

A Communion Season in the Days of the Fathers

Free Presbyterian Magazine – July, 1946

DR. KENNEDY tells us that he was moved to write an account of the godly fathers of Ross-shire by hearing the Lord saying to him: "The memory of the just is blessed," and I saw that the godly fathers of Ross-shire were already being forgotten and that a lifeless formality was taking the place of their godliness. I could not, therefore, refrain from an effort, such as I could make, to revive their memory and to turn the eye of a backsliding generation to their good old ways. It has been the policy of this Magazine since its beginning to do the same. Take for instance the articles sent us on "The Excellency of Christ" by Jonathan Edwards and the "Priestly Office of Christ" by Boston. How rich and satisfying they are in comparison with anything we could write. It will not be a good day for us when the spiritual food on which the godly fathers and mothers fed and on which they were nourished becomes less and less palatable to the palates of a generation who had not passed through the deep spiritual experiences which were theirs and which seem in many cases, at least, a thing of the past. The account of the Communion Season given below is taken from Dr. Kennedy's *Days of the Fathers in Ross-shire*.

"In distant parts of the North and West Highlands," says Dr. Kennedy, "many of the choicest of the Lord's people travelled from the remote parishes of the west of Ross and Sutherland, varying from 100 to 160 miles, to hear the savoury, preaching of the famous minister of Kilearnan. Distance was no obstacle in those pedestrian days. Kilearnan, like the parish of Ferintosh, in the immediate vicinity, was a centre to which the

most noted of God's heritage flocked in vast numbers. On communion occasions as many as fifty parishes have been represented at Kilearnan, and two thousand have been known to partake of the sacred element's at those solemn gatherings. Those were times of high festival at Redcastle. The minister was assisted at those special services by the most gifted and popular preachers in the Highlands. His saintly brother, Mr. Kennedy of Logie, and his immediate neighbour, Dr. Macdonald of Ferintosh, the famous 'Apostle of the North,' also Mr. Lachlan Mackenzie of Lochcarron, were invariably there, together with other ministers of noted preaching power. The heritage of God was refreshed and strengthened. During the services the burdens and fears of many were removed, and souls were plucked as brands from the burning." After enjoying intervals of sweet fellowship with God, the source and fountain of all blessing and joy, the multitude 'that kept holy day' dispersed to return to their homes, renewed in spiritual energy, and revived in hope. So famous had Kilearnan become during Mr. Kennedy's ministry that the name of the parish was quite a household word throughout the north" (p. 27).