

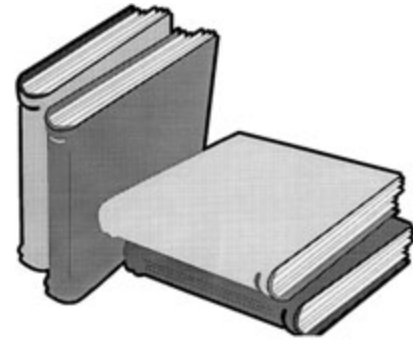
# The Rock and Pit

*Look unto the rock whence ye are hewn,  
and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged.*

Isa 51:1

Selections from the Christian's heritage in print,

collected by Dean Brown



Issue 1019

## **The Erskine Brothers: 2. Ralph.**

A traditional anecdote regarding [Ralph Erskine, Scottish minister 1680-1754] has become so current in Scotland as to deserve a place in illustration of his character. He was fond, it seems, of music; and some of his more straight-laced hearers, feeling scandalized by a report that he played on the violin, a deputation of grave elders was appointed to wait upon him. Ralph produced his violoncello, and treated the elders to a solemn psalm tune; with which they were highly gratified, and assured the people that "the minister did not play on the wee *sinfu' fiddle* they had imagined."

He was one of those divines [i.e., ministers], by no means uncommon in the last century [18<sup>th</sup> to this author] who delighted in versication, giving vent, in the form of lyric poetry ... the feelings of a devout heart. His *Gospel Sonnets* were at one time popular with his co-religionists. ... The perfect freeness of the gospel was the burden of his sonnets as it was the key-note of his sermons.

Come down, Zaccheus, quickly come,  
Salvation's brought into thy home;  
In vain thou climb'st the legal tree,  
Salvation freely comes to thee.

Thou dream'st of coming up to terms,  
Come down into my saving arms;  
Down, down, and get a pardon free,  
On terms already wrought by me.

From Luke 19:1-6.

Thomas McCrie,

*The Story of the Scottish Church*, 1874.

Republished by Free Presbyterian Publications,  
Glasgow, no date. p. 472-73.