abortive. The actual course of the negotiations is not clear. In the Fasti it is stated that Fraser was elected to Inverness on 22nd Oct. 1695; that the magistrates and the Town Council were for John Paisley (or Pasley), minister of Lochwinnoch; and that in spite of this opposition Fraser was sailed in September of the following year. It is also stated that he officiated for a considerable period and was on the point of being settled when, on 8th November 1698, he made a stipulation that one of the churches should be given to him to preach in forenoon and afternoon; the Session was unable to agree to this, and he remained in Culross (37). In this account the date of Fraser's death is given as 13th September 1699 (39), while in a note prefixed to the 1738 Memoirs it is given as 13th September 1698. The date in the Memoirs is obviously incorrect.

Of the Inverness negotiations Alexander Mitchell, who edited the Inverness Kirsk Session Records, 1661-1800, gives substantially the same account, including dates, as that in the Fasti; indeed the editor of the latter seems to be indebted to Mitchell for the details he gives. Shaw, in his History of the Province of Moray, states that "at the Revolution Mr. John MacGilligen preached for some time at Inverness, but was not settled, and died 8th June 1689."
Likewise Mr. James Fraser of Brae preached there for some time, but was not settled minister" (40). The editor of Shaw\'s History appends a note to a list of the ministers of the Second Charge of Inverness, which is as follows:

"John M\'Gilligan, of Alness, late min. of Fodderty, preached some time after liberty was given to the Presbyterians, but was not settled. Died 8 June, 1689. Alexander Sutherland, chaplain to Livinston\'s Regt., was called 30 Aug.,1691, but neither was he adm. Wm. Stuart likewise officiated, but was called to Kiltearn in 1693. James Fraser, of Brea, min. of Culross, also officiated for a considerable time, was called in Sept.,1696, and requested to get one of the Churches for himself, 8 Nov.,1698, but did not get possession, but cont. in his charge at Culross" (40).

This is precisely the same account as that in Mitchell and the Fasti.

It appears that the magistrates of Inverness were as staunch in their Jacobitism as those of Culross who had opposed Fraser\'s settlement there in 1689, and as resolute in their support of Episcopacy. At the Revolution the ministers were Mr. Hector MacKenzie, a keen supporter of Episcopacy, and Mr. Gilbert Marshall, minister of the Second Charge. Both of these after the Revolution kept their charges by qualifying to Government, but when Marshall died in 1691 the magistrates would not allow the charge to be declared vacant, and on 21st June of that year went the
length of posting armed men round the church so that no minister might enter. When Duncan Forbes, father of the Lord President, sought to have the doors opened he was thrust back and struck. Forbes and others made representations to the Privy Council, and in August Lord Leven's Regiment was ordered to the north to protect the friends of the Government and of the Presbyterian Establishment; but though the military 'made patent doors,' no minister was admitted for ten years. As the reports quoted above indicate several ministers were called and regularly appointed during that time, but owing to the hostility of the magistrates and apparently also of a considerable number of the people none of them could get possession of the church. As far as can be gathered Fraser would have been settled had he not made his request with reference to the use of the church (41).

A word must be said in conclusion of Fraser's relations with two outstanding ministers of the Church of Scotland who were coming into prominence as the shadows were gathering round his life - George Mair and Thomas Boston.

Culross was a collegiate charge. During the time of the persecution the two incumbents were Mr. Robert Wright and Mr. Alexander Young. Mr. Wright was admitted in 1662; the date of Mr. Young's admission is unknown. From his settlement in 1689 until almost the end of his life Fraser had no colleague, but on 2nd September 1698 George Mair was admitted to the Second Charge. It is, however,
probable, as James Anderson has suggested, that before that Mair was assistant to Fraser (42). Patrick Walker refers to Mair as "the worthy Mr. George Mair" (43), and Thomas Boston speaks of him in identical terms (44). Incidentally it was Mair who on 17th July 1700 officiated at the marriage of Boston, then minister of Simprin, to Katherine Brown, the daughter of a surgeon at Barhill, Ferrytown, Clackmannan. Mair was minister of the Second Charge of Culross from 1698 to 1714, and of Tulliallan from 1714 to 1716. He had a son George who was minister of New Deer from 1722 to 1736.

It is interesting to note that George Mair gave the Ms. of Fraser's Treatise on Faith to his nephew, Thomas Mair, then a boy at school, to transcribe. This Thomas Mair was later to become the Anti-Burgher minister of Orwell, and was to be deposed by his Synod for refusing to abstain from disseminating the views set forth in Fraser's Treatise with reference to the extent of the Atonement. But a later chapter of this Thesis will deal in greater detail with Mair and his deposition. Dr. G.H. Morrison, in his edition of Boston's Memoirs, says that it was at George Mair's suggestion that Boston kept his large diary, 1698-9. He also suggests that it was probably to the same advice that we owe Ebenezer Erskine's diary (47).

Fraser's contact with Thomas Boston was as brief as it was interesting. In the year preceding Fraser's death Boston assisted him at his communion in Culross. The reference to
the occasion is found in full in Boston's Memoirs where he writes:—"About the beginning of August (1698), Mr. Wylie (minister of Saline, near Carnock) wrote to the Presbytery of Stirling, in name of the Presbytery of Dunfermline, desiring them to allow me to come a day or two to them; the which they absolutely refused: and that day, or soon after, I perceived the Presbytery had a design on me for Clackmannan. That their refusal I did not take well: but they never asked my inclination, and I had no freedom to urge their letting me go. However, afterward, on a letter from Mr. James Fraser of Brea, minister of Culross, inviting me to assist by preaching at the communion there, on the 21st, I went and preached there accordingly in the churchyard; Mr. Turnbull having allowed, that if there was such a necessity as was alleged in the letter, it could not well be refused. At this time began my acquaintance with the worthy Mr. George Mair, Brea's colleague, whose conversation was afterwards of good use to me, in regard of the spirituality of it, and the insight he had into the doctrine of the gospel. I think that holy and learned man Brea died not very long after" (48). Boston's reference to Mair as Fraser's colleague seems to bear out Anderson's surmise that Mair was Fraser's assistant before he was settled as minister of the Second Charge at Culross.

A month or two later Boston has a further reference to Fraser. "Having preached the two days at Clackmannan, the
elders could not prevail with the heritors to join in a call to me. Mr. Inglis (tacksman of the estate of Clackmannan) set himself against me particularly, alleging for a reason, that I was young, and but a probationer. It was supposed, that my not bowing in the pulpit, and going with none of them on the Sabbath-nights, rendered me unacceptable: and I do believe, that they and I both agreed, that, in respect of my temper and way, I was not fit for the parish of Clackmannan. However, the said Mr. Inglis, who was a friend of Brea's, told me some time or other, while in that country (I apprehend it has been after this, when Brea was deceased), that there was something in my sermons so like Brea's, that one would have thought I had seen his notes, but that he knew I had no access to them; which last was very true" (49).

Probably the Marrow of Modern Divinity was the link between Fraser and Boston, though the actual book was still unknown to the latter. Fraser, we know from his Memoirs, had been greatly influenced in his earlier years by the Marrow, and it is a fairly safe guess to say that Boston's mind, even at that stage in his career, was attracted by theology of the Marrow type. Writing with reference to the time when Boston assisted Fraser at his Communion in Culross Dr. Addison, in his Life and Writings of Thomas Boston of Ettrick, says :- "On that auspicious occasion, he met Mr. James Fraser of Brea, and Mr. George Mair, his colleague. Both men came to mean much for Boston. Brea's record
of suffering, his learning and piety deeply impressed the young minister. How much more would Mr. James Fraser have become to him had he read this entry, a long time set down in the Memoirs in the study of Culross Manse:—'I was much helped by Luther on Galatians, and Calvin's Institutions, something more by that book called The Marrow of Modern Divinity.'" (50)

Fraser's death took place in Edinburgh on the 13th of September 1699. In the first edition of the Memoirs, published in 1738, there is an advertisement by the publisher on the reverse of the title-page stating that the manuscript from which the book was printed bore an attestation by the Rev. William Stuart, minister at Inverness, later at Kiltewan. In this attestation Mr. Stuart mentions that Fraser died at Edinburgh on 13th September 1698 between 9 and 10 in the evening. The exact words of the attestation are as follows:—"Account of the most remarkable passages of Providence to Mr. James Fraser of Brea, as written by his own hand a long time before his death, which was at Edinb. Sept, 13th, 1698, when the sun was under a great eclipse betwixt 9 and 10 in the morning; and the worthy author of the following sheets died between 9 and 10 at night, whose last words were in my hearing, 'I am full of the consolations of Christ, &c.' In testimony whereof, this is written at Inverness, May 31, 1718, by Will Stuart, minister there.'"

It is however known that the eclipse of the sun to which
Mr. Stuart refers actually occurred on 13th September 1699, not 1698, so that Mr. Stuart's date is exactly one year out. "Death did not come upon him unprepared," says James Anderson, referring to Fraser's passing. "His life had been a constant source of preparation for it, and now it was divested of its terrors. On the promises of the gospel, the theme on which he had delighted to dwell in his private meditations and public ministry, he found a sure foundation of hope, and infinite spring of joy" (51).

Notes appended to this Chapter

A. The Calamys.
B. Fraser's relations with the Episcopalians.
C. Hog of Kiltearn and Fraser of Brea.
D. Fraser and Erskine of Carnock.
E. Fraser at Culross.
F. George Mair.
NOTE A.

The Calamys

The "Mr. C." to whom Fraser refers was in all probability Edmund Calamy the younger. Born about 1635 he was educated at Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge (1652-6), and at Pembroke College, Cambridge (1656), graduating M.A. in 1658. Ordained a Presbyterian minister he was intruded rector of Moreton in Essex (1659-62). Withdrawing later to London he first preached in private houses, and then opened a meeting-house there in 1672. He died in 1686. His only son, Edmund, visited Scotland in 1709 and was made D.D. of Edinburgh, Aberdeen, and Glasgow. Like his father he received Presbyterian ordination. (Cf. Dict. of Nat. Biog., vol.viii.)

NOTE B.

Fraser's relations with the Episcopalians

Principal John Macleod, in his article on A Northern Nonconformist: Rev. Roderick Mackenzie of Avoch (Records of Scot. Ch. Hist. Soc., vol.vi, part iii), refers in passing to Fraser, and the reference is worth quoting as it helps to acquit Fraser of any charge of narrowness in his relations with his Episcopalian neighbours. "He was quite a convinced Erastian and Episcopalian," Principal Macleod says of Roderick Mackenzie, "yet he was on good terms with some of the Northern ministry who had to suffer for their Presbyterian principles. For example, two of his attached
friends were James Fraser of Brea who served a term of imprisonment on the Bess Rock, and Hugh Anderson who was ousted from the charge of Cromarty yet lived to be reinstated there after the Revolution took place. Mr. Mackenzie, we are told, never had a quarrel with any but on account of some immorality or vice, and he was one of 'such a Gospel Temper as not to be at ease till first he was reconciled with any he thought he had offended.' 'This,' says the writer, 'is a lesson worthy the imitation of all Mackenzies. And to those from whom he differed he was affable and discreet, kind and charitable. His correspondence with the Reverend Fraser of Brea, and Mr. Hugh Anderson of Cromarty, and their mutual endearing embraces at meeting, was no small proof of it.'"

The writer quoted by Principal Macleod is the anonymous author of a pamphlet published in 1711 with the title "The Countryman's Idea of a Gospel Minister held forth in the following Preface and Oration on .... Mr. Roderick Mackenzie .... who died the seventeenth day of March MDCCX."
Hogg of Kiltearn and Fraser of Brea were not only friends but also curiously alike both in their characters and characteristics, and in the spiritual experiences through which each passed. In his paper on *The Origin and Early Development of 'The Men'* Dr. John MacInnes has an excellent paragraph on Hogg which with very few alterations might have been written of Fraser. "As Hog impressed his own spirit so marvellously upon the northern tradition of Highland Evangelicalism, it were well to note the salient features of his character. He was, of course, a Protester; but he appears to have compelled even his enemies to acknowledge him as a man of God. In prayer 'he was most solemn and fervent, the profoundest Reverence, the lowest Submission, and yet marvellous boldness and Intimacy with God, attended his Engagements in this exercise. It might be truly said of him, as of Luther, when he prayed, it was *tanta reverentia ut si Deo et tanta fiducia, ut si amico*' (Hog's Memoirs, p. 33). The 'Men', as a class, inherited this reverent, yet intimate liberty in prayer. Again, we note his extreme stringency in dealing with candidates for Baptism and Holy Communion. While most searching in his examination of applicants for Baptism, as instanced in the case of John Munro, who owed his conversion to Hog's severe dealing with him on that occasion, he was 'fully more strict in his admission to the Lord's Supper, which was the reason he did not dispense that ordinance for
several years after he was settled; and on the first celebration of Communion, 'he proceeded with the greatest caution, allowing none to communicate who could not give some tolerable satisfying account of a work of grace upon their souls' (Memoirs, p. 42). The 'Men' learnt this lesson to such purpose that the Lord's Table became, in the northern Evangelical parishes, very largely an empty table. Hog's conversion, catastrophic in character, with severe and prolonged 'law-work' followed by the gradual attainment of peace of conscience, and conscious acceptance with God, as exemplified also in the conversion experience of his disciple, John Munro, became the 'Men's' norm and standard of a truly 'gracious change.' The 'Abstract of Mr. Hog's manner of dealing with persons under conviction,' which is printed as an appendix to his Memoirs, is arranged under five major headings, and eighteen sub-headings. Each of the headings and sub-headings represents a necessary element in the true conversion experience. The 'Abstract' is the work of an artist in soul-analysis. Whatever native tendency the Highlander may have had towards an undue spiritual subjectivism, and whatever native talent he may have possessed for dwelling upon, and valuing the finer shades of spiritual experience, were powerfully reinforced by the general acceptance of Hog's description of the Evangelical conversion."

Fraser and Erskine of Carnock

Over against the evidence of the Brodie Diaries we have definite information that Fraser was in London early in 1685. In the Journal of John Erskine of Carnock, under date 10th February, 1685, there is this entry: "I dined with Brea and Mr. Hepburn, and afternoon went with them to Newington, about three miles by north the city." Erskine is of course writing from London. On the 6th of the same month he had written: "This morning his Majesty King Charles the Second died, and his royal brother, the Duke of York and Albany, was proclaimed King in his stead, at severall places of the city of London, the Mayor and aldermen concurring, and being present on horseback, some of the nobility and late Council being present in their coaches."

The Rev. Walter Macleod who edited Erskine's Journal for the Scottish History Society in 1893, adds this note about Brea: "Mr. James Fraser of Brae, Ross-shire. Letters of Intercommuning were issued against him in 1675, and since then he had been subjected to fines and imprisonment, and latterly liberated on bond to leave Scotland. After the Revolution he was minister of Culross."

The Mr. Hepburn, to whom Erskine refers, is almost certainly the Rev. John Hepburn, later minister of Urr. We have other evidence to prove that Fraser and Hepburn were friends.
If both Brodie's and Erskine's dates are correct Fraser must have returned to Scotland in 1684, and then paid another visit to London either late in the same year or early in the following year. The only other conclusion is that Brodie's dates are incorrect and that after his liberation from Newgate Fraser remained in London for at least a year before returning to Scotland. This in fact the more likely solution.

Later in the same month – February, 1685 – Erskine writes as follows:—"26th. – This forenoon I took boat at the Hermitage, and afternoon came to the vessel wherein I was to go for Rotterdam, which was at Gravesend, – having been in one house with Mr. John Law all the time I was in London; we came together from Scotland. There was a few days before this a searching for Scots people through London, so that they were now almost in as great hazard there as at home, and hardly could they get away without being challenged. I went ashore at Gravesend and bought necessaries for my diet at sea. 27th. – This morning we loosed from Gravesend; the master of the vessel was Jacob Voullers, a Dutchman."

Erskine fled to Rotterdam where he landed on 4th March. Fraser, one gathers, returned to Scotland then or very soon thereafter, probably in company with Hepburn.

"After the removal of Bishop Ramsay from Culross in 1684," says Beveridge, in his Culross and Tulliallan, "the first and second charges were filled respectively by Mr. Robert Wright and Mr. Alexander Young, who were appointed thereto in that year. Both remained faithful to Episcopacy, and were deposed by the Scottish Privy Council at the Revolution for refusing to read the proclamation of William of Orange. They apparently continued to officiate in the neighbourhood of Culross for some time after their deposition, and ... attracted more than once the hostile notice of the kirk-session, now presided over by the celebrated James Fraser of Brea. On the expulsion of Wright and Young he was appointed to the first charge, but the second charge remained vacant from the Revolution till 1698" (op. cit., ii, p. 13.)

On 22nd June 1696 Fraser handed in his resignation of the charge of Culross. His resignation was in the following terms:—"Taking to consideration the great charge of this parish and kirk of Culross, and my great inabilities to do that dewtie to them a minister owes to his flock, partlie through my age, partlie through my manie avocations and diversions, and constrained passing some time in the north, and in Edinburgh and other places, and multitude of persons coming to me for advise and other waies, so that I cannot get that dewtie performed to the parish that were
needful and I myself very desirous of: Wherefore, and for other grievances and discouragements, and that the place may be the better supplied, I do demit my office and charge of the ministrie in this place, hereby giving those concerned full leave to move to the Presbetrye to get the kirk declared vacant, and to proceed to the calling of another minister to this place, and to settle him here dewlie" (ibid., ii, p. 28).

The resignation was given in and registered but the session apparently refused to accept it, and Fraser continued as minister. He had as his assistant a Mr. John Blair who had been given a temporary appointment as such until a colleague or second minister could be legally established in the parish.

On 20th March 1699 there is a Session minute which runs as follows:- "It is appoynted that a letter be written to Bree shewing the earnest desire of the sessione and people for his return, and Baillie A"dam ordered to write it." (ibid., ii, p. 28.)

NOTE F.

George Mair

"George Mair (Mayor) was for a time at Airth; ordained minister of the second charge at Culross, August 31, 1698; had a call to Closeburn, Presbytery of Penpont, which came before three General Assemblies; was admitted minister at Tulliallen, Presbytery of Dunblane, July 21, 1714; died in
1716. Thomas Mair of Orwell, a prominent figure in the early
days of the Secession, was his son, also George Mair, minister
at New Deer, Aberdeenshire. Boston had the highest regard
for Mair, reckoned him 'one of the happy instruments of the
breaking forth of a more clear discovery of the doctrine of the
Gospel in these latter days.' Patrick Walker mentions that
'the worthy Mr. George Mair' told him 'that when he went to the
North to preach Christ he never touched the sin of Prelacy nor
any of the rest of our national abominations, for, if the Lord
were pleased to bless any word that came out of his mouth, ....
all these would come in their own time.' - a footnote by
the Rev. George D. Low in his edition of Boston's General
Account of My Life, p. 47. (It will be noted that Low states
that Mair was ordained at Culross on August 31, 1698; also that
Thomas Mair of Orwell was his son. The references given
for the information about Mair are Wodrow, Correspondence,
i. 234-5; Six Saints of the Covenant, i. 218-9; Fraser's Life
of R. Erskine, pp. 120-1; Beveridge, Culross, &c., ii, 42, 215;
Small's History of the Congregations of the United Presbyterian
Church, i. 373-5.)

Beveridge, in his Culross and Tulliallan, gives a minute
of the Culross Town Council relative to the ordination of
George Mair. The minute is in the following terms:
"26 August 1698. The same day the magistratts and toune coun-
cmill being convened, and being declared and represented to the
toune councill that Mr. George Mair is, upon Wednesday next,
to be placed in the church of Culross, minister of the Gospel conjunct with Brae, and for that effect the presbitrie is to be here present; and the magistrates and town council, taking to their consideration, and found it necessary that ane dinner be provyditt against thatt day, therfor be pluralitie of voices hes ordered the dinner be mead readie in John Measone's hous." (Op. cit., ii, p. 42.)

Earlier the same year the first steps towards the ordination had been taken by the Culross Session. There is a minute of 12th April 1698 which reads as follows:—"The which day the session, taking to consideration their want of ane minister to be colleague, and that their settled minister is obliged to be for some time to be north, did fall a-speaking of Mr. Geo. Mair to be ordained for that effect; with which the session was unanimouslie well satisfied, and that intimation should next Lord's Day be made from pulpit to heritors, elders, and magistrates, and all concerned, to meet and consider of that affair." (ibid., ii, pp. 26-29.)

It would appear that Mair was known to the Culross Session as early as 1694 for on 14th August of that year one of their minutes reads:—"The minister by the session is desired to move to the next ensuing presbitrie for their concurrence to settle Mr. Geo. Maire expectant for present .... as colleague and helper to him in the office of the ministrie in this place, and which was undertaken by the minister." (ibid., ii, p. 20.)
"Writing on points of divinity; as on the Scriptures, on God's attributes, on Christian duties, sermons, cases, and the like; these, like fresh water, have kept my heart."

CHAPTER VII

THE MEMOIRS

(1738).

As far as is known Fraser did not publish anything in his lifetime; he did, however, leave behind him a very considerable body of writings in the form of memoirs, sermons, pamphlets and treatises. Had it been otherwise we should have been surprised. By nature he was intensely introspective; to a degree almost unknown in our day he delighted in tracing the intricacies of his feelings and emotions. Further he was a man of deep religious convictions. Ordinarily he found an outlet for his feelings and convictions in preaching, but there were times, notably his periods of imprisonment, when this outlet was denied him, and then he took to writing.

While he was still in his teens or early twenties he tells us that "he studied stenography or short-writing," in the study of which he became so absorbed that he had scarce time for anything else, not even his religious exercises (1). It is a reasonable deduction that he had composition of one kind or another in mind when he took to short-hand. It is
of this period that he writes :- "I began then to fall more closely to work, and to put other sails on, and more irons in the fire; for then did I write diaries, and make vows and covenants, and to fall to the work of self-examination, and to write some infant notions of practical divinity, and my meditations on several texts, which did me good, and at first helped me forward, and suited me" (2). Shortly afterwards he writes :- "Writing some practical divinity did me good, and put me likewise in a frame" (3). And a little later :- "Several practical and speculative discourses which I did write, especially on afflictions, did me good" (4). Referring to the year 1665, or about that time, he says :- "Writing on the Scriptures, I received much light, clearness, and sweetness .... I wrote at this time a complete treatise of afflictions and of conversion, as likewise finished a treatise concerning the Scriptures almost, and wrote several things on the attributes of God, and some other miscellanies, in which I was extraordinarily assisted, and with which I was very much benefitted" (5). Later, but before the end of 1669, he writes :- "Some work I got done: I wrote a Treatise of Faith, of the Covenant of Grace; I wrote a Treatise of forty sheets of paper, on several subjects useful for the times; I wrote also a Treatise against hearing the curates; as likewise, I wrote this Book of my Life, in which I found marvellous assistance, and found it a blessed mean to warm my heart with love to Christ, to see through many intricacies
of my life which were before me as a mist to me, and did
tend much to my settling" (6). More than once he refers
to his diaries; dealing, for example, with the account of
his life in the years 1663–1669 as contained in the Memoirs
he says: "I have been the more brief in what concerns these
last six years, in respect I have them at more length
contained in my daily diaries" (7). These diaries, or
some of them, it is safe to assume, are included in the
"Bhilocris" manuscript of his life, of which more will be
said later. Finally, in his catalogue of the twenty-seven
things which, through God's blessing, had done him good, he
includes, "writing on points of divinity; as on the
Scriptures, on God's attributes, on Christian duties,
sermons, cases, and the like; these, like fresh water, have
kept my heart" (8).

In the manuscripts which Fraser left behind him we
find both the results of his soul-searching, and the conclusions
which he reached with regard to some of the great theological
problems which exercised his mind and the minds of his
contemporaries. As we shall see later, one of the reasons
why he did not publish anything during his lifetime was that
his doctrines, in particular his theory of universal
redemption, were so unorthodox that his friends urged him,
for his own sake no less than for the peace and unity of the
Scottish Church, not to allow them to appear in print. Not
altogether willingly he acceded to their request.
His published works - the first appeared in 1713 and the last in 1749 - may be grouped as follows:— (a) **Memoirs**, (b) Sermons and Pamphlets on various subjects, (c) **A Treatise Concerning Justifying Faith**, and (d) **A Treatise on Justifying Faith** - actually the second part of the preceding work.

It is proposed to deal with the works in that order; with the **Memoirs**, sermons, pamphlets, etc., fairly briefly, and with the **Faith Treatises** at greater length as they are by far the most important of Fraser's works from a theological point of view.

The **Memoirs** first appeared in 1738. Some twenty-nine years earlier Robert Wodrow, in a letter to Mr. John Gabb, minister of the Gospel at Cliesh, dated Eastwood, Jan. 25, 1709, said by way of postscript, "Give my respects to Mr. Mair and tell him I earnestly wish Brays life wer published" (9). Mair, of course, was George Mair, Fraser's colleague at Culross. It would appear that the existence of the **Memoirs** in manuscript was known to many, and those who had seen the work were anxious that it should be published. Apparently there were two manuscript versions of the **Memoirs**. The first is now to be found in the first part of the published work - chapters I to VIII; while the second, upon which the remaining part of the published work is based, has never been printed in full. In the latter the author assumes the name of Philocris. Wodrow makes considerable use of this
"Philocris" manuscript in his *History of the Sufferings*; in that section of his monumental work in which he deals with "the particular hardships put upon the Presbyterian ministers, noblemen, and gentlemen, this year 1677" he says: 

"I may well begin this account with the imprisonment and sufferings of that excellent and pious minister, and the representative of a good family, Mr. James Frazer of Brae, which I shall give the reader mostly from his own distinct and pointed account of them in his *Life*, of which he hath left a large narrative in manuscript under the borrowed name of Philocris, a copy of which from the original is before me; and I shall here and afterward give a pretty large extract from it" (10). James Anderson also, in his *Martyrs of the Bass*, published in 1848, borrows largely from this manuscript, saying that it "contains many facts in reference to Fraser's personal history, which are not in the copy of his *Memoirs* lately published by the Wodrow Society" (11). The Wodrow Society edition to which Anderson refers appeared in 1847. The "Philocris" manuscript is now in the Library of the University of Edinburgh. It was said by David Laing to be in Fraser's handwriting, and is included in the Laing Mss. (iii, 160). The main difference between it and the published *Memoirs* is that while the latter is mainly concerned with Fraser's religious experience the former gives a great many more of the outward facts of his life.

There are two parts in the published *Memoirs*—chapters
I - VIII, and IX - XII. The first section, completed about 1669, is dedicated to Mr. Thomas Ross, whom the publisher in his preface calls "a singularly pious minister in the north." Alexander Brodie speaks of Ross as one who had "grac in a great measur, with mean natural gifts, straitnd, over-reachd with debt" (12). Fraser refers to Ross as "minister at Kincardine in Ross", but that may mean, not that he was the minister of Kincardine, as is sometimes supposed, but that at the time when the Memoirs was written he was resident in Kincardine. Wodrow certainly speaks of him as "minister at Kincardine," but as James Anderson points out, Wodrow's authority was probably Fraser. (13). "But Fraser appears merely to designate the place of his abode," Anderson continues: "for he wrote these memoirs when about thirty years of age, or in 1669, and at that time Ross held no parochial charge, having been ejected some years previously. That Ross was then residing at Kincardine is confirmed by a sentence in Mrs. Ross's (Catherine Collace) memoirs of herself" (14). Anderson says that if Ross was minister of Kincardine it must have been between 1653 and 1665, as in 1653 a Mr. John Forbes was minister of that parish, and in 1665 a Mr. George Burnet (15). Alexander Polson, in his Easter Ross, states that "after the Revolution three ministers of the district were ejected, viz. - Rev. Thomas Ross of Kincardine, Andrew Ross of Tain, and M'Killigan of Alness, as well as the famous Thomas Hog of Kiltearn, who was a native of Tain" (16).
A somewhat fuller account is given by John Noble in his *Religious Life in Ross*, where he says:—"Mr. Thomas Ross, who was admitted minister of Kincardine prior to 28th August, 1655, and deprived by Acts of Parliament, 11th June, and of Privy Council, 1st October, 1662, retired to Tain, where he continued to be engaged in the work of the Gospel." (17).

About 1669 it is known that Ross crossed over to Morayshire, and preached there apparently with some considerable success. In 1675, when the persecution became intensified, he was one of those who suffered. The Bishop of Moray reported his doings and those of several other like-minded ministers to the Privy Council, and the latter at once took action. A letter was addressed to the Earl of Moray requiring him to execute the law against the keepers of conventicles in the Shire of Moray as well as in the neighbouring place, and to report (18). Ross was taken, and imprisoned in the tolbooth of Nairn, much to the dismay of those who had profited by his preaching. Apparently the tolbooth of Nairn was a particularly unhealthy place, and Ross complained to the Privy Council that his feeble and delicate constitution was unlikely to stand a lengthy imprisonment in such a prison. He petitioned to be set at liberty, but instead of granting his request the Council ordered the Earl of Moray to transfer him to the tolbooth of Tain, where he remained till the end of May, 1676, and probably longer. In October 1677 he was again (or still)
there. If Wodrow's account is correct he was also for a
time imprisoned on the Bass (19). Writing of some of those
who suffered in 1675 he says: - "November 4th, I find that
Mr. Thomas Ross, a presbyterian minister in the shire of that
name, is apprehended for conventicles, and imprisoned in Tain.
I have no more about him, only he was brought to the Bass,
and continued some time there, with others of his brethren."
We know definitely that in October 1677 the Privy Council
set Ross at liberty from Tain, "He finding caution, under
the pain of two thousand merks, to re-enter himself in prison
when he shall be called, and that in the mean time he shall
live orderly, in obedience to law, under the pain aforesaid."
The following year he suffered from a severe throat affliction,
and died in his own house in Tain on 13th January 1679,
leaving a widow and one daughter.

In his Dedication to Ross Fraser gives his reasons for
writing the Memoirs. "I have in nothing been more
refreshed," he says, "and quickened, and edified, than by
hearing and reading of the spiritual experiences of others
of the Lord's people, and in nothing more comforted and
sanctified than by a serious recalling to mind of the Lord's
dealing with me .... The consideration of this, with the
desires of others, and my willingness to show my thankfulness
unto the Lord, by an acknowledgement of these His favours at
least, and being some way hopeful that it might profit others,
and to provoke those exercised more nobly, to manifest the
Lord's goodness unto them; I say, these things have put me out to this work at this time (O that the Lord would accept it of my hand;) even to record some passages of divine providence manifested towards me while here in my pilgrimage."

(20).

In a letter to the reader the publishers of the first edition of the Memoirs say:—"Sundry copies of the following Memoirs having been wrote out by the reverend author's own hand for the use of particular ministers and private Christians of his acquaintance, and handed from one person to another, has raised a desire in such as had not the property of these copies, but only the use of them for some short time, that a fair and correct edition of the book might be printed, for their benefit, and for the benefit of others who have not had the advantage to read it. This, together with the desire of some of the author's friends and nearest relations on life, induced us to attempt this publication; and we can assure you, that after comparing our copy (which, as you'll see by the Preface, is dedicated to the Reverend Mr. Thomas Ross sometime minister at Tayne, with a power to him to publish it or not as he pleased) with some other copies, it is found to be the most correct, and in the neatest language; and this may be owing to the reverend author's bestowing more particular pains on it than on other copies, because of the probability that it would sometime or other be published. It has likewise this advantage beyond
the other copies, that a particular account of his sufferings, by imprisonment, &c. (also written by his own hand) is to be found at the end of the book, which is not insert in any other copy of it that we have seen" (21).

In the Preface the publishers refer to the book as "very valuable, and will be so esteemed by the truly serious and judicious, being a very rational account of conversion, as to beginning, progress, and issue, and of the operation of the Spirit of God on the heart: and such an account of faith as cannot but please those who love it, and may, by the blessing of God, help to engage to it such as hitherto had it not in reality. There is perhaps no other performance gives a more distinct account of a supernatural work of grace; and it is thought not to be unseasonable at this juncture for reviving piety and the exercise of grace, and convicting those who make a jest of these serious matters" (22). They also state that their design in publishing the book was to do honour to the author's memory, "and to gratify severals, whose savour of piety hath indeared it to them; of whom we might mention some of high distinction. If it be asked why it was not published sooner, there is no other reason to be given than that it was a loss, and that better now than not at all. By the Dedication to Mr. Thomas Ross (a singularly pious minister in the north), the author seems to give permission to publish it, so that the world may be fully satisfied that the work is genuine, being copied from
that writ by his own hand, pf the truth of which they may rest assured, as can be attested by several ministers still living. The reason why Mr. Thomas Ross did not cause to publish it probably was, that he was at the time he received it in prison at Tayne, and died there in prison, or soon thereafter. Such as had a tender regard for the author wished that this had been published at the same time with the first part of his Treatise on Faith: particularly this would help to clear up that, as to some things dark, and not so very obvious, at least till it was thought proper to publish the second part of that treatise" (23). Reference is made to the fact that the book does not cover the whole of Fraser's life. "It was and is the wish of many," the publishers write, "that the rest of his life, particularly after his settlement at Culross had been got; for surely he wrote diaries during life, but, after all the search possible, this could not be found .... The first eight chapters, dedicated to Mr. Thomas Ross, were allowed by himself to be published; what follows is judged to be of good use, and therefore now published with the rest" (24).

A second edition of the Memoirs appeared in Aberdeen in 1776, and in 1798 yet another edition, also called the second, was published in Glasgow. Since then several editions have appeared, the most notable being that published by the Wodrow Society in their Select Biographies, volume ii, and edited by the Rev. W.K. Tweedie. This edition is based
upon that of 1738, but use was also made of a manuscript copy owned by David Laing, to which reference has already been made. Tweedie is his introduction to this edition says that "the student of our mysterious nature may find in not a few of the Society's volumes, explanations of the process by which men were trained in other times to do and to endure so much - to pass rejoicing and triumphant through scenes whose mere recital makes the modern reader fear, or even weep. How could men survive such a great fight of afflictions? How did they learn to take so joyfully the spoiling of their goods? How could they so boldly face, and so patiently endure, the imprisonments, the exile, the death which so often closed their career? The answer is embodied in such biographies as those that follow. As the apostle of the German Reformation was trained in a peculiar way for the work which he was called, in Providence, to do, so men like Fraser of Brea, and other worthies, were peculiarly disciplined for their peculiar sphere and times. To the student of Man, we repeat, the easy opportunity of contemplating such cases as they were described by parties actually engaged in the struggle, or recently retired from it, is a benefit to be highly prized" (25). In this Wodrow Society volume Fraser's book appears along with the Life of David Dickson, and the Memoirs of the Life and Character of William Guthrie, as well as shorter lives, and other documents. More than half the volume is taken up
by Fraser's Memoirs.

The most recent edition of the Memoirs is that published in 1889 in Inverness by Melven Brothers. It contains an Introductory Note written by Dr. Alexander Whyte, a great admirer of Fraser; and a Short Sketch of the author's life by Dr. Gustavus Aird, of Creich. The same year Melven Brothers also published a Gaelic translation, the work of Cathul Carr, of the third section of Chapter V. of the Memoirs, in which Fraser tells of his conversion. The title of this little booklet is "Creidimh Ann an Dia, na, Mar a Bha Mi Air Mo Tharruinn a Dh-Ionnsuidh Dhe, Agus Air Mo Thoirt Gu Dunadh Ris Tre Chreidimh" ("Faith in God, or, How I was drawn to Him, and led to close with Him through Faith").

Fraser's autobiography has long been regarded as a classic in Scotland, and of it many fine things have been said. "It presents us," says Alexander Mackenzie, "with a simple but vivid sketch of a mind deeply imbued with vital piety and the force of truth" (26). "As a record of human thought and emotion," says Spurgeon, "it is of great interest to the mental philosopher; but as a description of the experience of a deeply tried believer, it is exceedingly precious to the Christian" (27). Robert King regarded it as "for some of the higher qualities necessary to such a composition, (deserving) to be classed with that burning record of an awakened soul, Bunyan's Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners" (28). In his lectures on Bunyan's classic, to which King refers,
Dr. Alexander Whyte speaks of the author's "absolutely agonising experience of the lifelong pains of sanctification" as one of the things which went to his making and fitting out. "The life of sanctification," he continues, "follows on conversion, and both of those experiences have a kindred character in every man who truly undergoes them. An easy conversion is usually followed by an easy sanctification, and a fierce and a soul-crushing conversion is usually followed by a fierce and a soul-crushing sanctification. In all my reading I have only come upon three cases of sanctification of a fierceness and a crushingness worthy to be set beside that of John Bunyan. And they are all three fellow-countrymen and fellow-churchmen of our own - Thomas Halyburton, Alexander Brodie of Brodie, and James Fraser of Brea. The sword of truth and love and holiness was driven through and through the sinful hearts of those four elect men, and that divine sword turned every way in their sinful hearts till it laid them down dead men every day all their days on earth" (29).

In his James Fraser, Laird of Brea, Dr. Whyte pays a more elaborate tribute to the Memoirs. "The religious literature of Scotland," he says there, "is remarkably rich in books of religious autobiography. Telling us each one his own spiritual story we have James Melville, and Robert Blair, and John Livingstone, and Alexander Brodie, and James Fraser, and Thomas Halyburton, and Thomas Boston, and Hugh Miller, and John Duncan, and William Taylor, and Andrew Bonar."
And there are not a few fragments of the same kind quite worthy to stand beside those full and finished works; such as the autobiographical remains of the Lady Coltness, the Lady Anne Elcho, and Marion Veitch. Every one of these famous autobiographies has its own individuality, idiosyncrasy, and physiognomy; and each several one of them makes its own special contribution to the noblest catalogue of the books of our native land. I know something of all those great books; but there is none of them that draws me and holds me and keeps possession of me like the Memoirs of Sir James Fraser of Brea, written by himself .... It is in His Memoirs of Himself that James Fraser of Brea will live, and he will live in that remarkable book as long as a scholarly religion, and an evangelical religion, and a spiritual religion, and a profoundly experimental religion lives in his native land" (30).

Fraser's autobiography is of interest from at least two points of view:—1. as the story of a man who lived in stirring times, and who took his full share in the events of his time, and 2. as the record of a soul's re-birth and growth in knowledge, grace and power. In the brief synopsis which follows some attempt will be made to indicate the contents of the book.

The first chapter, which is really no more than a two-page introduction, Fraser deals with "some things that happened to me from my birth till I was nine years old." In the next chapter he passes to "some things concerning God's
dealings with me while under some common work of the Spirit, and not fully converted, from the time I was nine years old till I was seventeen." He then passes to an account of the way and manner of his conversion, and of some things which happened then and immediately thereafter. In this chapter he deals first of all with his conversion; then with some temptations and clouds which succeeded it; and finally with some other things relating to it and to the Lord's dealing with him.

In the fourth chapter he deals at some length with a spiritual decay or decline which followed his conversion; and in the fifth with his recovery from that sad condition, the sections of this chapter being: "the first several steps, and manner thereof;" "some things touching my humiliation and wilderness condition;" and, "how I was drawn to God, and made to close with Him by faith."

The sixth chapter is devoted to an account of his progress and growth, and establishment in the ways of God. He tells how after closing with Christ by faith he was assaulted by terrible temptations, and how he was delivered. Then he deals with a spiritual decay which followed, and the affliction which troubled him for two years. Recovery seems to have followed decay with monotonous regularity for a number of years, and in this chapter he expatiates on these successive ups and downs.

The seventh chapter is concerned with some things
touching his condition at the time when he wrote - 1669. It consists of eleven sections:— 1. "Wherein are contained some general personal observations in reference to myself;" 2. "Declaring some strong evils under which I mourn, and against which I wrestle;" 3. "Declaring my present exercises, lessons I am learning, studying, and in which I have made some proficiency;" 4. "Declaring my growth in grace as to some particulars;" 5. "Declaring the objective grounds of my doubting my conversion and actual interest in Christ, with the special and general answers thereto;" 6. "Declaring my evidences of regeneration and heaven;" 7. "Declaring some practical considerations and instructions which the Lord taught, and by which I attained to settling and peace as to my interest in Christ, and through which mists, doubts, and fears, were driven away;" 8. "Containing general and special rules for ordering my speech, behaviour, and practice" — in this section he deals with "rules I daily follow in my daily path: or, some special rules for ordering my own particular conversations;" 9. "Declaring such things as, through the Lord's blessing, have done me good;" 10. "Declaring such things as have done me evil;" and finally, 11. "Declaring some of Satan's spiritual and more subtle devices, whereby the work of sanctification hath been much hindered." These headings have been given in full as they furnish a very fair indication of both the style and contents of the Memoirs as a whole.
In the eighth chapter, the last in the first part of the Memoirs, Fraser deals with mercies which he has received—general mercies, and also some special mercies, "little particular favours from the Lord, as to my spiritual condition and temporal."

As will have now become apparent the first part of the Memoirs is mainly concerned with the author's inward life in the years before he definitely decided to go in for the ministry. The second part, the last four chapters, forming less than a quarter of the whole, covers the period from his decision to enter the ministry up to the time of his release from Newgate early in the year 1684. It is a matter for regret that none of his diaries for the years between 1684 and 1699 have been found.

Of the last four chapters the first—chapter nine—is concerned with his call to the ministry, the grounds upon which he judged himself to be called, some observations upon a minister's work and qualifications, and certain lessons to be drawn from his experiences in this connection. Chapters ten and eleven deal with his marriage, and the tragic death of his wife, together with his reflections upon the Lord's providences to him during that time.

Chapter twelve consists of a narrative of his sufferings—his public sufferings in general, his being intercommuned, his first imprisonment (in the Bass), and his second imprisonment (Edinburgh and Blackness), his banishment,
his third imprisonment (Newgate), and some observations upon all these sufferings. In this final chapter Fraser really gives us more about the outward facts of his life than in the other eleven chapters combined.

To the modern reader Fraser's autobiography is painfully introspective. He seems to have taken a strange delight in probing into his inner life. When he enumerates the twenty-seven things which, through God's blessing, did him good, he includes "serious and deliberate self-examination, and, while thus exercised, trying myself, looking to the qualifications of saints and hypocrites in Scripture, their sins and failings; studying the nature of true saving grace, the difference, according to the Scriptures, betwixt false and true grace;" "this," he adds, "hath contributed much to my settlement" (31). It is sometimes hard to understand what useful purpose he imagined he was serving in thus probing into his heart, and dragging up to the light of day all his inmost thoughts and feelings. He gives catalogue upon catalogue of his faults and failings, his temptations and besetting sins, his victories and defeats, and all this self-revelation is done in a most tortuous, involved, and roundabout fashion.

"Fraser," says Dr. Whyte, "describes his spiritual autobiography as 'The Book of the Intricacies of his own Heart and Life.' And so it is. It is a book of such intricacy and sinuosity and complication and reticulation and involution, that in all my experience of such books it
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THE MEMOIRS

stands simply unparalleled and unapproached. No labyrinth ever constructed by the brain of man comes near to the heart of Brea. Not even that wonder of the world the labyrinth of Egypt with its three thousand secret chambers. Not even the Cretan labyrinth of Daedalus with its blood-thirsty monster at its centre, and with only a thin linen thread to lead you out through its endless tortuosities to the open air. All that is but a faint and feeble description of the always spiritually intricate book that Fraser of Brea has bequeathed to his fellow-countrymen and his fellow-churchmen" (32).

Dr. Elder Gumming, in an appreciative article on Fraser in his Holy Men of God, says of him that "with all his experiences there is the most minute mental analysis, as plainly set down as he could give it, often not of a very healthy character" (33). "Surely," Dr. Cumming adds, "never did a man spend his spiritual strength so much in the speculative and microscopic examination of his own fallen and corrupt heart" (34). A recent writer speaks of the Memoirs as "abounding in an elaborate analysis of Spiritual self-consciousness" (35).

Some indication of how elaborate Fraser's self-examination was may be gathered from the following facts. While still a youth, according to his own confession, he made some considerable progress in holiness, but then grievously fell away from all his profession and practice, and in that decay he notes seventeen distinct steps. From his
experiences in his earlier days he draws twelve inferences or morals. In his remarks upon the various lessons and instructions learned from the providences connected with his conversion he has an "eighteenthly." God's call to him furnishes him with twenty different lessons; the temptations which followed it, with twenty-four. The evils, which were to him like the strong nations which the Israelites could not drive out, number twenty-one. He finds twenty different grounds for doubting the soundness of his conversion and actual interest in Christ. He gives twenty-seven evidences of regeneration and heaven. Satan, he holds, has thirty different spiritual and subtle devices to entangle him. The Memoirs closes with no fewer than forty-four observations on the author's sufferings. It is indeed the book of the intricacies of his heart and life.

What kind of man, it may be asked, does the book reveal? First and foremost, it reveals a man who is deeply religious. From his earliest years Fraser thought much about his spiritual welfare, and for long was troubled by doubts and fears about his condition. His unworthiness, his heaped-up sins, and his proneness to be led out of the way of strict piety and from the regular practice of religion made his life, according to his own account, a constant burden to him, particularly in his earlier years. He was inclined to take a gloomy view of things in general. He believed with all his heart and soul that there was one thing needful for man,
and that one thing to be reconciled to God, to be at peace with Him. But about his own standing in the sight of God he was seldom sure; could he say that he was at peace with Him; could he regard himself as reconciled to Him? Questions such as these, and in one form or another they were constantly in his mind, give a sombre hue to all his writings. But while the gloom which pervades Fraser's works may repel us it cannot hide the fact that he was a deeply religious man, though his religion lacked that note of joy inseparable from faith at its best. His concern for the things of the spirit was real and genuine, his piety was beyond doubt, his faith, in his later years at any rate, was strong and unwavering.

Again, in the Memoirs we find a man whose mind was of no common order. He was quite capable of wrestling with, indeed he took a real delight in wrestling with, questions of theology, and theology of the most abstruse kind. "You will naturally ask me," says Alexander Whyte, "what it is that gives James Fraser such a high rank as a spiritual writer, and just what it is that so signalises his Memoirs of Himself. Well, in his own characteristic words his Memoirs is 'the book of the intricacies of his own heart and life,' and that on their purely spiritual side. Fraser's mind was by nature of the most intricate kind: that is to say, his mind was naturally of the most acute and subtle and penetrating and searching-out kind. Had he gone into law, as at one time he intended to do, he would infallibly have
taken rank as one of the acutest of our Scottish lawyers. And with his immense industry he would to a certainty have left writings behind him that would have been of classical authority in that great profession. But to the lasting enrichment of his own soul, and to the lasting enrichment of all his kindred-minded readers' souls, Fraser was led of God into divinity, and into divinity of the deepest, acutest, most evangelical, and most experimental kind" (35). Problems of theology were to him both a challenge and an inspiration. He was not one of those who are content to rest satisfied with the appearance of things; he had to probe beneath the surface in order that he might discover the why and the wherefore of every phenomenon that came his way. A temptation was to him a challenge to search his heart and soul to drag up to the light of day the things hidden in the depths there that had made the temptation possible; a perplexity at once prompted him to delve down into the deepest and most secret recesses of his being in an endeavour to discover why and how it arose. Doubts and difficulties he regarded as first and foremost problems to be solved; and in nine cases out of ten solved they were, for he had a mind of keen insight and perspicacity.

Lastly, we find in the Memoirs a man who could not tolerate shams of any kind. Thorough and painstaking in his own religious life he looked for equal sincerity and honesty of purpose in others, and was not only disappointed
but also deeply offended when he failed to find it. He had no place for easy-going profession or slack practice in his own case, and he saw no reason why he should be content with nothing better than that in the case of others. His own faith had been won at a price; it had not been gained easily or painlessly; there were the marks of blood upon it; and a bloodless faith he distrusted in others. Having won this faith of his at great cost he stuck to it in the face of active and long-continued hostility; and he demanded loyalty of the same order in others. When judging himself and his actions he insisted upon using a high standard; and he showed his respect for others by refusing to judge any man by a standard lower than that which he used in his own case.
CHAPTER VIII

PRELACY AN IDOL, AND PRELATES IDOLATERS
(1713).

Fraser's published works, apart from the Memoirs and the Faith Treatises, may conveniently be grouped into two categories: first, the sermons and pamphlets of a political or semi-political character; and second, those of a purely devotional, and theological or religious kind. In the first class there are two works - his sermon on Prelacy an Idol, and Prelates Idolaters, and his longer and more important treatise, The Lawfulness and Duty of Separation from Corrupt Ministers and Churches Explained and Vindicated. We turn to these before taking up consideration of his religious and devotional works. Of his unpublished writings the most important, apart from the "Philocris" Memoirs, is his Defence of the Convention of Estates, 1689. This is included in the Wodrow Mss. (octavo), vol. xxii, No. 2, and had it been published would fall to be considered along with Prelacy an Idol, and The Lawfulness and Duty of Separation. All that need be said about it here is that the author's purpose in writing it was to vindicate and justify the action of the
Convention of Estates in declaring James VII. to have forfeited the crown, and in proclaiming the throne vacant.

The first of Fraser's writings to be published was a sermon with the title Prelacy an Idol, and Prelates Idolaters, the sub-title being "All Prelatists, Maintainers of, and Complyers with Prelacy charg'd with Idolatry, and proven guilty." It appeared in 1713, just fifteen years after the author's death. A second edition was published in Glasgow in 1742.

In the first edition the publisher refers to Fraser as "an eminent Watchman set on Zion's Watch-tower" who "did zealously oppose the Errors and Defections of his Day, which, alas! prevail at this Day, with little, or no Opposition." "Tho' there be many new Sermons published," he continues, "yet scarce any of them evidence so much Zeal by a free and faithful Pleading for Truth and Reformation, as this .... This Sermon was a Word fitly spoken, with Application to the Idol at that Time (Prelacy) which at this Time hath the Ascendant. It not only proves Prelacy an Idol of the Understanding; but faithfully warns all the Lord's People to hasten their Escape from that sinful course, lest they share in the Plagues of Idolatry. As the holy Scriptures, and this Sermon do condemn Prelacy; so these Lands were solemnly sworn to extirpate Prelacy, and all Superstition, &c., we need therefore, by this, or the like Sermon, to be put in mind of our Engagements to, and horrid Breach of Covenant"
with God, which we have so slighted that God, in holy
Justice, has made our Sin our Punishment. This Sermon by
necessary Consequence, condemns the hateful Neutrality, and
conniving at Prelacy in the Ministers of Scotland at this
Day. 'Tis lamentable that they should so tamely stoop to
all the Demands of the Propagators of Prelacy."

The publisher of the second edition (1742) states that
the sermon is reprinted "for the Conviction and Reclaiming
those in this Church, who, contrary to our avow'd Principles
which we are solemnly sworn to, have followed after, and
countenanced Mr. George Whitefield, who openly professes
himself to be of the Communion of the Church of England:
and also as a seasonable and necessary Warning to the
Professors of the Reformation in Scotland against the Evil
and Danger of Prelacy, whereunto the present Latitudinarian
Scheme of Principles introduc'd by the said Mr. Whitefield,
seem preparatory; and likewise as a standing Declaration and
publick Testimony against the äme."

This publisher also intimates the forthcoming
appearance of "a Treatise, intituled, The Lawfulness and
Duty of Separation and Secession from corrupt Ministers and
Churches; wherein all the ordinary Objections and Arguments
commonly advanced by the Prelates and Curats, and Messieurs
Williamson, Currie, Lawson, and their Adherents, for hearing
and joining with them, are fully and clearly answered and
refuted. By the reverend and learned Mr. James Fraser of
Brae, Minister of the Gospel at Culross: written by his
Prelacy and Idol is a pamphlet of forty pages containing a sermon on the text Hosea 2. lff. "Say ye unto your brethren, Ammi; and to your sisters, Ru-hamah. Plead with your mother, plead: for she is not my wife, neither am I her husband ...." It is a very carefully constructed and most logical discourse; in many ways it is a perfect model of clear and cogent reasoning. Its purpose is indicated in the title; it is a serious attempt to demonstrate that prelacy is as real and dangerous a form of idolatry as any known and practised in old Israel.

Fraser begins his sermon with a reference to the background of the text. "It is a wonderful thing," he says, "that the Lord should by His Spirit strive so long, and yet not give up with a people, so wicked as this people was; this people had corrupted the worship of God, had turned out all the Lord's honest servants, and set debauched wicked men of their own stamp in their rooms, persecuted every truly godly man, and given themselves up to all manner of sin, both against the first and second Table, and had rejected the Law of God, and continued obstinate against all the means, by which the Lord used to reclaim them: And now when it might have been expected, that the Lord should have given up with them, and utterly destroyed them; He not only spared them, nor stirred up all His wrath, but continued to send prophet after prophet, and messengers in abundance, to testify
against them, and in this, 'left not Himself without a witness.' So that there were few places of the land, that were left in the dark."

Having given the background of his text he proceeds without further delay to draw the parallel. "We see this wonder continued even with ourselves," he proceeds; "few places in the land, but God hath some way or other, given so much light, as shall leave folk without excuse, in the day of their compt and reckoning with God; and this country of Murray more than others; so much that it shall be more tolerable in the day of judgment, for the places, where there is not an honest minister to be found, than for this country; and though now, in a sort, it is exalted to heaven, yet shall it be brought down to hell, if the gospel have not other fruits among you, than yet it has had." The reference to the county of Moray is an indication that the sermon was first preached in Morayshire.

The first head of the sermon is that "the professors of the visible Church are much inclined to the sin of idolatry, or corrupting of the worship of God." Fraser points out that from patriarchal times right down to his own time people have been all too ready to fall into idolatry, and offers five reasons which help to explain this tendency: Men desire to be neighbour-like; they are moved by self-interest; they are apt to make their own additions to pure worship; they grow fond of these additions of theirs; and, finally, they
find it difficult to understand a purely spiritual worship, and so incline to symbols and ceremonies.

Idolatry, he holds, has been the most prevalent sin in all ages, and in his own time as much as in any preceding period. "Prelacy," he maintains, "draws deeper now at this time than we dream .... I do indeed believe the Lord to be as much offended at our contemnancing the curates by hearing them as at the worshipping of the calves at Dan and Bethel." His opinion is based upon seven considerations, which may briefly be summarised as follows:—Like the Israelites to whom Hosea writes men have now corrupted the worship of God by accepting prelacy with its officers and rites not authorised in Scripture; it is not that they have thrown off God as an object of worship but that they worship Him in an unlawful way; there are idols of the hand and also idols of the understanding; All who join in worship which is idolatrous are guilty along with those who have actually set up the idols, i.e. all who accept prelacy are equally guilty with the king, the rulers, the bishops, and the curates who have established it; men's worship is corrupted if they share in any way in an idolatrous form of service; there was a time when God winked at sins of worship, and also sins of practice, and even errors in doctrine, but now that His mind has been more fully declared men are without excuse; and, finally, it is not sufficient to say that as long as a man lives a good life it matters little whether the government of the Church
is presbyterian or episcopalian, for Church government is of very great importance.

The second head of the sermon is that "the sin of idolatry, or corrupting of God's worship, is a very great sin in the sight of God, and one of the greatest sins that a people can be guilty of, however small the matter may seem to some." That this is so is evident from the words Scripture uses to describe it—whoredom, adultery, witchcraft, and the like. It appears also from the fact that wherever established all sorts of sad and woeful concomitants and consequences flow from it. Further, it brings down upon men sad judgments and outward evils. It has to be noted too that down through the ages this is the sin against which God has cried most vehemently, and in combating which so many of His people have laboured and fallen. To the question, What makes idolatry, and in particular prelacy, so great a sin? the answer is that it means casting off God; by it men make themselves God, and invade the royal prerogatives of Christ.

Fraser now proceeds to answer several objections likely to be raised against his contention that prelacy is a great and grave sin.

Church government may be corrupt, but does it necessarily follow that worship is corrupt too? "The command of God," says Fraser, "reaches to government, as well as to worship, and who shall change or add to the one invades the
prerogative of Christ, as well as he who shall add to, or change the other." A curate holding office in a Church whose government is corrupt cannot offer worship which is not corrupt.

Whatever sin may be in the Church to-day, can it be regarded as being as sinful as idolatry? Is it as grave a thing to attend the ministrations of the curates as to worship the calves of Dan or Bethel? "No sin is little," Fraser replies, "and nothing where God's honour is concerned should be thought small." God has often laid great stress upon what men have regarded as small. The sin of prelacy may seem trifling to men, but not to God for it is a sin against the light, and it leads to greater evils.

Is it not the case that in the matter of Church government God has not given any clear guidance, and has not laid down any definite rules, as He did in the case of the place of worship in old Israel? To this Fraser's answer is that "the government of Christ's Church is as particularly determined in the Word of God, as the place of worship was in the Old Testament." Those who profess to have doubts about God's commands where government is concerned have no more excuse than those who claimed to have doubts about the place of worship in Old Testament times. Fraser, it will be noted, believes in the divine right of Presbytery.

Can prelacy be so very wicked a thing when there have been so many pious men who were bishops? Fraser readily
grants that there have been pious bishops, but that, he
hastens to add, was in the times of ignorance when, for
example, many pious and godly persons saw no sin in having
two wives. There were disciples, he points out, who had
not so much as heard that the Holy Ghost existed. "What
may be tolerable, and consistent with grace in some persons,"
he maintains, "may be very inconsistent with it in other
persons, and at another time."

Surely not all the curates are wicked? Is it not
the case that some of them are sober, given to no vice,
painstaking, able, and well-gifted? Why may men not
attend the ministrations of such? Some of the curates,
Fraser is willing to concede, may be all that their friends
say they are, but their devotion is no more than outward
appearance; their idolatry, their perjury, their separating
from the people of God are enough to condemn even the best
of them.

Some curates preach good and sound doctrine; why not
go to hear such men? The priests and prophets of Dan and
Bethel, and the scribes and Pharisees, Fraser says, no doubt
preached sound doctrine in all except the point in debate at
the time, but on that one point they grossly erred. "The
curates are sound in every point, except as to the point of
Church government, the obligation of the Covenant." Fraser
adds that "the controverted truths are the greatest."

Even if the charges against the curates should be
proved valid yet surely the people who attend their ministrations are guiltless? Not only was Jeroboam guilty when he set up the calves in Bethel, but so were all those who worshipped in that prohibited place. So not only are those guilty who set up prelacy but also all who comply with their commands.

Finally, what are men to do, when there are no others whose ministrations they can attend? Are they to stay at home on the Sabbath days? "Better spend the time so," replies Fraser, "as the Lord will help you, than to go to an idolatrous corrupted worship, and thereby establish prelacy."

Further, there are "few places of the land but, by exposing yourselves to suffering, and walking, or riding a few miles, ye may have the occasion of hearing an honest minister."

Under the third head of the sermon Fraser lays down that "it is the duty of the Lord's people who have obtained mercy from God, to be faithful and straight, to plead with the body of the apostate Church in which they are." To the question, By what means should men plead? he offers four answers - by showing and convincing the Church of the evil of her ways, both publicly and privately, and demonstrating to her her sinful courses; by exhorting her not to go along with the courses of the times, but in time to come out of Babylon; by announcing the wrath of God against the courses of the times; and by a contrary practice, and withdrawing from all who follow the course of defecting.
Fraser gives four rules for pleading - be constant in your pleading, plead with love, plead plainly and freely, and plead practically. To the question, Why should we plead? he offers three answers - to get some drawn out of the snare of the devil, if that is at all possible; to glorify God and to keep up the remembrance of His truth; and to make obstinate folk inexcusable in the day of judgment. To those who in this day of defection refuse to plead with others he gives a word of reproof, and to the faithful a word of urgency, pointing out that pleading is the one great and peculiar duty of the times.

The fourth head is that "the sin of idolatry, and corruption, as to the worship of God, is a forerunner to, and brings on great judgments, and sore evils upon that land, which is corrupted." Fraser instances six evils likely to come upon Scotland if men continue obstinately in their idolatry - As God has already departed in a great measure from many in the land so He is like to forsake the land altogether; if He forsake men they are like to get worse masters in His place; they are like to lose the gospel altogether; they are like to get corrupt ordinances and judgments; they are like to meet with the sword, or with famine and pestilence, when to die will be more tolerable than to live; and, the eternal course of God in heaven shall follow, "the last, and never-ending woe."

Under the fifth and final head Fraser maintains that
"idolatry continued in, provokes God to unchurch a people: and not to be their God, nor acknowledge them any more for His people." "God," he says, "is very jealous that folk serve Him in His own way." He enumerates five respects in which it appears that there is no tie between God and an idolatrous and corrupted Church. Briefly summarised these are that as an adulterous wife does what in her lies to disown her husband, so an idolatrous Church has already done all that is within her power to cut herself off from her God; and God for His part must now deal with her as she has merited.

In order that the Lord's people, and especially those of them who attend the ministrations of the curates, may lay to heart the danger of prelacy much more than at present they seem to do, Fraser concludes his sermon with "six sad words" - their sin of idolatry is a great and grievous sin in the sight of God; it is not only grievous in itself, but also disastrous in its effects, for it binds and chains men; by it they cast a reflection upon God, and publicly disown Him; by it they reveal that they lack true grace; they profess to disown profane folk, and open persecutors, and they would be counted amongst the people of God, but God numbers them with the workers of iniquity; "ye shall not rejoice when Zion rejoices," he says in conclusion, "ye shall never be in court or credit, when the Lord turns back the captivity of His people, whatever ye signify before, ye
shall never bear that bulk again."

As will have become apparent in the course of this brief resumé of the argument in Prelacy an Idol there is little theology, in the strict sense of the term, in this sermon, and so it is not of any real importance as far as the development of Fraser's thought is concerned. It is taken up with the immediate problem of episcopacy in the Scottish Church. In so far as theology does enter into it it is Calvinistic through and through. There is no hint of the particular theory of universal redemption so prominent in Fraser's later writings.
CHAPTER IX

THE LAWFULNESS AND DUTY OF SEPARATION FROM CORRUPT MINISTERS AND CHURCHES EXPLAINED AND VINDICATED (1744).

In the year 1744 one of the more considerable of Fraser's works was published in Edinburgh, the title being The Lawfulness and Duty of Separation from Corrupt Ministers and Churches Explained and Vindicated. In his Preface the publisher confesses that the title of the work as published is his, not Fraser's. The manuscript, he states, is entitled "An Enquiry into that so much debated Case, viz. Whether it be the Duty of the Lord's People in Britain and Ireland, to hear such as have submitted to the Prelatical Government, or to join with them while in the Exercise of such Acts as do belong to their Pastoral Office." His reason for making the change in the title is that "the argument therein managed, is, in itself, evidently of a larger Extent than the particular Case of Prelacy." "Therefore," he adds, "the Publisher hath used the Freedom to prefix the general Title which it now bears." On the title-page it is stated that the work was written by James Fraser of Brea against the sinful compliances of his day, and that it is now published
"against the sinful compliances of ours." The publisher is George Paton of Linlithgow who two years earlier had given to the world Fraser's *Prelacy an Idol*, in which work, it will be remembered, he intimated the forthcoming appearance of the Treatise now under consideration.

The thesis of this Treatise is that no man is bound, if his conscience at all trouble him in the matter, to attend the ministrations of curates and conformists. There is no precise indication of when Fraser wrote the work, but we know from the *memoirs* that it was about the year 1663 that he himself had ceased to "hear" the episcopalian clergy, having come to the conclusion that their services did him more harm than good. The Treatise contains his considered views on the subject, and was probably written about 1668 or 1669. This, at any rate, is the opinion of the publisher who has a footnote to page 146 which runs as follows:— "In regard some people have been prepossessed with a groundless conceit, that this excellent Treatise was not writ by the worthy gentleman whose name it bears, it is thought proper to acquaint the reader, that, if he will be at pains to compare this account of the author's withdrawing from hearing the curates, with what he has advanced, upon the same subject, in the Memoirs of his Life, written by himself, printed at Edinburgh, Anno 1738. Chap.6. Sect. 4. Pag. 152, 153, 154. he cannot entertain the least doubt or scruple anent the genuiness-eof genuineness of
this performance. And it appears, from his Memoirs, that he withdrew from hearing the curates in the year 1663. Nay farther, in Chap. 6. Sect. 7. Pag. 100. he tells that he wrote a Treatise against hearing the Curates; which he appears to have done in the year 1668 or 1669."

The motive behind the publication of the Treatise in 1744 is clear almost from the title-page, with its reference to the sinful compliances of the time. On the reverse of that page there is an advertisement which gives a further indication of the publisher's ecclesiastical standpoint. In it he states that at his "shop in Linlithgow, is to be sold, a Collection of several remarkable and valuable Sermons, Speeches and Exhortations, at renewing and subscribing the National Covenant of Scotland, and at the entering into and subscribing the Solemn League and Covenant of the three Kingdoms of Scotland, England and Ireland; wherein the Nature, necessity and Excellency of the Duty of Covenanting, with the Evil and Danger of Apostasy, are clearly and convincingly held forth from the Word of God. By several reverend, learned and pious Divines of that period. Which, upon reading and serious Consideration thereof, will be found to be most useful, necessary and advantageous, for affording Light anent the present Duty of these Lands, their entering into and renewing their solemn Engagements to the most high God, and for carrying on a work of Reformation in this present Period."
The apologetic character of the publication at that time of the Treatise becomes even clearer when one glances through the "Preface to the Reader" which extends to some thirty pages. Dated March 6, 1744, it opens with a reference to Fraser as one who was famous and remarkable in his time, as his other writings, particularly his Memoirs, testify. "This book," the writer continues, "is faithfully printed from a manuscript, which is known and has been attested to be Mr. Fraser's Hand-writing. And, in regard the ministers of the Associate Presbytery are now exposed to almost everybody's ill-nature and jealousy, so that such as shall not relish this performance, and yet care not for attacking the author, may possibly charge some of them with vitiating the same, the publisher, therefore, thinks it not improper to signify that none of them are concerned in the publication thereof, nor in the least accountable for any sentence of it." The publisher goes on to point out that while the Treatise is particularly levelled against compliance with prelacy and communion with prelatics yet its publication at this time is highly suitable to the present situation and controversy in Scotland "for as the fond reception which Mr. George Whitefield, a priest of the Church of England, and his latitudinarian scheme, have met with, do plainly call us to arms against an Invasion of prelacy; so the arguments here pled are plainly applicable unto, and of equal force against the sinful compliances of our day, with the defections of the
established Church of Scotland, and communion with the
judicatories thereof, with whom communion is now impracticable,
without involvement in the current of apostasy wherewith they
are all carried down."

It will be remembered that as early as April 1739 Ralph
Erskine was in correspondence with Whitefield, and during the
latter's visit to America from the autumn of 1739 to the
early days of 1741 he was in frequent touch with both the
Erskines, who thought so highly of him that they prayed for
him in public. When his visit to Scotland was broached they
had hopes that he might be prevailed upon to join the
Secession; his assurance that he "should be glad to sit at
their feet and be taught the way of God more perfectly"
encouraged them to believe that he and they were not
separated from one another by any impassable gulf. So when
on July 30, 1741 he landed at Leith on his way to visit
Ralph Erskine at Dunfermline they thought that they were about
to receive a very welcome accession to their ranks. When,
however, the Associate Presbytery met at Dunfermline it was
clear that Whitefield, still a man under 30, was not by any
means willing to accept the conditions the Presbytery wished
to lay down; in particular he could not agree to confine his
ministration to "the Lord's people," as they presumed to call
themselves. The conference was followed by a violent
sermon directed against the Church of England, of which
Whitefield was a priest. "The consequence of all this,"
wrote Whitefield, "was an open breach. I retired, I wept, I prayed; and after preaching in the fields, sat down and dined with them, and then took a final leave."

The following year, on his second visit to Scotland, Whitefield was frequently at Cambuslang, where the revival, or "wark," one of the results of his first visit, was soon to burn itself out in a final blaze. The Cambuslang revival was fiercely denounced by the Seceders. On July 15, 1742, four days after the first communion at Cambuslang, they instituted a public fast for the Satanic agency there manifested in "bitter outcryings, faintings, severe bodily pains, convulsions, voices, visions, and revelations," and for "the fond reception" accorded to a priest of the Church of England, who had sworn the Oath of Supremacy and abjured the Solemn League. The same year Adam Gib wrote a massive pamphlet with an almost equally massive title "Warning against countenancing the ministrations of Mr. G.W., together with an appendix wherein are shown that Mr. W. is no minister of Jesus Christ, that his call and coming to Scotland are scandalous, that his practice is disorderly, that his whole doctrine must be diabolical, so that people ought to avoid it from duty to God, to the Church, and to themselves" — in the course of which he wrote with reference to Whitefield's preaching: "The horror of this scene strikes me almost dumb. I must halt and give way to some awful ideas that cannot find vent in language .... My spirit is like to freeze with horror, impotent of speech" (1).
Having dealt faithfully with Whitefield the publisher of Fraser's Treatise goes on to point out that there is another individual, no less dangerous, to be reckoned with at the same time - Currie of Kinglassie, who was bold enough to attempt to defend the Church of Scotland, and to denounce all secession and separation. It was in 1740 that Currie, a friend of Ebenezer Erskine, though he dissociated himself from the schism, published his *Vindication of the Real Reformation Principles of the Church of Scotland*, in which he denounced the Seceders' demand that members at their first communion should sign the Solemn League and Covenant. Currie was a man of broad sympathies, and an admirer of Ridley, Cranmer, Hooper, Hall, and their like, to say nothing of Whitefield; he was resolutely opposed to schism of any kind. But according to our publisher he was rather contemptuous of the Covenants and "the glorious work of the Reformation." His Erastian sympathies were evident from his vigorous defence of the fasts appointed by the civil authority, and also of the ministers who took the Abjuration Oath, and read the Act of Parliament anent Captain Porteous.

In the eyes of our publisher Currie's faults were greatly aggravated by his willingness to give "a blind and unlimited obedience to all the iniquous (sic) sentences of the judicatures of this Church." "This," he says, "is evident from his writings in defence of the sentence of deposition that was passed by the Assembly 1740, against the seceding
in which tho' he endeavours artfully to conceal his own sentiments, yet it is evident, that he heartily approves of that sentence, and rakes together all the arguments that can be advanced in vindication of the same."

The reference is, of course, to what took place in the General Assembly on 15th May 1740, when the Seceders were in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, the sole King and Head of the Church, deposed from the office of the holy ministry, and prohibited and discharged from exercising the same or any part thereof within the Church of Scotland in all time coming.

After further detailing Currie's misdemeanours, the worst of which seems to have been his failure to commend the Secession, our publisher proceeds to deal at considerable length with the charges which this protagonist of the Church of Scotland has levelled against the Seceders. His answers are mainly quotations from the writings of men like Shiel, Durham, Gillespie, Forrester, Rutherford, Renwick, Brown, and MacWard. His conclusion with regard to Currie is that he "has done more real harm to the Church of Scotland, by his writings, than all her open enemies."

The errors of the Church of Scotland are dealt with in an equally faithful manner. The head and front of her offence is her alleged unfaithfulness to Scotland's solemn Covenants. To the author of the Preface one clear proof of the sin of her members and their disloyalty to the Covenants is their "going into the incorporating Union with
England, and accepting Establishment of this Church, upon the same foundation establishing the hierarchy of the Church of England in all time coming." In the case of the ministers of the Church a further proof of unfaithfulness is their swearing the Abjuration Oath, and their "subordinating themselves to the present civil powers by their reading the Act of Parliament anent Captain Porteous, and screening from censure such as have been guilty of that notorious scandal." The sinfulness of the ministers is further seen in their "countenancing, employing, and giving the right-hand of fellowship unto Mr. George Whitefield, a person leavened with gross errors, enthusiastic delusions, etc." They tolerate such errors as those of the Ariens, Socinians, Arminians, Legalists, and Neonomians; many of them are "lax and irregular in their lives and conversations;" and finally, many of them are "chargeable with very gross scandals as to their morals, and unfaithfulness as to their office."

Against men like Whitefield and Currie, and also against the Church of Scotland and her ministers and members in their present defection from Covenanting principles, the writer of the Preface finds a first-class weapon in Fraser's Treatise. "In the following Treatise, which is levelled against prelacy," he says, "all the arguments that the curates then adduced in their favours, are solidly and judiciously answered. And we have found that the agents for the present Church have defended themselves, and her with the
same weapons: so that, *Mutatis Mutandis*, this Treatise is designed for overturning any arguments this Church can advance in her own behalf, and for confirming all honest Seceders in their Secession from her. *"The following Treatise,"* he repeats later on, *"is of excellent use, at this day, for the edification of the Lord's people, for establishing and confirming all honest Seceders in the testimony they bear against the corruptions and backslidings of the dregs of time wherein our lot is fallen."

Following the Preface to the Reader's twenty-two reasons are given for the publication of the Treatise; but as they are little more than a repetition of what has already been said in the Preface it is unnecessary to give them in full. A note at the end of these Reasons states that the publisher "has subjoined unto this Treatise a small collection of some public papers relative to the same question therein discussed, which he hopes may be of some use." These papers are printed together under the title: "The Reasons Agreed upon by the Reformers of the Church of Scotland, for which the Book of Common-Prayer, urged upon Scotland, Anno 1637, was refused. As also the Reasons agreed upon by the Assembly of Divines at Westminster, for laying aside the English Book of Common-Prayer. Together with Mr. George Graham's Renunciation and Abjuration of Episcopacy."

From all the above it is quite clear that Fraser's Treatise was published in 1744 mainly for two reasons. There
was, first of all, the desire on the part of certain individuals to justify the Secession; and in the second place, there was the anxiety of these same people to discredit Whitefield and all in Scotland who had already given him the right-hand of fellowship, or who were likely to do so. But whatever the reasons were which led to the publication of the Treatise one has cause to be thankful that it did see the light of day, though almost fifty years after the death of the author.

The Treatise consists of four chapters. The first of these is introductory - "Wherein some things are premised touching the occasion of this Treatise, and stating of the question" - and is in three sections.

In the first section Fraser deals particularly with the situation which led him to write the Treatise. "After it had pleased God (for holy, gracious and wise ends), to send in the plague of Prelacy amongst us, breaking in, as an overflowing flood, upon the land, without resistance; by which means the whole government of Christ's Church and Kingdom was changed; and not only so, but made to run in a channel against which the whole nation had solemnly, clearly and particularly sworn .... After, I say, these evils had broken in upon us, altho' many fell, and went far away .... yet, by the power and goodness of God, many were kept blameless, at least, from bowing the knee to Baal." He goes on to point out that among those who were unwilling
To accept episcopacy without reservation there were some who while refusing to join with the curates in acts of discipline, i.e. to accept full episcopal government, were yet willing to "hear" the curates. Others questioned the lawfulness of joining with the curates in any authoritative act, either of worship or discipline. In the prevailing uncertainty he felt constrained to examine the whole question from a personal angle, knowing that in all probability he would be made to suffer for the stand he might feel compelled to take. Having prayerfully considered the question in all its bearings he came to the conclusion that it was wrong even to attend the pulpit ministrations of the curates. The Treatise embodies his considered judgment in the matter.

In the second section of this first chapter "the case is stated, and the terms explained." Five questions are propounded and answered.

What is meant by the term "conformists"? By it he means all who have accepted office under the hierarchical government of prelacy; all who have taken "collation from the prelate;" all who have promised, though not necessarily by writ or oath, to submit to episcopal government; all who have been ordained under episcopacy; all who come to episcopal synods and presbyteries, and concur with them in juridical acts; and finally, all who "forbear lecturing, sing the doxology, caHe repeat the Creed in baptism; which are all badges of the prelate's authority." Such persons, Fraser
sends, are in three categories:—those who have been
ordained since episcopacy came in; those who were ordained
under presbytery, but since the prelates have come in have
submitted to them; and those who have hesitated to take oath
or writ, but have promised to live peaceably, and to preach,
and to attend the episcopal church courts. All these, he
holds, have conformed, though not all in the same measure,
and are subject to episcopal rule.

What is the moral standing of these conformists? To
Fraser they are under-officers in an army arrayed against
Christ and His followers; they are, as such, in actual
rebellion against God; for the most part they are scandalous
persons, haters of godliness, persecutors, mockers, covetous,
drunkards or tipplers, sensual and ignorant; they are all
guilty of the dreadful sin of perjury; even the most
moderate among them are either ignorant or worldly or frothy
or self-conceited; generally they are persons unfitted for
office in the Christian Church either because of their moral
faults or on account of their lack of gifts or experience;
but better times they were the people who regularly opposed
God's work. "To conclude," he says, "such a wretched ungodly
assembly was never before convened out of hell. I shall
not say but some of them may be dear to God (tho' unknown to
me) but I am much afraid, that prelacy (as it now stands) is
such a pit, that they that are abhorred of the Lord so fall
into. Nor is it any personal prejudice (God knows) that
moves me thus to speak. It is were the Lord's will, I wish
the poor miserable creatures might see the evil of their way,
and be brought in, and humbled for their mocking, and
rebellion against God."

What is meant by "prelates" and "episcopal authority"?
Prelacy is, since poetry was banished, the main enemy of
Christ, according to Fraser, and of the Christian Church,
and prelates are no more than church-officers, having no
power from God, but commissioned by the civil magistrate whom
they acknowledge as their head. They are "the chief
supporters of Antichrist, and the greatest enemies to God
and His people." Episcopal government to-day, Fraser
continues, cannot be given the same consideration as when it
flourished two or three hundred years after Christ, for the
prelates of this time are entirely different from the bishops
of that earlier age. "Now," he says, "the case is altered;
our prelates now look liker officers of the synagogue of
Satan, than of Christ's Church, and the evil of this
government is written with the sun-beams so that he that
runneth may read it." "It is not episcopacy simply we
stand upon, but episcopacy discovered from heaven, which the
Lord will Have a controversy with, like Amalek, for ever;
episcopacy sworn against with an oath; episcopacy the grave
and tomb of the Lord's people, who have died in resisting it;
episcopacy which all the profane graceless herd of the
country countenance; episcopacy against which all the hearts
of the Lord's people are set on edge; episcopacy, after all this, set up without consent of the Lord's people, but a yoke violently wreathed about their necks, to which they must submit, or else be banished or forfeited; the Apollyon of God's people, to introduce which into Scotland, it was deemed necessary that two of the precious servants of Christ Jesus, a minister of the Gospel, who left few or none behind him, for learning, zeal and wisdom, to fill his room, and a nobleman, (to whom, for qualifications, all the rest were but shadows) and a prince in the land should die; who, tho' dead, yet speak; for the preserving of which, it was likewise thought meet, that many more precious sons of Zion, comparable to fine gold, should be sent out of the land, leaving behind them their sad remembrance; and for the establishing of which another Spanish Inquisition (I mean, the High Commission) is set up." The publisher here adds a footnote to explain that the minister and the nobleman referred to were "Mr. James Guthrie, executed June 1, 1661, and the Marquis of Argyle, beheaded May 27, 1661."

What is meant by "hearing the curates"? "The question," Fraser replies, "is not concerning accidental occasional hearing, as possibly when one, on a week-day, comes to hear; to observe them; but it is of hearing that is fixed and stated, proceeding from a relative tie, or of hearing as it is an act of worship."

What, finally, is meant by the "people of God"? By
the people of God Fraser means those who adhere to the
Covenants, and declare their opposition to the present course
of defection, and to every evil way in Britain and Ireland,
but especially in Scotland.

In the concluding section of this introductory chapter
Fraser deals with "some preliminary positions and concessions."
He believes that there will be general agreement that the
curates are for the most part very wicked, profane and scandalous;
that personal intercourse with them should be broken off; that
they should not be "sitten with" in synods; that they, like
so many of their former brethren under presbyterianism,
should cease to preach; that none should communicate with
them, or receive the Lord's Supper at their hands; that the
course they follow, and the cause they are engaged in, is an
open, stated and avowed revolt from, and rebellion against
God; that their guilt is not merely personal but is also
concerned with their authority and office in that they have
submitted to the prelates; and finally, that in view of the
fact that these islands, particularly Scotland, are more
eminently engaged against prelacy than any other nation or
people in the world, it follows that any compliance with
prelacy here would be a sadder thing than it would be
elsewhere.

The second chapter - "Some questions cleared" - deals
with certain matters, six in all, concerning the relation
of prelacy to presbytery.

1. The first question which Fraser proposes is, Can a man be at one and the same time both a bishop and a presbyter? According to episcopacy, says Fraser, a presbyter is one who has authority from a bishop to teach, rule, and administer the Sacraments, the bishop alone being qualified to ordain. But according to the Scriptures, a presbyter is "a qualified person appointed by God, through His Church, with power to administer the Sacraments, and to rule and preach with authority, in the house of God, with and in subordination to his brethren, in a fixed way."

Fraser insists that every word in this definition is of vital importance; and the question he proposes to answer is, Can a bishop be a presbyter in terms of this definition?

His answer is an emphatic No, and he proceeds to give his reasons. Subordination to the brethren being one of the essential characteristics of a presbyter a bishop having ceased to be in subordination and having assumed authority can no longer be regarded as a presbyter. As a captain who has become a colonel ceases to be a captain, though he may continue to issue orders, so a presbyter who becomes a bishop ceases to be a presbyter, though he may continue to exercise functions which he exercised as a presbyter.

A presbyter is one who is de facto inferior to a bishop, and de jure co-ordinate with his brethren: it follows that a bishop cannot be a presbyter at the same time, for that
would involve a contradiction in terms; a man cannot be both superior over and co-ordinate with the same people at the same time. The bishop is the fountain of power, the presbyters the streams through which the power flows; a man cannot at one and the same time be both fountain and stream. A presbyter's power derives from Christ, a bishop's from the king. A presbyter is an officer of Christ, a bishop of Antichrist; and no man can serve two masters.

But hitherto men who were originally ordained by bishops have been regarded as real ministers, and have not been compelled to seek re-ordination. Does this not imply that a bishop must be a presbyter, for "none but presbyters can ordain"? Fraser replies that while ordination by a bishop is really invalid yet once a man so ordained becomes subject to the true ministers of Christ his former invalid ordination becomes valid. He quotes Durham in support:—"Tho' a popish priest continuing in popery cannot be a real minister of Christ, yet a popish priest ordained by the Church of Rome, afterwards turning to the true Church, ipso facto that which before was invalid becomes valid."

What of the bishops of the primitive Church, and what of men like Ridley, Cranmer, Hooper, etc.? Were these not presbyters in the true sense? These men, says Fraser, accepted office as bishops in the times of ignorance, and are really to be treated as "minors and pupils", and their actions judged as the actions of such.
Were not the apostles superior to the presbyters, and at the same time themselves presbyters? The apostles, Fraser maintains, held a special office which permitted them to act as presbyters; they virtually held two offices, each distinct from the other. In any case it is not true to say that the relation between the apostles and the presbyters was one as between superiors and inferiors. The difference between them was that while the presbyters received their commission from the Church, the apostles received theirs direct from Christ. Further, while the presbyters' commission was restricted to a particular Church, the apostles' was as extensive as the world. And finally, the apostles had a greater measure of gifts and graces than the presbyters, and in consequence a priority of dignity, and so were called first in the Church.

In actual fact, though the apostles were called presbyters, is it not the case that in the strict sense of the word they were not presbyters at all—just as a general may be called a soldier though his rank and functions may be very different from those of a common soldier? Fraser grants that in a sense the apostles were not presbyters as the term is generally understood.

2. Do the conformists derive their authority from presbytery, under which they were ordained, or from prelacy, under which they now serve? Fraser holds that any authority the conformists now have derives from the bishop
under whom they serve, and that their former ordination is no longer valid. All persons, he says, who presume to discharge authoritative functions must first derive their authority from some source; gifts and parts are not enough; there must be some definite investment with authority. In the case of the Church this authority derives ultimately from Christ and is conferred by the Church to whom He has entrusted the power to ordain men. If a man is serving under presbytery then his authority comes to him through presbytery; if under prelacy, through the bishop. In the case of the conformists their authority clearly comes to them from the bishop.

Fraser proceeds to elaborate his point. "Into whatever stock an imp (i.e. shoot) is ingrafted, from that it receives nourishment, and in it lives and brings forth fruit." The conformists having submitted to episcopacy it follows that they derive all that they have in the way of authority from this new stock into which they have been ingrafted; that they have in fact submitted to prelacy is to Fraser clear from the fact that they "come to synods, cause repeat the Creed, forbear lecturing, and Lord the prelate." Under episcopacy all power of jurisdiction and ordination rests de facto with the bishop; "episcopacy is the power of the Church ingrafted in one, by which it differs from presbyterial government, which is the power in many equally distributed." Conformists take an oath of
submission and obedience to synods which have their life and authority from the bishop; they are at the bishop's bidding, and in him, in a sense, they live and move and have their being; their acts of worship, preaching, praying, singing, and baptizing, are regulated, bounded and ordered by the bishop; they must submit to his censures; they may even be deposed by him. In short, everything the conformists do prove that they are subject to the bishop, who can "regulate, moderate, suspend, order, refrain, cut and carve upon" all their ministerial action; and "chap them after what manner he pleases."

It is the case that some of the conformists have never in so many words renounced their presbyterian ordination; but their submission to episcopacy is, in Fraser's view, equivalent to such renunciation. By acknowledging the authority of the bishop they in effect renounce the authority of presbytery for the two cannot exist side by side; episcopacy is not, as some maintain, merely presbytery contracted with the power placed in the hands of one man; episcopacy as set up in Britain and Ireland is specifically distinct from presbytery "even as aristocracy is from monarchy, tho' monarchy be but contracted aristocracy."

"The matters stands thus," Fraser says in conclusion: "the conformists, being actual ministers, must have authority: for they preach not as gifted brethren merely, which is against their principles, God also denying this to them."
All their preachings, being acts of office, must have some power. All authority being in the Church, it is either in the hands of the community of believers, which is congregational, or in the hands of guides, either conjunctly, and so is presbytery, or solely, and so is episcopacy; which form is now in the Church: and therefore all power and authority in the Church must come from this power. The form of conveyance of this is by ordination, and their submission, and so in the same employment they are under the prelate, under which they were to presbytery formerly."

3. The third question which Fraser takes up in this chapter is, Are the conformists to be regarded as real and lawful ministers, or not? First, he proposes the question, What renders an action or an appointment null? An action is null, he says, if it lacks something which the law lays down as essential to it, something which is of the essence of it; or if it has some defect touching its substance; or if it is incapable of attaining the end for which it was ordained; or if it is contrary to the law; or if it is performed by a person who lacks the necessary authority to perform it. In the light of this definition of what constitutes nullity he declares that the conformists are not lawful ministers, and are not to be esteemed as such.

He gives definite reasons for his opinion. For a man to be a minister in the full legal sense he requires not only to receive ordination but to be a person having the
"subjective capacity" required to make ordination valid. 
By the law of God conformists, being spiritually unclean, are incapable of holding ministerial office. The same law of God which debars women from holding ministerial office operates in the case of conformists who also lack something which is essential to that office; their ignorance and sin are fatal defects in them. Further, any authority they have derives from the bishop, and a bishop is no true officer of the Christian Church.

Fraser here adds a word or two of warning. He holds that a man who exercises ministerial functions after he has forfeited the right to do so nevertheless remains a minister until the consciences of the people declare him to be no true minister. A minister even when known to be grossly scandalous is not to be cast out of communion until the Church has legally and juridically tried him; only in the case of a troubled, persecuted Church, in which it is not possible to follow the ordinary legal processes, can this procedure be in any way shortened. Again, while a minister by committing sin really forfeits his office, he is, once he turns from the evil of his ways, to be acknowledged as a true minister. Further, acts done by conformists, e.g. baptism, though in a sense null and void, do not require to be repeated. Fraser points out that at the time of the Reformation there was no re-ordination of ministers who came over from Rome, or later of those who came over from prelacy.
Such men by turning to and embracing the truth made valid their original invalid ordination. Again Durham is quoted in support:— "The popish ordination in itself is not altogether sufficient to constitute a Church, but those who have renounced the popish hierarchy, and what is antichristian in their office, and professing the truth of Christ, the former ordination becomes and stands valid."

4. Do the conformists commit sin by preaching? Fraser believes that they do. There are, he holds, certain defects so serious that the performance of certain actions, which would otherwise be a duty, becomes more sinful than their omission; and there are certain circumstances in which it becomes right to forbear doing what in other conditions one would be bound to do. Fraser contends that in the case of the conformists their duty is to refrain from preaching rather than to preach, giving as his reason the fact that they continue in their sins, that their office is founded upon perjury, that they seek selfish ends by their ministry, and that they discharge their office in an ignorant and profane manner. Further, by their continued submission to an unlawful authority they by their preaching pollute the holy things of God. They have a beam in their eyes which they ought to remove before trying to take the mote out of their brother's eye. They have still to be reconciled to their brethren whom by their defection they have injured. And finally, it is their plain duty to leave off preaching as
their former brethren did when episcopacy came in.

But, it will be asked, is not the logical conclusion from the foregoing argument that men should refuse even to pray with conformists? Not so, replies Fraser, for the prayers of all unregenerate persons are not necessarily sinful; and further, it has to be borne in mind that praying and preaching are two distinct things, and what holds true of the one does not always hold true of the other. Once a man’s wickedness becomes apparent then the people of God must refuse to countenance him in so public and important a function as preaching, though they may continue to pray with him. Eli’s sons, for example, forfeited the right to act as priests in God’s temple, and those, after the sinfulness of these men was discovered, continued to give them sacrifices to offer were guilty of sin.

5. This leads to the question, When is communion in worship lawful, and when is it not? It may be that conformists by their preaching are guilty of sin, but does it necessarily follow that those who "hear" them are also guilty? Fraser grants that the dispenser of an ordinance may sin grievously, and yet those who join with him in the ordinance may be guiltless; also that there is no sin in joining with unregenerate persons in such acts of worship as are incumbent upon all. He adds that to be present when an unlawful act is performed does not of necessity imply sin; a man, for example, may be the witness of a martyr’s death
and yet have no hand in it.

On the other hand, there are times when communion in worship does involve guilt, as, for example, when the Worship in its substance is unlawful, e.g. when a "toothless" service-book is used, or when the Lord's Supper is received kneeling, or when children are baptized with the sign of the cross. Sin is also present when scandalous ministers are patronised in preference to godly ones, or when not only the ministers but also the authority under which they hold office are sinful, or when the evils flowing from the act of worship are of greater consequence than the act itself, e.g. when it hardens and strengthens the corrupt church government, or when it grieves and condemns the godly.

6. Are there not times, it may be asked, when it is a duty to break off private intercourse with certain people, and yet not a duty to refuse to have fellowship with them in their public capacity? Fraser is convinced that "it is never lawful to separate in a personal conversation from any person, but when it is duty to separate from him likewise while in the exercise of his office." The Lord, he holds, is just as likely to withdraw Himself from a sinful man in his public office as in his private capacity. When Scripture forbids men to have fellowship with Belial no distinction is made between public and private intercourse. But, some one may say, preaching is an ordinance of God, and therefore to be countenanced no matter who it is that
preaches, to which Fraser replies that private meeting with
and speaking to one another are also commanded by God, and if
we feel compelled to break off the one the same reason should
lead us to break off the other. Conversely, if we feel
that it is our duty to "hear" the conformists we should also
feel that it is our duty to keep fellowship with them; it is
impossible to hold that their public speaking is edifying
while their private conversation is not. Let it also be kept
in mind that while, for example, a wicked man may be a
perfectly competent judge, it is impossible for a wicked man
to be a good Christian minister.

The third chapter, the longest in the Treatise, comprises
some "arguments against hearing the conformists." Hitherto
Fraser has dealt only with preliminary matters; now he comes
to grips with his subject proper. The chapter is in nine
sections.

1. In the first of these he deals with the question in
the light of the Pauline injunction: "Be ye not unequally
yoked with unbelievers." This command, as he points out,
does not mean that all fellowship with unbelievers is
forbidden, otherwise Christians would have to come out of the
world altogether. As citizens, and in business matters,
they often have to hold fellowship with persons whose morals
are not what they ought to be. "Paul," he says, "did not
renounce his burgesship in Tarsus, and the privilege of a
Roman, though the people were heathen." On the other hand
there is a kind of fellowship which is definitely forbidden; for example, such fellowship as is involved in marriage, or such as implicates us in the sins of unbelievers. By Unbelievers Fraser means not only open and professed pagans but also all nominal Christians who are not living a Christian life. Scripture, he holds, teaches that spiritual fellowship with such people is sinful, and this covers the case of "hearing" the conformists who are unbelievers in that they do the works of Satan.

To unite with conformists is unlawful, and that for several reasons: fellowship with them can never achieve the ends aimed at in all true union, for example, edification - "the blind will never lead the blind aright"; they and we are so unequal that there can never be any real accord between us; they and we are actuated by principles so entirely different that they can never be combined; union between them and us is just as impossible as between fire and water; to unite with them is directly contrary to the design, purpose, and ordination of God; union with them leads to certain sad consequences, which will follow, not accidentally, but necessarily; and finally, union with them will bring upon us the disasters which will surely come upon them.

It will be asked, May not the conformists have certain gifts to offer? If they have any gifts to offer they are hardly likely to use them for God, being children of Satan.
Is it not possible for God to use even such unsuitable instruments as the conformists? No one has ever heard of anyone being converted by their preaching; preaching is the power of God only when dispensed by men divinely commissioned, and the conformists have neither the divine commission nor the divine blessing. Does the bond not still exist which united us to these men in the days before episcopacy came in? In deserting presbytery they dissolved the tie which bound us together. Is it right to speak of "hearing" the conformists as having fellowship with them? To take part with them in public worship is most decidedly to have fellowship with them.

2. In the second section of the chapter Fraser takes up the argument based upon our Lord's discourse concerning true and false shepherds in St. John x. 1-14.

He begins by defining a false shepherd. He is one who has not entered by the right door, which is Christ, or the Church to which Christ has committed the keys. He has come in not to feed the flock but to destroy it. He has no real concern for the sheep; when trouble arises he thinks not of them but of himself. They are not really his; they do not recognize him but flee from him. By these tokens it is evident that the conformists are to be regarded as false shepherds, and are to be shunned, for they are in reality thieves and robbers. By all their works they show themselves to be such; they have entered not by the door but
by the window; they have no real concern for the people, but care more for their stipends; in times of danger they flee.

Some people may hold that even the conformists preach sound doctrine, but, according to Fraser, what appears to be orthodox preaching is really a cloak to hide their villainy. Other may say that though the conformists are not ministers de jure, yet they are so actu, and as such they should be countenanced. But ministers who are not so de jure, i.e. who have not been admitted to office in a legal manner, ought not under any circumstances to be countenanced. Even the countenancing of the conformists, quite apart from any question of following their evil doctrine, is a sin.

3. Fraser contends that the conformists lack that commission from God without which no man ought to preach, or be "heard". God has made it plain in Scripture that certain men are commissioned by Him to declare His word, and equally plain that there are others who are not so commissioned. In the case of the conformists there is no difficulty in deciding to which class they belong; their commission has come not from God but from perjured prelates; they are clearly God's enemies; their very works declare them to be false prophets; they do not convert men; they are not qualified for the office of God's messengers; and God has expressly forbidden us to countenance them.

But surely, it will be argued, a man who has received his commission from the Church, the body to which God has
entrusted the power to ordain, is to be regarded as having been commissioned by God Himself. Not so, replies Fraser, for God has not given His Church authority to ordain all and sundry, but only those whom He Himself has already chosen. But if each man is to be left to decide for himself whether or not the Church has erred in ordaining any particular person, or indeed in any of her acts, will this not tend to confusion? The answer is that in the Scripture there is a perfect rule for faith and life; whatever concerns man's duty is to be found there, and man's understanding, when enlightened by the Spirit of God, will enable him to interpret Scripture aright. The Word, not the Church, is the final authority, and what the Word reveals as the will of God is to be regarded as duty no matter what the Church says. The true function of the Church is to make God's Word clear, and when it is faithfully discharging this primary task its rulings are to be held as more important than the private judgments of men; on the other hand, when it is plainly at fault, and is manifestly going contrary to God's Word, e.g. when it ordains a drunkard, it is not to be followed. All our acts, Fraser insists, ought to be "squared by the Scriptures." He adds that in the matter of deciding whether a man is truly ordained or not it is not for individuals but for the Lord's people acting together to take the necessary steps.

4. Fraser's next point is that it is impossible to
"hear" the conformists, as he puts it, "in faith". He regards it as axiomatic that no ordinance is to be countenanced where no blessing can be expected. God does not command men to do anything from which no profit can possibly come, nor does He ever choose means incapable of attaining the end He has in view, so that to worship Him by ordinances which are barren of blessing is to worship Him in vain. This, says Fraser, obviously applies to the ministrations of the conformists. They are hirelings, and God has given men no command to "hear" such; He has in fact assured them that there is no profit in countenancing them. They are an abomination to Him, they have broken His covenant, they shall not prosper. "That which is filthy in the Lord's eyes, can never be pure to a saint, when they see it so."

5. Fraser now goes further, and insists that actual sin is involved in "hearing" the conformists. Our aim, he says, should be to be holy as God is holy; any contact with sin, and countenancing of sin, makes us less than holy, makes us in fact guilty of sin. That the preaching of the conformists is intrinsically and necessarily sinful he deduces from the fact that it is contrary to the law of God in that the authority behind it has come, not from God, but from prelates. Further, if their former brethren were justified in leaving off preaching when presbytery went out then the conformists cannot possibly be justified in continuing to preach. Again, the open sins of both prelates
and curates - perjury, drunkenness and the like - make their preaching abominable in the sight of God.

If it be granted that the conformists sin when they take it upon themselves to preach it follows that to attend their ministrations is also sinful. They are openly violating the second commandment, they are doing something which they have no right to do, they are acting without authority - and by our "hearing" them we make ourselves guilty of the same sins which are justly laid to their charge.

6. It has also to be borne in mind that sad consequences follow the "hearing" of the conformists. "Evil communications corrupt good manners." By "hearing" the conformists we make ourselves, as they already are, members of Satan, and expose ourselves to the judgments which are hanging over their heads. We are kept from doing those things which are enjoined upon us - "abuses cannot be rectified; pure lively ordinances cannot be dispensed; the faithful messengers of God, whose bellies, like Elihu's, are charged and swollen with new wine, and ready to burst, cannot get spoken; the children are starved; no sacraments are administered." We are hindered from God's presence for He hides His face from us as long as we are in fellowship with them. We are tempted to despise the Lord's ordinances when such filthy hands dispense them. We help to strengthen the prelatical power. We keep the conformists from seeing themselves as they really are. We are prevented from
showing our loyalty to the Lord Jesus Christ, our King and Master. And finally, we sadden the hearts of the righteous.

If it be objected that if a thing is a duty then we should not refuse to do it merely because we fear what we may have to suffer, the answer is that "accidental consequences are no ground for suspending a positive duty; but such consequences as flow from the nature of the thing itself, do warrant us to suspend the duty." And if the further objection be raised that the foregoing arguments seem to imply that if we, to take an example, were in New England we could not join with the ministers there, they being Independents and we Presbyterians. The answer is that the cases are not on all fours. Independency is already established in New England, and our joining or not joining with the Independents would not make any difference one way or the other, while on the other hand Prelacy has still to be established here and what we do or refrain from doing will have some influence on what is to be the outcome. Further, Independency, though in the eyes of Presbyterians it has its faults, is not so utterly wrong as Prelacy.

7. Fraser now offers what he calls "some providential considerations" to support his argument. It is because they have refused to hear the curates that the Lord's people are now exposed to suffering, so that "hearing" the conformists is tantamount to condemning the righteous. It is our duty to support and defend the Church, and to hold
fast to the liberties won for us - "to submit now to the
prelates is apostasy and backsliding." No nation has
ever been more engaged than ours both by oath and practice
against prelacy; no nation has ever suffered more in the
fight against this particular form of Church government.
We are dealing with men who are open enemies of Christ and
godliness, person who do not even make a pretence of godliness.
God has openly shown His approval of those who have separated
themselves from the conformists. The most strict, tender,
and godly amongst both ministers and professors of the Gospel
are opposed to "hearing" the conformists. The very authority
by which prelates and curates preach is vitiated and unlawful.
It is to be noted that prelates, curates, and their abettors
are particularly anxious that we should "hear" them, this
being the only significant testimony which private persons
can give. Parliament by its laws and acts has declared
that "hearing" is to be regarded as a sign of approval of the prelatic church government. Those who
"hear" the conformists are delivered from the fear of suffering,
and no Christian ought to do what is wrong merely in order
to escape suffering.

At this point Fraser makes his personal confession.
At First, he says, he was in favour of "hearing" the curates,
and actually did countenance the ministrations of prelates
and curates of all sorts. But he soon found that "hearing"
did him no good, rather did it upset and confuse him. One
day being led to remain away from Church he found that the Lord's presence was more real to him that day than it had been for a long time. In the end he came to the conclusion that "hearing" was wrong and did him more harm than good. He sums up his convictions in the matter by saying that "prelacy is the banner under which all evils have mustered since the Reformation," and against it all godly persons must set themselves in array.

8. In this section various arguments already dealt with in greater or less detail are repeated. Those who are not ministers acting under lawful authority should not be "heard", and this includes conformists who not only preach by an unlawful, usurped authority, but are themselves scandalous persons. It is impossible to hold, as some do, that they draw their authority to preach from presbytery, under which they were originally ordained, and their authority to rule from prelacy, under which they now serve; their authority in both cases comes from the prelates, and from them alone. The Lord's people are to separate from them both as ministers and as private individuals.

9. In the concluding section of the chapter Fraser turns to the Solemn League and Covenant. "The rank wits of this adulterous and evil generation have been, and are in nothing more employed," says Fraser, "than in cutting asunder the bonds of the holy and solemn oath of the Covenant." That Covenant, he continues, is a national oath, one in which the
whole nation is engaged; it is also a lawful oath, and to
resile from it involves manifest and sinful perjury. By it
we are bound to extirpate prelacy and to refuse to acknowledge
it in any way or to submit to it; or to countenance those who
support it. This means that we must refuse to acknowledge
not only those who are governors-in-chief in the prelatic
system — the prelates or bishops — but also the under-
governors — the curates and the conformists — whose sole
authority derives from those immediately superior to them.
To countenance any of these or to submit to any acts of office
proceeding from them is equivalent to accepting prelacy.
If we are to be faithful to our Solemn League and Covenant
we must, in short, refuse to "hear" the conformists, refrain
from attending prelatic synods and sessions, and abstain
from holding any kind of fellowship with these people. There
is nothing that can absolve us from discharging our
obligations under the Covenant; no defection on the part
of those who were at one time bound with us, no consideration
arising from our comparative impotence now to eject prelacy,
and no tenderness to the godly who go to "hear" the
conformists.

In the fourth and last chapter of the Treatise Fraser
deals with various arguments advanced by the curates and
their abettors in favour of countenancing prelacy.

1. In the first of the eleven sections which comprise
the chapter reference is made to our Lord's saying; "The
scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: all therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do." If it was right to hear the scribes and Pharisees surely it cannot be wrong to "hear" the curates. Fraser's reply to this is that men were commanded to pay deference to the scribes and Pharisees as judges and interpreters of the civil law, not as ecclesiastical leaders. It is inconceivable, he holds, that our Lord should require any one to obey in the religious sphere men who were so grossly heterodox and erroneous in their doctrine and manners as the scribes and Pharisees. Moses, he points out, was the representative of the civil authority while Aaron was the ecclesiastical leader.

Further, there is no real point of comparison between the scribes and Pharisees on the one hand, and the curates on the other. Whatever their faults the former did have authority; they were appointed by God to teach the people; they were free from scandalous sins. The curates, on the other hand, have no real authority, and worse still, there is no hope of reformation in their case, for they are steeped in their sins.

Again it is to be remembered that our Lord does not ask men to pay attention to the teaching of the scribes and Pharisees. Over and over again in fact Scripture warns men to beware of their teaching; they are spoken of as "blind leaders of the blind." As long as they confine themselves
To their proper task as civil magistrates and leaders, obedience is due to them, but when they presume to deal with spiritual things men are not to pay attention to them. In the case of the curates no obedience whatsoever is due to them for unlike the scribes and the Pharisees they do not even have status as civil leaders.

2. The second section of the chapter deals with Paul's reference in the Epistle to the Philippians to those who preach Christ out of envy. Some people hold that it was the Apostle's view that even such men should be "heard". "Whether in pretence, or in truth," he says, "Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice." To this argument Fraser replies that what Paul rejoiced in was not that Christ was preached out of envy, but that He was preached. "'Tis great joy," he says, "that the Lord is yet outwardly honoured by His enemies; and I am in part, and in some respect glad, that prelates and curates do yield outward obedience to Christ, tho' I think it unlawful to hear them." Again, it has to be kept in mind that the ministers to whom Paul was referring were officers, officiating by a lawful authority, and there is no ground for saying that they were scandalous persons, guilty of sins such as can be laid to the charge of the curates — profaneness, drunkenness and the like. Paul's commendation cannot be taken as justification for "hearing" the curates.

3. There is another argument based upon the fact that
the people of God did not separate themselves from Eli's sons in spite of the notorious wickedness of the latter. To this Fraser replies that by their uncleanness the sons of Eli were incited from serving in the sanctuary, and the people who gave them sacrifices to offer sinned in so doing. But even the sons of Eli, with all their wickedness, possessed a qualification which the curates do not have - they were officers serving by a lawful authority, and at the time they were in fact the only persons authorised to minister at the altar. It will be noted how throughout the Treatise Fraser lays great emphasis upon this question of authority.

4. Still another argument brought forward to justify "hearing" the curates is the fact that when our Lord healed the leper He sent him to the priest to offer the sacrifice prescribed. But, as Fraser points out, this argument if it proves anything at all proves too much. If we are to build upon it it means that even if the prelates and curates come in the end, as those priests did, to deny Christ out and out, still we cannot separate from them, and that is an impossible position to take up. It has also to be borne in mind that when that incident took place Christ was at the beginning of His ministry, and had to rectify faults gradually. Further, at that time the priests had at least the semblance of godliness; their sin had not yet been publicly discovered. And even if their wickedness been
common property still the Church they served was the only Church at that time, and if men had separated themselves from it that would have meant that God would not have been publicly worshipped at all. In any case, the priest to whom Christ sent the leper may not have been one of the wicked priests; for all we know he may have been another Zacharias.

5. Some may point out that the prophets and saints of old did not separate themselves from the Church of their time though it was corrupt and unclean, so why are men now to separate from prelates and curates? Fraser replies that there is really no comparison possible between the early Jewish Church and the Church of to-day; the situation is entirely changed. But in any case we do know that the prophets did command people to separate themselves from false teachers; and we have no reason to suppose that the prophets and saints of old joined with scandalous persons in public worship until they gave some sign of repentance. When the curates show signs of repentance we too shall join with them. "And now, I say, let curates repent and mourn, and quit the evil of their way, and renew their covenant, and we will yet continue with them; we will not hold the door out upon them for ever."

6. There was no command, it will be said, to separate from the corrupt churches of Corinth, Galatia, Ephesus, etc. Fraser points out that the arguments which he has already
advanced are applicable here, but in addition he makes two observations. It is clear, first of all, that there should be no fundamental separation from the Church, but only from corrupt officers; and in the second place, not every corruption or scandal affords sufficient ground for separation. In the Pauline churches referred to there were indeed scandals in doctrine and manners, but these were not obstinately continued in, while in the case of prelacy there is ground for fear that reformation is well nigh impossible.

7. But, it will be objected, has not the Church always regarded separation as sinful? It all depends, says Fraser, upon the grounds on which the separation takes place. Not all sins are such as to justify separation. But where there are sins which are gross and visibly odious, and sins which proceed from wilfulness, presumption and obstinacy separation is justified. In this connection a distinction is to be drawn between passive separation, or "coming out," and active separation, or "casting out." And further, separation need not be complete in every case; we may have fellowship with the people from whom we separate in certain acts but not in others; and we may separate from certain persons in the Church, and not from the Church itself. According to the measure of guilt so must the separation be. Fraser adds that in the present case it is the Episcopalians who are to be regarded as the real separatists, not the Presbyterians.
8. May it not be argued that when we separate from the conformists we also separate from public ordinances, and so deprive God of what is His due? There are certain things, says Fraser, such as preaching and administering the sacraments, which become ordinances only when performed by persons duly commissioned by God. When these are done by men who lack the divine commission they cease to be ordinances, and we incur no guilt in ceasing to attend them. Prayer and praise on the other hand are duties incumbent upon all and we must not neglect them.

9. Is it not the case that many of our godly predecessors refused to separate from prelates and curates, and is it not the case that even to-day there are many good people who frown upon separation? But, replies Fraser, we are not to take what others do or refuse to do as our standard of conduct, and in any case this argument means little for while there may be godly men then and now who do not favour separation there are equally godly persons who believe that separation is the only right course to pursue. Again, it should be remembered that what might be expedient in the dawn of the Reformation is not necessarily right now. Times have changed; men are now engaged by solemn oath against prelacy, and blood had been shed in the conflict.

10. Is it right to court needless suffering? To this question, which he confesses he regards as the strongest
argument of all, Fraser answers that if men are convinced that "hearing" the conformists is a sin then no matter what the consequences are likely to be they must refuse to "hear." Let them also remember that when men have to suffer for doing anything the chances are that that thing is the Lord's will. "'Tis the liker to be duty, that the Cross attend it." A further point - if all true professors, or a considerable part of them, were to refuse to "hear", the probability is that they would receive better treatment than they do now.

11. In the final section of the chapter various arguments in favour of "hearing" the conformists are answered. One of these arguments is that the conformists were lawfully ordained, and have never been deposed. If the Church were in a position to do so, says Fraser, it would most certainly depose these men; it is only its present weakness which debars it from taking action. But in any case these men by their apostasy and transgression have virtually deposed themselves.

If it be held that the conformists represent the only constituted Church in the country at this time the reply is that there is a real Church in being, consisting of the ministers who have been thrust out of their charges. Though these are debarred for the moment from exercising their office yet the Church which they represent continues in being.
To the contention that if the conformists cease to carry out their ministerial functions preaching and all public worship will come to an end throughout the country, the answer is that once the prelates and their officers have been got rid of the true ministers and people of God will soon fall to and rebuild the house of the Lord.

The Treatise ends with a few short paragraphs in which Fraser sums up his arguments, stressing once more the utter corruption, uncleanness, and perjury of the conformists, and the imperative necessity of separating from them if men are to be true to their Lord. "Now," he concludes, "may the Lord Himself visit His poor afflicted remnant, and give them grace, wisdom, boldness, and patience, until the evil days pass away. To Him be glory for ever. Amen."

Though this Treatise is one of the best known of Fraser's works, at any rate as far as its title is concerned, it is decidedly not one of his best, nor was it destined to influence to any appreciable extent the course of Scottish Church History. And for us to-day its interest is little more than academic. We are no longer concerned with the question which so exercised him and the men of his time - the rightness or wrongness of "hearing" curates and conformists. Though in his high doctrine of the Word of God, and the paramount claims of that Word upon the obedience of men, even when such obedience is likely to involve separation from our brethren, and schism within the Church, there are lessons which we would
all do well to take to heart. Fraser did not regard schism lightly, but he saw that there are times when loyalty to Christ demands nothing less than separation.

Again, while no one can read the Treatise without coming to the conclusion that it is the work of a man with an acute mind, the dominant impression will in most cases be that it is unnecessarily long. It might with great advantage run to one hundred pages rather than to over two hundred as it actually does. In reading it one is often reminded of Carlyle’s well-known criticism of the Koran—"a wearisome, confused jumble, crude, incondite, endless iterations, longwindedness, entanglement, most crude, incondite; insupportable stupidity in short." Fraser’s Treatise is by no means "insupportable stupidity," but it is longwinded, it is often wearisome, and a good deal of it consists of "endless iterations." Many of its arguments, while perfectly sound in themselves, and well worth bringing forward in support of his contentions, are repeated over and over again, almost ad nauseam. To drive home an argument repetition is a weapon not to be despised, but a point is soon reached beyond which repetition begins to defeat its object. One feels in Reading this Treatise that many of Fraser’s best points are dulled by over-emphasis and unnecessary repetition. At the same time he shows himself to be a severely logical debater and one who can marshal his arguments to the best possible advantage. One does
not wonder that the Seceders in the mid-eighteenth century regarded his Treatise as first-class propaganda for their position and contentions.

When all is said and done the Treatise is a great piece of work. There is sincerity in it and earnestness, and the author makes out a perfect case for separation from the conformists of his time, and after all that was what he set out to do. The Treatise is not, and does not profess to be, a theological work. What theology in the strict sense of the term there is in it is Calvinism of the orthodox pattern. At this stage in his career Fraser shows little sign of divergence from the commonly accepted doctrines of his time. His doctrine of the Word of God, for example, and in particular his subordination of the Church to the Word, and his insistence that when these two say different things, or appear to do so, it is the Word that is to be obeyed rather than the Church, is very pronouncedly Calvinistic in its emphasis. The Treatise gives no indication that later on its author was so to diverge from orthodox Calvinism as to propound a theory of universal redemption very far removed from the theology in which it was embedded.
The second of Fraser's works to appear in print, and the first of a purely theological kind, was his Meditations on Several Subjects in Divinity, published in Edinburgh in 1721. In a foreword the publisher says: "The following Sheets need no Recommendation, after so great a Name prefix'd to the Title Page. It may very well be said of the worthy Author Mr. Fraser, as it was said of Augustine, He was a Wonder of Nature, and a Miracle of Grace; he had a prompt and capacious Spirit, a fertile and rich Fancy, and an incomparable Dexterity in unfolding the Secrets of corrupt Nature, and the Mysteries of Divine Grace. He had a more than ordinary Insight into God's Covenant of Grace, and it would seem, that the Lord had singl'd him out amongst many, that He might reveal His Son in him. That Scripture was indeed verified in him, Psal. xxv. 14. 'The Secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him, and He will shew them His Covenant.' In brief, He an Able Minister of the New Testament, rightly dividing the Word of Truth .... While he was here on Earth he shone by His Life and Doctrine, and now
he is shining in the higher House, a Saint of the First Magnitude. The following Meditations are faithfully printed from the original Manuscript; we would not presume to alter his Way of Speaking, which is peculiar to himself, and which any who were acquainted with him will easily bear with. They were written in his younger Years, and they breathe forth an Ardent Love to Christ, being the love of his Espousals: They contain much of practical Religion, press'd in a very Evangelical Manner. With what Warmth of Affection does he speak of Christ, and with what Detestation of Sin! With what moving Considerations does he incite to the Love of the One, and Hatred of the Other! How feelingly does he speak of The Combat betwixt the Flesh and Spirit! And how skilfully does he lead to the blessed Fountain, for Strength to overcome! In short, thro' every Page there is a great Strain of Godliness observable; and the great Number of practical Books amongst us, needs make none think the publishing of this unnecessary, seeing Religion is a Subject that can never be exhausted, and the Lord is pleased, in a way of Sovereignty, to reveal more of His Mind to some than others."

I. The first of the fifteen Meditations which the book contains is entitled Of Trusting upon God, and begins with the assertion that "it hath been a plague on the generality of the spirits of men, to be much taken up with duties, in themselves good, and in their own order good,
and convenient; and yet to neglect the more useful duties, as believing, heart-searching, and watchfulness, and self-denial: the tithes of annise and cummin are taken up precisely when the weighty things, or more weighty things of the Law are omitted: and truly this duty of trusting on God is very much slighted by these who have best right and ground to practise it, whilst others, to whom this children's bread doth not belong, do greedily snatch at it."

"This duty of trusting on the Lord," Fraser continues, "is a moral duty, tying all persons at all times, being from the beginning of the world;" its neglect led to the destruction of the people of Israel, for it is universally enjoined upon the people of God; it is the thing which all have to render to God as creatures to the Creator. Faith and presumption are to be distinguished for they are entirely different things, the latter being as plainly forbidden in Scripture as the former is commanded. Faith becomes presumption when, for example, men trust on the Lord with an eye to the material advantages they hope to secure, or when on the ground that they trust in God they continue to indulge in sin foolishly assuming that they will automatically be forgiven. Further, there is a distinction to be drawn between faith in the full sense of the term, or saving faith as it is usually called, and that rudimentary dependence upon God which is sometimes found even in unregenerate persons and hypocrites. Faith in the latter sense is an imperfect
thing, but even so it has its reward. "There is," says Fraser, "a twofold faith and trust, one is a faith of assurance, another is a faith of dependence." Assurance is built upon the promises of God, "which are only yea and amen in Christ," so that no unregenerate man can have any claim to such faith; while the faith of dependence is based upon the goodness, tenderness, love and power of God, which He is free to communicate when, and where, and to whom He pleases, and so even unregenerate men may have it. Faith in the full sense is a rare possession; "it is," says Fraser, "a most difficult thing to believe, and depend upon the Lord."
The Israelites are a case in proof; in spite of all God's mercies to them, and all the tokens of His goodwill in the Wilderness, they remained stubborn in their unbelief; they lacked the faith which one might have expected in them.

With these preliminary remarks about faith in general Fraser passes to a more detailed consideration. What, he asks, does faith really mean? It is, he replies, an acknowledgement of the folly of trusting in ourselves or our abilities or indeed in anything other than God; it is "a seeing of all fulness in the Lord, a plaister for all maladies and sores"; it is a prizing of all the things which God alone can give us; it is the soul's realisation that it must not build upon anything in itself but only on God's goodness and faithfulness; it is an expectation of good from what we know of God; and it is, finally, a quiet
resting upon God.

How are we to acquire this faith? Make a real effort to understand your need of the Lord Jesus Christ, says Fraser; try to "be well acquainted with the Lord's name, which is the righteous man's strong tower"; get an interest in God, and make Him your own; labour to recognize the Lord's glory in His performing for you all those things for which you depend on Him; do not dwell too much upon improbabilities, nor upon grounds of distrust; use prayer as a weapon against unbelief; meditate on former experiences, either your own or those of others; and, "if you see any qualification to which a promise is annexed, find it out."

How is true faith to be distinguished from the faith that is false? A true faith, says Fraser, is mixed with much love to the person of Jesus Christ; it rests in Him, as well as on Him; it is accompanied by repentance; and it looks to God alone for all blessings. A false faith does not have the effect of mortifying or subduing a man's sin. "Oh! know it," says Fraser, "your faith must purify your heart, if of the right make." Further, a false or imperfect faith looks to God not for all things, as true faith does, but only for some, such as deliverance from outward evils; it desires the removal of some sins only, but not of all sins. To a false faith God is not all in all. "A carnal man," Fraser holds, "hath some broken reed to lean on, some cistern or other which he puts in balance with God,
Only an honest heart, Fraser continues, will receive anything from the Lord. Let no man deceive himself by trusting to the Lord for any unlawful thing, anything that is not in accordance with His will. Do not limit God as to the time, manner, or measure of the mercy expected. Do not expect anything without pains; God gives His promises and gifts freely, yet He will have men use means for obtaining them. Do not expect God instantly to give the very thing asked for; He may indeed give it, but not all at once, but rather "in penny-worth." Let not men conclude that they lack faith when they find it mixed with doubts and fears.

Faith is a duty enjoined upon all men. God is displeased with those who refuse to trust Him; conversely, He is pleased who do trust Him. Faith leads to much joy and comfort; anything that comes to us as a result of our faith will rejoice us exceedingly. Faith, Fraser says in conclusion, "is the life of the saints that were before us, are, or shall be; this was their constant trade .... and ye shall find that faith was their attorney-general, that which performed all things for them; they subdued sins by this, they rejoiced in this, pleased God is this, disdained the pleasures of sin for a season, condemned the world, lived in heaven, yea, faith did all things for them."

This brief meditation on faith may be regarded as an introduction to Fraser's _magnum opus_, his _Treatise on Faith_,
which contains his more mature and much more fully developed views on the nature of saving faith.

II. The second Meditation deals with Hungering and Thirsting after Christ, a state which, according to Fraser, is marked by a realisation that we lack something, and a sense of misery and unhappiness arising from that lack; also by what he calls "unsatisfaction under sense of the absent good." As long as a man is without Christ nothing will give him any real satisfaction; "bring gold, silver and honour to an hungry man, he could not be content; he would esteem a crust of brown bread more than all this." "The longer the soul wants," Fraser continues, "%the more it is unsatisfied .... This hunger is a growing hunger .... There is a great prizing and esteem of the thing longed for .... A man that is painfully sick desires to hear, to see and speak with none so much as with the physician."

What, it may be asked, are the signs of a true hunger and thirst after Christ? A man, Fraser replies, who really hungers and thirst after Christ will care little for anything else; "nothing can satisfy a hungry man, but meat, a thirsty man, but drink, an ambitious man, but honour, a covetous man, but wealth, an epicure, but meat, drink, and pleasure .... so nothing will satisfy a Christless man, struck with the sense of sin, wrath and misery, but a Christ." Again, such a man will prize anything that gives him Christ,
even in the smallest measure. "Any sermon, if it speak of Christ, is prized; any crumbs picked from Scripture, are welcome." Fraser laments that so few in his day hunger and thirst after Christ like that; "I fear," he says, "there is but little prizing of Christ; now nothing but able men, or else no hearing; high-flown notions of Christ, and some fine notions of Scripture, else he is but a cold preacher, and they are wearied ere the tedious sermon be but half done." Further, the man who really hungers and thirst after Christ will spare no pains to find Him. "He who says that he loves, desires, longs after Christ, yet loves his queans, his cups, his righteousness and duties, his pride, his credit or his ease, his pleasures, as he will not quit them for Christ, is a liar, and the truth is not in him." On the other hand, "a thief that is hungry will venture his neck for meat, and will give anything for it; so a soul hungering and thirsting for Christ will spare nothing for Him." Finally, such a man must have Christ; "if a soul be wounded under sense of the want of Christ, nothing but Christ will satisfy."

Hungering and thirsting after Christ, Fraser continues, is not a universal condition. There are many who do not realize their need of Christ; like poor Eadicea, they believe that they are rich and lack nothing, and yet they lack much. These people do not realize the excellence of what they have missed; "there is a veil over the eyes, and though Christ be excellent, and worth all the world, and the
delight of the Father, and the glory of the heavens, yet they see no beauty in Him for which He should be desired." In some men the world, like so many thorns, chokes the longing for Christ. Others become discouraged too easily, and conclude that God will pay no attention to them; "because of unbelief and discouragements they think in their hearts that though they should take never so much pains, frequent never so many sermons, yet God will not regard them; nay, though they should thirst after it, yet that it should not be; and therefore never trouble their heads with it." There are some who begin by hungering and thirsting after Christ, and who make some real efforts to find Him, but in the end become satisfied with something less than Christ; they allow the world to fill their hearts. And finally there are those to whom Christ's promises are "like the white of an egg, unsavoury and vile" — one of Fraser's favourite similes — the reason being that they lack the new nature, and have no relish for spiritual things.

III. In the third Meditation Fraser deals with Some Useful Considerations for raising our Esteem, Love and Desire after Christ, under Deadness and Desertions, the sub-title being, "to quicken the Soul in its Motions after the Lord of glory, especially to the Saints."

When we seek Christ, Fraser begins by reminding us, we pursue not a shadow, a vanity, a trifle, a thing of nought, a perishing, fading flower that cannot satisfy, a thing which
takes wings end flies away - the fond world pursues that kind of thing - but "the Son of God, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, to whom is given all power in heaven and in earth, and who doth command, rule, govern, punish, and reward all nations, doing whatsoever pleaseth Him, and who shall one day judge the world, and come in such an amazing glory, that the saints shall be drowned in an eternal admiration of Him, out of which they shall never recover themselves, but shall be swallowed up of this incomprehensible glory."

Just as a draught of cold water, Fraser goes on, is better for a thirsty man than gold or precious stones, however excellent these may be in their own way and place, so Christ, apart from His intrinsic excellence, is eminently suited to men's need, for as Spirit He can satisfy creatures whose nature is spiritual. "There is not an empty vacuity, or voidness in all the soul, but Christ can fill." If we lack holiness, we find in Him a fountain for sin and uncleanness; if we lack knowledge and understanding, He has eye-salve for our blinded eyes; if we are poor, He has gold tried in the furnace; if we are naked, He has clothing for us; If we are pursued by wrath, if we are grieved, vexed, and cast down by the unfaithfulness, harshness and deceitfulness of friends, we find in Him a loving, compassionate, faithful, powerful and honourable friend; and if we are wearied with the world, we find in Him rest for our souls.
What a glorious thing it is to have Christ as our own, and to be able to say, "My Beloved is mine, and I am His". And what a terrible thing to lose Him! "To lose a thing not mine, troubles me not," says Fraser, "but to lose mine own, grips to me." "Oh! ye fools," he cries, "seize quickly upon all this treasure, your will and consent makes them yours, ye have them for the asking, and for less; the market may arise quickly, and that which very little would do, ten thousand worlds shall be offered for it, and it shall not do."

We may have in Christ, if we will, the nearest and closest of all imaginable relationships, one which can be described by such terms as Brother, Father, God, Lord, King, Head, and Friend. "Christ," says Fraser, "is all comfortable relations to His people .... Is He not the half of thyself, and the best half? If thou hast not this interest in Christ as yet, as many have not, then make up for thy life quickly, otherwise thou wilt live a fool, and die a beggar, and be eternally undone for want of Him."

And not only does Christ stand to us in all possible relationships, but in them all He has never been surpassed in His kindness, greatness, and goodness. "Christ's love is unchangeable and constant, which neither sin, ingratitude, worthlessness, weakness, or jealousy can change .... Some there are which love in word, but not in action, or in deed; Christ loved in heart and action: Christ came down from
heaven, and He met with a number of broken men unable to recover themselves; Christ took on the debt, and wared all He had, His honour, His pleasure, His glory, His Father's fellowship. And when all would not do, He pawned and paid His life, not by constraint, but most willingly. Who will dare to die for a righteous person? but Christ dared to die for His enemies. Christ saw all the elect swimming in a flood of vengeance, and they were ready, like Peter, to sink; Christ waded through Himself, and got many a sad dowl ere He pulled out His lambs. If thou hast anything that is good, pleasant, or comfortable, Christ bought it, and sent it unto thee; He endured scorn, hunger, thirst, cruel mockings, contradiction of sinners for thy sake. There was a black and fearful cup of pure and unmixed vengeance prepared for thee, that would have made all the angels reel and run mad, and this we behoved to drink; and the dregs were curses of the Almighty: Christ pitied, wept, took up the cup, and without more ado sipped it off. When all our necks were upon the block, and the sword just ready to come down; Christ stept in and received the blow. When the storms were blowing within and without, Christ rode chin deep into the sea, He remembered His bride, and when He had done all, He thought all well wared; He saw the travel of His soul, and was satisfied; Christ never either before or after repented His bargain."

Christ, in short, is all in all to us; our portion,
our physician, the health of our countenance, our gain, our riches, our heritage, our meat, and drink, and clothing, our very soul and life, our rock, our strength, our light, our wisdom, our sanctification, our glory, our honour. Without Him man is "a dead rotten carcase, a sick, weak thing .... a mere cipher." "When thou wants the Lord Himself" - so Fraser concludes his Meditation - "look upon thyself as wanting thy heritage, thy light, thy strength, thy refuge, and thy all. Reprobates need not mourn much; or at least not so much as thou; for they have their portion and their reward: Oh! but thou hast not, till thou hast the Lord: and therefore, seeing the Lord is all unto thee, look for Him, and seek Him by all means, and then your souls shall live."

IV. The fourth Meditation, a continuation of the third, is entitled: Shewing in what Cases the precedent Considerations may be useful.

When Christ is on the point of taking possession of your heart, says Fraser, and you draw back from Him, then consider what He could be to you. "Shall I contemn the glorious Son of God, Him in whom the Father delighteth, and shall not I give Him my heart? Shall I refuse Him that is so suitable unto all my conditions? In whom I see all my wants made up, both meat and drink? Shall I refuse such a bargain? Shall I refuse Him for my husband? Refuse to live with Him that hath done so much for me? Who will be
all unto me? Oh! I cannot, I will not." When your soul runs away from God, goes after other lovers, begins to seg, then consider what you are doing, think of your folly, your ingratitude, your unreasonableness, and turn again to Him. When in sin your heart remains hard and impenitent, consider who it is against whom you are sinning - your Lord, your King, your best Friend, your Husband, your Love. When Christ calls you to some special duties, and you find your heart drawing back, ask yourself the question, Shall I refuse to do this for Him, who has done so much for me?

When troubles and afflictions come upon you - "in sad outward pressures and afflictions, when robbed and stript of all outward enjoyments, of means, of credit, of friends, or children, or wife" - do not be discouraged, but consider that you still have Christ, and with Him God, and with God all things. "What though the streams be dried up, is not the fountain of all good and life opened?" When you are tempted to sin, ask yourself, Shall I requite the Lord thus, who has done so much for me? "So say thou, When He hath given thee all things, and every tree in the Garden of Life and Heaven to eat at they will, and hath only forbidden this one tree of sin: Oh! Do not this abominable thing."

Finally, "in time of death, when thou art taking an everlasting and long farewell of all the world, never to see them again, and when thy heart begins to fail, and break at this sad parting, as loath to leave your old acquaintance:
Oh! remember then ye are but pilgrims while here; ye are going to your Father, to your friend, to your acquaintance, to your loving and dutiful spouse; ye are going to possess and inherit your portion.... Oh! long for Him, and say, Welcome death, welcome sickness, welcome ferry-man, that will have me over to my Father's kingdom. Come Lord Jesus, come quickly. Amen."

V. The fifth Meditation comprises Considerations to crucify the World.

By "the world" Fraser is careful to point out that what he means is worldly pleasure, profit and honour; and unregenerate, reprobate men, and that fleshly, unregenerate part of man which favours the things which are earthly, and continually opposes the regenerate part, the spirit. The things of the world, he says, are in themselves good and useful — "everything that God made is very good and useful" — but when we make them ends in themselves they become evil, and oppose and hinder God and His service. We are not, he insists, to cast off the world entirely; we are to use it, being careful not to abuse it.

"There are," he continues, "two great competitors and rivals, they are God and the world; and these two draw all men after them, and there is an everlasting quarrel betwixt them: these that are with Christ are against the world, and wjooso is with the world is against Christ."

When Christ,
who knew the true value of all things, came into the world He
disdaigned it, and refused its best offers. "Christ's refusal
is as if it were a paper hat set upon it, to make it contemptible
and disgraced, to hiss it out of the estimation of His people;
and when Christ hath done this to it, who will take it up?
Who will honour it? 'Tis nothing to be disgraced with men,
nay, that's a glory sometimes; but Christ's reproaching and
scorn is a sad weight, and rubs a real infamy and blot upon
whom it lights." The world was and is Christ's enemy.
All the time He was in the world it mocked, despised, reviled,
opposed, and persecuted Him, and at last killed Him, and that
by the most ignominious and painful death that could be.
"Look therefore," says Fraser, "upon the world as a murderer,...
let the world in thy thoughts be cried down as guilty of an unpardonable crime." Christ has declared war upon the
world. "'Tis a rebel at the King's horn declared, and
condemned guilty of treason; the Lord's commission is against
it .... Stand back therefore, up and follow the Lord, and
join with Him, resist, crucify, watch against all that thou
findest in thine own heart to take this rebel's part."

The world, Fraser repeats, is Christ's enemy, but already
it is an overcome enemy, so that all His soldiers, by faith
in Him, also overcome it. It crucified Him and buried Him,
but He rose again, broke out, burst the bands of death,
satisfied justice, and is ascended triumphing in high places,
and as He did this Himself, so He does it in the hearts of
all His people. "Why are ye then afraid of the world? Do ye fear a vanquished enemy? Is not the power of the world and sin broken?" The world's best days are already over; as far as it is concerned it is now more than afternoon, and its sun is like to set shortly. "A few years more will bring it to destruction, time will be no more, and it will be buried in the pit of oblivion, all the troubles, evils, glory thereof shall never be remembered any more, this clock is going now, but it will run out, and be winded up in eternity, dust thou art, and to dust thou shalt return. 'tis on its journey, it's burning a while, it will come to nothing, and end in a fair low."

Again the world is but a lie, a deceiver, a mere cheat, a painted shadow, dreams and appearances. "How should we laugh at this painted fool that can do nothing? It cannot take away life, for 'it is I that kill, and it is I that make alive;' it is but a bugbear, it cannot kill the soul, and what's life? no great matter, a perishing shadow, a tale that's told, and all that the world can do is but to interrupt a tale, all the world's beauty is but paintry and varnishing, all its glory but fading, all its promises and threats but lies and stories and ambiguities, all its strength but weakness, loud sounding shot but no balls, only powder that doth no harm. Life is the greatest thing in this world, 'all that a man hath will he give for his life,' and yet when a Christian's life is taken away, he hath a
life hid with Christ, which is above the world's reach, and all they can do is to flit a sinner from grace to glory."

The world, finally, is the way to ruin. It is the covering and veil on the eyes of all nations, the pearl that hinders us from seeing the glory of the Lord, the partition wall that separates us from Him, the log tied to our feet so that we cannot come to Him, the devil's bait, sin's solicitor and great agent, so let us 'shake off the world's yoke and golden soft, though strong bonds; kill this enemy within thee, that is seeking to cut thy throat, and by killing it free thyself.' The world is but the portion of the wicked; for the Christian, God has better things in store. "God hath provided better things for you; meddle with your own, delight thyself in the Lord, let the Lord be your delight, fear, love and glory."

VI. The title of the sixth Meditation is Of Sin and the Power thereof. Sin, says Fraser, is the greatest evil in the world, though many other evils are more lamented. It is stronger than men, "We think ourselves strong, but let us set all our wits, resolutions and power in one, we cannot stand against sin; sin hath conquered and subdued thousands and millions, but never one, save the man Christ, subdued it." It is stronger than the devil, because it overcame him, and now he is ruled by it, and "acted" by it. "Holiness, and the formal vision of God and blessedness, were strong guards for freewill; yet sin brâge in upon them, and strake down
devils and men from their excellency, when they were in their best estate." In some respects it is stronger even than God. "Many an assault hath God made, but the City (of sin) is unconquered to this day; God hath used sermons, exhortations, mercies, crosses, miracles, and hath been hacking and hewing at sin, and all in vain, the power of sin is unbroken still; may, He hath come to the very heart, and there striven and contended, and that day by day, and a very great power hath been let out on spirits, and yet to this day no reformation." It is as strong as death itself. "As a dead man cannot rise up and live, no more canst thou that art a dead sinner live a new life: nay, as a dead man cannot do the least action, so no more canst thou do the least duty .... thou canst not so much as breathe one living desire after God."

That sin is the strongest power on earth is borne out by the fact that Paul, a regenerate man, was, for all his grace, led captive by the law of sin and death, until a new access of strength came to him from beyond the world, from Christ Himself. Its strength appears too in the fact that all the world joins with it against those who try to follow Christ. "Ye have not only sin to fight against, but ye have sin's conquered subjects .... Let a man but look out for heaven, all the world is on his top." To get rid of it a man must change his whole nature. "Ye must be partakers of the Divine nature, which is a hard business, ere ye can
enter heaven; your blind eyes must see, and deaf ears must
hear and understand, and ye must love that which you hated,
and hate that which ye loved, and do all this as God doth ....
To crucify sin is to quit a man's self, to crucify sin is to
crucify his own soul, to pluck out his own eyes and hands,
and to crucify and kill them; so that ere ye get sin out of
you, ye must fork out nature out of you .... To crucify sin
is to put violent hand in a man's own life."

But in nothing is sin's power so evident as in the
length to which God went in His conflict with it. Of God's
effort to subdue sin Fraser says that "it is so mighty, so
glorious a work, that Christ thought it not unbeseeming
omnipotency to meddle with; mercy, power and goodness never
appear so much as in subduing of sin .... Oh! there will
needs be a stronger act of power put forth than was at the
making of the world out of nothing; God must call louder,
and draw stronger than ever He did. The mightiest pull
that Christ drew, was in drawing a sinner to Himself."

Fraser now proceeds to speak of some of the ways in
which the terrible power of sin reveals itself. When a
man continues long in sin it becomes in him like an
unmoveable rock, as becomes apparent when he tries to change
his nature; after a while it is like an idol in his heart,
from which he cannot, dare not part; when the hour of trial
and temptation comes it appears in its strength and prevents
the man from doing what he ought to do; it claims the man's
heart, the best room in his life which only Christ ought to have; it prevents him from rightly performing those duties which call for self-denial; it keeps him from putting duty at the very centre of life, making it his meat and drink; and finally it makes it hard for him to accept the yoke of God.

VII. The seventh Meditation, The Voice of Backslidings, is concerned with the lessons which our secret and subtle departings from God ought to teach us. These lessons, says Fraser, are both negative and positive.

Dealing first with the negative lessons, as he calls them, Fraser begins by saying that we ought not to conclude that it is God's will that we should fall away. "God is ever worse pleased," he says, "with our sinning than with abstaining from sin." Again, let us never, for all our backslidings, lose our hope and confidence in God. "The saddest and most desperate case a sinner can be in, cannot be ground of casting away his hope, and of despair: despair and unbelief is never a duty." And further, backslidings, however frequent, never loose us from our duty; we are never freed from our duty to God, no matter how unfaithful we may be; we are under an eternal engagement to duty.

Let us not listen, Fraser continues, to the voice which bids us go and help ourselves, wash ourselves, wash away with our meditations, prayers, watchings, and other duties and sorrows, both the guilt and filth of sin, before we
venture to come to Christ. "Come unto Him with thy vile unprepared heart. Let not the filthiness of thy heart, nor the indisposedness of thy heart keep thee from Christ.... We are to come to Him in our shame and sores, with the fang in our hand, and the tokens of our shame to Christ, that He may heal." No matter how often we fall into sin, let us not conclude that no amendment is possible, for God's mercies are new every morning, and the fountain opened unto the house of David "runs always as the issue of thy sins runs always; the plaister must be as big as the sore, else it reflects on Christ. A present case is but a fallible prognostic of future events." When we have sinned let us come to God at once and confess our sins. There are those who imagine that "as man forgets faults, and as themselves forget faults mix by time, so the Lord doth." "'Tis base," says Fraser, "and contrary to the proud nature of men to come, and the marks of his whoredoms before God; and therefore, stays till he wipe his mouth, and time wear away the impressions of guilt from his conscience; and thus being disburdened by time, not by Christ, comes with less sorrow and pain at last to Christ; and thus, though they come not with less sin than before, yet with less sense of sin; and because they have forgotten it, God likewise forgets it: but though time doth make men forget faults and injuries, yet He is not like unto ourselves, and will not forget sins, as we do, but will remember them."
Again, do not let us imagine that our backslidings give us a greater right to Christ, and make us more loved by Him than formerly. "'Tis true," Fraser admits, "David saith, 'Forgive, because my sin is great;' but the greatness of his sin is not the ground of his hope: but the penitent believers use this expression, not as a motive of mercy, but as an evidence that mercy will hereby be heightened: and hence though sin, as great, procures not mercy, yet, as great, it heightens mercy, when obtained." Finally, let our backslidings make us humble, and let us not presume upon God's mercy. "Take not the highest place, but the lowest place."

Turning to what he calls the positive lessons which our backslidings ought to teach us Fraser points out that they call us to search and try our ways, and to consider them; they reveal to us the deceitfulness, power and evil of a sinful heart; they are a warning to us not to make the arm of flesh our strength; they are a call to grief and penitence for sin; they should stir us up to hate, loathe and dislike sin the more as now having done us more ill than ever; they should take from us all presumption, and make us truly humble; they should lead us to increase our opposition to sin, and induce us "to watch it more narrowly, vow more violently against the stream of sin, pray more fervently, hate it more, shun it more;" they should teach us to be more wary and vigilant, and to lean more upon God; they should turn us to Him with shame, sorrow and grief for our sin, and an endeavour to watch more
carefully against it in the time to come; and finally, they should teach us to accept God's will with patience and a meek and quiet spirit even when He permits us to fall into sin.

VIII. The title of the eighth Meditation is Concerning the Evil of Actual Sins. By "actual sins" Fraser means outward and visible acts of a sinful nature, and of these he says that "it is a common received axiom that nothing can be added to that which is infinite; and yet behold an infinite evil of sin in the heart receiving addition by actual outwepd sins .... No man is so evil but he may be worse."

Outward sins, he maintains, give Satan a perfect conquest; though the heart of man is already poisoned by sin yet Satan's dominion is complete only when the man falls into outward sins; "the combat is never perfectly won till it overcome the outward man." Outward sins strengthen the habit of sin, and harden the heart in it; "all habits are increased by their acts, he that sins actually puts another link to his chain .... Outward sins give life to the inward habit .... Custom taketh away sense of sin." And worse still, they bring down upon us the visible judgments of God, in a sense in which sin in the heart does not. "I know," says Fraser, "that 'the Lord searches the heart and judges it;' but remarkable judgments that the world must notice must be on some outward guilt, that the justice of God may be seen."
Again, outward sins mean that the whole man is corrupted; "while thy heart and affections were only pollueted," says Fraser. "thy body was clean: but when thou sinst outwardly, thy body is likewise polluted." They are a source of grave discouragement to ourselves; "heart plagues that cannot be remedied, though they be causes of mourning and of loathing ourselves, and groaning under their power, yet do not usually discourage, but when sin breaks out we are stricken out of countenance." They lead us to murmur and fret against God; "the more a man sins, the more he hateth God." And finally, they harm others, while heart sins do evil to ourselves alone; "actual sins in the conversation grieve the godly, deaden them, harden and strengthen the wicked, rejoice them, confirm them in their way, stain your profession, rubbing a shame upon it .... Example hath strong influence, whether to good or evil."

IX. The ninth Meditation, one of the shortest in the book, deals with The Vilness of Sin. Nothing, says Fraser, is so vile as sin; "whatever is vile that is sin, the most ugly loathsome disease in the world is not so loathsome as sin is." When we see it in ourselves its vileness makes us abhor ourselves for it; " thou wilt have as low, as base thoughts of thyself as any can have; thou shalt mourn and grieve, and long to be dissolved out of this earthly tabernacle, that thou mayest put off this corruption, and mayest be delivered from the body of death; thou shalt long
and sigh for His image more than for anything else in the world; thy vile wretched heart shall be a continual burden unto thee."

The vileness of sin is seen in the torture, well merited, of the damned; it is seen in the fact that God cannot keep communion with His own people, unless they be holy; and it is seen in the fact that it means the disfiguring of a creature made in the image of God, and, as Fraser reminds us, corruptio optimi pessima. Man made for holiness is by his sin made incapable of it, and "the more excellent the form be which the subject wants, the more deformed the subject without that form."

Sin, in short, is an agglomeration of evils. "Sin is folly, and nothing is more despised, loathed or contemned than a fool; there is in sin unkindness, and God hath stamped in the very nature of man a greater distaste of this sin than of any other .... In sin there is deceitfulness and treachery, and therefore the Lord's faithfulness abhors it. In every sin there is weakness, and therefore the Lord's power is against it; in every sin there is baseness, and therefore the High and Lofty One cannot abide it; in every sin there is enmity against God, and therefore the Lord cannot away with it."

The title of the ninth Meditation is Concerning the Evil of Sin. There are two great duties incumbent upon all Christiana, says Fraser; these are to hate evil, and to do good. But to hate evil they must first of all have it
rightly represented to them, and this Fraser proceeds to do, repeating and elaborating many of the arguments which he has used in the preceding meditations.

He begins by saying that one of sin's natural results is separation from God. This separation is not God's doing; it is the inevitable consequence of our sin, and is the reward of our iniquity. To this separation there has to be added both temporal and spiritual evils; "thy estate is wasted, thy credit gone, thy comforts are taken away, thy enemies are strong, and thy persecutors swift; and the Lord's hand is in all things against thee, so as thou art brought down wonderfully." Of these evils the greatest is that eternal damnation which is the merited punishment for sin. "Damnation," Fraser insists, "is not an act of sovereignty, though reprobation be; 'tis an act of justice, 'tis measure for measure, hell is no overplus of reward. To be eternally separate from the most blessed face of God in Christ: under God's eternal curse, and fearful hatred, so as never to hear a good word from Him, to be weltering irremedilessly under infinite vengeance; this is unspeakable; but indeed, it is nothing but holy, holy justice, not one grain weight of cruelty." In passing, one would do well to note this statement carefully; it shows how very orthodox Fraser was in certain parts of his teaching.

God takes exact notice of sin, he continues, for it matters a great deal to Him; to Him it is no trifle. "He sees
sin, observes it, remembers, condemns it, threatens it, is angry at it, punishes it; nay, is very serious in it, 'tis not a despicable thing in the Lord's sight.... Evils against God are great evils, to sin in His sight against Him and His honour, is no jest, nor a light matter, it draws very deep: God as an enemy is a sad relative." How God regards sin appears in Christ's coming into the world to die for sinners, and so to save them from their sins. What was the secret, Fraser asks, of this nine days' wonder, this eternal wonder? What induced the Son of God to make a journey from heaven, to take on Him the form of a servant, to be abased, to give His life? What brought the Lord Jesus to bow so low, to come from such a height to such a depth? The answer is that He came to save the lost world, to condemn sin in the flesh, to deliver men from it.

Sin and misery, be it remembered, go hand in hand for there is a necessary concatenation between them. "Sin is sure earnest and arsles of punishment: God hath ordained them, and coupled them together by an invincible chain of an immutable, sure, and eternal decree; 'tis impossible to separate them." Death is the wages of sin, and if men sow the wind and iniquity, they shall reap vanity, and the whirlwind. Sin, in short, is the greatest of all evils, greater even than hell itself; it is something we commit against God Himself, an adulterous departure from Him, a crushing and trampling underfoot of His glory and authority;
and it is an everlasting evil - "it sticks for ever," says Fraser: "eternity, if ye die in sin, will not waft it away."

XI. There are two Meditations in the book each with the title "Meditation XI." The first of these consists of Inferences and Uses from the Consideration of the Evil of Sin. It is a continuation and, in part, a repetition of the previous meditation.

We are called, to begin with, to observe what a great evil sin is. It is the greatest and vilest of all evils, and sinners in the sight of God are loathed, hated, despised, and rejected; it is a most deceitful evil, not only strong, but crafty and cunning as well; the worst that men have said about it is not mere rhetoric but plain truth; it is violent and tyrannical, without moderation or sobriety; no power in heaven or earth, except Christ, can take it away or subdue it; it is a spiritual evil, an evil of the soul; it is an everlasting evil; it is really the only evil for all other evils spring from it; it brings terrible consequences with it, and is the infallible fore-runner of bitterness, misery, and death; its consequences extend to others; in actual practice it is rebellion against God, for it means departing from Him, and despising and contemning His authority; it is against Him, His image, authority, love, kindness, providence, people, will, laws, honour, and majesty; it has caused untold suffering in the world; it even humbles Christ unto death. "In a word, all the woe
that ever was, was done by sin."

In view of all this how mad, blind and stupid men are in their dealings with sin! "Blind they are when they cannot see such a big mountain as this that fills the whole earth, dead and senseless that cannot feel this heavy weight, that cast the Son of God down to hell; mad and fools that are not taken up with this, but will venture boldly of God's sore displeasure .... To drink a cup of poison, and laugh when thou hast done, is no sign of a wise man." Men should do all they can to put it at a distance from them; it is a matter of lamentation, bitterness, humiliation, and walking softly. Think of what man has become because of sin!

His state is one of "bondage to sin, to Satan, and our own lusts, a fearful strong prison; it is a state of blindness and darkness; it is a state of separation from God, it is a state of enmity to God, 'tis a state of condemnation, sentence hath passed against thee of eternal vengeance; it is a cursed estate."

And how just and righteous God is in punishing sin, here or in eternity! "It is not only lawful for Him, but it is righteousness in Him so to do; the glory of His justice and holiness shines in it, as well as of His sovereignty; damnation is a most holy, pure, and righteous action; the punishment is not above the fault; it is fit, that thou who didst trample on God, He should trample upon thee: sin is an infinite evil, and therefore notice, infinite punishment
must follow it." Let not men complain against God for any evil that comes upon them as the consequence of their sin. And let them not try to satisfy God, or to make amends for their sins, by the performance of duties, or by repentance or reformation. We cannot repair the infinite breach our sins have made; we cannot make God amends for we have no infinite satisfaction to offer for the infinite wrong we have done Him.

And finally, how necessary it is that men should flee unto the blood of Christ, this City of Refuge, for only in Him is help, only in Him can they find a remedy. God has shown His infinite love, the power of His mercy by sending His Son to die for sinners - "mercy is high that comes over such mountains." How precious Christ ought to be to them seeing that He came to take away the infinite evil of sin! Let us all be exceeding thankful that we are already in part freed from sin. "Oh! I tell you this no small mercy, that thou art delivered in part from the greatest evil; thy greatest enemy hath gotten its dead stroke, and thou shalt one day be altogether free from it."

XII. The twelfth Meditation is entitled Of the Combat butwixt the Flesh and the Spirit. It opens with a reference to Paul's description of the conflict in himself between the old nature and the new. "In every believer," says Fraser, "there is flesh and spirit, there is two distinct
end contrary interests, the interest of sin, of flesh, and of
the world, and the interest of Christ; there is life and death,
since and grace, flesh and spirit .... These two interests do
not sit still, but resist, fight, oppose, and clash one
against another; the devil, the world and the flesh are on
one side, and Christ, with the spirit and grace on the other."

This conflict, he continues, goes on till death. "It
is in heaven the spirits of just men are made perfect; while we
are here, we are strangers and pilgrims, and therefore will
have lusts that war against the soul." The seat of this
conflict is, as far as our unregenerate part is concerned, in
our physical body; our enemies are very near us, our eyes,
hands, and so forth; the conflict is very painful, like the
pulling out of a man's right eye; it calls for great courage;
the flesh must be opposed; it is with our basest part that we
have to deal; and it is a base thing to be subject to such a
slave, the servant of servants. The flesh, our
unregenerate part, is not our real self, but our enemy; to
remember this gives us confidence in our fight; it also helps
us to bear suffering for it is the flesh, not our real self,
which suffers; and it also gives us cause for rejoicing for
the real self, the spirit, is under grace, not under God's
curse and condemnation. The flesh may indeed so far prevail
against the spirit as to lead it captive, and even for a while
to overcome. But this is no more than the chance of war, and God's way of breaking the power of selfish
confidence in us.

What are we to do in order that we may gain the victory in this conflict? For one thing, we must realize that it is a matter of deadly earnest, it is not a jest or stage-play, but a mortal combat in which every part of our being is involved. When flesh and blood come into conflict "'tis not for the first blood, 'tis the death of one another they are seeking." Again, it is not enough to groan under sin, to hate it, or to make resolutions against it; we must actively oppose it; we must be up and doing. "Labour therefore to do; content not yourselves till it come to this. 'Tis more excellent to do, and better than to resolve." And whatever we do let us not despair. "Despair not then, though sin sometimes overcome, but get up with double courage and resolution, never give over."

XIII. In the next Meditation Fraser answers the question By what Acts is the Flesh resisted and mortified? Continuing the argument of the previous meditation he asserts that there is not a Christian living who does not know the woeful experience that there is a conflict between the flesh and the spirit. He then proceeds to enumerate some of the ways in which the Spirit of Christ in a man opposes Satan and the flesh.

God, he says, lights a candle in the mind by which the evil, power, tyranny and prejudice of the flesh are revealed. This divine light descends from the mind to the heart, the
seat of the affections, and leads the man to despise the world, so that "the evil is not only seen, but felt." In this way the soul is filled with indignation and hatred against sin, and resolves to fight against it and to take revenge upon it. "The world is now arraigned, and proven guilty of a capital crime; and it appears in its own colours, a naughty, strong, tyrannical, dangerous, spiteful, and bloody enemy, against whom it sees itself called to make war by the Lord Himself."

The soul now endeavours by all means to win the victory over the flesh. By prayer it ascends to heaven and thence brings down strength from God to aid it in the conflict. It deprives the flesh of those things by which it is nourished in sin, and so besieges and starves it into submission. "Sin is starved and famished, when all the fuel thereof is taken away, when all objections and temptations are removed; so that the heart of sin breaks and dies, not having wherewith to maintain it by." The soul sets a watch, "its intelligencer," to observe and guard against sin; and employing heart, tongue, and hands throws itself into the fight. But above all, it begins to judge itself; it inflicts punishment upon itself, takes a godly revenge, afflicts itself, until the heart "be tamed, and made sensible of its evil, so as like a corrected child it stands in awe of sinning."
XIV. In the fourteenth Meditation we have **The Nature of this spiritual Combat tried, by which it is differenced from the striving betwixt a natural Conscience and Sin.** Fraser maintains that the fight which the spiritual man wages against sin differs from that put up by the conscience of the natural, unregenerate man. The natural conscience, he says, fights against some sins, while the spirit, the regenerate man fights against all sin - "every false way, sins of omission, as well as sins of commission, secret sins, as well as public sins, small sins, as well as great sins, spiritual sins, and Gospel sins, as well as sins against nature, sins of others, as well as our own sins." The natural conscience, again, strives against actual sins, while the spirit strives against sin in the root - "I hear not," says Fraser, "that hypocrites mourn for an evil nature." Further, the natural conscience opposes sin, not because of its nature, but because of the harm it does him - like the smith who will not touch charcoal, not because it defiles him, but because it burns him - while the spirit opposes sin, and hates it, from a deadly enmity to it and its nature.

Continuing, he points out that while the conscience wants only peace the spirit seeks nothing less than the death of sin. While the conscience in its fight with sin uses terrors and legal motives the spirit strives and overcomes by love and faith, and suchlike spiritual motives
and means.  While the conscience seldom deals in positives but rather in negatives, the spirit not only denies obedience to sin but yields that obedience to God.  While in the natural men the contest against sin affects only certain parts of him - with one part of his being he may hate sin, and with another love it - the spiritual men hates it and fights against it with his whole being.  And finally, while the natural man, in spite of all his wrestling against sin, is in the end overcome by it, the spiritual man fights, and conquers, and triumphs at last.

XV. The fifteenth and last Meditation comprises Cautions in our Spiritual Warfare.

Fraser begins by warning us not to fight against the world and the flesh until we get a commission to do so.  By this he means that the first step in our conflict with sin ought to be the surrender of ourselves to God, and out of such surrender we shall get not only strength for our fight but the right motive.  Let us not think, he continues, of duty without at the same time remembering the comforts and encouragements associated with the doing of it, for example, God's presence with us, and His promised assistance; "the separating of this from duty makes duties burdensome, and intolerable; we look to the evil, the prejudice, and hazard in duties, but not to the good in them."  Let us carry out our duties not as the commands of a Judge who requires so much of us and will cast us off if we do not give Him all that He
requires, but as those of a loving Father, who is with us to help us. Let us also beware of doing anything laid upon us as a duty in our own strength; all duties ought to be faced "in the name of the Lord."

Again, let us beware of the false pity which Saul showed to Agag - "deal not tenderly with thy sins and lusts, spare them not, but labour to crucify them, spare neither small nor great." Let us shun not only actual sin, but all temptation to it - "beware of marching unto the utmost border of what is unlawful." Let us beware of fighting sin with nothing more than resolutions, words, thoughts and prayers. Let us not imagine that all difficulties are to disappear immediately - "dream not to be carried to heaven in a down-bed sleeping .... The Lord doth not always from heaven throw down great stones on our spiritual enemies; we must fight and sweat, and faint and travel, and be in pain." We must go on fighting right to the end - "never think thou hast done, till death come and bid thee lay down thy commission; having done all, stand."

In spite of a good deal of repetition, possibly inevitable in view of the type of writing concerned, and the obvious need of enforcing the lessons intended, there is an amazing amount of good solid matter in all these Meditations. And almost all that Fraser says in them can be adapted with very little alteration to the needs of our own time - more than two hundred years after they were first
published, and more than two hundred and fifty years since Fraser wrote them.

They reveal the author's deep knowledge of human nature, particularly in its follies and its weaknesses. The grave view he takes of sin is to be specially noted. By far the larger part of the book is taken up with discussions of the nature of sin, its deadly character, its insidious method of effecting a lodgement in the soul of man, and the ways and means to be adopted for its overthrow. Yet Fraser is no pessimist; he believes that with God's help sin, grave though it be, may be overcome. As long as men do not treat it lightly there is good hope for its final overthrow.

The Meditations offer an attractive wealth of illustration, shrewd comment, native wit, and freshness of presentation. Over and over again Fraser lights up his discourses with wonderfully fresh and living illustrations, metaphors, similes, and other figures of speech. He coins phrases which stick in the mind. To listen to him, we can well believe, must have been easy; it is no wonder that whenever he was advertised to preach crowds flocked to hear him.

The Meditations are eminently orthodox. There is scarcely a trace of the universalism which was to be prominent in his later Faith Treatises, and which created such a stir when these became known in ms. form. The most rigid and unbending Calvinist could have found little to
cavil at in these discourses when they were first preached. In almost every one of them there are distinct traces of Fraser's debt to the "Marrow Theology". His emphasis upon the sovereign power of God's grace, and his distrust of anything savouring of legalism are perhaps the outstanding characteristics of these Meditations.
In 1726 - five years after the publication of the Meditations on Several Subjects in Divinity, which we have just dealt with, and four years after the appearance of the first part of the Treatise on Faith, which falls to be considered later - a second collection of discourses by Fraser was published in Edinburgh with the title Some Choice Select Meditations. This is a small booklet of sixty pages, but of very considerable interest as it contains clear indications of the universalist doctrine with which Fraser's name is connected. The contents of the book, as stated on the title-page, are :- I. The Nature of the Gospel. II. The Necessity and Advantages of Faith. III. The Gospel-privilege of Justification, with further Observations upon the same Subject. As also upon Effectual Calling; and The Difference between Moral and Saving Grace, distinctly handled.

The collection is supposed to have been edited by James Hog of Carnock. (Cf. Fasti, new edn., v, p. 16.)

The editor in his Address to the Reader says :- "The
following Meditations, containing certain precious and most encouraging Gospel-discoveries; need no other Recommendation for Thy serious Perusal of them, than the comfortable Light they hold forth to thee, for preparing thy Way, and casting up the Highway, Isa. lxii. 10. If thy Exercise be, how thou may come at the Lord Jesus, as the great Salvation of God to Mankind lost; or if Satan and Unbelief dispute thy Right and Title to Christ: Herein, thou shalt find these Stones and Stumbling-blocks satisfyingly shovelled out of thy Way. Moreover, the Light thy hold forth, being so uncommon, and so lamentably darkned and vail'd in this declining Day, wherein it is said, Lo, here is Christ, Lo there: Again the Light herein is so profitable and instructing, especially to exercised Souls travelling in the Dark, tossed with the Fears, Doubts and Jealousies of Unbelief anent their Claim and Title to Christ, or their personal Interest in Him; and likewise, most convincingly answering and silencing some of the main and strongest Objections usually thrown up by the grand Enemy against the same. It was judg'd, that as the concealing of so valuable a Treatise, would be a singular loss: So the Publication hereof would be of singular Use to many, namely, to convinced souls in Quest of the Lord Jesus as the End of the Law for Righteousness to them that believe. Lastly, These Discoveries being the Meditations of a Scribe so eminently instructed for the Kingdom of Heaven, an Interpreter, one among a thousand, who being dead, yet speaketh, Heb. xi. 4,
may justly challenge their due Room in thy Esteem." A note is added to the effect that "there occurs only a few scholastick Terms therein, not so obvious to the vulgar Reader; which he may pass by, without any Loss or Prejudice to the Purposes treated therein."

The first Meditation in the book is on I Tim. i. 15. - "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, That Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief." In passing, it may be pointed out that this Meditation was republished as a separate pamphlet in 1753, the year in which Fraser's universalism led to the split in the Reformed Presbytery, and just a few months before the Synod of the Anti-Burghers took into consideration the alarming spread of the Arminian doctrine of universal redemption.

The Meditation opens with the statement that the Gospel is summarily comprehended in this most precious sentence, "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." The readers are called to consider certain truths which flow from this statement of the Gospel.

Man, it tells us, is a miserable, undone creature, otherwise there would be no need of a Saviour. His whole nature has been polluted by sin, and he requires some power other than himself to work salvation. Indeed his condition is the saddest and most miserable imaginable; so much so that it brought Christ from heaven to deal with it. "The cry
of thy woeful condition was so sad, as it brought Christ out of heaven to preach, to be humbled, and to die for sinners; and He came not to heal sore fingers, and doth not concern Himself with trifles." Man's condition is such that it is not in him to deliver himself; "no more than a dead man can live of himself, he cannot quicken himself, he cannot change his nature, he cannot break open his prison-doors, he can do nothing that may merit this, but daily sin, and rot in his prison.... Seek not then to plow on rocks, or to wash the Ethiopian; beware of trusting to thy duties, for thy help is not in them; use them, but trust not in them." There is really no cause for astonishment or discouragement when we find that there is no help in ourselves, for we were never told to expect it there. There is no more cause for surprise in this than there is in the fact that the sun does not rise in the west. "Ye look unto the wrong sirth, sirs, that look to yourselves."

But the revelation of the Saviour assures us that there is help and salvation for us, and therefore, "the most miserable and most desperate sinner that now is under the drop of the Gospel may hope." "Sinner, and lost undone creature, help is in Christ; Christ came to save sinners." Christ, says Fraser, is a noble Helper and Saviour; a most loving Saviour; a most wise and skilful Saviour; a lovely, as well as a loving Saviour; a complete, all-sufficient Saviour; the only Saviour; an everlasting Saviour; He is salvation
itself; a near Saviour, a very present help in trouble; a
most lowly and humble Saviour.

Fraser now comes to deal with the extent or scope of
the salvation to be found in Christ, and here for the first
time his universalism begins to appear. He begins by saying
that "Christ doth not engross, or keep up what is in
Himself, or to Himself; but opens and proclaims it: He is
not a fountain sealed or inclosed, but an opened fountain:
He hath life; but not for Himself, but for others, 'gifts for
the rebellious.'" He proceeds to elaborate this thought
under several heads:—1. "Christ deals in behalf of others:
He died not for His own sins; all the world was in Him, by
one man all are made alive, as in one all men perished; He
is a public person, and therefore called 'the Covenant of the
people.'" 2. This is borne out by the names given Him in
Scripture. "In respect of God's decree, a few only are
appointed to receive benefits by Him; and so was the City of
Refuge too appointed for all, though secretly intended for
the benefit of some only; and hence He is called a 'Way,' in
which every man may walk; a 'Fountain,' out of which every
man may drink, appointed for the general good; therefore look
not on this salvation, that is in Christ, as a thing in which
ye are not concerned; but look on it as appointed for thee."
3. Christ stands to men in the relation of a physician and
Saviour; it follows then that those who have access to Him
are the sick, the lost, and the undone. 4. Christ has
plainly declared the purpose of His coming; it was to give
gifts to the rebellious, and to save sinners. 5. All men
are commanded to come and take Christ's salvation as their
own. "Here is matter for comfort, that not only help is in
Christ, but your help; yours, in respect of appointment, and
work of Christ; yours, in respect of the promise of Christ,
giving it freely to you .... 'Whosoever will, let him come,
and take of the water of life.'" 6. Christ came to save
man as sinful, miserable and undone. He 'came not to call
the righteous, but sinners to repentance.' "It is not
therefore to angels that He is a Saviour, nor yet to man
simply, nor to man as happy, nor as righteous, nor yet to
man as elected; for the Gospel declaration meddles nothing
with this .... Oh, I tell you, if you see and look to
yourselves as whole, ye have nothing to do with this
physician; if as free, and not in bondage, look not on Christ
as a Saviour; if as clean, look not on this fountain."
7. The knowledge of himself as a sinner is the only thing
that gives a man a claim and interest in Christ; and to look
upon oneself in any other relationship is to be a stranger
to Him. Over and over again Scripture emphasises this.

But is it not the case, some may ask, that the
salvation which Christ offers "is neither to sinners
absolutely, nor as righteous, but as elect sinners."? 
"The Gospel declaration," Fraser replies, "has nothing to do
with election, this being secret. All are commanded to
believe; the ground therefore of this command, viz. Christ came to save sinners, must be as large as the persons called."

"If the promises belong to sinners as sinners," another may object, "then should they belong to all sinners, and Christ should be a Saviour to all sinners." "So He is," says Fraser, "and He came to save all sinners; and all sinners, having this joyful sound, have a right unto Christ." But does this mean that all are to be saved? No, for Christ "came not with an intention to save all." "We must distinguish," Fraser proceeds, "betwixt the end of Christ in coming, and the end of the coming of Christ; betwixt the end of the work, and the end of the worker. The end of Christ's coming, as it is His work, is that all may be saved; but the end of Christ Himself in coming is only that some few be saved: hence, though the end of Christ's coming, as it signifies the intention of the comer, be that all be not saved, but only the elect; yet the end of Christ's coming, as it is a work, is that all be saved; and, in this respect, Christ may be said to be the Saviour of all men, giving to all a legal title, hence called the common salvation .... Nor is it necessary though Christ be a Saviour unto all, and so all within the visible Church have claim to Him, and right in Him, that He actually save all: it is sufficient that all have right in Him."

But if by virtue of His office Christ be a Saviour to all men is He not bound to perform the acts of that
So He is, says Eraser, supposing that all come to Him, receive Him, resist Him not. But if men do not come to Him He is not bound to save them. "A man that is bound to deliver a thousand pounds to his neighbour by bond, if his neighbour refuse the money, and will not at all take it, nay, cannot abide to see his debtor, no obligation can tie this man to make him take, or deliver it to him. What Christ is bound to do, He declares, offers, and gives, and lays at the sinner's door, invites him to take, and not to despise his own mercies: but the sinner will not give Christ a look, will not come to Him; and when Christ comes to him to heal him, and bestow his own upon him, the sinner refuses."

But is not Christ bound to give faith, and to take away the resistance in men's hearts, otherwise He is not a perfect Saviour? Does not Christ fail if He make not the soul willing? The answer Fraser gives to this objection is that Christ is bound only to give what He offers, which is Himself and all His mercies and benefits. He offers peace, pardon, and remission of sins to be received by faith. "Christ's promises in the Gospel are not prophecies of what will come eventually, no more than His threatenings .... the possession of the thing, and the fruition of the benefit of the promise, is conditional."

But are not the promises to pious and godly persons, not to sinners as sinners? "Godliness," Fraser replies, "hath the promises of this life and that which is to come,
in actual possession, true; in right and remote title, it is false; for so, they are to sinners as sinners; especially, the first promises of life, light, and faith, which is not to the righteous: faith being the mean by which we are possessed of that to which we had a right before, by the Gospel free gift."

What a consolation it ought to be to poor, undone, blind sinners to know that they have a right to Christ! "A sinner and a saviour are not strangers, they have some simmetry and relation; nay, it is to them only that Christ as a Saviour is related."

A final objection – a man may say that he lacks repentance and brokenness of heart. Let him remember, says Fraser, that Christ is exalted to give repentance, and to call sinners to repentance. But my sins are very great! Great sinners are not excluded. But I have long continued in sin! Then turn at last, for He is an everlasting Saviour. But I cannot believe! He is the Saviour in order that He may help you to believe.

After this dissertation on the extent of the salvation which is found in Christ Fraser returns to his consideration of the text with which he started. As He comes to us in Gospel Christ is love, he points out, and nothing but love. "He came to save, not to condemn; this was His only business. . . . There is nothing in Christ's mouth, but peace and reconciliation, nothing but love altogether, no judgment, no law, no wrath, no upbraiding. He came to take away sin,
and therefore not to leave to die in sin, or to punish for sin." Does this not give men consolation and faith? Can they any longer fear or doubt Him? All their faith, comfort and hope are in Him, not in themselves. As your salvation depends upon nothing in yourselves, says Fraser, so nothing in you can be prejudicial to it, or give you ground to fail or sink; and therefore all objections drawn from your own unworthiness, deadness, blindness, vileness, sinfulfulness, are all nothing to the purpose at all .... The Lord is the confidence of all the ends of the earth, and therefore, 'Look to Him and be saved.'"

Again, the saying, 'Christ Jesus came to save sinners,' is not bare history or prophecy with which we have nothing to do but read it: it is the ground God gives us for believing, and, as it were, the advantage He gives us over Himself. It is our claim to Christ and heaven, and therefore 'a saying worthy of acceptation,' a saying to be laid hold of. If anyone says to us, 'Christ came to save a few sinners only,' then let us believe ourselves to be of the number of those He came to save. To accept this promise, 'Christ Jesus came to save sinners,' is to accept Christ Himself. "Whoever therefore shall hold, receive, and welcome the promise, receives and welcomes Christ: whoever holds up the promise, holds up Christ: when this promise is offered, Christ is offered; when this promise is given, Christ is given."
Fraser concludes the Meditation with a repetition of the gist of what he has already said about the extent of the Gospel offer. The Gospel, he says, offers Christ to sinners in general, not to particular persons. "Therefore, poor soul to whom this word comes, if thou be not righteous, see thyself included, and except not where Christ hath not excepted." Christ and salvation by Him are freely purchased, freely offered, freely given to poor sinners. No conditions are laid down except that we come to Him, nothing to be done where we lay hold on Him. "Here what a fine bargain sinners are come to!"

The title of the second Meditation in the book is *The Nature of the Gospel Handled*, and again its importance lies in the universalist doctrine which is even more pronounced in it than in the first Meditation.

Fraser begins by defining the Gospel as "the Lord's gracious promise to poor sinners, conveying right unto them to Jesus Christ and all His benefits; requiring faith as the means to make this effectual, and actual obedience for thankfulness." From this definition certain things are clear.

First, all the poor sinner's happiness, says Fraser, is in a promise. And this is so because a promise is "the most magnificent way" of conveying the great mercies of God to men; a promise calls for faith, teaching men to come out
of themselves, and to cease from boasting of anything in
themselves; God's promises teach men to depend upon Him and
His word; they are security for the things men want, and
assure them of the certainty of these things; they
particularise to them the mercies they may expect from Him;
they are evidences of His faithfulness; they are the seed of
justifying faith in men; they secure God's mercies to the
faithful, and like a staff hold them up from sinking; and
finally they are grounds not only of faith and hope, but of
rejoicing also.

The promise which is found in the Gospel, Fraser goes
on to say, is an absolute one. God has made this promise -
"Christ came to save sinners" - absolute in order to show the
freedom of the covenant of grace, of His bounty, and of the
riches of His mercy; to take away all grounds of doubt from
a poor sinner, who might well fear if things depended entirely
upon what he found in himself; to give all men a claim and
right to His mercies; to make those who refuse to believe
inexcusable; to make the covenant of grace sure, even the
condition upon which His mercies become ours being promised;
and to give men a firm ground for believing. "In that the
Scriptures make absolute promises the ground of believing
it is most false to say then, that we have nothing to do with
absolute promises till we believe." In these reasons which
Fraser gives for the absoluteness of God's promise in the
Gospel particular note should be taken of the phrase "to make
those who refuse to believe inexcusable." This is a foreshadowing of what is more fully developed in the universalism of the Faith Treatises.

Continuing, Fraser lays it down that God's promises belong to men as sinners. Only sinners, he says, are capable of receiving them - it would be ridiculous to promise a new heart to such as already have it. The whole tenor of Scripture, which speaks of 'saving sinners,' 'reconciling enemies,' 'justifying the ungodly,' and 'giving gifts to the rebellious,' bears this out. When Christ is referred to as 'light,' 'life,' 'physician,' 'health,' 'righteousness,' and the like, the logical inference is that men, for whom His salvation is intended, are blind, destroyed, sick, miserable, etc. Christ represented the world not as righteous, but as fallen and destroyed, and it was for the world as such that He died. To bestow great things on enemies, while still enemies, is the wonder of wonders; and God's grace shines most in giving His promises to sinners. It is sinners who are commanded to believe; the promises, therefore, as the seed and ground of faith, must likewise belong to them.

And further, God's promises belong to men as sinners simpliciter, not as elect sinners, otherwise none of us can draw near to Him with full assurance, as we are commanded to do, for "our election is uncertain to us until we be made to believe."

These absolute promises, thus made to sinners, give them a right to the thing promised. Fraser regards this
thought as "material and weighty; yet difficult, in respect of the multitude of objections that Satan seeks to muzzle and darken the truth in." Dealing first of all with the nature of the right which this absolute promise gives he points out that there are many kinds of rights — for example, natural rights, rights in conscience, forensical rights, rights of disposition and promise, actual personal rights, aptitudinary rights, mediate rights and immediate rights. What kind of right, it may be asked, has the sinner to the promises of God? All men, Fraser replies, have "a right of promise and disposition" to Jesus Christ and all His benefits; these promises are declared to all. All men have a relation to Jesus Christ as Saviour; He is the Saviour of all men. All within the visible Church are in a real covenant relation with Christ; their relation may be external, and so far imperfect, but none the less real. All such have a "right of confirmation," "in respect they have the seals of the covenant;" "as many as are baptized into Christ have put on Christ." Again, the right that sinners have to the promises is such "as the Lord is thereby engaged to perform the tenor thereof to them; so as there wants nothing to your title, nothing to your happiness, but your receiving of it." It is an absolute right made to sinners, not immediately, but mediate through Christ their representative, to whom the promise was first made. It is a proclaimed and published right. It is an "ample sure right, having no nullity in it
at all, which is a constant ground of believing, 'a covenant well-ordered in all things and sure.' It is a free absolute right; object not therefore the non-performance of the condition. It is made to sinners; object not therefore, I am a guilty condemned sinner; it is to thee, and thee only; it is by Christ thy Saviour offering what is thine really to thee. It is universal to all that hear it; do not say therefore, He means not me: make no objection therefore. It is particular; say not then, He means not me. It is constant; say not therefore, My time is gone. 'All the day long have I stretched out My hands: now is the accepted time.' In a word, ye have all grounds of believing made out to you; whatever thou wouldst have for thy security, thou hast; do not therefore by thy unbelief exclude thyself. Of all men's torments, thine shall be greatest in hell; woe to him for evermore, that splits upon unbelief, and looks on the Lord as One deceitful and ambiguous, after He hath given all imaginable grounds for thy security: what could thy heart wish more for than this?"

Fraser now offers some grounds for asserting that the promise of the Gospel is for sinners in general. He holds that Scripture in express words states that sinners have a right to it. If this be not true then the covenant of grace is not free; nor is our ground of hope for remission of sins in God alone - an impossible position to hold. All who have ears to hear are called to believe the promises and tidings
of the Gospel, and to all such these tidings and promises belong. Faith loses all meaning unless the promises, which are its ground and object, are really ours; if these are not ours then faith becomes mere usurpation. God quite definitely gives men a title to the promises. If men had no right and title in Him then their departing from Him would be no sin. The promises are the foundation of men's prayers for conversion; and the ground of their turning and coming to God, and also of all obedience, and of all glorying in the Lord rather than in themselves. Men have no other God to comfort them, to depend on, to believe on, to glory in. Men, however graceless and scandalous, are still spoken of as God's people. In baptism the covenant of grace becomes ours for baptism is a seal of that covenant. The covenant of grace, whatever Baxter may say about its conditional character, is absolute. The Lord has a right to men, and the correlate of that is that they have a right to Him. All sinners have as good a right to Christ as the Jews had to the Cities of Refuge, or the stung Israelites to the brazen serpent. Only on this assumption can the Gospel be cleared of all suspicion of double-dealing, "for if all have not a right to these things, how can the Lord's ambassadors offer them to poor souls?.... It is unreasonable to offer that to me, which in its use is not for me, but destined for the elect." This assumption is the only one which gives us clear ground for believing.
To believe that the promises are for sinners as such "doth make the reprobate most inexcusable, and make their torments in hell very just, and vex them exceedingly; when they shall be made to know, that they had as good right to Christ and heaven, as they had to their lands and estates, in which they were infest: they only starved for hunger, because they would not eat their meet; were condemned, because they would not lay hold on their pardon, nor present their discharge: died in prison, because they would not come out." Finally, if the covenant of grace requires any condition then it cannot be free - "if our right depends on faith, then the covenant of grace were not free: for the covenant, which requires a moral condition, is not free."

Fraser realizes that his theory as just outlined will raise many questions, and he proceeds to answer some of the most common of these. Is it possible to believe that the promises of God are unconditional? "Woe to the man," he replies, "that hath no other title to Christ or heaven, but his faith or love." How can a poor sinner be saved? Simply by receiving the Lord Jesus. What have I to do with Christ, and on what ground? God hath given Him to thee for a light; He is thine own. Are not the promises for the few? They are for all who hear them. Will that idea not harden the world, and lead men to believe that all will be saved? No! for unless men cordially embrace and believe the promises they cannot be saved. Then is not
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God a liar, in giving promises which in the case of some shall never be fulfilled? No! for He quite clearly lays down that men must accept His promise before they can be saved. Are not all the promises made to believers and to those who are holy? There are two kinds of promises: those which beget faith, and those which strengthen it; the latter are for believers only, but the former are for sinners. Can men be both condemned and justified at the same time? In a sense they can, just as a man may be a rebel and "at the king's horn," and yet have the suspension of his sentence purchased — "so it is here, actually under a sentence of condemnation; yet a discharge is purchased, and suspension and relaxation is purchased in Christ, and so are legally free." Is it not absurd to say that God is engaged to give that which in fact He never intends to give? A distinction must be drawn between a promise and a prophecy; between what is offered, and what is actually announced as going to happen. Men have an absolute, unconditional right to the promises, but whether or not they are to be fulfilled in them depends upon a condition — they must believe. Then is not the covenant conditional? No! the right and claim is given absolutely, but the fruits of it come only through faith. Is there any comfort in having a title to a thing, but knowing that a condition is attached to its full possession? Certainly; for the promise, the offer of salvation and our right to it, is in itself a mercy, and it rests with
ourselves whether we are to accept it or wilfully refuse it.

Are not the promises only to the Seed, and not to all?

Fraser's reply to this is interesting: "it is so, in respect of divine intention, intending only for their good; not in respect of external legal destination."

What advantage has a believer over an unbeliever if both have a right to the promises? "The believer hath not only meat in the house, but likewise in his belly .... The one is assured fully of heaven, and is beyond all hazard: the other hath only a right, which is to be made effectual through his using thereof."

What of those who feel no inward call to believe? "The rule of faith is God's speaking in the Word, not in the heart."

And finally, what of those who feel that they are not worthy to accept the promises because they do not feel the burden of sin? The wearied and the heavy-laden are certainly given a specific invitation to come to Christ, but the call is not confined to such.

Returning to his consideration of the truths which spring from his text Fraser goes on to point out that there is a certain conveyance of the right that we find in the Gospel, a certain way or channel, through and by which the blessings promised are made ours. They come primarily by Jesus Christ who from eternity undertook for us, coming in our place and shouldering our burden - "condemned guilty man, by the Lord Jesus' undertaking for him is thereby absolved and freed." They come also through our forebears;
when our fathers were espoused to God in a covenant we, their children were likewise married to Him - "as we in them became His people, so did the Lord in becoming our fathers' God, become our God likewise." Again, in baptism the Lord gives us a right to Himself and to all His benefits; in the Lord's Supper we really and sacramentally receive Him; in His preached Gospel He is given to us; and in the Bible we have in our hands "our charters for heaven." Finally, when the heart cordially and fully closes with the Lord Jesus then our right to the promises is not only externally and really but also internally and effectually conveyed to us.

In conclusion Fraser sums up what he believes to be the truth about the Gospel and its promises. He does so in a series of statements. The first thing in the Gospel, he says, is a promise to poor sinners. The absolute promises of the Gospel are not prophecies, or histories of what is, or will be, but declarations of the sinner's title. Faith does not give a man a right to the covenant of grace - he already has that, quite independently of his faith - but it gives him possession of what is his by right. God is the first contracter in the covenant of grace, and not man; or as we should say, God takes the first step. The Gospel, properly and strictly speaking, has no moral condition of any kind attached to it; it is a declaration of the absolute right made by the Lord to sinners, and while it is true to say that without faith there is no salvation, yet the covenant of
grace itself unconditional. Here lies the difference between the covenant of works and that of grace; in the former man's duty comes first and God's part second - "do this and thou shalt live" - while in the latter the order is reversed: first God gives the absolute promise, and then comes man's part, which is faith and thankfulness. All our service should be governed by the thought that "there is nothing that the Lord requires, but He hath first promised to fulfil and to do." This right which we have in the Gospel is the ground and foundation of all duties. Baptism seals an absolute covenant or proposition, not a conditional one, such as "If thou believe, thou shalt be saved;" whether baptized or not, if we believe we shall be saved; we do not need baptism to assure us of that; what baptism seals is the unconditional covenant. Here lies the value of baptism, and here too is seen "the mad cruelty of the Anabaptists, that denies poor souls their right or seal; little know they what they do." Baptism does not give the right, but it seals and confirms it, and assures us of it. We should not labour to make a right, or to get a right to Christ, but to see, receive, believe, and make use of the right which is already given. Justifying faith justifies declaratively only by letting us see what we are in Christ Jesus, and what we are in respect of the Gospel which declares to us remission of sins. A man is condemned not by an arbitrary act of God, but by his own refusal to believe; meat he has but he
will not eat it; he has a well of consolation but he will not
drew from it; prison doors are open but he will not come out;
garments he has but he will not put them on; pardon he may
have but he will not lay hold of it nor believe it. Faith is
the believing and particular application of the promise of
Christ and all spiritual benefits. The covenant of grace
is free in that it bestows a right freely. Faith is that by
which we know, see, and possess our rights. What a
marvellous consolation it is to poor souls to know that Christ
is theirs; all they have to do is to welcome Him. Finally,
"here see how faith makes God all; how unbelief makes God a
liar, by denying this title, saying, It cannot be that God
hath given Christ to me."

In the Meditation which follows Fraser deals briefly
with some questions concerning faith, its nature, necessity, and
so forth. "God hath chosen faith," he says, "to be the
channel of all good, because it debases a man most, and brings
him off himself to God." Again, it is the means by which a
man glorifies God most. Further, it is by faith that a man
makes his own the pardon which is in Christ; "as fire will not
burn, and meat will not feed, unless it be applied and eaten;
even so, no more will promises comfort, strengthen and satisfy,
unless by faith made use of and applied." To the question,
Why does God commend faith? the answer is that He uses the
language of commend and authority in order to show how
anxious He is that men should believe, and to impress upon
that they are really expected to lay hold on Christ; no room is left for doubt, and the wicked are without excuse.

What can faith give a man more than he already has in the covenant of grace? Much, replies Fraser. By faith a man glorifies and pleases God. By it he is personally justified which before he was not. By it the promises are secured to him—"these promises, which before declared but thy title, shall now declare what God will do." By it he is strengthened to do his duty—"it is meat received and eaten that strengthens, not meat in the house." By it doubts are removed and a man is kept in peace and joy. By it he is enabled to walk cheerfully and so to become a source of encouragement to others. And finally, by it he is kept close to God.

Fraser now proceeds to deal with The Gospel-privilege of Justification, a doctrine which, as he points out, has given rise to many questions, and caused much confusion, but which is of such great importance that there is scarcely any doctrine about which men ought to strive to gain clearer views.

In answer to the question, How does faith justify? he declares that there are four distinct kinds of justification. "There is," he says, "a legal, fundamental and real justification, whereby sinners in Jesus Christ are absolved from their sins." This justification comes through
what Christ has done from all eternity in taking the place of
the lost world, and giving His hand and promise to satisfy
justice. There is, secondly, personal justification which
comes through the soul's union with Christ. Further, there
is "a declarative, intimate pardon, which these that are
converted have, after they have sinned, and for which saints
pray daily." Lastly, "there is a final, complete, open,
public and declarative justification, which will be at the
last day." "All these four sorts of justification," he
concludes, "are evidently set down in Scripture." In the
case of all four faith is the means by which justification
actually becomes ours; by it we receive, seize, lay hold upon
justification.

When is a sinner justified? "When the Lord took
Christ from eternity," Fraser replies, "we, though not born,
were free; as many as hear it, have their remission declared
to them; by baptism they are infeft in their privilege; by
faith they see this, and laying hold on the pardon, they are
free personally." How may God be said to justify? He
is the author of the covenant of redemption by which men are
justified; He gives faith and draws the soul to Christ; He
intimates, declares and publishes the fact of pardon; He
actually keeps men from punishment; He gives His promise that
whoever shall believe shall be saved; and finally, He shows
His reconciled countenance in Christ, and so men have peace
with Him.
How does God pardon sins in the justified? This Fraser holds to be a specially important question "for many indeed pardoned and gracious persons, not knowing how the Lord pardons, but imagining some other way of it than Scripture sets down, not finding it that way, hence go and walk in the bitterness of their soul all the days of their life." God, he holds, opens the eyes of the justified to the truth that through the blood of Christ all sins are pardoned. He makes it clear that when a sinner repents and turns he shall have his sins forgiven. He gives access to the throne of grace. He looks upon the justified man more graciously and with a more pleasant countenance, thereby assuring him of pardon. He gives him strength and assistance for his duty. He also gives him particular seasonable promises suitable to his condition. In all these ways God both pardons sin in the justified man and lets him know that his sins are actually forgiven.

A final question: Are all sins, past, present, and to come, pardoned in justification? "Virtually, fundamentally and legally they are," says Fraser, but, he continues, "in respect of intimate pardon, all sins are not forgiven, till they be confessed, mourned for, and resolved to be forsaken; and till application of Christ by faith be made, fatherly anger is not done away."

There follow some rather disjointed thoughts on the
nature of faith under the title *Further Observations on Justifying Faith*. These may briefly be summarised as follows:—Justifying faith is "the answer or echo unto the call of God in the Gospel .... As the Gospel declares Christ in the call, so faith receives Him." As the Gospel is both truth to be accepted by the understanding, and glad tidings to be received by the will, so "faith is a glad, hearty, willing believing of the glad tidings of a Saviour come to same men from all their evils." The grounds of faith are, first, the command of God, and second, the offer of Christ in the Gospel. Jesus is never effectually revealed as the Saviour of sinners until in some measure the soul is made to feel its own emptiness and want of self-righteousness. Though feelings of terror, horror, despair, and fear of hell are not essential to true humiliation yet "he is most humbled, who sees most of his own heart-plagues, and abhors himself for it, trusts least to his own righteousness, sees most of his own inability to save himself, and is most willing to be saved by grace, or in any manner or way the Lord shall think fit."

There are many ways in which a man may enter into the haven of rest which is in Christ — "as all are not humbled in the same manner, or prepared for Christ in the same manner; so neither do all close with Christ in the same manner." Faith in its commonest form is "the heart's consent to be married with Christ, coming to Him, receiving of Him, and calling upon His name."
Acceptance of Christ is always accompanied by love, though love and faith are not to be confounded - "faith is distinct from love; nor is it as we love Christ, or because we love Him, that we are justified." In true faith we come to Christ not just that we may have His help for some immediate trouble but for what He is in Himself. There being no merit in faith itself boasting it is excluded - "in love, patience, godly fear, etc., we give something to God; but faith comes empty, gives nothing; for it is a receiving grace, not a giving grace, it hath beggary stampt upon it."

Particular application of the promises to ourselves is of the very essence of faith and inseparable from it. In all true and saving faith there is some measure of assurance. In the order of nature we first believe Christ to be ours before we place our faith in Him; and likewise we first believe the promises to belong to us before we draw comfort from them, there may be real closing with Christ even where there is a consciousness of moral deadness and coldness. There is no presumption when men, whether elect or reprobate, take the waters of life freely. "faith is a Christian's daily work, his life; he lives as he believes." The want of faith is one reason for the want of sanctification.

God may come to us in a manner in which we did not expect him. "I was thinking and looking, that the Lord would first come with the Law, and humble me to hell; and then that Christ should be discovered to me with great glory;
but behold He came in a road that I did not expect Him."

Faith is prior in point of time to every other grace. "Faith, and every other grace, will be dying, and pining, and withering, that place may be for dependence on Christ; and that Christ, for a renewed life, may put a renewed obligation on the soul."

Frasier now passes to Some Observations on Effectual Calling, beginning with the assertion that "all God's elect are called effectually of God in time." Without this call, he holds, none could ever come to Christ, and further, "it were presumption to come without it, nor would any poor creature come without it." The essence of this call is an invitation to come to Christ, and to receive Him and believe on Him; it is not until later that men are asked to take up His yoke.

This call is God's voice to the sinner; it is the realisation of this that causes men to believe. The call is heard, not directly, but through God's Word in the Scriptures, so "faith is a hearty closing with God's Word in the Gospel, or a heart believing the glad tidings of the Gospel."

Further, it is by the Spirit of God that the call is applied to the hearts of men, and only when it is so applied is it effectual, "for tho' the Word externally heard or read, doth indeed lay an obligation upon all to believe; yet, unless the Spirit deal with the heart, and solicit the business, the soul will never come to Christ." The call, again, is
particular, being addressed to the individual soul.

While the internal call of the Spirit to the individual soul is not always heard, the general call to believe, the external call, is always being sounded, so none can say that the time to believe is past; "your time is never past in regard of God's Word, which is to be our rule." "All within the visible Church are externally called .... There is never one who hears the Gospel, but is called to believe." To refuse to heed the call to believe is to neglect a plain duty.

Many who hear the external call never hear the internal call of the Spirit. On the other hand, the internal call may come to many hypocrites and reprobates, for "God deals, tho' not effectually, yet really with the hearts of a great many, with whom He never prevails." In the case of the elect the call is one which will inevitably be answered - "the call of God is a powerful efficacious call in the hearts of all His elect. They are compelled to come in, drawn unto Christ, so that they run. They shall be willing in the day of Christ's power." The elect do not necessarily answer this call immediately.

The call is no "naked command or invitation to believe on Christ." Four things are included in it: - a revelation of the sufficiency of Christ as the Saviour of sinners, an invitation to believe heartily and joyfully what the Gospel proclaims, a promise to those who believe of justification and salvation, and an answer to the objections which the
Finally, the call is a call of love, for "love is the great cord which draws the sinner effectually to Christ .... It is the key which opens the heart of the sinner."

The book closes with a discussion of Some Differences between Moral and Saving Grace. Pointing out that a truly converted man is quite a different man not only from what he was/profane, or ignorant, or morally evil, but also from what he was when he was most moral, Fraser proceeds to enumerate some of the differences observable in such a man. To begin with, the converted man looks to Christ for what He is in Himself, not for what He can give; he desires to live in fellowship with Him. Again, "when I was a moral man, I drew my comfort from my duties; but now I draw my duties from my comforts: my work was first, and because I did such a thing, or expected to get such a reward for working, therefore I want about duties; but now I first close with the promise, and because alive, I yielded my members as weapons of righteousness. While a moral man, I did, and then believed; but now, I first believe, and then do."

The unconverted man may indeed hate sin, but it will be because he finds it harmful to him; the converted man, on the other hand, hates it because it separates from and is grievous to God. The unconverted man lives in his own strength; the converted man in the strength of God. The unconverted man never finds rest from a conscience troubled by the guilt of
sin; the converted man finds full satisfaction and rest in the blood of Jesus.

Common grace, being for the most part seated in the imagination and fancy, goes as quickly as it usually comes; evangelical grace, with its seat in the understanding and in the will, having once got there, is not easily eradicated. Moral grace may be acquired, but special grace is infused. Moral grace puffs up, but special grace humbles.

The interest of these Meditations lies in the universalist doctrine which for the first time in Fraser's writings begins to take a prominent place. Apart from this they show few divergences from orthodox Calvinism. Once again one has to note the same grave view of sin which is one of the outstanding characteristic of all Fraser's writings; he is under no illusions with regard to the evil which it works in human life. One notes too the same vivid and picturesque language which marked the works already considered. And again one finds distinct traces of the Marrow teaching, particularly in the emphasis which he lays upon the unconditional character of the Gospel offer.
While it is by his Memoirs that Fraser is most widely known his Treatise on Faith is by far the most important of his works from the theological point of view. The work, though published in two parts at an interval of twenty-seven years, is essentially a unity; it is, however, convenient to refer to the First Faith Treatise and the Second Faith Treatise, as otherwise there is apt to be some confusion between the two parts.

The Treatise, to speak for the moment of the work as a whole, was completed while the author was a prisoner on the Bass. It is almost certain that part of it was written earlier, and it is probable that the outline of the whole was in Fraser's head before he was imprisoned, and also that the main gist of it was known to some at least of his friends. The years of comparative leisure on the Bass afforded him an opportunity of committing to writing what was already in being in his mind. On 22nd September 1677 Alexander Brodie makes
this entry in his diary:—"I read something of Brae his tractat of universal redemption, and was shaken, and saw my darkness, and my shallowness, that could not tak up thes questions, nor did I conceiv of them clearli" (1). If this refers to the *Treatise* the inference is that even before his imprisonment Fraser had committed some part of the work to paper, or alternatively that some of his visitors had carried out from his prison what he had written between January 1677, when he was committed to the Bass, and September. Brodie, however, may be referring to some earlier treatise, for example, one of the meditations later to be published in *Some Choice Select Meditations*, in which Fraser's universalism, as we have seen, appears in fairly clear outline.

It is more than likely that Fraser fully intended to publish his *Treatise* as soon as opportunity offered, but when it became known in manuscript form, and still in its incomplete state, to some of his bréthér ministers and friends an agitation arose to prevent him at all costs, for his own sake as well as for the peace of the Church, from disseminating the erroneous, not to say heretical, doctrines— as they thought—which the work contained. Fraser was alarmed when he realised the effect his work had on his friends; he was deeply perturbed that his theories should have created such a furore; and in deference to the wishes so forcibly expressed he refrained from publishing the book, though fortunately he did not destroy the manuscript as òne
of the friends in question suggested that he should do.

This was John Carstares, father of William Carstares, later to become Principal of the College of Edinburgh. Born in 1623 and in 1650 appointed minister of Glasgow Cathedral John Carstares, we are told, was remarkable for his courteous carriage, and for a refinement of manner which was thought to find expression even in the scrupulous neatness of his dress. He was on the side of toleration, and at a certain conference between Resolutioners and Protesters is said to have pleaded with his brethren in these words:—"Let us agree with our brethren, though they should never confess a fault." In 1662 he was one of the nine ministers for whom Leighton pleaded in vein that they should be allowed to take the Oath of Allegiance with an explanation that they acknowledged the King as supreme civil governor; and he was then deprived of his charge. After the Pentland Rising he is believed to have sought refuge in Holland, and to have returned to Scotland in 1672. In 1677 he complained of a field-preacher who had said that it was as sinful to go to hear a conformist minister as to go to a brothel; and about the same time he addressed a letter to M'Ward in the course of which he lamented the 'great and growing .... confusions, distempers, and distraction' by which his brethren were making themselves contemptible, as if they 'had a genuine and native tendency to them,' and which threatened to prove the heaviest blow which Presbytery
had yet received in Britain. 'Is there no forbearance in these things to be expected which we justly disallow? .... Is there, I say, no place to consider whether it were better to supr^esede our contecings than to have our Church ruined? I scarcely see a middle way for anything.' In 1680, when examined by the Privy Council with reference to his attitude towards the Cameronians, he 'said he could not express his abominating their extremities with vehemency enough.'

"In the hard-won moderation of his later days," says W.L. Mathieson, "Carstares was strongly of opinion that clergymen ought to confine themselves to pastoral, or at all events to evangelical work; and it was a source of much vexation to him that he could not impress this view on his eldest son .... At the end of his (the son's) first term of imprisonment his father charged him never again to meddle with politics; at the conclusion of the second he refused for some days to see him; and from his deathbed in 1686 he sent him a solemn message reiterating his former charge".

It is entirely in keeping with his character that John Carstares should take exception to Fraser's universalism, for a theory so unorthodox was likely to cause a division in the Church, and division Carstares feared above everything else. Apparently he had not himself seen the offending manuscript; its contents were communicated to him by a minister in whose judgment he had great faith. He immediately wrote a letter to Fraser in the course of which he dealt with his theory
with considerable freedom, and clearly intimated that he thought the author would be well advised to burn the manuscript in order that it might not do harm. The letter is dated 4th June 1677. "I humbly wish," Carstares wrote, "especially since yourself judged there were some things in it to be corrected, it had never been seen, and that you had smothered and destroyed it as an untimely birth, since any good things in it, I suppose, you will in humility judge, might have been got elsewhere, to no worse, if not altogether to as good purpose; and the ill and unsound, or raw and undigested things in it, would thus happily never have been heard tell of" (4). J. C. Johnston puts the matter mildly when he says that Fraser's views "were somewhat out of harmony with those of his brethren" (5).

It was not until some considerable time after Fraser's death that the Treatise appeared in print, and then only in part. The delay may have been due to Fraser's unwillingness to offend his brethren, or as has sometimes been suggested he may never have had any intention of publishing the work. Principal John Macleod, in his recent work, *Scottish Theology in relation to Church History since the Reformation*, inclines to the latter view. He writes: "This bizarre doctrine of a Redemption that issues and was meant to issue in nothing else than greater wrath for the lost may have been treated by the writer as a speculation which he did not mean to publish; for Fraser lived for many years after he was
released from the Bass, where he was a prisoner when he wrote his work on *Justifying Faith*, and to all appearance took no very definite steps for fully more than a score of years before his death to let the world or the Church know those special views that he had put on paper. And it was well-nigh half a century after his death before the treatise was published (i.e. the second and more important part). Gib questions the good faith of the publisher or the editor who saw to the publication. This challenge may have been made because the name and repute of Fraser, as one of the old field preachers in the days of persecution and a sufferer on the Bass Rock for the good cause, were fitted to give a good introduction to the teaching of a volume which purported to be his work. It is not easy, however, to make good a charge of bad faith against the editor even to the extent of being guilty of interpolation. Yet the fact that the author himself did not publish the rudely executed treatise might point to its being only a roughly worked-out theological problem that was set aside or held up by the writer as not a satisfactory solution to the question that he had set out to answer. It was not from the author's Ms. but from a copy that the work was printed" (6). It is difficult to reconcile Principal MacLeod's concluding sentence with the express statement of the publisher of the 1749 Treatise; this Treatise, he says in his preface to the reader, "is come to your hand posthumously as he (Fraser) left it, without
any alterations, which may be seen by the copy from which it is printed, it being prepared for the press by the author's own hand" (7). It is also difficult to accept his description of the Treatise as "a roughly worked-out theological problem" and a "rudely executed treatise." The Treatise, in both its parts, is a most elaborate and carefully-wrought work, whatever one may think of the theories which it contains.

The first part of the Treatise was published in 1722 with the title A Treatise Concerning Justifying or Saving Faith. The second and more important part appeared in 1749 with the title A Treatise on Justifying Faith, the full title being: "A Treatise on Justifying Faith. Wherein is opened the Grounds of Believing, or the Sinner's Sufficient Warrant to take hold of what is offered in the everlasting Gospel. Together with an Appendix concerning the Extent of Christ's Death, unfolding the dangerous and various pernicious Errors that have been vented about it." The Appendix - which is actually an appendix not to the whole work but only to one chapter of it - contains that part of Fraser's theology which was to have the greatest effect upon the course of Scottish Church history in the second half of the eighteenth century; it occupies exactly one third of the Treatise.

Of the work as a whole the late Dr. W.J. Couper wrote: "In 1749 there was published in Edinburgh a book that was destined to have a considerable influence upon the course of
Scottish religious history during the succeeding half century. It had been written by the well-known James Fraser of Brea while he was a prisoner on the Bass during the days of the persecution. Apparently it had fallen out of observation, for it was not printed till the year named, when it was issued to the public under the title of A Treatise on Justifying Faith. Its doctrine, especially its treatment of the extent of the Atonement as set forth in the Appendix, found a ready reception from some. In 1753 the standing of the book was brought specially before the Reformed Presbytery and in the following year before the Associate Synod. The Synod considered its teaching so dangerous that to guard their faithful people against being misled by it, they formally repudiated the book, and in a series of propositions set forth the orthodox doctrine (8). Dr. Couper went on to point out that when the book appeared Adam Gib, the redoubtable Anti-Burgher minister of Edinburgh, indicated that there were some suspicious circumstances connected with its publication (9). The publisher, said Gib, "could not be ignorant that there was not one word of the alleged author's handwriting in the copy which he used." Gib proceeded to insinuate that the Rev. Thomas Mair of Orwell, who was afterwards deposed for accepting the teaching of the Treatise, had altered the text for his own purposes (10). Dr. Couper was of opinion that there was no ground for Gib's insinuation.
It may be of interest at this point to give Dr. Alex. Whyte's opinion of the *Treatise*. "For an evangelical masterpiece like Fraser of Brea on Justifying Faith," he writes, "we must go to the Lutherans, or to the Calvinists, or to the Puritans, or to the Presbyterians. The Catholics and the Anglicans have their own masterpieces; but with some noble exceptions, Richard Hooker for one, they are not on the Pauline faith that alone justifies the ungodly. And over and above its evangelical value to its properly prepared readers what will always give a truly patriotic interest to this remarkable little book is the fact that it was written in a Covenanter's prison cell on the Bass Rock and with no book beside its author but the Bible. Amid the surging waves of the North Sea, with the flocks of solan geese screaming incessantly in his ear, and with 'a rabble of savage soldiers' all about him, James Fraser planned and executed this true masterpiece of apostolical and evangelical and experimental religion. Jacob Behmen was wont to say that he had no books, he had only himself. And when he was in his prison on the Bass Rock the laird of Brea had no books but only his Bible; his Bible and his own scholarly and intricate and saintly self" (11).

Dr. Whyte has something to say of the question which led Fraser to write his book. "As God would have it, as the Covenanter laird of Brea lay in his Bass Rock cell, and as he paced his daily round under his military guard, this
all-important, ever-present, and ever-pressing problem filled and fascinated his powerful mind: this supreme problem—How shall I, the chief of sinners, find an immediate and an abiding acceptance with God? And how shall I stand fast in that acceptance amid all my indwelling sinfulness, and amid all my daily outbreaks of actual transgression? And as he read day and night in David and in Paul, and day and night pondered and prayed and believed, by degrees no less than six Gospel grounds of justifying faith were revealed to him, on all of which his God would have him rest his faith, and then to set those six grounds down in his manuscript, till such time as he could send out his printed book to find its fit readers in evangelical and constitutional Scotland" (12).

"In his own clear-headed and sure-footed way," Dr. Whyte continues, "Brea begins his thorough-going book with an all-important chapter on What are not to be the foundations of our faith and our hope and our full assurance. I will sum up that true and able chapter in one word. Nothing whatever of ours; nothing whatever in ourselves; nothing that we possess by nature, and nothing that we can attain to by grace can ever be to us a sure rest and a solid support for our faith for forgiveness and for our hope of eternal life. Our best, and our best at its best, can never be a sure foundation for our souls to build upon. No, not if we had all Abraham's faith, and all Moses' meekness, and all David's penitence, and all Paul's spiritualmindedness in one man. Nor can we
ever plead our best services. Not if we could write Augustine's Confessions, and Luther's sermons, and Rutherford's Letters, and Bunyan's allegories, and all the Olney hymns to boot. Were all these things to meet in any one man he must, all the more, count all these things but loss that he may win Christ and be found in Him. He must, all the more, seek to have Christ made to him all his wisdom, and all his righteousness, and all his sanctification, and all his redemption. Now, if none of these things, no nor all of them taken together, can ever secure our justification before God, what are our sure Gospel grounds, given us of God, for our souls to rest on? Well, as every one knows — in words, at any rate — the one and the only and the always sure ground on which our faith is to rest for the forgiveness of all our sins and for our full and final justification before God, is that Atonement for sin which the Son of God made and finished for ever on the Cross. The Cross of Christ alone speaks perfect peace to the guilty conscience. The Cross of Christ alone sheds abroad the love of God in the broken heart" (13).

In the above paragraphs Dr. Whyte has dealt with Fraser's view of faith, in particular the grounds upon which we are to base our faith; he goes on to speak of Fraser's theory with regard to the extent of the Atonement. "Since the Son of God was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification, our author goes on to
And right noble, and right reassuring is the Gospel argument that he constructs on that apostolic Scripture. Are you the uttermost of all uttermost sinners? He asks his reader. Has no other man ever broken God's holy laws as you have broken them? Has no one else ever gone such lengths in sin as you have gone? Then it is to you, before all lesser sinners, that Christ comes with His salvation. Are you the most sensual-minded of all men? Are you the most malicious-minded of all men? Are you the most impenitent and prayerless of all men: the most God-forgetting and the most God-despising of all men? May, do all these evil things meet in you and possess you as they meet in and possess no other men? Well, so they met in and possessed Fraser, till he found a sure ground of faith and hope, even for him, in Christ's all-sufficiency for him: in His ability, and in His willingness, and in His preparedness to save even him to the uttermost" (14).

And here is a final quotation from Whyte:—"The all-sufficiency of Christ is seen in this that He is able to supply out of His fulness all that the wickedest and the vilest and the most hopeless of men needs, in order to make him, and on the spot a completely justified man. And then, to make him at last the holiest of men. There is no guilt-inflected wound in any sinful man's conscience for which Christ has not a sufficient ointment; and there is no
disease in any sinful men's heart for which He has not a sure and a certain cure" (15).

Fraser's theory of universal redemption as set forth in the *Faith Treatises*, and particularly in the Appendix to the fifth chapter of the *Second Treatise*, will be more fully dealt with in the succeeding chapters, which contain a detailed analysis of the contents of both treatises, but it will be as well to give a brief outline of it here. It has to be kept in mind that it was in the formulation of this particular theory that Fraser showed the most marked divergence from the theology current in Presbyterian Scotland in the second half of the seventeenth century; that it was by it that he exerted what influence he did in fact have upon the life and thought of his country in the century following his death; and that it is this theory which makes his theology of more than academic interest to us still.

Stated in its briefest and baldest form Fraser's theory is that all men are fundamentally justified in and through Christ who obeyed and died in the room of all, as the head and representative of fallen men. Christ, says Fraser, died "sufficiently" for all, whether elect or reprobate; His blood is "sufficient" to save all, and that must be taken to include the reprobate who, if the teaching of Scripture is to be accepted, are to be regarded as having a definite "interest" in Christ's death. From this it follows that salvation can "warrantably" be offered through Christ's blood to all
mankind without distinction; by His death a City of Refuge has been set up to which all men may fly for all have legal access to it. Each and all, provided they believe and have faith, may rest assured that through Christ's death salvation will be theirs in the end. Only so can there be a real foundation for the Gospel offer.

Are we then to believe that all, reprobate as well as elect, will in the end be saved? No, for though Christ died "sufficiently" for all, He died "efficaciously" only for the elect. His blood is "sufficient" to save even the reprobate, but as a matter of fact it does not save them for they will not and cannot believe or accept the salvation made available by it. If they believed they would undoubtedly be saved, Christ's death having removed every barrier, but it is inconceivable that they should believe, and therefore their salvation is not among the things which are to come to pass. But their rejection, be it noted — and this is of cardinal importance — their rejection of Christ is a "free" rejection; they are not "compelled" to reject Him in that sense that rejection is the one and only course open to them. It therefore follows that it is an action involving guilt; by it they justly become the objects of Divine or Gospel wrath.

James Anderson devotes a considerable part of his sketch of Fraser in the Martyrs of the Bass to the Second Faith Treatise, and its theory of universal redemption. "In that
work, besides other erroneous sentiments, Fraser adopts," he says, "and labours at length to establish, the doctrine of universal atonement, - the doctrine that 'Christ did, by His one infinite, indivisible satisfaction and ransom, satisfy Divine justice for the sins of all mankind, though with different intention and ends according to the different objects thereof;' with intention to save the elect, 'but not to save the rest, but that they, contemning and rejecting the offer of salvation, might be made fit objects to show His just gospel-vengeance and wrath upon them'" (16).

James Walker, in his Theology and Theologians of Scotland, deals at greater length with Fraser's theory. "The name of Fraser of Brees is one well known," he writes, "and very precious to many: a man he was of profound piety, full of love and devotion to his Master, for whom in the days of suffering he had borne an unflinching testimony. None is mentioned with greater respect by his contemporaries among the good men of his time.... He tells us how he was assailed with historic doubts, - such as might have been learned in the school of Strauss or Baur. But these very unfoldings of his inner life which he has given us, evidently indicate that if he was a man both of gifts and grace, he was also a man of a peculiar type. You do not wonder at singular doctrines coming from his pen. An earnest gospel preacher, he yet seemed to himself to want a sufficient ground for the gospel offer; and while a prisoner on the Bass, he wrote a
work upon the subject .... He was, at least in some points, a follower of Rutherford, and not infrequently he quotes Dr. Twiss; yet, strange to say, he wrought out a theory of Universal Redemption from the extremest positions of his ultra-Calvinistic masters.

"He asserts that 'Christ obeyed, and died in the room of all, as the head and representative of fallen man: that 'men are all fundamentally justified in Him and by Him:' that 'Christ died for all.' But then are all men saved? No. God did not mean to save any but His chosen. What, then, was the object of that one indivisible sacrifice for all, which God's Son offered on the cross? Well, first of all, to lay a real foundation for the gospel offer. For every man was satisfaction rendered, and every man might appropriate it as something objectively real. Is that all? Is it simply the old story of a conditional salvation? Not at all. Fraser scorns the idea of conditional redemptions and salvations. Men take, he argues, low and insufficient views of the Saviour's work, when they think it had respect to human happiness alone. The manifestation of God's justice and grace is its last and highest end. And this, according to him, is the glory of His scheme. It lays a basis for a gospel in which reprobates, just as well as the elect, can be asked to believe, while they are not, as the elect, brought under the divine appointment unto life; and hence, too, it follows that, in their free rejection of what
is simple verity, they become liable not to law, but to gospel wrath and vengeance; and the same blood which magnifies God's grace exceedingly, magnifies essentially His justice.

It comes to this, in short, - Fraser plainly states it, - that Christ dies for reprobates, that they may fall under a more tremendous doom, as, on the other hand, He dies for the elect, that theirs may be an all-transcendent blessedness. In many other respects the good man presents his theory. As you may buy a casket for its jewels, so Christ bought all the world, and all men in it, for His chosen's sake, not to save them, but to use them, and, as it suits Him, to cast away; though still, as there is a purchase, there is no unreality in offering them pardon and acceptance in virtue of it. So he puts it. There is no hiding or mitigating; all is plainly and boldly spoken out" (17).

Walker goes on to point out that the "whole notion of gospel vengeance was altogether out of keeping with the spirit of the Bible. How monstrous the idea of the Father satisfied, and the Saviour made the wrath-inflicter! What did you gain by this? That vague doctrine of redemption did not help you to the real one. Meant as a ladder to it, it really broke down under the first footstep placed on it." (18).

Walker also makes a brief reference to another point in Fraser's Tractise, "which is of larger interest than some of his other doctrinal speculations. It was a part of his scheme that Christ had purchased 'common benefits,' the
ordinary temporal blessings of life, and that it is through His grace that the world is sustained as it is, and that all its bounties are enjoyed by mankind" (18).

Dr. C.G. M'CRie takes much the same attitude as both Anderson and Walker to Fraser and his theory (19), as does also Dr. H.M.B. Reid in His Life of John M'Millan of Balmaghie. "Briefly stated," says Dr. Reid, "Fraser's teaching affected chiefly the extent of the atonement. He divided justification by faith into four different stages or classes:—1. legal or fundamental justification, by the death of Jesus, in which all mankind have a share; 2. personal, obtained by conscious union with Christ; 3. declarative, or the justification granted to saints who have sinned, and 4. final, after the last judgment. The crucial point arose in reference to the first of these classes, the so-called legal or fundamental justification. Fraser found in the New Testament the frequent statement, that 'Christ died for all.' He read Christ's own invitation, 'Come unto Me, all ye that labour.' He knew that, over broad Scotland, the gospel-offer was made to all. Yet the ordinary view of the Confessional teaching regarding Election and Predestination was, that only a limited number were destined and chosen to benefit by Christ's atoning work. He himself honestly believed this, but he desired to find some logical reconciliation between the free gospel-offer and this limited salvation. He imagined that he had found it in the
distinction between legal and personal justification. Christ died for all, and all therefore have a legal right to all the benefits of His death. But will not be saved, because God has, in His mysterious wisdom, appointed that many shall never claim their legal rights. Many are, as he phrases it, 'reprobates,' and die without further interest in Christ. They are not personally justified, but only forensically and technically.

"Fraser's illustrations make his meaning clearer. Two may be given, to throw light on his reasoning. The world of mankind is compared to a casket of jewels. Christ bought the world as one might buy such a casket; but He bought it only for the sake of the chosen few, as one might buy a whole casket for the sake of some special jewels inclosed within it, retaining these, and casting the rest away. Again, 'reprobates' are compared to men in prison, with the door unlocked. Christ's death unlocked the door, but 'reprobates' die in their dungeon, because they will not walk out at the door.

"Dr. Walker ... has pointed out the fatal weakness of Fraser's theory. It makes 'the Father satisfied, and the Saviour the wrath-inflicter.' It may be added, that it is Universalism without Salvation, a shadow without a substance. The system is indeed full of such contradictions. Taking only the illustrations quoted, how absurd to cast away anything so precious as a jewel! How wasteful to buy a
whole casket, for the sake of a small portion of its contents!
And how unreasonable to condemn the prisoner for not going out
at the unlocked door, when you tie him hand and foot with the
bonds of a doctrine of reprobation!" (20).

Of the effects of what Principal John Macleod has
recently called "this bizarre doctrine" something will be
said later on, but first of all we must turn to the actual
works in which the doctrine is contained, and study them in
detail.

Notes appended to this Chapter
A. Reception of Fraser's views.
B. Carstares and Fraser.
NOTE A.

As far as I am aware James Anderson, in his *Martyrs in the Bass*, gives the fullest account that is in print of the circumstances surrounding the *Treatise on Faith* and its effects in Fraser's lifetime. After giving a brief summary of the theory of universal redemption which it contains, Anderson continues:— "This was startling doctrine, as well as novel, to the Church of Scotland, and it could not fail to create alarm. Accordingly, Fraser having given the Ms. of this treatise — for it was not printed until long after his death — to his sister-in-law, by whom it was communicated to some others, several ministers, coming to understand the objectionable opinions which it maintained, took offence at the author. Hearing of this, he wrote a letter to a friend in self-vindication, admitting that he would not stand to every expression he had employed, and in order to reconcile dissatisfied brethren, expressing it as his purpose, that 'as he had not broached these views formerly to the disturbance of the peace of the Church, so he would not in time to come disturb or endanger its peace by doing so.'"

Anderson then gives the details of the exchange of letters between Fraser and John Carstares, and goes on:— "Fraser was much hurt at the dissatisfaction which his brethren felt on account of his novel opinions, and thought that they had not altogether treated him so tenderly as they
ought to have done. It was no doubt natural for him to feel and think so, especially as he had not published that treatise to the world, as it had got into several hands without his knowledge or consent, and as he had engaged not to spread these views to the disturbance of the peace of the church. But as the book defended a scheme of doctrine very objectionable, and as its being written by a man highly esteemed for piety and zeal, and who had suffered much in the cause of the gospel, would render it, if circulated or published, so much the more dangerous, it is not to be wondered at if they were alarmed. Though he was dear to them, and they were unwilling to add to his affliction, yet they felt themselves bound, as the guardians of sacred truth, to use every means in their power to prevent the dissemination of error; and Carstares, one of the mildest, as well as the most devout of men, reminded him of the ancient adage, 'amicus Socrates, amicus Plato, sed magis amica veritas.' This controversy appears to have been suppressed. If Fraser did not alter his opinions, which it is not likely he did, he acted in the discharge of his public ministry with such prudence, that we do not find any objections taken at the doctrine he preached, nor did he ever publish the treatise, though he lived many years after this correspondence between him and Carstares." (pp. 143-145.)
NOTE B.

Carstairs and Fraser

In his *Analecta* (May 1725) Wodrow has this entry :-

"Mr. Broun of Abercorn tells me, he has a set of Letters betwixt Mr. John Carstairs and Mr. Fraser of Braes upon the subject of Universal Redemption, and hopes to send me a copy of them." (iii, p. 207).

Thomas M‘Crie, in his *Memoirs of William Veitch*, refers in a footnote to a collection of "some long papers between Carstairs and Frazer of Brae, respecting some peculiar doctrinal notions entertained by the latter." These were included among the Wodrow papers. (p. 16).

"Mr. Broun of Abercorn" seems to have kept his promise to Wodrow.