

of the abstrusest questions of the schools. And yet, were I asked to illustrate by example the grand principle of the intellectual development of Scotland, it would be to the history of one of the self-taught geniuses of England,—John Bunyan, the inimitable Shakspeare of theological literature,—that I would refer. Had the tinker of Elstow continued to be throughout life what he was in his early youth,—a profane, irreligious man,—he would have lived and died an obscure and illiterate one. It was the wild turmoil of his religious convictions that awakened his mental faculties. Had his convictions slept, the whole mind would have slept with them, and he would have remained intellectually what the great bulk of the common English still are; but, as the case happened, the tremendous blows dealt by revealed truth at the door of his conscience aroused the whole inner man; and the deep slumber of the faculties, reasoning and imaginative, was broken forever.

In at least one respect, however, religion—if we view it in a purely secular aspect, and with exclusive reference to its effects on the present scene of things—was more essentially necessary to the Scotch as a nation than to their English neighbors. The Scottish character seems by no means so favorably constituted for working out the problem of civil liberty as that of the English. It possesses in a much less degree that innate spirit of independence which, in asserting a proper position for itself, sets consequences of a civil and economic cast at defiance. In the courage that meets an enemy face to face in the field,—that triumphs over the sense of danger and the fear of death,—that, when the worst comes to the worst, never estimates the antagonist strength, but stands firm and collected, however great the odds mustered against it,—no people in the world excel the Scotch. But in the political courage manifested in the subordinate species of warfare that