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SCOTTISH
HIGHLANDS

HIGHLAND CLANS
AND
REGIMENTS



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PROSPECTUS.

A HISTORY OF
THE SCOTTISH HIGHLANDS,
HIGHLAND CLANS, AND HIGHLAND REGIMENTS;

ON THE BASIS OF BROWNE'S "HISTORY OF THE HIGHLANDS AND CLANS," BUT ENTIRELY
RE-MODELLED AND TO A LARGE EXTENT RE-WRITTEN.

WITH AN ACCOUNT OF THE GAELIC LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

WRITTEN FOR THE WORK,

BY THE REV. THOMAS MACLAUCHLAN, LL.D., F.S.A.S.,

One of the Editors of the "Dean of Lismore's Book," Author of
"The Early Scottish Church," &c.;

AND AN ESSAY ON HIGHLAND SCENERY,

BY THE LATE PROFESSOR JOHN WILSON.

EDITED BY JOHN S^{on} KELTIE, F.S.A.S.

DURING the last thirty years, the patriotic labours of the various Scottish book-clubs,—The Abbotsford, The Bannatyne, The Iona, The Maitland, The Spalding Clubs—the works of the various eminent Scottish antiquaries and historians, not to mention many valuable papers and pamphlets, have not only subjected everything connected with the history of the Highlands to an unsparing and searching criticism, but have also brought to light many new facts, and opened up formerly unthought-of tracks of inquiry. Such a flood of light has thus been thrown on all matters connected with the Highlands, that the publishers feel BROWNE'S *History of the Highlands and Clans*,—the work on which this publication is to a certain extent based,—has fallen behind the age, and that, to keep pace with the advanced state of historical research, a NEW WORK IS DEMANDED. Therefore, in preparing the work now presented to the public, it has been found necessary to make such extensive alterations and additions, that the publishers feel justified in calling it a NEW WORK.

The work is divided into three sections:—

- I. THE GENERAL HISTORY OF THE HIGHLANDS, including RELIGION, LITERATURE, and ANTIQUITIES.
- II. THE HISTORY OF THE HIGHLAND CLANS.
- III. THE HISTORY OF THE HIGHLAND REGIMENTS.

PART I.—THE GENERAL HISTORY OF THE HIGHLANDS.

The whole of this part has been THOROUGHLY REVISED, RE-MODELLED, and to a great extent RE-WRITTEN. All the introductory chapters relating to the PRIMITIVE HISTORY of the Highlands, are NEW, and in them are treated the much controverted questions as to the PICTS and SCOTS, their RACE and LANGUAGE—the EARLY RACES OF KINGS, all points connected with the early SOCIAL and POLITICAL CONDITION of the Highlanders, their ORIGINAL RELIGION and the SPREAD OF CHRISTIANITY. The most RECENT INVESTIGATIONS bearing on the ANTIQUITIES of the Highlands, the ANCIENT MANNERS and CUSTOMS of the people, their PECULIAR DRESS, their SOCIAL and POLITICAL RELATIONS, their SUPERSTITIONS, and other interesting antiquarian matters, have been taken advantage of.

As to the rest of this portion of the work, while whatever had no connection with Highland history has been expunged, much new matter has been added in order to make the general narrative COMPLETE and AUTHENTIC. When, at a later period of their history, the Highlanders become a potent element in the settlement of many great disputes, it has been sought to make the reader understand clearly the part they thus took in the stirring and momentous transactions of the times. As examples of these we need only mention here the CIVIL WARS in which MONTROSE so often led on the Highland army to victory: the Revolution disputes, culminating in KILLIECRANKIE: the unfortunate insurrections of '15 and '45, which, but for the romantic enthusiasm of the Highlanders, would never have been even commenced.

In writing these chapters ample use has been made of the various club-publications above referred to, the latest of which, THE BOOK OF DEER, issued by the Spalding Club, edited by Dr. Stuart, has proved of great service in throwing light on the EARLY SOCIAL AND POLITICAL CONDITION of the Highlands, as well as on the STATE and CONSTITUTION of the EARLY SCOTTISH CHURCH. Among modern Scottish historians and antiquarians whose labours have been taken advantage of in this part of the work, we may mention the names of George Chalmers, W. F. Skene, Joseph Robertson, Daniel Wilson, Mr. Gregory, John Hill Burton, E. W. Robertson, James Logan, Cosmo Innes, George Grub, Dr. Maclauchlan, and Colonel Forbes-Leslie: this last gentleman has been kind enough to place at our disposal some of the cuts which adorn his valuable work, *The Early Races of Scotland*. Besides these, books and documents, ancient and modern, too numerous to detail here, have been consulted.

To the GAELIC LANGUAGE and LITERATURE, which, in the old work, possibly from lack of material, were treated in rather a summary manner, a prominent place has been given. Since the publication of *The Dean of Lismore's Book*, and other works on this interesting subject, there can be no complaint of lack of material; and so much importance do the publishers attach to the literature of the Highlands, that they have entered into an arrangement with the Rev. Thomas Maclauchlan, LL.D., F.S.A.S.—one of the editors of *The Dean of Lismore's Book*, and one of the most eminent living

Gaelic scholars—to write an entirely new account of this subject, into which will be introduced COPIOUS EXAMPLES of genuine old GAELIC POETRY.

In the course of the work will be given the late PROFESSOR WILSON'S celebrated ESSAY ON HIGHLAND SCENERY, of which the copyright belongs to the publishers.

PART II.—THE HISTORY OF THE HIGHLAND CLANS.

In any history of the Highlands, an account of the CLANS ought to occupy a place of the first importance, and in the present work, the GREATER PART OF THE SECOND VOLUME is devoted to this part of the subject. Every point of interest connected with this peculiar social system has been noticed:—the ORIGIN OF THE CLAN-SYSTEM, the relation of the chief to the general body of the clan, the various CLAN-DIGNITIES and OFFICES and the duties which belonged to each, the PECULIAR CUSTOMS to which the system gave rise, the difference between CLANSHIP and the FEUDAL SYSTEM, and the influence it had on the progress of the Highlands and on the rest of Scotland. In short, no pains have been spared to enable the reader to form a clear idea of all the 'outs and ins' of this primitive system of social government.

After this introductory matter, a DETAILED ACCOUNT is given of EACH SEPARATE CLAN which has any claim to be considered Highland. THE ORIGIN OF EACH CLAN, as far as possible, has been traced back to its FOUNDER, and its claim to be considered purely Gaelic discussed; its history is traced through all its branches and offshoots down to the present day; the part it took in the various clan strifes, in the disputes between the Highlands and Lowlands, and in the general wars of Scotland, is set forth. Every link in the genealogical chain has been carefully traced, and those chiefs and other members of a clan who took a more prominent part in the affairs of the time, have their lives given in considerable detail. Appended to the account of each clan are its ARMORIAL BEARINGS, a description of its CLAN-TARTAN, the name of its BADGE, its peculiar war-cry or SLOGAN, its estimated STRENGTH, and its PRINCIPAL SEAT. In addition to the authorities above referred to, the works of Smibert, Logan, Stewart, and others, as well as the separate histories of those clans that are fortunate enough to have such, this division of the work is greatly indebted to the original researches of the late Mr. Anderson, author of the *Scottish Nation*, whose examination of many ANCIENT MANUSCRIPTS and FAMILY RECORDS brought to light many facts connected with the history of the Highland clans, never before made public.

PART III.—HISTORY OF THE HIGHLAND REGIMENTS.

THE HISTORY OF THESE REGIMENTS is to a great extent the HISTORY OF BRITAIN'S BATTLES for more than a century past; and the great military glory which our country has acquired, has been owing, in no small degree, to their UNSURPASSED BRAVERY, PERFECT DISCIPLINE, and HIGH MORALE. In the part of the work devoted to this subject, it has been sought faithfully to record not only the noble services rendered to its country in past times by each regiment in every engagement in which it took part, but also the brave deeds performed by many individual Highland soldiers.

With regard to the later history of the Highland regiments, it has been sought to render this complete and perfectly reliable by applying, for direct information, to the COLONEL OF EACH EXISTING REGIMENT; and in every case the publishers have met with the greatest courtesy and willingness to lend all assistance. In addition to this,

of course, every accessible published work on the subject has been consulted, including the host of books called forth by the Crimean War and the Indian Mutiny.

From the above statements it will be seen that in no other single publication is it possible to obtain SUCH VARIED and VALUABLE INFORMATION on ALL POINTS OF INTEREST connected with the Scottish Highlands—their HISTORY, their ANTIQUITIES, their CLANS, their LITERATURE, their MILITARY ANNALS. No pains have been spared to make the work ACCURATE, EXHAUSTIVE, INTERESTING, and CONSISTENT with the MOST RECENT INVESTIGATIONS.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

Besides clan-tartans, the work will be richly embellished with autographs, seals, armorial bearings, objects of antiquarian interest, and many views and portraits on wood and steel, all taken from original or other authentic sources, and executed in the first style of art.

The publishers have spared no pains to obtain original and genuine portraits, and to have them faithfully and beautifully reproduced; and they owe their sincere thanks to those noblemen and gentlemen connected with the Highlands who have allowed them access to their valuable family collections, in order to obtain copies of such original portraits as were required for the work. Many of these portraits have never before been engraved. The publishers would especially mention here the valuable miniature portrait of Prince Charles Edward Stuart in Highland costume, which has been in possession of the Lochiel family for generations, and which has been kindly placed at their disposal by the present representative of the family, Donald Cameron, Esq., M.P. for Inverness-shire. It has the merit of being a faithful likeness, and will be engraved by Holl of London.

Many of the views, illustrative both of the events narrated in the history and of the rich and romantic Highland scenery, are from photographs and drawings taken specially for the work. Others, consisting chiefly of views of towns and fortresses taken at or near the time of the events they are intended to illustrate, are copied from the rare and valuable work of John Slezer, entitled *Theatrum Scotiæ*, published at the end of the 17th century. The facts that Slezer was a military engineer, and that he was appointed by government to survey the chief towns and strongholds of Scotland, are sufficient guarantees of the faithfulness of these views.

CONDITIONS.

This work will be published in Twenty-five parts, price Two Shillings each, size super-imperial 8vo. It will also be issued in Eight Divisions, rich cloth, price 7s. 6d. each. It will form, when completed, Two handsome Volumes, with Thirty specimens of authentic Clan-Tartans, beautifully executed in colour, and Twenty other page plates, including Map of Clan Territories, besides about Two Hundred illustrative wood engravings.

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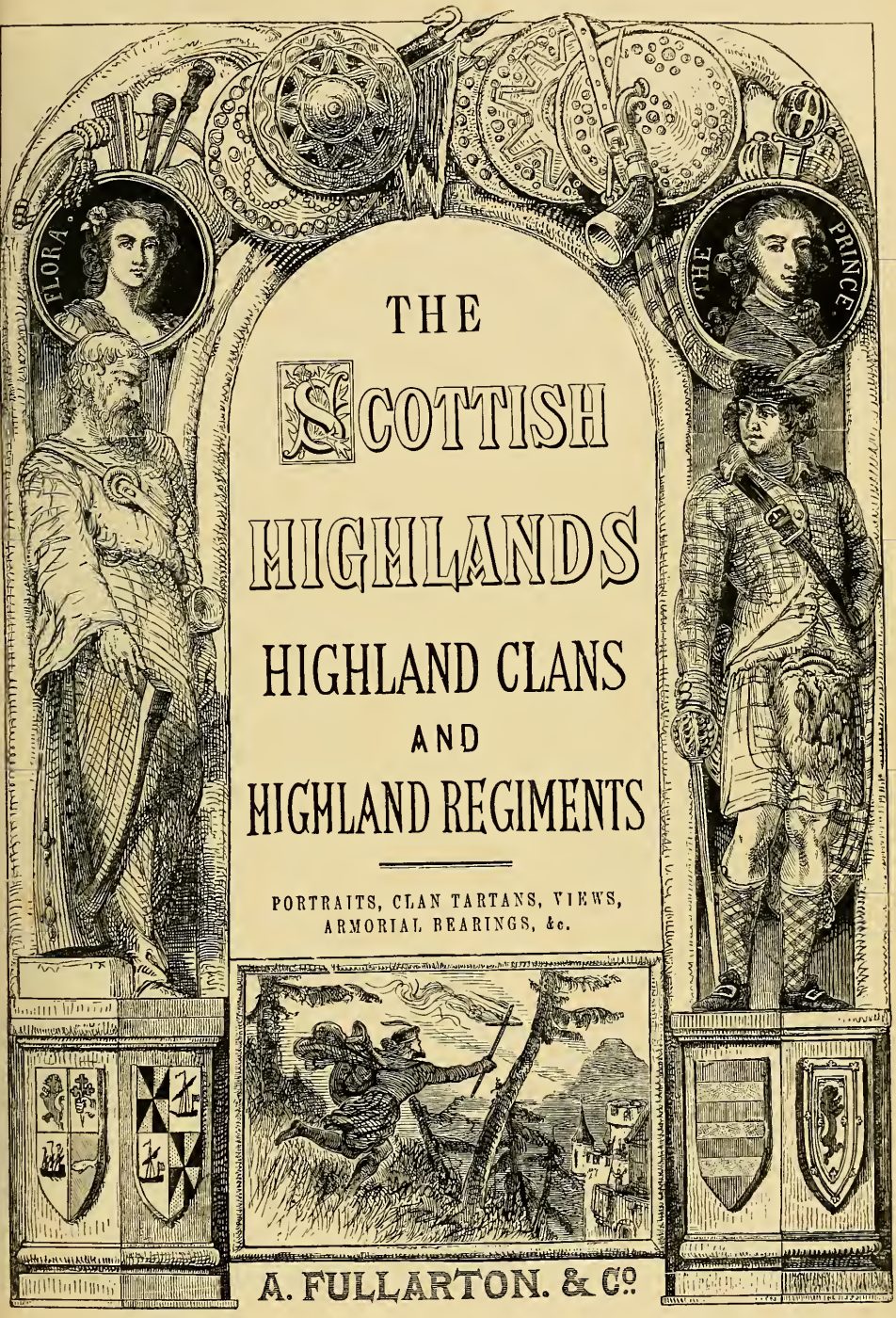
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THE
SCOTTISH
HIGHLANDS
HIGHLAND CLANS
AND
HIGHLAND REGIMENTS

PORTRAITS, CLAN TARTANS, VIEWS,
ARMORIAL BEARINGS, &c.



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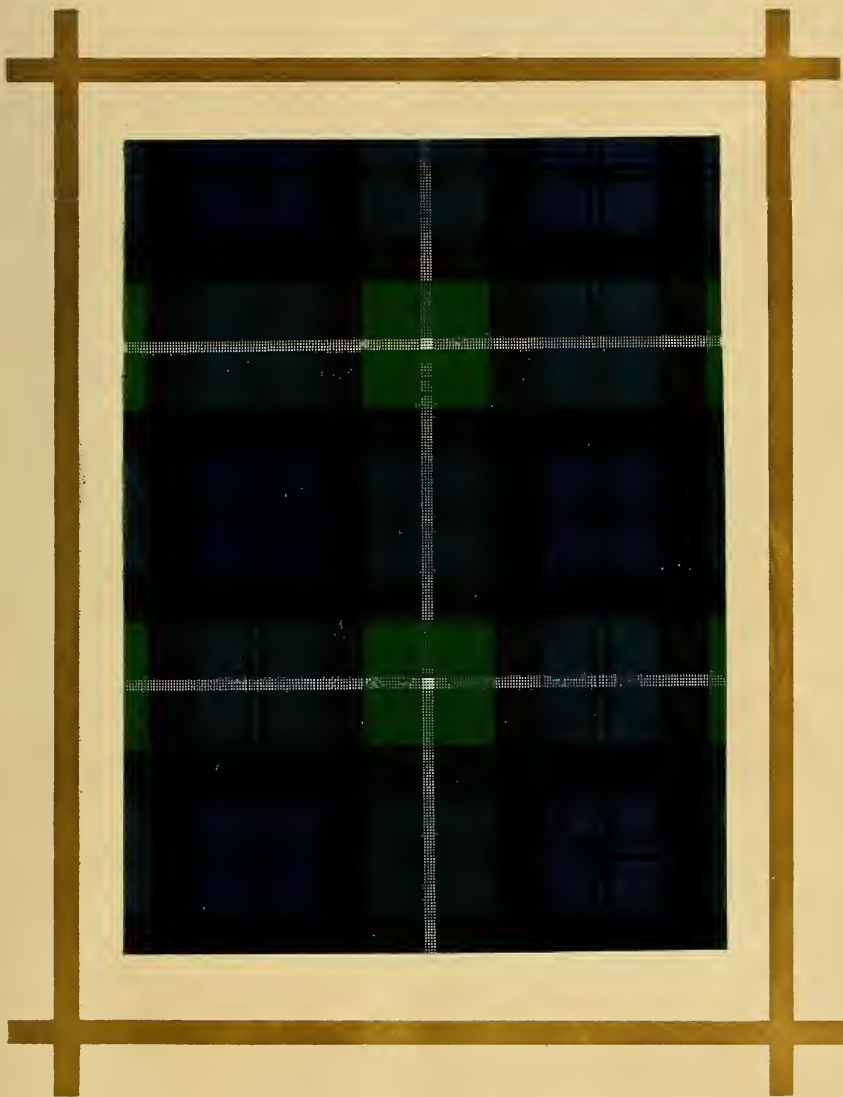


STUART.





Volcanic landscape, near the summit of the mountain.



ARGYLE CAMPBELL.





J. H. P.

ATTLE-FIELD OF SHEAFFEMUR



MACLEAN.



W. Hill.

JAMES STUART
DE CHEVALIER DE S^t GEORGE

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FORBES.

PART FIRST.

GENERAL HISTORY OF THE HIGHLANDS.

CHAPTER I.

B. C. 55—A. D. 446.

Highlands defined—Ancient Scotland—Roman Transactions—Agricola—Caledonians—Contest at Loch Ore—Galgacus—Mons Grampius—Battle—Agricola superseded—Lollius Urbicus—Antonine's Wall—Ulpian Marcellus—Severus—Constantius Chlorus—Picts—Scots—Attacots—Attack Roman Provinces—Romans abandon Britain—Influence of Romans—Roman Remains—Roads—Camps—Ardoch.

As it is generally acknowledged that the physical character of a country influences in a great degree the moral and physical character of its inhabitants, and thus to a certain extent determines their history, it may not be deemed out of place to define here the application of the term *Highlands*, so far as Scotland is concerned, and briefly to describe the general physical aspect of that part of our native land. If it hold good at all that there subsists a relation between a people and the country which they have inhabited for centuries, the following history will show that this is peculiarly the case with the Scottish Highlanders.

Most of those who have thought of the matter at all, have doubtless formed to themselves a general notion of the northern half of Scotland as a

“ Land of brown heath and shaggy wood,
Land of the mountain and the flood,”

and of its inhabitants as a brawny, rugged, indomitable, impulsive race, steadfast in their friendship and loyalty, and relentless but generous in their enmity. Although the popular and poetic notion of the country is on the whole correct, and although the above epithets may

express the main features of the character of the people, still it requires a close acquaintance with this interesting race, both historically and by personal intercourse, to form an adequate notion of their character in all its aspects.

To speak roughly, nearly the whole of the country north of a line connecting the heads of the estuaries of the Clyde, Forth, and Tay, may be included under the designation of the Highlands, and, in fact, popularly is so. Indeed, at the time at which the northern half of Scotland—the ancient and proper Caledonia—emerges from its pristine gloom, and for the first time glimmers in the light of history, the line indicated by the forts of Agricola, and afterwards by the wall of Antonine, marked the southern boundary of the region which was then, and for centuries afterwards, regarded by the Romans, and also, probably, by the southern Britons, as occupying the same position in relation to the rest of the country as the Highlands proper did at a subsequent period. In course of time the events which fall to be recorded in the following pages gradually altered this easily perceived boundary, so that for centuries before the present day, a much more intricate but still distinct line has marked the limits of what is now strictly and correctly regarded as the Highlands of Scotland.

The definition of this territory which best suits the purposes of history, and in all respects most nearly accords with those of political and social geography, is one which makes it commensurate with the country or locations of the ancient Highland clans. This definition assigns to the Highlands all the continental

territory north of the Moray frith, and all the territory, both insular and continental, westward of an easily traceable line from that frith to the frith of Clyde. The line commences at the mouth of the river Nairn: thence, with the exception of a slight north-eastward or outward curve, the central point of which is on the river Spey, it runs due south-east till it strikes the river Dee at Tullach, nearly on the third degree of longitude west of Greenwich; it then runs generally south till it falls upon Westwater, or the southern large head-water of the North Esk; thence, over a long stretch, it runs almost due south-west, and with scarcely a deviation, till it falls upon the Clyde at Ardmore in the parish of Cardross; and now onward to the Atlantic ocean, it moves along the frith of Clyde, keeping near to the continent, and excluding none of the Clyde islands except the comparatively unimportant Cumbræ. All the Scottish territory west and north-west of this line is properly the Highlands. Yet both for the convenience of topographical description, and because, altogether down to the middle of the 13th century, and partially down to the middle of the 16th, the Highlands and the Western Islands were politically and historically distinct regions, the latter are usually viewed apart under the name of the Hebrides. The mainland Highlands, or the Highlands after the Hebrides are deducted, extend in extreme length from Duncansby Head, or John o' Groat's on the north, to the Mull of Kintyre on the south, about 250 miles; but over a distance of 90 miles at the northern end, they have an average breadth of only about 45 miles,—over a distance of 50 or 55 miles at the southern end, they consist mainly of the Clyde islands, and the very narrow peninsula of Kintyre,—and even at their broadest part, from the eastern base of the Grampians to Ardnurchan Point on the west, they do not extend to more than 120 miles. The district comprehends the whole of the counties of Caithness, Sutherland, Ross, Cromarty, Inverness, and Argyle, large parts of Nairn, Perth, Dumbarton, and Bute, and considerable portions of Elgin, Banff, Aberdeen, Forfar, and Stirling. Considerable parts of this district, however, such as Caithness-shire, the island of Bute, and some large tracts of moor or valley

or flanking plain, do not exhibit the physical features which are strictly Highland.

A district so extensive can be but faintly pictured in a general and rapid description. Mountains, chiefly covered with heath or ling, but occasionally, on the one hand, displaying sides and summits of naked rock, and on the other, exhibiting a dress of verdure, everywhere rise, at short intervals, in chains, ridges, groups, and even solitary heights. Their forms are of every variety, from the precipitous and pinnacled acclivity, to the broad-based and round-backed ascent; but, in general, are sharp in outline, and wild or savagely grand in feature. Both elongated ridges, and chains or series of short parallel ridges, have a prevailing direction from north-east to south-west, and send up summits from 1,000 to upwards of 4,000 feet above the level of the sea. Glens, valleys, and expanses of lowland stretch in all directions among the mountains, and abound in voluminous streams, and large elongated lakes of picturesque appearance,—nearly all the inland lakes extending in stripes either north-eastward and south-westward, or eastward and westward. Along the whole west coast, at remarkably brief intervals, arms of the sea, long, narrow, and sometimes exceedingly rugged in outline, run north-eastward or south-eastward into the interior, and assist the inland fresh water lakes in cleaving it into sections. The rivers of the region are chiefly impetuous torrents, careering for a while along mountain-gorges, and afterwards either expanding themselves into beautiful lakes and flowing athwart delightful meadows, or ploughing long narrow valleys, green and ornate with grasses, trefoils, daisies, ranunculi, and a profuse variety of other herbage and flowers. Native woods, principally of pine and birch, and occasionally clumps and expanses of plantation, climb the acclivities of the gentler heights, or crowd down upon the valley, and embosom the inland lakes. On the east side, along the coast to the Moray frith, and towards the frontier in the counties of Nairn, Elgin, and Perth, gentle slopes and broad belts of lowland, fertile in soil and favourable in position, are carpeted with agricultural luxuriance, and thickly dotted with human dwellings, and successfully vie with the south of Scotland in towns and population, and in

the pursuit and display of wealth. But almost everywhere else, except in the fairyland of Loch Fyne, and the southern shore of Loch Etive, the Highlands are sequestered,—sinless of a town,—a semi-wilderness, where a square mile is a more convenient unit of measurement than an acre.

A district characterized by such features as we have named necessarily exhibits, within very circumscribed limits, varieties of scenery of the most opposite descriptions; enabling the admirer of nature to pass abruptly from dwelling on the loveliness of an extensive marine or champaign landscape into the deep solitude of an ancient forest, or the dark craggy fastnesses of an alpine ravine; or from lingering amid the quiet grassy meadows of a pastoral strath or valley, watered by its softly-flowing stream, to the open heathy mountain-side, whence 'alps o'er alps arise,' whose summits are often shrouded with mists and almost perennial snows, and their overhanging precipices furrowed by foaming cataracts. Lakes and long arms of the sea, either fringed with woods or surrounded with rocky barren shores, now studded with islands, and anon extending their silvery arms into distant receding mountains, are met in every district; while the extreme steepness, ruggedness, and sterility of many of the mountain-chains impart to them as imposing and magnificent characters as are to be seen in the much higher and more inaccessible elevations of Switzerland. No wonder, then, that this 'land of mountain and of flood' should have given birth to the song of the bard, and afforded material for the theme of the sage, in all ages; and that its inhabitants should be tinged with deep romantic feelings, at once tender, melancholy, and wild; and that the recollection of their own picturesque native dwellings should haunt them to their latest hours. Neither, amid such profusion and diversity of all that is beautiful and sublime in nature, can the unqualified admiration of strangers, from every part of Europe, of the scenery of the Highlands fail of being easily accounted for; nor can any hesitate in recommending them to visit the more remote or unknown solitudes.¹

¹ We are indebted for great part of this description to Fullarton's *Gazetteer of Scotland*.

Such are the main features of the Highlands of Scotland at the present day, and, to a considerable extent, the description might have applied to the country at the time of the Roman invasion. Still, in the graphic words of Stuart,² "To form an idea of the general aspect of Scotland, as it was some eighteen hundred years ago, we must, in imagination, restore to its now varied surface the almost unbroken gloom of the primeval forest; her waving mantle of sombre hue, within which the *genius loci* may be supposed to have brooded over the seclusion and the poverty of 'ancient Caledon.' In a bird's-eye view, if such a thought may be indulged, the greatest part of the country presented, in all probability, the appearance of one continuous wood; a mass of cheerless verdure resting on hill and dale—the sameness of its dark extent broken only where some lake or green-clad morass met the view, or where the higher mountains lifted their summits above the line of vegetation. In some districts, considerable tracks of open moorland might, doubtless, be seen clad in the indigenous heather of the North; while, in others, occasional spots of pasture-land would here and there appear;—but, on the whole, these must have formed a striking contrast to the wide expanse of the prevailing forest."

As the present work is concerned only with the Highlands of Scotland, it would of course be out of place to give any minute account of the transactions of the Romans in the other parts of the island. Suffice it to say that from the time, B.C. 55, when Julius Cæsar first landed on the coast of South Britain, until A.D. 78, when, under the Emperor Vespasian, Cnæus Julius Agricola assumed the command in Great Britain, the greater part of midland and south England had been brought under the sway of the Romans. This able commander set himself with vigour and earnestness to confirm the conquests which had been already made, to reduce the rest of the country to subjection, to conciliate the Britons by mild measures, and to attach them to the Roman power by introducing among them Roman manners, literature, luxuries, and dress.

Agricola was appointed to the command in Britain in the year 78 A.D., but appears not

² *Caledonia Romana*, p. 11.

to have entered Scotland till his third campaign in the year 80. He employed himself in the years 80, 81, and 82, in subduing the country south of the friths of Forth and Clyde,—the *Bodotria* and *Glotta* of Tacitus,—erecting, in 81, a series of forts between these two estuaries. Having accomplished this, Agricola made preparations for his next campaign, which he was to open beyond the friths in the summer of 83, he in the meantime having heard that the Caledonians—as Tacitus calls the people north of the Forth—had formed a confederacy to resist the invader.

These Caledonians appear to have been divided into a number of tribes or clans, having little or no political connection, and almost constantly at war among themselves. It was only when a foreign foe threatened their much-prized freedom that a sense of danger forced them to unite for a time under the com-

mand of a military leader. Some writers, on the authority of Ptolemy of Alexandria, but chiefly on that of the pseudo-Richard of Cirencester,³ give a list of the various tribes which, during the Roman period, inhabited North Britain, and define the locality which each occupied with as much exactness as they might do a modern English county. "There was one thing," says Tacitus, "which gave us an advantage over these powerful nations, that they never consulted together for the advantage of the whole. It was rare that even two or three of them united against the common enemy." Their whole means of subsistence consisted in the milk and flesh of their flocks and the produce of the chase. They lived in a state almost approaching to nudity; but whether from necessity or from choice cannot be satisfactorily determined. Dio represents the Caledonians as being naked, but Herodian



Fig. 1. Sculptured Stone in the Church of Meigle.



Fig. 2. From a Sculptured Stone found at St. Andrews.

speaks of them as wearing a partial covering. They appear, at all events, if the stone dug up at Blackness in the year 1868 (see p. 11), be taken as an authority, to have gone naked into battle. Their towns, which were few, consisted of huts covered with turf or skins, and for better security they were erected in the centre of some wood or morass. "What the Britons call a town, says Cæsar, "is a tract of woody country, surrounded by a vallum and ditch, for the security of themselves and cattle against the incursions of an enemy; for, when

they have enclosed a very large circuit with felled trees, they build within it houses for

³ The *De Situ Britannie* "professed to be a manuscript of the fourteenth century, written by a monk named Richard of Cirencester, made up by him from certain fragments left by a Roman General. The person who stepped forth as the lucky discoverer of so precious a relic was Charles Julius Bertram, English Professor in the Royal Marine Academy at Copenhagen. His revelation was accepted without hesitation, and revolutionized the existing notions about the geography of Roman Britain. After all, the hoax was not absolutely useless; it stimulated inquiry, and, in itself, what it professed to lay down on authority, were the guesses and theories of a learned and acute man."—Burtou's *History of Scotland*, vol. i. p. 13.

themselves, and hovels for their cattle."⁴ Notwithstanding, perhaps owing to the scantiness of their covering, which left their bodies exposed to the rigour of a cold and variable climate, the Caledonians were a remarkably hardy race, capable of enduring fatigue, cold, and hunger to an extent which their descendants of the present day could not encounter without risk of life. They were decidedly a warlike people, and are said, like the heroes of more ancient times, to have been addicted to robbery. The weapons of their warfare consisted of small spears, long broadswords, and hand daggers; and they defended their bodies in combat by a small target or shield,—all much of the same form and construction as those afterwards used by their posterity in more modern times. It would appear from the stone above referred to that the shields of the Caledonians were oblong, with a boss in the centre, and their swords short and pointed,—not long and blunt, as represented by Tacitus. The use of cavalry appears not to have been so well understood among the Caledonians as among the more southern tribes; but in battle they often made use of cars, or chariots, which were drawn by small, swift, and spirited horses; and it is conjectured that, like those used by the southern Britons, they had iron scythes projecting from the axle. It is impossible to say what form of government obtained among these warlike tribes. When history is silent, historians should either maintain a cautious reserve or be sparing in their conjectures; but analogy may supply materials for well-grounded speculations, and it may therefore be asserted, without any great stretch of imagination, that, like most of the other uncivilized tribes we read of in history, the Northern Britons or Caledonians were under the government of a leader or chief to whom they yielded a certain degree of obedience. Dio, indeed, insinuates that the governments of these tribes were democratic; but he should have been aware that it is only when bodies of men assume, in an advanced state of civilization, a compact and united form that democracy can prevail; and the state of barbarism in which he says the inhabitants of North

Britain existed at the period in question seems to exclude such a supposition. We have no certain information from any contemporary, and conjecture is therefore groundless. Later fable-loving historians and chroniclers, indeed, give lists of Kings of Scotland—or, rather, of Pictland—extending back for centuries before the Christian era, but these by general consent are now banished to the realm of myths. It is probable, as we have already said, that the Caledonians were divided into a number of independent tribes, and that each tribe was presided over by a chief, but how he obtained his supremacy it is impossible to say. We have one instance, at least, of a number of tribes uniting under one leader, viz., at the battle of *Mons Grampius*, when the Caledonians were commanded by a chief or leader called by Tacitus, Galgacus, "inter plures duces virtute et genere præstans."⁵ "The earliest bond of union may probably be traced to the time when they united under one common leader to resist or assail the Roman legionaries; and out of the *Duc* or *Toshach* elected for the occasion, like Galgacus, and exercising a paramount though temporary authority, arose the *Ardriagh* or supreme king, after some popular or ambitious chieftain had prolonged his power by successful wars, or procured his election to this prominent station for life."⁶

Whatever may have been the relation of the members of the different tribes, and the relation of the tribes to each other, it is certain, from the general tone of the works of Tacitus and other Roman historians in which those early inhabitants of the Scottish Highlands are mentioned, that they offered a far more formidable resistance to the Roman arms than had hitherto been done by any other of the British tribes.

In personal stature, the natives of Caledonia, like those of other parts of Britain, appear to have excelled their Roman invaders, and from Tacitus we learn that those with whom his father-in-law came into contact were distinguished by ruddy locks and lusty limbs. It is also certain that for the sake of ornament, or for the purpose of making their appearance more terrible in war, they resorted to the bar-

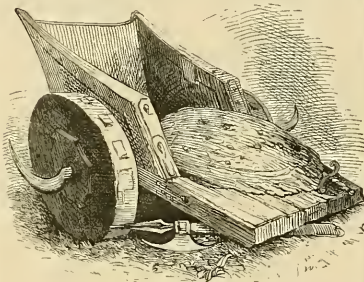
⁵ Tacitus, *Agricola*, xxix.

⁶ R. W. Robertson's *Scotland under her Early Kings*, vol. i. p. 31.

⁴ *De Bello Gallico*, ii. 17.

barous practice of tattooing their bodies. Indeed it may be taken as a proof of their never having to any great extent come under the power and influence of Rome and Roman customs, that they retained this practice for long after the other Britons had abandoned it, and on this account, in all probability, afterwards acquired the name of *Picts*.

The people whom Agricola encountered in Scotland cannot have been otherwise than tolerable proficient in the common branches of art; how else can we suppose them to have been supplied with all that *materiel* of war with which they are said to have appeared before him? Indolent and uninformed as were the bulk of the people, they must have had among them artificers both in wood and in iron, not unskilled in their respective trades—able to construct the body of a car—to provide



British War-Chariot.

for it axles of great strength—above all, able to construct the wheels and arm them with those sharp-edged instruments that were destined to cut down whatever opposed their course.⁷

Agricola, in the summer of 83, after having obtained information as to the nature of the country and the aspect of its inhabitants from exploring parties and prisoners, transported his army across the Frith of Forth to the shores of Fife by means of his fleet, and marched along the coast eastwards, keeping the fleet in sight. It cannot with certainty be ascertained at what part of the Forth this transportation of the forces took place, although some bold

antiquarians assert that it must have been not far from Queensferry. The fleet, Tacitus tells us,⁸ now acting, for the first time, in concert with the land-forces, proceeded in sight of the army, forming a magnificent spectacle, and adding terror to the war. It frequently happened that in the same camp were seen the infantry and cavalry intermixed with the marines, all indulging their joy, full of their adventures, and magnifying the history of their exploits; the soldier describing, in the usual style of military ostentation, the forests which he had passed, the mountains which he climbed, and the barbarians whom he put to the rout; while the sailor had his storms and tempests, the wonders of the deep, and the spirit with which he conquered winds and waves.

The offensive operations of the sixth campaign were commenced by the Caledonian Britons, who, from the higher country, made a furious attack upon the trans-Forthan fortifications, which so alarmed some of Agricola's officers, who were afraid of being cut off from a retreat, that they advised their general to recross the Forth without delay; but Agricola resisted this advice, and made preparations for the attack which he expected would soon be made upon his army. As Agricola had received information that the enemy intended to fall upon him from various quarters, he divided his army into three bodies and continued his march. Some antiquarians have attempted to trace the route taken by each division, founding their elaborate theories on the very slender remains of what they suppose to have been Roman fortifications and encampments. As it would serve no good purpose to encumber our pages with these antiquarian conjectures, detailed accounts of which will be found in Chalmers, Stuart, Roy, and others, we shall only say that, with considerable plausibility, it is supposed that the Ninth Legion encamped on the north side of Loch Ore, about two miles south of Loch Leven in Kinross-shire. Another legion, it is said, encamped near Dunearn Hill, about a mile distant from Burntisland, near which hill are still to be seen remains of a strength called *Agricola's camp*. At all events the divisions

⁷ Stuart's *Caledonia Romana*, pp 35, 36.

⁸ *Agricola* xxv.

do not seem to have been very far apart, as will be seen from the following episode.

The enemy having watched the proceedings of the Roman army made the necessary preparations for attack, and during the night made a furious assault on the Ninth Legion at Loch Ore. They had acted with such caution that they were actually at the very camp before Agricola was aware of their movements; but with great presence of mind he despatched a body of his lightest troops to turn their flank and attack the assailants in the rear. After an obstinate engagement, maintained with varied success in the very gates of the camp, the Britons were at length repulsed by the superior skill of the Roman veterans. This battle was so far decisive, that Agricola did not find much difficulty afterwards in subduing the surrounding country, and, having finished his campaign, he passed the winter of 83 in Fife; being supplied with provisions from his fleet in the Forth, and keeping up a constant correspondence with his garrisons on the southern side.

By this victory, according to Tacitus, so complete and glorious, the Roman army was inspired with confidence to such a degree, that they now pronounced themselves invincible, and desired to penetrate to the extremity of the island.

The Caledonians now began to perceive the danger of their situation from the proximity of such a powerful enemy, and a sense of this danger impelled them to lay aside the feuds and jealousies which had divided and distracted their tribes, to consult together for their mutual safety and protection, and to combine their scattered strength into a united and energetic mass. The proud spirit of independence which had hitherto kept the Caledonian tribes apart, now made them coalesce in support of their liberties, which were threatened with utter annihilation. In this eventful crisis, they looked around them for a leader or chief under whom they might fight the battle of freedom, and save their country from the dangers which threatened it. A chief, named Galgacus by Tacitus, was pitched upon to act as generalissimo of the Caledonian army; and, from the praises bestowed upon him by that historian, this warrior appears to have

well merited the distinction thus bestowed. Preparatory to the struggle they were about to engage in, they sent their wives and children into places of safety, and, in solemn assemblies in which public sacrifices were offered up, ratified the confederacy into which they had entered against their common enemy.

Having strengthened his army with some British auxiliaries from the south, Agricola marched through Fife in the summer of 84, making for a spot called by Tacitus *Mons Grampius*; sending at the same time his fleet round the eastern coast, to support him in his operations, and to distract the attention of the Caledonians. Various conjectures have been broached as to the exact line of Agricola's march and the exact position of the Mons Grampius. The most plausible of these is that of General Roy,⁹ who supposes that the march of Agricola was regulated by the course of the Devon; that he turned to the right from Glendevon through the opening of the Ochil hills, along the course of the rivulet which runs along Gleneagles; leaving the braes of Ogilvie on his left, and passing between Blackford and Auchterarder towards the Grampian hills, which he saw at a distance before him as he debouched from the Ochils. By an easy march he reached the moor of Ardoch, from which he descended the Caledonian army, to the number of 30,000 men, encamped on the declivity of the hill which begins to rise from the north-western border of the moor of Ardoch. Agricola took his station at the great camp which adjoins the fort of Ardoch on the northward. If the Roman camp at Ardoch does mark the spot where the disastrous engagement about to be noticed took place between these brave and determined Caledonians and the invincible Roman legions, it is highly probable that Agricola drew out his army on the neighbouring moor, having a large ditch or trench of considerable length in front, the Caledonian host under Galgacus being already disposed in battle array on the heights beyond. The Roman army is supposed to have numbered about 20,000 or 30,000, the auxiliary infantry, in number about 8,000,¹ occupying the centre, the wings

⁹ *Military Antiquities.*

¹ Tac. *Agricola* xxxv

consisting of 3,000 horse. The legions were stationed in the rear, at the head of the entrenchments, as a body of reserve to support the ranks, if necessary, but otherwise to remain inactive, that a victory, obtained without the effusion of Roman blood, might be of higher value. Previous to the commencement of this interesting fight, according to "the fashion of historical literature at that time," a speech is put into the mouth of each general by the historian Tacitus. "How much more valuable would it have been to us had Tacitus deigned to tell us something about the tongue in which the leader of the barbarians spoke, or even his name, and the name of the place where he fought, as the natives uttered it! Yet, for the great interests of its day, the speech of Galgacus was far removed from a mere feat of idle pedantry. It was a noble rebuke on the empire and the Roman people, who, false to the high destiny assigned to them by Virgil, of protecting the oppressed and striking down the oppressors, had become the common scourge of all mankind. The profligate ambition, the perfidy, the absorbing pride, the egotism, and the cruelty of the dominant people—how could all be so aptly set forth as in the words of a barbarian chief, ruling over the free people who were to be the next victims."²

The narrative of the battle we give mainly in the words of the Roman commander's son-in-law, Tacitus, who no doubt had the story from Agricola's own mouth.³ The battle began, and at first was maintained at a distance. The Britons wanted neither skill nor resolution. With their long swords, and targets of small dimension, they had the address to elude the missive weapons of the Romans, and at the same time to discharge a thick volley of their own. To bring the conflict to a speedy decision, Agricola ordered three Batavian and two Tungrian cohorts to charge the enemy sword in hand. To this mode of attack those troops had been long accustomed, but to the Britons it was every way disadvantageous. Their small targets afforded no protection, and their unwieldy swords, not sharpened to a point, could do but little execution in a close

engagement. The Batavians rushed to the attack with impetuous fury; they redoubled their blows, and with the bosses of their shields bruised the enemy in the face, and, having overpowered all resistance on the plain, began to force their way up the ascent of the hill in regular order of battle. Incited by their example, the other cohorts advanced with a spirit of emulation, and cut their way with terrible slaughter. Eager in pursuit of victory, they pressed forward with determined fury, leaving behind them numbers wounded, but not slain, and others not so much as hurt.

The Roman cavalry, in the mean time, was forced to give ground. The Caledonians, in their armed chariots, rushed at full speed into the thick of the battle, where the infantry were engaged. Their first impression struck a general terror, but their career was soon checked by the inequalities of the ground, and the close embodied ranks of the Romans. Nothing could less resemble an engagement of the cavalry. Pent up in narrow places, the barbarians crowded upon each other, and were driven or dragged along by their own horses. A scene of confusion followed. Chariots without a guide, and horses without a rider, broke from the ranks in wild disorder, and flying every way, as fear and consternation urged, they overwhelmed their own files, and trampled down all who came in their way.

Meanwhile the Britons, who had hitherto kept their post on the hills, looking down with contempt on the scanty numbers of the Roman army, began to quit their station. Descending slowly, they hoped, by wheeling round the field of battle, to attack the victors in the rear. To counteract their design, Agricola ordered four squadrons of horse, which he had kept as a body of reserve, to advance to the charge. The Britons poured down with impetuosity, and retired with equal precipitation. At the same time, the cavalry, by the directions of the general, wheeled round from the wings, and fell with great slaughter on the rear of the enemy, who now perceived that their own stratagem was turned against themselves.

The field presented a dreadful spectacle of carnage and destruction. The Britons fled; the Romans pursued; they wounded, gashed, and mangled the runaways; they seized their

² Barton's *Hist. of Scotland*, vol. i. p. 9.

³ Tac. *Agricola* xxxvi. &c. We adopt Murphy's translation in the main, here and elsewhere.

prisoners, and, to be ready for others, butchered them on the spot. Despair and horror appeared in various shapes; in one part of the field the Caledonians, sword in hand, fled in crowds from a handful of Romans; in other places, without a weapon left, they faced every danger, and rushed on certain death. Swords and bucklers, mangled limbs and dead bodies, covered the plain. The field was red with blood. The vanquished Britons had their moments of returning courage, and gave proofs of virtue and of brave despair. They fled to the woods, and, rallying their scattered numbers, surrounded such of the Romans as pursued with too much eagerness.

Night coming on, the Romans, weary of slaughter, desisted from the pursuit. Ten thousand of the Caledonians fell in this engagement: on the part of the Romans, the number of slain did not exceed three hundred and forty.

The Roman army, elate with success, and enriched with plunder, passed the night in exultation. The Britons, on the other hand, wandered about, uncertain which way to turn, helpless and disconsolate. The mingled cries of men and women filled the air with lamentations. Some assisted to carry off the wounded; others called for the assistance of such as escaped unhurt; numbers abandoned their habitations, or, in their frenzy, set them on fire. They fled to obscure retreats, and, in the moment of choice, deserted them; they held consultations, and, having inflamed their hopes, changed their minds in despair; they beheld the pledges of tender affection, and burst into tears; they viewed them again, and grew fierce with resentment. It is a fact well authenticated, that some laid violent hands upon their wives and children, determined with savage compassion to end their misery.

After obtaining hostages from the Horestians, who in all probability inhabited what is now the county of Fife, Agricola garrisoned the stations on the isthmus and elsewhere, recrossed the Forth, and took up his winter-quarters in the north of England, about the Tyne and Solway. In the meantime he gave orders to the fleet, then lying probably in the Frith of Forth or Tay, to proceed on a voyage

of discovery to the northward. The enterprise appears to have been successfully accomplished by the Roman navy, which proceeded coastwise as far as the Orkneys, whence it sailed by the Western Islands and the British Channel *ad Portum Trutulensem*, Richborough in Kent, returning to the point from which it started. This is the first voyage on record that determined Britain to be an island.

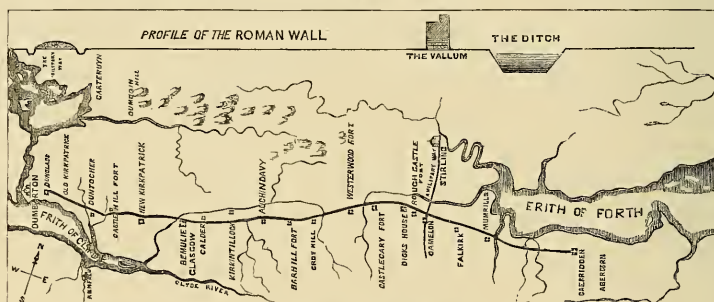
The Emperor Domitian now resolved to supersede Agricola in his command in North Britain; and he was accordingly recalled in the year 85, under the pretence of promoting him to the government of Syria, but in reality out of envy on account of the glory which he had obtained by the success of his arms. He died on the 23d of August, 93, some say, from poison, while others attribute his death to the effects of chagrin at the unfeeling treatment of Domitian. His countrymen lamented his death, and Tacitus, his son-in-law, preserved the memory of his actions and his worth in the history of his life.

During the remainder of Domitian's reign, and that of Hadrian his successor, North Britain appears to have enjoyed tranquillity; an inference which may be fairly drawn from the silence of the Roman historians. Yet as Hadrian in the year 121 built a wall between the Solway and the Tyne, some writers have supposed that the Romans had been driven by the Caledonians out of North Britain, in the reign of that Emperor. But if such was the case, how did Lollius Urbicus, the Roman general, about nineteen years after Hadrian's wall was erected, penetrate without opposition to Agricola's forts between the Clyde and the Forth? May we not rather suppose that the wall of Hadrian was built for the purpose of preventing incursions into the south by the tribes which inhabited the country between that wall and the Friths? But, be this as it may, little is known of the history of North Britain from the time of Agricola's recall till the year 138, when Antoninus Pius assumed the imperial purple. That good and sagacious emperor was distinguished by the care which he took in selecting the fittest officers for the government of the Roman provinces; and his choice, for that of Britain, fell on Lollius Urbicus.

The positive information concerning the transactions of this general in North Britain is as meagre as could possibly be, the only clearly ascertained fact in connection with his command being that he built a wall between the Forth and Clyde, very nearly on a line with the forts established by Agricola. "The meagreness of all ancient record," says Burton,⁴ "of the achievements of Lollus Urbicus is worthy of emphatic mention and recollection, because his name has got into the ordinary abridged histories which speak of it, and of 'his campaign in the north' as well-known events, of which people naturally expect fuller information elsewhere. The usual sources for reference regarding him will however be found utterly dumb." The story commonly given is that he proceeded north as far as the Moray Frith, throwing the extensive country between Forth and Clyde and the Moray Frith into the form

of a regular Roman province, which, on the worthless authority of the pseudo-Richard, was named *Vespasiana*. All this may have been the case, and the remains⁵ of Roman stations found throughout the wide tract just mentioned give some plausibility to the conjecture; but there is only the most slender grounds for connecting them with any northern expedition of Lollus Urbicus. At all events we may very safely conclude, from the general tone of the records which remain of his and of subsequent expeditions, as well as from the fact that they found it necessary to divide the Lowlands from the Highlands by a fortified wall, that the Romans considered the Caledonians of their time very troublesome, and found it exceedingly difficult if not impossible to bring them under their otherwise universal yoke.

It may not be out of place to give here some account of the wall of Antonine. The



Map and Profile of Antonine's Wall.

wall or rampart extended from Carriden on the Forth, two miles west from Blackness, and about the same distance east from Bo'ness, to West Kilpatrick on the Clyde. The date, which may be depended on, assigned to the building of the wall is between 138 and 140 a. d. Taking the length of this wall from Kilpatrick on the Clyde to Carriden or Carriden on the Forth, its extent would be 39,726 Roman paces, which exactly agrees with the modern measurement of 36 English miles and 620 yards. This rampart, which was of earth, and rested on a stone foundation, was upwards of twenty feet high and four and

twenty feet thick. Along the whole extent of the wall there was a vast ditch or *prætentura* on the outward or north side, which was generally twenty feet deep and forty feet wide, and which, there is reason to believe, might be filled with water when occasion required.⁶

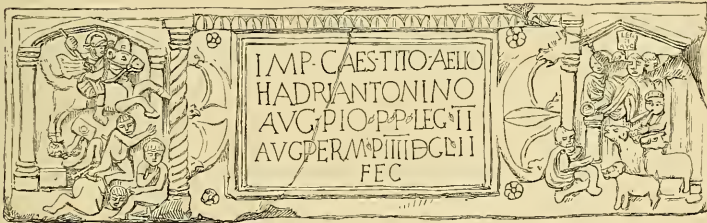
⁵ Wilson says that beyond the Forth and Clyde nearly the sole traces of the presence of the Romans are a few earthworks, with one or two exceptions, of doubtful import, and some chance discoveries of pottery and coins, mostly ascribable, it may be presumed, to the fruitless northern expedition of Agricola, after the victory of Mons Grampius, or to the still more ineffectual one of his successor, Severus.—*Prehistoric Annals*, p. 365.

⁶ On the estate of Callender, to the east of Falkirk, distinct remains of this trench are still to be seen, in good preservation, measuring a few hundred yards in length and about 12 feet in depth.

⁴ *Scotland*, vol. i. p. 29.

This ditch and rampart were strengthened at both ends, and throughout its whole extent, by about twenty forts, three being at each extremity, and the remainder placed between at the distance of about two English miles from one another; and it is highly probable that these stations were designedly placed on the previous fortifications of Agricola. The following, going from east to west, are the names and sites of some of the stations which have been identified:—Rough Castle, Castlecary, Westerwood, Banhill, Auchindinny, Kirkintilloch, Bemulie, East Kilpatrick, Castlehill, Duntocher, West Kilpatrick. It will be seen that to a certain extent they are on the line of the Edinburgh and Glasgow railway, and throughout nearly its whole length that of the Forth and Clyde canal. Its necessary appendage, a military road, ran behind the rampart from end to end, for the use of the troops and for keeping up the usual communication between the stations or forts.

From inscriptions on some of the foundation stones, which have been dug up, it appears that the Second legion, with detachments from the sixth and twentieth legions and some auxiliaries, executed these vast military works, equally creditable to their skill and perseverance. Dunglas near the western extremity, and Blackness near the eastern extremity of the rampart, afforded the Romans commodious harbours for their shipping, as also did Cramond, about five miles west from Edinburgh. This wall is called in the popular language of the country Grime's or Graham's Dyke.⁷ In 1868 a large oblong slab, in first-rate preservation, was dug up at Bo'ness, in the parish of Kinneil (Bede's *Peanfahel*, "the head of the wall"), containing an inscription as distinct as it was on the day when it came from a Roman chisel. We give here a cut of this remarkable stone, which is now in the Scottish Antiquarian Museum.



Stone from Antonine's Wall. (Copied and engraved specially for the present work.)

We have no distinct mention of the Caledonians again until the reign of Commodus, when, about the year 183, these troublesome barbarians appear to have broken through the northern wall, slain the general in command of the Roman forces, and pillaged the lowland country beyond. They were, however, driven back by Ulpian Marcellus, who succeeded by prudent management in maintaining peace for a number of years. In the beginning of the reign of Severus, however, the Caledonians again broke out, but were kept in check by Virius Lupus, who appears to have bribed rather than beaten the barbarians into conformity.

The irrepressible Highlanders again broke out about the year 207, and this time the Emperor Severus himself, notwithstanding his bad health and old age, came from Rome to Britain, determined apparently to "stamp out" the rebellion. On hearing of his arrival the tribes sent deputies to him to negotiate for peace, but the emperor, who was of a warlike disposition, and fond of military glory, declined to entertain any proposals.

After making the necessary preparations,

⁷ There are several other earthworks in England, according to Chalmers (*Caledonia*) and Taylor (*Words and Places*), which go under the appellation of Grime's Dyke or Grime's Ditch. *Grime* in Cornish is said to signify *strong*; in Gaelic, *war, battle*.

Severus began his march to the north in the year 208. He traversed the whole of North Britain, from the wall of Antoninus to the very extremity of the island, with an immense army. The Caledonians avoided coming to a general engagement with him, but kept up an incessant and harassing warfare on all sides. He, however, brought them to sue for peace; but the honours of this campaign were dearly earned, for fifty thousand of the Romans fell a prey to the attacks of the Caledonians, to fatigue, and to the severity of the climate. The Caledonians soon disregarded the treaty which they had entered into with Severus, which conduct so irritated him that he gave orders to renew the war, and to spare neither age nor sex; but his son, Caracalla, to whom the execution of these orders was intrusted, was more intent in plotting against his father and brother than in executing the revengeful mandate of the dying emperor, whose demise took place at York on the 4th February, 211, in the sixty-sixth year of his age, and in the third year of his administration in Britain.

It is in connection with this invasion that we first hear of the Meats or Meate, who are mentioned by Dion Cassius, or rather his epitomiser Xiphiline, and who are supposed by some to have inhabited the country between the two walls, while others think it more likely that they were a part of the Caledonians, and inhabited the district between the Grampians and the wall of Antonine. We shall not, however, enter into this question here, but endeavour, as briefly as possible, to record all that is known of the remaining transactions of the Romans in the north of Scotland, reserving other matters for the next chapter.

It was not consistent with the policy by which Caracalla was actuated, to continue a war with the Caledonians; for the scene of his ambition lay in Rome, to which he made hasty preparations to depart on the death of his father. He therefore entered into a treaty with the Caledonians by which he gave up the territories surrendered by them to his father, and abandoned the forts erected by him in their fastnesses. The whole country north of the wall of Antonine appears in fact to have been given up to the undisputed possession of the Caledonians, and we hear of no more incursions by them

till the reign of the emperor Constantius Chlorus, who came to Britain in the year 306, to repel the Caledonians and other Picts.⁸ Their incursions were repelled by the Roman legions under Constantius, and they remained quiet till about the year 345, when they again entered the territories of the provincial Britons; but they were compelled, it is said, again to retreat by Constans, son of Constantine the Great.

Although these successive inroads had been always repelled by the superior power and discipline of the Romans, the Caledonians of the fourth century no longer regarded them in the formidable light in which they had been viewed by their ancestors, and their genius for war improving every time they came in hostile contact with their enemies, they meditated the design of expelling the intruders altogether from the soil of North Britain. The wars which the Romans had to sustain against the Persians in the East, and against the Germans on the frontiers of Gaul, favoured the plan of the Caledonians; and having formed a treaty with the *Scots*, whose name is mentioned for the first time in history in this connection by Ammianus Marcellinus, they, in conjunction with their new allies, about the year 360 invaded the Roman territories and committed many depredations. Julian, who commanded the Roman army on the Rhine, despatched Lupicinus, an able military commander, to defend the province against the Scots and Picts, but he was recalled before he had done much to repel them.

The Picts—who on this occasion are mentioned by Ammianus Marcellinus⁹ as being divided into two nations, the *Dicaldones* and *Vecturiones*—and Scots, being joined by the Attacots, “a warlike race of men,” and the Saxons, numbers of whom appear at this early period to have settled in Britain, made another attack on the Roman provinces in the year

⁸ The first writer who mentions the *Picts* is Eumenius, the orator, who was a Professor at Autun, and who, in a panegyric pronounced by him in the year 297, mentions the *Picts* along with the Irish, and again, in 308, in a panegyric pronounced by him on Constans, speaks of the *Caledonians* and other *Picts*. This is one of the passages mainly relied on by those who consider the Caledonians and Picts to have been the same people.

⁹ *An. Mar.*, xxvii., 8.

364, on the accession of Valentinian. These appear to have made their way as far south as London, and it required all the valour and skill of Theodosius the Elder, father of the emperor of that name, who was sent to Britain in the year 367, to repel this aggression, and to repair the great ravages committed by the barbarians. The next outbreak occurred about the year 398, when the Picts and Scots again broke loose and ravaged the provinces, being repelled by a legion sent over by the great Stilicho, in answer to the petition of the helpless provincials for assistance.

In the beginning of the fifth century the enervated Romanized Britons again appear to have been subjected to the tender mercies of their wicked northern neighbours; and in reply to their cry for help, Honorius, in 416, sent over to their relief a single legion, which drove back the intruders. The Romans, as is well known, engrossed by overwhelming troubles nearer home, finally abandoned Britain about the year 446, advising the inhabitants, who were suffering from the ravages of the Picts and Scots, to protect themselves by retiring behind and keeping in repair the wall of Severus.

Such is a brief account of the transactions of the Romans in Britain so far as these were connected with the Highlands of Scotland. That energetic and insatiable people doubtless left their mark on the country and its inhabitants south of the Forth and Clyde, as the many Roman remains which exist there at the present day testify. The British provincials, indeed, appear in the end to have been utterly enervated, and, in the worst sense, Romanized, so that they became an easy prey to their Saxon helpers. It is quite evident, however, that the inhabitants of Caledonia proper, the district beyond the wall of Antonine, were to a very slight extent, if at all, influenced by the Roman invasion. Whether it was from the nature of the people, or from the nature of the country which they inhabited, or from both combined, they appear to have been equally impervious to Roman force and Roman culture. The best services that their enemies rendered to the Caledonians or Picts were that they forced them to unite against the common foe thus contributing towards the foundation

of a future kingdom; and that they gave them a training in arms such as the Caledonians could never have obtained, had they not been brought into collision with the best-trained soldiers of the world in their time.

We have in what precedes mainly followed only one thread in the very intricate web formed by the early history of the Highlands, which, to a certain extent at this period, is the history of Scotland; but, as will have been seen, there are various other threads which join in from time to time, and which, after giving a short account of the traces of the Roman invasion still existing in the Highlands, we shall endeavour to catch up and follow out as far as possible.

It is not necessary in a history of the Highlands of Scotland, as we have defined that term, that much space should be given to an account of Roman remains; for, as we have already said, these Italian invaders appear never to have obtained anything like a firm footing in that rugged district, or made any definite or characteristic impression on its inhabitants. "The vestiges whence it is inferred that the Empire for a time had so far established itself in Scotland as to bring the natives over to the habits of peaceful citizens, belong almost exclusively to the country south of Antonine's wall, between the Forth and Clyde. Coins and weapons have been found farther north, but scarcely any vestige of regular settlement. None of the pieces of Roman sculpture found in Scotland belong to the districts north of the wall. It is almost more significant still, that of the very considerable number of Scottish Roman inscriptions in the various collections, only one was found north of the wall, and that in the strongly-fortified station of Ardoch, where it commemorated that it was dedicated to the memory of a certain Ammonius Damionis.¹ On the other hand, it is in that unsubdued district that the memorials of Roman conquest chiefly abound."²

The whole of Britain was intersected by Roman ways, and as, wherever a Roman army went, it was preceded by pioneers who cleared and made a durable road to facilitate its march, there can be no doubt that the north of Scot-

¹ Wilson's *Prehist. Annals*.

² Burton's *Scotland*, vol. i. p. 74.

land was to a considerable extent intersected by highways during the invasion of Agricola, Lollius Urbicus, and Severus. One road at least can be traced as far north as Aberdeenshire, and is popularly known in some districts as the *Lang Causeway*. This road appears to have issued from the wall of Antonine, passed through Camelon, the Roman port on the Carron, and pushing straight forward, according to the Roman custom, across the Carron, it pursued its course in a general north-east direction through Stirling, Perth, by Ardoch, through Forfar and Kincardine, to about Stonehaven.

It would appear that there are traces of Roman roads even farther north. Between the rivers Don and Urie in Aberdeenshire, on the eastern side of Bennachie, there exists an ancient road known in the country by the name of the *Maiden Causeway*, a name by which some of the Roman roads in the north of England are distinguished. This proceeds from Bennachie whereon there is said to have been a hill-fort, more than the distance of a mile into the woods of Pitodrie, when it disappears: it is paved with stones, and is about fourteen feet wide. Still farther north, from Forres to the ford of Cromdale on the Spey, there has been long known a road of very ancient construction, pointing to Cromdale, where the Romans may have forded the Spey. Various traces of very ancient roads are still to be seen by Corgarf and through Braemar: the tradition of the people in Strathdee and Braemar, supports the idea that there are remains of Roman roads which traverse the country between the Don and the Dee. Certain it is, that there are obvious traces of ancient roads which cross the wild districts between Strathdon and Strathdee, though it is impossible to ascertain when or by whom these ancient roads were constructed, in such directions, throughout such a country.

Along these roads there were without doubt many camps and stations, as it is well known that the Romans never halted even for a single night, without entrenching themselves behind secure fortifications. There are many remains of what are supposed to have been Roman camps still pointed out in various places north of the line occupied by Antonine's wall. These are well known even to the peasantry, and are

generally treated with respect. The line of these camps reaches as far as the counties of Aberdeen and Inverness, the most important of them, however, being found in Strathallan, Strathearn, and Strathmore. Besides the most important of these camps, that at Ardoch, traces of many others have been found. There was one on the river Earn, about six miles east of Ardoch, which would command the middle part of Strathearn lying between the Ochil hills on the south and the river Almond on the north. Another important station is supposed to have been established near Callander, where, on a tongue of land formed by the junction of the rivers Strathgairney and Strathyre, the two sources of the Teith, are seen the embankments referred to by Scott³ as

. "The mouldering lines
Where Rome, the empress of the world,
Of yore her eagle wings unfurled."⁴

Another camp is placed at Dalgenross, near the confluence of the Ruchel and the Earn, which, with Bochastle, would command the western district of Strathearn. Another important station was the East Findoch, at the south side of the Almond; it guarded the only practicable passage through the mountains northward, to an extent of thirty miles from east to west. The Roman camp here was placed on a high ground, defended by water on two sides, and by a morass with a steep bank on the other two sides. It was about one hundred and eighty paces long, and eighty broad, and was surrounded by a strong earthen wall nearly twelve feet thick, part of which still remains. The trenches are still entire, and in some places six feet deep.

On the eastern side of Strathearn, and between it and the Forth, are the remains of Roman posts; and at Ardlargie a Roman camp was established with the design, it is supposed, of guarding the passage through the Ochil hills, by the valley of May water. Another camp at Gleneagles secured the passage of the same hills through Glendevon. With the design of guarding the narrow, but useful passage from

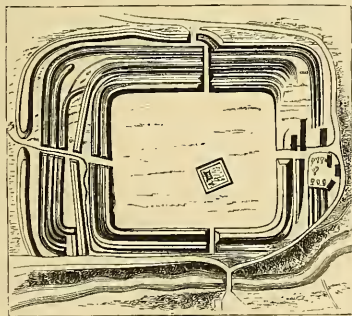
³ *Lady of the Lake*.

⁴ According to Burton, however, these are by some geologists set down as a geological phenomenon.—*Hist. of Scot. i. 75.*

the middle Highlands, westward through Glenlyon to Argyle, the Romans fixed a post at Fortingal, about sixteen miles north-west from the station at East-Findoch.

A different line of posts became necessary to secure Angus and the Mearns. At Coupar Angus, on the east side of the Isla, about seven miles east from Inchtuthel, stood a Roman camp, of a square form, of twenty acres within the ramparts. This camp commanded the passage down Strathmore, between the Siedlaw hills on the south-east, and the Isla on the north-west. On Campmoor, little more than a mile south from Coupar Angus, appear the remains of another Roman fort. The great camp of Battledyke stood about eighteen miles north-east from Coupar Angus, being obviously placed there to guard the passage from the Highlands through Glen Esk and Glen Prosen. About eleven and a-half miles north-east of the camp at Battledykes was another Roman camp, the remains of which may still be traced near the mansion-house of Keithock. This camp is known by the name of Wardikes. The country below the Siedlaw hills, on the north side of the estuary of Tay, was guarded by a Roman camp near Invergowrie, which had a communication on the north-east with the camp at Harefaulds. This camp, which was about two hundred yards square, and fortified with a high rampart and a spacious ditch, stood about two miles west from Dundee.

Traces of a number of others have been found, but we need not go farther into detail. This account of the Roman transactions in Scotland would, however, be incomplete with-



Roman Camp at Ardoch as it appeared in 1755.
[Stuart's *Caledonia Romana*.]

out a more particular notice of the well-known camp at Ardoch. Ardoch village, in Perthshire, lies on the east side of Knaigwater, ten miles north from Stirling, and is about two miles from the Greenloaning station of the Caledonian railway, the site of the camp being a little distance to the north-west of the village. As this station guarded the principal inlet into the interior of Caledonia, the Romans were particularly anxious to fortify so advantageous a position. "The situation of it," says the writer of the Old Statistical Account of Muthill, "gave it many advantages; being on the north-west side of a deep moss that runs a long way eastward. On the west side, it is partly defended by the steep bank of the water of Knaik; which bank rises perpendicularly between forty and fifty feet. The north and east sides were most exposed; and there we find very particular care was taken to secure them. The ground on the east is pretty regular, and descends by a gentle slope from the lines of fortification, which, on that side, consists of five rows of ditches, perfectly entire, and running parallel to one another. These altogether are about fifty-five yards in breadth. On the north side, there is an equal number of lines and ditches, but twenty yards broader than the former. On the west, besides the steep precipices above mentioned, it was defended by at least two ditches. One is still visible; the others have probably been filled up, in making the great military road from Stirling to the north. The side of the camp, lying to the southward, exhibits to the antiquary a less pleasing prospect. Here the peasant's rugged hand has laid in ruins a great part of the lines; so that it may be with propriety said, in the words of a Latin poet, 'Jam seges est, ubi Troja fuit.' The area of the camp is an oblong of 140 yards, by 125 within the lines. The general's quarter rises above the level of the camp, but is not in the centre. It is a regular square, each side being exactly twenty yards. At present it exhibits evident marks of having been enclosed with a stone wall, and contains the foundation of a house, ten yards by seven." There are two other encampments adjoining, having a communication with one another, and containing about 130 acres of ground. A subterranean passage is

said to have extended from the pretorium under the bed of the Knaik. Not far north of this station, on the way to Crieff, may be traced three temporary Roman camps of different sizes. Portions of the ramparts of these camps still exist. A mile west of Ardoch, an immense cairn lately existed, 182 feet long, 45 broad at the base, and 30 feet in sloping height. A human skeleton, 7 feet long, in a stone coffin, was found in it.⁵

CHAPTER II.

Early Inhabitants—Roman Writers—Aristotle—Tacitus—Dion Cassius—Caledonians and Meatae—Eumenius—Picts—Dicaledones and Vectoriones—Clandian—Inferences—Ecclesiastical Chroniclers—Their value—Gildas—Adamnan—Northern and Southern Picts—Columba's "Interpreter"—Bede's Account of Picts—Pictish Language—Peanfahel—Northern and Southern Picts—Welsh Triads—Irish Annals—Evidence from Language—Cymric and Gaelic Theories—*Inver* and *Aber*—Innes's Theory—Conclusion.

THE preceding chapter has been occupied almost entirely with an account of the transactions of the Romans in the north of Scotland, and it is now our duty to go back and narrate what is known of the internal history of the Highlands during the time of the Romans. In doing so we are brought face to face with certain much agitated questions which have for centuries engaged the attention of antiquaries, and in the discussion of which many bulky tomes have been written and incredible acrimony displayed. To enter with anything like minuteness into this discussion would occupy more space than can be devoted to the entire history, and, moreover, would be out of place in a popular work like the present, and distasteful to most of its readers. The following are some of the much-discussed questions referred to:—Who were the original inhabitants of Caledonia? To what race did they belong—were they Gothic or Celtic? and if Celtic, were they Cymric or Gaelic? When did they enter Scotland, and whence did they come—from the opposite continent, or

from the south of Britain? Was the whole of Scotland, in the time of Agricola, occupied by one people, or by a mixed race, or by various races? Were the Picts and Caledonians the same people? What is the meaning and origin of Pict, and was Caledonia a native appellation? What were the localities of the Northern and Southern Picts? Who were the Scots? What was the nature of the union of the Scots and Picts under Kenneth MacAlpin?

The notices of the early inhabitants of the Highlands in the contemporary Roman historians are so few, the information given so meagre and indefinite, and the ecclesiastical historians of a later time are so full of miracle, myth, and hearsay, and so little to be depended on, that it appears to us almost impossible, with the materials at present within the historian's reach, to arrive at anything like a satisfactory answer to the above questions. The impression left after reading much that has been written on various sides, is one of dissatisfaction and bewilderment,—dissatisfaction with the far-fetched and irrelevant arguments frequently adduced, and the unreliable authorities quoted, and bewilderment amid the dust-cloud of words with which any one who enters this debatable land is sure to be enveloped. "It is scarcely necessary to observe, that there are few points of ethnology on which historians and antiquaries have been more at variance with each other, than respecting the real race of those inhabitants of a portion of Caledonia popularly known by the designation of Picts. The difficulty arising from this discrepancy of opinion is increased by the scanty and unsatisfactory nature of the materials now available to those who wish to form an independent judgment. No connected specimen of the Pictish language has been preserved; nor has any ancient author who knew them from personal observation, stated in direct terms that they approximated to one adjoining tribe more than another. They are indeed associated with the Scots or Irish as joint plunderers of the colonial Britons; and the expression of Gildas that they differed in some degree from the Scots in their customs, might seem to imply that they *did* bear an analogy to that nation in certain respects. Of course, where there is such a lack of direct evidence, there is more scope for con-

⁵ For more minute descriptions of this camp, as well as for further details concerning the Roman transactions in Scotland, consult Roy's *Military Antiquities*, Gough's *Camden* (under Strathearn), Stuart's *Caledonia Romana*, Burton's *History of Scotland*.

jecture; and the Picts are pronounced by different investigators of their history to have been Germans, Scandinavians, Welsh, Gael, or something distinct from all the four. The advocates of the German hypothesis rest chiefly on Tacitus's description of their physical conformation. Dr. Jamieson, assuming that the present Lowland Scotch dialect was derived from them, sets them down as Scandinavians; Bishop Lloyd and Camden conceive them to have been of Celtic race, probably related to the Britons; Chalmers, the author of 'Caledonia,' regards them as nothing more than a tribe of Cambrians or Welsh; while Skene, one of the latest authors on the subject, thinks he has proved that they were the ancestors of the present race of Scottish Highlanders."⁶

The earliest known name applied to Britain is found in a treatise on the World ascribed to Aristotle, in which the larger island is called *Albinn*, and Ireland referred to as *Ierne*; and it is worthy of notice that at the present day the former is the name applied to Scotland by the Highlanders, who call themselves the *Gael Albinnich*. The first author, however, who gives us any information about the early inhabitants of the north part of Scotland is Tacitus, who, in his *Life of Agricola*, devotes a few lines, in a parenthetical way, to characterising each of the great divisions of the people who, in the time of that general, inhabited Britain. Tacitus tells us that in his time the inhabitants of Britain differed in the habit and make of their bodies, and from the ruddy locks and large limbs of the Caledonians he inferred that they were of German origin.⁷ This glimpse is clear enough, but tantalizing in its meagreness and generality. What does Tacitus mean by *German*—does he use it in the same sense as we do at the present day? Does he mean by Caledonia the whole of the country north of the Forth and Clyde, or does it apply only to that district—Fife, Forfar, the east of Perth, &c.—with the inhabitants of which his father-in-law came in contact? We find Ptolemy the geographer, who flourished about the middle of the 2d century A. D., mentioning the Caledonians as one of the many tribes which in his time inhabited the north of

Scotland. The term Caledonians is supposed by some authorities to have been derived from a native word signifying "men of the woods," or the inhabitants of the woody country; this, however, is mere conjecture.

The next writer who gives any definite information as to the inhabitants of Caledonia is Dion Cassius, who flourished in the early part of the 3d century, and who wrote a history of Rome which has come down to us in a very imperfect state. Of the latter part, containing an account of Britain, we possess only an epitome made by Xiphilinus, an ecclesiastic of the 11th century, and which of course is very meagre in its details. The following are the particulars given by this writer concerning the early inhabitants of north Britain. "Of the Britons the two most ample nations are the Caledonians and the Mæatae; for the names of the rest refer for the most part to these. The Mæatae inhabit very near the wall⁸ which divides the island into two parts; the Caledonians are after these. Each of them inhabit mountains, very rugged and wanting water, and also desert fields, full of marshes: they have neither castles nor cities, nor dwell in any: they live on milk and by hunting, and maintain themselves by the fruits of the trees: for fishes, of which there is a very great and numberless quantity, they never taste: they dwell naked in tents and without shoes: they use wives in common, and whatever is born to them they bring up. In the popular state they are governed, as for the most part: they rob on the highway most willingly: they war in chariots: horses they have, small and fleet; their infantry, also, are as well most swift at running, as most brave in pitched battle. Their arms are a shield and a short spear, in the upper part whereof is an apple of brass, that, while it is shaken, it may terrify the enemies with the sound: they have likewise daggers. They are able to bear hunger, cold, and all afflictions; for they merge themselves in marshes, and there remain many days, having only their head out of water: and in woods are nourished by the bark and roots of trees. But a certain kind of food they prepare for all occasions, of which if they take as much as 'the

⁶ Garnett's *Philological Essays*, p. 196.

⁷ *Agricola* xi.

⁸ The wall of Antonine.

size' of a single bean, they are in nowise ever wont to hunger or thirst."⁹

From this we learn that in the 3d century there were two divisions of the inhabitants of the Highlands, known to the Romans as the Caledonians and Mæats or Mæatae, the latter very probably inhabiting the southern part of that territory, next to the wall of Antonine, and the former the district to the north of this. As to whether these were Latinized forms of native names, or names imposed by the Romans themselves, we have no means of judging. The best writers on this subject think that the Caledonians and Mæats were two divisions of the same people, both living to the north of the Forth and Clyde, although Innes,¹ and one or two minor writers, are of opinion that the Mæats were provincial Britons who inhabited the country between the wall of Hadrian and that of Antonine, known as the province of Valentia. However, with Skene,² Mr. Joseph Robertson, and other able authorities, we are inclined to think that the evidence is in favour of their being the inhabitants of the southern portion of Caledonia proper.

Herodian,³ who wrote about A. D. 240, tells us that the Caledonians were in the habit of marking or painting their bodies with figures of animals, and that they wore no clothes in order that these figures might be preserved and exhibited.

The next reference made by a Roman writer to the inhabitants of Caledonia we find in a panegyric pronounced in his presence on the Emperor Constantius Chlorus, by Eumenius, a professor of rhetoric at Augustodunum (*Autun*) in Gaul, in the year 296 or 297, who speaks of the Britons, in the time of Caesar, having been attacked by the half-naked *Picts* and Irish. To what people the orator meant to apply the term *Picts*, around which there has clustered so much acrimonious disputation, we learn from another oration pronounced by him on the same emperor, before his son Constantine, in the year 309, in which, recording the actions of Constantius, he speaks of the woods and marshes of the *Caledonians and other Picts*.

⁹ Dio L. 76, c. 12, as quoted in Ritson's *Annals*, p. 11.

¹ Critical Essay, ch. ii.

² *Highlanders*.

³ Book iii.

After this no further mention is made of the Caledonians by any Roman writer, but towards the end of the 4th century Ammianns Marcellinus, in his account of the Roman transactions in Britain, speaks of the *Picts* in conjunction with the Saxons, Scots, and Attacots harassing the provincial Britons about the year 364. Further on he informs us that at this time the *Picts* were divided into two tribes or nations, the *Dicaledones* and *Vecturiones*, remarking, at the same time, that "the Attacots were a warlike race of men, and the Scots a people much given to wandering, and in the habit of ravaging or laying waste the districts into which they came."⁴

Claudian the poet, writing, about 397, in praise of Honorius, mentions, among other actions of Theodosius, the grandfather of that emperor, his having subdued the *Picts*, who were fitly so named,⁵ and makes various other references to this people and the Scots, which show that these two in combination were troubling the Roman provincials not a little.⁶

Such are most of the scanty details given by the only contemporary historians who take any notice of the inhabitants of North Britain; and the unprejudiced reader will see that the foundation thus afforded upon which to construct any elaborate theory is so narrow that every such theory must resemble a pyramid standing on its apex, liable at the slightest touch to topple over and be shattered to pieces. It appears to us that all the conclusions which it is safe to draw from the few facts stated by the contemporary Roman historians are, that at the commencement of the Christian era Caledonia proper, or the Highlands, was inhabited by a people or peoples apparently considerable in number, and who in all probability had been settled there for a considerable time, part of whom at least were known to the Romans by the name of Caledonians. That these Cale-

⁴ "Scotti per diversa vagantes, multa populabantur." Am. Mar. xxvii. 8.

⁵ "———Nec falso nomine Pictos Edomuit."

⁶ "Venit et extrensis legio prestanta Britannis
Quæ Scotos dat fræna truci, ferroque notatas
Perlegit exangues Scoto moriente figuras."—
De bello Gætico, v. 416.

Thus rendered by Ritson:—

The legion came, o'er distant Britains placed,
Which bridles the fierce Scot, and bloodless figures
With iron marked, views in the dying Pict.

donians, those of them at any rate with whom Agricola came in contact in the first century, were red or fair haired and large limbed, from which Tacitus inferred that they were of German extraction. In the beginning of the third century there were at least two divisions of the inhabitants of Caledonia,—the Caledonians and Meats,—the former inhabiting the country to the north of the Grampians, and the latter, in all probability, that to the south and south-east of these mountains. They appear to have been in many respects in a condition little removed from that of savages, although they must have made wonderful attainments in the manufacture of implements of war.

In the latter part of the third century we find the Highlanders spoken of under a new name, *Picti*, which the Roman historians at least, undoubtedly understood to be the Latin word meaning ‘painted,’ and which all the best modern writers believe to have been imposed by the Romans themselves, from the fact that the indomitable Caledonians had retained the custom of self-painting after all the Romanized Britons had given it up. There is the strongest probability that the Caledonians spoken of as Picts by Eumenius were the same as the Caledonians of Tacitus, or that the Caledonians and Picts were the same people under different names. The immediate cause for this change of name we have no means of ascertaining. It is in every way improbable that the Picts were a new people, who had come in upon the Caledonians, and supplanted them some time after Agricola’s invasion. The Romans were constantly coming into contact with the Caledonians from the time of Agricola till they abandoned Britain entirely, and had such a supplantation taken place, it certainly could not have been done quietly, and without the cognizance of the Romans. But we find no mention in any contemporary historian of any such commotion, and we know that the inhabitants of the Highlands never ceased to harass the British provincials, showing that they were not much taken up with any internal disturbance. Indeed, writers who adopt the most diverse opinions on other points in connection with the Pictish question

are all agreed as to this, that the Caledonians and Picts were the same people.⁸

We learn further from our authorities, that towards the end of the fourth century the inhabitants of Caledonia were known to the Romans under the names of Dicaledones and Vecturiones, it being conjectured that these correspond to the Caledonians and Meats of Dio, and the Northern and Southern Picts of a later period. The connection of the latter part of the word Dicaledones with *Caledonii* is evident, although the significance of the first syllable is doubtful,—some authorities conjecturing that it is the Gaelic word *du*, meaning “genuine.” It appears at all events to be established that during the early history of the Highlands, whatever other divisions may have existed among the inhabitants, those dwelling to the north and those dwelling to the south of the Grampians were two separate confederacies, and were known by distinct names.

Another not unimportant fact to be learned from the Roman historians in relation to the Picts or Caledonians is, that about the middle of the 4th century they were assisted by the Attacots, Saxons, and Scots. As to who the Attacots were it is now impossible to conjecture with anything like certainty, there being no sufficient reason for believing that they were allied to the Irish Scots. It is well enough known who the Saxons were, but how they came at this early period to be acting in concert with the Picts it is difficult to say. It is possible that numbers of them may have effected a settlement, even at this early period, in North Britain, although it is more likely that they were roving adventurers, who had left their homes, from choice or on compulsion, to try their fortune in Britain. They were probably the first droppings of the abundant shower that overwhelmed South Britain a century later. The Romans at this period had an officer with the title of “Comes litoris Saxonici per Britanniam;” and Claudian, in his praises of Stilicho, introduces Britain, saying—

“ Illius effectum curis, ne bella timerem
Scotica, ne Pictum tremem, ne littore toto
Prospicerem dubis venturum Saxona ventis.”

⁷ The name given by the Irish Annalists to the Picts is *Cruithne*, said by some to mean “variegated.”

⁸ The only important exception is Ritson, whose arguments, like those of his opponent Pinkerton, consist mostly of virulent language and vehement assertion.

It is interesting to notice that this⁹ is the first mention made of the Scots in connection with what is now Scotland; but whether there were settlements of them at this time among the Picts, or whether they had come over from Ireland for the purpose of assisting the latter to harass the Romans, it is difficult to say. Probably, as was the case with the Saxons, these were the harbingers of the great migration that reached its culmination about a century and a half later. They appear, from what Ammianus says, to have been at this time a set of destructive vagabonds. We shall have more to say about them further on.

From the general tone of these contemporary Roman historians we learn that, whether Celtic or Gothic, these Picts or Caledonians were a hardy, indomitable, determined race, with a strong love of liberty and of the country in which they dwelt, and a resolution never to be subject to the greedy Roman. Comparatively few and barbarous as they were, they caused the Romans far more trouble than all the rest of Britain together; to conquer the latter and Romanize it appears to have been comparatively smooth work, but the Italians acknowledged the Highlanders invincible by building walls and other fortifications, and maintaining extra garrisons to protect the provincials from their fierce and wasting inroads. Whether the present Highlanders are the descendants of these or not, they certainly possess many of their qualities.

It will have been seen that the Roman historians give us almost no clue to what we now deem of most interest and importance, the place of the early inhabitants among the families of men, the time and manner of their arrival, the language they spoke, and their internal history generally. Of course the records of contemporaries stand in the first place of importance as evidences, and although we have other sources, historical, linguistic, and antiquarian, which shed a little light upon the subject, these, for various reasons, must be used with great caution. The only statement approaching to anything like a hint as to the origin of the Caledonians is that of Tacitus, referring to their ruddy locks and large limbs

as an evidence of their German origin. There is no reason to doubt that those with whom Agricola came in contact were of this make and complexion, which, at the present day, are generally held to be indicative of a Teutonic origin; whereas the true Celt is popularly believed to be of a small make and dark complexion.¹ It may have been, that in Agricola's time the part of the country into which he penetrated was occupied by considerable numbers of Teutons, who had effected a settlement either by force, or by favour of the prior inhabitants. The statement of Tacitus, however, those who uphold the Celtic theory endeavour to explain away.

We may safely say then, that with regard to all the most important points that have excited the curiosity of modern enquirers, the only contemporary historians to whom we can appeal, leave us almost entirely in the dark.

The writers, next in order of importance to whom an appeal is made as witnesses in this perplexing case, are the ecclesiastical chroniclers, the chief of whom are Gildas, Adamnan, Bede, Nennius. "Much of the error into which former writers have been led, has arisen from an improper use of these authors; they should be consulted exclusively as contemporary historians—whatever they assert as existing or occurring in their own time, or shortly before it, we may receive as true; but when we consider the perverted learning of that period, and the little information which they appear to have possessed of the traditions of the people around them, we ought to reject their fables or fanciful origins as altogether undeserving of credit."² Though this dictum may perhaps be too sweeping, still any one who examines the authors referred to for himself, must admit that it is in the main just. It is well known that these writers exercise little or no discrimination in the composition of their narratives, that tradition, miracle, and observed fact are placed side by side, as all equally worthy of belief. Even Bede, the most reliable and

¹ It is a curious fact that these latter are, among the peasantry of Scotland, the distinctive characteristics of the Picts or Pechts, who, however, it is not unlikely, may be popularly confounded with the Brownies, especially as, in Perthshire at any rate, they are said always to have done their work while others were asleep.

² Skene's *Highlanders*, vol. i. p. 2.

⁹ In *Ann. Mar.*

cautious of these early chroniclers, lived as long after some of the events of which he professes to give an account, as we of the present day do after the time of the Crusades; almost his sole authority being tradition or hearsay. Moreover, the knowledge which these writers had of the distinction between the various races of mankind was so very hazy, the terms they use are to us so comparatively unintelligible, and the information they do contain on the points in dispute so brief, vague, and parenthetical, that their value as authorities is reduced almost to a minimum.

Whoever was the author of the work *De Excidio Britannie*, one of the latest and most acute writers³ on ethnology has shown that he is almost totally unworthy of credit, the sources of his information being exceedingly suspicious, and his statements proved to be false by comparison with trustworthy contemporary Roman historians. There is every reason to believe that the so-called Gildas—for by Mr. Wright⁴ he has been reduced to a *nominis umbra*—lived and wrote about the middle of the 6th century A.D., so that, had he used ordinary diligence and discrimination, he might have been of considerable assistance in enabling us to solve the perplexing mystery of the Pictish question. But indeed we have no right to look for much history in the work of Gildas, as it professes to be merely a complaint “on the general destruction of every thing that is good, and the general growth of evil throughout the land;” it is his purpose, he says, “to relate the deeds of an indolent and slothful race, rather than the exploits of those who have been valiant in the field.”⁵ So far as the origin and early history of the Picts is concerned, Gildas is of almost no value whatever, the only time he mentions the Picts being incidentally to notice an invasion they had made into the Roman provinces.⁶ If we can trust him, the Picts and their allies, the Scots, must have been very fierce enemies to deal with. They went about, he tells us, almost entirely destitute of clothes, having their faces covered with bushy hair, and were in the habit of dragging the poor enervated Britons from the top of their

protecting wall with hooked weapons, slaughtering them without mercy. Some writers infer from this narrative that, during the Roman occupation, no permanent settlement of Scots had been effected in present Scotland, but that the Scots who assisted the Picts came over from their native Scotland (Ireland) for that purpose; he tells us that the Scots came from the north-west, and the Picts from the north.⁷ “North-west” here, however, would apply quite as well to Argyle as to Ireland.

The writer next in chronological order from whom we derive any information of consequence concerning the Picts is Adamnan, a member of the early Irish Church, who was born in the county of Donegal about the year 625, elected abbot of Iona in 679, and who died in the year 704. Adamnan wrote a life of his great predecessor St. Columba, in which is contained much information concerning that great missionary’s labours among the Northern Picts; and although he narrates many stories which are palpably incredible, still the book contains much which may with confidence be accepted as fact. In connection with the questions under consideration, we learn that, in the time of Columba and Adamnan, there were—as formerly, in the time of the Roman writers—two divisions of the Picts, known in the 7th century and afterwards as the Northern and Southern Picts. Adamnan informs us that Columba’s mission was to the Northern Picts alone,—the southern division having been converted by St. Ninian in the 5th century. There has been much disputation as to the precise district inhabited by each of these two divisions of the Picts,—some maintaining that the southern division occupied the country to the south of the Forth and Clyde, while the Northern Picts occupied the whole district to the north of these estuaries. The best authorities, however, are of opinion that both divisions dwelt to the north of Antonine’s wall, and were divided from each other by the Grampians.

What more immediately concerns our present purpose is a passage in Adamnan’s work in which he speaks of Columba preaching to the Picts through an interpreter. Now Columba

³ V. O. Pike. *The English and their Origin*, ch. i.

⁴ *Biography Britannica Literaria*, vol. i.

⁵ Gildas, 1. ⁶ Id., 19.

⁷ Gildas, 14.

was an Irish Scot, whose native tongue was Gaelic, and it is from this argued that the Picts to whom he preached must have spoken a different language, or at least dialect, and belonged to a different race or tribe from the saint himself. Mr. Skene,⁸ who ably advocates the Gaelic origin of the Picts, perceiving this difficulty, endeavours to explain away the force of the passage by making it mean that Columba "interpreted or explained the word of God, that is, the Bible, which, being written in Latin, would doubtless require to be interpreted to them." The passage as quoted by Skene is, "Verbo Dei per interpretoem recepto." Garnett, however, one of the most competent and caudid writers on this question in its philological aspect, and who maintains, with the greatest clearness and ability, the Cymric origin of the Picts, looks at the passage in a different light. The entire passage, he says,⁹ as it stands in Colganus, is as follows:—"Alio in tempore quo sanctus Columba in Pictorum provincia per aliquot demorabatur dies, quidam cum tota plebeius familia, verbum *vite* per interpretoem, *Sancto predicante viro*, audies credidit, credensque baptizatus est."¹ "Here it will be observed," continues Garnett, "Adaman does not say, 'verbum Dei,' which might have been construed to mean the Scripture, but 'verbum *vite*, *Sancto predicante viro*,' which can hardly mean anything but 'the word of life, as it was preached by the Saint.'" Certainly, we think, the unprejudiced reader must admit that, so far as this point is concerned, Mr. Garnett has the best of it. Although at that time the Gaelic and Cymric dialects may have had much more in common than they have at the present day, nevertheless it appears to be beyond a doubt that the difference between the two was so great that a Gael would be unintelligible to a speaker of Cymric.²

The next and most important authority of this class on this *questio vexata* is the Venerable Bede, who, considering the age in which he lived, exercised so much caution and discrimination, that he deserves to be listened to with respect. Bede was born about 673. He was educated in the Monastery of Wearmouth, whence he removed to Jarrow, where he was ordained deacon in his nineteenth year, and priest in his thirtieth, and where he spent the rest of his days, dying in 735. He wrote many works, but the most important is the *Historia Ecclesiastica Gentis Anglorum*, the materials for which he obtained chiefly from native chronicles and biographies, records and public documents, and oral and written communications from contemporaries.

We shall transcribe most of the passage in which Bede speaks of the ancient inhabitants of Britain; so that our readers may be able to judge for themselves of the nature and value of the testimony borne by this venerable author. It must, however, be kept in mind that Bede does not pretend to give any but the ecclesiastical history of the English nation, everything else being subsidiary to this.

"This island at present, following the number of the books in which the Divine law was written, contains five nations, the English, Britons, Scots, Picts, and Latins, each in its own peculiar dialect cultivating the sublime study of Divine truth. The Latin tongue is, by the study of the Scriptures, become common to all the rest. At first this island had no other inhabitants but the Britons, from whom it derived its name, and who coming over into Britain, as is reported, from Armorica, possessed themselves of the southern parts thereof. When they, beginning at the south, had made themselves master of the greatest part of the island, it happened, that the nation of the

⁸ *Highlanders*, vol. i. p. 72.

⁹ Garnett's *Philological Essays*, p. 199.

¹ *Adam. ap. Colganum*, l. ii. c. 32.

² On the subject in question the recently published *Book of Deer* cannot be said to afford us any information. It gives a short account of the landing of Columba and a companion at Aberdour in the north of Aberdeenshire, and the founding of a monastery at Deer. But although the entries are in Gaelic, they do not tell us what language Columba spoke, nor whether 'Bede the Pict,' the morname of Buchan, understood him without an interpreter. The name of the saint—Drostan—whom Columba left behind him to prose-

cute the work, is Pictish, at any rate not Irish, so that nothing can be inferred from this. Since much of the first part of this book was written, Mr. Skene has advanced the theory, founded partly on four new Pictish words he has managed to discover, that the language of the Picts was neither pure Gaelic nor Cymric, "but a sort of low Gaelic dialect partaking largely of Welsh forms." This theory is not new, but was distinctly put forth by Dr. MacLachlan some years ago in his able and learned work, *The Early Scottish Church*, p. 29; if true, it would certainly satisfy a great many of the demands which any hypothesis on the subject must do.

Picts coming into the ocean from Scythia, as is reported, in a few tall ships, were driven by the winds beyond the shores of Britain and arrived off Ireland, on the northern coasts, where, finding the nation of the Scots, they requested to be allowed to settle among them, but could not succeed in obtaining their request. The Scots answered, that the island could not contain them both; but 'we can give you good advice,' said they, 'what to do; we know there is another island, not far from ours, to the eastward, which we often see at a distance, when the days are clear. If you will repair thither, you may be able to obtain settlements; or if they should oppose you, you may make use of us as auxiliaries.' The Picts accordingly sailing over into Britain, began to inhabit the northern parts thereof, for the Britons were possessed of the southern. Now the Picts having no wives, and asking them of the Scots, they would not consent to grant them upon any other terms, than that when any difficulty should arise, they should rather choose themselves a king from the female royal race than from the male; which custom, as is well known, has been observed among the Picts to this day. In process of time, Britain, besides the Britons and the Picts, received a third nation, the Scots, who, departing out of Ireland under their leader Reuda, either by fair means, or by force of arms, secured to themselves those settlements among the Picts which they still possess. From the name of their commander, they are to this day called Dalreudins; for in their language *Dal* signifies a part. . . . It is properly the country of the Scots, who, migrating from thence, as has been said, added a third nation in Britain to the Britons and the Picts. There is a very large gulf of the sea, which formerly divided the nation of the Picts from the Britons; which gulf runs from the west very far into the land, where, to this day, stands the strong city of the Britons, called Alcluith. The Scots arriving on the north side of this bay, settled themselves there."²

Here then Bede informs us that in his time the common report was that the Picts came into Scotland from Scythia, which, like the

Germania of Tacitus, may be taken to mean the northern countries of Europe generally. This is substantially the same statement as that of the author of the *Historia Britonum*, commonly called Nennius, who lived in the 9th century, and who informs us that the Picts coming to Scotland about 300 B.C., occupied the Orkney Islands, whence issuing, they laid waste many regions, and seized those on the left-hand side, *i. e.* the north of Britain, where they still remained in the writer's time, keeping possession of a third part of Britain.³

Supposing that Bede's report was quite in accordance with truth, still it gives us but small help in coming to a conclusion as to the place of these Picts among the families of men. It is certain that by far the greater part of Europe had at one time a Celtic population who preceded, but ultimately gave way to another wave of emigrants from the east. Now, if we knew the date at which this so-called migration of the Picts took place it might be of considerable assistance to us; but as we cannot now find out whether these emigrants proceeded from a Celtic or a Teutonic stock, the statement of Bede, even if reliable, helps us not at all towards a solution of the question as to the race of the Picts. Innes⁴ remarks very justly on this point—"Now, supposing that there were any good ground for the opinion of these two writers, which they themselves give only as a conjecture or hearsay, and that we had any certainty of the Caledonians, or Picts, having had their origin from the more northern parts of the European continent, it were an useless, as well as an endless discussion, to examine in particular from which of all the northern nations of the continent the first colony came to Caledonia; because that these nations of the north were almost in perpetual motion, and changing habitations, as Strabo remarks; and he assigns for it two reasons: the one, because of the barrenness of the soil, they tilled not the ground, and built habitations only for a day; the other, because being often overpowered by their neighbours, they were forced to remove. Another reason why it is impossible to know from which of

² Nennius 12, Vatican MS.

⁴ *Critical Essay on Scotland*, vol. i. p. 63.

² Bede's *Eccles. Hist.*, Book I c. i.

those nations the northern parts of Britain, (supposing they came from thence) were at first peopled, is because we have but very lame accounts of these northern nations from the Greek or Roman writers, (from whom alone we can look for any thing certain in those early times) especially of those of Scandia, to the north of the Baltic sea, as the same Strabo observes. Besides, it appears that Caledonia was peopled long before the inhabitants of these northern parts of the continent were mentioned, or even known by the most ancient writers we have; and perhaps before the first nations mentioned by them were settled in those parts."

There is, however, another statement made by Bede in the passage quoted, upon which, as it refers to his own time, much more reliance can be placed; it is, that in his time Britain contained five nations, each having its own peculiar dialect, viz., the English, Britons, Scots, Picts, and Latins. We know that the English spoke in the main Saxon; the Britons, *i. e.*, the inhabitants of Wales, Cumbria, &c., Welsh; the Scots, Gaelic; the Latins, we suppose, being the Romanized Britons and ecclesiastics. What language then did the Picts speak? As we know that Bede never travelled, he must have got his information from an informant or by hearsay, which circumstance rather detracts from its value. But supposing we take the passage literally as it stands, we learn that in Bede's time there were five distinct peoples or nations, whose names he gives, sharing among them the island. He does not say there were five distinct tongues, which would have been quite a different statement; he speaks of them not so much in respect of their language as in respect of their being the separate items which composed the inhabitants of Britain. In his time they were all quite distinct, in a measure independent of and at enmity with each other. He does not classify them in respect of the race to which they belonged, but with reference to the particular districts which they inhabited, and perhaps with regard to the time and means of their conversion to Christianity, each having been converted at a different time and by a different saint. The substance then of what he says appears to be, that there were in his time

five distinct tribes or congregations of people in Britain, each converted to Christianity, and each having the gospel preached in its own tongue. Supposing that the Picts and Scots, or Picts and Britons, or Picts and English did speak exactly the same tongue, it is not at all likely that Bede, in the present case, would have classed them together as both being one nation. Moreover, suppose we allow that Bede did mean that each of these nations spoke a language quite distinct from all the others, then his statement cuts equally at the Gothic and Celtic theory. The conclusion we are forced to is, that from this passage nothing can be gained to help us out of our difficulty.

There is a statement at the end of the passage quoted to which we would draw the reader's attention, as being Bede's way, and no doubt the universal way in his time, of accounting for a peculiar law which appears to have regulated the succession to the Pictish throne, and which ultimately, according to some, was the means of placing on that throne a Scottish monarch; thus accounting to some extent for the sudden disappearance and apparent destruction of the Pictish people and language.

We shall here refer to one other passage in the same historian, which has perhaps given rise to greater and more acrimonious contention than any other point in connection with this wordy discussion. The only word that has come down to us, which, with the exception of the names of the Pictish kings, we can be sure is a remnant of the Pictish language, is the name said by Bede to have been given to the eastern termination of the wall of Antonine. Bede,⁵ in speaking of the turf wall built by the Britons of Valentia in the beginning of the 5th century, says, "it begins at about two miles distance from the monastery of Abercorn on the west, at a place called in the Pictish language *Peanfahel*, but in the English tongue Penneltum." This statement of Bede's is straightforward and clear enough, and has never been disputed by any writer on any one of the three sides of the question. Nevertheless it has been used by the advocates respectively of the Gothic, Gaelic, and

⁵ Book i, c. 12.

Cymric origin of the Picts, as an undoubted proof of the correctness of each of these theories. Pinkerton, whose dishonesty and acrimoniousness are well known, and must detract considerably from the force of his arguments, claims it as being entirely Gothic or Teutonic. “The Pictish word,” he says,⁶ “is broad Gothic; *Paena* ‘to extend,’ Ihre; and *Vahel*, a broad sound of *veal*, the Gothic for ‘wall,’ or of the Latin *vallum*, contracted *val*; hence it means ‘the extent or end of the wall.’” This statement of Pinkerton’s may be dismissed as too far-fetched and awkward to merit much consideration, and we may safely regard the word as capable of satisfactory explanation only in Celtic. Innes, who upholds the British, *i. e.* the Cymric, origin of the Picts, says,⁷ “we nowhere find a clearer proof of the Pictish language being the same as the British [Welsh], than in Bede, where he tells us that *Penwahel* in Pictish signifies the head of the wall, which is just the signification that the same two words *Pen* and *Uahel* have in the British.” In this opinion Chalmers and other advocates of the Cymric theory coincide. Mr. Garnett, who essentially agrees with Innes and Chalmers as to the Cymric origin of the Picts, lays little stress upon this word as furnishing an argument in support of his theory. “Almost the only Pictish word given us by an ancient writer is the well-known *Pen val* (or as it appears in the oldest MSS. of Bede (*Peann jahel*), the name given by the Picts to the *Wall’s End*, or eastern termination of the Vallum of Antoninus. It is scarcely necessary to say the first part of the word is decidedly Cymric; *pen*, head, being contrary to all Gaelic analogy. The latter half might be plausibly claimed as the Gaelic *ful*; *gwall* being the more common termination in Welsh for a wall or rampart. *Ful*, however, does occur in Welsh in the sense of *inclosure*, a signification not very remote.”⁸

The two most recent and able supporters⁹ of the Gaelic theory are of much the same

mind as Garnett, and appear to regard this tantalizing word as affording no support to either side. Burton¹ cannot admit that anything has been made out of this leading to a historical conclusion.

We may safely conclude, then, that this so-called Pictish word, or, indeed, any information which we find in Bede, affords us no key to the perplexing question of the origin and race of the Picts.

We learn, however, one fact from Bede² which is so far satisfactory, viz., that in his time there were two divisions of the Picts, known as the Northern and Southern Picts, which were separated from each other by steep and rugged mountains. On reading the passage in Bede, one very naturally supposes that the steep and rugged mountains must be the Grampians, to which the expression applies more aptly than to any other mountain-chain in Scotland. Even this, however, has been made matter of dispute, it being contended by some that the locality of the Southern Picts was in the south-west and south of Scotland, where some writers set up a powerful Pictish kingdom. Mr. Grub,³ however, has clearly shown that the locality of the Southern Picts was to the north of the Forth and Clyde, and to the south of the Grampians. “The mistake formerly so common in regard to the country of the Southern Picts converted by St. Ninian, was in part owing to the situation of Candida Casa. It was supposed that his see must have been in the country of those whom he converted.” He clearly proves that it was not so in reality, and that there was nothing so unusual in the situation as to justify the conclusion which was drawn from it. “It was, no doubt, the case that the teachers by whom the chief Celtic and Teutonic nations were converted generally fixed their seat among those whom they instructed in the faith. But there was no necessity for this, especially when the residence of the teacher was in the neighbourhood of his converts. St. Columba was primate of all the churches of the Northern Picts, but he did not permanently reside among that nation. St. Ninian had ready access to his

⁶ *Inquiry into the Hist. of Scot.*, vol. i. p. 357, ed. 1814.

⁷ *Crit. Essay*, vol. i. p. 75.

⁸ Garnett’s *Phil. Essays*, p. 198.

⁹ Robertson’s *Scotland under her Early Kings*, vol. ii. p. 380. Forbes-Leslie’s *Early Races of Scotland*, vol. i. p. 35.

¹ *Hist. of Scot.*, vol. i. p. 187.

² Book iii. ch. 4.

³ *Ecc. Hist. of Scot.*, vol. i. p. 15, &c.

Pictish converts, and could govern them as easily from his White Church on the Solway, as Columba could instruct and rule the Northern Picts from his monastery in Iona."⁴

Other authorities appealed to by the upholders of each of the Celtic theories are the Welsh traditions, the Irish Annals, the Chronicles of the Picts and Scots, and various legendary documents of more or less value and authenticity. As these are of no greater authority than the writers with whom we have been dealing, and as the partisans of each theory claim the various passages as either confirming, or, at any rate, not contradicting their views, we shall not further trouble the reader with specimens of the manner in which they are dealt with. There is one passage, however, in the Welsh Triads, which the advocates of the Gaelic hypothesis claim as strongly confirmatory of their theory. After referring to the coming in of the Cymry, the Britons, etc., the Triads⁵ go on to say, "Three tribes came, under protection, into the Island of Britain, and by the consent and permission of the nation of the Cymry, without weapon, without assault. The first was the tribe of the Caledonians in the north. The second was the Gwyddelian Race, which are now in Alban (Scotland). The third were the men of Galedin, who came into the Isle of Wight. Three usurping tribes came into the Island of Britain and never departed out of it. The first were the *Coranied*, who came from the land of Pwyl. The second were the Gwyddelian Fíichti, who came into Alban over the sea of *Llychlyn* (Denmark). The third were the Saxons." "The Triads," says Skene⁶ in connection with this, "appear distinctly to have been written previous to the Scottish conquest in the ninth century, and they mention among the three usurping tribes of Britain the '*Gwyddyl Fíichti*,' and add immediately afterwards, 'and these Gwyddyl Fíichti are in Alban, along the shore of the sea of *Llychlyn*.' In another place, among the treacherous tribes of Britain, the same Triads mention the '*Gwyddyl coch o'r Werddon* a ddaethant in Alban,' that is 'the Red Gwyddyl from Ireland, who came into

Alban,' plainly alluding to the Dalriads, who were an Irish colony, and who have been acknowledged by all to have been a Gaelic race. It will be observed from these passages that the Welsh Triads, certainly the oldest and most unexceptionable authority on the subject, apply the same term of Gwyddyl to the Picts and to the Dalriads, and consequently they must have been of the same race, and the Picts a Gaelic people. Farther, the Welsh word '*Gwyddyl*,' by which they distinguish that race, has been declared by all the best authorities to be exactly synonymous with the word Gael, the name by which the Highlanders have at all times been distinguished, and the Welsh words '*Gwyddyl Fíichti*' cannot be interpreted to mean any thing else than '*The Gaelic Picts, or Pietish Gael*.'"

The following is the substance of the information given by the Irish writers as to the origin, race, and early history of the Picts. The greater part of it is, of course, mere tradition, accumulating as it grew older, and heightened by the imagination of the writers themselves.⁷ The Picts were called by the Irish writers *Cruithnidlh*, which O'Brien considers to be the same as Britneigh, or Britons; but according to others the name was derived from *Cruthen*, who founded the kingdom of the Picts in North Britain, in the first century; others derive the name from *Cruit*, a harp, hence *Cruitneach*, the Irish for Pict, also signifies a harper, as they are said to have been celebrated harpers. The ancient Britons are mentioned by Cæsar, and other Roman writers, to have painted their bodies of a blue colour, with the juice of a plant called woad, hence the painted Britons were called by the Romans *Picti*. The Picts or Cruthneans, according to the Psalter of Cashel, and other ancient annals, came from Thrace, in the reign of the Milesian monarch Heremon, nearly a thousand years before the Christian era, and landed at Inver Slainge, now the Bay of Wexford, under two chief commanders named Gud and Cathluan, but not being permitted to settle in Ireland, they sailed to Alban, or that part of North Britain, now Scotland, their chiefs having been kindly

⁴ *Ecc. Hist. of Scot.*, vol. i. p. 17.

⁵ *Davies' Celtic Researches*, p. 155.

⁶ *Highlanders of Scotland*, vol. i. p. 69.

⁷ We are indebted for most of the following account to Connellan's *Annals of the Four Masters*, p. 367 (note).

supplied with wives of Irish birth. The Cruthneans became possessed of North Britain, and founded there the kingdom of the Picts. A colony of the Cruthneans, or Picts, from North Britain, settled in Ulster in early times, and are often mentioned from the first to the ninth century; they resided chiefly in Dalaradia and Tir Eogain, or parts of Down, Antrim, and Derry, and became mixed by intermarriages with the old Irish of the Irian race, and were ruled over by their own princes and chiefs; and some of those Picts, also settled in Connanght, in the county of Roscommon. According to the Irish writers, the Picts, in their first progress to Ireland from Thrace, settled a colony in Gaul, and the tribes called Pictones and Pictavi, in that country, were descended from them, and they gave name to Pictavia, or the city of Poitiers, and the province of Poitou; and from these Picts were descended the Vendéans of France. *The Caledonians*, or first inhabitants of Scotland, are considered to have been the same as the Picts, and mixed with Cimbrians or Britons, and some of the Milesian Scots from Ireland.

The advocates of the various theories, apparently aware of how little can be made of the meagre and suspicious information afforded by these early histories and chronicles, have latterly made language the principal battle-ground on which to fight out this endless and profitless strife. Most of them take for granted that if the language spoken by any people can be found out, a sure indication is afforded of the race to which that people belonged; and that the topography of a country must necessarily have been imposed by the earliest inhabitants of whom we have record; and that, if so, the limits of their territory must have been co-extensive with the limits of such topography. This, however, is going too far. All the length to which we are permitted in fairness to go, when we find in any district or country an abundance of names of natural objects, as rivers and mountains, which can with certainty be traced to any particular language, is, that at one time or other, a race of people speaking this language must have passed over and dwelt for some time in that particular district or country. We find Celtic names of rivers and mountains scattered all over Europe, in the

midst of peoples who are admitted on all hands to have little or none of the Celtic element in them.⁸ So that an unprejudiced judge must admit that the fact of Cymric and Gaelic words being found in certain districts of the north of Scotland argues only that at one time people speaking these dialects must have dwelt in these districts. It affords no proof by itself that the people whom we first meet with in these districts are the people who spoke these dialects, and who imposed these names; nor indeed, if we could be sure that the people whom we first meet with as inhabitants also spoke the dialect to which such names belong, does it prove that they were the imposers of these names, that the dialect was their native and original tongue, and that they had not acquired it either as conquerors or conquered. Nor can it be adduced as a proof of sameness of race, that the present inhabitants of any particular district speak the same language as those who inhabited that district 1800 years ago or less. "He who trusts to language, and especially to written language, alone, as an index to race, must be prepared to maintain that the Gallic nation emigrated from the seven hills of Rome, and that the Franks came with them; that the Romans extirpated the Celts and Iberians of Spain, and that the Goths and Moors spoke nearly the same language as the Romans; that the Negroes of the United States and Jamaica were exported from England when in their infancy. So would Philology, if left to herself, interpret phenomena, of which we know, from other sources of information, that the causes are totally different."⁹ "The clearest proof that a mountain or river has a Celtic name, only shows that at some time or other Celts had been there; it does not tell us when they were there. Names, as the experience of the world amply shows, live after the people who bestowed them have long disappeared, and that through successive races of occupants."¹⁰

The materials which have been wrought up into a linguistic argument by the upholders of each of the three Pictish theories, Gothic, Gaelic, and Cymric, are chiefly a list of Pictish

⁸ See Taylor's *Words and Places*, ch. ix.

⁹ Pike's *English and their Origin*, ch. ii., which contains some shrewd and valuable remarks on the subject of language.

¹⁰ Barton, vol. i. p. 192.

kings which, we believe, may be depended on as authentic, and the topography of the country to the east and south-east of the Grampians, together with the single so-called Pictish word *Peanfahel*, which we have already considered. The theorists differ as much in their interpretation of the significance of what remains of the Pictish language, as we have seen they do in their interpretation of any references to the subject in dispute in ancient chronicles. The names of the kings, and the names of places have been traced by the disputants to Gothic, Gaelic and Cymric roots. As an amusing specimen of the ingenuity displayed in this hunt after roots, we give below a small table from Burton, comparing the different etymologies of names of kings given by Pinkerton, Chalmers, and Jamieson.²

It is, however, generally admitted at the present day, that so far as language is concerned, the Gothic theory has not the remotest chance; that names of places and of kings are most satisfactorily and straightforwardly explained by Cymric roots. As the Gothic or Teutonic theory cannot stand the test of modern criticism, we shall content ourselves with giving specimens of the manner in which the linguistic, or, more strictly, topographical argument is used by the advocates of the Cymric and Gaelic hypotheses respectively.

The Cymric argument is clearly, ably, and succinctly stated by Mr. Garnett in his essay on "The Relation of the Pict and Gael;" he, however, it must be remembered, looked at the whole question mainly in its philological aspect. In stating the argument we shall use chiefly his own words.³ "That the Picts

were actually Celts, and not of Teutonic race, is proved to a demonstration by the names of their kings; of whom a list, undoubtedly genuine from the fifth century downwards, was published by Innes, from a manuscript in the Colbertine library. Some of those appellations are, as far as we know at present, confined to the Pictish sovereigns; but others are well-known Welsh and Gaelic names. They differ, however, slightly in their forms, from their Cymric equivalents; and more decidedly so from the Gaelic ones; and, as far as they go, lead to the supposition that those who bore them spoke a language bearing a remote analogy to the Irish with its cognates, but a pretty close one to the Welsh.

"In the list furnished by Innes the names *Maelcon*, *Elpin*, *Taran* (i.e. thunder), *Uven* (Owen), *Bargoil*, are those of personages well known in British history or tradition. *Wrgust*, which appears as Fergus in the Irish annals, is the Welsh *Gwrgust*. *Talorg*, *Talorgan*, evidently contain the British word *Tal*, forehead, a common element in proper names; ex. gr. *Talhaiarn*, Iron Forehead; *Taliesin*, splendid forehead, &c. *Talewgrain* would signify in Welsh golden or splendid front. Three kings are represented as sons of *Wid*, in the Irish annals of *Foit* or *Foith*. In Welsh orthography it would be *Gwydd*, wild; a common name in Brittany at the present day, under the form of *Gwez*. The names *Drust*, *Drostan*, *Wrad*, *Necton* (in Bede *Naitan*), closely resemble the Welsh *Trust*, *Trustan*, *Gwriad*, *Nowython*. It will be sufficient to compare the entire list with the Irish or Highland genealogies, to be convinced that there must have been a material distinction between the two

	Chalmers for Celtic,	Pinkerton for Gothic,	Jamieson, "Teutonic Etymons."
Drust	Probably the British name <i>Trwst</i> , which signifies <i>din</i> .	<i>Drust</i> , a common Pictish name, is also Persian, and signifies <i>sincerus</i> The Persians were the old <i>Sythæ</i> or Goths, from whom the rest sprung.	Su. Goth. <i>troest</i> , <i>drisistig</i> . Germ., <i>dreist</i> . Alem. <i>gidrost</i> , daring.
Brudi or Bridei	<i>Brudw</i> , which is pronounced <i>Bridw</i> or <i>Bradw</i> , is in the British treacherous.	<i>Brudh</i> is the real Gothic name; <i>Bout</i> is the wounded (Bott <i>ictus</i> Wachter).	Island, <i>Bridli eminent</i> . verel: <i>brida</i> , to extend; and <i>Sueo</i> Goth, <i>æ</i> , law; 2. one who extends the law, who publishes it.

For other instances see Burton's *Scotland*, i. p. 196.

³ Garnett's *Phil. Essays*, pp. 197, 198.

brauches. Most of the Pictish names are totally unknown in Irish or Highland history, and the few that are equivalent, such as Angus and Fergus, generally differ in form. The Irish annalists have rather obscured the matter, by transforming those names according to their national system of orthography; but it is remarkable that a list in the 'Book of Ballymote,' partly given by Lynch in his 'Cambrensis Eversus,' agrees closely with Innes, even preserving the initial *w* or *u* where the Gaelic would require *f*. The philological inferences to be deduced from this document may be thus briefly summed up:—1. The names of the Pictish kings are not Gaelic, the majority of them being totally unknown both in the Irish and Highland dialects, while the few which have Gaelic equivalents decidedly differ from them in form. Cineod (Kenneth) and Domhmall or Donnel, appear to be the only exceptions. 2. Some of them cannot be identified as Welsh; but the greater number are either identical with or resemble known Cymric names; or approach more nearly to Welsh in structure and orthography than to any other known language. 3. There appears nevertheless to have been a distinction, amounting, at all events, to a difference in dialect. The Pictish names beginning with *w* would in Welsh have *gw*, as *Gwrgust* for *Wrgust*, and so of the rest. There may have been other differences sufficient to justify Bede's statement that the Pictish language was distinct from the British, which it might very well be without any impeachment of its claim to be reckoned as closely cognate."

We have already referred to the use made of the Pictish word *Peannfùhel*, preserved by Bede, and to the phrase in Adamnan concerning Columba's preaching by means of an interpreter. It is contended by the upholders of the Cymric theory that the ancient topographical appellations of the Pictish territory can in general only be explained by the Cymric dialects, one strong point being the number of local names beginning with the Welsh prefix *aber*, which, according to Chalmers, was in several instances subsequently changed by the Gael into *inver*. Skene,⁴ who felt the force of this argument,

tried to get rid of it by contending that *aber* is essentially a Gaelic word, being compounded of *alh*, ford, and *bior*, water. Garnett thinks this explanation utterly gratuitous, and observes that the term may be much more satisfactorily accounted for by a different process. "There are," he observes,⁵ "three words in Welsh denoting a meeting of waters—*aber*, *cynver*, and *ynver*,—respectively compounded of the particles *a*, denoting juxtaposition, *cyn* (Lat. *con*), and *yn*, with the root *ber*, flowing, preserved in the Breton verb *ber*, to flow, and all virtually equivalent to our word *confluence*. *Inver* is the only term known in any Gaelic dialect, either as an appellative or in proper names; and not a single local appellation with the prefix *aber* occurs either in Ireland or the Hebrides, or on the west coast of Scotland. Indeed, the fact that *inver* was substituted for it after the Gaelic occupation of the Pictish territories, is decisive evidence on the point; for, if *aber* was a term familiar to the Gael, why should they change it?"

"In Scotland," says Isaac Taylor,⁶ who upholds the Cymric hypothesis, "the *invers* and *abers* are distributed in a curious and instructive manner. If we draw a line across the map from a point a little south of Inverary, to one a little north of Aberdeen, we shall find that (with very few exceptions) the *invers* lie to the north west of the line, and the *abers* to the south-east of it. This line nearly coincides with the present southern limit of the Gaelic tongue, and probably also with the ancient division between the Picts and Scots. Hence we may conclude that the Picts, a people belonging to the Cymric branch of the Celtic stock, and whose language has now ceased to be anywhere vernacular, occupied the central and eastern districts of Scotland, as far as the Grampians; while the Gadhelic Scots have retained their language, and have given their name to the whole country. The local names prove, moreover, that in Scotland the Cymry did not encroach on the Gael, but the Gael on the Cymry. The intrusive names are *invers*, which invaded the land of the *abers*. Thus on the shore of eth Frith of Forth we find a few *invers* among the *abers*. The Welsh word *uchel*, high, may also

⁵ *Phil. Essays* p. 200.

⁶ *Words and Places*, p. 246.

⁴ *Highlanders*.

be adduced to prove the Cymric affinities of the Picts. This word does not exist in either the Erse or the Gaelic languages, and yet it appears in the name of the OCHIL HILLS, in Perthshire. Again, the Erse *bally*, a town, occurs in 2,000 names in Ireland; and, on the other hand, is entirely absent in Wales and Brittany. In Scotland this most characteristic test-word is found frequently in the *inver* district, while it never appears among the *abers*. The evidence of these names makes it impossible to deny that the Celts of the Scottish Lowlands must have belonged to the Cymric branch of the Celtic stock."

We infer from what Mr. Taylor says, that he is of opinion that at one time the language of the whole of the north of Scotland was Cymric, but that the district in which the Scots obtained a settlement afterwards underwent a change of topography. But it is admitted on all hands that the Scottish Dalriada comprehended no more than the modern Argyleshire, extending no farther north than Loch Leven and Loch Linnhe; and that the Irish Scots had little influence on the people or their language to the north-west of the Grampians. Indeed, Skene⁷ maintains that this district, in which he places the Northern Picts, was never subjected to the Scots, and that it was only the Southern Picts who latterly came under their sway. Yet we find that the *abers* here are few and far between, or, indeed, any indications of Cymric possession such as we find in the southern district. Is it possible that the Northern and Southern Picts were representatives of the two great divisions of the Celts,—the former claiming a Gaelic origin, and the latter a Cymric? Perhaps after all the Welsh Triads may in course of time be of some help in the solution of this dark problem, as, according to them, there was more than one Celtic settlement in Scotland before the migration of the Scots. The passages above quoted are, to all appearance, much more favourable to the Gaelic than to the Cymric hypothesis, and have been made much of by Skene and other supporters of that side of the question.

The Cymric origin of the Picts, besides

⁷ Highlanders.

Garnett and Taylor, is supported by such names as Innes, Chalmers, Ritson, Whittaker, Grub, and others.

Pinkerton, it is well known, is the great and unscrupulous upholder of the Gothic origin of the Picts; while the Gaelic theory has for its supporters such writers, of undoubted ability and acuteness, as Skene, E. W. Robertson, Forbes-Leslie, &c. Burton⁸ is of opinion that the Highlanders of the present day are the true representatives of the Dalriadic Scots of the West.

We shall, as we have done in the case of the other side, allow the upholders of the Gaelic hypothesis to state for themselves the Gaelic topographical argument. We shall use the words of Colonel Forbes-Leslie, who, in his invaluable work on the "Early Races of Scotland,"⁹ says, "The Celtic words *Inver* and *Aber* have nearly the same meaning; and the relative position in which they occur in names of places has been employed as if it were a sufficient argument for defining the presence or preponderance of the British or Gaelic Celts in certain districts. In this way *Aber*, prefixed to names of places, has been urged as adequate proof that the Picts of Caledonia were Celts of the British branch. The value of these and some other words requires examination. *Inver* is to be found in names of places in Wales. It may possibly be a British word. It certainly is a Gaelic one. *Aber*, although undoubtedly British, is also Gaelic—compounded of the two words *Ath* and *Bior*—and signifying the same as *Inver*, viz., the confluence of two streams, or the entrance to a river. If the word *Aber* had been unknown to the Gaelic scholars of modern days, its former existence in that language might have been presumed from the ancient names of places in the districts of Caledonia, where it occurs most frequently, being generally Gaelic and not British.

"Beyond the limits of Caledonia on the south of the Forth and Clyde, but within the boundary of modern Scotland, the word *Inver*, generally pronounced *Inner*, is of common occurrence, and bears witness to a Gaelic nomenclature. Thus, *Inner* or *Inverkip*, in the county of Renfrew; *Innerwell*, in the county of Wig-

⁸ *Scotland*, vol. i. p. 207.

⁹ Vol. i. p. 26.

ton ; Innerwick, in the county of Haddington ; Innerleithen, in the county of Peebles ; Inverleith and Iuveresk, in the county of Edinburgh, derive their names from their situation in regard to the rivers Kip, Leithen, Esk, &c. &c.

“ From the Moray Frith to the Forth, in the eastern counties of Caledonia, the prefix Inver or Aber is used indiscriminately in contiguous places. At the confluence of lesser streams with the river Dec, in Aberdeenshire, we find Inverey, Abergeldie, Invercauld, Invercanny, Aberdeen. Yet in those counties—viz., Aberdeen, Kincardine, Forfar, Perth, and Fif, in which were situated the capitals, and which were the richest provinces of the southern Picts—the number of names of places beginning with Inver is three times as numerous as those commencing with Aber ; there being, in a list taken from laud-registers, which do not go farther back than the middle of the sixteenth century, seventy-eight with Inver to twenty-four with Aber. It may, however, be admitted that, although Aber is Gaelic, its use is far more general by Celts of the British tribes ; and that the predominance of Iuver in the districts north of the Spey, and the intermixture of places the names of which commence with Iuver or Aber, not unfrequently used in records of nearly the same date for the same place in the country lying between the Moray and the Solway Friths, is, to a certain extent, evidence of a British element of population extending into Caledonia. The Britons, in earlier times, may have been pressing on to the north by gradual intrusion, and were probably afterwards increased by bodies of exiles escaping from the severity of Roman bondage and the punishment of unsuccessful revolt.

“ That names of places containing the words Bal, from Baù, a place or residence, and Ard, a height or rising ground, are so common in Ireland, and comparatively rare, so it is alleged, in Caledonia, has also been used as an argument to prove that the language of the Picts and other Caledonians of the southern and eastern districts was British, not Gaelic. But the foundation of the argument has been assumed, and is easily disproved. It is true that of large towns and places that appear in gazet-

teers, names commencing with Bal and Ard are not numerous. But in fact such names are extremely common. In the lowlands of Aberdeenshire—that is, in the portion of one county, and in the part of Caledonia farthest removed from the settlements of the intrusive Gaels, viz., the Scots from Ireland—registers of land show upwards of fifty places the names of which commence with Bal, and forty which commence with Ard. In the Pictish territory, from the Moray Frith to the Forth, I soon collected upwards of four hundred names of places beginning with Bal, and upwards of one hundred with Ard ; and the number might easily be doubled.”

Mr. E. W. Robertson, one of the latest and ablest upholders of this theory, thinks¹ there is scarcely sufficient evidence to justify any very decided conclusion as to the pre-existence of a Cymric population ; and that, whilst it would be unquestionably erroneous to ascribe a Cymric origin to the Picts, the existence of a Celtic element akin to the Cymri, amongst the population of Alban before the arrival of the *Gwyddel Fjichti*, must remain to a certain extent an open question.

Of all *a priori* theories that have hitherto been advanced as to how Scotland was likely to have been at first peopled, that of Father Innes, the first writer who investigated the subject thoroughly and critically, appears to us to be the most plausible and natural, although even it is beset with many difficulties. It appears to him more natural and probable that the Caledonian Britons, or Picts, were of the same origin as the Britons of the south ; that as these came in originally from the nearest coast of Gaul, as they multiplied in the island, they advanced to the north and settled there, carrying with them the customs and language of the South Britons.²

We have thus endeavoured to lay before the reader, as fully as space permits, and as clearly and unprejudicedly as possible, the materials at present existing by means of which to form an opinion on the Pictish question, and the arguments *pro* and *con*, mainly in their own words, urged by the partisans of the different theories. It appears to us that

¹ Vol. ii. p. 377. ² *Essay on Scotland*, vol. i. p. 70.

the data within reach are far too scanty to justify any one in coming to a settled conclusion, and that we must wait for more light before we can be justified in finally making up our minds on this perplexing subject.¹

At the present day we find that nearly the whole of the territory said to have been originally occupied by the Picts, is inhabited, and has been for centuries, by a population which in appearance is far more Teutonic than Celtic, and which undoubtedly speaks a broad Teutonic dialect.² And even in the district where the Gaelic language has been triumphant for ages, it is acknowledged even by the most devoted partisans of the Gaelic theory, that among the population there is a very considerable intermixture of the Teutonic element. Burton thinks, from a general view of the whole question, that the proportion of the Teutonic race that came into the use of the Gaelic, was much greater than the proportion of the Gaelic that came into the use of the Teutonic or Saxon, and that this may account for the contrasts of physical appearance to be seen in the Highlands.

We certainly have not exhausted the statement of the question, have not stated fully and completely all the points in dispute; nor do we pretend to have given with fulness all the arguments *pro* and *con* on the various sides. We have, however, given as much as will enable any ordinary

reader to form for himself a fair idea of the present state of the Pictish question, and indicated the sources whence more information may be derived, should any one wish to pursue the subject farther. In the words of the latest and greatest Scottish historian "this brief survey of the great Pictish controversy leaves nothing but a melancholy record of wasted labour and defeated ambition. It has been more fruitless than a polemical or a political dispute, for these leave behind them, either for good or evil, their marks upon the conduct and character of the populations among whom they have raged; while here a vast outlay of learning, ingenuity, enthusiasm, and, it must be added, temper, have left no visible monument but a pile of forbidding volumes, in which should any one who has not studied the matter fundamentally expect to find instructive information, he will assuredly be led into a tangled maze of unintelligible pedantry, from which he will come forth with no impression but a nightmare feeling of hopeless struggle with difficulties."³

CHAPTER III.

A. D. 446—843.

Early History—Scottish Settlement—Origin of Scots—Dalriada—Conversion of Picts—Druidism—St. Columba—Iona—Spread of Christianity—Brude and his Successors—Dun-Nechtan—Pictish Wars—Ungus—Contests—Norsemen—Union of Picts and Scots—Scoto-Irish or Dalriads—Lorn, Fergus, Angus and their Successors—Aidan—Contest at Deagsastan—Donal Breac—Wars with Irish and Picts—Conal II. and Successors—Ferchar Fada—Selvaich and Duncha Beg—Eocha III. unites Dalriada—Muredach—Contests with Picts—Aodh-fin—Eocha IV. or Achais—Alpin—Kenneth—Union of Picts and Scots—Dalriadic Government—Tanist—Brehon—Laws—Fosterage—Lists of Kings.

As we have already said, the materials for the internal history of the Highlands during the Roman occupation are of the scantiest, nearly all that can be recorded being the struggles of the northern tribes with the Roman invaders, and the incursions of the former and their allies into the territories of the Romanized Britons. Doubtless many events as worthy of record as these, an account of which has been

¹ We have already (p. 22) referred to the Gaelo-Cymric theory broached by Dr. MacLachlan in his *Early Scottish Church*, and recently adopted by Dr. Skene. Speaking of the distribution of the topographical nomenclature in the Highlands, Dr. MacLachlan says it indicates one of two things; "either that the one race overpowered the other in the east, and superinduced a new nomenclature over the old throughout the country,—that we have in fact two successive strata of Celtic names, the Gaelic underlying the British, which is by no means impossible; or, what is more likely, that the Pictish people were a people lying midway between the Gael and the Cymric—more Gaelic than the Cymri, and more Cymric than the Gael. This is precisely the character of the old Pictish topography; it is a mixture of Gaelic and Cymric; and if the language of the people was like their topography, it too was a language neither Gaelic nor Cymric, but occupying a middle space between them, indicating the identity of the races at some distant period, although they afterwards became rivals for the possession of the land." "This we think on the whole the most satisfactory theory yet propounded."

² We would infer from the recently published *Book of Deer*, that down at least to the time of David II., the inhabitants were still a Gaelic speaking population; all the entries in that book as to land are in that language.

³ Burton, vol. i. p. 200.

preserved, were during this period being transacted in the northern part of Scotland, and we have seen that many additions, from various quarters, must have been made to the population. However, there are no records extant which enable us to form any distinct notion of the nature of these events, and history cannot be manufactured.

After the departure of the Romans, the provincial Britons of the south of Scotland were completely at the mercy of the Picts as well as the Saxons, who had been invited over by the South Britons to assist them against the northern barbarians. These Saxons, we know, very soon entered into alliance with those whom they came to repel, and between them the Britons south of the friths were eventually driven into the West, where for centuries they appear to have maintained an independent kingdom under the name of Strathclyde, until ultimately they were incorporated with the Scots.⁴

Although both the external and internal history of the Highlands during this period is much better known than in the case of the Roman period, still the materials are exceedingly scanty. Scottish historians, from Fordun and Boece downwards, made it their business to fill up from their own imaginations what is wanting, so that, until the simple-minded but acute Innes put it in its true light, the early history of Scotland was a mass of fable.

Undoubtedly the two most momentous events of this period are the firm settlement in Argyle of a colony of Scots from Ireland and some of the neighbouring isles in 503,⁵ and the conversion of the Northern Picts to Christianity by Columba about 563.

At the time of the Roman abandonment of Britain the Picts were under the sway of a king or chieftain named Drust, son of Erp, concerning whom the only record remaining is, that he lived a hundred years and fought a hundred battles. In fact, little is known with certainty of the Pictish history for upwards of one hundred years after the departure of the Romans, although some ancient chronicles af-

ford us lists of Pictish kings or princes, a chronological table of whom, from Drust downwards, will be found at the end of this chapter. The Pictish chronicle contains the names of thirty-six others who are said to have reigned before Drust, but these are generally regarded as almost entirely spurious.

Before proceeding farther with the Pictish history, it may be proper to give a brief account of the settlement of the Irish Scots or Dalriads, as they are frequently called, in the Pictish territory.

The time of the settlement of the Scots in present Scotland was for long a subject of dispute, the early Scottish historians, from a false and unscrupulous patriotism, having pushed it back for many centuries before its actual occurrence. This dispute is now, however, fairly set at rest, there being no foundation for believing that the Scots found their way from Ireland to Scotland earlier than a century or two before the birth of Christ. As we have already seen, we find the first mention of the Scots in Ammianus Marcellinus about the year 360 A.D.; and their name occurs in the same connection frequently afterwards, during the Roman occupation of Scotland. Burton⁶ is of opinion that the migration did not take place at any particular time or under any particular leader, but that it was gradual, that the Scots "oozed" out of Ireland upon the western coast of Scotland.

It belongs to the history of Ireland to trace the origin and fix the race of the Scots, to settle the time of their coming into Ireland, and discover whence they came. Some suppose that they migrated originally from Britain to Ireland, while Innes and others bring them either from Scandinavia or Spain, and connect them with the Scythians, asserting that Scot is a mere corruption of Scyth, and dating the settlement at about the commencement of the Christian era. The Irish traditions connect them with a certain Scota, daughter of Pharaoh, and date their coming to Ireland upwards of 1,000 years B.C. E. W. Robertson⁷ and others consider them to have been Irish Picts or Cruithne.

Wherever the Scots came from and to whatever race they belong, whether Teutonic or

⁴ See Innes's *Essay*, vol. i.

⁵ This is the date commonly given, although Mr. E. W. Robertson makes it 502 on the authority of *Fighernach*, while O'Donovan (*Annals of the Four Masters*, vol. i. p. 160) makes it 506.

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⁶ Vol. i. p. 212.

⁷ *Early Kings*, vol. i. p. 5.

Celtic, they certainly appear not to have been the first settlers in Ireland, and at the time at which they first appear in authentic history occupied a district in Ireland corresponding to Connaught, Leinster, and part of Munster. They were also one of the most powerful of the Irish tribes, seeing that for many centuries Ireland was, after them, called *Scotia* or *Scotland*. It is usually said that a particular corner in the north-east of Ireland, about 30 miles in extent, corresponding to the modern county of Antrim, was the kingdom of the particular band of Scots who migrated to Scotland; and that it received its name, *Dal-Riada* ("the portion of *Riada*"), from *Carbre-Riada*, a leader of the Scots who conquered this particular part, previously inhabited by *Cruithne* or *Irish Picts*. *Robertson*,⁸ however, considers all this fable and the kingdom of *Dalriada* as mythical, *Tighernach* and the early Irish annalists never applying the name to any other locality than *British Dalriada*. At all events, this particular district was spoken of by the later chroniclers under the name of *Dalriada*, there being thus a *Dalriada* both in Scotland and Ireland.⁹ At the time of the migration of the Scots from Ireland to Scotland, they were to all intents and purposes a Celtic race, speaking *Irish Gaelic*, and had already been converted to Christianity.

The account of the Scottish migration usually given is, that in the year 503 A.D.,¹ a new colony of *Dalriads* or *Dalriadic Scots*, under the leadership of *Fergus* son of *Ere*, a descendant of *Carbre-Riada*, along with his brothers *Lorn* and *Angus*, left Ireland and settled on the western coast of *Argyle* and the adjacent islands. "The territories which constituted the petty kingdoms of *Dalriada* can be pretty well defined. They were bounded on the south by the *Frith* of *Clyde*, and they were separated on the east from the *Pictish* kingdom by the ridge of the great mountain chain

⁸ *Early Kings*, vol. ii. p. 265.

⁹ At this time, and up at least to the 11th century, present Scotland was known as *Albania*, *Alban*, or *Alba*, the term *Scotland* or *Scotia* being generally applied to Ireland, unless where there is some qualifying term, as *Nova*. *Burton* thinks it not safe to consider that the word *Scot* must mean a native of present Scotland, when the period dealt with is earlier than the middle of the 12th century.

¹ *Skene* in his *Chronicles of the Picts and Scots*, p. cx., makes the date to be about 495 or 498.

called *Drumalban*. They consisted of four tribes,—the genus or *Cinel Lorn*, descended from *Lorn*, the elder of the three brothers; the *Cinel Gabran* and *Cinel Comgall*, descended from two sons of *Domangart*, son of *Fergus*, the second of the brothers; and the *Cinel Angus*, descended from the third brother, *Angus*. The *Cinel Comgall* inhabited the district formerly called *Comgall*, now corrupted into *Cowall*. The *Cinel Gabran* inhabited what was called the *Airgiallas*, or the district of *Argyle* proper, and *Kintyre*. The *Cinel Angus* inhabited the islands of *Islay* and *Jura*, and the *Cinel Lorn*, the district of *Lorn*. Beyond this, on the north, the districts between *Lorn* and the promontory of *Ardnamurchan*, *i.e.*, the island of *Mull*, the district of *Morven*, *Ardgower*, and probably part of *Lochaber*, seem to have formed a sort of debatable ground, the population of which was *Pictish*, while the Scots had settlements among them. In the centre of the possessions of the *Cinel Gabran*, at the head of the well-sheltered loch of *Crinan*, lies the great *Moss* of *Crinan*, with the river *Add* flowing through it. In the centre of the moss, and on the side of the river, rises an isolated rocky hill called *Dunadd*, the top of which is strongly fortified. This was the capital of *Dalriada*, and many a stone obelisk in the moss around it bears silent testimony to the contests of which it was the centre. The picturesque position of *Dunolly Castle*, on a rock at the entrance of the equally sheltered bay of *Oban*, afforded another fortified summit, which was the chief stronghold of the tribe of *Lorn*. Of *Dunstaffnage*, as a royal seat, history knows nothing."²

It would appear that *Lorn* and *Fergus* at first reigned jointly, the latter becoming sole monarch on the decease of the former. The succession appears not to have been confined to any particular line, and a disputed succession not unfrequently involved the Scots in civil war.

There is no portion of history so obscure or so perplexing as that of the *Scoto-Irish* kings, and their tribes, from their first settlement, in the year 503, to their accession to the *Pictish* throne in 843. Unfortunately no contem-

² *Skene's Chronicles of the Picts and Scots*, p. cxiii.

poraneous written records appear ever to have existed of that dark period of our annals, and the efforts which the Scotch and Irish antiquaries have made to extricate the truth from the mass of contradictions in which it lies buried, have rather been displays of national prejudice than calm researches by reasonable inquirers. The annals, however, of Tigernach, and of Ulster, along with the brief chronicles and historical documents first brought to light by the industrious Innes, in his Critical Essay, have thrown some glimpses of light on a subject which had long remained in almost total darkness.³

The next authentic event of importance that falls to be recorded in connection with the history of the Highlands, is the conversion of the Northern Picts to Christianity, about the year 563. The Southern Picts, i. e. those living to the south and east of the Grampians, were converted by St. Ninian (360—432) about the beginning of the 5th century; but the Northern Picts, until the date above-mentioned, continued Pagans. That there were no Christians among them till that time appears very improbable, considering their close neighbourhood and constant intercourse with the Southern Picts and the Scots of Dalriada; but there can be no doubt that the court and the great bulk of the people adhered to their ancient superstitions.

The religion of the Picts before their conversion is supposed by the majority of writers on this subject to have been that which prevailed in the rest of Britain and in Celtic Gaul, Druidism. The incredulous Burton, however, if we may judge from his History of Scotland,⁴ as well as from an article of his in the Edinburgh Review, seems to believe that the whole system of Druidism has been elaborated by the imaginations of modern historians. That the Picts previous to their conversion had a religion, and a religion with what may be called priests and religious services, cannot be doubted, if we may trust Tacitus and Adamnan, the biographer of Columba; the former of whom tells us that, previous to the battle of the Grampians, the

union of the various tribes was ratified by solemn rites and sacrifices, and the latter, that Columba's efforts at conversion were strenuously opposed by the diabolical arts and incantations of the Magi. It appears from Adamnan that fountains were particularly objects of veneration; the superstitious awe with which many fountains and wells are regarded at the present day, being doubtless a remnant of the ancient Pictish religion. Trees, rivers, and lakes, as well as the heavenly bodies, appear also to have been objects of religious regard, and not a few of the customs which exist in Scotland at the present day have been inherited from our Pictish ancestors. Such are many of the rites performed on Hallowe'en, Beltane, Midsummer, &c., and many every-day superstitions still prevalent in the country districts of Scotland.

“Druidism is said to have acknowledged a Supreme Being, whose name was synonymous with the Eastern Baal, and if so, was visibly represented by the sun; and such remnants of the ancient worship as are still traceable in the language of the people, would indicate its having been a species of sun-worship. To this day the four leading points of the compass bear, in the terms which designate them among the Gael, marks of this. The east is *ear*, like the Latin *oriens*, from the Gaelic *eiridh*, ‘to rise;’ the west is *iar*, ‘after,’ used also as a preposition; the south is *deas*, and the north *tuath*; and it is in the use of these terms that the reverence for the solar luminary chiefly appears. *Deas*, ‘the south,’ is in all circumstances *right*; it is the *right* hand, which is easily intelligible, from the relation of that hand to the south when the face looks eastward; and it is expressive of whatever is otherwise *right*. *Deas* also means complete, trim, ready; whatever is *deas*, or southerly, is just as it should be. *Tuath*, ‘north,’ is the very opposite. *Tuathaisid* is a ‘stupid fellow;’ *Tuathail* is ‘wrong’ in every sense: south and north, then, as expressed in the words *deiseal* and *tuathail*, are, in the Gaelic language, the representatives of right and wrong. Thus everything that is to move prosperously among many of the Celts, must move sunwise: a boat going to sea must turn sunwise; a man or woman immediately after marriage, must make a turn sunwise. There are relics of fire-worship too;

³ More recently the invaluable labours of E. W. Robertson, Burton, Forbes-Leslie, Joseph Robertson, Grub, Skene, and MacLauchlan, have been the means of putting the history of this period on its proper footing.

⁴ Vol. i. ch. vi

certain days are named from fire-lighting; *Beallteine*, or 'the first day of summer,' and *saimhtheine*, 'the first day of winter,'—the former supposed to mean the fire of Baal or Bel, the latter closing the *saimhré*, or summer period of the year, and bringing in the *geamhré*, or winter period, are sufficient evidence of this. There are places in Scotland where within the memory of living men the *teine eigin*, or 'forced fire,' was lighted once every year by the rubbing of two pieces of wood together, while every

fire in the neighbourhood was extinguished in order that they might be lighted anew from this sacred source."⁷

Many of the antiquities which are scattered over the north of Scotland, such as stone circles, monoliths, sculptured stones, rocking stones, &c., are very generally supposed to have been connected with religion. From the resemblance of the circles especially, to those which exist in South Britain and in France, it has been supposed that one religion prevailed over



Stonehenge.—Copied by permission from Col. Forbes-Leslie's *Early Races of Scotland*.

these countries. As Druidism is so commonly believed to have prevailed among the Picts as well as among the other inhabitants of Britain, we shall here give a very brief account of that system, chiefly as we find it given in Cæsar.⁸ The following is the account given by Cæsar of the character and functions of the Druids:—"They attend to divine worship, perform public and private sacrifices, and expound matters of religion. A great number of youths are gathered round them for the sake of education, and they enjoy the highest honour in that nation; for nearly all public and private quarrels come under their jurisdiction; and when any crime has been committed, when a murder has been perpetrated, when a controversy arises about a legacy, or about landmarks, they are the judges too. They fix rewards and punishments; and should any one,

whether a private individual or a public man, disobey their decrees, then they exclude him from the sacrifices. All these Druids have one chief, who enjoys the highest authority amongst them. When he dies, he is succeeded by the member of the order who is most prominent amongst the others, if there be any such single individual; if, however, there are several men equally distinguished, the successor is elected by the Druids. Sometimes they even go to war about this supremacy.

"The Druids take no part in warfare; nor do they pay taxes like the rest of the people; they are exempt from military service, and from all public burdens. Attracted by such rewards, many come to be instructed by their own choice, while others are sent by their parents. They are reported to learn in the school a great number of verses, so that some remain there twenty years. They think it an unhallowed thing to commit their lore to writing, though in the other public and private

⁷ Dr. Maclauchlan's *Early Scottish Church*, pp. 32, 33.

⁸ Druid is said to be derived from a word meaning 'oak,' common to many of the Indo-European tongues.

affairs of life they frequently make use of the Greek alphabet. . . . Beyond all things, they are desirous to inspire a belief that men's souls do not perish, but transmigrate after death from one individual to another; and besides, they hold discourses about the stars, about the size of the world and of various countries, about the nature of things, and about the power and might of the immortal gods."

Among the objects of druidical veneration the oak is said to have been particularly distinguished; for the Druids imagined that there was a supernatural virtue in the wood, in the leaves, in the fruit, and above all in the *mistle-*

toe. Hence the oak woods were the first places of their devotion; and the offices of their religion were there performed without any covering but the broad canopy of heaven. The part appropriated for worship was inclosed in a circle, within which was placed a pillar of stone set up under an oak, and sacrifices were offered thereon. The pillars which mark the sites of these places of worship are still to be seen; and so great is the superstitious veneration paid by the country people to these sacred stones, as they are considered, that few persons have ventured to remove them.

Besides the immunities before-mentioned en-



Circle of Callernish in Lewis.—Copied by permission from Col. Forbes-Leslie's *Early Races of Scotland*.

joyed by the Druids, they also possessed both civil and criminal jurisdiction, they decided all controversies among states as well as among private persons; and whoever refused to submit to their awards was exposed to the most severe penalties. The sentence of excommunication was pronounced against him; he was debarred all intercourse with his fellow-citizens; his company was universally shunned as profane and dangerous; he was refused the protection of law; and death itself became an acceptable relief from the misery and infamy to which he was exposed.

St. Columba was born in the county of Douegal, in Ireland, in the year 521, and was connected both on his father's and mother's side with the Irish royal family. He was carefully educated for the priesthood, and, after having finished his ecclesiastical studies, founded monasteries in various parts of Ireland. The year of his departure from Ireland is, on good authority, ascertained to have been 563, and it is generally said that he fled to save his life, which was in jeopardy on account of a feud in which his relations were involved. Mr

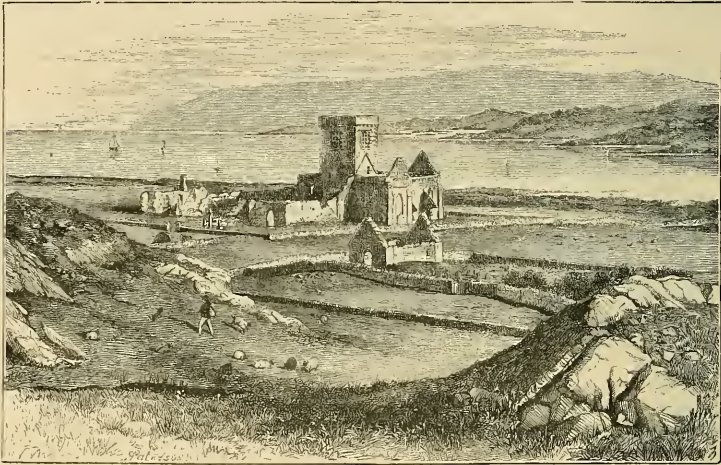
Grub⁹ believes that "the love of God and of his brethren was to him a sufficient motive for entering on the great work to which he was called. His immediate objects were the instruction of the subjects of Conal, king of the British Scots, and the conversion of their neighbours the heathen Picts of the North." In the year 563, when Columba was 42 years of age, he arrived among his kindred on the shores of Argyre, and immediately set himself to fix on a suitable site for a monastery which he meant to erect, from which were to issue forth the apostolic missionaries destined to assist him in the work of conversion, and in which also the youth set apart for the office of the holy ministry were to be educated. St. Columba espied a solitary isle lying apart from the rest of the Hebridean group, near the south-west angle of Mull, then known by the simple name I, whose etymology is doubtful, afterwards changed by Bede into Hy, latinized by the monks into Iova or Iona, and again honoured with the name of I-columb-cil.

⁹ *Eccles. Hist.*, vol. i. p. 49.

the island of St. Columba of the church. This island, Conal, who was then king of the Christian Scots of Argyle, presented to Columba, in order that he might erect thereon a monastery for the residence of himself and his disciples. No better station could have been selected than this islet during such barbarous times.

In pursuance of his plan, St. Columba settled with twelve disciples in Hy. "They

now," says Bede, "neither sought, nor loved, anything of this world,"—true traits in the missionary character. For two years did they labour with their own hands erecting huts and building a church of logs and reeds. "The monastery of Iona, like those previously founded by Columba in Ireland, was not a retreat for solitaries whose chief object was to work out their own salvation; it was a great school of Christian education, and was specially designed



Ruins on Iona.

to prepare and send forth a body of clergy trained to the task of preaching the Gospel among the heathen."¹ Having established his missionary institution, and having occupied himself for some time in the instruction of his countrymen the Scots of Argyle, the pious Columba set out on his apostolic tour among the Picts, probably in the year 565. At this time Bridei or Brude, whose reign extended from 536 to 586, the son of Mailcon, a powerful and influential prince, reigned over the Northern Picts, and appears also to have had dominion over those of the south. Judging well that if he could succeed in converting Brude, who, when Columba visited him was staying at one of his residences on the banks of the Ness, the arduous task he had undertaken

of bringing over the whole nation to the worship of the true God would be more easily accomplished, he first began with the king, and by great patience and perseverance succeeded in converting him.

The first Gaelic entry in the *Book of Deer* lets us see the great missionary on one of his tours, and describes the founding of an important mission-station which became the centre of instruction for all the surrounding country. The following is the translation given of the Gaelic original:—"Columcille, and Drostán son of Cosgrach, his pupil, came from Hí, as God had shown to them, unto Abbordoboir, and Bede the Pict was mormaer of Buchan before them, and it was he that gave them that town in freedom for ever from mormaer and toisech. They came after that to the other town, and it was pleasing to Columcille because it was

¹ Grub's *Ecc. Hist.*, vol. i. p. 51.

full of God's grace, and he asked of the mormaer, to wit Bede, that he should give it to him; and he did not give it, and a son of his took an illness after [or in consequence of] refusing the clerics, and he was nearly dead [*lit.* he was dead but if it were a little]. After this the mormaer went to entreat the clerics that they should make prayer for the son, that health should come to him; and he gave in offering to them from Cloch in tiprat to Cloch pette meic Garnait. They made the prayer, and health came to him. After that Columcille gave to Drostan that town, and blessed it, and left as (his) word, 'Whosoever should come against it, let him not be many-yeared [or] victorious.' Drostan's tears came on parting from Columcille. Said Columcille, 'Let DÉAN be its name henceforward.'

The *Abbordoboir* here spoken of is Aberdour on the north coast of Aberdeenshire, and *Dear* probably occupied the site of what is now Old Deer, about twelve miles inland from Aberdour. There is every reason for believing in the substantial truth of the narrative. The two saints, probably from the banks of the Ness, came to Aberdour and "tarried there for a time and founded a monastery on the land which had been granted them. In later times the parish church of Aberdour was dedicated to St. Drostan." One would almost be inclined to suppose, from the manner in which the missionaries were apparently received, that Christianity had been heard of there before; possibly Bede the Pictish mormaer had been converted at the court of King Brude, and had invited Columba to pay him a visit in Buchan and plant the gospel among the inhabitants. Possibly St. Ninian, the apostle of the southern Picts, may, during his mission among them, have penetrated as far north as Buchan. On the side of the choir of the old parish church of Turrieff, a few miles west of Deer, was found painted the figure of St. Ninian, which was probably as old as the 16th century. At all events, Columba and his companion appear to have been made most welcome in Buchan, and were afforded every facility for prosecuting their sacred work. The above record doubtless gives us a fair notion of Columba's mode of procedure in prosecuting his self-imposed task of converting the in-

habitants of Alba. As was the case in Buchan, he appears to have gone from district to district along with his missionary companions, seen the work of conversion fairly begun, planted a monastery in a suitable place, and left one or more of his disciples as resident missionaries to pursue the work of conversion and keep Christianity alive in the district.²

Columba soon had the happiness of seeing the blessings of Christianity diffusing themselves among a people who had hitherto sat in the darkness of paganism. Attended by his disciples he traversed the whole of the Pictish territories, spreading everywhere the light of faith by instructing the people in the truths of the Gospel. To keep up a succession of the teachers of religion, he established, as we have seen, monasteries in every district, and from these issued, for many ages, men of apostolic earnestness, who watered and tended the good seed planted by Columba, and carried it to the remotest parts of the north of Scotland and its islands, so that, in a generation or two after Columba, Christianity became the universal religion. These monasteries or cells were long subject to the Abbey of Iona, and the system of church government which proceeded from that centre was in many respects peculiar, and has given rise to much controversy between presbyterians and episcopalians.

St. Columba died on the 9th of June, 597, after a glorious and well-spent life, thirty-four years of which he had devoted to the instruction of the nation he had converted. His influence was very great with the neighbouring princes, and they often applied to him for advice, and submitted to him their differences, which he frequently settled by his authority. His memory was long held in reverence by the Scots and Caledonians.

Conal, the fifth king of the Scots in Argyle, the kinsman of St. Columba, and under whose auspices he entered on the work of conversion, and to whom it is said he was indebted for Hy, died in 571. His successor Aidan went over to Iona in 574, and was there ordained and inaugurated by the Abbot according to the ceremonial of the *liber vitreus*,

² *Book of Deer*, Preface. Further details concerning the early Scottish church will be given at the end of this volume.

the cover of which is supposed to have been encrusted with crystal.

To return to the history of the Picts, we have already observed that little is known of Pictish history for more than a hundred years after the Roman abdication; and even up to the union of the Picts and Scots, the materials for the history of both are about as scarce as they could possibly be, consisting mostly of meagre chronicles containing the names of kings, the dates of their accession and death, and occasionally the names of battles and of the contending nations. Scotland during this period appears to have been the scene of unceasing war between the Scots, Picts, Britons of Strathclyde, English, and Danes, the two first being continually at strife not only with each other but among themselves. We shall endeavour to give, as clearly and as faithfully as possible, the main reliable facts in the history of the Scots and Picts until the union of these two nations.

The reign of Brude was distinguished by many warlike exploits, but above all, as we have seen, by his conversion and that of his people to Christianity, which indeed formed his greatest glory. His chief contests were with the Scoto-Irish or Dalriads, whom he defeated in 557, and slew Gauran their king. Brude died in 586, and for several ages his successors carried on a petty system of warfare, partly foreign and partly domestic. Passing over a domestic conflict, at Lindores in 621, under Kenneth, son of Luthrin, we must notice the important battle of Dun-Nechtan, fought in 685, between the Picts under Brude, the son of Bili,¹ and the Saxons, under the Northumbrian Egfrid. The Saxon king, it is said, greedy of conquest, attacked the Picts without provocation, and against the advice of his court. Crossing the Forth from Lothian, he entered Strathearn and penetrated through the defiles of the Pictish kingdom, leaving fire and desolation in his train. His career was stopt at Dun-Nechtan, the hill of Nechtan, a hill in the parish of Dunuichen, about the centre of Forfarshire; and by a neighbouring lake, long known by the name of Nechtan's mere, a short distance east from the

town of Forfar, did Egfrid and his Saxons fall before Brude and his exasperated Picts. This was a sad blow to the Northumbrian power; yet the Northumbrians, in 699, under Berht, an able leader, again ventured to try their strength with the Picts, when they were once more defeated by Brude, the son of Dereli, who had recently mounted the Pictish throne.

The wars between the Picts and Northumbrians were succeeded by various contests for power among the Pictish princes, which gave rise to a civil war. Ungus, honoured by the Irish Annalists with the title of great, and Elpin, at the head of their respective partisans, tried their strength at Monacrib, supposed by some to be Moncrieff in Strathearn, in the year 727, when the latter was defeated; and the conflict was renewed at Duncrei (Crieff), when victory declared a second time against Elpin, who was obliged to flee from the hostility of Ungus. Nechtan next tried his strength with Ungus, in 728, at a place called Monacurna by the Annalists—possibly Moncur in the Carse of Gowrie—but he was defeated, and many of his followers perished. Talorgan, the son of Congus, was defeated by Brude, the son of Ungus, in 730, and in the same year the Picts appear to have entered into a treaty of peace with the English nation.

The victorious Ungus commenced hostilities against the Dalriads, or Scoto-Irish, in the year 736, and appears to have got the better of the latter. The Scots were again worsted in another battle in 740 by Ungus, who in the same year repulsed an attack of the Northumbrians under Eadbert. In the year 750 he defeated the Britons of the Cumbrian kingdom in the battle of Cato or Cath-O, in which his brother Talorgan was killed. Ungus, who appears to have been a powerful and able monarch, but whom Bede² characterizes as having conducted himself "with bloody wickedness, a tyrant and an executioner," died about 760. A doubtful victory was gained by Ciniod, or Kenneth, the Pictish king, over Aodh-fin, the Scottish king, in 767. Constantine, having overcame Conall, the son of Tarla, in 789, succeeded him in the throne.³

¹ There is some confusion here: Dr. Maclauchlan places this conflict in the reign of Brude son of Dereli, who, according to our list, did not succeed till 699.

² Book V. c. 24.

³ See the Ulster Annals, where an account is given of all these conflicts.

Up to this period the Norsemen from Scandinavia, or the *Vikings*, i. e. men of the voes or bays, as they were termed, had confined their ravages to the Baltic; but, in the year 787 they for the first time appeared on the east coast of England. Some years afterwards they found their way to the Caledonian shores, and in 795 made their first attack on Iona, which frequently afterwards, along with the rest of the Hebrides, suffered grievously from their ravages. In 839 the *Vikings* entered the Pictish territories. A murderous conflict ensued between them and the Picts under Uen their king, in which both he and his only brother Bran, as well as many of the Pictish chiefs, fell. This event, no doubt, hastened the downfall of the Pictish monarchy; and as the Picts were unable to resist the arms of Kenneth, the Scottish king, he carried into execution, in the year 843, a project he had long entertained, of uniting the Scots and Picts, and placing both crowns on his head. That anything like a total extermination of the Picts took place is now generally discredited, although doubtless there was great slaughter both of princes and people. Skene⁴ asserts indeed that it was only the Southern Picts who became subject to Kenneth, the Northern Picts remaining for long afterwards independent of, but sometimes in alliance with, the Scots. This is substantially the opinion of Mr. E. W. Robertson,⁵ who says, "the modern shires of Perth, Fife, Stirling, and Dumbarton, with the greater part of the county of Argyle, may be said to have formed the actual Scottish kingdom to which Kenneth succeeded." The Picts were recognised as a distinct people even in the tenth century, but before the twelfth they lost their characteristic nominal distinction by being amalgamated with the Scots, their conquerors.

The Scoto-Irish after their arrival in Argyle did not long continue under the separate authority of the three brothers, Lorn, Fergus, and Angus. They were said to have been very far advanced in life before leaving Ireland, and the Irish chroniclers assert that St. Patrick gave them his benediction before his death, in the year 493. The statement as to their ad-

vanced age derives some support from their speedy demise after they had laid the foundations of their settlements, and of a new dynasty of kings destined to rule over the kingdom of Scotland. Angus was the first who died, leaving a son, Muredach, who succeeded him in the small government of Ila. After the death of Lorn the eldest brother, Fergus, the last survivor, became sole monarch of the Scoto-Irish; but he did not long enjoy the sovereignty, for he died in 506.

Fergus was succeeded by his son Domangart, or Dongardus, who died in 511, after a short but troubled reign of about five years. His two sons Comgal and Gabhran or Gauran, successively enjoyed his authority. Comgal had a peaceful reign of four and twenty years, during which he extended his settlements. He left a son named Conal, but Gauran his brother, notwithstanding, ascended the throne in the year 535 without opposition. Gauran reigned two and twenty years, and, as we have already observed, was slain in a battle with the Picts under Bridei their king.

Conal, the son of Comgal, then succeeded in 557, and closed a reign of fourteen years in 571. It was during his reign that Columba's mission to the Picts took place. A civil war ensued between Aodhan or Aidan, the son of Gauran, and Duncha or Duncan, the son of Conal, for the vacant crown, the claim to which was decided on the bloody field of Loro or Loco in Kintyre in 575, where Duncha was slain. Aidan, the son of Gauran, had been formally inaugurated by St. Columba in Iona, in 574. In the time of Aidan there were frequent wars between the Dalriads and the English Saxons. Many battles were fought in which the Scots were generally defeated, the principal being that of Degsastan or Dalston near Carlisle, in 603, in which nearly the whole of the Scottish army was defeated. The wars with the Saxons weakened the power of the Dalriads very considerably, and it was not till after a long period of time that they again ventured to meet the Saxons in the field.

During a short season of repose, Aidan, attended by St. Columba, went to the celebrated council of Drum-keat in Ulster, in the year 590. In this council he claimed the principality of Dalriada, the land of his fathers, and

⁴ *Highlanders*, vol. i. p. 65.

⁵ *Early Kings*, vol. i. p. 39.

obtained an exemption from doing homage to the kings of Ireland, which his ancestors, it would appear, had been accustomed to pay. Aidan died in 605 or 608, at the advanced age of eighty, and was buried in the church of Kilkeran, the ruins of which are still to be seen in the midst of Campbelton.

Aidan was succeeded in the throne by his son Eocha-bui, or the "yellow," who reigned sixteen years. He carried on war with the Cruithne of Ulster. After him came his brother Kenneth-Cear, or the "left-handed," who was followed by Ferchar, son of Eogan, of the race of Lorn.

Donal, surnamed *breac* or freckled, the son of Eocha-bui, of the race of Gauran, succeeded Ferchar about 637. He was a warlike prince and had, distinguished himself in the wars against the Cruithne of Ireland. Congal-Claon, the son of Scanlan, the king of the Cruithne in Ulster, having slain Suibne-Mean, a powerful king of Ireland, was attacked by Domnal II., supreme king of Ireland, who succeeded Suibne, and was defeated in the battle of Duncetheren, in 629. Congal sought refuge in Cantyre, and having persuaded Donal-breac, the kinsman of Domnal, to join him in a war against the latter, they invaded Ireland with a heterogeneous mass of Scots-Irish, Picts, Britons, and Saxons, commanded by Donal and his brothers. Cealach, the son of Maelcomh, the nephew of the reigning king, and as tanist or heir-apparent, the leader of his army, attacked Donal-breac in the plain of Magh Rath or Moyra in Down, in 637, and completely defeated him after an obstinate and bloody engagement. Congal, the murderer of his sovereign, met his merited fate, and Donal-breac was obliged to secure his own and his army's safety by a speedy return to Cantyre. St. Columba had always endeavoured to preserve an amicable understanding between the Cruithne of Ulster and the Scots-Irish, and his injunctions were, that they should live in constant peace; but Donal disregarded the wise advice of the saint, and paid dearly for so doing. He was not more successful in an enterprise against the Picts, having been defeated by them in the battle of Glinne Mairison, Glenmairison, or Glenmoreson, probably in West Lothian,⁶

⁶ Skene's *Chron. of Picts and Scots*, p. cxv.

during the year 638. He ended his days at Straith-cairmaic or Strathearron, possibly in the neighbourhood of Falkirk, by the sword of Hoan or Owen, one of the reguli of Strathclyd, in the year 642. His son Cathasuidh fell by the same hand in 649.

Conal II., the grandson of Conal I., who was also of the Fergusian race of Congal, next ruled over the tribes of Cantyre and Argyle; but Dungal, of the race of Lorn, having obtained the government of the tribe of Lorn, questioned the right of Conal. He did not, however, carry his pretensions far, for Conal died, in undisturbed possession of his dominions, in 652, after a reign of ten years. To Donal-duin, or the brown, son of Conal, who reigned thirteen years, succeeded Maolduin, his brother, in 665. The family feuds which had long existed between the Fergusian races of Congal and Tauran, existed in their bitterest state during the reign of Maolduin. Doman-gart, the son of Donal-breac, was murdered in 672, and Conal, the son of Maolduin, was assassinated in 675.

Ferchar-fada, or the *tall*, apparently of the race of Lorn, and either the son or grandson of Ferchar, who died in 637, seized the reins of government upon the death of Maolduin. On the death of Ferchar, in 702, the sceptre passed again to the Fergusian race in the person of Eocha-rineval, remarkable for his Roman nose, the son of Doman-gart. The reign of this prince was short and unfortunate. His sceptre was seized by Aimbhecalach, the son of Ferchar-fada, who succeeded Eocha' in 705. He was of an excellent disposition, but after reigning one year, was dethroned by his brother, Selvach, and obliged, in 706, to take refuge in Ireland. Selvach attacked the Britons of Strathclyd, and gained two successive victories over them, the one at Longcoleth in 710, and the other at the rock of Mionuire in 716. At the end of twelve years, Aimbhecalach returned from Ireland, to regain a sceptre which his brother had by his cruelties shown himself unworthy to wield, but he perished in the battle of Finglein, perhaps Glen Fyne at the head of Loch Fyne, in 719. Selvach met a more formidable rival in Duncha-beg, who was descended from Fergus, by the line of Congal; he assumed the government of Cantyre and

Argail, and confined Selvach to his family settlement of Lorn. These two princes appear to have been fairly matched in disposition and valour, and both exerted themselves for the destruction of one another, thus bringing many miseries upon their tribes. In an attempt which they made to invade the territories of each other in 719 by means of curachs, a naval combat ensued off Airdeanesbi, (probably Ardaness on the coast of Argyle,) in which Selvach was overcome by Duncha; but Selvach was not subdued. The death of Duncha in 721 put an end to his designs; but Eocha' III., the son of Eocha'-rineval, the successor of Duncha, being as bent on the overthrow of Selvach as his predecessor, continued the war. The rival chiefs met at Irroisfoichne in 727, where a battle was fought, which produced nothing but irritation and distress. This lamentable state of things was put an end to by the death of Selvach in 729. This event enabled Eocha to assume the government of Lorn, and thus the Dalriadan kingdom which had been alternately ruled by chiefs of the houses of Fergus and Lorn became again united under Eocha. He died in 733, after a reign of thirteen years, during nine of which he ruled over Cantyre and Argyle, and four over all the Dalriadic tribes.

Eocha succeeded in the kingdom by Muredach, the son of Ainbheallach, of the race of Lorn. His reign was short and unfortunate. In revenge for an act of perfidy committed by Dungal, the son of Selvach, who had carried off Forai or Torai, the daughter of Brude, and the niece of Ungus, the great Pictish king, the latter, in the year 736, led his army from Strathearn, through the passes of the mountains into Lorn, which he wasted with fire and sword. He seized Dunal, in Mid-Lorn, and burned Creic, another fortress in the Ross of Mull, taking Dungal and Feradach, the two sons of Selvach, prisoners. Muredach went in pursuit of his enemy, and having overtaken him at Knock Cairpre, at Calatros, on the shores of the Linne,⁶ a battle ensued, in which the Scots were repulsed with great slaughter. Talorgan, the brother of Ungus, commanded

the Picts on this occasion, and pursued the flying Scots. In this pursuit Muredach is supposed to have perished, after a reign of three years.

Eogban or Ewan, the son of Muredach, took up the fallen succession in 736, and died in 739, in which year the Dalriadic sceptre was assumed by Aodh-fin, the son of Eocha' III., and grandson of Eocha'-rineval, descended from the Fergusian race of Gauran. In 740 he measured his strength with the celebrated Ungus; but victory declared for neither, and during the remainder of Ungus' reign, he did not attempt to renew hostilities. After the death of Ungus, in 761, Aodh-fin declared war against the Picts, whose territories he entered from Upper Lorn, penetrating through the passes of Glenorchy and Breadalbane. In 767 he reached Forteviot, the Pictish capital in Strathearn, where he fought a doubtful battle with Ciniod the Pictish king. Aodh-fin died in 769, after a splendid reign of thirty years.⁷

Fergus II., son of Aodh-fin, succeeded to the sceptre on the demise of his father, and died after an unimportant reign of three years. Selvach II., the son of Eogan, assumed the government in 772. His reign, which lasted twenty-four years, presents nothing very remarkable in history.

A new sovereign of a different lineage, now mounted the throne of the Scots in 796, in the person of Eocha or Auchy, the son of Aodh-fin

⁷ Dr. Skene, in his preface to the *Chronicles of the Picts and Scots*, endeavours to prove, by very plausible reasoning, and by comparison of various lists of kings, that for a century previous to the accession of Kenneth to the Pictish throne, Dalriada was under subjection to the Anglian monarchy, and was ruled by Pictish sovereigns. In an able paper, however, read recently by Dr. Archibald Smith before the Antiquarian Society of Scotland, he shows that Argyleshire was invaded but not subdued by Ungus, King of the Picts, in 736 and 741. Dr. Smith supported his conclusion by reference to passages in the annals of Tighernach, of Ulster, and the *Albanic Duan*, which seemed to him to give an intelligible and continuous account of regal succession in Dalriada, but afforded no countenance to the theory of Pinkerton of the entire conquest of the Scots in Britain by Ungus, nor to the conclusion Dr. Skene has come to, viz., the complete supremacy of the Picts in the Scottish Dalriada, and the extinction of Dalriada as a Scottish nation from the year 741 to the era of a new Scottish kingdom founded by Kenneth Macalpin in the year 843. On the contrary, he was convinced that Aodh-fionn was the restorer of its full liberty to the crushed section of Lorn, and that he was, at the close of his career, the independent ruler of Dalriada as a Scottish nation.

⁶ Dr. Reeves supposes this to be Culross in Perthshire.—MacLachlan.

of the Gauran race. Eocha' IV. is known also by the latinized appellation of Achaius. The story of the alliance between Achaius and Charlemagne has been shown to be a fable; although it is by no means improbable that he entered into an important treaty with the Picts, by marrying Urgusia, the daughter of Urguis, an alliance which, it is said, enabled his grandson Kenneth afterwards to claim and acquire the Pictish sceptre, in right of Urgusia his grandmother. Eocha died in 826, after a happy and prosperous reign of thirty years. He was succeeded by Dungal, the son of Selvach II., of the race of Lorn, being the last of that powerful family who swayed the Dalriadic sceptre. After a feeble but stormy reign of seven years, he died in 833.

Alpin, the last of the Scoto-Irish kings, and the son of Eocha IV. and of Urgusia, now mounted the throne. He was killed in 836, near the site of Laicht castle, on the ridge which separates Kyle from Galloway. The fiction that Alpin fell in a battle with the Picts, when asserting his right to the Pictish throne, has long been exploded.

In 836 Kenneth, the son of Alpin, succeeded his father. He was a prince of a warlike disposition, and of great vigour of mind and body. He avenged the death of his father by frequent inroads among the people dwelling to the south of the Clyde; but the great glory of his reign consists in his achievements against the Picts, which secured for him and his posterity the Pictish sceptre. The Pictish power had, previous to the period of Kenneth's accession, been greatly enfeebled by the inroads of the Danish Vikings; but it was not till after the death of Uven, the Pictish king, in 839, after a distracted reign of three years, that Kenneth made any serious attempt to seize the Pictish diadem. On the accession of Wred, Kenneth, in accordance with the principle of succession said by Bede to have prevailed among the Picts, claimed the Pictish throne in right of Urgusia, his grandmother; Wred died in 842, and after an arduous struggle, Kenneth wrested the sceptre from Wred, his successor, in 843, after he had reigned over the Scots seven years.

Burton⁸ thinks there can be no doubt that

the two countries were prepared for a fusion whenever a proper opportunity offered, but that this was on account of a matrimonial alliance between the two royal houses cannot with certainty be ascertained.⁹ As we have said already, it is extremely improbable that Kenneth gained his supremacy by extermination. The Picts certainly appear to have suffered severe defeat, but the likelihood is that after Kenneth succeeded to the throne, a gradual fusion of the two people took place, so that in course of time they became essentially one, speaking one language, obeying the same laws, and following the same manners and customs. If we knew for certain to what race the Picts belonged, and what language they spoke, it might help us not a little to understand the nature and extent of the amalgamation; but as we know so little about these, and as the chroniclers, in speaking of this event, are so enigmatical and meagre, we are left almost entirely to conjecture. We are certain, at any rate, that from some cause or other, the kings of the Dalriadic Scots, about the middle of the 9th century, obtained supremacy over at least the Southern Picts, who from that time forward ceased to be a separate nation.¹

⁹ See Skene's preface to *Chronicle of Picts and Scots*, p. xcvi. et seq., for some curious and ingenious speculation on this point.

¹ We shall take the liberty of quoting here an extract from an able and ingenious paper read by Dr. Skene before the Soc. of Ant., in June 1861, and quoted in Dr. Gordon's *Scotchichronicon*, p. 83. It will help, we think, to throw a little light on this dark subject, and assist the reader somewhat to understand the nature and extent of the so-called Scottish conquest. "The next legend which bears upon the history of St. Andrews is that of St. Adrian, at 4th March. The best edition of this legend is in the Aberdeen Breviary, and it is as follows:—Adrian was a native of Hungary, and after preaching there for some time, was seized with a desire to preach to other people; and having gathered together a company, he set out: 'ad orientales Scotie partes que tunc a Pictis occupabantur,' i.e., 'to the eastern parts of Scotland, which were then occupied by the Picts,'—and landed there with 6,006 confessors, clergy, and people, among whom were Glodanus, Gayus, Minanus, Seobranlus, and others, chief priests. These men, with their bishop, Adrian, 'deleto regno Pictorum, i.e., 'the Pictish kingdom being destroyed,'—did many signs, but afterwards desired to have a residence on the Isle of May. The Danes, who then devastated the whole of Britain, came to the Island, and there slew them. Their martyrdom is said to have taken place in the year 875. It will be observed that they are here said to have settled in the east part of Scotland, opposite the Isle of May, that is in Fife, while the Picts still occupied it; that the Pictish kingdom is then said to have been destroyed; and that their martyrdom took place in 875,

⁸ Scotland, vol. i. p. 329.

The history of the Scoto-Irish kings affords few materials either amusing or instructive; but it was impossible, from the connexion between that history and the events that will follow in detail, to pass it over in silence. The Scoto-Irish tribes appear to have adopted the same form of government as existed in Ireland at the time of their departure from that kingdom; the sovereignty of which, though nominally under one head, was in reality a *pentarchy*, which allowed four provincial kings to dispute the monarchy of the fifth. This system was the prolific source of anarchy, assassinations, and civil wars. The Dalriads were constantly kept in a state of intestine commotion and mutual hostility by the pretensions of their rival chiefs, or princes of the three races, who contended with the common sovereign for pre-eminence or exemption. The *Ulthie-tanaiste*, or law of tanistry, which appears to have been generally followed as in Ireland, as well in the succession of kings as in that of chieftains, rather increased than

mitigated these disorders; for the claim to rule not being regulated by any fixed law of hereditary succession, but depending upon the capricious will of the tribe, rivals were not found wanting to dispute the rights so conferred. There was always, both in Ireland and in Argyle, an heir presumptive to the Crown chosen, under the name of *tanist*, who commanded the army during the life of the reigning sovereign, and who succeeded to him after his demise. Budgets, and committees of supply, and taxes, were wholly unknown in those times among the Scots, and the monarch was obliged to support his dignity by voluntary contributions of clothes, cattle, furniture, and other necessaries.

There is reason to believe that tradition supplied the place of written records for many ages after the extinction of the Druidical superstition. Hence among the Scots, traditionary usages and local customs long supplied the place of positive or written laws. It is a mistake to suppose, as some writers have done,

thirty years after the Scottish conquest under Kenneth M'Alpin. Their arrival was therefore almost coincident with the Scottish conquest; and the large number said to have come, not the modest twenty-one who arrived with Regulus, but 6,606 confessors, clergy, and people, shows that the traditionary history was really one of an invasion, and leads to the suspicion at once that it was in reality a part of the Scottish occupation of the Pictish kingdom. This suspicion is much strengthened by two corroborative circumstances: 1st, the year 875, when they are said to have been slain by the Danes, falls in the reign of Constantine, the son of Kenneth Macalpin, in his fourteenth year, and in this year the Pictish chronicle records a battle between the Danes and the Scots, and adds, that after it, 'ocasi sunt Scotti in Cochocholum,' which seems to refer to this very slaughter. 2d, Hector Boëce preserves a different tradition regarding their origin. He says—'Non desunt qui scribant sanctissimos Christi martyros Hungaros fuisse. *Alii ex Scottis Anglisque gregarie collectos*,'—i.e., 'Some write that the most holy martyrs of Christ were Hungarians. Others (say) that they were collected from the Scots and English.' There was therefore a tradition that the clergy slain were not Hungarians, but a body composed of Scotti and Angli. But Hadrian was a bishop; he landed in the east of Fife, within the parochia of S. Regulus, and he is placed at the head of some of the lists of bishops of St. Andrews as first bishop. It was therefore the Church of St. Andrews that then consisted of clergy collected from among the Scotti and the Angli. The Angli probably represented the Church of Aca, and the Scotti those brought in by Adrian. The real significance of this occupation of St. Andrews by Scottish clergy will be apparent when we recollect that the Columban clergy, who had formerly possessed the chief ecclesiastical seats among the Picts, had been expelled in 717, and Angliic clergy introduced—the cause of quarrel being the difference of their usages. Now, the Pictish chronicle states as the

main cause of the overthrow of the Pictish kingdom, a century and a half later, this very cause. It says—'Deus enim eos pro merito sue militie alienos ac otiosos hereditatis dignatus est facere, quia illi non solum Deum, missam, ac preceptum spreverunt sed et in jure equalitatis aliis aequi pariter noluerunt.' i.e., 'For God, on account of their wickedness, deemed them worthy to be made hereditary strangers and idlers; because they contemned not only God, the mass, and the precept (of the Church), but besides refused to be regarded as on the same equality with others.' They were overthrown, not only because they despised 'Deum missam et preceptum,' but because they would not tolerate the other party. And this great grievance was removed, when St. Andrews appears at the head of the Scottish Church in a solemn Concordat with the king Constantine, when, as the Pictish Chronicle tells us, 'Constantinus Rex et Cellachus Episcopus leges disciplinaeque fidei atque jura ecclesiarum evangeliorum que pariter cum Scottis devoverunt custodiri.' i.e., 'King Constantine and Bishop Cellach vowed to preserve the laws and discipline of the faith and the rights of the churches and gospels, equally with the Scots.' Observe the parallel language of the two passages. In the one, the 'Picti in jure equalitatis aliis,' that is, the Scottish clergy, 'aequi pariter noluerunt,' and in the other the King and the Bishop of St. Andrews 'vowed to preserve the laws and discipline of the faith' '*pariter cum Scottis*,' the thing the Picts would not do. It seems plain, therefore, that the ecclesiastical element entered largely into the Scottish conquest; and a main cause and feature of it was a determination on the part of the Scottish clergy to recover the benefices they had been deprived of. The exact coincidence of this great clerical invasion of the parochia of St. Andrews by ecclesiastics, said by one tradition to have been Scots, and the subsequent position of St. Andrews as the head of the Scottish Church, points strongly to this as the true historic basis of the legend of S. Adrian."

that the law consisted in the mere will of the Brehon or judge. The office of Breitheamhuin or Brehon was hereditary, and it is quite natural to infer, that under such a system of jurisprudence, the *dictum* of the judge might not always comport with what was understood to be the *common law* or practice; but from thence, to argue that the will of the judge was to be regarded as the law itself, is absurd, and contrary to every idea of justice. As the principle of the rude jurisprudence of the Celtic tribes had for its object the reparation, rather than the prevention of crimes, almost every crime, even of the blackest kind, was commuted by a mulct or payment. Tacitus observes in allusion to this practice, that it was "a temper wholesome to the commonwealth, that homicide and lighter transgressions were settled by the payment of horses or cattle, part to the king or community, part to him or his friends who had been wronged." The law of Scotland long recognised this system of compensation. The fine was termed, under the Brehon law, *erie*, which not only signifies a reparation, but also a fine, a ransom, a forfeit. Among the Albanian Scots it was called *cro*, a term preserved in the *Regiam Majestatem*, which has a whole chapter showing "the *cro* of ilk man, how mikil it is."² This law of reparation, according to O'Connor, was first promulgated in Ireland, in the year 164.³ According to the *Regiam Majestatem*, the *cro* of a villain was sixteen cows; of an earl's son or thane, one hundred; of an earl, one hundred and forty; and that of the king of Scots, one thousand cows, or three thousand *oras*, that is to say, three *oras* for every cow.

Besides a share of the fines imposed, the Brehon or judge obtained a piece of arable land for his support. When he administered justice, he used to sit sometimes on the top of a hillock or heap of stones, sometimes on turf, and sometimes even on the middle of a bridge, surrounded by the suitors, who, of course, pleaded their own cause. We have already seen that, under the system of the Druids, the offices of religion, the instruction of youth, and the administration of the laws, were conducted in the open air; and hence the prevalence of

the practice alluded to. But this practice was not peculiar to the Druids; for all nations, in the early stages of society, have followed a similar custom. The Tings of the Scandinavians, which consisted of circular enclosures of stone, without any covering, and within which both the judicial and legislative powers were exercised, afford a striking instance of this. According to Pliny,⁴ even the Roman Senate first met in the open air, and the sittings of the Court of the Areopagus, at Athens, were so held. The present custom of holding courts of justice in halls is not of very remote antiquity in Scotland, and among the Scoto-Irish, the baron bailie long continued to dispense justice to the baron's vassals from a moorhill or eminence, which was generally on the bank of a river, and near to a religious edifice.

Of the various customs and peculiarities which distinguished the ancient Irish, as well as the Scoto-Irish, none has given rise to greater speculation than that of *fosterage*; which consisted in the mutual exchange, by different families, of their children for the purpose of being nursed and bred. Even the son of the chief was so entrusted during pupilarity with an inferior member of the clan. An adequate reward was either given or accepted in every case, and the lower orders, to whom the trust was committed, regarded it as an honour rather than a service. "Five hundred kync and better," says Campion, "were sometimes given by the Irish to procure the nursing of a great man's child." A firm and indissoluble attachment always took place among foster-brothers, and it continues in consequence to be a saying among Highlanders, that "affectionate to a man is a friend, but a foster-brother is as the life-blood of his heart." Camden observes, that no love in the world is comparable by many degrees to that of foster-brethren in Ireland.⁵ The close connexion which the practice of fosterage created between families, while it frequently prevented civil feuds, often led to them. But the strong attachment thus created was not confined to foster-brothers, it also extended to their parents. Spenser relates of the foster-mother to Murrough O'Brien, that, at his execution, she sucked the blood from his

² Lib. iv. c. xxiv.

³ O'Connor's Dissert.

⁴ Lib. viii. c. 45.

⁵ Holland's Camden, Ireland, p. 116.

head, and bathed her face and breast with it, saying that it was too precious to fall to the earth.

It is unnecessary, at this stage of our labours, to enter upon the subject of clanship; we mean to reserve our observations thereon till we come to the history of the clans, when we shall also notice some peculiarities or traits of

the Highlanders not hitherto mentioned. We shall conclude this chapter by giving lists of the Pictish and Scoto-Irish Kings, which are generally regarded as authentic. A great many other names are given by the ancient chroniclers previous to the points at which the following lists commence, but as these are considered as totally untrustworthy, we shall omit them.

A CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE OF THE PICTISH KINGS, CHIEFLY ACCORDING TO THE PICTISH CHRONICLE.

Series.	NAMES AND FILIATIONS.	Date of Accession.	Duration of Reigns.	Date of Death.
1	DREUST, the son of Erp,			451
2	TALORG, the son of Aniel,	451	4 years.	455
3	NECTON MORBET, the son of Erp,	455	25 . . .	480
4	DREUST Gurthimoch,	480	30 . . .	510
5	GALANAU ETELEICH, or GALANAN ERELECH,	510	12 . . .	522
6	DADREEST,	522	1 . . .	523
7	DREUST, the son of Girom,	523	1 . . .	524
	DREUST, the son of Wdrest, with the former,	524	5 . . .	529
	DREUST, the son of Girom, alone,	529	5 . . .	534
8	GARTNACH, the son of Girom,	534	7 . . .	541
9	GEALTRAIM, or CALTRAIM, the son of Girom,	541	1 . . .	542
10	TALORG, the son of Muircholaich,	542	11 . . .	553
11	DREUST, the son of Muircholaich,	553	1 . . .	554
12	GALAM, with Aleph,	554	1 . . .	555
	GALAM, with Bridei,	555	1 . . .	556
13	BRIDEI, the son of Mailcon,	556	30 . . .	586
14	GARTNAICH, the son of Domelch, or Donald,	586	11 . . .	597
15	NECTU, or NECHTAN, the nephew of Verb,	597	20 . . .	617
16	CINEOCH, or KENNETH, the son of Luthrin,	617	19 . . .	636
17	GARNARD, the son of Wid,	636	4 . . .	640
18	BRIDEI, the son of Wid,	640	5 . . .	645
19	TALORG, their brother,	645	12 . . .	657
20	TALLOGAN, the son of Enfret,	657	4 . . .	661
21	GARTNAIT, the son of Donnel,	661	6 $\frac{1}{2}$. . .	667
22	DREUST, his brother,	667	7 . . .	674
23	BRIDEI, the son of Bili,	674	21 . . .	695
24	TARAN, the son of Entfidich,	695	4 . . .	699
25	BRIDEI, the son of Dereli,	699	11 . . .	710
26	NECHTON, the son of Dereli,	710	15 . . .	725
27	DREUST, and Elpin,	725	5 . . .	730
28	UNGUS, or ORNUST, the son of Uргуист,	730	31 . . .	761
29	BRIDEI, the son of Wirguist,	761	2 . . .	763
30	CINEOCH, or KENNETH, the son of Wredech,	763	12 . . .	775
31	ELPIN, the son of Wroid,	775	3 $\frac{1}{2}$. . .	779
32	DREUST, the son of Talorgan,	779	5 . . .	784
33	TALLOGAN, the son of Ungus or Angus,	784	2 $\frac{1}{2}$. . .	786
34	CANAUL, the son of Tarla,	786	5 . . .	791
35	CONSTANTINE, the son of Uргуист,	791	30 . . .	821
36	UNGUS, the son of Uргуист,	821	12 . . .	833
37	DREUST, the son of Constantine, and Talorgan, the son of Wdch,	833	3 . . .	836
38	UVEN, or UVEN, the son of Ungus,	836	3 . . .	839
39	WEAD, the son of Bargoit,	839	3 . . .	842
40	BRED, or BRUDI,	842	1 . . .	843

A CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE OF THE SCOTO-IRISH KINGS,
FROM THE YEAR 503 TO 843.

Series.	NAMES AND FILIATIONS.	Date of Accession.	Duration of Reigns.	Date of Death.
1	FERGUS, the son of Ere.	A. D. 503	Years. 5	A. D. 506
2	DOMANGART, the son of Fergus.	506	5	511
3	COMGAL, the son of Domangart.	511	24	535
4	GAVRAN, the son of Domangart.	535	22	557
5	CONAL, the son of Comgal.	557	14	571
6	AIDAN, the son of Gavran.	571	34	605
7	EAOCHA'-BUI, the son of Aidan.	605	16	621
8	KENNETH-Cear, the son of Eoacha'-Bui.	621	4	621
9	FERCHAR, the son of Eogan, the first of the race of Lorn.	621	16	637
10	DONAL-BREAC, the son of Eoacha'-Bui.	637	5	642
11	CONAL II., the grandson of Conal I.	642	10	652
12	DUNGAL reigned some years with Conal.
13	DONAL-Duin, the son of Conal.	652	13	665
14	MAOL-Duin, the son of Conal.	665	16	681
15	FERCHAR-Fada, the grandson of Ferchar I.	681	21	702
16	EAOCHA'-Rinevel, the son of Domangart, and the grandson of Donal-breac.	702	3	705
17	AIBHCEALACH, the son of Ferchar-fada.	705	1	706
18	SELVACH, the son of Ferchar-fada, reigned over Lorn from 706 to 729.
19	DUNCHA BEG reigned over Cantyre and Argail till 720.	706	27	733
20	EAOCHA' III., the son of Eoacha'-rinevel, over Cantyre and Argail, from 720 to 729; and also over Lorn from 729 to 733.
21	MUREDACH, the son of Aibhcealach.	733	3	736
22	EOGAN, the son of Muredach.	736	3	739
23	AODH-FIN, the son of Eoacha' III.	739	30	769
24	FERGUS, the son of Aodh-fin.	769	3	772
25	SELVACH II., the son of Eogan.	772	24	796
26	EAOCHA'-ANNUINE IV., the son of Aodh-fin.	796	30	826
27	DUNGAL, the son of Selvach II.	826	7	833
28	ALPIN, the son of Eoacha'-Annune IV.	833	3	836
29	KENNETH, the son of Alpin.	836	7	843

It is right to mention that the Albanic Duan omits the names between Aibhcealach and Dungal (17—27), most of which, however, are contained in the St. Andrews' list.

CHAPTER IV.

A. D. 843—1107.

The Norse Invasions—Kenneth—Constantine—Aodh—Grig and Eocha—Donald IV.—Constantine III.—Danes—Battle of Brunanburg—Malcolm I.—Indulph—Duff—Culen—Kenneth III.—Battle of Luncarty—Malcolm II.—Danes—Duncan—Thorfinu, Jarl of Orkney—Macbeth—Battle with Seward—Lulach—Malcolm III. (Ceanmore)—Queen Margaret—Effect of Norwegian Conquest—Donal-bane—Edgar—Norsemen—Influx of Anglo-Saxons—Isolation of Highlands—Table of Kings.

For about two centuries after the union of the two kingdoms, the principal facts to be recorded are the extension of the Scottish dominion southwards beyond the Forth and

Clyde, towards the present border, and northwards beyond Inverness, and the fierce contests that took place with the "hardy Norsemen" of Scandinavia and Denmark, who during this period continued not only to pour down upon the coasts and islands of Scotland, but to sway the destinies of the whole of Europe. During this time the history of the Highlands is still to a great extent the history of Scotland, and it was not till about the 12th century that the Highlanders became, strictly speaking, a peculiar people, confined to the territory whose boundaries were indicated in the first chapter, having for their neighbours on the east and south a population of undoubtedly Teutonic origin. The Norse invasions not only kept Scotland in continual commotion at the time, but must have exercised an important influence on its whole history, and contributed a new and vigorous element to its population. These Vikings, about the end of the

9th century, became so powerful as to be able to establish a separate and independent kingdom in Orkney and the Western Islands, which proved formidable not only to the king of Scotland, but also to the powerful king of Norway. "It is difficult to give them distinctness without risk of error, and it is even hard to decide how far the mark left by these visitors is, on the one hand, the brand of the devastating conqueror; or, on the other hand, the planting among the people then inhabiting Scotland of a high-conditioned race—a race uniting freedom and honesty in spirit with a strong and healthy physical organization. It was in the north that the inroad preserved its most distinctive character, probably from its weight, as most completely overwhelming the original population, whatever they might be; and though, in the histories, the king of Scots appears to rule the northern end of Britain, the territory beyond Inverness and Fort-William had aggregated in some way round a local magnate, who afterwards appears as a Maormor. He was not a viceroy of the king of Norway: and if he was in any way at the order of the King of Scotland, he was not an obedient subordinate."⁶

Up to the time of Macbeda or Macbeth, the principle of hereditary succession to the throne, from father to son, appears not to have been recognised; the only principle, except force, which seems to have been acted upon being that of collateral succession, brother succeeding to brother, and nephew to uncle. After the time of Macbeth, however, the hereditary principle appears to have come into full force, to have been recognised as that by which alone succession to the throne was to be regulated.

The consolidation of the Scottish and Pictish power under one supreme chief, enabled these nations not only to repel foreign aggression, but afterwards to enlarge their territories beyond the Forth, which had hitherto formed, for many ages, the Pictish boundary on the south.

Although the power of the tribes to the north of the Forth was greatly augmented by the union which had taken place, yet all the genius and warlike energy of Kenneth were

necessary to protect him and his people from insult. Ragnor Lodbrog (*i. e.*, Ragnor of the Shaggy Bones,) with his fierce Danes infested the country round the Tay on the one side, and the Strathclyde Britons on the other, wasted the adjoining territories, and burnt Dunblane. Yet Kenneth overcame these embarrassments, and made frequent incursions into the Saxon territories in Lothian, and caused his foes to tremble. After a brilliant and successful reign, Kenneth died at Forteviot, the Pictish capital, 7 miles S.W. of Perth, on the 6th of February, 859, after a reign of twenty-three years. Kenneth, it is said, removed the famous stone which now sustains the coronation chair at Westminster Abbey, from the ancient seat of the Scottish monarchy in Argyle, to Scone. Kenneth (but according to some Constantine, the Pictish king, in 820), built a church at Dunkeld, to which, in 850, he removed the relics of St. Columba from Iona, which at this time was frequently subjected to the ravages of the Norsemen. He is celebrated also as a legislator, but no authentic traces of his laws now appear, the Macalpine laws attributed to the son of Alpin being clearly apocryphal.

The sceptre was assumed by Donald III., son of Alpin. He died in the year 863, after a short reign of four years. It is said he restored the laws of Aodh-fin, the son of Eochu III. They were probably similar to the ancient Brehon laws of Ireland.

Constantine, the son of Kenneth, succeeded his uncle Donald, and soon found himself involved in a dreadful conflict with the Danish pirates. Having, after a contest which lasted half a century, established themselves in Ireland, and obtained secure possession of Dublin, the Viking directed their views towards the western coasts of Scotland, which they laid waste. These ravages were afterwards extended to the whole of the eastern coast, and particularly to the shores of the Frith of Forth; but although the invaders were often repulsed, they never ceased to renew their attacks. In the year 881, Constantine, in repelling an attack of the pirates, was slain at a place called Merdo-fatha, or Werdo, probably the present Perth, according to Maclauchlan.

Aodh or Hugh, *the fair-haired*, succeeded his brother Constantine. His reign was un-

⁶ Burton's *Scotland*, vol. i. p. 354.

fortunate, short, and troublesome. Grig, who was Maormor, or chief, of the country between the Dee and the Spey, having become a competitor for the crown, Aodh endeavoured to put him down, but did not succeed; and having been wounded in a battle fought at Strathallan, (or possibly Strathdon,) he was carried to Inverurie, where he died, after lingering two months, having held the sceptre only one year.

Grig now assumed the crown, and, either to secure his possession, or from some other motive, he associated with him in the government Eocha, son of Ku, the British king of Strathelyde, and the grandson, by a daughter, of Kenneth Macalpin. After a reign of eleven years, both Eocha and Grig were forced to abdicate, and gave way to

Donald IV., who succeeded them in 893. During his reign the kingdom was infested by the piratical incursions of the Danes. Although they were defeated by Donald in a bloody action at Collin, said to be on the Tay, near Scoone, they returned under Ivar O'Ivar, from Ireland, in the year 904, but were gallantly repulsed, and their leader killed in a threatened attack on Forteviot, by Donald, who unfortunately also perished, after a reign of eleven years. In his reign the kings of present Scotland are no longer called *reges Pictorum* by the Irish Annalists, but *Ri Alban*, or kings of Alban; and in the Pictish Chronicle *Pictavia* gives place to *Albania*.

Constantine III., the son of Aodh, a prince of a warlike and enterprising character, next followed. He had to sustain, during an unusually long reign, the repeated attacks of the Danes. In one invasion they plundered Dunkeld, and in 908, they attempted to obtain the grand object of their designs, the possession of Forteviot in Strathearn, the Pictish capital; but in this design they were again defeated, and forced to abandon the country. The Danes remained quiet for a few years, but in 918 their fleet entered the Clyde, from Ireland, under the command of Reginald, where they were attacked by the Scots in conjunction with the Northern Saxons, whom the ties of common safety had now united for mutual defence. Reginald is said to have drawn up his Danes in four divisions; the first headed by Godfrey O'Ivar; the second by Earls; the third by

Chieftains; and the fourth by Reginald himself, as a reserve. The Scots, with Constantine at their head, made a furious attack on the first three divisions, which they forced to retire. Reginald's reserve not being available to turn the scale of victory against the Scots, the Danes retreated during the night, and embarked on board their fleet.

After this defeat of the Danes, Constantine enjoyed many years' repose. A long grudge had existed between him and Æthelstane, son of Edward, the elder, which at last came to an open rupture. Having formed an alliance with several princes, and particularly with Anlof, king of Dublin as well as of Northumberland, and son-in-law of Constantine, the latter collected a large fleet in the year 937, with which he entered the Humber. The hope of plunder had attracted many of the Viking to Constantine's standard, and the sceptre of Æthelstane seemed now to tremble in his hand. But that monarch was fully prepared for the dangers with which he was threatened, and resolved to meet his enemies in battle. After a long, bloody, and obstinate contest at Brunanburg, near the southern shore of the Humber, victory declared for Æthelstane. Prodiges of valour were displayed on both sides, especially by Turketel, the Chancellor of England; by Anlof, and by the son of Constantine, who lost his life. The confederates, after sustaining a heavy loss, sought for safety in their ships. This, and after misfortunes, possibly disgusted Constantine with the vanities of this world, for, in the fortieth year of his reign, he put into practice a resolution which he had formed of resigning his crown and embracing a monastic life. He became Abbot of the Monastery of St. Andrews in 943, and thus ended a long and chequered, but vigorous, and, on the whole, successful reign in a cloister, like Charles V. Towards the end of this reign the term Scotland was applied to this kingdom by the Saxons, a term which before had been given by them to Ireland. Constantine died in 952.

Malcolm I., the son of Donald IV., obtained the abdicated throne. He was a prince of great abilities and prudence, and Edmund of England courted his alliance by ceding Cumbria, then consisting of Cumberland and part of Westmoreland, to him, in the year 945, on

condition that he would defend that northern county, and become the ally of Edmund. Eðred, the brother and successor of Edmund, accordingly applied for, and obtained the aid of Malcolm against Anlaf, king of Northumberland, whose country, according to the barbarous practice of the times, he wasted, and carried off the people with their cattle. Malcolm, after putting down an insurrection of the Moray-men under Cellach, their Maormor, or chief, whom he slew, was sometime thereafter slain, as is supposed, at Ulurn or Auldearn in Moray, by one of these men, in revenge for the death of his chief.

Indulph, the son of Constantine III., succeeded the murdered monarch in the year 953. He sustained many severe conflicts with the Danes, and ultimately lost his life in 961, after a reign of eight years, in a successful action with these pirates, on the moor which lies to the westward of Cullen.

Duff, the son of Malcolm I., now mounted the throne; but Culen, the son of Indulph, laid claim to the sceptre which his father had wielded. The parties met at Drum Crup (probably Crieff), and, after a doubtful struggle, in which Doncha, the Abbot of Dunkeld, and Dubdou, the Maormor of Athole, the partisans of Culen, lost their lives, victory declared for Duff. But this triumph was of short duration, for Duff was afterwards obliged to retreat from Forteviot into the north, and was assassinated at Forres in the year 965, after a brief and unhappy reign of four years and a half.

Culen, the son of Indulph, succeeded, as a matter of course, to the crown of Duff, which he stained by his vices. He and his brother Eocha were slain in Lothian, in an action with the Britons of Strathclyde in 970, after an inglorious reign of four years and a half. During his reign Edinburgh was captured from the English, this being the first known step in the progress of the gradual extension of the Scottish kingdom between the Forth and the Tweed.⁷

Kenneth III., son of Malcolm I., and brother of Duff, succeeded Culen the same year. He waged a successful war against the Britons of Strathclyde, and annexed their territories to

his kingdom. During his reign the Danes meditated an attack upon Forteviot, or Dunkeld, for the purposes of plunder, and, with this view, they sailed up the Tay with a numerous fleet. Kenneth does not appear to have been fully prepared, being probably not aware of the intentions of the enemy; but collecting as many of his chiefs and their followers as the spur of the occasion would allow, he met the Danes at Luncarty, in the vicinity of Perth. Malcolm, the Tanist, prince of Cumberland, it is said, commanded the right wing of the Scottish army; Duncan, the Maormor of Athole, had the charge of the left; and Kenneth, the king, commanded the centre. The Danes with their battle-axes made dreadful havoc, and compelled the Scottish army to give way; but the latter was rallied by the famous Hay, the traditional ancestor of the Kinnoul family, and finally repulsed the Danes, who, as usual, fled to their ships. Burton thinks the battle of Luncarty "a recent invention."

The defeat of the Daues enabled Kenneth to turn his attention to the domestic concerns of his kingdom. He appears to have directed his thoughts to bring about a complete change in the mode of succession to the crown, in order to perpetuate in and confine the crown to his own descendants. This alteration could not be well accomplished as long as Malcolm, the son of Duff, the Tanist of the kingdom, and prince of Cumberland, stood in the way; and, accordingly, it has been said that Kenneth was the cause of the untimely death of prince Malcolm, who is stated to have been poisoned. It is said that Kenneth got an act passed, that in future the son, or nearest male heir, of the king, should always succeed to the throne; and that in case that son or heir were not of age at the time of the king's demise, that a person of rank should be chosen Regent of the kingdom, until the minor attained his fourteenth year, when he should assume the reins of government; but whether such a law was really passed on the moot-hill of Scoue or not, of which we have no evidence, certain it is that two other princes succeeded to the crown before Malcolm the son of Kenneth. Kenneth, after a reign of twenty-four years, was, it is said, in 994 assassinated at Fettercairn by

⁷ Robertson's *Early Kings*, vol. i. p. 76.

Finella,⁸ the wife of the Maormor of the Mearns, and the daughter of Cunechat, the Maormor of Angus, in revenge for having put her only son to death. It has been thought that till this time the Maormorship of Angus was in some measure independent of the Scottish crown, never having thoroughly yielded to its supremacy, that the death of the young chief took place in course of an effort on the part of Kenneth for its reduction, and that Kenneth himself was on a visit to the quarter at the time of his death, for exacting the usual royal privileges of *cain* and *cwairt*, or a certain tax and certain provision for the king and his followers when on a journey, due by the chiefs or landholders of the kingdom.⁹

Constantine IV., son of Culen, succeeded; but his right was disputed by Kenneth, the Grim, *i. e.* strong, son of Duff. The dispute was decided at Rathveramon, *i. e.* the castle at the mouth of the Almond, near Perth, where Constantine lost his life in the year 995.

Kenneth IV., the son of Duff, now obtained the sceptre which he had coveted; but he was disturbed in the possession thereof by Malcolm, the son of Kenneth III., heir presumptive to the crown. Malcolm took the field in 1003, and decided his claim to the crown in a bloody battle at Monivaird, in Strathearn, in which Kenneth, after a noble resistance, received a mortal wound.

Malcolm II. now ascended the vacant throne, but was not destined to enjoy repose. At the very beginning of his reign he was defeated at Durham by the army of the Earl of Northumberland, under his son Uchtred, who ordered a selection of good-looking Scotch heads to be stuck on the walls of Durham.

The Danes, who had now obtained a firm footing in England, directed their attention in an especial manner to Scotland, which they were in hopes of subduing. Sigurd, the Earl of Orkney, carried on a harassing and predatory warfare on the shores of the Moray Frith, which he continued even after a matrimonial alliance he formed with Malcolm, by marrying

his daughter; but this was no singular trait in the character of a Viking, who plundered friends and foes with equal pleasure. The scene of Sigurd's operations was chosen by his brother northmen for making a descent, which they effected near Speymouth. They carried fire and sword through Moray, and laid siege to the fortress of Nairn, one of the strongest in the north. The Danes were forced to raise the siege for a time, by Malcolm, who encamped his army in a plain near Killof or Kinloss. In this position he was attacked by the invaders, and, after a severe action, was forced to retreat, after being seriously wounded.

Malcolm, in 1010, marched north with his army, and encamped at Mortlach. The Danes advanced to meet the Scots, and a dreadful and fierce conflict ensued, the result of which was long dubious. At length the northmen gave way and victory declared for Malcolm. Had the Danes succeeded they would in all probability have obtained as permanent a footing in North Britain as they did in England; but the Scottish kings were determined, at all hazards, never to suffer them to pollute the soil of Scotland by allowing them even the smallest settlement in their dominions. In gratitude to God for his victory, Malcolm endowed a religious house at Mortlach, with its church erected near the scene of action. Maclauchlan, however, maintains that this church was planted by Malcolm Ceanmore.

Many other conflicts are narrated with minute detail by the later chroniclers as having taken place between Malcolm and the Danes, but it is very doubtful how far these are worthy of credit. That Malcolm had enough to do to prevent the Danes from overrunning Scotland and subduing the inhabitants can readily be believed; but as we have few authentic particulars concerning the conflicts which took place, it would serve no purpose to give the imaginary details invented by comparatively recent historians.

Some time after this Malcolm was engaged in a war with the Northumbrians, and, having led his army, in 1018, to Carham, near Werk, on the southern bank of the Tweed, where he was met by Uchtred, the Earl of Northumberland, a desperate battle took place, which was

⁸ According to Skene, *Finella* is a corruption of *Finuella* or *Finole* Cunechar, Earl of Angus.—Skene's *Annals of the Picts and Scots*, p. cxliv.

⁹ Maclauchlan's *Early Scottish Church*, p. 306. Robertson's *Scot. under her Early Kings*, vol. i. p. 88.

contested with great valour on both sides.¹ The success was doubtful on either side, though Uchtred claimed a victory; but he did not long enjoy the fruits of it, as he was soon thereafter assassinated when on his road to pay obeisance to the great Canute. Endulf, the brother and successor of Uchtred, justly dreading the power of the Scots, was induced to cede Lothian to Malcolm for ever, who, on this occasion, gave oblations to the churches and gifts to the clergy, and they in return transmitted his name to posterity. He was designed, par excellence, by the Latin chroniclers, *rex victoriosissimus*; by St. Berchan, the *Fórranach* or destroyer.

The last struggle with which Malcolm was threatened, was with the celebrated Canute, who, for some cause or other not properly explained, entered Scotland in the year 1031; but these powerful parties appear not to have come to action. Canute's expedition appears, from what followed, to have been fitted out to compel Malcolm to do homage for Cumberland, for it is certain that Malcolm engaged to fulfil the conditions on which his predecessors had held that country, and that Canute thereafter returned to England.

But the reign of Malcolm was not only distinguished by foreign wars, but by civil contests between rival chiefs. Finlegh, the Maormor of Ross, and the father of Macbeth, was assassinated in 1020, and about twelve years thereafter, Maolbride, the Maormor of Moray, grandfather of Lulach, was, in revenge for Finlegh's murder, burnt within his castle, with fifty of his men.

At length, after a splendid reign of thirty years, Malcolm slept with his fathers, and his body was transferred to Iona, and interred with due solemnity among the remains of his predecessors. By some authorities he is said to have been assassinated at Glammis.

Malcolm was undoubtedly a prince of great acquirements. He made many changes and some improvements in the internal policy of his kingdom, and in him religion always found a guardian and protector. But although Mal-

colm is justly entitled to this praise, he by no means came up to the standard of perfection assigned him by fiction. In his reign Scotland appears to have reached its present boundary on the south, the Tweed, and Strathclyde was incorporated with the rest of the kingdom. Malcolm was the first who was called *Rex Scotiae*, and might justly claim to be so designated, seeing that he was the first to hold sway over nearly the whole of present Scotland,—the only portions where his authority appears to have been seriously disputed being those in which the Danes had established themselves.

Duncan, son of Bethoc or Beatrice, daughter of Malcolm II., succeeded his grandfather in the year 1033. "In the extreme north, dominions more extensive than any Jarl of the Orkneys had hitherto acquired, were united under the rule of Thorfinn, Sigurd's son, whose character and appearance have been thus described:—'He was stout and strong, but very ugly, severe and cruel, but a very clever man.' The extensive districts then dependant upon the Moray Maormors were in the possession of the celebrated Macbeth."² Duncan, in 1033, desiring to extend his dominions southwards, attacked Durham, but was forced to retire with considerable loss. His principal struggles, however, were with his powerful kinsman, Thorfinn, whose success was so great that he extended his conquests as far as the Tay. "His men spread over the whole conquered country," says the *Orkneyinga Saga*,³ "and burnt every hamlet and farm, so that not a cot remained. Every man that they found they slew; but the old men and women fled to the deserts and woods, and filled the country with lamentation. Some were driven before the Norwegians and made slaves. After this Earl Thorfinn returned to his ships, subjugating the country everywhere in his progress." Duncan's last battle, in which he was defeated, was in the neighbourhood of Burghead, near the Moray Frith; and shortly after this, on the 14th August, 1040, he was assassinated in Bothgowanan,—which, in Gaelic, is said to mean "the smith's hut,"—by his kinsman the

¹ The last we hear of any king or ruler of Strathclyde was one that fought on Malcolm's side in this battle; and presently afterwards the attenuated state is found, without any conflict, absorbed in the Scots king's dominions.—Burton, vol. i. p. 367.

² Robertson's *Early Kings*, vol. i. p. 113.

³ As quoted by Skene, *Highlanders*, vol. i. p. 112.

Maormor Macbeda or Macbeth. Duncan had reigned only five years when he was assassinated by Macbeth, leaving two infant sons, Malcolm and Donal, by a sister of Siward, the Earl of Northumberland. The former fled to Cumberland, and the latter took refuge in the Hebrides, on the death of their father.

Macbeth, "snorting with the indigested fumes of the blood of his sovereign," immediately seized the gory sceptre. As several fictions have been propagated concerning the history and genealogy of Macbeth, we may mention that, according to the most authentic authorities, he was by birth Thane of Ross, and by his marriage with the Lady Gruoch,—who had a claim to the throne, as granddaughter of Kenneth,—became also Thane of Moray, during the minority of Lulach, the infant son of that lady, by her former marriage with Gilcomgain, the Maormor or Thane of Moray. Lady Gruoch was the daughter of Boedhe, son of Kenneth IV. ; and thus Macbeth united in his own person many powerful interests which enabled him to take quiet possession of the throne of the murdered sovereign. He, of course, found no difficulty in getting himself inaugurated at Scone, under the protection of the clans of Moray and Ross, and the aid of those who favoured the pretensions of the descendants of Kenneth IV.

Various attempts were made on the part of the partisans of Malcolm, son of Duncan, to dispossess Macbeth of the throne. The most formidable was that of Siward, the powerful Earl of Northumberland, and the relation of Malcolm, who, at the instigation or command of Edward the Confessor, led a numerous army into Scotland in the year 1054. They marched as far north as Dunsinnan, where they were met by Macbeth, who commanded his troops in person. A furious battle ensued, but Macbeth fled from the field after many displays of courage. The Scots lost 3,000 men, and the Saxons 1,500, including Osbert, the son of Siward. Macbeth retired to his fastnesses in the north, and Siward returned to Northumberland; but Malcolm continued the war till the death of Macbeth, who was slain by Macduff, Thane of Fife, in revenge for the cruelties he had inflicted on his family, at Lumphanan, in Aberdeenshire, in the year 1056, although, accord-

ing to Skene (*Chronicles*), it was in August, 1057.

Macbeth was unquestionably a man of great vigour, and well fitted to govern in the age in which he lived; and had it not been for the indelible character bestowed upon him by Shakespere (who probably followed the chronicle of Holinshed), his character might have stood well with posterity. "The deeds which raised Macbeth and his wife to power were not in appearance much worse than others of their day done for similar ends. However he may have gained his power, he exercised it with good repute, according to the reports nearest to his time."⁴ Macbeth, "in a manner sacred to splendid infamy," is the first king of Scotland whose name appears in the ecclesiastical records as a benefactor of the church, and, it would appear, the first who offered his services to the Bishop of Rome. According to the records of St. Andrews, he made a gift of certain lands to the monastery of Lochleven, and certainly sent money to the poor of Rome, if, indeed, he did not himself make a pilgrimage to the holy city.

After the reign of Macbeth, the former irregular and confusing mode of succession ceased, and the hereditary principle was adopted and acted upon.

Lulach, the great-grandson of Kenneth IV., being supported by the powerful influence of his own family, and that of the deceased monarch, ascended the throne at the age of twenty-five or twenty-six; but his reign lasted only a few months, he having fallen in battle at Essie, in Strathbogie, in defending his crown against Malcolm. The body of Lulach was interred along with that of Macbeth, in Iona, the common sepulchre, for many centuries, of the Scottish kings.

Malcolm III., better known in history by the name of Malcolm Ceanmore, or *great head*, vindicated his claim to the vacant throne, and was crowned at Scone, 25th April, 1057. His first care was to recompense those who had assisted him in obtaining the sovereignty, and it is said that he created new titles of honour, by substituting earls for thanes; but this has been disputed, and there are really no

⁴ Burton's *Scotland*, vol. i. p. 372.

data from which a certain conclusion can be drawn.

In the year 1059 Malcolm paid a visit to Edward the Confessor, during whose reign he lived on amicable terms with the English; but after the death of that monarch he made a hostile incursion into Northumberland, and wasted the country. He even violated the peace of St. Cuthbert in Holy Island.

William, Duke of Normandy, having overcame Harold in the battle of Hastings, on the 14th October, 1066, Edgar Ætheling saw no hopes of obtaining the crown, and left England along with his mother and sisters, and sought refuge in Scotland. Malcolm, on hearing of the distress of the illustrious strangers, left his royal palace at Dunfermline to meet them, and invited them to Dunfermline, where they were hospitably entertained. Margaret, one of Edgar's sisters, was a princess of great virtues and accomplishments; and she at once won the heart of Malcolm.

The offer of his hand was accepted, and their nuptials were celebrated with great solemnity and splendour. This queen was a blessing to the king and to the nation, and appears to have well merited the appellation of *Saint*. There are few females in history who can be compared with Queen Margaret.

It is quite unnecessary, and apart from the object of the present work, to enter into any details of the wars between Malcolm and William the Conqueror, and William Rufus. Suffice it to say that both Malcolm and his eldest son Edward were slain in a battle on the Alne, on the 13th November, 1093, after a reign of thirty-six years. Queen Margaret, who was on her death-bed when this catastrophe occurred, died shortly after she received the intelligence with great composure and resignation to the will of God. Malcolm had six sons, viz., Edward, who was killed along with his father, Edmund, Edgar, Ethelred, Alexander, and David, and two daughters, Maud, who was married to Henry I. of England, and Mary, who married Eustache, Count of Boulogne. Of the sons, Edgar, Alexander, and David, successively came to the crown.

Thorfinn, Earl of Orkney, died in 1064, and his extensive possessions in Scotland did not revert to his descendants, but to the native

chiefs, who had had the original right to possess them. These chiefs appear to have been independent of the Scottish sovereign, and to have caused him no small amount of trouble. A considerable part of Malcolm's reign was spent in endeavouring to bring them into subjection, and before his death he had the satisfaction of seeing the whole of Scotland, with perhaps the exception of Orkney, acknowledging him as sole monarch. The Norwegian conquest appears to have effected a most important change in the character of the population and language of the eastern lowlands of the north of Scotland. The original population must in some way have given way to a Norwegian one, and, whatever may have been the original language, we find after this one of a decidedly Teutonic character prevailing in this district, probably introduced along with the Norse population. "In the more mountainous and Highland districts, however, we are warranted in concluding that the effect must have been very different, and that the possession of the country by the Norwegians for thirty years could have exercised as little permanent influence on the population itself, as we are assured by the Saga it did upon the race of their chiefs.

"Previously to this conquest the northern Gaelic race possessed the whole of the north of Scotland, from the western to the eastern sea, and the general change produced by the conquest must have been, that the Gael were for the first time confined within those limits which they have never since exceeded, and that the eastern districts became inhabited by that Gothic race, who have also ever since possessed them."⁵

On the demise of Malcolm, Donal-bane his brother assumed the government; but Duncan, the son of Malcolm, who had lived many years in England, and held a high military rank under William Rufus, invaded Scotland with a large army of English and Normans, and forced Donal to retire for safety to the Hebrides. Duncan, whom some writers suppose to have been a bastard, and others a legitimate son of Malcolm by a former wife, enjoyed the crown only six months, having been assassinated by

⁵ Skene's *Highlanders*, vol. i. p. 123.

Maolpeder, the Maormor of the Mearns, at Menteith, at the instigation, it is believed, of Donal. Duncan left, by his wife Ethreda, daughter of Gospatrick, a son, William, sometimes surnamed Fitz-Duncan.

Donal-bane again seized the sceptre, but he survived Duncan only two years. Edgar Ætheling having assembled an army in England, entered Scotland, and made Donal prisoner in an action which took place in September 1097. He was imprisoned by orders of Edgar, and died at Rosecobie in Forfarshire, after having been deprived of his eyesight, according to the usual practice of the age. The series of the pure Scoto-Irish kings may be said to have ended with Donal-bane.

The reign of Edgar, who appears to have been of a gentle and peaceful disposition, is almost devoid of incident, the principal events being the marriage of his sister Matilda to the English Henry, and the wasting and conquest of the Western Islands by Magnus Olavson and his Norwegians. This last event had but little effect on Scotland proper, as these Islands at that time can hardly be said to have belonged to it. These Norsemen appear to have settled

Gallgael, "a horde of pirates, plundering on their own account, and under their own leaders, when they were not following the banner of any of the greater sea-kings, whose fleets were powerful enough to sweep the western seas, and exact tribute from the lesser island chieftains."⁶ Edgar died in 1107, and was succeeded by his brother Alexander, whom he enjoined to bestow upon his younger brother David the district of Cumbria.

We have now arrived at an era in our history, when the line of demarcation between the inhabitants of the Lowlands and Highlands of Scotland begins to appear, and when, by the influx of a Gothic race into the former, the language of that part of North Britain is completely revolutionized, when a new dynasty or race of sovereigns ascends the throne, and when a great change takes place in the laws and constitution of the kingdom.

Although the Anglo-Saxon colonization of the Lowlands of Scotland does not come exactly within the design of the present work; yet, as forming an important feature in the history of the Lowlands of Scotland, as contradistinguished from the Highlands, a slight notice of it may not be uninteresting.

Shortly after the Roman abdication of North Britain in the year 446, which was soon succeeded by the final departure of the Romans from the British shores, the Saxons, a people of Gothic origin, established themselves upon the Tweed, and afterwards extended their settlements to the Frith of Forth, and to the banks of the Solway and the Clyde. About the beginning of the sixth century the Dalriads, as we have seen, landed in Kintyre and Argyre from the opposite coast of Ireland, and colonized these districts, whence, in the course of little more than two centuries, they overspread the Highlands and western islands, which their descendants have ever since continued to possess. Towards the end of the eighth century, a fresh colony of Scots from Ireland settled in Galloway among the Britons and Saxons, and having overspread the whole of that country, were afterwards joined by detachments of the Scots of Kintyre and Argyre, in connection with whom they peopled that



Seal of Edgar.

among and mixed with the native inhabitants, and thus to have formed a population, spoken of by the Irish Annalists under the name of

⁶ *Early Kings*, vol. i. p. 160.

peninsula. Besides these three races, who made permanent settlements in Scotland, the Scandinavians colonized the Orkney and Shetland islands, and also established themselves on the coasts of Caithness and Sutherland, and in the eastern part of the country north of the Firth of Tay.

But notwithstanding these early settlements of the Gothic race, the era of the Saxon colonization of the Lowlands of Scotland is, with more propriety, placed in the reign of Malcolm Ceanmore, who, by his marriage with a Saxon princess, and the protection he gave to the Anglo-Saxon fugitives who sought an asylum in his dominions from the persecutions of William the Conqueror and his Normans, laid the foundations of those great changes which took place in the reigns of his successors. Malcolm, in his warlike incursions into Northumberland and Durham, carried off immense numbers of young men and women, who were to be seen in the reign of David I. in almost every village and house in Scotland. The Gaelic population were quite averse to the settlement of these strangers among them, and it is said that the extravagant mode of living introduced by the Saxon followers of Queen Margaret, was one of the reasons which led to their expulsion from Scotland, in the reign of Donal-bane, who rendered himself popular with his people by this unfriendly act.

This expulsion was, however, soon rendered nugatory, for on the accession of Edgar, the first sovereign of the Scoto-Saxon dynasty, many distinguished Saxon families with their followers settled in Scotland, to the heads of which families the king made grants of land of considerable extent. Few of these foreigners appear to have come into Scotland during the reign of Alexander I., the brother and successor of Edgar; but vast numbers of Anglo-Saxons, Anglo-Normans, and Flemings, established themselves in Scotland in the reign of David I. That prince had received his education at the court of Henry I., and had married Maud or Matilda, the only child of Waltheof, Earl of Northumberland and Huntingdon, by Judith, niece to William the Conqueror on the mother's side. This lady had many vassals, and when David came to the throne, in the year 1124, he was followed by a thousand

Anglo-Normans, to whom he distributed lands, on which they and their followers settled. Many of the illustrious families in Scotland originated from this source.

Malcolm Ceanmore had, before his accession to the throne, resided for some time in England as a fugitive, under the protection of Edward the Confessor, where he acquired a knowledge of the Saxon language; which language, after his marriage with the princess Margaret, became that of the Scottish court. This circumstance made that language fashionable among the Scottish nobility, in consequence of which and of the Anglo-Saxon colonization under David I., the Gaelic language was altogether superseded in the Lowlands of Scotland in little more than two centuries after the death of Malcolm. A topographical line of demarcation was then fixed as the boundary between the two languages, which has ever since been kept up, and presents one of the most singular phenomena ever observed in the history of philology.

The change of the seat of government by Kenneth, on ascending the Pictish throne, to Abernethy, also followed by the removal of the marble chair, the emblem of sovereignty, from Dunstaffnage to Scone, appears to have occasioned no detriment to the Gaelic population of the Highlands; but when Malcolm Ceanmore transferred his court, about the year 1066, to Dunfermline,—which also became, in place of Iona, the sepulchre of the Scottish kings,—the rays of royal bounty, which had hitherto diffused their protecting and benign influence over the inhabitants of the Highlands, were withdrawn, and left them a prey to anarchy and poverty. "The people," says General David Stewart, "now beyond the reach of the laws, became turbulent and fierce, revenging in person those wrongs for which the administrators of the laws were too distant and too feeble to afford redress. Thence arose the institution of chiefs, who naturally became the judges and arbiters in the quarrels of their clansmen and followers, and who were surrounded by men devoted to the defence of their rights, their property, and their power; and accordingly the chiefs established within their own territories a jurisdiction almost wholly independent of their liege lord."

The connection which Malcolm and his successors maintained with England, estranged still farther the Highlanders from the dominion of the sovereign and the laws; and their history, after the population of the Lowlands had merged into and adopted the language of the Anglo-Saxons, presents, with the exception of the wars between rival clans which will be noticed afterwards, nothing remarkable till their first appearance on the military theatre of our national history in the campaigns of Montrose, Dundee, and others.

On the accession of Alexander I., then, Scotland was divided between the Celt and the Saxon, or more strictly speaking, Teuton, pretty much as it is at the present day, the Gaelic population having become gradually confined very nearly to the limits indicated in the first chapter. They never appear, at least until quite recently, to have taken kindly to Teutonic customs and the Teutonic tongue, and resented much the defection of their king in

court, in submitting to Saxon innovations. Previous to this the history of the Highlands has been, to a very great extent, the history of Scotland, and even for a considerable time after this, *Scotia* was applied strictly to the country north of the Forth and Clyde, the district south of that being known by various other names. During and after Edgar's time, the whole of the country north of the Tweed became more and more a counterpart of England, with its thanes, its earls, and its sheriffs; and even the Highland maormors assumed the title of earl, in deference to the new customs. The Highlanders, however, it is well known, for centuries warred against these Saxon innovations, becoming more and more a peculiar people, being, up till the end of the last century, a perpetual thorn in the flesh of their Saxon rulers and their Saxon fellow-subjects. They have a history of their own, which we deem worthy of narration.¹

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE OF THE SCOTTISH KINGS, FROM 843
TO 1097, ADJUSTED FROM THE BEST AUTHORITIES.

NAMES OF THE KINGS.	Date of Accession.	Duration of Reign.	Death.
	A. D.	Years.	A. D.
KENNETH MACALPINE over the Scots and Picts,	843	16	859
DONAL MACALPIN,	859	4	863
CONSTANTINE II., son of Kenneth,	863	18	881
AODH, or HUGH, the son of Kenneth,	881	1	882
EODHA, or AOCHY, or GEIG, jointly,	882	11	893
DONAL IV., the son of Constantine,	893	11	904
CONSTANTINE III., the son of Aodh,	904	40	944*
MALCOLM I., son of Donal IV.,	944	9	953
INDULF, the son of Constantine III.,	953	8	961
DUF, the son of Malcolm I.,	961	4½	965
CULEN, the son of Indulf,	965	4½	970
KENNETH III., son of Malcolm I.,	970	24	994
CONSTANTINE IV., son of Culen,	994	1½	995
KENNETH IV., son of Duf,	995	8	1003
MALCOLM II., son of Kenneth III.,	1003	30	1033
DUNCAN, grandson of Malcolm II.,	1033	6	1039
MACBETH, son of Finlegh,	1039	17	1056
LELACH, son of Gruoch and Gilcomgain,	1056	4½	1057
MALCOLM III., Ceannmore, son of Duncan,	1057	35½	1093
DONALD BANE, son of Duncan,	1093	½	1094
DUNCAN II., son of Malcolm III.,	1094	½	1094
DONALD BANE again,	1094	3	1097
EDGAR, son of Malcolm III.,	1097	9	1106

¹ Since the above was written, the *Book of Deer* has been published; what further information is to be gained from it will be found at the end of this volume.

* Abdicated; died 952.

CHAPTER V.

A.D. 1107—1411.

KINGS OF SCOTLAND DURING THE PERIOD:—

Alexander I., 1107—1124.	Robert Bruce, 1306—1329.
David I., 1124—1153.	David II., 1329—1332.
Malcolm IV., 1153—1165.	Edward Balliol, 1332—1341.
William the Lion, 1165—1214.	David II. restored, 1341—1370.
Alexander II., 1214—1249.	Robert II. (Stewart), 1370—
Alexander III., 1249—1285.	1390.
Regency, 1285—1290.	Robert III., 1390—1406.
Interregnum, 1290—1292.	James I., 1406—1437.
John Balliol, 1292—1306.	

Alexander I.—David I.—Insurrections in Highlands—Somerled—Moraymen and Malcolm IV.—William the Lion—Disturbances in the Highlands—Ross-shire—Orkney—Alexander II.—Argyle—Caithness—Alexander III.—Disturbances in Ross—Expedition into Haco—Battle of Largs—Robert Bruce—Expedition into Lorn—Subdues Western Isles—Isles revolt under David II. and again submit—Contest between the Monroes and Clan Chattan—The Clan Chattan and the Camerons—Battle on North Inch—Wolf of Badenoch—His son Alexander Stewart—Disturbances in Sutherland—Lord of the Isles invades Scotland—Battle of Harlaw.

THE reign of Alexander I. was disturbed, about the year 1116, by an attempt made by the men of Moray and Merne to surprise the king while enjoying himself at his favourite residence at Invergowrie, on the north bank of the Tay, not far from its mouth. The king, however, showed himself more than a match for his enemies, as he not only defeated their immediate purpose, but, pursuing them with his army across the Moray Frith, chastised them so effectually as to keep them quiet for the remainder of his reign, which ended by his death, in April, 1124. In 1130, six years after the accession of King David I. to the Scottish throne, while he was in England, the Moraymen again rose against the semi-Saxon king, but were defeated at Strickathrow, in Forfarshire, by Edward the Constable, son of Sivard Beorn, Angus the Earl of Moray being left among the dead, Malcolm his brother escaping to carry on the conflict. In 1134 David himself took the field against these Highlanders, and, with the assistance of the barons of Northumberland, headed by Walter L'Espee, completely subdued the Moraymen, confiscated the whole district, and bestowed it upon knights in whose fidelity he could place confidence, some of these being Normans.

This was manifestly, according to Dr. Mac-

lauchlan, the period of the dispersion of the ancient Moravians. Never till then was the power of the Moray chiefs thoroughly broken, and only then were the inhabitants proscribed, and many of them expelled. The Murrays, afterwards so powerful, found their way to the south, carrying with them the name of their ancient country, and some of the present tribes of Sutherland, as well as of Inverness-shire, who, there is reason to believe, belonged to the Scoto-Pictish inhabitants of Moray, removed their dwellings to those portions of the country which they have occupied ever since. The race of Mac Heth may appear among the Mac Heths or Mac Aoidhs, the *Mackays* of Sutherland, nor is this rendered less probable by the Morganach or *sons of Morgan*, the ancient name of the Mackays, appearing in the Book of Deer as owning possessions and power in Buchan in the 10th or 11th century.²

The next enterprise of any note was undertaken by Somerled, thane of Argyle and the Isles, against the authority of Malcolm IV., who, after various conflicts, was repulsed, though not subdued, by Gilchrist, Earl of Angus. A peace, concluded with this powerful chieftain in 1153, was considered of such importance as to form an epoch in the dating of Scottish charters. A still more formidable insurrection broke out among the Moraymen, under Gildominick, on account of an attempt, on the part of the Government, to intrude the Anglo-Norman jurisdiction, introduced into the Lowlands, upon their Celtic customs, and the settling of Anglo-Belgic colonists among them. These insurgents laid waste the neighbouring counties; and so regardless were they of the royal authority, that they actually hanged the heralds who were sent to summon them to lay down their arms. Malcolm despatched the gallant Earl Gilchrist with an army to subdue them, but he was defeated, and forced to recross the Grampians.

This defeat aroused Malcolm, who was naturally of an indolent disposition. About the year 1160 he marched north with a powerful army, and found the enemy on the moor of Urquhart, near the Spey, ready to give him battle. After passing the Spey, the noblemen in the king's army reconnoitred the enemy;

² Maclauchlan's *Early Scottish Church*, pp. 346-7.

but they found them so well prepared for action, and so flushed with their late success, that they considered the issue of a battle rather doubtful. On this account, the commanders advised the king to enter into a negotiation with the rebels, and to promise, that in the event of a submission their lives would be spared. The offer was accepted, and the king kept his word. According to Fordun,⁷ the king, by the advice of his nobles, ordained that every family in Moray which had been engaged in the rebellion should, within a limited time, remove out of Moray to other parts of the kingdom, where lands would be assigned to them, and that their places should be supplied with people from other parts of the kingdom. For the performance of this order, they gave hostages, it is said,⁸ and at the time appointed transplanted themselves, some into the northern, but the greater number into the southern counties. Chalmers considers this removal of the Moraymen as "an egregious improbability," because "the dispossessing of a whole people is so difficult an operation, that the recital of it cannot be believed without strong evidence;"⁹ it is very probable that only the ringleaders and their families were transported. The older historians say that the Moraymen were almost totally cut off in an obstinate battle, and strangers brought into their place.¹

About this time Somerled, the ambitious and powerful lord of the Isles, made another and a

last attempt upon the king's authority. Having collected a large force, chiefly in Ireland, he landed, in 1164, near Renfrew; but he was defeated by the brave inhabitants and the king's troops in a decisive battle, in which he and his son Gillecolum were slain.

The reign of William the Lion, who succeeded his brother in 1165, was marked by many disturbances in the Highlands. The Gaelic population could not endure the new settlers whom the Saxon colonization had introduced among them, and every opportunity was taken to vex and annoy them. An open insurrection broke out in Ross-shire, headed by Donald Bane, known also as MacWilliam, which obliged William, in the year 1181, to march into the north, where he built the two castles of Eddirton and Dunscaith to keep the people in check. He restored quiet for a few years; but, in 1187, Donald Bane again renewed his pretensions to the crown, and raised the standard of revolt in the north. He took possession of Ross, and wasted Moray. William lost no time in leading an army against him. While the king lay at Inverness with his army, a party of 3,000 faithful men, under the command of Roland, the brave lord of Galloway, and future Constable of Scotland, fell in with Donald Bane and his army upon the Mangarvy moor, on the borders of Moray. A conflict ensued in which Donald and five hundred of his followers were killed. Roland carried the head of Donald to William, "as a savage sign of returning quiet." After this comparative quietness prevailed in the north till the year 1196, when Harold, the powerful Earl of Orkney and Caithness, disturbed its peace. William dispersed the insurgents at once; but they again appeared the following year near Inverness, under the command of Torphin, the son of Harold. The rebels were again overpowered. The king seized Harold, and obliged him to deliver up his son, Torphin, as an hostage. Harold was allowed to retain the northern part of Caithness, but the king gave the southern part of it, called Sutherland, to Hugh Freskin, the progenitor of the Earls of Sutherland. Harold died in 1206; but as he had often rebelled, his son suffered a cruel and lingering death in the castle of Roxburgh, where he had been confined.

⁷ Book viii. ch. 6.

⁸ Shaw's *Hist. of Moray*, new ed., pp. 259-60.

⁹ *Caledonia*, vol. i. p. 627.

¹ "Whilst the lowlands and the coast of Moray, which had already been partitioned out among the followers of David, would have presented comparatively few obstacles to such a project, it is hardly possible to conceive how it could ever have been successfully put into execution amidst the wild and inaccessible mountains of the interior. It appears, therefore, most reasonable to conclude, that Malcolm only carried out the policy pursued by his grandfather ever since the first forfeiture of the earldom; and that any changes that may have been brought about in the population of this part of Scotland—and which scarcely extended below the class of the lesser *Duchasach*, or small proprietors—are not to be attributed to one sweeping and compulsory measure, but to the grants of David and his successors; which must have had the effect of either reducing the earlier proprietary to a dependant position, or of driving into the remoter Highlands all who were inclined to contest the authority of the sovereign, or to dispute the validity of the royal ordinances which reduced them to the condition of subordinates."—Robertson's *Early Kings*, vol. I. p. 361.

During the year 1211 a new insurrection broke out in Ross, headed by Guthred or Godfrey, the son of Donald Bane or MacWilliam, as he was called. Great depredations were committed by the insurgents, who were chiefly freebooters from Ireland, the Hebrides, and Lochaber. For a long time they baffled the king's troops; and although the king built two forts to keep them in check, and took many prisoners, they maintained for a considerable period a desultory and predatory warfare. Guthred even forced one of the garrisons to capitulate, and burnt the castle; but being betrayed by his followers into the hands of William Comyn, Earl of Buchan, the Justiciary of Scotland, he was executed in the year 1212.

Shortly after the accession of Alexander II. in 1214, the peace of the north was attempted to be disturbed by Donald MacWilliam, who made an inroad from Ireland into Moray; but he was repulsed by the tribes of that country, led by M'Intagart, the Earl of Ross. In 1222, notwithstanding the formidable obstacles which presented themselves from the nature of the country, Alexander carried an army into Argyle, for the purpose of enforcing the homage of the western chiefs. His presence so alarmed the men of Argyle, that they immediately made their submission. Several of the chiefs fled for safety, and to punish them, the king distributed their lands among his officers and their followers. After this invasion Argyle was brought under the direct jurisdiction of the Scottish king, although the descendants of the race of Somerled, Lord of the Isles, still continued to be the chief magnates.

During the same year a tumult took place in Caithness, on account of the severity with which the tithes were exacted by Adam, the bishop, who, with his adviser, Serlo, was murdered by the bonders. The king, who was at the time at Jedburgh, hearing of this murder, immediately hastened to the north with a military force, and inflicted the punishment of death upon the principal actors in this tragedy, who amounted, it is said, to four hundred persons; and that their race might become extinct, their children were emasculated, a practice very common in these barbarous times. The Earl of Caithness, who was supposed to have been privy to the murder, was deprived of half of his

estate, which was afterwards restored to him on payment of a heavy fine. The Earl is said to have been murdered by his own servants in the year 1231, and in order to prevent discovery, they laid his body into his bed and set fire to the house.

In 1228 the country of Moray became the theatre of a new insurrection, headed by a Ross-shire freebooter, named Gillespec M'Scolane. He committed great devastations by burning some wooden castles in Moray, and spoiling the crown lands. He even attacked and set fire to Inverness. A large army of horse and foot, under the command of John Comyn, Earl of Buchan, Justiciary of Scotland, was, in 1229, sent against this daring rebel, who was captured, with his two sons, and their heads sent to the king.

The lords of Argyle usually paid homage to the king of Norway for some of the Hebrides which belonged to that monarch, but Ewen, on succeeding his father Duncan of Argyle in 1248, refused his homage to the Scottish king, who wished to possess the whole of the Western Isles. Though Ewen was perfectly loyal, and indeed was one of the most honourable men of his time, Alexander marched an army against him to enforce obedience, but his Majesty died on his journey in Kerrera, a small island near the coast of Argyle opposite Oban, on July 8, 1249, in the fifty-first year of his age, and the thirty-fifth of his reign.

According to the custom of the times, his son, Alexander III., then a boy only in his eighth year, was seated on the royal chair, or sacred stone of Scone, which was placed before the cross that stood within the burying-ground. Immediately before his inauguration, the bishop of St. Andrews girded him with the sword of state, and explained to him, first in Latin and afterwards in Norman French, the nature of the compact he and his subjects were about to enter into. The crown, after the king had been seated, was placed on his head, and the sceptre put into his hand. He was then covered with the royal mantle, and received the homage of the nobles on their knees, who, in token of submission, threw their robes beneath his feet. On this occasion, agreeably to ancient practice, a Gaelic sennachy, or bard, clothed in a red mantle, and venerable for his great age and



Alexander III.—From Pinkerton's Scottish Gallery.

hoary locks, approached the king, and in a bended and reverential attitude, recited, from memory, in his native language, the genealogy of all the Scottish kings, deducing the descent of the youthful monarch from Gathetus, the fabulous founder of the nation.² The reign of this prince was distinguished by the entire subjugation of the western islands to the power of the Scottish crown. The Scandinavian settlers were allowed to leave the islands, if inclined, and such of them as remained were bound to observe the Scottish laws.

Shortly after the accession of Alexander III., an insurrection broke out against the Earl of Ross, of some of the people of that province. The Earl apprehended their leader or captain, whom he imprisoned at Dingwall. In revenge, the Highlanders seized upon the Earl's second

² Almost the same ceremonial of inauguration was observed at the coronation of Macdonald, king of the Isles. Martin says, that "there was a big stone of seven feet square, in which there was a deep impression made to receive the feet of Mack-Donald, for he was crowned king of the Isles standing in this stone; and swore that he would continue his vassals in the possession of their lands, and do exact justice to all his subjects; and then his father's sword was put into his hands. The bishop of Argyle and seven priests anointed him king, in presence of all the heads of the tribes in the isles and continent, and were his vassals; at which time the orator rehearsed a catalogue of his ancestors."—*Western Islands*, p. 241.

son at Balnagown, took him prisoner, and detained him as a hostage till their captain should be released. The Monroes and the Dingwalls immediately took up arms, and having pursued the insurgents, overtook them at a place called Beallich-ne-Broig, between Ferrandonald and Loch Broom, where a bloody conflict ensued. "The Clan Iver, Clan-Talvich, and Clan-Laiwe," says Sir Robert Gordon, "wer almost uterlic extinguished and slain." The Monroes and Dingwalls lost a great many men. Dingwall of Kildun, and seven score of the surname of Dingwall, were killed. No less than eleven Monroes of the house of Foulis, who were to succeed one after another, fell, so that the succession of Foulis opened to an infant then lying in his cradle. The Earl's son was rescued, and to requite the service performed, he made various grants of lands to the Monroes and Dingwalls.³

In 1263, Haco, the aged king of Norway, sailed with a large and powerful fleet, determined to enforce acknowledgment of his claims as superior of the Western Islands on their chiefs, as well as upon the king of Scotland. Sailing southwards among the islands, one chief after another acknowledged his supremacy, and helped to swell his force, the only honourable exception being the stanch Even of Argyle. Meantime Haco brought his fleet to anchor in the Frith of Clyde, between Arran and the Ayrshire coast, his men committing ravages on the neighbouring country, as, indeed, they appear to have done during the whole of his progress. Negotiations entered into between Haco and Alexander III. came to nothing, and as winter was approaching, and his fleet had suffered much from several severe storms which caught it, the former was fain to make his way homewards. A number of his men, however, contrived to effect a landing near Largs, where they were met by a miscellaneous Scottish host, consisting of cavalry and country people, and finally completely routed. The date of this skirmish, which is known as the battle of Largs, is October 2d, 1263. Haco died in the end of the same year in Orkney, and in 1266 Magnus IV., his successor, ceded the whole of the

³ Sir R. Gordon's *History of the Earldom of Sutherland*, p. 36.

Scottish Islands held by Norway, except Orkney and Shetland, the Scottish king paying a small annual rent. Those of the islesmen who had proved unfaithful to the Scottish king were most severely and cruelly punished.

No event of any importance appears to have occurred in the Highlands till the time of King Robert Bruce, who was attacked, after his defeat at Methven, by Macdougall of Lorn, and defeated in Strathfillan. But Bruce was determined that Macdougall should not long enjoy his petty triumph. Having been joined by his able partisan, Sir James Douglas, he entered the territory of Lorn. On arriving at the narrow pass of Ben Cruachan, between Loch Awe and Loch Etive, Bruce was informed that Macdougall had laid an ambuscade for him. Bruce divided his army into two parts. One of these divisions, consisting entirely of archers who were lightly armed, was placed under the command of Douglas, who was directed to make a circuit round the mountain, and to attack the Highlanders in the rear. As soon as Douglas had gained possession of the ground above the Highlanders, Bruce entered the pass, and, as soon as he had advanced into its narrow gorge, he was attacked by the men of Lorn, who, from the surrounding heights, hurled down stones upon him accompanied with loud shouts. They then commenced a closer attack, but, being instantly assailed in the rear by Douglas's division, and assaulted by the king with great fury in front, they were thrown into complete disorder, and defeated with great slaughter. Macdougall, who was, during the action, on board a small vessel in Loch Etive, waiting the result, took refuge in his castle of Dunstaffnage. After ravaging the territory of Lorn, and giving it up to indiscriminate plunder, Bruce laid siege to the castle, which, after a slight resistance, was surrendered by the lord of Lorn, who swore homage to the king; but John, the son of the chief, refused to submit, and took refuge in England.

During the civil wars among the competitors for the Scottish crown, and those under Wallace and Bruce for the independence of Scotland, the Highlanders scarcely ever appear as participators in those stirring scenes which developed the resources, and called forth the chivalry of Scotland; but we are not to infer

from the silence of history that they were less alive than their southern countrymen to the honour and glory of their country, or that they did not contribute to secure its independence. General Stewart says that eighteen Highland chiefs⁴ fought under Robert Bruce at Bannockburn; and as these chiefs would be accompanied by their vassals, it is fair to suppose that Highland prowess lent its powerful aid to obtain that memorable victory which secured Scotland from the dominion of a foreign yoke.

After Robert Bruce had asserted the independence of his country by the decisive battle of Bannockburn, the whole kingdom, with the exception of some of the western islands, under John of Argyle, the ally of England, submitted to his authority. He, therefore, undertook an expedition against those isles, in which he was accompanied by Walter, the hereditary high-steward of Scotland, his son-in-law, who, by his marriage with Marjory, King Robert's daughter, laid the foundation of the Stewart dynasty. To avoid the necessity of doubling the Mull of Kintyre, which was a dangerous attempt for the small vessels then in use, Robert sailed up Loch-Fyne to Tarbert with his fleet, which he dragged across the narrow isthmus between the lochs of East and West Tarbert, by means of a slide of smooth planks of trees laid parallel to each other. It had long been a superstitious belief amongst the inhabitants of the Western Islands, that they should never be subdued till their invaders sailed across this neck of land, and it is said that Robert was thereby partly induced to follow the course he did to impress upon the minds of the islanders a conviction that the time of their subjugation had arrived. The islanders were quickly subdued, and John of Lorn, who, for his services to Edward of England, had been invested with the title of Admiral of the Western fleet of England, was captured and imprisoned first in Dumbarton

⁴ The chiefs at Bannockburn were Mackay, Mackintosh, Macpherson, Cameron, Sinclair, Campbell, Menzies, Maclean, Sutherland, Robertson, Grant, Fraser, Macfarlane, Ross, Macgregor, Munro, Mackenzie, and Macquarrie. After the lapse of five hundred years since the battle of Bannockburn was fought, it is truly astonishing to find such a number of direct descendants who are now in existence, and still possessed of their paternal estates.

castle, and afterwards in the castle of Loch Leven, where he died.

The feeble and effeminate reign of David II. was disturbed by another revolt by the Lord of the Isles, who was backed in his attempt to throw off his dependence by a great number of the Highland chiefs. David, with "an unwonted energy of character, commauded the attendance of the steward, with the prelates and barons of the realm, and surrounded by this formidable body of vassals and retainers, proceeded against the rebels in person. The expedition was completely successful. The rebel prince, John of the Isles, with a numerous train of those wild Highland chieftains who followed his banner, and had supported him in his attempt to throw off his dependence, met the king at Inverness, and submitted to his authority. He engaged in the most solemn manner, for himself and his vassals, that they should yield themselves faithful and obedient subjects to David, their liege lord; and not only give due and prompt obedience to the ministers and officers of the king in suit and service, as well as in the payment of taxes and public burdens, but that they would coerce and put down all others, of whatever rank or degree, who dared to raise themselves in opposition to the royal authority, and would compel them either to submit, or would pursue and banish them from their territories: for the fulfilment of which obligation the Lord of the Isles not only gave his own oath, under the penalty of forfeiting his whole principality if it was broken, but offered the high-steward, his father-in-law, as his security, and delivered his lawful son, Donald, his grandson, Angus, and his natural son, also named Donald, as hostages for the strict performance of the articles of the treaty."⁵ The deed by which John of the Isles bound himself to the performance of these stipulations is dated 15th November, 1369.⁶

To enable him the better to succeed in reducing the inhabitants of the Highlands and islands to the obedience of the laws, it is stated by an old historian,⁷ that David used artifice by dividing the chiefs, and promising high re-

wards to those who should slay or capture their brother chiefs. The writer says that this diabolical plan, by implanting the seeds of disunion and war amongst the chiefs, succeeded; and that they gradually destroyed one another, a statement, to say the least of it, highly improbable. Certain it is, however, that it was in this reign that the practice of paying *manrent* began, when the powerful wished for followers, and the weak wanted protection, a circumstance which shows that the government was too weak to afford protection to the oppressed, or to quell the disputes of rival clans.

In the year 1333,⁸ John Monroe, the tutor of Foulis, in travelling homeward, on his journey from Edinburgh to Ross, stopped on a meadow in Stratherdale that he and his servants might get some repose. While they were asleep, the owner of the meadow cut off the tails of their horses. Being resolved to wipe off this insult, he immediately, on his return home to Ross, summoned his whole kinsmen and followers, and, after informing them how he had been used, craved their aid to revenge the injury. The clan, of course, complied; and, having selected 350 of the best and ablest men among them, he returned to Stratherdale, which he wasted and spoiled; killed some of the inhabitants, and carried off their cattle. In passing by the isle of Moy, on his return home, Macintosh, the chief of the clan Chattan, being urged by some person who bore Monroe a grudge, sent a message to him demanding a share of the spoil. This was customary among the Highlanders when a party drove cattle which had been so taken through a gentleman's land, and the part so exacted was called a *Stoig Rathaid*, or *Stoig Creich*, that is, a Road Collop. Monroe, not being disposed to quarrel, offered Macintosh a reasonable share, but this he was advised not to accept, and demanded the half of the booty. Monroe refused to comply with such an unreasonable demand, and proceeded on his journey. Macintosh, determined to enforce compliance, immediately collected his clansmen, and went in pursuit of Monroe, whom he overtook at Clach-na-Haire, near In-

⁵ Tytler's *Hist. of Scotland*, vol. ii. p. 185. Robertson's *Parliamentary Records*, p. 115.

⁶ Vide the Deed printed in the Appendix to Tytler's *History*, vol. ii.

⁷ Fordun a Goodal, vol. ii. p. 380.

⁸ This is the date assigned by Sir Robert Gordon, but Shaw makes it more than a century later, viz., in 1454.

verness. As soon as Monroe saw Macintosh approaching, he sent home five of his men to Ferrindonald with the cattle, and prepared for action. But Macintosh paid dearly for his rapacity and rashness, for he and the greater part of his men were killed in the conflict. Several of the Monroes also were slain, and John Monroe himself was left for dead in the field of battle, and might have died if the predecessor of Lord Lovat had not carried him to his house in the neighbourhood, where he was cured of his wounds. One of his hands was so mutilated, that he lost the use of it the remainder of his life, on which account he was afterwards called John Bac-laimh, or Ciotach.⁹

Besides the feuds of the clans in the reign of David II., the Highlands appear to have been disturbed by a formidable insurrection against the government, for, in a parliament which was held at Scone, in the year 1366, a resolution was entered into to seize the rebels in Argyre, Athole, Badenoch, Lochaber, and Ross, and all others who had risen up against the royal authority, and to compel them to submit to the laws. The chief leaders in this commotion (of which the bare mention in the parliamentary record is the only account which has reached us,) were the Earl of Ross, Hugh de Ross, John of the Isles, John of Lorn, and John de Haye, who were all summoned to attend the parliament and give in their submission, but they all refused to do so in the most decided manner; and as the government was too weak to compel them, they were suffered to remain independent.

In the year 1386, a feud having taken place between the clan Chattan and the Camerons, a battle took place in which a great number of the clan Chattan were killed, and the Camerons were nearly cut off to a man. The occasion of the quarrel was as follows. The lands of Macintosh¹ in Lochaber, were possessed by the Ca-

merons, who were so tardy in the payment of their rents that Macintosh was frequently obliged to levy them by force by carrying off his tenants' cattle. The Camerons were so irritated at having their cattle pointed and taken away, that they resolved to make reprisals, preparatory to which they marched into Badenoch to the number of about 400 men, under the command of Charles Macgilony. As soon as Macintosh became acquainted with this movement he called his clan and friends, the Macphersons and Davidsons, together. His force was superior to that of the Camerons, but a dispute arose among the chiefs which almost proved fatal to them. To Macintosh, as captain of the clan Chattan, the command of the centre of the army was assigned with the consent of all parties; but a difference took place between Cluny and Invernahavon, each claiming the command of the right wing. Cluny demanded it as the chief of the ancient clan Chattan, of which the Davidsons of Invernahavon were only a branch; but Invernahavon contended that to him, as the oldest branch, the command of the right wing belonged, according to the custom of the clans. The Camerons came up during this quarrel about precedence, on which Macintosh, as umpire, decided against the claim of Cluny. This was a most imprudent award, as the Macphersons exceeded both the Macintoshes and Davidsons in numbers, and they were, besides, in the country of the Macphersons. These last were so offended at the decision of Macintosh that they withdrew from the field, and became, for a time, spectators of the action. The battle soon commenced, and was fought with great obstinacy. Many of the Macintoshes, and almost all the Davidsons, were cut off by the superior number of the Clan, or Macphersons, to acquaint him that "*the king*" was to pay him a visit. Macpherson, or MacGillchattan, as he was named, in honour of the founder of the family Gillichattan* Mor, having an only child, a daughter, who, he dreaded, might attract an inconvenient degree of royal notice, offered her in marriage to Macintosh along with his lands, and the station of the chief of the clan Chattan. Macintosh accepted the offer, and was received as chief of the lady's clan.

* "A votary or servant of St. Kattan," a most popular Scottish saint, we have thus *Gillichallum*, meaning a "votary of Columba," and of which another form is *Molcolm* or *Molcolm*, the prefix *Mal* being corrupted into *Mal*, signifying the same as *Gilly*. Thus *Gilly-Dhia* is the etymon of *Culdee*, signifying "servant of God,"—*Gillichrist* means "servant of Christ."

⁹ Sir R. Gordon, p. 47.—Shaw, p. 264.

¹ According to that eminent antiquary, the Rev. Donald Macintosh, non-juring episcopal clergyman, in his historical illustrations of his Collections of Gaelic Proverbs, published in 1785, the ancestor of Macintosh became head of the clan Chattan in this way. During these contests for the Scottish crown, which succeeded the death of King Alexander III., and favoured the pretensions of the King of the Isles, the latter styling himself "King," had, in 1291, sent his nephew Angus Macintosh of Macintosh to Dougall Dall (Blind) MacGillchattan, chief of the clan Chat-

merons. The Macphersons seeing their friends and neighbours almost overpowered, could no longer restrain themselves, and friendship got the better of their wounded pride. They, therefore, at this perilous crisis, rushed in upon the Camerons, who, from exhaustion and the loss they had sustained, were easily defeated. The few that escaped, with their leader, were pursued from Invernahavon, the place of battle, three miles above Ruthven, to Badenoch. Charles Macgilroy was killed on a hill in Glenbenchir, which was long called Torr-Thearlaich, *i. e.*, Charles'-hill.²

In the opinion of Shaw this quarrel about precedence was the origin of the celebrated judicial conflict, which took place on the North Inch of Perth, before Robert III., his queen, Annabella Drummond, and the Scottish nobility, and some foreigners of distinction, in the year 1396, and of which a variety of accounts have been given by our ancient historians. The parties to this combat were the Macphersons, properly the clan Chattan, and the Davidsons of Invernahavon, called in the Gaelic *Clann-Dhaibhidh*. The Davidsons were not, as some writers have supposed, a separate clan, but a branch of the clan Chattan. These rival tribes had for a long period kept up a deadly enmity with one another, which was difficult to be restrained; but after the award by Macintosh against the Macphersons, that enmity broke out into open strife, and for ten years the Macphersons and the Davidsons carried on a war of extermination, and kept the country in an uproar.

To put an end to these disorders, it is said that Robert III. sent Dunbar, Earl of Moray, and Lindsay of Glenesk, afterwards Earl of Crawford, two of the leading men of the kingdom, to endeavour to effect an amicable arrangement between the contending parties; but having failed in their attempt, they proposed that the differences should be decided in open combat before the king. Tytler³ is of opinion that, the notions of the Norman knights having by this time become familiar to the fierce mountaineers, they adopted the singular idea of deciding their quarrel by a combat of 30 against 30. Burton, however, with his

usual sagacity, remarks that, "for a whole race to submit to the ordeal of battle would imply the very highest devotion to those rules of chivalry which were an extravagant fashion in all the countries under the Norman influence, but were utterly unknown to the Highlanders, who submitted when they must submit, and retaliated when they could. That such an adjustment could be effected among them is about as incredible as a story about a parliamentary debate in Persia, or a jury trial in Timbuctoo."⁴ The beautiful and perfectly level meadow on the banks of the Tay at Perth, known as the North Inch, was fixed on, and the Monday before Michaelmas was the day appointed for the combat. According to Sir Robert Gordon, who is followed by Sir Robert Douglas and Mr. Mackintosh, it was agreed that no weapon but the broad sword was to be employed, but Wyntoun, who lived about the time, adds bows, battle-axes, and daggers.

"All thai entri in Barreris,

With Bow and Axe, Knif and Swerd,
To deal amang them thair last Werd."

The numbers on each side have been variously reported. By mistaking the word *trecenti*, used by Boece and Buchanan, for *trecenti*, some writers have multiplied them to 300. Bower, the continuator of Fordun and Wyntoun, however, mentions expressly 60 in all, or 30 on either side.

On the appointed day the combatants made their appearance on the North Inch of Perth, to decide, in presence of the king, his queen, and a large concourse of the nobility, their respective claims to superiority. Barricades had been erected on the ground to prevent the spectators from encroaching, and the king and his party took their stations upon a platform from which they could easily view the combat. At length the warriors, armed with sword and target, bows and arrows, short knives and battle-axes, advanced within the barriers, and eyed one another with looks of deadly revenge. When about to engage, a circumstance occurred which postponed the battle, and had well-nigh prevented it altogether. According to some accounts, one of the Macphersons fell sick; but Bower says, that when the troops had been

² Shaw's *History of Moray*, pp. 260, 261.

³ Vol. iii. pp. 76, 77.

⁴ Vol. in. p. 72.

marshalled, one of the Macphersons, panic-struck, slipped through the crowd, plunged into the Tay and swam across, and, though pursued by thousands, effected his escape. Sir Robert Gordon merely observes, that, "at their entrie into the feild, the clan Chattan lacked one of their number, who wes privilee stolne away, not willing to be pertaker of so deir a bargane." A man being now wanting on one side, a pause ensued, and a proposal was made that one of the Davidsons should retire, that the number on both sides might be equal, but they refused. As the combat could not proceed from this inequality of numbers, the king was about to break up the assembly, when a diminutive and crooked, but fierce man, named Henry Wynd, a burgher of Perth, better known to readers of Scott as Hal o' the Wynd, and an armourer by trade, sprung within the barriers, and, as related by Bower, thus addressed the assembly: "Here am I. Will any one fee me to engage with these hirelings in this stage play? For half a mark will I try the game, provided, if I escape alive, I have my board of one of you so long as I live. Greater love, as it is said, hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. What, then, shall be my reward, who stake my life for the foes of the commonwealth and realm?" This demand of *Gow Crom*, "Crooked Smith," as Henry was familiarly styled, adds Bower, was granted by the king and nobles. A murderous conflict now began. The armourer, bending his bow, and sending the first arrow among the opposite party, killed one of them. After showers of arrows had been discharged on both sides, the combatants, with fury in their looks, and revenge in their hearts, rushed upon one another, and a terrific scene ensued, which appalled the heart of many a valorous knight who witnessed the bloody tragedy. The violent thrusts of the daggers, and the tremendous gashes inflicted by the two-handed swords and battle-axes, hastened the work of butchery and death. "Heads were cloven asunder, limbs were lopped from the trunk. The meadow was soon flooded with blood, and covered with dead and wounded men."⁵

⁵ *Tales of a Grandfather*, vol. ii.

After the crooked armourer had killed his man, as already related from Bower, it is said that he either sat down or drew aside, which being observed by the leader of Cluny's band, he asked his reason for thus stopping; on which Wynd said, "Because I have fulfilled my bargain, and earned my wages."—"The man," exclaimed the other, "who keeps no reckoning of his good deeds, without reckoning shall be repaid," an observation which tempted the armourer to earn, in the multiplied deaths of his opponents, a sum exceeding by as many times the original stipulation. This speech of the leader has been formed into the Gaelic adage,

"Am fear nach cuantadh rium
Cha chunntainn ris,"

which Macintosh thus renders,

"The man that reckons not with me
I will not reckon with him."

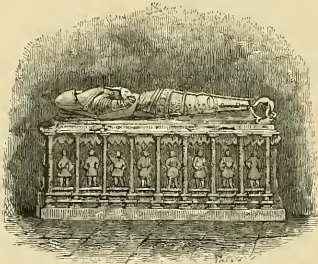
Victory at last declared for the Macphersons, but not until 29 of the Davidsons had fallen prostrate in the arms of death. Nineteen of Cluny's men also bit the dust, and the remaining 11, with the exception of Henry Wynd, who by his excellence as a swordsmen had mainly contributed to gain the day, were all grievously wounded. The survivor of the clan Davidson escaped unhurt. Mackintosh following Buchanan, relates that this man, after all his companions had fallen, threw himself into the Tay, and making the opposite bank, escaped; but this is most likely a new version of Bower's account of the affrighted champion before the commencement of the action.

The leader of the clan Kay or Davidsons is called by Bower *Schea-beg*, and by Wyntoun, *Scha-Ferquharis son*. Boece calls him *Stratberge*. Who *Christi-Mac-Iain*, or *Christi-Jonson* was genealogically, we are not informed; but one thing is pretty clear, that he, not *Schea-beg*, or *Shaw Oig*,—for these are obviously one and the same,—commanded the clan Chattan, or "*Clann-a-Chait*."⁶ Both the principals seem to have been absent, or spectators merely of the battle; and as few of the leading men of the clan, it is believed, were parties

⁶ For a more thorough discussion of this fight, see the account of the Clan Mackintosh in Vol. II.

in the combat, the savage policy of the government, which, it is said, had taken this method to rid itself of the chief men of the clan, by making them destroy one another, was completely defeated. This affair seems to have produced a good effect, as the Highlanders remained quiet for a considerable time thereafter.

The disorders in the Highlands occasioned by the feuds of the clans were, about the period in question, greatly augmented by Alexander of Badenoch, fourth son of Robert II., whom he had constituted Lieutenant or governor from the limits of Moray to the Pentland Frith. This person, from the ferocity of his disposition, obtained the appropriate appellation of "the Wolf of Badenoch." Avaricious as well



Effigy of "the Wolf of Badenoch" in Dunkeid Cathedral.

as cruel, the Wolf seized upon the lands of Alexander Barr, bishop of Moray, and as he persisted in keeping violent possession of them, he was excommunicated. The sentence of excommunication not only proved unavailing, but tended to exasperate the Lord of Badenoch to such a degree of fury that, in the month of May, 1390, he descended from his heights and burnt the town of Forres, with the choir of the church and the manse of the archdeacon. And in June following, he burnt the town of Elgin, the church of Saint Giles, the hospital of Maison-Dieu, and the cathedral, with eighteen houses of the canons and chaplains in the college of Elgin. He also plundered these churches of their sacred utensils and vestments, which he carried off. For this horrible sacrilege the Lord of Badenoch was prosecuted, and obliged to make due reparation. Upon making his submission he was absolved by Walter Trail,

bishop of St. Andrews, in the church of the Black Friars, in Perth. He was first received at the door, and afterwards before the high altar, in presence of the king (Robert III. his brother,) and many of the nobility, on condition that he should make full satisfaction to the bishop of Moray, and obtain absolution from the pope.⁶

The Lord of Badenoch had a natural son, named Alexander Stewart, afterwards Earl of Mar, who inherited the vices of his father. Bent upon spoliation and bloodshed, and resolved to imitate his father's barbarous exploits, he collected, in 1392, a vast number of caterans, armed only with the sword and target, and with these he descended from the range of hills which divides the county of Aberdeen and Forfar, devastated the country, and murdered the inhabitants indiscriminately. A force was instantly collected by Sir Walter Ogilvy, sheriff of Angus, Sir Patrick Gray, and Sir David Lindsay of Glensesk, to oppose him, and although inferior in numbers, they attacked Stewart and his party of freebooters at Gasklune, near the water of Ila. A desperate conflict took place, which was of short duration. The caterans fought with determined bravery, and soon overpowered their assailants. The sheriff, his brother, Wat of Lichtoune, Young of Ouchterlony, the lairds of Cairncross, Forfar, and Guthry, and 60 of their followers, were slain. Sir Patrick Gray and Sir David Lindsay were severely wounded, and escaped with difficulty. Winton has preserved an anecdote illustrative of the fierceness of the Highlanders. Lindsay had run one of them, a strong and brawny man, through the body with a spear, and brought him to the earth; but although in the agonies of death, he writhed himself up, and with the spear sticking in his body, struck Lindsay a desperate blow with his sword, which cut him through the stirrup and boot into the bone, on which he instantly fell and expired.⁷

Nicolas, Earl of Sutherland, had a feud with Y-Mackay of Far, in Strathnaver, chief of the Clanwig-worgon, and his son Donald Mackay, in which many lives were lost, and great depredations committed on both sides. In crdr

⁶ Shaw's *Moray*, pp. 314-15.—Winton, vol. ii. p. 373.—Keith's *Catalogue*, p. 83.

⁷ Winton, vol. ii. p. 369.

to put an end to this difference, the Earl proposed a meeting of the parties at Dingwall, to be held in presence of the Lord of the Isles, his father-in-law, and some of the neighbouring gentry, the friends of the two families. The meeting having been agreed to, the parties met at the appointed time, in the year 1395, and took up their residence in the castle of Dingwall in apartments allotted for them. A discussion then took place between the Earl and Mackay, regarding the points in controversy, in which high and reproachful words were exchanged, which so incensed the Earl, that he killed Mackay and his son with his own hands. Having with some difficulty effected his escape from the followers and servants of the Mackays, he immediately returned home and prepared for defence, but the Mackays were too weak to take revenge. The matter was in some degree reconciled between Robert, the successor of Nicolas, and Angus Mackay, the eldest son of Donald.⁸

Some years after this event a serious conflict took place between the inhabitants of Sutherland and Strathnaver, and Malcolm Macleod of the Lewis, which arose out of the following circumstances. Angus Mackay above mentioned, had married a sister of Malcolm Macleod, by whom he had two sons, Angus Dow, and Roriegald. On the death of Angus, Houcheon Dow Mackay, a younger brother, became tutor to his nephews, and entered upon the management of their lands. Malcolm Macleod, understanding that his sister, the widow of Angus, was ill treated by Houcheon Dow, went on a visit to her, accompanied by a number of the choicest men of his country, with the determination of vindicating her cause either by entreaty or by force. He appears not to have succeeded in his object, for he returned homeward greatly discontented, and in revenge laid waste Strathnaver and a great part of the Breachat in Sutherland, and carried off booty along with him. As soon as Houcheon Dow and his brother Neill Mackay learnt this intelligence, they acquainted Robert, Earl of Sutherland, between whom and Angus Mackay a reconciliation had been effected, who immediately despatched Alexander Ne-Shrem-Gorme

(Alexander Murray of Cubin,) with a number of stout and resolute men, to assist the Mackays. They followed Macleod with great haste, and overtook him at Tittim-Turwigh, upon the marches between Ross and Sutherland. The pursuing party at first attempted to recover the goods and cattle which had been carried off, but this being opposed by Macleod and his men, a desperate conflict ensued, in which great valour was displayed on both sides. It "was long, furious, cruel, and doubtful," says Sir Robert Gordon, and was "rather desperate than resolute." At last the Lewismen, with their commander, Malcolm Macleod, nicknamed Gilealm Beg M-Bowen, were slain, and the goods and cattle were recovered. One man alone of Macleod's party, who was sorely wounded, escaped to bring home the sorrowful news to the Lewis, which he had scarcely delivered when he expired.⁹

These feuds were followed by a formidable insurrection, or more correctly, invasion, in 1411, by Donald, Lord of the Isles, of such a serious nature as to threaten a dismemberment of the kingdom of Scotland. The male succession to the earldom of Ross having become extinct, the honours of the peerage devolved upon a female, Euphemia Ross, wife of Sir Walter Lesley. Of this marriage there were two children, Alexander, afterwards Earl of Ross, and Margaret, afterwards married to the Lord of the Isles. Earl Alexander married a daughter of the Duke of Albany. Euphemia, Countess of Ross, was the only issue of this marriage, but becoming a nun she resigned the earldom of Ross in favour of her uncle John Stewart, Earl of Buchan. The Lord of the Isles conceiving that the countess, by renouncing the world, had forfeited her title and estate, and, moreover, that she had no right to dispose thereof, claimed both in right of Margaret his wife. The Duke of Albany, governor of Scotland, at whose instigation the countess had made the renunciation, of course refused to sustain the claim of the prince of the islands. The Lord of the Isles having formed an alliance with England, whence he was to be supplied with a fleet far superior to the Scottish, at the head of an army of 10,000 men, fully

⁸ Sir Robert Gordon's *History*, p. 60.

⁹ Sir Robert Gordon, pp. 61, 62.

equipped and armed after the fashion of the islands with bows and arrows, pole-axes, knives, and swords, in 1411 burst like a torrent upon the earldom, and carried everything before him. He, however, received a temporary check at Dingwall, where he was attacked with great impetuosity by Angus Dubh Mackay of Farr, or Black Angus, as he was called; but Angus was taken prisoner, and his brother Roderic Gald and many of his men were killed.

Flushed with the progress he had made, Donald now resolved to carry into execution a threat he had often made to burn the town of Aberdeen. For this purpose he ordered his army to assemble at Inverness, and summoned all the men capable of bearing arms in the Boyne and the Enzie, to join his standard on his way south. This order being complied with, the Lord of the Isles marched through Moray without opposition. He committed great excesses in Strathbogie and in the district of Garioch, which belonged to the Earl of Mar. The inhabitants of Aberdeen were in dreadful alarm at the near approach of this marauder and his fierce hordes; but their fears were allayed by the speedy appearance of a well-equipped army, commanded by the Earl of Mar, who bore a high military character, assisted by many brave knights and gentlemen in Angus and the Mearns. Among these were Sir Alexander Ogilvy, sheriff of Angus, Sir James Scrymgeour, constable of Dundee and hereditary standard-bearer of Scotland, Sir William de Abernethy of Salton, nephew to the Duke of Albany, Sir Robert Maule of Panmure, Sir Alexander Irving of Drum, and Sir Robert Melville. The Earl was also joined by Sir Robert Davidson, the Provost of Aberdeen, and a party of the burghesses.

Advancing from Aberdeen, Mar marched by Inverury, and descried the Highlanders stationed at the village of Harlaw, on the water of Ury, near its junction with the Don. Mar soon saw that he had to contend with tremendous odds; but although his forces were, it is said, only a tenth of those opposed to him, he resolved, from the confidence he had in his steel-clad knights, to risk a battle. Having placed a small but select body of knights and men-at-arms in front, under the command of the constable of Dundee and the sheriff of

Angus, the Earl drew up the main strength of his army in the rear, including the Murrays, the Straitons, the Maules, the Irvings, the Lesleys, the Lovels, the Stirlings, headed by their respective chiefs. The Earl then placed himself at the head of this body. At the head of the Islesmen and Highlanders was the Lord of the Isles, subordinate to whom were Macintosh and Maclean and other Highland chiefs, all bearing the most deadly hatred to their Saxon foes, and panting for revenge.

On a signal being given, the Highlanders and Islesmen, setting up those terrific shouts and yells which they were accustomed to raise on entering into battle, rushed forward upon their opponents; but they were received with great firmness and bravery by the knights, who, with their spears levelled, and battle-axes raised, cut down many of their impetuous but badly armed adversaries. After the Lowlanders had recovered themselves from the shock which the furious onset of the Highlanders had produced, Sir James Scrymgeour, at the head of the knights and bannerets who fought under him, cut his way through the thick columns of the Islesmen, carrying death everywhere around him; but the slaughter of hundreds by this brave party did not intimidate the Highlanders, who kept pouring in by thousands to supply the place of those who had fallen. Surrounded on all sides, no alternative remained for Sir James and his valorous companions but victory or death, and the latter was their lot. The constable of Dundee was amongst the first who suffered, and his fall so encouraged the Highlanders, that seizing and stabbing the horses, they thus unhorsed their riders, whom they despatched with their daggers. In the meantime the Earl of Mar, who had penetrated with his main army into the very heart of the enemy, kept up the unequal contest with great bravery, and, although he lost during the action almost the whole of his army, he continued the fatal struggle with a handful of men till nightfall. The disastrous result of this battle was one of the greatest misfortunes which had ever happened to the numerous respectable families in Angus and the Mearns. Many of these families lost not only their head, but every male in the house. Lesley of Balquhain is said to have

fallen with six of his sons. Besides Sir James Scrymgeour, Sir Alexander Ogilvy the sheriff of Angus, with his eldest son George Ogilvy, Sir Thomas Murray, Sir Robert Maule of Panmure, Sir Alexander Irving of Drum, Sir William Abernethy of Salton, Sir Alexander Straiton of Lauriston, James Lovel, and Alexander Stirling, and Sir Robert Davidson, Provost of Aberdeen, with 500 men-at-arms, including the principal gentry of Buchan, and the greater part of the burgesses of Aberdeen who followed their Provost, were among the slain. The Highlanders left 900 men dead on the field of battle, including the chiefs Maclean and Mackintosh. This memorable battle was fought on the eve of the feast of St. James the Apostle, July 25th, 1411. It was the final contest for supremacy between the Celt and the Teuton, and appears to have made at the time an inconceivably deep impression on the national mind. For more than a hundred years, it is said, the battle of Harlaw continued to be fought over again by schoolboys in their play. "It fixed itself in the music and the poetry of Scotland; a march, called the 'Battle of Harlaw,' continued to be a popular air down to the time of Drummond of Hawthornden, and a spirited ballad, on the same event, is still repeated in our age, describing the meeting of the armies, and the deaths of the chiefs, in no ignoble strain."¹

Mar and the few brave companions in arms who survived the battle, passed the night on the field; when morning dawned, they found that the Lord of the Isles had retreated during the night, by Inverury and the hill of Benochy. To pursue him was impossible, and he was

¹ Tytler, vol. iii. p. 177. The ballad of the Battle concludes thus:—

There was not, sin' King Kenneth's days,
 Sic strange intestine cruel strife
 In Scotlande seen, as ilk man says,
 Where monie likelie lost their life;
 Whilk made divorce tween man and wife,
 And monie children fatherless,
 Whilk in this realm has been full rife;
 Lord help these lands! our wrangs redress!

In July, on Saint James his evin,
 That four-and-twenty dismal day,
 Twelve hundred, ten score, and eleven
 Of years sin' Christ, the soothe to say;
 Men will remember, as they may,
 When thus the veritie they knew:
 And monie a nee will mournie for aye
 The brisn battle of the Harlaw.

therefore allowed to retire without molestation, and to recruit his exhausted strength.²

As soon as the news of the disaster at Harlaw reached the ears of the Duke of Albany, then regent of Scotland, he set about collecting an army, with which he marched in person to the north in autumn, with a determination to bring the Lord of the Isles to obedience. Having taken possession of the castle of Dingwall, he appointed a governor, and from thence proceeded to recover the whole of Ross. Donald retreated before him, and took up his winter-quarters in the islands. Hostilities were renewed next summer, but the contest was not long or doubtful—notwithstanding some little advantages obtained by the King of the Isles—for he was compelled to give up his claim to the earldom of Ross, to become a vassal to the Scottish crown, and to deliver hostages to secure his future good behaviour. A treaty to this effect was entered into at Pilgillie or Polgillip, the modern Loch-Gilp, in Argyle.

CHAPTER VI.

A. D. 1424—1512.

KINGS OF SCOTLAND:—

James I., 1406—1436.	James III., 1460—1483.
James II., 1436—1460.	James IV., 1483—1513.

James I.—State of Country—Policy of the King to the Highland Chiefs—Lord of the Isles—Disturbances in Sutherland—Barbarity of a Robber—James's Highland Expedition—Disturbances in Caithness—Insurrection in the West under Donald Balloch—Lord of the Isles invades Sutherland—Allan of Lorn—Machinations of Edward IV. with Island Chiefs—Rebellion of Earl of Ross—Lord of the Isles submits—Disturbances in Ross and Sutherland—Wise Policy of James IV.—Visits Highlands—Fends in Sutherland—Highlanders at Flodden.

ON the return of James I., in 1424, from his captivity in England, he found Scotland, and

² "So ended one of Scotland's most memorable battles. The contest between the Lowlanders and Donald's host was a contest between foes, of whom their contemporaries would have said that their ever being in harmony with each other, or having a feeling of common interests and common nationality, was not within the range of rational expectations. . . . It will be difficult to make those not familiar with the tone of feeling in Lowland Scotland at that time believe that the defeat of Donald of the Isles was felt as a more memorable deliverance even than that of Bannockburn."—Barton, vol. iii. pp. 101, 102.

particularly the Highlands, in a state of the most fearful insubordination. Rapine, robbery, and an utter contempt of the laws prevailed to an alarming extent, which required all the energy of a wise and prudent prince, like James, to repress. When these excesses were first reported to James, by one of his nobles, on entering the kingdom, he thus expressed himself:—"Let God but grant me life, and there shall not be a spot in my dominions where the key shall not keep the castle, and the furze-bush the cow, though I myself should lead the life of a dog to accomplish it."³ "At this period, the condition of the Highlands, so far as is discoverable from the few authentic documents which have reached our times, appears to have been in the highest degree rude and uncivilized. There existed a singular combination of Celtic and of feudal manners. Powerful chiefs, of Norman name and Norman blood, had penetrated into the remotest districts, and ruled over multitudes of vassals and serfs, whose strange and uncouth appellatives proclaim their difference of race in the most convincing manner.⁴ The tenure of lands by charter and seisin, the feudal services due by the vassal to his lord, the bands of friendship or of manrent which indissolubly united certain chiefs and nobles to each other, the baronial courts, and the complicated official pomp of feudal life, were all to be found in full strength and operation in the northern counties; but the dependence of the barons, who had taken up their residence in these wild districts, upon the king, and their allegiance and subordination to the laws, were less intimate and influential than in the Lowland divisions of the country; and as they experienced less protection, we have already seen, that in great public emergencies, when the captivity of the sovereign, or the payment of his ransom, called for the imposition of a tax upon property throughout the kingdom, these great northern chiefs thought themselves at liberty to resist the collection within their mountainous principalities.

"Besides such Soto-Norman barons, however, there were to be found in the Highlands and Isles, those fierce aboriginal chiefs, who

hated the Saxon and the Norman race, and offered a mortal opposition to the settlement of all intruders within a country which they considered their own. They exercised the same authority over the various clans or septa of which they were the chosen heads or leaders, which the baron possessed over his vassals and military followers; and the dreadful disputes and collisions which perpetually occurred between these distinct ranks of potentates, were accompanied by spoliations, ravages, imprisonments, and murders, which had at last become so frequent and so far extended, that the whole country beyond the Grampian range was likely to be cut off, by these abuses, from all regular communication with the more pacific parts of the kingdom."⁵

Having, by a firm and salutary, but perhaps severe, course of policy, restored the empire of the laws in the Lowlands, and obtained the enactment of new statutes for the future welfare and prosperity of the kingdom, James next turned his attention to his Highland dominions, which, as we have seen, were in a deplorable state of insubordination, that made both property and life insecure. The king determined to visit in person the disturbed districts, and by punishing the refractory chiefs, put an end to those tumults and enormities which had, during his minority, triumphed over the laws. James, in the year 1427, arrived at Inverness, attended by his parliament, and immediately summoned the principal chiefs there to appear before him. From whatever motives—whether from hopes of effecting a reconciliation by a ready compliance with the mandate of the king, or from a dread, in case of refusal, of the fate of the powerful barons of the south who had fallen victims to James's severity—the order of the king was obeyed, and the chiefs repaired to Inverness. No sooner, however, had they entered the hall where the parliament was sitting, than they were by order of the king arrested, ironed, and imprisoned in different apartments, and debarred all communication with each other, or with their followers. It has been supposed that these chiefs may have been entrapped by some fair promises on the part of James, and the joy

³ Fordun a Goodal, vol. ii. p. 511.

⁴ MS. Adv. Lib. Coll. Diplom. a Macfarlane, vol. i. p. 245.—MS. Cart. Moray, 263.

⁵ Tytler, vol. iii. pp. 250, 251.



James I.

which, according to Fordun, he manifested at seeing these turbulent and haughty spirits caught in the toils which he had prepared for them, favours this conjecture. The number of chiefs seized on this occasion is stated to have amounted to about forty; but the names of the principal ones only have been preserved. These were Alaster or Alexander Macdonald, Lord of the Isles; Angus Dubh Mackay, with his four sons, who could bring into the field 4,000 fighting men; Kenneth More and his son-in-law, Angus of Moray, and Macmathan, who could muster 2,000 men; Alexander Macreiny of Garmoran and John Macarthur, each of whom could bring into the field 1,000 followers. Besides these were John Ross, James Campbell, and William Lesley. The Countess of Ross, the mother of Alexander, the Lord of the Isles, and heiress of Sir Walter Lesley, was also apprehended and imprisoned at the same time.⁶

The king now determined to inflict summary vengeance upon his captives. Those who were most conspicuous for their crimes were immediately executed; among whom were James Campbell, who was tried, convicted, and hanged

for the murder of John of the Isles; and Alexander Macreiny and John Macarthur, who were beheaded. Alexander of the Isles and Angus Dubh, after a short confinement, were both pardoned; but the latter was obliged to deliver up, as a hostage for his good behaviour, his son Neill, who was confined on the Bass rock, and, from that circumstance, was afterwards named Neill-Wasse-Mackay.⁷ Besides these, many others who were kept in prison in different parts of the kingdom, were afterwards condemned and executed.

The royal clemency, which had been extended so graciously to the Lord of the Isles, met with an ungrateful return; for shortly after the king had returned to his lowland dominions, Alexander collected a force of ten thousand men in Ross and the Isles, and with this formidable body laid waste the country; plundered and devastated the crown lands, against which his vengeance was chiefly directed, and razed the royal burgh of Inverness to the ground. On hearing of these distressing events, James, with a rapidity rarely equalled, collected a force, the extent of which has not been ascertained, and marched with great speed into Lochaber, where he found the enemy, who, from the celerity of his movements, was taken almost by surprise. Alexander prepared for battle; but, before its commencement, he had the misfortune to witness the desertion of the clan Chattan, and the clan Cameron, who, to a man, went over to the royal standard. The king, thereupon, attacked Alexander's army, which he completely routed, and the latter sought safety in flight.

Reduced to the utmost distress, and seeing the impossibility of evading the active vigilance of his pursuers, who hunted him from place to place, this haughty lord, who considered himself on a par with kings, resolved to throw himself entirely on the mercy of the king, by an act of the most abject submission. Having arrived in Edinburgh, to which he had travelled in the most private manner, the humbled chief suddenly presented himself before the king, on Easter-Sunday, in the church of Holyrood, when he and his queen, surrounded by the nobles of the court, were employed in

⁶ Fordun a Hearne, vol. iv. p. 1233—4.

⁷ Sir R. Gordon, p. 64.

their devotions before the high altar. The extraordinary appearance of the fallen prince denoted the inward workings of his troubled mind. Without bonnet, arms, or ornament of any kind, his legs and arms quite bare, his body covered with only a plaid, and holding a naked sword in his hand by the point, he fell down on his knees before the king, imploring mercy and forgiveness, and, in token of his unreserved submission, offered the hilt of his sword to his majesty. At the solicitation of the queen and nobles, James spared his life, but committed him immediately to Tantallan castle, under the charge of William Earl of Angus, his nephew. This took place in the year 1429. The Countess of Ross was kept in close confinement in the ancient monastery of Inchcolm, on the small island of that name, in the Frith of Forth.⁸ The king, however, repented, and released the Lord of the Isles and his mother, after about a year's imprisonment.

About this period happened another of those bloody frays, which destroyed the internal peace of the Highlands, and brought ruin and desolation upon many families. Thomas Macneill, son of Neill Mackay, who was engaged in the battle of Tutlum Turwigh, possessed the lands of Creigh, Spanziedaill, and Palrossie, in Sutherland. Having conceived some displeasure at Mowat, the laird of Freshwick, the latter, with his party, in order to avoid his vengeance, took refuge in the chapel of St. Duffus, near the town of Tain, as a sanctuary. Thither they were followed by Thomas, who not only slew Mowat and his people, but also burnt the chapel to the ground. This outrage upon religion and humanity exasperated the king, who immediately ordered a proclamation to be issued, denouncing Thomas Macneill as a rebel, and promising his lands and possessions as a reward to any one that would kill or apprehend him. Angus Murray, son of Alexander Murray of Cubin, immediately set about the apprehension of Thomas Macneill. To accomplish his purpose, he held a secret conference with Morgan and Neill Macneill, the brothers of Thomas, at which he offered, provided they would assist him in apprehending their brother, his two daughters in marriage, and

promised to aid them in getting peaceable possession of such lands in Strathnaver as they claimed. This, he showed them, might be easily accomplished, with little or no resistance, as Neill Mackay, son of Angus Dubh, from whom the chief opposition might have been expected, was then a prisoner in the Bass, and Angus Dubh, the father, was unable, from age and infirmity, to defend his pretensions. Angus Murray also promised to request the assistance of the Earl of Sutherland. As these two brothers pretended a right to the possessions of Angus Dubh in Strathnaver, they were easily allured by these promises; they immediately apprehended their brother Thomas at Spanziedaill in Sutherland, and delivered him up to Murray, by whom he was presented to the king. Macneill was immediately executed at Inverness, and Angus Murray obtained, in terms of the royal proclamation, a grant of the lands of Palrossie and Spanziedaill from the king. The lands of Creigh fell into the hands of the Lord of the Isles, as superior, by the death and felony of Macneill.⁹

In pursuance of his promise, Murray gave his daughters in marriage respectively to Neill and Morgan Macneill, and with the consent and approbation of Robert Earl of Sutherland, he invaded Strathnaver with a party of Sutherland men, to take possession of the lands of Angus Dubh Mackay. Angus immediately collected his men, and gave the command of them to John Aberigh, his natural son, as he was unable to lead them in person. Both parties met about two miles from Tongg, at a place called Drum-ne-Coub; but, before they came to blows, Angus Dubh Mackay sent a message to Neill and Morgan, his cousins-german, offering to surrender them all his lands and possessions in Strathnaver, if they would allow him to retain Keantayle. This fair offer was, however, rejected, and an appeal was therefore immediately made to arms. A desperate conflict then took place, in which many were killed on both sides; among whom were Angus Murray and his two sons-in-law, Neill and Morgan Macneill. John Aberigh, though he gained the victory, was severely wounded, and lost one of his arms. After the battle

⁸ Fordun, vol. iv. p. 1256.

⁹ Sir Robert Gordon, pp. 64, 65.

Angus Dubh Mackay was carried, at his own request, to the field, to search for the bodies of his slain cousins, but he was killed by an arrow from a Sutherland man who lay concealed in a bush hard by.

James I. made many salutary regulations for putting an end to the disorders consequent upon the lawless state of the Highlands, and the oppressed looked up to him for protection. The following remarkable case will give some idea of the extraordinary barbarity in which the spoliators indulged:—A notorious thief, named Donald Ross, who had made himself rich with plunder, carried off two cows from a poor woman. This woman having expressed a determination not to wear shoes again till she had made a complaint to the king in person, the robber exclaimed, "It is false: I'll have you shod before you reach the court;" and thereupon, with a brutality scarcely paralleled, the cruel monster took two horse shoes, and fixed them on her feet with nails driven into the flesh. The victim of this savage act, as soon as she was able to travel, went to the king and related to him the whole circumstances of her case, which so exasperated him, that he immediately sent a warrant to the sheriff of the county, where Ross resided, for his immediate apprehension; which being effected, he and a number of his associates were sent under an escort to Perth, where the court was then held. Ross was tried and condemned, he and his friends being treated in the same manner as he had treated the poor woman; and before his execution a linen shirt, on which was painted a representation of his crime, was thrown over him, in which dress he was paraded through the streets of the town, afterwards dragged at a horse's tail, and hanged on a gallows.¹

The commotions in Strathnaver, and other parts of the Highlands, induced the king to make another expedition into that part of his dominions; previous to which he summoned a Parliament at Perth, which was held on the 15th of October, 1431, in which a land-tax, or "zeldie," was laid upon the whole lands of the kingdom, to defray the expenses of the undertaking. No contemporary record of this expe-

dition exists; but it is said that the king proceeded to Dunstaffnage castle, to punish those chiefs who had joined in Donald Balloch's insurrection; that, on his arrival there, numbers of these came to him and made their submission, throwing the whole odium of the rebellion upon the leader, whose authority, they alleged, they were afraid to resist; and that, by their means, three hundred thieves were apprehended and put to death.

For several years after this expedition the Highlands appear to have been tranquil; but, on the liberation of Neill Mackay from his confinement on the Bass, in the year 1437, fresh disturbances began. This restless chief had scarcely been released, when he entered Caithness, and spoiled the country. He was met at a place called Sandsett; but the people who came to oppose his progress were defeated, and many of them were slain. This conflict was called Ruaig Hanset; that is, the flight, or chase at Sandsett.

About the same time a quarrel took place between the Keiths and some others of the inhabitants of Caithness. As the Keiths could not depend upon their own forces, they sought the aid of Angus Mackay, son of Neill last mentioned, who had recently died. Angus agreed to join the Keiths; and accordingly, accompanied by his brother, John Roy, and a chief-tain named Iain-Mor-Mac-Iain-Riabhaich, with a company of men, he went into Caithness, and, joining the Keiths, invaded that part of Caithness hostile to the Keiths. The people of Caithness lost not a moment in assembling together, and met the Strathnaver men and the Keiths at a place called Blare-Tannie. Here a sanguinary contest took place; but victory declared for the Keiths, whose success, it is said, was chiefly owing to the prowess of Iain-Mor-Mac-Iain-Riabhaich, whose name was, in consequence, long famous in that and the adjoining country.²

After the defeat of James, Earl of Douglas, who had renounced his allegiance to James II., at Arkinholme, in 1454, he retired into Argyleshire, where he was received by the Earl of Ross, with whom, and the Lord of the Isles, he entered into an alliance. The ocean prince,

¹ Fordun a Goodal, vol. ii. p. 510.

² Sir R. Gordon, p. 69.

having a powerful fleet of 500 galleys at his command, immediately assembled his vassals, to the amount of 5,000 fighting men, and, having embarked them in his navy, gave the command of the whole to Donald Balloch, Lord of Isla, his near kinsman, a chief who, besides his possessions in Scotland, had great power in the north of Ireland. This potent chief, whose hereditary antipathy to the Scottish throne was as keen as that of his relation, entered cheerfully into the views of Douglas. With the force under his command he desolated the western coast of Scotland from Innerkip to Bute, the Cumbrays and the Island of Arran; yet formidable as he was both in men and ships, the loss was not so considerable as might have been expected, from the prudent precautions taken by the king to repel the invaders. The summary of the damage sustained is thus related in a contemporary chronicle:—"There was slain of good men fifteen; of women, two or three; of children, three or four. The plunder included five or six hundred horse, ten thousand oxen and kine, and more than a thousand sheep and goats. At the same time, they burnt down several mansions in Innerkip around the church; harried all Arran; stormed and levelled with the ground the castle of Brodick; and wasted, with fire and sword, the islands of the Cumbrays. They also levied tribute upon Bute; carrying away a hundred bolls of malt, a hundred marts, and a hundred marks of silver."³

While Donald Balloch was engaged in this expedition, the Lord of the Isles, with his kinsmen and followers to the number of five or six hundred, made an incursion into Sutherland, and encamped before the castle of Skibo. What his object was has not been ascertained; but, as a measure of precaution, the Earl of Sutherland sent Neill Murray, son of Angus Murray, who was slain at Drum-na-Coub, to watch his motions. The Lord of the Isles immediately began to commit depredations, whereupon he was attacked by Murray, and compelled to retreat into Ross with the loss of one of his captains, named Donald Dubh-ua-Soirn, and fifty of his men. Exasperated at this defeat, Macdonald sent another party of his

islanders, along with a company of men from Ross, to Strathfleet in Sutherland to lay waste the country, and thus wipe off the disgrace of his late defeat. On hearing of this fresh invasion, the Earl of Sutherland despatched his brother Robert with a sufficient force to attack the Clandonald. They met on the sands of Strathfleet, and, after a fierce and bloody struggle, the islanders and their allies were overthrown with great slaughter. Many perished in the course of their flight. This was the last hostile irruption of the Clandonald into Sutherland, as all the disputes between the Lord of the Isles and the Sutherland family were afterwards accommodated by a matrimonial alliance.

The vigorous administration of James II., which checked and controlled the haughty and turbulent spirit of his nobles, was also felt in the Highlands, where his power, if not always acknowledged, was nevertheless dreaded; but upon the death of that wise prince in 1460, and the accession of his infant son to the crown, the princes of the north again abandoned themselves to their lawless courses. The first who showed the example was Allan of Lorn of the Wood, as he was called, a nephew of Donald Balloch by his sister. Coveting the estate of his elder brother, Ker of Lorn, Allan imprisoned him in a dungeon in the island of Kerrera, with the view of starving him to death that he might the more easily acquire the unjust possession he desired; but Ker was liberated, and his property restored to him by the Earl of Argyle, to whom he was nearly related, and who suddenly attacked Allan with a fleet of galleys, defeated him, burnt his fleet, and slew the greater part of his men. This act, so justifiable in itself, roused the revengeful passions of the island chiefs, who issued from their ocean retreats and committed the most dreadful excesses.⁴

After the decisive battle of Tooton, Henry VI. and his Queen retired to Scotland to watch the first favourable opportunity of seizing the sceptre from the house of York. Edward IV., anticipating the danger that might arise to his crown by an alliance between his rival, the exiled monarch, and the king of Scotland, determined to counteract the effects of such a

³ *Auchinleck Chronicle*, p. 55.

⁴ *Auchinleck Chronicle*, pp. 58, 59.

connection by a stroke of policy. Aware of the disaffected disposition of some of the Scottish nobles, and northern and island chiefs, he immediately entered into a negotiation with John, Earl of Ross, and Donald Balloch, to detach them from their allegiance. On the 19th of October, 1461, the Earl of Ross, Donald Balloch, and his son John de Isle, held a council of their vassals and dependants at Astornish, at which it was agreed to send ambassadors to England to treat with Edward. On the arrival of these ambassadors a negotiation was entered into between them and the Earl of Douglas, and John Douglas of Balveny, his brother, both of whom had been obliged to leave Scotland for their treasons in the previous reign. These two brothers, who were animated by a spirit of hatred and revenge against the family of their late sovereign James II., warmly entered into the views of Edward, whose subjects they had become; and they concluded a treaty with the northern ambassadors which assumed as its basis nothing less than the entire conquest of Scotland. Among other conditions, it was stipulated that, upon payment of a specified sum of money to himself, his son, and ally, the Lord of the Isles should become for ever the vassal of England, and should assist Edward and his successors in the wars in Ireland and elsewhere. And, in the event of the entire subjugation of Scotland by the Earls of Ross and Douglas, the whole of the kingdom on the north of the Frith of Forth was to be divided equally between these Earls and Donald Balloch, and the estates which formerly belonged to Douglas between the Frith of Forth and the borders were to be restored to him. This singular treaty is dated London, 18th February, 1462.⁵

Pending this negotiation, the Earl of Angus, at that time one of the most powerful of the Scottish nobles, having, by the promise of an English dukedom from the exiled Henry, engaged to assist in restoring him to his crown and dominions, the Earl of Ross, before the plan had been organized, in order to counteract the attempt, broke out into open rebellion, which was characterized by all those circumstances of barbarous cruelty which distin-

guished the inroads of the princes of the islands. He first seized the castle of Inverness at the head of a small party, being admitted unawares by the governor, who did not suspect his hostile intentions. He then collected a considerable army, and proclaimed himself king of the Hebrides. With his army he entered the country of Athole, denounced the authority of the king, and commanded all taxes to be paid to him; and, after committing the most dreadful excesses, he stormed the castle of Blair, dragged the Earl and Countess of Athole from the chapel of St. Bridget, and carried them off to Isla as prisoners. It is related that the Earl of Ross thrice attempted to set fire to the holy pile, but in vain. He lost many of his war-galleys, in a storm of thunder and lightning, in which the rich booty he had taken was consigned to the deep. Preparations were immediately made by the regents of the kingdom for punishing this rebellious chief; but these became unnecessary, for, touched with remorse, he collected the remains of his plunder, and stripped to his shirt and drawers, and barefooted, he, along with his principal followers, in the same forlorn and dejected condition, went to the chapel of St. Bridget which they had lately desecrated, and there performed a penance before the altar. The Earl and Countess of Athole were thereupon voluntarily released from confinement, and the Earl of Ross was afterwards assassinated in the castle of Inverness, by an Irish harper who bore him a grudge.⁶

Although at this period an account of Orkney and Shetland does not properly belong to a history of the Highlands, as these islands had for long been the property of the king of Norway, and had a population almost purely Tentic, with a language, manners, and customs widely differing from those of the Highlanders proper; still it will not be out of place to mention here, that these islands were finally made over to Scotland in 1469, as security for the dowry of Margaret of Norway, the wife of James III.

The successor of the Lord of the Isles—who was generally more like an independent sov-

⁵ *Rotuli Scotia*, vol. ii. p. 407.

⁶ Ferrerius, p. 333.—*Lesley de Rebus Gestis Scotorum*, p. 300.

ereign than a subject of the Scottish king—not being disposed to tender the allegiance which his father had violated, the king, in the month of May, 1476, assembled a large army on the north of the Forth, and a fleet on the west coast, for the purpose of making a simultaneous attack upon him by sea and land. Seeing no hopes of making effectual resistance against such a powerful force as that sent against him, he tendered his submission to the king on certain conditions, and resigned the earldom of Ross, and the lands of Kintyre and Knapdale, into his majesty's hands. By this act he was restored to the king's favour, who forgave him all his offences, and "infet him of new" in the lordship of the Isles and the other lands which he did not renounce. The Earl of Athole, who commanded the royal army, was rewarded for this service by a grant of the lands and forest of Cluny.⁷

After the Lord of the Isles had thus resigned the earldom of Ross into the king's hands, that province was perpetually molested by incursions from the islanders, who now considered it a fit theatre for the exercise of their predatory exploits. Gillespie, cousin of the Lord of the Isles, at the head of a large body of the islanders, invaded the higher part of Ross and committed great devastation. The inhabitants, or as many as the shortness of the time would permit, amongst whom the Clankenzie were chiefly distinguished, speedily assembled, and met the islanders on the banks of the Connan, where a sharp conflict took place. The Clankenzie fought with great valour, and pressed the enemy so hard that Gillespie Maedonald was overthrown, and the greater part of his men were slain or drowned in the river, about two miles from Braile, thence called Blar-na-Paire. The predecessor of the Laird of Brodie, who happened to be with the chief of the Mackenzies at the time, fought with great courage.

For a considerable time the district of Sutherland had remained tranquil, but on the 11th of July, 1487, it again became the scene of a bloody encounter between the Mackays and the Rosses. To revenge the death of a relation, or to wipe away the stigma of a defeat, were considered sacred and paramount duties by the

Highlanders; and if, from the weakness of the clan, the minority of the chief, or any other cause, the day of deadly reckoning was delayed, the feeling which prompted revenge was never dormant, and the earliest opportunity was embraced of vindicating the honour of the clan. Angus Mackay, son of the famous Neill of the Bass, having been killed at Tarbert by a Ross, his son, John Riabhaich Mackay, applied to John Earl of Sutherland, on whom he depended, to assist him in revenging his father's death. The Earl promised his aid, and accordingly sent his uncle, Robert Sutherland, with a company of chosen men, to assist John Mackay. With this force, and such men as John Mackay and his relation Uilleam-Dubh-Mac-Iain-Abaraich, son of John Aberigh who fought at Drum-na-Coub, could collect, they invaded Strath-oy-kell, carrying fire and sword in their course, and laying waste many lands belonging to the Rosses. As soon as the Laird of Balnagown, the chief of the Rosses, heard of this attack, he collected all his forces, and attacked Robert Sutherland and John Riabhaich Mackay, at a place called Aldv-charrish. A long and obstinate battle took place; but the death of Balnagown and seventeen of the principal landed gentlemen of Ross decided the combat, for the people of Ross, being deprived of their leader, were thrown into confusion, and utterly put to flight, with great slaughter.

The fruit of this victory was a large quantity of booty, which the victors divided the same day; but the avarice of the men of Assynt, induced them to instigate John Mackay to resolve to commit one of the most perfidious and diabolical acts ever perpetrated by men who had fought on the same side. The design of the Assynt men was, to cut off Robert Sutherland and his whole party, and possess themselves of their share of the spoil, before the Earl of Sutherland could learn the result of the battle, that he might be led to suppose that his uncle and his men had all fallen in the action with the Rosses. When this plan was divulged to Uilleam-Dubh-Mac-Iain-Abaraich, he was horrified at it, and immediately sent notice to Robert Sutherland of it, that he might be upon his guard. Robert assembled his men upon receipt of this extraordinary intelligence, told them of the base intentions of John Mackay,

⁷ Lesley's *Hist.*, p. 41.—Sir R. Gordon, p. 77.

and put them in order, to be prepared for the threatened attack; but on John Riabhaich Mackay perceiving that Robert and his party were prepared to meet him, he slunk off, and went home to Strathnaver.⁸

The lawless state of society in the Highlands, which followed as a consequence from the removal of the seat of government to the Lowlands, though it often engaged the attention of the Scottish sovereigns, never had proper remedies applied to mend it. At one time the aid of force was called in, and when that was found ineffectual, the vicious principle of dividing the chiefs, that they might the more effectually weaken and destroy one another, was adopted. Both plans, as might be supposed, proved abortive. If the government had, by conciliatory measures, and by a profusion of favours, suitable to the spirit of the times, secured the attachment of the heads of the clans, the supremacy of the laws might have been vindicated, and the sovereign might have calculated upon the support of powerful and trustworthy auxiliaries in his domestic struggles against the encroachments of the nobles. Such ideas appear never to have once entered the minds of the kings, but it was reserved for James IV., who succeeded to the throne in 1488, to make the experiment. "To attach to his interest the principal chiefs of these provinces, to overawe and subdue the petty princes who affected independence, to carry into their territories, hitherto too exclusively governed by their own capricious or tyrannical institutions, the same system of a severe, but regular and rapid, administration of civil and criminal justice, which had been established in his Lowland dominions, was the laudable object of the king; and for this purpose he succeeded, with that energy and activity which remarkably distinguished him, in opening up an intercourse with many of the leading men in the northern counties. With the captain of the Clanchattan, Duncan Mackintosh; with Ewan, the son of Alan, captain of the Clancameron; with Campbell of Glenurquhay; the Macgilleouns of Duart and Lochbuy; Mackane of Ardnamurchan; the lords of Mackenzie and Grant; and the Earl of Huntley,

a baron of the most extensive power in those northern districts—he appears to have been in habits of constant and regular communication—rewarding them by presents, in the shape either of money or of grants of laud, and securing their services in reducing to obedience such of their fellow chieftains as proved contumacious, or actually rose in rebellion."⁹

But James carried his views further. Rightly judging how much the personal presence of the sovereign would be valued by his distant subjects, and the good effects which would result therefrom, he resolved to visit different parts of his northern dominions. Accordingly, in the year 1490, accompanied by his court, he rode twice from Perth across the chain of mountains which extends across the country from the border of the Mearns to the head of Loch Rannoch, which chain is known by the name of the "Mount." Again, in 1493, he twice visited the Highlands, and went as far as Dunstaffnage and Mengarry, in Ardnamurchan. In the following year he visited the isles no less than three times. His first voyage to the islands, which took place in April and May, was conducted with great state. He was attended by a vast suite, many of whom fitted out vessels at their own expense. The grandeur which surrounded the king impressed the islanders with a high idea of his wealth and power; and his condescension and familiarity with all classes of his subjects, acquired for him a popularity which added strength to his throne. During these marine excursions the youthful monarch indulged his passion for sailing and hunting, and thereby relieved the tediousness of business by the recreation of agreeable and innocent pleasures.

The only opposition which James met with during these excursions was from the restless Lord of the Isles, who had the temerity to put the king at defiance, notwithstanding the repeated and signal marks of the royal favour he had experienced. But James was not to be trifled with, for he summoned the island prince to stand his trial for "treason in Kintyre;" and in a parliament held in Edinburgh shortly after the king's return from the north, "Sir John of the Isles," as he is named in the trea-

⁸ Sir R. Gordon, pp. 78, 79.

⁹ Tytler, vol. iv. pp. 367, 368.

surer's accounts, was stripped of his power, and his possessions were forfeited to the crown.

One of those personal petty feuds which were so prevalent in the Highlands, occurred about this time. Alexander Sutherland of Dilred, being unable or unwilling to repay a sum of money he had borrowed from Sir James Dunbar of Cumnock, the latter took legal measures to secure his debt by appraising part of Dilred's lands. This proceeding vexed the laird of Dilred exceedingly, and he took an umbrage at the Dunbars, who had recently settled in Sutherland, "grudgeing, as it were," says Sir R. Gordon, "that a stranger should brawe (brave) him at his owne doors." Happening to meet Alexander Dunbar, brother of Sir James, who had lately married Lady Margaret Baillie, Countess Dowager of Sutherland, high words passed between them, a combat ensued, and, after a long contest, Alexander Dunbar was killed. Sir James Dunbar thereupon went to Edinburgh, and laid the matter before King James IV., who was so exasperated at the conduct of Alexander Sutherland, that he immediately proclaimed him a rebel, sent messengers everywhere in search of him, and promised his lands to any person that would apprehend him. After some search he was apprehended with ten of his followers by his uncle, Y-Roy-Mackay, brother of John Reawigh Mackay already mentioned, who sent him to the king. Dilred was tried, condemned, and executed, and his lands declared forfeited. For this service, Y-Roy-Mackay obtained from the king a grant of the lands of Armdall, Far, Golspietour, Kinnald, Kilcolmkill, and Dilred, which formerly belonged to Alexander Sutherland, as was noted in Mackay's infement, dated in 1449.¹ "Avarice," says Sir R. Gordon, "is a strange vyce, which respects neither blood nor freindship. This is the first infement that any of the familie of Macky had from the king, so far as I can perceave by the records of this kingdom; and they wer until this tyme possessors onlie of ther lands in Strathnaver, not caring much for any charters or infements, as most pairts of the Highlanders have alwise done."

The grant of the king as to the lands over

¹ Sir R. Gordon, p. 80.

which Sir James Dunbar's security extended, was called in question by Sir James, who obtained a decree before the lords of council and session, in February, 1512, setting aside the right of Y-Roy-Mackay, and ordaining the Earl of Sutherland, as superior of the lands, to receive Sir James Dunbar as his vassal.

A lamentable instance of the ferocity of these times is afforded in the case of one of the Earls of Sutherland, who upon some provocation slew two of his nephews. This earl, who was named John, had a natural brother, Thomas Moir, who had two sons, Robert Sutherland and the Keith, so called on account of his being brought up by a person of that name. The young men had often annoyed the Earl, and on one occasion they entered his castle of Dunrobin to brave him to his face, an act which so provoked the Earl, that he instantly killed Robert in the house. The Keith, after receiving several wounds, made his escape, but he was overtaken and slain at the Clayside, near Dunrobin, which from that circumstance was afterwards called Ailein-Cheith, or the bush of the Keith.

In 1513 a troop of Highlanders helped to swell the Scotch army on the ever-memorable and disastrous field of Flodden, but from their peculiar mode of fighting, so different from that of the Lowlanders, appear to have been more a hindrance than a help.

CHAPTER VII.

A. D. 1516—1588.

KINGS OF SCOTLAND:—

James V., 1513—1542. | Mary, 1542—1567.
James VI., 1567—1603.

Doings in Sutherland—Battle of Torran-Dubh—Feud between the Keiths and the clan Gun—John Mackay and Murray of Aberscoors—Alexander Sutherland, the bastard, claims the Earldom—Contests between John Mackay and the Master of Sutherland—Earls of Caithness and Sutherland—Dissensions among the clan Chattan—Hector Macintosh elected Captain—His doings—Disturbances in Sutherland—Fends between the Clanranald and Lord Lovat—The 'Field of Shirts'—Earl of Huntly's Expedition—Commutations in Sutherland—Earl of Huntly and the Clanranald—The Queen Regent visits the Highlands—Commutations in Sutherland—Queen Mary's Expedition against Huntly—Earl and Countess of Sutherland poisoned—Earl of Caithness' treatment of the young Earl of Sutherland—Quarrel between

the Monroes and clan Kenzie—Doings of the Earl of Caithness—Unruly state of the North—The clan Chattan—Reconciliation of the Earls of Sutherland and Caithness—The Earl of Sutherland and the clan Gun—Disastrous Feud between the Macdonalds and Macleans—Disputes between the Earls of Sutherland and Caithness—Reconciliation between Mackay and the Earl of Sutherland.

In the year 1516, Adam Earl of Sutherland, in anticipation of threatened dangers in the north, entered into bonds of friendship and alliance with the Earl of Caithness for mutual protection and support. The better to secure the goodwill and assistance of the Earl of Caithness, Earl Adam made a grant of some lands upon the east side of the water of Ullly; but the Earl of Caithness, although he kept possession of the lands, joined the foes of his ally and friend. The Earl of Sutherland, however, would have found a more trustworthy supporter in the person of Y-Roy-Mackay, who had come under a written obligation to serve him the same year; but Mackay died, and a contest immediately ensued in Strathnaver, between John and Donald Mackay his bastard sons, and Neill-Naverigh Mackay, brother of Y-Roy, to obtain possession of his lands. John took possession of all the lands belonging to his father in Strathnaver; but his uncle Neill laid claim to them, and applied to the Earl of Caithness for assistance to recover them. The Earl, after many entreaties, put a force under the command of Neill and his two sons, with which they entered Strathnaver, and obtaining an accession of strength in that country, they dispossessed John Mackay, who immediately went to the clan Chattan and clan Kenzie, to crave their aid and support, leaving his brother Donald Mackay to defend himself in Strathnaver as he best could. Donald not having a sufficient force to meet his uncle and cousins in open combat, had recourse to a stratagem which succeeded entirely to his mind. With his little band he, under cloud of night, surprised his opponents at Delreavigh in Strathnaver, and slew both his cousins and the greater part of their men, and thus utterly destroyed the issue of Neill. John Mackay, on hearing of this, immediately joined his brother, and drove out of Strathnaver all persons who had favoured the pretensions of his uncle Neill-Naverigh. This unfortunate old man, after being abandoned by the Earl of Caithness, threw

himself upon the generosity of his nephews, requesting that they would merely allow him a small maintenance to keep him from poverty during the remainder of his life; but these unnatural relatives, regardless of mercy and the ties of blood, ordered Neill to be beheaded in their presence by the hands of Claff-na-Gep, his own foster brother.²

In the year 1517, advantage was taken by John Mackay of the absence of the Earl of Sutherland, who had gone to Edinburgh to transact some business connected with his estates, to invade the province of Sutherland, and to burn and spoil every thing which came in his way. He was assisted in this lawless enterprise by two races of people dwelling in Sutherland, called the Siol-Phaill, and the Siol-Thomais, and by Neil-Mac-Iain-Mac-Angus of Assynt, and his brother John Mor-Mac-Iain, with some of their countrymen. As soon as the Countess of Sutherland, who had remained at home, heard of this invasion, she prevailed upon Alexander Sutherland, her bastard brother, to oppose Mackay. Assisted chiefly by John Murray of Aberscors, and Uilleam Mac-Sheumais-Mhic-Chruiner, chief of the clan Gun in Sutherland, Alexander convened hastily the inhabitants of the country and went in search of the enemy. He met John Mackay and his brother Donald, at a place called Torran-Dubh or Cuocan-Dubh, near Rogart in Strathfleet. Mackay's force was prodigious, for he had assembled not only the whole strength of Strathnaver, Durines, Edderachillis, and Assynt, with the Siol-Phaill and Siol-Thomais; but also all the disorderly and idle men of the whole diocese of Caithness, with all such as he could entice to join him from the west and north-west isles, to accompany him in his expedition, buoyed up with the hopes of plunder. But the people of Sutherland were nowise dismayed at the appearance of this formidable host, and made preparations for an attack. A desperate struggle commenced, and after a long contest, Mackay's vanguard was driven back upon the position occupied by himself. Mackay having rallied the retreating party, selected a number of the best and ablest men he could find, and having placed the remainder of his army under

² Sir Robert Gordon, p. 90.

the command of his brother Donald, to act as a reserve in case of necessity, he made a furious attack upon the Sutherland men, who received the enemy with great coolness and intrepidity. The chiefs on both sides encouraged their men to fight for the honour of their clans, and in consequence the fight was severe and bloody; but in the end the Sutherland men, after great slaughter, and after prodigies of valour had been displayed by both parties, obtained the victory. Mackay's party was almost entirely cut off, and Mackay himself escaped with difficulty. The victors next turned their attention to the reserve under the command of Donald Mackay; but Donald dreading the fate of his brother, fled along with his party, which immediately dispersed. They were, however, closely pursued by John Murray and Uilleam Mac-Sheumais, till the darkness of the night prevented the pursuit. In this battle, two hundred of the Strathnaver men, thirty-two of the Siol-Phaill, and fifteen of the Siol-Thomais, besides many of the Assynt men, and their commander, Niall-Mac-Iain-Mac-Aonghais, a valiant chieftain, were slain. John Mor-Mac-Iain, the brother of this chief, escaped with his life after receiving many wounds. Of the Sutherland men, thirty-eight only were slain. Sir Robert Gordon says that this "was the greatest conflict that hitherto has been fought in between the inhabitants of these euntreys, or within the dioc of Cateynes, to our knowledge."³

Shortly after the battle of Torran-Dubh, Uilleam Mac-Sheumais, called Cattigh, chief of the clan Gun, killed George Keith of Aikregell with his son and twelve of their followers, at Drumnoy, in Sutherland, as they were travelling from Invergie to Caitness. This act was committed by Mac-Sheumais to revenge the slaughter of his grandfather (the Cruner,) who had been slain by the Keiths, under the following circumstances. A long feud had existed between the Keiths and the clan Gun, to reconcile which, a meeting was appointed at the chapel of St. Tayr in Caitness, near Girnigoe, of twelve horsemen on each side. The Cruner, then chief of the clan Gun, with some of his sons and his principal kinsmen, to the number of twelve in all, came to the

chapel at the appointed time. As soon as they arrived, they entered the chapel and prostrated themselves in prayer before the altar. While employed in this devotional act, the laird of Invergie and Aikregell arrived with twelve horses, and two men on each horse. After dismounting, the whole of this party rushed into the chapel armed, and attacked the Cruner and his party unawares. The Clan Gun, however, defended themselves with great intrepidity, and although the whole twelve were slain, many of the Keiths were also killed. For nearly two centuries the blood of the slain was to be seen on the walls of the chapel, which it had stained. James Gun, one of the sons of the Cruner, being absent, immediately on hearing of his father's death, retired with his family into Sutherland, where he settled, and where his son William Mac-Sheumais, or Mac-James otherwise William Cattigh, was born.

As John Mackay imputed his defeat at Torran-Dubh mainly to John Murray of Aber-scors, he resolved to take the first convenient opportunity of revenging himself, and wiping off the disgrace of his discomfiture. He, therefore, not being in a condition himself to undertake an expedition, employed two brothers, William and Donald, his kinsmen, chieftains of the Sliochd-Iain-Abaraich, with a company of men, to attack Murray. The latter having mustered his forces, the parties met at a place called Loch-Salchie, not far from the Torran-Dubh, where a sharp skirmish took place, in which Murray proved victorious. The two Strathnaver chieftains and the greater part of their men were slain, and the remainder were put to flight. The principal person who fell on Murray's side was his brother John-Roy, whose loss he deeply deplored.

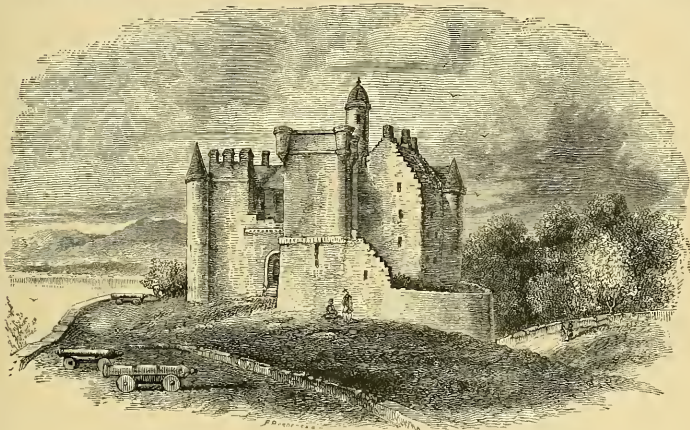
Exasperated at this second disaster, John Mackay sent John Croy and Donald, two of his nephews, sons of Angus Mackay, who was killed at Morinsh in Ross, at the head of a number of chosen men, to plunder and burn the town of Pitfour, in Strathfleet, which belonged to John Murray; but they were equally unsuccessful, for John Croy Mackay and some of his men were slain by the Murrays, and Donald was taken prisoner. In consequence of these repeated reverses, John Mackay submitted himself to the Earl of Sutherland on

³ Sir R. Gordon, p. 92.

his return from Edinburgh, and granted him his bond of service, in the year 1518. But, notwithstanding this submission, Mackay afterwards tampered with Alexander Sutherland, the bastard, and having gained his favour by giving his sister to Sutherland in marriage, he prevailed upon him to rise against the Earl of Sutherland. All these commotions in the north happened during the minority of King James V., when, as Sir R. Gordon says, "everie man thought to escape unpunished, and cheiflie these who were remotest from the seat of justice."⁴

This Alexander Sutherland was son of John,

the third of that name, Earl of Sutherland, and as he pretended that the Earl and his mother had entered into a contract of marriage, he laid claim, on the death of the Earl, to the title and estates, as a legitimate descendant of Earl John, his father. By the entreaties of Adam Gordon, Lord of Aboyne, who had married Lady Elizabeth, the sister and sole heiress of Earl John, Alexander Sutherland judicially renounced his claim in presence of the sheriff of Inverness, on the 25th of July, 1509. He now repented of what he had done, and, being instigated by the Earl of Caithness and John Mackay, mortal foes to the house of Suther-



Old Dunrobin Castle.

land, he renewed his pretensions. Earl Adam, perceiving that he might incur some danger in making an appeal to arms, particularly as the clans and tribes of the country, with many of whom Alexander had become very popular, were broken into factions and much divided on the question betwixt the two, endeavoured to win him over by offering him many favourable conditions, again to renounce his claims, but in vain. He maintained the legitimacy of his descent, and alleged that the renunciation he had granted at Inverness had been obtained from him contrary to his inclination, and against the advice of his best friends.

Having collected a considerable force, he, in

absence of the earl, who was in Strathbogie, attacked Dunrobin castle, the chief strength of the earl, which he took. In this siege he was chiefly supported by Alexander Terrell of the Doill, who, in consequence of taking arms against the earl, his superior, lost all his lands, and was afterwards apprehended and executed. As soon as the earl heard of the insurrection, he despatched Alexander Lesley of Kinninuvy, with a body of men, into Sutherland to assist John Murray of Aberscours, who was already at the head of a force to support the earl. They immediately besieged Dunrobin, which surrendered. Alexander had retired to Strathnaver, but he again returned into Sutherland with a fresh body of men, and laid waste the country. After putting to death several of his

⁴ Sir R. Gordon, p. 93.

own kinsmen who had joined the earl, he descended farther into the country, towards the parishes of Loth and Clyne. Meeting with little or no opposition, the bastard grew careless, and being observed wandering along the Sutherland coast, flushed with success and regardless of danger, the earl formed the design of cutting him entirely off. With this view, he directed Alexander Lesley of Kinninuvy, John Murray, and John Scorrigh-Mac-Finlay, one of the Siol-Thomais, to hover on Sutherland's outskirts, and to keep skirmishing with him till he, the earl, should collect a sufficient force with which to attack him. Having collected a considerable body of resolute men, the earl attacked the bastard at a place called Ald-Quhillin, by East Clentredaill, near the sea side. A warm contest ensued, in which Alexander Sutherland was taken prisoner, and the most of his men were slain, including John Bane, one of his principal supporters, who fell by the hands of John Scorrigh-Mac-Finlay. After the battle Sutherland was immediately beheaded by Alexander Lesley on the spot, and his head sent to Dunrobin on a spear, which was placed upon the top of the great tower, "which shews us" (as Sir Robert Gordon, following the superstition of his times, curiously observes), "that whatsoever by fate is allotted, though sometimes forsheved, can never be avoyded. For the witches had told Alexander the bastard that his head should be the highest that ever wes of the Southerlands; which he did foolishlye interpret that some day he should be Earl of Southerland, and in honor above all his predecessors. Thus the divell and his ministers, the witches, deceaving still such as trust in them, will either find or frame predictions for everie action or event, which doeth ever fall out contrarie to ther expectations; a kynd of people to all men unfaithfull, to hopers deceaful, and in all cuntries allwise forbidden, allwise reteaned and manteaned."⁵

The Earl of Sutherland being now far advanced in life, retired for the most part to Strathbogy and Aboyne, to spend the remainder of his days amongst his friends, and intrusted the charge of the country to Alexander Gordon, his eldest son, a young man of great intrepidity

and talent. The restless chief John Mackay, still smarting under his misfortunes, and thirsting for revenge, thought the present a favourable opportunity for retrieving his losses. With a considerable force, therefore, he invaded Sutherland, and entered the parish of Creigh, which he intended to ravage, but the Master of Sutherland hastened thither, attacked Mackay, and forced him to retreat into Strathnaver with some loss. Mackay then assembled a large body of his countrymen and invaded the Breachat. He was again defeated by Alexander Gordon at the Grinds during a keen skirmish. Hitherto Mackay had been allowed to hold the lands of Grinds, and some other possessions in the west part of Sutherland, but the Master of Sutherland now dispossessed him of all these as a punishment for his recent conduct. Still dreading a renewal of Mackay's visits, the Master of Sutherland resolved to retaliate, by invading Strathnaver in return, and thereby showing Mackay what he might in future expect if he persevered in continuing his visits to Sutherland. Accordingly, he collected a body of stout and resolute men, and entered Strathnaver, which he pillaged and burnt, and, having collected a large quantity of booty, returned into Sutherland. In entering Strathnaver, the Master of Sutherland had taken the road to Strathully, passing through Mackay's bounds in the hope of falling in with and apprehending him, but Mackay was absent on a *creach* excursion into Sutherland. In returning, however, through the Diric Moor and the Breachat, Alexander Gordon received intelligence that Mackay with a company of men was in the town of Lairg, with a quantity of cattle he had collected in Sutherland, on his way home to Strathnaver. He lost no time in attacking Mackay, and such was the celerity of his motions, that his attack was as sudden as unexpected. Mackay made the best resistance he could, but was put to the rout, and many of his men were killed. He himself made his escape with great difficulty, and saved his life by swimming to the island of Eilean-Minric, near Lairg, where he lay concealed during the rest of the day. All the cattle which Mackay had carried away were rescued and carried back into Sutherland. The following day Mackay left the island, returned home to his country,

⁵ Sir R. Gordon, pp 96, 97.

and again submitted himself to the Master and his father, the Earl, to whom he a second time gave his bond of service and manrent in the year 1522.⁶

As the Earl of Caithness had always taken a side against the Sutherland family in these different quarrels, the Earl of Sutherland brought an action before the Lords of Council and Session against the Earl of Caithness, to recover back from him the lands of Strathully, on the ground, that the Earl of Caithness had not fulfilled the condition on which the lands were granted to him, viz., to assist the Earl of Sutherland against his enemies. There were other minor points of dispute between the earls, to get all which determined they both repaired to Edinburgh. Instead, however, of abiding the issue of a trial at law before the judges, both parties, by the advice of mutual friends, referred the decision of all the points in dispute on either side to Gavin Dunbar,⁷ bishop of Aberdeen, who pronounced his award at Edinburgh, on the 11th March, 1524, his judgment appearing to have satisfied both parties, as the earls lived in peace with one another ever after.

The year 1526 was signalized by a great dissension among the clan Chattan. The chief and head of that clan was Lauchlan Macintosh of Dunnachtan, "a verrie honest and wyse gentleman," says Bishop Lesley, "an barroun of gude rent, quha keipit hes hole ken, friendes and tennentis in honest and guid rewll;"⁸ and according to Sir Robert Gordon, "a man of great possessions, and of such excellencies of witt and judgement, that with great commendation he did conteyn all his followers within the limits of ther duties."⁹ The strictness with which this worthy chief curbed the lawless and turbulent dispositions of his clan raised up many enemies, who, as Bishop Lesley says, were "impacient of vertuous living." At the head of this restless party was James Malcolmeson, a near kinsman of the chief, who, instigated by his worthless

companions, and the temptation of ruling the clan, murdered the good chief. Afraid to face the well-disposed part of the clan, to whom the chief was beloved, Malcolmeson, along with his followers, took refuge in the island in the loch of Rothiemurchus; but the enraged clan followed them to their hiding places and despatched them.

As the son of the deceased chief was of tender age, and unable to govern the clan, with common consent they made choice of Hector Macintosh, a bastard brother of the late chief, to act as captain till his nephew should arrive at manhood. In the meantime the Earl of Moray, who was uncle to young Macintosh, the former chief having been married to the earl's sister, took away his nephew and placed him under the care of his friends for the benefit of his education, and to bring him up virtuously. Hector Macintosh was greatly incensed at the removal of the child, and used every effort to get possession of him; but meeting with a refusal he became outrageous, and laid so many plans for accomplishing his object, that his intentions became suspected, as it was thought he could not wish so ardently for the custody of the child without some bad design. Baffled in every attempt, Hector, assisted by his brother William, collected a body of followers, and invaded the Earl of Moray's lands. They overthrew the fort of Dykes, and besieged the castle of Tarnoway, the country surrounding which they plundered, burnt the houses of the inhabitants, and slew a number of men, women, and children. Raising the siege of Tarnoway, Hector and his men then entered the country of the Ogilvies and laid siege to the castle of Pettens, which belonged to the Laird of Durnens, one of the families of the Ogilvies, and which, after some resistance, surrendered. No less than twenty-four gentlemen of the name of Ogilvie were massacred on this occasion. After this event the Macintoshes and the party of banditti they had collected, roamed over the whole of the adjoining country, carrying terror and dismay into every bosom, and plundering, burning, and destroying everything within their reach. To repress disorders which called so loudly for redress, King James V., by the advice of his council, granted a commission to the Earl of

⁶ Sir R. Gordon, p. 97.

⁷ It was this excellent Bishop who built, at his own expense, the beautiful bridge of seven arches on the Dee, near Aberdeen. The Episcopal arms cut on some of the stones are almost as entire as when dislised by the hands of the sculptor.

⁸ *Hist. of Scotland*, p. 137

⁹ p. 99.

Moray to take measures accordingly. Having a considerable force put under his command, the earl went in pursuit of Macintosh and his party, and having surprised them, he took upwards of 300 of them¹ and hanged them, along with William Macintosh, the brother of Hector. A singular instance of the fidelity of the Highlanders to their chiefs is afforded in the present case, where, out of such a vast number as suffered, not one would reveal the secret of Hector Macintosh's retreat, although promised their lives for the discovery. "Ther faith wes so true to ther captane, that they culd not be persuaded, either by fair meanes, or by any terror of death, to break the same or to betray their master."²

Seeing no hopes of escaping the royal vengeance but by a ready submission, Hector Macintosh, by advice of Alexander Dunbar, Dean of Moray, tendered his obedience to the king, which was accepted, and he was received into the royal favour. He did not, however, long survive, for he was assassinated in St. Andrews by one James Spence, who was in consequence beheaded. After the death of Hector, the clan Chattan remained tranquil during the remaining years of the minority of the young chief, who, according to Bishop Lesley, "wes sua well brocht up by the meenes of the Erle of Murray and the Laird of Phindlater in vertue, honestie, and civile polieye, that after he had received the government of his cuntrey, he was a mirrour of vertue to all the hieland captanis in Scotland."³ But the young chieftain's "honestie and civile polieye" not suiting the ideas of those who had concurred in the murder of his father, a conspiracy was formed against him by some of his nearest kinsmen to deprive him of his life, which unfortunately took effect.

The Highlands now enjoyed repose for some years. John Mackay died in 1529, and was succeeded by his brother Donald, who remained quiet during the life of Adam Earl of Sutherland, to whom his brother had twice granted his bond of service. But, upon the death of

that nobleman, he began to molest the inhabitants of Sutherland. In 1542 he attacked the village of Knoekartol, which he burnt; and at the same time he plundered Strathbroray. To oppose his farther progress, Sir Hugh Kennedy collected as many of the inhabitants of Sutherland as the shortness of the time would permit, and, being accompanied by Gilbert Gordon of Gartay, John Murray of Aberscoors, his son Hutcheon Murray, and Mac-Mhic-Sheumais of Killiernan, he attacked Mackay quite unawares near Alt-Na-Beth. Notwithstanding this unexpected attack, Mackay's men met their assailants with great firmness, but the Strathnaver men were ultimately obliged to retreat with the loss of their booty and a great number of slain, amongst whom was John Mackean-Mac-Angus, chief of Sliochd-Mhic-Iain-Mhic-Hutcheon, in Edderachillis. Though closely pressed by Gilbert Gordon and Hutcheon Murray, Donald Mackay made good his retreat into Strathnaver.

By no means disheartened at his defeat, and anxious to blot out the stain which it had thrown upon him, he soon returned into Sutherland with a fresh force, and encamped near Skibo. Hutcheon Murray collected some Sutherland men, and with them he attacked Mackay, and kept him in check till an additional force which he expected should arrive. As soon as Mackay saw this new body of men approaching, with which he was quite unable to contend, he retreated suddenly into his own country, leaving several of his men dead on the field. This affair was called the skirmish of Loch-Buy. This mode of annoyance, which continued for some time, was put an end to by the apprehension of Donald Mackay, who, being brought before the Earls of Huntly and Sutherland, was, by their command, committed a close prisoner to the castle of Foulis, where he remained a considerable time in captivity. At last, by means of Donald Mac-Iain-Mhoir, a Strathnaver man, he effected his escape, and, returning home, reconciled himself with the Earl of Sutherland, to whom he gave his bond of service and manrent, on the 8th of April, 1549.

During the reign of James V. some respect was paid in the Highlands to the laws; but the divisions which fell out amongst the no-

¹ This is the number given by Bishop Lesley, whose account must be preferred to that of Sir R. Gordon, who states it at upwards of 200, as the Bishop lived about a century before Sir Robert.

² Sir R. Gordon, p. 100.

³ *Hist.*, p. 138.

bility, the unquiet state of the nation during the minority of the infant queen, and the wars with England, relaxed the springs of government, and the consequence was that the usual scenes of turbulence and oppression soon displayed themselves in the Highlands, accompanied with all those circumstances of ferocity which rendered them so revolting to humanity. The Clanranald was particularly active in these lawless proceedings. This clan bore great enmity to Hugh, Lord Lovat; and because Randal, son of Donald Glass of Moidart, was sister's son of Lovat, they conceived a prejudice against him, dispossessed him of his lands, and put John Macranald, his cousin, in possession of the estate. Lovat took up the cause of his nephew, and restored him to the possession of his property; but the restless clan dispossessed Randal again, and laid waste part of Lovat's lands in Glenelg. These disorders did not escape the notice of the Earl of Arran, the governor of the kingdom, who, by advice of his council, granted a special commission to the Earl of Huntly, making him lieutenant-general of all the Highlands, and of Orkney and Zetland. He also appointed the Earl of Argyle lieutenant of Argyle and the Isles. The Earl of Huntly lost no time in raising a large army in the north, with which he marched, in May, 1544, attended by the Macintoshes, Grants, and Frasers, against the clan Cameron and the clan Randal, and the people of Moylart and Knoydart, whose principal captains were Ewen Allenson, Ronald M'Concilglas, and John Moydart. These had wasted and plundered the whole country of Urquhart and Glenmorrison, belonging to the Laird of Grant, and the country of Abertarf, Strathglass, and others, the property of Lord Lovat. They had also taken absolute possession of these different territories as their own properties, which they intended to possess and enjoy in all time coming. But, by the mediation of the Earl of Argyle, they immediately dislodged themselves upon the Earl of Huntly's appearance, and retired to their own territories in the west.

In returning to his own country, Lovat was accompanied by the Grants and Macintoshes as far as Gloy, afterwards called the Nine-Mile-Water, and they even offered to escort him home in case of danger; but, having no appre-

hensions, he declined, and they returned home by Badenoch. This was a fatal error on the part of Lovat, for, as soon as he arrived at Letterfinlay, he was informed that the Clanranald were at hand, in full march, to intercept him. To secure an important pass, he despatched Iain-Cleireach, one of his principal officers, with 50 men; but, from some cause or other, Iain-Cleireach did not accomplish his object; and, as soon as Lovat came to the north end of Loch Lochy, he perceived the Clanranald descending the hill from the west, to the number of about 500, divided into seven companies. Lovat was thus placed in a position in which he could neither refuse nor avoid battle. The day (3d July) being extremely hot, Lovat's men, who amounted to about 300, stripped to the shirts, from which circumstance the battle was called *Blar-Nan-Leine*, i.e., the Field of Shirts. A sort of skirmish at first took place, first with bows and arrows, which lasted a considerable time, until both sides had expended their shafts. The combatants then drew their swords, and rushed in true Highland fashion on each other, with fierce and deadly intent. The slaughter was tremendous, and few escaped on either side. Lord Lovat, with 300 of the surname of Fraser, and other followers, were left dead on the field. Lovat's eldest son, a youth of great accomplishments, who had received his education in France, whence he had lately arrived, was mortally wounded, and taken prisoner. He died within three days. Great as was the loss on the side of the Frasers, that on the opposite side was comparatively still greater. According to a tradition handed down, only four of the Frasers and ten of the Clanranald remained alive. The darkness of the night alone put an end to the combat. This was an unfortunate blow to the clan Fraser, which, tradition says, would have been almost entirely annihilated but for the happy circumstance that the wives of eighty of the Frasers who were slain were pregnant at the time, and were each of them afterwards delivered of a male child.⁴

As soon as intelligence of this disaster was brought to the Earl of Huntly, he again re-

⁴ Lesley, p. 184.—Sir R. Gordon, pp. 109, 110.—Shaw's *Moray*, pp. 265, 266.

turned with an army, entered Lochaber, which he laid waste, and apprehended many of the leading men of the hostile tribes, whom he put to death.

The great power conferred on the Earl of Huntly, as lieutenant-general in the north of Scotland, and the promptitude and severity with which he put down the insurrections of some of the chiefs alluded to, raised up many enemies against him. As he in company with the Earl of Sutherland was about to proceed to France for the purpose of conveying the queen regent to that country, in the year 1550, a conspiracy was formed against him, at the head of which was Macintosh, chief of the clan Chattan. This conspiracy being discovered to the earl, he ordered Macintosh to be immediately apprehended and brought to Strathbogie, where he was beheaded in the month of August of that year. His lands were also forfeited at the same time. This summary proceeding excited the sympathy and roused the indignation of the friends of the deceased chief, particularly of the Earl of Cassilis. A commotion was about to ensue, but matters were adjusted for a time, by the prudence of the queen regent, who recalled the act of forfeiture and restored Macintosh's heir to all his father's lands. But the clan Chattan were determined to avail themselves of the first favourable opportunity of being revenged upon the earl, which they, therefore, anxiously looked for. As Lauchlan Macintosh, a near kinsman of the chief, was suspected of having betrayed his chief to the earl, the clan entered his castle of Pettie by stealth, slew him, and banished all his dependants from the country of the clan.

About the same time the province of Sutherland again became the scene of some commotions. The earl having occasion to leave home, intrusted the government of the country to Alexander Gordon, his brother, who ruled it with great justice and severity; but the people, disliking the restraints put upon them by Alexander, created a tumult, and placed John Sutherland, son of Alexander Sutherland, the bastard, at their head. Seizing the favourable opportunity, as it appeared to them, when Alexander Gordon was attending divine service in the church at Golspikirkton, they proceeded

to attack him, but receiving notice of their intentions, he collected the little company he had about him, and went out of church resolutely to meet them. Alarmed at seeing him and his party approach, the people immediately dispersed and returned every man to his own house. But William Murray, son of Caen Murray, one of the family of Pulrossie, indignant at the affront offered to Alexander Gordon, shortly afterwards killed John Sutherland upon the Nether Green of Dunrobin, in revenge for which murder William Murray was himself thereafter slain by the Laird of Clyne.

The Mackays also took advantage of the Earl of Sutherland's absence, to plunder and lay waste the country. Y-Mackay, son of Donald, assembled the Strathnaver men and entered Sutherland, but Alexander Gordon forced him back into Strathnaver, and not content with acting on the defensive, he entered Mackay's country, which he wasted, and carried off a large booty in goods and cattle, in the year 1551. Mackay, in his turn, retaliated, and this system of mutual aggression and spoliation continued for several years.⁵

During the absence of the Earl of Huntly in France, John of Moydart, chief of the Clanranald, returned from the isles and recommenced his usual course of rapine. The queen regent, on her return from France, being invested with full authority, sent the Earl of Huntly on an expedition to the north, for the purpose of apprehending Clanranald and putting an end to his outrages. The earl having mustered a considerable force, chiefly Highlanders of the clan Chattan, passed into Moydart and Knoydart, but his operations were paralyzed by disputes in his camp. The chief and his men having abandoned their own country, the earl proposed to pursue them in their retreats among the fastnesses of the Highlands; but his principal officers, who were chiefly from the Lowlands, unaccustomed to such a mode of warfare in such a country, demurred; and as the earl was afraid to entrust himself with the clan Chattan, who owed him a deep grudge on account of the execution of their last chief, he abandoned the

⁵ Sir R. Gordon, p. 133.

enterprise and returned to the low country. Sir Robert Gordon says that the failure of the expedition was owing to a tumult raised in the earl's camp by the clan Chattan, who returned home; but we are rather disposed to consider Bishop Lesley's account, which we have followed, as the more correct.⁶

The failure of this expedition gave great offence to the queen, who, instigated it is supposed by Huntly's enemies, attributed it to negligence on his part. The consequence was, that the earl was committed a prisoner to the castle of Edinburgh in the month of October, where he remained till the month of March following. He was compelled to renounce the earldom of Moray and the lordship of Abernethy, with his tacks and possessions in Orkney and Zetland, and the tacks of the lands of the earldom of Mar and of the lordship of Strathdie, of which he was bailie and steward, and he was moreover condemned to a banishment of five years in France. But as he was about to leave the kingdom, the queen, taking a more favourable view of his conduct, recalled the sentence of banishment, and restored him to the office of chancellor, of which he had been deprived; and to make this act of leniency somewhat palatable to the earl's enemies, the queen exacted a heavy pecuniary fine from the earl.

The great disorders which prevailed in the Highlands at this time, induced the queen-regent to undertake a journey thither in order to punish these breaches of the law, and to repress existing tumults. She accordingly arrived at Inverness in the month of July, 1555, where she was met by John, Earl of Sutherland, and George, Earl of Caithness. Although the latter nobleman was requested to bring his countrymen along with him to the court, he neglected or declined to do so, and he was therefore committed to prison at Inverness, Aberdeen, and Edinburgh, successively, and he was not restored to liberty till he paid a considerable sum of money. Y-Mackay of Far was also summoned to appear before the queen at Inverness, to answer for his spoliations committed in the country of Sutherland during the absence of Earl John in France;

but he refused to appear. Whereupon the queen granted a commission to the Earl of Sutherland, to bring Mackay to justice. The earl accordingly entered Strathnaver with a great force, sacking and spoiling every thing in his way, and possessing himself of all the principal positions to prevent Mackay's escape. Mackay, however, avoided the earl, and as he declined to fight, the earl laid siege to the castle of Borwe, the principal strength in Strathnaver, scarcely two miles distant from Far, which he took after a short siege, and hanged Ruairidh-Mac-Iain-Mhoir, the commander. This fort the earl completely demolished.

While the Earl of Sutherland was engaged in the siege, Mackay entered Sutherland secretly, and burnt the church of Loth. He thereafter went to the village of Knockartol, where he met Mackenzie and his countrymen in Strathbroray. A slight skirmish took place between them; but Mackay and his men fled after he had lost Angus-Mackeanvoir, one of his commanders, and several of his followers. Mackenzie was thereupon appointed by the earl to protect Sutherland from the incursions of Mackay during his stay in Strathnaver. Having been defeated again by Mackenzie, and seeing no chance of escape, Mackay surrendered himself, and was carried south, and committed a prisoner to the castle of Edinburgh, in which he remained a considerable time. During the queen's stay in the north many notorious delinquents were brought to trial, condemned and executed.

During Mackay's detention in Edinburgh, John Mor-Mackay, who took charge of his kinsman's estate, seizing the opportunity of the Earl of Sutherland's absence in the south of Scotland, entered Sutherland at the head of a determined body of Strathnaver men, and spoiled and wasted the east corner of that province, and burnt the chapel of St. Ninian. Mac-Mhic-Sheumais, chief of the Clan-Gun, the Laird of Clyne, the Terrell of the Doill, and James Mac-William, having collected a body of Sutherland men, pursued the Strathnaver men, whom they overtook at the foot of the hill called Ben-Moir, in Berridell. Here they laid an ambush for them, and having, by favour of a fog, passed their sentinels, they

⁶ Lesley, p. 251.

unexpectedly surprised Mackay's men, and attacked them with great fury. The Strathnaver men made an obstinate resistance, but were at length overpowered. Many of them were killed, and others drowned in the water of Garwary. Mackay himself escaped with great difficulty. This was one of the severest defeats the Strathnaver men ever experienced, except at the battle of Knoken-dow-Reyward.

On the release of Mackay from his confinement in the castle of Edinburgh, he was employed in the wars upon the borders, against the English, in which he acquitted himself courageously; and on his return to Strathnaver he submitted himself to the Earl of Sutherland, with whom he lived in peace during the remainder of the earl's life. But Mackay incurred the just displeasure of the tribe of Slight-ean-Voir by the committal of two crimes of the deepest dye. Having imbibed a violent affection for the wife of Tormaid-Mac-Iain-Mhoir, the chieftain of that tribe, he, in order to accomplish his object, slew the chief, after which he violated his wife, by whom he had a son called Donald Balloch Mackay. The insulted clan flew to arms; but they were defeated at Durines, by the murderer and adulterer, after a sharp skirmish. Three of the principal men of the tribe who had given themselves up, trusting to Mackay's clemency, were beheaded.⁷

In the early part of the reign of the unfortunate Queen Mary, during the period of the Reformation in Scotland, the house of Huntly had acquired such an influence in the north and north-east of Scotland, the old Maormorate of Moray, as to be looked upon with suspicion by the government of the day. Moreover the Lords of the Congregation regarded the earl with no friendly feeling as the great leader of the Roman Catholic party in the country, and it was therefore resolved that Mary should make a royal progress northwards, apparently for the purpose of seeing what was the real state of matters, and, if possible, try to overawe the earl, and remind him that he was only a subject. The queen, who, although Huntly was the Catholic leader, appears to have entered into the expedition heartily; and her bastard

brother, the Earl of Murray, proceeded, in 1562, northwards, backed by a small army, and on finding the earl fractious, laid siege to the castle of Inverness, which was taken, and the governor hanged. The queen's army and the followers of Huntly met at the hill of Corriche, about sixteen miles west of Aberdeen, when the latter were defeated, the earl himself being found among the slain. It was on this occasion that Mary is said to have wished herself a man to be able to ride forth "in jack and knapskull." This expedition was the means of effectually breaking the influence of this powerful northern family.

George, Earl of Caithness, who had long borne a mortal hatred to John, Earl of Sutherland, now projected a scheme for cutting him off, as well as his countess, who was big with child, and their only son, Alexander Gordon; the earl and countess were accordingly both poisoned at Helmsdale, while at supper, by Isobel Sinclair, wife of Gilbert Gordon of Gartay, and sister of William Sinclair of Dumbaith, instigated, it is said, by the earl; but their son, Alexander, made a very narrow escape, not having returned in time from a hunting excursion to join his father and mother at supper. On Alexander's return the earl had become fully aware of the danger of his situation, and he was thus prevented by his father from participating in any part of the supper which remained, and after taking an affectionate and parting farewell, and recommending him to the protection of God and of his dearest friends, he sent him to Dunrobin the same night without his supper. The earl and his lady were carried next morning to Dunrobin, where they died within five days thereafter, in the month of July, 1567, and were buried in the cathedral church at Dornoch. Pretending to cover himself from the imputation of being concerned in this murder, the Earl of Caithness punished some of the earl's most faithful servants under the colour of avenging his death; but the deceased earl's friends being determined to obtain justice, apprehended Isobel Sinclair, and sent her to Edinburgh to stand her trial, where, after being tried and condemned, she died on the day appointed for her execution. During all the time of her illness she vented the most dreadful imprecations upon her cousin,

⁷ Sir R. Gordon, p. 136.

the earl, who had induced her to commit the horrid act. Had this woman succeeded in cutting off the earl's son, her own eldest son, John Gordon, but for the extraordinary circumstances of his death, to be noticed, would have succeeded to the earldom, as he was the next male heir. This youth happening to be in the house when his mother had prepared the poison, became extremely thirsty, and called for a drink. One of his mother's servants, not aware of the preparation, presented to the youth a portion of the liquid into which the poison had been infused, which he drank. This occasioned his death within two days, a circumstance which, together with the appearances of the body after death, gave a clue to the discovery of his mother's guilt.⁸

Taking advantage of the calamity which had befallen the house of Sutherland, and the minority of the young earl, now only fifteen years of age, Y-Mackay of Far, who had formed an alliance with the Earl of Caithness, in 1567 invaded the country of Sutherland, wasted the barony of Skibo, entered the town of Dornoch, and, upon the pretence of a quarrel with the Murrays, by whom it was chiefly inhabited, set fire to it, in which outrage he was assisted by the Laird of Duffus. These measures were only preliminary to a design which the Earl of Caithness had formed to get the Earl of Sutherland into his hands, but he had the cunning to conceal his intentions in the meantime, and to instigate Mackay to act as he wished, without appearing to be in any way concerned.

In pursuance of his design upon Alexander, the young Earl of Sutherland, the Earl of Caithness prevailed upon Robert Stuart, bishop of Caithness, to write a letter to the governor of the castle of Skibo, in which the Earl of Sutherland resided, to deliver up the castle to him; a request with which the governor complied. Having taken possession of the castle, the earl carried off the young man into Caithness, and although only fifteen years of age, he got him married to Lady Barbara Sinclair, his daughter, then aged thirty-two years. Y-Mackay was the paramour of this lady, and for continuing the connexion with him she was afterwards divorced by her husband.

The Earl of Caithness having succeeded in his wishes in obtaining possession of the Earl of Sutherland, entered the earl's country, and took possession of Dunrobin castle, in which he fixed his residence. He also brought the Earl of Sutherland along with him, but he treated him meanly, and he burnt all the papers belonging to the house of Sutherland he could lay his hands on. Cruel and avaricious, he, under the pretence of vindicating the law, for imaginary crimes expelled many of the ancient families in Sutherland from the country, put many of the inhabitants to death, disabled those he banished, in their persons, by new and unheard-of modes of torture, and stripped them of all their wealth. To be suspected of favouring the house of Sutherland, and to be wealthy, were deemed capital crimes by this oppressor.

As the Earl of Sutherland did not live on friendly terms with his wife on account of her licentious connexion with Mackay, and as there appeared no chance of any issue, the Earl of Caithness formed the base design of cutting off the Earl of Sutherland, and marrying William Sinclair, his second son, to Lady Margaret Gordon, the eldest sister of the Earl of Sutherland, whom he had also gotten into his hands, with the view of making William earl of Sutherland. The better to conceal his intentions the Earl of Caithness made a journey south to Edinburgh, and gave the necessary instructions to those in his confidence to despatch the Earl of Sutherland; but some of his trusty friends having received private intelligence of the designs of the Earl of Caithness from some persons who were privy thereto, they instantly set about measures for defeating them by getting possession of the Earl of Sutherland's person. Accordingly, under cloud of night, they came quietly to the burn of Golspie, in the vicinity of Dunrobin, where, concealing themselves to prevent discovery, they sent Alexander Gordon of Slderay to the castle, disguised as a pedlar, for the purpose of warning the Earl of Sutherland of the danger of his situation, and devising means of escape. Being made acquainted with the design upon his life, and the plans of his friends for rescuing him, the earl, early the following morning, proposed to the residents in the castle, under

⁸ Sir R. Gordon, p. 147.

whose charge he was, to accompany him on a small excursion in the neighbourhood. This proposal seemed so reasonable in itself, that, although he was perpetually watched by the Earl of Caithness' servants, and his liberty greatly restrained, they at once agreed; and, going out, the earl being aware of the ambush laid by his friends, led his keepers directly into the snare before they were aware of danger. The earl's friends thereupon rushed from their hiding-place, and seizing him, conveyed him safely out of the country of Sutherland to Strathbogie. This took place in 1569. As soon as the Earl of Caithness's retainers heard of the escape of Earl Alexander, they collected a party of men favourable to their interests, and went in hot pursuit of him as far as Portne-Coulter; but they found that the earl and his friends had just crossed the ferry.⁹

Shortly after this affair a quarrel ensued between the Monroes and the clan Kenzie, two very powerful Ross-shire clans. Lesley, the celebrated bishop of Ross, had made over to his cousin, the Laird of Balquhain, the right and title of the castle of the Canoury of Ross, together with the castle lands. Notwithstanding this grant, the Regent Murray had given the custody of this castle to Andrew Monroe of Milntown; and to make Lesley bear with the loss, the Regent promised him some of the lands of the Barony of Fintry in Buchan, but on condition that he should cede to Monroe the castle and castle lands of the Canoury; but the untimely and unexpected death of the Regent interrupted this arrangement, and Andrew Monroe did not, of course, obtain the title to the castle and castle lands as he expected. Yet Monroe had the address to obtain permission from the Earl of Lennox during his regency, and afterwards from the Earl of Mar, his successor in that office, to get possession of the castle. The clan Kenzie grudging to see Monroe in possession, and being desirous to get hold of the castle themselves, purchased Lesley's right, and, by virtue thereof, demanded delivery of the castle. Monroe refused to accede to this demand, on which the clan laid siege to the castle; but Monroe defended it for three years at the expense of many lives on

both sides. It was then delivered up to the clan Kenzie under the act of pacification.¹

No attempt was made by the Earl of Sutherland, during his minority, to recover his possessions from the Earl of Caithness. In the meantime the latter, disappointed and enraged at the escape of his destined prey, vexed and annoyed still farther the partisans of the Sutherland family. In particular, he directed his vengeance against the Murrays, and made William Sutherland of Evelick, brother to the Laird of Duffus, apprehend John Croy-Murray, under the pretence of bringing him to justice. This proceeding roused the indignation of Hugh Murray of Aberscoors, who assembled his friends, and made several incursions upon the lands of Evelick, Pronsies, and Riercher. They also laid waste several villages belonging to the Laird of Duffus, from which they carried off some booty, and apprehending a gentleman of the Sutherlands, they detained him as an hostage for the safety of John Croy-Murray. Upon this the Laird of Duffus collected all his kinsmen and friends, together with the Siol-Phaill at Skibo, and proceeded to the town of Dornoch, with the intention of burning it. But the inhabitants, aided by the Murrays, went out to meet the enemy, whom they courageously attacked and overthrew, and pursued to the gates of Skibo. Besides killing several of Duffus' men they made some prisoners, whom they exchanged for John Croy-Murray. This affair was called the skirmish of Torran-Roy.

The Laird of Duffus, who was father-in-law to the Earl of Caithness, and supported him in all his plans, immediately sent notice of this disaster to the earl, who without delay sent his eldest son, John, Master of Caithness, with a large party of countrymen and friends, including Y-Mackay and his countrymen, to attack the Murrays in Dornoch. They besieged the town and castle, which were both manfully defended by the Murrays and their friends; but the Master of Caithness, favoured by the darkness of the night, set fire to the cathedral, the steeple of which, however, was preserved. After the town had been reduced, the Master of Caithness attacked the castle

⁹ Sir R. Gordon, p. 154.

¹ Sir R. Gordon, p. 155.

and the steeple of the church, into which a body of men had thrown themselves, both of which held out for the space of a week, and would probably have resisted much longer, but for the interference of mutual friends of the parties, by whose mediation the Murrays surrendered the castle and the steeple of the church; and, as hostages for the due performance of other conditions, they delivered up Thomas Murray, son of Houcheon Murray of Aberscors, Houcheon Murray, son of Alexander Mac-Sir-Angus, and John Murray, son of Thomas Murray, the brother of John Murray of Aberscors. But the Earl of Caithness refused to ratify the treaty which his son had entered into with the Murrays, and afterwards basely beheaded the three hostages. These occurrences took place in the year 1570.²

The Murrays and the other friends of the Sutherland family, no longer able to protect themselves from the vengeance of the Earl of Caithness, dispersed themselves into different countries, there to wait for more favourable times, when they might return to their native soil without danger. The Murrays went to Strathbogie, where Earl Alexander then resided. Hugh Gordon of Drumnoy retired to Orkney, where he married a lady named Ursla Tulloch; but he frequently visited his friends in Sutherland, in spite of many snares laid for him by the Earl of Caithness, while secretly going and returning through Caithness. Hugh Gordon's brothers took refuge with the Murrays at Strathbogie. John Gray of Skibo and his son Gilbert retired to St. Andrews, where their friend Robert, bishop of Caithness, then resided, and Mac-Mhie-Sheumais of Strathully went to Glengarry.

As the alliance of such a powerful and warlike chief as Mackay would have been of great importance to the Sutherland interest, an attempt was made to detach him from the Earl of Caithness. The plan appears to have originated with Hugh Murray of Aberscors, who made repeated visits to Strathbogie, to consult with the Earl of Sutherland and his friends on this subject, and afterwards went into Strathnaver and held a conference with Mackay, whom he prevailed upon to accom-

pany him to Strathbogie. Mackay then entered into an engagement with the Earl of Huntly and the Earl of Sutherland, to assist the latter against the Earl of Caithness, in consideration of which, and on payment of £300 Scots, he obtained from the Earl of Huntly the heritable right and title of the lands of Strathnaver; but Mackay, influenced by Barbara Sinclair, the wife of the Earl of Sutherland, with whom he now publicly cohabited, broke his engagement, and continued to oppress the earl's followers and dependents.

From some circumstances which have not transpired, the Earl of Caithness became suspicious of his son John, the Master of Caithness, as having, in connection with Mackay, a design upon his life. To put an end to the earl's suspicion, Mackay advised John to go to Girnigo (Castle Sinclair), and to submit himself to his father's pleasure, a request with which the Master complied; but, after arriving at Girnigo, he was, while conversing with his father, arrested by a party of armed men, who, upon a secret signal being given by the earl, had rushed in at the chamber door. He was instantly fettered and thrust into prison within the castle, where, after a miserable captivity of seven years, he died, a prey to famine and vermin.

Mackay, who had accompanied the Master to Girnigo, and who in all probability would have shared the same fate, escaped and returned home to Strathnaver, where he died, within four months thereafter, of grief and remorse for the many bad actions of his life. During the minority of his son Houcheon, John Mor-Mackay, the cousin, and John Beg-Mackay, the bastard son of Y-Mackay, took charge of the estate; but John Mor-Mackay was speedily removed from his charge by the Earl of Caithness, who, considering him as a favourer of the Earl of Sutherland, caused him to be apprehended and carried into Caithness, where he was detained in prison till his death. During this time John Robson, the chief of the clan Gun in Caithness and Strathnaver, became a dependent on the Earl of Sutherland, and acted as his factor in collecting the rents and duties of the bishop's lands within Caithness which belonged to the earl. This connexion was exceedingly disagreeable to the Earl of Caith-

² Sir R. Gordon, p. 156.

ness, who in consequence took a grudge at John Robson, and, to gratify his spleen, he instigated Houcheon Mackay to lay waste the lands of the clan Gun, in the Brea-Moir, in Caithness, without the knowledge of John Beg-Mackay, his brother. As the clan Gun had always been friendly to the family of Mackay, John Beg-Mackay was greatly exasperated at the conduct of the earl in enticing the young chief to commit such an outrage; but he had it not in his power to make any reparation to the injured clan. John Robson, the chief, however, assisted by Alexander Earl of Sutherland, invaded Strathnaver and made ample retaliation. Meeting the Strathnaver men at a place called Creach-Drumi-Doun, he attacked and defeated them, killing several of them, and chiefly those who had accompanied Houcheon Mackay in his expedition to the Brea-Moir. He then carried off a large quantity of booty, which he divided among the clan Gun of Strathully, who had suffered by Houcheon Mackay's invasion.³

The Earl of Caithness, having resolved to avenge himself on John Beg-Mackay for the displeasure shown by him at the conduct of Houcheon Mackay, and also on the clan Gun, prevailed upon Neill-Mac-Iain-Mac-William, chief of the Sliochd-Iain-Abaraich, and James Mac-Rory, chief of the Sliochd-Iain-Mhoir, to attack them. Accordingly, in the month of September, 1579, these two chiefs, with their followers, entered Balnekill in Durines during the night-time, and slew John Beg-Mackay and William Mac-Iain-Mac-Rob, the brother of John Robson, and some of their people. The friends of the deceased were not in a condition to retaliate, but they kept up the spirit of revenge so customary in those times, and only waited a favourable opportunity to gratify it. This did not occur till several years thereafter. In the year 1587, James Mac-Rory, "a fyne gentleman and a good commander," according to Sir Robert Gordon, was assassinated by Donald Balloch-Mackay, the brother of John Beg-Mackay; and two years thereafter John Mackay, the son of John Beg, attacked Neill Mac-Iain-Mac-William, whom he wounded severely, and cut off some of his

followers. "This Neill," says Sir R. Gordon, "heir mentioned, was a good captain, bold, craftie, of a verie good witt, and quick resolution."

After the death of John Beg-Mackay, and William Mac-Iain-Mac-Rob, a most deadly and inveterate feud followed, between the clan Gun and the Sliochd-Iain-Abaraich, but no recital of the details has been handed down to us. "The long, the many, the horrible encounters," observes Sir R. Gordon "which happened between these two trybes, with the bloodshed, and infinit spoils committed in every part of the diocye of Catteynes by them and their associates, are of so disordered and troublesome memorie, that, what with their asperous names, together with the confusion of place, tymes, and persons, would yet be (no doubt) a warr to the reader to overlook them; and therefore, to favor myne oune paines, and his who should get little profite or delight thereby, I doe pass them over."⁴

The clan Chattan, about this time, must have been harassing the surrounding districts to a terrible extent, and causing the government considerable trouble, as in 1583 we find a mandate addressed by King James "to our shirreffs of Kincardin, Abirdene, Banf, Elgen, Fores, Narne, and Invernys; and to our derrest bruthir, James, Erle of Murray, our lieutenant generale in the north partis of our realme, and to our louittis consingis [] Erle of Suthirlan; John Erle of Cathnes," &c., &c., commanding them that inasmuch as John M'Kinlay, Thomas Mackinlay, Donald Glass, &c., "throcht assistance and fortifying of all the kin of Clanquhattane duelland within Baienach, Petty, Brauchly, Stratharne, and other parts thereabout, committs daily fire-raising, slaughter, murder, heirschippis, and wasting of the cuntre," to the harm of the true lieges, these sheriffs and others shall fall upon the "said Clanquhattane, and invade them to their utter destruction by slaughter, burning, drowning, and other ways; and leave na creature living of that clan, except priests, women, and bairns." The "women and bairns" they were ordered to take to "some parts of the sea nearest land, quhair ships salbe forsene on our

³ Sir R. Gordon, p. 173.

⁴ *History*, p. 174.

expenses, to sail with them furth of our realme, and land with them in Jesland, Zesland, or Norway; because it were inhumanity to put hands in the blood of women and bairns." Had this mandate for "stamping out" this troublesome clan been carried out it would certainly have been an effectual cure for many of the disturbances in the Highlands; but we cannot find any record as to what practical result followed the issue of this cruel decree.⁶

In the year 1585 a quarrel took place between Neill Houcheonson, and Donald Neilson, the Laird of Assynt, who had married Houcheon Mackay's sister. The cause of Donald Neilson was espoused by Houcheon Mackay, and the clan Gun, who came with an army out of Caithness and Strathnaver, to besiege Neill Houcheonson in the isle of Assynt. Neill, who was commander of Assynt, and a follower of the Earl of Sutherland, sent immediate notice to the earl of Mackay's movements, on receiving which the earl, assembling a body of men, despatched them to Assynt to raise the siege; but Mackay did not wait for their coming, and retreated into Strathnaver. As the Earl of Caithness had sent some of his people to assist Mackay, who was the Earl of Sutherland's vassal, the latter resolved to punish both, and accordingly made preparations for entering Strathnaver and Caithness with an army. But some mutual friends of the parties interfered to prevent the effusion of blood, by prevailing on the two earls to meet at Elgin, in the presence of the Earl of Huntly and other friends, and get their differences adjusted. A meeting was accordingly held, at which the earls were reconciled. The whole blame of the troubles and commotions which had recently disturbed the peace of Sutherland and Caithness, was thrown upon the clan Gun, who were alleged to have been the chief instigators, and as their restless disposition might give rise to new disorders, it was agreed, at said meeting, to cut them off, and particularly that part of the tribe which dwelt in Caithness, which was chiefly dreaded, for which purpose the Earl of Caithness bound himself to deliver up to the Earl of Sutherland, certain individuals of the clan living in Caithness.

To enable him to implement his engagement a resolution was entered into to send two companies of men against those of the clan Gun who dwelt in Caithness and Strathnaver, and to surround them in such a way as to prevent escape. The Earl of Caithness, notwithstanding, sent private notice to the clan of the preparations making against them by Angus Sutherland of Mellary, in Berriedale; but the clan were distrustful of the earl, as they had already received secret intelligence that he had assembled his people together for the purpose of attacking them.

As soon as the Earl of Sutherland could get his men collected he proceeded to march to the territories of the clan Gun; but meeting by chance, on his way, with a party of Strathnaver men, under the command of William Mackay, brother of Houcheon Mackay, carrying off the cattle of James Mac-Rory, a vassal of his own, from Coireceann Loch in the Dir-Meanigh, he rescued and brought back his vassal's cattle. After this the earl's party pursued William Mackay and the Strathnaver men during the whole day, and killed one of the principal men of the clan Gun in Strathnaver, called Angus-Roy, with several others of Mackay's company. This affair was called Latha-Tom-Fraoich, that is, the day of the heather bush. At the end of the pursuit, and towards evening, the pursued party found themselves on the borders of Caithness, where they found the clan Gun assembled in consequence of the rising of the Caithness people who had taken away their cattle.

This accidental meeting of the Strathnaver men and the clan Gun was the means, probably, of saving both from destruction. They immediately entered into an alliance to stand by one another, and to live or die together. Next morning they found themselves placed between two powerful bodies of their enemies. On the one side was the Earl of Sutherland's party at no great distance, reposing themselves from the fatigues of the preceding day, and on the other were seen advancing the Caithness men, conducted by Henry Sinclair, brother to the laird of Dun, and cousin to the Earl of Caithness. A council of war was immediately held to consult how to act in this emergency, when it was resolved to attack the Caithness men

⁶ See Spalding Club *Miscellany*, vol. ii. p. 83.

first, as they were far inferior in numbers, which was done by the clan Gun and their allies, who had the advantage of the hill, with great resolution. The former foolishly expended their arrows while at a distance from their opponents; but the clan Gun having husbanded their shot till they came in close contact with the enemy, did great execution. The Caithness men were completely overthrown, after leaving 140 of their party, with their captain, Henry Sinclair, dead on the field of battle. Had not the darkness of the night favoured their flight, they would have all been destroyed. Henry Sinclair was Mackay's uncle, and not being aware that he had been in the engagement till he recognised his body among the slain, Mackay felt extremely grieved at the unexpected death of his relative. This skirmish took place at Aldgown, in the year 1586. The Sutherland men having lost sight of Mackay and his party among the hills, immediately before the conflict, returned into their own country with the booty they had recovered, and were not aware of the defeat of the Caithness men till some time after that event.

The Earl of Caithness afterwards confessed that he had no intention of attacking the clan Gun at the time in question; but that his policy was to have allowed them to be closely pressed and pursued by the Sutherland men, and then to have relieved them from the imminent danger they would thereby be placed in, so that they might consider that it was to him they owed their safety, and thus lay them under fresh obligations to him. But the deceitful part he acted proved very disastrous to his people, and the result so exasperated him against the clan Gun, that he hanged John Mac-Iain-Mac-Rob, chieftain of the clan Gun, in Caithness, whom he had kept captive for some time.

The result of all these proceedings was another meeting between the Earls of Sutherland and Caithness at the hill of Bingrime in Sutherland, which was brought about by the mediation of Sir Patrick Gordon of Auchindun, who was sent into the north by his nephew, the Earl of Huntly, for that purpose. Here again a new confederacy was formed against the clan Gun in Caithness, who were now

maintained and harboured by Maekay. The Earl of Sutherland, on account of the recent defeat of the Caithness men, undertook to attack the clan first. He accordingly directed two bodies to march with all haste against the clan, one of which was commanded by James Mac-Rory and Neill Mac-Iain-Mac-William, chief of the Sliochd-Iain-Abaraich, who were now under the protection of the Earl of Sutherland; and the other by William Sutherland Johnson, George Gordon in Marle, and William Murray in Kinnald, brother of Hugh Murray of Aberscors. Houcheon Mackay, seeing no hopes of maintaining the clan Gun any longer without danger to himself, discharged them from his country, whereupon they made preparations for seeking an asylum in the western isles. But, on their journey thither, they were met near Loch Broom, at a place called Leckmelme, by James Mac-Rory and Neill Mac-Iain-Mac-William, where, after a sharp skirmish, they were overthrown, and the greater part of them killed. Their commander, George Mac-Iain-Mac-Rob, brother of John Mac-Iain-Mac-Rob, who was hanged by the Earl of Caithness, was severely wounded, and was taken prisoner after an unsuccessful attempt to escape by swimming across a loch close by. After being carried to Dumrobin castle, and presented to the Earl of Sutherland, George Gun was sent by him to the Earl of Caithness, who, though extremely grieved at the misfortune which had happened to the clan Gun, dissembled his vexation, and received the prisoner as if he approved of the Earl of Sutherland's proceedings against him and his unfortunate people. After a short confinement, George Gun was released from his captivity by the Earl of Caithness, at the entreaty of the Earl of Sutherland, not from any favour to the prisoner himself, or to the earl, whom the Earl of Caithness hated mortally, but with the design of making Gun an instrument of annoyance to some of the Earl of Sutherland's neighbours. But the Earl of Caithness was disappointed in his object, for George Gun, after his enlargement from prison, always remained faithful to the Earl of Sutherland.⁶

About this time a violent feud arose in the

⁶ Sir R. Gordon, p. 185.

western isles between Angus Macdonald of Kintyre, and Sir Lauchlan Maclean of Duart, in Mull, whose sister Angus had married, which ended in the almost total destruction of the clan Donald and clan Lean. The circumstances which led to this unfortunate dissension were these :—

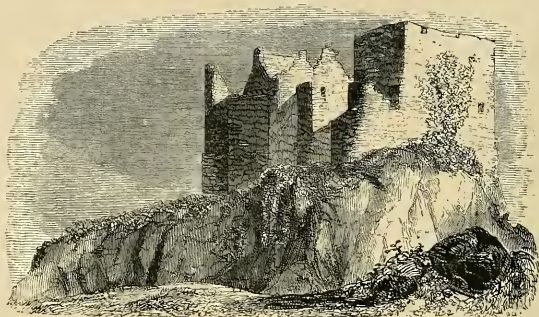
Donald Gorm Macdonald of Slate, when going on a visit from Slate to his cousin, Angus Macdonald of Kintyre, was forced by contrary winds to land with his party in the island of Jura, which belonged partly to Sir Lauchlan Maclean, and partly to Angus Macdonald. The part of the island where Macdonald of Slate landed belonged to Sir Lauchlan Maclean. No sooner had Macdonald and his company landed, than, by an unlucky coincidence, Macdonald Tearreagh and Houcheon Macgillespie, two of the clan Donald who had lately quarrelled with Donald Gorm, arrived at the same time with a party of men ; and, understanding that Donald Gorm was in the island, they secretly took away, by night, a number of cattle belonging to the clan Lean, and immediately put to sea. Their object in doing so was to make the clan Lean believe that Donald Gorm and his party had carried off the cattle, in the hope that the Macleans would attack Donald Gorm, and they were not disappointed. As soon as the *lifting* of the cattle had been discovered, Sir Lauchlan Maclean assembled his whole forces, and, under the impression that Donald Gorm and his party had committed the spoliation, he attacked them suddenly and unawares, during the night, at a place in the island called Inverchuckwick, and slew about sixty of the clan Donald. Donald Gorm, having previously gone on board his vessel to pass the night, fortunately escaped.

When Angus Macdonald heard of this “un-toward event,” he visited Donald Gorm in Skye for the purpose of consulting with him on the means of obtaining reparation for the loss of his men. On his return homeward to Kintyre, he landed in the Isle of Mull, and, contrary to the advice of Coll Mac-James and Reginald Mac-James, his two brothers, and of Reginald Mac-Coll, his cousin, who wished him to send a messenger to announce the result of his meeting with Donald Gorm, went to the castle of Duart, the principal residence

of Sir Lauchlan Maclean in Mull. His two brothers refused to accompany him, and they acted rightly ; for, the day after Angus arrived at Duart, he and all his party were perfidiously arrested by Sir Lauchlan Maclean. Reginald Mac-Coll, the cousin of Angus, alone escaped. The Rhinns of Islay at this time belonged to the clan Donald, but they had given the possession of them to the clan Lean for personal services. Sir Lauchlan, thinking the present a favourable opportunity for acquiring an absolute right to this property, offered to release Angus Macdonald, provided he would renounce his right and title to the Rhinns ; and, in case of refusal, he threatened to make him end his days in captivity. Angus, being thus in some degree compelled, agreed to the proposed terms ; but, before obtaining his liberty, he was forced to give James Macdonald, his eldest son, and Reginald Mac-James, his brother, as hostages, until the deed of conveyance should be delivered to Sir Lauchlan.

It was not, however, the intention of Angus Macdonald to implement this engagement, if he could accomplish the liberation of his son and brother. His cousin had suffered a grievous injury at the hands of Sir Lauchlan Maclean without any just cause of offence, and he himself had, when on a friendly mission, been detained most unjustly as a prisoner, and compelled to promise to surrender into Sir Lauchlan's hands, by a regular deed, a part of his property. Under these circumstances, his resolution to break the unfair engagement he had come under is not to be wondered at. To accomplish his object he had recourse to a stratagem in which he succeeded, as will be shown in the sequel.

After Maclean had obtained delivery of the two hostages, he made a voyage to Islay to get the engagement completed. He left behind, in the castle of Duart, Reginald Mac-James, one of the hostages, whom he put in fetters, and took the other to accompany him on his voyage. Having arrived in the isle of Islay, he encamped at Eilean-Gorm, a ruinous castle upon the Rhinns of Islay, which castle had been lately in the possession of the clan Lean. Angus Macdonald was residing at the time at the house of Muliudry or Mullindhrea, a comfortable and well-furnished residence belonging



Castle Duart.

to him on the island, and to which he invited Sir Lauchlan, under the pretence of affording him better accommodation, and providing him with better provisions than he could obtain in his camp; but Sir Lauchlan, having his suspicions, declined to accept the invitation. "There wes," says Sir Robert Gordon, "so little trust on either syd, that they did not now meit in friendship or amitie, bot vpon ther owne guard, or rather by messingers, one from another. And true it is (sayeth John Colwin, in his manuscript) that the islanders are, of nature, verie suspicious; full of invention against ther nighbours, by whatsoever way they may get them destroyed. Besyds this, they are bent and eager in taking revenge, that neither have they regard to persone, tyme, aige, nor cause; and ar generallie so addicted that way (as lykwise are the most pairt of all Highlanders), that therein they surpasse all other people whatsoever."

Sir Lauchlan, however, was thrown off his guard by fair promises, and agreed to pay Macdonald a visit, and accordingly proceeded to Mulindry, accompanied by James Macdonald, his own nephew, and the son of Angus, and 86 of his kinsmen and servants. Maclean and his party, on their arrival, were received by Macdonald with much apparent kindness, and were sumptuously entertained during the whole day. In the meantime, Macdonald sent notice to all his friends and well-wishers in the island, to come to his house at nine o'clock at

night, his design being to seize Maclean and his party. At the usual hour for going to repose, Maclean and his people were lodged in a long-house, which stood by itself, at some distance from the other houses. During the whole day Maclean had always kept James Macdonald, the hostage, within his reach, as a sort of protection to him in case of an attack, and at going to bed he took him along with him. About an hour after Maclean and his people had retired, Angus assembled his men to the number of 300 or 400, and made them surround the house in which Maclean and his company lay. Then, going himself to the door, he called upon Maclean, and told him that he had come to give him his reposing drink, which he had forgotten to offer him before going to bed. Maclean answered that he did not wish to drink at that time; but Macdonald insisted that he should rise and receive the drink, it being, he said, his will that he should do so. The peremptory tone of Macdonald made Maclean at once apprehensive of the danger of his situation, and immediately getting up and placing the boy between his shoulders, prepared to preserve his life as long as he could with the boy, or to sell it as dearly as possible. As soon as the door was forced open, James Macdonald, seeing his father with a naked sword in his hand and a number of his men armed in the same manner, cried aloud for mercy to Maclean, his uncle, which being granted, Sir Lauchlan was imme-

diately removed to a secret chamber, where he remained till next morning. After Maclean had surrendered, Angus Macdonald announced to those within the house, that if they would come without their lives would be spared; but he excepted Macdonald Terreagh and another individual whom he named. The whole, with the exception of these two, having complied, the house was immediately set on fire, and consumed along with Macdonald Terreagh and his companion. The former was one of the clan Donald of the Western Islands, and not only had assisted the clan Lean against his own tribe, but was also the originator, as we have seen, of all these disturbances; and the latter was a near kinsman to Maclean, one of the oldest of the clan, and celebrated for his wisdom and prowess. This affair took place in the month of July, 1586.

When the intelligence of the seizure of Sir Lauchlan Maclean reached the Isle of Mull, Allan Maclean, who was the nearest kinsman to Maclean, whose children were then very young, bethought himself of an expedient to obtain the possessions of Sir Lauchlan. In conjunction with his friends, Allan caused a false report to be spread in the island of Islay, that the friends of Maclean had killed Reginald Mac-James, the remaining hostage at Duart in Mull, by means of which he hoped that Angus Macdonald would be moved to kill Sir Lauchlan, and thereby enable him (Allan) to supply his place. But although this device did not succeed, it proved very disastrous to Sir Lauchlan's friends and followers, who were beheaded in pairs by Coll Mac-James, the brother of Angus Macdonald.

The friends of Sir Lauchlan seeing no hopes of his release, applied to the Earl of Argyle to assist them in a contemplated attempt to rescue him out of the hands of Angus Macdonald; but the earl, perceiving the utter hopelessness of such an attempt with such forces as he and they could command, advised them to complain to King James VI. against Angus Macdonald, for the seizure and detention of their chief. The king immediately directed that Macdonald should be summoned by a herald-at-arms to deliver up Sir Lauchlan into the hands of the Earl of Argyle; but the herald was interrupted in the performance of his duty,

not being able to procure shipping for Islay, and was obliged to return home. The Earl of Argyle had then recourse to negotiation with Macdonald, and, after considerable trouble, he prevailed on him to release Sir Lauchlan on certain strict conditions, but not until Reginald Mac-James, the brother of Angus, had been delivered up, and the earl, for performance of the conditions agreed upon, had given his own son, and the son of Macleod of Harris, as hostages. But Maclean, quite regardless of the safety of the hostages, and in open violation of the engagements he had come under, on hearing that Angus Macdonald had gone on a visit to the clan Donald of the glens in Ireland, invaded Isla, which he laid waste, and pursued those who had assisted in his capture.

On his return from Ireland, Angus Macdonald made great preparations for inflicting a just chastisement upon Maclean. Collecting a large body of men, and much shipping, he invaded Mull and Tiree, carrying havoc and destruction along with him, and destroying every human being and every domestic animal, of whatever kind. While Macdonald was committing these ravages in Mull and Tiree, Maclean, instead of opposing him, invaded Kintyre, where he took ample retaliation by wasting and burning a great part of that country. In this manner did these hostile clans continue, for a considerable period, mutually to vex and destroy one another, till they were almost exterminated, root and branch.

In order to strengthen his own power and to weaken that of his antagonist, Sir Lauchlan Maclean attempted to detach John Mac-Iain, of Ardnamurchan, from Angus Macdonald and his party. Mac-Iain had formerly been an unsuccessful suitor for the hand of Maclean's mother, and Sir Hector now gave him an invitation to visit him in Mull, promising, at the same time, to give him his mother in marriage. Mac-Iain accepted the invitation, and on his arrival in Mull, Maclean prevailed on his mother to marry Mac-Iain, and the nuptials were accordingly celebrated at Torloisk in Mull. No persuasion, however, could induce Mac-Iain to join against his own tribe, towards which, notwithstanding his matrimonial alliance, he entertained the strongest affection. Chagrined at the unexpected refusal of Mac-

Iain, Sir Lauchlan resolved to punish his refractory guest by one of those gross infringements of the laws of hospitality which so often marked the hostility of rival clans. During the dead hour of the night he caused the door of Mac-Iain's bedchamber to be forced open, dragged him from his bed, and from the arms of his wife, and put him in close confinement, after killing eighteen of his followers. After suffering a year's captivity, he was released and exchanged for Maclean's son, and the other hostages in Macdonald's possession.

The dissensions between these two tribes having attracted the attention of government, the rival chiefs were induced, partly by command of the king, and partly by persuasions and fair promises, to come to Edinburgh in the year 1592, for the purpose of having their differences reconciled. On their arrival they were committed prisoners to the castle of Edinburgh, but were soon released and allowed to return home on payment of a small pecuniary fine, "and a shameful remission," says Sir Robert Gordon, "granted to either of them."⁷

In the year 1587, the flames of discord, which had lain dormant for a short time, burst forth between the rival houses of Sutherland and Caithness. In the year 1583, Alexander, Earl of Sutherland, obtained from the Earl of Huntly a grant of the superiority of Strathnaver, and of the heritable sheriffship of Sutherland and Strathnaver, which last was granted in lieu of the lordship of Aboyne. This grant was confirmed by his Majesty in a charter under the great seal, by which Sutherland and Strathnaver were disjoined and dismembered from the sheriffdom of Inverness. As the strength and influence of the Earl of Sutherland were greatly increased by the power and authority with which the superiority of Strathnaver invested him, the Earl of Caithness used the most urgent entreaties with the Earl of Huntly, who was his brother-in-law, to recall the gift of the superiority which he had granted to the Earl of Sutherland, and confer the same on him. The Earl of Huntly gave no decided answer to this application, although he seemed rather to listen with a favourable ear to his brother-in-law's

request. The Earl of Sutherland having been made aware of his rival's pretensions, and of the reception which he had met with from the Earl of Huntly, immediately notified to Huntly that he would never restore the superiority either to him or to the Earl of Caithness, as the bargain he had made with him had been long finally concluded. The Earl of Huntly was much offended at this notice, but he and the Earl of Sutherland were soon reconciled through the mediation of Sir Patrick Gordon of Auchindun.

Disappointed in his views of obtaining the superiority in question, the Earl of Caithness seized the first opportunity, which presented itself, of quarrelling with the Earl of Sutherland, and he now thought that a suitable occasion had occurred. George Gordon, a bastard son of Gilbert Gordon of Gartay, having offered many indignities to the Earl of Caithness, the Earl, instead of complaining to the Earl of Sutherland, in whose service this George Gordon was, craved satisfaction and redress from the Earl of Huntly. Huntly very properly desired the Earl of Caithness to lay his complaint before the Earl of Sutherland; but this he declined to do, disdainingly to seek redress from Earl Alexander. Encouraged, probably, by the refusal of the Earl of Huntly to interfere, and the stubbornness of the Earl of Caithness to ask redress from his master, George Gordon, who resided in the town of Marle in Strathully, on the borders of Caithness, not satisfied with the indignities which he had formerly shown to the Earl of Caithness, cut off the tails of the earl's horses as they were passing the river of Helmsdale under the care of his servants, on their journey from Caithness to Edinburgh, and in derision desired the earl's servants to show him what he had done.

This George Gordon, it would appear, led a very irregular and wicked course of life, and shortly after the occurrence we have just related, a circumstance happened which induced the Earl of Caithness to take redress at his own hands. George Gordon had incurred the displeasure of the Earl of Sutherland by an unlawful connexion with his wife's sister, and as he had no hopes of regaining the earl's favour but by renouncing this impure intercourse, he sent Patrick Gordon, his brother, to the Earl of

⁷ *History*, p. 192.

Caithness to endeavour to effect a reconciliation with him, as he could no longer rely upon the protection of his master, the Earl of Sutherland. The Earl of Caithness, who felt an inward satisfaction at hearing of the displeasure of the Earl of Sutherland with George Gordon, dissembled his feelings, and pretended to listen with great favour to the request of Patrick Gordon, in order to throw George Gordon off his guard, while he was in reality meditating his destruction. The *ruse* succeeded so effectually, that although Gordon received timely notice, from some friends, of the intentions of the earl to attack him, he reposed in false security upon the promises held out to him, and made no provision for his personal safety. But he was soon undeceived by the appearance of the earl and a body of men, who, in February, 1587, entering Marle under the silence of the night, surrounded his house and required him to surrender, which he refused to do. Having cut his way through his enemies and thrown himself into the river of Helmsdale, which he attempted to swim across, he was slain by a shower of arrows.

The Earl of Sutherland, though he disliked the conduct of George Gordon, was highly incensed at his death, and made great preparations to punish the Earl of Caithness for his attack upon Gordon. The Earl of Caithness in his turn assembled his whole forces, and, being joined by Mackay and the Strathnaver men, together with John, the Master of Orkney, and the Earl of Carrick, brother of Patrick, Earl of Orkney, and some of his countrymen, marched to Helmsdale to meet the Earl of Sutherland. As soon as the latter heard of the advance of the Earl of Caithness, he also proceeded towards Helmsdale, accompanied by Mackintosh, Roderick Mackenzie of Redcastle, Hector Monroe of Contaligh, and Neill Houchenson, with the men of Assynt. On his arrival at the river of Helmsdale, the Earl of Sutherland found the enemy encamped on the opposite side. Neither party seemed inclined to come to a general engagement, but contented themselves with daily skirmishes, annoying each other with guns and arrows from the opposite banks of the river. The Sutherland men, who were very expert archers, annoyed the Caithness men so much, as to force them

to break up their camp on the river side and to remove among the rocks above the village of Easter Helmsdale. Mackay and his countrymen were encamped on the river of Marle, and in order to detach him from the Earl of Caithness, Macintosh crossed that river and had a private conference with him. After reminding him of the friendship which had so long subsisted between his ancestors and the Sutherland family, Macintosh endeavoured to impress upon his mind the danger he incurred by taking up arms against his own superior the Earl of Sutherland, and entreated him, for his own sake, to join the earl; but Mackay remained inflexible.

By the mediation of mutual friends, the two earls agreed to a temporary truce on the 9th of March, 1587, and thus the effusion of human blood was stopped for a short time. As Mackay was the vassal of the Earl of Sutherland, the latter refused to comprehend him in the truce, and insisted upon an unconditional submission, but Mackay obstinately refused to do so, and returned home to his own country, highly chagrined that the Earl of Caithness, for whom he had put his life and estate in jeopardy, should have acceded to the Earl of Sutherland's request to exclude him from the benefit of the truce. Before the two earls separated they came to a mutual understanding to reduce Mackay to obedience; and that he might not suspect their design, they agreed to meet at Edinburgh for the purpose of concerting the necessary measures together. Accordingly, they held a meeting at the appointed place in the year 1588, and came to the resolution to attack Mackay; and to prevent Mackay from receiving any intelligence of their design, both parties swore to keep the same secret; but the Earl of Caithness, regardless of his oath, immediately sent notice to Mackay of the intended attack, for the purpose of enabling him to meet it. Instead, however, of following the Earl of Caithness's advice, Mackay, justly dreading his hollow friendship, made haste, by the advice of Macintosh and the Laird of Foulis, to reconcile himself to the Earl of Sutherland, his superior, by an immediate submission. For this purpose he and the earl first met at Inverness, and after conferring together they made another appoint-

ment to meet at Elgin, where a perfect and final reconciliation took place in the month of November, 1588.

CHAPTER VIII.

A. D. 1588—1601.

KING OF SCOTLAND:—JAMES VI., 1567—1603.

Continued strife between the Earls of Sutherland and Caithness—Short Reconciliation—Strife renewed—Fresh Reconciliation—Quarrel between Clau Gun and other tribes—The Earl of Huntly, the Clan Chattan, and others—Death of the “Bonny” Earl of Murray—Consequent excitement—Strife between Huntly and the Clan Chattan—Huntly attainted and treated as a rebel—Argyle sent against him—Battle of Glenlivet—Journey of James VI. to the North—Tumults in Ross—Feud between the Macleans and Macdonalds—Defeat of the Macleans—Dispute between the Earls of Sutherland and Caithness—Feud between Macdonald of Slate and Macleod of Harris—Reconciliation.

THE truce between the Earls of Caithness and Sutherland having now expired, the latter, accompanied by Mackay, Macintosh, the Laird of Foulis, the Laird of Assynt, and Gille-Calum, Laird of Rasay, entered Caithness with all his forces in the beginning of 1588. In taking this step he was warranted by a commission which he had obtained at court, through the influence of Chancellor Maitland, against the Earl of Caithness for killing George Gordon. The people of Caithness, alarmed at the great force of the earl, fled in all directions on his approach, and he never halted till he reached the strong fort of Girnigo, where he pitched his camp for twelve days. He then penetrated as far as Duncansby, killing several of the country people on his route, and collecting an immense quantity of cattle and goods, so large, indeed, as to exceed all that had been seen together in that country for many years. This invasion had such an effect upon the people of Caithness, that every race, clan, tribe, and family there, vied with one another in offering pledges to the Earl of Sutherland to keep the peace in all time coming. The town of Wiek was also pillaged and burnt, but the church was preserved. In the church was found the heart of the Earl of Caithness's father in a case of lead, which was opened by John Mac-Gille-Calum of Rasay, and the ashes of the heart were thrown by him to the winds.

During the time when these depredations were being committed, the Earl of Caithness shut himself up in the castle of Girnigo; but on learning the disasters which had befallen his country, he desired a cessation of hostilities and a conference with the Earl of Sutherland. As the castle of Girnigo was strongly fortified, and as the Earl of Caithness had made preparations for enduring a long siege, the Earl of Sutherland complied with his request. Both earls ultimately agreed to refer all their differences and disputes to the arbitration of friends, and the Earl of Huntly was chosen by mutual consent to act as umpire or oversman, in the event of a difference of opinion. A second truce was in this way entered into until the decision of the arbiters, when all differences were to cease.⁵

Notwithstanding this engagement, however, the Earl of Caithness soon gave fresh provocation, for before the truce had expired he sent a party of his men to Dirichatt in Sutherland, under the command of Kenneth Buy, and his brother Farquhar Buy, chieftains of the Siol-Mhic-Imheair in Caithness, and chief advisers of the Earl of Caithness in his bad actions, and his instruments in oppressing the poor people of Caithness. The Earl of Sutherland lost no time in revenging himself for the depredations committed. At Whitsunday, in the year 1589, he sent 300 men into Caithness, with Alexander Gordon of Kilcahuekill at their head. They penetrated as far as Girnigo, laying the country waste everywhere around them, and striking terror into the hearts of the inhabitants, many of whom, including some of the Siol-Mhic-Imheair, they killed. After spending their fury the party returned to Sutherland with a large booty, and without the loss of a single man.

To retaliate upon the Earl of Sutherland for this inroad, James Sinclair of Markle, brother of the Earl of Caithness, collected an army of 3,000 men, with which he marched into Strathlully, in the month of June, 1589. As the Earl of Sutherland had been apprehensive of an attack, he had placed a range of sentinels along the borders of Sutherland, to give notice of the approach of the enemy. Of

⁵ Sir R. Gordon, c. 157.

these, four were stationed in the village of Liribell, which the Caithness men entered in the middle of the day unknown to the sentinels, who, instead of keeping an outlook, were at the time carelessly enjoying themselves within the watch-house. On perceiving the Caithness men about entering the house, they shut themselves up within it; but the house being set on fire, three of them perished, and the fourth, rushing through the flames, escaped with great difficulty, and announced to his countrymen the arrival of the enemy. From Strathully, Sinclair passed forward with his army to a place called Crissalligh, on the height of Strathbroray, and began to drive away some cattle towards Caithness. As the Earl of Sutherland had not yet had sufficient time to collect a sufficient force to oppose Sinclair, he sent in the meantime Houcheon Mackay, who happened to be at Dunrobin with 500 or 600 men, to keep Sinclair in check until a greater force should be assembled. With this body, which was hastily drawn together on the spur of the occasion, Mackay advanced with amazing celerity, and such was the rapidity of his movements, that he most unexpectedly came up with Sinclair not far from Crissalligh, when his army was ranging about without order or military discipline. On coming up, Mackay found John Gordon of Kilmekill at the head of a small party skirmishing with the Caithness men, a circumstance which made him instantly resolve, though so far inferior in numbers, to attack Sinclair. Crossing therefore the water, which was between him and the enemy, Mackay and his men rushed upon the army of Sinclair, which they defeated after a long and warm contest. The Caithness men retreated with the loss of their booty and part of their baggage, and were closely pursued by a body of men commanded by John Murray, nicknamed *the merchant*, to a distance of 16 miles.⁹

This defeat, however, did not satisfy the Earl of Sutherland, who, having now assembled an army, entered Caithness with the intention of laying it waste. The earl advanced as far as Corrichoigh, and the Earl of Caithness convened his forces at Spittle, where he lay wait-

ing the arrival of his enemy. The Earl of Huntly, having been made acquainted with the warlike preparations of the two hostile earls, sent, without delay, his uncle, Sir Patrick Gordon of Auchindun, to mediate between them, and he luckily arrived at the Earl of Sutherland's head-quarters, at the very instant his army was on its march to meet the Earl of Caithness. By the friendly interference of Sir Patrick, the parties were prevailed upon to desist from their hostile intentions, and to agree to hold an amicable meeting at Elgin, in presence of the Earl of Huntly, to whom they also agreed to refer all their differences. A meeting accordingly took place in the month of November, 1589, at which all disputes were settled, and in order that the reconciliation might be lasting, and that no recourse might again be had to arms, the two earls subscribed a deed, by which they appointed Huntly and his successors hereditary judges, and arbitrators of all disputes or differences, that might thenceforth arise between these two houses.

This reconciliation, however, as it did not obliterate the rancour which existed between the people of these different districts, was but of short duration. The frequent depredations committed by the vassals and retainers of the earls upon the property of one another, led to an exchange of letters and messages between them about the means to be used for repressing these disorders. During this correspondence the Earl of Sutherland became unwell, and, being confined to his bed, the Earl of Caithness, in October, 1590, wrote him a kind letter, which he had scarcely despatched when he most unaccountably entered Sutherland with a hostile force; but he only remained one night in that country, in consequence of receiving intelligence of a meditated attack upon his camp by John Gordon of Kilmekill, and Neill Mac-Iain-Mac-William. A considerable number of the Sutherland men having collected together, they resolved to pursue the Caithness men, who had carried off a large quantity of cattle; but, on coming nearly up with them, an unfortunate difference arose between the Murrays and the Gordons, each contending for the command of the vanguard. The Murrays rested their claim upon their former good services to the house of Sutherland; but the Gordons refusing to

⁹ Sir R. Gordon, p. 199.

admit it, all the Murrays, with the exception of William Murray, brother of the Laird of Palrossie, and John Murray, *the merchant*, withdrew, and took a station on a hill hard by to witness the combat. This unexpected event seemed to paralyze the Gordons at first; but seeing the Caithness men driving the cattle away before them, and thinking that if they did not attack them they would be accused of cowardice, Patrick Gordon of Gartay, John Gordon of Embo, and John Gordon of Kilmekill, after some consultation, resolved to attack the retiring foe without loss of time, and without waiting for the coming up of the Strathnaver men, who were hourly expected. This was a bold and desperate attempt, as the Gordons were only as one to twelve in point of numbers, but they could not brook the idea of being branded as cowards. With such numerical inferiority, and with the sun and wind in their faces to boot, the Sutherland men advanced upon and resolutely attacked the Caithness men near Clyne. In the van of the Caithness army were placed about 1,500 archers, a considerable number of whom were from the Western Isles, under the command of Donald Balloch Mackay of Scourie, who poured a thick shower of arrows upon the men of Sutherland as they advanced, the latter, in return, giving their opponents a similar reception. The combat raged with great fury for a considerable time between these two parties: thrice were the Caithness archers driven back upon their rear, which was in consequence thrown into great disorder, and thrice did they return to the conflict, cheered on and encouraged by their leader; but, though superior in numbers, they could not withstand the firmness and intrepidity of the Sutherland men, who forced them to retire from the field of battle on the approach of night, and to abandon the cattle which had been carried off. The loss in killed and wounded was about equal on both sides; but, with the exception of Nicolas Sutherland, brother of the Laird of Forse, and Angus Mac-Angus-Termat, both belonging to the Caithness party, and John Murray, *the merchant*, on the Sutherland side, there were no principal persons killed.

Vain as the efforts of the common friends of the rival earls had hitherto been to reconcile

them effectually, the Earl of Huntly and others once more attempted an arrangement, and having prevailed upon the parties to meet at Strathbogie, a final agreement was entered into in the month of March, 1591, by which they agreed to bury all bygone differences in oblivion, and to live on terms of amity in all time thereafter.

This fresh reconciliation of the two earls was the means of restoring quiet in their districts for a considerable time, which was partially interrupted in the year 1594, by a quarrel between the clan Gun and some of the other petty tribes. Donald Mac-William-Mac-Henric, Alister Mac-Iain-Mac-Rorie, and others of the clan Gun entered Caithness and attacked Farquhar Buy, one of the captains of the tribe of Siol-Mhic-Imheair, and William Sutherland, *alias* William Abaraich, the chief favourite of the Earl of Caithness, and the principal plotter against the life of George Gordon, whose death has been already noticed. After a warm skirmish, Farquhar Buy, and William Abaraich, and some of their followers, were slain. To revenge this outrage, the Earl of Caithness sent the same year his brother, James Sinclair of Murkle, with a party of men, against the clan Gun in Strathie, in Strathnaver, who killed seven of that tribe. George Mac-Iain-Mac-Rob, the chief, and Donald Mac-William-Mac-Henric narrowly escaped with their lives.

For the sake of continuity, we have deferred noticing those transactions in the north in which George Gordon, Earl of Huntly, was more immediately concerned, and which led to several bloody conflicts.

The earl, who was a favourite at court, and personally liked by James VI., finding himself in danger from the prevailing faction, retired to his possessions in the north, for the purpose of improving his estates and enjoying domestic quiet. One of his first measures was to erect a castle at Ruthven, in Badenoch, in the neighbourhood of his hunting forests. This gave great offence to Macintosh, the chief of the clan Chattan, and his people, as they considered that the object of its erection was to overawe the clan. Being the earl's vassals and tenants, they were bound to certain services, among which the furnishing of materials for the building formed a chief part; but, instead of assist-

ing the earl's people, they at first indirectly and in an underhand manner endeavoured to prevent the workmen from going on with their operations, and afterwards positively refused to furnish the necessaries required for the building. This act of disobedience was the cause of much trouble, which was increased by a quarrel in the year 1590, between the Gordons and the Grants, the occasion of which was as follows. John Grant, the tutor of Ballendalloch, having withheld the rents due to the widow, and endeavoured otherwise to injure her, James Gordon, her nephew, eldest son of Alexander Gordon of Lismore, along with some of his friends, went to Ballendalloch to obtain justice for her. On their arrival, differences were accommodated so far that the tutor paid up all arrears due to the lady, except a trifle, which he insisted, on some ground or other, on retaining. This led to some altercation, in which the servants of both parties took a share, and latterly came to blows; but they were separated, and James Gordon returned home. Judging from what had taken place, that his aunt's interests would in future be better attended to if under the protection of a husband, he persuaded the brother of Sir Thomas Gordon of Cluny to marry her, which he did. This act so incensed the tutor of Ballendalloch, that he at once showed his displeasure by killing, at the instigation of the laird of Grant, one of John Gordon's servants. For this the tutor, and such of the Grants as should harbour or assist him, were declared outlaws and rebels, and a commission was granted to the Earl of Huntly to apprehend and bring them to justice, in virtue of which, he besieged the house of Ballendalloch, and took it by force, on the 2d November, 1590; but the tutor effected his escape. Sir John Campbell of Cadell, a despicable tool of the Chancellor Maitland, who had plotted the destruction of the earl and the laird of Grant, now joined in the conspiracy against him, and stirred up the clan Chattan, and Macintosh their chief, to aid the Grants. They also persuaded the Earls of Athol and Murray to assist them against the Earl of Huntly.

As soon as Huntly ascertained that the Grants and clan Chattan, who were his own vassals, had put themselves under the com-

mand of these earls, he assembled his followers, and, entering Badenoch, summoned his vassals to appear before him, and deliver up the tutor and his abettors, but none of them came. He then proclaimed and denounced them rebels, and obtained a royal commission to invade and apprehend them. To consult on the best means of defending themselves, the Earls of Murray and Athole, the Dunbars, the clan Chattan, the Grants, and the laird of Cadell, and others of their party met at Forres. In the midst of their deliberations Huntly, who had received early intelligence of the meeting, and had, in consequence, assembled his forces, unexpectedly made his appearance in the neighbourhood of Forres. This sudden advance of Huntly struck terror into the minds of the persons assembled, and the meeting instantly broke up in great confusion. The whole party, with the exception of the Earl of Murray, left the town in great haste, and fled to Tarnoway; the Earl of Huntly, not aware that Murray had remained behind, marching directly to Tarnoway in pursuit of the fugitives. On arriving within sight of the castle into which the flying party had thrown themselves, the earl sent John Gordon, brother of Sir Thomas Gordon of Cluny, with a small body of men to reconnoitre; but approaching too near without due caution, he was shot by one of the Earl of Murray's servants. As Huntly found the castle well fortified, and as the rebels evacuated it and fled to the mountains, leaving a sufficient force to protect it, he disbanded his men on November 24, 1590, and returned home, whence he proceeded to Edinburgh.

Shortly after his arrival the Earl of Bothwell, who had a design upon the life of Chancellor Maitland, made an attack upon the palace of Holyroodhouse under cloud of night, with the view of seizing Maitland; but, having failed in his object, he was forced to flee to the north to avoid the vengeance of the king. The Earl of Huntly, who had been lately reconciled to Maitland, and the Duke of Lennox, were sent in pursuit of Bothwell, but he escaped. Understanding afterwards that he was harboured by the Earl of Murray at Donnibristle, the chancellor, having procured a commission against him from the king in favour of Huntly, again sent him, accompanied by forty gentlemen, to

attack the Earl of Murray. When the party had arrived near Donnibristle, the Earl of Huntly sent Captain John Gordon, of Buckie, brother of Gordon of Gight, with a summons to the Earl of Murray, requiring him to surrender himself prisoner; but instead of complying, one of the earl's servants levelled a piece at the bearer of the despatch, and wounded him mortally. Huntly, therefore, after giving orders to take the Earl of Murray alive if possible, forcibly entered the house; but Sir Thomas Gordon, recollecting the fate of his brother at Tarnoway, and Gordon of Gight, who saw his brother lying mortally wounded before his eyes, entirely disregarded the injunction; and following the earl, who had fled among the rocks on the adjoining sea-shore, slew him. It was this Earl of Murray who was known as the "bonny" earl, and, according to some historians, had impressed the heart of Anne of Denmark, and excited the jealousy of her royal spouse. This at least was the popular notion of his time:—

" He was a braw gallant,
And he played at the glove;
And the bonny Earl of Murray,
Oh! he was the queen's love."

According to one account the house was set on fire, and Murray was discovered, when endeavouring to escape, by a spark which fell on his helmet, and slain by Gordon of Buckie, saying to the latter, who had wounded him in the face, "You have spilt a better face than your awin."

The Earl of Huntly immediately despatched John Gordon of Buckie to Edinburgh, to lay a statement of the affair before the king and the chancellor. The death of the Earl of Murray would have passed quietly over, as an event of ordinary occurrence in those troublesome times; but, as he was one of the heads of the Protestant party, the Presbyterian ministers gave the matter a religious turn by denouncing the Catholic Earl of Huntly as a murderer, who wished to advance the interests of his church by imbruing his hands in the blood of his Protestant countrymen. The effect of the ministers' denunciations was a tumult among the people in Edinburgh and other parts of the kingdom, which obliged the king to cancel the commission he had granted

to the Earl of Huntly. The spirit of discontent became so violent that Captain John Gordon, who had been left at Inverkeithing for the recovery of his wounds, but who had been afterwards taken prisoner by the Earl of Murray's friends and carried to Edinburgh, was tried before a jury, and, contrary to law and justice, condemned and executed for having assisted the Earl of Huntly acting under a royal commission. The recklessness and severity of this act were still more atrocious, as Captain Gordon's wounds were incurable, and he was fast hastening to his grave. John Gordon of Buckie, who was master of the king's household, was obliged to flee from Edinburgh, and made a narrow escape with his life.

As for the Earl of Huntly, he was summoned, at the instance of the Lord of St. Colme, brother of the deceased Earl of Murray, to stand trial. He accordingly appeared at Edinburgh, and offered to abide the result of a trial by his peers, and in the meantime was committed a prisoner to the castle of Blackness on the 12th of March, 1591, till the peers should assemble to try him. On giving sufficient surety, however, that he would appear and stand trial on receiving six days' notice to that effect, he was released by the king on the 20th day of the same month.

The clan Chattan, who had never submitted without reluctance to the Earl of Huntly, considered the present aspect of affairs as peculiarly favourable to the design they entertained of shaking off the yoke altogether, and being countenanced and assisted by the Grants, and other friends of the Earl of Murray, made no secret of their intentions. At first the earl sent Allan Macdonald-Dubh, the chief of the clan Cameron, with his tribe, to attack the clan Chattan in Badenoch, and to keep them in due order and subjection. The Camerons, though warmly opposed, succeeded in defeating the clan Chattan, who lost 50 of their men after a sharp skirmish. The earl next despatched Macdonald, with some of the Lochaber men, against the Grants in Strathspey, whom he attacked, killed 18 of them, and laid waste the lands of Ballendalloch. After the clan Chattan had recovered from their defeat, they invaded Strathdee and Glenmuck in November 1592. To punish

this aggression, the Earl of Huntly collected his forces and entered Pettie, then in possession of the clan Chattan as a fief from the Earls of Murray, and laid waste all the lands of the clan Chattan there, killed many of them, and carried off a large quantity of cattle, which he divided among his army. But in returning from Pettie after disbanding his army, he received the unwelcome intelligence that William Macintosh, son of Lauchlan Macintosh, the chief, with 800 of the clan Chattan, had invaded the lands of Auchindun and Cabberogh. The earl, after desiring the small party which remained with him to follow him as speedily as possible, immediately set off at full speed, accompanied by Sir Patrick Gordon of Auchindun and 36 horsemen, in quest of Macintosh and his party. Overtaking them before they had left the bounds of Cabberogh, upon the top of a hill called Stapliegate, he attacked them with his small party, and, after a warm skirmish, defeated them, killing about 60 of their men, and wounding William Macintosh and others.

The Earl of Huntly, after thus subduing his enemies in the north, now found himself placed under ban by the government on account of an alleged conspiracy between him and the Earls of Angus and Errol and the crown of Spain, to overturn the State and the Church. The king and his councillors seemed to be satisfied of the innocence of the earls; but the ministers, who considered the reformed religion in Scotland in danger while these Catholic peers were protected and favoured, importuned his majesty to punish them. The king, yielding to necessity and to the intrigues of Queen Elizabeth, forfeited their titles, intending to restore them when a proper opportunity occurred; and, to silence the clamours of the ministers, convoked a parliament, which was held in the end of May, 1594. As few of the peers attended, the ministers, having the commissioners of the burghs on their side, carried everything their own way, and the consequence was, that the three earls were attained without trial, and their arms were torn in presence of the parliament, according to the custom in such cases.

Having so far succeeded, the ministers, instigated by the Queen of England, now

entreated the king to send the Earl of Argyle, a youth of nineteen years of age, in the pay of Queen Elizabeth, with an army against the Catholic earls. The king, still yielding to necessity, complied, and Argyle, having collected a force of about 12,000 men, entered Badenoch and laid siege to the castle of Ruthven, on the 27th of September, 1594. He was accompanied in this expedition by the Earl of Athole, Sir Lauchlan Maclean with some of his islanders, the chief of the Macintoshes, the Laird of Grant, the clan Gregor, Macneil of Barra, with all their friends and dependents, together with the whole of the Campbells, and a variety of others animated by a thirst for plunder or malice towards the Gordons. The castle of Ruthven was so well defended by the clan Pherson, who were the Earl of Huntly's vassals, that Argyle was obliged to give up the siege. He then marched through Strathspey, and encamped at Drummin, upon the river Avon, on the 2d of October, whence he issued orders to Lord Forbes, the Frasers, the Dunbars, the clan Kenzie, the Irvings, the Ogilvies, the Leslies, and other tribes and clans in the north, to join his standard with all convenient speed.

The earls, against whom this expedition was directed, were by no means dismayed. They knew that although the king was constrained by popular clamour to levy war upon them, he was in secret friendly to them; and they were, moreover, aware that the army of Argyle, who was a youth of no military experience, was a raw and undisciplined militia, and composed, in a great measure, of Catholics, who could not be expected to feel very warmly for the Protestant interest, to support which the expedition was professedly undertaken. The seeds of disaffection, besides, had been already sown in Argyle's camp by the corruption of the Grants and Campbell of Lochnell.

On hearing of Argyle's approach, the Earl of Errol immediately collected a select body of about 100 horsemen, being gentlemen, on whose courage and fidelity he could rely, and with these he joined the Earl of Huntly at Strathbogie. The forces of Huntly, after this junction, amounted, it is said, to nearly 1,500 men, almost altogether horsemen, and with this body he advanced to Carnborrow, where the

two earls and their chief followers made a solemn vow to conquer or die. Marching from thence, Huntly's army arrived at Auchindun on the same day that Argyle's army reached Drummin. At Auchindun, Huntly received intelligence that Argyle was on the eve of descending from the mountains to the lowlands, which induced him, on the following day, to send Captain Thomas Carr and a party of horsemen to reconnoitre the enemy, while he himself advanced with his main army. The reconnoitring party soon fell in, accidentally, with Argyle's scouts, whom they chased, and some of whom they killed. This occurrence, which was looked upon as a prognostic of victory, so encouraged Huntly and his men, that he resolved to attack the army of Argyle before he should be joined by Lord Forbes, and the forces which were waiting for his appearance in the lowlands. Argyle had now passed Glenlivet, and had reached the banks of a small brook named Alchonlathan.

On the other hand, the Earl of Argyle had no idea that the Earls of Huntly and Errol would attack him with such an inferior force; and he was, therefore, astonished at seeing them approach so near him as they did. Apprehensive that his numerical superiority in foot would be counterbalanced by Huntly's cavalry, he held a council of war, which advised Argyle to wait till the king, who had promised to appear with a force, should arrive, or, at all events, till he should be joined by the Frasers and Mackenzies from the north, and the Irvings, Forbeses, and Leslies from the lowlands with their horse. This opinion, which was considered judicious by the most experienced of Argyle's army, was however disregarded by him, and he determined to wait the attack of the enemy; and to encourage his men he pointed out to them the small number of those they had to combat with, and the spoils they might expect after victory. He disposed his army on the declivity of a hill, betwixt Glenlivet and Glenrinnis, in two parallel divisions. The right wing, consisting of the Macleans and Macintoshes, was commanded by Sir Lauchlan Maclean and Macintosh—the left, composed of the Grants, Macneills, and Macgregors, by Grant of Gartinbeg; and the centre, consisting of the Campbells, &c., was commanded by

Campbell of Auchinbreck. This vanguard consisted of 4,000 men, one-half of whom carried muskets. The rear of the army, consisting of about 6,000 men, was commanded by Argyle himself. The Earl of Huntly's vanguard was composed of 300 gentlemen, led by the Earl of Errol, Sir Patrick Gordon of Auchindun, the laird of Gight, the laird of Bonnitoun, and Captain, afterwards Sir Thomas Carr. The earl himself followed with the remainder of his forces, having the laird of Cluny upon his right hand and the laird of Abergeldy upon his left. Three pieces of field ordnance under the direction of Captain Andrew Gray, afterwards colonel of the English and Scots who served in Bohemia, were placed in front of the vanguard. Before advancing, the Earl of Huntly harangued his little army to encourage them to fight manfully; he told them that they had no alternative before them but victory or death—that they were now to combat, not for their own lives only, but also for the very existence of their families, which would be utterly extinguished if they fell a prey to their enemies.

The position which Argyle occupied on the declivity of the hill gave him a decided advantage over his assailants, who, from the nature of their force, were greatly hampered by the mossy nature of the ground at the foot of the hill, interspersed by pits from which turf had been dug. But, notwithstanding these obstacles, Huntly advanced up the hill with a slow and steady pace. It had been arranged between him and Campbell of Lochnell, who had promised to go over to Huntly as soon as the battle had commenced, that, before charging Argyle with his cavalry, Huntly should fire his artillery at the yellow standard. Campbell bore a mortal enmity at Argyle, as he had murdered his brother, Campbell of Calder, in 1592; and as he was Argyle's nearest heir, he probably had directed the firing at the yellow standard in the hope of cutting off the earl. Unfortunately for himself, however, Campbell was shot dead at the first fire of the cannon, and upon his fall all his men fled from the field. Macneill of Barra was also slain at the same time.

The Highlanders, who had never before seen field pieces, were thrown into disorder

by the cannonade, which being perceived by Huntly, he charged the enemy, and rushing in among them with his horsemen, increased the confusion. The Earl of Errol was directed to attack the right wing of Argyle's army, commanded by Maclean, but as it occupied a very steep part of the hill, and as Errol was greatly annoyed by thick volleys of shot from above, he was compelled to make a detour, leaving the enemy on his left. But Gordon of Auchindun, disdaining such a prudent course, galloped up the hill with a party of his own followers, and charged Maclean with great impetuosity; but Auchindun's rashness cost him his life. The fall of Auchindun so exasperated his followers that they set no bounds to their fury; but Maclean received their repeated assaults with firmness, and manœuvred his troops so well as to succeed in cutting off the Earl of Errol, and placing him between his own body and that of Argyle, by whose joint forces he was completely surrounded. At this important crisis, when no hopes of retreat remained, and when Errol and his men were in danger of being cut to pieces, the Earl of Huntly, very fortunately, came up to his assistance and relieved him from his embarrassment. The battle was now renewed and continued for two hours, during which both parties fought with great bravery, "the one," says Sir Robert Gordon, "for glorie, the other for necessitie." In the heat of the action the Earl of Huntly had a horse shot under him, and was in imminent danger of his life; but another horse was immediately procured for him. After a hard contest the main body of Argyle's army began to give way, and retreated towards the rivulet of Alchonlathan; but Maclean still kept the field, and continued to support the falling fortune of the day. At length, finding the contest hopeless, and after losing many of his men, he retired in good order with the small company that still remained about him. Huntly pursued the retiring foe beyond the water of Alchonlathan, when he was prevented from following them farther by the steepness of the hills, so unfavourable to the operations of cavalry. The success of Huntly was mainly owing to the treachery of Lochnell, and of John Grant of Gartingbeg, one of Huntly's vassals, who, in terms of a concerted plan, re-

treated with his men as soon as the action began, by which act the centre and the left wing of Argyle's army were completely broken. On the side of Argyle 500 men were killed besides Macneill of Barra, and Lochnell and Auchinbreck, the two cousins of Argyle. The Earl of Huntly's loss was comparatively trifling. About 14 gentlemen were slain, including Sir Patrick Gordon of Auchindun, and the Laird of Gight; and the Earl of Errol and a considerable number of persons were wounded. At the conclusion of the battle the conquerors returned thanks to God on the field for the victory they had achieved. This battle is called by some writers the battle of Glenlivet, and by others the battle of Alchonlathan. Among the trophies found on the field was the ensign belonging to the Earl of Argyle, which was carried with other spoils to Strathbogie, and placed upon the top of the great tower. So certain had Argyle been of success in his enterprise, that he had made out a paper apportioning the lands of the Gordons, the Hays, and all who were suspected to favour them, among the chief officers of his army. This document was found among the baggage which he left behind him on the field of battle.¹

Although Argyle certainly calculated upon being joined by the king, it seems doubtful if James ever entertained such an intention, for he stopped at Dundee, from which he did not stir till he heard of the result of the battle of Glenlivet. Instigated by the ministers and other enemies of the Earl of Huntly, who became now more exasperated than ever at the unexpected failure of Argyle's expedition, the king proceeded north to Strathbogie, and in his route he permitted, most unwillingly, the house of Craig in Angus, belonging to Sir John Ogilvie, son of Lord Ogilvie, that of Bagaes in Angus, the property of Sir Walter Lindsay, the house of Culsalmond in Garioch, appertaining to the Laird of Newton-Gordon, the house of Slaines in Buchan, belonging to the Earl of Errol, and the castle of Strathbogie, to be razed to the ground, under the pretext that priests and Jesuits had been harboured in them. In the meantime the Earl of Huntly

¹ Sir R. Gordon, pp. 226, 227, 228, 229.—Shaw's *Moray*, pp. 266, 267, 268.

and his friends retired into Sutherland, where they remained six weeks with Earl Alexander; and on the king's departure to Strathbogie, Huntly returned, leaving his eldest son George, Lord Gordon, in Sutherland with his aunt, till the return of more peaceable times.

The king left the Duke of Lennox to act as his lieutenant in the north, with whom the two earls held a meeting at Aberdeen, and as their temporary absence from the kingdom might allay the spirit of violence and discontent, which was particularly annoying to his majesty, they agreed to leave the kingdom during the king's pleasure. After spending sixteen months in travelling through Germany and Flanders, Huntly was recalled, and on his return he, as well as the Earls of Angus and Errol, were restored to their former honours and estates by the parlement, held at Edinburgh in November 1597, and in testimony of his regard for Huntly, the king, two years thereafter, created him a marquis. This signal mark of the royal favour had such an influence upon the clan Chattan, the clan Kenzie, the Grants, Forbeses, Leslies, and other hostile clans and tribes, that they at once submitted themselves to the marquis.

The warlike operations in the north seem, for a time, to have drawn off the attention of the clans from their own feuds; but in the year 1597 a tumult occurred at Loggiewreid in Ross, which had almost put that province and the adjoining country into a flame. The quarrel began between John Mac-Gille-Calum, brother of Gille-Calum, Laird of Rasay, and Alexander Bane, brother of Duncan Bane of Tulloch, in Ross. The Monroes took the side of the Banes, and the Mackenzies aided John Mac-Gille-Calum. In this tumult John Mac-Gille-Calum and John Mac-Murthow-Mac-William, a gentleman of the clan Kenzie, and three persons of that surname, were killed on the one side, and on the other were slain John Monroe of Culeraigie, his brother Houcheon Monroe, and John Monroe Robertson. This occurrence renewed the ancient animosity between the clan Kenzie and the Monroes, and both parties began to assemble their friends for the purpose of attacking one another; but their differences were in some measure happily reconciled by the mediation of common friends.

In the following year the ambition and avarice of Sir Lauchlan Maclean, of whom notice has been already taken, brought him to an untimely end, having been slain in Islay by Sir James Macdonald, his nephew, eldest son of Angus Macdonald of Kintyre. Sir Lauchlan had long had an eye upon the possessions of the clan Ronald in Islay; but having failed in extorting a conveyance thereof from Angus Macdonald in the way before alluded to, he endeavoured, by his credit at court and by bribery or other means, to obtain a grant of these lands from the crown in 1595. At this period Angus Macdonald had become infirm from age, and his son, Sir James Macdonald, was too young to make any effectual resistance to the newly acquired claims of his covetous uncle. After obtaining the gift, Sir Lauchlan collected his people and friends, and invaded Islay, for the purpose of taking possession of the lands which belonged to the clan Donald. Sir James Macdonald, on hearing of his uncle's landing, collected his friends, and landed in Islay to dispossess Sir Lauchlan of the property. To prevent the effusion of blood, some common friends of the parties interposed, and endeavoured to bring about an adjustment of their differences. They prevailed upon Sir James to agree to resign the half of the island to his uncle during the life of the latter, provided he would acknowledge that he held the same for personal service to the clan Donald in the same manner as Maclean's progenitors had always held the Rhinns of Islay; and he moreover offered to submit the question to any impartial friends Maclean might choose, under this reasonable condition, that in case they should not agree, his Majesty should decide. But Maclean, contrary to the advice of his best friends, would listen to no proposals short of an absolute surrender of the whole of the island. Sir James therefore resolved to vindicate his right by an appeal to arms, though his force was far inferior to that of Sir Lauchlan. A desperate struggle took place, in which great valour was displayed on both sides. Sir Lauchlan was killed fighting at the head of his men, who were at length compelled to retreat to their boats and vessels. Besides their chief, the Macleans left 80 of their principal men and 200 common soldiers dead on

the field of battle. Lauchlan Barroch-Maclean, son of Sir Lauchlan, was dangerously wounded, but escaped. Sir James Macdonald was also so severely wounded that he never fully recovered from his wounds. About 30 of the clan Donald were killed and about 60 wounded. Sir Lauchlan, according to Sir Robert Gordon, had consulted a witch before he undertook this journey into Islay, who advised him, in the first place, not to land upon the island on a Thursday; secondly, that he should not drink of the water of a well near Groynard; and lastly, she told him that one Maclean should be slain at Groynard. "The first he transgressed unwillingly," says Sir Robert, "being driven into the island of Ila by a tempest upon a Thursday; the second he transgressed negligently, having drank of that water before he was aware; and so he was killed there at Groynard, as was foretold him, but doubtfullie. Thus endeth all these that doe trust in such kynd of responses, or doe hunt after them!"²

On hearing of Maclean's death and the defeat of his men, the king became so highly incensed against the clan Donald that, finding he had a right to dispose of their possessions both in Kintyre and Islay, he made a grant of them to the Earl of Argyle and the Campbells. This gave rise to a number of bloody conflicts between the Campbells and the clan Donald in the years 1614, -15, and -16, which ended in the ruin of the latter.

The rival houses of Sutherland and Caithness had now lived on friendly terms for some years. After spending about eighteen months at court, and attending a convention of the estates at Edinburgh in July, 1598, John, sixth Earl of Sutherland, went to the Continent, where he remained till the month of September, 1600. The Earl of Caithness, deeming the absence of the Earl of Sutherland a fit opportunity for carrying into effect some designs against him, caused William Mackay to obtain leave from his brother Houcheon Mackay to hunt in the policy of Durines belonging to the Earl of Sutherland. The Earl of Caithness thereupon assembled all his vassals and dependents, and, under the pretence of hunting, made demonstrations for entering Sutherland

or Strathnaver. As soon as Mackay was informed of his intentions, he sent a message to the Earl of Caithness, intimating to him that he would not permit him to enter either of these countries, or to cross the marches. The Earl of Caithness returned a haughty answer; but he did not carry his threat of invasion into execution on account of the arrival of the Earl of Sutherland from the Continent. As the Earl of Caithness still continued to threaten an invasion, the Earl of Sutherland collected his forces, in the month of July 1601, to oppose him. Mackay, with his countrymen, soon joined the Earl of Sutherland at Lagan-Gaincamhd in Dirichat, where he was soon also joined by the Monroes under Robert Monroe of Contaligh, and the laird of Assynt with his countrymen.

While the Earl of Sutherland's force was thus assembling, the Earl of Caithness advanced towards Sutherland with his army. The two armies encamped at the distance of about three miles asunder, near the hill of Bengrime. In expectation of a battle on the morning after their encampment, the Sutherland men took up a position in a plain which lay between the two armies, called Leathad Reidh, than which a more convenient station could not have been selected. But the commodiousness of the plain was not the only reason for making the selection. There had been long a prophetic tradition in these countries that a battle was to be fought on this ground between the inhabitants of Sutherland, assisted by the Strathnaver men, and the men of Caithness; that although the Sutherland men were to be victorious their loss would be great, and that the loss of the Strathnaver men should even be greater, but that the Caithness men should be so completely overthrown that they should not be able, for a considerable length of time, to recover the blow which they were to receive. This superstitious idea made such an impression upon the minds of the men of Sutherland that it was with great difficulty they could be restrained from immediately attacking their enemies.

The Earl of Caithness, daunted by this circumstance, and being diffident of the fidelity of some of his people, whom he had used with great cruelty, sent messengers to the Earl of

² *History*, p. 238.

Sutherland expressing his regret at what had happened, stating that he was provoked to his present measures by the insolence of Mackay, who had repeatedly dared him to the attack, and that, if the Earl of Sutherland would pass over the affair, he would permit him and his army to advance twice as far into Caithness as he had marched into Sutherland. The Earl of Sutherland, on receipt of this offer, called a council of his friends to deliberate upon it. Mackay and some others advised the earl to decline the proposal, and attack the Earl of Caithness; while others of the earl's advisers thought it neither fit nor reasonable to risk so many lives when such ample satisfaction was offered. A sort of middle course was, therefore, adopted by giving the Earl of Caithness an opportunity to escape if he inclined. The messengers were accordingly sent back with this answer, that if the Earl of Caithness and his army would remain where they lay till sunrise next morning they might be assured of an attack.

When this answer was delivered in the Earl of Caithness' camp, his men got so alarmed that the earl, with great difficulty, prevented them from running away immediately. He remained on the field all night watching them in person, encouraging them to remain, and making great promises to them if they stood firm. But his entreaties were quite unavailing, for as soon as the morning dawned, on perceiving the approach of the Earl of Sutherland's army, they fled from the field in the utmost confusion, jostling and overthrowing one another in their flight, and leaving their whole baggage behind them. The Earl of Sutherland resolved to pursue the flying enemy; but, before proceeding on the pursuit, his army collected a quantity of stones which they accumulated into a heap to commemorate the flight of the Caithness men, which heap was called *Carn-Teiche*, that is, the *Flight Cairn*.

Not wishing to encounter the Earl of Sutherland under the adverse circumstances which had occurred, the Earl of Caithness, after entering his own territories, sent a message to his pursuer to the effect that having complied with his request in withdrawing his army, he hoped hostile proceedings would cease, and that if the Earl of Sutherland should advance

with his army into Caithness, Earl George would not hinder him; but he suggested to him the propriety of appointing some gentlemen on both sides to see the respective armies dissolved. The Earl of Sutherland acceded to this proposal, and sent George Gray of Cuttle, eldest son of Gilbert Gray of Sordell, with a company of resolute men into Caithness to see the army of the Earl of Caithness broken up. The Earl of Caithness, in his turn, despatched Alexander Bane, chief of the Caithness Banes, who witnessed the dismissal of the Earl of Sutherland's army.³

About the period in question, great commotions took place in the north-west isles, in consequence of a quarrel between Donald Gorm Macdonald of Slate, and Sir Roderick Macleod of Harris, arising out of the following circumstances. Donald Gorm Macdonald, who had married the sister of Sir Roderick, instigated by jealousy, had conceived displeasure at her and put her away. Having complained to her brother of the treatment thus received, Sir Roderick sent a message to Macdonald requiring him to take back his wife. Instead of complying with this request, Macdonald brought an action of divorce against her, and having obtained decree therein, married the sister of Kenneth Mackenzie, lord of Kintail. Sir Roderick, who considered himself disgraced and his family dishonoured by such proceedings, assembled all his countrymen and his tribe, the *Siol-Thormaid*, without delay, and invaded with fire and sword the lands of Macdonald in the isle of Skye, to which he laid claim as his own. Macdonald retaliated by landing in Harris with his forces, which he laid waste, and after killing some of the inhabitants retired with a large booty in cattle. To make amends for this loss, Sir Roderick invaded Uist, which belonged to Macdonald, and despatched his cousin, Donald Glas Macleod, with 40 men, into the interior, to lay the island waste, and to carry off a quantity of goods and cattle, which the inhabitants had placed within the precincts of the church of Killtrynard as a sanctuary. This exploit turned out to be very serious, as Donald Macleod and his party were most unexpect-

³ Sir Robert Gordon, p. 243.

edly attacked in the act of carrying off their prey, by John Mac-Iain-Mhic-Sheumais, a kinsman of Macdonald, at the head of a body of 12 men who had remained in the island, by whom Donald Macleod and the greater part of his men were cut to pieces, and the booty rescued. Sir Roderick, thinking that the force which had attacked his cousin was much greater than it was, retired from the island, intending to return on a future day with a greater force to revenge his loss.

This odious system of warfare continued till the hostile parties had almost exterminated one another; and to such extremities were they reduced by the ruin and desolation which followed, that they were compelled to eat horses, dogs, cats, and other animals, to preserve a miserable existence. To put an end, if possible, at once to this destructive contest, Macdonald collected all his remaining forces, with the determination of striking a decisive blow at his opponent; and accordingly, in the year 1601, he entered Sir Roderick's territories with the design of bringing him to battle. Sir Roderick was then in Argyle, soliciting aid and advice from the Earl of Argyle against the clan Donald; but on hearing of the approach of Macdonald, Alexander Macleod, brother of Sir Roderick, resolved to try the result of a battle. Assembling, therefore, all the inhabitants of his brother's lands, together with the whole tribe of the Siol-Thormaid, and some of the Siol-Thorquill, he encamped close by the hill of Benquhillin, in Skye, resolved to give battle to the clan Donald next morning. Accordingly, on the arrival of morning, an obstinate and deadly fight took place, which lasted the whole day, each side contending with the utmost valour for victory; but at length the clan Donald overthrew their opponents. Alexander Macleod was wounded and taken prisoner, along with Neill-Mac-Alastair-Ruaidh, and 30 others of the choicest men of the Siol-Thormaid. Iain-Mac-Thormaid and Thormaid-Mac-Thormaid, two near kinsmen of Sir Roderick, and several others, were slain.

After this affair, a reconciliation took place between Macdonald and Sir Roderick, at the solicitation of old Angus Macdonald of Kintyre, the laird of Coll, and other friends, when Macdonald delivered up to Sir Roderick the pris-

oners he had taken at Benquhillin; but although these parties never again showed any open hostility, they brought several actions at law against each other, the one claiming from the other certain parts of his possessions.

CHAPTER IX.

A. D. 1602—1613.

KING OF SCOTLAND:—
James VI., 1567—1603.

KING OF GREAT BRITAIN:—
James I., 1603—1625.

Feud between the Colquhouns and Macgregors—Macgregors outlawed—Execution of their Chief—Quarrel between the clan Kenzie and Glengarry—Alister Mac-Uilleam-Mhoir beheaded—Lawless proceedings in Sutherland—Deadly quarrel in Dornoch—Meeting between the Earls of Caithness and Sutherland—Feud between the Murrays and some of the Siol-Thormais—Discussion in Moray among the Dunbars—Quarrel between the Earl of Caithness and the chief of the Mackays—Commotions in Lewis among the Macleods—Invasion of Lewis by Fife adventurers—Compelled to abandon it—Lord Kintail obtains possession of Lewis—Expulsion of Neill Macleod—Quarrel between the Laird of Rasay and Mackenzie of Gairloch—Disturbances in Caithness—Tumults in Caithness on the apprehension of Arthur Smith, a false coiner—Earl of Caithness prosecutes Donald Mackay and others—Dissensions among the clan Camron.

In the early part of the year 1602 the west of Scotland was thrown into a state of great disorder, in consequence of the renewal of some old quarrels between Colquhoun of Luss, the chief of that surname, and Alexander Macgregor, chief of the clan Gregor. To put an end to these dissensions, Alexander Macgregor left Rannoch, accompanied by about 200 of his kinsmen and friends, entered Lennox, and took up his quarters on the confines of Luss's territory, where he expected, by the mediation of his friends, to bring matters to an amicable adjustment. As the laird of Luss was suspicious of Macgregor's real intentions, he assembled all his vassals, with the Buchanans and others, to the number of 300 horse and 500 foot, desiguing, if the result of the meeting should not turn out according to his expectations and wishes, to cut off Macgregor and his party. But Macgregor, anticipating Colquhoun's intention, was upon his guard, and, by his precautions, defeated the design upon him. A conference was held for the purpose of terminating all differences, but the meeting

broke up without any adjustment: Macgregor then proceeded homewards. The laird of Luss, in pursuance of his plan, immediately followed Macgregor with great haste through Glenfreon, in the expectation of coming upon him unawares, and defeating him; but Macgregor, who was on the alert, observed, in due time, the approach of his pursuers, and made his preparations accordingly. He divided his company into two parts, the largest of which he kept under his own command, and placed the other part under the command of John Macgregor, his brother, whom he despatched by a circuitous route, for the purpose of attacking Luss's party in the rear, when they should least expect to be assailed. This stratagem succeeded, and the result was, that after a keen contest, Luss's party was completely overthrown, with the loss of 200 men, besides several gentlemen and burgesses of the town of Dumbarton. It is remarkable that of the Macgregors, John, the brother of Alexander, and another person, were the only killed, though some of the party were wounded.

The laird of Luss and his friends sent early notice of their disaster to the king, and by misrepresenting the whole affair to him, and exhibiting to his majesty eleven score bloody shirts, belonging to those of their party who were slain, the king grew exceedingly incensed at the clan Gregor, who had no person about the king to plead their cause, proclaimed them rebels, and interdicted all the lieges from harbouring or having any communication with them. The Earl of Argyle, with the Campbells, was afterwards sent against the proscribed clan, and hunted them through the country. About 60 of the clan made a brave stand at Bentsick against a party of 200 chosen men belonging to the clan Cameron, clan Nab, and clan Ronald, under the command of Robert Campbell, son of the laird of Glenorely, when Duncan Aberigh, one of the chieftains of the clan Gregor, and his son Duncan, and seven gentlemen of Campbell's party were killed. But although they made a brave resistance, and killed many of their pursuers, the Macgregors, after many skirmishes and great losses, were at last overcome. Commissions were thereafter sent through the kingdom, for fining those who had harboured any of the clan, and for pun-

ishing all persons who had kept up any communication with them, and the fines so levied were given by the king to the Earl of Argyle, as a recompense for his services against the unfortunate Macgregors.

Alexander Macgregor, the chief, after suffering many vicissitudes of fortune, at last surrendered himself to the Earl of Argyle, on condition that he should grant him a safe conduct into England to King James, that he might lay before his majesty a true state of the whole affair from the commencement, and crave the royal mercy; and as a security for his return to Scotland, he delivered up to Argyle thirty of his choicest men as hostages. But no sooner had Macgregor arrived at Berwick on his way to London, than he was basely arrested, brought back by the earl to Edinburgh, and, by his influence, executed along with the thirty hostages. Argyle hoped, by these means, ultimately to annihilate the whole clan; but in this cruel design he was quite disappointed, for the clan speedily increased, and became almost as powerful as before.⁴

While the Highland borders were thus disturbed by the warfare between the Macgregors and the Colquhouns, a commotion happened in the interior of the Highlands, in consequence of a quarrel between the clan Kenzie and the laird of Glengarry, who, according to Sir Robert Gordon, was "unexpert and unskilfull in the lawes of the realme." From his want of knowledge of the law, the clan Kenzie are said by the same writer to have "easalie intrapped him within the compas thereof," certainly by no means a difficult matter in those lawless times; they then procured a warrant for citing him to appear before the judiciary court at Edinburgh, which they took good care should not be served upon him personally. Either not knowing of these legal proceedings, or neglecting the summons, Glengarry did not appear at Edinburgh on the day appointed, but went about revenging the slaughter of two of his kinsmen, whom the clan Kenzie had killed after the summons for Glengarry's appearance had been issued. The consequence was that Glengarry and some of his followers were outlawed. Through the interest of the Earl of

⁴ Sir R. Gordon, p. 247.

Dunfermlie, lord chancellor of Scotland, Kenneth Mackenzie, afterwards created Lord Kintail, obtained a commission against Glengarry and his people, which occasioned great trouble and much slaughter. Being assisted by many followers from the neighbouring country, Mackenzie, by virtue of his commission, invaded Glengarry's territories, which he mercilessly wasted and destroyed with fire and sword. On his return, Mackenzie besieged the castle of Strome, which ultimately surrendered to him. To assist Mackenzie in this expedition, the Earl of Sutherland, in token of the ancient friendship which had subsisted between his family and the Mackenzies, sent 240 well equipped and able men, under the command of John Gordon of Embo. Mackenzie again returned into Glengarry, where he had a skirmish with a party commanded by Glengarry's eldest son, in which the latter and 60 of his followers were slain. The Mackenzies also suffered some loss on this occasion. At last, after much trouble and bloodshed on both sides, an agreement was entered into, by which Glengarry renounced in favour of Kenneth Mackenzie, the castle of Strome and the adjacent lands.⁵

In the year 1605, the peace of the northern Highlands was somewhat disturbed by one of those atrocious occurrences so common at that time. The chief of the Mackays had a servant named Alastair-Mac-Uilleam-Mhoir. This man having some business to transact in Caithness, went there without the least apprehension of danger, as the Earls of Sutherland and Caithness had settled all their differences. No sooner, however, did the latter hear of Mac-Uilleam-Mhoir's arrival in Caithness, than he sent Henry Sinclair, his bastard brother, with a party of men to kill him. Mac-Uilleam-Mhoir, being a bold and resolute man, was not openly attacked by Sinclair; but on entering the house where the former had taken up his residence, Sinclair and his party pretended that they had come on a friendly visit to him to enjoy themselves in his company. Not suspecting their hostile intentions, Alister invited them to sit down and drink with him; but scarcely had they taken their seats when

they seized Mac-Uilleam-Mhoir, and carried him off prisoner to the Earl of Caithness, who caused him to be beheaded in his own presence, the following day. The fidelity of this unfortunate man to Mackay, his master, during the disputes between the Earls of Sutherland and Caithness, was the cause for which he suffered. Mackay, resolved upon getting the earl punished, entered a legal prosecution against him at Edinburgh, but by the mediation of the Marquis of Huntly the suit was quashed.⁶

In July, 1605, a murder was committed in Strathnaver, by Robert Gray of Hopsdale or Ospisdell, the victim being Angus Mac-Kenneth-Mac-Alister, one of the Siol-Mhurchaidh-Rhiabhaich. The circumstances leading to this will illustrate the utterly lawless and insecure state of the Highlands at this time. John Gray of Skibo held the lands of Ardinh under John, the fifth of that name, Earl of Sutherland, as superior, which lands the grandfather of Angus Mac-Kenneth had in possession from John Mackay, son of Y-Roy-Mackay, who, before the time of this Earl John, possessed some lands in Breachat. When John Gray obtained the grant of Ardinh from John the fifth, he allowed Kenneth Mac-Alister, the father of Angus Mac-Kenneth, to retain possession thereof, which he continued to do till about the year 1573. About this period a variance arose between John Gray and Hugh Murray of Aberscors, in consequence of some law-suits which they carried on against one another; but they were reconciled by Alexander, Earl of Sutherland, who became bound to pay a sum of money to John Gray, for Hugh Murray, who was in the meantime to get possession of the lands of Ardinh in security. As John Gray still retained the property and kept Kenneth Mac-Alister in the possession thereof at the old rent, the Murrays took umbrage at him, and prevailed upon the Earl of Sutherland to grant a conveyance of the wadset or mortgage over Ardinh in favour of Angus Murray, formerly baillie of Dornoch. In the meantime, Kenneth Mac-Alister died, leaving his son, Angus Mac-Kenneth, in possession. Angus Murray having acquired the mortgage, now endeavoured to raise the rent of Ardinh.

⁵ Sir R. Gordon, p. 248.

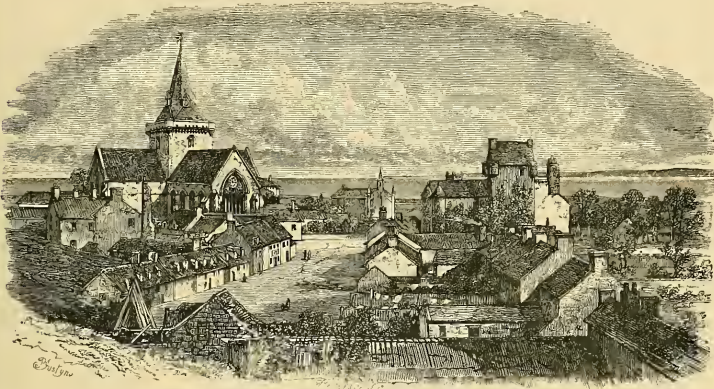
⁶ Sir R. Gordon, p. 253.

but Angus Mac-Kenneth refusing to pay more than his father had paid, was dispossessed, and the lands were let to William Mac-Iain-Mac-Kenneth, cousin of Angus Mac-Kenneth. This proceeding so exasperated Angus that he murdered his cousin William Mac-Kenneth, his wife, and two sons, under cloud of night, and so determined was he that no other person should possess the lands but himself, that he killed no less than nine other persons, who had successively endeavoured to occupy them. No others being disposed to occupy Ardinsh at the risk of their lives, and Angus Murray getting wearied of his possession, resigned his right to Gilbert Gray of Skibo, on the death of John Gray, his father. Gilbert thereafter conveyed the property to Robert Gray of Ospisdell, his second son; but Robert, being disinclined to allow Angus Mac-Kenneth, who had again obtained possession, to continue tenant, he dispossessed him, and let the land to one Finlay Logan, but this new tenant was murdered by Mac-Kenneth in the year 1604. Mac-Kenneth then fled into Strathnaver with a party composed of persons of desperate and reckless passions like himself, with the intention of annoying Robert Gray by their incursions. Gray having ascertained that they were in the parish of Creigh, he immediately attacked them and killed Murdo Mac-Kenneth, the brother of Angus, who made a narrow escape, and again retired into Strathnaver. Angus again returned into Sutherland in May 1605, and, in the absence of Robert Gray, burnt his stable, with some of his cattle, at Ospisdell. Gray then obtained a warrant against Mac-Kenneth, and having procured the assistance of a body of men from John Earl of Sutherland, entered Strathnaver and attacked Mac-Kenneth at the Cruiffs of Hoip, and slew him.⁷

The Earl of Caithness, disliking the unquiet state in which he had for some time been forced to remain, made another attempt, in the month of July, 1607, to hunt in Bengrime, without asking permission from the Earl of Sutherland; but he was prevented from accomplishing his purpose by the sudden appearance in Strathully of the latter, attended by his friend Mackay, and a considerable body of their countrymen.

Almost the whole of the inhabitants of Dornoch turned out on this occasion, and went to Strathully. During their absence a quarrel ensued in the town between one John Macphail and three brothers of the name of Pope, in which one of the latter was killed; the circumstances leading to and attending which quarrel were these:—In the year 1585, William Pope, a native of Ross, settled in Sutherland, and being a man of good education, was appointed schoolmaster in Dornoch, and afterwards became its resident minister. He also received another clerical appointment in Caithness, by means of which, and of his other living, he became, in course of time, wealthy. This good success induced two younger brothers, Charles and Thomas, to leave their native country and settle in Sutherland. Thomas was soon made chancellor of Caithness and minister of Rogart. Charles became a notary public and a messenger-at-arms; and having, by his good conduct and agreeable conversation, ingratiated himself with the Earl of Sutherland, was appointed to the office of sheriff-clerk of Sutherland. The brothers soon acquired considerable wealth, which they laid out in the purchase of houses in the town of Dornoch, where they chiefly resided. Many of the inhabitants of the town envied their acquisitions, and took every occasion to insult them as intruders, who had a design, as they supposed, to drive the ancient inhabitants of the place from their possessions. On the occasion in question William and Thomas Pope, along with other ministers, had held a meeting at Dornoch on church affairs, on dissolving which they went to breakfast at an inn. While at breakfast, John Macphail entered the house, and demanded some liquor from the mistress of the inn, but she refused to give him any, as she knew him to be a troublesome and quarrelsome person. Macphail, irritated at the refusal, spoke harshly to the woman, and the ministers having made some excuse for her, Macphail vented his abuse upon them. Being threatened by Thomas Pope, for his insolence, he pushed an arrow with a barbed head, which he held in his hand, into one of Pope's arms. The parties then separated, but the two Popes being observed walking in the churchyard in the evening, with

⁷ Sir R. Gordon, p. 254



Dornoch, showing the Cathedral and the remaining tower of the old Castle.

their swords girt about them, by Macphail, who looked upon their so arming themselves as a threat, he immediately made the circumstance known to Honcheon Macphail, his nephew, and one William Murray, all of whom entered the churchyard and assailed the two brothers with the most vituperative abuse. Charles Pope, learning the danger his brothers were in, immediately hastened to the spot, where he found the two parties engaged. Charles attacked Murray, whom he wounded in the face, whereupon Murray instantly killed him. William and Thomas were grievously wounded by Macphail and his nephew, and left for dead, but they ultimately recovered. Macphail and his nephew fled to Holland, where they ended their days. After this occurrence, the surviving brothers left Sutherland and went back into their own country. It is only by recording such comparatively unimportant incidents as this, apparently somewhat beneath the dignity of history, that a knowledge of the real state of the Highlands at this time can be conveyed.

By the mediation of the Marquis of Huntly, the Earls of Caithness and Sutherland again met at Elgin with their mutual friends, and once more adjusted their differences. On this occasion the Earl of Sutherland was accompanied by large parties of the Gordons, the Frasers, the Dunbars, the clan Kenzie, the

Monroes, the clan Chattan, and other friends, which so displeased the Earl of Caithness, who was grieved to see his rival so honourably attended, that he could never afterwards be induced to meet again with the Earl of Sutherland or any of his family.

During the year 1608 a quarrel occurred in Sutherland between Iver Mac-Donald-Mac-Alistair, one of the Siol-Thomais, and Alexander Murray in Auchindough. Iver and his eldest son, John, meeting one day with Alexander Murray and his son, Thomas, an altercation took place on some questions in dispute. From words they proceeded to blows, and the result was that John, the son of Iver, and Alexander Murray were killed. Iver then fled into Strathnaver, whither he was followed by Thomas Murray, accompanied by a party of 24 men, to revenge the death of his father. Iver, however, avoided them, and having assembled some friends, he attacked Murray unawares, at the hill of Binchlibrig, and compelled him to flee, after taking five of his men prisoners, whom he released after a captivity of five days. As the chief of the Mackays protected Iver, George Murray of Pulrossie took up the quarrel, and annoyed Iver and his party; but the matter was compromised by Mackay, who paid a sum of money to Pulrossie and Thomas Murray, as a reparation for divers losses they had sustained at Iver's hands during his out-

lawry. This compromise was the more readily entered into by Pulrossie, as the Earl of Sutherland was rather favourable to Iver, and was by no means displeased at him for the injuries he did to Pulrossie, who had not acted dutifully towards him. Besides having lost his own son in the quarrel, who was killed by Thomas Murray, Iver was unjustly dealt with in being made the sole object of persecution.⁸

A civil dissension occurred about this time in Moray among the Dunbars, which nearly proved fatal to that family. To understand the origin of this dispute it is necessary to state the circumstances which led to it, and to go back to the period when Patrick Dunbar, sheriff of Moray, and tutor and uncle of Alexander Dunbar of Westfield, was killed, along with the Earl of Murray, at Donnibristle. Alexander did not enjoy his inheritance long, having died at Dunkeld, shortly after the death of his uncle, under circumstances which led to a suspicion that he had been poisoned. As he died without leaving any issue, he was succeeded by Alexander Dunbar, son of the above-mentioned Patrick, by a sister of Robert Dunbar of Burgy. This Alexander was a young man of great promise, and was directed in all his proceedings by his uncle Robert Dunbar of Burgy. Patrick Dunbar of Blery and Kilbuyack and his family, imagining that Robert Dunbar, to whom they bore a grudge, was giving advice to his nephew to their prejudice, conceived a deadly enmity at both, and seized every occasion to annoy the sheriff of Moray and his uncle. An accidental meeting having taken place between Robert Dunbar, brother of Alexander, and William Dunbar, son of Blery, high words were exchanged, and a scuffle ensued, in which William Dunbar received considerable injury in his person. Patrick Dunbar and his sons were so incensed at this occurrence that they took up arms and attacked their chief, Alexander Dunbar, sheriff of Moray, in the town of Forbes, where he was shot dead by Robert Dunbar, son of Blery. John Dunbar, sheriff of Moray, who succeeded his brother Alexander, and his brother, Robert Dunbar of Burgy, endeavoured to bring the murderers of his brother to justice; but they failed in consequence of

Alexander Dunbar being, at the time of his death, a rebel to the king, having been denounced at the horn for a civil cause. By negotiation, however, this deadly feud was stayed, and a sort of reconciliation effected by the friendly mediation of the Earl of Dunfermline, then Lord Chancellor of Scotland.⁹

In the year 1610 the Earl of Caithness and Houcheon Mackay, chief of the Mackays, had a difference in consequence of the protection given by the latter to a gentleman named John Sutherland, the son of Mackay's sister. Sutherland lived in Berridale, under the Earl of Caithness, but he was so molested by the earl that he lost all patience, and went about avenging the injuries he had sustained. The earl, therefore, cited him to appear at Edinburgh to answer to certain charges made against him; but not obeying the summons, he was denounced and proclaimed a rebel to the king. Reduced, in consequence, to great extremities, and seeing no remedy by which he could retrieve himself, he became an outlaw, wasted and destroyed the earl's country, and carried off herds of cattle, which he transported into Strathnaver, the country of his kinsman. The earl thereupon sent a party of the Siol-Mhic-Imheair to attack him, and, after a long search, they found him encamped near the water of Shin in Sutherland. He, however, was aware of their approach before they perceived him, and, taking advantage of this circumstance, attacked them in the act of crossing the water. They were in consequence defeated, leaving several of their party dead on the field.

This disaster exasperated the earl, who resolved to prosecute Mackay and his son, Donald Mackay, for giving succour and protection within their country to John Sutherland, an outlaw. Accordingly, he served both of them with a notice to appear before the Privy Council to answer to the charges he had preferred against them. Mackay at once obeyed the summons, and went to Edinburgh, where he met Sir Robert Gordon, who had come from England for the express purpose of assisting Mackay on the present occasion. The earl, who had grown tired of the troubles which John Sutherland had occasioned in his country,

⁸ Sir R. Gordon, p. 259.

⁹ Sir R. Gordon, p. 261.

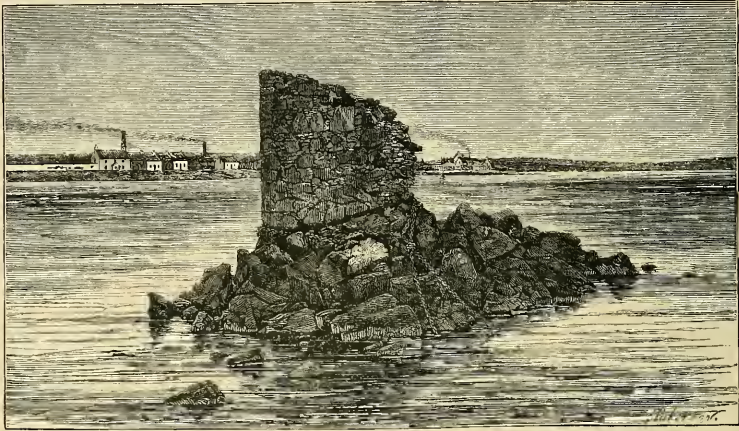
was induced, by the entreaties of friends, to settle matters on the following conditions:— That he should forgive John Sutherland all past injuries, and restore him to his former possessions; that John Sutherland and his brother Donald should be delivered, the one after the other, into the hands of the earl, to be kept prisoners for a certain time; and that Donald Mac-Thomais-Mhoir, one of the Sliochd-Iain-Abaraich, and a follower of John Sutherland in his depredations, should be also delivered up to the earl to be dealt with as to him should seem meet; all of which stipulations were complied with. The earl hanged Donald Mac-Thomais as soon as he was delivered up. John Sutherland was kept a prisoner at Girnigo about twelve months, during which time Donald Mackay made several visits to Earl George for the purpose of getting him released, in which he at last succeeded, besides procuring a discharge to Donald Sutherland, who, in his turn, should have surrendered himself as prisoner on the release of his brother John, but upon the condition that he and his father, Houcheon Mackay, should pass the next following Christmas with the earl at Girnigo. Mackay and his brother William, accordingly, spent their Christmas at Girnigo, but Donald Mackay was prevented by business from attending. The design of the Earl of Caithness in thus favouring Mackay, was to separate him from the interests of the Earl of Sutherland, but he was unsuccessful.

Some years before the events we have just related, a commotion took place in Lewis, occasioned by the pretensions of Torquill Connaldagh of the Cogigh to the possessions of Roderick Macleod of Lewis, his reputed father. Roderick had first married Barbara Stuart, daughter of Lord Methven, by whom he had a son named Torquill-Ire, who, on arriving at manhood, gave proofs of a warlike disposition. Upon the death of Barbara Stuart, Macleod married a daughter of Mackenzie, lord of Kintail, whom he afterwards divorced for adultery with the Breve of Lewis, a sort of judge among the islanders, to whose authority they submitted themselves. Macleod next married a daughter of Maclean, by whom he had two sons, Torquill Dubh and Tormaid.

In sailing from Lewis to Skye, Torquill-

Ire, eldest son of Macleod, and 200 men, perished in a great tempest. Torquill Connaldagh, above mentioned, was the fruit of the adulterous connexion between Macleod's second wife and the Breve, at least Macleod would never acknowledge him as his son. This Torquill being uow of age, and having married a sister of Glengarry, took up arms against Macleod, his reputed father, to vindicate his supposed rights as Macleod's son, being assisted by Tormaid, Ougigh, and Murthow, three of the bastard sons of Macleod. The old man was apprehended and detained four years in captivity, when he was released on condition that he should acknowledge Torquill Connaldagh as his lawful son. Tormaid Ougigh having been slain by Donald Macleod, his brother, another natural son of old Macleod, Torquill Connaldagh, assisted by Murthow Macleod, his reputed bastard brother, took Donald prisoner and carried him to Cogigh, but he escaped and fled to his father in Lewis, who was highly offended at Torquill for seizing his son Donald. Macleod then caused Donald to apprehend Murthow, and having delivered him to his father, he was imprisoned in the castle of Stornoway. As soon as Torquill heard of this occurrence, he went to Stornoway and attacked the fort, which he took, after a short siege, and released Murthow. He then apprehended Roderick Macleod, killed a number of his men, and carried off all the charters and other title-deeds of Lewis, which he gave in custody to the Mackenzies. Torquill had a son named John Macleod, who was in the service of the Marquis of Huntly; he now sent for him, and on his arrival committed to him the charge of the castle of Stornoway in which old Macleod was imprisoned. John Macleod being now master of Lewis, and acknowledged superior thereof, proceeded to expel Rorie-Og and Donald, two of Roderick Macleod's bastard sons, from the island; but Rorie-Og attacked him in Stornoway, and after killing him, released Roderick Macleod, his father, who possessed the island in peace during the remainder of his life. Torquill Connaldagh, by the assistance of the clan Kenzie, got Donald Macleod into his possession, and executed him at Dingwall.

Upon the death of Roderick Macleod, his



Stornoway Castle.—From a photograph taken specially for this work.

son Torquill Dubh succeeded him in Lewis. Taking a grudge at Rorie-Og, his brother, he apprehended him, and sent him to Maclean to be detained in prison; but he escaped out of Maclean's hands, and afterwards perished in a snow-storm. As Torquill Dubh excluded Torquill Connaldagh from the succession of Lewis, as a bastard, the clan Kenzie formed a design to purchase and conquer Lewis, which they calculated on accomplishing on account of the simplicity of Torquill Connaldagh, who had now no friend to advise with, and from the 'dissensions which unfortunately existed among the race of the Siol-Torquill. This scheme, moreover, received the aid of a matrimonial alliance between Torquill Connaldagh and the clan, by a marriage between his eldest daughter and Roderick Mackenzie, the lord of Kintail's brother. The clan did not avow their design openly, but they advanced their enterprise under the pretence of assisting Torquill Connaldagh, who was a descendant of the Kintail family, and they ultimately succeeded in destroying the family of Macleod of Lewis, together with his tribe, the Siol-Torquill, and by the ruin of that family and some neighbouring clans, this ambitious clan made themselves complete masters of Lewis and other places. As Torquill Dubh was the chief obstacle in their way, they formed a conspiracy

against his life, which, by the assistance of the Breve, they were enabled to carry out successfully. The Breve, by stratagem, managed to obtain possession of Torquill Dubh and some of his friends, and deliver them to the lord of Kintail, who ordered them to be beheaded, which they accordingly were in July, 1597.

Some gentlemen belonging to Fife, hearing of these disturbances in Lewis, obtained from the king, in 1598, a gift of the island, their professed object being to civilize the inhabitants, their real design, however, being, by means of a colony, to supplant the inhabitants, and drive them from the island. A body of soldiers and artificers of all sorts were sent, with every thing necessary for a plantation, into Lewis, where, on their arrival, they began to erect houses in a convenient situation, and soon completed a small but neat town, in which they took up their quarters. The new settlers were, however, much annoyed in their operations by Neill and Murthow Macleod, the only sons of Roderick Macleod who remained in the island. The speculation proved ruinous to many of the adventurers, who, in consequence of the disasters they met with, lost their estates, and were in the end obliged to quit the island.

In the meantime, Neill Macleod quarrelled with his brother Murthow, for harbouring and

maintaining the Breve and such of his tribe as were still alive, who had been the chief instruments in the murder of Torquill Dubh. Neill thereupon apprehended his brother, and some of the clan Mhic-Ghille-Mhoir, all of whom he killed, reserving his brother only alive. When the Fife speculators were informed that Neill had taken Murthow, his brother, prisoner, they sent him a message offering to give him a share of the island, and to assist him in revenging the death of Torquill Dubh, provided he would deliver Murthow into their hands. Neill agreed to this proposal, and having gone thereafter to Edinburgh, he received a pardon from the king for all his past offences.

These proceedings frustrated for a time the designs of the Mackenzies upon the island, and the lord of Kintail almost despaired of obtaining possession by any means. As the new settlers now stood in his way, he resolved to desist from persecuting the Siol-Torquill, and to cross the former in their undertakings, by all the means in his power. He had for some time kept Tormaid Macleod, the lawful brother of Torquill Dubh, a prisoner; but he now released him, thinking that upon his appearance in the Lewis all the islanders would rise in his favour; and he was not deceived in his expectations, for, as Sir Robert Gordon observes, "all these islanders, (and lykwayes the Hielanders,) are, by nature, most bent and prone to adventure themselves, their lyffs, and all they have, for their masters and lords, yea beyond all other people."¹ In the meantime Murthow Macleod was carried to St. Andrews, and there executed. Having at his execution revealed the designs of the lord of Kintail, the latter was committed, by order of the king, to the castle of Edinburgh, from which, however, he contrived to escape without trial, by means, as is supposed, of the then Lord-Chancellor of Scotland.

On receiving pardon Neill Macleod returned into Lewis with the Fife adventurers; but he had not been long in the island when he quarrelled with them on account of an injury he had received from Sir James Spence of Wormistoun. He therefore abandoned them, and watched a favourable opportunity for attacking them.

They then attempted to apprehend him by a stratagem, but only succeeded in bringing disaster upon themselves. Upon hearing of this, the lord of Kintail thought the time was now suitable for him to stir, and accordingly he sent Tormaid Macleod into Lewis, as he had intended, promising him all the assistance in his power if he would attack the Fife settlers.

As soon as Tormaid arrived in the island, his brother Neill and all the natives assembled and acknowledged him as their lord and master. He immediately attacked the camp of the adventurers, which he forced, burnt the fort, killed the greater part of their men, took the commanders prisoners, whom he released, after a captivity of eight months, on their solemn promise not to return again to the island, and on their giving a pledge that they should obtain a pardon from the king for Tormaid and his followers for all past offences. After Tormaid had thus obtained possession of the island, John Mac-Donald-Mac-Houcheon apprehended Torquill Connaldagh, and carried him into Lewis to his brother, Tormaid Macleod. Tormaid inflicted no punishment upon Connaldagh, but merely required from him delivery of the title-deeds of Lewis, and the other papers which he had carried off when he apprehended his father Roderick Macleod. Connaldagh informed him that he had it not in his power to give them up, as he had delivered them to the clan Kenzie, in whose possession they still were. Knowing this to be the fact, Tormaid released Torquill Connaldagh, and allowed him to leave the island, contrary to the advice of all his followers and friends, who were for inflicting the punishment of death upon Torquill, as he had been the occasion of all the miseries and troubles which had befallen them.

The Breve of Lewis soon met with a just punishment for the crime he had committed in betraying and murdering his master, Torquill Dubh Macleod. The Breve and some of his relations had taken refuge in the country of Assynt. John Mac-Donald-Mac-Houcheon, accompanied by four persons, having accidentally entered the house where the Breve and six of his kindred lodged, found themselves unexpectedly in the same room with them. Being of opposite factions, a fight immediately

ensued, in the course of which the Breve and his party fled out of the house, but were pursued by John and his men, and the Breve and five of his friends killed.

Although the Fife settlers had engaged not to return again into Lewis, they nevertheless made preparations for invading it, having obtained the king's commission against Tormaid Macleod and his tribe, the Siol-Torquill. They were aided in this expedition by forces from all the neighbouring counties, and particularly by the Earl of Sutherland, who sent a party of men under the command of William Mac-Mhic-Sheunnais, chief of the clan Gun in Sutherland, to assist in subduing Tormaid Macleod. As soon as they had effected a landing in the island with all their forces, they sent a message to Macleod, acquainting him that if he would surrender himself to them, in name of the king, they would transport him safely to London, where his majesty then was; and that, upon his arrival there, they would not only obtain his pardon, but also allow him to deal with the king in behalf of his friends, and for the means of supporting himself. Macleod, afraid to risk his fortune against the numerous forces brought against him, agreed to the terms proposed, contrary to the advice of his brother Neill, who refused to yield. Tormaid was thereupon sent to London, where he took care to give the king full information concerning all the circumstances of his case; he showed his majesty that Lewis was his just inheritance, and that his majesty had been deceived by the Fife adventurers in making him believe that the island was at his disposal, which act of deception had occasioned much trouble and a great loss of blood. He concluded by imploring his majesty to do him justice by restoring him to his rights. Understanding that Macleod's representations were favourably received by his majesty, the adventurers used all their influence at court to thwart him; and as some of them were the king's own domestic servants, they at last succeeded so far as to get him to be sent home to Scotland a prisoner in 1605. He remained a captive at Edinburgh till the month of March, 1615, when the king granted him permission to pass into Holland, to Maurice, Prince of Orange, where he ended his days. The settlers soon grew wearied of their new

possession, and as all of them had declined in their circumstances in this luckless speculation, and as they were continually annoyed by Neill Macleod, they finally abandoned the island, and returned to Fife to bewail their loss.

Lord Kintail, now no longer disguising his intentions, obtained, through means of the Lord Chancellor, a gift of Lewis, under the great seal, for his own use, in virtue of the old right which Torquill Connaldagh had long before resigned in his favour. Some of the adventurers having complained to the king of this proceeding, his majesty became highly displeased at Kintail, and made him resign his right into his majesty's hands by means of Lord Balmerino, then Secretary of Scotland, and Lord President of the session; which right his majesty now (1608) vested in the persons of Lord Balmerino, Sir George Hay, afterwards Chancellor of Scotland, and Sir James Spence of Wormistoun. Balmerino, on being convicted of high treason in 1609, lost his share, but Hay and Spence undertook the colonization of Lewis, and accordingly made great preparations for accomplishing their purpose. Being assisted by most of the neighbouring countries, they invaded Lewis for the double object of planting a colony, and of subduing and apprehending Neill Macleod, who now alone defended the island.

On this occasion Lord Kintail played a double part, for while he sent Roderick Mackenzie, his brother, with a party of men openly to assist the new colonists who acted under the king's commission,—promising them at the same time his friendship, and sending them a vessel from Ross with a supply of provisions,—he privately sent notice to Neill Macleod to intercept the vessel on her way; so that the settlers, being disappointed in the provisions to which they trusted, might abandon the island for want. The case turned out exactly as Lord Kintail anticipated, as Sir George Hay and Sir James Spence abandoned the island, leaving a party of men behind to keep the fort, and disbanded their forces, returning into Fife, intending to have sent a fresh supply of men, with provisions, into the island. But Neill Macleod having, with the assistance of his nephew, Malcolm Macleod, son of Roderick Og, burnt the fort, and apprehended

the men who were left behind in the island, whom he sent safely home, the Fife gentlemen abandoned every idea of again taking possession of the island, and sold their right to Lord Kintail. He likewise obtained from the king a grant of the share of the island forfeited by Balmerino, and thus at length acquired what he had so long and anxiously desired.²

Lord Kintail lost no time in taking possession of the island,—and all the inhabitants, shortly after his landing, with the exception of Neill Macleod and a few others, submitted to him. Neill, along with his nephews, Malcolm, William, and Roderick, the three sons of Roderick Og, the four sons of Torquill Blair, and thirty others, retired to an impregnable rock in the sea called Berrissay, on the west of Lewis, into which Neill had been accustomed, for some years, to send provisions and other necessary articles to serve him in case of necessity. Neill lived on this rock for three years, Lord Kintail in the meantime dying in 1611. As Macleod could not be attacked in his impregnable position, and as his proximity was a source of annoyance, the clan Kenzie fell on the following expedient to get quit of him. They gathered together the wives and children of those that were in Berrissay, and also all persons in the island related to them by consanguinity or affinity, and having placed them on a rock in the sea, so near Berrissay that they could be heard and seen by Neill and his party, the clan Kenzie vowed that they would suffer the sea to overwhelm them, on the return of the flood-tide, if Neill did not instantly surrender the fort. This appalling spectacle had such an effect upon Macleod and his companions, that they immediately yielded up the rock and left Lewis.

Neill Macleod then retired into Harris, where he remained concealed for a time; but not being able to avoid discovery any longer, he gave himself up to Sir Roderick Macleod of Harris, and entreated him to carry him into England to the king, a request with which Sir Roderick promised to comply. In proceeding on his journey, however, along with Macleod, he was charged at Glasgow, under pain of treason, to deliver up Neill to the privy coun-

cil. Sir Roderick obeyed the charge, and Neill, with his eldest son Donald, were presented to the privy council at Edinburgh, where Neill was executed in April 1613. His son Donald was banished from the kingdom of Scotland, and immediately went to England, where he remained three years with Sir Robert Gordon, tutor of Sutherland, and from England he afterwards went to Holland, where he died.

After the death of Neill Macleod, Roderick and William, the sons of Roderick Og, were apprehended by Roderick Mackenzie, tutor of Kintail, and executed. Malcolm Macleod, his third son, who was kept a prisoner by Roderick Mackenzie, escaped, and having associated himself with the clan Donald in Islay and Kintyre during their quarrel with the Campbells in 1615-16, he annoyed the clan Kenzie with frequent incursions. Malcolm, thereafter, went to Flanders and Spain, where he remained with Sir James Macdonald. Before going to Spain, he returned from Flanders into Lewis in 1616, where he killed two gentlemen of the clan Kenzie. He returned from Spain in 1620, and the last that is heard of him is in 1626, when commissions of fire and sword were granted to Lord Kintail against "Malcolm Macquari Macleod."³

From the occurrences in Lewis, we now direct the attention of our readers to some proceedings in the isle of Rasay, which ended in bloodshed. The quarrel lay between Gille-Chalum, laird of the island, and Murdo Mackenzie of Gairloch, and the occasion was as follows. The lands of Gairloch originally belonged to the clan Mhic-Ghille-Chalum, the predecessors of the laird of Rasay; and when the Mackenzies began to prosper and to rise, one of them obtained the third part of these lands in mortgage or wadset from the clan Mhic-Ghille-Chalum. In process of time the clan Kenzie, by some means or other, unknown to the proprietor of Gairloch, obtained a right to the whole of these lands, but they did not claim possession of the whole till the death of Torquill Dubh Macleod of Lewis, whom the laird of Rasay and his tribe followed as their superior. But upon the death of Torquill Dubh, the laird of Gairloch took possession of

² Gordon, p. 274; Gregory's *Western Highlands*, p. 334.

³ Gregory, p. 337.

the whole of the lands of Gairloch in virtue of his pretended right, and chased the clan Mhic-Ghille-Chalum from the lands with fire and sword. The clan retaliated in their turn by invading the laird of Gairloch, plundering his lands and committing slaughters. In a skirmish which took place in the year 1610, in which lives were lost on both sides, the laird of Gairloch apprehended John Mac-Alain-Mac-Rory, one of the principal men of the clan; but being desirous to get hold also of John Holmoch-Mac-Rory, another of the chiefs, he sent his son Murdo the following year along with Alexander Baue, the son and heir of Bane of Tulloch in Ross, and some others, to search for and pursue John Holmoch; and as he understood that John Holmoch was in Skye, he hired a ship to carry his son and party thither; but instead of going to Skye, they unfortunately, from some unknown cause, landed in Rasay.

On their arrival in Rasay in August 1611, Gille-Chalum, laird of Rasay, with some of his followers, went on board, and unexpectedly found Murdo Mackenzie in the vessel. After consulting with his men, he resolved to take Mackenzie prisoner, in security for his cousin, John Mac-Alain-Mac-Rory, whom the laird of Gairloch detained in captivity. The party then attempted to seize Mackenzie, but he and his party resisting, a keen conflict took place on board, which continued a considerable time. At last, Murdo Mackenzie, Alexander Bane, and the whole of their party, with the exception of three, were slain. These three fought manfully, killing the laird of Rasay and the whole men who accompanied him on board, and wounding several persons that remained in the two boats. Finding themselves seriously wounded, they took advantage of a favourable wind, and sailed away from the island, but expired on the voyage homewards. From this time the Mackenzies appear to have uninterruptedly held possession of Gairloch.⁴

About the time this occurrence took place, the peace of the north was almost again disturbed in consequence of the conduct of William Mac-Angus-Roy, one of the clan Gun, who, though born in Strathnaver, had become a

servant to the Earl of Caithness. This man had done many injuries to the people of Caithness by command of the earl; and the mere displeasure of Earl George at any of his people, was considered by William Mac-Angus as sufficient authority for him to steal and take away their goods and cattle. William got so accustomed to this kind of service, that he began also to steal the cattle and horses of the earl, his master, and, after collecting a large booty in this way, he took his leave. The earl was extremely enraged at his *quondam* servant for so acting; but, as William Mac-Angus was in possession of a warrant in writing under the earl's own hand, authorizing him to act as he had done towards the people of Caithness, the earl was afraid to adopt any proceedings against him, or against those who protected and harboured him, before the Privy Council, lest he might produce the warrant which he held from the earl. The confidence which the earl had reposed in him served, however, still more to excite the earl's indignation.

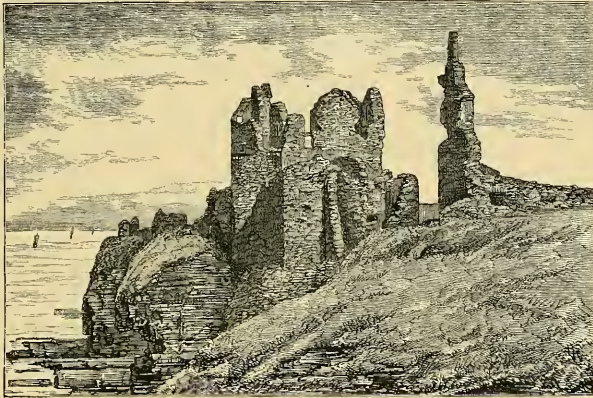
As William Mac-Angus continued his depredations in other quarters, he was apprehended in the town of Tain, on a charge of cattle stealing; but he was released by the Monroes, who gave security to the magistrates of the town for his appearance when required, upon due notice being given that he was wanted for trial. On attempting to escape he was re-delivered to the provost and bailies of Tain, by whom he was given up to the Earl of Caithness, who put him in fetters, and imprisoned him within Castle Sinclair (1612). He soon again contrived to escape, and fled into Strathnaver, the Earl of Caithness sending his son, William, Lord Berridale, in pursuit of him. Missing the fugitive, he, in revenge, apprehended a servant of Mackay, called Angus Henriach, without any authority from his majesty, and carried him to Castle Sinclair, where he was put into fetters and closely imprisoned on the pretence that he had assisted William Mac-Angus in effecting his escape. When this occurrence took place, Donald Mackay, son of Houcheon Mackay, the chief, was at Dunrobin castle, and he, on hearing of the apprehension and imprisonment of his father's servant, could scarcely be made to

⁴ Sir Robert Gordon, p. 278.

believe the fact on account of the friendship which had been contracted between his father and the earl the preceding Christmas. But being made sensible thereof, and of the cruel usage which the servant had received, he prevailed on his father to summon the earl and his son to answer to the charge of having apprehended and imprisoned Angus Henriach, a free subject of the king, without a commission. The earl was also charged to present his prisoner before the privy council at Edinburgh in the month of June next following, which he accordingly did; and Angus being tried before the lords and declared innocent, was delivered over to Sir Robert Gordon, who then acted for Mackay.⁵

During the same year (1612) another event occurred in the north, which created considerable uproar and discord in the northern Highlands. A person of the name of Arthur Smith, who resided in Banff, had counterfeited the coin of the realm, in consequence of which he, and a man who had assisted him, fled from Banff

into Sutherland, where being apprehended in the year 1599, they were sent by the Countess of Sutherland to the king, who ordered them to be imprisoned in Edinburgh for trial. They were both accordingly tried and condemned, and having confessed to crimes even of a deeper dye, Smith's accomplice was burnt at the place of execution. Smith himself was reserved for farther trial. By devising a lock of rare and curious workmanship, which took the fancy of the king, he ultimately obtained his release and entered into the service of the Earl of Caithness. His workshop was under the rock of Castle Sinclair, in a quiet retired place called the Gote, and to which there was a secret passage from the earl's bedchamber. No person was admitted to Smith's workshop but the earl; and the circumstance of his being often heard working during the night, raised suspicions that some secret work was going on which could not bear the light of day. The mystery was at last disclosed by an inundation of counterfeit coin in Caithness,



Castles Sinclair and Girnigo.—From a photograph taken specially for this work.

Orkney, Sutherland, and Ross, which was first detected by Sir Robert Gordon, brother to the Earl of Sutherland, when in Scotland, in the year 1611, and he, on his return to England, made the king acquainted therewith. A commission was granted to Sir Robert to apprehend

Smith, and bring him to Edinburgh, but he was so much occupied with other concerns that he intrusted the commission to Donald Mackay, his nephew, and to John Gordon, younger of Embo, whose name was jointly inserted in the commission along with that of Sir Robert. Accordingly, Mackay and Gordon, accompanied by Adam Gordon Georgeson Johu,

⁵ Sir R. Gordon, p. 231.

Gordon in Broray, and some other Sutherland men, went, in May, 1612, to Strathnaver, and assembling some of the inhabitants, they marched into Caithness next morning, and entered the town of Thurso, where Smith then resided.

After remaining about three hours in the town, the party went to Smith's house and apprehended him. On searching his house they found a quantity of spurious gold and silver coin. Donald Mackay caused Smith to be put on horseback, and then rode off with him out of the town. To prevent any tumult among the inhabitants, Gordon remained behind with some of his men to show them, if necessary, his Majesty's commission for apprehending Smith. Scarcely, however, had Mackay left the town, when the town-bell was rung and all the inhabitants assembled. There were present in Thurso at the time, John Sinclair of Stirkeage, son of the Earl of Caithness's brother, James Sinclair, brother of the laird of Dun, James Sinclair of Dyrron, and other friends, on a visit to Lady Berridale. When information was brought them of the apprehension of Smith, Sinclair of Stirkeage, transported with rage, swore that he would not allow any man, no matter whose commission he held, to carry away his uncle's servant in his uncle's absence. A furious onset was made upon Gordon, but his men withstood it bravely, and after a warm contest, the inhabitants were defeated with some loss, and obliged to retire to the centre of the town. Donald Mackay hearing of the tumult, returned to the town to aid Gordon, but the affair was over before he arrived, Sinclair of Stirkeage having been killed. To prevent the possibility of the escape or rescue of Smith, he was killed by the Strathnaver men as soon as they heard of the tumult in the town.

The Earl of Caithness resolved to prosecute Donald Mackay, John Gordon, younger of Embo, with their followers, for the slaughter of Sinclair of Stirkeage, and the mutilation of James Sinclair, brother of the laird of Dun, and summoned them, accordingly, to appear at Edinburgh. On the other hand, Sir Robert Gordon and Donald Mackay prosecuted the Earl of Caithness and his son, Lord Berridale, with several other of their countrymen, for

resisting the king's commission, attacking the commissioners, and apprehending Angus Henrich, without a commission, which was declared treason by the laws. The Earl of Caithness endeavoured to make the Privy Council believe that the affair at Thurso arose out of a pre-meditated design against him, and that Sir Robert Gordon's intention in obtaining a commission against Arthur Smith was, under the cloak of its authority, to find means to slay him and his brethren; and that, in pursuance of his plan, Sir Robert had, a little before the skirmish in Thurso, caused the earl to be denounced and proclaimed as a rebel to the king, and had lain in wait to kill him; Sir Robert, however, showed the utter groundlessness of these charges to the Lords of the Council.

On the day appointed for appearance, the parties met at Edinburgh, attended by their respective friends. The Earl of Caithness and his son, Lord Berridale, were accompanied by the Lord Gray, the laird of Roslin, the laird of Cowdenknowes, a son of the sister of the Earl of Caithness, and the lairds of Murkle and Greenland, brothers of the earl, along with a large retinue of subordinate attendants. Sir Robert Gordon and Donald Mackay were attended by the Earl of Winton and his brother, the Earl of Eglinton, with all their followers, the Earl of Linlithgow, with the Livingstones, Lord Elphinston, with his friends, Lord Forbes, with his friends, the Drummonds, Sir John Stuart, captain of Dumbarton, and bastard son of the Duke of Lennox; Lord Balfour, the laird of Lairg Mackay in Galloway; the laird of Foulis, with the Monroes, the laird of Duffus, some of the Gordons, as Sir Alexander Gordon, brother of the Earl of Sutherland, Cluny, Lesmoir, Buckie, Knokepsack, with other gentlemen of respectability. The absence of the Earl of Sutherland and Houcheon Mackay mortified the Earl of Caithness, who could not conceal his displeasure at being so much overmatched in the respectability and number of attendants by seconds and children, as he was pleased to call his adversaries.

According to the usual practice on such occasions, the parties were accompanied by their respective friends, from their lodgings, to

the house where the council was sitting; but few were admitted within. The council spent three days in hearing the parties and deliberating upon the matters brought before them, but they came to no conclusion, and adjourned their proceedings till the king's pleasure should be known. In the meantime the parties, at the entreaty of the Lords of the Council, entered into recognizances to keep the peace, in time coming, towards each other, which extended not only to their kinsmen, but also to their friends and dependants.

The king, after fully considering the state of affairs between the rival parties, and judging that if the law were allowed to take its course the peace of the northern countries might be disturbed by the earls and their numerous followers, proposed to the Lords of the Privy Council to endeavour to prevail upon them to submit their differences to the arbitration of mutual friends. Accordingly, after a good deal of entreaty and reasoning, the parties were persuaded to agree to the proposed measure. A deed of submission was then subscribed by the Earl of Caithness and William, Lord Berridale, on the one part, and by Sir Robert Gordon and Donald Mackay on the other part, taking burden on them for the Earl of Sutherland and Mackay. The arbiters appointed by Sir Robert Gordon were the Earl of Kinghorn, the Master of Elphinston, the Earl of Haddington, afterwards Lord Privy Seal of Scotland, and Sir Alexander Drummond of Meidhop. The Archbishop of Glasgow, Sir John Preston, Lord President of the Council, Lord Blantyre, and Sir William Oliphant, Lord Advocate, were named by the Earl of Caithness. The Earl of Dunfermline, Lord-Chancellor of Scotland, was chosen oversman and umpire by both parties. As the arbiters had then no time to hear the parties, or to enter upon the consideration of the matters submitted to them, they appointed them to return to Edinburgh in the month of May, 1613.

At the appointed time, the Earl of Caithness and his brother, Sir John Sinclair of Greenland, came to Edinburgh, Sir Robert Gordon arriving at the same time from England. The arbiters, however, who were all members of the Privy Council, being much occupied with state affairs, did not go into the

matter, but made the parties subscribe a new deed of submission, under which they gave authority to the Marquis of Huntly, by whose friendly offices the differences between the two houses had formerly been so often adjusted, to act in the matter by endeavouring to bring about a fresh reconciliation. As the marquis was the cousin-german of the Earl of Sutherland, and brother-in-law of the Earl of Caithness, who had married his sister, the council thought him the most likely person to be intrusted with such an important negotiation. The marquis, however, finding the parties obstinate, and determined not to yield a single point of their respective claims and pretensions, declined to act farther in the matter, and remitted the whole affair back to the Privy Council.

During the year 1613 the peace of Lochaber was disturbed by dissensions among the clan Cameron. The Earl of Argyle, reviving an old claim acquired in the reign of James V., by Colin, the third earl, endeavoured to obtain possession of the lands of Lochiel, mainly to weaken the influence of his rival the Marquis of Huntly, to whose party the clan Cameron were attached. Legal proceedings were instituted by the earl against Allan Cameron of Lochiel, who, hastening to Edinburgh, was there advised by Argyle to submit the matter to arbiters. The decision was in favour of the earl, from whom Lochiel consented to hold his lands as a vassal. This, of course, highly incensed the Marquis of Huntly, who resolved to endeavour to effect the ruin of his *quondam* vassal by fomenting dissensions among the clan Cameron, inducing the Camerons of Erracht, Kinlochiel, and Glennevis to become his immediate vassals in those lands which Lochiel had hitherto held from the family of Huntly. Lochiel, failing to induce his kinsmen to renew their allegiance to him, again went to Edinburgh to consult his lawyers as to the course which he ought to pursue. While there, he heard of a conspiracy by the opposite faction against his life, which induced him to hasten home, sending word privately to his friends—the Camerons of Callart, Strone, Letterfinlay, and others—to meet him on the day appointed for the assembling of his opponents, near the spot where the latter were to meet.

On arriving at the appointed rendezvous, Lochiel placed in ambush all his followers but six, with whom he advanced towards his enemies, informing them that he wished to have a conference with them. The hostile faction, thinking this a favourable opportunity for accomplishing their design, pursued the chief, who, when he had led them fairly into the midst of his ambushed followers, gave the signal for their slaughter. Twenty of their principal men were killed, and eight taken prisoners, Lochiel allowing the rest to escape. Lochiel and his followers were by the Privy Council outlawed, and a commission of fire and sword granted to the Marquis of Huntly and the Gordons, for their pursuit and apprehension. The division of the clan Cameron which supported Lochiel continued for several years in a state of outlawry, but, through the influence of the Earl of Argyle, appears not to have suffered extremely.⁶

CHAPTER X.

A. D. 1613—1623.

KING OF GREAT BRITAIN :—James I., 1603—1625.

Continued animosity between the Earls of Caithness and Sutherland—The latter imprisoned as a suspected Catholic—Formidable Rebellion in the South Hebrides—Suppressed by the Earl of Argyle—Fresh intrigues of the Earl of Caithness—His oppressions—Burning of the corn at Sanset—Legal proceedings against the Guns—Agreement between the Earl of Caithness, Sir Robert Gordon, and Lord Forbes—Lord Berridale imprisoned—Conditions of release—Put in possession of the family Estates—Alliance between the Earl of Caithness and Sir Donald Mackay—Sir Robert Gordon protects the clan Gun—Mackay's attempts against the Clan—Mackay and Sir Robert Gordon reconciled—Quarrel between the Earl of Enzie and the clan Chattan—Slaughter of Thomas Lindsay—Hostile preparations against the Earl of Caithness—Expedition into Caithness—Flight of the Earl—Reduction and pacification of Caithness.

As the Privy Council showed no inclination to decide the questions submitted to them by the Earl of Caithness and his adversaries, the earl sent his brother, Sir John Sinclair of Greenland, to Edinburgh, to complain of the delay which had taken place, and desired him to throw out hints, that if the earl did not obtain

satisfaction for his supposed injuries, he would take redress at his own hands. The earl thought that he would succeed, by such a threat, in moving the council to decide in his favour, for he was well aware that he was unable to carry it into execution. To give some appearance of an intention to enforce it, he, in the month of October, 1613, while the Earl of Sutherland, his brothers and nephews, were absent from the country, made a demonstration of invading Sutherland or Strathnaver, by collecting his forces at a particular point, and bringing thither some pieces of ordnance from Castle Snelair. The Earl of Sutherland, having arrived in Sutherland while the Earl of Caithness was thus employed, immediately assembled some of his countrymen, and, along with his brother Sir Alexander, went to the marches between Sutherland and Caithness, near the height of Strathully, where they waited the approach of the Earl of Caithness. Here they were joined by Mackay, who had given notice of the Earl of Caithness's movements to the lairds of Foulis, Balnagown, and Assynt, the sheriff of Cromarty, and the tutor of Kintail, all of whom prepared themselves to assist the Earl of Sutherland. The Earl of Caithness, however, by advice of his brother, Sir John Sinclair, returned home and disbanded his force.

To prevent the Earl of Caithness from attempting any farther interference with the Privy Council, either in the way of intrigue or intimidation, Sir Robert Gordon obtained a remission and pardon from the king, in the month of December, 1613, to his nephew, Donald Mackay, John Gordon, younger of Embo, John Gordon in Broray, Adam Gordon Georgeson, and their accomplices, for the slaughter of John Sinclair of Stirkeage at Thurso. However, Sir Gideon Murray, Deputy Treasurer for Scotland, contrived to prevent the pardon passing through the seals till the beginning of the year 1616.

The Earl of Caithness, being thus baffled in his designs against the Earl of Sutherland and his friends, fell upon a device which never failed to succeed in times of religious intolerance and persecution. Unfortunately for mankind and for the interests of Christianity, the principles of religious toleration, involving the

⁶ Gregory's *Western Highlands*, p. 342.

inalienable right of every man to worship God according to the dictates of his conscience, have been till of late but little understood, and at the period in question, and for upwards of one hundred and sixty years thereafter, the statute book of Scotland was disgraced by penal enactments against the Catholics, almost unparalleled for their sanguinary atrocity. By an act of the first parliament of James VI., any Catholic who assisted at the offices of his religion was, "for the first fault," that is, for following the dictates of his conscience, to suffer confiscation of all his goods, movable and immovable, personal and real; for the second, banishment; and death for the third fault! But the law was not confined to overt acts only—the mere suspicion of being a Catholic placed the suspected person out of the pale and protection of the law; for if, on being warned by the bishops and ministers, he did not recant and give confession of his faith according to the approved form, he was excommunicated, and declared infamous and incapable to sit or stand in judgment, pursue or bear office.⁷

Under this last-mentioned law the Earl of Caithness now sought to gratify his vengeance against the Earl of Sutherland. Having represented to the Archbishop of St. Andrews and the clergy of Scotland that the Earl of Sutherland was at heart a Catholic, he prevailed upon the bishops—with little difficulty, it is supposed—to acquaint the king thereof. His majesty thereupon issued a warrant against the Earl of Sutherland, who was in consequence apprehended and imprisoned at St. Andrews. The earl applied to the bishops for a month's delay, till the 15th February, 1614, promising that before that time he would either give the church satisfaction or surrender himself; but his application was refused by the high commission of Scotland. Sir Alexander Gordon, the brother of the earl, being then in Edinburgh, immediately gave notice to his brother, Sir Robert Gordon, who was at the time in London, of the proceedings against their brother, the earl. Sir Robert having applied to his majesty for the release of the earl for a time, that he might make up his mind on the subject of religion, and look after

his affairs in the north, his majesty granted a warrant for his liberation till the month of August following. On the expiration of the time, he returned to his confinement at St. Andrews, from which he was removed, on his own application, to the abbey of Holyrood house, where he remained till the month of March, 1615, when he obtained leave to go home, "having," says Sir Robert Gordon, "in some measure satisfied the church concerning his religion."

The Earl of Caithness, thus again defeated in his views, tried, as a *dernier resort*, to disjoin the families of Sutherland and Mackay. Sometimes he attempted to prevail upon the Marquis of Huntly to persuade the Earl of Sutherland and his brothers to come to an arrangement altogether independent of Mackay; and at other times he endeavoured to persuade Mackay, by holding out certain inducements to him, to compromise their differences without including the Earl of Sutherland in the arrangement; but he completely failed in these attempts.⁸

In 1614–15 a formidable rebellion broke out in the South Hebrides, arising from the efforts made by the clan Donald of Islay to retain that island in their possession. The castle of Dunyveg in Islay, which, for three years previous to 1614, had been in possession of the Bishop of the Isles, having been taken by Angus Oig, younger brother of Sir James Macdonald of Islay, from Ranald Oig, who had surprised it, the former refused to restore it to the bishop. The Privy Council took the matter in hand, and, having accepted from John Campbell of Calder an offer of a fen-duty or perpetual rent for Islay, they prevailed on him to accept a commission against Angus Oig and his followers. The clan Donald, who viewed with suspicion the growing power of the Campbells, looked upon this project with much dislike, and treated certain hostages left by the bishop with great severity. Even the bishop remonstrated against making "the name of Campbell greater in the Isles than they are already," thinking it neither good nor profitable to his majesty, "to root out one pestiferous clan, and plant in another little better." The remonstrance of the bishop

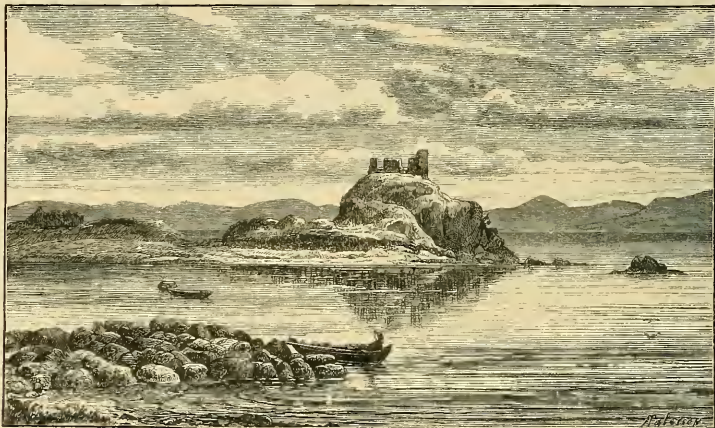
⁷ Act James VI., Parl. 3, Cap. 45.

⁸ Sir R. Gordon, p. 299.

and an offer made to put matters right by Sir James Macdonald, who was then imprisoned in Edinburgh castle, were alike unheeded, and Campbell of Calder received his commission of Lieutenandry against Angus Oig Macdonald, Coll Mac-Gillespie, and the other rebels of Islay. A free pardon was offered to all who were not concerned in the taking of the castle, and a remission to Angus Oig, provided he gave up the castle, the hostages, and two associates of his own rank.

While Campbell was collecting his forces, and certain auxiliary troops from Ireland were preparing to embark, the chancellor of Scotland, the Earl of Dunfermline, by means

of a Ross-shire man, named George Graham of Eryne, prevailed on Angus Oig to release the bishop's hostages, and deliver up to Graham the castle, in behalf of the chancellor. Graham re-delivered the castle to Angus, to be held by him as the regular constable, until he should receive further order from the chancellor, and at the same time assured Angus of the chancellor's countenance and protection, enjoining him to resist all efforts on the part of Campbell or his friends to eject him. These injunctions Graham's dupes too readily followed. "There can be no doubt whatever that the chancellor was the author of this notable plan to procure the liberation of the hostages, and at the same



Dunyveg Castle, Islay.—From a drawing taken expressly for this work.

time to deprive the clan Donald of the benefit of the pardon promised to them on this account. There are grounds for a suspicion that the chancellor himself desired to obtain Islay; although it is probable that he wished to avoid the odium attendant on the more violent measures required to render such an acquisition available. He, therefore, contrived so as to leave the punishment of the clan Donald to the Campbells, who were already sufficiently obnoxious to the western clans, whilst he himself had the credit of procuring the liberation of the hostages."

Campbell of Calder and Sir Oliver Lambert, commander of the Irish forces, did not effect a junction till the 5th of January, 1615, and on

the 6th, Campbell landed on Islay with 200 men, his force being augmented next day by 140 more. Several of the rebels, alarmed, deserted Angus, and were pardoned on condition of helping the besiegers. Ronald Mac-James, uncle of Angus Oig, surrendered a fort on the island of Lochgorme which he commanded, on the 21st, and along with his son received a conditional assurance of his majesty's favour. Operations were commenced against Dunyveg on February 1st, and shortly after Angus had an interview with the lieutenant, during which the latter showed that Angus had been deceived by Graham, upon which he promised to surrender. On returning to the castle, however, he refused to implement his promise, being in-

stigated to hold out apparently by Coll Mac-Gillespie. After being again battered for some time, Angus and some of his followers at last surrendered unconditionally, Coll Mac-Gillespie contriving to make his escape. Campbell took possession of the castle on the 3d February, dispersed the forces of the rebels, and put to death a number of those who had deserted the siege; Angus himself was reserved for examination by the Privy Council. In the course of the examination it came out clearly that the Earl of Argyle was the original promoter of the seizure of the castle, his purpose apparently being to ruin the clan Donald by urging them to rebellion; but this charge, as well as that against the Earl of Dunfermline, appears to have been smothered.

During the early part of the year 1615, Coll Mac-Gillespie and others of the clan Donald who had escaped, infested the western coasts, and committed many acts of piracy, being joined about the month of May by Sir James Macdonald, who had escaped from Edinburgh castle, where he had been lying for a long time under sentence of death. Sir James and his followers, now numbering several hundreds, after laying in a good supply of provisions, sailed towards Islay. The Privy Council were not slow in taking steps to repress the rebellion, although various circumstances occurred to thwart their intentions. Calder engaged to keep the castle of Dunyveg against the rebels, and instructions were given to the various western gentlemen friendly to the government to defend the western coasts and islands. Large rewards were offered for the principal rebels. All the forces were enjoined to be at their appointed stations by the 6th of July, furnished with forty days' provisions, and with a sufficient number of boats, to enable them to act by sea, if necessary.

Sir James Macdonald, about the end of June, landing on Islay, managed by stratagem to obtain possession of Dunyveg Castle, himself and his followers appearing to have conducted themselves with great moderation. Dividing his force, which numbered about 400, into two bodies, with one of which he himself intended to proceed to Jura, the other, under Coll Mac-Gillespie, was destined for Kintyre, for the purpose of encouraging the ancient

followers of his family to assist him. In the beginning of July, Angus Oig and a number of his followers were tried and condemned, and executed immediately after.

Various disheartening reports were now circulated as to the disaffection of Donald Gorme of Sleat, captain of the clan Ranald, Ruari Macleod of Harris, and others; and that Hector Maclean of Dowart, if not actually engaged in the rebellion, had announced, that if he was desired to proceed against the clan Donald, he would not be very earnest in the service. The militia of Ayr, Renfrew, Dumbarton, Bute, and Inverness were called out, and a commission was granted to the Marquis of Hamilton to keep the clan Donald out of Arran.

The Privy Council had some time before this urged the king to send down the Earl of Argyle from England—to which he had fled from his numerous creditors—to act as lieutenant in suppressing the insurrection. After many delays, Argyle, to whom full powers had been given to act as lieutenant, at length mustered his forces at Duntrou on Loch Crinan early in September. He issued a proclamation of pardon to all rebels who were willing to submit, and by means of spies examined Macdonald's camp, which had been pitched on the west coast of Kintyre, the number of the rebels being ascertained to be about 1,000 men. Argyle set himself so promptly and vigorously to crush the rebels, that Sir James Macdonald, who had been followed to Islay by the former, finding it impossible either to resist the Lieutenant's forces, or to escape with his galleys to the north isles, desired from the earl a truce of four days, promising at the end of that time to surrender. Argyle would not accede to this request except on condition of Sir James giving up the two forts which he held; this Sir James urged Coll Mac-Gillespie to do, but he refused, although he sent secretly to Argyle a message that he was willing to comply with the earl's request. Argyle immediately sent a force against Sir James to surprise him, who, being warned of this by the natives, managed to make his escape to an island called Inchdaholl, on the coast of Ireland, and never again returned to the Hebrides. Next day, Mac-Gillespie surrendered the two forts and his prisoners, upon assurance of his

own life and the lives of a few of his followers, at the same time treacherously apprehending and delivering to Argyle, Macfie of Colonsay, one of the principal rebel leaders, and eighteen others. This conduct soon had many imitators, including Macfie himself.

Having delivered the forts in Islay to Campbell of Calder, and having executed a number of the leading rebels, Argyle proceeded to Kintyre, and crushed out all remaining seeds of insurrection there. Many of the principal rebels, notwithstanding a diligent search, effected their escape, many of them to Ireland, Sir James Macdonald being sent to Spain by some Jesuits in Galway. The escape of so many of the principal rebels seems to have given the Council great dissatisfaction. Argyle carried on operations till the middle of December 1615, refusing to dismiss the hired soldiers in the beginning of November, as he was ordered by the Council to do. He was compelled to disburse the pay, amounting to upwards of £7,000, for the extra month and a half out of his own pocket.

“Thus,” to use the words of our authority for the above details,⁹ “terminated the last struggle of the once powerful clan Donald of Islay and Kintyre, to retain, from the grasp of the Campbells, these ancient possessions of their tribe.”

Ever since the death of John Sinclair at Thurso, the Earl of Caithness used every means in his power to induce such of his countrymen as were daring enough, to show their prowess and dexterity, by making incursions into Sutherland or Strathnaver, for the purpose of annoying the vassals and dependants of the Earl of Sutherland and his ally, Mackay. Amongst others he often communicated on this subject with William Kennethson, whose father, Kenneth Buidhe, had always been the principal instrument in the hands of Earl George in oppressing the people of his own country. For the furtherance of his plans he at last prevailed upon William, who already stood rebel to the king in a criminal cause, to go into voluntary banishment into Strathnaver, and put himself under the protection of Mackay, to whom he was to pre-

tend that he had left Caithness to avoid any solicitations from the Earl of Caithness to injure the inhabitants of Strathnaver. To cover their designs they caused a report to be spread that William Mac-Kenneth was to leave Caithness because he would not obey the orders of the earl to execute some designs against Sir Robert Gordon, the tutor of Sutherland, and Mackay, and when this false rumour had been sufficiently spread, Mac-Kenneth, and his brother John, and their dependants, fled into Strathnaver and solicited the favour and protection of Mackay. The latter received them kindly; but as William and his party had been long addicted to robbery and theft, he strongly advised them to abstain from such practices in all time coming; and that they might not afterwards plead necessity as an excuse for continuing their depredations, he allotted them some lands to dwell on. After staying a month or two in Strathnaver, during which time they stole some cattle and horses out of Caithness, William received a private visit by night from Kenneth Buidhe, his father, who had been sent by the Earl of Caithness for the purpose of executing a contemplated depredation in Sutherland. Mackay was then in Sutherland on a visit to his uncle, Sir Robert Gordon, which being known to William Mac-Kenneth, he resolved to enter Sutherland with his party, and carry off into Caithness all the booty they could collect. Being observed in the glen of Loth by some of the clan Gun, collecting cattle and horses, they were immediately apprehended, with the exception of Iain-Garbh-Mac-Chonald-Mac-Mhur-chidh-Mhoir, who, being a very resolute man, refused to surrender, and was in consequence killed. The prisoners were delivered to Sir Robert Gordon at Dornoch, who committed William and his brother John to the castle of Dornoch for trial. In the meantime two of the principal men of Mac-Kenneth's party were tried, convicted, and executed, and the remainder were allowed to return home on giving surety to keep the peace. This occurrence took place in the month of January 1616.

The Earl of Caithness now finished his restless career of iniquity by the perpetration of a crime which, though trivial in its consequences,

⁹ Gregory's *Western Highlands*, p. 319, et seq.

was of so highly a penal nature in itself as to bring his own life into jeopardy. As the circumstances which led to the burning of the corn of William Innes, a servant of Lord Forbes at Sanset in Caithness, and the discovery of the Earl of Caithness as instigator, are somewhat curious, it is thought that a recital of them may not be here out of place.

Among other persons who had suffered at the hands of the earl was his own kinsman, William Sinclair of Dumbaith. After annoying him in a variety of ways, the earl instigated his bastard brother, Henry Sinclair, and Kenneth Buidhe, to destroy and lay waste part of Dumbaith's lands, who, unable to resist, and being in dread of personal risk, locked himself up in his house at Dunray, which they besieged. William Sinclair immediately applied to John, Earl of Sutherland, for assistance, who sent his friend Mackay with a party to rescue Sinclair from his perilous situation. Mackay succeeded, and carried Sinclair along with him into Sutherland, where he remained for a time, but he afterwards went to reside in Moray, where he died. Although thus cruelly persecuted and forced to become an exile from his country by the Earl of Caithness, no entreaties could induce him to apply for redress, choosing rather to suffer himself than to see his relative punished. William Sinclair was succeeded by his grandson, George Sinclair, who married a sister of Lord Forbes. By the persuasion of his wife, who was a mere tool in the hands of the Earl of Caithness, George Sinclair was induced to execute a deed of entail, by which, failing of heirs male of his own body, he left the whole of his lands to the earl. When the earl had obtained this deed he began to devise means to make away with Sinclair, and actually persuaded Sinclair's wife to assist him in this nefarious design. Having obtained notice of this conspiracy against his life, Sinclair left Caithness and took up his residence with his brother-in-law, Lord Forbes, who received him with great kindness and hospitality, and reprobated very strongly the wicked conduct of his sister. Sinclair now recalled the entail in favour of the Earl of Caithness, and made a new deed by which he conveyed his whole estate to Lord Forbes. George Sinclair died soon after the execution of the deed,

and having left no issue, Lord Forbes took possession of his lands of Dunray and Dumbaith.

Disappointed in his plans to acquire Sinclair's property, the Earl of Caithness seized every opportunity of annoying Lord Forbes in his possessions, by oppressing his tenants and servants, in every possible way, under the pretence of discharging his duty as sheriff, to which office he had been appointed by the Earl of Huntly, on occasion of his marriage with Huntly's sister. Complaints were made from time to time against the earl, on account of these proceedings, to the Privy Council of Scotland, which, in some measure, afforded redress; but to protect his tenants more effectually, Lord Forbes took up a temporary residence in Caithness, relying upon the aid of the house of Sutherland in case of need.

As the Earl of Caithness was aware that any direct attack on Lord Forbes would be properly resented, and as any enterprise undertaken by his own people would be laid to his charge, however cautious he might be in dealing with them, he fixed on the clan Gun as the fittest instruments for effecting his designs against Lord Forbes. Besides being the most resolute men in Caithness, always ready to undertake any desperate action, they depended more upon the Earl of Sutherland and Mackay, from whom they held some lands, than upon the Earl of Caithness; a circumstance which the latter supposed, should the contemplated outrages of the clan Gun ever become matter of inquiry, might throw the suspicion upon the two former as the silent instigators. Accordingly, the earl opened a negotiation with John Gun, chief of the clan Gun in Caithness, and with his brother, Alexander Gun, whose father he had hanged in the year 1586. In consequence of an invitation, the two brothers, along with Alexander Gun, their cousin-german, repaired to Castle Sinclair, where they met the earl. The earl did not at first divulge his plans to all the party; but taking Alexander Gun, the cousin, aside, he pointed out to him the injury he alleged he had sustained, in consequence of Lord Forbes having obtained a footing in Caithness,—that he could no longer submit to the indignity shown him by a stranger,—that he had made choice of him (Gun) to undertake a piece of service for him, on per-

forming which he would reward him most amply; and to secure compliance, the earl desired him to remember the many favours he had already received from him, and how well he had treated him, promising, at the same time, to show him even greater kindness in time coming. Alexander thereupon promised to serve the earl, though at the hazard of his life; but upon being interrogated by the earl whether he would undertake to burn the corn of Sanset, belonging to William Innes, a servant of Lord Forbes, Gun, who had never imagined that he was to be employed in such an ignoble affair, expressed the greatest astonishment at the proposal, and refused, in the most peremptory and indignant manner, to undertake its execution; yet, to satisfy the earl, he told him that he would, at his command, undertake to assassinate William Innes,—an action which he considered less criminal and dishonourable, and more becoming a gentleman, than burning a quantity of corn! Finding him obdurate, the earl enjoined him to secrecy.

The earl next applied to the two brothers, John and Alexander, with whom he did not find it so difficult to treat. They at first hesitated with some firmness in undertaking the business on which the earl was so intent; and they pleaded an excuse, by saying, that as justice was then more strictly executed in Scotland than formerly, they could not expect to escape, as they had no place of safety to retreat to after the crime was committed; as a proof of which they instanced the cases of the clan Donald and the clan Gregor, two races of people much more powerful than the clan Gun, who had been brought to the brink of ruin, and almost annihilated, under the authority of the laws. The earl replied, that as soon as they should perform the service for him he would send them to the western isles, to some of his acquaintances and friends, with whom they might remain till Lord Forbes and he were reconciled, when he would obtain their pardon; that in the meantime he would profess, in public, to be their enemy, but that he would be their friend secretly, and permit them to frequent Caithness without danger. Alexander Gun, overcome at last by the entreaties of the earl, reluctantly consented to his request, and going into Sanset, in the dead of night, with

two accomplices, set fire to all the corn stacks which were in the barn-yard, belonging to William Innes, and which were in consequence consumed. This affair occurred in the month of November, 1615. The Earl of Caithness immediately spread a report through the whole country that Mackay's tenants had committed this outrage, but the deception was of short duration.

It may be here noticed that John, sixth Earl of Sutherland, died in September, 1615, and was succeeded by his eldest son, John, a boy six years old, to whom Sir Robert Gordon, his uncle, was appointed tutor.

Sir Robert Gordon, having arrived in the north of Scotland, from England, in the month of December following, resolved to probe the matter to the bottom, not merely on account of his nephew, Mackay, whose men were suspected, but to satisfy Lord Forbes, who was now on friendly terms with the house of Sutherland; but the discovery of the perpetrators soon became an easy task, in consequence of a quarrel among the clan Gun themselves, the members of which upbraided one another as the authors of the fire-raising. Alexander Gun, the cousin of Alexander Gun, the real criminal, thereupon fled from Caithness, and sent some of his friends to Sir Robert Gordon and Donald Mackay with these proposals:—that if they would receive him into favour, and secure him from danger, he would confess the whole circumstances, and reveal the authors of the conflagration, and that he would declare the whole before the Privy Council if required. On receiving this proposal, Sir Robert Gordon appointed Alexander Gun to meet him privately at Helmsdale, in the house of Sir Alexander Gordon, brother of Sir Robert. A meeting was accordingly held at the place appointed, at which Sir Robert and his friends agreed to do everything in their power to preserve Gun's life; and Mackay promised, moreover, to give him a possession in Strathie, where his father had formerly lived.

When the Earl of Caithness heard of Alexander Gun's flight into Sutherland he became greatly alarmed lest Alexander should reveal the affair of Sanset; and anticipating such a result, the earl gave out everywhere that Sir Robert Gordon, Mackay, and Sir Alexander Gordon.

had hired some of the clan Gun to accuse him of having burnt William Innes's corn. But this artifice was of no avail, for as soon as Lord Forbes received notice from Sir Robert Gordon of the circumstances related by Alexander Gun, he immediately cited John Gun and his brother Alexander, and their accomplices, to appear for trial at Edinburgh, on the 2d April, 1616, to answer to the charge of burning the corn at Sanset; and he also summoned the Earl of Caithness, as sheriff of that county, to deliver them up for trial. John Gun, thinking that the best course he could pursue under present circumstances was to follow the example of his cousin, Alexander, sent a message to Sir Alexander Gordon, desiring an interview with him, which being granted, they met at Navidale. John Gun then offered to reveal everything he knew concerning the fire, on condition that his life should be spared; but Sir Alexander observed that he could come under no engagement, as he was uncertain how the king and the council might view such a proceeding; but he promised, that as John had not been an actor in the business, but a witness only to the arrangement between his brother and the Earl of Caithness, he would do what he could to save him, if he went to Edinburgh in compliance with the summons.

In this state of matters, the Earl of Caithness wrote to the Marquis of Huntly, accusing Sir Robert Gordon and Mackay of a design to bring him within the reach of the law of treason, and to injure the honour of his house by slandering him with the burning of the corn at Sanset. The other party told the marquis that they could not refuse to assist Lord Forbes in finding out the persons who had burned the corn at Sanset, but that they had never imagined that the earl would have acted so base a part as to become an accomplice in such a criminal act; and farther, that as Mackay's men were challenged with the deed, they certainly were entitled at least to clear Mackay's people from the charge by endeavouring to find out the malefactors,—in all which they considered they had done the earl no wrong. The Marquis of Huntly did not fail to write the Earl of Caithness the answer he had received from Sir Robert Gordon and Mackay, which grieved him exceedingly, as he was too well aware of the

consequences which would follow if the prosecution of the Guns was persevered in.

At the time appointed for the trial of the Guns, Sir Robert Gordon, Mackay, and Lord Forbes, with all his friends, went to Edinburgh, and upon their arrival they entreated the council to prevent a remission in favour of the Earl of Caithness from passing the signet until the affair in hand was tried; a request with which the council complied. The Earl of Caithness did not appear; but he sent his son, Lord Berridale, to Edinburgh, along with John Gun and all those persons who had been summoned by Lord Forbes, with the exception of Alexander Gun and his two accomplices. He alleged as his reason for not sending them that they were not his men, being Mackay's own tenants, and dwelling in Dilred, the property of Mackay, which was held by him off the Earl of Sutherland, who, he alleged, was bound to present the three persons alluded to. But the lords of the council would not admit of this excuse, and again required Lord Berridale and his father to present the three culprits before the court on the 10th June following, because, although they had possessions in Dilred, they had also lands from the Earl of Caithness on which they usually resided. Besides, the deed was committed in Caithness, of which the earl was sheriff, on which account also he was bound to apprehend them. Lord Berridale, whose character was quite the reverse of that of his father, apprehensive of the consequences of a trial, now offered satisfaction in his father's name to Lord Forbes if he would stop the prosecution; but his lordship refused to do anything without the previous advice and consent of Sir Robert Gordon and Mackay, who, upon being consulted, caused articles of agreement to be drawn up, which were presented to Lord Berridale by neutral persons for his acceptance. He, however, considering the conditions sought to be imposed upon his father too hard, rejected them.

In consequence of the refusal of Lord Berridale to accede to the terms proposed, John Gun was apprehended by one of the magistrates of Edinburgh, on the application of Lord Forbes, and committed a prisoner to the jail of that city. Gun thereupon requested to see Sir Robert Gordon and Mackay, whom he entreated

to use their influence to procure him his liberty, promising to declare everything he knew of the business for which he was prosecuted before the lords of the council. Sir Robert Gordon and Mackay then deliberated with Lord Forbes and Lord Elphinston on the subject, and they all four promised faithfully to Gun to do everything in their power to save him, and that they would thenceforth maintain and defend him and his cousin, Alexander Gun, against the Earl of Caithness or any person, as long as they had reason and equity on their side; besides which, Mackay promised him a liferent lease of the lands in Strathie to compensate for his possessions in Caithness, of which he would, of course, be deprived by the earl for revealing the latter's connexion with the fire-raising at Sanset. John Gun was accordingly examined the following day by the lords of the council, when he confessed that the Earl of Caithness made his brother, Alexander Gun, burn the corn of Sanset, and that the affair had been proposed and discussed in his presence. Alexander Gun, the cousin, was examined also at the same time, and stated the same circumstances precisely as John Gun had done. After examination, John and Alexander were again committed to prison.

As neither the Earl of Caithness nor his son, Lord Berridale, complied with the commands of the council to deliver up Alexander Gun and his accomplices in the month of June, they were both outlawed and denounced rebels; and were summoned and charged by Lord Forbes to appear personally at Edinburgh in the month of July immediately following, to answer to the charge of causing the corn of Sanset to be burnt. This fixed determination on the part of Lord Forbes to bring the earl and his son to trial had the effect of altering their tone, and they now earnestly entreated him and Mackay to agree to a reconciliation on any terms; but they declined to enter into any arrangement until they had consulted Sir Robert Gordon. After obtaining Sir Robert's consent, and a written statement of the conditions which he required from the Earl of Caithness in behalf of his nephew, the Earl of Sutherland, the parties entered into a final agreement in the month of July, 1616. The principal heads of the contract,

which was afterwards recorded in the books of council and session, were as follows:—That all civil actions between the parties should be settled by the mediation of common friends,—that the Earl of Caithness and his son should pay to Lord Forbes and Mackay the sum of 20,000 merks Scots money,—that all quarrels and criminal actions should be mutually forgiven, and particularly, that the Earl of Caithness and all his friends should forgive and remit the slaughter at Thurso—that the Earl of Caithness and his son should renounce for themselves and their heirs all jurisdiction, criminal or civil, within Sutherland or Strathnaver, and any other jurisdiction which they should thereafter happen to acquire over any lands lying within the diocese of Caithness then pertaining, or which should afterwards belong, to the Earl of Sutherland, or his heirs,—that the Earl of Caithness should deliver Alexander Gun and his accomplices to Lord Forbes,—that the earl, his son, and their heirs, should never thenceforth contend with the Earl of Sutherland for precedency in parliament or priority of place,—that the Earl of Caithness and his son, their friends and tenants, should keep the peace in time coming, under the penalty of great sums of money, and should never molest nor trouble the tenants of the Earl of Sutherland and Lord Forbes,—that the Earl of Caithness, his son, or their friends, should not receive nor harbour any fugitives from Sutherland or Strathnaver,—and that there should be good friendship and amity kept amongst them in all time to come.

In consequence of this agreement, the two sons of Kenneth Buy, William and John before-mentioned, were delivered to Lord Berridale, who gave security for their keeping the peace; and John Gun and Alexander his cousin were released, and delivered to Lord Forbes and Mackay, who gave surety to the lords of the council to present them for trial whenever required; and as the Earl of Caithness had deprived them of their possessions in Caithness on account of the discovery they had made, Mackay, who had lately been knighted by the king, gave them lands in Strathnaver as he had promised. Matters being thus settled, Lord Berridale presented himself before the court at Edinburgh to abide his

trial; but no person of course appearing against him, the trial was postponed. The Earl of Caithness, however, failing to appear, the diet against him was continued till the 28th of August following.

Although the king was well pleased, on account of the peace which such an adjustment would produce in his northern dominions, with the agreement which had been entered into, and the proceedings which followed thereon, all of which were made known to him by the Privy Council; yet, as the passing over such a flagrant act as wilful fire-raising, without punishment, might prove pernicious, he wrote a letter to the Privy Council of Scotland, commanding them to prosecute, with all severity, those who were guilty of, or accessory to, the crime. Lord Berridale was thereupon apprehended on suspicion, and committed a prisoner to the castle of Edinburgh; and his father, perceiving the determination of the king to prosecute the authors of the fire, again declined to appear for trial on the appointed day, on which account he was again outlawed, and declared a rebel as the guilty author.

In this extremity Lord Berridale had recourse to Sir Robert Gordon, then resident at court, for his aid. He wrote him a letter, entreating him that, as all controversies were now settled, he would, in place of an enemy become a faithful friend,—that for his own part, he, Lord Berridale, had been always innocent of the jars and dissensions which had happened between the two families,—that he was also innocent of the crime of which he was charged,—and that he wished his majesty to be informed by Sir Robert of these circumstances, hoping that he would order him to be released from confinement. Sir Robert answered, that he had long desired a perfect agreement between the houses of Sutherland and Caithness, which he would endeavour to maintain during his administration in Sutherland,—that he would intercede with the king in behalf of his lordship to the utmost of his power,—that all disputes being now at an end, he would be his faithful friend,—that he had a very different opinion of his disposition from that he entertained of his father, the earl; and he concluded by entreating him to be careful to preserve the friendship which had been now commenced between them.

I.

As the king understood that Lord Berridale was supposed to be innocent of the crime with which he and his father stood charged, and as he could not, without a verdict against Berridale, proceed against the family of Caithness by forfeiture, in consequence of his lordship having been infeft many years before in his father's estate, his majesty, on the earnest entreaty of the then bishop of Ross, Sir Robert Gordon, and Sir James Spence of Wormistoun, was pleased to remit and forgive the crime on the following conditions:—1st. That the Earl of Caithness and his son should give satisfaction to their creditors, who were constantly annoying his majesty with clamours against the earl, and craving justice at his hands. 2d. That the Earl of Caithness, with consent of Lord Berridale, should freely renounce and resign perpetually, into the hands of his majesty, the heritable sheriffship and justiciary of Caithness. 3d. That the Earl of Caithness should deliver the three criminals who had burnt the corn, that public justice might be satisfied upon them, as a terror and example to others. 4th. That the Earl of Caithness, with consent of Lord Berridale, should give and resign *in perpetuum* to the bishop of Caithness, the house of Strabister, with as many of the feu lands of that bishopric as should amount to the yearly value of two thousand merks Scots money, for the purpose of augmenting the income of the bishop, which was at that time small in consequence of the greater part of his lands being in the hands of the earl. Commissioners were sent down from London to Caithness in October 1616, to see that these conditions were complied with. The second and last conditions were immediately implemented; and as the earl and his son promised to give satisfaction to their creditors, and to do everything in their power to apprehend the burners of the corn, the latter was released from the castle of Edinburgh, and directions were given for drawing up a remission and pardon to the Earl of Caithness. Lord Berridale, however, had scarcely been released from the castle, when he was again imprisoned within the jail of Edinburgh, at the instance of Sir James Home of Cowdenknowes, his cousin german, who had become surety for him and his father to their creditors

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for large sums of money. The earl himself narrowly escaped the fate of his son and retired to Caithness, but his creditors had sufficient interest to prevent his remission from passing till they should be satisfied. With consent of the creditors the council of Scotland gave him a personal protection, from time to time, to enable him to come to Edinburgh for the purpose of settling with them, but he made no arrangement, and returned privately into Caithness before the expiration of the *supersedere* which had been granted him, leaving his son to suffer all the miseries of a prison. After enduring a captivity of five years, Lord Berridale was released from prison by the good offices of the Earl of Enzie, and put, for behoof of himself, and his own and his father's creditors, in possession of the family estates from which his father was driven by Sir Robert Gordon acting under a royal warrant, a just punishment for the many enormities of a long and misspent life.¹

Desperate as the fortunes of the Earl of Caithness were even previous to the disposal of his estates, he most unexpectedly found an ally in Sir Donald Mackay, who had taken offence at Sir Robert Gordon, and who, being a man of quick resolution and of an inconstant disposition, determined to forsake the house of Sutherland, and to ingratiate himself with the Earl of Caithness. He alleged various causes of discontent as a reason for his conduct, one of the chief being connected with pecuniary considerations; for having, as he alleged, burdened his estates with debts incurred for some years past in following the house of Sutherland, he thought that, in time coming, he might, by procuring the favour of the Earl of Caithness, turn the same to his own advantage and that of his countrymen. Moreover, as he had been induced to his own prejudice to grant certain life-rent tacks of the lands of Strathie and Dilred to John and Alexander Gun, and others of the clan Gun for revealing the affair of Sanset, he thought that by joining the Earl of Caithness, these might be destroyed, by which means he would get back his lands which he meant to convey to his brother, John Mackay, as a portion; and he, moreover,

expected that the earl would give him and his countrymen some possessions in Caithness. But the chief ground of discontent on the part of Sir Donald Mackay was an action brought against him and Lord Forbes before the court of session, to recover a contract entered into between the last Earl of Sutherland and Mackay, in the year 1613, relative to their marches and other matters of controversy, which being considered by Mackay as prejudicial to him, he had endeavoured to get destroyed through the agency of some persons about Lord Forbes, into whose keeping the deed had been intrusted.

After brooding over these subjects of discontent for some years, Mackay, in the year 1618, suddenly resolved to break with the house of Sutherland, and to form an alliance with the Earl of Caithness, who had long borne a mortal enmity at that family. Accordingly, Mackay sent John Sutherland, his cousin-german, into Caithness to request a private conference with the earl in any part of Caithness he might appoint. This offer was too tempting to be rejected by the earl, who expected, by a reconciliation with Sir Donald Mackay, to turn the same to his own personal gratification and advantage. In the first place, he hoped to revenge himself upon the clan Gun, who were his principal enemies, and upon Sir Donald himself, by detaching him from his superior, the Earl of Sutherland, and from the friendship of his uncles, who had always supported him in all his difficulties. In the second place, he expected that, by alienating Mackay from the duty and affection he owed the house of Sutherland, that he would weaken his power and influence. And lastly, he trusted that Mackay would not only be prevailed upon to discharge his own part, but would also persuade Lord Forbes to discharge his share of the sum of 20,000 merks Scots, which he and his son, Lord Berridale, had become bound to pay them, on account of the burning at Sanset.

The Earl of Caithness having at once agreed to Mackay's proposal, a meeting was held by appointment in the neighbourhood of Dunray, in the parish of Reay, in Caithness. The parties met in the night-time, accompanied each by three men only. After much discussion, and various conferences, which were continued for two or three days, they resolved to destroy the

¹ Sir R. Gordon, p. 329, et seq.

clan Gun, and particularly John Gun, and Alexander his cousin. To please the earl, Mackay undertook to despatch these last, as they were obnoxious to him, on account of the part they had taken against him, in revealing the burning at Sanset. They persuaded themselves that the house of Sutherland would defend the clan, as they were bound to do by their promise, and that that house would be thus drawn into some snare. To confirm their friendship, the earl and Mackay arranged that John Mackay, the only brother of Sir Donald, should marry a niece of the earl, a daughter of James Sinclair of Murkle, who was a mortal enemy of all the clan Gun. Having thus planned the line of conduct they were to follow, they parted, after swearing to continue in perpetual friendship.

Notwithstanding the private way in which the meeting was held, accounts of it immediately spread through the kingdom; and every person wondered at the motives which could induce Sir Donald Mackay to take such a step so unadvisedly, without the knowledge of his uncles, Sir Robert and Sir Alexander Gordon, or of Lord Forbes. The clan Gun receiving secret intelligence of the design upon them, from different friendly quarters, retired into Sutherland. The clan were astonished at Mackay's conduct, as he had promised, at Edinburgh, in presence of Lords Forbes and Elphinston and Sir Robert Gordon, in the year 1616, to be a perpetual friend to them, and chiefly to John Gun and to his cousin Alexander.

After Mackay returned from Caithness, he sent his cousin-german, Angus Mackay of Big-house, to Sutherland, to acquaint his uncles, who had received notice of the meeting, that his object in meeting the Earl of Caithness was for his own personal benefit, and that nothing had been done to their prejudice. Angus Mackay met Sir Robert Gordon at Dunrobin, to whom he delivered his kinsman's message, which, he said, he hoped Sir Robert would take in good part, adding that Sir Donald would show, in presence of both his uncles, that the clan Gun had failed in duty and fidelity to him and the house of Sutherland, since they had revealed the burning; and therefore, that if his uncles would not forsake John Gun, and some

others of the clan, he would adhere to them no longer. Sir Robert Gordon returned a verbal answer by Angus Mackay, that when Sir Donald came in person to Dunrobin to clear himself, as in duty he was bound to do, he would then accept of his excuse, and not till then. And he at the same time wrote a letter to Sir Donald, to the effect that for his own (Sir Robert's) part, he did not much regard Mackay's secret journey to Caithness, and his reconciliation with Earl George, without his knowledge or the advice of Lord Forbes; and that, however unfavourable the world might construe it, he would endeavour to colour it in the best way he could, for Mackay's own credit. He desired Mackay to consider that a man's reputation was exceedingly tender, and that if it were once blemished, though wrongfully, there would still some blot remain, because the greater part of the world would always incline to speak the worst; that whatever had been arranged in that journey, between him and the Earl of Caithness, beneficial to Mackay and not prejudicial to the house of Sutherland, he should be always ready to assist him therein, although concluded without his consent. As to the clan Gun, he could not with honesty or credit abandon them, and particularly John and his cousin Alexander, until tried and found guilty, as he had promised faithfully to be their friend, for revealing the affair of Sanset; that he had made them this promise at the earnest desire and entreaty of Sir Donald himself; that the house of Sutherland did always esteem their truth and constancy to be their greatest jewel; and seeing that he and his brother, Sir Alexander, were almost the only branches of it then of age or man's estate, they would endeavour to prove true and constant wheresoever they did possess friendship; and that neither the house of Sutherland, nor any greater house whereof they had the honour to be descended, should have the least occasion to be ashamed of them in that respect; that if Sir Donald had quarrelled or challenged the clan Gun, before going into Caithness and his arraignment with Earl George, the clan might have been suspected; but he saw no reason to forsake them until they were found guilty of some great offence.

Sir Robert Gordon, therefore, acting as tutor

for his nephew, took the clan Gun under his immediate protection, with the exception of Alexander Gun, the burner of the corn, and his accomplices. John Gun thereupon demanded a trial before his friends, that they might hear what Sir Donald had to lay to his charge. John and his kinsmen were acquitted, and declared innocent of any offence, either against the house of Sutherland or Mackay, since the fact of the burning.

Sir Donald Mackay, dissatisfied with this result, went to Edinburgh for the purpose of obtaining a commission against the clan Gun from the council, for old crimes committed by them before his majesty had left Scotland for England; but he was successfully opposed in this by Sir Robert Gordon, who wrote a letter to the Lord-Chancellor and to the Earl of Melrose, afterwards Earl of Haddington and Lord Privy Seal, showing that the object of Sir Donald, in asking such a commission, was to break the king's peace, and to breed fresh troubles in Caithness. Disappointed in this attempt, Sir Donald returned home to Strathnaver, and, in the month of April, 1618, he went to Braill, in Caithness, where he met the earl, with whom he continued three nights. On this occasion they agreed to despatch Alexander Gun, the burner of the corn, lest Lord Forbes should request the earl to deliver him up; and they hoped that, in consequence of such an occurrence, the tribe might be ensnared. Before parting, the earl delivered to Mackay some old writs of certain lands in Strathnaver and other places within the diocese of Caithness, which belonged to Sir Donald's predecessors; by means of which the earl thought he would put Sir Donald by the ears with his uncles, expecting him to bring an action against the Earl of Sutherland, for the warrandice of Strathnaver, and thus free himself from the superiority of the Earl of Sutherland.

Shortly after this meeting was held, Sir Donald entered Sutherland privately, for the purpose of capturing John Gun; but, after lurking two nights in Golspie, watching Gun, without effect, he was discovered by Adam Gordon of Kilaahkill, a trusty dependant of the house of Sutherland, and thereupon returned to his country. In the meantime the Earl of Caithness, who sought every oppor-

tunity to quarrel with the house of Sutherland, endeavoured to pick a quarrel with Sir Alexander Gordon about some shellings which he alleged the latter's servants had erected beyond the marches between Torrish, in Strathully, and the lands of Berridale. The dispute, however, came to nothing.

When Sir Robert Gordon heard of these occurrences in the north, he returned home from Edinburgh, where he had been for some time; and, on his return, he visited the Marquis of Huntly at Strathbogie, who advised him to be on his guard, as he had received notice from the Earl of Caithness that Sir Donald meant to create some disturbances in Sutherland. The object the earl had in view, in acquainting the marquis with Mackay's intentions, was to screen himself from any imputation of being concerned in Mackay's plans, although he favoured them in secret. As soon as Sir Robert Gordon was informed of Mackay's intentions he hastened to Sutherland; but before his arrival there, Sir Donald had entered Strathully with a body of men, in quest of Alexander Gun, the burner, against whom he had obtained letters of caption. He expected that if he could find Gun in Strathully, where the clan of that name chiefly dwelt, they, and particularly John Gun, would protect Alexander, and that in consequence he would ensnare John Gun and his tribe, and bring them within the reach of the law, for having resisted the king's authority; but Mackay was disappointed in his expectations, for Alexander Gun escaped, and none of the clan Gun made the least movement, not knowing how Sir Robert Gordon was affected towards Alexander Gun. In entering Strathully, without acquainting his uncles of his intention, Sir Donald had acted improperly, and contrary to his duty, as the vassal of the house of Sutherland; but, not satisfied with this trespass, he went to Badinloch, and there apprehended William M'Corkill, one of the clan Gun, and carried him along with him towards Strathnaver, on the ground that he had favoured the escape of Alexander Gun; but M'Corkill escaped while his keepers were asleep, and went to Dnnrobin, where he met Sir Alexander Gordon, to whom he related the circumstance.

Hearing that Sir Robert Gordon was upon

his journey to Sutherland, Mackay left Badinloch in haste, and went privately to the parish of Culnaly, taking up his residence in Golspietour with John Gordon, younger of Embo, till he should learn in what manner Sir Robert would act towards him. Mackay, perceiving that his presence in Golspietour was likely to lead to a tumult among the people, sent his men home to Strathnaver, and went himself the following day, taking only one man along with him, to Dunrobin castle, where he met Sir Robert Gordon, who received him kindly according to his usual manner; and after Sir Robert had opened his mind very freely to him on the bad course he was pursuing, he began to talk to him about a reconciliation with John Gun; but Sir Donald would not hear of any accommodation, and after staying a few days at Dunrobin, returned home to his own country.

Sir Donald Mackay, perceiving the danger in which he had placed himself, and seeing that he could put no reliance on the hollow and inconstant friendship of the Earl of Caithness, became desirous of a reconciliation with his uncles, and with this view he offered to refer all matters in dispute to the arbitration of friends, and to make such satisfaction for his offences as they might enjoin. As Sir Robert Gordon still had a kindly feeling towards Mackay, and as the state in which the affairs of the house of Sutherland stood during the minority of his nephew, the earl, could not conveniently admit of following out hostile measures against Mackay, Sir Robert embraced his offer. The parties, therefore, met at Tain, and matters being discussed in presence of Sir Alexander Gordon of Navidale, George Monroe of Milntoun, and John Monroe of Leamlair, they adjudged that Sir Donald should send Angus Mackay of Bighouse, and three gentlemen of the Slaight-ean-Aberigh, to Dunrobin, there to remain prisoners during Sir Robert's pleasure, as a punishment for apprehending William M'Corkill at Badinloch. After settling some other matters of little moment, the parties agreed to hold another meeting for adjusting all remaining questions, at Elgin, in the month of June of the following year, 1619. Sir Donald wished to include Gordon of Embo and others of his friends in Sutherland in this

arrangement; but as they were vassals of the house of Sutherland, Sir Robert would not allow Mackay to treat for them.

In the month of November, 1618, a disturbance took place in consequence of a quarrel between George, Lord Gordon, Earl of Enzie, and Sir Lauchlan Macintosh, chief of the clan Chattan, which arose out of the following circumstances:—When the earl went into Lochaber, in the year 1613, in pursuit of the clan Cameron, he requested Macintosh to accompany him, both on account of his being the vassal of the Marquis of Huntly, the earl's father, and also on account of the ancient enmity which had always existed between the clan Chattan and clan Cameron, in consequence of the latter keeping forcible possession of certain lands belonging to the former in Lochaber. To induce Macintosh to join him, the earl promised to dispossess the clan Cameron of the lauds belonging to Macintosh, and to restore him to the possession of them; but, by advice of the laird of Grant, his father-in-law, who was an enemy of the house of Huntly, he declined to accompany the earl in his expedition. The earl was greatly displeased at Macintosh's refusal, which afterwards led to some disputes between them. A few years after the date of this expedition—in which the earl subdued the clan Cameron, and took their chief prisoner, whom he imprisoned at Inverness in the year 1614—Macintosh obtained a commission against Macronald, younger of Moidart, and his brother, Donald Glass, for laying waste his lands in Lochaber; and, having collected all his friends, he entered Lochaber for the purpose of apprehending them, but, being unsuccessful in his attempt, he returned home. As Macintosh conceived that he had a right to the services of all his clan, some of whom were tenants and dependants of the Marquis of Huntly, he ordered these to follow him, and compelled such of them as were refractory to accompany him into Lochaber. This proceeding gave offence to the Earl of Enzie, who summoned Macintosh before the lords of the Privy Council for having, as he asserted, exceeded his commission. He, moreover, got Macintosh's commission recalled, and obtained a new commission in his own favour from the lords of the council, under which he invaded

Lochaber, and expelled Macronald and his brother Donald from that country.

As Macintosh held certain lands from the earl and his father for services to be done, which the earl alleged had not been performed by Macintosh agreeably to the tenor of his titles, the earl brought an action against Macintosh in the year 1618 for evicting these lands, on the ground of his not having implemented the conditions on which he held them. And, as the earl had a right to the tithes of Culloden, which belonged to Macintosh, he served him, at the same time, with an inhibition, prohibiting him to dispose of these tithes. As the time for tithing drew near, Macintosh, by advice of the clan Kenzie and the Grants, circulated a report that he intended to oppose the earl in any attempt he might make to take possession of the tithes of Culloden in kind, because such a practice had never before been in use, and that he would try the issue of an action of spuilzie, if brought against him. Although the earl was much incensed at such a threat on the part of his own vassal, yet, being a privy counsellor, and desirous of showing a good example in keeping the peace, he abstained from enforcing his right; but, having formerly obtained a decree against Macintosh for the value of the tithes of the preceding years, he sent two messengers-at-arms to poind and distrain the corns upon the ground under that warrant. The messengers were, however, resisted by Macintosh's servants, and forced to desist from the execution of their duty. The earl, in consequence, pursued Macintosh and his servants before the Privy Council, and got them denounced and proclaimed rebels to the king. He, thereupon, collected a number of his particular friends with the design of carrying his decree into execution, by distraining the crop at Culloden and carrying it to Inverness. Macintosh prepared himself to resist, by fortifying the house of Culloden and laying in a large quantity of ammunition; and having collected all the corn within shot of the castle and committed the charge of it to his two uncles, Duncan and Lauchlan, he waited for the approach of the earl. As the earl was fully aware of Macintosh's preparations, and that the clan Chattan, the Grants, and the clan Kenzie, had promised

to assist Macintosh in opposing the execution of his warrant, he wrote to Sir Robert Gordon, tutor of Sutherland, to meet him at Culloden on the 5th of November, 1618, being the day fixed by him for enforcing his decree. On receipt of this letter, Sir Robert Gordon left Sutherland for Bog-a-Gight, where the Marquis of Huntly and his son then were, and on his way paid a visit to Macintosh with the view of bringing about a compromise; but Macintosh, who was a young man of a headstrong disposition, refused to listen to any proposals, and rode post-haste to Edinburgh, from which he went privately into England.

In the meantime, the Earl of Enzie having collected his friends, to the number of 1,100 horsemen well appointed and armed, and 600 Highlanders on foot, came to Inverness with this force on the day appointed, and, after consulting his principal officers, marched forwards towards Culloden. When he arrived within view of the castle, the earl sent Sir Robert Gordon to Duncan Macintosh, who, with his brother, commanded the house, to inform him that, in consequence of his nephew's extraordinary boasting, he had come thither to put his majesty's laws in execution, and to carry off the corn which of right belonged to him. To this message Duncan replied, that he did not mean to prevent the earl from taking away what belonged to him, but that, in case of attack, he would defend the castle which had been committed to his charge. Sir Robert, on his return, begged the earl to send Lord Lovat, who had some influence with Duncan Macintosh, to endeavour to prevail on him to surrender the castle. At the desire of the earl, Lord Lovat accordingly went to the house of Culloden, accompanied by Sir Robert Gordon and George Monroe of Milntoun, and, after some entreaty, Macintosh agreed to surrender at discretion; a party thereupon took possession of the house, and sent the keys to the earl. He was, however, so well pleased with the conduct of Macintosh, that he sent back the keys to him, and as neither the clan Chattan, the Grants, nor the clan Kenzie, appeared to oppose him, he disbanded his party and returned home to Bog-a-Gight. He did not even carry off the corn, but gave it to Macintosh's grandmother, who enjoyed

the life-rent of the lands of Culloeden as her jointure.

As the Earl of Enzie had other claims against Sir Lauchlan Macintosh, he cited him before the lords of council and session, but failing to appear, he was again denounced rebel, and outlawed for his disobedience. Sir Lauchlan, who was then in England at court, informed the king of the earl's proceedings, which he described as harsh and illegal, and, to counteract the effect which such a statement might have upon the mind of his majesty, the earl posted to London and laid before him a true statement of matters. The consequence was, that Sir Lauchlan was sent home to Scotland and committed to the castle of Edinburgh, until he should give the earl full satisfaction. This step appears to have brought him to reason, and induced him to apply, through the mediation of some friends, for a reconciliation with the earl, which took place accordingly, at Edinburgh, in the year 1619. Sir Lauchlan, however, became bound to pay a large sum of money to the earl, part of which the latter afterwards remitted. The laird of Grant, by whose advice Macintosh had acted in opposing the earl, also submitted to the latter; but the reconciliation was more nominal than real, for the earl was afterwards obliged to protect the chief of the clan Cameron against them, and this circumstance gave rise to many dissensions between them and the earl, which ended only with the lives of Macintosh and the laird of Grant, who both died in the year 1622, when the ward of part of Macintosh's lands fell to the earl, as his superior, during the minority of his son. The Earl of Seaforth and his clan, who had also favoured the designs of Macintosh, were in like manner reconciled, at the same time, to the Earl of Enzie, at Aberdeen, through the mediation of the Earl of Dunfermline, the Chancellor of Scotland, whose daughter the Earl of Seaforth had married.²

In no part of the Highlands did the spirit of faction operate so powerfully, or reign with greater virulence, than in Sutherland and Caithness and the adjacent country. The jealousies and strifes which existed for such a

length of time between the two great rival families of Sutherland and Caithness, and the warfare which these occasioned, sowed the seeds of a deep-rooted hostility, which extended its baneful influence among all their followers, dependants, and friends, and retarded their advancement. The most trivial offences were often magnified into the greatest crimes, and bodies of men, animated by the deadliest hatred, were instantly congregated to avenge imaginary wrongs. It would be almost an endless task to relate the many disputes and differences which occurred during the seventeenth century in these distracted districts; but as a short account of the principal events is necessary in a work of this nature, we again proceed agreeably to our plan.

The resignation which the Earl of Caithness was compelled to make of part of the feu lands of the bishopric of Caithness, into the hands of the bishop, as before related, was a measure which preyed upon his mind, naturally restless and vindictive, and in consequence he continually annoyed the bishop's servants and tenants. His hatred was more especially directed against Robert Monroe of Aldie, commissary of Caithness, who always acted as chamberlain to the bishop, and factor in the diocese, whom he took every opportunity to molest. The earl had a domestic servant, James Sinclair of Dyren, who had possessed part of the lands which he had been compelled to resign, and which were now tenanted by Thomas Lindsay, brother-uterine of Robert Monroe, the commissary. This James Sinclair, at the instigation of the earl, quarrelled with Thomas Lindsay, who was passing at the time near the earl's house in Thurso, and, after changing some hard words, Sinclair inflicted a deadly wound upon him, of which he shortly thereafter died. Sinclair immediately fled to Edinburgh, and thence to London, to meet Sir Andrew Sinclair, who was transacting some business for the king of Denmark there, that he might intercede with the king for a pardon; but his majesty refused to grant it, and Sinclair, for better security, went to Denmark along with Sir Andrew.

As Robert Monroe did not consider his person safe in Caithness under such circumstances, he retired into Sutherland for a time. He then

² Sir Robert Gordon, p. 356, et seq.

pursued James Sinclair and his master, the Earl of Caithness, for the slaughter of his brother, Thomas Lindsay; but, not appearing for trial on the day appointed, they were both outlawed, and denounced rebels. Hearing that Sinclair was in London, Monroe hastened thither, and in his own name and that of the bishop of Caithness, laid a complaint before his majesty against the earl and his servant. His majesty thereupon wrote to the Lords of the Privy Council of Scotland, desiring them to adopt the most speedy and rigorous measures to suppress the oppressions of the earl, that his subjects in the north who were well affected might live in safety and peace; and to enable them the more effectually to punish the earl, his majesty ordered them to keep back the remission that had been granted for the affair at Sanset, which had not yet been delivered to him. His majesty also directed the Privy Council, with all secrecy and speed, to give a commission to Sir Robert Gordon to apprehend the earl, or force him to leave the kingdom, and to take possession of all his castles for his majesty's behoof; that he should also compel the landed proprietors of Caithness to find surety, not only for keeping the king's peace in time coming, but also for their personal appearance at Edinburgh twice every year, as the West Islanders were bound to do, to answer to such complaints as might be made against them. The letter containing these instructions is dated from Windsor, 25th May, 1621.

The Privy Council, on receipt of this letter, communicated the same to Sir Robert Gordon, who was then in Edinburgh; but he excused himself from accepting the commission offered him, lest his acceptance might be construed as proceeding from spleen and malice against the Earl of Caithness. This answer, however, did not satisfy the Privy Council, which insisted that he should accept the commission; he eventually did so, but on condition that the council should furnish him with shipping and the munitions of war, and all other necessaries to force the earl to yield, in case he should fortify either Castle Sinclair or Aekergill, and withstand a siege.

While the Privy Council were deliberating on this matter, Sir Robert Gordon took occa-

sion to speak to Lord Berridale, who was still a prisoner for debt in the jail of Edinburgh, respecting the contemplated measures against the earl, his father. As Sir Robert was still very unwilling to enter upon such an enterprise, he advised his lordship to undertake the business, by engaging in which he might not only get himself relieved of the claims against him, save his country from the dangers which threatened it, but also keep possession of his castles; and that as his father had treated him in the most unnatural manner, by suffering him to remain so long in prison without taking any steps to obtain his liberation, he would be justified, in the eyes of the world, in accepting the offer now made. Being encouraged by Lord Gordon, Earl of Enzie, to whom Sir Robert Gordon's proposal had been communicated, to embrace the offer, Lord Berridale offered to undertake the service without any charge to his majesty, and that he would, before being liberated, give security to his creditors, either to return to prison after he had executed the commission, or satisfy them for their claims against him. The Privy Council embraced at once Lord Berridale's proposal, but, although the Earl of Enzie offered himself as surety for his lordship's return to prison after the service was over, the creditors refused to consent to his liberation, and thus the matter dropped. Sir Robert Gordon was again urged by the council to accept the commission, and to make the matter more palatable to him, they granted the commission to him and the Earl of Enzie jointly, both of whom accepted it. As the council, however, had no command from the king to supply the commissioners with shipping and warlike stores, they delayed proceedings till they should receive instructions from his majesty touching that point.

When the Earl of Caithness was informed of the proceedings contemplated against him, and that Sir Robert Gordon had been employed by a commission from his majesty to act in the matter, he wrote to the Lords of the Privy Council, asserting that he was innocent of the death of Thomas Lindsay; that his reason for not appearing at Edinburgh to abide his trial for that crime, was not that he had been in any shape privy to the slaughter, but for fear of his creditors, who, he was afraid, would apprehend

and imprison him; and promising, that if his majesty would grant him a protection and safe-conduct, he would find security to abide trial for the slaughter of Thomas Lindsay. On receipt of this letter, the lords of the council promised him a protection, and in the month of August, his brother, James Sinclair of Murkle, and Sir John Sinclair of Greenland, became sureties for his appearance at Edinburgh, at the time prescribed for his appearance to stand trial. Thus the execution of the commission was in the meantime delayed.

Notwithstanding the refusal of Lord Berridale's creditors to consent to his liberation, Lord Gordon afterwards did all in his power to accomplish it, and ultimately succeeded in obtaining this consent, by giving his own personal security either to satisfy the creditors, or deliver up Lord Berridale into their hands. His lordship was accordingly released from prison, and returned to Caithness in the year 1621, after a confinement of five years. As his final enlargement from jail depended upon his obtaining the means of paying his creditors, and as his father, the earl, staid at home consuming the rents of his estates, in rioting and licentiousness, without paying any part either of the principal or interest of his debts, and without feeling the least uneasiness at his son's confinement, Lord Berridale, immediately on his return, assisted by his friends, attempted to apprehend his father, so as to get the family estates into his own possession; but without success.

In the meantime the earl's creditors, wearied out with the delay which had taken place in liquidating their debts, grew exceedingly clamorous, and some of them took a journey to Caithness in the month of April, 1622, to endeavour to effect a settlement with the earl personally. All, however, that they obtained were fair words, and a promise from the earl that he would speedily follow them to Edinburgh, and satisfy them of all demands; but he failed to perform his promise. About this time, a sort of reconciliation appears to have taken place between the earl and his son, Lord Berridale; but it was of short duration. On this new disagreement breaking out, the earl lost the favour and friendship not only of his brothers, James and Sir John, but also that of

his best friends in Caithness. Lord Berridale, thereupon, left Caithness and took up his residence with Lord Gordon, who wrote to his friends at Court to obtain a new commission against the earl. As the king was daily troubled with complaints against the earl by his creditors, he readily consented to such a request, and he accordingly wrote a letter to the Lords of the Privy Council of Scotland, in the month of December 1622, desiring them to issue a commission to Lord Gordon to proceed against the earl. The execution of the commission was, however, postponed in consequence of a message to Lord Gordon to attend the Court and proceed to France on some affairs of state, where he accordingly went in the year 1623. On the departure of his lordship, the earl made an application to the Lords of the Council for a new protection, promising to appear at Edinburgh on the 10th of August of this year, and to satisfy his creditors. This turned out to be a mere pretence to obtain delay, for although the council granted the protection, as required, upon the most urgent solicitations, the earl failed to appear on the day appointed. This breach of his engagement incensed his majesty and the council the more against him, and made them more determined than ever to reduce him to obedience. He was again denounced and proclaimed rebel, and a new commission was granted to Sir Robert Gordon to proceed against him and his abettors with fire and sword. In this commission there were conjoined with Sir Robert, his brother, Sir Alexander Gordon, Sir Donald Mackay, his nephew, and James Sinclair of Murkle, but on this condition, that Sir Robert should act as chief commissioner, and that nothing should be done by the other commissioners in the service they were employed in, without his advice and consent.

The Earl of Caithness seeing now no longer any chance of evading the authority of the laws, prepared to meet the gathering storm by fortifying his castles and strongholds. Proclamations were issued interdicting all persons from having any communication with the earl, and letters of concurrence were given to Sir Robert in name of his majesty, charging and commanding the inhabitants of Ross, Sutherland, Strathnaver, Caithness, and Orkney, to assist him in the execution of his majesty's

commission; a ship well furnished with munitions of war, was sent to the coast of Caithness to prevent the earl's escape by sea, and to furnish Sir Robert with ordnance for battering the earl's castles in case he should withstand a siege.

Sir Robert Gordon having arrived in Sutherland in the month of August, 1623, was immediately joined by Lord Berridale for the purpose of consulting on the plan of operations to be adopted; but, before fixing on any particular plan, it was concerted that Lord Berridale should first proceed to Caithness to learn what resolution his father had come to, and to ascertain how the inhabitants of that country stood affected towards the earl. He was also to notify to Sir Robert the arrival of the ship of war on the coast. A day was, at the same time, fixed for the inhabitants of the adjoining districts to meet Sir Robert Gordon in Strathully, upon the borders between Sutherland and Caithness. Lord Berridale was not long in Caithness when he sent notice to Sir Robert acquainting him that his father, the earl, had resolved to stand out to the last extremity, and that he had fortified the strong castle of Ackergill, which he had supplied with men, ammunition, and provisions, and upon holding out which he placed his last and only hope. He advised Sir Robert to bring with him into Caithness as many men as he could muster, as many of the inhabitants stood still well affected to the earl.

The Earl of Caithness, in the meantime, justly apprehensive of the consequences which might ensue if unsuccessful in his opposition, despatched a messenger to Sir Robert Gordon, proposing that some gentlemen should be authorized to negotiate between them, for the purpose of bringing matters to an amicable accommodation. Sir Robert, who perceived the drift of this message, which was solely to obtain delay, returned for answer that he was exceedingly sorry that the earl had refused the benefit of his last protection for clearing away the imputations laid to his charge; and that he clearly perceived that the earl's object in proposing a negotiation was solely to waste time, and to weary out the commissioners and army by delays, which he, for his own part, would not submit to, because the harvest

was nearly at hand, and the king's ship could not be detained upon the coast idle. Unless, therefore, the earl at once submitted himself unconditionally to the king's mercy, Sir Robert threatened to proceed against him and his supporters immediately. The earl had been hitherto so successful in his different schemes to avoid the ends of justice that such an answer was by no means expected, and the firmness displayed in it served greatly to shake his courage.

Upon receipt of the intelligence from Lord Berridale, Sir Robert Gordon made preparations for entering Caithness without delay; and, as a precautionary measure, he took pledges from such of the tribes and families in Caithness as he suspected were favourable to the earl. Before all his forces had time to assemble, Sir Robert received notice that the war ship had arrived upon the Caithness coast, and that the earl was meditating an escape beyond the seas. Unwilling to withdraw men from the adjoining provinces during the harvest season, and considering the Sutherland forces quite sufficient for his purpose, he sent couriers into Ross, Strathnaver, Assynt, and Orkney, desiring the people who had been engaged to accompany the expedition to remain at home till farther notice; and, having assembled all the inhabitants of Sutherland, he picked out the most active and resolute men among them, whom he caused to be well supplied with warlike weapons, and other necessaries, for the expedition. Having thus equipped his army, Sir Robert, accompanied by his brother, Sir Alexander Gordon, and the principal gentlemen of Sutherland, marched, on the 3d of September, 1623, from Dunrobin to Killiernan in Strathully, the place of rendezvous previously appointed. Here Sir Robert divided his forces into companies, over each of which he placed a commander. The following morning he passed the river Helmsdale, and arranged his army in the following order:—Half a mile in advance of the main body he placed a company of the clan Gun, whose duty it was to search the fields as they advanced for the purpose of discovering any ambuscades which might be laid in their way, and to clear away any obstruction to the regular advance of the main body. The right wing of the army was

led by John Murray of Aberscoors, Hugh Gordon of Ballellon, and Adam Gordon of Kilmalkill. The left wing was commanded by John Gordon, younger of Embo, Robert Gray of Ospisdale, and Alexander Sutherland of Kilphidder. And Sir Robert Gordon himself, his brother Sir Alexander, the laird of Pulrossie, and William Mac-Mhic-Sheumais of Killiernan, led the centre. The two wings were always kept a short distance in advance of the centre, from which they were to receive support when required. In this manner the army advanced towards Berridale, and they observed the same order of marching during all the time they remained in Caithness.

As soon as Lord Berridale heard of Sir Robert Gordon's advance, he and James Sinclair of Murkle, one of the commissioners, and some other gentlemen, went forward in haste to meet him. The parties accordingly met among the mountains above Cayen, about three miles from Berridale. Sir Robert continued his march till he arrived at Brea-Na-Henghish in Berridale, where at night he encamped. Here they were informed that the ship of war, after casting anchor before Castle Sinclair, had gone from thence to Scrabster road, and that the Earl of Caithness had abandoned the country, and sailed by night into one of the Orkney Islands, with the intention of going thence into Norway or Denmark. From Brea-Na-Henghish the army advanced to Lathron, where they encamped. Here James Sinclair of Murkle, sheriff of Caithness, Sir William Sinclair of May, the laird of Ratter, the laird of Forse, and several other gentlemen of Caithness, waited upon Sir Robert Gordon and tendered their submission and obedience to his majesty, offering, at the same time, every assistance they could afford in forwarding the objects of the expedition. Sir Robert received them kindly, and promised to acquaint his majesty with their submission; but he distrusted some of them, and he gave orders that none of the Caithness people should be allowed to enter his camp after sunset. At Lathron, Sir Robert was joined by about 300 of the Caithness men, consisting of the Cadels and others who had favoured Lord Berridale. These men were commanded by James Sinclair, fiar of Murkle, and were kept always a mile or

two in advance of the army till they reached Castle Sinclair.

No sooner did Sir Robert arrive before Castle Sinclair, which was a very strong place, and the principal residence of the Earl of Caithness, than it surrendered, the keys being delivered up to him as representing his majesty. The army encamped before the castle two nights, during which time the officers took up their quarters within the castle, which was guarded by Sutherland men.

From Castle Sinclair Sir Robert marched to the castle of Ackergill, another strong place, which also surrendered on the first summons, and the keys of which were delivered in like manner to him. The army next marched in battle array to the castle of Kease, the last residence of the earl, which was also given up without resistance. The Countess of Caithness had previously removed to another residence not far distant, where she was visited by Sir Robert Gordon, who was her cousin-german. The countess entreated him, with great earnestness, to get her husband again restored to favour, seeing he had made no resistance to him. Sir Robert promised to do what he could if the earl would follow his advice; but he did not expect that matters could be accommodated so speedily as she expected, from the peculiar situation in which the earl then stood.

From Kease Sir Robert Gordon returned with his army to Castle Sinclair, where, according to the directions he had received from the Privy Council, he delivered the keys of all these castles and forts to Lord Berridale, to be kept by him for his majesty's use, for which he should be answerable to the lords of the council until the farther pleasure of his majesty should be known.

The army then returned to Wick in the same marching order which had been observed since its first entry into Caithness, at which place the commissioners consulted together, and framed a set of instructions to Lord Berridale for governing Caithness peaceably in time coming, conformably to the laws of the kingdom, and for preventing the Earl of Caithness from again disturbing the country, should he venture to return after the departure of the army. At Wick Sir Robert Gordon was joined by Sir Donald Mackay, who had collected together

the choicest men of Strathnaver; but, as the object of the expedition had been accomplished, Sir Donald, after receiving Sir Robert's thanks, returned to Strathnaver. Sir Robert having brought this expedition to a successful termination, led back his men into Sutherland, and, after a stay of three months, went to England, carrying with him a letter from the Privy Council of Scotland to the king, giving an account of the expedition, and of its happy results.³

CHAPTER XI.

A. D. 1624—1636.

BRITISH SOVEREIGNS:—

James VI., 1603—1625. Charles I., 1625—1649.

Insurrection of the clan Chattan against the Earl of Murray—Dispute between the laird of Duffus and Gordon, younger of Embo—Sir Donald Mackay's machinations—Feud among the Grants—Dispute between the lairds of Frendraught and Rothiemay—Quarrel between Frendraught and the laird of Pitcaple—Calamitous and fatal fire at Frendraught House—Inquiry as to the cause of the fire—Escape of James Grant—Apprehension of Grant of Ballindalloch—And of Thomas Grant—Dispute between the Earl of Sutherland and Lord Lorn—Depredations committed upon Frendraught—Marquis of Huntly accused thereof—The Marquis and Letterfourie committed—Liberated—Death and character of the Marquis.

THE troubles in Sutherland and Caithness had been scarcely allayed, when a formidable insurrection broke out on the part of the clan Chattan against the Earl of Murray, which occasioned considerable uproar and confusion in the Highlands. The clan Chattan had for a very long period been the faithful friends and followers of the Earls of Murray, who, on that account, had allotted them many valuable lands in recompense for their services in Pettie and Strathearn. The clan had, in particular, been very active in revenging upon the Marquis of Huntly the death of James, Earl of Murray, who was killed at Donnibristle; but his son and successor being reconciled to the family of Huntly, and needing no longer, as he thought, the aid of the clan, dispossessed them of the lands which his predecessors had bestowed upon them. This harsh proceeding occasioned great irritation,

³ Sir Robert Gordon, p. 366, *et seq.*

and, upon the death of Sir Lauchlan their chief, who died a short time before Whitsunday, 1624, they resolved either to recover the possessions of which they had been deprived, or to lay them waste. While Sir Lauchlan lived, the clan were awed by his authority and prevented from such an attempt, but no such impediment now standing in their way, and as their chief, who was a mere child, could run no risk by the enterprise, they considered the present a favourable opportunity for carrying their plan into execution.

Accordingly, a gathering of the clan, to the number of about 200 gentlemen and 300 servants, took place about Whitsunday, 1624. This party was commanded by three uncles of the late chief.⁴ "They kept the feilds," says Spalding, "in their Highland weid upon foot with swords, bowes, arrowes, targets, hagbuttis, pistollis, and other Highland armour; and first began to rob and spouzie the earle's tenements, who laboured their possessions, of their hail goods, geir, insight, plenishing, horse, molt, sheep, corns, and cattell, and left them nothing that they could get within their bounds; syne fell in sorning throw out Murray, Strathawick, Urquhart, Ross, Sutherland, Brae of Marr, and diverse other parts, taking their meat and food per force wher they could not get it willingly, frae freinds aelseweill as frae their faes; yet still kept themselves from sheiding of innocent blood. Thus they lived as outlawes, oppressing the countrie, (besydes the casting of the earle's lands waist), and openly avowed they had tane this course to get their own possessions again, or then hold the country walking."

When this rising took place, the Earl of Murray obtained from Monteith and Balquhider about 300 armed men, and placing himself at their head he marched through Moray to Inverness. The earl took up his residence in the castle with the Earl of Enzie, his brother-in-law, eldest son of the Marquis of Huntly, and after the party had passed one night at Inverness, he despatched them in quest of the

⁴ Spalding says that the party were commanded by Lauchlan Macintosh, *alias* Lauchlan Og, uncle of the young chief, and Lauchlan Macintosh or Lauchlan Angus-son, eldest son of Angus Macintosh, *alias* Angus William, son of Auld Tirlie.—*Memorials of the Troubles in Scotland and in England*, A. D. 1624—1645.

clan Chattan, but whether from fear of meeting them, or because they could not find them, certain it is that the Mouteith and Balquhiddier men returned without effecting anything, after putting the earl to great expense. The earl, therefore, sent them back to their respective countries, and went himself to Elgin, where he raised another body of men to suppress the clan Chattan, who were equally unsuccessful in finding the latter out.

These ineffectual attempts against the clan served to make them more bold and daring in their outrages; and as the earl now saw that no force which he could himself bring into the field was sufficient to overawe these marauders, King James, at his earnest solicitation, granted him a commission, appointing him his lieutenant in the Highlands, and giving him authority to proceed capitally against the offenders. On his return the earl proclaimed the commission he had obtained from his majesty, and issued letters of intercommuning against the clan Chattan, prohibiting all persons from harbouring, supplying, or entertaining them, in any manner of way, under certain severe pains and penalties. Although the Marquis of Huntly was the earl's father-in-law, he felt somewhat indignant at the appointment, as he conceived that he or his son had the best title to be appointed to the lieutenancy of the north; but he concealed his displeasure.

After the Earl of Murray had issued the notices, prohibiting all persons from communicating with, or assisting the clan Chattan, their kindred and friends, who had privately promised them aid, before they broke out, began to grow cold, and declined to assist them, as they were apprehensive of losing their estates, many of them being wealthy. The earl perceiving this, opened a communication with some of the principal persons of the clan, to induce them to submit to his authority, who, seeing no hopes of making any longer an effectual resistance, readily acquiesced, and, by the intercession of friends, made their peace with the earl, on condition that they should inform him of the names of such persons as had given them protection, after the publication of his letters of interdiction. Having thus quelled this formidable insurrection without bloodshed, the earl, by virtue of his commission, held

justice courts at Elgin, where "some slight louns, followers of the clan Chattan," were tried and executed, but all the principals concerned were pardoned.

As the account which Spalding gives of the appearance of the accused, and of the base conduct of the principal men of the clan Chattan, in informing against their friends and benefactors, is both curious and graphic, it is here inserted: "Then presently was brought in befor the barr; and in the honest men's faces, the clan Chattan who had gotten supply, verified what they had gotten, and the honest men confounded and dasht, knew not what to answer, was forced to come in the earle's will, whilk was not for their weil: others compared aud willingly confessed, trusting to gett more favour at the earle's hands, but they came little speid: and lastly, some stood out and denyed all, who was reserved to the triall of an assyse. The princippal malefactors stood up in judgment, and declared what they had gotten, whether meat, money, cloathing, gun, ball, powder, lead, sword, dirk, and the like commodities, and also instructed the assyse in ilk particular, what they had gotten frae the persons pannalled; that an uncouth form of probation, wher the princippal malefactor proves against the receptor for his own pardon, and honest men, perhaps neither of the clan Chattan's kyue nor blood, punished for their good will, ignorant of the laws, and rather receipting them more for their evil nor their good. Nevertheless thir innocent men, under collour of justice, part and part as they came in, were soundly fyned iu great soumes as their estates might bear, and some above their estate was fyned, and every one warded within the tolbuith of Elgine, while the least myte was payed of such as was persued in anno 1624."⁵

Some idea of the unequal administration of the laws at this time may be formed, when it is considered that the enormous fines imposed in the present instance, went into the pockets of the chief judge, the Earl of Murray himself, as similar mulcts had previously gone into those of the Earl of Argyle, in his crusade against the unfortunate clan Gregor! This legal robbery, however, does not appear to have

⁵ *Memorials*, vol. i. p. 8.

enriched the houses of Argyle and Murray, for Sir Robert Gordon observes, that "these fynes did not much advantage either of these two earles." The Earl of Murray, no doubt, thinking such a mode of raising money an easy and profitable speculation, afterwards obtained an enlargement of his commission from Charles I., not only against the clan Chattan, but also against all other offenders within several adjacent shires; but the commission was afterwards annulled by his majesty, not so much on account of the abuses and injustice which might have been perpetrated under it, but because, as Sir Robert Gordon observes, "it grieved divers of his majesty's best affected subjects, and chiefly the Marquis of Huntlie, unto whose predecessors onlie the office of livetennendrie in the north of Scotland had been granted by former kings, for these many ages."

There seems reason, however, for supposing that the recall of the commission was hastened by complaints to the king, on the part of the oppressed; for the earl had no sooner obtained its renewal, than he held a court against the burgh of Inverness, John Grant of Glenmoriston, and others who had refused to acknowledge their connexion with the clan Chattan, or to pay him the heavy fines which he had imposed upon them. The town of Inverness endeavoured to get quit of the earl's extortions, on the ground that the inhabitants were innocent of the crimes laid to their charge; but the earl frustrated their application to the Privy Council. The provost, Duncan Forbes,⁶ was then sent to the king, and Grant of Glenmoriston took a journey to London, at the same time, on his own account; but their endeavours proved ineffectual, and they had no alternative but to submit to the earl's exactions.⁷

The quarrel between the laird of Duffus and John Gordon, younger of Embo, which had lain dormant for some time, burst forth again, in the year 1625, and proved nearly fatal to both parties. Gordon had long watched an opportunity to revenge the wrong which he conceived had been done him by the laird

of Duffus and his brother, James, but he could never fall in with either of them, as they remained in Moray, and, when they appeared in Sutherland, they were always accompanied by some friends, so that Gordon was prevented from attacking them. Frequent disappointments in this way only whetted his appetite for revenge; and meeting, when on horseback, one day, between Sidderay and Skibo, with John Sutherland of Clyne, third brother of the laird of Duffus, who was also on horseback, he determined to make the laird of Clyne suffer for the delinquencies of his elder brother. Raising, therefore, a cudgel which he held in his hand, he inflicted several blows upon John Sutherland, who, as soon as he recovered himself from the surprise and confusion into which such an unexpected attack had thrown him, drew his sword. Gordon, in his turn, unsheathed his, and a warm combat ensued, between the parties and two friends who accompanied them. After they had fought a while, Gordon wounded Sutherland in the head and in one of his hands, and otherwise injured him, but he spared his life, although completely in his power.

Duffus immediately cited John Gordon to appear before the Privy Council, to answer for this breach of the peace, and, at the same time, summoned before the council some of the Earl of Sutherland's friends and dependants, for an alleged conspiracy against himself and his friends. Duffus, with his two brothers and Gordon, came to Edinburgh on the day appointed, and, the parties being heard, Gordon was declared guilty of a riot, and was thereupon committed to prison. This result gave great satisfaction to Duffus and his brothers, who now calculated on nothing less than the utter ruin of Gordon; as they had, by means of Sir Donald Mackay, obtained a Strathnaver man, named William Mack-Allen (one of the Siol-Thomais), who had been a servant of Gordon's, to become a witness against him, and to prove every thing that Duffus was pleased to allege against Gordon.

In this state of matters, Sir Robert Gordon returned from London to Edinburgh, where he found Duffus in high spirits, exulting at his success, and young Embo in prison. Sir Robert applied to Duffus, hoping to bring

⁶ Founder of the house of Culloden, and great-grandfather of the celebrated Lord President Forbes.

⁷ Vide the petition of Provost Forbes to the king, "in the name of the inhabitants" of Inverness; printed among the Culloden Papers, No. 5, p. 4.

about a reconciliation by the intervention of friends, but Duffus refused to hear of any arrangement; and the more reasonable the conditions were, which Sir Robert proposed, the more unreasonable and obstinate did he become; his object being to get the lords to award him great sums of money at the expense of Gordon, in satisfaction for the wrong done his brother. Sir Robert, however, finally succeeded, by the assistance of the Earl of Enzie, who was then at Edinburgh, in getting the prosecution against the Earl of Sutherland's friends quashed, in obtaining the liberation of John Gordon, and in getting his fine mitigated to one hundred pounds Scots, payable to the king only; reserving, however, civil action to John Sutherland of Clyne against Gordon, before the Lords of Session.⁸

Sir Donald Mackay, always restless, and desirous of gratifying his enmity at the house of Sutherland, endeavoured to embroil it with the laird of Duffus in the following way. Having formed a resolution to leave the kingdom, Sir Donald applied for, and obtained, a license from the king to raise a regiment in the north, to assist Count Mansfield in his campaign in Germany. He, accordingly, collected, in a few months, about 3,000 men from different parts of Scotland, the greater part of whom he embarked at Cromarty in the month of October 1626; but, on account of bad health, he was obliged to delay his own departure till the following year, when he joined the king of Sweden with his regiment, in consequence of a peace having been concluded between the King of Denmark and the Emperor of Germany.⁹ Among others whom Mackay had engaged to accompany him to Germany, was a person named Angus Roy Gun, against whom, a short time previous to his enlistment, Mac-

kay and his brother, John Mackay of Dirlet, had obtained a commission from the lords of the Privy Council for the purpose of apprehending him and bringing him before the council for some supposed crimes. Mackay could have easily apprehended Angus Roy Gun on different occasions, but having become one of his regiment, he allowed the commission, as far as he was concerned, to remain a dead letter.

Sometime after his enlistment, Angus Roy Gun made a journey into Sutherland, a circumstance which afforded Mackay an opportunity of putting into execution the scheme he had formed, and which showed that he was no mean adept in the arts of cunning and dissimulation. His plan was this:—He wrote, in the first place, private letters to the laird of Duffus, and to his brother, John Sutherland of Clyne, to apprehend Angus Roy Gun under the commission he had obtained; and at the same time, sent the commission itself to the laird of Duffus as his authority for so doing. He next wrote a letter to Alexander Gordon, the Earl of Sutherland's uncle, who, in the absence of his brother, Sir Robert, governed Sutherland, entreating him, as Angus Roy Gun was then in Sutherland, to send him to him to Cromarty, as he was his hired soldier. Ignorant of Mackay's design, and desirous of serving him, Sir Alexander sent two of his men to bring Gun to Sir Alexander; but on their return they were met by John Sutherland of Clyne and a party of sixteen men, who seized Gun; and to prevent a rescue, the laird of Duffus sent his brother, James Sutherland, Alexander Murray, heir-apparent of Aberscoors, and William Neilson, chief of the Sliochd-Iain-Aharaich, with 300 men to protect his brother John. At the same time, as he anticipated an attack from Sir Alexander Gordon, he sent messengers to his supporters in Ross, Strathnaver, Caithness, and other places for assistance.

When Sir Alexander Gordon heard of the assembling of such a body of the Earl of Sutherland's vassals without his knowledge, he made inquiry to ascertain the cause; and

John Gun Rob-son; John Sinclair, bastard son of the earl of Caithness; Francis Sinclair, son of James Sinclair of Murkle; John Innes, son of William Innes of Sanset; John Gun, son of William Gun in Golspie-Kirktown; and George Gun, son of Alexander Gun Rob-son.

⁸ Sir R. Gordon, p. 397, et seq.

⁹ A considerable number of gentlemen, chiefly from Ross, Sutherland, and Caithness, joined Mackay, some of whom rose to high rank in the army of Gustavus Adolphus. Among these were Robert Monroe of Foulis, and his brother, Hector; Thomas Mackenzie, brother of the Earl of Seaforth; John Monroe of Obisdell, and his brother Robert; John Monroe of Assynt, and others of that surname; Hugh Ross of Priesthill; David Ross and Nicolas Ross, sons of Alexander Ross of Invercharron; Hugh Gordon, son of Adam Gordon of Calkour; John Gordon, son of John Gordon of Garty; Adam Gordon and John Gordon, sons of Adam Gordon George-son; Ivo Mackay, William, son of Donald Mackay of Scourie; William Gun, son of

being informed of Gun's capture, he collected 18 men who were near at hand, and hastened with them from Dunrobin towards Clyne. On arriving at the bridge of Broray, he found James Sutherland, with his brother John, and their whole party drawn up in battle array at the east end of the bridge. He, thereupon, sent a person to the Sutherlands to know the cause of such an assemblage, and the reason why they had taken Gun from his servants. As the Sutherlands refused to exhibit their authority, Sir Alexander made demonstrations for passing the bridge, but he was met by a shower of shot and arrows which wounded two of his men. After exchanging shots for some time, Sir Alexander was joined by a considerable body of his countrymen,¹ by whose aid, notwithstanding the resistance he met with, he was enabled to cross the bridge. The Sutherlands were forced to retreat, and as they saw no chance of opposing, with success, the power of the house of Sutherland, they, after some hours' consultation, delivered up Angus Roy Gun to Sir Alexander Sutherland, who sent him immediately to Mackay, then at Cromarty.

As such an example of insubordination among the Earl of Sutherland's vassals might, if overlooked, lead others to follow a similar course, Sir Alexander caused the laird of Duffus and his brother of Clyne, with their accomplices, to be cited to appear at Edinburgh on the 16th of November following, to answer before the Privy Council for their misdemeanours. The laird of Duffus, however, died in the month of October, but the laird of Clyne appeared at Edinburgh at the time appointed, and produced before the Privy Council the letter he had received from Mackay, as his authority for acting as he had done. Sir Alexander Gordon also produced the letter sent to him by Sir Donald, who was thereby convicted of having been the intentional originator of the difference; but as the lords of council thought that the laird of Clyne had exceeded the bounds of his commission, he was imprisoned in the jail of Edinburgh, wherein he was ordered to remain until he should give satisfaction to the other party, and present some of his men who had failed to appear though summoned. By the mediation, however, of James Sutherland, tutor of Duffus, a reconciliation

was effected between Sir Robert and Sir Alexander Gordon, and the laird of Clyne, who was, in consequence, soon thereafter liberated from prison.¹

The year 1628 was marked by the breaking out of an old and deadly feud among the Grants, which had been transmitted from father to son for several generations, in consequence of the murder of John Grant of Ballindalloch, about the middle of the sixteenth century, by John Roy Grant of Carron, the natural son of John Grant of Glenmoriston, at the instigation of the laird of Grant, the chief of the tribe, who had conceived a grudge against his kinsman. Some years before the period first mentioned, James Grant, one of the Carron family, happening to be at a fair in the town of Elgin, observed one of the Grants of the Ballindalloch family eagerly pursuing his (James's) brother, Thomas Grant, whom he knocked down in the street and wounded openly before his eyes. The assailant was in his turn attacked by James Grant, who killed him upon the spot and immediately decamped. Ballindalloch then cited James Grant to stand trial for the slaughter of his kinsman, but, as he did not appear on the day appointed, he was outlawed. The laird of Grant made many attempts to reconcile the parties, but in vain, as Ballindalloch was obstinate and would listen to no proposals. Nothing less than the blood of James Grant would satisfy Ballindalloch.

This resolution on the part of Ballindalloch almost drove James Grant to despair, and seeing his life every moment in jeopardy, and deprived of any hope of effecting a compromise, he put himself at the head of a party of brigands, whom he collected from all parts of the Highlands. These freebooters made no distinction between friends and foes, but attacked all persons of whatever description, and wasted and despoiled their property. James Grant of Dalnebo, one of the family of Ballindalloch, fell a victim to their fury, and many of the kinsmen of that family suffered greatly from the depredations committed by Grant and his associates. The Earl of Murray, under the renewed and extended commission which he had obtained from King Charles, made various

¹ Sir R. Gordon, p. 401, et seq.

attempts to put an end to these lawless proceedings, but to no purpose; the failure of these attempts serving only to harden James Grant and his party, who continued their depredations. As John Grant of Carron, nephew of James Grant, was supposed to maintain and assist his uncle secretly, a suspicion for which there seems to have been no foundation, John Grant of Ballindalloch sought for an opportunity of revenging himself upon Carron, who was a promising young man. Carron having one day left his house, along with one Alexander Grant and seven or eight other persons, to cut down some timber in the woods of Abernethy, Ballindalloch thought the occasion favourable for putting his design into execution. Having collected and armed sixteen of his friends, he went to the forest where Carron was, and under the pretence of searching for James Grant and some of his associates, against whom he had a commission, attacked Carron, who fought manfully in defence of his life, but being overpowered, was killed by Ballindalloch. Before Carron fell, however, he and Alexander Grant had slain several of Ballindalloch's friends, among whom were Thomas Grant of Davey, and Lauchlan Macintosh of Rockinoyr. Alexander Grant afterwards annoyed Ballindalloch, killing several of his men, and assisted James Grant to lay waste Ballindalloch's lands. "Give me leave heir," says Sir R. Gordon, "to remark the providence and secret judgement of the Almighty God, who now hath mett Carron with the same measure that his forefather, John Roy Grant of Carron, did serve the ancestor of Ballendallogh; for upon the same day of the month that John Roy Grant did kill the great grandfather of Ballendallogh (being the eleventh day of September), the verie same day of this month wes Carron slain by this John Grant of Ballendallogh many yeirs thereafter. And, besides, as that John Roy Grant of Carron was left-handed, so is this John Grant of Ballendallogh left-handed also; and moreover, it is to be observed that Ballendallogh, at the killing of this Carron, had upon him the same coat-of-armor, or maillic-coat, which John Roy Grant had upon him at the slaughter of the great-grandfather of this Ballendallogh, which maillic-coat Ballendallogh had, a little before this tyme, taken

from James Graut, in a skirmish that passed betwixt them. Thus wee doe sie that the judgements of God are inscrutable, and that, in his own tyme, he punisheth blood by blood."²

The Earl of Murray, when he heard of this occurrence, instead of taking measures against Ballindalloch for his outrage against the laws, which he was fully entitled to do by virtue of the commission he held, took part with Ballindalloch against the friends of Carron. He not only represented Ballindalloch's case favourably at court, but also obtained an indemnity for him for some years, that he might not be molested. The countenance thus given by his majesty's lieutenant to the murderer of their kinsmen, exasperated James and Alexander Grant in the highest degree against Ballindalloch and his supporters, whom they continually annoyed with their incursions, laying waste their lands and possessions, and cutting off their people. To such an extent was this system of lawless warfare carried, that Ballindalloch was forced to flee from the north of Scotland, and live for the most part in Edinburgh, to avoid the dangers with which he was surrounded. But James Grant's desperate career was checked by a party of the clan Chattan, who unexpectedly attacked him at Auchnachyle, in Strathdoun, under cloud of night, in the latter end of December, 1630, when he was taken prisoner after receiving eleven wounds, and after four of his party were killed. He was sent by his captors to Edinburgh for trial before the lords of the council, and was imprisoned in the castle of Edinburgh, from which he escaped in the manner to be afterwards noticed.

About the time that James Grant was desolating the district of the Highlands, to which his operations were confined, another part of the country was convulsed by a dispute, ending tragically, which occurred between James Crichton of Frenoret, or Frenedraught, and William Gordon of Rothiemay, whose lands lay adjacent to each other. Part of Gordon's lands which marched with those of Crichton were purchased by the latter; but a dispute having occurred about the right to the salmon fishings belonging to these lands, an irrecon-

² *History*, p. 416.

cilable difference arose between them, which no mediation of friends could reconcile, although the matter in dispute was of little moment. The parties having had recourse to the law to settle their respective claims, Crichton prevailed, and succeeded in getting Gordon denounced rebel. He had previously treated Rothiemay very harshly, who, stung by the severity of his opponent, and by the victory he had obtained over him, would listen to no proposals of peace, nor follow the advice of his best friends. Determined to set the law at defiance, he collected a number of loose and disorderly characters, and annoyed Frendraught, who, in consequence, applied for and obtained a commission from the Privy Council for apprehending Rothiemay and his associates. In the execution of this task he was assisted by Sir George Ogilvy of Banff, George Gordon, brother-german of Sir James Gordon of Lesmoir, and the uncle of Frendraught, James Leslie, second son of Leslie of Pitcaple, John Meldrum of Reidhill, and others. Accompanied by these gentlemen, Crichton left his house of Frendraught on the 1st of January, 1630, for the house of Rothiemay, with a resolution either to apprehend Gordon, his antagonist, or to set him at defiance by affronting him. He was incited the more to follow this course, as young Rothiemay, at the head of a party, had come a short time before to the very doors of Frendraught, and had braved him to his face. When Rothiemay heard of the advance of Frendraught, he left his house, accompanied by his eldest son, John Gordon, and about eight men on horseback armed with guns and lances, and a party of men on foot with muskets, and crossing the river Deveron, went forward to meet Frendraught and his party. A sharp conflict immediately took place, in which Rothiemay's horse was killed under him; but he fought manfully for some time on foot, until the whole of his party, with the exception of his son, were forced to retire. The son, notwithstanding, continued to support his father against fearful odds, but was at last obliged to save himself by flight, leaving his father lying on the field covered with wounds, and supposed to be dead. He, however, was found still alive after the conflict was over, and being carried home to his house, died within

three days thereafter. George Gordon, brother of Gordon of Lesmoir, received a shot in the thigh, and died in consequence ten days after the skirmish. These were the only deaths which occurred, although several of the combatants on both sides were wounded. John Meldrum, who fought on Frendraught's side, was the only person severely wounded.

The Marquis of Huntly was highly displeased at Frendraught for having, in such a trifling matter, proceeded to extremities against his kinsman, a chief baron of his surname, whose life had been thus sacrificed in a petty quarrel. The displeasure of the marquis was still farther heightened, when he was informed that Frendraught had joined the Earl of Murray, and had claimed his protection and assistance; but the marquis was obliged to repress his indignation. John Gordon of Rothiemay, eldest son of the deceased laird, resolved to avenge the death of his father, and having collected a party of men, he associated himself with James Grant and other freebooters, for the purpose of laying waste Frendraught's lands, and oppressing him in every possible way. Frendraught, who was in the south of Scotland when this combination against him was formed, no sooner heard of it than he posted to England, and, having laid a statement of the case before the king, his majesty remitted the matter to the Privy Council of Scotland, desiring them to use their best endeavours for settling the peace of the northern parts of the kingdom. A commission was thereupon granted by the lords of the council to Frendraught and others, for the purpose of apprehending John Gordon and his associates; but, as the commissioners were not able to execute the task imposed upon them, the lords of the council sent Sir Robert Gordon, tutor of Sutherland, who had just returned from England, and Sir William Seaton of Killesmuir, to the north, with a new commission against the rebels. As it seemed to be entirely out of the power of the Earl of Murray to quell the disturbances in the north, the two commissioners received particular instructions to attempt, with the aid of the Marquis of Huntly, to get matters settled amicably, and the opposing parties reconciled. The lords of the council, at the same time, wrote a letter to the Marquis of Huntly to the same effect.

Sir Robert Gordon and Sir William Seaton accordingly left Edinburgh, on their way north, in the beginning of May, 1630. The latter stopped at Aberdeen for the purpose of consulting with some gentlemen of that county, as to the best mode of proceeding against the rebels; and the former went to Strathbogie to advise with the Marquis of Huntly.

On Sir Robert's arrival at Strathbogie, he found that the marquis had gone to Aberdeen to attend the funeral of the laird of Drum. By a singular coincidence, James Grant and Alexander Grant descended the very day of Sir Robert's arrival from the mountains, at the head of a party of 200 Highlanders, well armed, with a resolution to burn and lay waste Frendraught's lands. As soon as Sir Robert became aware of this circumstance, he went in great haste to Rothiemay house, where he found John Gordon and his associates in arms, ready to set out to join the Grants. By persuasion and entreaties Sir Robert, assisted by his nephew the Earl of Sutherland, and his brother, Sir Alexander Gordon, who were then at Frendraught on a visit to the lady of that place, who was a sister of the earl, prevailed not only upon John Gordon and his friends to desist, but also upon James Grant and his companions-in-arms, to disperse.

On the return of the Marquis of Huntly to Strathbogie, Rothiemay and Frendraught were both induced to meet them in presence of the marquis, Sir Robert Gordon, and Sir William Seaton, who, after much entreaty, prevailed upon them to reconcile their differences, and submit all matters in dispute to their arbitration. A decree-arbital was accordingly pronounced, by which the arbiters adjudged that the laird of Rothiemay and the children of George Gordon should mutually remit their father's slaughter, and, in satisfaction thereof, they decreed that the laird of Frendraught should pay a certain sum of money to the laird of Rothiemay, for relief of the debts which he had contracted during the disturbances between the two families,³ and that he should pay some money to the children of George Gordon.

³ Spalding says that Frendraught was "orlained to pay to the lady, relict of Rothiemay, and the bairns, fiftie thousand merks, in composition of the slaughter." P. 14.

Frendraught fulfilled these conditions most willingly, and the parties shook hands-together in the orchard of Strathbogie, in token of a hearty and sincere reconciliation.⁴

The laird of Frendraught had scarcely been reconciled to Rothiemay, when he got into another dispute with the laird of Pitcaple, the occasion of which was as follows:—John Meldrum of Reidhill had assisted Frendraught in his quarrel with old Rothiemay, and had received a wound in the skirmish in which the latter lost his life, for which injury Frendraught had allowed him some compensation; but, conceiving that his services had not been fairly requited, he began to abuse Frendraught, and threatened to compel him to give him a greater recompense than he had yet received. As Frendraught refused to comply with his demands, Meldrum entered the park of Frendraught privately in the night-time, and carried away two horses belonging to his pretended debtor. Frendraught thereupon prosecuted Meldrum for theft, but he declined to appear in court, and was consequently declared rebel. Frendraught then obtained a commission from the Privy Council to apprehend Meldrum, who took refuge with John Leslie of Pitcaple, whose sister he had married. Under the commission which he had procured, Frendraught went in quest of Meldrum, on the 27th of September, 1630. He proceeded to Pitcaple's lands, on which he knew Meldrum then lived, where he met James Leslie, second son of the laird of Pitcaple, who had been with him at the skirmish of Rothiemay. Leslie then began to expostulate with him in behalf of Meldrum, his brother-in-law, who, on account of the aid he had given him in his dispute with Rothiemay, took Leslie's remonstrances in good part; but Robert Crichton of Conland,⁵ a kinsman of Frendraught, grew so warm at Leslie's freedom that from high words they proceeded to blows. Conland, then, drawing a pistol from his belt, wounded Leslie in the arm, who was thereupon carried home, apparently in a dying state.

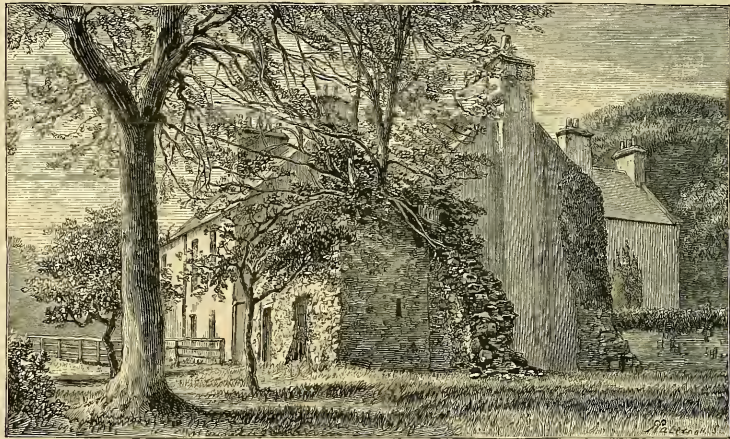
This affair was the signal for a confederacy among the Leslies, the greater part of whom

⁴ Sir R. Gordon, p. 416, *et seq.* Spalding, p. 14.

⁵ Sir R. Gordon (p. 419) spells this *Couland* and *Cowlland*.

took up arms against Fren draught, who, a few days after the occurrence, viz., on the 5th of October, first went to the Marquis of Huntly, and afterwards to the Earl of Murray, to express the regret he felt at what had taken place, and to beg their kindly interference to bring matters to an amicable accommodation. The Earl of Murray, for some reason or other, declined to interfere; but the marquis undertook to mediate between the parties. Accordingly, he sent for the laird of Pitcahle to come to the Bog of Gight to confer with him; but, before setting out, he mounted and equipped about 30 horsemen, in consequence of information he had received that Fren draught was at the Bog.

At the meeting with the marquis, Pitcahle complained heavily of the injury his son had sustained, and avowed, rather rashly, that he would revenge himself before he returned home, and that, at all events, he would listen to no proposals for a reconciliation till it should be ascertained whether his son would survive the wound he had received. The marquis insisted that Fren draught had done him no wrong, and endeavoured to dissuade him from putting his threat into execution; but Pitcahle was so displeased at the marquis for thus expressing himself, that he suddenly mounted his horse and set off, leaving Fren draught behind him. The marquis, afraid of the consequences, de-



Fren draught House, with the ruins of the old Castle in front.—From a photograph taken for this work.

tained Fren draught two days with him in the Bog of Gight, and, hearing that the Leslies had assembled, and lay in wait for Fren draught watching his return home, the marquis sent his son, John, Viscount of Aboyne, and the laird of Rothiemay along with him, to protect and defend him if necessary. They arrived at Fren draught without interruption, and being solicited to remain all night, they yielded, and, after partaking of a hearty supper, went to bed in the apartments provided for them.

The sleeping apartment of the viscount was in the old tower of Fren draught, leading off from the hall. Immediately below this apartment was a vault, in the bottom of which was a round hole of considerable depth. Robert

Gordon, a servant of the viscount, and his page, English Will, as he was called, also slept in the same chamber. The laird of Rothiemay, with some servants, were put into an upper chamber immediately above that in which the viscount slept; and in another apartment, directly over the latter, were laid George Chalmer of Noth, Captain Rollock, one of Fren draught's party, and George Gordon, another of the viscount's servants. About midnight the whole of the tower almost instantaneously took fire, and so suddenly and furiously did the flames consume the edifice, that the viscount, the laird of Rothiemay, English Will, Colonel Ivat, one of Aboyne's friends, and two other persons, perished in

the flames. Robert Gordon, called Sutherland Gordon, from having been born in that county, who lay in the viscount's chamber, escaped from the flames, as did George Chalmer and Captain Rollock, who were in the third floor; and it is said that Lord Aboyne might have saved himself also, had he not, instead of going out of doors, which he refused to do, run suddenly up stairs to Rothiemay's chamber for the purpose of awakening him. While so engaged, the stair-case and ceiling of Rothiemay's apartment hastily took fire, and, being prevented from descending by the flames, which filled the stair-case, they ran from window to window of the apartment piteously and unavailingly exclaiming for help.

The news of this calamitous event spread speedily throughout the kingdom, and the fate of the unfortunate sufferers was deeply deplored. Many conjectures were formed as to the cause of the conflagration. Some persons laid the blame on Frendraught without the least reason; for, besides the improbability of the thing, Frendraught himself was a considerable loser, having lost not only a large quantity of silver plate and coin, but also the title deeds of his property and other necessary papers, which were all consumed. The greater number, however, suspected the Leslies and their adherents, who were then so enraged at Frendraught that they threatened to burn the house of Frendraught, and had even entered into a negotiation to that effect with James Grant the rebel, who was Piteaple's cousin-german, for his assistance.⁶

The Marquis of Huntly, who suspected Frendraught to be the author of the fire, afterwards went to Edinburgh and laid a statement of the case before the Privy Council, who, thereupon, issued a commission to the bishops of Aberdeen and Moray, Lord Ogilvie, Lord Carnegie, and Colonel Bruce, to investigate the circumstances which led to the catastrophe. The commissioners accordingly went to Frendraught on April 13th, 1631, where they were met by Lords Gordon, Ogilvie, and Deskford, and several barons and gentlemen, along with whom they examined the burnt tower and vaults below, with the adjoining premises, to

ascertain, if possible, how the fire had originated. After a minute inspection, they came to the deliberate opinion, which they communicated in writing to the council, that the fire could not have been accidental, and that it must have been occasioned either by some means from without, or raised intentionally within the vaults or chambers of the tower.⁷

The matter, however, was not allowed to rest here, but underwent thorough investigation by the Privy Council in Edinburgh, the result being that John Meldrum, above mentioned, was brought to trial and condemned to death by the Justiciary Court, in August, 1633, as having been the perpetrator of the fiendish deed. We give below an extract from the "dittay" or indictment against Meldrum, showing the manner in which it was thought he accomplished his devilish task.⁸ The catastrophe roused such intense and widespread excitement among all classes of people at the time, that the grief and horror which was felt found an outlet in verse.⁹

⁷ Spalding, p. 24.

⁸ "Johnne Meldrum haifing convocat to himself certane brokin men, all fugitives and rebellis, his complices and associattis, upone the acht day of October, the yair of God jai vie and threttie yeiris under silence and clud of nicht, betwix tweltt hours at nycht and twa etfir myltycht, come to the place of Frendraucht, and supponing and certainly perswading himself that the said James Creichtoun of Frendraucht wes lying within the touer of Frendraucht, quihilk was the only strenth and strongest part of the said place, the said Johnne Meldrum, with his saidis complices, in maist tresonabill and feirfull maner, haifing brocht with thame ane hudge quantitie of powder, pik, brumstone, flax, and uther combustabill matter provydit be thame for the purpos, pat and convoyit the samyn in and throw the slittis and stoness of the vult of the said grit touer of Frendraucht, weil knawin and foirseine be the said Johnne Meldrum, quha with his complices at that instant tyme fyret the samyn pik, powder, brumstone, flax, and uther combustable matter above writtin, at dyverse places of the said vult; quihilk being sua fyret and kindlet, did violentlie flie to ane hoill in the heid of the said vult and tak vent thairat, the whilk hoill of the said vult and vent thairof being perflytte knawin to the said John Meldrum, be rasonne he had remained in houshold with the said laird of Frendraucht, as his doueifull servand, within the said hous and place of Frendraucht for ane lang tyme of befor, and knew and was previe to all the secretis of the said house. And the said vult being sua fyret, the hailt touer and houssis quhairof immediatly thairefir, being four hous hight, in les space than ane hour tuik fyre in the deid hour of the night, and was in maist tresonabill, horrible, and lamentable maner brunt, blavin up, and consumet."—Spalding's *Memorials*, Appendix, vol. i. p. 390.

⁹ Sir R. Gordon, p. 241.—Spalding, p. 13, et seq.

⁹ A ballad is still sung in the district around Frendraught, which, says Motherwell, "has a high

During James Grant's confinement within the castle of Edinburgh, the north was comparatively quiet. On the night of the 15th October, 1632, he, however, effected his escape from the castle by descending on the west side by means of ropes furnished to him by his wife or son, and fled to Ireland. Proclamations were immediately posted throughout the whole kingdom, offering large sums for his apprehension, either dead or alive, but to no

degree of poetic merit, and probably was written at the time by an eye-witness of the event which it records." We give a few verses from the version in Motherwell's *Minstrelsy*, as quoted in the Appendix to Spalding, vol. i. p. 409.

"The eighteenth of October,
A dismal tale to hear,
How good Lord John and Rothiemay
Was both burnt in the fire.

They had not long cast off their cloaths,
And were hut now asleep—
When the weary smoke began to rise,
Likewise the scorching heat.

'O waken, waken, Rothiemay,
O waken, hrother dear,
And turn you to our Saviour,
There is strong treason here.'

He did him to the wire-window
As fast as he could gang—
Says—'Wae to the hands put in the stancheons,
For our we'll never win.'

Cried—'Mercy, mercy, Lady Frendraught,
Will ye not sink with sin?
For first your husband killed my father,
And now you burn his son.'

O then out spoke her, Lady Frendraught,
And loudly did she cry—
'It were great pity for good Lord John,
But none for Rothiemay,
But the keys are casten in the deep draw well,
Ye cannot get away.'

While he stood in this dreadful plight,
Most piteous to be seen,
There called out his servant Gordon,
As he had frantic been.

'O loup, O loup, my dear master,
O loup and come to me;
I'll catch you in my arms two,
One foot I will not see.'

'But I cannot loup, I cannot come,
I cannot win to thee;
My head's fast in the wire-window,
My feet burning from me.'

'Take here the rings from my white fingers,
That are so long and small,
And give them to my Lady fair,
Where she sits in her hall.'

'So I cannot loup, I cannot come,
I cannot loup to thee—
My earthly part is all consumed,
My spirit but speaks to thee.'

Wringing her hands, tearing her hair,
His Lady she was seen,
And thus addressed his servant Gordon,
Where he stood on the green.

purpose. His wife was taken into custody by order of the Marquis of Huntly, but after undergoing an examination, in which she admitted nothing which could in the least degree criminate her, she was set at liberty.⁹

James Grant did not remain long in Ireland, but returned again to the north, where he concealed himself for some time, only occasionally skulking here and there in such a private manner, that his enemies were not aware of his presence. By degrees he grew bolder, and at last appeared openly in Strathdown and on Speyside. His wife, who was far advanced in pregnancy, had taken a small house in Carron, belonging to the heirs of her husband's nephew, in which she meant to reside till her accouchement, and in which she was occasionally visited by her husband. Ballindalloch hearing of this, hired a person named Patrick Macgregor, an outlaw, to apprehend James Grant. This employment was considered by Macgregor and his party a piece of acceptable service, as they expected, in the event of Grant's apprehension, to obtain pardon for their offences from the lords of the council. Macgregor, therefore, at the head of a party of men, lay in wait for James Grant near Carron, and, on observing him enter his wife's house at night, along with his bastard son and another man, they immediately surrounded the house and attempted to force an entry. Grant perceiving his danger, acted with great coolness and determination. Having fastened the door as firmly as he could, he and his two companions went to two windows, from which they discharged a volley of arrows upon their assailants, who all shrunk back, and none would venture near the door except Macgregor himself, who came boldly forward and endeavoured to force it; but he paid dearly for his rashness, for Grant, imme-

'O wae he to you, George Gordon,
An ill death may you die,
So safe and sound as you stand there,
And my Lord hereaved from me.'

'I hade him loup, I hade him come,
I hade him loup to me,
I'd catch him in my arms two,
A foot I should not see.'

And aft she cried, 'Oho! alas, alas,
A sair heart's ill to win;
I wan a sair heart when I married him,
And the day it's well return'd again.'"

⁹ Spalding, vol. i. p. 29.

diately laying hold of a musket, shot him through both his thighs, when he instantly fell to the ground, and soon after expired. In the confusion which this occurrence occasioned among Maegregor's party, Grant and his two associates escaped.

Shortly after this event, on the night of Sunday, December 7th, 1634, James Grant apprehended his cousin, John Grant of Ballindalloch, by stratagem. After remaining a few days at Culquholy, Ballindalloch was blindfolded and taken to Thomas Grant's house at Dandais, about three miles from Elgin, on the high road between that town and the Spey. James Grant ordered him to be watched strictly, whether sleeping or waking, by two strong men on each side of him. Ballindalloch complained of foul play, but James Grant excused himself for acting as he had done for two reasons; 1st, Because Ballindalloch had failed to perform a promise he had made to obtain a remission for him before the preceding Lamas; and, 2dly, That he had entered into a treaty with the clan Gregor to deprive him of his life.

Ballindalloch was kept in durance vile for twenty days in a kiln near Thomas Grant's house, suffering the greatest privations, without fire, light, or bed-clothes, in the dead of winter, and without knowing where he was. He was closely watched night and day by Leonard Leslie, son-in-law of Robert Grant, brother of James Grant, and a strong athletic man, named M'Grimmon, who would not allow him to leave the kiln for a moment even to perform the necessities of nature. On Christmas, James Grant and his party having gone on some excursion, leaving Leslie and M'Grimmon behind them, Ballindalloch, worn out by fatigue, and almost perishing from cold and hunger, addressed Leslie in a low tone of voice, lamenting his miserable situation, and imploring him to aid him in effecting his escape, and promising, in the event of success, to reward him handsomely. Leslie, tempted by the offer, acceded to Ballindalloch's request, and made him acquainted with the place of his confinement. It was then arranged that Ballindalloch, under the pretence of stretching his arms, should disengage the arm which Leslie held, and that, having so disentangled that arm, he

should, by another attempt, get his other arm out of M'Grimmon's grasp. The morning of Sunday, the 28th of December, was fixed upon for putting the stratagem into execution. The plan succeeded, and as soon as Ballindalloch found his arms at liberty, he suddenly sprang to his feet and made for the door of the kiln. Leslie immediately followed him, pretending to catch him, and as M'Grimmon was hard upon his heels, Leslie purposely stumbled in his way and brought M'Grimmon down to the ground. This stratagem enabled Ballindalloch to get a-head of his pursuers, and although M'Grimmon sounded the alarm, and the pursuit was continued by Robert Grant and a party of James Grant's followers, Ballindalloch succeeded in reaching the village of Urquhart in safety, accompanied by Leonard Leslie.

Sometime after his escape, Ballindalloch applied for and obtained a warrant for the apprehension of Thomas Grant, and others, for harbouring James Grant. Thomas Grant, and some of his accomplices, were accordingly seized and sent to Edinburgh, where they were tried and convicted. Grant was hanged, and others were banished from Scotland for life.

After Ballindalloch's escape, James Grant kept remarkably quiet, as many persons lay in wait for him; but hearing that Thomas Grant, brother of Patrick Grant of Colquhoche, and a friend of Ballindalloch, had received a sum of money from the Earl of Moray, as an encouragement to seek out and slay James Grant, the latter resolved to murder Thomas Grant, and thus relieve himself of one enemy at least. He therefore went to Thomas's house, but not finding him at home, he killed sixteen of his cattle; and afterwards learning that Thomas Grant was sleeping at the house of a friend hard by, he entered that house and found Thomas Grant and a bastard brother of his, both in bed. Having forced them out of bed, he took them outside of the house and put them immediately to death. A few days after the commission of this crime, Grant and four of his associates went to the lands of Strathbogie, and entered the house of the common executioner, craving some food, without being aware of the profession of the host whose hospitality they solicited. The executioner, disliking the appearance of Grant and his

companions, went to James Gordon, the baillie of Strathbogie, and informed him that there were some suspicious looking persons in his house. Judging that these could be none other but Grant and his comrades, Gordon immediately collected some well-armed horsemen and foot, and surrounded the house in which Grant was; but he successfully resisted all their attempts to enter the house, and killed two servants of the Marquis of Huntly. After keeping them at bay for a considerable time, Grant and his brother, Robert, effected their escape from the house, but a bastard son of James Grant, John Forbes, an intimate associate, and another person, were taken prisoners, and carried to Edinburgh, where they were executed, along with a notorious thief, named Gille-Roy-Mac-Gregor. This occurrence took place in the year 1636. The laird of Grant had, during the previous year, been ordered by the council to apprehend James Grant, or to make him leave the kingdom; and they had obliged him to find caution and surety, in terms of the general bond¹ appointed by law to be taken from all the heads of clans, and from all governors of provinces in the kingdom, but chiefly in the west and north of Scotland; but the laird could neither perform the one nor the other.²

By the judicious management of the affairs of the house of Sutherland by Sir Robert Gordon, his nephew, the earl, on reaching his

majority in 1630 and entering upon the management of his own affairs, found the hostility of the enemy of his family either neutralised or rendered no longer dangerous; but, in the year 1633 he found himself involved in a quarrel with Lord Lorn, eldest son of the Earl of Argyle, who had managed the affairs of his family during his father's banishment from Scotland. This dispute arose out of the following circumstances.

In consequence of a quarrel between Lord Berridale, who now acted as sole administrator of his father's estates, and William Mac-Iver, chieftain of the Siol-Mhic-Imheair, in Caithness, the former removed the latter from the lands and possessions he held of him in Caithness. Mac-Iver thereupon retired into Argyle, and assuming the surname of Campbell, as being originally an Argyle man, sought the favour and protection of Lord Lorn. The latter endeavoured, by writing to the Earl of Sutherland, Berridale himself, and others, to bring about a reconciliation between Mac-Iver and Berridale, but to no purpose. Seeing no hopes of an accommodation, Mac-Iver collected a party of rebels and outlaws, to the number of about 20, and made an incursion into Caithness, where, during the space of four or five years, he did great injury, carrying off considerable spoil, which he conveyed through the heights of Strathnaver and Sutherland.

To put an end to Mac-Iver's depredations, Lord Berridale at first brought a legal prosecution against him, and having got him denounced rebel, sent out parties of his countrymen to ensnare him; but he escaped for a long time, and always retired in safety with his booty, either into the isles or into Argyle. Lord Lorn, however, publicly disowned Mac-Iver's proceedings. In his incursions, Mac-Iver was powerfully assisted by an islander of the name of Gille-Calum-Mac-Shomhairle, who had married his daughter, and who was well acquainted with all the passes leading into Caithness.

At last Mac-Iver and his son were apprehended by Lord Berridale, and hanged, and the race of the Siol-Mhic-Imheair was almost extinguished; but Gille-Calum-Mac-Shomhairle having associated with himself several of the men of the Isles and Argyle, and some out-

¹ The "Common Band" or "General Band," was the name given in popular speech to an Act of the Scottish Parliament of the year 1537, which was passed with the view of maintaining good order, both on the Borders and in the Highlands and Isles. The plan on which this Act chiefly proceeded was, "To make it imperative on all landlords, bailies, and chiefs of clans, to find sureties to a large amount, proportioned to their wealth and the number of their vassals or clansmen, for the peaceable and orderly behaviour of those under them. It was provided, that, if a superior, after having found the required sureties, should fail to make immediate reparation of any injuries committed by persons for whom he was bound to answer, the injured party might proceed at law against the sureties for the amount of the damage sustained. Besides being compelled, in such cases, to reimburse his sureties, the superior was to incur a heavy fine to the Crown. This important statute likewise contained many useful provisions for facilitating the administration of justice in these rude districts."—Spalding's *Memorials*, vol. i. p. 3, (note). Gregory's *Western Highlands*, p. 237.

² *Continuation of the History of the Earls of Sutherland*, by Gilbert Gordon of Sallagh, annexed to Sir R. Gordon's work, p. 460. Spalding, p. 63.

laws of the clan Mhic-Iain-Dhuinn, who were dependants of Lord Lorn, continued his incursions into Caithness. Having divided his company into two parties, one of which, headed by Gille-Calum himself, went to the higher parts of Ross and Sutherland, there to remain till joined by their companions. The other party went through the lowlands of Ross, under the pretence of going to the Lammas fair, then held at Tain, and thence proceeded to Sutherland to meet the rest of their associates, under the pretence of visiting certain kinsmen they said they had in Strathully and Strathnaver. This last-mentioned body consisted of 16 or 20 persons, most of whom were of the clan Mhic-Iain-Dhuinn. They were under the command of one Ewen Aird; and as they passed the town of Tain, on their way to Sutherland, they stole some horses, which they sold in Sutherland, without being in the least suspected of the theft.

The owners of the stolen horses soon came into Sutherland in quest of them, and claimed them from the persons to whom they had been sold. The Earl of Sutherland, on proof being given of the property, restored the horses to the true owners, and sent some men in quest of Ewen Aird, who was still in Strathully. Ewen was apprehended and brought to Dunrobin. The Earl of Sutherland ordained him to repay the monies which Ewen and his companions had received for the horses, the only punishment he said he would inflict on them, because they were strangers. Ewen assented to the earl's request, and remained as a hostage at Dunrobin until his companions should send money to relieve him; but as soon as his associates heard of his detention, they, instead of sending money for his release, fled to Gille-Calum-Mac-Shomhairle and his party, leaving their captain a prisoner at Dunrobin. In their retreat they destroyed some houses in the high parts of Sutherland, and on entering Ross they laid waste some lands belonging to Hutcheon Ross of Auchincloigh. These outrages occasioned an immediate assemblage of the inhabitants of that part of the country, who pursued the marauders and took them prisoners. On the prisoners being sent to the Earl of Sutherland, he assembled the principal gentlemen of Ross and Sutherland at Dornoch,

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where Ewen Aird and his accomplices were tried before a jury, convicted, and executed at Dornoch, with the exception of two young boys, who were dismissed.

The Privy Council not only approved of what the Earl of Sutherland had done, but also sent a commission to him, the Earl of Seaforth, Hutcheon Ross, and some other gentlemen in Ross and Sutherland, against the clan Mhic-Iain-Dhuinn, in case they should again make any incursion into Ross and Sutherland.

Lord Lorn being at this time justiciary of the Isles, had obtained an act of the Privy Council in his favour, by which it was decreed that any malefactor, being an islander, upon being apprehended in any part of the kingdom, should be sent to Lord Lorn, or to his deputies, to be judged; and that to this effect he should have deputies in every part of the kingdom. As soon as his lordship heard of the trial and execution of the men at Dornoch, who were of the clan Mhic-Iain-Dhuinn, his dependants and followers, he took the matter highly amiss, and repaired to Edinburgh, where he made a complaint to the lords of the council against the Earl of Sutherland, for having, as he maintained, apprehended the king's free subjects without a commission, and for causing them to be executed, although they had not been apprehended within his own jurisdiction. The lords of the council having heard this complaint, Lord Lorn obtained letters to charge the Earl of Sutherland and Hutcheon Ross to answer to the complaint at Edinburgh before the lords of the Privy Council, and, moreover, obtained a suspension of the earl's commission against the clan Mhic-Iain-Dhuinn, on becoming bound, in the meantime, as surety for their obedience to the laws.

Sir Robert Gordon happening to arrive at Edinburgh from England, shortly after Lord Lorn's visit to Edinburgh, in the year 1634, learned the object of his mission, and the success which had attended it. He, therefore, being an eye-witness of every thing which had taken place at Dornoch respecting the trial, condemnation, and execution of Lord Lorn's dependants, informed the lords of the council of all the proceedings, which proceeding on his part had the effect of preventing Lord Lorn

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from going on with his prosecution against the Earl of Sutherland. He, however, proceeded to summon Hutcheon Ross; but the earl, Sir Robert Gordon, Lord Reay, and all the gentlemen who were present at the trial at Dornoch, signed and sent a letter to the lords of the council, giving a detail of the whole circumstances of the case, and along with this letter he sent a copy of the proceedings, attested by the sheriff clerk of Sutherland, to be laid before the council on the day appointed for Ross's appearance. After the matter had been fully debated in council, the conduct of the Earl of Sutherland and Hutcheon Ross was approved of, and the commission to the earl of Sutherland again renewed, and Lord Lorn was taken bound, that, in time coming, the counties of Sutherland and Ross should be kept harmless from the clan Mhic-Iain-Dhuinn. The council, moreover, decided, that, as the Earl of Sutherland had the rights of regality and sheriffship within himself, and as he was appointed to administer justice within his own bounds, therefore he was not obliged to send criminals, though islanders, to Lord Lorn or to his deputies. This decision had the effect of relieving Sutherland and Ross from farther incursions on the part of Lord Lorn's followers.³

The disaster at Fren draught had made an impression upon the mind of the Marquis of Huntly, which nothing could efface, and he could never be persuaded that the fire had not originated with the proprietor of the mansion himself. He made many unsuccessful attempts to discover the incendiaries, and on the arrival of King Charles at Edinburgh, in the year 1633, the marquis made preparations for paying a personal visit to the king, for the purpose of imploring him to order an investigation into all the circumstances attending the fire, so as to lead to a discovery of the criminals. Falling sick, however, on his journey, and unable to proceed to Edinburgh, he sent forward his marchioness, who was accompanied by Lady Aboyne and other females of rank, all clothed in deep mourning, to lay a statement of the case before his majesty, and to solicit the royal interference. The king received the marchioness and her attendants most gra-

ciously, comforted them as far as words could, and promised to see justice done.

After the king's departure from Scotland, the marchioness and Lady Aboyne, both of whom still remained in Edinburgh, determining to see his majesty's promise implemented, prevailed upon the Privy Council to bring John Meldrum of Reidhill to trial, the result being as recorded above. A domestic servant of Fren draught named Tosh, who was suspected of having been concerned in the fire, was afterwards put to the torture, for the purpose of extorting a confession of guilt from him; but he confessed nothing, and was therefore liberated from prison.

The condemnation and execution of Meldrum, in place of abating, appear to have increased the odium of Fren draught's enemies. The Highlanders of his neighbourhood, as well as the Gordons, considering his property to be fair game, made frequent incursions upon his lands, and carried off cattle and goods. In 1633 and 1634 Adam Gordon of Strathdown, with a few of his friends and some outlaws, made incursions upon Fren draught's lands, wasted them, and endeavoured to carry off a quantity of goods and cattle. Fren draught, however, heading some of his tenants, pursued them, secured the booty, and captured some of the party, whom he hanged.

On another occasion, about 600 Highlanders, belonging to the clan Gregor, clan Cameron, and other tribes, appeared near Fren draught, and openly declared that they had come to join Adam Gordon of Park, John Gordon of Invermarkie, and the other friends of the late Gordon of Rothiemay, for the purpose of revenging his death. When Fren draught heard of the irruption of this body, he immediately collected about 200 foot, and 140 horsemen, and went in quest of these intruders; but being scattered through the country, they could make no resistance, and every man provided for his own safety by flight.

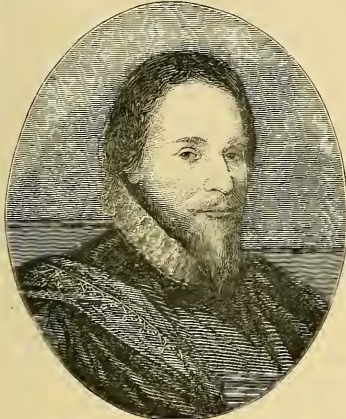
To put an end to these annoyances, Fren draught got these marauders declared outlaws, and the lords of the Privy Council wrote to the Marquis of Huntly, desiring him to repress the disorders of those of his surname, and falling his doing so, that they would consider him the author of them. The marquis returned

³ Gordon of Sallagh's *Continuation*, p. 464, et seq.

an answer to this communication, stating, that as the aggressors were neither his tenants nor servants, he could in no shape be answerable for them,—that he had neither countenanced nor incited them, and that he had no warrant to pursue or prosecute them.

The refusal of the marquis to obey the orders of the Privy Council, emboldened the denounced party to renew their acts of spoliation and robbery. They no longer confined

their depredations to Frendraught and his tenants, but extended them to the property of the ministers who lived upon Frendraught's lands. In this course of life, they were joined by some of the young men of the principal families of the Gordons in Strathbogie, to the number of 40 horsemen, and 60 foot, and to encourage them in their designs against Frendraught, the lady of Rothiemay gave them the castle of Rothiemay, which they fortified,



First Marquis and Marchioness of Huntly. Copied by permission of His Grace the Duke of Richmond, from the Originals at Gordon Castle.

and from which they made daily sallies upon Frendraught's possessions; burned his corn, laid waste his lands, and killed some of his people. Frendraught opposed them for some time; but being satisfied that such proceedings taking place almost under the very eyes of the Marquis of Huntly, must necessarily be done with his concurrence he went to Edinburgh, and entered a complaint against the marquis to the Privy Council. During Frendraught's absence, his tenants were expelled by the Gordons from their possessions, without opposition.⁴

When the king heard of these lawless proceedings, and of the refusal of the marquis to interfere, he ordered the lords of the Privy Council to adopt measures for suppressing them; preparatory to which they cited the

marquis, in the beginning of the following year, to appear before them to answer for these oppressions. He accordingly went to Edinburgh in the month of February, 1635, where he was commanded to remain till the matter should be investigated. The heads of the families whose sons had joined the outlaws also appeared, and, after examination, Letterfourie, Park, Tilliangus, Terrisoule, Invermarkie, Tulloch, Ardlogy, and several other persons of the surname of Gordon, were committed to prison, until their sons, who had engaged in the combination against Frendraught, should be presented before the council. The prisoners, who denied being accessory thereto, then petitioned to be set at liberty, a request which was complied with on condition that they should either produce the rebels, as the pillagers were called, or make them leave the kingdom. The marquis, although nothing could be proved against him, was obliged to

⁴ Gordon's *Continuation*, p. 475. Spalding, vol. i. p. 47, *et seq.*

find caution that all persons of the surname of Gordon within his bounds should keep the peace; and that he should be answerable in all time coming for any damage which should befall the laird of Fren draught, or his lands, by whatever violent means; and also that he should present the rebels at Edinburgh, that justice might be satisfied, or make them leave the kingdom.

The Marquis of Huntly, thereupon, returned to the north, and the rebels hearing of the obligation he had come under, immediately dispersed themselves. The greater part of them fled into Flanders, and about twelve of them were apprehended by the marquis, and sent by him to Edinburgh. John Gordon, who lived at Woodhead of Rothiemay, and another, were executed. Of the remaining two, James Gordon, son of George Gordon in Auchterless, and William Ross, son of John Ross of Ballivet, the former was acquitted by the jury, and the latter was imprisoned in the jail of Edinburgh for future trial, having been a ringleader of the party. In apprehending these twelve persons, James Gordon, son of Adam Gordon of Strathdoun, was killed, and to show the Privy Council how diligent the marquis had been in fulfilling his obligation, his head was sent to Edinburgh along with the prisoners.

The activity with which the marquis pursued the oppressors of Fren draught, brought him afterwards into some trouble. Adam Gordon, one of the principal ringleaders of the confederacy, and second son of Sir Adam Gordon of the Park, thinking it "hard to be banished out of his native country, resolute to cum home" and throw himself on the king's mercy. For this purpose he made a private communication to the Archbishop of St. Andrews, then chancellor of Scotland, in which he offered to submit himself to the king's pleasure, promising, that if his majesty would grant him a pardon, he would reveal the author of the rebellion. The archbishop, eager, it would appear, to fulfil the ends of justice, readily entered into Gordon's views, and sent a special messenger to London to the king, who at once granted Adam a pardon. On receiving the pardon, Gordon accused the Marquis of Huntly as the author of the conspiracy against

Fren draught, and with having instigated him and his associates to commit all the depredations which had taken place. The king, thereupon, sent a commission to Scotland, appointing a select number of the lords of the Privy Council to examine into the affair.

As Adam Gordon had charged James Gordon of Letterfourie, with having employed him and his associates, in name of the marquis, against the laird of Fren draught, Letterfourie was cited to appear at Edinburgh for trial. On being confronted with Adam Gordon, he denied everything laid to his charge, but, notwithstanding this denial, he was committed, a prisoner to the jail of Edinburgh. The marquis himself, who had also appeared at Edinburgh on the appointed day, January 15th, 1636, was likewise confronted with Adam Gordon before the committee of the Privy Council; but although he denied Adam's accusation, and "cleared himself with great dexterity, beyond admiration," as Gordon of Salgah observes, he was, "upon presumption," committed a close prisoner to the castle of Edinburgh.

When his majesty was made acquainted with these circumstances by the commissioners, and that there was no proof to establish the charge against the marquis, both the marquis and Gordon of Letterfourie were released by his command, on giving security for indemnifying the laird of Fren draught for any damage he might sustain in time coming, from the Gordons and their accomplices. Having so far succeeded in annoying the marquis, Adam Gordon, after collecting a body of men, by leave of the Privy Council, went along with them to Germany, where he became a captain in the regiment of Colonel George Leslie. To terminate the unhappy differences between the marquis and Fren draught, the king enjoined Sir Robert Gordon, who was related to both,—the marquis being his cousin-german, and chief of that family, and Fren draught the husband of his niece,—to endeavour to bring about a reconciliation between them. Sir Robert, accordingly, on his return to Scotland, prevailed upon the parties to enter into a submission, by which they agreed to refer all questions and differences between them to the arbitrament of friends; but before the submis-

sion was brought to a final conclusion, the marquis expired at Dundee on the 13th June, (15th according to Gordon), 1636, at the age of seventy-four, while returning to the north from Edinburgh. He was interred in the family vault at Elgin, on the thirtieth day of August following, "having," says Spalding, "above his chest a rich mortcloth of black velvet, wherein was wrought two white crosses. He had torchlights in great number carried by freinds and gentlemen; the marques' son, called Adam, was at his head, the earle of Murray on the right spaik, the earle of Seaforth on the left spaik, the earle of Sutherland on the third spaik, and Sir Robert Gordon on the fourth spaik. Besyds thir nobles, many barrons and gentlemen was there, having above three hundred lighted torches at the lifting. He is carried to the east port, down the wynd to the south kirk stile of the colledge kirk, in at the south kirk door, and buried in his own isle with much murning and lamentation. The like forme of burriall, with torch light, was not sein heir thir many dayes before."⁵

The marquis was a remarkable man for the age in which he lived, and there are no characters in that eventful period of Scottish history so well entitled to veneration and esteem. A lover of justice, he never attempted to aggrandize his vast possessions at the expense of his less powerful neighbours; a kind and humane superior and landlord, he exercised a lenient sway over his numerous vassals and tenants, who repaid his kindness by sincere attachment to his person and family. Endowed with great strength of mind, invincible courage, and consummate prudence, he surmounted the numerous difficulties with which he was surrounded, and lived to see the many factions which had conspired against him discomfited and dissolved. While his constant and undeviating attachment to the religion of his forefathers, raised up many enemies against him among the professors of the reformed doctrines, by whose cabals he was at one time obliged to leave the kingdom, his great power and influence were assailed by another formi-

dable class of opponents among the turbulent nobility, who were grieved to see a man who had not imitated their venality and rapacity, not only retain his predominance in the north, but also receive especial marks of his sovereign's regard. But skilful and intriguing as they were in all the dark and sinister ways of an age distinguished for its base and wicked practices, their machinations were frustrated by the discernment and honesty of George Gordon, the first Marquis of Huntly.

CHAPTER XII.

A. D. 1636—(SEPTEMBER) 1644.

BRITISH SOVEREIGN:—Charles I., 1625—1649.

Charles I. attempts to introduce Episcopacy into Scotland—Meets with opposition—Preparations for war—Doings in the North—Earl of Montrose—Montrose at Aberdeen—Arrests the Marquis of Huntly—Covenanters of the North meet at Turriff—The "Trott of Turray"—Movements of the Gordons—Viscount Aboyne lands at Aberdeen—"Raid of Stonehaven"—Battle at the Bridge of Dee—Pacification of Berwick—War again—Earl of Argyll endeavours to secure the West Highlands—Harsh proceedings against the Earl of Arly—Montrose goes over to the king—Marquis of Huntly rises in the North—Montrose enters Scotland in disguise—Landing of Irish forces in the West Highlands—Meeting of Montrose and Alexander Macdonald—Atholmen join Montrose—Montrose advances into Strathearn—Battle of Tippermuir.

HITHERTO the history of the Highlands has been confined chiefly to the feuds and conflicts of the clans, the details of which, though interesting to their descendants, cannot be supposed to afford the same gratification to readers at large. We now enter upon a more important era, when the Highlanders begin to play a much more prominent part in the theatre of our national history, and to give a foretaste of that military prowess for which they afterwards became so highly distinguished.

In entering upon the details of the military achievements of the Highlanders during the period of the civil wars, it is quite unnecessary and foreign to our purpose to trouble the reader with a history of the rash, unconstitutional, and ill-fated attempt of Charles I. to introduce Episcopacy into Scotland; nor, for the same reason, is it requisite to detail minutely the proceedings of the authors of the Covenant.

⁵ Spalding, vol. i. p. 50, *et seq.* Gordon's *Continuation*, p. 476, *et seq.*

Suffice it to say, that in consequence of the inflexible determination of Charles to force English Episcopacy upon the people of Scotland, the great majority of the nation declared their determination "by the great name of the Lord their God," to defend their religion against what they considered to be errors and corruptions. Notwithstanding, however, the most positive demonstrations on the part of the people to resist, Charles, acting by the advice of a privy council of Scotsmen established in England, exclusively devoted to the affairs of Scotland, and instigated by Archbishop Laud, resolved to suppress the Covenant by open force. In order to gain time for the necessary preparations, he sent the Marquis of Hamilton, as his commissioner, to Scotland, who was instructed to promise "that the practice of the liturgy and the canons should never be pressed in any other than a fair and legal way, and that the high commission should be so rectified as never to impugn the laws, or to be a just grievance to loyal subjects," and that the king would pardon those who had lately taken an illegal covenant, on their immediately renouncing it, and giving up the bond to the commissioners.

When the Covenanters heard of Hamilton's approach, they appointed a national fast to be held, to beg the blessing of God upon the kirk, and on the 10th of June, 1638, the marquis was received at Leith, and proceeded to the capital through an assemblage of about 60,000 Covenanters, and 500 ministers. The spirit and temper of such a vast assemblage overawed the marquis, and he therefore concealed his instructions. After making two successive journeys to London to communicate the alarming state of affairs, and to receive fresh instructions, he, on his second return, issued a proclamation, discharging "the service book, the book of canons, and the high commission court, dispensing with the five articles of Perth, dispensing the entrants into the ministry from taking the oath of supremacy and of canonical obedience, commanding all persons to lay aside the new Covenant, and take that which had been published by the king's father in 1589, and summoning a free assembly of the kirk to meet in the month of November, and a parliament in the month of May, the following year." Matters had, however, proceeded too far for

submission to the conditions of the proclamation, and the covenanting leaders answered it by a formal protest, in which they gave sixteen reasons, showing that to comply with the demands of the king would be to betray the cause of God, and to act against the dictates of conscience.

In consequence of the opposition made to the proclamation, it was generally expected that the king would have recalled the order for the meeting of the assembly at Glasgow; but no prohibition having been issued, that assembly, which consisted, besides the clergy, of one lay-elder and four lay-assessors from every presbytery, met at the time appointed, viz., in the month of November, 1638. After the assembly had spent a week in violent debates, the commissioner, in terms of his instructions, declared it dissolved; but, encouraged by the accession of the Earl of Argyre, who placed himself at the head of the Covenanters, the members declined to disperse at the mere mandate of the sovereign, and passed a resolution that, in spiritual matters, the kirk was independent of the civil power, and that the dissolution by the commissioner was illegal and void. After spending three weeks in revising the ecclesiastical regulations introduced into Scotland since the accession of James to the crown of England, the assembly condemned the liturgy, ordinal, book of canons, and court of high commission, and, assuming all the powers of legislation, abolished episcopacy, and excommunicated the bishops themselves, and the ministers who supported them. Charles declared their proceedings null; but the people received them with great joy, and testified their approbation by a national thanksgiving.

Both parties had for some time been preparing for war, and they now hastened on their plans. In consequence of an order from the supreme committee of the Covenanters in Edinburgh, every man capable of bearing arms was called out and trained. Experienced Scottish officers, who had spent the greater part of their lives in military service in Sweden and Germany, returned to Scotland to place themselves at the head of their countrymen, and the Scottish merchants in Holland supplied them with arms and ammunition. The king advanced as far as York with an army, the Scottish bishops

making him believe that the news of his approach would induce the Covenanters to submit themselves to his pleasure; but he was disappointed,—for instead of submitting themselves, they were the first to commence hostilities. About the 19th of March, 1639, General Leslie, the covenanting general, with a few men, surprised, and without difficulty, occupied the castle of Edinburgh, and about the same time the Earl of Traquair surrendered Dalkeith house. Dumbarton castle, like that of Edinburgh, was taken by stratagem, the governor, named Stewart, being intercepted on a Sunday as he returned from church, and made to change clothes with another gentleman and give the pass-word, by which means the Covenanters easily obtained possession. The king, on arriving at Durham, despatched the Marquis of Hamilton with a fleet of forty ships, having on board 6,000 troops, to the Frith of Forth; but as both sides of the Frith were well fortified at different points, and covered with troops, he was unable to effect a landing.⁶

In the meantime, the Marquis of Huntly raised the royal standard in the north, and as the Earl of Sutherland, accompanied by Lord Reay, John, Master of Berridale and others, had been very busy in Inverness and Elgin, persuading the inhabitants to subscribe the Covenant, the marquis wrote him confidentially, blaming him for his past conduct, and advising him to declare for the king; but the earl informed him in reply, that it was against the bishops and their innovations, and not against the king, that he had so acted. The earl then, in his turn, advised the marquis to join the Covenanters, by doing which he said he would not only confer honour on himself, but much good on his native country; that in any private question in which Huntly was personally interested he would assist, but that in the present affair he would not aid him. The earl thereupon joined the Earl of Seafortb, the Master of Berridale, Lord Lovat, Lord Reay, the laird of Balnagown, the Rosses, the Monroes, the laird of Grant, Macintosh, the laird of Innes, the sheriff of Moray, the baron of Kilravock, the laird of Altire, the tutor of Duffus, and the other Covenanters on the north of the river Spey.

The Marquis of Huntly assembled his forces first at Turriff, and afterwards at Kintore, whence he marched upon Aberdeen, which he took possession of in name of the king. The marquis being informed shortly after his arrival in Aberdeen, that a meeting of Covenanters, who resided within his district, was to be held at Turriff on the 14th of February, resolved to disperse them. He therefore wrote letters to his chief dependents, requiring them to meet him at Turriff the same day, and bring with them no arms but swords and "schottis" or pistols. One of these letters fell into the hands of the Earl of Montrose, one of the chief covenanting lords, who determined at all hazards to protect the meeting of his friends, the Covenanters. In pursuance of this resolution, he collected, with great alacrity, some of his best friends in Angus, and with his own and their dependents, to the number of about 800 men, he crossed the range of hills called the Grangebean, between Angus and Aberdeenshire, and took possession of Turriff on the morning of the 14th of February. When Huntly's party arrived during the course of the day, they were surprised at seeing the little churchyard of the village filled with armed men; and they were still more surprised to observe them levelling their hagbuts at them across the walls of the churchyard. Not knowing how to act in the absence of the marquis, they retired to a place called the Broad Ford of Towie, about two miles south from the village, when they were soon joined by Huntly and his suite. After some consultation, the marquis, after parading his men in order of battle along the north-west side of the village, in sight of Montrose, dispersed his party, which amounted to 2,000 men, without offering to attack Montrose, on the pretence that his commission of lieutenantancy only authorised him to act on the defensive.⁷

James Graham, Earl, and afterwards first Marquis of Montrose, who played so prominent a part in the history of the troublous times on which we are entering, was descended from a family which can be traced back to the beginning of the 12th century. His ancestor, the Earl of Montrose, fell at Flodden, and his

⁶ Gordon's *Scots Affairs*, vol. ii. p. 209.

⁷ Spalding, vol. i. p. 137.

grandfather became viceroy of Scotland after James VI. ascended the throne of England. He himself was born in 1612, his mother being Lady Margaret Ruthven, eldest daughter of William, first Earl of Gowrie. He succeeded to the estates and title in 1626, on the death of his father, and three years after, married Magdalene Carnegie, daughter of Lord Carnegie of Kinnaird. He pursued his studies at St. Andrews University and Kinnaird Castle till he was about twenty years of age, when he went to the Continent and studied at the academies of France and Italy, returning an accomplished gentleman and a soldier. On his return he was, for some reason, coldly received by Charles I., and it is supposed by some that it was mainly out of chagrin on this account that he joined the Covenanters. Whatever may have been his motive for joining them, he was certainly an important and powerful accession to their ranks, although, as will be seen, his adherence to them was but of short duration.

Montrose is thus portrayed by his contemporary, Patrick Gordon of Ruthven, author of *Britain's Distemper*. "It cannot be denied but he was an accomplished gentleman of many excellent partes; a bodie not tall, but comely and well compassed in all his linaimantes; his complexion meerly whitee, with flaxin haire; of a stayed, graue, and solide looke, and yet his eyes sparkling and full of lyfe; of speach slowe, but wittie and full of sence; a presence graitfull, courtly, and so winninge vpon the beholder, as it seemed to claime reuerence without seueing for it; for he was so affable, so courteous, so bening, as seemed verely to scorne ostentation and the keeping of state, and therefor he quicklie made a conquesse of the heartes of all his followers, so as when he list he could haue lead them in a chaine to haue followed him with chearefullnes in all his interpryses; and I am certanely perswaded, that this his gracious, humane, and courteous fredome of behauiour, being certanely acceptable befor God as well as men, was it that wanne him so much renoune, and inabled him cheifly, in the loue of his followers, to goe through so great interpryses, wheirin his equall had failed, altho they exceeded him farre in power, nor can any

other reason be giuen for it, but only this that followeth. He did not seeme to affect state, nor to claime reuerence, nor to keepe a distance with gentlemen that ware not his domesticks; but rather in a noble yet courteouse way he seemed to slight those vanishing smockes of greatnes, affecting rather the reall possession of mens heartes then the frothie and outward showe of reuerence; and therefor was all reuerence thrust vpon him, because all did loue him, therfor all did honour him and reuerence him, yea, haueing once acquired there heartes, they ware readie not only to honour him, but to quarrell with any that would not honour him, and would not spare there fountounes, nor there derrest blood about there heartes, to the end he might be honoured, because they saue that he tooke the right course to obtaine honour. He had fund furth the right way to be reuerenced, and thereby was approued that propheticke maxime which hath never failed, nor neuer shall faile, being pronounced by the Fontaine of treuth (*He that exalteth himselfe shall be humbled*); for his winninge behauiour and courteous caryage got him more respect then those to whom they ware bound both by the law of nature and by good reason to haue giuen it to. Nor could any other reason be giuen for it, but only there to much keepinge of distance, and caryeing themselves in a more statlye and reserued way, without putteing a difference betuixt a free borne gentleman and a seruille or base mynded slaue.

"This much I thought good by the way to signifie; for the best and most valiant generall that euer lead ane armie if he mistake the disposition of the nation whom he commandes, and will not descend a litle till he meete with the genius of his shouldours, on whose followinge his grandour and the success of his interpryses chiefly dependeth, stryueing through a high soireing and ower winninge ambition to drawe them to his byas with awe and not with lowe, that leader, I say, shall neuer preuaile against his enemies with ane armie of the Scottes nation."

Montrose had, about this time, received a commission from the Tables—as the boards of representatives, chosen respectively by the nobility, county gentry, clergy, and inhabitants of

the burghs, were called—to raise a body of troops for the service of the Covenanters, and he now proceeded to embody them with extraordinary promptitude. Within one month, he collected a force of about 3,000 horse and foot, from the counties of Fife, Forfar, and Perth, and put them into a complete state of military discipline. Being joined by the forces under General Leslie, he marched upon Aberdeen, which he entered, without opposition, on the 30th of March, the Marquis of Huntly having abandoned the town on his approach. Some idea of the well-appointed state of this army may be formed from the curious description of Spalding, who says, that “upon the morne, being Saturday, they came in order of battell, weil armed, both on horse and foot, ilk horseman having five shot at the least, with ane carabine in his hand, two pistols by his sydes, and other two at his saddell toir; the pikemen in their ranks, with pike and sword; the musketiers in their ranks, with musket, musket-staffe, bandelier, sword, powder, ball, and match; ilk company, both on horse and foot, had their captains, lieutenants, ensignes, sergeants, and other officers and commanders, all for the most part in buff coats, and in goodly order. They had five colours or ensignes, whereof the Earl of Montrose had one, having this motto: ‘FOR RELIGION, THE COVENANT, AND THE COUNTRIE;’ the Earle of Marischall had one, the Earle of Kinghorne had one, and the town of Dundie had two. They had trumpeters to ilk company of horsemen, and drummers to ilk company of footmen; they had their meat, drink, and other provision, bag and baggage, carryed with them, all done be advyse of his excellence Felt Marschall Leslie, whose counsell General Montrose followed in this businesse. Now, in seemly order and good array, this army came forward, and entered the burgh of Aberdein, about ten hours in the morning, at the Over Kirkgate Port, syne came down throw the Broadgate, throw the Castlegate, out at the Justice Port to the Queen’s Links directly. Here it is to be noted that few or none of this hail army wanted ane blew ribbin hung about his craig, Joun under his left arme, which they called the *Covenanters’ Ribbin*. But the Lord Gordon, and some other of the marquess’ bairnes

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and familie, had ane ribbin when he was dwelling in the toune, of ane reid flesh collar, which they wore in their hatts, and called it *The Royall Ribbin*, as a signe of their love and loyalltie to the king. In despyte and derision thereof this blew ribbin was worn, and called the *Covenanters’ Ribbin*, be the hail souldiers of the army, and would not hear of the roall ribbin; such was their pryde and malice.”⁸

At Aberdeen Montrose was joined the same day by Lord Fraser, the Master of Forbes, the laird of Dalgettie, the tutor of Pitsligo, the Earl Marshal’s men in Buchan, with several other gentlemen and their tenants, dependants, and servants, to the number of 2,000, an addition which augmented Montrose’s army to 9,000 men. Leaving the Earl of Kinghorn with 1,500 men to keep possession of Aberdeen, Montrose marched the same day towards Kintore, where he encamped that night. Halting all Sunday, he proceeded on the Monday to Inverury, where he again pitched his camp. The Marquis of Huntly grew alarmed at this sudden and unexpected movement, and thought it now time to treat with such a formidable foe for his personal safety. He, therefore, despatched Robert Gordon of Straloch and Doctor Gordon, an Aberdeen physician, to Montrose’s camp, to request an interview. The marquis proposed to meet him on a moor near Blackhall, about two miles from the camp, with 11 attendants each, with no arms but a single sword at their side. After consulting with Field Marshal Leslie and the other officers, Montrose agreed to meet the marquis, on Thursday the 4th of April, at the place mentioned. The parties accordingly met. Among the eleven who attended the marquis were his son James, Lord Aboyne, and the Lord Oliphant. Lords Elcho and Cowper were of the party who attended Montrose. After the usual salutation they both alighted and entered into conversation; but, coming to no understanding, they adjourned the conference till the following morning, when the marquis signed a paper obliging himself to maintain the king’s authority, “the liberty of church and state, religion and laws.” He promised at the same time to do his best to make his friends, tenants, and

⁸ *Troubles*, vol. i. pp. 107, 108.

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servants subscribe the Covenant.⁹ The marquis, after this arrangement, went to Strathbogie, and Montrose returned with his army to Aberdeen, the following day.

The marquis had not been many days at Strathbogie, when he received a notice from Montrose to repair to Aberdeen with his two sons, Lord Gordon and Viscount Aboyne, for the ostensible purpose of assisting the committee in their deliberations as to the settlement of the disturbances in the north.¹ On Huntly receiving an assurance from Montrose and the other covenanting leaders that no attempt should be made to detain himself and his sons as prisoners, he complied with Montrose's invitation, and repairing to Aberdeen, he took up his quarters in the laird of Pitfoddel's house.

The arrest of the marquis, which followed, has been attributed, not without reason, to the intrigues of the Frasers and the Forbeses, who bore a mortal antipathy to the house of Huntly, and who were desirous to see the "Cock of the North," as the powerful head of that house was popularly called, bumbled.² But, be these conjectures as they may, on the morning after the marquis's arrival at Aberdeen, viz., on the 11th April, a council of the principal officers of Montrose's army was held, at which it was determined to arrest the marquis and Lord Gordon, his eldest son, and carry them to Edinburgh. It was not, however, judged advisable to act upon this resolution immediately, and to do away with any appearance of treachery, Montrose and his friends invited the marquis and his two sons to supper the following evening. During the entertainment the most friendly civilities were passed on both sides, and, after the party had become somewhat merry, Montrose and his friends hinted to the marquis the expediency, in the present posture of affairs, of resigning his commission of lieutenancy. They also proposed that he should write a letter to the king along with the resignation of his commission, in favour of the Covenanters, as good and loyal subjects; and that he should despatch the laird of Cluny, the following morning, with the letter and resigna-

tion. The marquis, seeing that his commission was altogether unavailable, immediately wrote out, in presence of the meeting, a resignation of it, and a letter of recommendation as proposed, and, in their presence, delivered the same to the laird of Cluny, who was to set off the following morning with them to the king. It would appear that Montrose was not sincere in making this demand upon the marquis, and that his object was, by calculating on a refusal, to make that the ground for arresting him; for the marquis had scarcely returned to his lodgings to pass the night, when an armed guard was placed round the house, to prevent him from returning home, as he intended to do, the following morning.

When the marquis rose, next morning, he was surprised at receiving a message from the covenanting general, desiring his attendance at the house of the Earl Marshal; and he was still farther surprised, when, on going out, along with his two sons, to the appointed place of meeting, he found his lodging beset with sentinels. The marquis was received by Montrose with the usual morning salutation, after which, he proceeded to demand from him a contribution for liquidating a loan of 200,000 merks, which the Covenanters had borrowed from Sir William Dick, a rich merchant of Edinburgh. To this unexpected demand the marquis replied, that he was not obliged to pay any part thereof, not having been concerned in the borrowing, and of course, declined to comply. Montrose then requested him to take steps to apprehend James Grant and John Dugar, and their accomplices, who had given considerable annoyance to the Covenanters in the Highlands. Huntly objected, that, having now no commission, he could not act, and that, although he had, James Grant had already obtained a remission from the king; and as for John Dugar, he would concur, if required, with the other neighbouring proprietors in an attempt to apprehend him. The earl, finally, as the Covenant, he said, admitted of no standing hatred or feud, required the marquis to reconcile himself to Crichton, the laird of Frendraught, but this the marquis positively refused to do. Finding, as he no doubt expected, the marquis quite resolute in his determination to resist these demands, the

⁹ Spalding, vol. i. pp. 157, 160.

¹ Gordon of Rothiemay, vol. ii. p. 235.

² Id., vol. ii. p. 235.

earl suddenly changed his tone, and thus addressed the marquis, apparently in the most friendly terms, "My lord, seeing we are all now friends, will you go south to Edinburgh with us?" Huntly answered that he would not—that he was not prepared for such a journey, and that he was just going to set off for Strathbogie. "Your lordship," rejoined Montrose, "will do well to go with us." The marquis now perceiving Montrose's design, accosted him thus, "My lord, I came here to this town upon assurance that I should come and go at my own pleasure, without molestation or inquietude; and now I see why my lodging was guarded, and that ye mean to take me to Edinburgh, whether I will or not. This conduct, on your part, seems to me to be neither fair nor honourable." He added, "My lord, give me back the bond which I gave you at Inverury, and you shall have an answer." Montrose thereupon delivered the bond to the marquis. Huntly then inquired at the earl, "Whether he would take him to the south as a captive, or willingly of his own mind?" "Make your choice," said Montrose. "Then," observed the marquis, "I will not go as a captive, but as a volunteer." The marquis thereupon immediately returned to his lodging, and despatched a messenger after the laird of Cluny, to stop him on his journey.²

It was the intention of Montrose to take both the marquis and his sons to Edinburgh, but Viscount Aboyne, at the desire of some of his friends, was released, and allowed to return to Strathbogie. On arriving at Edinburgh, the marquis and his son, Lord Gordon, were committed close prisoners to the castle of Edinburgh, and the Tables "appointed five guardians to attend upon him and his son night and day, upon his own expenses, that none should come in nor out but by their sight."³ On being solicited to sign the Covenant, Huntly issued a manifesto characterized by magnanimity and the most steadfast loyalty, concluding with the following words:—"For my ousne part, I am in your power; and resolved not to leave that foul title of traitor as ane inheritance upon my posterity. Yow

may tacke my heade from my shoulders, but not my heart from my sovairne."⁴

Some time after the departure of Montrose's army to the south, the Covenanters of the north appointed a committee meeting to be held at Turriff, upon Wednesday, 24th April, consisting of the Earls Marshal and Seaforth, Lord Fraser, the Master of Forbes, and some of their kindred and friends. All persons within the diocese, who had not subscribed the Covenant, were required to attend this meeting for the purpose of signing it, and failing compliance, their property was to be given up to indiscriminate plunder. As neither Lord Aboyne, the laird of Banff, nor any of their friends and kinsmen, had subscribed the Covenant, nor meant to do so, they resolved to protect themselves from the threatened attack. A preliminary meeting of the heads of the northern Covenanters was held on the 22d of April, at Monynusk, where they learned of the rising of Lord Aboyne and his friends. This intelligence induced them to postpone the meeting at Turriff till the 26th of April, by which day they expected to be joined by several gentlemen from Caithness, Sutherland, Ross, Moray, and other quarters. At another meeting, however, on the 24th of April, they postponed the proposed meeting at Turriff, *sine die*, and adjourned to Aberdeen; but as no notice had been sent of the postponement to the different covenanting districts in the north, about 1,500 men assembled at the place of meeting on the 26th of April, and were quite astonished to find that the chiefs were absent. Upon an explanation taking place, the meeting was adjourned till the 20th of May.

Lord Aboyne had not been idle during this interval, having collected about 2,000 horse and foot from the Highlands and Lowlands, with which force he had narrowly watched the movements of the Covenanters. Hearing, however, of the adjournment of the Turriff meeting, his lordship, at the entreaty of his friends, broke up his army, and went by sea to England to meet the king, to inform him of the precarious state of affairs in the north. Many of his followers, such as the lairds of Gight, Haddo, Udney, Newton, Pitmedder,

² Spalding, vol. i. p. 168.

³ *Ibid.* p. 177.

⁴ Gordon of Rothiemay, ii. 240. Spalding, i. 179.

Foveran, Tippertie, Harthill, and others, who had subscribed the Covenant, regretted his departure; but as they had gone too far to recede, they resolved to continue their forces in the field, and held a meeting on the 7th of May at Auchterless, to concert a plan of operations.

A body of the Covenanters, to the number of about 2,000, having assembled at Turriff as early as the 13th of May, the Gordons resolved instantly to attack them, before they should be joined by other forces, which were expected to arrive before the 20th. Taking along with them four brass field-pieces from Strathbogie, the Gordons, to the number of about 800 horse and foot, commenced their march on the 13th of May, at ten o'clock at night, and reached Turriff next morning by day-break, by a road unknown to the sentinels of the covenanting army. As soon as they approached the town, the commander of the Gordons ordered the trumpets to be sounded and the drums to be beat, the noise of which was the first indication the Covenanters had of their arrival. Being thus surprised, the latter had no time to make any preparations for defending themselves. They made, indeed, a short resistance, but were soon dispersed by the fire from the field-pieces, leaving behind them the lairds of Echt and Skene, and a few others, who were taken prisoners. The loss on either side, in killed and wounded, was very trifling. This skirmish is called by the writers of the period, "the Trott of Turray."⁵

The successful issue of this trifling affair had a powerful effect on the minds of the victors, who forthwith marched on Aberdeen, which they entered on the 15th of May. They expelled the Covenanters from the town, and were there joined by a body of men from the Braes of Mar under the command of Donald Farquharson of Tulliegarmouth, and the laird of Abergeldie, and by another party headed by James Grant, so long an outlaw, to the number of about 500 men. These men quartered themselves very freely upon the inhabitants, particularly on those who had declared for the Covenant, and they plundered many gentle-

men's houses in the neighbourhood. The house of Durris, belonging to John Forbes of Leslie, a great Covenanter, received a visit from them. "There was," says Spalding, "little plenishing left unconveyed away before their coming. They gott good bear and ale, broke up gimells, and buke bannocks at good fyres, and drank merrily upon the laird's best drink: syne carried away with them also meikle victual as they could beir, which they could not gett eaten and destroyed; and syne removed from that to Echt, Skene, Monymusk, and other houses pertaining to the name of Forbes, all great Covenanters."⁶

Two days after their arrival at Aberdeen, the Gordons sent to Dunnottar, for the purpose of ascertaining the sentiments of the Earl Marshal, in relation to their proceedings, and whether they might reckon on his friendship. The earl, however, intimated that he could say nothing in relation to the affair, and that he would require eight days to advise with his friends. This answer was considered quite unsatisfactory, and the chiefs of the army were at a loss how to act. Robert Gordon of Straloch, and James Burnet of Craigmylle, a brother of the laird of Leys, proposed to enter into a negotiation with the Earl Marshal, but Sir George Ogilvie of Banff would not listen to such a proceeding, and, addressing Straloch, he said, "Go, if you will go; but prythee, let it be as quarter-master, to inform the earl that we are coming." Straloch, however, went not in the character of a quarter-master, but as a mediator in behalf of his chief. The earl said he had no intention to take up arms, without an order from the Tables; that, if the Gordons would disperse, he would give them early notice to re-assemble, if necessary, for their own defence, but that if they should attack him, he would certainly defend himself.

The army was accordingly disbanded on the 21st of May, and the barons went to Aberdeen, there to spend a few days. The depredations of the Highlanders, who had come down to the lowlands in quest of plunder, upon the properties of the Covenanters, were thereafter carried on to such an extent, that the latter complained to the Earl Marshal, who immediately

⁵ *Turray* is the old name of Turriff.—Gordon of Rothiemay, vol. ii. p. 254. Gordon of Sallagh, p. 401.

⁶ Spalding, vol. i. p. 188.

assembled a body of men out of Angus and the Meams, with which he entered Aberdeen on the 23d of May, causing the barons to make a precipitate retreat. Two days thereafter the earl was joined by Montrose, at the head of 4,000 men, an addition which, with other accessions, made the whole force assembled at Aberdeen exceed 6,000.

Meanwhile a large body of northern Covenanters, under the command of the Earl of Seaforth, was approaching from the districts beyond the Spey; but the Gordons having crossed the Spey for the purpose of opposing their advance, an agreement was entered into between both parties that, on the Gordons retiring across the Spey, Seaforth and his men should also retire homewards.

After spending five days in Aberdeen, Montrose marched his army to Udney, thence to Kellie, the seat of the laird of Haddo, and afterwards to Gight, the residence of Sir Robert Gordon, to which he laid siege. But intelligence of the arrival of Viscount Aboyne in the bay of Aberdeen, deranged his plans. Being quite uncertain of Aboyne's strength, and fearing that his retreat might be cut off, Montrose quickly raised the siege and returned to Aberdeen. Although Lord Aboyne still remained on board his vessel, and could easily have been prevented from landing, Montrose most unaccountably abandoned the town, and retired into the Meams.

Viscount Aboyne had been most graciously received by the king, and had ingratiated himself so much with the monarch, as to obtain the commission of lieutenantancy which his father held. The king appears to have entertained good hopes from his endeavours to support the royal cause in the north of Scotland, and before taking leave he gave the viscount a letter addressed to the Marquis of Hamilton, requesting him to afford his lordship all the assistance in his power. From whatever cause, all the aid afforded by the Marquis was limited to a few officers and four field-pieces: "The king," says Gordon of Sallagh, "coming to Berwick, and business growing to a height, the armies of England and Scotland lying near one another, his majesty sent the Viscount of Aboyne and Colonel Gun (who was then returned out of Germany) to the Marquis of Hamilton, to

receive some forces from him, and with these forces to go to Aberdeen, to possess and recover that town. The Marquis of Hamilton, lying at anchor in Forth, gave them no supply of men, but sent them five ships to Aberdeen, and the marquis himself retired with his fleet and men to the Holy Island, hard by Berwick, to reinforce the king's army there against the Scots at Dunslaw."⁷ On his voyage to Aberdeen, Aboyne's ships fell in with two vessels, one of which contained the lairds of Banff, Foveran, Newton, Crummie, and others, who had fled on the approach of Montrose to Gight; and the other had on board some citizens of Aberdeen, and several ministers who had refused to sign the Covenant, all of whom the viscount persuaded to return home along with him.

On the 6th of June, Lord Aboyne, accompanied by the Earls of Glencairn and Tullibardine, the lairds of Drum, Banff, Fedderet, Foveran, and Newton, and their followers, with Colonel Gun and several English officers, landed in Aberdeen without opposition. Immediately on coming ashore, Aboyne issued a proclamation which was read at the cross of Aberdeen, prohibiting all his majesty's loyal subjects from paying any rents, duties, or other debts to the Covenanters, and requiring them to pay one-half of such sums to the king, and to retain the other for themselves. Those persons who had been forced to subscribe the Covenant against their will, were, on repentance, to be forgiven, and every person was required to take an oath of allegiance to his majesty.

This bold step inspired the royalists with confidence, and in a short space of time a considerable force rallied round the royal standard. Lewis Gordon, third son of the Marquis of Huntly, a youth of extraordinary courage, on hearing of his brother's arrival, collected his father's friends and tenants, to the number of about 1,000 horse and foot, and with these he entered Aberdeen on the 7th of June. These were succeeded by 100 horse, sent in by the laird of Drum, and by considerable forces led by James Grant and Donald Farquharson. Many of the Covenanters also joined the viscount, so that his force ultimately amounted

⁷ *Continuation*, p. 402.

to several thousand men. Spalding⁸ gives a sad, though somewhat ludicrous account of the way in which Farquharson's "hieland men" conducted themselves while in Aberdeen. He says, "Thir saullless lounis plunderit meit, drink, and schein quhair ever they eam. Thay oppressit the Oldtoun, and brocht in out of the countrie honest menis schein, and sold at the cross of Old Abridain to sie as wold by, ane schein upone foot for ane groat. The poor men that aucht thame follout in and coft bak thair awin schein agane, sic as wes left unslayne for thair meit."

On the 10th of June the viscount left Aberdeen, and advanced upon Kintore with an army of about 2,000 horse and foot, to which he received daily accessions. The inhabitants of the latter place were compelled by him to subscribe the oath of allegiance, and notwithstanding their compliance, "the troops," says Spalding, "plundered meat and drink, and made good fires: and, where they wanted peats, broke down beds and boards in honest men's houses to be fires, and fed their horses with corn and straw that day and night."⁹ Next morning the army made a raid upon Hall Forrest, a seat of the Earl Marshal, and the house of Muchells, belonging to Lord Fraser; but Aboyne, hearing of a rising in the south, returned to Aberdeen.

As delay would be dangerous to his cause in the present conjuncture, he crossed the Dee on the 14th of June, his army amounting altogether probably to about 3,000 horse and foot,¹ with the intention of occupying Stonehaven, and of issuing afresh the king's proclamation at the market cross of that burgh. He proceeded as far as Muehollis, or Muchalls, the seat of Sir Thomas Burnet of Leyes, a Covenanter, where he encamped that night. On hearing of his approach, the Earl Marshal and Montrose posted themselves, with 1,200 men, and some pieces of ordnance which they had drawn from Dunnotar castle, on the direct road which Aboyne had to pass, and waited his approach.

⁸ Spalding, vol. i. p. 205.

⁹ *Troubles*, vol. i. p. 206.

¹ Spalding, vol. i. p. 207.—Gordon of Rothiemay, vol. ii. p. 268.—Gordon of Ruthven, in his abridgment of *Britane's Distemper* (Spald. Club ed.), p. 206, makes the number 5,000.

Although Aboyne was quite aware of the position of the Earl Marshal, instead of endeavouring to outflank him by making a detour to the right, he, by Colonel Gun's advice, crossed the Meagre hill next morning, directly in the face of his opponent, who lay with his forces at the bottom of the hill. As Aboyne descended the hill, the Earl Marshal opened a heavy fire upon him, which threw his men into complete disorder. The Highlanders, unaccustomed to the fire of cannon, were the first to retreat, and in a short time the whole army gave way. Aboyne thereupon returned to Aberdeen with some horsemen, leaving the rest of the army to follow; but the Highlanders took a homeward course, carrying along with them a large quantity of booty, which they gathered on their retreat. The disastrous issue of "the Raid of Stonehaven," as this affair has been called, has been attributed, with considerable plausibility, to treachery on the part of Colonel Gun, to whom, on account of his great experience, Aboyne had intrusted the command of the army.²

On his arrival at Aberdeen, Aboyne held a council of war, at which it was determined to send some persons into the Mearns to collect the scattered remains of his army, for, with the exception of about 180 horsemen and a few foot soldiers, the whole of the fine army which he had led from Aberdeen had disappeared; but although the army again mustered at Leggettsden to the number of 4,000, they were prevented from recrossing the Dee and joining his lordship by the Marshal and Montrose, who advanced towards the bridge of Dee with all their forces. Aboyne, hearing of their approach, resolved to dispute with them the passage of the Dee, and, as a precautionary measure, blocked up the entrance to the bridge of Dee from the south by a thick wall of turf, beside which he placed 100 musketeers upon the bridge, under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Johnstone, to annoy the assailants from the small turrets on its sides. The viscount was warmly seconded in his views by the citizens of Aberdeen, whose dread of another hostile visit from the Covenanters induced them to

² Spalding, vol. i. p. 208. Gordon of Rothiemay, vol. ii. p. 272. *Britane's Distemper*, p. 24.

afford him every assistance in their power, and it is recorded that the women and children even occupied themselves in carrying provisions to the army during the contest.

The army of Montrose consisted of about 2,000 foot and 300 horse, and a large train of artillery. The forces which Lord Aboyne had collected on the spur of the occasion were not numerous, but he was superior in cavalry. His ordnance consisted only of four pieces of brass cannon. Montrose arrived at the bridge of Dee on the 18th of June, and, without a moment's delay, commenced a furious cannonade upon the works which had been thrown up at the south end, and which he kept up during the whole day without producing any material effect. Lieutenant-colonel Johnstone defended the bridge with determined bravery, and his musketeers kept up a galling and well-directed fire upon their assailants. Both parties reposed during the short twilight, and as soon as morning dawned Montrose renewed his attack upon the bridge, with an ardour which seemed to have received a fresh impulse from the unavailing efforts of the preceding day; but all his attempts were vain. Seeing no hopes of carrying the bridge in the teeth of the force opposed to him, he had recourse to a stratagem, by which he succeeded in withdrawing a part of Aboyne's forces from the defence of the bridge. That force had, indeed, been considerably impaired before the renewal of the attack, in consequence of a party of 50 musketeers having gone to Aberdeen to escort thither the body of a citizen named John Forbes, who had been killed the preceding day; to which circumstance Spalding attributes the loss of the bridge; but whether the absence of this party had such an effect upon the fortune of the day is by no means clear. The covenanting general, after battering unsuccessfully the defences of the bridge, ordered a party of horsemen to proceed up the river some distance, and to make a demonstration as if they intended to cross. Aboyne was completely deceived by this manœuvre, and sent the whole of his horsemen from the bridge to dispute the passage of the river with those of Montrose, leaving Lieutenant-colonel Johnstone and his 50 musketeers alone to protect the bridge. Montrose having thus drawn his

opponent into the snare set for him, immediately sent back the greater part of his horse, under the command of Captain Middleton, with instructions to renew the attack upon the bridge with redoubled energy. This officer lost no time in obeying these orders, and Lieutenant-colonel Johnstone having been wounded in the outset by a stone torn from the bridge by a shot, was forced to abandon its defence, and he and his party retired precipitately to Aberdeen.

When Aboyne saw the colours of the Covenanters flying on the bridge of Dee, he fled with great haste towards Strathbogie, after releasing the lairds of Purie Ogilvy and Purie Fodderinghame, whom he had taken prisoners, and carried with him from Aberdeen. The loss on either side during the conflict on the bridge was trifling. The only person of note who fell on Aboyne's side was Seaton of Pitmedden, a brave cavalier, who was killed by a cannon shot while riding along the river side with Lord Aboyne. On that of the Covenanters was slain another valiant gentleman, a brother of Ramsay of Balmain. About 14 persons of inferior note were killed on each side, including some burgesses of Aberdeen, and several were wounded.

Montrose, reaching the north bank of the Dee, proceeded immediately to Aberdeen, which he entered without opposition. So exasperated were Montrose's followers at the repeated instances of devotedness shown by the inhabitants to the royal cause, that they proposed to raze the town and set it on fire; but they were hindered from carrying their design into execution by the firmness of Montrose. The Covenanters, however, treated the inhabitants very harshly, and imprisoned many who were suspected of having been concerned in opposing their passage across the Dee; but an end was put to these proceedings in consequence of intelligence being brought on the following day (June 20th) of the treaty of pacification which had been entered into between the king and his subjects at Berwick, upon the 18th of that month. On receipt of this news, Montrose sent a despatch to the Earl of Seaford, who was stationed with his army on the Spey, intimating the pacification, and desiring him to disband his army, with which order he instantly complied.

The articles of pacification were preceded by a declaration on the part of the king, in which he stated, that although he could not condescend to ratify and approve of the acts of the Glasgow General Assembly, yet, notwithstanding the many disorders which had of late been committed, he not only confirmed and made good whatsoever his commissioner had granted and promised, but he also declared that all matters ecclesiastical should be determined by the assemblies of the kirk, and matters civil by the parliament and other inferior judicatories established by law. To settle, therefore, "the general distractions" of the kingdom, his majesty ordered that a free general assembly should be held at Edinburgh on the 6th August following, at which he declared his intention, "God willing, to be personally present;" and he moreover ordered a parliament to meet at Edinburgh on the 20th of the same month, for ratifying the proceedings of the general assembly, and settling such other matters as might conduce to the peace and good of the kingdom of Scotland. By the articles of pacification, it was, *inter alia*, provided that the forces in Scotland should be disbanded within forty-eight hours after the publication of the declaration, and that all the royal castles, forts, and warlike stores of every description, should be delivered up to his majesty after the said publication, as soon as he should send to receive them. Under the seventh and last article of the treaty, the Marquis of Huntly and his son, Lord Gordon, and some others who had been detained prisoners in the castle of Edinburgh by the Covenanters, were set at liberty.

It has been generally supposed that neither party had any sincere intention to observe the conditions of the treaty. Certain it is, that the ink with which it was written was scarcely dry before its violation was contemplated. On the one hand, the king, before removing his army from the neighbourhood of Berwick, required the heads of the Covenanters to attend him there, obviously with the object of gaining them over to his side; but, with the exception of three commoners and three lords, Montrose, Loudon, and Lothian, they refused to obey. It was at this conference that Charles, who apparently had great persuasive powers, made

a convert of Montrose, who from that time determined to desert his associates in arms, and to place himself under the royal standard. The immediate strengthening of the forts of Berwick and Carlisle, and the provisioning of the castle of Edinburgh, were probably the suggestions of Montrose, who would, of course, be intrusted with the secret of his majesty's designs. The Covenanters, on the other hand, although making a show of disbanding their army at Dunse, in reality kept a considerable force on foot, which they quartered in different parts of the country, to be in readiness for the field on a short notice. The suspicious conduct of the king certainly justified this precaution.

The general assembly met on the day fixed upon, but, instead of attending in person as he proposed, Charles appointed the Earl of Traquair to act as his commissioner. After abolishing the articles of Perth, the book of canons, the liturgy, the high commission and episcopacy, and ratifying the late Covenant, the assembly was dissolved on the 30th of August, and another general assembly was appointed to be held at Aberdeen on the 28th of July of the following year, 1640. The parliament met next day, viz., on the last day of August, and as there were no bishops to represent the third estate, fourteen minor barons were elected in their stead. His majesty's commissioner protested against the vote and against farther proceedings till the king's mind should be known, and the commissioner immediately sent off a letter apprising him of the occurrence. Without waiting for the king's answer, the parliament was proceeding with a variety of bills for securing the liberty of the subject and restraining the royal prerogative, when it was unexpectedly and suddenly prorogued, by an order from the king, till the 2d of June in the following year.

If Charles had not already made up his mind for war with his Scottish subjects, the conduct of the parliament which he had just prorogued determined him again to have recourse to arms in vindication of his prerogative. He endeavoured, at first, to enlist the sympathies of the bulk of the English nation in his cause, but without effect; and his repeated appeals to his English people, setting forth the rectitude of his intentions and the justice of his cause, being answered by men who questioned the

one and denied the other, rather injured than served him. The people of England were not then in a mood to embark in a crusade against the civil and religious liberties of the north; and they had too much experience of the arbitrary spirit of the king to imagine that their own liberties would be better secured by extinguishing the flame which burned in the breasts of the sturdy and enthusiastic Covenanters.

But notwithstanding the many discouraging circumstances which surrounded him, Charles displayed a firmness of resolution to coerce the rebellious Scots by every means within his reach. The spring and part of the summer of 1640 were spent by both parties in military preparations. Field-Marshal Sir Alexander Leslie of Balgony, an old and experienced officer who had been in foreign service, was appointed generalissimo of the Scots army by the war committee. When mustered by the general at Choclee, it amounted to about 22,000 foot and 2,500 horse. A council of war was held at Dunse at which it was determined to invade England. Montrose, to whose command a division of the army, consisting of 2,000 foot and 500 horse, was intrusted, was absent when this meeting was held; but, although his sentiments had, by this time, undergone a complete change, seeing on his return no chance of preventing the resolution of the council, he dissembled his feelings and openly approved of the plan. There seems to be no doubt that in following this course he intended, on the first favourable opportunity, to declare for the king, and carry off such part of the army as should be inclined to follow him, which he reckoned at a third of the whole.³

The Earl of Argyle was commissioned by the Committee of Estates to secure the west and central Highlands. This, the eighth Earl and first Marquis of Argyle, had succeeded to the title only in 1638, although he had enjoyed the estates for many years before that, as his father had been living in Spain, an outlaw. He was born in 1598, and strictly educated in the protestant faith as established in Scotland at the Reformation.

In 1626 he was made a privy councillor, and in 1634 appointed one of the extraordinary lords of session. In 1638, at the General Assembly of Glasgow, he openly went over to the side of the Covenanters, and from that time was recognised as their political head. Argyle, in executing the task intrusted to him by the committee, appears to have been actuated more by feelings of private revenge than by an honest desire to carry out the spirit of his commission. The ostensible reason for his undertaking this charge was his thorough acquaintance with the Highlands and the Highlanders, and his ability to command the services of a large following of his own. "But the cheefe cause," according to Gordon of Rothiemay,⁴ "though least mentioned, was Argyle, his spleene that he carried upon the account of former disbleedgments betwixt his family and some of the Highland clans: therefore he was glade now to gett so faire a colour of revenge upon the publicke score, which he did not lett slippe. Another reasone he had besyde; it was his designe to swallow upp Badzenoch and Lochaber, and some landes belonging to the Mackdonalds, a numerous trybe, but haters of, and aequally hated by Argyle." He had some hold on these two districts, as, in 1639, he had become security for some of Huntly's debts to the latter's creditors. Argyle managed to seduce from their allegiance to Huntly the clan Cameron in Lochaber, who bore a strong resentment against their proper chief on account of some supposed injury done to the clan by the former warquis. Although they had little relish for the Covenant, still to gratify their revenge, they joined themselves to Argyle. A tribe of the Macdonalds who inhabited Lochaber, the Macranalds of Keppoch, who remained faithful to Huntly, met with very different treatment at the hands of Argyle, who devastated their district and burnt down their chief's dwelling at Keppoch.

During this same summer (July 1640), Argyle, who had raised an army of about 5,000 men, made a devastating raid into the district of Forfarshire belonging to the Earl of Airly. He made first for Airly castle, about five

³ Wishart's Memoirs, Edin. 1819, p. 24.

⁴ Scots Affairs, iii. 163.

miles north of Meigle, which, in the absence of the earl in England, was held by his son Lord Ogilvie, who had recently maintained it against Montrose. When Argyle came up, Ogilvie saw that resistance was hopeless, and abandoned the castle to the tender mercy of the enemy. Argyle without scruple razed the place to the ground, and is said to have shown himself so "extremely earnest" in the work of demolition "that he was seen taking a hammer in his hand and knocking down the hewed work of the doors and windows till he did sweat for heat at his work."⁵ Argyle's men carried off all they could from the house and the surrounding district, and rendered useless what they were compelled to leave behind.

From Airlly, Argyle proceeded to a seat belonging to Lord Ogilvie, Forthar in Glenisla, the "bonnie house o' Airlly," of the well-known song. Here he behaved in a manner for which it would be difficult for his warmest supporters to find the shadow of an excuse, even taking into consideration the roughness of the times. The place is said by Gordon to have been "no strength," so that there is still less excuse for his conduct. He treated Forthar in the same way that he did Airlly, and although Lady Ogilvie, who at the time was close on her confinement, asked Argyle to stay proceedings until she gave birth to her infant, he without scruple expelled her from the house, and proceeded with his work of destruction. Not only so, however, but "the Lady Drum, Dame Marian Douglas, who lived at that time in Kelly, hearing tell what extremity her grandchild, the Lady Ogilvie, was reduced to, did send a commission to Argyle, to whom the said Lady Drum was a kinswoman, requesting that, with his license, she might admit into her own house, her grandchild, the Lady Ogilvie, who at that time was near her delivery; but Argyle would give no license. This occasioned the Lady Drum for to fetch the Lady Ogilvie to her house of Kelly, and for to keep her there upon all hazard that might follow."

At the same time Argyle "was not forgetful to remember old quarrels to Sir John Ogilvie of Craigie." He sent a sergeant to Ogilvie's house to warn him to leave it, but the sergeant

thought Argyle must have made some mistake, as he found it no more than a simple unfortified country house, occupied only by a sick gentlewoman and some servants. The sergeant re-



First Marquis of Argyle.

turned and told this to Argyle, who waxed wroth and told him it was his duty simply to obey orders, commanding him at the same time to return and "deface and spoil the house." After the sergeant had received his orders, Argyle was observed to turn round and repeat to himself the Latin political maxim *Abscindantur qui nos perturbant*, "a maxime which many thought that he practised accurately, which he did upon the account of the proverb consequential thereunto, and which is the reason of the former, which Argyle was remarked likewise to have often in his mouth as a choice aphorism, and well observed by statesmen, *Quod mortui non mordent*."

Argyle next proceeded against the Earl of Athole, who, with about 1,200 followers, was lying in Breadalbane, ready to meet him. Argyle, whose army was about five times the size of Athole's, instead of giving fight, managed by stratagem to capture Athole and some of his friends, whom he sent to the Committee of Estates at Edinburgh.

⁵ Gor Jon of Rothiemay, iii. 165.

Argyle, after having thus gratified his private revenge and made a show of quieting the Highlands, returned to the lowlands.⁶

On the 20th of August General Leslie crossed the Tweed with his army, the van of which was led by Montrose on foot. This task, though performed with readiness and with every appearance of good will, was not voluntarily undertaken, but had been devolved upon Montrose by lot; none of the principal officers daring to take the lead of their own accord in such a dangerous enterprise. There can be no doubt that Montrose was insincere in his professions, and that those who suspected him were right in thinking that in his heart he was turned Royalist,⁷ a supposition which his correspondence with the king and his subsequent conduct fully justify.

Although the proper time had not arrived for throwing off the mask, Montrose immediately on his return to Scotland, after the close of this campaign, began to concert measures for counteracting the designs of the Covenanters; but his plans were embarrassed by some of his associates disclosing to the Covenanters the existence of an association which Montrose had formed at Cumbernauld for supporting the royal authority. A great outcry was raised against Montrose in consequence, but his influence was so great that the heads of the Covenanters were afraid to show any severity towards him. On subsequently discovering, however, that the king had written him letters which were intercepted and forcibly taken from the messenger, a servant of the Earl of Traquair, they apprehended him, along with Lord Napier of Merchiston, and Sir George Stirling of Keith, his relatives and intimate friends, and imprisoned them in the castle of Edinburgh. On the meeting of the parliament at Edinburgh in July, 1641, which was attended by the king in person, Montrose demanded to be tried before them, but his application was rejected by the Covenanters, who obtained an order from the parliament prohibiting him from going into the king's presence. After the king had returned to England, Montrose and his fellow-prisoners were liberated,

and he, thereupon, went to his own castle, where he remained for some time, ruminating on the course he should pursue for the relief of the king. The king, while in Scotland at this time, conferred honours upon several of the covenanting leaders, apparently for the purpose of conciliation, Argyle being raised to the dignity of a marquis.

Although Charles complied with the demands of his Scottish subjects, and heaped many favours and distinctions upon the heads of the leading Covenanters, they were by no means satisfied, and entered fully into the hostile views of their brethren in the south, with whom they made common cause. Having resolved to send an army into England to join the forces of the parliament, which had come to an open rupture with the sovereign, they attempted to gain over Montrose to their side by offering him the post of lieutenant-general of their army, and promising to accede to any demands he might make; but he rejected all their offers; and, as an important crisis was at hand, he hastened to England in the early part of the year 1643, in company with Lord Ogilvie, to lay the state of affairs before the king, and to offer him his advice and service in such an emergency. Charles, however, either from a want of confidence in the judgment of Montrose, who, to the rashness and impetuosity of youth, added, as he was led to believe, a desire of gratifying his personal feelings and vanity, or overcome by the calculating but fatal policy of the Marquis of Hamilton, who deprecated a fresh war between the king and his Scottish subjects, declined to follow the advice of Montrose, who had offered to raise an army immediately in Scotland to support him.

A convention of estates called by the Covenanters, without any authority from the king, met at Edinburgh on the 22d of June, 1643, and he soon perceived from the character and proceedings of this assembly, the great majority of which were Covenanters, the mistake he had committed in rejecting the advice of Montrose, and he now resolved, thenceforth, to be guided in his plans for subduing Scotland by the opinion of that nobleman. Accordingly, at a meeting held at Oxford, between the king and Montrose, in the month of December, 1643,

⁶ See Gordon of Rothiemay, iii. 163 et seq. Spalding, i. 290.

⁷ Guthrie's Memoirs, p. 70.

when the Scots army was about entering England, it was agreed that the Earl of Antrim, an Irish nobleman of great power and influence, who then lived at Oxford, should be sent to Ireland to raise auxiliaries with whom he should make a descent on the west parts of Scotland in the month of April following;—that the Marquis of Newcastle, who commanded the royal forces in the north of England, should furnish Montrose with a party of horse, with which he should enter the south of Scotland,—that an application should be made to the King of Denmark for some troops of German horse; and that a quantity of arms should be transported into Scotland from abroad.⁸

Instructions having been given to the Earl of Antrim to raise the Irish levy, and Sir James Cochran having been despatched to the continent as ambassador for the king, to procure foreign aid, Montrose left Oxford on his way to Scotland, taking York and Durham in his route. Near the latter city he had an interview with the Marquis of Newcastle for the purpose of obtaining a sufficient party of horse to escort him into Scotland, but all he could procure was about 100 horse, badly appointed, with two small brass field pieces.⁹ The Marquis sent orders to the king's officers, and to the captains of the militia in Cumberland and Westmoreland, to afford Montrose such assistance as they could, and he was in consequence joined on his way to Carlisle by 800 foot and three troops of horse, of Cumberland and Northumberland militia. With this small force, and about 200 horse, consisting of noblemen and gentlemen who had served as officers in Germany, France, or England, Montrose entered Scotland on the 13th of April, 1644. He had not, however, proceeded far, when a revolt broke out among the English soldiers, who immediately returned to England. In spite of this discouragement, Montrose proceeded on with his small party of horse towards Dumfries, which surrendered to him without opposition. After waiting there a few days, in expectation of hearing some tidings respecting the Earl of Antrim's movements, without receiving any, he retired to Carlisle,

to avoid being surprised by the Covenanters, large bodies of whom were hovering about in all directions.

To aid the views of Montrose, the king had appointed the Marquis of Huntly, on whose fidelity he could rely, his lieutenant-general in the north of Scotland. He, on hearing of the capture of Dumfries by Montrose, immediately collected a considerable body of horse and foot, consisting of Highlanders and lowlanders, at Kincardine-O'Neil, with the intention of crossing the Cairn-a-Mount; but being disappointed in not being joined by some forces from Perthshire, Angus, and the Mearns, which he expected, he altered his steps, and proceeded towards Aberdeen, which he took. Thence he despatched parties of his troops through the counties of Aberdeen and Banff, which brought in quantities of horses and arms for the use of his army. One party, consisting of 120 horse and 300 foot, commanded by the young laird of Drum and his brother, young Gicht, Colonel Nathaniel Gordou and Colonel Donald Farquharson and others, proceeded to the town of Montrose, which they took, killed one of the bailies, made the provost prisoner, and threw some cannon into the sea as they could not carry them away. But, on hearing that the Earl of Kinghorn was advancing upon them with the forces of Angus, they made a speedy retreat, leaving thirty of their foot behind them prisoners. To protect themselves against the army of the Marquis of Huntly, the inhabitants of Moray, on the north of the Spey, raised a regiment of foot and three companies of horse, which were quartered in the town of Elgin.

When the convention heard of Huntly's movements, they appointed the Marquis of Argyle to raise an army to quell this insurrection. He, accordingly, assembled at Perth a force of 5,000 foot and 800 horse out of Fife, Angus, Mearns, Argyle, and Perthshire, with which he advanced on Aberdeen. Huntly, hearing of his approach, fled from Aberdeen and retired to the town of Banff, where, on the day of his arrival, he disbanded his army. The marquis himself thereafter retired to Strathnaver, and took up his residence with the master of Reay. Argyle, after taking possession of Aberdeen, proceeded northward

⁸ Wishart.

⁹ The Duchess of Newcastle says, in the memoirs of her husband, that the number was 200.

and took the castles of Gicht and Kellie, made the lairds of Gicht and Haddo prisoners and sent them to Edinburgh, the latter being, along with one Captain Logan, afterwards beheaded.¹

We now return to Montrose, who, after an ineffectual attempt to obtain an accession of force from the army of Prince Rupert, Count Palatine of the Rhine, determined on again entering Scotland with his little band. But being desirous to learn the exact situation of affairs there, before putting this resolution into effect, he sent Lord Ogilvie and Sir William Rollock into Scotland, in disguise, for that purpose. They returned in about fourteen days, and brought a spiritless and melancholy account of the state of matters in the north, where they found all the passes, towns, and forts, in possession of the Covenanters, and where no man dared to speak in favour of the king. This intelligence was received with dismay by Montrose's followers, who now began to think of the best means of securing their own safety. In this unpleasant conjuncture of affairs, Montrose called them together to consult on the line of conduct they should pursue. Some advised him to return to Oxford and inform his majesty of the hopeless state of his affairs in Scotland, while others gave an opinion that he should resign his commission, and go abroad till a more favourable opportunity occurred of serving the king; but the chivalrons and undaunted spirit of Montrose disdained to follow either of these courses, and he resolved upon the desperate expedient of venturing into the very heart of Scotland, with only one or two companions, in the hope of being able to rally round his person a force sufficient to support the declining interests of his sovereign.

Having communicated this intention privately to Lord Ogilvie, he put under his charge the few gentlemen who had remained faithful to him, that he might conduct them to the king; and having accompanied them to a distance, he withdrew from them clandestinely, leaving his servants, horses, and baggage behind him, and returned to Carlisle. Having prepared himself for his journey, he selected Sir William Rollock, a gentleman of tried honour,

and one Sibbald, to accompany him. Disguised as a groom, and riding upon a lean, worn-out horse, and leading another in his hand, Montrose passed for Sibbald's servant, in which condition and capacity he proceeded to the borders. The party had not proceeded far when an occurrence took place, which considerably disconcerted them. Meeting with a Scottish soldier, who had served under the Marquis of Newcastle in England, he, after passing Rollock and Sibbald, went up to the marquis, and accosted him by his name. Montrose told him that he was quite mistaken; but the soldier being positive, and judging that the marquis was concerned in some important affair, replied, with a countenance which betokened a kind heart, "Do not I know my lord Marquis of Montrose well enough? But go your way, and God be with you."² When Montrose saw that he could not preserve an incognito from the penetrating eye of the soldier, he gave him some money and dismissed him.

This occurrence excited alarm in the mind of Montrose, and made him accelerate his journey. Within four days he arrived at the house of Tullibelton, among the hills near the Tay, which belonged to Patrick Graham of Inchbrakie, his cousin, and a royalist. No situation was better fitted for concocting his plans, and for communicating with those clans and the gentry of the adjoining lowlands who stood well affected to the king. It formed, in fact, a centre, or *point d'appui* to the royalists of the Highlands and the adjoining lowlands, from which a pretty regular communication could be kept up, without any of those dangers which would have arisen in the lowlands.

For some days Montrose did not venture to appear among the people in the neighbourhood, nor did he consider himself safe even in Tullibelton house, but passed the night in an obscure cottage, and in the day-time wandered alone among the neighbouring mountains, ruminating over the strange peculiarity of his situation, and waiting the return of his fellow-travellers, whom he had despatched to collect intelligence on the state of the kingdom. These messengers came back to him after some days' absence, bringing with them the most cheerless accounts of the

¹ Gordon of Sallagh, p. 519.

² Wishart, p. 64

situation of the country, and of the persecutions which the royalists suffered at the hands of the Covenanters. Among other distressing pieces of intelligence, they communicated to Montrose the premature and unsuccessful attempt of the Marquis of Huntly in favour of the royal cause, and of his retreat to Strathnaver to avoid the fury of his enemies. These accounts greatly affected Montrose, who was grieved to find that the Gordons, who were stern royalists, should be exposed, by the abandonment of their chief, to the revenge of their enemies; but he consoled himself with the reflection, that as soon as he should be enabled to unfurl the royal standard, the tide of fortune would turn.

While cogitating on the course he should pursue in this conjuncture, a report reached him from some shepherds on the hills that a body of Irish troops had landed in the West, and was advancing through the Highlands. Montrose at once concluded that these were the auxiliaries whom the Earl of Antrim had undertaken to send him four months before, and such they proved to be. This force, which amounted to 1,500 men, was under the command of Alexander Macdonald, son of Coll Mac-Gillespie Macdonald of Iona, who had been greatly persecuted by the family of Argyle. Macdonald had arrived early in July, 1644, among the Hebrides, and had landed and taken the castles of Meigray and Kinloch Alan. He had then disembarked his forces in Knoydart, where he expected to be joined by the Marquis of Huntly and the Earl of Seaforth. As he advanced into the interior, he despatched the fiery cross for the purpose of summoning the clans to his standard; but, although the cross was carried through a large extent of country, even to Aberdeen, he was joined at first only by the clan Donald, under the captain of clan Ranald, and the laird of Glengary. The Marquis of Argyle collected an army to oppose the progress of Macdonald, and, to cut off his retreat to Ireland, he sent some ships of war to Loch Eishord, where Macdonald's fleet lay, which captured or destroyed them. This loss, while it frustrated an intention Macdonald entertained of returning to Ireland, in consequence of the disappointment he had met with in not being joined by the clans, stimulated

him to farther exertions in continuing his march, in the hope of meeting Montrose.

As Macdonald was perfectly ignorant of Montrose's movements, and thought it likely that he might be still at Carlisle, waiting till he should hear of Macdonald's arrival, he sent letters to him by the hands of a confidential friend, who resided in the neighbourhood of Inchbrakie's house. This gentleman, who knew nothing of Montrose's return to Scotland, having luckily communicated to Mr. Graham the secret of being intrusted with letters to his kinsman, Montrose, Graham offered to see them safely delivered to Montrose, though he should ride to Carlisle himself. The gentleman in question then delivered the letters to Graham, and Montrose having received them, wrote an answer as if from Carlisle, in which he requested Macdonald to keep up his spirits, that he would soon be joined by a seasonable reinforcement and a general at their head, and he ordered him with all expedition to march down into Athole. In fixing on Athole as the place of his rendezvous, Montrose is said to have been actuated by an implicit reliance on the fidelity and loyalty of the Athole-men, and by a high opinion of their courage. They lay, besides, under many obligations to himself, and he calculated that he had only to appear among them to command their services in the cause of their sovereign.

When Macdonald received these instructions, he marched towards Athole; but in passing through Badenoch he was threatened with an attack by the Earls of Sutherland and Scaforth, at the head of some of their people, and by the Frasers, Grants, Rosses, and Monroes, and other inhabitants of Moray, who had assembled at the top of Strathspey; but Macdonald very cautiously avoided them, and hastened into Athole. On arriving in Athole, Macdonald was coldly received by the people of that as well as the surrounding country, who doubted whether he had any authority from the king; and besides, they hesitated to place themselves under the command of a person of neither noble nor ancient lineage, and whom they considered an upstart. This indecision might have proved fatal to Macdonald, who was closely pressed in his rear by the army of Argyle, had not these untoward deliberations

been instantly put an end to by the arrival of Montrose at Blair, where Macdonald had fixed his head-quarters. Montrose had travelled seventy miles on foot, in a Highland dress, accompanied by Patrick Graham, his cousin, as his guide.³ His appearance was hailed by his countrymen with every demonstration of joy, and they immediately made him a spontaneous offer of their services.

Accordingly, on the following day, the Athole-men, to the number of about 800, consisting chiefly of the Stewarts and Robertsons, put themselves under arms and flocked to the standard of Montrose. Thus, in little more than twenty-four hours, Montrose saw himself at the head of a force of upwards of 2,000 men, animated by an enthusiastic attachment to his person and to the cause which he had espoused. The extraordinary contrast between his present commanding position, and the situation in which he was placed a few days before, as a forlorn wanderer among the mountains, produced a powerful effect upon the daring and chivalrous spirit of Montrose, who looked forward to the success of his enterprise with the eagerness of a man who considered the destinies of his sovereign as altogether depending upon his individual exertions. Impressed with the necessity of acting with promptitude, he did not hesitate long as to the course he should pursue. He might have immediately gone in quest of Argyle, who had followed the army of Macdonald, with slow and cautious steps, and by one of those sudden movements which no man knew better how to execute with advantage, surprised and defeated his adversary; but such a plan did not accord with the designs of Montrose, who resolved to open the campaign at once in the lowlands, and thus give confidence to the friends and supporters of the king.

The general opinion which the Lowlanders of this period entertained regarding their upland neighbours was not very respectful. A covenanting wit, in a poem which he wrote against the bishops only a few years before, says of one whose extraction was from the other side of the Grampians,

“ A bishop and a Highlander, how can'st thou
honest be ? ”

³ Wishart, p. 69.

as if these two qualifications were of themselves sufficient, without any known vice, to put a man completely beyond the pale of virtue. It seems, indeed, to have been a general belief at the time that this primitive and sequestered people, as they were avowedly out of the saving circle of the Covenant, were also out of the limits of both law and religion, and therefore hopelessly and utterly given up to all sorts of wickedness. Not only were murder and robbery among the list of offences which they were accused of daily committing, but there even seems to have been a popular idea that sorcery was a prevailing crime amongst them. They were also charged with a general inclination to popery, an offence which, from the alarms and superstitions of the time, had now come, in general phraseology, to signify a condensation of all others. Along with this horrible notion of the mountaineers, there was not associated the slightest idea of their ardent and chivalrous character; nor was there any general sensation of terror for the power which they undoubtedly possessed of annoying the peaceful inhabitants, and thwarting the policy of the Low country, no considerable body of Highlanders having been there seen in arms for several generations.

In pursuance of his determination, Montrose put his small army in motion the same day towards Strathearn, in passing through which he expected to be joined by some of the inhabitants of that and the adjoining country. At the same time he sent forward a messenger with a friendly notice to the Menzieses of his intention to pass through their country, but instead of taking this in good part they maltreated the messenger and harassed the rear of his army. This unprovoked attack so exasperated Montrose, that he ordered his men, when passing by Weem castle, which belonged to the clan Menzies, to plunder and lay waste their lands, and to burn their houses, an order which was literally obeyed. He expected that this example of summary vengeance would serve as a useful lesson to deter others, who might be disposed to imitate the conduct of the Menzieses, from following a similar course. Notwithstanding the time spent in making these reprisals, Montrose passed the Tay with a part of his forces the same evening, and the remainder

followed very early the next morning. He had, at the special request of the Athole-men themselves, placed them under the command of his kinsman, Patrick Graham of Inchbrakie, and he now sent him forward with a select party to reconnoitre. Inchbrakie soon returned with information that he had observed a party of armed men stationed upon the hill of Buchanty. On inquiry, Montrose ascertained that this body was commanded by Lord Kilpont, eldest son of the Earl of Menteith, and by Sir John Drummond, son of the Earl of Perth, both of whom were his relations. The force in question, which consisted of about 500 men, was on its way to Perth to join the other covenanting troops who were stationed there. Montrose immediately marched up to this body, with the intention, if he could not prevail on them to join him, of attacking them, but before he had approached sufficiently near, Lord Kilpont, who had ascertained that Montrose commanded, sent some of his principal officers to him to ascertain what his object was in thus advancing. Montrose having explained his views and stated that he acted by the king's authority, and having entreated them to return to their allegiance, they and the whole of their party immediately joined him. This new accession augmented Montrose's army to about 3,000 men.

Montrose now learned from his new allies that the Covenanters had assembled their forces in great numbers at Perth, and that they lay there waiting for his approach. The covenanting army, in fact, was more than double that of Montrose, amounting to about 6,000 foot and 700 horse, to which were attached four pieces of artillery. Montrose, on the other hand, had not a single horseman, and but three horses, two of which were for his own use, and the other for that of Sir William Rollock, and besides he had no artillery. Yet with such a decided disparity, Montrose resolved to march directly to Perth and attack the enemy. He appears to have been influenced in this resolution by the consideration of the proximity of Argyle with his army, and the danger in which he would be placed by being hemmed in by two hostile armies: he could expect to avoid such an embarrassment only by risking an immediate engagement.

As the day was too far advanced to proceed to Perth, Montrose ordered his men to bivouac during the night about three miles from Buchanty, and began his march by dawn of day. As soon as Lord Elcho, the commander of the covenanting army, heard of Montrose's approach, he left Perth and drew up his army on Tippermuir, a plain of some extent between four and five miles west from the town. Reserving to himself the command of the right wing, he committed the charge of the left to Sir James Scott, an able and skilful officer, who had served with great honour in the Venetian army; and to the Earl of Tullibardine he intrusted the command of the centre. The horse were divided and placed on each wing with the view of surrounding the army of Montrose, should he venture to attack them in their position. As soon as Montrose perceived the enemy thus drawn up in battle array, he made the necessary dispositions for attacking them. To counteract as much as possible the danger arising to such a small body of men, unprotected by cavalry, from the extended line of the Covenanters, Montrose endeavoured to make his line as extensive as possible with safety, by limiting his files to three men deep. As the Irish had neither swords nor pikes to oppose the cavalry, they were stationed in the centre of the line, and the Highlanders, who were provided with swords and Lochaber axes, were placed on the wings, as better fitted to resist the attacks of the cavalry. Some of the Highlanders were, however, quite destitute of arms of every description, and it is related on the authority of an eye-witness that Montrose, seeing their helpless condition, thus quaintly addressed them:—"It is true you have no arms; your enemies, however, have plenty. My advice, therefore, is, that as there happens to be a great abundance of stones upon this moor, every man should provide himself, in the first place, with as stout a stone as he can well manage, rush up to the first Covenanter he meets, beat out his brains, take his sword, and then, I believe, he will be at no loss how to proceed."⁴ This advice, as will be seen, was really acted upon. As Montrose was almost destitute of

⁴ *Gentleman's Mag.*, vol. xvi. p. 153.

powder, he ordered the Irish forces to husband their fire till they should come close to the enemy, and after a simultaneous discharge from the three ranks, (the front rank kneeling,) to assail the enemy thereafter as they best could. To oppose the left wing of the Covenanters, commanded by Sir James Scott, Montrose took upon himself the command of his own right, placing Lord Kilpont at the head of the left, and Macdonald, his major-general, over the centre.

During the progress of these arrangements, Montrose despatched an accomplished young nobleman, named Drummond, eldest son of Lord Maderty, with a message to the chiefs of the Covenanters' army, entreating them to lay down their arms and return to their duty and obedience to their sovereign. Instead, however, of returning any answer to this message, they seized the messenger, and sent him to Perth under an escort, with an intimation that, on obtaining a victory over his master, they would execute him. Indeed, the probability of a defeat seems never for a moment to have entered into the imaginations of the Covenanters, and they had been assured by Frederick Carmichael, a minister who had preached to them the same day, being Sunday, 1st September, "that if ever God spoke truth out of his mouth, he promised them, in the name of God, a certain victory that day."⁵

There being no hopes, therefore, of an accommodation, both armies, after advancing towards each other, remained motionless for a short time, as if unwilling to begin the attack; but this state of matters was speedily put an end to by the advance of a select skirmishing party under the command of Lord Drummond, sent out from the main body of the covenanting army, for the double purpose of distracting the attention of Montrose, and inducing his troops to leave their ranks, and thus create confusion among them; but Montrose kept his men in check, and contented himself with sending out a few of his men to oppose them. Lord Drummond, whom Baillie appears to have suspected of treachery, and his party were routed at the first onset, and fled back upon the main body in great disorder. This trivial affair decided

the fate of the day, for the Covenanters, many of whom were undisciplined, seeing the unexpected defeat of Lord Drummond's party, became quite dispirited, and began to show symptoms which indicated a disposition for immediate flight. The confusion into which the main body had been thrown by the retreat of the advanced party, and the indecision which seemed now to prevail in the Covenanters' army in consequence of that reverse, were observed by the watchful eye of Montrose, who saw that the favourable moment for striking a decisive blow had arrived. He therefore gave orders to his men to advance, who, immediately setting up a loud shout, rushed forward at a quick pace towards the enemy. They were met by a random discharge from some cannon which the Covenanters had placed in front of their army, but which did little or no execution. When sufficiently near, Montrose's musketeers halted, and, as ordered, poured a volley into the main rank of the Covenanters, which immediately gave way. The cavalry of the Covenanters, thereupon, issued from their stations and attacked the royalists, who, in their turn, defended themselves with singular intrepidity. While the armed Highlanders made ample use of their Lochaber axes and swords, the Irish steadily opposed the attacks of the horse with the butt ends of their muskets; but the most effective annoyance which the cavalry met with appears to have proceeded from the unarmed Highlanders, who having supplied themselves with a quantity of stones, as suggested by Montrose, discharged them with well-directed aim at the horses and their riders. The result was, that after a short struggle, the cavalry were obliged to make a precipitate retreat. While this contest was going on, another part of Montrose's army was engaged with the right wing of the covenanting army, under Sir James Scott, but although this body made a longer and more determined resistance, and galled the party opposed to them by an incessant fire of musketry, they were at last overpowered by the Athol-men, who rushed upon them with their broad-swords, and cut down and wounded a considerable number. The rout of the Covenanters now became general. The horsemen saved themselves by the fleetness of their horses; but during the pursuit, which was kept

⁵ Wishart, p. 77.

up to a distance of six or seven miles, many hundreds of foot were killed, and a considerable number made prisoners,⁶ some of whom afterwards served in Montrose's army. The loss on the side of Montrose appears to have been very trifling. By this victory, and the subsequent capture of Perth, which he entered the same day, Montrose was enabled to equip his army with all those warlike necessaries of which it had been so remarkably destitute in the morning, and of which the Covenanters left him an abundant supply.⁷

CHAPTER XIII.

A. D. 1644 (SEPTEMBER)—1645 (FEBRUARY).

BRITISH SOVEREIGN:—Charles I., 1625—1649.

Montrose crosses the Tay to Collace—Marches through Angus and Mearns—Battle of Aberdeen—Supineness of the Gordons—Movements of Argyle—Montrose retreats through Badenoch—Second march of Montrose to the north—Battle of Fyvie—Montrose retreats to Strathbogie—Secession from his camp—Montrose enters and wastes Breadalbane and Argyle—Marches to Lochness—Argyle enters Lochaber—Battle of Inverlochy.

MONTROSE now entertained confident expectations that many of the royalists of the surrounding country who had hitherto kept aloof would join him; but after remaining three days at Perth, to give them an opportunity of rallying round his standard, he had the mortification to find that, with the exception of Lords Dupplin and Spynie, and a few gentlemen from the Carse of Gowrie, who came to him, his anticipations were not to be realized. The spirits of the royalists had been too much subdued by the severities of the Covenanters for them all at once to risk their lives and fortunes on the issue of what they had long considered a hopeless cause; and although Montrose had succeeded in dispersing one army with a greatly inferior force, yet it was well

known that that army was composed of raw and undisciplined men, and that the Covenanters had still large bodies of well-trained troops in the field.

Thus disappointed in his hopes, and understanding that the Marquis of Argyle was fast approaching with a large army, Montrose crossed the Tay on the 4th of September, directing his course towards Coupar-Angus, and encamped at night in the open fields near Collace. His object in proceeding northward was to endeavour to raise some of the loyal clans, and thus to put himself in a sufficiently strong condition to meet Argyle. Montrose had given orders to the army to march early next morning, but by break of day, and before the drums had beat, he was alarmed by an uproar in the camp. Perceiving his men running to their arms in a state of fury and rage, Montrose, apprehensive that the Highlanders and Irish had quarrelled, immediately rushed in among the thickest of the crowd to pacify them, but to his great grief and dismay, he ascertained that the confusion had arisen from the assassination of his valued friend Lord Kilpont. He had fallen a victim to the blind fury of James Stewart of Ardvairlich, with whom he had slept the same night, and who had long enjoyed his confidence and friendship. According to Wishart, wishing to ingratiate himself with the Covenanters, he formed a design to assassinate Montrose or his major-general, Macdonald; and endeavoured to entice Kilpont to concur in his wicked project. He, therefore, on the night in question, slept with his lordship, and having prevailed upon him to rise and take a walk in the fields before daylight, on the pretence of refreshing themselves, he there disclosed his horrid purpose, and entreated his lordship to concur therein. Lord Kilpont rejected the base proposal with horror and indignation, which so alarmed Stewart that, afraid lest his lordship might discover the matter, he suddenly drew his dirk and mortally wounded Kilpont. Stewart, thereupon, fled, and thereafter joined the Marquis of Argyle, who gave him a commission in his army.⁸

⁶ There is a great discrepancy between contemporary writers as to the number killed. Wishart states it at 2,000; Spalding, at 1,300, and 800 prisoners; though he says that some reckoned the number at 1,500 killed. Gordon of Sallagh mentions only 300. Gordon of Ruthven, in *Britane's Distemper*, gives the number at 2,000 killed and 1,000 prisoners. Baillie says (vol. ii. p. 233, ed. 1841) that no quarter was given, and not a prisoner was taken.

⁷ *Britane's Distemper*, p. 73.

⁸ Wishart, p. 84.—Stewart's descendant, the late Robert Stewart of Ardvairlich, gives an account of the above incident, founded on a "constant tradition in the family," tending to show that his ancestor was not so much a man of base and treacherous character,

Montrose now marched upon Dundee, which refused to surrender. Not wishing to waste his time upon the hazardous issue of a siege with a hostile army in his rear, Montrose proceeded through Angus and the Mearns, and in the course of his route was joined by the Earl of Airly, his two sons, Sir Thomas and Sir David Ogilvie, and a considerable number of their friends and vassals, and some gentlemen from the Mearns and Aberdeenshire. This was a seasonable addition to Montrose's force, which had been greatly weakened by the absence of some of the Highlanders who had gone home to deposit their spoils, and by the departure of Lord Kilpont's retainers, who had gone to Montroith with his corpse.

After the battle of Tippermuir, Lord Elcho had retired, with his regiment and some fugitives, to Aberdeen, where he found Lord Burleigh and other commissioners from the convention of estates. As soon as they heard of the approach of Montrose, Burleigh, who acted as chief commissioner, immediately assembled the Forbesses, the Frasers, and the other friends of the covenanting interest, and did everything in his power to gain over to his side as many persons as he could from those districts where Montrose expected assistance. In this way Burleigh increased his force to 2,500 foot and 500 horse, but some of these, consisting of Gordons, and others who were obliged to take up arms, could not be relied upon.

When Montrose heard of these preparations, he resolved, notwithstanding the disparity of force, his own army now amounting only to

as of "violent passions and singular temper." James Stewart, it is said, was so irritated at the Irish, for committing some excesses on lands belonging to him, that he challenged their commander, Macdonald, to single combat. By advice of Kilpont, Montrose arrested both, and brought about a seeming conciliation. When encamped at Collace, Montrose gave an entertainment to his officers, on returning from which Ardvoirlich, "heated with drink, began to blame Kilpont for the part he had taken in preventing his obtaining redress, and reflecting against Montrose for not allowing him what he considered proper reparation. Kilpont, of course, defended the conduct of himself and his relative, Montrose, till their argument came to high words, and finally, from the state they were both in, by an easy transition, to blows, when Ardvoirlich, with his dirk, struck Kilpont dead on the spot." He fled, leaving his eldest son, Henry, mortally wounded at Tippermuir, on his death-bed.—Intro. to *Legend of Montrose*.

1,500 foot and 44 horse, to hasten his march and attack them before Argyle should come up. On arriving near the bridge of Dee, he found it strongly fortified and guarded by a considerable force. He did not attempt to force a passage, but, directing his course to the west, along the river, crossed it at a ford at the Mills of Drum, and encamped at Crathas that night (Wednesday, 11th September). The Covenanters, the same day, drew up their army at the Two Mile Cross, a short distance from Aberdeen, where they remained till Thursday night, when they retired into the town. On the same night, Montrose marched down Deeside, and took possession of the ground which the Covenanters had just left.⁹

On the following morning, viz., Friday, 13th September, about eleven o'clock, the Covenanters marched out of Aberdeen to meet Montrose, who, on their approach, despatched a drummer to beat a parley, and sent a commissioner along with him bearing a letter to the provost and bailies of Aberdeen, commanding and charging them to surrender the town, promising that no more harm should be done to it; "otherwise, if they would disobey, that then he desired them to remove old aged men, women, and children out of the way, and to stand to their own peril." Immediately on receipt of this letter, the provost called a meeting of the council, which was attended by Lord Burleigh, and, after a short consultation, an answer was sent along with the commissioner declining to surrender the town. On their return the drummer was killed by the Covenanters, at a place called Justice Mills; which violation of the law of nations so exasperated Montrose, that he gave orders to his men not to spare any of the enemy who might fall into their hands. His anger at this occurrence is strongly depicted by Spalding, who says, that "he grew mad, and became furious and impatient."

As soon as Montrose received notice of the refusal of the magistrates to surrender the town, he made the necessary dispositions for attacking the enemy. From his paucity of cavalry, he was obliged to extend his line, as he had done at Tippermuir, to prevent the enemy

⁹ Spalding, vol. ii. p. 405.

from surrounding or outflanking him with their horse, and on each of his wings he posted his small body of horsemen along with select parties of musketeers and archers. To James Hay and Sir Nathaniel Gordon he gave the command of the right wing, committing the charge of the left to Sir William Rollock, all men of tried bravery and experience.

The Covenanters began the battle by a cannonade from their field-pieces, and, from their commanding position, gave considerable annoyance to the royal forces, who were very deficient in artillery. After the firing had been kept up for some time, Lord Lewis Gordon, third son of the Marquis of Huntly, a young man of a very ardent disposition, and of a violent and changeable temper, who commanded the left wing of the Covenanters, having obtained possession of some level ground where his horse could act, made a demonstration to attack Montrose's right wing; which being observed by Montrose, he immediately ordered Sir William Rollock, with his party of horse, from the left wing to the assistance of the right. These united wings, which consisted of only 44 horse, not only repulsed the attack of a body of 300, but threw them into complete disorder, and forced them to retreat upon the main body, leaving many dead and wounded on the field. Montrose restrained these brave cavaliers from pursuing the body they had routed, anticipating that their services might be soon required at the other wing; and he was not mistaken, for no sooner did the covenanting general perceive the retreat of Lord Lewis Gordon than he ordered an attack to be made upon the left wing of Montrose's army; but Montrose, with a celerity almost unexampled, moved his whole cavalry from the right to the left wing, which, falling upon the flank of their assailants sword in hand, forced them to fly, with great slaughter. In this affair Montrose's horse took Forbes of Craigievar and Forbes of Boyndlie prisoners.

The unsuccessful attacks on the wings of Montrose's army had in no shape affected the future fortune of the day, as both armies kept their ground, and were equally animated with hopes of ultimate success. Vexed, but by no means intimidated by their second defeat, the gentlemen who composed Burleigh's horse con-

sulted together as to the best mode of renewing the attack; and, being of opinion that the success of Montrose's cavalry was owing chiefly to the expert musketeers, with whom they were interlined, they resolved to imitate the same plan, by mixing among them a select body of foot, and renewing the charge a third time, with redoubled energy. But this scheme, which might have proved fatal to Montrose, if tried, was frustrated by a resolution he came to, of making an instant and simultaneous attack upon the enemy. Perceiving their horse still in great confusion, and a considerable way apart from their main body, he determined upon attacking them with his foot before they should get time to rally; and galloping up to his men, who had been greatly galled by the enemies' cannon, he told them that there was no good to be expected by the two armies keeping at such a distance—that in this way there was no means of distinguishing the strong from the weak, nor the coward from the brave man, but that if they would once make a home charge upon these timorous and effeminate striplings, as he called Burleigh's horse, they would never stand their attack. "Come on, then," said he, "my brave fellows, fall down upon them with your swords and muskets, drive them before you, and make them suffer the punishment due to their perfidy and rebellion."¹ These words were no sooner uttered, than Montrose's men rushed forward at a quick pace and fell upon the enemy, sword in hand. The Covenanters were paralyzed by the suddenness and impetuosity of the attack, and, turning their backs, fled in the utmost trepidation and confusion, towards Aberdeen. The slaughter was tremendous, as the victors spared no man. The road leading from the field of battle to Aberdeen was strewn with the dead and the dying; the streets of Aberdeen were covered with the bodies, and stained with the blood of its inhabitants. "The lieutenant followed the chase into Aberdeen, his men heaving and cutting down all manner of men they could overtake, within the town, upon the streets, or in the houses, and round about the town, as our men were fleeing, with broad swords, but (*i. e.* without) mercy

¹ Wishart, p. 89.

or reined. Their cruel Irish, seeing a man well clad, would first tyr (strip) him, and save his clothes unspoiled, syne kill the man."² In fine, according to this writer, who was an eye-witness, the town of Aberdeen, which, but a few years before, had suffered for its loyalty, was now, by the same general who had then oppressed it, delivered up by him to be indiscriminately plundered by his Irish forces, for having espoused the same cause which he himself had supported. For four days did these men indulge in the most dreadful excesses, "and nothing," continues Spalding, was "heard but pitiful howling, crying, weeping, mourning, through all the streets." Yet Guthry says that Montrose "shewed great mercy, both pardoning the people and protecting their goods."³

It is singular, that although the battle continued for four hours without any determinate result, Montrose lost very few men, a circumstance the more extraordinary as the cannon of the Covenanters were placed upon advantageous ground, whilst those of Montrose were rendered quite ineffective by being situated in a position from which they could not be brought to bear upon the enemy. An anecdote, characteristic of the bravery of the Irish, and of their coolness in enduring the privations of war, has been preserved. During the cannonade on the side of the Covenanters, an Irishman had his leg shot away by a cannon ball, but which kept still attached to the stump by means of a small bit of skin, or flesh. His comrades-in-arms being affected with his disaster, this brave man, without betraying any symptoms of pain, thus cheerfully addressed them:—"This, my companions, is the fate of war, and what none of us ought to grudge: go on, and behave as becomes you; and, as for me, I am certain my lord, the marquis, will make me a trooper, as I am now disabled for the foot service." Then, taking a knife from his pocket, he deliberately opened it, and cut asunder the skin which retained the leg, without betraying the least emotion, and delivered it to one of his companions for interment. As soon as this courageous man was able to mount a horse, his wish to become a trooper was complied with,

in which capacity he afterwards distinguished himself.⁴

Hoping that the news of the victory he had obtained would create a strong feeling in his favour among the Gordons, some of whom had actually fought against him, under the command of Lord Lewis Gordon, Montrose sent a part of his army towards Kintore and Inverury, the following day, to encourage the people of the surrounding country to declare for him; but he was sadly disappointed in his expectations. The fact is, that ever since the appointment of Montrose as lieutenant-general of the kingdom,—an appointment which trenched upon the authority of the Marquis of Huntly as lieutenant of the north,—the latter had become quite lukewarm in the cause of his sovereign; and, although he was aware of the intentions of his son, Lord Lewis, to join the Covenanters, he quietly allowed him to do so without remonstrance. But, besides being thus, in some measure, superseded by Montrose, the marquis was actuated by personal hostility to him on account of the treatment he had formerly received from him; and it appears to have been partly to gratify his spleen that he remained a passive observer of a struggle which involved the very existence of the monarchy itself. Whatever may have been Huntly's reasons for not supporting Montrose, his apathy and indifference had a deadening influence upon his numerous retainers, who had no idea of taking the field but at the command of their chief.

As Montrose saw no possibility of opposing the powerful and well-appointed army of Argyll, which was advancing upon him with slow and cautious steps, disappointed as he had been of the aid which he had calculated upon, he resolved to march into the Highlands, and there collect such of the clans as were favourably disposed to the royal cause. Leaving Aberdeen, therefore, on the 16th of September, with the remainder of his forces, he joined the camp at Kintore, whence he despatched Sir William Rollock to Oxford to inform the king of the events of the campaign, and of his present situation, and to solicit him to send supplies.

We must now advert to the progress of

² Spalding, vol. ii. 407.

³ Memoirs, p. 131.

⁴ Wishart, p. 91.

Argyle's army, the slow movements of which form an unfavourable contrast with the rapid marches of Montrose's army. On the 4th of September, four days after the battle of Tippermuir, Argyle, who had been pursuing the Irish forces under Macdonald, had arrived with his Highlanders at Stirling, where, on the following day, he was joined by the Earl of Lothian and his regiment, which had shortly before been brought over from Ireland. After raising some men in Stirlingshire, he marched to Perth upon the 10th, where he was joined by some Fife men, and Lord Bargenny's and Sir Frederick Hamilton's regiments of horse, which had been recalled from Newcastle for that purpose. With this increased force, which now consisted of about 3,000 foot and two regular cavalry regiments, besides ten troops of horse, Argyle left Perth on the 14th of September for the north, and in his route was joined by the Earl Marshal, Lords Gordon, Fraser, and Crichton, and other Covenanters. He arrived at Aberdeen upon the 19th of September, where he issued a proclamation, declaring the Marquis of Montrose and his followers traitors to religion and to their king and country, and offering a reward of 20,000 pounds Scots, to any person who should bring in Montrose dead or alive.⁵ Spalding laments with great pathos and feeling the severe hardships to which the citizens of Aberdeen had been subjected by these frequent visitations of hostile armies, and alluding to the present occupancy of the town by Argyle, he observes that "this multitude of people lived upon free quarters, a new grief to both towns, whereof there was quartered on poor old Aberdeen Argyle's own three regiments. The soldiers had their baggage carried, and craved nothing but house-room and fire. But ilk captain, with twelve gentlemen, had free quarters, (so long as the town had meat and drink,) for two ordinaries, but the third ordinary they furnished themselves out of their own baggage and provisions, having store of meal, molt and sheep, carried with them. But, the first night, they drank out all the stale ale in Aberdeen, and lived upon wort thereafter."⁶

Argyle was now within half a day's march

of Montrose, but, strange to tell, he made no preparations to follow him, and spent two or three days in Aberdeen doing absolutely nothing. After spending this time in inglorious supineness, Argyle put his army in motion in the direction of Kintore. Montrose, on hearing of his approach, concealed his cannon in a bog, and leaving behind him some of his heavy baggage, made towards the Spey with the intention of crossing it. On arriving at the river, he encamped near the old castle of Rothiemurchus; but finding that the boats used in passing the river had been removed to the north side of the river, and that a large armed force from the country on the north of the Spey had assembled on the opposite bank to oppose his passage, Montrose marched his army into the forest of Abernethy. Argyle only proceeded at first as far as Strathbogie; but instead of pursuing Montrose, he allowed his troops to waste their time in plundering the properties and laying waste the lands of the Gordons in Strathbogie and the Enzie, under the very eyes of Lord Gordon and Lord Lewis Gordon, neither of whom appears to have endeavoured to avert such a calamity. Spalding says that it was "a wonderful unnaturalitie in the Lord Gordon to suffer his father's lands and friends in his own sight to be thus wrecked and destroyed in his father's absence;" but Lord Gordon likely had it not in his power to stay these proceedings, which, if not done at the instigation, may have received the approbation of his violent and headstrong younger brother, who had joined the Covenanters' standard. On the 27th of September, Argyle mustered his forces at the Bog of Gicht, when they were found to amount to about 4,000 men; but although the army of Montrose did not amount to much more than a third of that number, and was within twenty miles' distance, he did not venture to attack him. After remaining a few days in Abernethy forest, Montrose passed through the forest of Rothiemurchus, and following the course of the Spey, marched through Badenoch to Athole, which he reached on 1st October.

When Argyle heard of the departure of Montrose from the forest of Abernethy, he made a feint of following him. He accordingly set his army in motion along Spey-side,

⁵ Spalding, vol. ii. p. 414.

⁶ Idem.

and crossing the river himself with a few horse, marched up some distance along the north bank, and recrossed, when he ordered his troops to halt. He then proceeded to Forres to attend a committee meeting of Covenanters to concert a plan of operations in the north, at which the Earl of Sutherland, Lord Lovat, the sheriff of Moray, the lairds of Balnagown, Innes and Pluscardine, and many others were present. From Forres Argyle went to Inverness, and after giving some instructions to Sir Mungo Campbell of Lawers, and the laird of Buchanan, the commanders of the regiments stationed there, he returned to his army, which he marched through Badenoch in pursuit of Montrose. From Athole Montrose sent Macdonald with a party of 500 men to the Western Highlands, to invite the laird of Maclean, the captain of clan Ranald, and others to join him. Marching down to Dunkeld, Montrose himself proceeded rapidly through Angus towards Brechin and Montrose.⁷

Although some delay had been occasioned in Montrose's movements by his illness for a few days in Badenoch, this was fully compensated for by the tardy motions of Argyle, who, on entering Badenoch, found that his vigilant antagonist was several days' march a-head of him. This intelligence, however, did not induce him in the least to accelerate his march. Hearing, when passing through Badenoch, that Montrose had been joined by some of the inhabitants of that country, Argyle, according to Spalding, "left nothing of that country undestroyed, not not one four footed beast;" and Athole shared a similar fate.

At the time Montrose entered Angus, a committee of the estates, consisting of the Earl Marshal and other barons, was sitting in Aberdeen, who, on hearing of his approach, issued on the 10th of October a printed order, to which the Earl Marshal's name was attached, ordaining, under pain of being severely fined, all persons, of whatever age, sex, or condition, having horses of the value of forty pounds Scots or upwards, to send them to the bridge of Dee, which was appointed as the place of rendezvous, on the 14th of October, by ten o'clock, A. M., with riders fully equipped and

armed. With the exception of Lord Gordon, who brought three troops of horse, and Captain Alexander Keith, brother of the Earl Marshal, who appeared with one troop at the appointed place, no attention was paid to the order of the committee by the people, who had not yet recovered from their fears, and their recent sufferings were still too fresh in their minds to induce them again to expose themselves to the vengeance of Montrose and his Irish troops.

After refreshing his army for a few days in Angus, Montrose prepared to cross the Grampians, and march to Strathbogie to make another attempt to raise the Gordons; but, before setting out on his march, he released Forbes of Craigievar and Forbes of Boyndlie, on their parole, upon condition that Craigievar should procure the liberation of the young laird of Drum and his brother from the jail of Edinburgh, failing which, Craigievar and Boyndlie were both to deliver themselves up to him as prisoners before the 1st of November. This act of generosity on the part of Montrose was greatly admired, more particularly as Craigievar was one of the heads of the Covenanters, and had great influence among them. In pursuance of his design, Montrose marched through the Mearns, and upon Thursday, the 17th of October, crossed the Dee at the Mills of Drum, with his whole army. In his progress north, contrary to his former forbearing policy, he laid waste the lands of some of the leading Covenanters, burnt their houses, and plundered their effects. He arrived at Strathbogie on the 19th of October, where he remained till the 27th, without being able to induce any considerable number of the Gordons to join him. It was not from want of inclination that they refused to do so, but they were unwilling to incur the displeasure of their chief, who they knew was personally opposed to Montrose, and who felt indignant at seeing a man who had formerly espoused the cause of the Covenanters preferred before him. Had Montrose been accompanied by any of the Marquis of Huntly's sons, they might have had influence enough to have induced some of the Gordons to declare for him; but the situation of the marquis's three sons was at this time very peculiar. The eldest son, Lord Gordon, a young man "of singular worth and accomplishments."

⁷ Guthry, p. 231.

was with Argyle, his uncle by the mother's side; the Earl of Aboyne, the second son, was shut up in the castle of Carlisle, then in a state of siege; and Lord Lewis Gordon, the third son, had, as we have seen, joined the Covenanters, and fought in their ranks.

In this situation of matters, Montrose left Strathbogie on the day last mentioned, and took up a position in the forest of Fyvie, where he despatched some of his troops, who took possession of the castles of Fyvie and Tollie Barclay, in which he found a good supply of provisions, which was of great service to his army. During his stay at Strathbogie, Montrose kept a strict outlook for the enemy, and scarcely passed a night without scouring the neighbouring country to the distance of several miles with parties of light foot, who attacked straggling parties of the Covenanters, and brought in prisoners from time to time, without sustaining any loss. These petty enterprises, while they alarmed their enemies, gave an extraordinary degree of confidence to Montrose's men, who were ready to undertake any service, however difficult or dangerous, if he only commanded them to perform it.

When Montrose crossed the Dee, Argyle was several days' march behind him. The latter, however, reached Aberdeen on the 24th of October, and proceeded the following morning towards Kintore, which he reached the same night. Next morning he marched forward to Inverury, where he halted at night. Here he was joined by the Earl of Lothian's regiment, which increased his force to about 2,500 foot, and 1,200 horse. In his progress through the counties of Angus, Kincardine, Aberdeen, and Banff, he received no accession of strength, from the dread which the name and actions of Montrose had infused into the minds of the inhabitants of these counties.

The sudden movements of Argyle from Aberdeen to Kintore, and from Kintore to Inverury, form a remarkable contrast with the slowness of his former motions. He had followed Montrose through a long and circuitous route, the greater part of which still bore recent traces of his footsteps, and instead of showing any disposition to overtake his flying foe, seemed rather inclined to keep that respectful distance from him so congenial to the mind of one who,

"willing to wound," is "yet still afraid to strike." But although this questionable policy of Argyle was by no means calculated to raise his military fame, it had the effect of throwing Montrose, in the present case, off his guard, and had well-nigh proved fatal to him. The rapid march of Argyle on Kintore and Inverury, in fact, was effected without Montrose's knowledge, for the spies he had employed concealed the matter from him, and while he imagined that Argyle was still on the other side of the Grampians, he suddenly appeared within a very few miles of Montrose's camp, on the 28th of October.

The unexpected arrival of Argyle's army did not disconcert Montrose. His foot, which amounted to 1,500 men, were little more than the half of those under Argyle, while he had only about 50 horse to oppose 1,200. Yet, with this immense disparity, he resolved to await the attack of the enemy, judging it inexpedient, from the want of cavalry, to become the assailant by descending into the plain where Argyle's army was encamped. On a rugged eminence behind the castle of Fyvie, on the uneven sides of which several ditches had been cut and dikes built to serve as farm fences, Montrose drew up his little but intrepid host; but before he had marked out the positions to be occupied by his divisions, he had the misfortune to witness the desertion of a small body of the Gordons, who had joined him at Strathbogie. They, however, did not join Argyle, but contented themselves with withdrawing altogether from the scene of the ensuing action. It is probable that they came to the determination of retiring, not from cowardice, but from disinclination to appear in the field against Lord Lewis Gordon, who held a high command in Argyle's army. The secession of the Gordons, though in reality a circumstance of trifling importance in itself, (for had they remained, they would have fought unwillingly, and consequently might not have had sufficient resolution to maintain the position which would have been assigned them,) had a disheartening influence upon the spirits of Montrose's men, and accordingly they found themselves unable to resist the first shock of Argyle's numerous forces, who, charging them with great impetuosity, drove them up the eminence, of a consider-

able part of which Argyle's army got possession. In this critical conjuncture, when terror and despair seemed about to obtain the mastery over hearts to which fear had hitherto been a stranger, Montrose displayed a coolness and presence of mind equal to the dangers which surrounded him. Animating them by his presence, and by the example which he showed in risking his person in the hottest of the fight, he roused their courage by putting them further in mind of the victories they had achieved, and how greatly superior they were in bravery to the enemy opposed to them. After this emphatic appeal to their feelings, Montrose turned to Colonel O'Kean, a young Irish gentleman, highly respected by the former for his bravery, and desired him, with an air of the most perfect *sang froid*, to go down with such men as were readiest, and to drive these fellows (meaning Argyle's men), out of the ditches, that they might be no more troubled with them. O'Kean quickly obeyed the mandate, and though the party in the ditches was greatly superior to the body he led, and was, moreover, supported by some horse, he drove them away, and captured several bags of powder which they left behind them in their hurry to escape. This was a valuable acquisition, as Montrose's men had spent already almost the whole of their ammunition.

While O'Kean was executing this brilliant affair, Montrose observed five troops of horse, under the Earl of Lothian, preparing to attack his 50 horse, who were posted a little way up the eminence, with a small wood in their rear. He, therefore, without a moment's delay, ordered a party of musketeers to their aid, who, having interlined themselves with the 50 horse, kept up such a galling fire upon Lothian's troopers, that before they had advanced half way across a field which lay between them and Montrose's horse, they were obliged to wheel about and gallop off.

Montrose's men became so elated with their success that they could scarcely be restrained from leaving their ground and making a general attack upon the whole of Argyle's army; but although Montrose did not approve of this design, he disguised his opinion, and seemed rather to concur in the views of his men, telling them, however, to be so far mindful of their

duty as to wait till he should see the fit moment for ordering the attack. Argyle remained till the evening without attempting anything farther, and then retired to a distance of about three miles across the Spey; his men passed the night under arms. The only person of note killed in these skirmishes was Captain Keith, brother of the Earl Marshal.

Next day Argyle resolved to attack Montrose, with the view of driving him from his position. He was induced to come to this determination from a report, too well founded, which had reached him, that Montrose's army was almost destitute of ammunition;—indeed, he had compelled the inhabitants of all the surrounding districts to deliver up every article of pewter in their possession for the purpose of being converted into ammunition; but this precarious supply appears soon to have been exhausted.⁸ On arriving at the bottom of the hill, he changed his resolution, not judging it safe, from the experience of the preceding day, to hazard an attack. Montrose, on the other hand, agreeably to his original plan, kept his ground, as he did not deem it advisable to expose his men to the enemy's cavalry by descending from the eminence. With the exception of some trifling skirmishes between the advanced posts, the main body of both armies remained quiescent during the whole day. Argyle again retired in the evening to the ground he had occupied the preceding night, whence he returned the following day, part of which was spent in the same manner as the former; but long before the day had expired he led off his army, "upon fair day light," says Spalding, "to a considerable distance, leaving Montrose to effect his escape unmolested."

Montrose, thus left to follow any course he pleased, marched off after nightfall towards Strathbogie, plundering Turriff and Rothiemay house in his route. He selected Strathbogie as the place of his retreat on account of the ruggedness of the country and of the numerous dikes with which it was intersected, which would prevent the operations of Argyle's cavalry, and where he intended to remain till joined by Macdonald, whom he daily expected from the

⁸ Wishart, p. 100.

Highlands with a reinforcement. When Argyle heard of Montrose's departure on the following morning, being the last day of October, he forthwith proceeded after him with his army, thinking to bring him to action in the open country, and encamped at Tullochbeg on the 2d of November, where he drew out his army in battle array. He endeavoured to bring Montrose to a general engagement, and, in order to draw him from a favourable position he was preparing to occupy, Argyle sent out a skirmishing party of his Highlanders; but they were soon repulsed, and Montrose took possession of the ground he had selected.

Baffled in all his attempts to overcome Montrose by force of arms, Argyle, whose talents were more fitted for the intrigues of the cabinet than the tactics of the field, had now recourse to negotiation, with the view of effecting the ruin of his antagonist. For this purpose he proposed a cessation of arms, and that he and Montrose should hold a conference, previous to which arrangements should be entered into for their mutual security. Montrose knew Argyle too well to place any reliance upon his word, and as he had no doubt that Argyle would take advantage, during the proposed cessation, to tamper with his men and endeavour to withdraw them from their allegiance, he called a council of war, and proposed to retire without delay to the Highlands. The council at once approved of this suggestion, whereupon Montrose resolved to march next night as far as Badenoch; and that his army might be able to accomplish such a long journey within the time fixed, he immediately sent off all his heavy baggage under a guard, and ordered his men to keep themselves prepared as if to fight a battle the next day.⁹ Scarcely, however, had the carriages and heavy baggage been despatched, when an event took place which greatly disconcerted Montrose. This was nothing less than the desertion of his friend Colonel Sibbald and some of his officers, who went over to the enemy. They were accompanied by Sir William Forbes of Craigievar, who, having been unable to fulfil the condition on which he was to obtain his ultimate liberation, had returned two or three days before to Montrose's camp.

⁹ Wishart, p. 102.

This distressing occurrence induced Montrose to postpone his march for a time, as he was quite certain that the deserters would communicate his plans to Argyle. Ordering, therefore, back the baggage he had sent off, he resumed his former position, in which he remained four days, as if he there intended to take up his winter quarters.

In the meantime Montrose had the mortification to witness the defection of almost the whole of his officers, who were very numerous, for, with the exception of the Irish and Highlanders, they outnumbered the privates from the Lowlands. The bad example which had been set by Sibbald, the intimate friend of Montrose, and the insidious promises of preferment held out to them by Argyle, induced some, whose loyalty was questionable, to adopt this course; but the idea of the privations to which they would be exposed in traversing, during winter, among frost and snow, the dreary and dangerous regions of the Highlands, shook the constancy of others, who, in different circumstances, would have willingly exposed their lives for their sovereign. Bad health, inability to undergo the fatigue of long and constant marches—these and other excuses were made to Montrose as the reasons for craving a discharge from a service which had now become more hazardous than ever. Montrose made no remonstrance, but with looks of high disdain which betrayed the inward workings of a proud and unsubdued mind, indignant at being thus abandoned at such a dangerous crisis, readily complied with the request of every man who asked permission to retire. The Earl of Airly, now sixty years of age and in precarious health, and his two sons, Sir Thomas and Sir David Ogilvie, out of all the Lowlanders, alone remained faithful to Montrose, and could, on no account, be prevailed upon to abandon him. Among others who left Montrose on this occasion, was Sir Nathaniel Gordon, who, it is said, went over to Argyle's camp in consequence of a concerted plan between him and Montrose, for the purpose of detaching Lewis Gordon from the cause of the Covenanters, a conjecture which seems to have originated in the subsequent conduct of Sir Nathaniel and Lord Lewis, who joined Montrose the following year.

Montrose, now abandoned by all his Lowland friends, prepared for his march, preparatory to which he sent off his baggage as formerly; and after lighting some fires for the purpose of deceiving the enemy, took his departure on the evening of the 6th of November, and arrived about break of day at Balveny. After remaining a few days there to refresh his men, he proceeded through Badenoch, and descended by rapid marches into Athole, where he was joined by Maconald and John Muidartaeh, the captain of the Clanranald, the latter of whom brought 500 of his men along with him. He was also reinforced by some small parties from the neighbouring Highlands, whom Maconald had induced to follow him.

In the meantime Argyle, after giving orders to his Highlanders to return home, went himself to Edinburgh, where he "got but small thanks for his service against Montrose."¹ Although the Committee of Estates, out of deference, approved of his conduct, which some of his flatterers considered deserving of praise because he "had shed no blood;"² yet the majority had formed a very different estimate of his character, during a campaign which had been fruitful neither of glory nor victory. Confident of success, the heads of the Covenanters looked upon the first efforts of Montrose in the light of a desperate and forlorn attempt, rashly and inconsiderately undertaken, and which they expected would be speedily put down; but the results of the battles of Tippermuir, Aberdeen, and Fyvie, gave a new direction to their thoughts, and the royalists, hitherto contemned, began now to be dreaded and respected. In allusion to the present "posture of affairs," it is observed by Guthry, that "many who had formerly been violent, began to talk moderately of business, and what was most taken notice of, was the lukewarmness of many amongst the ministry, who now in their preaching had begun to abate much of their former zeal."³ The early success of Montrose had indeed caused some misgivings in the minds of the Covenanters; but as they all hoped that Argyle would change the tide of war, they showed no disposition to relax in their

severities towards those who were suspected of favouring the cause of the king. The signal failure, however, of Argyle's expedition, and his return to the capital, quite changed, as we have seen, the aspect of affairs, and many of those who had been most sanguine in their calculations regarding the result of the struggle, began now to waver and to doubt.

While Argyle was passing his time in Edinburgh, Montrose was meditating a terrible blow at Argyle himself to revenge the cruelties he had exercised upon the royalists, and to give confidence to the clans in Argyle's neighbourhood. These had been hitherto prevented from joining Montrose's standard from a dread of Argyle, who having always a body of 5,000 or 6,000 Highlanders at command, had kept them in such complete subjection that they dared not, without the risk of absolute ruin, espouse the cause of their sovereign. The idea of curbing the power of a haughty and domineering chief whose word was a law to the inhabitants of an extensive district, ready to obey his cruel mandates at all times, and the spirit of revenge, the predominating characteristic of the clans, smoothed the difficulties which presented themselves in invading a country made almost inaccessible by nature, and rendered still more unapproachable by the severities of winter. The determination of Montrose having thus met with a willing response in the breasts of his men, he lost no time in putting them in motion. Dividing his army into two parts, he himself marched with the main body, consisting of the Irish and the Athole-men, to Loch Tay, whence he proceeded through Breadalbane. The other body, composed of the clan Donald and other Highlanders, he despatched by a different route, with instructions to meet him at an assigned spot on the borders of Argyle. The country through which both divisions passed, being chiefly in possession of Argyle's kinsmen or dependants, was laid waste, particularly the lands of Campbell of Glenorehy.

When Argyle heard of the ravages committed by Montrose's army on the lands of his kinsmen, he hastened home from Edinburgh to his castle at Inverary, and gave orders for the assembling of his clan, either to repel any attack that might be made on his own country,

¹ Spalding, vol. ii. p. 287. ² Guthry, p. 134.

³ Memoirs, pp. 134—5.

or to protect his friends from future aggression. It is by no means certain that he anticipated an invasion from Montrose, particularly at such a season of the year, and he seemed to imagine himself so secure from attack, owing to the intricacy of the passes leading into Argyle, that although a mere handful of men could have effectually opposed an army much larger than that of Montrose, he took no precautions to guard them. So important indeed did he himself consider these passes to be, that he had frequently declared that he would rather forfeit a hundred thousand crowns, than that an enemy should know the passes by which an armed force could penetrate into Argyle.⁴

While thus reposing in fancied security in his impregnable stronghold, and issuing his mandates for levying his forces, some shepherds arrived in great terror from the hills, and brought him the alarming intelligence that the enemy, whom he had imagined were about a hundred miles distant, were within two miles of his own dwelling. Terrified at the unexpected appearance of Montrose, whose vengeance he justly dreaded, he had barely self-possession left to concert measures for his own personal safety, by taking refuge on board a fishing boat in Loch Fyne, in which he sought his way to the Lowlands, leaving his people and country exposed to the merciless will of an enemy thirsting for revenge. The inhabitants of Argyle being thus abandoned by their chief, made no attempt to oppose Montrose, who, the more effectually to carry his plan for pillaging and ravaging the country into execution, divided his army into three parties, under the respective orders of the captain of *elan* Ranald, Macdonald, and himself. For upwards of six weeks, viz., from the 13th of December, 1644, till nearly the end of January following, these different bodies traversed the whole country without molestation, burning, wasting, and destroying every thing which came within their reach. Nor were the people themselves spared, for although it is mentioned by one writer that Montrose "shed no blood in regard that all the people (following their lord's laudable example) delivered themselves by flight also,"⁵ it is evident

from several contemporary authors that the slaughter must have been immense.⁶ In fact, before the end of January, the face of a single male inhabitant was not to be seen throughout the whole extent of Argyle and Lorn, the whole population having been either driven out of these districts, or taken refuge in dens and caves known only to themselves.

Having thus retaliated upon Argyle and his people in a tenfold degree the miseries which he had occasioned in Locharaber and the adjoining countries, Montrose left Argyle and Lorn, passing through Glencoe and Locharaber on his way to Lochness. On his march eastwards he was joined by the laird of Abergeldie, the Farquharsons of the Braes of Mar, and by a party of the Gordons. The object of Montrose, by this movement, was to seize Inverness, which was then protected by only two regiments, in the expectation that its capture would operate as a stimulus to the northern clans, who had not yet declared themselves. This resolution was by no means altered on reaching the head of Lochness, where he learned that the Earl of Seaforth was advancing to meet him with an army of 5,000 horse and foot, which he resolved to encounter, it being composed, with the exception of two regular regiments, of raw and undisciplined levies.

While proceeding, however, through Abergarf, a person arrived in great haste at Kileumin, the present fort Augustus, who brought him the surprising intelligence that Argyle had entered Locharaber with an army of 3,000 men; that he was burning and laying waste the country, and that his head-quarters were at the old castle of Inverlochry. After Argyle had effected his escape from Inverary, he had gone to Dumbarton, where he remained till Montrose's departure from his territory. While there, a body of covenanting troops who had served in England, arrived under the command of Major-general Baillie, for the purpose of assisting Argyle in expelling Montrose from his bounds; but on learning that Montrose had left Argyle, and was marching through Glencoe and Locharaber, General Baillie determined to lead his army in an easterly direction

⁴ Wishart, p. 107. ⁵ Guthrie, p. 136.

⁶ Spalding, vol. ii. p. 442; Wishart, p. 108—*Red Book of Claveranath*.

through the Lowlands, with the intention of intercepting Montrose, should he attempt a descent. At the same time it was arranged between Baillie and Argyle that the latter, who had now recovered from his panic in consequence of Montrose's departure, should return to Argyle and collect his men from their hiding-places and retreats. As it was not improbable, however, that Montrose might renew his visit, the Committee of Estates allowed Baillie to place 1,100 of his soldiers at the disposal of Argyle, who, as soon as he was able to muster his men, was to follow Montrose's rear, yet so as to avoid an engagement, till Baillie, who, on hearing of Argyle's advance into Lochaber, was to march suddenly across the Grampians, should attack Montrose in front. To assist him in levying and organizing his clan, Argyle called over Campbell of Auchinbreck, his kinsman, from Ireland, who had considerable reputation as a military commander. In terms of his instructions, therefore, Argyle had entered Lochaber, and had advanced as far as Inverlochry, when, as we have seen, the news of his arrival was brought to Montrose.

Montrose was at first almost disinclined, from the well-known reputation of Argyle, to credit this intelligence, but being fully assured of its correctness from the apparent sincerity of his informer, he lost not a moment in making up his mind as to the course he should pursue. He might have instantly marched back upon Argyle by the route he had just followed; but as the latter would thus get due notice of his approach, and prepare himself for the threatened danger, Montrose resolved upon a different plan. The design he conceived could only have originated in the mind of such a bold and enterprising commander as Montrose, before whose daring genius difficulties hitherto deemed insurmountable at once disappeared. The idea of carrying an army over dangerous and precipitous mountains, whose wild and frowning aspect seemed to forbid the approach of human footsteps, and in the middle of winter, too, when the formidable perils of the journey were greatly increased by the snow, however chimerical it might have seemed to other men, appeared quite practicable to Montrose, whose sanguine anticipations of the ad-

vantages to be derived from such an extraordinary exploit, more than counterbalanced, in his mind, the risks to be encountered.

The distance between the place where Montrose received the news of Argyle's arrival and Inverlochry is about thirty miles; but this distance was considerably increased by the devious track which Montrose followed. Marching along the small river Tarf in a southerly direction, he crossed the hills of Lairie Thierard, passed through Glenroy, and after traversing the range of mountains between the Glen and Ben Nevis, he arrived in Glennevis before Argyle had the least notice of his approach. Before setting out on his march, Montrose had taken the wise precaution of placing guards upon the common road leading to Inverlochry, to prevent intelligence of his movements being carried to Argyle, and he had killed such of Argyle's scouts as he had fallen in with in the course of his march. This fatiguing and unexampled journey had been performed in little more than a night and a day, and when, in the course of the evening, Montrose's men arrived in Glennevis, they found themselves so weary and exhausted that they could not venture to attack the enemy. They therefore lay under arms all night, and refreshed themselves as they best could till next morning. As the night was uncommonly clear, it being moonlight, the advanced posts of both armies kept up a small fire of musketry, which led to no result.

In the meantime Argyle, after committing his army to the charge of his cousin, Campbell of Auchinbreck, with his customary prudence, went, during the night, on board a boat in the loch, excusing himself for this apparent pusillanimous act by alleging his incapacity to enter the field of battle in consequence of some contusions he had received by a fall two or three weeks before; but his enemies averred that cowardice was the real motive which induced him to take refuge in his galley, from which he witnessed the defeat and destruction of his army. This somewhat suspicious action of Argyle—and it was not the only time he provided for his personal safety in a similar manner—is accounted for in the following († ironical) way by the author of *Britane's Distemper* (p. 100):—

“ In this confusion, the commanders of there

armie lightes wpon this resolution, not to hazart the marquise owne persone; for it seems not possible that Ardgyle himselfe, being a nobleman of such eminent qualitie, a man of so deepe and profound judgement, one that knew so weell what belongeth to the office of a generall, that any basse motion of feare, I say, could make him so wnsensible of the poynt of honour as is generally reported. Nether will I, for my owne part, believe it; but I am confident that those barrones of his kinred, wha ware captanes and commanderes of the armie, feareing the euent of this battelle, for diuers reasons; and one was, that Allan M'Collduie, ane old fox, and who was thought to be a seer, had told them that there should be a battell lost there by them that came first to seike battell; this was one cause of there importunitie with him that he should not come to battell that day; for they sawe that of necessitie they most fecht, and would not hazart there cheife persone, urging him by force to retere to his galay, which lay hard by, and committe the tryall of the day to them; he, it is to be thought, with great difficultie yeelding to there request, leanes his cusine, the laird of Auchinbreike, a most valorous and braue gentleman, to the generall commande of the armie, and takes with himselfe only sir James Rollocke, his brother in lawe, sir Jhone Wachope of Nithrie, Mr. Mungo Law, a preacher. It is reported those two last was send from Edinburgh with him to beare witnesse of the expulsion of those rebelles, for so they ware still pleased to terme the Royalistes."

It would appear that it was not until the morning of the battle that Argyle's men were aware that it was the army of Montrose that was so near them, as they considered it quite impossible that he should have been able to bring his forces across the mountains; they imagined that the body before them consisted of some of the inhabitants of the country, who had collected to defend their properties. But they were undeceived when, in the dawn of the morning, the warlike sound of Montrose's trumpets, resounding through the glen where they lay, and reverberating from the adjoining hills, broke upon their ears. This served as the signal to both armies to prepare for battle. Montrose drew out his army in an extended

line. The right wing consisted of a regiment of Irish, under the command of Macdonald, his major-general; the centre was composed of the Athole-men, the Stuarts of Appin, the Macdonalds of Glencoe, and other Highlanders, severally under the command of Clanranald, M'Lean, and Glengary; and the left wing consisted of some Irish, at the head of whom was the brave Colonel O'Kean. A body of Irish was placed behind the main body as a reserve, under the command of Colonel James M'Donald, alias O'Neill. The general of Argyle's army formed it in a similar manner. The Lowland forces were equally divided, and formed the wings, between which the Highlanders were placed. Upon a rising ground, behind this line, General Campbell drew up a reserve of Highlanders, and placed a field-piece. Within the house of Inverloch, which was only about a pistol-shot from the place where the army was formed, he planted a body of 40 or 50 men to protect the place, and to annoy Montrose's men with discharges of musketry.⁷ The account given by Gordon of Sallagh, that Argyle had transported the half of his army over the water at Inverloch, under the command of Auchinbreck, and that Montrose defeated this division, while Argyle was prevented from relieving it with the other division, from the intervening of "an arm of the sea, that was interjected betwixt them and him,"⁸ is probably erroneous, for the circumstance is not mentioned by any other writer of the period, and it is well known, that Argyle abandoned his army, and witnessed its destruction from his galley,—circumstances which Gordon altogether overlooks.

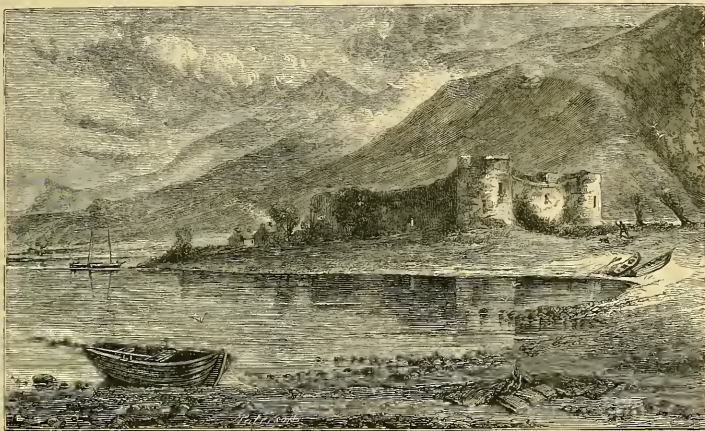
It was at sunrise, on Sunday, the 2d of February, 1645, that Montrose, after having formed his army in battle array, gave orders to his men to advance upon the enemy. The left wing of Montrose's army, under the command of O'Kean, was the first to commence the attack, by charging the enemy's right. This was immediately followed by a furious assault upon the centre and left wing of Argyle's army, by Montrose's right wing and centre. Argyle's right wing not being able to resist the attack of Montrose's left, turned about and fled, which

⁷ Spalding, vol. ii. p. 444.

⁸ *Continuation*, p. 522.

circumstance had such a discouraging effect on the remainder of Argyle's troops, that after discharging their muskets, the whole of them, including the reserve, took to their heels. The rout now became general. An attempt was made by a body of about 200 of the fugitives, to throw themselves into the castle of Inverlochy, but a party of Montrose's horse prevented them. Some of the flying enemy directed their course along the side of Loch-Eil, but all these were either killed or drowned

in the pursuit. The greater part, however, fled towards the hills in the direction of Argyle, and were pursued by Montrose's men, to the distance of about eight miles. As no resistance was made by the defeated party in their flight, the carnage was very great, being reckoned at 1,500 men. Many more would have been cut off had it not been for the humanity of Montrose, who did every thing in his power to save the unresisting enemy from the fury of his men, who were not disposed to give quarter to the



Inverlochy Castle.—From M'Culloch's celebrated picture in the Edinburgh National Gallery.

unfortunate Campbells. Having taken the castle, Montrose not only treated the officers, who were from the Lowlands, with kindness, but gave them their liberty on parole.

Among the principal persons who fell on Argyle's side, were the commander, Campbell of Auchinbreck, Campbell of Lochnell, the eldest son of Lochnell, and his brother, Colin; M'Dougall of Rara and his eldest son; Major Menzies, brother to the laird, (or Prior as he was called) of Achatens Parbreck; and the provost of the church of Kilman. The loss on the side of Montrose was extremely trifling. The number of wounded is indeed not stated, but he had only three privates killed. He sustained, however, a severe loss in Sir Thomas Ogilvie, son of the Earl of Airly, who died a

few days after the battle, of a wound he received in the thigh. Montrose regretted the death of this steadfast friend and worthy man, with feelings of real sorrow, and caused his body to be interred in Athole with due solemnity.⁹ Montrose immediately after the battle sent a messenger to the king with a letter, giving an account of it, at the conclusion of which he exultingly says to Charles, "Give me leave, after I have reduced this country, and conquered from Dan to Beersheba, to say to your Majesty, as David's general to his master, Come thou thyself, lest this country be called by my name." When the king received this letter, the royal and parliamentary commis-

⁹ Spalding, vol. ii. p. 445.—Wishart, p. 111, et seq.—Guthry, p. 140.

sioners were sitting at Uxbridge negotiating the terms of a peace; but Charles, induced by the letter, imprudently broke off the negotiation, a circumstance which led to his ruin.

CHAPTER XIV.

A. D. FEBRUARY—SEPTEMBER, 1645.

BRITISH SOVEREIGN:—Charles I., 1625—1649.

Montrose marches to Inverness and Elgin, wasting the lands of the Covenanters—Enters and plunders Banff—Deputation from Aberdeen—Death of Donald Farquharson—Montrose imposes a tax of £10,000 on Aberdeen—Enters and burns Storchaven—Defeats Hurry's horse at Fettersairn—Marches to Brechin and Dunkeld—Storms and captures Dundee—Montrose's retreat from Dundee—Movements of General Baillie—Battle of Alford—Montrose's after-movements—Battle of Alford—General Baillie and the Committee of Estates retreat to Stirling—Montrose marches to Aberdeen—Montrose marches south—Is joined by more Highlanders—Threatens Perth—Retreats to Dunkeld—Again moves south—Baillie joined by the men of Fife—Montrose at Alloa—Macleod burns Castle Campbell—Montrose goes towards Stirling—Differences among the Covenanters—Battle of Kilsyth—Montrose enters Glasgow—Submission of the nobility and the western counties—Submission of Edinburgh—Montrose appointed Lieutenant-governor of Scotland—Desertion of Highlanders—Battle of Philiphaugh.

WHEN the disastrous news of the battle of Inverlochy reached Edinburgh, the Estates were thrown into a state of great alarm. They had, no doubt, begun to fear, before that event, and, of course, to respect the prowess of Montrose, but they never could have been made to believe that, within the space of a few days, a well-appointed army, composed in part of veteran troops, would have been utterly defeated by a force so vastly inferior in point of numbers, and beset with difficulties and dangers to which the army of Argyle was not exposed. Nor were the fears of the Estates much allayed by the appearance of Argyle, who arrived at Edinburgh to give them an account of the affair, "having his left arm tied up in a scarf, as if he had been at bones-breaking."¹ It is true that Lord Balmerino made a speech before the assembly of the Estates, in which he affirmed, that the great loss reported to be sustained at Inverlochy "was but the invention of the malignants, who spake as they

wished," and that "upon his honour, not more than thirty of Argyle's men had been killed,"² but as the disaster was well known, this device only misled the weak and ignorant. Had Montrose at this juncture descended into the Lowlands, it is not improbable that his presence might have given a favourable turn to the state of matters in the south, where the king's affairs were in the most precarious situation; but such a design does not seem to have accorded with his views of prolonging the contest in the Highlands, which were more suitable than the Lowlands to his plan of operations, and to the nature of his forces.

Accordingly, after allowing his men to refresh themselves a few days at Inverlochy, Montrose returned across the mountains of Lochaber into Badenoch, "with displayed banner." Marching down the south side of the Spey, he crossed that river at Balchastel, and entered Moray without opposition. He proceeded by rapid strides towards the town of Inverness, which he intended to take possession of; but, on arriving in the neighbourhood, he found it garrisoned by the laird of Lawers' and Buchanan's regiments. As he did not wish to consume his time in a siege, he immediately altered his course and marched in the direction of Elgin, issuing, as he went along, a proclamation in the king's name, calling upon all males, from 16 to 60 years of age, to join him immediately, armed as they best could, on foot or on horse, and that under pain of fire and sword, as rebels to the king. In consequence of this threat Montrose was joined by some of the Moray-men, including the laird of Grant and 200 of his followers; and, to show an example of severity, he plundered the houses and laid waste the estates of many of the principal gentlemen of the district, carrying off, at the same time, a large quantity of cattle and effects, and destroying the boats and nets which they fell in with on the Spey.³

Whilst Montrose was thus laying waste part of Moray, a committee of the Estates, consisting of the Earl of Seaforth, the laird of Innes, Sir Robert Gordon, the laird of Pluscardine, and others, was sitting at Elgin; these, on

¹ Gathry, p. 141.

² *Idem.*

³ Spalding, vol. ii. p. 447.

hearing of his proceedings, prohibited the holding of the fair which was kept there annually on Fasten's eve, and to which many merchants and others in the north resorted, lest the property brought there for sale might fall a prey to Montrose's army. They, at the same time, sent Sir Robert Gordon, Mackenzie of Pluscardine, and Innes of Luthers, to treat with Montrose, in name of the gentry of Moray, most of whom were then assembled in Elgin; but he refused to enter into any negotiation, offering, at the same time, to accept of the services of such as would join him and obey him as the king's lieutenant.⁴ Before this answer had been communicated to the gentry at Elgin, they had all fled from the town in consequence of hearing that Montrose was advancing upon them with rapidity. The laird of Innes, along with some of his friends, retired to the castle of Spynie, possessed by his eldest son, which was well fortified and provided with every necessary for undergoing a siege. The laird of Duffus went into Sutherland. As soon as the inhabitants of the town saw the committee preparing to leave it, most of them also resolved to depart, which they did, carrying along with them their principal effects. Some went to Inverness, and others into Ross, but the greater part went to the castle of Spynie, where they sought and obtained refuge.

Apprehensive that Montrose might follow up the dreadful example he had shown, by burning the town, a proposal was made to, and accepted by him, to pay four thousand merks to save the town from destruction; but, on entering it, which he did on the 19th of February, his men, and particularly the laird of Grant's party, were so disappointed in their hopes of plunder, in consequence of the inhabitants having carried away the best of their effects, that they destroyed every article of furniture which was left.

Montrose was joined, on his arrival at Elgin, by Lord Gordon, the eldest son of the Marquis of Huntly, with some of his friends and vassals. This young nobleman had been long kept in a state of durance by Argyle, his uncle, contrary to his own wishes, and now, when an opportunity had for the first time

occurred, he showed the bent of his inclination by declaring for the king.

On taking possession of Elgin, Montrose gave orders to bring all the ferry-boats on the Spey to the north side of the river, and he stationed sentinels at all the fords up and down, to watch any movements which might be made by the enemies' forces in the south.

Montrose, thereupon, held a council of war, at which it was determined to cross the Spey, march into the counties of Banff and Aberdeen, by the aid of Lord Gordon, raise the friends and retainers of the Marquis of Huntly, and thence proceed into the Mearns, where another accession of forces was expected. Accordingly, Montrose left Elgin on the 4th of March with the main body of his army, towards the Bog of Gicht, accompanied by the Earl of Seaforth, Sir Robert Gordon, the lairds of Grant, Pluscardine, Findrassie, and several other gentlemen who "had come in to him" at Elgin. To punish the Earl of Findlater, who had refused to join him, Montrose sent the Farquharsons of Braemar before him, across the Spey, who plundered, without mercy, the town of Cullen, belonging to the earl.

After crossing the Spey, Montrose, either apprehensive that depredations would be committed upon the properties of his Moray friends who accompanied him, by the two regiments which garrisoned Inverness, and the Covenanters of that district, or having received notice to that effect, he allowed the Earl of Seaforth, the laird of Grant, and the other Moray gentlemen, to return home to defend their estates; but before allowing them to depart, he made them take a solemn oath of allegiance to the king, and promise that they should never henceforth take up arms against his majesty or his loyal subjects. At the same time, he made them come under an engagement to join him with all their forces as soon as they could do so. The Earl of Seaforth, however, disregarded his oath, and again joined the ranks of the Covenanters. In a letter which he wrote to the committee of Estates at Aberdeen, he stated that he had yielded to Montrose through fear only, and he avowed that he would abide by "the good cause to his death."⁵

⁴ Gordon's *Continuation*, p. 522.

⁵ Spalding, vol. ii. p. 301.

On Montrose's arrival at Strathbogie, or Gordon castle, Lord Graham, his eldest son, a most promising youth of sixteen, became unwell, and died after a few days' illness. The loss of a son who had followed him in his campaigns, and shared with him the dangers of the field, was a subject of deep regret to Montrose. While Montrose was occupied at the death-bed of his son, Lord Gordon was busily employed among the Gordons, out of whom he speedily raised a force of about 500 foot, and 160 horse.

With this accession to his forces, Montrose left Strathbogie and marched towards Banff, on his route to the south. In passing by the house of Cullen, in Boyne, the seat of the Earl of Findlater, who had fled to Edinburgh, and left the charge of the house to the countess, a party of Montrose's men entered the house, which they plundered of all its valuable contents. They then proceeded to set the house on fire, but the countess entreated Montrose to order his men to desist, and promised that if her husband did not come to Montrose and give him satisfaction within fifteen days, she would pay him 20,000 merks, of which sum she instantly paid down 5,000. Montrose complied with her request, and also spared the lands, although the earl was "a great Covenanter." Montrose's men next laid waste the lands in the Boyne, burnt the houses, and plundered the minister of the place of all his goods and effects, including his books. The laird of Boyne shut himself up in his stronghold, the Crag, where he was out of danger; but he had the misfortune to see his lands laid waste and destroyed. Montrose then went to Banff, which he gave up to indiscriminate plunder. His troops did not leave a vestige of moveable property in the town, and they even stripped to the skin every man they met with in the streets. They also burned two or three houses of little value, but not a drop of blood was shed.

From Banff Montrose proceeded to Turriff, where a deputation from the town council of Aberdeen waited upon him, to represent the many miseries which the loyal city had suffered from its frequent occupation by hostile armies since the first outbreaking of the unfortunate troubles which molested the kingdom.

They further represented, that such was the terror of the inhabitants at the idea of another visit from his Irish troops, that all the men and women, on hearing of his approach, had made preparations for abandoning the town, and that they would certainly leave it if they did not get an assurance from the marquis of safety and protection. Montrose heard the commissioners patiently, expressed his regret at the calamities which had befallen their town, and bade them not be afraid, as he would take care that none of his foot, or Irish, soldiers should come within eight miles of Aberdeen; and that if he himself should enter the town, he would support himself at his own expense. The commissioners returned to Aberdeen, and related the successful issue of their journey, to the great joy of all the inhabitants.⁶

Whilst Montrose lay at Turriff, Sir Nathaniel Gordon, with some troopers, went to Aberdeen, which he entered on Sunday, the 9th of March, on which day there had been "no sermon in either of the Aberdeens," as the ministers had fled the town. The keys of the churches, gates, and jail were delivered to him by the magistrates. The following morning Sir Nathaniel was joined by 100 Irish dragoons. After releasing some prisoners, he went to Torry, and took, after a slight resistance, 1,800 muskets, pikes, and other arms, which had been left in charge of a troop of horse. Besides receiving orders to watch the town, Sir Nathaniel was instructed to send out scouts as far as Cowie to watch the enemy, who were daily expected from the south. When reconnoitring, a skirmish took place at the bridge of Dee, in which Captain Keith's troop was routed. Finding the country quite clear, and no appearance of the covenanting forces, Gordon returned back to the army, which had advanced to Fren-draught. No attempt was made upon the house of Fren-draught, which was kept by the young viscount in absence of his father, who was then at Muchalls with his godson, Lord Fraser; but Montrose destroyed 60 ploughs of land belonging to Fren-draught within the parishes of Forgue, Inverkeithnie, and Drum-blade, and the house of the minister of Forgue, with all the other houses, and buildings, and

⁶ Spalding, vol. ii. p. 452.

their contents. Nothing, in fact, was spared. All the cattle, horses, sheep, and other domestic animals, were carried off, and the whole of Frendraught's lands were left a dreary and uninhabitable waste.

From Pennyburn, Montrose despatched, on the 10th of March, a letter to the authorities of Aberdeen, commanding them to issue an order that all men, of whatever description, between the age of sixteen and sixty, should meet him equipped in their best arms, and such of them as had horses, mounted on the best of them, on the 15th of March, at his camp at Inverury, under the pain of fire and sword. In consequence of this mandate he was joined by a considerable number of horse and foot. On the 12th of March, Montrose arrived at Kintore, and took up his own quarters in the house of John Cheyne, the minister of the place, whence he issued an order commanding each parish within the presbytery of Aberdeen, (with the exception of the town of Aberdeen,) to send to him two commissioners, who were required to bring along with them a complete roll of the whole heritors, feuars, and liferenters of each parish. His object, in requiring such a list, was to ascertain the number of men capable of serving, and also the names of those who should refuse to join him. Commissioners were accordingly sent from the parishes, and the consequence was, that Montrose was joined daily by many men who would not otherwise have assisted him, but who were now alarmed for the safety of their properties. While at Kintore, an occurrence took place which vexed Montrose exceedingly.

To reconnoitre and watch the motions of the enemy, Montrose had, on the 12th of March, sent Sir Nathaniel Gordon, along with Donald Farquharson, Captain Mortimer, and other well-mounted cavaliers, to the number of about 80, to Aberdeen. This party, perceiving no enemy in the neighbourhood of Aberdeen, utterly neglected to place any sentinels at the gates of the town, and spent their time at their lodgings in entertainments and amusements. This careless conduct did not pass unobserved by some of the Covenanters in the town, who, it is said, sent notice thereof to Major-general Hurry, the second in command under General Baillie, who was then lying at the North Water Bridge with Lord Balcarras's and

other foot regiments. On receiving this intelligence, Hurry put himself at the head of 160 horse and foot, taken from the regular regiments, and some troopers and musketeers, and rode off to Aberdeen in great haste, where he arrived on the 15th of March, at 8 o'clock in the evening. Having posted sentinels at the gates to prevent any of Montrose's party from escaping, he entered the town at an hour when they were all carelessly enjoying themselves in their lodgings, quite unapprehensive of such a visit. The noise in the streets, occasioned by the tramping of the horses, was the first indication they had of the presence of the enemy, but it was then too late for them to defend themselves. Donald Farquharson was killed in the street, opposite the guard-house; "a brave gentleman," says Spalding, "and one of the noblest captains amongst all the Highlanders of Scotland, and the king's man for life and death." The enemy stripped him of a rich dress he had put on the same day, and left his body lying naked in the street. A few other gentlemen were killed, and some taken prisoners, but the greater part escaped. Hurry left the town next day, and, on his return to Baillie's camp, entered the town of Montrose, and carried off Lord Graham, Montrose's second son, a boy of fourteen years of age, then at school, who, along with his teacher, was sent to Edinburgh, and committed to the castle.

The gentlemen who had escaped from Aberdeen returned to Montrose, who was greatly offended at them for their carelessness. The magistrates of Aberdeen, alarmed lest Montrose should inflict summary vengeance upon the town, as being implicated in the attack upon the cavaliers, sent two commissioners to Kintore to assure him that they were in no way concerned in that affair. Although he heard them with great patience, he gave them no satisfaction as to his intentions, and they returned to Aberdeen without being able to obtain any promise from him to spare the town. Montrose contented himself with making the merchants furnish him with cloth, and gold and silver-lace, to the amount of £10,000 Scots, for the use of his army, which he held the magistrates bound to pay, by a tax upon the inhabitants. "Thus," says Spalding, "cross upon cross upon Aberdeen."

When Sir Nathaniel Gordon and the remainder of his party returned to Kintore, Montrose despatched, on the same day (March 16th), a body of 1,000 horse and foot, the latter consisting of Irish, to Aberdeen, under the command of Macdonald, his major-general. Many of the inhabitants, alarmed at the approach of this party, and still having the fear of the Irish before their eyes, were preparing to leave the town; but Macdonald relieved their apprehensions by assuring them that the Irish, who amounted to 700, should not enter the town; he accordingly stationed them at the Bridge of Dee and the Two Mile Cross, he and his troopers alone entering the town. With the exception of the houses of one or two "remarkable Covenanters," which were plundered, Macdonald showed the utmost respect for private property, a circumstance which obtained for him the esteem of the inhabitants, who had seldom experienced such kind treatment before.

Having discharged the last duties to the brave Farquharson and his companions, Macdonald left Aberdeen, on March 18th, to join Montrose at Durriss; but he had not proceeded far when complaints were brought to him that some of his Irish troops, who had lagged behind, had entered the town, and were plundering it. Macdonald, therefore, returned immediately to the town, and drove, says Spalding, "all these rascals with sore skins out of the town before him."⁷

Before leaving Kintore, the Earl of Airly was attacked by a fever, in consequence of which, Montrose sent him to Lethintie, the residence of the earl's son-in-law, under a guard of 300 men; but he was afterwards removed to Strathbogie for greater security. On arriving, March 17th, at Durriss, in Kincardineshire, where he was joined by Macdonald, Montrose burnt the house and offices to the ground, set fire to the grain, and swept away all the cattle, horses, and sheep. He also wasted such of the lands of Fintry as belonged to Forbes of Craigievar, to punish him for the breach of his parole; treating in the same way the house and grain belonging to Abercrombie, the minister of Fintry, who was "a main Covenanter." On the 19th, Montrose entered

Stonehaven, and took up his residence in the house of James Clerk, the provost of the town. Here learning that the Covenanters in the north were troubling Lord Gordon's lands, he despatched 500 of Gordon's foot to defend Strathbogie and his other possessions; but he still retained Lord Gordon himself with his troopers.

On the day after his arrival at Stonehaven, Montrose wrote a letter to the Earl Marshal, who, along with sixteen ministers, and some other persons of distinction, had shut himself up in his castle of Dunottar. The bearer of the letter was not, however, suffered to enter within the gate, and was sent back, at the instigation probably of the earl's lady and the ministers who were with him, without an answer. Montrose then endeavoured, by means of George Keith, the Earl Marshal's brother, to persuade the latter to declare for the king, but he refused, in consequence of which Montrose resolved to inflict summary vengeance upon him, by burning and laying waste his lands and those of his retainers in the neighbourhood. Acting upon this determination, he, on the 21st of March, set fire to the houses adjoining the castle of Dunottar, and burnt the grain which was stacked in the barn-yards. Even the house of the minister did not escape. He next set fire to the town of Stonehaven, sparing only the house of the provost, in which he resided; plundered a ship which lay in the harbour, and then set her on fire, along with all the fishing boats. The lands and houses of Cowic shared the same hard fate. Whilst the work of destruction was going on, it is said that the inhabitants appeared before the castle of Dunottar, and, setting up cries of pity, implored the earl to save them from ruin, but they received no answer to their supplications, and the earl witnessed from his stronghold the total destruction of the properties of his tenants and dependents without making any effort to stop it. After he had effected the destruction of the barony of Dunottar, Montrose set fire to the lands of Fetteresso, one-fourth part of which was burnt up, together with the whole corn in the yards. A beautiful deer park was also burnt, and its alarmed inmates were all taken and killed, as well as all the cattle in the barony. Montrose

⁷ Vol. ii. p. 457.



Dunottar Castle in the 17th century.—From Slezer's *Theatrum Scotiae* (1693).

next proceeded to Drumlaithie and Urie, belonging to John Forbes of Leslie, a leading Covenanter, where he committed similar depredations.

Montrose, on the following day, advanced to Fettercairn, where he quartered his foot soldiers, sending out quarter-masters through the country, and about the town of Montrose, to provide quarters for some troopers; but, as these troopers were proceeding on their journey, they were alarmed by the sudden appearance of some of Major-general Hurry's troops, who had concealed themselves within the plantation of Halkerton. These, suddenly issuing from the wood, set up a loud shout, on hearing which the troopers immediately turned to the right about and went back to the camp. This party turned out to be a body of 600 horse, under the command of Hurry himself, who had left the head-quarters of General Baillie, at Brechin, for the purpose of reconnoitring Montrose's movements. In order to deceive Hurry, who kept advancing with his 600 horse, Montrose placed his horse, which amounted only to 200, and which he took care to line with some expert musqueteers, in a prominent situation, and concealed his foot in an adjoining valley. This *ruse* had the desired effect, for Hurry imagining that there were no other forces at

hand, immediately attacked the small body of horse opposed to him; but he was soon undeceived by the sudden appearance of the foot, and forced to retreat with precipitation. Though his men were greatly alarmed, Hurry, who was a brave officer, having placed himself in the rear, managed to retreat across the North Esk with very little loss.

After this affair Montrose allowed his men to refresh themselves for a few days, and, on the 25th of March, put his army in motion in the direction of Brechin. On hearing of his approach, the inhabitants of the town concealed their effects in the castle, and in the steeples of churches, and fled. Montrose's troops, although they found out the secreted goods, were so enraged at the conduct of the inhabitants that they plundered the town, and burnt about sixty houses.

From Brechin, Montrose proceeded through Angus, with the intention either of fighting Baillie, or of marching onwards to the south. His whole force, at this time, did not exceed 3,000 men, and, on reaching Kirriemuir, his cavalry was greatly diminished by his having been obliged to send away about 160 horsemen to Strathbogie, under Lord Gordon and his brother Lewis, to defend their father's possessions against the Covenanters. Montrose

proceeded with his army along the foot of the Grampians, in the direction of Dunkeld, where he intended to cross the Tay in the sight of General Baillie, who commanded an army greatly superior in numbers; but, although Montrose frequently offered him battle, Baillie, contrary, it is said, to the advice of Hurry, as often declined it. On arriving at the water of Isla, the two armies, separated by that stream, remained motionless for several days, as if undetermined how to act. At length Montrose sent a trumpeter to Baillie offering him battle; and as the water could not be safely passed by his army if opposed, Montrose proposed to allow Baillie to pass it unmolested, on condition that he would give him his word of honour that he would fight without delay; but Baillie answered that he would attend to his own business himself, and that he would fight when he himself thought proper. The conduct of Baillie throughout seems altogether extraordinary, but it is alleged that he had no power to act for himself, being subject to the directions of a council of war, composed of the Earls of Crawford and Cassilis, Lords Balmerino, Kirkeudbright, and others.⁸

As Montrose could not attempt to cross the water of Isla without cavalry, in opposition to a force so greatly superior, he led his army off in the direction of the Grampians, and marched upon Dunkeld, of which he took possession. Baillie being fully aware of his intention to cross the Tay, immediately withdrew to Perth for the purpose of opposing Montrose's passage; but, if Montrose really entertained such an intention after he had sent away the Gordon troopers, he abandoned it after reaching Dunkeld, and resolved to retrace his steps northwards. Being anxious, however, to signalize himself by some important achievement before he returned to the north, and to give confidence to the royalists, he determined to surprise Dundee, a town which had rendered itself particularly obnoxious to him for the resistance made by the inhabitants after the battle of Tippermuir. Having sent off the weaker part of his troops, and those who were lightly armed, with his heavy baggage, along the bottom of the hills with instructions to

meet him at Brechin, Montrose himself, at the head of about 150 horse, and 600 expert musketeers,⁹ left Dunkeld on April 3d about midnight, and marched with such extraordinary expedition that he arrived at Dundee Law at 10 o'clock in the morning, where he encamped. Montrose then sent a trumpeter into the town with a summons requiring a surrender, promising that, in the event of compliance, he would protect the lives and properties of the inhabitants, but threatening, in case of refusal, to set fire to the town and put the inhabitants to the sword. Instead of returning an answer to this demand, the town's people put the messenger into prison. This insult was keenly felt by Montrose, who immediately gave orders to his troops to storm the town in three different places at once, and to fulfil the threat which he had held out in case of resistance. The inhabitants, in the mean time, made such preparations for defence as the shortness of the time allowed, but, although they fought bravely, they could not resist the impetuosity of Montrose's troops, who, impelled by a spirit of revenge, and a thirst for plunder, which Dundee, then one of the largest and most opulent towns in Scotland, offered them considerable opportunities of gratifying, forced the inhabitants from the stations they occupied, and turned the cannon which they had planted in the streets against themselves. The contest, however, continued in various quarters of the town for several hours, during which the town was set on fire in different places. The whole of that quarter of the town called the Bonnet Hill fell a prey to the flames, and the entire town would have certainly shared the same fate had not Montrose's men chiefly occupied themselves in plundering the houses and filling themselves with the contents of the wine cellars. The sack of the town continued till the evening, and the inhabitants were subjected to every excess which an infuriated and victorious soldiery, maddened by intoxication, could inflict.

This melancholy state of things was, however, fortunately put an end to by intelligence having been brought to Montrose, who had viewed the storming of the town from the

⁸ Spalding, vol. ii. p. 462.

⁹ *Montrose Redivivus*, p. 61.

neighbouring height of Dundee Law, that General Baillie was marching in great haste down the Carse of Gowrie, towards Dundee, with 3,000 foot and 800 horse. On receiving this news from his scouts, Montrose gave immediate orders to his troops to evacuate Dundee, but so intent were they upon their booty, that it was with the utmost difficulty they could be prevailed upon to leave the town, and, before the last of them could be induced to retire, some of the enemy's troops were within gun-shot of them. The sudden appearance of Baillie's army was quite unlooked-for, as Montrose had been made to believe, from the reports of his scouts, that it had crossed the Tay, and was proceeding to the Forth, when, in fact, only a very small part, which had been mistaken by the scouts for the entire army of Baillie, had passed.

In this critical conjuncture, Montrose held a council of war, to consult how to act under the perilous circumstances in which he was now placed. The council was divided between two opinions. Some of them advised Montrose to consult his personal safety, by riding off to the north with his horse, leaving the foot to their fate, as they considered it utterly impossible for him to carry them off in their present state, fatigued, and worn out as they were by a march of 24 miles during the preceding night, and rendered almost incapable of resisting the enemy, from the debauch they had indulged in during the day. Besides, they would require to march 20 or even 30 miles, before they could reckon themselves secure from the attacks of their pursuers, a journey which it was deemed impossible to perform, without being previously allowed some hours repose. In this way, and in no other, urged the advocates of this view, might he expect to retrieve matters, as he could, by his presence among his friends in the north, raise new forces; but that, if he himself was cut off, the king's affairs would be utterly ruined. The other part of the council gave quite an opposite opinion, by declaring that, as the cause for which they had fought so gloriously was now irretrievably lost, they should remain in their position, and await the issue of an attack, judging it more honourable to die fighting in defence of their king, than to seek safety in an

ignominious flight, which would be rendered still more disgraceful by abandoning their unfortunate fellow-warriors to the mercy of a revengeful foe.

Montrose, however, disapproved of both these plans. He considered the first as unbecoming the generosity of men who had fought so often side by side; and the second he thought extremely rash and imprudent. He, therefore, resolved to steer a middle course, and, refusing to abandon his brave companions in arms in the hour of danger, gave orders for an immediate retreat, in the direction of Arbroath. This, however, was a mere manoeuvre to deceive the enemy, as Montrose intended, after nightfall, to march towards the Grampians. In order to make his retreat more secure, Montrose despatched 400 of his foot, and gave them orders to march as quickly as possible, without breaking their ranks. These were followed by 200 of his most expert musketeers, and Montrose himself closed the rear with his horse in open rank, so as to admit the musketeers to interline them, in case of an attack. It was about six o'clock in the evening when Montrose began his retreat, at which hour the last of Baillie's foot had reached Dundee.

Scarcely had Montrose begun to move, when intelligence was received by Baillie, from some prisoners he had taken, of Montrose's intentions, which was now confirmed by ocular proof. A proposal, it is said, was then made by Hurry, to follow Montrose with the whole army, and attack him, but Baillie rejected it; and the better, as he thought, to secure Montrose, and prevent his escape, he divided his army into two parts, one of which he sent off in the direction of the Grampians, to prevent Montrose from entering the Highlands; and the other followed directly in the rear of Montrose. He thus expected to be able to cut off Montrose entirely, and to encourage his men to the pursuit, he offered a reward of 20,000 crowns to any one who should bring him Montrose's head. Baillie's cavalry soon came up with Montrose's rear, but they were so well received by the musketeers, who brought down some of them, that they became very cautious in their approaches. The darkness of the night soon put an end to the pursuit, and

Montrose continued unmolested his march to Arbroath, in the neighbourhood of which he arrived about midnight. His troops had now marched upwards of 40 miles, 17 of which they had performed in a few hours, in the face of a large army, and had passed two nights and a day without sleep; but as their safety might be endangered by allowing them to repose till daylight, Montrose entreated them to proceed on their march. Though almost exhausted with incessant fatigue, and overpowered with drowsiness, they readily obeyed the order of their general; and, after a short halt, proceeded on their route in a northwesterly direction. They arrived at the South Esk early in the morning, which they crossed, at sunrise, near Carriston Castle.

Montrose now sent notice to the party which he had despatched from Dunkeld to Brechin, with his baggage, to join him, but they had, on hearing of his retreat, already taken refuge among the neighbouring hills. Baillie, who had passed the night at Forfar, now considered that he had Montrose completely in his power; but, to his utter amazement, not a trace of Montrose was to be seen next morning. Little did he imagine that Montrose had passed close by him during the night, and eluded his grasp. Chagrined at this unexpected disappointment, Baillie, without waiting for his foot, galloped off at full speed to overtake Montrose, and, with such celerity did he travel, that he was close upon Montrose before the latter received notice of his approach. The whole of Montrose's men, with the exception of a few sentinels, were now stretched upon the ground, in a state of profound repose, and, so firmly did sleep hold their exhausted frames in its grasp, that it was with the utmost difficulty that they could be aroused from their slumbers, or made sensible of their danger. The sentinels, it is said, had even to prick some of them with their swords, before they could be awakened,¹ and when at length the sleepers were aroused they effected a retreat, after some skirmishing, to the foot of the Grampians, about three miles distant from their camp, and retired, thereafter, through Glenesk into the interior without further molestation.

This memorable retreat is certainly one of the most extraordinary events which occurred during the whole of Montrose's campaigns. It is not surprising, that some of the most experienced officers in Britain, and in France and Germany, considered it the most splendid of all Montrose's achievements.²

Being now secure from all danger in the fastnesses of the Grampians, Montrose allowed his men to refresh themselves for some days. Whilst enjoying this necessary relaxation from the fatigues of the field, intelligence was brought to Montrose that a division of the covenanting army, under Hurry, was in full march on Aberdeen, with an intention of proceeding into Moray. Judging that an attack upon the possessions of the Gordons would be one of Hurry's objects, Montrose despatched Lord Gordon with his horse to the north, for the purpose of assisting his friends in case of attack.

It was not in the nature of Montrose to remain inactive for any length of time, and an occurrence, of which he had received notice, had lately taken place, which determined him to return a second time to Dunkeld. This was the escape of Viscount Aboyne, and some other noblemen and gentlemen, from Carlisle, who, he was informed, were on their way north to join him. Apprehensive that they might be interrupted by Baillie's troops, he resolved to make a diversion in their favour, and, by drawing off the attention of Baillie, enable them the more effectually to elude observation. Leaving, therefore, Macdonald, with about 200 men, to beat up the enemy in the neighbourhood of Coupar-Angus, Montrose proceeded, with the remainder of his forces, consisting only of 500 foot and 50 horse, to Dunkeld, whence he marched to Crieff, which is about 17 miles west from Perth. It was not until he had arrived at the latter town that Baillie, who, after his pursuit of Montrose, had returned to Perth with his army, heard of this movement. As Baillie was sufficiently aware of the weakness of Montrose's force, and as he was sure that, with such a great disparity, Montrose would not risk a general engagement, he endeavoured to surprise him, in the hope either of cutting him off entirely, or crippling him so effectually

¹ *Montrose Redivivus*, p. 65.

² Wishart, p. 127.

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