

**THE DAYS OF THE
FATHERS IN
ROSS-SHIRE**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649007899

The days of the fathers in Ross-shire by John Kennedy

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Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

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JOHN KENNEDY

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OF THE

FATHERS IN ROSS-SHIRE.

BY THE

REV. JOHN KENNEDY,

BISHOPWALL.

FOURTH EDITION.

JAMES CAMPBELL & SON,
TORONTO & MONTREAL

MDCCCLXVII.

PREFACE TO THE FOURTH EDITION.

WHILE I was engaged in preparing for the press, I did not expect that a second edition would ever be required. I was writing merely for a district, and even there, I expected a reading of my book, only from a few, whose hearts were clinging fondly to the days gone by. When it appeared, it was so vehemently assailed, that I expected it never would have run through even the first edition. But a second and a third time it has run the race; and it is now starting for the fourth time.

The call for a fourth edition finds me so occupied, that I have no leisure for careful revision. Though not in the least disposed to alter any statement, or to modify any opinion, contained in the book, I might, if I had time, dress it up more carefully. But, being a very old-fashioned sort of thing, both in its stories and its notions, perhaps it is more suitably attired in the rude garb, in which it first appeared. The very extent to which it seemed to require, served to prevent my attempting a thorough

recasting of my work. Mine seemed so like another highlandman's gun, which needed "new lock, stock, and barrel," that I shrunk from the task of renewing it. But believing that it was charged with truth before, and having no desire to change or to reserve my ammunition; and many hard blows, which were meant to shatter, having failed to disable it, it is now for the fourth time loaded, and is ready to go off.

DINGWALL, *December 1866.*

PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION.

THE field, on which I gathered materials for this book, would afford to a careful gleaner, a rich collection of interesting matter. I had not time to pass leisurely over it; and even the scanty handful which I picked up in my haste, I lacked the skill to arrange into a pleasing sample. But if I cannot now, without shame, examine the result of my labour, it is a relief to be assured that the toil of it is over; and if this pioneer effort affords no pleasure to my readers, I will yet be content, if its very rudeness shall make it easier for others to come after me.

I offer no apology for directing attention to the subject of this volume. If I required to do so, I would be offering, as an excuse for having written, what I should have used as a reason for not writing at all. I heard the Lord saying, "the memory of the just is blessed," and I saw that the righteous 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.

I am not very anxious to excuse myself for the manner in which, any more than for the subject on which, I have written. I might plead that I never wrote with care before, and that I had but little leisure for my first attempt, but if I did not do the best I could, I ought to have done nothing. Amidst my usual employment, when in health, I found no time for "making books," and it was not, till laid aside by sickness from my wonted work, that the purpose of this book was formed. But health returned ere I had begun to write, and, being afraid to abandon my design, I gave, to its execution, such snatches of time, as were left unoccupied by labours which I could not abridge.

I cannot account for the omission of a reference to the honoured name of Dr Stewart. I fully intended to have given him his place among the eminent ministers of Ross-shire, though the memoir of his life and labours which has been published, made any attempt to describe him by me unnecessary. The oversight was certainly not due to any want of veneration for the memory of one, than whom there were few men more amiable, few Christians more humble and holy, few preachers more faithful, and few pastors more watchful and wise.

If I had not the hope, that none would be disposed

to refuse him a place among the eminent ministers of Ross-shire, and that the account, which I have given of him, might be accepted as a specimen of how they lived and laboured, I would not have ventured to append the memoir of my father. It required no labour to collect information regarding him, and it was therefore easier to construct a memoir of him, than of any other of the fathers. But it would be dishonest to pretend, that it was not my love to him, as my own father, which thrust into print the materials that lay in my memory. At the same time, the impulse of that love I would certainly have repressed, if I thought the position I claimed for him, would not be conceded by all.

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

I ANTICIPATED all the censure, and none of the praise, bestowed upon my little book. I would have been quite as much disappointed, if it did not displease a certain class of readers, as if none at all had been found to commend it. I therefore feel, that I have no cause to complain of the reception it has met with; for by those, whose censure I would reckon praise, it has been most heartily abused; and some friends of Christ have been moved to say of it, "the Lord bless it," and to say to me, "Be of good courage."

I expected that its Highland tone, and its seemingly anti-lowland spirit, would have excited prejudice in some minds against it. Its thorough Highlandism I neither tried, nor was I able, to prevent. I was very often translating from Gaelic as I wrote, and I could not quite hide the tartan under the English mantle. I was acting, too, on the defensive. It was not my vocation to be searching for Highland faults; I was engaged in warding off Lowland blows. I had so often, in speaking to Highlanders, pointed out their blemishes, that, in my first attempt to write about