by a more impartial, as well as a more able writer. “Scot­land,” says Jonathan Edwards, “ has also been the scene, for many years together, of cruelties and blood by the hands of high-churchmen, such as came very little short of the popish persecution in Queen Mary’s days, and in many things much exceeded it.”@@1 Mr. Skinner is lively where he is not edifying or instructive ; and if he is here entitled to any other praise, it is that of supplying an ac­count of his own sect from the era of the Revolution. A supplementary volume, under the title of “ Annals of Scot­tish Episcopacy,” was published at Edinburgh in 1818 by the author's grandson the Rev. John Skinner of Forfar.

Towards the close of the century, he published “ a Let­ter to the Congregation of the Chapel of Old Deer and “ Some plain Remarks on a plain Account of Conversion, now in circulation through the Parish and Neighbourhood of Old Deer.” This last tract, printed in 1799, is directed against William Ward, A.M., a clergyman of the church of England. He continued to augment his stores of theo­logical learning, and undertook some more laborious works, which were not however published till after the death of the author. His name was favourably known to many dis­tinguished individuals in England, as well as Scotland. As a poet, he corresponded with Bums ; as a man of erudition, with Doig. The master of Stirling school and the minister of Longside chapel were both remarkable men in their generation ; and to those who complain of the want of lei­sure, opportunities, and encouragement in the pursuit of learning, their history supplies a most edifying example. During the summer of 1795, Dr. Doig and Mr. Ramsay of Ochtertyre paid him a visit ; and he spent a delightful week with them at Peterhead, which was then a watering place of fashionable resort.

Of the activity, as well as the benevolence of his dispo­sition, he exhibited a signal proof by devoting a portion of his time to the study of physic, not for his own benefit, but for that of his poor neighbours, whether episcopalians or presbyterians. “ Nor was it only to those,” says his bio­grapher, “ who were placed more immediately under bis pastoral care, that his benevolence was extended. Though he always considered them as entitled to his first and prin­cipal concern, yet did he never feel himself more happily employed, than when administering relief to the distresses, whether bodily or mental, of all that were within his reach, and would listen to his advice, whatever might be their reli­gious profession. As no medical practitioner resided within four or five miles of Longside, soon after his settlement there, Mr. Skinner’s sympathy was often excited by per­ceiving his neighbours suffering under a want, of which the state of the country afforded no prospect of a regular sup­ply. He resolved therefore to devote part of his own time to the study of physic ; and with the aid of an eminent physician in Aberdeen [Dr. Thomas Livingston], who ap­proved of his design, and felt the force of the motives from which it sprung, he soon acquired such a knowledge of the healing art, as enabled him to afford to the poor, labouring under disease, that relief which they could not otherwise have easily obtained, and the want of which might some­times have proved fatal. It is proper to add, that for his medical prescriptions he accepted no fees.”

During the autumn of 1799 he had the heavy misfortune to lose his wife. This was a loss which could not be repair­ed ; and at length, when the weight of age pressed more heavily upon him, his only surviving son Bishop Skinner invited him to spend the remainder of his days under his roof. He accordingly removed to Aberdeen on the 4th of June 1807, and for about eight days he apparently enjoy­ed his usual health and spirits. Some feverish symptoms, with a difficulty of respiration, afterwards supervened : but

during the last day of his life, he moved into the garden, when finding his strength to be totally impaired, and having with much difficulty been supported into the house, he was placed in a chair, and calmly closing his eyes, expired with­out a groan or a struggle. He thus departed on the 16th of June, in the eighty-sixth year of his age. In compliance with his own request, his remains were interred in the church-yard of Longside, in the same grave with those of his wife. A marble tablet was there erected by the members of his congregation, by whom his memory was much revered.

Skinner appears to have been a man of a cheerful and friendly disposition ; and in the discharge of his pastoral duties, he is represented as very exemplary. During the greater part of his professional life, it was not his practice to commit his discourses to writing, but he nevertheless preached with much ease and fluency. His opinions were deeply tinctured with the Hutchinsonian philosophy. To a lively fancy he added no despicable share of learning. He had cultivated not only a knowledge of the Latin and Greek, but likewise of the Hebrew language. In the com­position of Latin verse he had attained to great facility, and to considerable skfll. The longest of his poems is a Latin version of the Batrachomyomachia ascribed to Homer. He likewise translated Christis Kirk of the Grcne, a Scotish poem remarkable for its genuine humour. The measure which he has here adopted, hexameter and pentameter verse, is not peculiarly suited to so familiar and ludicrous a subject : iambics would certainly have been more appropri­ate. Some of his Scotish poems are written in a pleasant strain, and three of his songs, Tullochgorum, John o’ Ba- denyon, and the Ewie wi’ the crookit Horn, have obtained a great share of popularity.

Not long after his death appeared “ Theological Works of the late Rev. John Skinner, Episcopal Clergyman in Longside, Aberdeenshire. To which is prefixed a biogra­phical memoir of the author.” Aberdeen, 1809, 2 vols. 8vo. This publication was accompanied or immediately followed by “ A miscellaneous Collection of Fugitive Pieces of Poetry,&c. Vol. III. of his Posthumous Works.” Edinburgh, 1809∙ A separate edition of his poems was published un­der the title of “ Amusements of Leisure Hours: or, Poeti­cal Pieces, chiefly in the Scottish dialect.” Edinburgh, 1809, 12mo. A copious life of the author, evidently written by his son, is prefixed to the theological works. The first volume likewise includes a series of “ Letters addressed to Candidates for Holy Orders in the *Episcopal church of Scotland”* The second contains “ A Dissertation on the Shechinah, or Divine Presence with the Church or People of God,” “ An Essay towards a literal or true radical Ex­position of the Song of Songs, which is Solomon’s,” and “ Psalms viii., xxiii., and xlv. translated into Latin verse.” In his Essay he strenuously maintains the opinion of those who regard the Song of Solomon as an inspired book. Of the value of his Dissertation, some notion may perhaps be formed from a single specimen. The divine presence, says this learned theologian, “ is not now to be looked for, but in the way of God’s own divine appointment, and under the sacred symbols of bread and wine, set apart and instituted for that very purpose by Christ himself. . . . And if Corah and his company met with so signal and sudden a punish­ment for invading but a part of Aaron’s office, of how much sorer punishment shall they be thought worthy, as St. Paul argues in a like case, who dare thrust themselves, without any call, order, or commission, into the ministry of the Christian priesthood, and will take upon them to consecrate the symbols of the divine presence, and to stand as priests between God and the people ? It is no wonder that such unruly invaders of the priesthood should do what they can to bring the sacrament of the divine presence into contempt

@@@1 Edwards's History of the Work of Redemption, p. 291. Edinb. 1771, 8vo