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27.

# THE AIMS, THE PRINCIPLES, AND THE WORK

OF THE  
SCOTTISH REFORMATION SOCIETY.

BY THE LATE  
REV. ROBERT S. CANDLISH, D.D.

OF FREE ST. GEORGE'S, EDINBURGH, AND PRINCIPAL OF THE NEW COLLEGE.

"We believe that, among all classes of the community, of every rank, every profession, and every denomination, most inadequate notions of the evil of that anti-Christian system, and the danger of its progress, have for a long time been becoming more and more extensively prevalent."—*See page 4.*



Edinburgh:  
*THE SCOTTISH REFORMATION SOCIETY,*  
17 GEORGE IV. BRIDGE.  
1891.

# ADDRESS

TO THE

## PEOPLE OF SCOTLAND.

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THIS Society is formed in the anticipation of a prolonged and sustained effort being necessary in opposition to the progress of Popery, and in defence of Protestant truth and Protestant liberty. If our object were merely to deal with the particular aggression on the part of the Pope which has occasioned the present movement, no permanent organisation would be required. A temporary and provisional committee would suffice. But we take a far deeper view of the crisis than such a mode of action would imply. We know the character of the enemy we have to meet—stealthy, patient, persevering—not apt to work at random, or put forth its strength by fits and starts—but long-sighted, ever watchful, profiting by its very defeats, and with sanguine confidence waiting on for new opportunities. We know, also, the sad supineness into which long security has lulled by far the larger portion of the Protestant community. And we know the busy and insidious zeal with which, in Scotland as well as England, a middle party of treacherous Protestants and disguised Papists are pioneering the way to Rome. And these, as well as other similar considerations, convince us, both that the public meeting in Edinburgh did well in constituting a Society, instead of merely nominating a committee; and also, that the Society so constituted must, in humble reliance on the blessing of God, enter upon its operations with the calm deliberation of men who have not merely a fortress to storm once for all, but a lengthened campaign to face, and who, therefore, in “going to make war” against so formidable a power, “sit down to consider and count the cost.”



The principles and objects of the Society are carefully and clearly defined in the Title and Constitution subjoined to this Address. A very few words of explanation may be sufficient to recommend it to the support of all enlightened, evangelical, and earnest Protestants.

I. We repudiate all intention to interfere either with the religious liberty or with the civil privileges of our Roman Catholic fellow-subjects. Anything like the imposition of pains and penalties we would most strenuously oppose ; nor do we seek to revive the question of the admission of Roman Catholics to an equal standing with Protestants in the Parliamentary representation of these realms. Whatever difference of opinion there may have been—and may still be—among the members of this Society on the subject of the “ Roman Catholic Relief Bill ” of 1829, it is to be distinctly understood that it forms no part of the Society’s aim to disturb that measure. We are not associated for any such purpose. But admitting as the basis of our proceedings the equality now actually established by the Legislature between Protestants and Papists, in respect of exemption from civil and political disabilities, we take up a position of strenuous antagonism to all positive encouragement given to the Papal system. And we demand a thorough review of all the measures that have been sanctioned by the Government and by Parliament, both before and since the year 1829, in so far as these appear to go beyond the legitimate limits of religious toleration and civil equality, and to involve this country in the responsibility of directly countenancing and upholding what our own laws themselves characterise as an idolatrous superstition.

II. While this Society cordially wishes success to all other institutions formed on similar principles, and for similar ends, it desires to stand on an entirely independent footing ; and, in particular, not to be confounded with any association of the kind hitherto formed, as it originates in an emergency which

calls for the extensive co-operation of the friends of Protestantism on broader principles and with more concentrated energies than has yet been attempted. The crisis which has now occurred is, in many views of it, unprecedented. It is fitted to suggest fresh topics of thought and fresh lines of action. Nor is it unreasonable to expect that any new and fresh organisation, springing out of the new and fresh crisis, should at all events seek to chalk out for itself some new and fresh methods of operation. Doubtless, the essential controversy is still the same. We have the old enemy to fight, and we must use the old weapons. In particular, we must make it our business to elevate the present and the rising generations to the same pitch of intelligence and earnestness, on the subject of Evangelical truth and Papal error, to which our forefathers in troublous times attained. Still, we must aim at such a result by means accommodated to existing circumstances ; and we would desire, therefore, to be held unfettered by any complication with previous efforts.

III. We especially disclaim all sympathy with any excitement that might tend to make this great religious question a mere political stalking-horse or politico-ecclesiastical point of battle. That this has too often been the case the party names current, and the party conflicts from time-to time witnessed,—in Ireland chiefly, but not exclusively,—give sad and unequivocal proof. Nor are there signs wanting of a disposition, in certain quarters, to make this very opportunity of the late Papal aggression subservient to the purposes of political intrigue and ecclesiastical aggrandisement. We have nothing in common with such a disposition. We enlist under no party banner ; we wear no party badge ; nor do we serve ourselves heirs to any party name or any party opinions. We believe that public men of all different shades of political creed have grievously erred in their views of Popery, and in their treatment of its institutions. And we believe that, among all classes of the community, of every rank, every profession, and every denomination, most

The Society  
not to be  
made a political  
stalking-horse.

inadequate notions of the evil of that anti-Christian system, and the danger of its progress, have for a long time been becoming more and more extensively prevalent. Our work, therefore, must be of a wide, comprehensive, and catholic character ; and we must so address ourselves to it,—in such a spirit of calm and conciliatory moderation, as well as of unflinching faithfulness and firmness,—that the risk of creating needless prejudices may be as far as possible obviated, and the widest access may be obtained for our influence and our operations among all sorts of men.

IV. These being our sentiments in regard to the duty to which we are called, and the right method of discharging it, we feel great confidence in appealing to our fellow-citizens and fellow-countrymen for their support. And we venture to hope that, as the Society will require support both liberal and sustained, so it will be found to deserve it. Every one must see that, if we are to do anything adequate to the crisis, we must have ample resources steadily provided. A puny effort, dwindling away after a year or two into a mere shadow, or a defunct list of office-bearers in the Almanac, would be far worse than no effort at all. Some things we might perhaps accomplish with no great expenditure of funds. Two or three public meetings may be held ; half-a-dozen lectures may be delivered ; a number of tracts may be circulated ; and Parliament, perhaps, may have some petitions laid upon its table. It may even be possible to persuade some publisher to issue a periodical that may live or languish for a few years, and then ignobly expire. But who could regard a movement so conducted, at the present time, with any other feelings than those of disappointment ? It is far more thorough work than this that the occasion demands. We must have the means of keeping up the good fight with uninterrupted constancy, and carrying it into every circle of society, into every neighbourhood, and into every house.

We must be in circumstances to take advantage of all those ways of dealing with the public mind which the opponents

of Gospel truth, whether Papists, Puseyites, or unbelievers, know so well how to turn to most marvellous account. We

**Popular literature required.** desire to have popular literature and science leavened with sound principle, and to put into people's hands, with variety enough to suit all tastes, works in all

departments of sound knowledge and innocent recreation,—not only free from the taint of Popish leaning or spurious liberality that pervades too large a portion of our current popular literature,—but imbued with correct sentiments on the essential articles of the Christian faith; and we trust that the efforts of this Society will tend to this most desirable result. Then, if much real good is to be done, we must be able to encourage and set on foot researches of all sorts, and

**The workings of Jesuitism to be exposed.** everywhere, into the past and present workings of that most insidious system, of which Jesuitism is the true type; and we must have competent parties employed to detect and expose, out of the records

of history and the reports of passing events, the actual practical character of the movements of the Man of Sin, as well as to bring Scriptural truth to bear on the minds and consciences of its deluded votaries. Minute and accurate statistical information, embracing other times and countries besides our own, must be obtained and recorded; and, in fact, a dépôt must be formed, where materials may be accumulated and weapons collected for the most complete exposure of all the errors and arts of Popery, as well as of the blighting and baleful influence it has exerted on the peace, and purity, and happiness of mankind.

Nor is even this all. A sustained and active correspondence must be kept up with all parts of this country, and with other lands. The public proceedings of official persons, and especially of Parliament, must be vigilantly and narrowly observed, lest, as has happened of late more than once, serious invasions of Protestant principle be insidiously slipped through or inadvertently allowed to pass. And there must be such an organisation as will secure prompt, united, and general action among the friends of the Protestant cause, whenever any emergency occurs to call for it.

**Correspondence—vigilance.**

Measures such as these,—together with the free use of lectures, Lectures, tracts, and periodicals, in such a way as really to tracts, &c. ensure their high efficiency and bring them into contact with all the strata of the public mind, from the highest down to the very lowest of all,—must require a very considerable expenditure;—not, however, as we firmly believe, more than the circumstances that have created the Society itself imperatively and indispensably require, nor, as we fondly hope, more than the hearty and intelligent Protestant zeal of the community will be found willing to supply.

V. For again, in conclusion, we have to remind our friends, that though the more immediate origin of our Society is to be traced to the late audacious Bull of the Pope, yet it is under other and more alarming considerations that the Society has been deliberately formed. It is not the recent act, viewed apart and by itself, that has excited our alarm. But when we regard Advancing it as a symptom—as not an isolated fact, but one power of the of a long series of insidious, yet well-considered Papacy. and matured steps in the advancing power and influence of the Papacy among us, we cannot regard the apprehensions it has so generally awakened as at all exaggerated or unfounded. We are not merely threatened with foreign invasion—the enemy is already on the shores, and in the very heart of our country. He has now come in like a flood, while we have been slumbering and sleeping, and it is for us now to lose not a moment in adopting urgent measures of defence, while we earnestly pray that the Spirit of the Lord may lift up a standard against him.

Nor are our apprehensions lessened when we look abroad. The Look abroad. hosts are mustering to the battle. Both the old and the recent sovereignties of Papal Europe are giving their power to the Beast, that he also may give his power to them, so as to keep them on their tottering thrones. Britain, as the land of the brave and the free, and, above all, as the principal, if not the only bulwark of Protestantism, is the object of their fear, and therefore of their hatred. It is enough to advert to the ominous

fact that every Papal sovereign in Europe has ventured to send formal congratulations to Dr. Wiseman on his elevation as Cardinal-Archbishop of Westminster. Can we fail to see here the union of Papal Europe with the Man of Sin? These are no isolated acts that are now attempted. They form links of that chain which has been forged in the Vatican, either to bind Britain again to Rome, or to enslave her and work her downfall.

On the whole, then, we confidently commit our cause, under  
 The people God, to the people of Scotland; for though our  
 of Scotland headquarters are in Edinburgh, the sphere of our  
 appealed to. operations must extend over all the country, and  
 we hope to be instrumental in helping forward a universal  
 national movement against the great adversary of our Lord and  
 Saviour.

Fellow Protestants! come to our aid! And for the sake of  
 your children, your liberties, your country, your religion, join  
 with us in this sacred and arduous enterprise. Come ye to the  
 help of the Lord—to the help of the Lord against the mighty!

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*Issued by the*

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84-7-89

