SKETCHES

OF

SCOTTISH CHURCH HISTORY:

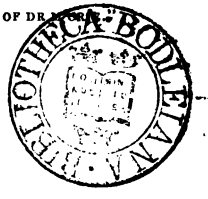
EMBRACING THE PERIOD FROM THE

REFORMATION TO THE REVOLUTION.

BY THE

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EDINBURGH:
JOHN JOHNSTONE, HUNTER SQUARE.

MDCCCXLI.

456.

PREFACE.

THE substance of the following Sketches was originally delivered in the form of Lectures; and the first portion of them, embracing the period preceding the Restoration of Charles II., appeared some time since in a popular Religious Periodical. The author having been requested to publish the whole in a separate Volume, they now appear in a somewhat altered form, and with considerable additions; thus presenting a connected and concise history of the Church of Scotland from the Reformation to the Revolution.

Having been composed chiefly for the benefit of the Young, with the view of inducing them to take an interest in the Church of their fathers, and adapted to a popular audience, without the most distant prospect of publication, these Sketches will be found to differ, both in style and matter, from ordinary historical writings. The circumstances now mentioned will account, not only for the absence of polish in the composition, but for the frequent introduction into the text of authorities which might otherwise have found a more appropriate place in the margin. The

popular and almost conversational tone thus imparted to the narrative, it was found impossible to alter, without recasting the whole into another mould, and constructing a new work. The object of the Volume is rather to exhibit the more prominent and characteristic features of our Church History, than to enter into details, or to develope the internal character of the Church in her ecclesiastical acts and proceedings. To those who wish to make themselves thoroughly acquainted with this part of the subject, the author begs cordially to recommend the "History of the Church of Scotland," by his esteemed friend the Rev. W. M. Hetherington, minister of Torphichen,—a work which promises to supply, what has been long wanted, and much wished for, a complete History, bearing the impress of genuine talent, and breathing the spirit of the true Reformed and Covenanted Church of Scotland.

Though the volume has been unavoidably extended to a much larger size than was originally anticipated, either by the author or his publisher, it has been considered advisable, at the expense of swelling it still more, to insert in the Appendix the Correspondence between the author and Mr Patrick F. Tytler, on the alleged participation of John Knox in the conspiracy against Riccio.

To the high professions of impartiality, with which some historians have ushered their productions into

the world, the author does not aspire, and is not disposed to attach much value; having seldom found such professions realized, and being convinced that no writer of Church History who has any principles to which he attaches importance, can describe the scenes and characters with which these principles are identified, without imparting to the description more or less of the colour of his own mind. The author candidly avows himself a Presbyterian of the old school; and he has been at no pains to conceal his sentiments. In support of the main facts of the history, which have been amply authenticated in larger works, accessible to all, he considered it superfluous to adduce authorities. But he has advanced no statement, the truth of which he did not endeavour to ascertain by personal investigation; and, in disputed cases, the authorities to which he refers will speak for themselves.

The leading facts of our ecclesiastical history, so far as is requisite to form a candid and enlightened judgment on them, are placed beyond all dispute, having been substantially admitted by respectable historians of all different creeds and principles. The discrepancies which appear in their accounts, and which have induced some to question the credibility of all history, consist chiefly in the opposite interpretations which they put on the same facts, and the different conclusions which they draw from the same events

—interpretations and conclusions which will vary, according to the author's sentiments and prepossessions, and vary with regard to the facts and events of the present day, as well as those of the past.

EDINBURGH, *August* 12, 1841.

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HISTORICAL SKETCHES, &c.

CHAPTER I.

State of Religion before the Reformation—Popery in Scotland—Origin of the Reformation—The Early Martyrs of the Reformation—Patrick Hamilton—Straiton—Kennedy and Russel—Woman at Perth—Persecuting Character of Popery.

Before entering on the history of the Reformation, it may be necessary, in order to appreciate the full value and importance of that glorious deliverance, to take a brief survey of the state of the world, and particularly of our own land, previous to its introduction.

It may be truly said, that, before this period, "the whole world wondered after the Beast." There was not a nation in Christendom, and hardly any class of people, who did not bow to the authority of the Roman Church, if we except the Waldenses, who inhabited the inaccessible fastnesses of the Alps, the followers of Huss in Bohemia, and the Lollards of Kyle in Scotland. The Pope, pretending to be the vicar and representative of Jesus Christ, not in the lowliness of his character when on earth, but in the splendour of

his kingly dignity in heaven, had risen to such a pitch of arrogance, as to assume the honours, not only of the head of the Church, but of supreme potentate and plenipotentiary over all the kingdoms of the world. Our Lord has said,—"My kingdom is not of this world,"—teaching us that his Church is distinct from, and independent of, worldly kingdoms, and ought not to claim temporal dominion over men; but the Church of Rome, in direct contravention of this statute, and interpreting literally those passages of Scripture in which the glory of the Church is pourtrayed under images drawn from earthly things, transformed herself into a worldly monarchy, and challenged, in civil as well as ecclesiastical affairs, the homage of the greatest princes of Europe. If at any time one of these monarchs ventured to disobey the mandates of the Italian priest who happened, for the time, to be seated in the chair of St Peter, he was immediately excommunicated, and his kingdom laid under an interdict; the effects of which were, that his subjects were absolved from their allegiance, and to assassinate him was declared a meritorious service, entitling the murderer to heaven—all other princes were summoned to make war against him—the churches throughout the country were shut up—the sacraments were suspended—the dead were buried in the highways,—and the muffled bells rang a funeral peal, as if some fearful curse hung over the devoted land. In such circumstances, the stoutest monarchs were made to tremble, and submit to the most humiliating penance. Two of them—one, a king of England, another, a king of France,—were compelled

to hold the Pope's stirrup while he mounted on horseback; a third was ordered to lie prostrate on the earth, while the haughty pontiff, placing his foot on his majesty's neck, exclaimed, "Thou shalt tread upon the serpent, and trample on the dragon and lion;" another was whipped by proxy, the Cardinal of Lorraine receiving the lashes on his bare back in the name of his royal master, lying flat, as D'Aubigné* expresses it, "like a mackarel on a gridiron;" while another, Henry IV., emperor of Germany, having offended the Pope, travelled to his residence to beg his pardon; and there did he stand at the gate, barefooted and bareheaded, for the space of three days, ere his holiness would admit him to his presence; and after all, the haughty pontiff deprived him of his crown, and transferred it to another.

The spiritual power claimed by the Pope was, as it still is, not less extraordinary. Not content with assuming the prerogatives and even the titles of the Deity, the lordship of conscience, the gift of infallibility, and the power of absolving men from the consequences of sin in a future world, he went beyond this, and "exalted himself above the Most High." He presumed to consecrate vice, and dispense with the obligations of the divine law;† he invented new sins, and created new worlds in which they might be punished. Indul-

* The French historian, who flourished in the sixteenth century.

† Bellarmine, the standard author of the Papists, goes so far as to aver, that "if the Pope should command vice, and prohibit virtue, the Church would be bound to believe vice to be good, and virtue to be evil, unless she would sin against conscience." And the Romish canons teach that the Pope "has a heavenly power to change the nature of things, that his will is instead of reason, nor is there any one that can say unto him, *What doest thou?*"—See Bruce's *Free Thoughts*, p. 80.

gences were openly sold for money, by which the deluded people were taught to believe that their sins would be forgiven, and the souls of their departed friends redeemed out of a place which they called Purgatory.

Popery, however, with all its sanctified pretensions, was merely a vast conspiracy against the civil and religious liberties of mankind, the ramifications of which extended over nearly the whole earth, and every member of which, from the pontiff down to the meanest monk, was sworn to advance the interests of the body. Swarms of priests and confessors infested every country—penetrating, like the plague-frogs of Egypt, into the recesses of every family, from the chamber of the king to that of the meanest cottager, and polluting every thing they touched. This motley crew, by means of auricular confession, made themselves masters of the secrets of every court, every household, and every bosom; and thus a regular system of spiritual espionage was established, by which secret intelligence of every movement might be conveyed to head-quarters, and the whole complicated machinery, obeying the touch of some unseen hand, could be made to bear, with decided and irresistible effect, on the accomplishment of its designs.

Some may wonder how such a system of organized tyranny and oppression could have been tolerated so long without any combined attempt being made to shake it off. But we shall cease to wonder when we consult the Scriptures, where we learn that the antichristian system is the masterpiece of Satan's cunning, expressly devised for deluding mankind,—" whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power,

and signs, and lying wonders; and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish." We shall cease to wonder when we consider that Popery is the religion of corrupt human nature, admirably contrived to gratify its pride, and chime in with its lusts and passions; furnishing pardons which may be procured for money, and presenting objects of worship which may be seen and handled; enlisting all the fine arts—architecture, music, painting, and statuary—into its service; appealing to every sense; enthralling the mind by the mystery and plausibility of its doctrines; fascinating the imagination by the gorgeousness of its ritual; and overwhelming reason itself by the very magnitude of its absurdities. And we shall cease to wonder, when we think on the power which the Papists were able to wield in support of their system, that the slightest heretical whisper was sufficient to consign the suspected person to the dungeons of the Inquisition, and that, if he persisted in holding his opinions, he was doomed to expiate, in the flames of a cruel death, the crime of having dared to question the dogmas of the infallible Church.

Indeed, the Church of Rome would have found it impossible to withstand the opposition which she provoked, had not "the kings of the earth," intoxicated with "the wine of her fornication," in other words, seduced by her idolatries, "given their power to the Beast," lending themselves to be the tools and executioners of her vengeance.

The state of religion in Scotland, immediately before the Reformation, was deplorable in the extreme. Owing to the distance between this country and Rome,

it was the more easy for the clergy to keep up in the minds of the people a superstitious veneration for the papal power; and our ancestors, who heard of the Pope only in the lofty panegyrics of the monks, regarded him as a kind of demigod. Of Christianity, almost nothing remained but the name. Such of the doctrines of our holy religion as were retained in the profession of the Church, were completely neutralized by heresies entirely subversive of them, or buried under a mass of superstitious observances. An innumerable multitude of saints were substituted in the place of Him who is the "one Mediator between God and man." The exactions made by the priests were most rapacious. The beds of the dying were besieged, and their last moments cruelly disturbed, with the view of obtaining legacies to their convents. Nor did the grave itself put a period to their demands; for no sooner had the poor farmer or mechanic breathed his last, than the priest came and carried off his corpse-present; and if he died rich, his relations were sure to be handsomely taxed for masses to relieve his soul from purgatory. It is calculated, that in Scotland alone, the number of convents, monasteries, and nunneries, amounted to upwards of a hundred and fifty.* These were inhabited by shoals of monks and friars, the former being confined to their cloisters, the latter permitted to wander about preaching and begging. The profligacy of the priests and higher clergy was notorious. The ordinances of religion were debased, "divine service was neglected, and, except on festival days, the churches (about the demolition of which such an

* Appendix to Spotswood's History.

outcry has been made by some) were no longer employed for sacred purposes, but served as sanctuaries for malefactors, places of traffic, or resorts for pastime."* One anecdote will sometimes show the state of matters better than whole pages of description. It seems that a chief part of the priest's office in those days was *cursing*. A letter of cursing cost a *plack;* and nothing was more common than for the country people, when any part of their property, even the most trifling article, was amissing, to pay the priest for cursing the thief. The process is thus described in a friar's sermon, quoted in Knox's history:—"The priest whose duty and office it is to pray for the people, stands up on Sunday, and cries, 'Ane has tint a spurtill; thair is a flail stoun beyond the burne; the gudwyif on the other side of the gait has tint a horne spune:—God's malison and mine I give to them that knows of this geir and restores it not!'"†

Persecution and the suppression of free inquiry were the only weapons by which such a system of corruption and imposition could defend itself. Every avenue by which truth might enter was carefully guarded; the Scriptures were effectually kept from the view of the people by being locked up in a dead language; the most frightful pictures were drawn of those that had separated from the Church of Rome; and if any person hinted dissatisfaction with the conduct of churchmen, or proposed the correction of abuses, he was immediately marked as a heretic, and if he did not consult his safety by flight, he was immured in a dungeon, or committed to the flames. Such was the

* M'Crie's Life of Knox, i. 23. † Knox's History, p. 14.

power and the vigilance exercised by the clergy, that it was not safe to utter a word against them even in one's sleep. It is recorded by Knox as a fact, that one man, a precentor or chanter as he was called, was actually apprehended, and had he not recanted would have suffered death, merely because he was overheard saying in his sleep one night, "The deevil tak the priests, for they are a greedy pack!"

As an illustration of the gross ignorance which then prevailed among the clergy, Buchanan informs us that in 1545, when severe laws were enacted against the reading of the New Testament, such was the blindness of the priests, that many of them, scandalized at the term *New*, maintained that it was a dangerous book lately written by Martin Luther, and cried out, they would have no *new* Testament, give them the *old* one!* The following is still better. When Thomas Forrest, usually called Dean Thomas, or the Vicar of Dollar, was examined before the Bishop of Dunkeld on a charge of having ventured to preach from the gospel or epistle for the day, and "shown the mysteries of the Scripture to the people in their own language, so as to make the clergy detestable in their sight," the following conversation took place:—"My joy, Dean Thomas," said the bishop, "I love you well, and, therefore, I must give you my counsel how you shall rule and guide yourself." "I thank your lordship heartily," replied the vicar. "My joy, Dean Thomas," continued the bishop, "I am informed that you preach the epistle or gospel every Sunday to your parishioners, and that you take not the cow nor the uppermost cloth from your

* Buch. Hist. 219, fol. edit.

parishioners, which thing is very prejudicial to the churchmen. My joy, it is too much to preach every Sunday; for in so doing you may make the people think that we should preach likewise. But it is enough for you, when you find any good epistle, or any good gospel, that setteth forth the rights of the holy Church, to preach that, and let the rest be." "Truly, my lord," said the vicar, "I have read the New Testament, and the Old, and all the epistles and gospels, and among them all I never could find any evil epistle or any evil gospel; but if your lordship will show me the good and the evil epistles and gospels, then I shall preach the good and omit the evil." "I thank God," replied the bishop with great vehemence, "*that I never knew what the Old and New Testament was!* Therefore, Dean Thomas, I will know nothing but my portuise and pontifical." From this saying there arose a proverb which was commonly applied in Scotland for many years after, to persons who were grossly ignorant:—"Ye are like the Bishop of Dunkeld, that kenned neither new law nor auld."

The fate of the vicar was soon afterwards decided. Having happened to quote, in his defence, the words of Paul, "I had rather speak five words with my understanding than ten thousand in an unknown tongue," he was asked where he found that? "In my book whilk is in my sleeve," answered the vicar. Upon this the public prosecutor started up, pulled the New Testament out of his sleeve, and holding it up before the people, cried, "Behold he has *the book of heresy* in his sleeve, whilk makes all the pley* in

* Confusion.

the Kirk!" "Brother," said the vicar, "God forgive you; ye ought to say better, if ye pleased, than call the evangel of Jesus Christ the book of heresy; for I assure you, dear brother, there is nothing in this book but the life, latter will and testament of our Master and Saviour Jesus Christ, written by the four evangelists for our comfort and instruction." This, however, could not avail him. The Pope had condemned the Bible in English; and the poor vicar, Testament and all, was burnt at the stake.*

But the time had now arrived, in the all-wise providence of God, when the eyes of men were to be opened to the abominations of this mystery of iniquity. The Reformation, it is well known, commenced in Germany in 1517, when the heroic Martin Luther declared war against indulgences; but it was a considerable time before its blessed light reached the shores of Scotland. As we intend to confine ourselves to the history of the Reformation in our own country, we shall not enter into any general account of its rise and progress abroad. But there is one feature of this glorious work which has been too much neglected by those who have written its history, and to which, as it characterised the Reformation in our own land no less than in others, we cannot refrain from adverting—we mean the strictly *religious character of its origin*. Without denying that many who took a prominent part in promoting it, were actuated by worldly and selfish motives, and without overlooking the influence of secondary causes, which contributed to its advancement, such as the revival of learning, the invention of the art of printing,

* Pitscottie, p. 356.

and the posture of political affairs in the countries where it was introduced,—it ought never to be forgotten, that the reformation of religion in the Church was the result of its revival in the souls of men. The first Reformers were, without exception, men of piety and prayer—men who had deeply studied the Bible and their own hearts; and it was by discovering in the Scriptures the true doctrines of salvation which alone can purify the heart and pacify the conscience, that they were led first to see the corruptions of the Church of Rome, and then to seek their removal. The Reformation was the triumph of truth over error; and it was the preaching of the pure Gospel by the Reformers, and especially the great doctrine of justification by faith through the righteousness of Christ, that gave its deathblow to the papal system. It is true, that had the Reformers not received the support of the civil power, in all human probability the infant Reformation would have been strangled at its birth, as it actually was in Spain and Italy, and the whole of Europe might have been yet lying under the dominion of Antichrist. And it is a striking fact, that since the era of the Reformation, the Protestant religion has made little farther progress in Europe, and that those nations which refused to receive the Protestant religion continue Popish to this day; while in those that embraced it, Protestantism continues to flourish in proportion to the zeal with which it was welcomed, and the purity in which it was established. But though, in accomplishing his gracious designs, God employs earthly means, and makes use of events in the political world, it is not the less on this account the work of God.

History is a record of the operations of Divine Providence; but it is also a record of human guilt and frailty, exhibited not only in the malicious opposition of the enemies of religion, but in the unworthy motives and mistaken policy of its professed friends. And the first lesson which the student of church-history requires to learn, is to distinguish between these two things—to remember that the work may be of God, though the manner of working is of man; and not to confound the cause of truth and righteousness with the follies, the mistakes, and mismanagements of the instruments employed in advocating and advancing it.

The first person who was honoured to carry the tidings of the Reformation to Scotland, and to seal them with his blood, was Patrick Hamilton.* This amiable and accomplished young gentleman was of

* Patrick Hamilton, though not the first who introduced or suffered for the reformed opinions in Scotland, may be considered the proto-martyr of the Reformation, inasmuch as he was the first who suffered in that glorious cause, after the standard of the Reformation had been unfurled by Luther. Before his time, two individuals at least, had suffered martyrdom for their religious opinions,—James Resby, an Englishman, and scholar of Wickliffe, who was burnt in 1422; and Paul Craw, a Bohemian, and a follower of Huss, who endured the same cruel fate at St Andrews about ten years afterwards. In 1494, thirty persons, chiefly gentlemen and ladies of distinction, were accused of heretical sentiments, but conducted their defence with such boldness, that they were dismissed with an admonition. In 1525, there was an Act of Parliament passed, prohibiting the importation of Luther's books into Scotland, which they said had always "been clean of all sic filth and vice." If we may judge from the character of the Scots, who have been accused of being usually "wise behind the hand," it is highly probable that such books had already been introduced into this country.—*Life of Knox*, ii. 28. "The more the subject is investigated," says Dr M'Crie, "the more clearly am I persuaded it will appear, that the opinions of Wickliffe had the most powerful and extensive influence upon the Reformation. We can trace the existence of the Lollards, in Ayrshire, from the time of Wickliffe to the days of George Wishart. And in Fife, they were so numerous, as to have formed the design of rescuing Patrick Hamilton by force on the day of his execution."—*Life of Melville*, i. 8.

noble extraction, and nearly allied to the royal family, being nephew of the Earl of Arran and of the Duke of Albany. He was destined for the Church, but while pursuing his studies he acquired some knowledge of the reformed doctrine, and with the view of obtaining better information, he went abroad and paid a visit to Luther and other Reformers in Germany. The result was, a deeper persuasion of the truth, accompanied with a strong and unconquerable desire to impart to his benighted countrymen the beams of that saving knowledge by which his own soul had been enlightened. His friends, aware of the danger to which he would expose himself by so doing, used every argument to dissuade him from making the attempt. But the motion was from God, and could not be resisted. On arriving in Scotland, about the commencement of the year 1528, his spirit, like that of Paul, was stirred within him, when he beheld the ignorance and superstition which prevailed; and wherever he came, he denounced, in the plainest terms, the corruptions of the Church. His clear arguments, aided by his fervent piety, mild manners and exalted rank, could not fail to produce a powerful sensation; and the clergy took the alarm. James Beaton, Archbishop of St Andrews, was at that time primate of the Church and chancellor of the kingdom,—a cruel and crafty man, who scrupled at no means, however flagitious, for effecting his purposes. Afraid to proceed openly against Hamilton, he advised that he should be decoyed to St Andrews on the pretext of a friendly conference with him about his doctrine. The open-hearted young man eagerly embraced the proposal, and fell into the snare. It is

needless to dwell on the revolting consequences. He was easily induced, by some insidious priests, to declare his sentiments. At the dead hour of night he was dragged from his bed, taken to the castle, and after confessing his faith before the archbishop, was condemned to be burnt at the stake as an obstinate heretic. On the afternoon of Friday, February 28, 1528, this gentle and gracious youth was led to the place of execution, where a stake was fastened, with wood, coals, powder, and other inflammable materials piled around it. When he came to the place, he stripped himself of his gown, coat, and bonnet, and giving them to a favourite servant, "These," he said, "will not profit in the fire, they will profit thee. After this, of me thou canst receive no commodity, except the ensample of my death, which I pray thee bear in mind; for albeit it be bitter to the flesh, yet is it the entrance into eternal life, which none shall possess that deny Christ before this wicked generation." When bound to the stake, he exhibited no symptoms of fear, but commended his soul to God, and kept his eyes stedfastly directed towards heaven. The executioner set fire to the train of powder, which, however, did not kindle the pile, but severely scorched the side of the martyr. In this situation he remained unmoved till a new supply of powder was brought from the castle. Meanwhile, the friars who stood around him, kept molesting him, crying out, "Convert, heretic; call upon our Lady; say, *Salve regina.*" "Depart and trouble me not," he said, "ye messengers of Satan." One of them in particular, called Friar Campbell, rendered himself conspicuous for his rudeness in disturb-

ing the last moments of the martyr. "Thou wicked man," said Hamilton, addressing him, "thou knowest that I am not an heretic, and that it is the truth of God for which I now suffer—so much didst thou confess unto me in private—and thereupon I appeal thee to answer before the judgment-seat of Christ." At length the fire was kindled, and, amidst the noise and fury of the flames, he was distinctly heard pronouncing these last words: "How long, O Lord, shall darkness cover this realm! How long wilt thou suffer this tyranny of men! Lord Jesus, receive my spirit."

The martyrdom of this engaging and accomplished youth produced a sensation very different from what his murderers anticipated. They expected by this bold stroke, aimed at a person of such high rank, to intimidate all others, and suppress the rising Reformation. The effect was precisely the reverse. It roused the minds of men from the dead sleep into which they had fallen—led them to inquire into the causes of his death—created discussion,—and ultimately, what Hamilton had failed to do with his living voice, was accomplished by his cruel death. He

> "Had borne his faculties so meek, had been
> So clear in his great office, that his virtues
> Did plead like angels, trumpet-tongued, against
> The deep damnation of his taking off!"

Knox informs us, that many even in the University of St Andrews began to "call in doubt what they had before held for a certain veritie, and to espy the vanitie of the received superstition." And he relates, in his own homely way, an anecdote which shows how matters stood:—"Short after this," he says, "new

consultation was taken that some should be burnit. A merrie gentleman, namit John Lindesay, familiar (servant) to Bishop James Beatoun, standing by when consultation was had, said,—'My Lord, gif ye burne any man, except ye follow my counsaill, ye will utterlie destroy yourselves. Gif ye will burne them, let thame be burnit in *how cellars;* for the reik of Mr Patrik Hamilton has infectit as many as it did blaw upon.'" * The effect of Hamilton's death on the popular mind was greatly aided by the fearful death of Friar Campbell, who had insulted him at the stake. This wretched man soon after went distracted, and died in the utmost horror of mind, with the appeal of the martyr ringing in his ears.

Notwithstanding all warning and advice, the flames of persecution were kindled throughout the country, and numbers suffered between the years 1528 and 1540. We shall only select two or three instances. The first presents a curious illustration of the impolicy of superstition, and at the same time of the wonderful power of divine grace in qualifying for martyrdom an individual, who was as unlikely to suffer, and as little thought of being called to suffer such a death, as any one who peruses this account. In a history of the French Church we find it recorded of an honest country gentleman, who had paid little regard to any form of religion, but who was so pestered and annoyed by the priests with some unfounded suspicions of heresy, that he began first to inquire what heresy was, and from one step to another was led to suffer willingly and intelligently for a religion of which he had formerly

* Knox, p. 15.

known absolutely nothing. The following case is somewhat similar:—Mr David Straiton was a gentleman of property on the sea-coast of Angus. He was the proprietor of some fishing-boats, out of which the Bishop of Murray demanded tithe. Straiton, who was a man of stubborn disposition and rough manners, was so incensed at the increasing pride and covetousness of the clergy, that he ordered his servants to cast every tenth fish they caught into the sea, and sent word to the bishop, that "if he wanted his tithe, he might come and receive it where he got the stock." He was forthwith summoned to answer for heresy. Heresy was a thing he had never dreamt of. He had hitherto been notorious for his contempt of all religion. But now he was led to make inquiry, and happily sought the acquaintance of John Erskine of Dun, afterwards one of the leaders of the Reformation, from whose conversation he derived singular benefit. At this time, Tyndal's translation of the New Testament had found its way into Scotland, and was privately circulated with great industry. One copy supplied several families. At the silent hour of night they would assemble together in a private house, and having ascertained that there were no spies near them, the sacred volume was brought forth from its concealment, and, while one read, the rest listened with mute attention. One day, Mr Straiton retired with the young Laird of Lauriestone to a solitary place in the fields to hear the New Testament read to him (he was unable to read himself); and it so happened that, in the course of reading, this saying of our Lord occurred, "He that denieth me

before men, in the midst of this wicked generation, him will I deny in the presence of my Father and his angels." These words produced the most extraordinary effect on the mind of Straiton; he suddenly became as one enraptured or inspired; and throwing himself on his knees, his hands stretched out, and his eyes fixed for some time stedfastly towards heaven, he burst forth in the following strain:—"O Lord, I have been wicked, and justly mayest thou abstract thy grace from me; but, Lord, for thy mercies' sake, let me never deny thee nor thy truth, for fear of death or corporal pains." The issue proved that the prayer had been heard. Being brought before the bishop's court at Holyrood House, he refused to recant, boldly defended the truth, and was sentenced to be hanged and burnt. The execution took place at the Rood of Greenside, near Edinburgh; and he died triumphantly, anticipating a joyful immortality.

The next case we shall notice presents an affecting proof of the triumph of divine grace over constitutional timidity, and the love of life so natural to youth. Alexander Kennedy was a young gentleman of liberal education, residing in Glasgow, who had a turn for Scottish poetry, and at the time we refer to he had not passed the 18th year of his age. He was apprehended along with Jerome Russel, who was of the order of Grey Friars, and is described by Knox "as a young man of meek nature, quick spirit, and of good letters." Kennedy, on being brought before his judges, and threatened with the dreadful doom of being burnt alive, was at first inclined to recant. In a short time, however, he recovered his composure.

The poor boy (for he was little more) seemed all at once to have been strengthened from on high; and after having thanked God for having preserved him from apostasy, he rose from his knees. "Now," said he, addressing his judges, "I defy death. Do with me as you please; I thank God *I am ready.*" His companion, Russel, though naturally mild, was roused by the irritating language of his persecutors. "This is your hour and power of darkness," he said to them; "now ye sit as judges, and we stand wrongfully accused: but the day will come when our innocence will appear, and ye shall see your own blindness, to your everlasting confusion. Go on, and fill the measure of your iniquity." On their way to the place of execution, Russel, observing some symptoms of depression in the appearance of his youthful fellow-sufferer, thus encouraged him, "Brother, fear not; greater is He that is in us than he that is in the world. The pain that we are to suffer is short, and shall be light; but our joy and consolation shall never have an end. Let us, therefore, strive to enter in to our Master and Saviour by the same strait way which he has trode before us. Death cannot destroy us, for it is already destroyed by Him for whose sake we suffer." And so both of them, after kneeling down and praying, cheerfully yielded themselves to the executioners—they were fastened to the stake—the faggots were lighted —and their spirits ascended, as it were in a chariot of fire, to the realms of everlasting glory.

The next story is of a more harrowing description. It is that of a female, the wife of one Robert Lamb, at Perth, who suffered at the same time with her

husband. Lamb's crime was, that he had interrupted a friar when preaching that a man could not be saved without praying to the saints; and the only charge against his wife was, that she refused to pray to the Virgin Mary when in childbirth, declaring that she would only pray to God in the name of Jesus Christ. For these crimes Lamb was condemned to be hanged, and his wife to be tied in a sack and drowned. The circumstances attending the last scene of this poor woman's life were sufficient to have moved any heart but that of a Popish inquisitor. Warmly attached to her husband, she implored, as a last and only favour, that she might be allowed to die in his company. This affecting request was barbarously refused, but she was allowed to accompany him to the place of his execution. On the way, she exhorted him to patience and constancy in the cause of Christ; and on parting with him, she said, "Husband, be glad; we have lived together many joyful days; and this day on which we must die, we ought to esteem the most joyful of all, because now we shall have joy for ever. Therefore, I will not bid you good night, for we shall meet in the kingdom of heaven." After witnessing his death, she was ordered to prepare for her own, and was taken for that purpose to a pool of water in the neighbourhood. Here the tenderness of the mother began to manifest itself. She implored her neighbours to be kind to her fatherless and motherless children; and, with a look of anguish, she took from her bosom the infant she was suckling, and committed it to a nurse whom she had provided. Yet all this did not shake her fortitude or her faith; she rose superior

to her sufferings, and calmly resigned herself to death.

On hearing of the courage and constancy of these early martyrs of the Reformation, one cannot fail to admire the power of faith in the glorious Gospel of Christ,—that faith, under the strengthening influences of which, in more ancient times, even "women were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection." The mental heroism of these sufferers not only closely resembles that of the primitive martyrs of Christianity, but may stand a comparison with some of the most splendid examples of courage recorded in Roman history. The conduct of the wife of poor Robert Lamb may remind us of the noble matron of Rome, the wife of Pœtus, who, when condemned to die with her husband, plunged the dagger first into her own bosom, and then, handing it to her husband, said with a smile, "Pœtus, it is not painful." We see in both the same noble contempt of death; but, when more narrowly examined, how different do the cases appear! Putting out of view the vast dissimilarity between the causes in which they suffered, the Roman lady was obliged to die; she could not have escaped by making any concessions. The Scottish mother might have saved her life by saying a few words, such as, "Hail, Mary, queen of heaven!" Her's was a voluntary sacrifice on the altar of faith and a good conscience.

Our admiration of the power of divine grace in these worthies must increase, when we consider that, at this time, the number of the reformed was comparatively very small,—that the sufferers met with

little sympathy from their neighbours,—and that there was, as yet, no public preaching of the Gospel in Scotland, so that it could only be from reading the Scriptures that any acquired the knowledge of the truth; and yet, in spite of these disadvantages, a single ray of that truth, darting from a single text, was sufficient to open their eyes, and, in the faith and hope of the Gospel, they would cheerfully submit to death in its most frightful forms.

It is true that the victims of Popish cruelty in Scotland were few when compared with those that suffered in other countries; but no thanks to Popery for that. What our ancestors felt was merely a sample of the bloody tragedy which it was now enacting in almost every nation in Europe. Thanks, rather, under Providence, to the stout hearts and stalwart arms of our Reformers, who arrested its sanguinary career soon after its commencement, braved its power even on the throne, and never ceased till they had proscribed it by the laws of the land.

We may be told by some that all the cruelties of which we have been speaking are to be traced to the barbarism of the age, and to ignorance of the principles of liberty, which, they say, were not understood even by Protestants for many years afterwards. This is a mere theory, unsupported by facts,—the language of persons who are fond of reducing every thing to general principles. Protestantism disavows, by the very right of protest which it claims for itself, the right of persecuting others for conscience' sake. But Popery, like every form of superstition, is, in its very essence and spirit, a system of intolerance. It aims at universal domi-

nion; it denies the right of private judgment in matters of religion; it lays the conscience and understanding of every man at the feet of his priest; and, when it has once taken possession of the mind, it hardens the heart, and fits it for perpetrating atrocities which human nature, undebased by its influence, shrinks and shudders at beholding. Our ancestors knew it better than we do, and it was one of their articles of indictment against it, which shows that they had feelings which were shocked, and a sense of justice which was outraged by it,—that it was "a cruel, bloody, and tyrannical superstition."

How thankful, then, ought we to feel to a kind and ill-requited Providence, that we have been delivered from such a system of oppression,—that we are not called to suffer, as our forefathers were, for professing the Gospel of Jesus Christ,—that we are permitted to enjoy, in unmolested peace, our religious privileges! If David would not drink of the water of Bethlehem, because it was in his eyes "the blood of the men that went in jeopardy of their lives," but "poured it out unto the Lord," how dearly ought we to prize, and how gratefully ought we to improve, to the glory of God, those privileges which have been transmitted to us at the expense of the blood of His dear saints!

CHAPTER II.

The Last Martyrs of the Reformation—George Wishart—Walter Mill—Commencement of the Reformation—Scotland Reformed by her Nobles and People—Arrival of John Knox—Demolition of the Monasteries.

In 1539, James Beaton, Archbishop of St Andrews, who put Patrick Hamilton to death, died, and was succeeded in the primacy by his nephew, Cardinal David Beaton. This prelate inherited all his uncle's hostility to the reformed doctrine, with even a larger share of his ambition, craft, and cruelty. When James V. died of a broken heart, he forged a will in the name of the deceased monarch, appointing himself governor of the kingdom; and had this policy succeeded, there can be little doubt that he might have arrested, to an indefinite period, the progress of the Reformation in Scotland. Some idea may be formed of the wholesale measures which this bloody-minded man had devised for the extirpation of Protestantism, as well as of the numbers of the reformed at this period, when it is stated, that before the death of the king, the cardinal had presented him with a list of

three hundred and sixty of the chief of the nobility and barons, with the Earl of Arran at the head of them, who were suspected of heresy, and doomed to destruction.* A merciful Providence interfered to defeat this atrocious plot. The forgery was discovered; and Arran, who was friendly to the Reformation, was elected governor of the kingdom.

Baffled in his bloody and ambitious designs, Beaton retired, like a chafed tiger, to his castle at St Andrews, and, taking the law into his own hand, sacrificed to his vengeance all the Protestants who came within his reach. But the special object of his hatred was Mr George Wishart, a reformed minister, and brother to the laird of Pitarrow. All the accounts of this martyr transmitted to us, unite in representing him as a person of the most amiable and venerable character. He is described as a tall man, of a dark complexion, graceful in his person and courteous in his manners, of profound learning, and remarkable for his humility and his charity. His piety was so fervent, that he used to spend whole days and nights in prayer and meditation. As a preacher, he had a wonderful command over the feelings of his audience, and many were converted under his ministry. Wishart's popularity, however, was gall and wormwood to those of the Romish clergy who were still attached to their superstition, and especially to Beaton, who tried various plans, for some time unsuccessfully, to get him dragged or decoyed into his den. Hearing of his success in Ayr, the cardinal sent the Bishop of Glasgow to apprehend him. The bishop, whom Knox calls "a

* Crawfurd's Lives, p. 79.

glorious fule," found the preacher surrounded by so many gentlemen, that he durst not execute his commission; but he took possession of the church; and the gentlemen having threatened to expel him by force, "Let him alone," said Wishart, who could not endure violence of any kind, "his sermon will not do mekill hurt; let us go to the mercat cross." The bishop's sermon, according to Knox's account, was a very harmless one indeed. "He preached to his jackmen, and to sum auld boisses of the toun: the sum of all his sermone was, They say we sould preiche; why not? Better late thryve, nor never thryve. Haud us still for your bishope, and we shall provyde better the nixt tyme."

In Wishart's character piety was beautifully blended with benevolence. He was so liberal to the poor, that he parted, not only with his money, but even with his body-clothes, to supply their necessities. The town of Dundee was visited with a severe plague in 1544; and he no sooner heard of it, than he hastened to the scene of death with as much earnestness as others were flying from it. "They are now in trouble, and need comfort," he said; "and perchance the hand of God will make them now to magnify and reverence that Word, which before, for fear of men, they set at licht part." He was received with great joy by the inhabitants; sermon was intimated for the very next day; and as the plague was still raging in the place, he took his station upon the head of the east gate, the infected standing without the gate, and those that were free within; and there he preached to them on these appropriate words in the 107th Psalm, "He sent his word, and healed them;"

adding, by way of paraphrase, "It is neither herb nor plaister, O Lord, but thy word haills all." "By the which sermon," says Knox, "he raised up the hearts of all that heard him, that they regardit not death, but jugit thame mair happie that sould depairt, than sic as sould remain behind." His concern for the bodies of his fellow-men was not less distinguished than his love to their souls. When not preaching, he was constantly employed in visiting the sick, and ministering to the wants of the poor; exposing himself, without fear, to the risk of infection.

But, in truth, the life of Wishart was in greater danger from his persecutors than from the pestilence. One day, as he was descending from his elevated position on the gate after sermon, he observed a man standing at the foot of the stairs, and immediately suspecting his purpose, he laid hold of his hand, saying, "My friend, what would ye do?" taking from him, at the same time, a dagger, which he held concealed under his gown. The wretch was so confounded, that he confessed on the spot that he was a priest, who had been bribed by Cardinal Beaton to assassinate Wishart. The people, on hearing this, would have torn him to pieces, but the good minister took the assassin into his arms, and saved his life. "No," said he, "he has done me no harm, but rather good; he has let us understand what we may fear; in times to come we will watch better."

The promptitude and quick penetration displayed by Wishart on this occasion may be explained on ordinary principles. Knox himself tells us that he marked the priest, "because he was maist scharp of

eye and judgement." But the following incident, which occurred soon after, is not so easily explained: When at Montrose, he received a letter, purporting to come from an intimate friend who had been taken suddenly ill, and was anxious to see him before his death. Wishart set out in the company of a few friends, but had not proceeded above a quarter of a mile when he suddenly stopped, and said to them, "I am forbidden of God to go this journey; will some of you be pleased to ride to yonder place (pointing to a little hill) and see what you find, for I apprehend there is a plot against my life." They went to the hill, and discovered some sixty horsemen concealed behind it, ready to intercept him. It turned out that the letter was a forgery of the cardinal's, and Wishart once more escaped; but, with a presentiment soon after verified, he said to his friends on their return, "I know I shall end my life in the hands of that blood-thirsty man; but it will not be after this manner." "I know assuredly my travel is nigh an end," he said on another occasion, with something like the spirit of ancient prophecy, "but God will send you comfort after me. This realm shall be illuminated with the light of Christ's Gospel, as clearly as any realm ever was since the days of the apostles; the house of God shall be built in it; yea, it shall not lack (whatsoever enemies shall devise to the contrary) the very topstone. Neither shall this be long in doing; for there shall not many suffer after me."

Shortly after this, Wishart was basely betrayed into the hands of the cardinal by the Earl of Bothwell, under a pledge of personal safety. He was conducted

to St Andrews, and after a mock trial, during which he was grossly insulted, laughed at, and even spit upon, by his judges, he was condemned to the stake as an obstinate heretic. The crimes of which he was accused were, such as denying auricular confession, purgatory, the mass, and other inventions of the Romish Church; and he defended himself with great meekness and fidelity. Of one real heresy only did his enemies accuse him, namely, of holding that the souls of men slept, after death, till the resurrection; and of this he was so anxious to clear himself, that he formally disclaimed it at the stake. So determined was Beaton on accomplishing his object, that though Arran, the governor, wrote him to delay the trial, declaring that "he would not consent to his death until the cause was well examined, and protesting, that if the cardinal should do otherwise, that the man's blood should be required at his hands," the haughty prelate, setting all authority at defiance, and without waiting for the sanction of the civil power, proceeded to carry the sentence into effect at his own hand. On the day of execution, the cannon of the castle were planted so as to command the street and the scaffold, in case of any attempt being made to rescue the prisoner; and the front-tower of the palace was elegantly fitted up with cushions and tapestry, that there, seated at their ease, the cardinal and his clergy might enjoy the spectacle. That morning the devoted martyr was invited to breakfast with the governor of the castle. He replied, "Very willingly, and so much the rather that I perceive you to be a good Christian, and a man fearing God." Bread and

wine having been set upon the table, he said, "I beseech you, in the name of God, and for the love you bear to our Saviour, Jesus Christ, to be silent a little while, till I have made a short exhortation, and blessed this bread, so that I may bid you farewell." He then spoke about half-an-hour of the institution of the Supper, and the death of Christ; after which, he blessed the bread and wine, and having tasted them himself, distributed them to the governor and his friends. "As for myself," he concluded, "there is a more better potion prepared for me, only because I have preached the true doctrine of Christ; but pray for me that I may take it patiently as from his hand." He was then brought out, and fixed to the stake with a heavy chain. The fire was lighted, and the powder fastened to his body exploded. "This flame hath scorched my body," said the sufferer, "yet hath it not daunted my spirit. But he who from yonder high place beholdeth us with such pride, shall, within a few days, lie in the same as ignominiously as now he is seen proudly to rest himself." The fire having now kindled, he was first strangled, and his body was soon consumed to ashes.*

This happened on the first day of March 1546. Nothing could be more unlikely, at the time Wishart uttered this memorable prediction, than that it should be fulfilled. The cardinal himself paid no regard to it; he dwelt securely in his fortified castle; the people of the town were at his command; and he had powerful friends throughout the country. A late writer is so perfectly sure that our ancestors could, in

* Spotswood, 79, 82; Pitscottie, 457; Knox, 53.

no instance, receive premonitions of future events, that he maintains it to be "more probable" that Wishart was privy to some conspiracy against the cardinal, "than that he should be endowed with the spirit of prophecy."* But is there any thing inconsistent with reason or religion in supposing that God may, on special occasions, such as in times of hot persecution, have granted to his faithful and prayerful servants, impressions and forewarnings of coming events, beyond what could be discovered even by "an extraordinary degree of sagacious foresight?" "That the Supreme Being," says Dr Cook, "may, in seasons of difficulty, thus enlighten his servants, cannot be doubted." To hold that this opinion is inconsistent with the perfection of the Holy Scriptures, is to mistake the matter entirely. Our worthies never pretended to be endowed with the spirit of prophecy, in the sense in which this is true of the ancient prophets; they did not lay claim to inspiration, or require implicit faith to be placed in their sayings as divine; they did not propose them as a rule of duty, nor appeal to them as miraculous evidences of the doctrines they taught. But they regarded such presentiments as gracious intimations of the will of God, granted to them in answer to prayer, for their own encouragement or direction; and they delivered them as warnings to others, leaving the truth of them to be ascertained and proved by the event.

To insinuate, as some have done, that Wishart—the meek, the unworldly, the beneficent, the tender-hearted and pious Wishart, who repeatedly interceded for the life of his enemies, prayed for their forgiveness

* M'Gavin's Edition of Scots Worthies, vol. i. p. 37.

at the stake, and kissed the executioner before he did his office—was "privy to the conspiracy" afterwards formed against Beaton, is the strangest exhibition of prejudice which modern times afford. The charge has been revived of late, in a more malignant spirit, by some writers, whose sympathies seem to be all in favour of the popish clergy, and with whom, in estimating the justness of the accusation, it is apparently enough to know that Beaton was a bishop, and Wishart a reformer. The credulity, if not the charity, of these gentlemen may be estimated, when we mention that the whole evidence on which they proceed is a passage in some manuscript correspondence of the period, in which mention is made of "a Scotishman called Wyshert," who, it seems, had been employed as a sort of go-between, or confidential servant, in some conspiracy formed by Henry VIII. against the life of the cardinal! After what we have stated of the character of Wishart, our readers may be safely left to judge whether *he* was likely to be the person employed on this menial and degrading service, or whether, knowing that such a conspiracy had been formed, he was a man capable of telling it at such an awful moment, for the purpose of being accounted a prophet; as if, after the manner of modern fortune-tellers, he had first acted as a spy, and then pretended to predict what he had discovered! In the hands of writers actuated by such a spirit, or guided by such evidence, no man's character can be safe, and no man's memory can be sacred; but "the memory of the just is blessed," and it is consoling to think that, in this case, as in many others of a similar kind, Providence has preserved

materials sufficient to vindicate the character of the Reformer, and make the odious charge recoil on the heads of his accusers.*

The truth is, that the plot which had been concerted against the cardinal by Henry VIII. had completely failed, and his assassination was the result of a more private conspiracy which was formed some time after Wishart's death. This conspiracy, as we are informed by our historians, was first proposed by a hot-headed young man of the house of Rothes, named Norman Lesley, who was instigated by some personal pique against Beaton, and was heard to swear that "these two" (holding out his hand and dagger) "were the two priests that would give absolution to the Cardinal."† With him were associated his brother, John Lesley, William Kirkaldy of Grange, James Melville of Carnbee, and some others, not exceeding twelve persons in

* See an able and triumphant "Vindication of George Wishart the martyr, against Mr Patrick Fraser Tytler," which appeared in the "Edinburgh Christian Monitor" for 1823, vol. iii. p. 475, where the author shows the absurdity of supposing that a gentleman of Mr Wishart's rank and character, the brother of a Scottish baron, would be designated by his friends, "a Scottishman called Wysshert," and proves, by direct historical testimony, that this person could neither be the martyr nor his brother the laird of Pitarrow. Mr Tytler attempted a reply in the same periodical (vol. iv. p. 90), in which, however, he does not venture to repeat his charge against Wishart, or to answer the arguments of his critic. More recently, the charge has been revived by a Scots Episcopalian, the Rev. C. J. Lyon of St Andrews, who has been satisfactorily answered by the Rev. W. Lothian of the same place. In his History of Scotland, Mr Tytler does not venture to repeat the charge as to Wishart's share in the conspiracy, though he still insinuates that, from his connection with the conspirators against Beaton, he must have known of it; it is just *possible* that he might not. (Vol. v. 417.) This is pure conjecture. And even though we should grant it to be "possible" that he did know that plots had *formerly* been laid for the assassination of the cardinal, how was he to know that future plots would be laid after his death, and that these would certainly prove successful?

† Buchanan, lib. 15; Spotswood, 82; Pitscottie, 483.

all. Early on the morning of Saturday, 29th May 1546, this small band surprised the castle of St Andrews, turned out the attendants, burst into the chamber of the cardinal, and after upbraiding him with his perfidy and cruelty, fell upon him with their swords. He died exclaiming, "I am a priest,—fy, fy,—all is gone!" The inhabitants of the town, awakened by the terrified inmates of the castle, ran to the palace, eagerly demanding a sight of the cardinal; and the conspirators, in order to satisfy them, exposed his dead body on the very tower from which he had, a few months before, in savage pomp, witnessed the execution of George Wishart.

Far be it from us to vindicate this act of bloody revenge. The rude and unsettled state of the times, and the arbitrary violence of Beaton, who had set the example of acting in defiance of all law in the murder of Wishart, may palliate the irregularity, but cannot excuse the atrocity of the deed.* Viewed as an event in Providence, we may recognise in it a just judgment from God on a cruel persecutor; while, at the same time, considered as the deed of man, we condemn the instruments whose passions were overruled for accomplishing it. Beaton died unlamented, as he had lived

* The history of England records instances of the murder of bishops, much more numerous and more revolting than any similar cases in Scotland. The murder of Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury, in the twelfth century, by four English barons,—that of Sudbury, Archbishop of York, in the next century, by Wat Tyler's mob,—of Walcher, Bishop of Durham,—Ayscoth, Bishop of Salisbury, and others, who fell victims to their own ambition, oppression, and illegal practices, might be cited to show that the assassination of Beaton is not without its parallels in Episcopalian England, and might, if it were necessary, furnish an answer to the invidious and unpatriotic reflections which have been cast on Scotland by some of her recreant children.

undesired; and the general feeling as to the manner of his death was expressed in the following couplet of Sir David Lyndesay, the Scottish poet (whose poetry, by the way, helped mightily to bring down the sinking credit of the Romish clergy):—

> "As for the Cardinal, I grant
> He was the man we weel could want,
> And we'll forget him soon;
> And yet I think the sooth to say,
> Although the loon is weel away,
> The deed was foully done."

The martyrdom of Wishart did not arrest the progress of the Reformation, nor did the fate of Beaton stop the fury of persecution. New preachers, many of whom had fled from England on the accession of "bloody Mary," supplied the place of those who had been put to death, and converts, both from among the clergy and laity, were daily made to the Reformed faith. The inhabitants of Edinburgh, almost in a body, resolved no longer to attend mass, but to make an open separation from the Church of Rome,—an example which was followed by many others in town and country. In vain did the queen, the widow of James V., who was now regent of the kingdom, try to stem the torrent. The clergy sunk every day in public estimation, and various causes contributed to accelerate their downfall. Instead of setting themselves to reform the notorious abuses of the Church, they made an ostentatious display of the most puerile of her ceremonies; instead of prudently bending to circumstances, they rose to a higher pitch of pride and arrogance than ever. The very year of Wishart's martyrdom, Cardinal Beaton and the Archbishop of Glasgow

had a mortal quarrel in that city, the point of dispute being which of their crosses should be carried foremost in a procession. The cross-bearers happening to meet, a scuffle ensued, and they pommelled each other with their crosses, till both were thrown to the ground. Some time after, a momentous controversy arose about the propriety of saying the *Pater-noster* to the saints. A monk, called Friar Totts, in a sermon preached in St Andrews, at the request of some doctors in the university, engaged to prove that all the petitions in the Lord's prayer might, with great propriety, be addressed to the saints. "If we meet with an old man in the streets," said he, "we will say, Good morrow, father; how much more may we call the saints *our fathers*. And seeing we grant they are in heaven, we may say to every one of them, Our father which art in heaven," &c. This stuff might have gone down a few years before, but the temper of the times had changed; the preacher set his audience a-laughing, and he was glad to leave the town, to escape from the persecution of the boys on the street, who cried after him, "Friar Paternoster." A scene of a different kind occurred in the metropolis. St Giles, it seems, was the patron saint of Edinburgh, and on his feast-day it was the custom to carry his image through the town, with drums, trumpets, and all sorts of musical instruments. When this day arrived in the year 1558 (just two years before the Reformation), the clergy resolved to have it kept with all due solemnity, and the queen, fearing a tumult, agreed to honour the scene with her presence. But lo! when the hour of the procession arrived, the saint was missing; some evil-disposed person had

stolen him out of the receptacle in which he was usually kept. This occasioned some delay, till another image, of smaller dimensions, was borrowed from the Greyfriars, which the people, in derision, called "Young Sanct Geill." All now went forward peaceably, till the queen retired to dinner, when some young fellows, provided for the purpose, came forward and offered to assist the bearers of the image. "Young Sanct Geill" was soon justled off into the street and smashed in pieces. The result was, an Edinburgh riot; and the priests were glad to save themselves by a hasty flight. Down went the crosses; off went the surplices, caps, and coronets. "Such an uproar," says Knox, "came never among the generation of antichrist in this realm before!"*

There was only one thing needed to seal the ruin of the Popish clergy in Scotland,—the continuance of the cruelties by which they endeavoured to put down the opposition they had excited. And, like those beasts of prey whose dying struggles are more formidable than their first attack, Popery expended the last efforts of its expiring power in a deed of brutal cruelty. Walter Mill, an old decrepid priest, who had been condemned as a heretic in the time of Cardinal Beaton, but had escaped, was at last discovered by the spies of his successor, Archbishop Hamilton, and brought to St Andrews for trial. He appeared before the court so worn out with age and hardships, that it was not expected he would be able to answer the questions put to him; but, to the surprise of all, he managed his defence with great spirit. He was con-

* Spotswood, 118; Knox, 95.

demned to the flames; but such was the horror now felt at this punishment, and such the general conviction of the innocence of the victim, that the clergy could not prevail on a secular judge to ratify the sentence, and not an individual in the town would give or sell a rope to bind the martyr to the stake, so that the archbishop had to furnish them with a cord for the purpose from his own pavilion. When commanded by Olyphant, the bishop's menial, to go to the stake, the old man, with becoming spirit, refused. "No," said he, "I will not go except thou put me up with thy hand; for I am forbidden by the law of God to put hands on myself." The wretch having pushed him forward, he went up with a cheerful countenance, saying, "I will go unto the altar of God." "As for me," he added, when tied to the stake, his voice trembling with age, "I am fourscore years old, and cannot live long by course of nature; but a hundred better shall rise out of the ashes of my bones. I trust in God I shall be the last that shall suffer death in Scotland for this cause." So saying, he expired amidst the flames, on the 28th of August 1558. He was indeed the last that suffered in that cause; and, as Spottiswood says, his death was the death of Popery in this realm. This barbarous execution roused the horror of the nation to an incredible pitch. The citizens of St Andrews marked the spot on which the martyr died, by rearing over it an immense heap of stones; and as often as the priests caused it to be removed, the sullen and ominous memorial was restored by the next morning. The knell of Popery had rung; and Scotland was prepared to start up as

one man, and shake itself free of the monster which had, for so many centuries, prostrated its strength, and preyed upon its vitals.

As a last resource to support their sinking credit, the priests tried once more to get up a miracle, the last attempted in Scotland. Public notice was given, that on a certain day they intended to put the truth of their religion to the test, by curing a young man who had been born blind, at the chapel of our Lady of Loretto, near Musselburgh. A great multitude collected to witness the miracle; and there, sure enough, was the young man, apparently stone blind, accompanied by a solemn procession of monks, who, after solemnly invoking the assistance of the virgin, made him open his eyes, to the astonishment of the beholders. Among the crowd, there was a gentleman, Colville of Cleish, a brave man, and a good Protestant, who immediately suspected the deception. He took the young man home to his lodgings, and locking the door, prevailed upon him to tell the whole secret. It appeared that while in the service of the nuns of Sciennes, near Edinburgh, the boy had acquired the faculty of turning up the white of his eyes, and keeping them in that position so as to appear blind. The monks having come to the knowledge of this fact, thought of turning it to some account, and having kept him for some time concealed, so as not to be easily recognised, they had first sent him out to beg as a blind pauper, and had now brought him out to play his part on the occasion referred to. To confirm his narrative, the lad "played his paivie" before Colville, by "flypping up the lid of his eyes, and casting up the white" to

perfection. Upon this Colville exposed the whole story, and made the young man repeat it at the Cross of Edinburgh, to the confusion of the whole fraternity of monks and friars, who would, no doubt, have wreaked their vengeance on their former tool, and made him blind enough, had not Cleish stood beside him with his drawn sword, placed him, when he had done, on his own horse, and carried him off to Fife.*

It is a great mistake to suppose that the Scottish Reformation originated with the common people, or in the spirit of rebellion. It would be much nearer the truth to say, that Scotland was reformed by her noblemen and gentlemen; for in both the periods of her Reformation, the flower of her nobility took the lead; her principal Reformers were men of superior education as well as high rank; and many of the first Protestant preachers were converted ecclesiastics, who continued to officiate in the Church, having discarded the mummeries of Popery, and become genuine pastors of Christ's flock. And though unfortunately the crown was unfavourable to the Reformation, it was not until every other method had been tried ineffectually to obtain their object, that the Protestant noblemen and gentry found it necessary to bind themselves by solemn oaths for mutual defence, and to hazard their lives in the cause of religion.

The principal persons among the nobility and landed gentry, "into whose hearts the Lord God of our fathers did put such a thing as this, to beautify the house of the Lord," and whose names deserve to be held by all Scotsmen in everlasting remembrance, were,

* Life of Knox, i. 321; Row MS., 356.

Archibald Earl of Argyle, Lord James Stewart, afterwards Earl of Murray, and commonly called the Good Regent, the Earl of Glencairne, the Earl of Morton, the Earl of Rothes, Archibald Lord of Lorne, Lords Ochiltree, Yester, and Boyd, Sir James Sandilands of Calder, John Erskine of Dun, and a large proportion of the lesser barons. The feudal system, which then prevailed in Scotland, gave these noblemen and gentlemen the virtual command of the whole community; in short, they reigned on their estates like so many princes. These were not the men, when once enlightened by the truth, tamely to submit to priestly domination. They had long been disgusted by the manners of the higher clergy, who, though in general mean or base-born persons, had claimed precedence of the ancient nobility, thrust themselves into places of power, and appropriated to themselves the greater share of the national wealth. On the other hand, they saw that the reformed preachers, who were in general the sons or relatives of persons of rank, were men of principle and self-denial, mainly bent on the promotion of the spiritual interests of their countrymen. For some time they contented themselves with protecting these good men from the vengeance of the prelates; and providing, by an act of Council, that "it should be lawful for every one that could read, to use the English version of the Bible, until the prelates should publish a more correct one," an act which, by giving "free course to the Word of the Lord," had great influence in promoting the Reformation.

Hamilton, Archbishop of St Andrews, hearing that Argyle kept one of these ministers, Mr John Douglas,

in his castle as his chaplain, sent the Earl a coaxing letter, in which, after declaring he felt "bound in conscience" to inquire into this matter, and representing the danger to which he exposed himself and his honourable family by defection from the Church, he exhorted his lordship to rid himself, "in some honest fashion," of Douglas, that perjured apostate who had seduced him, offering to provide him with a learned preacher, who, he would "lay his soul in pawn," would teach him no other than true doctrine. The Earl's answer is respectful but spirited, and contains some shrewd hints which the archbishop could not fail to apply to himself: "Your lordship declares that there are delations of sundry points of heresy upon that man called Douglas. I have heard him teach no articles of heresy but that which agrees with God's Word. Your Lordship regards your conscience; I pray God that ye do so, and examine your conscience weill. He preaches against idolatrie; I remit to your lordship's conscience gif that be heresie or not. He preaches against adulterie and fornicatioun; I refer that to your lordship's conscience. He preaches against hypocrisie; I refer that to your lordship's conscience. He preaches against all manner of abuses of Christ's sincere religion; I refer that to your lordship's conscience. My lord, I exhort you, in Christ's name, to weigh all these affairs in your conscience, and consider if it be your dutie, not only to thole this, but in like manner to do the same. Your lordship says you would take the labour to get me a man to instruct me in your Catholick faith. God Almichtie send us mony of that sort, that will preache trewly, and nathing

but ane Catholick universal Christian faith; for we Hieland rude people hes *mister of them* (much need of them). And if your lordship wald get me sic a man, I sould provide him a corporal living, with great thanks to your lordship. And because I am able to sustean more than ane of them, I will request your lordship to provyde me as many as ye can, for *the harvest is grit, and the labouraris are few.*"

We beg to make a remark here, once for all, on the style of these extracts and anecdotes. Since the introduction of the English dialect into our country, the Scotch has been disused by almost all except the humbler classes of society, and hence has become associated in some minds with rudeness and vulgarity. But at the era of our present history, and for many years after, the language of the court, the bench, and the pulpit, of our kings and queens, and the finest ladies and gentlemen of the day, though differing materially in its pronunciation from the coarse dialect or *patois* which now prevails, was universally Scottish. This very obvious statement seems called for, when we find such sentiments as those we have now given actually stigmatized as "vulgar scurrility!" There can be no question that much of the disgust which some profess to feel at the sayings of our worthy ancestors, may be traced to the mere circumstance that their thoughts and feelings, truly noble and refined as they were in themselves, and as they might have appeared if clothed in an English dress, were unfortunately uttered in their own mother tongue.

But to proceed. The nobility and gentry resolved to do every thing in their power to suppress idolatry,

and advance "the preaching of the Evangel," as they fitly and well described the Reformation; and yet, anxious to proceed in the most orderly manner, presented supplications to the Queen Regent, humbly craving the reform of some of the most glaring abuses of the Church. The queen, however, who was a determined Papist, a Frenchwoman, and acting under foreign influence, instead of listening to these petitions, had concerted with the bishops to summon the reformed ministers to Edinburgh; and, in order to get the gentry out of the way, had issued an order for them to march to the border. The gentlemen of the west, on their way through Edinburgh, discovered the plot, and were so indignant, that they went resolutely in a body to the palace, entered the queen's chamber, where they found her surrounded with her clergy, and bitterly complained of the deception which had been practised on them. Her majesty attempted to soothe them with fair speeches; but Chalmers of Gathgirth, a gruff old baron, who was very zealous in the cause, cut her short by saying, "Madam, we know that this is the malicious device of these jaivels (the bishops), and of that bastard (Hamilton, the archbishop) that standeth by you; but we vow to God we shall make a day of it! They oppress us, and our tenants, to feed their idle bellies; they trouble our preachers, and would murder them and us! Shall we suffer this any longer? No, madam, it shall not be!" So saying, he clapt on his steel bonnet, in which all the rest of the gentlemen joined him. Alarmed for the bodily safety of the bishops, who were trembling from head to foot, the queen interfered, and sent

the unceremonious gentlemen away, with fair promises of protection to the ministers.

These promises were not long kept. The queen, after dissembling a while with the Reformers, at length threw off the mask, and avowed her determination to suppress the Reformation by force of arms. It is often seen that, on the eve of some great deliverance to the Church, her enemies are permitted, before their final overthrow, to gain a temporary advantage; and so it was now. The queen's brothers, the Princes of Lorraine, who were the most ambitious of men, and the most bigoted of Papists, had formed a gigantic conspiracy for dethroning Elizabeth, and restoring England and Scotland to the dominion of Rome. To the success of this enterprise it was deemed necessary to despatch French troops into our country, to subdue the refractory Scots, and extinguish the heresy which had sprung up among them. Our fathers, it may be easily supposed, viewed these foreign allies with the greatest jealousy. The lords and gentlemen, taking the alarm, began to prepare for self-defence; but no till they had used every expedient, without success, to prevent matters from coming to an extremity. The queen declared that, "in spite of them, all their preachers should be banished from Scotland, though they sould preach as weel as St Paul;" and when reminded of her former promises, she replied, that "it became not subjects to burden their princes with promises, farther than they pleased to keep them." A proclamation was issued, prohibiting any person from preaching without authority from the bishops; and on hearing that this proclamation was disregarded, she

summoned four of the preachers, Paul Methven, John Christison, William Harlow, and John Willock, to stand trial at the justiciary court of Stirling, for usurping the ministerial office, and exciting sedition among the people. The trial was appointed to take place on the 10th of May 1559.

Such was the critical state of affairs, when an individual suddenly appeared on the stage, the report of whose arrival in Scotland spread a panic among the Popish clergy from which they never recovered, and who was destined to do more for the cause of the Reformation than all the nobles of Scotland, with their armed followers, could have effected;—need I say, that individual was John Knox.

As the life of this Reformer forms the subject of a work with which many of our readers may be familiar, and of which any sketch that can be given here must necessarily be very meagre, we need not dwell on his previous history. Suffice it to say, that John Knox was born at Gifford, a village near Haddington, in the year 1505; that he was a fellow-student of the famous George Buchanan, who was classical tutor to James VI., and one of the most learned men of his age; and that it was not long before both Buchanan and Knox embraced the reformed religion, with all the ardour of youth, and the firmness of strong and cultivated minds. Knox had formed a strong attachment to George Wishart, and waited constantly on his person, bearing the sword which was carried before him, from the time that the attempt was made to assassinate him at Dundee. When Wishart was apprehended, Knox insisted for liberty to accompany him; but the martyr dismissed

him with this reply, "Nay, return to your bairns (meaning his pupils); and God bless you; *ane is sufficient for a sacrifice.*" After the assassination of Cardinal Beaton, he retreated for safety to the castle of St Andrews, which was then held by the conspirators. Knox had, before his conversion, entered into priests' orders; and while he remained in the castle, he was unexpectedly called upon to officiate to the Protestants who had there sought refuge. But the castle having surrendered, he was sent, with other prisoners, to the galleys. Upon regaining his liberty, he repaired to England, where he remained till the death of that good Prince, Edward VI., when the fires of persecution, kindled by the bloody Mary, compelled him to flee to Geneva, and he accepted the charge of the English congregation in that city. But during all his wanderings, his heart was fixed on his native country. With the friends of the Reformation there he kept up a constant correspondence; and, after various unsuccessful attempts, he at last resolved to devote himself, at all hazards, to the work of emancipating it from the darkness and thraldom of Popery. He arrived, as we have already seen, at a period when his presence was much required, and at a crisis to meet which his character was admirably adapted. Possessing firm and high-toned principle, the foundations of which were deeply laid in sincere piety, and profound acquaintance with the Scriptures; endowed with talents of no common order, and an eloquence popular and overwhelming; ardent in his feelings, indefatigable in his exertions, daring and dauntless in his resolutions, John Knox was the man, and almost the only man

of his time, who seemed to be expressly designed by the hand of Providence for achieving the lofty and adventurous enterprise to which he now consecrated himself, spirit, and soul, and body.

His arrival in Scotland was not long concealed from the clergy. On the morning after he landed at Leith, a person came to the monastery of the Greyfriars, where the provincial council was sitting, with the information that John Knox was come from France, and had slept the last night in Edinburgh. The priests were panic-struck with the intelligence, the council was dismissed in confusion, a messenger was despatched to the queen, and within a few days Knox was proclaimed an outlaw and a rebel. Undismayed by this denunciation, he did not hesitate a moment on the course he should pursue. He determined to present himself voluntarily at Stirling, where the Protestant ministers had been summoned to stand their trial. Having remained only a single day in Edinburgh, he hurried to Dundee, where he found the principal Protestants already assembled, with the intention of accompanying their ministers to the place of trial, and avowing their adherence to the doctrines for which they were accused. Having accompanied them to Perth, Knox preached a sermon in that town, in which he exposed the idolatry of the mass and image worship. The audience had peaceably dismissed, when one of the priests, as if in contempt of the doctrine that had been delivered, began to celebrate mass. A boy, having uttered some mark of disapprobation, was struck by the priest; the boy retaliated by throwing a stone at his aggressor, which happened to break one

of the images. This, in the excited state of the public mind, operated as a signal to some of the people who lingered on the spot; and in a few minutes the altar, images, and all the ornaments of the church, were torn down and trampled under foot. The noise soon collected a mob, who flew, by a sudden and irresistible impulse, on the monasteries; and notwithstanding the interposition of the magistrates, and the entreaties of Knox and the other ministers, the fury of the people could not be restrained till these costly edifices were reduced to a heap of smoking ruins. This tumult was quite unpremeditated, and confined to the lowest of the inhabitants, or, as Knox calls them, "the rascal multitude." The Queen Regent, however, glad of a pretext to crush the Reformation, magnified the accidental riot into a dangerous and designed rebellion, and, imputing the whole blame to the Protestants, assembled an army to avenge the insult.

Nothing was farther at this time from the minds of the Reformers than to excite rebellion, or to gain their purpose by violent and unconstitutional means. "Cursit be they," was their language to her majesty, "that seek effusion of blood, war, or dissension. Let us possess Christ Jesus, and the benefit of his evangel, and nane within Scotland shall be mair obedient subjects than we shall be." They soon discovered, however, that the price of their allegiance was to be the renunciation of their religion; and that nothing would satisfy the queen and her advisers, but the forcible suppression of the Reformation by fire and sword. This brought matters to a crisis. When Lord Ruthven, who was sheriff and provost of Perth, was com-

manded by her majesty to go home and suppress the Reformed opinions in his jurisdiction, he told her very plainly, "that in what concerned their bodies, his charge was to keep them in order, but what concerned their souls was neither in his commission, nor would he meddle with it." And Lord James Stewart, having been severely blamed by Francis, the husband of Mary Queen of Scots, for taking part with the Reformed, and charged, "upon his allegiance," to leave them, boldly replied, "that he had done nothing against his allegiance, but what was lawful for maintenance of the liberties of the country, and propagation of the Gospel, which it was no more lawful for him to abandon than to deny Jesus Christ."* If, therefore, any confusion ensued, if they were compelled to assume a hostile attitude, the blame must rest with those who reduced them to the alternative of either resisting their sovereign, or submitting to have themselves and their country enslaved. Finding all their endeavours to obtain the peaceable enjoyment of their religion to be fruitless; perceiving that the queen, who had so often deceived and disappointed them, had now become their declared enemy, the leading Protestants, who now began to be called the *Lords of the Congregation*, saw the necessity of arming and combining in self-defence. For this purpose, they drew up an engagement or bond, in which they renounced Popery, pledging themselves to mutual support in the defence and promotion of the true religion. This bond received numerous subscriptions. And now, having taken their ground, and finding their

* Lord Herries' Hist. Memoirs, pp. 37, 42.

numbers increasing daily, they saw that the only effectual method to prevent the odious chains of ecclesiastical tyranny from being rivetted on themselves and their posterity, was to make a united and determined effort to shake them off for ever. They demanded the reformation of the Church, and each of them engaged, in his own sphere, to take immediate steps for abolishing the Popish service, and setting up the Reformed religion in those places where their authority extended, and where the people were friendly to their design.

St Andrews was the place fixed on for commencing these operations. In the beginning of June 1559, the Earl of Argyle and Lord James Stewart, afterwards Earl of Murray, who was prior of the Abbey of St Andrews, made an appointment with Knox to meet him on a certain day in that city. Travelling along the east coast of Fife, he preached at Anstruther and Crail, setting before the people the danger in which the civil and religious liberties of the nation were placed by the invasion of foreign and mercenary troops, sent to enslave them by a Popish faction in France, and bidding them prepare themselves either to die like men, or live victorious. Such was the effect of his exhortation, that altars, and images, and all monuments of idolatry in these places were immediately pulled down and destroyed. The archbishop of St Andrews, apprized of his design to preach in that town, and apprehending similar consequences, assembled an armed force, and sent information to the lords, that if John Knox dared to present himself in the pulpit of his cathedral, " he should gar him be saluted

with a dozen of culverings (a species of fire-arms), whereof the most parte should licht on his nose." The noblemen having met to consult what ought to be done, considering that the queen with her French troops was lying at Falkland, only twelve miles from St Andrews, while they "were only accompanied with their quiet households," and fearing lest his appearance in the pulpit should lead to the sacrifice of his life, and the lives of those who were determined to defend him from violence, agreed that Knox should desist from preaching at this time, and urged him very strenuously to comply with their advice.

The intrepid Reformer, however, disdained all such fears, and would not listen to their solicitations. "God is my witness," said he, "that I never preached Christ Jesus in contempt of ony man, or to the worldly hurt of ony creature. But to delay to preache tomorrow (unless the bodie be violentlie withhaldin) I cannot of conscience; for in this town and kirk began God first to call me to the dignitie of a preacher, from the which I was reft by the tyranny of France, and procurement of the bishops, as ye all weill enough know, and it is no time now to recite. This only I cannot conceal, quhilk mae than ane have heard me say, when the bodie was far absent fra Scotland, that my assurit hope was, in open audience, to preache in Sanct Androis, before I departit this life. And thairfor, my lords, seeing that God, above the expectation of manie, has brought the bodie to the same place, I beseech your honours not to stop me to present myself unto my brethren. And as for the fear of danger that may come to me, let no man be solicitous; for my life

is in the custody of Him whose glory I seek; and therefore I cannot so fear their boast nor tyrannie, that I will cease from doing my dewtie, when God of his mercie offereth the occasion. I desire the hand nor weapon of no man to defend me; only I crave audience, which gif it be denied heir unto me at this tyme, I must seek farther where I may have it."

This bold reply silenced all remonstrance; and the next day, being the Sabbath, 10th June 1559, Knox appeared in the pulpit, and preached before the Lords of the Congregation, and a numerous assembly, without experiencing the slightest interruption. He discoursed on the subject of our Saviour's ejecting the buyers and sellers from the temple, and overthrowing the tables of the money-changers: "Take these things hence: it is written, My Father's house shall be a house of prayer, but ye have made it a den of thieves." From which he took occasion to expose the enormous corruptions which had been introduced into the Church under the Papacy, and to point out what was incumbent on Christians, in their different spheres, for removing them. On the three following days he preached in the same place; and such was the influence of his doctrine, that the provost, bailies, and inhabitants harmoniously agreed to set up the Reformed worship in the town; the church was stripped of images and pictures, and the monasteries were pulled down.

CHAPTER III.

National Establishment of the Reformed Religion—First Meeting of the General Assembly—The First Book of Discipline—Constitution of the Church of Scotland—Anecdotes of John Knox and Queen Mary—The Murder of the Good Regent—Death of John Knox.

THE demolition of the monasteries and other religious houses, which marked the commencement of the Reformation in our country, has furnished a rich topic for declamation to many, who refer to it as a proof of the bigotry and barbarism of our Reformers. We allow they may have gone too far, under the excitement of the moment; "and can any man think," says honest Row, "that in such a great alteration in a kingdom, every man did every thing rightly?" But let us do them justice. Had the Queen Regent, instead of resorting to violent measures to suppress the Reformation, listened to the petitions of her noblemen for inquiry into the abuses of the Church, or even allowed her subjects liberty to profess the Gospel, these excesses would never have occurred. It was only when this liberty was denied them, and they were required to submit unconditionally to the will of the Popish

clergy, that the people had recourse to this method of revenge. "After which answer," says Sir James Balfour, "the congregation goes to the staitly monastry of Scone, and pulls it doun, and solemnly burns all the Roman trashe, as images, altars, and the lyke. Then proceed they fordward to Stirling, Cambuskenneth, and Linlithgow, and there demolish and pull doun all whatsoever carried any symboll of the Roman harlot."* The churches and cathedrals, be it observed, were generally spared; it was only the monasteries, and places identified with the reigning superstition, that fell a sacrifice to the popular fury. And when we consider that these formed the strongholds of Popery, against which the nation was now at war, and the receptacles of a lazy, corrupt, and tyrannical priesthood, who had so long fattened on the spoils of a deluded people, there appears more good policy than some are willing to admit in the advice which John Knox is said to have inculcated—"Down with those crow-nests, else the crows will *big* in them again."† Another view of the matter, equally capable of defence, is suggested by an anecdote which he relates of a woman, who, when the flames of the monasteries in Perth were ascending to heaven, and some were lamenting their destruction, exclaimed, that if they knew the scenes of villany and debauchery that had passed within these walls, they would "admire the judgments of heaven, in bringing such haunts of pollution to such an end."‡

There was, indeed, a striking difference between the

* Annales of Scotland, vol. i. p. 316. † Row's MS. Hist., p. 6.
‡ Knox, Hist.

Scottish and the English Reformation. In England the reigning powers took the lead, and the people followed, as they best might, in the wake of royal authority. In Scotland, the people were converted to the Protestant faith, before the civil power had moved a step in the cause; and when the Legislature became friendly to the Reformation, nothing remained for it to do, but to ratify the profession which the nation had adopted. The consequence has been, that the Church of England, with all her excellencies (and they are many), has never ventured to advance beyond the limits prescribed to her by Queen Elizabeth; while the Scottish Church, carrying the Legislature along with her, has made various steps in reformation,—has, on more than one occasion, improved her standards,—has pointed her testimony to the times, and discarded from her creed and constitution every thing which seemed, even by implication, to symbolize with the apostasy of the Church of Rome.

In the month of August 1560, when, through the friendly aid of England, the French troops had been expelled from Scotland, and when, after the Queen Regent's death, a free Parliament was assembled, Popery, as a matter of course, was abolished, and the Protestant religion was substituted in its place. Considering the suddenness with which this change was effected, the business was remarkably well conducted. A petition was presented to the Parliament by the ministers and others in the name of the people, requesting them to secure, by legal enactments, the profession of the true religion. The Parliament then requested the ministers to lay before them a summary of Christian

doctrine, which they could prove to be agreeable to Scripture; and, in the course of a few days, the ministers presented a Confession, consisting of twenty-five articles, which the Parliament, after due examination, formally ratified and approved. This Confession agrees in all points with those of the other Reformed Churches, and is not materially different from the Westminster Confession now in use, which was afterwards adopted by the Church of Scotland. It was remarked, that when it was read over, in the audience of the whole Parliament, in which there were several lords and bishops known to be disaffected to the Reformation, only three of the noblemen voted against it, giving no other reason for their dissent than, "We will beleve as our forefatheris belevit:" "the bishops spak nathing." Upon which, the Earl Marishal, after declaring his own approbation of the articles, protested, "That if any ecclesiastics should after this oppose themselves to this our Confession, they should be entitled to no credit, seeing that, having lang advisement and full knowledge of it, none of them is fund, in lawful, free, and quiet Parliament, to vote against it."

This amounted, it will be observed, to a national establishment of the Protestant religion. The nation, by its rulers and representatives, passed from Popery to Protestantism; and, in its civil capacity, ratified (not the Gospel indeed, which no acts of Parliament can ratify, but) the profession of the Gospel, which the people, in their religious capacities, had already embraced. And thus it appears that there was a civil establishment of the true religion in Scotland, before there was even an Established Church, for the Re-

formed Church of Scotland was not as yet regularly organized, much less endowed. The legal recognition of the Presbyterian Church, as an organized society, was a subsequent step, and indeed not fully obtained till many years after this; the settlement of regular stipends on the ministers was still later. And yet, by the act of the State to which we have referred, the Protestant religion became the national religion of Scotland. These are the plain facts; and we leave every one to form his own judgment on them. But if the *principle* of civil establishments of religion is to be debated at all, at this point must the battle begin; and the question to be decided is, whether it was right or wrong for the nation of Scotland to declare, by an act of its Parliament, that Popery was abolished, and that Protestantism was thenceforth the national religion.

By the same Parliament which established the Protestant religion, another act was passed, which has been severely blamed, even by friends of the Reformation, prohibiting the celebration of mass, under severe penalties, which amounted, in extreme cases, even to death. The only apology which some can find for this dubious act of policy is, that the principles of religious liberty were not then so fully understood, and that it is no wonder that our ancestors carried with them a portion of the intolerance of the Romish Church from which they had so lately escaped. Our Reformers, however, had no idea of converting their creed into a penal code, or of punishing all who departed from it as heretics. They regarded Papists as enemies to the State, and the leading principles of

Popery as subversive of all good order in society. The proscription of the mass, the outward symbol of Popery, was certainly the most effectual way of putting down the civil nuisance. The truth is, they would not allow the mass to be a point of religion at all; they regarded it as manifest idolatry,—an opinion in which every sound Protestant will coincide; but having, erroneously we think, conceived that the Mosaic law against idolaters was still binding on Christian nations, they applied the statute to it as a civil crime. Whatever may be thought of this interpretation of the civil law, it was obviously a very different thing from the spirit of Popery, which, stamping the whole of its creed with the attribute of infallibility, and denying all hope of salvation to those who are beyond its pale, enforces all its dogmas with civil pains on those who are accounted heretics. And that the object of our Reformers was not to punish the persons of heretics, or religious opinions as such, but to stay the plague of idolatry and profaneness in the country, appears from two facts which we shall now state. The first is, that the penalties actually inflicted on "mass-mongers," as they were termed, were entirely of the ignominious kind, usually allotted to persons convicted of infamous crimes, and intended to brand the practice as odious and disreputable.* And the other fact, to which we refer with

* "Upon the secund day of October 1561, Archibald Dowglas, provost of Edinburgh, with the baillies and counsale, causit ane proclamation be proclameit at the Croce, commanding and charging all and sundry monks, freris, priestis, and all utheris papists and profane persons, to pas furth of Edinburgh within twenty-four hours next efter following, under the pane of burnying of disobeyaris upon the cheik, and harling of them throw the toun in ane cart: at the quhilk proclamation the quenis grace was very commovit. And the samyn day Mr Thomas Macalyean was chosin provest of Edinburgh, and Archibald Dowglas dischargit, for making of the pro-

pride (because England, with all her boasted liberality, cannot say so much) is, that NOT A SINGLE PAPIST SUFFERED DEATH IN SCOTLAND FOR THE SAKE OF HIS RELIGION. We hear of four priests condemned to death for saying mass in Dunblane; but the sentence was remitted, and they were merely set in the pillory. Candour would ascribe this as much to the lenity and liberality of our Protestant ancestors, as to the reluctance of the Popish clergy to suffer martyrdom for conscience' sake. Very few of them, indeed, appear to have had much conscience in the matter, except on the point of their worldly emoluments; and the only instance on record of their taking the Reformation to heart, is that of a poor priest in Cupar of Fife, who was so much distressed at seeing his altars and images demolished by the crowd, that on the following night he went and hanged himself.

The first meeting of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland was held at Edinburgh, on the 20th of December 1560. It consisted of forty members, only six of whom were ministers; and its deliberations were conducted at first with great simplicity and unanimity. As a proof of this it may be mentioned, that seven different meetings of Assembly were held without a moderator or president.* It may appear still more extraordinary to some to be told, that none were appointed to represent the sovereign in the General Assembly as commissioner for at least twenty years after the Reformation; though, during that time, there were

clamatioun forrsaid without the quenis advyise, togidder with all the baillies."—*Diurnal of Occurrents in Scotland*, p. 69.

* Life of Knox, vol. ii. p. 18.

no fewer than 39 or 40 Assemblies, and though the supreme magistrate, especially during the regency of Murray and Lennox, was very friendly to the Church and her interests.* At the second General Assembly there was some debate, raised by Maitland of Lethington, about the propriety of their meeting without the queen's authority. "The question is," said Lethington, "whether the queen alloweth such conventions." "If the liberty of the Kirk," said a member, "should depend upon the queen's allowance or disallowance, we are assured we shall be deprived, not only of Assemblies, but of the public preaching of the Gospel." "No such thing," said Lethington. "Weill, time will try," replied the other; "and I will add, take from us the freedom of Assemblies, and take from us the Evangel; for without Assemblies how shall good order and unitie in doctrine be keapit?" The greater part of the nobles and barons having expressed their concurrence in this sentiment, they requested her majesty's friends to inform her, that if she entertained any suspicion of their proceedings, she might appoint some one to hear their deliberations; and this matter being amicably settled, the Assembly convened in virtue of the intrinsic power granted by Christ to his Church, and concluded their work without so much as petitioning for the countenance of the civil power. So early did the Church of Scotland assert the royal prerogatives of the King of Zion.†

What a wonderful change had now come over the face of Scotland! A few years before this, idolatry was rampant, and, to use the words of Patrick Hamil-

* Stevenson, Introd., vol. i. p. 117. † Calderwood, p. 30; Knox, p. 295.

ton, "darkness covered this realm." Now superstition has vanished, and the light of truth has arisen on the mountains and valleys of our native land. A year ago, it was blasphemy to say a word against the mass; now, the mass itself is denounced as blasphemy. Not a cross, nor an image, nor a cowl, nor a mitre is to be seen; and were it not for the smoking ruins of some monastery, or the vacant niches of a cathedral, it could hardly have been known by a stranger that Popery had ever existed in the country. Still, however, the victory was not secured. Still the dignitaries of the Church retained their titles, and claimed all their temporal privileges. Still, though the Popish service was proscribed, the Protestant worship, except in a few places of note, was not substituted in its place. There was a sad dearth of preachers; the mass of the people, in town and country, were so poor as hardly to be able to provide for their own subsistence; and it became a matter of indispensable necessity that some means should be adopted to provide them with religious instruction.

Under the Papacy, no regular provision had been made, either for the support of the poor, who were shamefully neglected, or for the maintenance of a working clergy. Two years before the Reformation, a kind of proclamation was issued, and affixed to the gates of the monasteries and other religious houses, in the name of "the blind, the lame, bedrals, widows, orphans, and other poor," complaining that the alms of the Christian people had been unjustly stolen from them by monks and friars, who are described as "haill of body, stark, sturdie, and abill to work;"

and charging them "to remove furth of the hospitals which they now occupied, that we, the lawful proprietors thereof, may enter and enjoy the commodities of the Kirk, which ye have wrangouslie haldin from us." The preaching friars were left to shift for themselves, and derived a miserable subsistence from the contributions of the faithful, while the higher clergy and the monks lived in luxurious ease. The Reformed Church, however, having discarded these drones and dignitaries, and depending for her success on the preaching of the Word, required funds for the support of a ministry equal to the spiritual need of the whole population; and our Reformers justly considered that, after the poor had been provided for, they had a claim on the revenues of the Church for the support of such a ministry.

But other and more powerful claimants for the property of the Kirk appeared in the nobility and landed gentlemen, whose ancestors had swelled the revenues of the Church by large donations of land and money. Many years before the Reformation the Laird of Grange, who was treasurer to James V., and a secret friend of the Protestant cause, advised his Majesty, "gif he wad do weill and be rich, to tak hame again, to the profit of the crown, all vacand benefices, be little and little, as they may fall by decease of every prelate." The king relished the proposal so highly, that, as Sir James Melville informs us, he determined to carry it into effect; and the style in which he attempted it, affords a curious illustration of the rudeness of the times. At his first meeting with the prelates, "he could not contean him any langer, and

after many sour reproofs, he said, 'Wherefore gave my predecessors sa mony lands and rents to the Kirk? Was it to maintain hawks, and dogs, and harlots to a number of idle priests? Pack you off to your charges, and reform your own lives, and be not instruments of discord between my subjects and me. The King of England burns you, the King of Denmark beheads you; bot *I shall stick you with this same whinger.*' And therewith he drew out his dagger upon them, and they fled in great fear from his presence."* Knox tells us another anecdote, which shows how the nobility felt on this point. After a dispute between the Reformers and some of the Popish clergy, in which the latter were so sorely baffled that they could give no direct answer to the arguments against the mass, the noblemen present said, "We have been miserably deceived heretofore; for if the mass may not obtain remission of sins to the quick and dead, wherefore were all the abbacies so richly doted with our temporal lands?"

It was very natural, therefore, when the Reformation discovered the falsity of the pretences on which so much of their wealth had been expended on the Church, and the costly establishments of the prelates were abolished, that the landed gentry should claim a portion at least of the forfeited property. But in doing this, they showed a degree of avarice and rapaciousness hardly to be expected from persons who had taken such an active part in reforming the Church. Though the Protestant religion had been established by the law of the land, the Church, as we have said, was

* Melville's Memoirs, p. 63.

still unendowed; and the ministers were supported, very sparingly, on the benevolence of the people, or of the gentlemen who received them into their houses. Knox and his brethren, perceiving how matters were going, and that the whole ecclesiastical property would soon be swallowed up, insisted that a considerable proportion of it should be reserved for the support of the poor, the founding of universities and schools, and the maintenance of an efficient ministry throughout the country. At last, after great difficulty, the Privy Council came to the determination, that the ecclesiastical revenues should be divided into three parts,—that two of them should be given to the ejected prelates during their lives, which afterwards reverted to the nobility, and that the third part should be divided between the court and the Protestant ministry. "Weall!" exclaimed Knox, on hearing of this arrangement, "if the end of this order be happy, my judgment fails me. I see twa parts freely given to the deevil, and the third mon be divided between God and the deevil. Who would have thought, that when Joseph ruled in Egypt, his brethren should have travelled for victuals, and have returned with empty sacks unto their families? O happie servands of the deevil, and miserable servands of Jesus Christ, if, after this lyf, there were not hell and heiven!"*

* Even this pittance, it would appear, was not fully or regularly paid to the ministers. Various means were taken to elude a settlement; and in 1567, we find the General Assembly, in their instructions to their Commissioners, whom they sent to deal with the Privy Council, thus expressing their disappointment: "That Satan, by his instruments, had of long time, and by many subtile ways, laboured to hinder the progress of true religion within this realm; and that now the same was in hazard to be utterly subverted, chiefly through the poverty of the ministers that ought

But there was another thing that tried the temper of the nobility, and the patience of the Reformers, as much as the settlement of the patrimony of the Church; and this was, the ratification of the order, government, and discipline of the Church. For this purpose, in the year 1560, a commission was given to John Knox, with Messrs Winram, Spotswood, Row, and Douglas, to set down the heads of discipline, as they had already done those of doctrine. This was done, and a plan of government was soon drawn up, and cordially approved of by the General Assembly, under the name of "The First Book of Discipline." When this book, however, was submitted to the Privy Council, it was warmly opposed by some of the nobility, who dreaded that its provisions would interfere with their selfish plans for appropriating the revenues of the Church. On this account, though subscribed by a number of the nobility, barons, and burgesses in Parliament, it did not receive a formal ratification. But it was still regarded by the Church as a standard book, to regulate her practice and guide her decisions.

The constitution of the Reformed Church of Scotland, as laid down in the First Book of Discipline, was purely Presbyterian, and remarkably simple. It recognises four classes of ordinary and permanent office-bearers,—the pastor, the doctor, the elder, and

to preach the word of life unto the people; some being compelled to leave their vocation, and betake them to civil callings; others so distracted through worldly cares, as they could not wait upon the preaching of the Word so diligently as they wished." To prevent this, and also to provide for the "poor and indigent members of Christ," they entreated that the patrimony of the Church should be restored to the just possessors.—*Spottiswood*, 209.

the deacon. The two former are distinguished merely by the different work assigned to them,—the pastor being appointed to preach and administer the sacraments, while the doctor's office was simply theological and academical. The elder was a spiritual officer, ordained to assist, in the discipline and government of the Church, those "who laboured in word and doctrine;" and to the deacon was assigned, as of old, the oversight of the revenues of the Church, and the care of the poor. The affairs of each congregation were managed by the kirk-session, which was composed of the pastor, elders, and deacons; the weekly exercise, afterwards converted into the Presbytery, took cognizance of those which concerned the neighbouring churches; the Provincial Synod attended to the wider interests of the churches within their bounds; and the General Assembly, which was composed of ministers and elders, commissioned from the different parts of the kingdom, and which met twice or thrice a-year, attended to the general interests of the National Church. These were the general features of the system, in the formation of which it was the study of our Reformers to imitate, as closely as possible, the model of the primitive churches exhibited in the New Testament; while, in all the subordinate details of their discipline, they steadily kept in view the apostolic rule, "Let all things be done unto edification." Though shackled, in point of practice, by the imperfect provision made for the settlement of churches, and labouring under the disadvantage of not having obtained a civil ratification to their discipline, which would have settled the point at once, they yet declare

it as a principle founded on the Word of God, that "it appertaineth to the people, and to every several congregation, to elect their own minister." Indeed, from its very infancy, the Church of Scotland was, essentially and pre-eminently, the Church of the people. The interests of the people were consulted in all its arrangements; and the people, on their part, who had been mainly instrumental in its erection, felt deeply interested in its preservation. They watered the roots of their beloved Church with their blood; and when it "waxed a great tree," and they were permitted to lodge under the shadow of its branches, they surveyed it with the fond pride of men who felt that they had a share in its privileges, and therefore a stake in its prosperity.

Owing to the paucity of ministers, and as a temporary expedient till Presbyteries were fully organized, it was judged proper, after supplying the principal towns, to assign to the rest the superintendence of a large district, over which they were appointed to travel, somewhat in the character of missionaries, for the purpose of preaching in vacant parishes, planting churches, and inspecting the ministers and readers within their bounds; of their diligence in which services they were to give a report to the Assembly. These persons were called superintendents. With strange inconsistency, those very writers who taunt the Scottish Church with being republican in her constitution, have laid hold of this circumstance as a proof that she was really Episcopalian! But in point of fact, these superintendents differed from other ministers in little else than the greater amount of labour allotted to them. They

were the servants of the Church Courts, and were as much amenable to them as any functionary in the excise now is to her Majesty's Board of Commissioners. They were admitted in the same manner as other pastors, being elected by the people, and ordained by the ordinary ministers. They were equally subject to rebuke, suspension, and deposition, as the rest of the ministers of the Church; they could not exercise any spiritual jurisdiction without the consent of the Provincial Synods; and they were accountable to the General Assembly for the whole of their conduct. Nor was there any thing in the appointment of these superintendents inconsistent with the genius and spirit of Presbytery,—a system which, if we may so speak, possesses a plastic character, capable of accommodating itself to any country, to any form of civil government, and to every condition of the Church. The grand peculiarity of Presbytery, which distinguishes it from Prelacy, lies not in the equality of its orders, for it has various orders; nor even in the temporary and delegated precedence of one over the rest of his brethren, for this belongs to every Moderator in a Church Court; but it lies in placing the supreme jurisdiction in a General Assembly, the members of which, as in our Houses of Parliament, and Courts of Justice, assume no pre-eminence in authority over one another. If there was any danger of superintendents becoming *bona fide* prelates, it arose from the tendency of human nature, in certain circumstances, to abuse powers conferred for the best of purposes. Our ancestors soon began to perceive this, and so suspicious were they of any thing ap-

proaching, or likely to lead, to a lordly domination over the brethren, that they refused to these superintendents the name of bishops; and as Presbyteries were set up, this office gradually ceased on the death of the first incumbents.*

Different opinions will, of course, be formed of the policy adopted by the Scottish Church, according to the leanings of individuals; and our object being not to discuss principles, but to state facts, we leave the reader to form his own conclusions. Our Reformers, it is certain, drew their plan immediately from the Scriptures; and, to use the words of Row, who had the best means of information, they "took not their example from any kirk in the world—no, not from Geneva." They have often been blamed for having swept away, from a morbid antipathy to Popery, not only the abuses and corruptions of the Church, but every thing that was decent in its worship and dignified in its government,—leaving the Kirk of Scotland as bare and barren of ornament as its native mountains. We allow that, having satisfied themselves that the Church of Rome was the antichrist of Scripture, they were anxious to strip their establishment of every thing that bore the least resemblance to her characteristic features. And they did this in conscientious obedience to the call, "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." But we deny that any point of order or doctrine was rejected merely because it had been

* Life of Knox, ii. 9, 283. Row's MS. Historie, p. 12. Gilbert Rule, in his "Good Old Way," has, in "The Fundamental Charter," answered all the arguments in favour of the contrary view of the subject.

held by the Romish Church. With respect to *decency*, we defy any Church to show more regard than was paid by our reforming ancestors to the precept, "Let all things be done decently and in order." And as to *ornaments* and *dignities*, people's ideas of these things will differ, according to the views they take of what true ornament or dignity is. If they refer to worldly ornaments and dignities, of these the Reformed Church of Scotland did not and would not boast; she disclaimed them as incompatible with the simplicity of Christ, and demeaning the spiritual glory of his Church. But there is "an honour which cometh from God;" and of this distinction she was emulous,—in this, if we may so speak, she was proud to excel all other Churches. The basis of her constitution, of which we have presented an imperfect sketch, may be given in few words:—"ONE IS YOUR MASTER, AND ALL YE ARE BRETHREN." Recognising no earthly head, rejecting all earthly control, she stood forth the independent queen and immaculate spouse of Christ; and holding in her hand the Word of God, as the charter of her rights, she pointed to her exalted King, seated on the throne of heaven. Placed on such a footing as this, the ministry of the Gospel must command respect. That it has done so, is testified by the fact that, while the prelates of Rome, with all their mitres, croziers, and surplices, sunk into general contempt, being hated by the people for their tyranny, and scorned by the nobles for their arrogance, the plain Presbyterian pastor, humbly but faithfully discharging the duties of his high office, met with respect and affection from all classes of his flock. And that

it must continue to do so, may be augured from the principles on which Presbyterianism is founded,—the principles of common sense as well as of Scripture, and which, however they may be now slighted by some, will, by the blessing of God, survive the hostility that aims at their subversion, and may yet flourish in a state of higher purity than ever they attained even in the palmiest days of Presbytery, long after the boasted fabrics of human wisdom and human folly have crumbled into dust.

The infant Reformation had hardly been established, when its safety was endangered by the arrival in Scotland of Mary Queen of Scots. This princess having been married in early life to the French Dauphin, had been educated in the Court of France, under the auspices of her uncle, the Cardinal of Lorraine, and nursed up in a blind attachment to Popery and arbitrary power. Every means had been employed, before she left France, to prejudice her mind against the Reformers, and the religion which had been embraced by her subjects. The willing tool of an artful and deep-laid policy, she was taught that it would be the glory of her reign to bring back her kingdom to the obedience of Rome, and to co-operate with the Popish princes of the Continent, who had formed a plan for the universal extirpation of heresy. She arrived at Leith in August 1561, and was received by the good people of Edinburgh and Leith with every demonstration of joyous loyalty. She had hardly landed, however, when orders were issued for the celebration of the mass in her private chapel. The ministers regarded this direct breach of the law passed by the

Parliament, as a sure sign of the queen's resolution to set at defiance all that had been done against Popery and in behalf of the Reformed religion. Many, however, of the common people, animated by the sudden fervour of loyalty inspired by the presence of their young and lovely queen, began to justify her, and declare their resolution to defend her in the enjoyment of her own religion. Even the Lords of the Congregation, though at first highly incensed at her conduct, were no sooner admitted into her presence, than, soothed and flattered by the fair speeches of this insinuating princess, they began to cool in their religious zeal. The effects of this transformation on the nobility are thus curiously described by an old historian of the period:—"Every man, as he came up to court, accused them that were before him; but after they had remained a certain space, they came out as quiet as the former. On perceiving this, Campbell of Kinyeancleuch, a man of some humour, and zealous in the cause, said to Lord Ochiltree, whom he met on his way to court, 'My Lord, now ye are come last of all; and I perceive that the fire-edge is not yet off you; but I fear, that after the holy water of the court be sprinkled upon you, ye shall become as temperate as the rest. For I have been here now five days, and at first nothing was heard but—Down with the mass, hang the priest; but after they had been twice or thrice at the Abbey, all that fervency passed. I think there be some enchantment, whereby men are bewitched.'"

There was one man, however, whom neither the blandishments of the court, nor the defection of his friends, could induce to desert his principles, or cool

in his attachment to the cause of the Reformation. Knox, the intrepid Reformer, perceiving that the queen was determined on prosecuting her designs, and that preparations were making for the celebration of mass in a more public and pompous manner than she had ventured on at first, took occasion to denounce the evils of idolatry from the pulpit, concluding his sermon with these remarkable words,—"One mass is more fearful to me, than if ten thousand armed enemies were landed in any part of the realm, of purpose to suppress the whole religion." On hearing of this sermon, the queen sent for Knox, and held a long conference with him. She charged him with having taught the people to receive a religion different from that which was allowed by their princes. He replied, that true religion derived its origin and authority, not from princes, but from God; that princes were often most ignorant on this point; and referred to David and the primitive Christians. "Yea," said the queen; "but none of these men raised the sword against their princes." "Yet, you cannot deny," said Knox, "that they resisted; for those who do not obey the commandment, do in some sort resist." "But they resisted not with the sword." "God, madam, had not given to them the power and the means." "Think you, then," said the queen, "that subjects, having the power, may resist their princes?" "If princes exceed their bounds, madam," replied the Reformer, "no doubt they may be resisted, even by power. For no greater honour is to be given to kings than God has commanded to be given to father and mother. But the father may be struck with a frenzy,

in which he would slay his children. Now, madam, if the children arise, join together, apprehend the father, take the sword from him, bind his hands, and keep him in prison till the frenzy is over, think you, madam, that the children do any wrong? Even so, madam, it is with princes that would murder the children of God that are subject to them."

On hearing these bold sentiments, so different from any thing that she had been accustomed to, Mary stood, for nearly a quarter of an hour, silent and amazed. At length, addressing the Reformer, she said, "Weel, then, I perceive that my subjects shall obey you and not me." "God forbid," answered he; "but my travell is that both princes and subjects obey God. And think not, madam, that wrong is done to you when ye are willed to be subject to God; for He it is that subjects the people under princes: Yea, God craves of kings that they be, as it were, foster-fathers to his kirk, and commands queens to be nurses unto his people." "Yea," quoth she, "but ye are not the Kirk that I will nourish. I will defend the Kirk of Rome, for it is, I think, the true Kirk of God." "Your will, madam, is no reason, neither doth your thought make that Roman harlot to be the true and immaculate spouse of Jesus Christ." He added, that he was ready to prove that the Roman Church had, within 500 years, degenerated farther from the purity of religion taught by the apostles, than the Jewish Church, which crucified Christ, had degenerated from the ordinances God gave them by Moses. "My conscience is not so," said the queen. "Conscience, madam, requires knowledge; and I fear that right

knowledge ye have nane." "But I have both heard and read." "So, madam, did the Jews, who crucified Christ Jesus; they read the law and the prophets, and heard them interpreted after their manner. Have you heard any teach but such as the pope and cardinals have allowed; and you may be assured that such will speak nothing to offend their own estate." The queen, after some farther reasoning, told him, that although she was unable to contend with him in argument, she knew some who would answer him. "Madam," replied Knox, fervently, "would to God that the learnedest Papist in Europe were present with your Grace to sustain the argument, and that you would wait patiently to hear the matter reasoned to an end." "Well," said she, "you may get that sooner than you believe." "Assuredly," said Knox, if ever I get that in my life, I get it sooner than I believe; for the ignorant Papist cannot patiently reason; and the learned and crafty Papist will never come to your presence, madam, to have the ground of their religion searched out. When you shall let me see the contrary, I shall grant myself to have been deceived in that point." Thus ended this extraordinary conference; and on taking his leave of her majesty, the Reformer said, "I pray God, madam, that you may be as blessed within the commonwealth of Scotland as ever Deborah was in the commonwealth of Israel." *

Some time after this, the queen having obtained intelligence of the massacre of Passy in France, where her uncle, the Duke of Guise, had attacked a congre-

* Knox, 290. M'Crie's Life of Knox, ii. 32, &c.

gation of Protestants, peaceably assembled for worship, and butchered a number of them, gave a splendid ball to her foreign servants, at which the dancing was prolonged to a late hour. Against this conduct Knox had inveighed in severe terms from the pulpit, and he was again summoned before her majesty. In his defence, he declared that he had been misrepresented, which he would show the queen, provided she would be pleased to hear him repeat, as exactly as he could, what he had preached the day before. Mary was obliged, for once, to listen to a Protestant sermon. When he had finished, she told him, that if he heard any thing about her conduct which displeased him, he ought to come to herself privately, and she would willingly listen to his admonitions. Knox easily saw through this proposal, which was evidently intended to keep him from saying any thing in public that might be displeasing to the court. He excused himself on the ground of his office; and retiring, he jocularly observed, "Albeit at your Grace's commandment I am heir now, yit can I not tell what uther men shall judge of me, that at this time of day, am absent from my buke, and waiting upon the court." "Ye will not always be at your buke," said the queen, in a pet, and turning her back upon him. As he left the room, "with a reasonable merry countenance," he overheard one of the Popish attendants saying, "He is not afraid!" "Why should the pleasing face of a gentilwoman afray me?" said he, regarding them with a sarcastic scowl; "I have luiked in the face of mony angry *men*, and yit have not been affrayed above measour."

At this time Knox was the only minister of Edinburgh, and there was only one place of worship—St Giles—which, however, was capable of accommodating no fewer than 3000 persons. We may conceive the effect which would be produced on this immense multitude by the eloquent declamations, the fervent appeals, and overwhelming invectives of such a preacher as Knox. And we need not wonder that the proud, the self-willed Queen of Scots, who had lived in the midst of the flatteries and pleasures of a licentious court, and who would not listen to the advices of her most sage and favourite counsellors, should have ill brooked the unsparing rebukes of the Scottish Reformer. Their last interview was more stormy than the preceding, and presents so characteristic a view of Knox, that, familiar as it may be to many, we cannot avoid noticing it. He had deeply offended her majesty by protesting against her marriage with Darnley. "Never had prince been handled," she passionately exclaimed, "as she was; she had borne with him in all his rigorous speeches; she had sought his favour by all means; and yet," said she, "I cannot be quit of you. I vow to God I shall be once revenged!" On pronouncing these words, she burst into a flood of tears. When she had composed herself, Knox proceeded calmly to make his defence. "Out of the pulpit," he said, "few had occasion to complain of him; but there he was not his own master, but was bound to obey Him who commanded him to speak plainly, and to flatter no flesh on the face of the earth." Mary again burst into tears. Her courtiers tried to mitigate her grief and resentment

by all the arts of blandishment; but during this scene the stern and inflexible mind of the Reformer displayed itself. He continued silent, with unaltered countenance, until the queen had given vent to her feelings. He then protested, "that he never took delight in the distress of any creature; that it was with great difficulty he could see his own boys weep when he corrected them, and far less could he rejoice in her majesty's tears; but seeing he had given her no just cause of offence, and had only discharged his duty, he was constrained, though unwillingly, to sustain her tears, rather than hurt his conscience and betray the commonwealth by his silence."

This apology inflamed the queen even more than the offence; she ordered him instantly to leave her presence, and await the signification of her pleasure in an adjoining room. There he stood alone, none of his friends venturing to show him the slightest countenance. In this situation, he addressed himself to the ladies of the court, who were sitting in their rich dresses in the chamber—"O, fair ladies, how pleasing were this lyfe of yours, if it sould always abyde, and then, in the end, that we might pass to heiven with all this gay gear! But fye upon that knave Death, that will come, whidder we will or not!"

The subsequent history of the unfortunate Mary is too well known to require notice. For a short time, a dark cloud hung over the Reformed Church. The queen, by her alluring manners, gained over a party of the nobles. The Earl of Murray and other Protestant noblemen were compelled to take shelter in England; mass was openly celebrated, and Knox, for

his fidelity in warning the people against the consequences, was accused of high treason, and placed in such imminent hazard of his life, that his friends advised him to quit Edinburgh for a season. To crown all, Mary joined the league which had been planned by Catherine of Medicis and the Duke of Alva, those bloodiest of all persecutors, and which bound her to join with them in the *extermination* of all heretics,—in other words, she signed the death-warrant of the great mass of her own subjects, nobility, gentry, ministers, and commons.* But these gloomy appearances were soon dispelled by her own infatuated conduct. Disgusted with Darnley, and irritated by the assassination of David Rizzio, an Italian musician, whom she had made her secretary,† she abandoned herself to the counsels of the Earl of Bothwell, who, to gain his own ambitious ends, plotted the murder of the king. The unfortunate Darnley was decoyed to Edinburgh, and lodged in a house on the outskirts of the town. On the morning of the 10th February 1567, the whole city was awakened by a tremendous explosion, which was found to proceed from the house in which the king was lodged having been blown up with gunpowder. His dead body was found lying in the neighbourhood. The whole kingdom was thrown into a ferment; the murder was traced to Bothwell, the queen's favourite; and the suspicions of all fell

* Tytler's History of Scotland, vol. vii. p. 18-20.

† Rizzio, or Riccio, was suspected, on good grounds, to be a pensioner of Rome.—*Tytler's Hist.*, vii. p. 19. His overbearing pride created him many enemies, and among the rest the husband of Mary, who never rested till he had procured his destruction.—See Note A, *Mr Tytler's Charge against John Knox.*

upon the queen as an accomplice in the barbarous deed. These suspicions were soon confirmed by her marriage with the murderer of her husband, and led to a complete change of government. The Protestant noblemen were restored; the queen was obliged to abdicate the throne, and ultimately to flee into England, when her infant son was proclaimed King of Scotland, by the title of James VI.

The unfortunate Mary might have lived happily, and reigned gloriously, had she not been a Papist. But she died the victim of foreign intrigues, more than of her private vices. The latter might have been tolerated by her subjects; but she dealt in larger crimes, and lent herself to traffic with the religion, liberties, and lives of her countrymen. Her memory has shared a similar fate; for her injudicious admirers have sought to vindicate her at the expense of the Reformers and the Reformation. In defence of these, again, others have been compelled to tell the truth; and the beautiful but frail princess, whose reputation was too tender to admit of handling, has been fairly crushed in the collision which has been thus occasioned.

In awarding their due meed of praise to the instruments employed by Providence in accomplishing the Scottish Reformation, it would be ungrateful to pass without notice the services rendered to the cause by James Earl of Murray. This excellent nobleman, who succeeded to the regency after the deposition of his sister, Queen Mary, was universally respected and beloved as a governor. Warmly attached to the Reformation from its commencement, and evincing by his private virtues the sincerity of his religious pro-

fessions, he entered on his office at a critical period, and it may be said, that, to his prudence and decision, Scotland owed, under God, the preservation of the Reformed religion. To the unfortunate queen, while she retained the reins of government, he testified all brotherly kindness; and when she had forfeited the regards of all good men and the loyalty of all good subjects, the noble firmness with which he upheld the dignity of government, and prosecuted the murderers of the late king, exposed him to the vengeance of these mean-spirited assassins. One Hamilton of Bothwellhaugh, whose life the regent had spared after it had been forfeited to the laws of his country, smarting under an injury which he unjustly ascribed to the man who had pardoned him,* laid in wait for his victim as he rode through Linlithgow, and firing through a window, mortally wounded him, and then made his escape on horseback. This dastardly deed, which, in the manner as well as the spirit in which it was perpetrated, has nothing to redeem it from a resemblance to the base attempts of a modern Fieschi, has been actually applauded by some of the partizans of Mary; while they hold up their hands in horror at the execution of Archbishop Hamilton, who confessed on the scaf-

* Life of Knox, ii. 165, and Note W. The story, so often retailed, about Regent Murray's cruelty to Hamilton's wife, has been found out to be a complete forgery, resting solely on the authority of Crawfurd's Memoirs, a book which has been proved to be a tissue of fabrications from beginning to end.—See *Preface to Historie of King James the Sext.* Bannatyne edition. Murray's assassination was the result of a plot, in which the Lairds of Pherniherst and Buccleuch had a chief share. One of their followers, on the day after the murder, and before it could be known on the borders, said, in reply to another who threatened him with the regent's displeasure, "Tush, the regent is as cauld as the bitt in my horse's mouth."—*Bannatyne's Mem.* p. 4. Ban. edit.

fold his participation in the infamous transaction! Notwithstanding of this, his memory is embalmed in the page of impartial history. De Thou, the great French historian, affirms, that "he was a man without ambition, without avarice, incapable of doing an injury to any one, distinguished by his virtue, affability, beneficence, and innocence of life." And Spotswood, who must have conversed with many personally acquainted with Murray, says, "He was a man truly good, and worthy to be ranked among the best governors that this kingdom hath enjoyed, and therefore to this day honoured with the title of *The Good Regent.*" *

Knox did not long survive the good regent, whose untimely death he, in common with the whole country, deeply deplored. Having returned to Edinburgh, he resumed, with his usual ardour, his ministerial labours, in which he was now ably assisted by his colleague, John Craig. But a stroke of apoplexy, from the effects of which he never fully recovered, and his incessant cares, brought on him prematurely the infirmities of age, and he was soon unable to make himself be heard in the large church of St Giles. The following description of his personal appearance at this time, given by James Melville in his Diary, is exceed-

* See the character of Murray cleared from the aspersions of Dr Robertson, and other historians, in Life of Knox, vol. ii. Note W. Mr Tytler, who manifests such horror at the assassination of David Rizzio, passes the murder of Regent Murray without any expression of sympathy for the victim or abhorrence of the crime. He even attempts to anticipate any such emotions in the breasts of his readers, by repeating, as an undoubted fact, the story about Hamilton's wife, and reiterating a charge about betraying Norfolk, which even Hume has said he could prove to be "no way dishonourable."—*Hist. of Scotland*, vol. vii.

ingly striking:—" Of all the benefits I had that year (1571), was the coming of that maist notable prophet and apostle of our nation, Mr John Knox, to St Andrews. I heard him teach there the prophecies of Daniel. I had my pen and my little book, and tuk away sic things as I could comprehend. In the opening up of his text he was moderat, the space of an halff-houre; but when he enterit to application, he made me sa to grew and tremble, that I culd nocht hald a pen to wryt. I hard him oftymes utter these thretenings, in the hicht of ther pryde, whilk the eyes of monie saw cleirlie brought to pass. Mr Knox wald sumtyme come in and repose him in our college-yard, and call us scholars to him and bless us, and exhort us to know God and his wark in our country, and stand by the guid caus. I saw him everie day of his doctrine (preaching) go hulie and fear (cautiously) with a furring of martriks about his neck, a staff in the ane hand, and guid godlie Richart Ballenden, his servand, haldin up the other oxtar, from the Abbey to the paroche kirk, and by the said Richart and an other servant, lifted up to the pulpit, whar he behovit to lean at his first entrie, bot or he had done with his sermon, he was sa active and vigorous, that he was lyk to ding that pulpit in blads and flie out of it." *

But the time was fast approaching when this zealous servant of Jesus Christ was to rest from his labours. Feeling his end approaching, he desired that some one should read to him every day the 17th chapter of John's Gospel, the 53d chapter of Isaiah, and a portion of the Epistle to the Ephesians. To his colleague,

* Melville's Diary, p. 26. Ban. edit.

elders, and deacons, assembled in his room, he said,—"The day approaches for which I have long and vehemently thirsted, when I shall be released from my great labours and sorrows, and shall be with Christ. I know that many have complained of my too great severity; but God knows that my mind was always void of hatred to the persons of those against whom I thundered the severest judgments." On Sabbath, after lying quiet for some time, he suddenly exclaimed, "If any be present, let them come and see the work of God." He then burst out into these rapturous expressions,—"I have been these two last nights in meditation on the troubled state of the Church of Christ, despised of the world, but precious in the sight of God. I have called to God for her, and commended her to her husband, Jesus Christ. I have fought against spiritual wickedness in heavenly things, and have prevailed." Having seemed to fall into a slumber, interrupted with heavy moans, and being asked why he sighed so deeply, he replied, "I have during my life sustained many assaults of Satan, but at present he has assailed me most fearfully, and put forth all his strength to make an end of me at once. The cunning serpent has laboured to persuade me, that I have merited heaven and eternal blessedness by the faithful discharge of my ministry. But blessed be God, who has enabled me to quench this fiery dart, by suggesting to me such passages of Scripture as these: 'What hast thou that thou hast not received?' and, 'By the grace of God I am what I am.'" A little after, he said, "Now, for the last time," touching three of his fingers as he spoke, "I commend my soul, spirit, and body,

into thy hand, O Lord." He then gave a deep sigh, saying, "Now it is come!" His attendants perceiving that he had lost his speech, requested him to give them a sign that he heard them, and died in peace; upon which he lifted up one of his hands, and sighing twice, expired without a struggle. He died in the 67th year of his age, November 24, 1572. His funeral was attended by the Regent Morton, all the nobility in town, and a vast concourse of people. And when his body was laid in the grave, Morton pronounced over it the short but emphatic epitaph,—"There lies he who never feared the face of man!"*

Such was the latter end of one whose name, while he lived, was a terror to the enemies of the Reformation, and whose memory, since the day of his death, lay under a load of unmerited reproach, from which it has only lately been rescued. In the popular histories of the day, John Knox was held up as a fierce and gloomy bigot, equally a foe to polite learning and innocent enjoyment; and in his conduct towards the Queen of Scots, to whose winning loveliness the rugged Reformer afforded an inviting though most invidious contrast, he was represented as acting the part of a barbarian. We have cause to rejoice that the cloud of popular prejudice against our Reformer has now been dispelled, and that his character has been placed in its proper light. It has been shown, that though sternly upright, and fearlessly courageous in the discharge of his duty, he was a tender-hearted and generous man; that his firmness as a patriot was based

* Melville has it thus:—"Here lies he that neither feared nor flattered any flesh."—*Diary*, p. 47.

on the sincerest piety; and that the real design, as well as the effect of his measures, was to emancipate his country from superstition, ignorance, and barbarism, substituting in their place the blessings of education, liberty, and religion. The attempts which have been made to revive the exploded calumnies of his enemies, whether by the sentimental admirers of Queen Mary, or by the lovers of despotism and apostolic succession, have met with no credit or sympathy from the public; and, to their honour, the breasts of all true Scotsmen have once more learnt to vibrate in unison with the manly worth, the sacred patriotism, and the high-toned principle of the Scottish Reformer.

CHAPTER IV.

Attempts to alter the Constitution of the Church of Scotland—Tulchan Bishops—Anecdote of Campbell of Kinyeancleuch—Andrew Melville—Second Book of Discipline—The National Covenant of Scotland—Excommunication of Montgomery—Melville's Intrepidity—Scenes between James VI. and the Presbyterian Ministers.

KNOX, at his death, left the affairs of the Kirk in a very unsettled state. Hitherto the Church of Scotland had contended chiefly for the honour of Christ, in his priestly and prophetical offices, against the corruptions of the Papacy; she was soon called to struggle for the glory of his regal office, as the King of Zion, against the encroachments of civil power and prelatic ambition. Even before the death of Knox, an attempt was made to alter her form of government. In the year 1572, a convention, composed of superintendents and other ministers supposed to be favourable to this design, met at Leith, and through the influence of Morton, were induced to consent that the titles of archbishop, bishop, &c., should be retained; and that qualified persons among the ministers should be advanced to these dignities. The General Assembly, which was

held the same year, condemned this innovation; but it served the design of Morton, which was, that these bishops should be nominally put in possession of the whole benefices, but should rest satisfied with a small portion to themselves, and enter into a private bargain to deliver up the rest to him and other noblemen who acted with him. The ministers who were so mean as to accept of bishoprics under this disgraceful and simoniacal paction, exposed themselves to general contempt, and were called, by way of derision, *tulchan bishops*,—a tulchan being a calf's skin stuffed with straw, which the country people set up beside the cow to induce her to give her milk more freely. "The bishop," it was said, "had the title, but my lord had the milk." They might, with equal truth, have been called *phantom bishops*, for most of them had no Episcopal ordination, and they had no share in the government of the Church.*

Still, however, the introduction of these nominal dignitaries threatened the future peace of the Church; and the prospect of the confusions to which it might give rise, embittered the last hours of Knox, whose "dead hand and dying voice" were raised against the innovation. Hume of Godscroft informs us that the Reformer "rebuked Morton sharply for divers things,

* The first tulchan bishop was Mr John Douglas, a simple old man, whom Morton presented to the see of St Andrews. "That was the first time I heard Mr Patrick Constantine," says James Melville, "the week after the bishop was made. In his sermon he made three sorts of bishops —my lord bishop, my lord's bishop, and the Lord's bishop. My lord bishop, said he, was in the Papistry; my lord's bishop is now, when my lord gets the benefice, and the bishop serves for nothing but to make his title sure; and the Lord's bishop is the true minister of the Gospel."—*Diary*, p. 25. This Mr Patrick Constantine was the same person with Patrick Adamson, who afterwards agreed to become one of "my lord's bishops."

but especially for his labouring to set up and maintain the estate of bishops;" and shortly before his death, he admonished the same nobleman to maintain the Church of God and his ministry, warning him that if he did it not, "God would spoil him of all, and his end would be ignominy and shame,"—a prediction which Morton acknowledged, before his execution, he had "fand true indeid."

The history of the Church during Morton's regency, from 1572 to 1578, presents little more than a series of struggles between the Court and the Kirk, all occasioned by the attempts of the regent to intrude the spurious species of Episcopacy which we have now described. For some time he appeared likely to obtain the advantage. The old heroes of the Reformation were fast dying out; and their successors, dreading the effects of the regent's resentment, or unwilling to show an example of insubordination by resisting his authority, were yielding up, inch by inch, the liberties of the Church. We have no doubt, the idea which many have formed of the Presbyterian clergy, from the common accounts of the period, is, that they were a body of rude fanatics, who took a delight in opposing the civil power, and setting themselves up as spiritual dictators to king and subjects. The truth, however, as attested by history, is, that the greater part of the Scots ministers were a simple and facile race of men, easily deceived or overawed; that persons of weak or worldly minds were easily found, who, from fear of offending the great, or losing their livings, fell in with the measures of the court; and that, had it not been for a few active and energetic spirits, stirred up

from time to time by a gracious Providence, to stem the tide of defection, they would, on more than one occasion, have bartered away their dearest privileges without a struggle. Such, we are sorry to say, was the case at the period of which we now speak.

An incident occurred in 1574, which displayed their pusillanimity, as well as the grasping avarice of the regent. Among other plans for replenishing his coffers, Morton had fallen on the expedient of uniting three or four parishes under the care of one minister. Mr John Davidson, who afterwards became minister of Prestonpans, and made a considerable figure in the history of the Church, and who was at this time a young man and regent in the University of St Andrews, had composed a poetical dialogue, which he called "A Conference betwix the Clark and the Courtier," and in which he exposed, in terms more plain than pleasant, the mischievous and disreputable character of the practice.* Morton was highly incensed at this *jeu d'esprit*, and threatened the author with prosecution. The poem was presented to the General Assembly for their judgment, and it was too evident that his brethren were afraid to give it the sanction of their approbation. On this occasion, the honest spirit of Campbell of Kinyeancleuch (the same who rated the nobility so severely for truckling to Queen Mary) again manifested itself. Perceiving that the Assembly were trifling in the matter, he turned to Mr Davidson and said,

* Among other lines, the poem contained the following:—

"Had gude John Knox not yet been deid,
It had not cum unto this heid:
Had they myntit till sic ane steir,
He had made heavin and eirth to hear."

"Brother, look for no answer here. God hath taken away the hearts from men, that they dare not justify the truth, lest they displease the world. Therefore, cast you for the next best." "What is that?" said Davidson. "Go home with me," replied his sagacious friend. "Nay," added he, seeing that the young minister hesitated; "ye may lawfully flee when ye are persecuted." Davidson, finding that Morton was determined against him, accepted the kind invitation, and set off under the laird's protection to Kinyeancleuch. On their journey, Campbell was seized with a severe and fatal illness. Feeling the near approach of death, this faithful and pious gentleman could not restrain his emotions when he thought of the state in which he left the Church of his native land. "A pack of traitors," he exclaimed, referring to some of the ministers, "have sold Christ to the regent, as manifestly as ever Judas did! *What leal heart can contain itself unbursting?*" And he burst out into tears, accompanied with sobs and lamentations. Then addressing himself to Mr Davidson, "Take my best horse with you," he cried, "and ride away with my blessing. The Lord bless you," he added, holding out his hand; "gird up your loins, and make to your journey; for ye have a battle to fight, and few to take your part but the Lord only."*

We cannot pass this incident without giving utterance to a reflection which we have no doubt has already occurred to the reader. How seldom amongst the people in our day, and, alas! how seldom amongst the gentry, do we now meet with a similar example of

* Calderwood's MS. Hist., vol. iv. ad an. 1574, Adv. Libr.

such tender-hearted concern for the interests of Zion! Amidst all the professions of zeal that we hear, how rarely, among any class of Christians, does the low state of religion in the Church draw a tear from the eye, or a sob from the heart!

The state of ecclesiastical affairs in Scotland, during this period, was very singular. A species of secular or parliamentary Episcopacy was upheld by the court, while the Church, established by law, remained Presbyterial. The Assembly would grant the bishops no authority, even as their representatives in Parliament, and demanded, that in all matters ecclesiastical, they should be subject to the Church courts. This anomalous state of things could not last long without producing jealousies and dissensions. The churchmen who were raised to these titular dignities disdained to submit to the trial and censure of the General Assembly; and the Assembly, on the other hand, soon discovered that the continuance of bishops, even in name, was dangerous to the liberties of the Church. In August 1575, while they declined interfering with the civil arrangement regarding these prelates, the Assembly decided that "the name of bishop is injurie to all them that has a particular flock over the which he has ane peculiar charge;" and in several subsequent meetings, various acts were passed to the same effect, which, says Row, "were afterwards riven out of the registers of the General Assembly (ye may easily judge by whom);* yet, by God's good providence, a principal act was concluded, and remains undestroyed, in

* He refers to Archbishop Adamson, who obtained possession of the registers, and mutilated them in those places where Episcopacy had been condemned.

the year 1580, when it was declared that "the office of ane bishop, as it is now used and commonly taken within this realm, has no sure warrand, authority, or good ground out of the Scripture of God, but is brought in by folly and corruption, to the great overthrow of the Kirk of God." *

While matters were in the state now described, the cause of truth was revived, and a new spirit infused into the counsels of the Church, by the arrival in Scotland of another champion of the Reformation, whose name deserves a place next to that of Knox,—Andrew Melville. This accomplished scholar and divine had been residing for ten years on the Continent, where he added to the learning which he had acquired at home, and which had procured him a very high character in the literary world. Endowed with all the firmness, intrepidity, and integrity of Knox, Melville was enabled, from his superior literary endowments, to confer lasting benefits on his country, by introducing salutary reforms into its universities, and reviving a taste for letters. He was successively appointed principal of the University of Glasgow, and of the New College, St Andrews; and being also a minister and a professor of divinity, he had a right to sit in the Church courts. It was not long before he was called to lend the powerful aid of his talents in the struggle of the Church against Episcopacy. And among other services, he had a chief hand in the composition of the Second Book of Discipline, which,

* Row's MS. Hist., ad an. 1575; Booke of Univ. Kirk, pp. 152, 194; Ibid., Bannat. ed., vol. i. 342; ii. 453.

after long and deliberate discussion, was approved and adopted by the General Assembly in 1578.

Of this book, which, though it was not ratified by Parliament, still forms a standard work in the Church of Scotland, we may remark, that it defines the government of the Church still more exactly than the First Book of Discipline, which was drawn up hastily to meet the emergency of a sudden conversion from Popery. It draws the essential line of distinction between civil and ecclesiastical power; declaring, that Jesus Christ has appointed a government in his Church distinct from civil government, which is to be exercised in his name by such officers as he hath authorised, and not by civil magistrates, or under their direction. Civil authority, they say, has for its direct and proper object, the promoting of external peace and quietness among the subjects; ecclesiastical authority, the directing of men in matters of religion and conscience; yet as they are both of God, and tend to one common end, if rightly used, viz., the glory of God and making men good subjects, they ought to co-operate within their respective spheres, and fortify, without interfering with, one another. They claim the right of Church courts, as courts of Christ, to convene and settle business independent of the civil power. These courts were divided into sessions, presbyteries, synods, and general assemblies. They admit of no superiority of office in the Church above a teaching presbyter, or minister of the Gospel —no pastor of pastors. None are to be intruded into the ministry contrary to the will of the congregation. And among the abuses which they desire to see

reformed by the State, is lay patronage, which they declare leads to intrusion, and is incompatible with "lawful election, and the assent of the people over whom the person is placed, as the practice of the apostolical and primitive kirk and good order craves."

Of the discipline thus briefly sketched, we shall only say, that while Presbyterians never alleged an inspired prescription for every part of its details, they consider its leading and characteristic principles to be of divine origin, or, to use the language of Calderwood, "to be taken, not out of the cistern of men's invention, but from the pure fountains of God's Holy Word." At the same time, its subordinate arrangements are supported by the general rules of Scripture. They are simple, well calculated to preserve order and unity, and promote the edification of the flock of Christ; and, when duly observed, they will be found as much opposed to clerical domination as to popular confusion.

Impolitic as Morton's administration was, it was not nearly so bad as that which succeeded. A party of discontented nobles having gained access to the young king, persuaded him to assume the government into his own hands: Morton resigned, and in 1578 James VI. ascended the throne, in the twelfth year of his age. This young prince had been carefully brought up under the superintendence of the Countess of Mar, and the celebrated George Buchanan, who early instilled into his mind the elements of learning and the principles of religion. It must be owned that Buchanan was not exactly the man fitted to inspire his royal pupil with favourable ideas of Presbytery.

He had become recluse and testy in his old age; and the impression which he left on the mind of James, may be gathered from what the king used long after to say of one of his old English courtiers, "That man makes me always tremble at his approach; he minds me so of my old pedagogue." Buchanan, on his part, seems to have entertained a very low opinion of the mental capacity of his pupil; for on being reproached for making the king a pedant, he is said to have replied, that "it was the best he could make of him." Unfortunately, at the commencement of his reign, James fell into the hands of two unprincipled courtiers, the one a Frenchman, whom he made the Duke of Lennox; and the other, one Captain Stewart, a notorious profligate, who afterwards became Earl of Arran. These men, besides polluting his morals, filled his head with the most extravagant notions of kingly power, and the strongest prejudices against the Scottish Church, the strict discipline of which, for obvious reasons, was peculiarly obnoxious to persons of such characters. To the impressions then made on the vain and weak mind of James, we may trace all the troubles which distracted his reign in Scotland.

The reign of James, however, may be said to have had an auspicious commencement. On the 17th October 1579, he made a sort of triumphal entry into Edinburgh, when he was received by the inhabitants with every demonstration of loyalty. Entering at the West Port, the houses in the streets through which he passed were covered with tapestry; and various allegorical devices, in the quaint style of the times, were contrived to give eclat to the procession. The silver

keys of the city were delivered to him by a young boy, emerging from a splendid figure of the globe, which opened as his Majesty approached. Four beautiful damsels, representing the four cardinal virtues, each addressed him in a short speech; while another lady, personating religion, invited him to enter the church, where he heard a discourse. Thereafter, Bacchus, seated on a puncheon, crowned with garlands, welcomed the king to his own town; wine was liberally distributed to the poor; musicians, stationed at different places, greeted him with the melody of their viols; and finally, amidst the sound of trumpets, and the shouts of the people, his Majesty proceeded to the Abbey.

In the following year, the king gave a proof of his attachment to the Protestant cause, highly gratifying to his people, by agreeing to a solemn deed, which marks one of the most important eras in the history of the Church of Scotland—we refer to *the National Covenant.* Before the Reformation, several bonds or covenants had been entered into by the Protestant nobility, gentry, and others, in which they pledged themselves to defend and support the true religion against its enemies; and to the confederation thus solemnly cemented may be traced much of the success which attended their struggles against Popery. The same practice had been previously adopted, with the happiest effects, by the Protestant princes of Germany and the Protestant Church of France. In Scotland, however, where the Protestant had become the established religion, this solemnity assumed the peculiar form of a national deed; and our ancestors were naturally led, by similarity of circumstances, to imitate

the covenants of ancient Israel, when king, priests, and people, swore mutual allegiance to the true God. In following this practice, they justly considered themselves warranted by the light of nature and the precepts of the moral law, as well as by the promises of the Gospel, and the examples of Holy Scripture.

The National Covenant of Scotland was an abjuration of Popery, and a solemn engagement, ratified by an oath to the Most High God, to support the Protestant religion. Its immediate occasion was a dread, too well founded—a dread from which Scotland was never entirely freed till the period of the Revolution—of the reintroduction of Popery. It was well known that the Earl of Arran was an emissary of the house of Guise, and had been sent over to this country to prevail on the young king to embrace the Roman Catholic faith. Foreseeing that James would succeed to the throne of England on the death of Elizabeth, the crafty politicians of Rome, ever watching to regain their ascendency in that kingdom, saw the advantage of making a conquest of the Scottish monarch. The Pope himself sent him several flattering letters; Jesuits and seminary priests were sent into the country in disguise, and letters from Rome were intercepted, granting a dispensation to Roman Catholics to profess the Protestant faith for a time, provided they preserved an inward attachment to their own religion, and embraced every opportunity of advancing the Papal interests. Such a fearful and unprincipled conspiracy against true religion and civil liberty, so dangerous at all times to a country divided in religious sentiment, demanded a counter-combination, equally

strict and solemn, and led to the formation of the National Covenant of Scotland. It was drawn up at the king's request, by his chaplain, John Craig, and consisted of an abjuration, in the most solemn and explicit terms, of the various articles of the Popish system, and an engagement to adhere to and defend the reformed doctrine and discipline of the Reformed Church of Scotland. The Covenanters farther pledged themselves, under the same oath, "to defend his majesty's person and authority with our goods, bodies, and lives, in the defence of Christ's evangell, liberties of our country, ministration of justice, and punishment of iniquity, against all enemies within the realm or without." This bond, which was at first called "the King's Confession," was sworn and subscribed by the king and his household for an example to others, on the 28th of January 1581, and afterwards, in consequence of an order in council, and an act of the General Assembly, it was cheerfully subscribed by all ranks of persons through the kingdom; the ministers zealously promoting the subscription of it in their respective parishes.

This solemn transaction had a powerful influence in quieting the public mind, and rivetting the attachment of the nation to the Protestant faith; but it did not prevent the royal favourites from prosecuting their obnoxious measures. On the death of Boyd, the nominal archbishop of Glasgow, Lennox offered the vacant see to several ministers, on condition of their making over to him most part of its revenues by a private bargain; but they had the firmness to reject the base temptation. The offer was at last accepted

by Robert Montgomery, minister of Stirling, a man, says Dr Robertson, "vain, feeble, presumptuous, and more apt to have alienated the people from an order already beloved, than to reconcile them to one which was the object of their hatred." The consequence was, that a keen altercation took place between the Court and the General Assembly, which continued for some time.

At length, in 1582, matters were brought to a crisis. The king having written a letter in favour of Montgomery, the Assembly which met that year answered it "discreetly and wisely, yet standing to their poynt," and were proceeding to confirm a sentence of suspension against Montgomery, when he rushed out of the house, and a messenger-at-arms appeared, who charged the Moderator and Assembly under the pain of rebellion and putting of them to the horn, if they should direct any summons against him, or in any way trouble him in his ministry for aspiring to the see of Glasgow. Here was a case of what has been called a collision between the civil and ecclesiastical jurisdictions. The question was, not whether the individual ministers should obey the law of the land, but whether the church should obey the state, or in other words, yield up her spiritual independence. The Assembly did not hesitate a moment on the course they should pursue. Montgomery was summoned to their bar to answer, among other offences, for having procured the charging of the Assembly with the king's letters; and not having compeared, he was laid under the awful sentence of excommunication.

The Presbytery of Glasgow having met to carry

this judgment into effect, Montgomery entered the place in which they were assembled, with the magistrates and an armed force, to stop their procedure. The Moderator, refusing to obey the mandate, was forcibly pulled from his chair by the provost, who tore his beard, struck out one of his teeth by a blow on the face, and committed him to the tolbooth. In spite of this, however, the Presbytery continued sitting, and remitted the case to the Presbytery of Edinburgh, which appointed Mr John Davidson, who had now returned to Scotland, and was settled at Liberton, to excommunicate Montgomery. The Court stormed and threatened, but the intrepid young minister, at the risk of his life, which was menaced by Lennox, pronounced the sentence before a large auditory, and it was intimated on the succeeding Sabbath in Glasgow, Edinburgh, and many of the adjoining churches.

As an illustration of the disrepute into which the Episcopal office had fallen in Scotland, and of the respect paid in those days to a sentence of the ecclesiastical courts, we may mention that when Montgomery shortly afterwards came to Edinburgh, the inhabitants, as soon as they heard that he was in town, rose up as one man and demanded that he should be expelled. Lennox attempted to shield him from the popular fury, by issuing a proclamation that all men should accept of him as a good Christian and a true subject. But the Frenchman knew not the temper of the people he had to deal with. They insisted that the excommunicated archbishop should no longer pollute the town with his presence, and waited for his coming out of the council-room, in which he had sought refuge, the men

armed with sticks, and the women with missiles of every description; so that Montgomery was glad to crave the convoy of the provost out of town by a back passage, called the Kirk Wynd. In making his way through this narrow defile, he was discovered and pursued by the mob, with cries of "Aha, false thief! mainsworn thief!" and taking to his heels, narrowly escaped, at the expense of two or three buffets on the neck, when in the act of getting out at the wicket-gate of the Potterrow. It is said that King James, who was fond of all sorts of diversion, even at the expense of his friends, when he heard of this rude ebullition of popular feeling, "lay down on the Inch of Perth, and laughed his fill, saying that Montgomery was a seditious loun."*

In the meantime, Melville was not idle. In a sermon preached at the opening of the General Assembly, he inveighed against those who had introduced what he called the *bludie gullie* of absolute power into the country, and who sought to erect a new popedom in the person of the king. Adverting to the designs of the popish powers, "This," he exclaimed, "will be called meddling with civil affairs; but these things tend to the wreck of religion, and therefore I rehearse them." Being afterwards employed with others to present a bold remonstrance to the king and council from the Assembly on this subject, he displayed a spirit which reminds us of the first Reformer. Arran, looking round with a threatening countenance, exclaimed, "Who dare subscribe these treasonable articles?" "WE DARE," replied Melville, and advanc-

* Calderwood's MS. Hist., vol. v. ad an. 1581.

ing to the table, he took the pen from the clerk and subscribed.

In these contendings the ministers had hitherto received no support from the nobility; but in August 1582, a few noblemen, disgusted with the conduct of Lennox and Arran, forcibly took possession of the king's person, with the view of delivering him and the country from their disgraceful influence. The nobles seem to have treated his majesty, while he was in their hands, very much as they would have done a spoilt child, who did not know how to use his liberty without doing mischief to himself and all about him. On attempting to escape he was seized by the Master of Glammis, and burst into tears. "No matter," Glammis roughly replied, with his foot planted against the door, "better bairns weep than bearded men." This enterprise, which is known in history by the name of the Raid of Ruthven, was ill-planned, and soon issued in the restoration of the unworthy favourites, in the banishment of the lords who had engaged in it, and in troublesome consequences to the Church. The king never forgave the attempt, which he ascribed to the influence of the ministers, and which thus served to prejudice him still more than ever against the discipline of Presbytery. It does not appear that the ministers had any share in the plot; but candour requires us to state, that they imprudently involved themselves in trouble by passing an act of Assembly approving of it.*

* Even this act was not passed till the following year, when the Assembly, with great reluctance, and only after obtaining the king's express sanction, approved of the change.—*Melville's Diary*, 95, 97.

For about a year or so, while the two worthless favourites were removed from court, the Church enjoyed a respite; and the faithful ministers who had been banished were, to the great joy of the people, restored to their charges. The following scene will illustrate the general estimation in which these worthy pastors were held. John Dury, one of the ministers of Edinburgh, had proved a great eye-sore to the court, and particularly to the Duke of Lennox, whose open profligacies were as openly rebuked by the unsparing preacher. Lennox became so enraged, that, not content with having summoned Dury to the Council at Dalkeith House, and procured his banishment from Edinburgh, he caused him to be attacked by his French cooks, who nearly murdered him, on his way from the Council, with their spits and large knives. During his banishment, the Assembly ordered the Presbytery of Edinburgh to keep his charge vacant. After the Raid of Ruthven, however, Dury was restored to his flock; and the people, hearing of his approach to the city, went out in great crowds to meet him at the Nether Bow. Here, with a systematic gravity characteristic of Scottish mobs on much less solemn occasions, they arranged themselves in the form of a triumphal procession, in the midst of which the exiled minister was conducted along the street—the multitude, with uncovered heads and loud voices, singing the 124th Psalm, in the peculiar metre matched with its fine old music—

> "Now Israel may say, and that truly,
> If that the Lord had not our cause maintained," &c.

The sounds of the rejoicing melody reached the ears

of the Duke, whose house stood in the High Street; and when, on looking out of his window, he saw his old enemy thus restored in triumph, "in a French passion" he tore his beard, and intending to strike himself on the thigh, struck his hand on the window-board, crying, "The d—l for John Dury!" after which he hastened out of town, and never returned to Scotland again.*

The scene, however, soon changed. The Earl of Arran, who was really the worse of the two, was restored to favour; the nobles who had engaged in the *Raid* were banished; and a cloud fell on the prospects of the Church. In February 1584, Melville was summoned before the Privy Council to answer for certain treasonable speeches he was alleged to have uttered in a sermon, and finding that the unprincipled Arran was determined to send him to the Castle of Blackness, which was then the Bastile of Scotland, he yielded to the importunities of his friends, and escaped from the storm by retreating to Berwick.

In May following the Parliament overturned the independence of the Church, by ordaining that no ecclesiastical assembly should be held without the king's consent; that none were to presume to say a word, privately or publicly, against the proceedings of his majesty's council; that to decline the judgment of the king and privy council, in any matter whatsoever, should be punished as treason; and that all ministers were to acknowledge the bishops as their ecclesiastical superiors. These Acts of Parliament were called by the people the *Black Acts*,—a name which they

* Melville's Diary, p. 95; MS. Notes in Adv. Lib., M. 8.

well merited, whether we consider the base character of the administration by which they were carried, the malicious hostility to the liberties of the Church which they betrayed, or the melancholy consequences to which they led. Suspecting that the ministers would publicly condemn these Erastian acts, orders were sent to the provost and bailies to apprehend James Lawson and Walter Balcanquhal, ministers of Edinburgh, in the event of their doing so, and pull them by violence out of the pulpit. This, however, did not deter them from denouncing the acts from the pulpit on the following Sabbath; and on Monday morning, when they were proclaimed at the Cross, they publicly protested against them, with all due formalities, in the name of the Church of Scotland. Orders were immediately issued for their apprehension, but they saved themselves by a timely flight, and, with upwards of twenty other ministers who followed their example, took refuge in England.

Some may be surprised to hear of the liberties then used by Presbyterian ministers, and may be disposed to blame them, perhaps, for introducing secular matters into their pulpits. But did not the government first set the example of intermeddling with what did not belong to them, when they claimed an Erastian power over the Church? Some individuals among the clergy may have used unbecoming language; but, not to mention other considerations, it ought to be remembered that, at the period of which we speak, the pulpit was almost the only organ by which, in the absence of a free press, public opinion was or could be expressed, and the ecclesiastical courts were the only assemblies

in the nation which possessed any thing like liberty or independence. It was the preachers who first taught the people to express an opinion on the conduct of their rulers; and the Assemblies of the Church set the earliest example of a firm and regular opposition to the arbitrary measures of the court. But they stood upon higher ground still; for we distinctly maintain, that the ministers of Scotland would never have denounced from the pulpit the acts of government, unless these acts had infringed, directly or indirectly, on the liberties of the Church and the prerogatives of the King of Zion; and when they did so, it was from no contempt of royal authority, but from conscientious obedience to that higher Power by whom kings reign and princes decree justice. In fact, the Assembly about this time passed an act prohibiting the use of rash and irreverent speeches in the pulpit against his majesty, and actually deposed one of their number for having been guilty of this offence.

But the reader will be less surprised at the freedoms which the ministers took with the king, when we mention what freedoms the king used with the ministers. Nothing, in fact, pleased James better than a public disputation with the clergy. Having been in Edinburgh a little before this time, he attended worship in the High Church. Balcanquhal advanced something to show that ministers had as great authority as bishops, upon which James, who prided himself on his skill in divinity, and thought he could handle a text better than any divine in his kingdom, rose up from his seat, and interrupting the preacher—"Mr Walter," said he, "what Scripture have ye for that assertion? I am

sure ye have no Scripture so to alledge." The preacher said he would show his majesty that he had Scripture sufficient. "If ye prove that by Scripture," said the king, "I will give ye my kingdom;" adding that it was the practice of the preachers to busy themselves about such causes in the pulpit, but he "knew their intent well enouche," and would look after them. This interlude continued upwards of a quarter of an hour, after which the king sat down and patiently heard out the sermon.

There is a similar story told of James, which is less generally known. Patrick Adamson, who had been presented to the see of St Andrews, had gone up to England on pretence of business, and obtained episcopal consecration there in a clandestine manner. On his return to Scotland, however, he found the zeal of the Assembly and the people running so high against the order, that he durst not openly avow his prelatic character. While in this predicament, the king brought him from St Andrews to Edinburgh to preach before him in the High Church, and accompanied him with his own guard to the church to protect him from the people. On entering the church, his majesty, finding the pulpit preoccupied by Mr John Cowper, one of the ordinary ministers, who was just beginning to officiate, cried out, "Mr Cowper, I will not have you preach to-day; I command you to go down out of the pulpit, and let *the Bishop of St Andrews* come up and preach to me." "Please your majesty," said Cowper, "this is the day appointed to me to preach, and if it were your majesty's pleasure, I would fain supply the place my-

self." By this time the king discovered, from the surprise and commotion of the people, that he had unwittingly let out the secret of Adamson's new dignity; and correcting himself, he replied, "I will not hear you at this time; I command you to go down, and let *Maister Patrick Adamson* come up and preach this day." "I shall obey, sir," said Cowper, coming down from the pulpit. But the whole assembly was now in uproar and confusion. The archbishop, surrounded with the king's body guard, mounted the pulpit, and was seen bowing with great reverence to his majesty; but not a word could be heard for the outcries and lamentations of the people, who kept running out and rushing into the church, creating the most extraordinary noise, in the midst of which the king, coming still lower down with his titles, cried out in great wrath, with an oath, "What ails the people that they will not tarry to hear *a man* preach!" *

This Adamson, who has been thus introduced to our notice, gave great annoyance to the Church about this time, and no individual in the nation was more heartily disliked. He was known to have been the chief adviser of the measures for overturning the Presbyterian discipline, and he had employed his pen to traduce the characters of some of the best and noblest of the land who had opposed them. With all his learning and talents, he was of a mean-spirited and cowardly disposition. Trusting to the favour of the court, though he had been first suspended by the Assembly, and afterwards excommunicated by the Synod of Fife,

* Prynne's Antipathie of Lordly Prelacy to Regal Monarchy, p. 338; Row's MS. Hist., 80.

he determined to show his contempt for these ecclesiastical censures by preaching in the parish church of St Andrews on the Sabbath after the latter sentence was pronounced; but somebody having whispered to him, as he entered the church, that a great crowd of gentlemen had gathered, and were threatening to take him out of the pulpit and hang him, he became so frightened that he fled for refuge to the steeple, and it required all the persuasions and bodily strength of the bailies to get him "ruggit out" and carried home.* At last, deserted by the king, and deprived of his annuity, he was indebted for support to Andrew Melville, to whom he had been a most bitter enemy; and falling into sickness, he earnestly petitioned the Synod of Fife to be released from the sentence of excommunication. This was granted, upon which he presented to them a formal recantation of his episcopal sentiments, and died in February 1592, expressing his deep regret for the part he had acted against the Church.†

The puerilities of James VI., his fond conceit of arbitrary power, and his ridiculous passion for intermeddling with Church affairs, have not escaped the notice of historians; but as an offset to these failings, some are fond of painting, in the most gloomy colours, the fanaticism and puritanic severity of the Presbyterians. That the Church courts did, in some instances,

* Melville's Diary, p. 164.

† Row's MS. Hist., 83; Life of Melville, i. 314-316.—Adamson's recantation may be seen in Defoe's Memoirs of the Church of Scotland, p. 196. Dr M'Crie observes, that "the circumstances in which the archbishop subscribed his recantation necessarily throw a degree of suspicion over the sincerity with which it was made, and detract from its value as a testimony in favour of Presbytery. But there is not the least reason to doubt the genuineness of the document itself."

carry their notions of discipline to an excess bordering on intolerance, can hardly be denied; and considering the rude materials with which they had to deal, it is not at all surprising. But our forefathers were far from being morose ascetics, or foes to innocent amusement. Military exercises, athletic games, archery, and music, were commonly studied and practised, even by the gravest ministers.* Nor did they object to a little merriment, even in the midst of their most solemn assemblies. The commissioners of the Church having met at St Andrews to protest against the inauguration of Adamson as archbishop, one came in and told them, that "there was a corbie crouping" on the roof of the church. "That's a bad omen," said David Ferguson, minister of Dunfermline; "for inauguration is from *avium garritu;* the raven is *omnimodo* a black bird, and therefore ominous; and if we read rightly what it speaks, it will be found to be, *Corrupt! corrupt! corrupt!*"

David Ferguson, several of whose witty sayings are recorded by his contemporaries, and who is described

* Speaking of John Dury's week-day exercises, James Melville says,—"The gown was na sooner aff, and the byble out of hand fra the kirk, when on ged the corslet, and fangit was the hagbot, and to the fields."—*Diary*, p. 26. Of himself, honest James says,—"I lovit singing and playing on instruments passing weel, and wald gladly spend time where the exercise thereof was in the college; for twa or three of our condisciples played fellon weill on the virginals, and another on the lute and githorn. I had my necessars honestly enough of my father for archery and goff; but nocht a purse for catchpull and tavern." Private, or rather academic theatricals, of an innocent description, were likewise very common. The reader may not be prepared to hear of John Knox attending a play!—"This yeir, in the month of July, Mr John Davidson, one of our regents, made a play at the marriage of Mr John Colvin, whilk I saw playit in Mr Knox's presence, wherein, according to Mr Knox's doctrine, the Castle of Edinburgh was besieged, taken, and the captain, with ane or twa with him, hangit in effigie."—*Melville's Diary*, p. 22, 23.

as "a merrie wise man," was distinguished no less by his intelligence and integrity, than his good humour. He was now the oldest minister of the Church, having been one of the six ministers who were honoured to plant the Reformed religion in Scotland, and he retained his vivacity to the last. King James, who resided frequently at Dunfermline, used to take great delight in his conversation. Having once asked him, how it happened that, of all other houses, the house of the Master of Gray, who was a Papist, should have been shaken by an earthquake during the night? "Why," said Ferguson, "please your majesty, why should not the deevil be allowed to rock his awen bairns?" "David," said James to him one day, "why may not I have bishops in Scotland, as well as they have in England?" "Yea, Sir," replied Ferguson, "ye may have bishops here; but remember, ye must make us all bishops, else will ye never content us. For, if ye set up ten or twelve louns over honest men's heads, and give them more thousands to misspend than honest men have hundreds or scores, we will never all be content. We are Paul's bishops, Sir—Christ's bishops; haud us as we are." "The d—l haid ails you," replied the king, "but that ye would all be alike; ye cannot abide ony to be above you." "Sir," said the minister, "*ban not.*" * This old minister, who was a shrewd observer of character, used to forewarn his brethren, that if James should come to the possession of the throne of England, he would not rest till he had introduced Episcopacy into Scotland; and his prediction was too well realized.

* "Swear not." Row's Hist., pp. 40, 314.

CHAPTER V.

Re-establishment of the Presbyterian Discipline in 1592—King James and Andrew Melville—Renewal of the National Covenant in 1596—Pretended Riot of 17th December—Schemes for the Introduction of Prelacy into the Church of Scotland—The Gowrie Conspiracy—Robert Bruce—James at the Hampton Court Conference—Aberdeen Assembly 1605—Scheme of Constant Moderators—Extraordinary Scene at Perth—Bishops admitted by the Packed Assembly of Glasgow 1610—Consecration of the Bishops—Archbishop Gladstanes—Court of High Commission.

We need not dwell on the events which led to the re-establishment of the Presbyterian discipline in the year 1592. Suffice it to say, that the signal overthrow of the Spanish Armada, the invasion of which discovered the hostile intentions of the Popish princes of the Continent,—the prudent councils of Chancellor Maitland, who supplanted the king's unworthy favourites,—and the blessing of God on the faithful warnings and contendings of the ministers, led to the happiest results. James was persuaded to desist from attempting to impose upon the nation a hierarchy which none desired but himself; nay, he professed to have become a convert to Presbyterianism. At one time there can be no doubt he was sensible of its advantages;

for in answer to an English divine who expressed his astonishment why the Church of Scotland was never troubled with heresy, he said, evidently in good earnest, "I'll tell you how, man. If it spring up in a parish, there is an eldership to take notice of it; if it be too strong for them, the Presbytery is ready to crush it; if the heretic prove too obstinate for them, he shall find more witty heads in the Synod; and if he cannot be convinced there, the General Assembly, I'll warrant you, will not spare him." At a meeting of the General Assembly in 1590, he pronounced a high panegyric on the Church of Scotland. He "praised God that he was born in such a place as to be king in such a Kirk, the purest Kirk in the world. The Kirk of Geneva," continued his majesty, "keepeth Pasch and Yule. What had they for them? They have no institution. As for our neighbour Kirk in England, their service is an ill-mumbled mass in English: they want nothing of the mass but the liftings. I charge you, my good people, ministers, elders, nobles, gentlemen and barons, to stand to your purity; and I, forsooth, as long as I brook my life and crown, shall maintain the same against all deadly." The future behaviour of James furnishes us with an awkward commentary on this speech, and leaves us too much room to question its sincerity; but at the time it was delivered, the Assembly received it with every demonstration of joy; "there was nothing heard for a quarter of an hour, but praising God, and praying for the king."*

Shortly after this, in June 1592, the Parliament

* Calderwood, Pref. iv., p. 256.

formally restored Presbytery, having passed an act ratifying the government of the Church, by sessions, presbyteries, provincial synods, and national assemblies. This act, which still continues the legal charter of the Church of Scotland, has been always regarded by Presbyterians as a great step in the national reformation. It was never indeed viewed as the basis of her ecclesiastical constitution, which is to be found in her Confession of Faith and Books of Discipline, but it was a clear civil recognition and ratification of that constitution, giving her the advantage of occupying legal ground, sanctioning her liberties, and reducing within proper bounds the prerogatives of the crown; and had the Church been remiss in exertions to obtain such a settlement, or declined to accept of it, she would certainly have acted a part equally foolish and criminal. The question was, whether Presbytery or Prelacy should be the established form; and a refusal on the part of the Presbyterians to accept of an establishment, crippled as it was with certain conditions from which they were resolved to seek deliverance, would have been equivalent, at that time, to surrendering their liberties into the hands of a despotic and overbearing monarch, who was quite prepared, in such a case, to place the whole country under the regimen of an arbitrary hierarchy. As it was, this important act was not obtained without a struggle; the royal consent was given with reluctance; and the representatives of the Church, who were waiting for it with trembling anxiety, were not relieved from their fears till they heard it proclaimed at the Cross of Edinburgh.

The advantages of a legal settlement in favour of

religion are not to be despised, either because, like all other human securities, they are liable to be abused on the one hand, or because they may be, as in this case, perfidiously violated on the other. The Church of Scotland did not long enjoy in peace her civil establishment. She soon became involved in troubles arising from the dubious and vacillating policy of the king. Although a desperate Popish plot for the extirpation of the Protestant religion, concerted by the King of Spain, and headed in Scotland by the Earls of Huntly, Angus, and Errol, had been discovered in the beginning of 1593,—though Jesuits were flocking into the country, and murders had been committed on some eminent Protestants, James, either from motives of policy, or from personal fear, because, as he used to say, "the Papists were dexterous king-killers,"* could not be prevailed upon to act a decided part against the traitors. The Popish lords were no sooner proclaimed rebels, than the declaration was withdrawn, and some of them were even admitted to court. Against these proceedings the clergy remonstrated with the utmost boldness both in the pulpit and ecclesiastical assemblies. "The king," says Sir James Balfour, "was tossed like a tinnes ball betuix the preceisse ministers and the treacherous Papists. Mr Robert Bruce told him to his face out of the pulpit, that 'God would raise more Bothwells against him nor one, gif he did not revenge God's quarrel against the Papists, befor his awen particular,'"—referring to the insurrection of the Earl of Bothwell, against whom

* "Just," says Toplady, "as some Indians are said to worship the devil, for fear he should do them a mischief."—*Works*, ii. 207.

he supposed the king to be more zealous than against his more dangerous enemies. Mr Patrick Simpson was still more plain, for, preaching before his majesty on the words, "Where is Abel thy brother?" he openly rebuked him for not prosecuting Huntly, the murderer of "the bonnie Earl of Murray." "Sir," said the preacher, "I assure you, the Lord will ask at you, where is the Earl of Murray your brother?" "Mr Patrick," replied the king before all the people, "my chalmer door was never steeked upon you; ye might have told me any thing you thought in secret." "Sir," said Simpson, "the scandal was publick."*

But the most singular exhibition of boldness on the part of the ministers at this period was that made by Andrew Melville. In 1596, when the design of recalling the Popish lords was ascertained, Melville accompanied a deputation of the clergy to Falkland, for the purpose of remonstrating against a measure which they judged to be fraught with danger to the country. They were admitted to a private audience; and James Melville, whose temper was the reverse of that of his uncle, and who was employed to speak for the rest, because, as he says himself, "I could propone the mater in a mild and smooth maner, quhilk the king lyked best of," was beginning to open the case, when he was interrupted by his majesty, who accused them, "in maist crabbit and coleric maner," of holding seditious meetings, and of alarming the country without any reason. This was too much for Andrew Melville, who could no longer keep silence. He took the king by the sleeve, and calling him "God's sillie vassal,"

* Balfour's Annals of Scotland, i. 395. Row's MS. Hist., p. 100.

he proceeded to address him in the following strain,—"perhaps," says his biographer, "the most singular, in point of freedom, that ever saluted royal ears, or that ever proceeded from the mouth of a loyal subject, who would have spilt his blood in defence of the person and honour of his prince:"*—"Sir," he said, "we will always humbly reverence your majesty in public; but since we have this occasion to be with your majesty in private, and since you are brought into extreme danger both of your life and crown, and along with you the country and the Church of God are like to go to wreck, for not telling you the truth and giving you faithful counsel, we must discharge our duty, or else be traitors both to Christ and you. Therefore, Sir, as diverse times before I have told you, so now again I must tell you, there are two kings and two kingdoms in Scotland: there is King James, the head of this commonwealth, and there is Christ Jesus, the King of the Church, whose subject James the Sixth is, and of whose kingdom he is not a king, nor a lord, nor a head, but a member. We will yield to you your place, and give you all due obedience; but again I say, you are not the head of the Church: you cannot give us that eternal life which we seek for even in this world, and you cannot deprive us of it. Permit us then freely to meet in the name of Christ, and to attend to the interests of that Church of which you are a chief member. Sir, when you were in your swaddling clothes, Christ Jesus reigned freely in this land in spite of all his enemies; his officers and ministers convened for the ruling and welfare of his Church, which was ever for

* M'Crie's Life of Melville, i. 391.

your welfare, when these same enemies were seeking your destruction. And now, when there is more than extreme necessity for the continuance of that duty, will you hinder and dishearten Christ's servants and your most faithful subjects, quarrelling them for their convening, when you should rather commend and countenance them, as the godly kings and emperors did?" During the delivery of this confounding lecture, his majesty's passion, which was very high at its commencement, gradually subsided; and the ministers were dismissed with fair promises.

Different opinions will, no doubt, be formed of the conduct pursued by these undaunted presbyters. Those who are accustomed to regard the interests of truth as of paramount, because eternal, importance, will admire it as a moral heroism; while others, judging of it by an inferior standard, may denounce it as officious insolence. It is no doubt perfectly easy for us, at this distance, to sit down in great tranquillity, and sagely to pronounce that this or the other measure was too precipitate, and that the zeal of certain persons was quite irregular. But, as it has been well remarked, "if we look backwards, and impartially consider the state of things at that period, and the different circumstances affecting it, our censure must needs be more modest; and we shall probably find ourselves inclined to admit of an apology for that which cannot obtain our approbation. In the midst of a storm at sea, it is not surely to be expected that things should be managed so calmly and prudently as in moderate weather and an easy voyage."* "However," says a modern histo-

* Dr Macqueen's Letters on Mr Hume's History of Great Britain, p. 83.

rian, "from our being placed under happier circumstances, we may shrink at the broad, indecent reproach which, from the pulpit, was frequently directed even against the sovereign himself; however we may be convinced that such a practice now would be useless or intolerable, we must, if we calmly investigate the period at present under review, be satisfied that we, in a great degree, owe to the intrepidity of the clergy the liberties which we enjoy; and that, had they remained silent, the king would either have destroyed every vestige of freedom, or, what was more likely, his throne would have been subverted, and Scotland delivered into the hands of a merciless and bigoted tyrant."*

The year 1596 is memorable in the history of the Church of Scotland, both for the happy revival of religion which marked its progress, and for the lamentable manner in which it terminated. For some time the power of religion had been visibly decaying; various corruptions had crept into the Church, and numerous offences were chargeable both on ministers and people. To meet these evils some extraordinary effort was necessary; and for this purpose the General Assembly of 1593 had appointed a commission for a general visitation of the whole presbyteries throughout the realm. But the honour of giving a new impulse to the religious feelings of the nation is due to that zealous minister, to whom we have repeatedly had occasion to allude, John Davidson, minister, formerly of Liberton, now of Prestonpans. Lamenting the evils which abounded, and the inefficacy of all the means hitherto used to correct them, he proposed, in an overture to

* Dr Cook's History of the Church of Scotland, vol. ii. p. 19.

the General Assembly, that, after a solemn confession of the corruptions and offences of ministers and persons of all estates, not excepting the courts of justice and the king's household, they should renew the National Covenant, "making promise before the Majesty of God to amend their conduct." This proposal was cordially agreed to, and the Assembly was held in the Little Church of Edinburgh, on Tuesday, 30th of March 1596. On this solemn occasion Davidson, who was chosen to preside, preached so much to the conviction of his hearers, and, in their name, offered up a confession of their sins to heaven with such sincere and fervent emotion, that the whole assembled ministers melted into tears before him; and rising from their seats at his desire, and lifting up their right hands, they renewed their covenant with God, "protesting to walk more warily in their ways, and to be more diligent in their charges." This scene, which continued during three hours, was deeply affecting beyond any thing that the oldest person present had ever witnessed. As the greater part of the ministers were not present to join in the sacred action, the Assembly ordained that it should be repeated in the different synods and presbyteries, and afterwards extended to congregations; and the ordinance was obeyed with an alacrity and fervour which spread from presbytery to presbytery, and from parish to parish, till all Scotland, like Judah of old, "rejoiced at the oath."

But the satisfaction diffused by this exercise was of short duration,—it seemed designed, as a brief moment of sunshine, to prepare the faithful ministers of the Church for the storm which awaited them. It was

remarked by many that the Church never had another Assembly like this during that king's reign; and Calderwood, after detailing its proceedings, closes his account with these pithy words: "HERE END THE SINCERE GENERAL ASSEMBLIES OF THE KIRK OF SCOTLAND." On the 17th of December of the same year, when the minds of the people were in a state of high excitement from rumours of the designs of the Papists, information was conveyed to the ministers that Huntly, one of the Popish lords, had been all night in the palace, and that his retainers were waiting for orders to enter the capital. Alarmed at this intelligence, Lord Lindsay and Mr Bruce were appointed to wait on the king to set before him the dangers that threatened religion. "What dangers see you?" said his majesty. Bruce mentioned their apprehensions as to Huntly. "What have ye to do with that?" said James; "and how durst you convene against my proclamation?" "We dare do more than that," said Lord Lindsay; "and we will not suffer religion to be overthrown." Meanwhile the panic had been communicated to the people, and some evil-disposed persons taking advantage of it, raised the cry, "To arms! to arms!" "These are not our weapons," said Bruce, attempting to calm the assembly, and after some confusion, which issued in no violence, the tumult was soon quelled. Such was the whole affair of the 17th of December, which the king professed to resent so highly, that he removed the court from the city, and made it a pretext for overthrowing the liberties of the Church.

The real secret of James's antipathy to Presbytery

was his ambition to be regarded as head of the Church, a claim to which Presbyterianism, from its very nature, stands directly opposed. His sentiments on this subject were discovered in two publications which appeared shortly after the event now related. The first of these, which is entitled, "The true law of free Monarchies," is an unvarnished defence of arbitrary power, and may help us to understand the meaning of his favourite maxim, "No bishop, no king." The king, according to James, is to be "a free and absolute monarch," at liberty to do what he pleases with his people, "who," says he, "are not permitted to make any resistance but by flight, as we may see by the example of brute beasts and unreasonable creatures, among whom we never read or hear of any resistance to their parents, *except among the vipers.*" In the other treatise, "Basilicon Doron," which was addressed to his son, Prince Henry, he maintains "that the office of a king is partly civil and partly ecclesiastical; that a principal part of his function consists in ruling the Church; that it belongs to him to judge when preachers wander from their text; that parity among ministers is irreconcilable with monarchy, and the mother of confusion; and, in short, that Episcopacy should be set up, and the principal Presbyterian ministers banished from the country."

With principles so opposite to the spirit and constitution of the Scottish Church, it is not surprising that James and the Presbyterian ministers should have been perpetually at variance. The clergy, jealous of the jurisdiction of the Church, openly and vehemently denounced the king's proceedings from the pulpit;

and the king, on the other hand, threatened all the ministers with civil pains, who ventured to condemn his measures, or question his authority as supreme potentate of the Church. "There would never be peace," he said, "till the marches were ridden between them." Determined, however, to "ride the marches" in his own person, he summoned one of the most zealous of their number, Mr David Black, minister of St Andrews, to answer, before the Privy Council, for certain treasonable speeches, as he termed them, which he had uttered in the pulpit. Black, in his own name, and in that of his brethren of the ministry, sent in a declinature to the Council, declining their authority to sit as judges of his doctrine, *in the first instance*, or till he was tried by the Church courts. They saw quite well that this prosecution was put out as a *feeler*, to ascertain how far the Church would yield; and, to use their own language, they feared "that their yielding on this occasion would be held as an acknowledgment of his majesty's jurisdiction in matters that are mere spiritual, which might move his majesty to attempt farther in the spiritual government of the house of God, and end in either a plain subverting of the spiritual judicature, or at least a confounding thereof with civil, if at any time profane and ambitious magistrates might, by such dangerous beginnings, find the hedge broken down to make a violent eruption upon the Lord's inheritance, which the Lord forbid."* This faithful struggle for the liberties of the Church issued, as might have been expected, in the defeat of the weaker

* Declinature of the King and Council's Judicature in Matters Spiritual, &c., by Mr David Black, 18th Nov. 1596.

party, and Black was banished from St Andrews. It was the delight of James, however, to gain his object by policy rather than by violence; and at length, by a series of stealthy, wheedling, and disgraceful manœuvres, which he dignified with the name of *kingcraft*, he succeeded in overturning the Presbyterian polity.

His first attempt of this nature was made shortly after the tumult to which we have referred, when he requested the Assembly to appoint some of their number, with whom he might advise respecting affairs in which the Church might be interested; and the Assembly foolishly complied, appointing fourteen ministers to act as commissioners for the Church. "This," says James Melville, "was the very needle which drew in the Episcopal thread." Next year, the king stole another step towards his purpose, by prevailing upon the Parliament to declare that Prelacy was the third estate of the kingdom, and that such pastors as his majesty should please to raise to the dignity of bishops should have a right to vote in Parliament. The next step was to prevail on the Church courts to allow their commissioners to enjoy this enviable privilege. The commissioners themselves do not seem to have been unwilling to yield, and endeavoured to persuade their brethren that his majesty's object was merely to maintain the dignity of the ministerial office, and in nowise to bring in the Popish or Anglican bishops. But the more clear-sighted saw through the stratagem, and protested against it. The venerable Fergusson compared it to the wooden horse by which the Greeks succeeded in taking Troy. And John Davidson, now an old man, but retaining all the spirit of his youth,

cried out, "Aye, busk, busk, busk him as bonnilie as ye can, and fetch him in as fairly as ye will, we see him weill enough; we see the horns of his mitre." At length, in March 1598, in an Assembly summoned to meet at Dundee, for the especial convenience of the *northern ministers* whom James had bribed to come up, it was decided, by a majority of ten, that the ministry, as the third estate of the realm, should have a vote in Parliament.

Still, in spite of this disgraceful compliance, it required all the craft and finesse of the king to constitute these representatives of the Church *bona fide* bishops. After various conferences, and proroguing one Assembly after another, an Assembly, which met at Montrose in 1600, agreed to a number of *caveats*, or cautions, to prevent the commissioners of the Church (for by that name they were to be designated) from abusing their powers. But the strictest caveats, sanctioned by the most sacred promises, were feeble ties on an unprincipled court and perfidious churchmen. The king, conceiving that matters were now ripe for accomplishing his purpose, quietly nominated three of the ministers, David Lindsay, Peter Blackburn, and George Gladstanes, to the vacant bishoprics of Ross, Aberdeen, and Caithness. And these individuals, thus nominated without the knowledge or consent of the Church, sat and voted in the ensuing Parliament, directly in the face of those cautions which they had so lately vowed to observe. "It was neither the king's intention," says Spotswood, "nor the mind of *the wiser sort*, that these cautions should stand in force; but to have matters peaceably ended, and *the*

reformation of the policy made without noise, the king gave way to these conceits."

The triumph of James, however, was not complete, so long as the General Assemblies continued to manage the affairs of the Church; and it required other ten years of sad struggling and manœuvering before he gained a victory, of which it is hard to say whether it was more disgraceful to the victor or more disastrous to the vanquished.

About the time of which we now speak, several ministers were involved in trouble, by an event in which they had no concern, solely through the pragmatical obstinacy of the king. All who have read the History of Scotland, are acquainted with "the Gowrie Conspiracy," an enigma in the life of James VI. which still seems to defy solution, and is involved in as much mystery as it was at the time of its occurrence. John Ruthven, Earl of Gowrie, an accomplished young nobleman, had just returned from his travels on the Continent, and was universally beloved by all who knew him. He was a zealous Protestant, and had spent a quarter of a year at Geneva with Beza, the great Reformer, who had conceived for him the highest esteem and admiration, and who could never afterwards hear his name mentioned without tears. The citizens of Perth respected him so highly, that they elected him provost in 1593, and continued him in the office during his absence. Suddenly, in August 1600, the king, with a large retinue, came to Gowrie's house in Perth, pretending he had been invited by the earl's brother, Alexander Ruthven. A scuffle took place, and the inhabitants, on reach-

ing the spot, found their provost and his brother weltering in their blood. The king and his friends gave out that these two noblemen had attempted to assassinate his majesty, and that they had been killed in the act, on the king giving the alarm. This story is so full of glaring improbabilities, that one cannot help sympathizing with the opinion of Sir Thomas Moncreiff, who, on meeting the king near the Bridge of Earn, on his return from Perth, and after hearing his account of the affair, is said to have replied, "May it please your majesty, it is a strange story indeed, *if it be true.*" * Nothing throws so much suspicion on the king's account of this conspiracy, as his extreme spite at any who whispered the smallest doubt of its truth. It was not enough that the ministers returned thanks to God for his deliverance; they must declare their full belief in his story. On his return to Edinburgh, Monday, 11th August 1600, the king went to the market cross, accompanied by some of the nobility, where his chaplain, Patrick Galloway, preached to the people convened on the street a sermon, in which he endeavoured to persuade them that Gowrie and his brother had verily conspired the king's death, and were slain in the execution of the enterprise; and the king himself, rising up after him, made an harangue to the same purpose. He next caused a narrative of the affair to be published; but in spite of all his efforts, the clergy as a body, and not a few of the laity, persisted in their incredulity. They remembered that Gowrie was a staunch friend of the Protestant religion, and in favour with Queen Elizabeth,

* The Muses Threnodie, &c., by Cant, p. 170.

while the Popish lords, under whose influence the king now acted, were the deadly enemies of the house of Gowrie; and that Arran in particular, who had procured the execution of the earl's father, even after he had obtained the royal pardon for his share in the Raid of Ruthven, was not likely to feel at ease, so long as the sons of the stout old earl were alive, to dispute his daring pretensions, if not to avenge their own loss.* Incensed at their conduct, the king summoned the ministers into his presence, and partly by arguments, partly by threats, they were all convinced or silenced, except Mr Robert Bruce, who steadily refused to acknowledge himself persuaded of the guilt of Gowrie, and against whom his majesty was pleased to maintain his own veracity by the unanswerable arguments of deprivation and banishment.

Robert Bruce, who has been thus introduced to us, was a noble character, and deserves a more lengthened notice. He was second son to the laird of Airth, from whom he inherited the estate of Kinnaird. In his youth he was educated with the view of his rising to the bench; but his conscience was so deeply impressed with an inward call to the ministry, that he could obtain no rest till he was permitted to attend the divinity lectures of Andrew Melville at St Andrews;

* The citizens of Perth would never believe that their provost was guilty, although their minister, William Cowper, used every means to persuade them.—*Scott's M S. Records of Session of Perth*, vol. i. In the tumult which succeeded the discovery, they surrounded the earl's house, crying, "Give us out our provost, or the king's green coat shall pay for it!" The king was seen with his hunting coat at the window. Ruthven of Forgun, on seeing him, cried up, "Come down, thou son of Signior Davie! thou hast slain an honester man than thyself."—*Cald. M S. Hist. ad an.* 1600. *Cant's History of Perth*, pp. 206, 253.

and on one occasion, in conversation with James Melville, alluding to the conflict of mind through which he had passed, he said, "Before I throw myself again into such torment of conscience, as I have had in resisting the call to the ministry, I would rather choose to walk through a fire of brimstone, though it were a mile in length." With all his fervency, however, such was his lowliness of mind, that when a preacher he could not be prevailed upon to enter upon the ministry, until he was, as it were, entrapped into it. At a sacramental occasion in Edinburgh, in the church to which he was afterwards called, one of the ministers desired him to sit beside him while serving a table; and having left him, as if for a little, he sent word to Mr Bruce, who was still sitting opposite to the elements, that unless he continued the service, the work must necessarily be closed. The eyes of all were fixed on him,—many requested him to supply the minister's place; and Bruce, thinking he had been seized with a sudden illness, proceeded with the services in a manner which produced the most unprecedented effect on all present. Having thus commenced, he continued to discharge the duties of the ministry; and sometime afterwards, when the commissioners for the Church would have had him submit to be ordained by the imposition of hands, Bruce, with characteristic spirit, refused to submit to the ceremony, on the ground, that it would imply that his former ministry had been unlawful. In 1590, King James had such a high opinion of him, that when he went to bring home his queen from Denmark, he nominated him an extraordinary counsellor, an office which Bruce discharged so well, that

his majesty declared "he would be obligated to him all his life."

The heroic independence and unbending rectitude of Bruce's mind, were never more strikingly displayed than in his conduct in regard to the Gowrie conspiracy. Being recalled from France after his banishment, he signified that his doubts were in a great measure removed, but still refused to give a public profession of his faith in the king's story, or to make the humiliating submission which was enjoined. He had never, he said, refused to do the duty of a subject; but to utter in the pulpit, under the authority of his office, any thing of which he was not fully persuaded, he was not at liberty. "I have a body and some goods (continued he), let his majesty use them as God shall direct him. But, as to my inward peace, I pray his majesty, in all humility, to suffer me to keep it. Place me where God placed me, and I shall teach as faithful and wholesome doctrine to the honour of the magistrate, as God shall give me grace. But to go through the country and make proclamations here and there, will be counted either a beastly fear, or a beastly flattery; and in so doing, I should raise greater doubts, and do more harm than good to the cause, for people look not to words but to grounds."*

The time was now come when James was to be no longer thwarted in his designs on the Church,

* The king acknowledged to Mr Bruce that he ordered Alexander Ruthven to be struck. "I grant," said he, "that I am art and part in Master Alexander's slaughter, but it was in my own defence." "Why brought ye him not to justice?" said Bruce; "you should have had God before your eyes." "I had neither God nor the devil before my eyes, man!" said the king, interrupting him, "but my own defence."—*Calderwood, MS. Hist. ad an.* 1600.

by the inconvenient and uncourtly firmness of the Scottish ministers. In March 1603, on the death of Elizabeth, he succeeded to the throne of England, and was received by his new subjects with every demonstration of unbounded loyalty. He was not long seated on the English throne, when a conference was held at Hampton Court, to hear the complaints of the Puritans, as those good men were called who scrupled to conform to the ceremonies, and sought a reformation of the abuses, of the Church of England. On this occasion, surrounded with his deans, bishops, and archbishops, who poured into his ears the incense of flattery, and looked up to him as an oracle of wisdom, James, like King Solomon, to whom he was fond of being compared, appeared in all his glory, giving his judgment on every question as it occurred, and displaying before the astonished prelates, who kneeled every time they addressed him, his polemical powers and theological learning. Contrasting his present honours with the scenes from which he had just escaped in his native country, he began by congratulating himself, that, " by the blessing of Providence, he was brought *into the promised land*, where religion was professed in its purity; where he sat among grave, learned, and reverend men; and that now he was not, as formerly, a king without state and honour, nor in a place where order was banished, and beardless boys would brave him to his face."* After long conferences, during which the king gave the most extraordinary exhibitions of his learning, drollery, and profaneness, he was completely thrown off

* Dr Barlow's Summary of Hampton Court Conference, p. 4.

his guard, by having caught the sound of the word *presbytery*, which Dr Reynolds, a representative of the Puritans, had unfortunately employed. Thinking that he aimed at a "Scotch presbytery," James got into a towering passion, declaring that presbytery agreed as well with monarchy as God and the devil. "Then," said he, "Jack and Tom, and Will and Dick, shall meet, and at their pleasures censure me and my council, and all our proceedings. Then Will shall stand up and say, It must be thus: Then Dick shall reply, and say, Nay marry, but we will have it thus. And, therefore, here I must once reiterate my former speech, *Le Roy s'avisera* (the king will look after it). Stay, I pray you, for one seven years before you demand that of me; and if you then find me pursy and fat, and my wind-pipes stuffed, I will perhaps hearken to you; for let that government be once up, I am sure I shall be kept in breath; then we shall all of us have work enough, both our hands full. But, Dr Reynolds, till you find that I grow lazy, let that alone."* Then, putting his hand to his hat, "My lords the bishops," said his majesty, "I may thank you that these men plead for my supremacy; they think they can't make their party good against you, but by appealing unto it. But if once you are out, and they in place, I know what would become of my supremacy; for *No bishop, no king*, as I said before." Then rising from his chair, he concluded the conference with, "If this be all they have to say, I'll make them conform, or I'll harry them out of this land, or else do worse."

* Collier, Eccl. Hist., 681.

The English lords and prelates were so filled with admiration at the quickness of apprehension and dexterity in controversy shown by the king, that, as Dr Barlow informs us, "one of them said his majesty spoke by the instinct of the Spirit of God; and the Lord Chancellor, as he went out, said to the Dean of Chester, I have often heard that *Rex est mixta persona cum sacerdote* (that a king is partly a priest), but I never saw the truth thereof till this day!"*

In these circumstances, buoyed up with flattery by his English clergy, and placed beyond the reach of the faithful admonitions of the Scottish ministry, we need not wonder to find James prosecuting, with redoubled ardour, his scheme of reducing the Church of Scotland to the English model. The bishops being now established, his next object was to procure something like an acknowledgment of them by the Church, to effect which it was necessary to destroy every vestige of freedom in the constitution of her Assemblies. The first attempt of this kind had been made in 1599, when the king dismissed the assembly, and summoned another to meet at Montrose in 1600, solely by virtue of his *royal prerogative*. This was entirely contrary to the establishment ratified by Parliament in 1592, according to which, the time and place of meeting were to be nominated by the preceding Assembly, with his majesty's consent.† Under various pretexts, James had infringed this rule, proroguing and altering the time of Assemblies at his pleasure; and at last the Assembly which should have met at Aberdeen in July 1605, was prorogued without any time being fixed for

* Dr Barlow's Summary of the Conference, 82, 84. † Row's Hist., p. 143.

its meeting. Now was the time to decide whether the Church was to stand firm, or to yield her liberties, without a struggle, into the hands of the king. In the midst of a tempestuous winter, which kept many from coming up, a few faithful men having convened at Aberdeen, determined at least to constitute the Assembly, and appoint another meeting. Hearing that an Assembly was to be held at Aberdeen, a letter was sent to Straiton of Laurieston, the king's commissioner, empowering him to dissolve the meeting, just because it had not been called by his majesty. The brethren present resolved to constitute before reading the communication; and John Forbes, minister of Alford, was chosen moderator. While they were reading the king's letter, a messenger-at-arms arrived, and in the king's name commanded them to dissolve on pain of rebellion. The Assembly agreed to dissolve, provided it were done in the regular way, by his majesty's commissioner naming a day and place for the next meeting. This the commissioner refused to do; the object of the king being to reserve to himself the right of calling it or not at his sovereign pleasure. The moderator accordingly, at the request of his brethren, appointed the Assembly to meet at the same place on the last Tuesday of September, and dissolved the meeting.

Such is a short account of the Assembly at Aberdeen, which brought so many of the faithful ministers into trouble. Their conduct on this occasion was marked equally by respect to the royal authority and fidelity to the great Head of the Church; and it deserves the warmest approbation of every friend of religion and

civil liberty. No sooner, however, was his majesty informed of their proceedings, than he transmitted orders to his privy council to proceed against the ministers as guilty of high treason. Fourteen of them having defended their conduct, were committed to various prisons; and six of the principal ministers, who were obnoxious for their fidelity, were selected for prosecution. Their names, which deserve to be recorded, were, Mr John Forbes, the moderator; Mr John Welch, minister at Ayr; Mr Andrew Duncan at Crail; Mr Robert Dury at Anstruther; Mr John Sharp at Kilmany; and Mr Alexander Strachan at Creigh.

At three o'clock in the morning, in the depth of winter, and through roads almost impassable, these good men were summoned to stand trial for high treason before the Court of Justiciary at Linlithgow, where they were met by a number of their brethren, who had come to countenance them during their trial. The prisoners made an eloquent defence. The concluding speech of Forbes, the moderator, is remarkably impressive. "My lord," said he, addressing the Earl of Dunbar, when he saw they were about to pass judgment, "I adjure you before the living God, that you report to his majesty, in our names, this history out of the book of Joshua." He then related the account of the league between the Israelites and the Gibeonites, and the manner in which God avenged the violation of that covenant many years afterwards on Saul and his house.* "Now, my lord, warn the king, that if such a high judgment fell upon Saul and his house for destroying them that deceived Israel, and only be-

* Josh. ix. 3-19; 2 Sam. xxi. 1, 2.

cause of the oath of God which passed between them, what judgment will fall on his majesty, his posterity, and the whole land, if he and ye violate the great oath ye have all made to God, to stand to His truth, and to maintain the discipline of His kirk according to your powers." Then reading over to them the last sentence of the National Covenant, he added, "So take this to heart, as ye will be answerable to God in that dreadful day of judgment, to which we appeal, if ye wrongously condemn us."

But what avail innocence and eloquence against the arts of corruption and the influence of terror? The Earl of Dunbar had been sent down for the express purpose of securing the condemnation of the ministers; the jury were packed, and a verdict was at last obtained, at midnight, finding, by a majority of three, the prisoners guilty of high treason. On hearing the verdict, the ministers embraced each other, and gave God thanks for having supported them during the trial. On arriving at Edinburgh, they were met by their wives, who were awaiting with much anxiety the result of the trial. On being told that they had been convicted by so few votes of the crime of treason, "they joyfully," says Row, "and with masculine minds, thanked the Lord Jesus, who had given them that strength and courage to stand to their Master's cause, saying, They are evil entreated, as their Master was before them, judged, and condemned under silence of night."

It was thought that they might be set at liberty after a little confinement; but orders came down from London in November 1606, to banish them out of his

majesty's dominions. They were accordingly brought from the Castle of Blackness to Leith, and the ship being ready, and many of their friends having attended to see them embark, "they fell down upon their knees on the shore," says our historian, "and prayed two several times, verie fervently, moving all the multitude about them to tears in abundance; and after they had sung the twenty-third psalm, joyfullie taking leave of their friends and acquaintances, they passed to the ship, and after encountering a storm, were safely transported and landed in France."*

Previously to this, it was thought expedient to remove Andrew Melville and a few of the more zealous brethren out of the way. They were summoned to London, on the pretext of a consultation with the king, and they were not long there when they were prohibited from returning to Scotland. Melville, on account of a Latin epigram, which he wrote for his own amusement, containing some satirical reflections on the English service, was committed to the Tower of London; and, after a confinement of four years, was banished to France, where he died, at Sedan, in the year 1622.

Meanwhile, the king, intent on bringing his favourite project to a conclusion, went a step farther, and proposed that the bishops should be appointed *constant moderators;* in other words, that they should have a right, in virtue of their office (*ad vitam aut culpam*), to preside in all meetings of Presbyteries, Synods, and General Assemblies. This new aggression on the liberties of the Church, the object of which was clearly

* Row's MS. Hist., p. 176.

seen through, met with fresh opposition from the Church courts, and gave rise to many unseemly and disgraceful scenes. As an illustration, we may describe the scene that took place in Perth, at the opening of the Synod there, in March 1607, when Mr William Row, a bold and zealous champion of Presbytery, presided as moderator. The king had sent Lord Scoon,* a man of violent temper and dissolute habits, to force them to accept a constant moderator. Scoon sent notice to Mr Row, that if, in his preaching, he uttered a syllable against constant moderators, he should cause ten or twelve of his guards to discharge their pieces in his face; and when he attended the sermon he stood up in a menacing posture to outbrave the preacher. But Mr Row, no way dismayed, knowing what vices Scoon was most addicted to, and particularly that he was a notorious glutton, drew his picture in the beginning of his discourse so much to the life, that Scoon, seeing all eyes directed towards him, was glad to sit down, and cover his face. After which the minister proceeded to prove that no constant moderator ought to be tolerated in the Church; but being aware that Scoon understood neither Latin nor Greek, he wisely avoided naming the constant moderator in English, giving him the learned title of *proestos ad vitam.* Sermon being ended, Scoon said to some of his attendants, "You see how I charmed the preacher from meddling with the constant moderator; but I wonder what man it was he spoke so much against by the name of *Prestos ad vitam.*" When told that this was the learned phrase for *constant moderator,*

* Sir David Murray, Lord Scoon, and afterwards Viscount Stormont.

Scoon's rage knew no bounds, and he resolved to prevent the Synod from meeting, unless they chose for their moderator one of those who had been nominated for that office by the king. Upon their refusing to submit to this dictation, and proceeding to elect one of their own number, Scoon rose in great wrath, threatened, and gave abusive names to them, and even attempted to snatch the roll of the members out of the moderator's hand; but Row, who was a man of great bodily strength, kept down the commissioner in his chair with the one hand,—exhorting him to "speak with reverence and reason,"—and holding the roll in the other, deliberately called over the names of the members, who chose Mr Harrie Livingston as their moderator. "Let no man be so bold as come there," cried Scoon, rising to intercept Livingston on his way to the moderator's chair. "Let us begin at God," said Livingston, kneeling down, when he had got to the middle of the table, "and let us all be humbled in the name of Jesus Christ." "The d—l a Jesus is here!" exclaimed the commissioner, with truly shocking profaneness, overturning at the same time the table around which the ministers were kneeling. They continued to kneel, undisturbed by his violence, till the prayer was ended and the meeting constituted. During this time, Scoon stood with his head uncovered, calling for the bailies of Perth, and commanding them to ring the common bell, and remove these rebels,—an order which, though he was at that time their provost, none of them chose to execute. Baffled in this, on their adjourning, he ordered the doors of the church to be locked, so that, when the ministers returned, they were compelled to

hold their Synod in the open churchyard, the members kneeling down on the graves for prayer, amidst the tears of the populace, who crowded around them, deeply sympathizing with the dishonour thus offered to their church, and soon furnished them with tables and stools from their own houses.*

The extraordinary scene which we have just described, disgraceful as it was to the individual who occasioned it, and to the government that employed him, reflects no discredit on the ministers of the Synod of Perth, who deserve praise for their firm and yet respectful opposition to such a despotic invasion of their privileges. And it shows the impolicy of all State interference with the proper jurisdiction of the Church, —an interference which must issue either in the tame submission of the latter, in the things of God, to the authority of man, or in a collision between the civil and sacred jurisdictions, which all wise governments have, for their own sakes, carefully avoided.

It is needless to dwell on the other steps by which James succeeded in accomplishing his object. Suffice it to observe, that, at length, in an Assembly held at Glasgow in 1610, by dint of bribery and intimidation, he obtained the consent of the Church to receive the bishops as moderators of Diocesan Synods, and to confer on them the power of excommunicating and absolving offenders, of ordaining and deposing ministers, and visiting all the churches within their respective dioceses.

It would be absurd to consider this convention at

* Row's Hist., p. 180. Livingstone's Characteristics, art. W. Row. Scot's MS. Extract from Kirk-Session Register of Perth, vol. i., 1607.

Glasgow a free and lawful and General Assembly. Royal missives were sent to the Presbyteries nominating the individuals whom they should choose as their representatives, and whom the bishops had previously selected as most likely to favour their designs; and the Earl of Dunbar, the king's commissioner, was furnished with instructions to spare no expense, and scruple at no means for securing that every thing should be done according to the royal pleasure. The bribery practised at this Assembly was shamefully notorious. Golden coins, called *angels*, were so plentifully distributed among the ministers, that it was called, by way of derision, the *angelical* Assembly. Sir James Balfour tells us that the earl expended "forty thousand merks to facilitate the matter and obtain their suffrages." This was a trifle, however, when compared with the other expenses which it cost the king to establish Prelacy. Mr Row may have somewhat exaggerated the sum, but he states that "in buying the benefices of the bishops out of the hands of the noblemen who had them, in buying votes at Assemblies, in defraying all their other charges, such as coming to and living at court prelate-like, &c., the king did employ (by the confession of such as were best acquainted with, and were actors in, these businesses) above the sum of three hundred thousand pounds sterling (Scots) money,—a huge thing, indeed," he adds, "but sin lying heavie on the throne, crying aloud for wrath on him and his posteritie, is infinitely sadder than three hundred thousand pounds sterling."*

The pretext under which this disgraceful bribery

* Row's MS. Hist., p. 209.

was practised, was that of defraying the expenses of the poor ministers who had come from a distance. "But," says Row, "the contrare was well knowne; for both some neare Glasgow, who voted the king's way, got the wages of Balaam, and some gracious ministers in the north, who voted *negative*, got no gold at all." Those who were mean enough to accept of these bribes (and some of them were so low as fifty merks, about two pounds sixteen shillings and sixpence sterling, while another, who was too late, got only nine pounds eighteen shillings Scots, just sixteen shillings and sixpence sterling) returned home in disgrace, self-condemned and taunted by their brethren, for having sold the liberties of the Church, which they had taken them solemnly pledged to defend before their departure. Altogether, it must be owned, this Assembly is a blot on the escutcheon of the Church of Scotland. It is true that it was neither legal in its constitution nor free in its deliberations, and on this account it was, with other Assemblies held at this period, declared null and void by the famous Assembly of 1638; it is true, also, that many of the faithful ministers protested against it at the time. But still, it is lamentable to think that so many ministers could be collected out of the parishes of Scotland, weak enough to yield to the threats, or base enough to take the bribes, of a despotic and domineering government, bent on overturning the liberties of the Church. It was well for the bishops that the bolder spirits who had opposed their encroachments were out of the way, that the flower of the ministry had been banished out of Scotland. For, as Archbishop Gladstanes acknow-

ledged, in a letter to the king announcing their success at Glasgow, "had Andrew Melville been in the country, they had never been able to get that turn accomplished."

Blinded and misled as the members of this convention were, they had no idea of sanctioning the doctrine of the divine right of Episcopacy; they conceived that the form of Presbyteries would still be kept up, with the bishops as moderators. No sooner, however, had the bishops gained their object at Glasgow, than three of them set off to London, and having received Episcopal ordination from the English prelates, they returned to consecrate the rest, without consulting Presbytery, Synod, or Assembly. It thus appeared that they considered themselves quite independent of the Church of Scotland, and conceived they had a right to govern their brethren, in virtue of the powers communicated to them by the bishops of another Church with which she had no connection. In short, they now alleged that they had received *new light* on the subject of Church government, and had discovered Episcopacy to be more agreeable to Scripture and antiquity than Presbytery. With such sentiments, they soon began to exercise the jurisdiction with which they supposed themselves invested.

At the meeting of the Synod of Fife, Gladstanes, archbishop of St Andrews, took the chair. It had been previously arranged by the ministers that, after protesting against this usurpation, they should march out in due order, leaving the bishop alone in possession of the chair. Mr John Malcolm, minister of Perth, as being the oldest member, was elected as the fittest

person to take the lead in this proceeding. Before entering on business, Malcolm rose up, and begged to ask by what authority, and on what grounds, the order of our Kirk, established in so many famous General Assemblies, and ratified by the king's acts, was altered, which, said he, "we cannot see but with grief of heart, seeing we acknowledge it to be the only true form of government of Christ's Kirk." "I am astonished," said the bishop in a high passion, "to hear such an aged man utter such foolish talk. Can you be ignorant, Sir, of what was done by the General Assembly in Glasgow?" Other members, however, coming forward in his support, Gladstanes became calmer. "It's a strange thing, brethren," he said, "that ye are so troubled about such an indifferent matter. What matter who be moderator, provided nothing be done but to all your contentment?" "Ye pretend the Word," said they, "but ye let us see no warrand; we know nothing ye seek but gain and preferment in this course." Upon this the bishop, starting up, exclaimed with vehemence, "God never let me see God's face, nor be a partaker of his kingdom, if I should take this office upon me, and were not persuaded I had the warrand of the Word!" The rest of the members looked to Malcolm, expecting him to walk out, as had been concerted; but as Row observes, he was "a man who had not a brow for that bargain," and he was prevailed upon to remain by Mr William Cooper (afterwards made a bishop), who stood up and said, "Brethren, I beseech you remember that these things are not so essential points, as to rent the bowels of the Kirk for them. Are these things such

as to cast your ministry in hazard for them? What joy can ye have for your suffering, when ye suffer for a matter so indifferent as, Who shall be moderator? Who shall have the imposition of hands? Wherefore serves it, to fill the people's ears with contentious doctrine concerning the government of the Kirk? Were it not much better to preach sincerely, and wait on and see what the Lord will work in these matters?" Gladstanes, we may easily conceive, highly applauded this speech; he declared that no honest man could be of another opinion; and such was the influence it had, coming as it did from one who was highly respected among his brethren for his piety and prudence, that they carried their opposition no farther.

This is the first time in the history of the Scottish Church that we have met with any thing resembling the sentiments now generally known by the term *latitudinarian;* and it is rather suspicious that, on this occasion, these loose principles should have been employed with success to cajole good men into a surrender of the privileges of the Church, and into the adoption of a scheme which in their judgment and their conscience they condemned. The same strain of reasoning which Cooper employed, with sincerity we doubt not, on the present occasion, has too often since furnished a pretext for introducing the most extensive changes into a religious profession, and overthrowing the liberties of the Christian Church. If Episcopacy were indeed a matter of such indifference, why plead for it "the warrand of the Word," and why involve a whole Church in disorder, by attempting to intrude it on a reluctant people, who were perfectly well pleased

with the government which they enjoyed? But, in fact, nothing can be properly called a matter of indifference which affects the honour of the great King and Head of the Church; and we can conceive nothing more impertinent or disgusting than the cant of liberality, when assumed by men who, in the act of robbing the Church of her dearest privileges, affect to mourn over the contentions which are the fruits of their own selfish policy.

It has been observed that "James' bishops," as they were called, "were prudent and humble men, and gave great respect to all honest and deserving ministers as their brethren," very different from those who succeeded them about twenty years afterwards, and whose ambition, in aiming at civil offices, induced the nobility to join with those who sought to re-establish Presbytery.* This remark is so far true, and the reasons are very obvious. James' bishops were all originally Presbyterian ministers, who were well acquainted with their brethren, and had not learned those haughty and imperious airs which Archbishop Laud taught their successors to assume. His majesty, too, in the selection of his bishops, took care in general to fix upon those who, in addition to their servility, possessed the talents and temper best fitted for conciliating their brethren. Hence we find among them such men as William Cooper, bishop of Galloway, who, though Spottiswood accuses him of fondness for popularity, and Calderwood charges him with various delinquencies, seems, on the whole, to have been a good, peaceable, and amiable man,—a sort of Leigh-

* Guthry's Memoirs. Scott's MSS. in Adv. Lib.

ton among the early bishops. A very different character was Archbishop Gladstanes, of St Andrews, who had formerly been minister of Arbirlot. Vainglorious, obsequious, and time-serving, this prelate was a tool exactly to the taste of James, before whom he crouched with all the servility of an Eastern slave. "Most gracious sovereign," he thus addressed him, "may it please your most excellent majesty, as of all vices ingratitude is most detestable, I finding myself, not only as first of that dead estaitt quhilk your majesty hath re-created, but also in my private condition so overwhelmed with your majesty's princely and magnifick benignitie, could not bot repaire to your majesty's most gracious face, that so unworthy a creature micht both see, bless, and thank *my earthly creator*. As no estaitt may say that they are your majesty's creatures as we may say, so there is none whose standing is so slippery, when your majesty shall frown, as we; for at your majesty's nod we must either stand or fall." Gladstanes did not long enjoy his poor dignity, having died in May 1615. According to the testimony of his cotemporaries, he was a notorious glutton, and brought on himself such a miserable death, that his body required to be buried immediately after; "yet the solemnity of the funeral was made in the month of June following; and the day of his funeral being windy and stormy, blew away the pall, and marred all the honours that were carried about the empty coffin."*

* Row has recorded a prayer which he is said to have used after supper, too coarse and profane to be here related. And he adds an epitaph composed on him at the time, beginning thus:—

Gladstanes was succeeded in the primacy by John Spottiswood, a shrewd and crafty politician, and the author of a History of the Church of Scotland, which, as has been well observed, might more properly be called "Calumnies against the Church of Scotland." The writer, who, as appears from his private correspondence, was engaged in all the shuffling and jesuitical plots of the Government for overturning Presbytery, which he had sworn to support, could hardly be expected to give a fair account of transactions in which his own credit was so deeply implicated, and for his share in which he was afterwards excommunicated by the Church which he had betrayed. His falsehoods and misrepresentations have been so satisfactorily exposed, that to appeal to him *now* as an authority, on any point of history affecting the cause of Presbytery, is set down at once as a mark of blindfold prejudice.

It could hardly be expected that men who had been thus intruded into the government of the Church under the wing of royal prerogative, and contrary to the will of the nation, would find it easy to gain either respect to their persons, or submission to their authority. In fact, the people despised them, and the ministers continued to preach against their intrusion, and to administer ordinances as if no such persons as bishops existed in the country. The king found it necessary, therefore, in the absence of all respect for their episcopal powers, to arm them with civil

"Here lyes beneath thir laid-stanes
The carcass of George Gladstanes;
Wherever be his other half,
Lo, here ye have his epitaph."*

* Wodrow's Biographical Collections (Maitland edit.), vol. i. part i.

authority. For this purpose he erected *the Court of High Commission*, a sort of English Inquisition, composed of prelates, noblemen, knights, and ministers, and possessing the combined powers of a civil and ecclesiastical tribunal. This nondescript court, whose proceedings were regulated by no fixed laws, was empowered to receive appeals from any church court, to summon before them all preachers charged with speeches contrary to the established order of the Church, and on finding them guilty, to depose and excommunicate, or to fine and imprison them. But though thus invested with powers which enabled them to set at defiance both the Church courts and the civil jurisdiction, it must be admitted that, for several years, the bishops had the prudence to refrain from exercising their authority to the extent which the king desired. "They took little upon them," says a Presbyterian writer, "and were very little opposed, until the Assembly at Perth, in the year 1618."* During this interval, though the meetings of the General Assembly were suspended, sessions, presbyteries, and synods continued to conduct business much in the usual way; and the Church, if it did not enjoy prosperity, was at least suffered to remain in a sort of dead calm, till the waters were again disturbed by the ill-judged and tyrannical interference of the king.

* Blair's Life, p. 13.

CHAPTER VI.

The King attempts to introduce the English Ceremonies —Prosecution of Mr David Calderwood—The Five Articles of Perth—Black Saturday—Disputes between the Ministers and People—King James and the Bookseller—Ejected Ministers—John Welch—Robert Bruce—Robert Blair—Patrick Simpson—Andrew Duncan—George Dunbar—John Scrimgeour—Robert Cunningham—Revivals at Stewarton and Kirk of Shotts.

In the spring of 1617, King James paid a visit to Scotland, having, as he expressed it, "a natural and salmon-like affection to see the place of his breeding —his native and ancient kingdom." He had been led by the bishops to believe that the people and their ministers were now quite submissive to all his wishes on the point of church order. He was determined, therefore, to try next whether they would submit, with equal ease, to the ceremonies of the English Church. Among other directions for his reception, he ordered repairs to be made on the Chapel of Holyrood-house; an organ was sent down, and the English carpenters began to set up statues of the twelve apostles,

made of carved wood, and finely gilded. The people began to murmur—"First came the organs, now the images, and ere long we shall have the mass." The bishops became alarmed, and, at their solicitation, the king, though mightily offended, agreed to dispense with the gilded apostles. It was very strange, he said, that they would admit figures of "griffins, monsters, and deevils" into their churches, and refuse those of holy apostles. His other wishes, however, were gratified. A splendid altar was erected, with two closed Bibles, two unlighted candles, and two basins without water. In the king's chapel, the English Liturgy was ordered to be read daily; the communion was taken in a kneeling posture; and the roof of that venerable pile, for the first time since the Reformation, echoed to the sounds of choristers and instrumental music.*

In the Parliament, which was held soon after his arrival, James manifested his determination to have his example imitated in all the churches of the kingdom. With this view, he prevailed on them to pass an article, ordaining, "that whatsoever his majesty should determine in the external government of the Church, with the advice of the bishops, and a competent number of the ministry, should have the strength of a law." In vain did the more prudent of the clergy warn him of the danger of such an enactment. "To have matters ruled as they have been in your General Assemblies," said his majesty, "I will never agree; for the bishops must rule the ministers, and the king rule both."† Intelligence of this having reached the ministers, a number of them, out of several parts of

* Cald. MS. Hist., ad an. 1617. † Spottiswood, p. 531.

the country, met and drew up a supplication to the king and Parliament, in which, after protesting against any innovations being brought into the Church without the consent of a free General Assembly, they pled that their Church had attained to a degree of purity in doctrine, discipline, and worship, which had been acknowledged rather as a pattern to be followed, than as one which required to be modelled in conformity with other Churches less reformed; that, under their form of government, which had been ratified by various acts of Parliament under his majesty's reign, they had enjoyed a peace and freedom from schism, which the introduction of any novelty would miserably destroy; and that his majesty had repeatedly assured them of his determination not to impose upon them the English forms, which had allayed all their suspicions: they therefore prayed that his majesty would not suffer the article, of which they had heard, to pass into a law, "to the grief of this poor Church, that the universal hope of thousands in this land, who rejoiced at your majesty's happy arrival, may not be turned into mourning."

This faithful and respectful petition, which was signed by fifty-six names, through the cowardice of the person intrusted with it, was never formally presented; but a copy of it having come into his majesty's hands, he was highly incensed at it, and though he found it expedient to defer giving the royal sanction to the obnoxious article, he determined to wreak his displeasure on some of the most zealous of the ministers, who were summoned to appear before the High Commission at St Andrews.

As a specimen of the manner in which the ministers were treated at this court, we may select the case of Mr David Calderwood, the author of the well-known History of the Church of Scotland, an account of which he has given us in his own simple and graphic manner. "What moved you to protest?" asked his majesty. Calderwood answered, that "it was an article concluded in Parliament, which cut off our General Assemblies." The king then inquired how long he had been a minister; and having been told, he said, "Hear me, Mr David, I have been an older keeper of General Assemblies than you. A General Assembly serves to preserve doctrine in purity and the Church from schism, to make confessions of faith, and put up petitions to the king in Parliament. But for matters of order, rites, and things indifferent, that belongs to the king with advice of his bishops." From this royal doctrine Mr David gave in his humble dissent. The king then challenged the last clause of the protestation, in which they declared that they must be forced rather to incur the censure of his majesty's law, than to admit any imposition not flowing from the Church lawfully convened. Calderwood answered, "That whatsoever was the phrase of speech, they meant no other thing but to protest that they would give passive obedience to his majesty, but could not give active obedience unto any unlawful thing which should flow from that article." "*Active* and *passive* obedience?" exclaimed the king. "That is, we will rather suffer than practise," said Mr Calderwood. "I will tell thee what is obedience, man," returned his majesty: "what the centurion said to his servants, '*To this*

man, Go, and he goeth, and to that man, Come, and he cometh,'—that is obedience." "To suffer, Sire," replied Calderwood, "is also obedience, howbeit not of that same kind; and even that obedience is not absolute, but limited, being liable to exception of a countermand from a superior power." The king here whispered something to Spottiswood, who, turning to Calderwood, said, "His majesty saith, that if ye will not be content to be suspended *spiritually*, ye shall be suspended *corporally*." To this wretched witticism, the prisoner replied, addressing himself to his majesty, "Sire, my body is in your majesty's hands to do with it as it pleaseth your majesty; but as long as my body is free, I will teach, notwithstanding of their sentence."

After some farther altercation, Calderwood requested leave to address the bishops, which was granted. He argued with them that they had no power to suspend or deprive him in this Court of High Commission; "for," said he, "ye have no power in this court but by commission from his majesty; and his majesty cannot communicate that power to you which he claims not for himself." This home thrust at the authority of the court, which neither the king nor the bishops could well answer, threw the assembly into confusion. We give the rest of the scene in Calderwood's own language: "The Bishop of Glasgow rounding in his ear, 'Ye are not a wise man; ye wot not who are your friends,' he rounded likewise to the bishop and said, 'Wherefore brought ye me here?' Others, in the meantime, were reviling him, and some called him a proud knave. Others uttered speeches which he could not take up for confusion of voices. Others

were not ashamed to shake his shoulders and dunch him on the neck, he being yet upon his knees." The king demanded, in the meantime, if he would abstain from preaching for a certain time, in case he should command him by his royal authority, as from himself; and Calderwood thinking he still referred to the sentence of the Commission, and being disturbed by the shaking, tugging, and confusion, replied, "I am not minded to obey." Upon which he was hurried off, and committed to Lord Scoon, to be imprisoned for declining the king's authority. Scoon, who seems to have taken a malicious pleasure in performing such services, was conducting his prisoner along the street, when some one asked, "Where away with that man, my lord?" "First to the tolbooth, and then to the gallows," said Scoon. Mr Calderwood having thus discovered his mistake, took the earliest opportunity of assuring his majesty that it was not *his* authority, but that of the Commission which he had disowned; but it was not deemed safe to allow so bold a champion of Presbytery to stand in the way, so he was banished out of the country. Lord Cranston earnestly pleaded that the period of his banishment might be delayed, on account of the tempestuous season of the year. This petition was refused. "If he be drowned in the seas," said the king, "he may thank God he hath escaped a worse death."*

Irritated at the unexpected opposition made to his measures, James vented his rage on the bishops, whom

* Calderwood's Hist., p. 682. The Bannatyne Miscellany, p. 205. Calderwood's fate was neither to be hanged nor drowned, he being soon after the re-establishment of Presbytery in 1638, appointed minister of Pencaitland, and having died at Jedburgh 29th October 1650.

he called "dolts and deceivers," because they had made him believe they had managed matters so well that his presence was all that was wanted to settle them. In the month of November 1617, he convoked a meeting of the clergy, for it could not be called a General Assembly, at St Andrews, and there proposed to them five articles of conformity with the English Church, which having been next year agreed upon at another meeting in Perth, are generally known by the name of *the Five Articles of Perth.* As these Articles occasioned much disorder in the Church, and led to very serious consequences, we may here enumerate them, and subjoin a few remarks to explain the opposition made to them by the Church of Scotland. They were as follows:—1. Kneeling at the Lord's Supper. 2. The observance of certain holidays, viz., Christmas, Good Friday, Easter, Ascension, and Pentecost. 3. Episcopal confirmation. 4. Private baptism. 5. Private communicating.

These Articles may appear to some too insignificant to require or to justify the resistance which was made to them by the faithful portion of the Church. But the slightest innovations are important in religion; and by some of these Articles, as might easily have been shown, the most sacred doctrines of Christianity were involved in danger. The first Article, viz., that of Kneeling at the Communion, was particularly obnoxious, from its tendency to countenance the Popish doctrine of the adoration of the host. Although this ceremony is retained by the English Church as expressive of veneration rather than worship, the Scottish ministers were justly apprehensive that the adoration,

addressed at first to an invisible Being, might soon be transferred to the intermediate object presented to the votary, and again degenerate into an idolatrous worship of the elements. They maintained; besides, that their practice of sitting at a communion-table, in token of their fellowship, which was the common practice of all the other Reformed Churches, was much more agreeable to the example of the first Supper, than receiving the elements individually from the hands of a priest, while kneeling at an altar.

Against the holidays they objected, that the nativity of Christ was of an uncertain date; that the institution of Christmas was an imitation of the idolatrous Saturnalia of the Romans, to coincide with which it was changed by the Roman Church to the 25th of December; that Easter and Pentecost were revivals of the ceremonial law of the Jews; that the anniversary of the birth, crucifixion or resurrection of Christ, was no more consecrated by the events, than the form of the manger in which he was born, of the cross on which he suffered, or of the sepulchre in which he was buried; that they tended, wherever introduced, to diminish respect for the only day which God had made holy, viz., the Christian Sabbath, and that those who kept them, came under the charge of "observing days, and months, and years,"—a practice distinctly condemned in Scripture.

The third Article, respecting Confirmation, was condemned chiefly from having no foundation in Scripture, and because it implied a confirmation of baptism, as if this ordinance, administered by Presbyters, were not complete without the imposition of hands by a bishop.

The fourth and fifth Articles, viz., the private administration of the two sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, our fathers condemned as inconsistent with the nature and design of these institutions, both of which are Church ordinances, and therefore ought to be administered only when the Church is assembled, and as leading to superstitious notions of the virtue of the mere outward signs. Though important ordinances, they denied them to be essential to salvation; and to insist on either Baptism or the Lord's Supper being administered privately, seemed to them not only inconsistent with Scripture, but fitted to revive those Popish doctrines, against which their humanity and their reason alike revolted —that unbaptized infants are excluded from bliss, and that the reception of the consecrated host on death-bed is essential to salvation.

But while our fathers had good reasons for condemning these ceremonies, as unwarranted and superstitious additions to the divine worship, there was another source of alarm which will be better understood by many in our day than any we have now mentioned. They knew well, that the moment these Articles received the sanction of the civil power, the bishops would forcibly impose them on all the subjects, ministers and people, who, whatever might be their private opinions, would be obliged to practise them under the severest penalties.* Need we wonder that they should have strenuously protested against this direct

* Gillespie's Dispute against English-Popish Ceremonies, p. 4-7. In this treatise, Gillespie distinctly asserts the principle, that "human laws, as they come from men, and in respect of any force or authority which men can give them, have no power to bind the conscience," p. 8.

imposition on conscience—this tyrannical encroachment, which left them no alternative, between surrendering their Christian liberty, or incurring the consequences of disobeying the law of the land?

Such, then, were the celebrated Articles which James sought to intrude on the Scottish Church. The Assembly which met at St Andrews, much to his chagrin, postponed the consideration of them; and on the 25th of August 1618, the last Assembly which met in James' reign, and for twenty years afterwards, was held in Perth, for the purpose of extorting something like a sanction to the obnoxious ceremonies. "This Assembly," says Row, "was not made up of commissioners sent from presbyteries, but of bishops, doctors, deans, and such ministers as were the bishops' followers; then the king had his commissioners, and there were sundry noblemen and gentlemen who were written for by the king and bishops, to keep the said Assembly; and sundrie commissioners, sent from presbyteries, were not called upon, nor got they any vote there, the moderator knowing what they would say." "There was set in the Little Kirk," says Calderwood, "a long table, and forms at every side for noblemen, barons, burgesses, bishops, and doctors, and at the head of it a cross table, with chairs for his majesty's commissioners and the moderator. The ministers were left to stand behind, as if their place and part had been only to behold. But this apparently was done of policy, that they might carry some majesty on their part, to dash simple ministers."

In an Assembly thus constituted, we need not wonder that a majority was found willing to vote with

the court. Archbishop Spottiswood, unable to answer the reasonings of those who condemned the Articles, burst out in a passion with these words, which were remembered long after,—"This matter shall not be carried either by arguments or votes; if it were but we bishops, with his majesty's commissioner, we will conclude the matter, and see who dare withstand it!"* Having told them he would send up the names of all who voted against them to the king, the question was put, "Will you consent to the Articles, or disobey the king?" The Articles were carried by a considerable majority; but a minority of *forty-five*, even out of this packed Assembly, whom no promises could allure or menaces deter from voting according to their consciences, saved the Scottish Church from absolute degradation.

When this mock Assembly rose, the bishops prepared to enforce the obnoxious rites. In a few weeks they were ratified by the Privy Council, and in July 1621 they obtained the sanction of Parliament. It was remarked, that at the very instant when the Marquis of Hamilton, the commissioner, rose to touch this act with the royal sceptre, in token of its ratification, a black thunder-cloud which had for some time before hung over the city, enveloping it in extraordinary darkness, burst, as if it were immediately over the Parliament-house, into a tremendous storm; three brilliant flashes of lightning, following in quick succession, and rendered more frightful by the surrounding darkness, darted in at the great window, and seemed to strike directly in the face of the commissioner; this was suc-

* Blair's Life, p. 15.

ceeded by terrible peals of thunder, and such a tempest of rain and hail, that it was with great difficulty, and after long delay, the members were able to reach their homes. On this account, as well as of the sad work transacted on it, this day got the name, which it long retained among the people, of *Black Saturday.*

Our fathers, who lived under the realizing belief of a superintending Providence, directing with the same hand the elements of nature and the events of time, were accustomed to see and hear God in every thing. These appearances, in the excited state of the public mind at that time, were considered as ominous of the wrath of Heaven at this flagrant breach of national engagements, and betokening approaching judgments. Whatever may be thought of the warrantableness of thus interpreting the appearances of nature—appearances which, it must be allowed, are naturally fitted, and must therefore be intended, to inspire us with awe of the divine Majesty,—the feelings to which they gave occasion, in the present instance, certainly do more honour to the piety of our Presbyterian ancestors, than the raillery which Spottiswood puts into the mouths of others, who said, " It was to be taken as an approbation from heaven, likening the same to the thunderings and lightnings at the giving of the law of Moses!"*

The bishops had now got every thing their own way. They had procured the sanction of what they called a General Assembly; and the Parliament had ratified their Articles, which were now become the law of the land. All that now remained was, that the law should be obeyed. But this was not so easily accomplished.

* Spottiswood, p. 542.

Christmas day, 1618, arrived, the churches of Edinburgh were opened, and some of the time-serving ministers, in obedience to instructions from the king, observed the festival. But, notwithstanding all the exertions made by the bishops and magistrates, few or none could be prevailed upon to attend; the people flocked out of town, or went about their ordinary affairs; the kirks were almost deserted, and in some of them the dogs were playing in the middle of the floor. Mr Patrick Galloway, one of the ministers, a vain-glorious man, who had offered to sign the protestation with his blood, and who was formerly so zealous, says Calderwood, that "he took it ill if he were asked to eat a Christmas pie,"—now appeared in the pulpit, fretting and fuming because he was not followed in his present course, and denouncing famine of the Word, deafness, blindness, and leanness upon all those who came not to his Christmas sermon. Another of the ministers, Mr William Struthers, inveighed from the pulpit against the people of Edinburgh, in a strain of the most violent vituperation. And yet this man had been formerly so zealous against the bishops, that he could scarce give a comment upon the chapter after meals without a stroke at them; and on one occasion it is recorded of him, that, being in Glasgow, and happening to see bishop Spottiswood there on the street, he went into a shop, and fell into a swoon. On administering to him some aquavitæ, he recovered; and being asked what accident had befallen him, "What! (he exclaimed) saw ye not *the character of the Beast coming!*"

These trifling anecdotes carry their own moral with them. He has studied history and observed life to

little purpose, who has not discovered that those who make the most flaming professions of zeal, when professions may be made without danger or inconvenience, or who show an overstrained strictness about matters of really small moment, are generally the first to yield when the trial of principle arrives, and turn out the most bitter opponents of their brethren who, though they made less noise about their faithfulness, have, nevertheless, stood faithful in the evil day.

Of all the Articles of Perth, there was none that proved more obnoxious to the people than that of being compelled to kneel at the Sacrament. The people, in general, are always more ready to take alarm at innovations in those parts of the service in which they are required to take an active share; and this ceremony was so identified in their minds with the idolatry of Rome—so clearly derived from worshipping the body of Christ in the host—that they shrunk from it with horror. In some churches, we are told, they went out, and left the minister alone; in others, the simpler sort, when the officiating clergyman insisted on their kneeling, cried out, "The danger, if any be, light upon your soul, and not upon ours!" The elders and deacons refused to officiate, and the ministers were reduced to a sad dilemma. This led, as might have been expected, to unseemly altercations, in which the dignity of the clerical character suffered from rude collision with the common people. One of the deacons, named John Mein, seems to have given them more than ordinary provocation, by the steadiness with which he stood to his point, and answered their arguments.

"What will ye say," said Mr Galloway, "if I prove

kneeling out of the Scripture? Psalm xcv.—'O come, let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before the Lord our Maker.' Heard ye me on that text last day?"

"Yes, Sir," answered the deacon, "and thought ye proved nothing. If ye can prove kneeling out of Scripture, I will be content to go with you. But ye allege only the ninety-fifth Psalm, which was sixteen hundred years before the institution."

"May not that content you which has contented the Kirk of Scotland?" asked Struthers.

"Sir, that is a point of Papistry," said John, "to believe as the Kirk believes."

"What will ye say to this, then," cried Galloway, "the kirk has concluded it, and the king and council has confirmed it. Would you set yourself above both kirk and king?"

"Sir," replied John, smiling, "Ye were wont to say to us langsyne, 'Thus saith the Lord;' but now ye change your tune, and say, 'Thus saith the kirk and the king.'" *

King James, whose ill humour seems to have increased with age, was particularly incensed at the people of Edinburgh for their opposition to his favourite ceremonies. One James Cathkin, a bookseller of that city, was apprehended in London, in 1619, on the charge of having circulated a book of Calderwood's against the Perth Articles, and was brought before his majesty; when the following characteristic conversation took place:—His majesty asked him where he dwelt? He replied, "If it please your majesty, I was born in Edinburgh, and dwells in Edinburgh."

* Calderwood's MS. Hist. ad an. 1619.

"What religion are ye of?" asked the king.

"Of the religion your majestie professes," said Cathkin.

This was too much for his majesty, who exclaimed, with a tremendous oath, "You are none of my religion! You are a recusant—you go not to the church!"

"If it please your majestie, I go to the church," said Cathkin.

"Were you there on Christmas day?"

"No."

"And why were you not there?"

Cathkin replied, that holidays had been "casten out of the Kirk," and ventured to hint, that "it had been good if our ministers had acquainted the Session of the Kirk before they had brought in these novelties upon us."

"Plagues on you and the Session of your Kirk baith!" said the king. "When I was in Scotland, I keeped Yoole and Pasch* in spite of all your hearts; and," added he, pointing to Cathkin, who was on his knees before him, "see, my lords, these people will kneel to me, and will not kneel to God. I never can get order of thir people of Edinburgh. I forgave them the seventeenth day! (alluding to 17th Dec. 1596.) Ye are worse than Turks and Jews." And so saying, he wound up with an execration against the "soules and bodies" of the whole population of Edinburgh, in language too gross for repetition.†

The history of the Church during the subsequent years of James' reign, presents little that is interesting or important. We may therefore devote the re-

* Christmas and Easter. † The Bannatyne Miscellany, p. 197-206.

maining portion of this chapter to a few sketches of the most eminent of those ministers who flourished and suffered during this barren portion of our ecclesiastical annals.

The reader will recollect the six ministers who were tried for high treason at Linlithgow, and banished, for having held an Assembly at Aberdeen in 1605. Among these worthy sufferers in the cause of Christ and his royal prerogative as king of Zion, the most remarkable was Mr John Welch. He was by birth a gentleman, his father being laird of Collieston, an estate in Nithsdale; and he was settled as minister, first of Selkirk, and afterwards of Ayr. The accounts given of his piety, his perseverance and success in prayer, are such as almost to exceed belief in this lukewarm age; but the incidents recorded in illustration of these, belong rather to the province of the biographer. The following, however, may be quoted as being, if not a better attested, at least a more easily credited narrative. In France, the country of his exile, Mr Welch applied himself with such assiduity to the study of the language of the country, that he was able, in the course of fourteen weeks, to preach in French, and was chosen minister to a Protestant congregation in the town of St Jean D'Angely. War having broken out between Louis XIII. and his Protestant subjects, this town was besieged by the king in person. On this occasion, Welch not only exhorted the inhabitants to a vigorous resistance, but mounted the walls, and rendered his personal assistance to the garrison. The king was at length admitted to the town on a treaty,

and being displeased that Welch preached during his residence in it, sent the Duke D'Espernon, with a company of soldiers, to take him from the pulpit. When the preacher saw the duke enter the church, he ordered his hearers to make room for the marshal of France, and desired him to sit down and hear the Word of God. He spoke with such an air of authority, that the duke involuntarily took a seat and listened to the sermon with great gravity and attention. He then brought Welch to the king, who asked him how he durst preach there, since it was contrary to the laws of the kingdom for any of the Reformed to preach in places where the court resided. "Sir," replied Welch, "if your Majesty knew what I preached, you would not only come and hear it yourself, but make all France to hear it; for I preach not as those men you use to hear. First, I preach that you must be saved by the merits of Jesus Christ and not your own; and I am sure your conscience tells you, that your good works will never merit heaven. Next, I preach that as you are king of France, there is no man on earth above you. But these men whom you hear subject you to the Pope of Rome, which I will never do." Pleased with this reply, Louis said to him, "*He bien, vous seriez mon ministre*" ("Very good, you shall be my minister,") and addressing him by the title of "father," assured him of his protection. He was as good as his word; for in 1621, when the town was again besieged, he gave directions to take care of his minister, and he was safely conveyed with his family to Rochelle.

Having lost his health, and the physicians having

informed him that his only chance of recovery was by returning to his native country, Mr Welch ventured, in the year 1622, to come to London; and his wife, who was a daughter of the celebrated John Knox, having obtained access to James, petitioned him to allow her husband to return to Scotland. On this occasion, the following singular colloquy took place:—The king asked her who was her father. She replied, "John Knox." "Knox and Welch!" exclaimed he, "the devil never made such a match as that." "It's right like, Sir," said Mrs Welch, "for we never speired* his advice." He then asked her how many children John Knox had left, and if they were lads or lasses. She said, three, and they were *all lasses*. "God be thanked!" cried the king, lifting up both his hands, "for an they had been *three lads*, I had never *bruiked*† my three kingdoms in peace!" She again urged her request that he would give her husband his native air. "Give him his native air," replied the king, "give him the devil!" "Give that to your haughty courtiers," said she, offended at his profaneness. He told her, at last, that if she would persuade her husband to submit to the bishops, he would allow him to return to Scotland. Mrs Welch, lifting up her apron, and holding it towards the king, replied, in the true spirit of her father, "Please your majesty, I'd rather kep‡ his head there!" Welch languished a very short time in London, having been released from his sufferings by death, in May 1622.§

The reader will recollect the noble part acted by

* Asked. † Enjoyed. ‡ Catch.

§ M'Crie's Life of Knox, vol. ii. p. 271-274.

Mr Robert Bruce in the case of the Gowrie conspiracy. Will it be believed that this high-minded gentleman, and worthy minister of Christ, was never permitted to return to his charge, and that he was afterwards persecuted till his death, by the mean jealousy of the bishops, who set spies on his conduct, and procured orders to drag him from one corner of the kingdom to another! From the descriptions of contemporaries, it appears that Bruce's appearance and manner corresponded with the dignity of his mind. "He had," says Livingston, who was well acquainted with him, "a very majestic countenance, and whenever he did speak in public or private, yea, when he read the Word, I thought it had such a force as I never discerned in any other man. He was, both in public and private, very short in prayer with others; but then, every sentence was *like a bolt shot up to heaven*; yea, I have heard him say that he wearied when others continued long in prayer; but being alone, he spent much of his time in that exercise. It was his custom, after the first sermon, to retire by himself for prayer; and one day, some noblemen who had far to ride, sent the beadle to learn if there was any appearance of his coming. The man returned and told them, 'I think he shall not come this day, for I overheard him always say to another, that *he will not go, and cannot go, without him*, and I do not hear the other answer him a word at all.'" It is needless to say who *the Other* was, whose silence astonished the ignorant beadle.

The manner of Mr Bruce's death, which took place in August 1631, was beautifully in accordance with the tenor of his life. On the morning of his departure,

his illness consisting chiefly in the debility of old age, he arose to breakfast with his family, and having eaten an egg, he desired his daughter to bring him another. Instantly, however, assuming an air of deep meditation, he said, "Hold, daughter, my Master calls me!" and having asked for the family Bible, and finding that his sight was gone, he said, "Cast up to me the eighth chapter of the epistle to the Romans, and place my finger on these words, 'I am persuaded that neither death nor life shall be able to separate me from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.'" "Now," he said, "is my finger upon the place?" and being told it was, he added, "Then God be with you, my children; I have breakfasted with you, and shall sup with my Lord Jesus Christ this night!" And so saying, the good man expired.

The memoirs of Mr Robert Blair, who was first settled at Bangor in Ireland, and latterly at St Andrews, exhibit the history of a mind deeply exercised about eternal things, and may be regarded as a fair specimen of the warm and manly piety, chastened by knowledge, and rendered firm and consistent by the admixture of public principle, which distinguished many in these times. The most singular feature in the religious history of these good men, was their wonderful success in obtaining answer to their prayers for temporal favours. We will introduce one or two instances of these "returns of prayer," as they were termed, with an observation made by Mr Blair, after recounting an extraordinary incident in his own life: —"If any one who may read these things shall be offended, seeing revelations have now ceased, and that

we are to keep close to the will of God revealed in the Scriptures; I answer for their satisfaction, that if any creature, be he angel or man, add any thing to that perfect rule of faith and manners, or reveal any thing contrary thereto, let him be accursed. This we leave to Papists and sectaries. But, in the meantime, it ought not to be denied, that the Lord is pleased sometimes to reveal to his servants, especially in a suffering condition, some events concerning themselves, and that part of the Church of God in which they live." There is much included in these words, "especially in a suffering condition." We know not what it is to suffer for Christ, and therefore know not "the consolations of Christ" which *abound* under these sufferings. Daily bread is all we can expect for daily work; and it is only when the Master sees his servants sick and exhausted, and ready to perish in his service, that he brings forth his *cordials* to recruit their spirits.

Mr Patrick Simpson was first ordained minister of Cramond, but was afterwards transported to Stirling, where he continued till his death. He was a very learned man, and was the author of a history of the Church, and of some of her ancient councils. On being blamed by one of his friends for wasting so much time in the study of Pagan writers, he replied that his purpose was "to adorn the house of God with these Egyptian jewels." In 1601, his wife, who was a woman of singular piety, fell sick, and, under her indisposition, was assailed by the most fearful temptations, supposing herself to be delivered up unto Satan. Having fallen into one of those fits of despair, on Sabbath morning, when Mr Simpson was going out to preach, he was ex-

ceedingly distressed, and betook himself to prayer; and on his returning to the company present, he assured them that "they who had been witnesses to that sad hour, should yet see the adversary of her soul meet with a shameful defeat." Her distraction continued till the Tuesday morning preceding her death, when on coming from his retirement, he said to the attendants, "Be of good comfort, for I am sure that ere ten o'clock of the day, that brand shall be plucked out of the fire." He then prayed at her bed-side, and upon his alluding to Jacob wrestling with God, she sat up in the bed, drew the curtains aside, and said, "Thou art this day a Jacob, who has wrestled and prevailed; and now God has made good his word which he spake this morning to you, for I am plucked out of the hands of Satan, and he shall have no power over me." Shortly after this she expired, uttering only the language of comfort, hope, and joy. Patrick Simpson took an active share in the struggles of the Church against the encroachments of the bishops; he nobly refused a bishoprick when offered to him; and he died, almost broken-hearted, when the Perth Articles were agreed upon, in March 1618.

The next instance partakes almost of the nature of romance. Andrew Duncan, minister of Crail in Fife, was distinguished by his sufferings in defence of the Presbyterian polity. He was another of those who were banished for having attended the Assembly at Aberdeen; and on his return in 1619, he was again brought into trouble, being summoned before the High Commission Court of the bishops for opposing the Perth Articles. On this occasion he boldly admon-

ished his judges of their sin and danger. "Pity yourselves," he said, in his protest, "for the Lord's sake; lose not your own souls, I beseech you, for Esau's pottage; remember Balaam, who was cast away by the deceit of the wages of unrighteousness; forget not how miserable Judas was, who lost himself for a trifle of money, which never did him good. Better be pined to death by hunger, than, for a little pittance of the earth, perish for ever, and never be recovered, so long as the days of heaven shall last, and the years of eternity shall endure." Spotswood, the archbishop, on glancing at the faithful document, tossed it from him in disdain; another of the bishops, picking it up, said, "He calls us Esaus, Balaams, and Judasses." "Not so," said Mr Duncan; "read again; beware that ye be not like them." He had soon an opportunity of exemplifying his doctrine; for having been banished to Berwick, to live "upon his own charges," he was almost literally "pined to death by hunger." With a numerous family, and a wife far gone in pregnancy, he was reduced to the utmost hardships. One night in particular, when the children were crying for bread, and there was none in the house to give them, the poor exiled minister occupied himself alternately in praying to God, in pacifying his children, and comforting his wife. He exhorted her to wait patiently on God, who was now trying them, but would undoubtedly provide for them, though he should rain down bread from heaven. This confidence was the more remarkable, as they had neither friend nor acquaintance in that place to whom they could make their case known. Early next morning, a man brought them a sack-

ful of provision, and went away without telling them from whence it came, though entreated to do so. Shortly after this, during the night, when the good man knew not where to apply for aid to his suffering wife, a lady came to their door, and having sent a servant back with her horse, to return for her at a certain time, requested permission to act the part of servant and nurse. She continued to do so till her services were no longer required, and on her departure presented the astonished and grateful couple with a box containing linen, cordials, and money; but notwithstanding all their entreaties, would neither tell who she was nor from whence she came.

This practice of banishing ministers from one part of the country to another, must, particularly in those cases where they had large families, have been very grievous and oppressive; yet they seem to have endured it with great cheerfulness. One of them, Mr George Dunbar, minister of Ayr, who had a number of young children, was twice thrust out by the bishops. At that time there were few such things as coaches or carriages in the country; and it may amuse some of my readers to learn that the children on these occasions had to be transported in *creels* placed on horseback. When the bishop's messenger came the second time to Mr Dunbar's house to turn them out, one of his little daughters, who had no doubt suffered by the former transportation, cried out to the man, "What! and is Pharaoh's heart hardened still?" All that her father said, however, on hearing the summons, was, "Well, goodwife, ye must e'en provide the creels again." *

* Livingston's Characteristics.

Some are apt to imagine that all the ministers of a certain period and persuasion were possessed of the same character; and sourness of temper has been supposed to have been the characteristic feature of Presbyterians. A minuter acquaintance with them would correct such an idea; for we meet with all different sorts of temperament among them,—melancholy and lively—grave and facetious—rude and gentle. In short, they resembled each other only in their piety and fidelity. Robert Boyd of Trochrig was a man of profound learning, sagacity, and integrity, and had he not been driven about by the bishops from one place to another, he might have proved an ornament to his native country. He was successively Principal of Glasgow and Edinburgh Universities, and minister of Paisley, but in none of these situations was he allowed to remain in peace, and from the last place, to the disgrace of Paisley, he was driven by a rascally mob with stones and dirt, so that he retired in disgust to his property of Trochrig. He was a man of grave and severe character, but he tells us that his brother, whose untimely loss he deplored, was constantly laughing and joking.

John Scrimgeour, minister of Kinghorn, who stood boldly out against Episcopacy, was, as Livingstone tells us, "a man rude-like in his clothing, in his behaviour, and some of his expressions, but of a tender loving heart." Though a great scholar, he used to say, he wished that all books were burnt except the Bible and a few notes upon it. His temper was so irritable, that, like Jonah, he could not restrain himself from expressing his displeasure even before God. A

favourite daughter being supposed near death, he used in secret prayer the following extraordinary language: —"Thou knowest, O Lord, I have been serving thee in the uprightness of my heart according to my measure, and thou seest that I take pleasure in this child, and cannot I obtain such a thing as this at thy hand?" with other expressions of a similar nature, which, though the prayer was granted, he said "he would not utter again for all the world." On his death-bed, his body was racked by a very painful disorder; and in the intervals of one of the attacks, he said to Mr Livingstone, "John, I have been a *rude stunkard man* all my days, and now by this pain the Lord is *dantoning* (subduing) me, to make me as a lamb, before he take me home to himself."

A very different character from this, though essentially like, was Robert Cunningham, minister of Holywood in Ireland. "He was," says the same writer, "the one man, to my discerning, of all that ever I saw, that resembled most the meekness of Jesus Christ in his whole carriage; and was so far reverenced by all, even the most wicked, that he was often troubled with that Scripture, Wo to you when all men speak well of you." The sweetness of his disposition endeared him so much to his brethren, that they could not endure to hear of any one touching him; and Mr Blair, on learning that the Bishop of Down intended to depose him, went and told him, with solemn earnestness, "Sir, you may do to me and some others as you please, but if ever you meddle with Mr Cunningham, your cup will be full!"

The death-bed scene of this amiable man corres-

ponded with the gentleness of his nature. Having been thrust out of his charge in Ireland, he came over to his native country, but never held up his head again. "The bishop," he said, "has taken away my ministry from me, and I may say my life also, for my ministry is dearer to me than my life."* During his sickness he was heard to say, "I see Christ standing over Death's head, and saying, Deal warily with my servant; loose now this pin, now that, for this tabernacle must be set up again." A little before his departure, March 1637, his wife sitting by his bedside, with her hand clasped in his, he commended to God first his congregation, then his brethren in the ministry, and his children, and concluded with, "*And last, O Lord, I recommend to thee this gentlewoman, who is no more my wife!*" Thus saying, he softly disengaged his hand, and gently moved his wife's a little away from him. At this affecting farewell she burst into tears, and in the act of attempting to allay her grief, he fell asleep in Jesus.†

The general state of religion in Scotland during the earlier part of the seventeenth century, was very far from being satisfactory. In the large towns, which had enjoyed the labours of a faithful ministry, the good fruits were apparent in the holy lives of many; but, in consequence of the niggardly provision made for the support of a settled ministry, many parishes in

* George Wishart, the eminent martyr, regarded his suspension from preaching in the same light: "He grew pensive; and being asked the reason, said, 'What do I differ from *a dead man*, but that I eat and drink?'"—*Clark's Gen. Martyr.*, p. 263.

† Livingstone's Characteristics, *passim*.

the country were left, in a great measure, desolate, the place of ministers being often supplied by readers, who, for a small salary, were engaged to read portions of the Scriptures, and the prayers which were contained in the Book of Common Order, prefixed to the psalms in metre. But it may be easily imagined, that this class of men, little raised above the peasantry from which they were chosen, without learning, without authority, would ill supply the place of a regular and well-trained ministry. The General Assembly, long before this period, were deeply affected with this state of spiritual destitution, and many were the plans proposed, and the efforts made, to supply the country with good and faithful ministers. But, in the absence of all funds for their support, this was found impracticable; and on the entrance of Episcopacy, the case became still worse, two-thirds of the benefices, formerly appropriated to the maintenance of the ministry, being claimed by the bishops to support the dignity of their station.

At this period, therefore, the state of religion in Scotland was very peculiar; some spots being richly cultivated, while others were left in their native sterility; and the character of the people corresponded, being something like the prophet's figs, "the good, very good; and the evil, very evil." In some parishes, where the Gospel was preached, piety flourished to an uncommon degree, and discipline was exercised with a rigour which, in the present day, would be considered intolerable. In other places, the people remained destitute of all privileges and all restraint, in a state of ignorance, superstition, and crime, very little better

than that which existed in the days of Popery. This accounts for the apparent contradictions which the records of the time may be found to contain. The country, in fact, was but partially civilized, and the ministers of religion had to contend, not only with the ordinary sources of human depravity, but with strange forms of evil which had been engendered in the shades of that long dark night from which they had lately escaped.

The most singular, certainly, of all the crimes which characterised this age, and that which has occasioned most speculation, was that of *witchcraft*. The prosecutions which were instituted, both in civil and ecclesiastical tribunals, against those who were charged with this offence, exhibit a very strange picture of society. It does not come within our present province to enter upon this subject; nor shall we discuss the policy of those laws which were enacted in the reign of James VI. against this crime, and under the operation of which so many unhappy individuals were subjected to a cruel death. The unholy acts of necromancy, sorcery, and divination practised among the heathen nations of antiquity, were prohibited by the law of Moses, under the penalty of death, as involving the worship of false gods, or treason against heaven; and witchcraft is among the sins condemned in the New Testament. Whether the god of this world is now permitted to exercise his power in the same manner as then over the souls and bodies of men, may admit of question; but it cannot be denied, that even the pretence or profession of holding intercourse with evil spirits, and practising diabolical arts, amounts to a crime of no

light consideration, either in a moral or civil point of view; and it is certain, that at the period of our history to which we refer, there were individuals who avowedly acted as the agents of Satan, and practised on the credulity and the superstitious fears of their neighbours, to an extent of which we can form no conception, often employing their arts to the vilest of purposes. It is melancholy to think that so many wretched creatures should have fallen victims to these delusions; but while we condemn the cruelties exercised in their discovery and punishment, we should bear in mind the peculiar state of society at the time. It is unfair to single out the ministers as eminently chargeable with these prosecutions against witchcraft, in which they only participated with persons of all ranks,—with the king on the throne, the judges on the bench, and the most learned men of the age. And it is preposterous to confine the charge to the Presbyterian ministers; for the trial and burning of witches went on with even superior activity and cruelty during the reign of Episcopacy, both before and after the Restoration.

In the midst of all this corruption, however, and in spite of the banishment of so many faithful ministers, the Gospel flourished in some places of the country to an unprecedented degree. The persecutors might remove the labourers from the field, but they could not destroy the fruits of their labours. A spirit of grace and supplication was poured out on their bereaved flocks, and they were wonderfully enabled in patience to possess their souls, so that no sufferings could induce them to abandon their principles, neither did they ever resign themselves to despair. "Nay,"

says the author of memoirs in reference to this period, "when the darkness was at the greatest, and when, to the eye of reason, there seemed scarcely a ray of hope, the Presbyterians declared that utter desolation shall yet be to the haters of the virgin daughter of Scotland. The bride shall yet sing as in the days of her youth. The dry olive tree shall again bud, and the dry dead bones shall live." Many faithful ministers, such as Dickson, Bruce, Livingstone, and Henderson, had great boldness given them to preach the Gospel, with the connivance, or in spite of the mandates of the bishops; and two remarkable *revivals* took place, one at Stewarton in 1625, and the other at the Kirk of Shotts in 1630, which deserve to be recorded.

The parish of Stewarton, at the period referred to, had for its minister a very worthy man, Mr Castlelaw; but it is remarkable that the principal instrument of the revival was not he, but the minister of the neighbouring parish of Irvine, Mr Dickson. Mr Dickson had been formerly Professor of Moral Philosophy in the University of Glasgow, and was settled in Irvine in 1618. His zeal against the Perth Articles exposed him to the rage of the bishops, who summoned him before the High Commission Court, and after subjecting him to the most insulting treatment, banished him to Turriff in the north of Scotland. To all this Mr Dickson meekly replied, "The will of the Lord be done; though ye cast me off, the Lord will take me up. Send me whither you will, I hope my Master will go with me, as being his own weak servant." By the intercession of the Earl of Eglinton, whose Countess, though reared in her youth amidst the splendour of a court, was a

humble and devoted Christian, and exerted all her influence for the promotion of religion and the protection of its faithful ministers, Dickson was restored to his beloved people in Irvine. After his return, in 1623, his ministry was singularly honoured of God for the conviction and conversion of multitudes. Crowds of persons, under spiritual concern, came from all the parishes round about Irvine, and many settled in the neighbourhood to enjoy his ministrations. Thus encouraged, Mr Dickson began a weekly lecture on the Mondays, being the market day in Irvine, when the town was thronged with people from the country. The people from the parish of Stewarton, especially, availed themselves of this privilege, to which they were strongly encouraged by their own minister. The impression produced upon them was very extraordinary. In a large hall within the manse there would often be assembled upwards of a hundred persons, under deep impressions of religion, waiting to converse with the minister, whose public discourses had led them to discover the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and to cry, "What shall we do to be saved?" And it was by means of these week-day discourses and meetings that the famous Stewarton revival, or *the Stewarton sickness*, as it was derisively called, began, and spread afterwards from house to house for many miles along the valley in Ayrshire through which the Stewarton water runs. Extravagances, as might be expected, took place during this period of excitement, from which some took occasion to bring reproach on the good work;*

* "The ignorant and proud secure livers called them the *daft* people of Stewarton."—*Life of Robert Blair*, p. 18.

but these were checked and condemned by Mr Dickson and others who conversed with them; and the sacred character of the work was attested by the solid, serious, and practical piety which distinguished the converts. Many who had been well known as most abandoned characters and mockers at religion, being drawn by motives of curiosity to attend these lectures, afterwards became completely changed, showing by their life and conversation that the Lord had "opened their hearts to attend to the things spoken" by his servant.*

The impulse given by this revival continued from 1625 to 1630, when it was followed by a similar effusion of the Holy Spirit in another part of the country. This took place at the Kirk of Shotts. And here also it is observable that the honour of being instrumental in originating the revival was reserved not to the minister of the parish, though a good man, but to one of those faithful servants who had suffered for their nonconformity to the innovations of the time; the Lord thus signally accomplishing his word, "Them that honour me, I will honour." The circumstances which led to this revival were the following:—Some ladies of rank who had occasion to travel that way, had received civilities at different times from Mr Hance, the minister of Shotts; and on one occasion, when their carriage broke down near the manse, he kindly invited them to alight, and remain at his house till it was mended. During their stay they noticed that the house stood much in need of repair, and in return for his attentions, they got a new manse

* Gillies' Historical Collections, vol. i. p. 306.

erected for him in a better situation. Mr Hance, on receiving so substantial a favour, waited on the ladies to thank them, and wished to know if there was any thing in his power he could do to testify his gratitude. It is gratifying to know that at this time, as well as afterwards, the noblest of the daughters of Scotland distinguished themselves by their zeal in the good cause. These ladies loved the Gospel, and the persecuted ministers who were witnessing for its purity. They, therefore, gladly seized the opportunity of asking Mr Hance to invite such of them as they named to assist at the Sacrament, in order that they might enjoy the benefit of their ministrations, and afford to others an opportunity of partaking in a privilege at this time rarely enjoyed. To this the minister gladly consented; and information of it spreading abroad, an immense concourse of people gathered from all parts of the country, to attend the dispensation of the ordinance, which was fixed for Sabbath the 20th of June 1630.

Among the ministers who were invited on this occasion, at the request of these ladies, were the noble and venerable champion, Robert Bruce of Kinnaird, who was still able to preach with his wonted majesty and authority, and John Livingstone, chaplain to the Countess of Wigton, who was afterwards settled some time in Ireland, but who at this time was only a preacher, and about twenty-seven years of age. Much of the spirit of light and love was imparted during the services of the communion Sabbath; and so filled were they with joy and peace, that, instead of retiring to rest, the communicants joined together in little companies, and spent the whole night in devotional exercises.

It had not been usual before this time to have service on the Monday after the dispensation of the Lord's Supper; but God had vouchsafed so much of his gracious presence on the preceding days of this occasion, that they knew not how to part on this Monday, without thanksgiving and praise. Mr Livingstone was with difficulty prevailed on to preach the sermon. In the memoirs of his life, written by himself, he gives the following memorandum in reference to this sermon:—"The only day in all my life wherein I found most of the presence of God in preaching was on a Monday after the communion, preaching in the churchyard of Shotts, June 21, 1630. The night before I had been with some Christians, who spent the night in prayer and conference. When I was alone in the fields, about eight or nine of the clock in the morning, before we were to go to sermon, there came such a misgiving of spirit upon me, considering my unworthiness and weakness, and the multitude and expectation of the people, that I was consulting with myself to have stolen away somewhere, and declined that day's preaching, but that I thought I durst not so far distrust God, and so went to sermon, and got good assistance about an hour and a-half upon the points which I had meditated on: 'Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean; from all your filthiness and from all your idols will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh." Ezek. xxxvi. 25, 26. And in the end, offering to close with some words of exhortation, I was led

on about an hour's time, in a strain of exhortation and warning, with such liberty and melting of heart, as I never had the like in public all my lifetime."*

To this sermon, under the blessing of God, no less than five hundred people ascribed their conversion. And in gratitude for such a remarkable token of the Divine countenance on this day, the Church of Scotland has ever since devoted a part of the Monday, after a communion Sabbath, to the duty of public thanksgiving.

Some remarkable incidents occurred on that Monday, one of which, as illustrating the striking effect produced by Mr Livingstone's discourse, may be now related. "Three young gentlemen belonging to Glasgow had made an appointment to go to Edinburgh to attend some public amusements. Having alighted at Shotts to take breakfast, one of their number proposed to go and hear sermon, probably more from curiosity than any other motive; and for greater expedition, they arranged to come away at the end of the sermon, before the last prayer. But the power of God accompanying the sermon, was so felt by them, that they could not come away till all was over. When they returned to take their horses, they called for some refreshment before they mounted; but when it was set upon the table, they all looked to one another, none of them daring to touch it till a blessing was asked; and as they were not accustomed formerly to attend to such things, one of them at last proposed, 'I think we should ask a blessing to our drink.' The others assented at once to this proposal, and put it on

* Life of Mr John Livingstone, p. 14.

one of their number to do it, to which he readily consented. And when they had done, they could not rise till another had returned thanks. They went on their way more sedately than they used to do, but none of them mentioned their inward concern to the others, only now and then one would say, 'Was it not a great sermon we heard?' another would answer, 'I never heard the like of it.' They went to Edinburgh, but instead of waiting on diversions or company, they kept their rooms the greater part of the time they were there, which was only about two days, when they were all quite weary of Edinburgh, and proposed to return home. Upon the way home they did not discover the state of their minds to one another; and after arriving in Glasgow they kept themselves very much retired, coming seldom out. At last, one of them made a visit to his friend, and declared to him what God had done for him at the Kirk of Shotts. The other frankly owned the concern that he had been brought under at the same time; and both of them proceeding to the third, and finding him in the same state of mind, they all three agreed immediately to begin a fellowship meeting. They continued to maintain a practice suitable to their profession for the remainder of their lives, and became eminently useful in their day and generation."*

From this, and other well-attested instances, it appears that the revival on this occasion was not characterised by those faintings, exclamations, raptures, and other enthusiastic excesses, which have brought discredit on similar work in our own country and

* Gillies' Hist. Collections, vol. i. p. 308-311.

elsewhere. The Word of God sank deep into the hearts of the hearers, forcing them to retire, like the stricken deer, into solitude, there to weep and mourn, till the dart was extracted by the Hand from which it had come, and the balm of consolation was poured into the bleeding wound. It was some time before the modesty of the converts would permit them to own the change which had been wrought upon them, till, like the spring of living water, which cannot be controlled or concealed, the grace of God evinced its power by bursting from the once "stony heart," and pouring itself forth in the pure, peaceful, and beautiful stream of a holy conversation.

CHAPTER VII.

Accession of Charles I.—His Visit to Scotland—Laud's Service-Book—Its reception in Scotland—The Covenant Renewed—State of Parties—Alexander Henderson—Earls Loudoun and Rothes—Hamilton's Visit to Scotland—Glasgow Assembly 1638—Presbyterian Form of Worship.

CHARLES I. succeeded to the throne of England in March 1625. Naturally reserved, haughty, and imperious, he had imbibed from his father, James VI., the most extravagant notions of monarchical authority. He was taught to hold, as a point of religious rather than political faith, that the king, in his sole person, was superior to all law, civil or ecclesiastical. Whatever might be his private virtues (and they have been greatly exaggerated), there can be no doubt that his conduct as a prince, from the commencement of his reign, was violent and unconstitutional. Yielding himself to the influence of his queen, a popish princess, and to the guidance of high church counsellors, who flattered his love of arbitrary power, Charles soon began that course of opposition to his Parliaments and the liberties of his people which ended in his ruin.

In June 1633 he paid a visit to Scotland, to receive the crown of that ancient kingdom. Our sagacious countrymen were not long in discovering the real character of their new monarch. The first thing that excited their suspicions was the open profanation of the Lord's day practised in the royal household. Laud had by this time re-published King James' infamous *Book of Sports*, afterwards ratified by Charles, for allowing of pastimes on the Lord's day, "which," says Whitelocke, "gave great distaste to many others as well as those who were usually called Puritans."* It was, therefore, with feelings of no ordinary alarm, that the inhabitants of Edinburgh witnessed the example given by the court, when they heard the sacred quietude and peaceful devotions of their Sabbath disturbed, for the first time, by the sounds of mirth and boisterous revelry.

Charles was crowned "with such rites, ceremonies, and forms, as made many good Christians admire," says Row, "that such things should be used in this reformed Kirk." During this ceremony, Laud openly insulted one of the bishops for not wearing the full Episcopal costume. On the following Sabbath, the king heard sermon in the High Church, and when the ordinary reader was about to commence the psalm, one of the bishops came down from the king's loft, and after some angry words pulled him from the desk, substituting two English choristers in their vestments, who, with the assistance of the bishops, performed the service after the English form. Thereafter, Guthrie, Bishop of Moray, mounted the pulpit, and addressed the king

* Whitelocke's Memorials, p. 17-19.

in a style of such fulsome panegyric, that his majesty, fond as he was of such incense, blushed for shame.

In the Parliament which met immediately after, the king began his campaign as the champion of Episcopacy, by proposing that they should pass an act empowering him to regulate ecclesiastical vestments. From the specimen which they had seen at the coronation the Parliament were startled at this proposal; and when the act was read for their approbation, Lord Melville, an aged nobleman, rose and said, "I have sworn, Sire, with your father and the whole kingdom, to the Confession of Faith, in which these innovations were solemnly abjured." Others of the noblemen began to make similar objections, upon which Charles pulled out a list from his pocket, and said, "Gentlemen, I have all your names here, and I'll know who will do me service, and who not, this day." Notwithstanding this illegal and disgraceful threat, the votes carried against his majesty; the clerk, however, suborned for the purpose, declared that they were in his favour; and when the Earl of Rothes contradicted this, the king declared that the report of the clerk must be held decisive, unless Rothes chose to challenge his veracity at the bar of the house, and, on failing in his proof, to suffer the penalty of *death*. The nobleman, disgusted at this conduct, or unwilling to expose his majesty, declined the perilous task, and the articles were ratified as the deed of Parliament.

The gratulations with which King Charles had been received by his subjects on his arrival were now exchanged for "curses, not loud but deep." On expressing his astonishment at the change he observed

in the public feeling towards him, he was honestly told the reason by Lord Loudoun: "Sire, the people of Scotland will obey you in every thing with the utmost cheerfulness, provided you do not touch their religion and conscience."

Episcopacy had now been established in Scotland for thirty years, and yet the antipathy of the people against it was becoming every day more intense. The conduct of the bishops and the clergy whom they had obtruded on the flocks of the banished ministers, especially that of the younger portion of them, did not tend to abate this feeling. These rash novices, who had neither piety nor learning to recommend them, disdained to mingle with their people; they aped the manners of the higher classes, and even among them assumed a haughtiness of demeanour which filled our nobles with indignation. A good story, bearing on this point, is related by Sir James Balfour. Charles was extremely desirous that the primate of Scotland (Spottiswood) should have precedence of the chancellor; "which" says Sir James, "the Lord Chancellor Hay, a gallant stout man, would never condescend to, nor ever suffer him to have place of him, do what he could." Once and again the king attempted to gain this point, so anxious was he to humble the nobility and exalt the clergy; and on the occasion of his coronation, he sent Sir James to the doughty old chancellor, with a request that he would "but only for that day give place to the archbishop." Lord Hay's reply was in the true spirit of the Scottish chieftain, "that he was ready to lay down his office at his majesty's feet, but since it was his royal will that he should enjoy it with all the

privileges of the same, never a stoled priest in Scotland should set a foot before him so long as his blood was hot." The prosecution of Lord Balmerino, who was indicted for high treason, for having attempted to use the privilege of petition, viewed in connection with similar proceedings in England, tended greatly to alarm the Scots nobility. In addition to all this, a spirit of repentance seems to have been poured out on the people, leading many seriously to reflect on the share which they had had in procuring the calamities now impending over the Church. They began to contrast the days which they had enjoyed under the pure ministration of the Gospel with those in which they now lived, and their faithful pastors, now banished far away, with the worthless hirelings who had been intruded upon them. The result was, deep compunction for their contempt of their former privileges and breach of solemn engagements, on account of which they now considered themselves to be justly punished by Heaven.

Thus it will be perceived, that about this period (1636) every thing was prepared for an explosion; and yet this was the period fixed for introducing fresh innovations of a character still more obnoxious than all the preceding. No change had as yet been attempted on the form of public prayer, which was still conducted, externally at least, in the manner which had been practised since the Reformation. A collection of prayers, prefixed to the Psalms in metre, usually called John Knox's Liturgy, had been long in use. It was originally meant as a help to weak ministers, at a period when it was difficult to find well-qualified

persons to supply the pulpits; and the prayers in this book were still used in the churches by the *readers*, who were employed to read the Scriptures to the people before the ministers began the proper service of the day, and in some places on the morning and evening of every week-day. In the pretended Assembly of 1616, held at Aberdeen, it was ordained that a new liturgy, or book of common-prayer, should be formed for the use of the Church of Scotland; and the task of preparing it is said to have fallen on Cowper, bishop of Galloway.* But this project was not carried into effect—probably from their knowledge of the aversion of the Scots to fixed forms of prayer. The people of Scotland did not question the lawfulness of set forms, but their necessity; they had been long habituated to hear them read, though not by their *ministers*; but they considered it wrong to be tied down and shackled by forms in this part of public worship. To the English liturgy they objected, not only on the ground of its confining the minister to a prescribed form of words, but because it recognised a number of superstitious practices which the Scripture condemned, and which not only the Puritans, but many of the best and most enlightened members of the Church of England, had long desired to see reformed. But the English liturgy, undesired as it was, would not have excited such a sensation as that which Laud attempted to force on the people of Scotland. For our especial benefit, it pleased his Grace of Canterbury to draw up a new service-book of his own,

* Booke of Universal Kirke, p. 595, Pet. ed.; Scott's MSS. in Adv. Lib.

much more nearly resembling the Popish breviary; and in various points, particularly in the communion service, borrowing the very words of the mass-book.

To prepare the way for the introduction of this *Anglo-Popish* service, as it was called, a book of canons was sent down, for the regulation of the clergy; next, every minister was enjoined to procure two copies of Laud's liturgy, for the use of his church, upon the pain of deprivation,—even before the book had been seen by any of them; and lastly, when the minds of the whole nation had been wrought up to a state of alarm, by the reports which had been in circulation, of a design to reintroduce the Popish worship, down came the long-expected service-book, with orders from the king and council that it should be read in all the churches.

Brief as the space was during which the ministers were permitted to examine the contents of this book, they had sufficient time to discover its character, and to warn the people against it. The pulpits resounded with accusations against its orthodoxy, and denunciations of the tyranny of the bishops in imposing it on the once free reformed Church of Scotland. In the midst of these preparations, the fatal day appointed for commencing the use of the service-book, the 23d of July 1637, at last arrived.

On the morning of this Sabbath, one Henderson, a reader in the High Church of St Giles, who was a great favourite with the people, read the usual prayers about eight o'clock; and when he had ended, he said, with tears in his eyes, "Adieu, good people, for I think this is the last time of my reading prayers in

this place." The dean of Edinburgh was appointed to perform the service, after the form of the obnoxious liturgy. An immense crowd, attracted by curiosity, had assembled. At the stated hour, the dean was seen issuing out of the vestry, clad in his surplice, and passed through the crowd to the reading-desk, the people gazing as they would at a show. No sooner, however, had he begun to read, than his voice was drowned in a tumultuous shout, chiefly from persons of the lower classes, denouncing the innovation. An old woman, named Janet Geddes, who kept a green-stall in the High Street, no longer able to conceal her indignation, cried out, "Villain, dost thou say mass at my lug!" and, with these words, launched at the dean's head the stool on which she had been sitting. Others followed her example, and the confusion soon became universal. The service was interrupted, and the women, whose zeal on this occasion was most conspicuous, rushed to the desk in wild disorder. The dean threw off his surplice and fled, to avoid being torn in pieces. The bishop of Edinburgh then ascended the pulpit, and endeavoured to allay the ferment; but his address only inflamed them the more. He was answered by a volley of sticks, stones, and other missiles, with cries of "A Pope! a Pope!—Antichrist!—pull him down!—stone him!" and on returning in his coach, had he not been protected by the magistrates, he might have fallen a victim to the fury of the mob—a martyr to the new liturgy! *

* In an old manuscript lately printed (*Appendix to Rothes' Relation*, p. 198, Ban. ed.) there is a satirical account of this scene, differing in a few particulars from that given above, and adding several others. According to this account, the epithets bestowed on the clerical functionaries by the

Nothing can be more ridiculous than the attempts which were made at the time by the prelatic clergy, and which have been revived of late by their admirers, to magnify this incidental tumult into a regularly organized conspiracy. The terror into which the bishops were thrown, and the disgrace which they felt at being defeated by a handful of women, naturally led them to exaggerate the whole affair; and they may have really believed, perhaps, what some asserted, that the authors of the tumult were men disguised in women's clothes. We need not wonder at this, when we consider that even Baillie, a good Presbyterian, whom we shall have frequent occasion to quote, says, in his Letters at this period, "I think our people are possessed with a bloody devil, far above any thing that can be imagined." But Baillie soon found he was mistaken: at that time he had not made up his mind on the questions in dispute, and indeed seems to have been incapable of it, from bodily fear. "The Lord save my poor soul," says this good but rather weak-minded man, "for as moderate as I have been, and resolving, in spite of the devil and the world, by God's grace so to remain to death,—for as well as I have been beloved hitherto, yet *I think I may be killed*,

crowd, were much more distinguished for their strength than delicacy. "The dean, Mr James Hanna, was mightily upbraided. Some cried, 'Ill hanged thief! if at that time when thou wentest to court thou hadst been weel hanged, thou hadst not been here to be a pest to God's Church this day.' A certain woman cried, 'Fy, if I could get the throple out of him!' One did cast a stool at him, intending to have given him a ticket of remembrance; but *jouking* (jerking down his head) became his safeguard at that time." There is little doubt that one folding stool was made use of for the purpose here expressed; and if the missile employed was any thing like what is commonly called "Jenny Geddes's stool," preserved in the Antiquarian Society's Museum, it was well for the dean that he had learned to *jouk*.

and my house burnt upon my head!"* But indeed there is not the vestige of a proof that it was premeditated, or even foreseen, by any class of people in the country; and none will assert it who have read the accounts transmitted by those who were on the spot, and who had no temptation to conceal it.

This tumult, simple as it was in its commencement, proved the death-blow of Laud's liturgy. Though at first confined to the humbler orders, and the result, as we have seen, not of any premeditated scheme, but of an impulse given to long suppressed feelings, the quarrel was soon taken up by the higher classes of society. The infatuated conduct of the prelates (the younger part of them at least) to enforce the obnoxious mandate of the court, roused the whole country to follow the example set by Edinburgh. Petitions and remonstrances poured into the Privy Council. New riots, in which the gentry began to participate, took place, and it was found absolutely necessary to suspend the use of the liturgy. In Glasgow similar indignation was excited by an attempt to impose this book; and there, as in Edinburgh, the women seem to have borne the principal share. One Mr William Annan, minister of Ayr, who preached in defence of the service-book, had wellnigh fallen a victim to their fury. During the day he was pursued with threats of vengeance; and on venturing out at night, he was beset by some hundreds of ladies, chiefly the wives of honest burgesses, who attacked him, it is said, with "fists, staves, and peats, but no stones;" tore his coat, ruff, and hat to pieces, and

* Baillie's MS. Letters, Oct. 4, 1637.

after beating him soundly, allowed him to go home. His humiliation, however, was not yet complete; for next morning, on mounting his horse, the animal, startled by the mob which began to collect around him, fell with him into a gutter, and the discomfited divine, covered with mud, made his escape out of Glasgow amidst the derisive shouts of the populace.

About this time the excitement in Edinburgh was so great, that many noblemen and gentlemen, commissioners from various places, with their retainers, and great crowds of people from all quarters, were come up to town, waiting with the utmost anxiety the king's answer to a supplication for the suppression of the service-book. Had that answer been conciliatory, had any concessions been made at this critical juncture, it is probable that Episcopacy might have continued, and a civil war been prevented. But Charles' infatuation prevailed. A new proclamation arrived, enjoining strict obedience to the canons and reception of the service-book, condemning all the proceedings of the supplicants, and discharging all their public meetings, under pain of treason. The Supplicants, as they called themselves, apprised of this measure, which would have extinguished every spark of freedom in the country, resolved to proceed in a body to the Scottish Privy Council, which was to meet at Stirling on the 20th of February 1638, and present, in the name of the kirk and kingdom of Scotland, a protest against the proclamation as soon as it was made, which was the legal course for securing their liberties. The Earls of Traquair and Roxburgh, after in vain attempting to dissuade them from their purpose, resolved to

steal a march on them, by secretly starting from Edinburgh at two o'clock on Monday morning, the day before the meeting of council, expecting to have the proclamation ratified and published, ere the Supplicants were aware of their departure. In this, however, they were disappointed. Traquair's servant having stepped into an alehouse before leaving Edinburgh, to fortify himself for the cold ride of a February morning by a glass of "Scotch twopenny," incautiously let out the secret of his journey to some of his boon companions, and among them was a servant of the Lord Lindsay, who immediately communicated the news to his master. Lindsay lost not a moment in sounding the alarm among his friends, and he himself, with the Earl of Home, mounting their horses at four the same morning, overtook the two earls at the Torwood, passed them by taking a turn round the wood, and reached Stirling an hour before them. In course of time, Traquair and Roxburgh rode leisurely up the streets of the town, and proceeded, with the aid of some other councillors, to pass the proclamation, when, to their mortification and astonishment, the two lords of the Covenant appeared, and, in all due form of law, protested against it.*

On the news of this spirited protestation reaching London, the court was greatly incensed, and none more so than Archbishop Laud, who was supposed to have had the chief hand in urging the king to these extreme measures against the Scots, and who on this occasion betrayed his wounded pride in a very ridiculous manner. On his way to the council-table he was

* Rothes' Relation, p. 63; Baillie, i. 33; Guthry's Memoirs, p. 33.

met by the celebrated Archie Armstrong, the king's fool, who said to him, "Wha's fule now? Doth not your Grace hear the news from Striveling about the liturgy?" Laud was silly enough to complain of this jest as an insult; and it was ordained, by order of council, that "Archibald Armstrong, for certain scandalous words of a high nature, spoken by him against the Lord Archbishop of Canterbury, his Grace, should have his coat pulled over his head, and be banished the court." Some one having met Archie after the execution of this sentence, all in black, asked him what had become of his fool's coat. "O," said he, "my lord of Canterbury hath taken it from me, because either he or some of the Scotch bishops may have use of it for themselves; but he has given me a black coat for it, to cover my knavery withal." *

The same promptitude and decision in protesting against the proclamation was manifested at Edinburgh; and at length the council, apprehensive of danger from such large masses of people collected in town, agreed that if they would disperse the crowd, the commissioners might appoint some of their number to represent the rest, who might remain and look after their interest. To this the commissioners agreed, and erected four *tables*, as they were called,—one for the nobility, another for the barons, a third for the boroughs, and a fourth for the Church.

Before separating, however, to return to their homes, the commissioners, considering the critical state in which the Church and nation were placed, agreed to renew the national Covenant, with some additions ap-

* Rothes' Relation, App. p. 208; The Scots Scouts Discoveries, 1639.

plicable to the present conjuncture, binding themselves "to adhere to and defend the true religion, and forbearing the practice of all innovations already introduced into the worship of God, and to labour by all means lawful to recover the purity and liberty of the Gospel as it was professed and established before the aforesaid innovations." This Covenant was sworn and subscribed, with much solemnity, in the Greyfriars' Church at Edinburgh, on 1st of March 1638.

A fast was appointed. After sermon the Covenant was read; upon which the Earl of Loudoun, whose manner was peculiarly impressive, made an address to the assembled multitude, dwelling on the importance of this bond of union in present circumstances, and exhorting all to zeal and perseverance in the cause of the Lord. Thereafter Mr Alexander Henderson, then minister at Leuchars, poured out an impassioned prayer for the Divine blessing; when the noblemen present stepped forward to the table, subscribed the deed, and, with uplifted hands, swore to the observance of its duties. After them, the gentry, ministers, and thousands of every rank, subscribed and swore. The immense sheet of parchment was speedily filled, and numbers, for want of room, were obliged to sign only their initials. The enthusiasm was universal; it seemed as if a new era had dawned on them; every face beamed with joy, and the city presented one scene of devout congratulation and rapture. "Behold," says a writer speaking of that time, "the nobility, the barons, the burgesses, the ministers, the commons of all sorts of Scotland,—all in tears for their breach of covenant, and for their backsliding and defec-

tion from the Lord; and, at the same time, returning with great joy unto their God, by swearing cheerfully and willingly to be the Lord's. It may well be said of this day, Great was the day of Jezreel. It was a day wherein the arm of the Lord was revealed; a day wherein the princes of the people were assembled to swear fealty and allegiance to that great King whose name is the Lord of hosts." *

"To this much vilified bond," it has been well said, "every true Scotsman ought to look back with as much reverence as Englishmen do to their Magna Charta. It was what saved the country from absolute despotism, and to it we may trace back the origin of all the efforts made by the inhabitants of Britain in defence of their freedom, during the succeeding reign of the Stuarts."† But it must be viewed in a still more sacred light. It was "the oath of God," sworn in His name, in agreeableness to His Word, and in defence of His cause; and the effects which followed bear a striking resemblance to those recorded in Holy Writ, as the native fruits of similar exercise in ancient

* Wilson's Defence of Reformation Principles, p. 242.—All the Presbyterian writers of that time bear witness that the Divine presence accompanied this solemn service in a remarkable manner, and that its happy influences were every where manifest. The General Assembly of 1640, in their letter to the Swiss Churches, say, that "when they began to descend and search deeper into their hearts, the remembrance of their violated Covenant pierced and penetrated their consciences; wherefore, being led by serious repentance, they resolved to renew the Covenant, with confession," &c.—*Epistola*, &c., subjoined to *Historia Motuum*. And in another document they declare, that "the Lord from heaven did testify his acceptance of that Covenant by the wonderful workings of his Spirit in the hearts both of pastors and people, to their great comfort and strengthening in every duty, above any measure that hath been heard of in this land."—*Reasons against the Rendering of our sworn and subscribed Confession of Faith.*

† Aikman's History of Scotland, vol. iii. 445.

Israel. The minds of the people were at once solemnized and cemented in defence of their religious privileges. They felt themselves bound to God, and to one another, by the superadded obligation of an oath, sworn by the nation, and registered in heaven. They looked on themselves as embarked in a holy cause, in which it was an honour to suffer, and martyrdom to die. The prelates were thunderstruck at the event; and the archbishop of St Andrews, who had sagacity enough to foresee in it the doom of the whole Episcopal fabric, exclaimed in despair, "Now all that we have been doing these thirty years bypast is at once thrown down!"

The state of parties in Scotland, at this remarkable era of our history, was very singular, and in some respects unprecedented. It is customary with high-church historians to speak of the country as having been divided into two parties—the Royal or Prelatical, and the Presbyterian; and they would even have us to believe that the latter was a mere "faction," composed of rebelliously disposed persons, who were guided or rather goaded on to excesses by a set of fanatical leaders. This, however, is just a specimen of the defamatory style uniformly adopted by the enemies of the truth, when the ministers of religion bestir themselves to vindicate the liberties of the Church, or obtain the reformation of her abuses. The real state of matters was precisely the reverse. The two parties mentioned certainly existed in the country; but it is quite ridiculous to say that the nation was *divided* into them. The prelatical party may be said to have been com-

posed of the bishops alone, with a few of their underlings among the clergy, whom they had intruded into the Church,—a party so insignificant, in point of numbers, rank, wealth, or influence, that they may truly be called a faction,—a faction opposed to the whole nation.* At the head of this faction, however, Charles, unhappily for himself and the country, had now openly placed himself. It was long before his Scottish subjects, in the excess of their loyalty, would believe that he could be the author of the harsh and arbitrary proclamations which frequently issued against them from the English court; they ascribed the whole to the machinations of Laud and his prelates, and to the malicious representations of the Scots bishops, who, pretending to be frightened by the uproar about the liturgy, had fled to court, carrying to the ears of his majesty, and disseminating through England by means of the press, the most false and exaggerated reports of the state of matters. There can be no doubt

* The misrepresentation referred to is only an echo of that circulated at the time by the deposed bishops who fled into England, and who gave out that "many, and some of the chiefest amongst the Covenanters, were men of unquiet spirits and broken fortunes," &c. To this the noblemen and gentlemen replied,—"It is known by all who are acquainted with this country, that almost the *whole kingdom* standeth to the defence of this cause, and that the chiefest of the nobles, barons, and burgesses, are honoured in the places where they live for religion, wisdom, power, and wealth, answerable to the condition of this kingdom; that the meanest of the commons who have joined in this cause, are content of their mean estates with the enjoying of the Gospel; and no less known, that our adversaries are not for number any considerable part of the kingdom, and that the chiefest (setting aside some few statesmen, and such as draw their breath from court) are known atheists, or professed papists, drowned in debt, denounced his majesty's rebels for a long time past, are under caption of their creditors, and have already, in their imaginations, divided among them the lands of the supplicants, which they hope to be possessed in by the power of England."—*The Remonstrance of the Nobility, Barons, &c.*, Feb. 27, 1639, p. 14.

now, from unquestioned documents, that these prelates, by their infatuated counsels, were the principal means of plunging the nation into a civil war; but *their* loyalty, it seems, taught them to transfer all the responsibility, and consequently all the odium, of their measures, from their own heads to that of the monarch, on pretence of supporting the royal prerogative. To this mean-spirited policy, Charles, with an infatuation which seems to have been inherent in the race of the Stuarts, was induced to yield; for he sent down a message, informing his faithful subjects in Scotland, to their grief and dismay, that the liturgy had been imposed by his own express orders, and that the measures of the bishops had his entire approbation; and, as if this had not been enough to complete the breach, he gave the sanction of his name to an infamous libel against the Scottish nation, drawn up by a fugitive minister named Balcanquhal, and filled with the most unfounded statements and injurious reflections, which was published under the title of "The King's Large Declaration." Thus the whole was converted into a personal quarrel between Charles and his subjects; and the question came to be, Whether the people of Scotland should submit, in the matters of religion, to the arbitrary dictates of the sovereign, irrespective of either Parliament or General Assembly, or at once assert their privileges as Christians, and their rights as freemen?

In opposition to the contemptible faction to which we have referred, the whole body of the Scottish nation, including the Parliament, the most ancient and respectable of the nobility, barons, and gentlemen,

with the mass of the common people, were decidedly Presbyterian. Nothing, indeed, is more remarkable, during the whole of this singular period, than the unanimity which prevailed in the country on all the questions at issue between them and the court. With the single exception of Aberdeen, which was under the influence of the Marquis of Huntly, and the Aberdeen *Doctors*, who, owing to their distance from the immediate scene of action, information, and intercourse with their brethren, remained attached to the cause of prelacy and arbitrary power, the whole nation cordially joined in the cause of the Covenant. No compulsion was used to procure subscriptions, for none was needed. Some individuals, indeed, among the clergy who refused to sign, might be treated somewhat unceremoniously; but this was rather an expression of the popular dislike at the measures with which they were identified, than an attempt to force their consciences. Every thing like personal violence was deprecated and repressed by the leaders of the Covenant; and both Rothes and Baillie lament that their good cause should have been injured by any approach to such evil practices. So far from persons being compelled to sign the Covenant, great care was taken to prevent improper or incompetent subscriptions. None were allowed to sign but such as had communicated in the Lord's Supper. "Some men of no small note," says Henderson, "offered their subscriptions, and were refused, till time should prove that they joined from love to the cause, and not from the fear of man." "The matter was so holy," says the Earl of Rothes, "*that they held it to be irreligious* to use violent

means for advancing such a work." A unanimity so singular can only be ascribed to a remarkable effusion of the influences of the Holy Spirit, the genuineness of which was attested by the general revival of practical religion which marked the whole progress of the work. "I was present," says Livingstone, "at Lanark, and several other parishes, when, on Sabbath, after the forenoon's sermon, the Covenant was read and sworn; and I may truly say, that in all my lifetime, excepting at the Kirk of Shotts, I never saw such motions from the Spirit of God. All the people generally and most willingly concurred. I have seen more than a thousand persons all at once lifting up their hands, and the tears falling down from their eyes; so that through the whole land, excepting the professed Papists, and some few who adhered to the prelates, people universally entered into the Covenant of God." Nay, such was the enthusiasm displayed in the cause of the Covenant, that some subscribed it with their blood, and others would not be prevented from signing, even in the presence of the prelatical ministers and their underlings, who, with oaths and imprecations, and in some cases with drawn swords, attempted to intimidate them from coming forward.*

* Baillie's Letters; Rothes' Relation; Livingstone's Life.—It may be proper to state that the counties north of Aberdeen, particularly Caithness, Sutherland, Ross and Inverness, cordially entered into the Covenant. "It was professed by all, that it was the joyfullest day that ever they saw, or ever was seen in the North; and it was marked as a special mark of God's goodness towards these parts, that so many different clans and names, among whom was nothing before but hostility and blood, were met together in one place for such a good cause, and in so peaceable a manner, as that nothing was to be seen and heard but mutual embracements, with hearty praise to God for so happy a union."—*Rothes' Relation*, p. 106. At Inverness, the town drummer having been ordered to invite the inhabitants

If we search for the secondary causes which produced such an excitement among a people proverbially sober, steady, and intelligent, the whole might be traced to three main sources of dissatisfaction and alarm, namely, Arminianism, Popery, and arbitrary power. It would be easy to enlarge on each of these topics, showing the close connection in which they then stood to each other, and the ample grounds which our forefathers had for their apprehensions regarding them. To ignorance of these causes, or to a wilful suppression of the facts regarding them, we may trace all the misapprehension which still exists, in so many quarters, regarding the struggles of our reforming ancestors at this period. Suffice it here to say, that Arminianism, as then maintained in England, was fitted, if not intended, to pave the way for the introduction of Popery,—that Archbishop Laud and his divines were radically Popish,—and that Popery was then, as it ever has been in theory and practice, whatever it may be in profession, decidedly favourable to absolute despotism in the State.* The doctrine advocated by these divines, and by the doctors of Aberdeen, was, that the king was supreme judge in all causes, ecclesiastical as well as civil,—and that, though the whole subjects in the kingdom should be massacred in one day, or ordered to submit to the Turkish religion, under the penalty of being spoiled of liberty, goods, and life, they had no alternative but to submit to

to sign the Covenant, added to the proclamation, of his own accord, something about pains and penalties, which, Rothes says, "gave occasion to our adversaries to calumniate our proceedings."—*Ib.*, p. 107.

* Hist. Essay on the Loyalty of Presbyterians, p. 188.

the will of the ruling monarch.* This shows what sort of people our ancestors had to deal with. The question was not about obedience to the law, but submission to an arbitrary prince, who held that his will was above all law; and who was supported by a clergy defending him in these extravagant claims, by Popish powers urging him to exercise them, and by a large army in England levied to enforce them.

In such circumstances, had Scotland yielded, she would have entailed on herself indelible disgrace. She did not yield; and the consequence was a struggle, which, commencing in this country, was soon transferred to the plains of England, and issued in the temporary triumph of liberty and true religion. During this contest, whatever may have been the designs of parties in England, the Scots distinguished themselves as much for true loyalty to their king, as for fidelity to the cause of God, and patriotic devotion to their native country.

It is usually seen, that when Providence has some great work to accomplish in behalf of the Church, instruments are raised up admirably fitted for the part which they are designed to perform. At this juncture, it is pleasing to find that, notwithstanding the oppression under which the Church had laboured for thirty years before, individuals arose, out of the ranks of the nobility, the barons, and the clergy, who, in point of talents, piety, and natural dispositions, seem to have been exactly adapted for the struggle in which they were to engage. Among these, the first place

* Baillie's Letters, vol. i. p. 89. Duplyes of the Ministers and Professors of Divinitie in Aberdeen. 1638.

is due to Alexander Henderson, then minister of Leuchars in Fife, and who, for his personal worth, as well as his prominent share in the transactions of this period, deserves particular notice. In the early part of his life, Mr Henderson had been, to say the least, neutral in the contest between Presbytery and Episcopacy; there is even reason to think he was a defender of the corruptions introduced by the bishops. As a proof of this, he accepted a presentation from Archbishop Gladstanes to the parish of Leuchars, and such was the repugnance of the people there to his induction, that, on the day of his ordination, they nailed the church doors, so that the ministers who attended, together with Henderson, were obliged to break in by the window. Some time after this, having heard that Mr Robert Bruce was to preach at a communion in the neighbourhood, Henderson, attracted by curiosity, went secretly to hear him, and placed himself in a dark corner of the church, where he might remain most concealed. Mr Bruce came into the pulpit, and after a pause, according to his usual manner, which fixed Mr Henderson's attention upon him, he read, with his wonted dignity and deliberation, these words as his text,—"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheep-fold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber." These words, so literally applicable to the manner in which he had entered upon his ministry at Leuchars, went "like drawn swords" to his inmost soul. He who wished to conceal himself from the eyes of men, felt that he was naked and opened before the eyes of Him with whom we have to do. In

short, the discourse of this powerful preacher was, by the divine blessing, the means of Henderson's conversion; and ever after he retained a great affection for Mr Bruce, whom he called his spiritual father.

After this wonderful change on his sentiments, which went much deeper than a conversion to Presbyterianism, Henderson continued to discharge the duties of his retired parish in a manner much more conducive to the edification of his people; and laid up those stores of learning for which he afterwards found so much use. He became a decided opponent of the prelatical measures; and when matters came to an extremity, his talents as a public speaker, his piety and learning, his gentlemanly and ingratiating manners, and his profound sagacity in business, pointed him out to all his brethren as the fittest person for taking the lead in the management of their affairs.

Among the nobility who entered with heart and soul into the cause of the Covenant, the most distinguished were the Earls of Loudoun and Rothes. John Campbell, Earl of Loudoun, was a nobleman whose patriotism, prudence, eloquence, and fortitude, justly entitle him to be regarded as the chief assertor both of the civil and religious liberties of his country. From his youth, he attached himself to the Presbyterian interest, which he saw was identified with the cause of civil liberty. On the commencement of the civil broils in 1638, he took an active share in opposing the despotic measures of the court; and on one occasion roundly told the king's commissioner, in language which was soon re-echoed in tones of thunder from every part of the kingdom, "That they

knew no other bands between a king and his subjects but those of religion and the laws. If these are broken," he said, "men's lives are not dear to them; *boasted* (threatened) we shall not be; such fears are past with us." Loudoun may be said to have been the Brutus of Scotland, during this epoch of her history: firm as a rock, nobly upright, sternly conscientious. The Earl of Rothes, with the same unbending integrity, was a man of a different stamp. Lively and facetious, polite in his address, and indefatigably active in all his motions, this young nobleman, who died in the 41st year of his age, was at the head of all the enterprises of the Covenanters, and rendered essential service to the cause.*

In the month of June following the swearing of the Covenant at Edinburgh, the king sent down, as his Commissioner to Scotland, the Marquis of Hamilton, a man of insinuating manners, chiefly with the view of conciliating the Scots, and inducing them, if possible, to renounce the Covenant. The Covenanters had by this time become very suspicious of the designs of Charles, for which they had too good reason. From a correspondence between the king and Hamilton,

* In 1641, Rothes being in London shortly before his death, came into high favour at court; and from some expressions in Baillie's letters, it has been surmised, very unreasonably and uncharitably, that had he lived much longer, he would have changed sides and become an apostate. There is not a word spoken by Baillie that can be construed into such a suspicion, which seems indeed to rest on no better foundation than the conjecture of the strongly biassed mind of Clarendon.—Among the other noblemen who engaged at this time in the cause of the Covenant may be mentioned, Earls Eglinton, Montrose, Cassils, Home, Lothian, Wemyss, Dalhousie; and Lords Lindsay, Yester, Sinclair, Boyd, Fleeming, Elcho, Carnegy, Balmerino, Cranston, Cowper, Johnston, Forester, Melville, &c., &c.

afterwards discovered, it was found that Charles was at this time making preparations for a hostile invasion on Scotland. After describing these preparations, he says to Hamilton, "Thus you may see, that I intend not to yield to the demands of these traitors the Covenanters. And as concerning the explanation of their damnable Covenant, I will only say, that so long as this Covenant is in force, whether it be with or without explanation, I have no more power in Scotland than as a Duke of Venice, which I will rather die than suffer."

On his arrival in Scotland, however, Hamilton soon found that he had to deal with a people who were determined to "die rather than suffer" such an infringement of their rights, and who had now adventured too far to retrace their steps either with safety or with a good conscience. No sooner, therefore, did Hamilton give a distant hint of his instructions, than the Covenanters declared, that "there was not a man joined but would rather quit his life than his part in that Covenant." * Alarmed at the arrival of some military stores at Leith, they blockaded the castle, and placed armed guards at the city gates; and it required all the artifice of the Commissioner to allay the storm which he had injudiciously excited.

On the 9th of June, Hamilton, who had been residing at Dalkeith, entered Edinburgh with great pomp, and it was arranged that the manner of his reception should present a demonstration of the power and zeal of the Covenanters. For this purpose, the circuitous road by Musselburgh, along the beach of the

* Rothes' Relation, p. 151.

sea, was selected. The nobles, to the number of 30, and all others who had horses, rode to the end of the long sands at Musselburgh, to accompany his grace to the palace. The people, to the number of 60,000, were ranged, under the directions of Sir George Cuningham, in ranks along the sea-side, extending to several miles. At the eastern extremity of Leith links, on the side of a rising ground, there stood about 700 ministers, all in their cloaks,—a demonstration of their numbers and unity in the cause. While riding slowly along through this prodigious array, and hearing so many thousands beseeching him on all sides, with tears, that he would advise the king to deliver them from the bishops and their books, and to restore to them their beloved ministers, the Marquis was deeply affected, and protested, that had the king been present to witness the scene, he would never think of forcing his obnoxious measures on such a people.

It is needless to dwell on the temporising measures by which Hamilton endeavoured to bring over the Covenanters to the wishes of his master. One of his plans deserves notice, as showing the unprincipled character of the means resorted to by the king to gain his purposes. With the view of counteracting the Covenant as sworn in the previous March, and sowing dissension among the Covenanters, he ordered Hamilton to subscribe, in his name, the National Covenant, as sworn in 1581, and to require all his subjects in Scotland to follow his example. The design of this manœuvre was very obvious. In the Covenant, as sworn in 1581, no particular mention was made of Prelacy or any of its corruptions, though the sub-

scribers bound themselves to maintain "religion as then professed." There could be no doubt that the religion then professed was the Presbyterian, but under this ambiguous phrase, Charles, by a piece of chicanery, tacitly understood the Episcopal form of religion. When Hamilton, therefore, proposed to the ministers that they should subscribe "The King's Covenant," as it was called, they, with great propriety, refused to do so, having already subscribed that Covenant with an express stipulation in reference to Prelacy and its evils, which they considered to be a violation of its obligations. "If we should now enter upon this new subscription," said they, "we should think ourselves guilty of mocking God, and taking his name in vain; for the tears that began to be poured forth at the solemnizing of the Covenant are not yet dried up and wiped away, and the joyful noise which then began to sound forth hath not yet ceased. As we are not to multiply miracles on God's part, so ought we not to multiply solemn oaths and covenants on our part, and thus to play with oaths as children do with their toys, without necessity."

All the manœuvres of Charles and his bishops to outwit, to intimidate, to divide, or to gain over the Covenanters, having thus signally failed, the king found himself under the necessity of complying with the wishes of the people of Scotland, and summoning "a free General Assembly," which was indicted to meet at Glasgow, on Wednesday, November 21, 1638; and the Marquis of Hamilton was appointed his Majesty's Commissioner. This Assembly was to inquire into the evils that distressed the country, and to pro-

vide suitable remedies; and the bishops having been generally accused as the author of these disturbances, were subjected, by his Majesty's proclamation, to the censure of the Assembly.

This famous Assembly met at Glasgow on the 21st November 1638. A more noble, grave, and learned body of men never perhaps convened to deliberate on the affairs of the Church. It consisted of 140 ministers, freely chosen by their different Presbyteries, with 98 ruling elders, of whom 17 were noblemen of the highest rank, 9 were knights, 25 were landed proprietors, and 47 burgesses of great respectability, capable of representing their respective communities in Parliament. Some of the noblemen and gentlemen, hearing that an attempt would be made by the Marquis of Hamilton, the king's Commissioner, to overawe the Assembly by a large retinue of followers, came accompanied by their usual retainers in arms. The Assembly was conducted throughout with the utmost gravity and decorum; but honest Baillie makes grievous complaints of the manner in which they were incommoded and jostled by the crowd, who were very naturally anxious to witness their proceedings, and gravely lectures the Scottish people in general for not taking a lesson on "modesty and manners" in church, "from Canterbury, yea, from the Pope, yea, from the Turks or Pagans." "We are here so far the other way," says he, "that our rascals, without shame, in great numbers, make such din and clamour in the house of the true God, that if they minted to use the like behaviour in my chamber, I would not be content till they were down the stairs."

The order and dignity which characterised the proceedings of the Assembly itself, meeting as it did in a period of such excitement, were mainly owing to the consummate tact, firmness, and address of its Moderator, Alexander Henderson. For the exercise of these qualities, he found abundant occasion in the course of the seven days, during which the Commissioner kept protesting and disputing against their constitution. The king had called "a free General Assembly" of the Church of Scotland; but it soon appeared that he had never any intention of allowing it to meet. His secret correspondence with the Commissioner, now published to the world, unfolds the duplicity of his character in the most extraordinary light.* He exhorts Hamilton to use all his endeavours to divide the Assembly by sowing the seeds of jealousy between the laics and the clergy; if this failed, he was to protest against all their proceedings, and on no account to allow them to proceed to the censure of the bishops. Then the bishops, who had been subjected by the king's proclamation to the censure of the Assembly, instead of appearing in answer to their summons, sent in a declinature, in which, with ridiculous effrontery, they refused to acknowledge the authority of the Assembly, chiefly on the ground that the Moderator was not a bishop, and because the meeting was partly composed of laymen, as they were pleased to call the ordained elders of the Church;—thus setting themselves up as judges of a court before which they were cited as criminals, and presuming, in their own persons, to settle the grand point at issue, relating to the

* See "Records of the Kirke of Scotland," by Alex. Peterkin. Part ii.

government of the Church, which was to come before the Assembly. The first question, therefore, came to be, Whether the Assembly found themselves competent judges of the bishops? On this question being put by the Moderator, the Commissioner, after a long speech, in which he extolled his majesty's grace and condescension, presented to them a proclamation in the king's name, discharging the Service-Book, the Articles of Perth, and High Commission, and declaring that the bishops should be answerable from time to time, according to their demerits, to the General Assembly. The obvious design of this measure was to quash all farther proceedings against the bishops, whom Hamilton persisted in styling the "lords of the clergy,"—to divide the Assembly—and, at the same time, by apparently granting all the popular demands, to throw on the members of the Assembly, should they continue their sittings, the odium of unreasonable opposition to a pious and gracious prince, who had done so much to satisfy the desires of his people. As to the promise of subjecting the prelates to the censure of the General Assembly, it was sufficiently clear, from their declinature, that nothing was farther from their intentions, or more unlikely to happen.

In these circumstances, it required more than common prudence in the Moderator to act a part at once respectful to majesty, and true to the interests of the Church. Henderson nobly discharged the arduous and delicate task. "It well becometh us," he said in reply, "with all thankfulness to receive so ample a testimony of his majesty's goodness, and not to disesteem the smallest crumbs of comfort that fall to us

of his majesty's liberality. With our hearts do we acknowledge before God, and with our mouth do we desire to testify to the world, how far we think ourselves obliged to our dread sovereign; wishing that the secret thoughts of our hearts, and the way wherein we have walked this time past, were made manifest. It hath been the glory of the Reformed Churches, and we account it our glory after a special manner, to give unto kings and Christian magistrates what belongs unto their places; and as we know the fifth command of the law to be a precept of the second table, so do we acknowledge it to be the first of that kind, and that, next to piety towards God, we are obliged to loyalty and obedience to our king. It has pleased his majesty to descend so far to his subjects' humble petitions, for which we render to his majesty most hearty thanks,—offering, therefore, to spend our lives in his service. And we would do with him as the Jews did with Alexander the Great. When he came to Jerusalem, he desired that his picture might be placed in the temple. This they refused to grant unto him, it being unlawful so to pollute the house of the Lord; but they granted to him one thing less blameable and far more convenient for the promulgation of his honour, to wit, that they should begin the calculation of their years from the time that he came to Jerusalem, and likewise that they should call all their male first-born by the name of Alexander,—which thing he accepted. So, whatsoever is ours, we shall render it to his majesty, even our lives, lands, liberties, and all; but for that which is God's, and the liberties of his house, we do think, neither will his Majesty's piety

suffer him to crave, neither may we grant them, although he should crave it."*

On hearing this noble reply, the Commissioner said, "Sir, ye have spoken as a good Christian and a dutiful subject." The "dutiful subject" had spoken; it remained for the "good Christian" to act. Henderson repeated the question for the third time,—"I now ask if this Assembly find themselves competent judges of the prelates?" "If you proceed to the censure of their persons and offices," said Hamilton, "I must remove myself." "A thousand times I wish the contrary from the bottom of my heart," replied the Moderator, "and I entreat your Grace to continue to favour us with your presence, without obstructing the work and freedom of the Assembly." The Earl of Rothes seconded this request, using various arguments to prevail on the Commissioner to remain, and even attempting to coax him into good humour, but without effect. Hamilton began to shed tears, lamenting that such a weighty burden should have been laid on such a weak man, and acted his part so well as to draw tears of sympathy from many in the Assembly. This scene continued for some time, when, perceiving that they were determined to proceed to the business for which they had met, Hamilton rose up, and after repeating his protestations, he, in the name of the king, as the head of the Church, dissolved the Assembly, and discharged their farther proceedings.

There are critical periods in the history of the Church, when the vital principles on which it is founded are at

* MS. Journal of the Assembly, *penes me*, compared with another in the possession of David Laing, Esq.

stake, and when to yield would entail, not only disgrace on the individuals more immediately concerned, but ruin on the cause in which they are embarked. And such was the present. The Assembly had indeed been convened by the king's authority, but they were not bound to rise and dismiss at his bidding. Neither the laws of the land, nor the constitution of the Church of Scotland, as ratified by these laws, allowed any such power to the reigning monarch. The Covenant had already been pronounced by the Lord Advocate, and other legal officers, to be perfectly agreeable to the law, and it was in pursuance of that engagement that the Assembly had now met, though, for the sake of peace and good order, they had requested the sanction of royalty to their meeting. And none can accuse them of rebellion, in refusing to obey the order of the Commissioner on this occasion, except those who hold that the power of the king is supreme in ecclesiastical matters, and who are prepared to re-enact the despotism which compelled our fathers to assume the attitude of resistance. Had the Assembly dismissed in obedience to this summary and unconstitutional mandate, it would have amounted to a virtual acknowledgment of the king's claim to be considered as the head of the Church, and a denial of the headship of our Lord Jesus Christ. They would have been guilty of basely betraying the liberties of the Church, at a period when these were placed in manifest peril, and when they had a fair opportunity of asserting them. Our fathers were men of another spirit. As Christians, they chose to "obey God rather than men," "not fearing the wrath of the king." As Presbyterians, they felt them-

selves called upon to contend for the distinguishing glory of Presbytery—the independence of the Church. As freemen, they claimed the protection of constitutional law, in opposition to the arbitrary mandate of the sovereign. As an established Church, they stood on the vantage-ground of having their spiritual privileges recognised and secured by the laws of the land. And as Covenanters, they had pledged themselves to maintain and defend these privileges at all hazards.

While the Commissioner, therefore, was in the act of retiring, a protestation, which had been prepared that morning, in anticipation of such an event, was presented by Rothes, and read by the clerk, in which, for reasons given at length, they declare, "in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, THE ONLY HEAD AND MONARCH OF HIS CHURCH, that, from a consciousness of our duty to God and his truth, the king and his honour, this kingdom and her peace, this Assembly and her freedom, and the safety of ourselves and our posterity, in our persons and estates, we profess, with sorrowful and heavy, but loyal hearts, *we cannot dissolve this Assembly.*" They likewise protested, that "if any stir should arise by impeding of their lawful meetings, the cause should not be imputed to them, who did ardently desire the Commissioner's abode, but to the prelates, who had declined them, being conscious of their guiltiness." This protest having been read, the Moderator delivered a cheering address, in which, with admirable dexterity, he converted the departure of the Commissioner into an encouragement for them to remain. "All who are present know," he said, "the reasons of the meeting of this Assembly; and albeit we have acknow-

ledged the power of Christian kings for convening of Assemblies, yet that may not derogate from Christ's right; for He hath given divine warrants to convocate assemblies, whether magistrates consent or not. Therefore, seeing we perceive his Grace, my Lord Commissioner, to be so zealous of *his* royal master's commands, have we not also good reason to be zealous toward *our* Lord, and to maintain the liberties and privileges of His kingdom?" This, with similar exhortations from other members, made such an impression, that, with the exception of one or two who slunk away, they all remained firm at their post. Lights were ordered to be brought in, and the question being put, "If they would abide the whole time of the Assembly and adhere to the protestation?" the whole Assembly rose, and, as with one voice, voted in the affirmative. Lest in the confusion created by so many voices, any dissenting vote should have been given unheard, the roll was called, and one by one they declared their resolution to remain till the business of the Assembly was finished. Just before the roll was called, an incident occurred which greatly encouraged the Assembly. A young nobleman, Lord Erskine, son of the Earl of Mar, who had formerly refused to sign the Covenant, stepped forward to the table, and begged the audience of the Assembly. In a low tone of voice, but with great earnestness, and an utterance almost choked with tears, he said, "I request you, for the Lord's cause, right honourable and worthy members of this Assembly, that ye would receive me into your number; for I have remained too long obstinate to your wholesome admonitions, being moved and stirred up by my own

private ends, rather than any checks of conscience, which ends I cease to reckon before you; but I am ashamed of them, and that I should have dallied so long with God. Therefore I request you, for Christ Jesus' sake, that ye would receive me into your number, and suffer me to subscribe our Covenant." "Which words," says the record from which I quote them, "because he spake them with a low voice, the Moderator rehearsed to the Assembly, professing he could scarce utter them for tears, so that all almost who did hear him, through joy, were constrained to weep." "We all embraced him gladly," says Baillie, "and admired the timeousness of God's comforts." This was followed by another gratifying occurrence. The Earl of Argyll, who had hitherto appeared neutral, though he warmly sympathized with the Covenanters, and had retired along with the Commissioner in the hope of adjusting the quarrel, returned on the following day to the Assembly; and, though not a member of the court, he cheerfully consented, at the request of the Moderator, to remain and countenance their proceedings. The accession of such a powerful nobleman, who was known to stand high in the royal favour, tended greatly to encourage the Assembly at this crisis, and his example was followed by many others of the king's counsellors. While Henderson, however, congratulated them on receiving this "human encouragement," he took care to guard his brethren against placing too much reliance on it. "Though we had not a single nobleman to assist us," said he, "our cause were not the worse nor the weaker."

The first step taken by the Assembly, when they

proceeded to business, was to nullify the six pretended Assemblies which had been held since the accession of James to the English throne, including the Assemblies from 1606 to 1618. These, for various reasons which even Hume allows to be "pretty reasonable," were declared to have been "unfree, unlawful, and null Assemblies." They next proceeded to the censure of the prelates, fourteen in number, who were charged with a great variety of moral as well as ecclesiastical delinquencies. Of these, two archbishops and six bishops were excommunicated, four were deposed, and two suspended. The task of publicly pronouncing these sentences of the Assembly devolved on the Moderator; and on the following day, in the midst of an immense auditory, Henderson discharged his office in the gravest and most impressive manner. After sermon on Psalm cx. 1: "The Lord said unto my Lord, sit thou at my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool," he pronounced on the degraded prelates, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, the awful sentences of deposition and excommunication. Never were the religious feelings of the people of Scotland wound up to a higher pitch of intensity, than on this remarkable occasion. To see the Church of Scotland again rising in her might, after a slumber of more than 30 years, and with her first awakened effort prostrating, at one blow, those prelates who had so long lorded over her and the land with clerical pride and more than clerical power, appeared to them as a dream. A sensation of mingled awe and wonder pervaded the Assembly; and as the more solemn part of the service approached, the interest became so intense, that even the reporters

who took notes of the proceedings became too much agitated by the scene to continue their task. It is hardly necessary to add, that this Assembly condemned the Service-Book, the Canons, and the High Commission; that they renounced the Five Articles of Perth; and that, after declaring Episcopacy to have been abjured by the Church of Scotland, they, in the name of that Church, and as a Church of Christ, unanimously voted its removal, and restored Presbyterian government to all its former integrity.

The Assembly having now sat from the 21st of November to the 20th of December, and held no less than 26 sessions, Henderson addressed them in an eloquent concluding speech. After apologizing for his own weakness in the part he had taken in the proceedings, and complimenting the ministers on the diligence and fidelity they had displayed, he thus proceeded:—

"And now we are quit of the Service-Book, which was a book of slavery and service indeed,—the Book of Canons, which tied us in spiritual bondage,—the Book of Ordination, which was a yoke put upon the necks of faithful ministers,—and the High Commission, which was a guard to keep us all under that slavery. All these evils God has rid us of, and likeways of the civil places of kirkmen, which was the splendour of all these evils; and the Lord has led captivity captive, and made lords slaves. What should we do less than resolve, first, since the Lord has granted us liberty, to labour to be sensible of it, and take notice of it. For we are like to a man newly awakened out of a dream, or like a man that has lien long in the

irons, who, after they are taken off and he redeemed, he feels not his liberty, but thinks the irons are on him still. So it is with us. We do not feel our liberty; therefore it were good for us to study to know the bounds of our liberty wherewith Christ hath set us free, and then again to labour earnestly that we be not more entangled with the yoke of bondage.

"Then, for these nobles, barons, burgesses, and others, who have attended here, this I may say confidently, and from the warrant of the Word, 'Those that honour God, God will honour them.' Your lordships, and these worthy gentlemen, who have been honouring God, and giving testimony ample of your love to religion this time bygone (though I will not excuse your former backslidings), if ye will go on, the Lord shall protect you, bless you, honour you; and your faith shall be found, in the day of the revelation of Jesus Christ, unto praise, honour, and glory. And I must say one word of these nobles, whom Jesus Christ has nobilitated indeed, and declared sensibly to be worthy of that title of nobility: Ye know they were lyke the tops of the mountains that were first discovered in the deluge, which made the little valleys hope to be delivered from it also; and so it came to pass. I remember reading, that in the eastern country, where they worship the sun, a number being assembled early in the morning to that effect, all striving who should see the sun first, a servant turned his face to the west, and waited on. The rest thought him a foolish man, and yet he got the first sight of the sun, shining on the tops of the western mountains. So, truly, he would have been thought a foolish man,

a few years ago, that would have looked for such things of our nobility; yet the Sun of Righteousness has been pleased to shine first upon these mountains; and long, long may He shine upon them, for the comfort of the hills and refreshing of the valleys; and the blessing of God be upon them and their families, and we trust it shall be seen to the generations following.

"Last, I must give a word of thanksgiving to this city, wherein we have had such comfortable residence, and to the principal magistrates of it, who have attended our meeting. The best recompense we can give them, is to pray for the blessing of God upon them; and to give them a taste of our labour, by visiting their college, and any other thing that consists in our power; that so the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ may be established among them, and that the name of this city may from henceforth be, *Jehovah Shammah*,—'The Lord is there.'"

The 133d Psalm was then sung, beginning thus—

"Behold how good a thing it is,
And how becoming well,
Together such as brethren are
In unity to dwell."

The apostolical blessing was pronounced, and Henderson dismissed the Assembly with these memorable words, uttered in a solemn and emphatic voice: "*We have now cast down the walls of Jericho; let him that rebuildeth them beware of the curse of Hiel the Bethelite!*" "And so," says Baillie, "we all departed with great comfort and humble joy, casting ourselves and our poor Church in the arms of our good God."

The Assembly of 1638 may be regarded as one of

the noblest efforts ever made by the Church to assert her intrinsic independence, and the sole headship of our Lord Jesus Christ. Single martyrs have often borne witness to the same purpose,—single ministers, and even congregations, may have stood out boldly for the same truth; but here we have the whole Church of Scotland, by her representatives, in her judicial capacity, lifting up her voice, and proclaiming, before the whole world, the sovereign rights of her Lord and King. No Church, except one constituted on the Presbyterian model, could have borne such a testimony, or gained such a triumph; and the simple fact, that such a noble stand was once made by the Church of Scotland, ought to endear her to the hearts of all who, whatever may be their denomination, are the genuine friends of liberty, of the Christian religion, and of the best interests of mankind.

There can be no doubt that the original demands of the Covenanters came short of the abolition of Episcopacy, and that they would have been contented, at the outset, with some limitation of the power of the bishops, and their subjection to General Assemblies, the discharge of the Articles of Perth, and of the High Commission Court, and the free entry of ministers. But, by degrees, their eyes were opened to discover the root of all the evils of which they complained,—the Episcopacy itself; and nothing tended more to produce this result than the measures of the court, which may be said to have driven them into the right course, from one step to another, beyond their first intentions, and in some cases against their original inclinations. This is repeatedly referred to in the

speeches delivered at the Glasgow Assembly, and in their public papers, with dutiful acknowledgments to that mysterious Providence "who had made the wrath of man to praise Him," and secured to Himself the whole honour of a reformation, accomplished by instruments who could not assume any of the credit to themselves.

Having described the external reformation thus effected, let us now take a glance into the interior of a Presbyterian kirk, and see how the public worship was conducted about 1638. At eight o'clock on Sabbath morning appeared in the desk the reader, whose office it was to read the prayers from Knox's Liturgy, and portions of Scripture, before the minister entered the pulpit. These readers were found so useful to the ministers, that, though the office had been declared by the General Assembly to be without warrant, they were still allowed to officiate, and continued to do so till the Westminster Assembly, when, much against the inclinations of our Scots commissioners, they were condemned. The last relic of these ancient functionaries appeared in the practice, which was common till of late in some of the parishes of Scotland, of the precentor or schoolmaster reading some chapters of the Bible before the ringing of the last bell.*

Immediately on entering the pulpit, the minister kneeled down and began with prayer, the people generally kneeling also. It was customary, at some part of the service, to repeat the Lord's Prayer and the doxology; but in other respects the worship was unfettered by forms, the officiating minister guiding the

* Baillie's Letters, i. 413; Scott's MSS., Adv. Lib.

devotions of his flock, as Justin Martyr describes those of the primitive Christians, "according to his ability, without a prompter." Prayer being ended, the congregation joined in singing a portion of the psalms; a part of the service in which they took great delight, and in which they were so well instructed, that many of them could sing without requiring the aid of a Psalm-book.* No such pains had been taken to instruct the people of England in this part of divine worship. So far from being able to sing the Psalms "without buik," many of them were not able to read them; and the Westminster divines hence found it necessary to enact, that "for the present, where many in the congregation cannot read, it is convenient that the minister, or some other fit person appointed by him and the other ruling officers, do read the Psalm, line by line, before the singing thereof," †—a toleration which our Scottish ministers granted with no small re-

* From a very early period the Psalms of David, which were translated into metre by Sternhold and Hopkins, were sung in the Scots churches, and great pains were used to instruct the people in psalmody. From a curious document, in the hand-writing of Calderwood, we find that "men, women, and children, were exhorted to exercise themselves in the Psalms," and that "sundry musicians of best skill and affection, for furtherance of the Act of Parliament anent the instructing of the youth in musick, have set down common and proper tunes to the whole Psalms, according to the diverse forms of metre."—*Bannatyne Miscellany*, p. 231. In 1631 there appeared a new version of the Psalms, said to have been composed by king James; and Charles, among his other ill-judged innovations, insisted on this version being used instead of the old one. But our fathers had various objections to it. Calderwood says, "The people are acquainted with the old metaphrase more than any book in Scripture; yea, some can sing all, or the most part, *without buik*, and some that cannot read can sing some psalms."—*Ibid.* Mr Row informs us that in the new version, "there were some expressions so poetical and so far from the language of Canaan, that all who had any religion did dislike them; such as calling the sun, *the lord of light*, and the moon, *the pale ladie of the night*, &c."—*Row's M S. Hist.*, p. 263.

† Directory for Public Worship.

luctance. "Then," says Lightfoot, in his Journal of the Assembly, "was our Directory read over to the Scots commissioners, who were absent at the passing of it; and Mr Henderson disliked our permission of any to read the Psalms line by line; and this business held us in some debate."*

The Psalm being sung, the minister offered up another prayer, beseeching the influences of the Spirit to accompany the word preached. And then followed the sermon, which having been succeeded by prayer and praise, the congregation were dismissed with the apostolic blessing. The Presbyterian discourses of this and the succeeding period, though some of them may not please a fastidious taste, and others are disfigured by a certain quaintness and homeliness of style, hardly compatible, in our eyes, with the dignity of religious subjects, uniformly possess the sterling merit of being rich in evangelical sentiment and Christian experience; and in this respect present a striking contrast to the Episcopal sermons of the same period, which are, in general, the driest, most jejune, and most pedantic productions imaginable.

The dress of the ministers at this time was extremely simple. In 1610, king James, among his other cares for his mother Kirk, sent directions from court that all ministers should wear black clothes, and when in the pulpit should appear in black gowns. In general, however, the Presbyterian ministers preferred the old Geneva cloak, which had much the appearance of a gown. As to the people, generally, they seem to have conducted themselves during divine service with suit-

* Lightfoot's Works, vol. xiii. p. 344.

able decorum; though the following extract from the minutes of the Kirk-Session of Perth, would indicate that the clergymen were occasionally exposed to annoyances similar to those of which they have had to complain in more modern times:—"John Tenender, session-officer, is ordained to have his red staff in the kirk on the Sabbath-days, therewith to waken sleepers, and to remove greeting bairns furth of the kirk."*

According to the form now described, public worship was conducted in the Church of Scotland from the Reformation down to the period of which we are writing; and it has continued, with a few inconsiderable variations, to be the form observed from that time to the present. Laud's Service-Book did not survive the tumult of July 1637; and no attempt was made, even during the persecuting reigns of the Stuarts, to impose another book of prayers on the Scottish Church. †

* Scott's MS. Register, ad an. 1616.

† The Countryman's Letter to the Curate; Sir G. Mackenzie's Vindication, p. 9; Dr M'Crie's Miscellaneous Writings, p. 277.—The English liturgy was not introduced into Scotland till about 1711.

CHAPTER VIII.

The Bishops' War—Preparations of the Covenanters—Camp at Dunse Law—Pacification at Birks—General Assembly 1639—Private Meetings—Lord and Lady Loudoun—Civil War Renewed by Charles.

It does not fall within the scope of these sketches, to enter on a minute description of the hostilities which commenced shortly after the dissolution of the Glasgow Assembly of 1638, or to settle the much disputed question, Who began the civil war? Those who are acquainted with the numerous causes which conspired to bring about this collision, will not place much weight on the meeting of that Assembly, the controversy about which was soon settled. It has been alleged by many that Charles' concessions were such as ought to have satisfied the Scots; but they knew that these concessions were not sincere, that he only waited the opportunity to retract them, and that he had been all the time making warlike preparations to lay the liberties of the country at his feet. One thing is certain, that whoever may have been to blame in commencing hostilities, the Scots used every effort to

prevent, and showed every disposition to terminate them. Aware that their proceedings at Glasgow would be misrepresented, and eagerly taken advantage of by their adversaries, they sent up a supplication to the king; in which, in the most humble and respectful manner, they explained the reasons of their conduct. All, however, was of no avail; no sooner was it known at court that the Assembly had continued to sit after being discharged by the Commissioner, than the king meditated revenge. He was so highly incensed at the Covenanters, says Burnet, that "he resolved neither to think nor talk of treating with them, till he should appear among them in a more formidable position." They had touched him on the tender point of the royal prerogative. As the champion of Episcopacy, he deemed himself bound in conscience to resent the insult offered to the order. In short, his pride was piqued, and nothing would satisfy him but unconditional submission. The only answer he made, on reading their supplication, was, "When they have broken my head, they will put on my cowl." He immediately raised an army in England, with which he advanced to the border, ordered a fleet to blockade the Firth of Forth, and despatched the Marquis of Hamilton with another army, to land in the north, and join the forces under the command of the Marquis of Huntly. As the Parliament of England, with whom Charles had also quarrelled, refused to grant him supplies for this outrageous undertaking, the bishops, by the advice of Laud, came forward with large contributions. The inferior clergy in the English Church declined all interference in the

quarrel; but the Papists, who expected every thing from the triumph of the king's party, and acted under the private directions of the queen, were not slow in contributing to the object. The war thus commenced, having been instigated by the advice, and supported by the money, of the prelates, and being, moreover, mainly designed to support their Episcopal pretensions, was commonly called by the English the Bishops' War, and Charles was termed, in ridicule, "the Archbishop of Canterbury's knight."

The posture of Scotland, at this crisis, was sufficiently alarming; but our fathers, conscious of the rectitude of their intentions, and the goodness of their cause, were not to be intimidated. They would not submit to be trampled on by a bigoted court, and an infuriated bench of bishops. "Certainly," says Baillie, "our dangers were greater than we might let our people conceive; but the truth is, we lived by faith in God, we knew the goodness of our cause, and we were resolved to stand to it at all hazards whatsoever, knowing the worst to be a glorious death for the cause of God and our dear country." Animated by such pious and patriotic sentiments, the nation rose, almost simultaneously, and made vigorous preparations for meeting the threatened invasion of the Episcopal army. Charles, who had boasted in his letters and proclamations of forcing the Scots to unconditional submission, soon discovered the truth, of which the Marquis of Hamilton forewarned him, that "while the fire-edge was upon the Scottish spirits, it would not prove an easy task to tame them."* A large force

* Burnet's Memoirs of Duke of Hamilton, 140.

was soon levied, by the orders of Parliament, and placed under the command of General Leslie, a brave old veteran, who had been trained to war under that noble champion of Protestantism and liberty, Gustavus Adolphus, king of Sweden. Beacons were erected along the country, so constructed, that when a fire was lighted at the foot of a long pole, they were to stand to their arms; when another fire was kindled on a grate fixed to a transverse beam, they were to repair to their regiments; and in case of imminent danger, the whole army were summoned to the scene of action by the lighting of a tar-barrel, placed on the top of the pole. By a series of vigorous measures, the Covenanters soon made themselves masters of all the fortified places in Scotland. Apprehending danger from the king's fleet, they took care to fortify the town of Leith; and such was the zeal manifested by all classes of people in the cause, that about 1500 of both sexes, including ladies as well as gentlemen, for the encouragement of the rest, wrought in the trenches till the fortifications were completed.*

While thus providing for self-defence, however, the Covenanters were anxious to vindicate themselves from the charges of their enemies. The king having denounced them as traitors and rebels, even before they took up arms in their defence, and every effort being used by the bishops to render them odious in the eyes of the English, by circulating the most groundless calumnies against them;† they published a paper, in

* "Noblemen, gentlemen, and others wrought at it; and none busier in bearing the rubbish than ladies of honour."—*Guthry's Mem.*, p. 54.

† Some of these calumnies, though fully refuted at the time, are retailed

which they "take God to witness that religion was the only subject, conscience the motive, and reformation the aim, of their designs;"* and that they had no intention of invading England, or casting off their dutiful obedience to his majesty's lawful commands. And when they found themselves compelled to take up arms, another paper appeared, prepared by Henderson,† in which the real state of the quarrel was explained, and their conduct in resorting to self-defence vindicated by many cogent and unanswerable reasons.

At length, the blazing tar-barrel announced to the people of Scotland that the threatened invasion had taken place. A squadron of twenty-eight ships of war, carrying between five and six thousand English troops, under the Marquis of Hamilton, appeared in the Firth of Forth; but the people flocking from all quarters to the point of danger, the fleet was literally pent up on both sides, and the soldiers durst not set a foot on shore. None distinguished themselves more on this occasion than old Lady Hamilton, the mother of the Marquis, who was so zealous a Covenanter, that she came on horseback to Leith, at the head of an armed troop, with two pistols at her saddle, protesting, as is affirmed, that she would kill her son with her own hands, if he should venture to land in a hostile way; for which purpose, it is said, she had loaded her pistols

even to this day. For example, the Glasgow Assembly is charged with having restrained the liberty of the press; whereas they only prohibited any from printing "any thing that concerned the Kirk, without authority from the Kirk, *under the pain of church censure*,—a privilege ordinarily used from the time of the Reformation."—*Remonstrance of the Nobility, &c.*, 1639, p. 16; *Printed Acts of Assembly*, 1638.

* Information to all good Christians within the kingdom of England.

† Instructions for Defensive Arms.

with *balls of gold* instead of lead. It is certain she paid him a visit on board his ship, while he lay in the Forth. What passed at this interview we are not informed; but the people augured the best from it. "The son of such a mother," they said, "will do us no harm."* Hamilton, however, was soon glad to make his escape, when he heard the tidings from the borders. The Scots encountered, at Kelso, a part of the English army, much superior to theirs in numbers, and at the first onset the English threw down their arms and fled, with the loss of three hundred men. "It would," says Defoe, in his Memoirs of the Church of Scotland, "it would make too much sport with the English courage and bravery, which is so well confirmed in the world, to give an account how like scoundrels this army behaved." "The English soldiers," says Baillie, "were a great deal more nimble at flying than fighting; and it was difficult to tell whether the arms of their cavalry were more weary with whipping, or their heels with jading their horses." The real fact was, that the English had no heart in the business.† Whitelocke tells us, that though "the Scots had been proclaimed rebels in England, and a prayer was published, to be said in all the churches against them; yet nothing could alter the opinion of the English officers and private soldiers, who said 'they

* Whitelocke's Memorials, p. 30. The story about the "balls of gold" rests on the authority of Gordon of Straloch's MS. (none of the purest sources to be sure); but the noble heroism of the old Marchioness is noticed by Spang, *Hist. Motuum*, p. 257.

† The king wrote to Hamilton that he was now fully satisfied of what that nobleman had told him in the gallery at Whitehall, viz., "that the nobility and gentry of England would never incline to invade Scotland, and thereby *begin an offensive war*."—*Mem. of D. Hamilton*, p. 139. *Nalson*, vol. i. p. 231.

would not fight to maintain the pride and power of the bishops.'" They had been impressed into the service against their will; while the Scots, a nation which may have been vanquished, but which has never been subdued, felt at the time, as Baillie says, that they would not have been afraid though all Europe had been on their borders.

Encouraged by their success, but still standing on the defensive, the Scots encamped at Dunse Law, a hill near Dunse, in the beginning of June 1639, and the appearance they presented on this occasion is described with such *naiveté* by Baillie, that we cannot give it better than in his own words:—

"It would have done you good to have cast your eyes athort our brave and rich hills, as oft as I did with great contentment and joy, for I was there among the rest, having been chosen preacher by the gentlemen of our shire. I carried, as the fashion was, a sword and a couple of Dutch pistols at my saddle; but I promise, for the offence of no man, except a robber in the way; for it was our part alone to pray and preach for the encouragement of our countrymen, which I did to my power most cheerfully. Our regiment lay on the sides of the hill almost round about. Every company had, fleeing at the captain's tent door, a brave new colour, stamped with the Scottish arms, and this motto, *For Christ's Crown and Covenant*, in golden letters. Our soldiers were all lusty and full of courage; the most of them stout young plowmen; great cheerfulness in the face of all. They were clothed in olive or gray plaiden, with bonnets having knots of blue ribands. The captains, who were barons

or country gentlemen, were distinguished by blue ribands worn scarf-wise across the body. None of our gentlemen were any thing the worse of lying some weeks together in their cloaks and boots on the ground. Our meanest soldiers were always served in wheat bread, and a groat would have got them a lamb-leg, which was a dainty world to the most of them. We were much obliged to the town of Edinburgh for money: Mr Harry Pollok, by his sermons, moved them to shake out their purses. Every one encouraged another. The sight of the nobles and their beloved pastors daily raised their hearts. The good sermons and prayers, morning and evening, under the roof of heaven, to which their drums did call them instead of bells, also Leslie's skill, prudence, and fortune, made them as resolute for battle as could be wished. We were feared that emulation among our nobles might have done harm; but such was the wisdom and authority of that *old little crooked soldier* (General Leslie), that all, with an incredible submission, gave over themselves to be guided by him, as if he had been the great Solyman. Had you lent your ear in the morning, and especially at even, and heard in the tents the sound of some singing psalms, some praying, and some reading the Scripture, ye would have been refreshed. True, there was swearing and cursing and brawling in some quarters, whereat we were grieved; but we hoped, if our camp had been a little settled, to have gotten some way for these misorders. For myself I never found myself in better temper than I was all that time till my head was again homeward; for I was as a man who had taken my leave from the

world, and was resolved to die in that service, without return." *

Such was the character of the people whom Charles had compelled to rise in self-defence. The motto on their banners, FOR CHRIST'S CROWN AND COVENANT, was meant to vindicate their appearance in arms, by proclaiming to the world that it was solely in behalf of the rights of conscience and religion. This gave a religious character to the whole enterprise, which it was of great importance to keep in view; for Charles and his bishops had taken great pains to represent them as a set of lawless rebels, actuated by the factious spirit of worldly men, and aiming at the subversion of royal authority. It was chiefly, too, to contradict this calumny, and show the sacredness as well as justness of their quarrel, that the ministers took such a prominent part in the war, both in the pulpit and in the field, and, I may add, in the cabinet also. From not attending to this circumstance, they have been blamed and reproached, not only by prelatical writers, but by others from whom better things might have been expected. To such as condemn defensive war, even when the dearest rights of a people are invaded, and who would adduce such passages of Scripture as—"The weapons of our warfare are not carnal," and, "All they that take the sword shall perish by the sword," which were quoted at the time by the advocates of slavish submission to the will of a despot, with the view of preventing a whole nation from using the only weapons by which they could vindicate their civil and religious liberties—to such persons we can only

* Baillie's Letters, vol. i. 174.

reply, as one did of old, "We are not careful to answer you in this matter." Away with such pusillanimity! Scotland has ever been a loyal nation; but touch her on the point of conscience, and it will be found that, like her emblematical thistle, she cannot, and she will not be touched with impunity. She has ever been more anxious to secure her religious rights than to enjoy civil privileges; her love of liberty has hitherto been intertwined with her love to religion; and if these twin-sisters should ever be dissevered, we fear that the blow which divides them will prove fatal to both. We shall say no more in vindication of our Scots ministers, than that their noble spirit in coming to the field to encourage their people in the day of battle, presents a striking contrast to the conduct of the English bishops, who, after inciting the unfortunate monarch to fight against his subjects, accompanied him only to York, and then left him, in the hour of peril, to finish, as he best might, the war which they had urged him to begin.

The issue of the affair at Dunse Law was, that the king, perceiving the determined front opposed to him by the Covenanters, and his own troops daily deserting his standard, proposed a negociation for peace. Commissioners from the army of the Covenant, among whom were the Earls of Rothes and Loudoun, and Alexander Henderson, having first required a safe conduct under the king's own hand, were admitted to an audience with his majesty, in his camp at Birks, on the south side of the Tweed; and upon being asked to state what they wanted, Loudoun, falling on his knees, said, that "they only asked to enjoy their religion and

liberties, according to the ecclesiastical and civil laws of the kingdom." In particular, they entreated that the acts of the late Assembly at Glasgow should be ratified by Parliament; that all matters ecclesiastical should be determined by the Assemblies of the Kirk, and matters civil by Parliament; and that those incendiaries who had endeavoured to set two neighbour kingdoms at variance might be tried by the laws of their country, and punished according to their deserts. A treaty was at length agreed upon, of a very general and ambiguous description, but which the Covenanters, in their extreme desire of peace, gratefully accepted.* The commissioners were sumptuously entertained by the officers of the king's army; Rothes kept them all in good humour by his jests and anecdotes; and thus, as one of the English wits observed, the bishops were beaten on this occasion, "neither by *civil* law, nor by *canon* law, but by *Dunse Law*." The commissioners returned, thankful for, rather than proud of, their success, and the army was disbanded, though, having intelligence of a treacherous design to break the treaty, they still kept the officers on half-pay. "Yea," says Baillie, who was a high loyalist, though a staunch Covenanter, "had we been ten times victorious in set battles, it was our conclusion to have laid down our army at his feet, and on our knees presented nought but our first supplications. We had no other end of our wars; we sought no

* "In the course of the negociation, the Scots told the king that if he would give them leave to enjoy their religion and their laws, they would, at their own expense, transport their army to assist in the recovery of the Palatinate,—a memorable circumstance unnoticed by historians."—*Macaulay's Hist.*, vol. ii. p. 296; *Sydney's State Papers*, vol. ii. p. 692.

crowns; we aimed at no lands and honours; we desired but to keep our own in the service of our prince, as our ancestors had done; we loved no new masters. Had our throne been void, and our voices been sought for the filling of Fergus's chair, we would have died ere any had sat down on that fatal marble but Charles alone." Such, we have reason to believe, were the sentiments of the whole of the Scottish nation at this time. Such was their loyalty, as it appears in all their public papers about this critical period, and, as it was proved, through all the political changes that followed, down to the restoration of Charles II., which was brought about mainly by the Presbyterians. And such were the men who are stigmatized to this day as republican and anti-monarchical rebels!

Charles, we may easily believe, was much mortified at being compelled to treat with men whom he had doomed to destruction; and he resolved, on the first opportunity, to break through all his engagements. He began by blaming the Scots for not discharging their officers, and for pressing the Covenant upon his subjects. To these complaints it was answered, that as General Leslie, and those who had accompanied him, had relinquished their posts of honour and profit in Sweden to serve their native country, they judged themselves bound in honour to give them entertainment; and that as to the Covenant, they could aver that none had, to their knowledge, been forced to subscribe it. The king then attempted a new stratagem: he sent an order for fourteen of the leading noblemen and ministers to hold a conference with him at Berwick, with the purpose, there can be

no doubt, of entrapping them. Six of the number waited on his majesty, but he declined imparting his pleasure to them, till the whole fourteen were present, and the six were dismissed, like Joseph's brethren, upon promise that they should return and bring up the rest with them. This step excited the utmost alarm in Edinburgh; they had now begun to distrust the king in every thing; they suspected a plot against their leaders; and when the fourteen, among whom was Mr Henderson, were setting out on their way to Berwick, they were stopped at the Water-gate by a multitude of the lower classes of the inhabitants, who took their horses from them, and ordered them to stay at home,—an order which, as may be supposed, they were not very unwilling to obey.

Notwithstanding this affront, by which he was deeply offended, the king found himself obliged to sanction a meeting of the General Assembly, which was appointed to be held in Edinburgh in August 1639. The Earl of Traquair was sent as Commissioner, with secret instructions to prevent, if possible, the condemnation of Episcopacy, and to protest, at the close of the Assembly, that any concessions made by him, with which the king might be dissatisfied, "his majesty should be heard for redress thereof, in his own time and place." The Assembly was placed in a somewhat awkward predicament, in consequence of an agreement entered into by the Scots commissioners at the Pacification at Birks, that no reference would be made to the proceedings of the Glasgow meeting. This agreement, however, which showed their ardent desire for a peaceful settlement of the contentions

between them and the king, was qualified at the time by a declaration, that though his majesty could not approve the Glasgow Assembly, it was not his majesty's mind that any of the Presbyterians "should be thought to disapprove or depart from the same." And at this meeting, when Traquair would have had them consider all that was done against the bishops at that time as null and void, the Assembly firmly answered, that they were careful not to offend the king by requiring any formal approbation on his part of the Glasgow Assembly; but that, "*while they breathed*, they would not pass from that Assembly." Finding them determined, the Commissioner, to the great joy and astonishment of the Assembly, announced his seemingly gracious concessions, and, with consummate duplicity, pledged himself, in his sovereign's name, to sanction an act of Assembly, embracing all the points for which the Covenanters had struggled, —assented to the abolition of Episcopacy and of all the innovations and evils condemned by the Glasgow Assembly, and undertook to get this act ratified in Parliament. This artifice succeeded; the suspicions of the Presbyterians were lulled, and the declaration of the Commissioner threw them into raptures of devout joy and chivalrous loyalty. The stern heroes of the Covenant were melted into tears; and the venerable patriarchs of the old Presbyterian Church, who had served at her altars for half a century, and who had mourned her degradation in silent sorrow or sad captivity, poured out their hearts in thanksgiving to God and the king in the most affecting terms.*

* Peterkin's Records of the Kirk, p. 273.

"Old Mr John Row being called upon, with tears, said,—I bless, I glorify, I magnify the God of heaven and earth, that has pitied this poor Church, and given us such matter of joy and consolation; and the Lord make us thankful, first, to our gracious and loving God, and next, obedient subjects to his majesty.

"Mr John Weymes, being called on, could scarce get a word spoken for tears trickling down along his gray hairs, like drops of rain or dew upon the top of the tender grass, and yet withal smiling for joy, said,—I do remember of a glorious Reformation in Scotland. I do remember when the Kirk of Scotland had a beautiful face. I remember since there was a great power and life accompanying the ordinances of God, and a wonderful work and operation upon the hearts of people. This mine eyes did see;—my eyes did see a fearful defection after procured by our sins; and no more did I wish, before mine eyes were closed, but to have seen such a beautiful day, as to my great comfort I now see this day, and that under the conduct and favour of our king's majesty. Blessed for evermore be our Lord and King, Jesus; and the blessing of God be upon his majesty, and the Lord make us thankful!

"The moderator (David Dickson) said,—I believe the king's majesty made never the heart of any so blyth in giving them a bishoprick, as he has made the heart of that reverend man joyful in putting them away. Would God the king's majesty had a part of our joy that we have this day!" *

* MS. Journal of the General Assembly 1639 (*penes me*), p. 372; Records of the Kirk, p. 201.

The same Assembly condemned the book entitled the "King's Large Declaration," and understood to be the production of Dr Balcanquall, as an infamous libel, "dishonourable to God, to the king's majesty, and to the National Kirk, and stuffed full of lies and calumnies." To crown their triumph, they obtained the sanction of the Commissioner, and of the Scottish Privy Council, to the Covenant as it had been sworn the preceding year; and it was accordingly ordered to be subscribed by all ranks and classes within the kingdom.

So much has been said about the Scottish Presbyterians at this period compelling the lieges to swear the Covenant, that a few words may be necessary to explain this part of the history. We have already seen that, at first, no compulsion was used, with the consent either of the Church or of the Parliament, in imposing the Covenant. Aberdeen was almost the only town that could complain of being forced into the bond, and for this the Aberdonians had themselves to blame, having taken up arms against the Covenanters, and thus set themselves up against the whole country.* So that

* The following letter affords decided evidence that the leaders of the Covenant had not the slightest intention of enforcing it by civil pains and penalties. It was written by the Earl of Rothes to his cousin, Patrick Leslie, who was provost of Aberdeen: "LOVING COUSIN,—Because your town of Aberdeen is now the only burgh in Scotland that hath not subscribed the Confession of Faith [so the Covenant was then termed], and all the good they can obtain thereby is, that if we sail fairly, as there is very good condition offered, they shall be under *perpetual ignominy*, and the doctors that are unsound *punished by the Assembly*; and if things go to extremity because they refuse, and in hopes of the Marquis of Huntly's help, the king will perhaps send in some ship or ships and men there as a sure place: and if that be good for the country, judge ye of it. It is but a fighting against the High God to resist this course. * * Do all the good ye can in that town and the country about: ye will not repent it;

when Montrose was sent, in 1639, to that "unnatural toun," as it was called, he took it upon himself, without any authority, to compel the bailies and chief persons to swallow the Covenant. The same conduct, we regret to say, was followed by Colonel Munro, a Highland gentleman, who had distinguished himself abroad, and who, being accustomed to pillage in the German wars, suppressed the king's adherents in the north with unjustifiable severity. Having been sent to Aberdeen to oppose the Marquis of Huntly and the Earl of Aboyne, who were levying forces and fortifying that part of the country against the Covenanters, the Colonel's first exploit, for which he had no warrant from Church or State, was to impose the Covenant on all whom he suspected of disaffection; and for disobedience to this injunction, Mr Irvine of Drum, and twelve other gentlemen, with twenty-six burgesses of Aberdeen, were sent up as prisoners to Edinburgh, till, as Munro said, "they should learn to speak the country language." These are the only instances in which we hear of any severe measures being employed to enforce the Covenant; and when it is considered that they were adopted during the heat of a civil war, and committed, in the first instance, by one who proved a renegade, and in the other, by a rough soldier of fortune, who had no notion of any pleading conscientious scruples in the matter, they are

and attend my Lord Montrose, *who is a noble and true-hearted cavalier*. * * I am your friend and cousin,—ROTHES. *Leslie, 13th July* 1638." —*Rothes' Relation*, App. p. 216. The passage in the above letter respecting the Marquis of Montrose, who at this time professed great zeal for the Covenant, is worthy of notice. We shall find this "noble and true-hearted cavalier" appearing, a few years after this, in his true colours.

hardly worth the indignation that has been wasted on them.

But why, it may be asked, did they procure an order to enforce subscription to the Covenant by civil pains and penalties? Far be it from us to defend persecution for religious opinions, or to justify the Covenanters in any instance where it can be shown they were guilty of this; but to form a candid judgment on the question, it is necessary to consider the circumstances in which our fathers were placed. In a time of civil war, it is found necessary to administer tests and exact compliances, which would be thought intolerable in a time of peace; and as this war was raised entirely on religious grounds, the Covenant, which was intended as a bond of mutual defence and confederation, was the only effectual means of distinguishing friends from foes. Had there been a party in the country conscientiously opposed to Presbytery, and yet favourable to the struggle made by the Presbyterians for civil liberty, a civil test would have been quite sufficient; but no such party existed. Those who were opposed to Presbytery, were all the advocates and abettors of civil despotism; those who would not abjure Prelacy would have wreathed around the necks of their countrymen the galling chains of civil and ecclesiastical thraldom. The name of *Malignants*, which this party now acquired, shows the light in which they were generally regarded. But the best vindication of the Presbyterians is to be found in their actual practice. Though they considered it necessary to obtain the sanction of the civil power to the Covenant, by which it was constituted a legal and national deed, and though severe laws were afterwards

passed against those who refused subscription to it, which cannot in themselves be defended, yet it is not possible to point to a single instance in which any were put to death, and very few instances occurred in which any were subjected to hardships, for refusing to subscribe it.

Superficial thinkers and talkers have been accustomed to indulge in sage reflections on the intolerance of our Scottish ancestors; professing to wonder that, on escaping from persecution, they should have become persecutors themselves, and charitably concluding that, had they possessed the power, they would, like all dominant sects, have abused it as much as their opponents. As their history becomes better understood, such sentiments are found to require considerable qualification. Men of sense and candour, guided by the spirit of a less flimsy religion, and the lights of a sounder philosophy, are beginning to discover that the intolerance of the Covenanters, if it indeed deserves that name, was all on the side of liberty; that the power which they claimed was wielded in the promotion of morality and liberal education; and that the measures which they adopted, severe and trenchant as they may be thought by us, had they succeeded according to their desires and intentions, would have issued in the entire demolition of civil and ecclesiastical tyranny.

The proceedings of the General Assembly of 1639, while they diffused general joy through Scotland, gave mortal offence to the king, who blamed his Commissioner for having exceeded his instructions, by sanctioning the condemnation of Prelacy, and the

renovation of the Covenant; so that when the Scottish Parliament met for the purpose of ratifying these acts of Assembly, they were prorogued by royal mandate till June 1640. Against this arbitrary proceeding the members of Parliament remonstrated, and sent the Earl of Loudoun, with other deputies, to London, to lay their grievances at the foot of the throne. The result was, that Loudoun was sent to the Tower on a charge of high treason; and if we are to believe the secret history of the period, the king resolved to despatch him privately, without trial or even charge, after the manner of an eastern sultan. About three o'clock in the afternoon he sent an order to Sir William Balfour, the lieutenant of the Tower, to see Lord Loudoun's head struck off within the prison, before nine the next morning. The sentence was communicated to the prisoner, who heard it with much composure; but the lieutenant, anxious to save his lordship from death, and his majesty from disgrace, apprized the Marquis of Hamilton of the orders he had received, and both immediately repaired to the king, whom they found in bed, and earnestly besought him to reverse the warrant. At first Charles stormed, and declared, with an oath, that it should be executed; but on Hamilton setting before him the danger of the measure, he yielded, and sullenly tore the warrant in pieces.*

We notice this incident chiefly for the purpose of

* Burnet's Mem. of Hamilton, p. 161; Rushworth, vol. iii. p. 99; Oldmixon's England, vol. i. p. 140; Scots Staggering State, &c.—"This is so extraordinary an event," says Mr Brodie, "that I rejected it in the first instance; but, on maturer reflection, I have seen it in a different light." —*Hist. British Empire*, vol. ii. p. 515.

introducing another, not so generally known, regarding the lady of this illustrious nobleman. On hearing of her husband's imprisonment, Lady Loudoun presented in person a petition to the Scottish Parliament, beseeching them to interfere in his behalf, from consideration of the loss which his family and the country would sustain by his death. The Parliament having cheerfully acceded to this request, her ladyship returned them thanks. "But," said the heroine, "I hope your lordships will not suffer your loving apprehension of my husband's danger to restrain you from any course which your lordships think advantageous for the kirk and kingdom. To these I desire your lordships to have regard only, and never to prejudice them in the least, for any compassionate consideration of my dear husband's sufferings."* Had this speech been delivered by the lady of a cavalier, it would, doubtless, have called forth universal and unbounded admiration. But Lady Loudoun was a Covenanter; and it is probable that, in certain quarters, this will share the fate of similar instances of female heroism and self-denial at this period, which our high-church historians can only account for on the supposition that these ladies, in their zeal for securing to their husbands the crown of martyrdom, must have been contemplating the advantages of a second match! But, indeed, such writers are as incapable of appreciating the sacred enthusiasm of these high-spirited women, as they are of understanding the manly principles which animated their husbands and brothers in this important cause.

While thus involved in outward trouble, the Pres-

* MS. Register of Rescinded Acts, 1640, in Register Office.

byterians were threatened with intestine discord, from a dispute which arose in 1639 regarding private meetings. During the tyranny of the prelates, it had been customary for religious persons, particularly in Ireland, to meet in private houses for prayer and Christian conference; and the Scottish exiles, on returning home from that country after the expulsion of the bishops, felt naturally desirous to keep up these meetings, from which they had derived much comfort in their banishment. Some of them are said to have been tinctured with Brownism or Independency, and they were accused of various excesses and disorders. It seems unquestionable, that some of the more forward had, in their zeal for such means of private edification, spoken in disrespectful terms of the ordinary ministry, or of some ministers who had opposed them. This roused the ire of Mr Harry Guthry, minister of Stirling, and afterwards bishop of Dunkeld, who brought the matter for adjudication before the Assembly which met at Aberdeen in July 1640. The consequence was, a keen dispute, in which Samuel Rutherford defended the private meetings; while Calderwood, who, from having witnessed the extravagancies of the Brownists in Holland, entertained a great dread of any thing approaching to Independency, argued against them. Much to the dissatisfaction of many, this Assembly condemned the practice; but the question having been renewed in the Assembly of 1641, was amicably settled by their agreeing to certain regulations, drawn up by Henderson, for preventing the abuse of such meetings.*

* Guthry's Memoirs, p. 78, *et seq.*; Baillie's Let., i. p. 197; M'Crie's Miscellaneous Writings, p. 38, Ap. ii.; Records of the Kirk, p. 294.

It is needless, as it is painful, to dwell on the subsequent proceedings of the infatuated monarch. Yielding to the solicitations of his prelatical counsellors, and having obtained funds from them for renewing the war, Charles once more, in spite of all his promises, denounced the Scots as rebels, and, without any provocation, prepared to invade the country. On this occasion, the Scottish army did not await the approach of the royal forces; they entered England, and encountering the enemy at Newburn, gained another decisive victory on the 28th of August 1640. The result was another treaty, begun at Rippon, and afterwards transferred to London. Mr Henderson having been included among the commissioners for conducting this treaty, it was deemed advisable by the General Assembly that he should be accompanied by some of the ablest of his brethren, who might be useful in combating the errors of the times, and devising means for settling the unhappy differences which prevailed. The persons selected for this purpose were Mr Robert Baillie, Mr George Gillespie, and Mr Robert Blair, who set out in high spirits for the English metropolis. "We rode," says Baillie, in a letter to his wife, "upon little nags, each attended by his servant. We were by the way at great expenses; their inns are all like palaces; and no marvel, for they extortion their guests. For three meals, coarse enough, we would pay, together with our horses, sixteen or seventeen pounds (Scots); and some three dishes of cray fish, like little partans, cost us forty-two shillings." Such was the humble guise in which the founders of the Solemn League went up to Lon-

don. But to form a proper idea of the causes which led to the formation of that league, the scene must now be transferred for a little to England.

CHAPTER IX.

The Scene changes to England—The Star Chamber—Irish Massacre—The Long Parliament—The Solemn League and Covenant—Westminster Assembly—George Gillespie—Westminster Standards—Presbyterianism in England—Presbyterianism in Ireland—Erastianism and Sectarianism.

From the unhappy hour when toleration was granted to Popery, on the arrival of Charles' queen in England, there followed a series of arbitrary measures which alarmed the jealousy of the English nation. Archbishop Laud, who ruled over the Church with a rod of iron, had been striving to reintroduce the worst errors of Popery; and whatever might be his private motives, it was evident to all that the real tendency of his measures was to restore the authority of the Pope. The proceedings of the infamous Star Chamber, over which he presided, had roused the indignation of all classes. Many of the best ministers in the land had been imprisoned, pilloried, or driven into banishment for nonconformity. Multitudes of people, despairing of religious liberty at home, had submitted to voluntary exile, and fled to America, where they planted a colony in New

England. Even this last resource was grudged them, and means were taken to prevent the emigration of the Puritans, as they were called. Among the rest, two individuals who had incurred the vengeance of the prelates, were on the point of embarking for the new world, when the Government issued orders to prohibit the ship from sailing,—these were John Hampden and Oliver Cromwell. And thus, in the inscrutable arrangements of Heaven, it was ordered that these persons should remain to act their distinguished part in the revolution which followed, and that the royal party should, in pursuance of their own reckless policy, forcibly detain on the scene of action the very instruments destined for their own destruction.

As a specimen of the cruelties exercised by the Star Chamber, we may notice their treatment of Dr Alexander Leighton, father of the celebrated archbishop of that name. This worthy man, who was a professor of divinity in St Andrews, was apprehended in London, at the instigation of Laud, and on the charge of having published a book, entitled, "Sion's Plea against the Prelacy," was thrown into prison. There he lay in a filthy hole, infested with vermin, for fifteen weeks; and when served with his libel, he was reduced to such a state of distress, that his hair and skin had come off his body, and he was unable to appear at the bar. In this wretched condition he was condemned, unheard, to suffer the following sentence, on hearing which pronounced, we are told that Laud "pulled off his cap and gave God thanks;" but the bare recital of which, in the petition of Dr Leighton,

some years afterwards, at the trial of the archbishop, sent such a thrill of horror through the breasts of the members of Parliament, that the clerk was repeatedly ordered to stop till they had recovered themselves:— "This horrid sentence was to be inflicted with knife, fire, and whip, at and upon the pillory, with ten thousand pounds fine; which some of the lords of court conceived could never be inflicted, but only that it was imposed on a dying man to terrify others. But Laud and his creatures caused the said sentence to be executed with a witness; for the hangman was animated with strong drink all the night before in the prison, and with threatening words to do it cruelly. Your petitioner's hands being tied to a stake, besides all other torments, he received thirty-six stripes with a treble cord; after which he stood almost two hours in the pillory, in cold, frost, and snow, and then suffered the rest, as cutting off the ear, firing the face, and slitting up the nose. He was made a spectacle of misery to men and angels. And on that day sevennight, the sores upon his back, ears, nose, and face, not being cured, he was again whipped at the pillory in Cheapside, and there had the remainder of the sentence executed, by cutting off the other ear, slitting up the other nostril, and branding the other cheek!"* Similar punishments were inflicted on Mr Prynne, Dr Bastwick, and Mr Burton, three eminent Puritans, whose only crime was their having written against Laud and his ceremonies. The generous spirit of the English people revolted at such atrocities, which only rendered their perpetrators odious, and prepared the

* Neal's Hist. of the Puritans, vol. ii. p. 385.

way for their downfall. The sufferers at the pillory, instead of being mocked by the spectators, met with their cordial sympathy; and symptoms began to appear, very plainly indicating, that had Laud been placed in the same degrading position, with his "mean sallow visage, pinched features and peering eyes," the very picture of the superstitious littleness of his mind, the spectacle would have been hailed with shouts of universal satisfaction.

In 1641, an event occurred which awakened the whole population of England, as well as Scotland, to a full sense of the danger to which their religion and liberties were exposed,—we refer to the horrible massacre of the Protestants of Ireland by the Roman Catholics. The exact amount of the share which Charles had in this infamous transaction is involved in considerable perplexity; but certain it is, that the avowed object of the leaders in the insurrection was to subjugate the Parliament of England and the Scots army, and make common cause with the king in his struggle for arbitrary power. Religious rancour, goaded by superstition, lent its energies to the promotion of this design. The ignorant natives, schooled by their priests into the belief that they would merit heaven by putting the heretics to death, received the sacrament before commencing the work of carnage, in token of their absolution from all the consequences of indulging their unholy passions; and they swore they would not leave a Protestant alive in the kingdom. The scene of slaughter opened on the 23d of October 1641, continuing without intermission for several months. The Protestants of Ulster were attacked

with a savage ferocity unparalleled in the annals of civilization. No mercy was shown to sex or rank, age or infancy. The mother was reserved only to see her helpless children butchered before her eyes, and then to suffer the same fate. Some wretches were prevailed upon, by the promise of life, to become the executioners of their dearest relatives; and after having incurred this tremendous guilt, were executed in their turn. Others, after being tempted by the same promise to disown their faith and conform to the Popish rites, were coolly told that, lest they should relapse, it would be charity to send them immediately to heaven, and were forthwith put to death. In these tragical scenes, the women, under the influence of religious frenzy, were as active as the men; and mere children, hardly able to wield the knife, were urged by their parents to stain their little hands in blood. But time would fail us to recount the cruelties and indignities committed on the unhappy Protestants.*

* The bare recital of these execrable atrocities (without entering into details), is enough to make the ears to tingle. Not to speak of the multitudes who perished in the field of battle and in dungeons, thousands were driven into the water, like so many beasts, and knocked on the head or shot, if they attempted to swim for their lives; others were dragged through the water with ropes about their necks; others buried alive; others hung up by the arms, and gradually slashed to death, to see how many blows an Englishman would endure before he died; others, particularly the women, were ripped up,—their children were thrown to the swine to be devoured before their eyes, or being taken up by the heels, had their brains dashed out against trees; while others were found in the fields sucking the breasts of their murdered mothers, and crying, mammy! mammy! were without mercy buried alive. Multitudes were enclosed in houses, which being set on fire, they were miserably consumed in the flames, or cut to pieces on attempting to escape! These fearful butcheries, accompanied with the most hellish blasphemies and imprecations on the part of the murderers, and the most heart-rending shrieks and lamentations from their terrified victims, present a scene unparalleled in British history, and only next in horror to the massacre of St Bartholomew in France.

Suffice it to add, that at the first outbreak of the rebellion, according to the most moderate computation, 40,000, while according to others, no less than 300,000 altogether, fell victims to the vengeance of Popery.*

When the tidings of this massacre reached Scotland, Charles was in Edinburgh, endeavouring to conciliate the Scots, in the hope of obtaining their aid against the English Parliament. With this view, he sanctioned all their proceedings against Episcopacy, and even ratified the acts of the Glasgow Assembly,—concessions for which he has been severely condemned by some historians, and of which he himself is said to have repented. And yet these very writers, while they allow that he was forced by circumstances into these concessions, and never meant to give them effect, are loud in their condemnation of the Scots for not giving him credit for his good intentions, and for taking part with the English Parliament in the subsequent struggles, instead of resting satisfied with having obtained a peaceable settlement of their own discipline! But the charge is as absurd as it is disingenuous. For how could they expect the peaceable enjoyment of their own discipline, so long as Charles

* Sir John Temple's History of the Irish Rebellion, in Appendix, No. IV., to Fox's Acts and Monuments, Seymour's edit. 1838; Reid's Hist. of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, vol. i. pp. 308-336.—Dr Reid says, "It is vain to hope to discover the exact number of Protestant sufferers during the first or earliest stage of the rebellion. Suffice it to say, that the lowest possible computation presents an awful sacrifice of human life." We consider 40,000 a very moderate computation, if not "the lowest possible," in estimating the numbers involved in a massacre, which so many writers have calculated at hundreds of thousands, which almost depopulated the northern counties of Ireland, and which continued, with brief intermission, to rage for two years.

continued to wage war with his Parliament,—a war instigated by the counsels of the avowed enemies of the Presbyterians, and plainly designed to establish arbitrary power? The duplicity of the king, and his attachment to Prelacy, were too well known to encourage them to place much reliance on professions which, made only in the hour of his need, would be as easily revoked in the event of his success. From the triumph of Charles in such a contest, they had nothing to expect but revenge; their only hope, as presbyterians and as patriots, lay in the success of the English Parliament.

This Parliament, so well known in history by the name of the Long Parliament, has been loaded with such uniform and indiscriminating abuse, that it may surprise our readers to learn that, during the first years of its history, it consisted of independent gentlemen of the most unblemished reputation, and of whom Clarendon himself is obliged to say, "As to religion, they were all members of the Established Church, and almost to a man for Episcopal government. Though they were undevoted enough to the court, they had all imaginable duty of the king, and affection for the government established by law or ancient custom; and without doubt, the majority of that body were persons of gravity and wisdom, who, being possessed of great and plentiful fortunes, had no mind to break the peace of the kingdom, or to make any considerable alterations of the government of the Church or State."*

It would be interesting to trace the steps by which the public mind of England was gradually prepared

* Clarendon, vol. i. p. 184.

for the complete extirpation of the hierarchy. Neal ascribes it to the arrogance of the prelates, who, instead of being contented, as their predecessors had been, with an acknowledgment of the lawfulness of their office, began to plead for its divine right; "and as the Parliament increased in power, the Puritans stiffened in their demands, till all methods of accommodation were impracticable."* But he conceals the fact, which could be easily proved from other writers, that the great body of the English Puritans, including under this term many of the Established clergy, had long been decidedly Presbyterian in their sentiments. At no period of our history was the subject of Church government so thoroughly discussed. It became the all-engrossing topic of the day; and it is computed that, on this controversy alone, there issued from the press, between 1640 and 1660, no fewer than 30,000 pamphlets. The question, from its close connection with public affairs, soon became a national one; the trial of Archbishop Laud, who was impeached by the Parliament of high treason, brought out sad disclosures; public feeling ran every day higher against the prelates; and, at last, the Parliament, deeply sensible of the necessity of some reform in the English Church, summoned an Assembly of Divines to meet at Westminster on the 1st of July 1643, for the purpose of taking this subject into their serious deliberation. To aid them in this object, they invited the General Assembly of the Scottish Church to send up some of their number as commissioners; and they resolved to make common cause with the Scots, and

* Neal's History of the Puritans, vol. ii. 409.

draw closer together the bonds of union with them in asserting the cause of liberty and reformation.

Every step taken by the English Parliament was viewed with intense interest in Scotland. It appears from the correspondence carried on during the treaty in 1640 and 1641, between the English and Scottish commissioners, hitherto unpublished, that even at that early period the Scots contemplated, and earnestly pleaded, for a uniformity in doctrine, worship, discipline, and government, between the two Churches of England and Scotland. Their primary motive in making this proposal was certainly to secure the peaceable enjoyment of their own form of religion, which, they were persuaded, could not be expected so long as the two Churches continued so much divided. At a time when religion exerted such an influence as a governing principle both over rulers and subjects, they held that "unity in religion" was the only effectual means of healing the civil dissensions by which the country was in danger of being rent in pieces. But they had other motives, more elevated and enlarged, for desiring such a uniformity. While they disclaimed all intentions of dictating terms of union to the kingdom and Church of England, they could not fail to see, and seeing, to avail themselves of the opportunity presented to them in Providence, of promoting the interests of truth, and extending to their brethren in England the blessings of a purer worship and more scriptural form of polity. "We have not been so forgetful," they say, "of ourselves, who are the lesser, and of England, which is the greater kingdom, as to suffer any such presumptuous thoughts to enter into our minds.

Yet charity is no presumption, and the common duty of charity bindeth all Christians at all times both to pray and profess their desire that all others were not only almost but altogether such as themselves, except their afflictions and distresses." "This unity of religion," they add, "shall make ministers to build the Church with both their hands, whereas now the one hand is holden out for opposition against the other party; and shall turn the many unpleasant labours of writing and reading of unprofitable controversies into treatises of mortification, and studies of devotion. It is a thing so desirable, that all sound divines and politicians are for it; and as we conceive so pious a work to be worthy the best consideration, so we are earnest in recommending it to your Lordships, that it may be brought before his majesty and the Parliament, as that which, *without forcing of conscience*, seemeth not only to be a possible but an easy work." They then proceed, with great modesty, to suggest a reformation in the government of the English Church, concluding with a recommendation "that the Church be peaceably governed by churchmen in Assemblies, and the State, in Parliament and Council, governed by civil men and not by churchmen; thus the work shall be better done; the means that uphold their unprofitable pomp may supply the wants of many preaching ministers, and, without the smallest loss to the subjects, may be a great increase to his majesty's revenues; his majesty's authority shall be more deeply rooted in the united hearts, and more strongly guarded by the joint forces, of his subjects; and his greatness shall be enlarged abroad, by becoming the head of all the Pro-

testants in Europe, to the greater terror of his enemies, and securing of greatness to his posterity and royal succession."*

Whatever may be thought of the soundness or good policy of these sentiments, it must be allowed that the design was a noble one, that the plan was comprehensive even to sublimity, that the spirit in which it was proposed was truly Christian, enlightened, and benevolent; and that these are the last men who deserve to be branded as traitors and rebels. Let us at least do them the tardy justice of admitting, that had their pious wishes been fulfilled, it is possible that our country might not have been seen, as it is at this day, inflamed with intestine discords, and emitting a thousand fiery particles of dissent, which seem to threaten a universal conflagration.

The English Parliament, when these propositions were first made to them, were not prepared to adopt them in all their extent; but when, in August 1642, the royal standard was raised at Nottingham, and the country was involved in the flames of civil war, they began to see the necessity of acting on the principles which had been suggested, and to court an alliance with the Scots. And yet, deeply as our fathers sympathized with the proceedings of the Parliament, it was not without a severe struggle, and not till every effort had been tried by them, and tried in vain, to effect a reconciliation between the king and his Parliament, that the Scots were compelled, as a last resource, to join with the latter in maintaining the

* Copies of Letters and other Documents relating to Scotland, 1640, 1641, MS. *penes me.*

liberties and the constitution of the country. "Necessity," said Henderson, in a speech to the English Parliament, September 1643, "necessity, which hath in it a kind of sovereignty, and is a law above all laws, and therefore is said to have no law, doth mightily press the church and kingdom of Scotland at this time. It is no small comfort to them, that they have not been idle and at ease, but have used all good and lawful means, by supplications and remonstrances to his majesty, for quenching the combustion in this kingdom; and after all these, that they sent commissioners to his majesty, humbly to mediate for a reconcilement. But the offer of their humble services was rejected, from no other reason but that they had no warrant nor capacity for such a mediation; and that the intermixture of the government of the Church of England with the civil government of the kingdom, was such a mystery as could not be understood by them." In these circumstances, his majesty having denied them a Parliament, those intrusted with the public affairs of Scotland were under the necessity of calling a Convention of the Estates, to deliberate on the perilous aspect of matters in the country; and Commissioners having been sent from the English Parliament to consult with the Estates and the General Assembly, their consultations issued in the formation of a Solemn League and Covenant between the three kingdoms, "as the only mean, after all others have been essayed, for the deliverance of England and Ireland out of the depths of affliction, preservation of the church and kingdom of Scotland from the extremity of misery, and the safety of our native

king and his kingdom from destruction and desolation."

The General Assembly which met in Edinburgh, August 1643, was rendered remarkable by the presence of the Commissioners from England, and the formation of this Solemn League between England, Ireland, and Scotland. This Assembly met in the New Church aisle of St Giles, which was then first fitted up for their reception, and in which, till within a few years ago, the Assembly continued to meet ever afterwards. In the prospect of the important discussions which were to come before them, all eyes were again turned to Mr Henderson, and he was a third time called to the moderator's chair. On the 7th of August, the long-expected English Commissioners, who came by sea, arrived in Edinburgh. Four of them, Sir William Armyn, Sir Harry Vane, Mr Hatcher, and Mr Darley, appeared for the Parliament; and two ministers, Mr Steven Marshall, a Presbyterian, and Mr Philip Nye, an Independent, appeared for the Assembly of Divines. The arrival of these gentlemen in Edinburgh, at such a crisis, and on such an errand, excited a thrilling interest through the whole community, of which we, in present circumstances, can hardly form a conception. Trembling for their liberties, which they conceived, and with too good reason, to be involved in the struggle now maintained in England,—alarmed by the discovery of new Popish plots, and by constant rumours of wars, massacres, and victories, they hailed the appearance of these strangers, as the family of Noah did that of the dove

with the olive branch, and fondly augured from it the cessation of the troubles with which the nation was deluged. The General Assembly, at that time the watchful and jealous sentinel of the liberties of the country, welcomed them with heartfelt enthusiasm, regarding their visit as the omen of that happy conjunction in religion with England, for which they had so long thirsted and prayed. Henderson, ever alive to the dignity of the Assembly, cautioned his brethren to conduct themselves, now that the eyes of strangers were to be upon them, with even more than their ordinary gravity and decorum. And a deputation of ministers and elders was appointed to wait on the Commissioners, and courteously to invite them to the Assembly. Yet such was the care which they took to avoid even the appearance of introducing civil matters into their deliberations, that, while the Englishmen were cordially granted free access to the Assembly as spectators, it was intimated to them that, in any transactions with them as Commissioners, they would have the goodness to retire to a loft of the New Church adjoining the Assembly room, where the correspondence between them and the Assembly would be conducted.

It was at first intended, by some at least of the English, that there should be merely a civil league between the two kingdoms, pledging themselves to mutual support against the common enemy; but through the influence and arguments of Henderson, in which he was supported by the whole Assembly, and powerfully aided by the critical circumstances in which England was placed, it was agreed that there should also be a reli-

gious union, cemented by the three kingdoms entering into a Solemn League and Covenant. Henderson presented the draught of one which he had composed, to a meeting of the three committees from the Parliament of England, the Scottish Convention of Estates, and the General Assembly,—which, after some slight alterations, they adopted. On the Moderator producing it before the Assembly for their approbation, the effect was quite electrifying. "When the draught was read to the General Assembly," says Mr Blair, who witnessed the scene, "our smoking desires for uniformity did break forth into a vehement flame, and it was so heartily embraced, and with such a torrent of affectionate expressions, as none but eye and ear witnesses can conceive. When the vote of some old ministers was asked, their joy was so great that tears did interrupt their expressions."* The Covenant was received with the same cordiality by the Convention of Estates.

In the month of September 1643, the city of London witnessed a spectacle equally interesting, but to Englishmen much more novel and extraordinary. On the 25th of that month, both houses of Parliament, with the Assembly of Divines, and the Scottish Commissioners, met in St Margaret's Church, Westminster. After divine service, the Solemn League was read, article by article, in the pulpit, from a parchment roll, the whole assembly standing uncovered, and swearing to it with their hands lifted up to heaven.

On this solemn occasion, our countryman, Mr Hen-

* Memoirs of the Life of Blair, p. 98.

derson, delivered an animated address, in which he warmly recommended the duty as pleasing to God, exemplified in other kingdoms and churches, and often accompanied with the most blessed fruits. "Had the Pope at Rome the knowledge of what is doing this day in England," he said in conclusion, "and were this Covenant written on the plaster of the wall over against him, where he sitteth, Belshazzar-like, in his sacrilegious pomp, it would make his heart to tremble, his countenance to change, his head and mitre to shake, his joints to loose, and all his cardinals and prelates to be astonished. The Word of God is for it, as you have been now resolved, by the testimony of a reverend Assembly of so many godly, learned, and great divines. In your own sense and experience you will find that, although, while you are assaulted with worldly cares and fears, your thoughts may somewhat trouble you; yet at other times, when upon seeking God in private or public, as in the evening of a well-spent Sabbath, your disposition is more spiritual, and leaving the world behind you, you have found access unto God through Jesus Christ, the bent of your hearts will be strongest to go through with this work. It is a good testimony that our designs and ways are agreeable to God, if we affect them most when our hearts are farthest from the world, and our temper is most spiritual and heavenly, and least carnal and earthly. As the Word of God, so the prayers of the people of God in all the reformed churches are for us and on our side. *It were more terrible than an army, to hear that there were any fervent supplications to God against us.* Blasphemies, curses,

and horrid imprecations there be, proceeding from another spirit, and that is all." *

The Solemn League having been thus adopted by the English Parliament, was sent back to Edinburgh, where it was ordained by the Commission of the Church and the Committee of Estates to be sworn and subscribed throughout the kingdom, the former enjoining it under ecclesiastical censures, and the latter under the pain of being punished as enemies to his majesty's honour and the peace of these kingdoms.

It may be proper here to say a few words respecting a deed which exercised such an important influence on the destinies of the Church and the nation. In this Covenant our fathers bound themselves and their posterity, *first*, To endeavour the preservation of the Reformed religion in the Church of Scotland, the reformation of religion in England and Ireland, "according to the Word of God and the example of the best Reformed Churches," and the bringing of the three Churches to the nearest possible conjunction and uniformity in religion; *secondly*, To the extirpation of Popery and Prelacy; *thirdly*, To the preservation of the rights of Parliament, of the liberties of the kingdoms, and of his majesty's person and authority; and, *lastly*, they pledge themselves to personal reformation, and a holy life. Our limits prevent us from entering on a lengthened vindication of this Covenant from the numerous objections that have been brought against it. It is hardly necessary to expose the vulgar prejudice, which, taking advantage of an obnoxious

* Two Speeches delivered before the subscribing of the Covenant, the 25th of September, at St Margaret's, in Westminster,—the one by Mr Philip Nye, the other by Mr Alexander Henderson. 1643.

term, would identify the *extirpation* of Popery and Prelacy with the extirpation of the persons of Papists and Prelatists. The only points of objection worthy of notice, are the mixture of things sacred and civil in the same bond, and the enjoining of it under civil penalties. The same answer may suffice for both, and is to be found in the extraordinary circumstances in which our ancestors were placed. A combined attack having been made upon their civil rights and their religious liberties, it became warrantable, and even necessary to unite both in their means of defence. So far as it can be shown that, in any case, they resorted to violence or compulsion to enforce the Covenant, we do not vindicate them; but indeed it cannot be proved that it was forced upon any, or that civil injury was incurred by any for simply refusing it. The truth is, that the great body of the people, of all ranks entered with heart and soul into the solemn pledge; and the acts of the Church and the State enjoining it, if candidly interpreted and compared with the commentary of their practice, will be found to have been nothing more than a judicial sanction of the measure, with a formal intimation that the Church would hold its opponents as enemies to religion, and that the State would regard them as enemies to the liberties of the country. But whatever errors or excesses may have characterised the mode in which it was managed by men, the work itself may nevertheless have been of God; and if the matter of that Covenant was agreeable to the divine will, if the nation voluntarily entered into this solemn engagement with the Lord of Hosts, it will not be easy to show that either

lapse of time or change of circumstances could dissolve the obligation. Nations, as such, in the eye of reason as well as Scripture, possess a permanent identity in all the different stages of their history, and are, equally with individuals, the subjects of God's moral government. Since, therefore, the three kingdoms were brought, in the good Providence of God, to swear allegiance to Him, as well as amity to each other, they could not draw back without perjury; and the serious conclusion is, that, in all their subsequent departures from the Reformation thus so solemnly covenanted, their sinful conduct is aggravated by the guilt of having broken their vows to the Most High God.

It has been repeatedly asserted that the Independent party in the English Parliament outwitted our Scottish divines, by getting the clause inserted in the Covenant which binds them to reform the Church of England "according to the Word of God," by which, they say, they tacitly understood Independency, while the Scots understood it of their beloved Presbytery. We have already seen that, if there was any address shown in the concoction of the League, the praise is due to the Scots, who succeeded in getting more than they ever expected from the English, when they prevailed on them to make it a religious as well as civil bond. They certainly understood Presbytery to be the system most agreeable to the Word of God, and to the example of the best Reformed Churches; but it is quite a mistake to suppose that they were "taken in" by Sir Harry Vane, or artfully led to expect the conformity of England as the bribe for their assistance to the English Parliament. The truth is, that our

ancestors entered into this League with England rather in the hope, and with the desire, that they might be brought into a nearer conformity with the Presbyterian discipline, than with any sanguine expectation of seeing this accomplished. They never supposed that England would submit to their polity, without some alteration suited to their circumstances, and accordingly they joined with them in constructing a new Confession and Directory. "We are not to conceive," says Henderson, in a letter dated 1642, "that they will embrace our form. A new form must be set down for us all. And although we should never come to this unity in religion and uniformity in worship, yet my desire is to see what form England shall pitch upon before we publish ours."* In short, nothing is more apparent, from the whole of their correspondence, than that they went up to the Westminster Assembly with very slender hopes of being able to prevail on the English to submit to Presbytery; and the success which attended their exertions to do so, filled their hearts with unfeigned astonishment, as well as gratitude to that God, whose hand they constantly recognised in all their proceedings. "The seven years of ensuing providence," says Henderson, in the dedication of a sermon, preached in 1644, "may carry us as far beyond the present intentions, whether of the enemies of religion or our own, as the seven years past have done *beyond our former intentions* and theirs. The pulling down of Popery in the Christian world, and the pulling down of Prelacy in Britain, are equally feasible to the Almighty, who delighteth

* Baillie's Letters, MS., vol. ii. p. 305.

to turn our difficulties and impossibilities into the glorious demonstrations of his divine power, and who putteth motions into the hearts of men, which they turn into petitions and endeavours, and God, by his power, bringeth forth into reality and action: the conception, birth, and perfection, is all from himself."

But it is time to take some notice of the labours of our Scottish ministers in the Westminster Assembly. This famous Assembly was convened, as we have seen, by the Parliament on the 1st of July 1643. It was to consist of 120 divines, with 30 lay assessors, of whom 10 were lords and 20 were commoners. The divines were, for the most part, clergymen of the Church of England, selected not for their peculiar views on the point of Church government, but for their well-known learning, piety, and abilities. Some of them were keen advocates of Prelacy, but these, so soon as they saw how matters were likely to be carried, retired from the Assembly. A convocation of more grave, judicious, and learned divines, was never, perhaps, collected in Christendom. Their theological writings, which still continue to be standard works, amply confirm this commendation; and, above all, "the Westminster Standards," as Presbyterians have denominated the Confession of Faith, Larger and Shorter Catechisms, and other formularies of the Church of Scotland, which were the result of their labours, would be alone sufficient to entitle their memory to the veneration and respect of all who love the truth.

The Parliament of England having solicited the General Assembly to send up some of their number as Commissioners to this Assembly, the following four

ministers were appointed:—Alexander Henderson, Samuel Rutherford, Robert Baillie, and George Gillespie. With these were associated the following elders:—the Earl of Cassilis, Lord Maitland, and Sir Archibald Johnston of Warriston. Our worthy Commissioners reached London in November 1643, and, on being introduced to the Assembly at Westminster, were cordially welcomed by a speech from Dr Twiss, their learned and excellent prolocutor. The following description of the appearance of the Assembly, as it presented itself to our Commissioners, from the pen of Mr Baillie, is given in his usual homely and graphic style:—"The like of that Assembly I did never see, and, as we hear say, the like was never in England, nor any where is shortly like to be. No mortal man may enter to hear or see, let be to sit, without an order in writ from both houses of Parliament. They did sit in Henry the Seventh's Chapel, but since the weather grew cold, they did go to Jerusalem Chamber, a fair room in the abbey of Westminster, about the bounds of our College forehall. At the upmost end there is a chair set on a frame, a foot from the earth, for the prolocutor, Dr Twiss. Before it, on the ground, stand two chairs for the Assessors, Dr Burgess and Mr White. Before these two chairs, through the length of the room, stands a table, at which sit the two scribes. The house is all well hung, and has a good fire, which is some daintes at London. Foranent the table, upon the prolocutor's right hand, there are three or four rankes of formes; on the lowest we five do sit, upon the others at our backs, the members of Parliament deputed to the

Assemblie. On the formes foranent us, on the prolocutor's left hand, are four or five stages of formes ranged round the room, whereupon their divines sit as they please. We meet every day of the week but Saturday. We sit commonly from nine to one or two afternoon. The prolocutor, at the beginning and end, has a short prayer. Ordinarily there will be present about three score of their divines. After the prayer, the scribe reads the proposition and Scriptures, whereupon the Assembly debates in a most grave and orderly way."

The Scottish Commissioners soon found ample employment. After the labours of the day in the Assembly, they were engaged in committees, or in writing letters and pamphlets, till the midnight chimes at Westminster rung them to bed. They had no conception that they would have been so long detained in London, for the Assembly continued to sit, with little intermission, for nearly *five years*. The chief burden of the debates fell upon our divines, who were harassed by them night and day. Many an anxious look did they cast towards home; and often did they plead that they might be allowed to return to their quiet duties in their own parishes; but their duty to the Church and nation forbade it. "Many a perplexed night have we of it," says Baillie. "If our neighbours at Edinburgh tasted the sauce wherein we dip our venison, their teeth would not water so fast to be here as some of them do."

The first point that came before the Assembly, and which occupied the greater part of their time, was the thorny question of Church government. Our Scots

ministers soon found, to their high satisfaction, that the great body of the Assembly was favourably disposed to the Presbyterian discipline. And had the matter been left to the mere force of numbers, little time would have sufficed to decide it. Out of an Assembly, consisting of seventy or eighty members, there were only five Independents, and one or two Erastians. In this insignificant minority, however, there were two or three possessed of considerable talents for public speaking and ingenuity in debate, and they continued to take up the Assembly's time, by pertinaciously disputing every inch of ground, and protesting against every decision. The Assembly, anxious for unanimity, bore all this with astonishing patience. The Independents occupied them no less than *three weeks* in debating the point of sitting at a communion-table. "The unhappy Independents," says Baillie, "would mangle that sacrament. No catechising nor preparation before; no thanksgiving after; no sacramental doctrine or chapters in the day of celebration; no coming up to any table, but a carrying of the elements to all in their seats athort the church: yet all this, with God's help, we have carried over them to our practice. We must dispute every inch of ground. Great need had we of the prayers of all God's people." This obstinacy was the less justifiable on the part of the Independents, as the Scottish ministers had agreed to drop several of their ancient practices in order to please them.

Many days were spent on the question of ruling elders. But the most important and lengthened debate in this Assembly, was regarding the divine

right of Presbyterial government. The question was, Whether many congregations may, and by divine institution ought, to be under one Presbyterial government? After a debate which occupied 30 days, the divine right of Presbytery was carried by an overwhelming majority. The Independents entered their dissent, and, as is usual with the losing party, complained of unfair usage. But never was the charge made with less feasibility. The length of time during which the discussion was protracted, shows that ample opportunity had been given them to bring forward their objections; and the debate, which was afterwards published at length, proves how ably and fairly they had been met. It is remarkable that, notwithstanding the earnest desires of the Assembly, and their own promises, the Independents, though they were constantly finding fault with the Presbyterial form, would never present any model of their own in its place.*

In these debates our countrymen took an active and important share. To the masterly management and sagacious counsels of Henderson, the Assembly owed, in a great measure, the happy unanimity which prevailed among them. To the services of George Gillespie, who was then in the prime of life, his colleague Mr Baillie bears repeated testimony. "None in all

* Baillie's Let., ii. 27, 33, 172, &c. Reasons presented by the Dissenting Brethren (Independents) against Presbyterial Government, 1648. Answer of the Assembly of Divines to the Reasons, &c., 1648. Papers for Accommodation, 1644, printed 1648. Reasons by the Dissenting Brethren for not giving in a Model of their Way. Answer of the Assembly to said Reasons, 1645. Answer to the Apologeticall Narration, &c. The names of "the Dissenting Brethren" were Messrs Goodwin, Nye, Simpson, Burroughs, and Bridge.

the Assembly did reason more pertinently than Mr Gillespie; he is an excellent youth; my heart blesses God in his behalf. I admire his gifts, and bless God as for all my colleagues, so for him in particular, as equal in these to the first in the Assembly." On arriving in London, Gillespie went strait to the Assembly, and stood behind the crowd while Goodwin was pleading the cause of Independency. He was observed by Henderson, who mentioned his arrival to the prolocutor; and Gillespie was requested to come forward and reply. In vain he pleaded to be excused,—he was obliged to come forward, making his way through the crowd in his travelling boots; and, covered with blushes, he commenced a speech which occupied an hour and a half, and ended in a triumphant demolition of the Independent's logic. On another occasion, when the Parliament and Assembly had met for conference on the much contested question of Church order, an elaborate discourse was delivered by the learned Selden, in favour of *Erastianism*, which subjects the Church to the State in the administration of discipline,—a doctrine highly pleasing to the Parliament at that time. Mr Gillespie, who appeared busily engaged in taking notes of the speech, was requested by his brethren, who well knew his talents, to stand up and answer it. He at first modestly refused. "Rise, George," said one of his friends, "rise up and defend the right of the Lord Jesus Christ to govern, by his own laws, the Church which he has purchased with his blood." He complied, and, after giving a summary of the arguments of his antagonist, he confuted them, to the admiration of all present. Selden

himself is said to have observed, in astonishment, "This young man, by his single speech, has swept away the learning and labour of my life." On looking at Gillespie's notes, it was found that he had written nothing but,—*Da lucem Domine*—"Lord, give light," and similar brief petitions for divine direction.*

The same modest and devout spirit characterised his last moments. Mr Gillespie died in 1648, in his 36th year. During his last sickness he enjoyed little sensible assurance, but was strong in "the faith of adherence," clinging to the promises of God. When asked if he felt comfort, he replied, "No; but though the Lord has not allowed me comfort, I shall yet believe that 'my Beloved is mine, and I am his.'" "Brother," said one of the ministers who stood around his bed, "you are taken away from evil times; what advice have you to give to us who are left behind?" He replied, that he had little experience in the ministry, having only been nine years a minister; "but," he added, "I have this to say, that I have got infinitely more in my work from prayer than from study; and know much more help from the assistance of the Spirit than from books." "And yet it is well known," says Wodrow, "that he was an indefatigable student."†

Having finished the discussion of the questions as to government, and the Directory for Worship, the Confession of Faith and the Catechisms next occupied the attention of the Assembly. These, however, though they cost much labour, excited less controversy. The first draught of the Confession was prepared chiefly by our Scots Commissioners, but it is hardly possible now

* Wodrow's Analecta, Adv. Lib. † Ibid.

to state what share individuals had in its compilation. It is generally believed that the Shorter Catechism was drawn up by Dr Arrowsmith.* The following character of this distinguished man is given by one who appears to have been well acquainted with him:—"He was a burning and a shining light, who, by his indefatigable study of the sublime mysteries of the Gospel, spent himself to the utmost to explicate the darkest places of Scripture. He was a holy and learned divine; firm and zealous in his attachment to the cause of Christ, from which no worldly allurements would shake his faith, or move his confidence. He was a man of a thousand. His soul aspired after more than his weak and sickly body was able to perform."†

When the Confession of Faith and Catechisms were agreed to, the Scottish Commissioners took leave of the Westminster Assembly, and, after an absence of about four years, returned to Scotland, and gave an account of their proceedings to the General Assembly which met in August 1647. This Assembly, of which Mr Robert Douglas was Moderator, is memorable in our history for having received the Westminster Confession of Faith, as a part of the uniformity in religion to which the three kingdoms had become bound in the Solemn League. The only reservation which they made in approving of this Confession, was in regard to the authority of the magistrate in calling Assemblies, ascribed to him in the 31st chapter, which they understood "only of Churches not settled in point of govern-

* Baillie informs us that Dr Arrowsmith was "a man with a glass eye, in place of that which was put out by an arrow,—a learned divine, on whom the Assembly put the writing against the Antinomians."—Vol. i. 414.

† Brook's Lives of the Puritans, vol. iii. 317.

ment;" asserting their freedom "to assemble together synodically, as well *pro re nata* as at the ordinary times, upon delegation from the churches, by the intrinsical power received from Christ, as often as it is necessary for the good of the Church so to assemble." This explanation was rendered necessary, in consequence of the Erastian principles which, as we shall afterwards have occasion to show, had now begun to prevail in the English Parliament, and to hinder them from settling the discipline of the Church. Whatever construction might be put upon those parts of the Confession by the rulers, the Assembly thus declared the sense in which they "understood" them. This act still remains in force, and is prefixed to all our copies of the Confession, a standing memorial of the jealousy with which the Church of Scotland watched over her spiritual independence as a Church of Christ. We may here state, once for all, that the Larger and Shorter Catechisms, Propositions for Church Government, and the Directory for Public Worship, which had been drawn up by the Westminster Assembly, in conjunction with the commissioners from the Church of Scotland, were also received, approved, and ratified by the General Assembly, in several acts relating to them, as "parts of the covenanted uniformity." These acts of approbation by the Church were afterwards ratified by the Estates in Parliament; and thus, so far as Scotland was concerned, the stipulations of the Solemn League were cordially and honourably fulfilled.

Presbyterianism may be now said to have gained the ascendency, not only in Scotland, but in England and Ireland. The Assembly of Divines, called by

the English Parliament to settle a platform of doctrine, worship, and government, in which all the three kingdoms might unite, had, with a few exceptions, agreed to a set of standards which met with the entire and cordial approbation of the Church of Scotland. The Presbyterians had a powerful party in the English Parliament; and the vast body of the English clergy had become decidedly Presbyterian. There cannot be a stronger proof of this than the fact, that on the restoration of Charles II., no fewer than *two thousand* ministers, most of whom had previously been Episcopal, were in one day ejected from their charges, and silenced for nonconformity; and when so many were found willing to suffer for conscience' sake, we may conceive that there would be a still greater number who, though they conformed to the Episcopal government, would have remained contented with the Presbyterian, had it continued the established religion.

In 1646, the Parliament, urged on by the Westminster Assembly, and by petitions from various parts of England, as well as by the strenuous exhortations of the Scottish Church, granted a partial establishment to Presbytery. The Church of England, instead of so many dioceses, was now divided into *provinces*, each of which was to hold a provincial assembly, made up of representatives from the several presbyteries, or *classes*, as they were called, within the boundary; and a proper subordination of judicatories was arranged, the supreme court being a National Assembly, to be formed of deputies from the various provincial assemblies. It is true, indeed, that this arrangement took

full effect only in London and Lancashire; and that, though the ministers held meetings for church affairs in various other counties, they did not enjoy the civil sanction.* Most of the pulpits, however, were filled with Presbyterian ministers, who alone enjoyed the benefices, and continued to do so till the Restoration; they also held the chief places in the universities; and, in short, Presbyterianism was considered the established form of religion in England.

The same success attended the cause of Presbytery in Ireland. In 1644, the Solemn League had been administered to the Protestants in that country by four ministers deputed by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland. The manner in which these ministers executed their commission was highly praiseworthy. Not the shadow of force or constraint was employed. The officers and soldiers, and the Irish inhabitants in general, with all the chivalrous ardour and enthusiasm of the national character, testified the greatest alacrity in entering into the Covenant. It was carefully explained to them, before they were admitted to swear it; and the only complaint was, that the ministers were "over scrupulous" in admitting persons to subscribe. "The Covenant was taken in all places," says an Irish writer of these times, "with great affection: partly sorrow for former judgments, and sins, and miseries; partly joy, in the hopes of laying a foundation for the work of God in the land, and overthrowing Popery and Prelacy, which had been the bane and ruin of that poor Church. Sighs and

* Baxter's History of His Life and Times, abridged by Calamy, vol. i. p. 85.

tears were joined together. Indeed they were assisted with more than the ordinary presence of God in that work in every place they went to; so that all the hearers did bear them witness that God was with them.—Yea, even the malignants who were against the Covenant durst not appear on the contrary; for the people generally held these ministers as servants of God, and coming with a blessed message and errand to them."*

The first symptoms of a disposition to recede from these sacred engagements were manifested, we are sorry to say, by the English Parliament. In this Parliament a great many of the members were now become either Erastians or Independents. The Erastians are so called from *Erastus*, a German physician, who first broached the opinion that all Church authority is derived from the State, or civil government of the country. The Erastians maintained, therefore, that the Church was the creature of the State, or at least dependent on the State in the exercise of her judicial authority,—a principle precisely the reverse of the Popish one, which is, that the State is dependent on the Church. Between these two extremes the Church of Scotland endeavoured to steer a middle course: while she acknowledged the jurisdiction of the State in all *civil* matters, she claimed a jurisdiction independent of the State in all *spiritual* matters. Recognising no other head of spiritual authority but the Lord Jesus Christ, the King of Zion, she had to contend for his divine prerogatives, as we have seen, almost from the commencement of her history. During the reign of James,

* Reid's History of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, vol. ii. p. 29.

she maintained a constant struggle on this point. In this warfare she triumphed under the reign of Charles; and now, when Presbyterianism had obtained a footing in England, she found herself, strange to say, engaged in the same contest with the Long Parliament.

The grand point which the English Presbyterians sought to gain in this Parliament was a civil sanction to the *divine right* of Presbyterial government,—in other words, an acknowledgment that it was the government appointed by Christ in his Word. By maintaining, in this sense, the divine right of their form of policy, the Presbyterians did no more than what both Prelatists and Independents did in behalf of their respective models. It was not the subordinate arrangements, but the grand essential principles of Presbytery that they held to be of divine appointment. Their great object was to prevail on the Parliament to sanction some *certain form* of Church government; and though Presbyterianism appeared to them the most scriptural, many would have preferred a moderate Episcopacy to the state of anarchy and confusion in which the Church then stood.* The Parliament, however, saw that, if they sanctioned this principle without any modification, they would strip themselves of all power and control over the Church; for it was an essential principle of Presbytery that the Church possessed intrinsic powers wholly independent of the State. They determined, therefore, to oppose the Presbyterians in this matter. The Independents and other sectaries, afraid that, if the independence of the Church were sanctioned by the State, they would

* Calamy's Abridgement of Baxter's Life, vol. i. p. 81.

not obtain *toleration*, concurred with the Erastians in refusing to acknowledge the principle. The lawyers, who, if not the most numerous, were the most active and loquacious portion of this Parliament, were almost all to a man, as might be expected from their profession, against acknowledging the independent authority of the Church.

It is worth while, in passing, to vindicate the English Presbyterians from the misrepresentation and abuse with which they have been assailed, from almost every quarter, for their conduct, or rather their designs, at this period of their history. "The Presbyterians," says Neal, in his "History of the Puritans," "were now in the height of their power, the hierarchy being destroyed, and the best, if not all the livings in the kingdom, being distributed among them; yet still they were dissatisfied for want of the *top-stone* to their new building, which was *church power;* the pulpits and conversation of the city were filled with invectives against the men in power, because they would not leave the Church independent on the State." Again, "The Presbyterian hierarchy was as narrow as the *prelatical;* and as it did not allow a liberty of conscience, claiming a civil as well as ecclesiastical authority over men's persons and properties, it was equally, if not more intolerable." Similar charges pervade the whole of Mr Neal's history, and they have been repeated by writers of all different persuasions—prelatical, infidel, and sectarian. "Presbyterianism," says another writer, "displayed the same intolerance as Episcopacy had done. Religious tyranny subsists in various degrees. Popery is the consum-

mation of it, and Presbyterianism a weak degree of it. But the latter has in it the essence of the former, and differs from it only as a musket differs from a cannon." *

Now, what was this *church power* which the Presbyterians were so anxious to secure, and which Neal would represent as "a civil authority over men's persons and properties?" Will it be believed, that it was neither more nor less than the power of *keeping back scandalous and unworthy persons from the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper?* This was, in fact, the great point in dispute between them and the Parliament; for the Parliament had insisted on having the supreme power in ecclesiastical matters, and had passed a law to the effect, that if any person was refused admission to sealing ordinances by the Church courts, he might appeal to Parliament, which might, by virtue of its authority, compel the Church courts to receive him, whatever his character might be. The Presbyterians, as Neal himself admits, "were dissatisfied with the men in power, because they would not leave the Church independent on the State." And would Mr Neal, himself an Independent, have had the Church to be *dependent on the State?* Would he have had the Presbyterians tamely submit to see the royal prerogatives of Christ

* Toulmin, in his edition of Neal.—It is with deep regret that we are compelled to class with these writers, our historiographer, Mr Brodie, who, while he advocates latitudinarian views of Church government, leans to Independency, and joins in the sweeping censures of other historians on the Presbyterians.—*Hist. of the British Empire*, vol. iii. p. 501-513. Mr Brodie considers it sufficient to state as his authority,—"For all, see Baillie's Letters, vol. ii.," without quoting any particular passage, or appearing to have compared the several passages with each other.

assumed by a Parliament, after they had succeeded in wresting them out of the hands of a monarch, against whom, for this very reason, the nation had long been engaged in a bloody war?*

But the real intentions of the Presbyterians must be judged of from their own writings, with some of which Neal seems to have been unacquainted, and to others of which he had no access.† "In the Assembly," says Baillie, writing in 1646, "we are fallen on a fashious proposition, that has kept us diverse days—*to oppose the Erastian heresy*, which in this land is very strong, especially among the lawyers, unhappy members of this Parliament. We find it necessary to say, 'that Christ, in the New Testament, has institute a Church government distinct from the civil, to be exercised by the officers of the Church, without commission from the magistrate.' None in the Assembly (Westminster) has any doubt of this truth but one Colman, a professed Erastian—a man reasonably learned, but stupid and inconsiderate, half a pleasant (half crazy), and of small estimation. But the lawyers in the Parliament, making it their work to spoil our Presbytery, not so much upon *conscience*, as upon fear that the Presbytery *spoil their market, and take up most of the*

* Neal asserts that "the Independents claimed a like power" (the same power of the keys, or of Church government, as the Presbyterians) "for the brotherhood of every particular congregation, *but without any civil sanctions or penalties annexed.*"—*Hist. of Puritans*, vol. iii. p. 260, *Toulmin's ed.* We have seen that the claim of the Presbyterians to a divine right had nothing to do with civil pains or penalties; but let the Independents speak for themselves: "To the magistrate's power we give as much, and, as we think, MORE than the principles of the Presbyterian government will suffer them to yield."—*Apologeticall Narration, by the Five Dissenting Brethren*, p. 19.

† Baillie's Letters had not been published when Neal wrote his history.

country pleas without law, did blow up the poor man with much vanity, so he is become their champion. We give him a free and fair hearing; albeit we fear, when we have answered all, the Houses, when it comes to them, shall scrape it out of the Confession; for *this point is their idol.* The pope and king were never more earnest for the headship of the Church than the plurality of this Parliament. Although they are like for a time by violence to carry it, yet almost all the ministry are zealous for the prerogative of Christ." In another letter (1645), he says,—"The most part of the House of Commons, especially the lawyers, are either half or whole Erastians, believing no Church government to be of divine right, but all to be a human constitution, *depending on the will of the magistrate.* About this matter we have had, at diverse times, much bickering with them. Our advice to them" (*i. e.*, the advice of the Scots to the English ministers) "was, that they would go on to set up their Presbyteries and Synods with so much power as they could get; and after they were once settled, they might then strive to obtain their full due power. But the Synod (Westminster Assembly) was in another mind, and at last they framed a most zealous, clear, and peremptory paper, wherein they held out plainly the Church's *divine right to keep off from the sacrament all who were scandalous;* and if they cannot obtain the free exercise of THAT POWER which Christ hath given them, *they will lay down their charges, and will rather choose all afflictions, than to sin by profaning the holy table.*" *

* Baillie's Letters, vol. ii. pp. 150, 195.

And these are the men who are represented as dissatisfied because they could not get the *civil* power into their hands! To sneer at such men for not being contented with having obtained the English "livings," would only show a mind too narrow and sordid to be capable of appreciating the sacred, the noble, the elevated ground on which they had taken their stand. Indeed, to say a word more in their vindication would be superfluous; and if it should be thought that we have dwelt too largely, or spoken too warmly, on the subject, let it be remembered that the memory of these noble champions of the royal prerogatives of Christ has been now lying under an accumulated mass of calumny for nearly 200 years; and that, whilst almost every sect has had its eulogists and defenders, few or none have appeared to vindicate the maligned and maltreated Presbyterians of England.* From this part of the history we learn one lesson, which cannot be too deeply engraven on the mind,—that the *government* of Christ, as well as the *doctrine* of Christ, is the object of the unrelenting dislike and hatred of the carnal heart; it is part of "the offence of the cross," which has not "ceased;" and hence it is that worldly politicians, of all different shades of politics, down to the present day, unite their efforts, like the Independents and Erastians in the days of Cromwell, to rob the Church of her independence, and reduce her "very much to a level with any ordinary corporation."

Another cause which hindered the full establishment of Presbytery, and frustrated the objects of the Covenant in England, was the rapid and unprecedented

* *Vide* Appendix to M'Crie's Discourses on Unity, p. 152.

growth of *sectarianism*. About the time when the Westminster Assembly sat down, there were very few Dissenters in England,—and these were chiefly Independents, who had no regular churches, but went about the country disseminating their opinions; but in the course of a few years, during the civil war, they sprung up and multiplied in the most appalling numbers. The mere enumeration of these Sectaries would be a difficult task. Besides Papists and Prelatists, the only opponents with whom our Scots Presbyterians had to contend, there arose in England Independents and Brownists of all degrees, Millenarians, Antinomians, Anabaptists, Libertines, Familists, Seekers, Perfectists, Socinians, Arians, Antiscripturists, Fifth Monarchy Men, Ranters, Beheminists, Quakers, and a host of other sects, nameless and numberless. Errors of every possible shade, heresies the most monstrous, and blasphemies the most revolting, were daily propagated; and the kingdom was convulsed in a religious fully as much as in a political sense.* The prolific nest in

* We must not confound the Puritans with the Sectaries. The Presbyterians and good men in the English Church were the true Puritans: the Sectaries were the spawn of the civil war. Those who are disposed to join in the cuckoo cry of intolerance against the Presbyterians of this period, would do well to peruse the *Gangræna* of Thomas Edwards, which contains a full account of the heresies, blasphemies, and evil practices of the Sectaries. He enumerates no less than 176 errors and heresies which prevailed at that time. Mr Baxter's account of them is still more worthy of attention, as, from his well-known liberality, he cannot be justly suspected of partiality. "These are they," he says, "who have been most addicted to church divisions and separations, and sidings and parties, and have *refused all terms of concord and unity*; who, though many of them were weak and raw, were yet prone to be puffed up with high thoughts of themselves, and to overvalue their little degrees of knowledge and parts, which set them not above the pity of understanding men. The Sectaries (especially the Anabaptists, Seekers, and Quakers) chose out the most able, zealous ministers, to make them the marks of their reproach and obloquy,—and all because they stood in the way of their designs, and

which these Sectaries were engendered was the Parliamentary army. No regular chaplains had been provided for them,—the bishops would ordain none but those who would use the liturgy; and thus an immense body of men, who had enlisted in the cause from religious principle, whose passions were excited to frenzy by their struggles for religious liberty, and who, having recently escaped from Episcopal thraldom, were not inclined to submit to any government, were left abandoned to all the excesses of religious enthusiasm. In Scotland, where there was a regular ministry and church discipline, no such fanaticism appeared, even during the stormiest period of her struggles,—every thing was conducted quietly and orderly; but in England, deprived of these advantages, every one who deemed himself qualified assumed the office of preacher; the regular ministry was despised, the pulpits were invaded, and the doctrine taught in them openly impugned by these armed and booted apostles, wherever they went.

Alarmed at this prodigious increase of sects and heresies, the Presbyterians implored the Parliament to use means to arrest the current, by a formal condemnation of them; and, above all, by erecting the discipline of the Church, with full power to proceed against them according to the laws of Christ. Without this

hindered them in the propagation of their opinions. They set against the same men as the drunkards and swearers set against, and much after the same manner, only they did it more profanely than the profane, in that they said, 'Let the Lord be magnified,'—'Let the Gospel be propagated.' And all this began but in unwarrantable separation, and too much aggravating the faults of the churches, &c. They thought that whatever needed amendment required their *obstinate separation*, and that they were allowed to make odious any thing that was amiss," &c.—*Calamy's Abridg. of Baxter's Life*, vol. i. p. 94.

sanction, their authority would have been disregarded, and the sentences of their courts might be reversed by an appeal to Parliament, which claimed the supreme jurisdiction. The Parliament, however, now under the influence of the Independent leaders, refused to adopt any such measures; and the only effect of the proposal was, that all parties joined against the Presbyterians. This coalition formed the only bond of union among the motely swarm of the Sectaries, and the motto inscribed on their banner was—*Toleration, and Liberty of Conscience.* Disagreeing about every thing else, they all united in desiring full liberty to preach and propagate their own opinions; though even about this there were differences of opinion. The Independents would only extend liberty of conscience to what they called the *fundamentals* of religion; and Dr Owen drew up a list of sixteen fundamentals, according to which, not only Deists, Socinians, and Papists, but Arians, Antinomians, Quakers, and even Arminians, were excluded from all benefit of toleration.* Others, however, went farther, and advanced the principle, that "it is *the will and command of God*, that, since the coming of his Son, a permission of the most Paganish, Jewish, Turkish, or Antichristian consciences and worships be granted to all men in all nations."†

The Presbyterians were shocked at such a principle, which seemed eversive of all religion, and some of them, in their zeal against it, condemned and reprobated the doctrine of toleration in terms which now appear to

* Neal's Hist. of the Puritans, vol. iii. Calamy's Abridgement of Baxter, vol. i. p. 120.

† Preface to *The Bloody Tenet.*

us overstrained and indefensible; but the more moderate contented themselves with protesting against the Government giving a *positive* and *judicial* sanction to the prevailing heresies. These did not require that their discipline should be enforced at the point of the sword; but they argued, that it was one thing not to compel men to come in, and another thing to *open the door* for the encouragement of error, and to inscribe over it—"All kinds of heresies, schisms, and blasphemies, publicly allowed and tolerated here!" They justly considered it to be a glaring inconsistency, and a violation of solemn vows, for a Christian nation, the one day to engage to God and one another, under a solemn oath, to endeavour the extirpation of heresy, schism, blasphemy, and profaneness; and the next day to declare, by a law of the land, a formal toleration of all these evils; and though entertaining a tender respect for the legitimate rights of conscience, for which they themselves had pleaded and suffered, they could not allow this to shut their eyes to the grievous dishonour done to Christ and his truth, by these interminable heresies and schisms, which were exposing the Protestant religion to the scoffs of Papists, eating out, like a canker, the very life of godliness, and subjecting the nation to the judgments of Heaven. Both parties were solicitous for peace; but while the Sectaries sought peace with error and division, the Presbyterians sought peace with truth and unity.*

* Whatever may be thought of the *principles* of the Presbyterians on the subject of Toleration, it is undeniable that their *practice*, when in power, was marked by the most exemplary forbearance. "The Presbyterian party," says Edwards "(though the Assembly of Divines, the

The sentiments of our Scottish divines on this point may be seen from the following extracts:—"As for the Church of Scotland," says Baillie, "that it did ever intermeddle to trouble any in their goods, liberties, or persons, it's very false. What civil penalties the Parliament of a kingdom thinks meet to inflict upon those who are refractory and unamendable by the censures of a Church, the State, from whom alone these punishments do come, are answerable, and not the Church. That excommunication in Scotland is inflicted on those who cannot assent to every point of religion determined in their Confession, there is nothing more untrue; for we know it well, that never any person in Scotland was excommunicate only for his difference of opinion in a theological tenet. Excommunication there is a very dreadful sentence, and therefore very rare. These last forty years, so far as I have either seen or heard, there has none at all been excommunicate in Scotland but some few trafficking Papists, and some very few notoriously flagitious persons, and five or six of you the prelates for your obstinate impenitence, after your overturning the foundations both of

representative body of the city, the Court of Common Council, the ministry of the kingdom, thousands and ten thousands of godly well-affected persons, the kingdom of Scotland, yea, all the reformed Churches, own that way), in their love and forbearance to the Sectaries, hath been admirable. When the Independents were but few, and other Sectaries a small number, some half-a-score or dozen ministers, with 300 or 400 people, the Presbyterians gave them the right hand of fellowship, admitted them to their meetings, opened their pulpit doors to them, showed all brotherly respect to them, even more than to most of their own way; and notwithstanding breach of agreements, drawing away their people, and many high and strange carriages, yet still using all fairness and love, hoping, by brotherly kindness, forbearance, and a thorough reformation in the Church (wherein they have been willing, upon all occasions, to gratify and have respect unto their consciences), at last to have gained them." After recording various instances of the liberality of Presbyterians to the Secta-

our Church and State."* In another work, published about the same time, he says,—"If once the government of Christ were set up amongst us, as it is in the rest of the Reformed Churches, we know not what would impede it, by *the sword of God alone, without any secular violence*, to banish out of the land these spirits of error in all meekness, humility, and love, by the force of truth, convincing and satisfying the minds of the seduced. Put these holy and divine instruments into the hand of the Church of England, by the blessing of God thereupon, the sore and great evil of so many heresies and schisms shall quickly be cured, which now not only troubles the peace and welfare, but hazards the very subsistence both of church and kingdom; *without this mean, the State will toil itself in vain about the cure of such spiritual diseases.*"†

These unhappy contests about toleration created jealousies between the Parliament and the Presbyterian party, which ultimately issued in the overthrow of the covenanted cause in England; the Sectaries prevailed in defeating all the attempts of the Presby-

ries, he adds: "For mine own part, I am confidently persuaded, and so I believe are all wise men that have observed the ways of the Sectaries, that if they had been in the place of the Presbyterians, having had their power, number, authority, and the Presbyterians had been a small number as they were, and should have offered to have done but the twentieth part of that in preaching, writing, &c., against them, which the Sectaries have done against the Presbyterians, they would have trod them down as mire in the street, casting them out with scorn before this time of day, nor have suffered a Presbyterian to preach among us, or to have been in any place or office, military or civil, but all would have been shut up in prisons, banished, or else hiding themselves in holes and corners; many godly persons, in some places, having much ado now to hold up their heads to live by them, to preach quietly, to go safely in the streets, or to be quiet in their houses."—*Gangræna*, i. pp. 50, 53.

* Baillie's Historical Vindication of the Church of Scotland, p. 58.

† Baillie's Dissuasive from the Errors of the Time, pref. pp. 7, 8.

rians to promote unity and peace; and the English Presbyterians fell in the noble but fruitless attempt to stem the torrent of errors and divisions which still overspread that country, and which, having found their way into Scotland, continue to distract our peace, to disgrace the cause of Protestantism, and to threaten the ruin of our national prosperity. So much for our not adhering to the Reformation so auspiciously begun, and violating that solemn compact by which the three nations were bound to prosecute it!

CHAPTER X.

Montrose and the Covenanters—Charles I. comes to the Scots Army—His Discussion with Alexander Henderson—Death of Henderson—Disposal of the King's Person—Duke Hamilton's Engagement—Execution of Charles I.—State of Religion in Scotland—Abolition of Patronage—Negotiations with Charles II.—His Coronation—Resolutioners and Protesters—Cromwell and the English Army in Scotland—Anecdotes of Blair, Rutherford, and Douglas.

WHILE the civil war was raging in England, the state of Scotland, especially in the year 1645, was most deplorable. The kingdom was involved in the combined miseries of war, famine, and pestilence. It is well known, that the passions of men are never more inflamed, never wreak themselves in deeds of greater cruelty, than during a civil war; and of all civil wars, those in which religion is concerned have generally been found the most bitter and inveterate. But in Scotland, besides these elements of discord, the feudal antipathies which prevailed among the rival chieftains who held sway over different parts of the country, contributed greatly to embitter the strife, and

led to numerous atrocities, the bare recital of which, in the calm hour of tranquillity, makes the heart thrill with horror, while it should inspire us with gratitude to God, that our lot has been cast in happier days. The person to whom Scotland owed a large share of her miseries at this time, was the Marquis of Montrose, who had now raised the royal standard in Scotland, and, at the head of a rude and savage band of "Highland kernes and Irish runnagates," was spreading ruin and devastation over the country. The close connection in which this nobleman once stood to the Covenanters, and the fierce hostility which he subsequently displayed against them, demand a little notice of his character and history.

At the commencement of the contests between the Court and the Covenanters, we find Montrose among the keenest partisans of the Covenant. He was a member of the famous Glasgow Assembly of 1638; he was among the first to take up arms, and, having been sent to the North, he, as we have seen, without any orders to that effect, forced the authorities of Aberdeen to take the Covenant; and, when the Scots army invaded England, the lot of his regiment being first to cross the Tweed, he was the foremost person to plunge into the river, which he did most courageously, in the midst of winter. Soon after this exploit, however, having been admitted to an interview with the king, he began to show a disposition to desert the banner of the Covenant. Naturally haughty, jealous, and conceited,—anxious to distinguish himself, and impatient of all rivalship, superiority, or control,—it is supposed, on good autho-

rity, which has never yet been disproved, that he was induced to change sides from wounded vanity and disappointed ambition, at seeing Argyll preferred before him in the council, and General Leslie in the field. In 1640, he was detected in a clandestine correspondence with the king, at a very critical conjuncture; but having craved pardon for the offence, he was generously forgiven. In the following year he was accused of being involved in a plot to assassinate the Earls of Argyll and Hamilton, generally known by the name of *The Incident*, which is still involved in considerable mystery. In 1643 he threw off the mask, openly joined the king's party, and raised an army for the purpose of ruining the cause which he had so solemnly pledged himself to maintain.

The character of Montrose, as might be expected from the prominent part which he took in defence of the king, is variously estimated by historians, according to their political leanings and predilections. In the eyes of the admirers of Charles and arbitrary power, who are animated by any thing but a kindly and charitable feeling towards the Covenanters, Montrose appears in a character little inferior to that of the most illustrious heroes of antiquity,—invested with all the dazzling interest of romance,—"a high-spirited gentleman, accomplished in mind and body,—his heart overflowing with lofty and generous sentiments;" and they dwell with rapture on the splendid victories which he achieved over his countrymen, while they bewail his untimely fate as that of a martyr, and can hardly find epithets sufficiently strong to express their detestation of the bigots and barbarians by whom it

was inflicted. By others, again, he is represented as a mean-spirited, vindictive, and ruthless bravado,—as the blackest criminal, destitute of either public or private principle,—the chief of a lawless banditti of savages, committing murder and devastation in the spirit of cold-blooded, indiscriminate, unmanly, vengeance; and justly meriting, on these accounts, the ignominious end to which he was brought. It is extremely difficult, in drawing the character, and tracing the history, of such a man as Montrose, to avoid extremes; and that both of the pictures we have given are in the extreme, can hardly be denied. Mindful of the ancient adage, that "No man ever became most base all of a sudden," we are unwilling to believe that this nobleman, when he first took up arms in the cause of Charles, contemplated the atrocities into which he was afterwards led, by placing himself at the head of a barbarous and disgusting horde, who had no feelings in common with his countrymen, and whose sole object in following him was pillage and plunder; and he may have persuaded himself that, in perpetrating these atrocities, he was actuated by a pure regard for the interests of his sovereign. But it is vain to deny, and indeed impossible to explain his conduct without admitting, that there was mingled with this romantic and mistaken feeling, motives of private animosity against Argyll and the other chieftains of the Covenant; and that, having forfeited for ever the mercy, and roused the resentment of the nation, by imbruing his hands so deeply in the blood of his countrymen, he became equally reckless and daring,—determined, apparently, to elevate himself on the ruins of his country, and gain

the darling object of his heart, though he should convert the whole of Scotland into a field of slaughter and desolation. His humanity and discretion, while acting under the banner of the Covenant, were such as to elicit the warm commendations of Baillie and his party, who dreaded nothing so much as tarnishing the honour of their victories with deeds of cruelty or needless severity. To what extent his character may have been altered by his becoming a renegade from his religion and a traitor to his country, we shall not say; but the change which marked his conduct may be estimated from the following brief recital of his career after that period.

The regular troops of Scotland being then engaged under General Leslie in England, Montrose suddenly appeared in Perthshire, in September 1644, at the head of an army composed of Highlanders and wild Irishmen, most of the latter of whom had been engaged in the bloody scenes of the Irish massacre, and gained an easy victory at Tibbermuir over the raw and undisciplined troops who were hastily called out to arrest his progress. Having made himself master of Perth, he advanced north, flushed with success, to Aberdeen. Here, also, the troops of the Covenanters, unprepared for such treachery, were taken by surprise; and after a brave resistance of two hours, were compelled to retreat. A drummer, who had accompanied a commissioner sent to summon the town to surrender, having got drunk, and been unhappily killed on his return, Montrose, irritated by the refusal to submit to his victorious arms, made this incident a pretext for an indiscriminate slaughter, and gave the inhuman

"charge to his men to kill, and pardon none."* Orders so congenial to the savage dispositions and the merciless habits of his soldiery, were promptly fulfilled to the letter; and the scene which followed is given in the homely language of Spalding, a contemporary and a townsman of Aberdeen, whose account being that of a staunch loyalist and an admirer of Montrose, cannot for a moment be suspected of exaggeration. "The Livetennand (Montrose) followis the chais in to Abirdene, his men hewing and cutting down all maner of man they could overtak within the toune, upon the streits, or in their housis, and round about the toun as our men wes fleing, with brode swordis, but (without) mercy or remeid. Thir cruell Irishis, seeing a man weill cled, wold first tyr him (that is, strip him) and save the clothes onspoyled, and syne kill the man. Montrois followis the chais in to Abirdene, leaving the body of his army standing clois unbroken till his returne, except such Irishis as faucht the field. He had promesit to them the plundering of the toun for their good service. Alwaies (yet) the Livetennand (Montrose) stayit not, bot returnit bak fra Abirdene to the camp this samen Frydday at nicht, leaving the Irishis killing, robbing, and plundering of this toune at their plesour. And nothing hard bot pitiful houlling, crying, weeping, murning, throu all the streittis. Thus thir Irishis continewit Frydday, Setterday, Sonday, Mononday." The conduct of these monsters to the unhappy women whom they found in the town cannot be rehearsed. But to complete the picture, our faithful historian (too faithful to be quoted in this part

* Spalding's Hist. of the Troubles, vol. ii. p. 264, Bannatyne ed.

of his narrative by the panegyrists of Montrose) adds, "It is lamentable to heir how thir Irishis who had gotten the spoyl of the town did abuse the samyn. The men that they killit they wold not suffer to be bureit, bot tirrit them of their clothes, syne left their nakit bodies lying above the ground. The wyf durst not cry nor weip at her husband's slauchter befoir her eyes, nor the mother for the sone, nor dochter for the father; which, if thay war heard (doing), then war thay presently slayne also."*

This horrible scene of carnage, lust, and rapine, was perpetrated in the presence, under the authority, and by the express orders of "the gallant Montrose," who was lodged in the town, and kept the main body of his troops in the neighbourhood, that his Irish followers might revel at pleasure, and reap the full reward he had promised them "for their good service;" and the next day he marched off with the rest of his army, leaving the city in the possession and at the mercy of the inhuman instruments of his vengeance. And yet this reckless and infatuated man could so far forget himself as to declare, before his execution, that he "did all that lay in him to keep back his soldiers from spoiling the country; and for bloodshed, if it could have been thereby prevented, he would rather it had all come out of his own veins." If the remembrance of his former behaviour, in forcing the inhabitants of this town to embrace the Covenant, could make no impression on his sense of shame, we might have thought that their well-known partiality to the cause of Charles might have recommended them to his

* Spalding's Hist. of the Troubles, vol. i.. Ban. ed.

mercy; and the army of the Covenanters, by whom alone the resistance to his progress had been made, having fled, his conduct in giving up the unoffending and unarmed inhabitants to pillage and massacre is deprived even of the feeble defence which has been set up for it, on the ground of his taking reprisals upon the enemies of the king. But next to the guilt of being accessory to such an atrocious scene, which has at least the palliation of having been committed during the rage of a civil war, is that of attempting to vindicate it; and when we hear Dr Wishart, the panegyrist of Montrose, coolly describing the scene, by telling us that "he entered the city and allowed his men two days *to refresh themselves;*" and a later historian, who surveys it in the 19th century, callously declaring that Montrose "stands as completely exonerated as any general under whose command blood ever flowed or misery followed,"* we are almost tempted to say that the conduct of that general, bad as it was, was not so inexcusable as the spirit which dictated such vindications of it.

For four days did this monstrous cruelty continue, and it ceased only then, because the approach of Argyll obliged the rebels to evacuate the town. As Montrose was not in a situation to cope with Argyll, he retreated northward, and having gained fresh adherents, he penetrated, in the midst of winter, into Argyleshire, and, in the absence of its chief, overran that district with a vindictive barbarity of which only the ferocious Irish of that age and the savages of the mountains could have been found capable. The houses and the corn

* Napier's Montrose and the Covenanters.

were burned, the cattle destroyed, and all the males fit to bear arms that fell into their hands massacred in cold blood.* Argyll, resenting this dreadful invasion of his territory as a personal wrong, hastened to the scene with a party of soldiers, who being mostly raw recruits from the Lowlands, were easily routed by Montrose at Inverlochy. The conduct of Argyll on this occasion, in taking to his boat on the lake instead of leading on his men, has given occasion to his enemies to reproach him with pusillanimity. Baillie vindicates him from this, by informing us that "having a hurt in his arm and face, gotten by a casual fall from his horse, whereby he was disabled to use either sword or pistol, he was compelled by his friends to go aboard his barge." But Argyll was a senator, not a soldier; he never professed to excel in that martial daring which, in the eyes of some men, is deemed of sufficient value to atone for the absence of almost every moral and religious qualification. His firmness as a patriot, his fidelity to his country at this awful crisis, and the services he rendered to the cause of the Covenant by the wisdom of his counsels and the energy of his measures, exposed him to the slanders of the cavalier party, who, while they ridiculed his religious principles, which they were incapable of appreciating, were too glad of an occasion to exaggerate his deficiency in point of natural courage, a quality in which it was their pride and glory to excel. These slanders, carefully preserved and transmitted by successive historians, continue to be repeated down to the present

* Brodie's History of the British Empire, vol. iii. p. 534. Spalding's Troubles, &c.

day; and the memory of this nobleman lies under a cloud of obloquy, which is only beginning to clear away, as the principles for which he contended are better understood.

Meanwhile the state of the country continued to get worse and worse. Almost every man who could bear arms having been called out to serve in the wars, agricultural operations were almost totally suspended, and the consequence was, that famine, and its general attendant, pestilence, soon made their appearance. It might truly have been said, in the language of the prophet, "The sword is without, and the pestilence and the famine within; he that is in the field shall die with the sword, and he that is in the city, famine and pestilence shall devour him."* The plague, which spread quickly through the southern parts of the country, had slain its thousands. The greatest alarm prevailed in consequence of the excesses of Montrose, whose hands were by this time deeply dyed in the blood of his countrymen; and who, elated by his successes, conceived himself already master of the whole kingdom. "Only give me leave," wrote this vainglorious man to the king, "after I have reduced this country to your majesty's obedience, and conquered from Dan to Beersheba, to say to your majesty then, as David's general did to his master, 'Come thou thyself, lest this country be called by my name.'"† The

* Ezek. vii. 15.

† The letter in which this bravado occurs was found among Montrose's papers after his defeat at Philiphaugh.—*Burnet's Hist.*, vol. i. p. 52. Welwood states that this letter "had as ill effects as the worst of King Charles's enemies could have wished, for it dashed out in a moment all the impressions his best friends had been making upon him for a considerable time, towards a full settlement with his people."—*Welwood's Memoirs*, p. 65.

savages, under the conduct of this leader, and of Alaster Macdonald, a Popish outlaw, exercised every where the most "horrid and unheard of cruelties," so that the inhabitants fled in all directions at the slightest notice of their approach; and nothing was heard but the cries of women and children wailing over the loss of husbands, fathers, and brothers. In these circumstances, the country may be said to have been saved from absolute ruin by the firmness and zeal of the Scottish Church. At an extraordinary meeting held in February 1645, the General Assembly addressed a spirited remonstrance to the Scottish Parliament, urging them to execute exemplary punishment on the authors and abettors of the civil war; they also addressed "A solemn and seasonable warning" to all classes, and to the armies both in England and Scotland, pointing out the various sins of which they had been guilty, and which they viewed as the causes of God's wrath against the land, and urging them to the duties of fasting, repentance, and prayer. In this paper, after having described the miseries, sins, and dangers of the country, they say, "Unless men will blot out of their hearts the love of religion and the cause of God, and cast off all care of their country, laws, liberties, and estates, yea, all natural affection of themselves, their wives, children, and friends, and whatsoever is dearest to them under the sun, they must now or never appear actively, each one stretching himself to, yea, beyond his power. It is no time to dally, or go about the business by halves. If we have been so forward to assist our neighbour kingdoms, shall we neglect to defend our own? Or shall the enemies of God be more active against his

cause than his people for it? God forbid. If the work, being so far carried on, shall now miscarry and fail in our hands, our own consciences shall condemn us, and posterity shall curse us; but if we stand stoutly and stedfastly to it, all generations shall call us blessed." The effect of these exhortations, which were echoed through all the pulpits of the land, was highly encouraging. "The Covenanters," as one observes, "betook themselves to their old shift of fasting and prayer." The minds of the people, instead of yielding to despair, were roused to more vigorous exertion. Shortly afterwards, the country was delivered from its fears by the defeat of the royal forces at Naseby in England; and this permitting the return of the regular army under Lieutenant-General David Leslie, the brother of Alexander Leslie, who had been made Earl of Leven, the Marquis of Montrose was speedily discomfited at Philiphaugh; from which time it may be considered that the strength of the king's cause was broken, and "none of his men of might could find their hands."

Much has been written in reprobation of the severity shown by the Covenanters to the prisoners who were taken after this victory; and, particularly, in putting to death a number of the rebels, who were some time afterwards compelled to surrender at discretion at Dunavertie in the Highlands.* It is impossible for a Christian mind to contemplate these horrors of war without shuddering, nor will we undertake to vindicate

* Sir James Turner, who was on the spot, and no friend to the Covenanters, distinctly refutes Bishop Guthry's account of this affair; and declares that no quarter was promised to these prisoners.—*Turner's Memoirs*, p. 47. In 1644. the English Parliament passed an ordinance, that no quarter should be given to the Irish who were found in arms against them.—*Oldmixon's England*, vol. i. p. 269.

all the measures taken by the Presbyterians at this trying period; but certainly, if ever severity was justifiable, it was in the case adverted to. What can be more preposterous than to gloat, as some writers have done, with evident delight, over the massacre of *six thousand* trembling fugitives after the battle of Kilsyth,—a feat which Montrose and his savages accomplished in their shirts, with "the sleeves tucked up like a butcher going to kill cattle;" and yet to affect the utmost horror at the military and judicial execution of some two or three hundred rebels, chiefly Irish, taken with arms in their hands, and reeking with the blood of our countrymen?* Blinded by prejudice, such writers can see no distinction between the cry for justice against these murderers, which rose from every quarter of the country, and a base thirst for private revenge; nor will they condescend to make the smallest allowance for the outraged feelings of a people suffering under the combined scourge of war, famine, and pestilence, towards those whom they regarded as the authors of all their miseries, and in whom they often recognised the very ruffians who had been engaged in the murderous scenes of the Irish rebellion. Cruelty, in every form, is justly an object of detestation; but it betrays a strange perversion of mind to sympathize in its perpetration, and only to revolt at its punishment.

The period which we now approach was, without exception, the most trying and perplexing in the whole history of the Scottish Church. When we consider the circumstances in which our ancestors were then placed by the course of events, we will make great

* Napier's Montrose and the Covenanters, vol. ii. p. 442-473.

allowances for them, and will not hastily condemn them for adopting measures which we cannot fully approve. Distracted between the conscientious duty which they owed to the great Head of the Church, and the allegiance which they owed to their earthly sovereign,—earnestly desirous to see Charles reinstated on the throne, and yet unwilling to offend the English Parliament, to which they looked for protection against his despotic encroachments,—dreading sectarianism on the one hand, and prelacy on the other,—never had the rulers of the Church found more difficulty in steering the vessel intrusted to their charge. Though events did not answer their expectations (and we must not judge of their actions by the events), it is impossible for any well-constituted mind not to admire the sterling principle and straight-forward consistency with which they prosecuted their course during this stormy epoch, manifesting the most devoted loyalty to their unhappy and infatuated prince, and at the same time a steady adherence to the cause of liberty, and to their sacred engagements,—a course which affords a striking contrast to that pursued by the other two parties in the national struggle. Indeed, one of the most striking attestations to the general rectitude of their conduct appears in the fact, that, by the friends of both of these parties they have been equally blamed, both of old and of late, for opposite extremes,—the republican party sneering at their excess of loyalty, while the royal party denounce them as the most base and disloyal of demagogues.

The king, after his defeat by Cromwell, had betaken himself, in the spring of 1646, to the Scottish army,

at that time lying in the north of England, obviously with the design of inducing them to take part with him against the English Parliament. This unexpected step placed the Scots in a situation of extreme embarrassment. Their army had been levied and sent into England expressly to aid the Parliament in its struggle with the royal forces: they were supported by the money of the Parliament, and considered themselves solemnly bound, by the brotherly Covenant, to advance its cause. At the same time, they had begun to suspect that some of the Parliamentary leaders entertained designs against the king's person; and to refuse him the "shelter and defence" for which he professed to have thrown himself into their hands, seemed as inconsistent with their engagements in the Covenant, which bound them to "preserve and defend the king's majesty's person and authority, in the preservation and defence of the true religion and liberties of the kingdom," as it was repugnant to every feeling of honour and generosity. He was received by the Scots with every mark of respect; and had he complied with the only terms on which they could, with safety or consistency, engage to support him, there can be little doubt that he would have escaped all his subsequent calamities. These terms were,—that he should dismiss his popishly affected counsellors, and subscribe the Solemn League. The Scottish commissioners were fully aware of the advantage which would accrue to their cause by the accession of such a convert; but, from the state of feeling in the country, they were equally convinced of the impracticability of success on any other terms. They entreated him,

on their knees, and with tears in their eyes, to comply with conditions which were absolutely essential to the peace and safety of both nations, as well as to his own interests; assuring him, that, in the event of his compliance, not only would the whole Scottish people, to a man, prove faithful to him, but that the great body of the English would join with them in replacing him honourably and securely on the throne of his ancestors. To all these solicitations, Charles, who was buoyed up with false hopes by his prelates, turned a deaf ear. His only answer was, that he was bound, by his coronation oath, to defend the prelacy and the ceremonies of the English Church; and that, ere he wronged his conscience by violating that oath, he would forfeit his crown and his life. It may appear to have been harsh to insist on the king taking a covenant which bound him to extirpate Prelacy, while he professed to believe it to be a form of divine institution; but when we consider that this form had been already abjured and abrogated by the three kingdoms, it does not seem too much, that the sovereign should have been required to adopt the national faith. The interests of a whole nation were not to be sacrificed to the personal scruples of the monarch; especially when these related merely to a form of ecclesiastical government, which could not be shown to have any foundation in Scripture, and the divine right of which had only of late been asserted, for political purposes. His majesty's professions of regard to his coronation oath, after the specimens which he had given of his duplicity, and after so often violating that oath, without remorse, in regard to the civil liber-

ties of his subjects, met with little credit. They did not impose even upon Baillie, who says, "As to his conscience, none would believe him, though he were to swear it, that he had any conscience on the subject." The real grounds of his refusal to comply with the terms of the Scottish commissioners were, as has been amply shown by others, purely of a political kind. We shall merely add, for the sake of anticipating another objection, that although "covenanting," as it has been practised by churches, is a religious duty, requiring certain religious qualifications for the right performance of it, yet the Solemn League, as well as the National Covenant of Scotland, were properly national and public deeds, binding, indeed, to the external support of a certain profession of religion, but not necessarily implying spiritual qualifications in those who entered into them. Vowing is, in its own nature, not a religious but a moral duty, competent to nations as well as individuals; and our covenants may be vindicated on the same principle as the oaths which Britain still considers herself entitled to exact from those who hold the highest official stations in the country. The real source of all the prejudice against them has been, that they were sworn in support of Presbyterianism.

That no means might be left untried which promised to relieve the royal mind from its scruples, Alexander Henderson was, by his majesty's special request, appointed to confer with him at Newcastle, on the points of difference between Prelacy and Presbytery. Henderson declined a public disputation with his majesty's divines, on the ground that he had sel-

dom found any good result from such controversies. "All that I intended," said he, "was a free yet modest expression of my motives and inducements, which drew my mind to the dislike of Episcopal government, wherein I was bred in my younger years in the university." Instead, however, of a familiar conference, the points in dispute were discussed in a series of papers which passed privately between his majesty and Mr Henderson. The result may be easily imagined. His majesty, in his answers, carefully evaded the main argument; Henderson quoted Scripture, and Charles quoted the Fathers, and the time was consumed in a heroic but hopeless attempt on the part of Henderson, by this most unsatisfactory of all modes of discussion, to convince the king on points where neither his pride nor his policy would permit him to listen to reason. These papers are eight in number, five by his majesty, and three by Henderson. "After perusing them," says one who was well versed in the controversy, "it is difficult to read without a smile the panegyrics which the Episcopalian writers have bestowed on the *incomparable wisdom* of his majesty, and the triumph which he obtained over Mr Henderson in the controversy."*

Grieved and heart-broken by the infatuation of the king, whom he perceived to be obstinately bent on refusing all the means of extricating himself from his difficulties, this devoted servant of Christ, who was labouring at the same time under a severe distemper, which he was persuaded would prove mortal, returned by sea to Edinburgh, on the 11th of August 1646.

* Life of Henderson by Dr M'Crie, Miscel. Writings, p. 58.

Though sick and exhausted, he enjoyed great peace of mind, and conversed much to the comfort of his brethren who visited him. Having revived a little, he was one day so unusually cheerful, that his friend, Sir James Stuart, could not refrain from congratulating him on the change. "Well," said Henderson, "I will tell you the reason. I am near the end of my race, hasting home, and I am as glad of it as a school-boy, when sent home from the school to his father's house. In a few days I will sicken and die. In my sickness I will be much out of ease to speak of any thing; but I desire that you may be with me as much as you can, and you shall see that all shall end well." Soon after this, as he foretold, he departed in peace. His body was interred in the Greyfriars' churchyard; and a monument was erected over his remains with a suitable inscription. After the restoration, this monument was defaced by orders from the Government; but it was afterwards repaired, and still remains in a very perfect state. Not satisfied with wreaking their vengeance on his tomb-stone, his enemies attempted to blast his immortal reputation. Laying hold of the circumstance of his having died soon after his conferences with the king at Newcastle, they circulated the report that he had become a convert to their royal cause, and that his death had been hastened by remorse for the part he had acted against his sovereign. They had even the effrontery to publish a forged document, purporting to be his death-bed declaration, in which they put into his mouth sentiments which he would have sooner died than avowed. This disgraceful and unprincipled trick, which resem-

bles those so often resorted to by Papists, was exposed at the time by the General Assembly, who, immediately upon its appearance, appointed a committee to examine the pamphlet, and afterwards published a declaration of its falsehood and forgery; in which, "out of the tender respect which they bear to his name, they declare that, after due search and trial, they do find that their worthy brother, Mr Alexander Henderson, did, from the time of his coming from London to Newcastle, till the last moment of his departure out of this life, manifest the constancy of his judgment touching the work of reformation in these kingdoms,—as divers reverend brethren who visited him have declared to this Assembly, particularly two brethren, who constantly attended him from the time he came home till his breath expired."* This was certainly sufficient; and yet this base slander, which has been refuted by our best historians,† and which has done more to discredit the cause of Prelacy than any thing that Henderson ever said against it, continues to be retailed by writers of that party down to the present day!

The next scene which occurs in this dramatic portion of our history, is the surrender of the king's person into the hands of the English. It must be gratifying to every lover of his country to know, that late investigations have freed the memory of our Scottish ancestors from the stigma which was so long attached to their conduct in this transaction. It is hardly worth while to notice the ridiculous story of the Scots

* Acts of Assembly, p. 422, ed. 1682.
† Laing's History of Scotland, vol. ii. p. 327.

having *sold their king*, which was got up at the time, in consequence of some arrears having been paid to the Scots army for their assistance. Instead of being received as a bribe, this money was reluctantly paid by the Parliament as a debt for past services; and this matter was adjusted in August 1646, five months before the question as to the disposal of the king's person was settled, with which, in fact, it had no connection. The money was payable simply on the condition of their delivering up the fortresses on the borders, and marching into Scotland—with no stipulation, on either side, as to the king's person.* The transaction, though thus stripped of its mercenary character, may seem still to reflect on the generosity of our countrymen. Even in this point of view, it is capable of a complete vindication; and, had our space permitted, it could be demonstrated that the Scottish leaders acted, on this trying occasion, in the most upright and honourable manner. To carry the king with them to Scotland, while he refused all terms of accommodation with his Parliament, would have been to renew the civil war in their own country, under circumstances more unfavourable than ever. By consenting to the establishment of Presbytery in England, while he retained his designs of subverting the Reformation in England, afforded no rational prospect of peace; and the Scottish Church, with its firmness, which is condemned by many who sing in their praises of the firmness of Charles, would accept of a boon, which, in the circumstances

* Whitelocke, 229. Answer of the Commons to the Scots Commissioners' Papers, 19.

nothing better than a bribe, and which would have involved them in a compromise of their sacred engagements with England. On the other hand, to deliver him up unconditionally, to be disposed of according to the pleasure of the English Parliament, as the English demanded, was an alternative to which they would not listen; and months were spent in negotiations, in the course of which the pertinacity with which the Scots insisted on their right to be consulted the disposal of the king's person, threatened to issue in open rupture with the Parliament. The speeches vered by the Scots commissioners, who went to don to treat this delicate question, on being sent ress, were seized and suppressed by order of Parnent, and the printer was imprisoned. They were lished, however, in Scotland; and, breathing as did the most devoted loyalty, they created a ena in behalf of the unfortunate monarch, which bsequent fate roused into universal indignation.

To ca point for which the Scots commissioners con- refused l was, that the king should, in accordance with ent, woul n earnest and repeatedly expressed desire, be own cou ted to return to some of his palaces in the e than ourhood of London, "with honour, safety, and f Presby n." "We do hold," said Lord Loudoun, "that gns of sur posing of the king's person doth not properly ed no ra to any one of the kingdoms, but jointly to both. Church, ter Scotland hath suffered the heat of the day by many nter's cold, have forsaken their own peace for of Charles, their brethren, have set their own house on fire the circum ch theirs; after we have gone along with you he hardship of this war, and (without vanity

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* Whitelocke, 229. Answer of the Commons to the Scots Commissioners' Papers, 19.

nothing better than a bribe, and which would have involved them in a compromise of their sacred engagements with England. On the other hand, to deliver him up unconditionally, to be disposed of according to the pleasure of the English Parliament, as the English demanded, was an alternative to which they would not listen; and months were spent in negotiations, in the course of which the pertinacity with which the Scots insisted on their right to be consulted in the disposal of the king's person, threatened to issue in an open rupture with the Parliament. The speeches delivered by the Scots commissioners, who went to London to treat this delicate question, on being sent to press, were seized and suppressed by order of Parliament, and the printer was imprisoned. They were published, however, in Scotland; and, breathing as they did the most devoted loyalty, they created a sensation in behalf of the unfortunate monarch, which his subsequent fate roused into universal indignation. The point for which the Scots commissioners contended was, that the king should, in accordance with his own earnest and repeatedly expressed desire, be permitted to return to some of his palaces in the neighbourhood of London, "with honour, safety, and freedom." "We do hold," said Lord Loudoun, "that the disposing of the king's person doth not properly belong to any one of the kingdoms, but jointly to both. And after Scotland hath suffered the heat of the day and winter's cold, have forsaken their own peace for love of their brethren, have set their own house on fire to quench theirs; after we have gone along with you in all the hardship of this war, and (without vanity

be it spoken) have been so useful in the cause; and that the king hath cast himself into the hands of the Scottish army, and that, by the blessing of God, we are come to the harbour of a peace,—we cannot expect that the Honourable House will think it agreeable with conscience or honour, that the person of the king should be disposed of by them as they think fit, or by any one of the kingdoms alone. The king doth, with all earnestness, desire to be joined with you. Nor can there be a more real testimony of our respect and affection to England, than that we desire he may be with you, and be advised by you; neither can you have any greater honour, than that his majesty is willing to return to you. And if so kind an offer should be refused, and the king driven to despair, it is to be feared these kingdoms will be involved in greater difficulties than ever. For, though Scotland be most willing and desirous that the king should return to his Parliament with honour, safety, and freedom; yet, if any such course shall be taken, or any demand made for rendering of his person, which cannot stand with his honour and safety, or which cannot consist with our duty, allegiance, and covenant, nor with the honour of that army to whom, in the time of his extreme danger, he had his recourse for safety, *it cannot be expected that we can be capable of so base an act.* And whatever hath been moved by us concerning the king, we desire it may be rightly constructed, as proceeding from such as have not wavered from their first principles; for when the king was in the height of his power, we did not, and, I hope, never shall, flatter him; and when the

enemy was in the height of their pride and strength, *Scotland did fear no colours!* And now, when the king is at his lowest ebb, and hath cast himself into our army for safety, we hope your lordships will pardon us, from our sense of honour and duty, to be very tender of the person and posterity of the king, to whom we have so many near relations, and not like the worse of us that we cannot so far forget our allegiance and duty, as not to have an antipathy against the change of a monarchical government, in which we have lived through the descent of so many kings, and under which both kingdoms have been governed so many ages, and flourished in all happiness."*

In their reply to these truly loyal and patriotic sentiments, the Parliament expressed great indignation at the suspicions which the Scots seemed to entertain of their intentions. "Let not your expressions obliquely infer," said they, "that the Parliament of England will not do what becometh them to the king, since all the world doth know that this kingdom hath in all times showed as great affections to their kings as any other nation." The English House of Peers, who were inclined to befriend Charles, and considered his presence in London necessary to prosecute their designs in his favour, and against the sectarian army, now became as anxious as the Commons for the removal of the Scots army out of England. Embarrassed by these considerations,—despairing of being able to conquer the obstinacy of Charles, whose last message, when presented to the House of Peers,

* Several Speeches spoken by the Right Honourable the Earle of Loudoun, Lord High Chancellor of Scotland, at a Conference, &c. Oct. 1646.

"made all," as Burnet informs us, "even those that were best affected, hang their heads, and send it down to the House of Commons without a word,"—and perceiving no other course which they could pursue with safety or success, the Parliament of Scotland at length, considering that, "as his majesty has frequently expressed his desire to be near his two Houses of Parliament, and that these houses had desired he might come to Holmby House, promising the safety and preservation of his royal person, in the preservation and defence of the true religion and liberties of the kingdom, according to the Covenant, they declare their concurrence for his majesty's going to Holmby House, or some other of his majesty's houses in or about London, there to remain till he give satisfaction to both kingdoms in the propositions of peace; and that, in the meantime, there shall be no harm, prejudice, injury, or violence done to his royal person,—that there shall be no change of government other than has been for three years preceding,—and that his posterity shall in nowise be prejudiced in their lawful succession to the throne and government of these kingdoms." Who could have anticipated, that within three years after this, the English, to whose honour and fidelity the Scots committed the person of their common sovereign, would have proceeded to bring him to their bar as a criminal, and to the scaffold as a traitor? When Charles returned to his Parliament, there was no human probability of such a catastrophe; his affairs were in a better train than ever they had been before, had it not been for what has been well termed his own "perverse fatality;"

and before we can condemn the Scots as accessory to the king's death, we must suppose them to have possessed a sagacity, which foresaw the issue of the most complicated negotiations, to have calculated on the obstinacy of the king resisting every measure proposed to him, and to have anticipated the bloody termination of the conflict, which took the whole nation by surprise, and filled Europe with astonishment.*

The year 1648 was distinguished by the famous

* In a treatise published by the Committee of Estates, 1650, in answer to Montrose's Declaration, they vindicate themselves, and the Scottish nation, with unanswerable force, from the charges above referred to. "Our chief study and endeavour," say they, "hath been to render unto God the things that are God's, and to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and to our neighbours the things that are theirs. We hope it is made clear and evident to all that will judge impartially, that there was no treaty betwixt this kingdom, their committees or armies, with the king, before his coming to our army, nor after his coming, but with the advice and consent of both houses of Parliament; and that it is a malicious and wicked device, and manifest untruth, that we should have sold our king. We abhor the very thoughts of it." After stating that "the agreement for paying their arrears was made five months before the king, with consent of both kingdoms, went from Newcastle to Holmby," they proceed to vindicate themselves from disloyalty and imprudence in giving consent to his majesty's going to the Parliament. "Who would, at that time, have foreseen that an army, raised by the Parliament for their own defence, and which, in profession, so highly esteemed and magnified the authority of Parliament, would not only disobey their orders, but also attempt such horrid things as they have since adventured upon? Surely when the Scots army came out of England, it would have seemed not only improbable but incredible. The kingdom of Scotland did intrust his majesty's person to the honourable houses of Parliament of England, who were as deeply engaged by duty, oaths, covenants, and solemn professions for his majesty's preservation, as the kingdom of Scotland; and, no question, they would have preserved his majesty's person from all violence or injury whatsoever, had they not met with the unexpected violence against their own persons; for until the army did, by the power of the sword, imprison and seclude the far greater part of the House of Commons, and made void the power of the House of Peers, they durst not attempt any thing against his majesty's person. And what wonder if we, who were strangers, could not perceive the depth of such designs (if at that time there was any framed design of that kind, which we very much question), when the houses of Parliament did not foresee their own ruin?"

Engagement projected by the Duke of Hamilton, the professed object of which was to rescue Charles out of the hands of the English army, who were now under the command of Cromwell, and had obtained, by force, possession of the king's person. This ill-fated expedition was condemned by the Scottish Presbyterians, because no provision was made, in the event of its success, that the king would secure the liberties of the nation according to the terms of the Covenant. These terms, indeed, bound them to "stand to the defence of our dread sovereign, the king's majesty, his person, and authority;" but at the same time, "to the defence of the liberties and laws of the kingdom;" and the reason assigned for this was, that "some among themselves had laboured to put into the hands of the king an arbitrary and unlimited power, destructive to the privileges of Parliaments, and the liberties of the subject." So that, as has been justly remarked, "in proof of the regard of our fathers to civil liberty, we may appeal to those very covenants which have been so absurdly decried by ignorant and prejudiced moderns, but which, in reality, constituted at that time the only *Magna Charta* of Scottish freedom."* The Covenanters with equal sagacity and regard to liberty, protested against the admission, into places of power and trust in this army, of those who were termed *Malignants*, that is, persons who were well known to be hostile to the cause of civil and religious freedom, and inclined to favour the arbitrary measures of the court. It was perceived at once that to suffer this, in the circu-

* Preliminary Dissertation to Wodrow's History by Dr Burns.

stances of the country, was equivalent to delivering up the military into the hands of the king, and abandoning all that they had been contending for. But though the Church protested against the enterprise, it was sanctioned by the Estates; the command was intrusted to notorious Malignants, and Hamilton dragged a reluctant army of 15,000 men into England, where, as might have been expected, from the total want of spirit and mutual confidence among those who composed it, they were easily routed by the English army, under Cromwell, near Preston, with the loss of 2000 killed, and 8000 prisoners.

This battle, fatal to so many of our countrymen, proved fatal also to the unfortunate and infatuated monarch. The sectarian army, or, as Cromwell called them, his "obedient lambs," elated by their successes, repaired to London, and took the administration into their own hands. Their first step was to *purge* the House of Commons, by excluding all the Presbyterian members, which was done by a guard of soldiers under the command of Colonel Pride. The Commons being thus reduced to Sectaries, wholly at the devotion of the army, King Charles was brought before this non-descript tribunal, was arraigned as a criminal, and having refused to own their jurisdiction, was condemned as a traitor to his country, and sentenced to be beheaded. The awful sentence was carried into execution on the 30th of January 1649, before an immense concourse of spectators. Artillery was planted at all the avenues leading to the place of execution, ready to be discharged on the multitude in case of a tumult; and when the axe fell on the neck of the

unhappy monarch, and the executioner exposed the bleeding head to public view, one dismal universal groan burst from the horror-stricken crowd,* who were immediately, however, dispersed in all directions by troops of dragoons.

The behaviour of Charles at his death presents his character in a light much more favourable than any of the public actions of his life. That cold reserve and inflexible obstinacy which distinguished his whole conduct, assumed, in his last moments, the sublimer aspect of chastened and tranquil magnanimity. His private virtues have been acknowledged by all; but such were the imperfections of his character, that these virtues were unprofitable to the public, and, by their abuse, proved pernicious to himself. His bigotry, his stubbornness, and above all, his proud desire of an inordinate power, which he refused to share with any but the prelates, brought misery upon his country, and ruin upon himself. His life was a series of political blunders; and in his death, though it was little better than a judicial murder, princes may read a lesson which may serve, to the end of time, to warn them against abusing the power with which they are intrusted.

When the news of the execution of Charles I. reached Edinburgh, on Sabbath, February 4, 1649, it is impossible to describe the mingled feelings of astonishment, horror, and indignation, which filled all ranks of persons; and if any thing were wanting to prove the devoted and disinterested loyalty of the

* Philip Henry, who witnessed this terrible scene, says of the groan referred to, that it was such "as he never heard before, and desired he might never hear the like again."—*Life, by M. Henry*, p. 17.

Scottish Presbyterians, the step which they instantly adopted places it beyond all question. The very next day, without calculating on the consequences, Charles II., the son of the deceased monarch, was proclaimed king, at the Cross of Edinburgh, by the Committee of Estates. The proclamation, however, was guarded by the proviso, that "before being admitted to the exercise of his royal power, he shall give satisfaction to this kingdom in those things that concern the security of religion, according to the National Covenant, and the Solemn League and Covenant,"—the only terms on which the Scots considered themselves warranted, in consistency with their engagements to England, and from regard to their own civil and religious liberties, to invite him to the throne. As a proof of his sincerity in prosecuting the ends of these Covenants, it was agreed that he should be required to dismiss from his councils, and from places of trust, all who were suspected of disaffection to the covenanted cause. Commissioners were immediately despatched to Charles, who was then at the Hague in Holland, to treat with him on these terms; but at first, imitating the policy of his father, he refused to listen to any stipulations; in consequence of which the Commissioners returned, much dissatisfied, without accomplishing their object. The negotiations were renewed with better success the following year; but, meanwhile, let us attend to the proceedings of the Church during the intervening period.

During the whole of this period of civil convulsion, the Church prospered and improved in no ordinary degree. The minds of men were kept on the alert,

and led to serious inquiry, by being compelled to contend, amidst almost perpetual changes, perils, and alarms, for their religious principles and privileges. The constant practice of catechising of young and old, left few ignorant of the doctrines of religion, or of the profession for which they were contending. All felt personally interested in the public struggle. The ministers, though not without their faults and extravagancies, were distinguished, as a body, for their theological learning, their piety and assiduity in their functions. Bishop Burnet, who is sufficiently ready to depreciate them, is obliged to own, "They had an appearance that created respect. They were related to the chief families in the country, either by blood or marriage, and had lived in so decent a manner, that the gentry paid great respect to them. They used to visit their parishes much; and had brought the people to such a degree of knowledge, that cottagers and servants would have prayed extempore. As they lived in great familiarity with their people, and used to pray and talk oft with them in private, so it can hardly be imagined to what a degree they were loved and reverenced by them." * Great efforts were made, during this stormy period, to purify the Church from unworthy ministers; a step which was followed by the revival of religion, and a visible reformation of manners, in several parishes. Many excellent acts were passed by the General Assembly. To this period, also, we are indebted for the full establishment of parochial schools; which have contributed so much to elevate Scotland above other nations in point of general intel-

* Burnet's History, vol. i. p. 225.

ligence; and which, being originally designed as nurseries for the Church of Christ, as well as seminaries for useful learning, were placed under the superintendence of Presbyteries, and conducted on religious principles. This valuable institution, which was projected by the reformers, and brought into extensive operation long before it received the support of the Government, we entirely owe to the efforts of the Church courts; and indeed, their care to promote the interests both of common education in the Highlands and Lowlands, and of classical learning, manifested in numerous acts regarding schools and universities, reflects the highest credit on their enlarged and enlightened views, at a time when our ancestors are generally charged with the most narrow-minded bigotry. Making allowance for the peculiar circumstances in which they were placed, and by which they were occasionally driven into extreme measures, the estimate of Kirkton cannot be considered beyond the truth, when he says of this period (1649), "Now the ministry was notably purified, the magistracy altered, and the people strangely refined. Scotland hath been, even by emulous foreigners, called Philadelphia; and now she seemed to be in her flower."

In these praiseworthy exertions for the good of their country, the Church received the cordial cooperation of the ruling powers, who passed several acts contributing to the advancement of religion. Among these we cannot omit noticing the celebrated act passed in 1649, for the total abolition of Patronage. Without entering into the much litigated question of patronage, we shall state a few facts in illustration of

its history in the Church of Scotland. The opinion of the first reformers on the subject of patronage, may be gathered from the fact, that they held the election of the people essential to constitute the pastoral relation between a minister and a congregation. In the First Book of Discipline, which continued to be the rule of the Church's procedure for many years, and the authority of which was not superseded by the Second Book, it is laid down as a principle, that "it appertaineth to the people, and to every several congregation, to elect their minister;" and that, "altogether this is to be avoided, that any man be violently intruded or thrust in upon any congregation." It would appear that they did not at first perceive that patronage was incompatible with this principle; and, in fact, for some time they went on harmoniously together.*

In the year 1565, Queen Mary, having suspected that the General Assembly, by certain articles which they presented to her majesty, intended to interfere

* In 1561, Knox admitted John Spottiswood Superintendent of Lothian, and the form of procedure observed in this case, which was published in a treatise at the time, may serve to illustrate this point. The sermon being finished, Knox declared, "That the Lords of Secret Councill had given charge and power to the Churches of Lothian to *chuse* Mr John Spottiswood, superintendent," &c. "When no objection was moved, the people present were asked if there was any other they desired to be put in election with the said Mr John; and next, if they would have him to their superintendent, if they would honour and obey him as Christ's minister, and comfort and assist him in every thing pertaining to his charge? It was answered, by some appointed for that purpose, 'We will; and do promise to him such obedience as becometh the sheep to give unto their pastor, so long as he remaineth faithful in his office.' The people's consent being thus declared, Mr Knox proposed the following questions to Mr Spottiswood," &c. This treatise, entitled, "The Form and Order of the Election of the Superintendent, which may serve in the Election of all other ministers," may be found in Dunlop's Confessions, vol. ii., and in Wodrow's Biographical Collections (*Maitland edit.*), vol. i. part i. p. 75.

with her right of presentation, the Assembly replied, "Our mind is not that her majesty, or any other patron of this realm, should be defrauded of their just patronages; but as the presentation of benefices pertains to the patron, so ought the collation thereof, by law and reason, pertain to the Kirk." Her majesty had misunderstood them; they did not intend, by these articles, to interfere with the rights of patronage, far less to "defraud" the patrons; the struggle, at that time, was for the right of collation. Still the form of election by the congregation was continued in one shape or another; and such was the care taken by the clergy to preserve the liberties of the people, that during the Presbyterian administration, no complaints of intrusion were ever heard.* They soon, however, discovered that patronage in its exercise interfered with the freedom of election; and accordingly, in the Second Book of Discipline, begun in 1573, and finally agreed to in 1578, among "certain special heads of reformation which we crave," they mention the abolition of patronage.† If it should be asked, how the

* In 1563, Robert Ramsay is suspended by the Assembly, "for entering in the ministrie within the Superintendent of Angus, his bounds, *without election* or his admission."—*Bookе of the Universall Kirk*, part 1. p. 44, Ban. ed. Even the bishops, introduced by Morton, were "chosen by the flock then present," anno 1574.—*Ibid.* p. 319. Indeed, the Parliament of 1640 declare it as a well-known fact, that it had been the practice of the Church of Scotland to settle parishes "on the sute and calling of the congregation, ever since the Reformation."—*Act. Parl. Scot.*, vol. v. p. 299.

† "The libertie of the election of persons called to the ecclesiastical function, and observed without interruption so long as the Kirk was not corrupted by Antichrist, we desire to be restored and retained within this realm. So that none be intrused upon any congregation, either by the prince or any inferior person, without lawful election, and the assent of the people over whom the person is placed, as the practice of the Apostolical and Primitive Kirk, and good order craves. And, because this

Church of Scotland could continue to enjoy her benefices under a system which she declared to be "contrary to the Word of God, and to the liberty of election?" we reply, That she did so under a solemn protest against it; that it was not in her power to reform the law, this being the province of the State; and that she was constantly looking for deliverance from it as a yoke. In 1582, when an act was passed to prevent some abuses of patronage, it was declared that its provisions "should no ways be prejudicial to the laic patrons and their presentations, *until the time the laws be reformed according to the Word of God.*"* In 1596, the Assembly ordained, that "because by presentations many are forcibly thrust into the ministry, and upon congregations that utter thereafter that they were not called of God, it would be provided that none seek presentations to benefices without advice of the Presbytery." They also ordained, "That the trial of persons to be admitted to the ministry hereafter consist not only in their learning and ability to preach, but also in conscience and feeling and spiritual wisdom; and such as are not qualified in these points to be delayed to farther trial, and till they be found qualified." The events which followed

order, which God's Word craves, cannot stand with patronages and presentation to benefices, used in the Pope's Kirk, we desire all them that truly fear God earnestly to consider that, forasmuch as the names of patronages and benefices, together with the effect thereof, have flowed from the Pope and corruption of the canon law only, in so far as thereby any person was intrused, or placed over kirks having care of souls: And, forasmuch as that manner of proceeding hath no ground in the Word of God, but is contrary to the same, and to the said liberty of election, they [patronages] ought not now to have place in this light of reformation." — *Second Book of Discipline*, ch. 12.

* Calderwood, p. 124. Bookes of the Univ. Kirk p. 247; Peterkin's ed.

soon after this, with the introduction of Prelacy, rendered all attempts of this nature hopeless or abortive; but no sooner did the civil power become favourable to Presbytery, than the Church renewed her exertions to shake off the burden. The famous Assembly at Glasgow, in 1638, not only ratified the Second Book of Discipline, in which patronage is so explicitly condemned, and the act of Assembly 1596, but enacted, "that no person be intruded in any office of the Kirk contrary to the will of the congregation to which they are appointed." With these principles, the practice of the Church of Scotland at that time fully corresponded; "so that," says Henderson, in a treatise published in 1641, "no man is here obtruded upon the people against their open or tacit consent and approbation."* In 1646, we find the Assembly "recommending to several presbyteries and provincial assemblies to consider the interests of particular congregations in the calling and admission of ministers;" and at length, in compliance with the urgent desires of the Church, the Parliament, March 1649, cordially and completely abolished patronage, leaving it to the General Assembly to fix upon such a plan of admission to the sacred office as they in their wisdom might see fit. The preamble of this act, as expressing the views of our reforming ancestors, deserves attention: "Considering that patronages and presentations of kirks is an evil and bondage under which the Lord's people and ministers of this land have long groaned, and that it hath no warrand in God's Word, but is

* The Government and Order of the Church of Scotland.

founded only on the canon law, and is a custom merely popish, brought into the Kirk in time of ignorance and superstition: And that the same is contrary to the Second Book of Discipline, in which upon solid and good ground, it is reckoned among abuses that are desired to be reformed, and unto several acts of General Assemblies; and that it is prejudicial to the liberty of the people and planting of kirks, and unto the free calling and entries of ministers unto their charge: And the said Estates being willing and desirous to promote and advance the reformation aforesaid, that every thing in the house of God may be ordered according to his will and commandment, — *do discharge for ever hereafter* all patronages and presentations of kirks, whether belonging to the king or any laic patron, presbyteries, or others within this kingdom." The General Assembly, in July following, "highly commend the piety and zeal of the Estates of Parliament in promoting so necessary a point of reformation;" and, with some variety of opinion as to the particular mode in which the business of election should be conducted, they agreed on a plan which, though imperfect, and only intended as a temporary arrangement, was attended with the best effects. According to this plan, the election was placed in the session, with consent of the congregation, who might obtain a hearing of such preachers they chose, by petitioning the presbytery. In the case of dissent by the major part of the congregation from the person agreed upon by the session, the matter was to be remitted to the judgment of the pres-

bytery, who, "if they do not find their dissent to be grounded on causeless prejudices, are to appoint a new election."*

In the following year the Scots renewed their negotiations with Charles at the Hague; and upon hearing that Montrose had failed in a foolhardy expedition against the Covenanters, and had been executed as a traitor, he thought proper to comply with their proposals; and setting sail with the Commissioners, landed in Scotland at the mouth of the Spey, on the 23d of June 1650. It would be well for the credit both of his majesty and of our venerable ancestors, if historical truth would allow us to draw a veil over the transactions which followed. Before Charles landed on the Scottish shore, he agreed to swear and subscribe the Covenant. Mr Livingstone, who accompanied the embassy, and was very jealous of the

* Sir James Balfour informs us that "the current was carried for the Church way, in respect Argyle, the Chancellor, and Archibald Johnston, durst doe no utherwayes, lest the leaders of the Church should desert them, and leave them to stand on their auen feeitt, which without the Church none of them could weill do."—*Histor. Works*, vol. iii. ad. an. 1649. This is, at least, a testimony to the zeal of the Church in the matter; but Sir James had no ground for accusing the nobles, as a body, of insincerity.

The chief dispute in the Assembly 1649, regarding the mode of election, turned on the question, Whether the part which the congregation had in the election was that of nomination or consent? The progress of independency in England filled many with a dread of every thing that seemed to favour the views of that sect, who ascribed to the people the whole power of admission to the sacred office. Calderwood, "who, in the time of his exile, had seen the wild follies of the English Brownists in Arnheim and Amsterdam" (*Guthry's Memoirs*, p. 79); Baillie, and others who had been engaged in the Independent controversy, were averse to admit that the people possessed the right of *election*; but all agreed that the right of election should be within the Church,—that patronage was, in every form, hostile to the liberty of election and the independence of the Church,—and that no minister should be intruded into any congregation against their will.

king's sincerity, would have deferred this ceremony till he was brought to a better state of mind; but he was overruled by the rest, and prevailed on reluctantly to administer the solemn test. In August following, finding that the Church still entertained strong suspicions of his insincerity, the king subscribed a declaration at Dunfermline, in which he professed to lament the opposition which his father had made to the work of reformation, and solemnly declared that he renounced Popery and Prelacy, and "would have no enemies but the enemies of the Covenant, no friends but the friends of the Covenant." Mr Gillespie, the minister who put the pen into Charles' hand to subscribe this declaration, assured him, "that if he was not satisfied in his soul and conscience, beyond all hesitation, of the righteousness of the subscription, he was so far from over-driving him to do it, that he obtested him, and charged him, in his Master's name, not to subscribe that declaration, no, not for the three kingdoms." "Mr Gillespie," answered the king, "Mr Gillespie, I am satisfied, and therefore will subscribe it." The truth is, that in religious matters, Charles would subscribe any thing. It was afterwards discovered that, before he left the Continent, he had embraced Popery, and in this religion, if he can be said to have had any religion, he continued till his death, though on his restoration he subscribed the articles of the Church of England; thus juggling in sacred things to the last, and imposing on the English Church, as he now did on the Scottish, by false professions. Even at this time, while coming under the most sacred engagements to support Presbytery, he

was secretly concerting measures to ruin that cause, by introducing its enemies into the army and legislature, and dividing the Presbyterians. The stern obstinacy of his father appears virtue itself, when contrasted with the cool perjury of his profligate and unprincipled son.

It is impossible, on the other hand, to vindicate the conduct of the leaders among the Presbyterians, in accepting, or even requiring, these protestations from such a man as Charles, under the circumstances. The truth is, that these tests were exacted by a party in the Church and State—the moderate party, as it may be termed, who were most friendly to Charles, and were driven to these measures to silence the scruples of their brethren, and to secure the co-operation of the country in restoring the king to his throne. With the same views, and hopeful that his majesty would prove faithful to his engagements, which were absolutely necessary to his success, they prevailed on the Commissioners to "forbear mentioning in the Assembly (July 1650) any thing which might make the king or his way odious, in the entrie of his government." And thus were laid the foundations of that lamentable schism between the Resolutioners and Protesters, which was not healed even at the period of the Restoration.*

The people of Scotland, ignorant of the real character of Charles, and confiding in his professions of attachment to their religion, were overjoyed at the arrival of their prince. "In a special manner at

* Row's Supplement to Life of Blair, MS., p. 82. Burnet's Hist. of his Own Times, i. p. 103. Hind let Loose, p. 87, 88. Crookshank's Introd. i. p. 58.

Edinburgh," says Nicol, in his Diary, "by setting furth of bailfyres, ringing of bells, sounding of trumpets, dancing all that night through the streets. The puir kaill-wyffes at the Trone sacrificed their creillis, and the very stooles they sat upon, to the fyre." These rejoicings were soon interrupted by the approach of Cromwell with an immense army, and the shameful defeat at Dunbar, when no less than three thousand of the Scots fell on the field of battle, among whom were several ministers, who, being viewed with an evil eye by the sectaries, found no mercy at their hands. If we may believe Sir Edward Walker, the English owed this victory as much to the lenity of the Scottish leaders as to their presumption. He tells us, that the committee of war would not allow the attack to be made on Cromwell when they might have routed him, "saying it were pity to destroy so many of their brethren; but seeing next day they were like to fall into their hands, it were better to get a *dry victory*, and send them back with shame for their breach of covenant."* The unfortunate Covenanters, who were sincere at least, however far they might be mistaken in their attempts to serve the monarch for whom they shed their blood, met with little sympathy; and it is with no ordinary feelings of disgust that we learn

* Walker's Journal, Disc. p. 189.—Much misapprehension exists as to the share which the ministers had in provoking David Lesley to engage. Some of them, no doubt, were too forward; their notion of purging the army even of *private* soldiers suspected of malignancy, was sufficiently absurd; and their expectation of supernatural success to their army, because thus purified (the error of the age), was equally unwarranted. But it was Lesley's own conceit to draw down the army from the hill at night, which proved its ruin; and none were more indignant at him than the Protesting ministers.—*Pamphlets, Adv. Lib. A A A.* 3, 22. *Baillie* ii. 350.

from Clarendon, that Charles rejoiced at their defeat. "Never," says that cold-hearted historian, "was victory obtained with less lamentation; for, as Cromwell had great argument of triumph, so the king was glad of it, as the greatest happiness that could befall him, in the loss of so strong a body of his enemies!"

Charles, indeed, soon gave evidence that he looked on the Presbyterians as his "enemies." One Saturday morning, when at Perth, shortly after the battle of Dunbar, and while Cromwell lay in Edinburgh, his majesty, on pretence of hawking, left the town on horseback, attended by a few domestics, and set off at full speed to the hills. Here he was met by the Earl of Buchan, not, as he expected, at the head of an army prepared to deliver him out of the hands of the Covenanters, but with a miserable escort of some 60 or 70 Highlanders. He was led to a wretched hovel, where, throwing himself on an old bolster and some rushes, he was found by a party sent in pursuit of him, and brought back next day to Perth in time to hear the afternoon sermon. This ill-timed flight, which was called *the start*, filled the minds of all his friends with the deepest grief. "To my own heart," says Baillie, "it brought one of the most sensible sorrows that in all my life I had felt." Jealous as many of the stricter Presbyterians were of him before, when he "took the start," they lost all confidence in him. And, in October 1650, a long and pointed remonstrance was addressed to the Committee of Estates, signed by a number of gentlemen, officers, and ministers, connected with the forces in the west country, complaining of their rashness in admitting the king to swear the

Covenant, and charging them, in very severe terms, with having "turned aside, forgotten their late vows, and brought the calamities of war upon the nation by their unfaithful conduct."

In the midst of all these disorders of Church and State, Charles was solemnly crowned at Scoon, on the 1st of January 1651. The sermon before the ceremony was preached by Mr Robert Douglas, one of the ministers of Edinburgh. He chose for his text those strikingly appropriate words, 2 Kings xi. 12, 17:— "And he brought forth the king's son, and put the crown upon him, and gave him the testimony: and they made him king, and anointed him; and they clapped their hands, and said, God save the king. And Jehoiada made a covenant between the Lord and the king and the people, that they should be the Lord's people; between the king also and the people." This sermon has been printed, and it is considered an ingenious, able, and faithful discourse. "Many doubt of your reality in the Covenant," said the preacher, addressing his majesty, "let your sincerity be evidenced by your stedfastness and constancy; for many, like your ancestor, have begun well, but have not been constant. Take warning from the example before you; let it be laid to heart; requite not men's faithful kindness with persecution; yea, requite not the Lord so, who has preserved you to this time, and is setting a crown upon your head." After sermon, the National Covenant and Solemn League were distinctly read, and the king solemnly swore them. Thereafter, the oath to defend and support the Church of Scotland was administered to the king, who, kneel-

ing, and holding up his right hand, used these awfully solemn words,—"By the Eternal and Almighty God, who liveth and reigneth for ever, I shall observe and keep all that is contained in this oath." The whole ceremonial was gone about with as much splendour as the circumstances of the country admitted; but the dangers and suspicions with which they were environed threw a gloom over the scene, and the mournful forebodings of the more faithful party in the Church were speedily confirmed.

The shameful defeat at Dunbar, proved, in its consequences, hardly less disastrous to the Church of Scotland, than it had been to the Scottish army. The successes of Cromwell, who now threatened to overrun the whole country, emboldened Charles and his courtiers to press for the removal of those restraints which were laid on the royal party by the Act of Classes passed in 1649. This Act, so called from its dividing the Malignants into different classes, according to the degrees in which they had shown their disaffection to the cause of the Covenant, excluded many of Charles' friends from the army and civil judicatories. To have some pretext for repealing this obnoxious statute, which guarded the privileges of the Church as well as the liberties of the nation, it was deemed of importance to obtain the approbation of the General Assembly. This, however, was not easily obtained. A large party in the Church had, as we have already seen, become justly suspicious of the sincerity of Charles, and severely blamed their brethren of the royal or moderate party, for precipitance in exacting from him professions which were contradicted by all that they

knew of his principles and conduct. As proofs of his insincerity, they referred to the fact, that while engaged in the treaty with the Scots Covenanters, he had secretly confirmed a peace with the Irish rebels, and sent a commission to Montrose to invade the kingdom of Scotland, which was found among the papers of Montrose after his defeat. And, in their Remonstrance, they protested against the Dunfermline declaration which the moderate party had drawn up, as "teaching his majesty dissimulation and outward compliance, rather than any cordial conjunction with the cause and Covenant."* These remonstrances gave great offence to the ruling party in the Church, and the breach was widened by their subsequent procedure. A few members of the Commission of the Assembly, favourable to the royal party, having met at Perth in December 1650, the Parliament submitted to their judgment the following question:—"What persons are to be admitted to rise in arms, and to join with the forces of the kingdom, and in what capacity, for defence thereof, against the armies of the sectaries, who, contrary to the Solemn League and Covenant and Treaties, have most unjustly invaded and are destroying the kingdom?" In answer to this ensnaring question, so plausibly worded, the Commission passed two Resolutions, favourable, under certain limitations, to the admission of all fencible persons in the land. No sooner had these been obtained, than the Parliament, without paying any regard to their limitations, rescinded the Act of Classes; and the consequence was, that the most notorious Malignants, some

* Westland Remonstrance, *apud* Sir J. Balfour's Works, iv. 143.

of whom had served under Montrose, and all of whom were enemies to the Reformation since 1638, were nominated to the highest posts in the army, and to places of power and trust in the nation. In consequence of these resolutions, a sad division took place in the Assembly which met at St Andrews and Dundee, July 1651. Those who adhered to the Resolutions or answers given by the Commission, were called Resolutioners; those who joined in a protest against them, were denominated Protesters. The debates between the parties, as might be expected from the tumultuous times in which they occurred, were violent, tedious, and involved; each side professing to be actuated by regard to the cause of the Reformation, and mutually charging each other with marring its success. The Resolutioners, who formed the majority in this Assembly, went so far as to depose three of the most eminent and active of the Protesters, namely,—James Guthrie, minister of Stirling (who afterwards suffered in the cause), Patrick Gillespie of Glasgow, and James Simpson of Airth. The Protesters, on the other hand, asserted the nullity of this Assembly, and protested against all their proceedings.

Such was the commencement of the first schism that had taken place in the Church of Scotland since the time of the Reformation. The controversy involved a number of questions, casuistical and political, of which we cannot afford room even for an abstract. Much may be said on both sides; and great allowances must be made for those who contended for the necessity of enrolling all who were capable of bearing arms. But it is easy for us, who have the

light of subsequent history to guide us, to see that the Protesters, as their brethren were afterwards compelled to acknowledge, "had their eyes open, while the Resolutioners were blind." The perfidious conduct of Charles at the Restoration, and 28 years of bloody persecution, furnish a melancholy commentary on the truth of this conclusion. "I must confess, madam," said Mr Dickson to a lady who came to visit him on his death-bed, "that the Protesters have been much truer prophets than we were."* It is needless to speculate on what might have been the result, had the Church acted otherwise: it was the will of Providence that she should be subjected to a long period of trial; and in a little time, as Wodrow expresses it, "the whole honest Presbyterian ministers were struck at, and sent to the furnace to unite them."

By the advice of his new counsellors, Charles undertook an expedition into England, the result of which is matter of well-known history. His defeat at Worcester, in September 1651, which Cromwell, in his despatches, called "a crowning mercy," was not such matter of congratulation to the king as that at Dunbar: it completely ruined his hopes; and, after many narrow escapes, he effected a passage to France, leaving the whole country at the mercy of the conqueror. It is hard to say, if the good people of Scotland were more alarmed at the arms of Cromwell's soldiers, than the Church was at the heresies which they brought along with them. The ministers beheld, with dismay, an army of sectaries, impregnated with all the errors of the times, and quite as ready to combat them

* Wodrow's Anal. MS.

in the pulpit, as they were to meet their army in the battle-field. Cromwell himself, who delighted in nothing so much as a theological debate, entered into a curious controversy with the clergy who had taken refuge in the Castle of Edinburgh, which held out after the city was captured. While his soldiers battered the walls of the castle with their cannon, the General attempted to storm the minds of the besieged theologians with his Independent missives, which were met, on their part, by regular and firm rejoinders. Meanwhile their pulpits were usurped by the gifted lay-preachers of the army, holding forth in their regimentals to crowded and astonished auditories. "General Lambert," says Nicholl, "having urgit the toun of Edinburgh Councel to appropriate to him the Eist Kirk, being the best kirk in the toun for his exercise at sermound, the same was renderit to him for that use; wherein there wes divers and sundrie sermonds preached, asweill by captanes, and lievtenants, and troupers of his army, as by ordinar pastors and English ministers; which captanes, commanders, and troupers, when they enterit the pulpits, did not observe our Scots forms, bot when they ascended, they enterit the pulpits with their swords hung at their sides, and sum carrying pistolls up with thame; and after their entrie, laid asyde within the pulpits their swords till they had ended their sermonds. It was thocht," adds our simple annalist, "that these men war weill giftit, yet were not ordourlie callit according to the discipline observit within this kingdom of Scotland."

In various places throughout the country Cromwell's soldiers behaved very rudely. They would come into

the churches during the time of service, take up their seat, by way of contempt, on the stool of repentance, and after sermon publicly challenge the minister to dispute with them on the doctrine which he had been preaching.* The ministers, however, generally got the advantage of these intruders, and even before Cromwell himself they showed a becoming spirit. Though a proclamation had been issued, prohibiting any to pray for King Charles, many of them continued to do so, in spite of the prohibition, and even in the face of the soldiers, who threatened to fire on them if they attempted it. When Cromwell came to Glasgow, the magistrates and some of the ministers fled at the first news of his approach. Among those who remained was Mr Zachary Boyd, famous for his translation of the Bible into metre. This divine, nothing daunted by the presence of Cromwell and his soldiers, who came to hear him, "railed on them all to their face in the High Church." Tradition informs us that Cromwell's secretary was so annoyed with the plainness of the worthy paraphrast, that he asked leave, in a whisper, "to pistol the scoundrel." "No, no," said the Protector, "we will manage him in another way." In the evening he asked the clergy to sup with him, and concluded the entertainment with a prayer, which, it is said, lasted till three in the morning.† Cromwell, it would appear, could stand a sermon levelled at his civil authority, with better temper than a reflection on his powers as a theological disputant. Marching into the General

* Lamont's Diary, p. 58.

† MSS. in Adv. Lib.; Brown's Hist. of Glasgow, p. 104; Baillie, vol. ii. p. 359.

Assembly on one occasion, he made a harangue to them, nearly an hour in length, in his usual style of unintelligible rhodomontade, and copiously interlarded with quotations from Scripture. The members looked at each other in bewildered amazement, till at length an old minister, Mr John Semple of Carsphairn, rose up and said,—"Moderator, I hardly know what *the gentleman* wald be at in this long discourse; but one thing I am sure of, he was perverting the Scripture." For this speech the honest minister was punished by six months' imprisonment.*

The General Assembly, however, was a court too free in its constitution to suit the despotic temper of Cromwell, any more than that of James or Charles. The successful usurper, who had dissolved the Long Parliament, and openly scoffed at the mention of *Magna Charta*, was not likely to suffer the continuance of an Assembly, the members of which had taken such an active part in favour of the king. Accordingly, on the 20th of July 1653, when the General Assembly had convened in Edinburgh, and the clerk was beginning to call the roll, the church in which they met was surrounded by a troop of horse, under the Command of Lieutenant-Colonel Cottrel, who, with another officer, entered the Assembly, and standing upon a bench, demanded to know by whose authority they had met, whether by authority of the late Parliament, or of their late king, or of the Protector? Mr David Dickson, the Moderator, replied that they were an ecclesiastical synod, a spiritual court of Christ, which meddled not with any thing civil, and that their autho-

* Wodrow's Anal. MS.

rity was from God, and confirmed by the laws of the land yet unrepealed. The colonel then demanded a list of the members, which the Moderator told him he would get, if he would have a little patience till they had called the roll; but Cottrel declared this would be too tedious an affair, and ordered them to be gone, otherwise he had instructions how to proceed. Upon this the Moderator, in the name of the Assembly, protested against such unexampled violence, and was proceeding to dissolve the meeting with prayer, when he was rudely interrupted, and ordered to the door, a mandate with which he and the rest of the Assembly at last complied.* "He led us all through the whole streets," says Baillie, "a mile out of the town, encompassing us with foot-companies of musqueteers and horsemen,—all the people gazing and mourning as at the saddest spectacle they had ever seen. When he had led us a mile without the town, he then declared what farther he had in commission:—that we should not dare to meet any more above three in number; and that, against eight o'clock to-morrow, we should depart the town, under pain of being guilty of breaking the public peace; and the day following we were commanded off the town, under the pain of present imprisonment. Thus," adds Baillie, "our General Assembly, the glory and strength of our Church upon earth, is by your soldiery crushed and trode under foot, without the least provocation from us, at this time, in word or deed."†

This unconstitutional encroachment on the liberties of the Church, though it came with a bad grace from

* Lamont's Diary, p. 69. † Baillie's Letters, vol. ii. p. 369.

one who boasted himself the patron of toleration and liberty of conscience, was, after all, the less to be regretted at this period, as the meetings of the Church courts were chiefly occupied with unseemly discussions between the Resolutioners and Protesters. The melancholy consequences of this breach among the leaders of the Scottish Church soon became apparent after the defeat of Charles had subjected the whole of Scotland to the arms of Cromwell. The English conquerors, as was natural, were partial to the Protesters, who had been opposed to the party that brought over the king; and Cromwell endeavoured, by all the arts of his masterly policy, to gain them over to his interests. He succeeded in inducing some of them to take *the tender*, which was an acknowledgment of his authority and that of the English Commonwealth without a king or House of Lords. With great difficulty he prevailed upon them, and ultimately on the Resolutioners also, to cease praying for King Charles; but Mr Patrick Gillespie was the first, and we believe the only minister in Scotland, who publicly prayed for the Protector. Mr Gillespie was, it may be presumed, a great favourite with the usurper, and he, with some of his brethren, received a commission in 1655, empowering them to settle the affairs of the Kirk. In this document, Cromwell declares himself clearly in favour of an established Church. "Being thoroughly sensible," his highness says, "that whatsoever union of nations is made where the true religion is not the foundation thereof, it will prove tottering and unstable, he hath therefore expressly commanded his council here to endeavour the promoting the preaching of the

Gospel, and the power of true religion and holinesse; and to take care that the usual maintenance here be received and enjoyed by such ministers as are of a holy and unblameable conversation, disposed to live peaceably under the present Government, are able and fit to preach the Gospel, and shall be approved according to an ordinance of his highness of the 8th of August 1654."* It appears from this commission that Cromwell was determined to be patron-general to the whole Church of Scotland; it is obviously so framed as to admit only such as were Protesters; and what is very curious, in the ordinance to which he refers, with the view of securing his own men, it is expressly provided that, in the induction of ministers, "respect shall be had to the choice of *the more sober and godly sort of the people, although the same should not prove to be the greater part*,"—a somewhat arbitrary and invidious distinction, which, it must be allowed, left ample powers of discretion to those who were intrusted with the administration.

It does not appear that the Protesters availed themselves of the power with which this commission invested them; though it is certain that very unseemly contests happened at various settlements about this period, particularly in the west country, where the Protesting party mustered very strong. Baillie has given some very lamentable accounts of the intrusion of ministers upon congregations by that party, with the aid of the English soldiery; but it must be remembered that this writer was a bitter opponent of the Protesters, and he is chargeable with having not only

* Nicholl's Diary, p. 163-166.

exaggerated their conduct, but resorted to very unworthy means to defeat the negotiations which were set on foot for healing the breach between them and their brethren the Resolutioners. It is but justice to add, that the great body of the Protesters were far from being favourable to republicanism or to the usurpation of Cromwell. Lamont informs us, in his Diary, that at a communion at Sconie in Fife, where Mr Alexander Moncrieff and Mr Samuel Rutherford officiated, "all that had taken the tender were debarred from the table, as also the English." The same scrupulosity was not felt by Mr James Sharp, who afterwards, as archbishop of St Andrews, rendered himself infamous in history for the persecution of his brethren; he swallowed the tender, and paid his court to the usurper, with the same ease that he afterwards renounced the Covenant, and truckled to the king. Mr James Guthrie, on the other hand, whose death he had a share in procuring, though a Protester, not only refused the tender, but incurred considerable risk in maintaining his loyalty. "I have it from good hands," says Wodrow, "that Mr Guthrie defended the king's right in public debate with Hugh Peters, Oliver's chaplain, and from the pulpit he asserted the king's title in the hearing of the English officers."*

These dissensions among the ministers must have been unfavourable to the interests of religion. The Protesters, openly despising the sentence by which they had been deposed, continued to exercise their ministry, holding communion exclusively with those of their own sentiments. On too many occasions, the

* Wodrow's Hist., i. 163; Burns' ed.

pulpit was converted into an arena of controversy with their brethren; so that the people beheld the spectacle, hitherto unknown in Scotland, of ministers preaching, and even praying, against each other. In September 1655, Patrick Gillespie, who was Principal of Glasgow College, having come to Edinburgh, was invited by Mr Stirling, a Protester, to preach for him in the West Kirk. The rest of the ministers, hearing of it, refused to countenance him with their presence. "Mr Patrick," says our author, "at his cuming to the pulpit, was interuptit by ane of the lait king's servandis, callit Captane Melvill, wha, sitting near to the pulpitt, did ryse and call to him, saying, 'Mr Gillespy, how dar ye cum thair to the pulpitt to teach and preach? Ye aught not to cum thair, becaus ye are deposed from the ministrie by the General Assemblie, and ye have been ane enymie and traitour both to kirk and kingdome!' and sum moir to that purpos; and with that he rais and went out of the church, and sindry utheris with him, alleging, that he aucht not to be heard in pulpitt, being a deposed minister. Yet, Mr Patrick Gillespy, not being much dasched, procedit, and efter a shoirt prayer, read his text, quhilk was the 29th verse of the 26 chaptour of the Acts of the Apostles, in these wordis: 'And Paul said, I wald to God that not only thow, but also all that heir me this day, war both almost and altogidder such as I am, except these bandis.'"*

* Nicholl's Diary; Ban. ed.—Nicholl, who is a staunch loyalist, complains grievously of the increase of crime in Scotland during this period; but indeed little weight can be attached to the opinions of this writer, who betrays great weakness of mind. The following specimens of his lugubrious reflections are sufficiently amusing. He complains bitterly of the taxes levied in Edinburgh for the support of the English army, especially the

And yet, notwithstanding some public grievances, which, after all, were not more than what might have been expected in a country lying under the power of a victorious army,* and notwithstanding the heats and divisions which prevailed, and which must have frustrated to a great degree the good effects of the Reformation, it appears, from the most indubitable evidence, that religion prospered in no ordinary degree during the time of this invasion. "It is true," says Kirkton, "that they did not permit the General Assembly to sit (and in this I believe they did no bad office, for both the authority of that meeting was denied by the Protesters, and the Assembly seemed

plack laid on the pint of ale,—for the imposition of which, he seriously considers a storm of wind and rain which happened, as a judgment on the city! "And then," says he, "thair wyne, aill, and beir, were all sophisticat,—drawn over and kirned with milk, brimstone, and uther ingrediants; the aill made strong and heidie with hemp seed, coriander seed, Turkie pepper, sute, salt, and uther sophistications. Whairwith the magistrates of Edinburgh did take no ordour; nather yit with blown muttón, corrupt veill and fiesche; nor yit with fusted breid and lycht loaves, and with fals missoures and wechtis."—*Diary*, p. 189. "Mairover," he adds, "befoir the English airmy came into Scotland, ther was a lecture every day in the afternune, at the ringing of the four hour bell, quhilk did much good both to the soull and body; the soul being edifeit and fed by the Word, and the body withheld in from unnecessary bibbing, quhilk at that hour of the day was in use and custome."—pp. 170, 171. But what distressed him most of all was, that notwithstanding of all these burdens, the ladies dressed as fine as ever. "The moir poverty, the pryde of men much moir aboundit; for at this time it was daylie seen that gentill women and burgessis wyffes, haid moir gold and silver about thair gown and wylicoat tayles, nor thair husbands had in thair purses and coffers!"—p. 168.

* It is generally allowed that public justice was never more impartially executed than during Cromwell's reign in Scotland; and it is even said that the decisions of the English judges, whom he set up, were more agreeable to the spirit and principles of the Scots law, than the previous decisions of our native judges had been. A young lawyer making this observation to a Scots judge who died many years ago, received this singular reply, "D—l mean them, they had neither kith nor kin in this country: take *that* out of the way, and I think I could be a good judge myself."—*Brown's Hist. of Glasgow*, p. 114.

to be more set upon establishing themselves than promoting religion); also, the division of the Church betwixt Protesters and Resolvers continued for six or seven years with far more heat than became them; and errors in some places infected some few; yet were all these losses inconsiderable in regard of the great success the Word preached had in sanctifying the people of the nation; and I verily believe there were more souls converted to Christ in that short period of time than in any season since the Reformation, though of triple its duration. Nor was there ever greater purity and plenty of the means of grace. Ministers were painful, people were diligent. So, truly, religion was at that time in very good case, and the Lord present in Scotland, though in a cloud." Again, referring to the state of Scotland before the Restoration, he has these remarkable words:—"At the king's return, every parish had a minister, every village had a school, every family almost had a Bible, —yea, in most of the country all the children of age could read the Scriptures, and were provided of Bibles either by their parents or ministers. Every minister was a very full professor of the reformed religion, according to the large Confession of Faith framed at Westminster. None of them might be scandalous in their conversation, or negligent in their office, so long as a Presbyterie stood. I have lived many years in a parish where I never heard an oath; and you might have ridden many miles before you heard any. Also, you could not, for a great part of the country, have lodged in a family where the Lord was not worshipped, by reading, singing, and public prayer. Nobody

complained more of our Church government than our taverners; whose ordinary lamentation was,—their trade was broke, people were become so sober!"*

This high testimony is fully borne out by that of other witnesses, as unimpeachable as honest Kirkton. They tell us what fell under their own observation; and those must have been no mean attainments, either in piety or morality, which came up to the standard required by the Presbyterians of these times.† No doubt, many hypocrites may have been concealed under the mask of rigorous devotion; but, whatever might be the case in England during the same period, it is certain that hypocrisy was not then the reigning vice in Scotland. We grant that crimes and outbreakings of a very flagrant nature were occasionally taking place, which some, not considering the rude state of society at the time, would set down as a proof of its general demoralization. It is certain, too, that immediately before the Restoration, a sad declension became apparent, which was the more remarked from its contrast with the previous prosperity. But there can be no question that the piety of that period was both more intense and more widely diffused than it has ever since been in Scotland. It is not by looking into the records of Church courts, which indeed almost supplied the place of courts of police, nor into the

* Kirkton's Hist. of the Church of Scotland, pp. 63, 64.

† "Old Mr Hutcheson, minister at Killellan, used to say to Mr Wodrow, 'When I compare the times before the Restoration with the times since the Revolution, I must own that the young ministers preach accurately and methodically, but there was far more of the power and efficacy of the Spirit and the grace of God went along with sermons in those days than now; and, for my part, (all the glory be to God!) I seldom set my foot in a pulpit in those times but I had notice of some blessed effects of the Word.'"—*Gillies' Hist. Collections*, i. 315.

"Acknowledgments of Sins," published about that period, that we can form a proper estimate of the moral state of the country. Such documents only serve to show that, in these days, the discipline of the Church was administered with a fidelity which is now too little known, and that our fathers were affected by the existence of public evils, which are no longer so candidly acknowledged, only because they are not laid so deeply to heart.

An English merchant, who had occasion to visit Scotland in the way of his business about the year 1650, happened to hear three of the most eminent of the Scottish ministers of that age,—Robert Blair, Samuel Rutherford, and David Dickson. Being asked, on his return, what news he had brought from Scotland, the gentleman, who was never known to have any sense of religion before, replied, "Great and good news! I went to St Andrews, where I heard a sweet majestick-looking man (Mr Blair); and he showed me *the majesty of God*. After him, I heard a little fair man (Mr Rutherford); and he showed me *the loveliness of Christ*. I then went to Irvine, where I heard a well-favoured proper old man, with a long beard (Mr Dickson); and that man showed me *all my heart*." "The whole General Assembly," says Wodrow, "could not have given a better character of the three men."*

Of Mr Robert Blair we have had occasion to speak before. He was a man of mild and amiable temper, and was exceedingly active in endeavouring to heal the unhappy dissensions between the Resolutioners

* Wodrow's MSS., Adv. Lib.

and Protesters, in which he professed to be neutral. Mr Blair was originally settled at Bangor in Ireland, on which occasion, as he refused to be ordained in the prelatic form, the bishop of the diocese agreed to be present with the other ministers only in the character of a presbyter. Driven by a less charitable bishop from Ireland, he took refuge in his native country, where he was first settled at Ayr, and afterwards translated to St Andrews. Polite and affable in his manners, he was chosen by Charles I., after the death of Henderson, as his chaplain in Scotland, an office which he discharged with the most scrupulous fidelity. He was a shrewd observer of character. When Cromwell came to Edinburgh, he, with Guthrie and Dickson, were deputed to hold a conference with the usurper. Mr Blair, who was best acquainted with him, begged him to answer three questions. What was his opinion of monarchical government? Oliver replied that he was favourable to monarchy. What did he think anent toleration? He answered as confidently, that he was against toleration. What was his judgment about the government of the Church? "Ah, now, Mr Blair," said Cromwell, "you article me too severely; you must pardon me, that I give you not a present answer to that question." On retiring, Mr Dickson said, "I am glad to hear this man speak no worse;" to which Blair replied, "If you knew him as well as I, you would not believe one word he says; for he is an egregious dissembler."*

Samuel Rutherford is one of those characters whom every one thinks he should know by his writings as

* Memoirs of Blair, p. 107.

familiarly as if he had seen him face to face. Eager, ethereal, and imaginative, ever soaring and singing, the high notes of his devotion fall down on the ear with a singular effect, as if the music came from heaven rather than from earth.* Rutherford was the most popular preacher of his day; but it is not so generally known that he was as much distinguished for his learning and metaphysical attainments, as for his eloquence and devotion. He received invitations to the chair of philosophy in more than one of the foreign universities; but such was his love to his native country, that he would not desert her in the midst of her troubles. The following anecdote of his infancy, though it approaches the marvellous, is so characteristic of the future man, that it deserves to be preserved. While amusing himself with some of his companions, Samuel, then a mere child, fell into a deep well; the rest of the children ran off to alarm his parents, who, on reaching the spot, were astonished to find him seated on an adjoining hillock, cold and dripping. On being questioned how he had got there, he replied, that "a bonnie white man came and drew him out of the well." The minutest particulars concerning such a person are interesting; the following are curious:—"I have known many great and good ministers in this Church," said an aged contemporary pastor who survived the Revolution, "but for such a piece of clay as Mr Rutherford was, I never knew one in Scotland like him, to whom so many great gifts were given; for he

* His Letters, with all their faults, which are those of the age, have beauties which must be felt to the end of time. "Hold off the Bible," said Richard Baxter, "such a book the world never saw the like."

seemed to be altogether taken up with every thing good, and excellent, and useful. He seemed to be always praying, always preaching, always visiting the sick, always catechising, always writing and studying. He had two quick eyes, and when he walked, it was observed that he held aye his face upward. He had a strange utterance in the pulpit, a kind of *skreigh* that I never heard the like. Many times I thought he would have flown out of the pulpit when he came to speak of Jesus Christ; he was never in his right element but when he was commending him. He would have fallen asleep in bed speaking of Christ."* Rutherford was a staunch Protester; but controversy, though he excelled in it, seemed to be alien to his nature. "One day, when preaching in Edinburgh, after dwelling for some time on the differences of the day, he broke out with —'Wo is unto us for these sad divisions, that make us lose the fair scent of the Rose of Sharon!' and then he went on commending Christ, going over all his precious styles and titles about a quarter of an hour; upon which the laird of Glanderston said, in a loud whisper, Ay, now you are right—hold you there.'"† Rutherford died in 1661, shortly after his book called *Lex Rex* was burnt by the hangman at Edinburgh,‡ and at the gates of the New College of St Andrews, where he was regent and professor of divinity. He departed just in time to avoid an ignominious death; for though every body knew he was dying, Charles's

* Patrick Simpson, *apud* Wodrow's MSS.

† Wodrow's Analecta, MS. iv.

‡ "It was much easier to burn the book than to answer it," says Wodrow. When Charles II. read *Lex Rex*, he said, with his native shrewdness, that it would scarcely ever get an answer; and his words have proved true.

council had, with impotent malice, summoned him to appear before them at Edinburgh on a charge of high treason. When the summons came, he said,—"Tell them I have got a summons already before a superior Judge and judicatory, and I behove to answer my first summons; and ere your day arrive, I will be where few kings and great folks come." When they returned, and told that he was dying, the Parliament, with a few dissenting voices, voted that he should not be allowed to die in the college! Upon this Lord Burleigh said,—"Ye have voted that honest man out of his college, but ye cannot vote him out of heaven." Some of them profanely remarked, "he would never win there; hell was too good for him." "I wish I were as sure of heaven as he is," replied Burleigh; "I would think myself happy to *get a grip of his sleeve to haul me in.*" * Among his brethren who came to pray with him on his death-bed, were Mr Wood, a Resolutioner, but an excellent man, and Mr Honeyman, who afterwards was made a bishop, and distinguished himself for his opposition to the cause of God. It was observed that, when Mr Wood prayed, the dying man was not much affected, but when Honeyman was engaged, he wept all the time of the prayer. Being afterwards asked his reason for this, he replied,—"Mr Wood and I will meet again, though we be now to part; but alas for poor Honeyman, he and I will never meet again in another world, and this made me weep." † When dying, he fre-

* Walker's Remains, p. 171. Reid's Memoirs of the Divines in the Assembly at Westminster.

† Wodrow's MSS.

quently repeated,—"Oh for arms to embrace Him! Oh for a well-tuned harp! I hear him saying to me, Come up hither!" And thus, says honest Howie, "the renowned eagle took its flight into the mountains of spices."*

David Dick or Dickson was a very different character, yet almost equally eminent. We have already seen the success which accompanied his ministrations when at Irvine. He was afterwards translated, first to Glasgow, and afterwards to Edinburgh, in both of which cities he officiated as professor of divinity. His contemporaries have preserved many of his remarkable sayings, which show him to have been a man of great shrewdness and sagacity, mixed with a peculiar vein of humour. He was singularly successful in dissecting the human heart, and winning souls to the Redeemer. Mr Dickson took an active share in the disputes between the Resolutioners and Protesters, in which he supported the former party, though he lived to see and confess that they had been completely deceived. He was a man of strong nerve and undaunted resolution in the discharge of his duty, of which the following anecdote may serve as an illustration:—On one occasion, when riding between Edinburgh and Glasgow, he was attacked by robbers. Instead of giving way to his fears, Mr Dickson boldly admonished them of their danger with respect to their souls, and concluded by earnestly exhorting them to try some other profession more safe and creditable than that in which they were engaged. Some years after this, when quietly seated in the College of Edinburgh, he

* Scots Worthies, art. S. Rutherford.

was surprised by receiving the present of a pipe of wine, accompanied with a message that the gentleman who sent it requested the pleasure of drinking a glass of the wine with him next evening in his study. The request was granted; and, in the course of conversation, the gentleman, after finding that the minister retained no recollection of having seen him before, informed him that he was one of the robbers who had attacked him,—that he had been seriously impressed by his admonition,—and that, having adopted his advice, he had prospered in foreign trade, and now came to thank his benefactor.

But, perhaps, one of the noblest characters of the period, though less known, was Mr Robert Douglas, minister of Edinburgh. He had formerly been a chaplain in the army of Gustavus Adolphus; and when leaving his service, that celebrated prince and warrior pronounced the following eulogium on his character, —"There goes a man who, for wisdom and prudence, might be a counsellor to any king in Europe; who, for gravity, might be a moderator to any assembly in the world; and who, for his skill in military affairs, might be the general of any army." Like many of the ministers at this period, he was connected by birth with some of the best families in the land. Majestic in his appearance, and princely in his bearing, there was something so authoritative about him, that one has said he never could look at him without a sensation of awe. Though a Resolutioner, he took an active part in endeavouring to secure the liberties of the Church of Scotland after the Restoration, and carried on a correspondence with James Sharp, when in

London, in which the designs of that unhappy apostate were artfully covered over with high professions of regard to the Presbyterian interest. Mr Douglas, though deceived for a time by Sharp's duplicity, at length discovered his real character. We are informed, that when Sharp returned to Scotland, he himself affecting no ambition for the prelacy, pressed the acceptance of the see of St Andrews upon Mr Douglas. He told him that he clearly perceived that the king was determined on introducing Episcopacy, and that he knew none fitter for the office of primate than Mr Douglas, who had better accept, lest a worse should be appointed. The honest Presbyterian saw into the secret soul of the hypocrite; and when he had given his own decided refusal, demanded of his former friend what he would do himself were the offer made to him. Sharp hesitated, and rose to take his leave. Douglas accompanied him to the door. "James," said he, "I perceive you are clear,—I see you will engage,—you will be bishop of St Andrews; take it, then," he added, laying his hand on Sharp's shoulder,—"*and the curse of God with it!*" *

"The subject," says Sir Walter Scott, narrating this scene, "might suit a painter." We may add, with equal truth, that the subject affords matter of solemn warning to the Christian minister, and of serious reflection to all.

* Kirkton, 134.

CHAPTER XI.

Restoration of Charles—the Reformation overturned by the Act Rescissory—Trial and Execution of the Marquis of Argyll—Execution of James Guthrie—Re-establishment of Episcopacy—Treachery of Sharp—Consecration of the Scottish Bishops—Ejection of the Presbyterian Ministers—Introduction of the Curates—Execution of Lord Warriston.

We have now reached the period of the Restoration, when the Church of Scotland was thrown into the furnace of persecution,—when she was stripped of the glory of her reformation, and subjected, for a long series of years, like the Church of ancient Israel, to captivity and bondage. The Restoration of Charles took place on the 29th of May 1660. Never did a more rapid, more complete, or more melancholy change pass over the character of a nation, than that which Scotland underwent at this era. "With the restoration of the king," says Bishop Burnet, "a spirit of extravagant joy spread over the nation, that brought on with it the throwing off the very profession of virtue and piety; all ended in enter-

tainments and drunkenness, which overrun the three kingdoms to such a degree, that it very much corrupted all their morals. Under the colour of drinking the king's health, there were great disorders and much riot every where. Those who had been concerned in the former transactions, thought they could not redeem themselves from the censures and jealousies that these brought on them, by any method that was more sure and more easy than by going into the stream, and laughing at all religion,—telling or making stories to expose both themselves and their party, as impious and ridiculous." *

Charles was not long seated on the throne, when, abandoning himself to pleasure and debauchery, he proceeded to overturn the whole work of reformation, civil and ecclesiastical, which he had solemnly sworn to support. The first step towards the execution of this nefarious project for the subversion of the civil and religious liberties of Scotland, and which laid the foundation of all the persecutions that followed, was the passing, early in the year 1661, of the Act of Supremacy for securing what was termed the *royal prerogative*,—in other words, for making the king supreme judge in all matters civil and ecclesiastical. To this was afterwards added the Oath of Allegiance, which bound the person to acknowledge the supreme and unlimited power of the king in all matters civil or religious, and made it high treason to deny him that power. Wodrow has justly observed, that "slavish principles as to civil rights and liberty, still lead the van to persecution for conscience' sake." By these

* Burnet's History of his Own Times, i. 139.

acts, the Parliament, with disgraceful servility, laid the civil liberties of the nation at the feet of a despot on the throne; but it is easy to see that they must have fallen with peculiar severity on the conscientious ministers and members of the Church of Scotland, who had always contended for the supremacy of the Lord Jesus Christ, as the only King of his Church. At last, tired of annulling acts of Parliament passed during the previous period of reformation, the Scottish counsellors of Charles, in the same year, passed a sweeping measure, annulling the Parliaments themselves. By this measure, which was called the Act Rescissory, all the proceedings for reformation between 1638 and 1650 were declared rebellious and treasonable; the National Covenant and Solemn League were condemned as unlawful oaths; the Glasgow Assembly of 1638 denounced as an unlawful and seditious meeting; and the ordering of the government of the Church was declared to be an inherent right of the Crown. In short, all that had been done for the reformation of the Church, during the second reforming period, was by this act completely annulled. "It was a maddening time," says Burnet, "when the men of affairs were perpetually drunk." Middleton himself seldom came sober to the House; and it is well known that this infamous Act, which still stands unrepealed in our statute-book, and which no modern reformer has ever proposed to repeal, was proposed by the junto at a debauch, and carried at the board in the midst of drunken acclamations.

It was not enough, however, to satisfy the malice of these enemies of truth and liberty, that the work of

reformation should be buried under legal enactments; it was deemed necessary that its grave should be moistened with the blood of the noblest and best of its supporters. The first victim selected was the Marquis of Argyll. The marquis had protested against the execution of Charles I.; he was among the first who invited Charles II. to Scotland, and placed the crown upon his head; but all this could not atone for the active share he had taken, during the civil wars, in guiding the affairs of the nation, and opposing the measures of the court. Charles entertained a mortal aversion to him, for the liberty which he had taken in privately warning him against Malignants, and for heading the Presbyterians in imposing on him the Covenant as the condition of their submission. On going up to London, to congratulate the king on his restoration, Argyll was thrown into the Tower, from whence he was transported by sea to Edinburgh, to stand his trial for high treason. No less than fourteen charges were brought against him; all of which he so satisfactorily disproved, that his judges were on the point of sending a deputation to the king, stating the difficulty which they had in finding any plausible ground for his condemnation, when they were relieved from their embarrassment by an act of the basest description recorded in history. A rude knocking was heard at the Parliament door, and a packet was handed in, containing a number of confidential letters which had passed between Argyll and General Monk, and which the latter person had sent to be produced at the trial. This act of cold-blooded treachery sealed the doom of the marquis. Monk, who had been the active agent

of Cromwell, was made Duke of Albemarle; and Argyll, who had only yielded to the usurper after resistance was vain, was sentenced to be beheaded!

The marquis received his sentence with great serenity; and, on its being pronounced, said,—"I had the honour to set the crown upon the king's head, and now he hastens me to a better crown than his own!" On arriving at the Tolbooth, he found his excellent lady waiting for him. "They have given me till Monday to be with you, my dear," said he, "therefore let us make for it." The afflicted wife, throwing herself into his arms, could not refrain from expressing her indignation at the unjust sentence. "The Lord will require it!" she cried, "the Lord will require it!" "Forbear, forbear," said the marquis, seeing his friends dissolved in tears around him; "truly I pity them; they know not what they are doing. They may shut me in where they please, but they cannot shut out God from me. I am as content to be here as I was in the Tower; was as content there as I was when at liberty; and hope to be as content on the scaffold as any of them all."

The marquis was constitutionally timorous; and in prison, referring to this, he desired those about him to observe that the Lord had heard his prayers, and delivered him from all his fears; and indeed, the efforts of his friends were chiefly needed to repress his ardent longing for dissolution. The night before his execution, being engaged in settling some of his worldly affairs, his heart became so overpowered with a sense of the love of God, that he could not conceal his emotions. "I thought," said he, "to have con-

cealed the Lord's goodness—but it will not do. I am now ordering my worldly affairs, and God is sealing my charter to a better inheritance, and just now saying to me, *Son, be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee.*" On repeating these words he burst into tears, and retired to the window to weep there; he then drew near the fire, and made as if he would stir it a little, to conceal his emotions—but all would not do; so that, coming up to Mr Hutchison, his chaplain, he said,—"I think His kindness overcomes me; but God is good to me, that he lets not out too much of it here, for he knows I could not bear it."

Taking leave of his friends to go to the scaffold, the noble martyr said,—"I could die like a Roman, but choose rather to die as a Christian. Come away, gentlemen; he that goes first goes cleanliest." On his way out of prison he requested an interview with Mr Guthrie, and embraced him in the most affectionate manner. "My lord," said Guthrie, "God hath been with you, he is with you, and will be with you; and such is my respect for your lordship, that, if I were not under sentence of death myself, I could cheerfully die for your lordship!" When on the scaffold he showed the same composure, and spoke at some length with great pertinency. He forgave all his enemies, and said he would condemn none. "God," said he, "hath laid engagements on Scotland. We are tied by Covenants to religion and reformation; those who were then unborn are yet engaged; and it passeth the power of all the magistrates under heaven to absolve from the oath of God. These times are like to be either very sinning or suffering times; and let Chris-

tians make their choice, there is a sad dilemma in the business, SIN or SUFFER; and surely he that will choose the better part will choose to suffer. Others that will choose to sin will not escape suffering; they shall suffer, but perhaps not as I do (pointing to the Maiden, the instrument of execution), but worse. Mine is but temporal, theirs shall be eternal. When I shall be singing, they shall be howling. I have no more to say but to beg the Lord, that when I go away, he would bless every one that stayeth behind."

On approaching the Maiden, Mr Hutchison said,—"My lord, now hold your grip sicker,"—meaning that he should hold fast his confidence in Christ. Argyll answered,—"Mr Hutchison, you know what I said: I am not afraid to be surprised by fear." At this awful moment, his physician having touched his pulse, found it beating at its usual rate—calm and strong. He knelt down cheerfully, and having given the signal by lifting up his hand, the loaded knife of the Maiden fell, and struck off his head, which was affixed to the west end of the Tolbooth. This martyrdom took place, May 27, 1661.

Thus fell the Marquis of Argyll, whose name and memory still bear the obloquy of the cause in which he suffered. Fain would we stay our narrative, to wipe off the foul slanders that have been heaped on him. We have only room to say, and we do it on the best authority, though in the words of honest Howie of Lochgoin,—"That he had piety for a Christian, sense for a counsellor, courage for a martyr, and a soul for a king! If ever any was, he might be said to be a true Scotsman."

James Guthrie, minister of Stirling, was the next victim. He was a son of the Laird of Guthrie, and descended of an ancient and honourable family. "Perhaps," says Wodrow, "he had the greatest mixture of fervent zeal and sweet calmness in his temper, as any man in his time." When every one about him was excited, he remained unruffled; and it was usual with him, on such occasions, to say, "Enough of this; let us go to some other subject; we are warm, and can dispute no longer with advantage." His great crime, in the eyes of the Government, was in reality the same as that for which Argyll had suffered —his eminent zeal in the cause of the covenanted reformation. He had been a leading and active promoter of the measures taken by the Protesters; but what sealed his doom, was his having been the person selected in 1650 to pronounce the sentence of excommunication against the Earl of Middleton, who was now the king's commissioner. A story is told, though with some variations, of a message having been sent to Mr Guthrie by the king (some say by a nobleman), to delay pronouncing that sentence. The messenger arrived on Sabbath morning, as he was putting on his cloak to go to church; and the last bell having been rung, Mr Guthrie was perplexed, not knowing how to act on such a short notice. "My heart," said his wife, "what the Lord gives you light and clearness to do, that do, without giving any positive answer to the messenger." He went, and to the messenger's astonishment, pronounced the sentence of excommunication. Though the Commission of the Church relaxed Middleton from the sentence shortly after, yet it is believed

that he never forgave nor forgot what Mr Guthrie did that day, and that this worthy man fell a sacrifice to his personal revenge, as well as to Sharp's ambition.

His indictment charged him with various offences, amounting, in the eyes of his adversaries, to the charge of high treason; and, among the rest, his being the author of a piece entitled "The Causes of the Lord's Wrath," and his accession to the Westland Remonstrance, formerly mentioned. Mr Guthrie's speech in his own defence is one of the most eloquent and triumphant vindications that was ever perhaps made before a court of justice; but neither the acknowledged piety of the man, the innocence of his character, nor the eloquence of his address, had any weight on the minds of judges who were determined that he should suffer, with the view of striking terror into the rest, and paving the way for the innovations which they contemplated. He was condemned "to be hanged at the Cross of Edinburgh as a traitor, on the 1st of June 1661, and thereafter his head to be struck off and affixed on the Netherbow; his estate to be confiscated, his coat-of-arms torn and reversed, and his children declared incapable, in all time coming, to enjoy any office, dignities, possessions, lands, or goods, moveable or immoveable, or any thing within this kingdom." This dreadful doom he received with the utmost composure, saying, "My lords, let never this sentence affect you more than it does me; and let never my blood be required of the king's family."

This good man seems to have laid his account with suffering in the cause of the Covenant long before there was any appearance of it; for it is told of him,

that on coming into Edinburgh, to subscribe the Covenant, he met the executioner of the city as he was entering at the West Port,—a circumstance which, incidental as it was, made such an impression on his mind, that he was heard to say, "he took the Covenant with the resolution to suffer for the things contained in it, if the Lord should call him thereto." On the night before his execution, when sealing some letters, he was observed to stamp the wax crosswise, thus marring the impression. "I have no more to do," said he, "with coats-of-arms." At supper with his friends that night, he was cheerful even to pleasantry. On his way to the scaffold, his arms being pinioned, he requested that one of them might be slackened so far as to allow him to support his tottering frame on a staff while walking down the street to the place of execution. On the fatal ladder "he spoke an hour," says Burnet, "with the composedness of one who was delivering a sermon, rather than his last words." He bore a particular testimony to the Covenants, and said, "These sacred, solemn, public oaths of God, I believe, can be loosed or dispensed with by no person, party, or power upon earth, but are still binding upon these kingdoms, and will be so for ever hereafter; and are ratified and sealed by the conversion of many thousand souls since our entering thereinto. I take God to record upon my soul," he added, "I would not exchange this scaffold with the palace or mitre of the greatest prelate in Britain." He forewarned them of the wrath of God upon Scotland, and of the sufferings they might expect, if they continued faithful; and just before he was turned over, lifting the napkin

from his face, he cried,—"The Covenants, the Covenants shall yet be Scotland's reviving!"

It would be improper to omit noticing the well-known anecdote, which is said to rest on the best authority, that a considerable time after the death of Mr Guthrie, when the Earl of Middleton was passing the Netherbow, a few drops of blood fell from the head of the martyr on the carriage, and that the marks could never be effaced. But the following is better deserving of attention, as an illustration of the profound respect in which the faithful clergy of Scotland were then held by the people. The headless corpse of Mr Guthrie was put into a coffin and carried into the old kirk aisle, where it was decently prepared for interment by a number of ladies of high respectability. Some of the ladies having been observed to dip their napkins in the blood of the martyr, Sir Archibald Primrose challenged them for doing so, representing it as a piece of Popish superstition; when one of them, who was afterwards married to Sir Thomas Burnet, replied, "We intend not to abuse it to superstition or idolatry, but to hold that bloody napkin up to heaven, with our address that the Lord would remember the innocent blood that is spilt." While thus employed, a genteel young man* came in, and poured out on the body a phial of rich perfume, the odour of which filled the whole church. On observing this, one of the ladies exclaimed, "God bless you, Sir, for this labour of love which you have shown to the slain body of a servant of Jesus Christ!" The young

* It was afterwards discovered that this was Mr George Stirling, who became eminent as a surgeon in Edinburgh.

man, without speaking a word, made a low bow and retired.*

Having thus removed out of the way two of the most active and influential supporters of Presbytery, the Court proceeded with its design of re-establishing Episcopacy. Though Charles had promised, only about a year before, to maintain the Presbyterian discipline, he sent a letter in August 1661 to the Scottish council, in which, after reciting the inconveniences of that form of government, and asserting its inconsistency with monarchy, he says,—"Wherefore we declare our firm resolution to *interpose our royal authority* for restoring the Church of Scotland to its right government by bishops, as it was before the late troubles." A Parliament was called, which, through intimidation, and various other means, was induced to approve of this resolution; and a proclamation was immediately issued, announcing the restoration of the bishops, prohibiting meetings of Synods and Assemblies, and forbidding all preaching against the change, on pain of imprisonment. And thus, by the mere

* Wodrow's Analecta, MS. iv.—In a "Tale of the Times of the Martyrs," written by the late celebrated Edward Irving, which appeared in "The Anniversary for 1829," there is an interesting account, given on the authority of a venerable old lady in Glasgow, of the manner in which James Guthrie's head was taken down from the pole to which it was affixed, and buried beside his body. According to Mr Irving's account, this daring exploit was performed by a nephew of James Guthrie, who was affianced to the daughter of the Provost of Edinburgh, a violent enemy of the Covenanters, and who was obliged to flee the country in consequence of the Provost seeking his life as the forfeit of his noble conduct. The tale has certainly some foundation in fact; but both the dates and persons must have been confounded by tradition; for we have every reason to believe that Guthrie's head remained on the Netherbow port for twenty-seven years, when it was taken down by Alexander Hamilton, then a student in Edinburgh, and afterwards Guthrie's successor in Stirling.—*Scots Worthies*, i. 243; *M'Gavin's ed.*

will and mandate of the king, and without consulting the Church in any form, Episcopacy was again established in a country which had always opposed it, and where the former attempt to plant it had been followed with the most disastrous consequences.

Nothing leaves a darker blot on the history of our country, than the ease and despatch with which this change was effected. When, in the beginning of the following year, presbyteries, and even sessions, were discharged from meeting, until authorised by the bishops, the greater part of the presbyteries, instead of making a stand for their religious liberties, tamely submitted to the proclamation; so that the Presbyterians justly exposed themselves to the taunt which an English historian casts on them, that "Presbytery fell without the honour of a dissolution." It would be a great mistake, however, to suppose, because Episcopacy met with so little resistance at its first introduction, that the body of the people were favourable to the change, or indifferent to their ancient polity. Many, no doubt, especially among the nobility, had become wearied of Christ's yoke; many, too, worn out with intestine discords, were disposed to hail peace on almost any terms; and the general licentiousness of manners introduced with the Restoration, contributed greatly to foster these dispositions. But it was not to such causes that Prelacy was indebted for its triumph. It was brought in partly by stratagem, and partly by the main force of royal proclamations, fenced with the terrors of imprisonment, confiscation, and the gibbet. The secret history of the time reveals the real source of these proclamations in the plottings of a set of avaricious and unprincipled

courtiers, whose sole object was to enrich themselves, by inflicting fines and confiscations on those noblemen and gentlemen who had taken an active share in the previous reforming period. For this purpose, Scotland was excluded from the act of indemnity, long after the benefits of that act had been extended to England; and our country was left at the mercy of a succession of harpies, who first preyed upon her vitals, and then upon one another.

The treachery of James Sharp has been already adverted to. To this person, who was at first minister of Crail, and afterwards promoted to the see of St Andrews, the Church of Scotland had unhappily intrusted the management of her cause at court, about the time of the Restoration, and he was sent to London for the express purpose of securing the preservation and liberty of the Presbyterian establishment. While thus employed, he was secretly gained over by some of the English high-church politicians, to enter into their measures for the re-establishment of Prelacy, and engaged to betray the Church which confided in him; expecting, as the reward of his treachery, to be made Primate of all Scotland. With a deep dissimulation, which has seldom been equalled in the history of ecclesiastical crime, he carried on a correspondence with his brethren, in which he artfully concealed the intentions of Government, lulled their suspicions, and prevented them from petitioning or using any means to prevent the catastrophe, all under professions of the warmest devotion to the cause of Presbytery and the Covenant.* When he

* This correspondence is preserved in the Introduction to Wodrow's

came down to Scotland, he practised the same deception so successfully, that his brethren never suspected his design till it was ripe for execution.

It is doubtful, however, whether all these causes combined would have succeeded in prostrating the liberties of the Church, had they not been aided by the lamentable dissension within her own pale, between the Resolutioners and Protesters. This breach remained still unhealed; and it was the policy of Sharp and others to prevent the two parties from coalescing. By their mutual jealousies they were prevented from joining in any common measure for the safety of the Church. In addition to all this, most of the eminent men who had guided her councils during the reforming period, were now in the dust, or sinking under the weight of years. The Earl of Loudoun, the most eloquent and courageous of the champions of the Covenant, died in March 1662. He knew that, next to the Marquis of Argyll, none were more obnoxious to the present rulers, and often entreated his excellent lady to pray that he might be removed by death before the next session of Parliament; and his request was granted. Many of the old ministers died from pure grief at seeing the goodly fabric which had cost Scotland so much to rear, and which was hallowed in their eyes by so many sacred associations, threatened with destruction. Among these we may notice Robert Baillie, Principal of the University of Glasgow, to whose letters we owe so much of our information regarding the preceding period. This excellent man,

History, where it will stand a monument of Sharp's infamy to the latest posterity.

who was distinguished for his learning, and had done much for the advancement of the Second Reformation, became latterly a keen partizan on the side of the Resolutioners; and his prejudice against the Protesters has given a strong tinge to all his representations of them and their proceedings. But he lived to see the error into which his party had been led by their extreme loyalty. We are assured, on unquestionable authority, that "he died under a rooted aversion to Prelacy in this Church."* And he himself, in the last of his Letters, expresses this sentiment in the most feeling manner: "We are in the most hard taking we have seen at any time. It is the matter of my daily grief, and I think it has brought all my bodily trouble on me, and I fear it shall do me more harm."† This was written in May 1662, and in July of the same year his troubles were ended.

Still, however, with the exception of a few in the northern counties, the great body of the people were attached to Presbyterianism;—a great proportion of the nobility and gentry were on its side; and as to the ministers, they were so decidedly Presbyterian, that out of all the Presbyteries and Synods of Scotland, not one, with the exception of *the Synod of Aberdeen*, disgraced itself by petitioning in favour of Episcopacy. The defeat of Presbytery was owing, not so much to the fainting of the standard-bearers in the day of battle, as to their want of union, and being outmanœuvred by their opponents, who showed themselves greater adepts in policy and worldly wisdom,—qualities which, however useful in their place, are

* Wodrow, vol. i. p. 128, fol. † Baillie's Letters, vol. ii. p. 462.

not very becoming in the ministers of Christ, in whom we rather admire that simplicity of purpose which may often render them the dupes of worldly politicians, or even betray them into perilous positions and awkward dilemmas, but which we would not wish to see exchanged for the opposite qualities of intrigue and dissimulation. And when we consider that the system of Prelacy was thus intruded on the nation, without asking the consent of a single Church court, —that its foundations were laid in blood, and that the country continued to struggle against it during all the 28 black and bloody years of its existence, it is preposterous to allege that Prelacy was ever acknowledged by the Scottish people. Not the shadow of such an acknowledgment was ever made by the Church —not even such as was pretended during the reign of James VI. And without such an acknowledgment, the mere act of government, in obtruding Prelacy on the nation with tyrannical and overbearing violence, did not and could not make it the act of the Church. Whatever Erastians may say, the State could no more undo than it could create the Presbyterian Church of Scotland; which remained unaffected in her identity, though under a cloud, and in temporary captivity, till the Revolution, when she "shook herself from the dust, and loosed herself from the bands of her neck."

Episcopacy having been established by law, it became necessary to provide Scotland with bishops. Of the old bishops, none remained alive but one Sydserf, and he, it seems, was not deemed of sufficient dignity to confer Episcopal ordination, "a flower," says Kirkton, "not to be found in a Scottish garden;" so that

four of the ministers who were chosen for this office, viz., Sharp, Fairfoul, Hamilton, and Leighton, were summoned to London, where the ceremony of ordination was performed in Westminster Abbey. To crown the disgrace of their defection, the English bishops insisted on their acknowledging the nullity of their Presbyterian orders, by submitting to be ordained first deacons, then presbyters, and lastly bishops. Sharp pretended at first to scruple at this degradation; but he soon submitted with the rest; on which the bishop of London said to him, that "it seemed to be Scots fashion to *scruple* at every thing and to *swallow* every thing." If the bishop formed his opinion of our nation from the sample of it before him, it was very natural for him so to express himself; for, with the exception of Leighton, every one of them had formerly professed great opposition to that form of government in which they now took such a conspicuous share. Sharp, who was made archbishop of St Andrews, it is needless to characterise. Burnet informs us that Fairfoul, who was made archbishop of Glasgow, was "a facetious man, insinuating and crafty; but he was a better physician than a divine. His life was scarce free from scandal; and he was eminent in nothing that belonged to his own function. He had not only sworn the Covenant, but had persuaded others to do it. And when one objected to him, that it went against his conscience, he answered, there were some very good medicines that could not be *chewed*, but were to be *swallowed* down." Hamilton, who was made bishop of Galloway, had equally distinguished himself for his zeal in the cause

of the Covenant. Leighton, who was appointed to the diocese of Dunblane, was a character in every respect different from the rest. Evangelical in his doctrine, but latitudinarian in his ecclesiastical views, he did not think that the forms of government were settled by such positive laws as were unalterable, but looked on Episcopacy as the best form. The sanctity of his character, and amiableness of his manners, which have been quoted as the redeeming qualities of Scots Episcopacy, were in fact its exceptions; for on these very accounts he was disliked and contemned by Sharp and his associates, as a tool unfit for their purposes. Leighton condemned and deplored the measures which were taken for thrusting Episcopacy upon Scotland; and when the bishops returned to Edinburgh in a sort of triumphal procession, he left them in disgust before reaching the city, and entered it as privately as possible.*

On the day after the arrival of the bishops, May 8, 1662, the Parliament passed an act restoring them to all their ancient prerogatives, spiritual and temporal; another restoring Patronage, and ordering all entrants to take collation from the bishop; and, not to burden the reader's memory with other acts rooting out every

* "Leighton often said to me," says Burnet, "that in the whole progress of that affair, there appeared such cross characters of an angry Providence, that how fully soever he was satisfied in his own mind as to Episcopacy itself, yet it seemed that God was against them, and that they were not like to be the men to build up his church; so that the struggling about it seemed to him like a fighting against God. He who had the greatest hand in it (Sharp) proceeded with so much dissimulation; and the rest of the order were so mean and selfish; and the Earl of Middleton, with the other secular men that conducted it, were so openly impious and vicious, that it did cast a reproach on every thing relating to religion to see it managed by such instruments."—*History*, i. p. 202.

vestige of the previous Reformation, they passed the following declaration, which all persons in public trust were required to subscribe, and which became a convenient engine of persecution: "I do sincerely affirm and declare that I judge it unlawful for subjects, under pretext of reformation, or any other pretext whatsoever, to enter into Leagues and Covenants, or to take up arms against the king, or those commissioned by him, and all those gatherings, petitions, &c., that were used in the beginning, and carrying on of the late troubles, were unlawful and seditious. And particularly, that these oaths, whereof the one was commonly called the National Covenant (as it was sworn and subscribed in the year 1638, and thereafter), and the other entitled a Solemn League and Covenant, were and are in themselves unlawful oaths, and that there lieth no obligation upon me, or any of the subjects, from the said oaths, to endeavour any alteration of the government in Church or State, as it is now established by the laws of the kingdom." It was absurd enough to require a person, not only to declare that he was not bound by these Covenants, but to pronounce absolution on all the rest of the subjects who had taken them. But the matter assumes a graver aspect, when it is considered that God was a party in these engagements, and that not only were these sacred deeds condemned by the law of the land, but the subjects compelled to perjure themselves by formally renouncing their obligation, both on themselves, and on the land.

The spirit of the ruling party was not long confined to Parliamentary enactments. The 29th of May 1662,

being the anniversary of the king's restoration, was ordered to be kept as a day of public thanksgiving, or, as they profanely termed it, "a holiday to the Lord." On this day the Covenants were torn in pieces at the Cross of Edinburgh by the hands of the common hangman. The town of Linlithgow, at the same time, signalized itself by an act of wanton insult on these sacred bonds still more revolting. After divine service the streets were filled with bonfires, and the fountain in the centre of the town was made to flow with wine. At the Cross was erected an arch upon four pillars, on one side of which appeared the figure of an old hag with the Covenant in her hand, and the inscription, "A glorious Reformation." On the top was another figure representing the devil, with this label in his mouth,—"Stand to the cause." On the king's health being drunk, fire was applied to the frame, and the whole was reduced to ashes, amidst the shouts of a mob inflamed with liquor. This solemn burning of the Covenants was got up by the provost and minister of the place, both of whom had been Covenanters. By the more respectable class of the inhabitants it was witnessed with grief and horror, as a profane and daring affront offered to the God of heaven.

Still, though the Church courts, the official public organs of the Church's voice, had been closed, the ministers were allowed to occupy their pulpits; and it was gall and wormwood to the hearts of Sharp and his associates, that they should do so without acknowledging their authority. Diocesan meetings were therefore appointed to be held in the different dioceses of the bishops; but these, except in the north, were

very ill attended. The Parliament ordained that all ministers must wait upon these Episcopal courts, on pain of being held contemners of royal authority. To enforce this act, the Earl of Middleton and his commission made a tour to the west country. The scenes of prodigality, debauchery, and profaneness which took place, during this circuit, were of such a kind as could not be rehearsed here without exciting feelings of disgust and horror in every well-constituted mind. On arriving at Glasgow, Fairfoul, the archbishop, complained to Middleton, that, notwithstanding the Act of Parliament, not one of the ministers had owned him as their bishop, and suggested to him the propriety of passing an act and proclamation, banishing all those ministers from their manses, parishes, and dioceses, who had been admitted since 1649, when patronage was abolished, unless they obtained a presentation from the lawful patron, and collation from the bishop of the diocese before the 1st of November. This was the first step toward the persecution; and it will be observed that it commenced under pretence of enforcing the law, the old obnoxious law of patronage. Those who had been admitted since 1649 were of course young persons; they were men of piety, zeal, and popular talents; and having been admitted to their charges by the free call and consent of the people, they were greatly esteemed and beloved. The council agreed to issue the proclamation on the 4th of October, thus giving them less than a month's warning. "Duke Hamilton told me," says Burnet, "they were all *so drunk* that day, that they were not capable of considering any thing that was laid

before them, and would hear of nothing but executing the law, without any relenting or delay." The military were ordered to pull the ministers out of their pulpits, if they should presume to go on with their functions. Sir James Lockhart of Lee alone protested against this mad step, as calculated only to augment the public odium against the bishops, and asserted that the young ministers, before they would acknowledge Episcopacy, would suffer more than the loss of their stipends. The archbishop maintained that there would not be *ten* in all his diocese who would refuse to comply. Middleton, who had no idea of men throwing themselves and their families on the wide world, for the sake of a good conscience, sneered at the bare supposition. To his utter amazement, and to the unspeakable mortification of the bishops, nearly *four hundred* ministers chose rather to be ejected from their charges than comply. Turned out of their homes in the depth of winter, and deprived of all maintenance, they exhibited to their congregations a firmness of principle, which elevated and endeared them still more in their estimation, — while the sudden and simultaneous shutting up of 400 churches in one day, by which almost the whole of the west, and a great part of the south of Scotland, were deprived of their pastors, and a third of the ministers of the Church silenced, did more to alienate the minds of the populace from the bishops than any other plan that could have been devised. "The honest people," says Kirkton, "encouraged their ministers to enter upon the course of suffering; and many in Scotland rejoiced to see their ministers give that proof of their sincerity,

for there were some who affirmed, not 20 ministers in Scotland would lose their stipends for refusing to sit with a bishop."

"Scotland," says Wodrow, "was never witness to such a Sabbath as the last on which those ministers preached; and I know no parallel to it, save the 17th of August, to the Presbyterians in England." * The people were dissolved in tears, and, at intervals, as the minister proceeded, there were loud wailings and involuntary bursts of sorrow. As an instance, I may refer to the parish of Irongray, of which Mr John Welsh was minister, a faithful and courageous champion of the Covenant. An order was sent to apprehend him, which was executed by one Maxwell, a Papist. The whole parish assembled to convey their minister a little on his way, and the mournful procession followed him with tears and lamentations, till he came to the water of Cluden, where he was to take horse. There he was beset by his affectionate parishioners, who clung to him on all sides, and refused to part with him. With a heart almost broken, but resolved not to be detained, Mr Welsh, after some of the ministers had knelt down and prayed, mounted his horse, the people still holding him. In order to extricate himself from them, he dashed into the water, and rode quickly away; but multitudes, both of men and women, rushed into the stream on foot, and followed him on the other side as long as he was in sight, rending the air with their cries and lamentations. †

Another eminent minister who was expelled from

* St Bartholomew's Day, when 2000 ministers were ejected for nonconformity.

† Blackader's Mem., p. 105.

his charge at this time, and who distinguished himself for the boldness with which he continued to preach in the open fields, was Mr John Blackader of Troqueer. One of his sons, who was then a mere child, relates, with much simplicity, what happened on this occasion:—"A party of the king's guard of horse, called Blew-benders, came from Dumfries to Troqueer, to search for and apprehend my father, but found him not, for what occasion I know not. So soon as the party entered the close, and came into the house, with cursing and swearing, we that were children were frightened out of our little wits, and ran up stairs, and I among them; who, when I heard them all roaring in the room below, like so many breathing devils, I had the childish curiosity to get down upon my belly, and peep through a hole in the floor above them, for to see what monsters of creatures they were; and it seems they were monsters indeed for cruelty; for one of them perceiving what I was doing, immediately drew his sword, and thrust it up where I was peeping, so that the mark of the point was scarce an inch from the hole, though no thanks to the murdering ruffian, who designed to run it up through my eye. Immediately after we were forced to pack up, bag and baggage, and remove to Glencairn, ten miles from Troqueer. We who were the children were put into cadger's creels, where one of us cried out, coming through the Bridge-end of Dumfries, 'I'm banisht, I'm banisht!' One happened to ask, Who has banished ye, my bairn? He answered, 'Byte-the-sheep (the bishop) has banisht me.'" *

* Memoirs of John Blackader, p. 106.

The next point with the bishops was to supply the vacant pulpits; but this was not so easily accomplished as the emptying of them had been. Few or none in the south could be induced to enter the pulpits of the ejected ministers, and they were obliged to have recourse to the north country, where, from a variety of causes which we need not stay to specify, ever since the days when James VI. summoned his "northern men" to outvote the Assembly, there has been a general disposition to accommodate themselves to despotic measures, whether it might be to obey the king, or to "please the laird." There they procured a number of raw young lads and hungry expectants, "unstudied and unbred," says Kirkton, "who had all the properties of Jeroboam's priests, miserable in a world, and unable to subsist, which made them so much long for a stipend. So they went to their churches with the same intention as a shepherd contracts for herding a flock of cattle. A gentleman in the north, it is said, cursed the Presbyterian ministers, because, said he, since they left their churches, we cannot get a lad to keep our cows; they turn all ministers." "They were the worst preachers I ever heard," says bishop Burnet; "they were ignorant to a reproach, and many of them were openly vicious. They were a disgrace to their orders and the sacred function; and were, indeed, *the dregs and refuse* of the northern parts. Those of them who arose above contempt or scandal, were men of such violent tempers that they were as much hated as the others were despised." In short, the patrons themselves were ashamed to present such creatures, and they were generally put in by the bishops.

These were not the men likely to reconcile the people to the loss of their favourite pastors. We need not be surprised to hear, that in different places attempts were made to resist their entrance into the churches; these, however, were chiefly by women and boys. At Irongray, the women, headed by one Margaret Smith, opposed the military who were guarding the curate, defending themselves under the kirk-dyke, and fairly beat them off with stones. For this feat Margaret was brought into Edinburgh, and condemned to banishment; but she told her tale so innocently, that she was allowed to escape. Other women, who followed the same course in many other places, were condemned to do penance, by having papers stuck on their heads, and afterwards being severely whipped. These, Kirkton tells us, were "ordinarily the actions of the profane and ignorant, not approved by the sober and judicious Presbyterians;" but we may judge how strong and general the feeling was against the intruders, when farther informed that careless fellows thought there was no surer way of atoning for the excesses of the last night, than by insulting a curate the next morning. It was chiefly, too, by small annoyances, that they showed their contempt for the *curates*, as they called them. Some would steal the tongue of the kirk bell; others would barricade the door, so as to oblige the curate to climb up literally by the window. A shepherd boy, who had found a nest of ants, emptied them one day into the curate's large boots, as he was going to the pulpit; and then the sport of the urchins was to behold the reverend gentleman, after exhibiting a variety of antics, under the torture of the mischiev-

ous animals, obliged to bring his service to an abrupt conclusion.* Another instance of the same contempt for these unworthy pastors may be recorded:—A curate in the west country, who felt deeply mortified at the extreme thinness of his audience, sent a threatening message to the women, that if they did not make their appearance at the church next day, he would inform against them. The women obeyed the mandate, but each of them came with a child in her arms; and the curate had not long proceeded in his service, when first one child began to cry, then another, till the whole of them joined in the chorus, and the voice of the preacher was drowned in a universal squall. It was in vain that he stormed and almost cursed at the women; they told him it was his own fault, and that they could, on no account, leave their children at home.†

Matters, however, soon assumed a more serious aspect. At Edinburgh the ministers were treated with great rigour, being required either to submit to the present order of things, or desist from preaching, and retire from the city. The whole of them, rather than comply, submitted to the sentence, except one Robert Lawrie, who, being the only minister left behind, as a sort of nucleus to the new race of ministers, was designated by the people *the nest-egg*. Prosecutions were next set on foot against some of the ministers who had dared to preach against the defections of the times,—among whom were Mr Donald Cargill, Mr Thomas Wylie, Mr M'Kail, and Mr John Brown of Wamphray, whose names are well known in the succeed-

* Kirkton's History. † Wodrow's Analecta, MS.

ing history. Many of the ministers were thrown into prison, and others escaped from death by a voluntary banishment.*

The fate of Archibald Johnston, Lord Warriston, who suffered about this time, deserves more than a passing notice. Besides affording a striking illustration of the instability of human greatness, it sets in a very strong light the spirit which animated the rulers of that dark period. Archibald Johnston makes his first appearance on the stage of public life, in the famous Glasgow Assembly of 1638, when he was chosen clerk. A profound and accomplished lawyer, an eloquent speaker, and a man of the most active business habits, he took a prominent share in all the

* Among others who were banished at this time was Mr John Livingstone, minister of Ancrum, who soon afterwards died in Holland. The reader will recollect that it was he who was honoured as the chief instrument of the wonderful revival at the Kirk of Shotts in 1630. The case of this worthy man affords a striking illustration of the remark, which has been often verified, that true piety will generally lead even those who have taken no prominent share in ecclesiastical discussions, to act a conscientious part in public matters which involve religious principle. In a letter which he wrote to his parishioners, whom he was not permitted to revisit before his departure, he says, "I have often told you that, for my part, I could never make it a chief part of my work to insist upon the particular debates of the time, as being assured, that if a man drink in the knowledge and the main foundations of Christian religion, and have the work of God's Spirit in his heart, to make him walk with God, and make conscience of his ways, such an one (except he be giddy with self-conceit) shall not readily mistake Christ's quarrel, to join either with a profane Atheist party, or a fanatic Atheist party; but the secret of the Lord will be with them that fear him, and he will show them his covenant. And I have thought it not far from a sure argument, that a course is *not approven of God*, when generally all they that are godly and all profane men turning penitent scunner at it, and it may be cannot tell why: and generally all the profane, at the first sight, and all that had a profession of piety, when they turn loose, embrace it, and it may be cannot tell why. There may be diversity of judgment, and sometimes sharp debates among them that are going to heaven; but certainly one spirit guides the seed of the woman, and another spirit the seed of the serpent; and blessed are they that know their Master's will and do it; blessed are they that endure to the end."

subsequent proceedings of the Covenanters, and was among the chief leaders in promoting the league between Scotland and England. His zeal in this cause, and his success in thwarting all the machinations of the royal party, and bringing some of them, particularly Montrose, to deserved punishment, during the civil war, exposed him to the special vengeance of the Government at the Restoration. Their enmity to his person on these accounts knew no bounds, though they attempted to conceal it under the pretext of an indictment, charging him with having served under Cromwell, who had made him clerk-register, and advanced him to the bench under the title of Lord Warriston. Convinced that nothing would satisfy them but his blood, Warriston retreated to the Continent, where he lived for some time in concealment. His enemies, however, with the slow but sure determination of the blood-hound, tracked him out; and at last one of their emissaries, a worthless creature of the name of Murray, usually called "crooked Murray," discovered the good old man at an exercise in which he always took much delight,—at his prayers. Before this time, in addition to the infirmities of old age, he had been shamefully treated during an attack of illness at Hamburgh, by Dr Bates, one of the king's physicians, "who," says a writer that must have been acquainted with the facts, "intending to kill him, did prescribe unto him poison for physic, and then caused to draw from this melancholy patient 60 ounces of blood, whereby he was brought near unto the gates of death, and made in a manner no man, having lost his memory, so that he could not remember what he had

done or said a quarter of an hour before; in which condition he continued till his dying day."* In this melancholy condition, he was dragged on board of ship, conducted from Leith, bare-headed and on foot, and lodged in the Tolbooth of Edinburgh. On being first brought before the council, the poor old man, broken with disease, and bewildered with his situation, began to supplicate his judges in the most moving tones for mercy; at which Sharp and the other bishops who were present, raised an inhuman laugh, and insulted the superannuated prisoner to his face. It had a different effect on the rest of the audience; for, says Sir George Mackenzie, "it moved all the spectators with a deep melancholy; and the chancellor, reflecting upon the man's great parts, former esteem, and the great share he had in all the late revolutions, could not deny some tears to the frailty of silly mankind."† Warriston, however, afterwards recovered his self-possession, apologized to the court, on the grounds already mentioned, for his obvious imbecility, and submitted with resignation to the sentence of death which they pronounced on him. While in prison, the tenderness and spirituality of his frame, and the thankfulness with which he received any little attention that was paid him, gained the hearts even of some that had formerly hated him. His great concern was that he might be supported, and not left to faint in the hour of trial. On his way to the scaffold, he frequently said to the people standing by, "Your prayers, your prayers."

* Preface to the Apologetical Relation, published in 1665. Burnet says, "he was so disordered in body and mind that it was a reproach to a government to proceed against him."—*Hist.*, i. 297.

† Mackenzie's Hist. of Scotland, p. 134.

He delivered his last words on the scaffold with the utmost composure, using a paper to aid his shattered memory. On ascending the ladder, in doing which his feeble and tottering frame was assisted by some friends in deep mourning, he cried with great fervour, "I beseech you all who are the people of God, not to scar at sufferings for the sake of Christ, or stumble at any thing of this kind falling out in those days, but be encouraged to suffer for him; for I assure you in the name of the Lord, he will bear your charges." While they were adjusting the rope around his neck, he added, "The Lord hath graciously comforted me." He then prayed, "Abba, Father, accept this thy poor sinful servant, coming unto thee through the merits of Jesus Christ." And crying out, "O pray, pray! praise, praise!" he was turned over, and expired without a struggle, with his hands lifted up to heaven. Thus died Archibald Johnston, Lord Warriston, July 22, 1663.*

We consider it due to the memory of this excellent man, to have dwelt thus long on the last scene of his life; for as there was no man who did more in his day for the advancement of the Reformation, so there is none whose character has been so grossly insulted and misrepresented; while his sufferings, at the close of his eventful life, have, of late, very much in the spirit of those who inflicted them, been made the

* As a curious illustration of the superstitious spirit of the age, it may be mentioned, that a report was circulated both before and after his death, that a *spae-wife* had uttered the following ominous prediction concerning him at his birth:—

"Full moon, full sea,
Great man shalt thou be;
Bot ill dead shalt thou dye."—*Lamont's Diary*, p. 206.

subject of cruel mockery and heartless triumph. But "the triumphing of the wicked is short;" and the time, we trust, has now come, when the attempt to revive such calumnies against our persecuted ancestors, will only prove the signal for the raising of a hundred voices to vindicate their memory.

To form a fair estimate of the character of Archibald Johnston, we must view it apart from the peculiar complexion of his religious and political creed. Granting the goodness of the cause he espoused, which rests on surer grounds than the merits or demerits of its supporters, he cannot be justly charged with having acted either dishonourably or with unbecoming violence in the prosecution of his measures. The sole offence with which his enemies could charge him, was his having accepted office under the usurper, a crime, if crime it was, shared by many besides him, and which was confessed and regretted by none more cordially than by himself. But Warriston belonged to a class rarely to be met with now: he was a religious politician. The standard of his policy was the Word of God; his great and governing aim, the divine glory. And, on this account, his name has suffered obloquy from a quarter where all who would follow his steps may expect similar treatment, so long as society is composed, as it still is to such an alarming extent, of the godless and unbelieving.

CHAPTER XII.

Field-Meetings in Fife—The Bishops' Drag-Net—High Commission Court—William Guthrie of Fenwick—Oppressions of the Soldiery—Rising in the West—Skirmish at Pentland—Tortures and Executions—Hugh M'Kail—Executioner of Irvine.

In our last sketch we noticed the commencement, in 1663, of those field-meetings, or *Conventicles*, as they were called by their enemies, which gave so much offence to the prelates. At first these meetings were very rare, being held chiefly in the west and south country. The people, having been secretly apprised of the place of meeting, assembled in some remote sequestered glen, unarmed, and unoffending, and after hearing the Gospel from the lips of their beloved pastors—endeared to them the more by their having suffered for the truth which they preached—peaceably dispersed, and returned to their homes. One of these sacred "trysting-places," celebrated for many meetings of this nature, was Glenvale, a beautiful sequestered valley in Fife, lying between West Lomond and Bishophill, and opening to the west. About the middle of the valley it expands into a fine amphitheatre on the south, capable

[illegible] and heartless triumph. But [illegible] of the wicked is short;" and the [illegible] when the attempt to [illegible] against our persecuted ancestors, [illegible] for the raising of a hundred [illegible] their memory.

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of containing many thousand persons; on the north side is a large projecting rock, which is said to have been occupied by the ejected ministers as a pulpit. In this splendid temple, "not made with hands," many assembled from the surrounding country, to worship the God of their fathers; and anecdotes connected with these scenes are still preserved by the older natives of the district. On one occasion, it is said, they were surprised by a small party of the king's troops, who came upon them from the west, and looking down, saw the whole congregation lying in the valley below, hanging entranced on the lips of the minister, who was then in the midst of his sermon, and unconscious of the approach of the enemy. The soldiers were preparing to attack them, when they were dissuaded from the attempt by Crawford of Powmill, who observed, "Take care what ye do—I see Bilton among them" (a famous marksman); "if you meddle with them, he is certain to make some of you sleep in your shoes."*

On another occasion, when a meeting was held in the parish of Kinglassie, a gentleman of the name of Baleddie came upon them with a few followers. But they observed him at a distance, and before his arrival, they had the minister concealed among them in disguise. When Baleddie came and found himself

* Crawford of Powmill, though a rude profane man, and by no means friendly to the Presbyterians, sometimes interfered for their protection. A party of soldiers having one day come to apprehend a neighbour of his, a tenant at Pittendriech, the poor man, who was building a stack at the time, threw down his fork and ran to Powmill, and meeting with the laird, implored him for shelter, crying, "O laird, where shall I run?" "O never fear," replied Powmill, "run into the house, and get into my bed: they'll never think of seeking a saint in hell!"—*Traditional. Memoirs of Veitch and Bryson*, p. 295.

disappointed in his object, which was to apprehend the minister, he rode round the multitude in high wrath, cursing, and threatening to fine the whole of them. While thus employed, one of his aunts, who was present, a woman of determined spirit, and possessed of great influence in the country side, rose up and said, "Baleddie, begone, and do not molest these honest people, who are met peaceably to hear the Gospel; or, if you do not, I will lay you by the heels." "O, aunt Mary," said Baleddie, "are *you* there?" and turning his horse's head, he rode off. After this the minister resumed his place, and the people dispersed without farther molestation.*

How long matters might have continued in this comparatively peaceful state, had these meetings been tolerated, it is hard to say. Incensed, however, at finding their curates despised and deserted, the bishops procured an "act for separation and disobedience to ecclesiastick authority," ordaining that all ministers who ventured to preach without the sanction of the bishops, should be punished as seditious persons, and that every one who absented himself from public worship in his own parish church, should be subjected to certain pains and penalties. This act, which was called the bishop's *drag-net*, was followed by the most vexatious oppressions. In the end of 1663, and beginning of the following year, troops were sent into the west, under the command of Sir James Turner, a mercenary and unprincipled soldier, who had formerly fought under the banner of the Covenant, but who now found a more lucrative service under the bishops

* Traditional.

in plundering the Presbyterians. The process adopted by this officer was very simple and summary. The curate, after sermon, read a roll of the parishioners, and handed over the names of the absentees to Turner, who was at once the judge of the party, and the executioner of the sentence. Vast sums were levied under the pretext of fines for non-attendance at church; and if the tenant was unwilling or unable to pay the money on the spot, the soldiers were sent to quarter upon him, till the poor man was "eaten up;" his cattle were disposed of for a mere trifle; the bread was torn from the mouths of his children, and thrown to the officers' dogs; and whole families, reduced from comfort to beggary, were compelled to wander about the country for subsistence. Those who travelled to a distance to hear such of the Presbyterian ministers as were still permitted to occupy their pulpits, met with no better treatment. A party of soldiers would sit carousing in the ale-house till the service was concluded, when they went armed to the church-door, and questioned each individual as he came out, whether he belonged to the parish. If they did not, and were unprepared to pay the fine, the men's coats and the women's plaids were taken from them; and it was no uncommon spectacle to see the soldiers returning from these expeditions on the Lord's day, laden with the spoils, as if they had been stripping the slain on the field of battle.

These oppressive measures, however, proving insufficient to suppress the practice, the bishops soon found more active work for their military assistants. In the beginning of 1664, a new court was erected by

the advice of Sharp, composed of bishops and laymen, termed the *High Commission Court*, the chief object of which was, to carry into effect the ecclesiastical laws, and punish all who opposed the government of the Church by bishops. The powers conferred on this court were so extraordinary, that the Chancellor and other noblemen, became justly suspicious of the growing authority of the bishops, and after continuing for two years it was abolished. But during these two years it was not idle. Ministers were banished or imprisoned; women were publicly whipped; and even boys, after being scourged and branded, were sold as slaves, and sent to Barbadoes.* Among other proclamations against the Presbyterians at this time, too tedious to mention, there was one making it sedition to give charity, or collect any contributions for the support of the poor ejected ministers; and another for dragooning people to the church, by imposing fines, or quartering soldiers upon them until they complied. As a specimen of the spirit of the times, we may notice the case of William Guthrie, minister of Fenwick, and author of that excellent little treatise, "The Trial of a Saving Interest in Christ." He was cousin to James Guthrie, whose martyrdom we have recorded. Affable in his manners, and facetious in his conversation, as well as diligent and devout in his office, Mr Guthrie was universally beloved and respected. When he first came to Fenwick, the people were so rude and irreligious, that many of them never came to church, and did not even know the face of their pastor; and various were the expedients he tried

* Kirkton.

to overcome their prejudices. Disguising himself, sometimes as a traveller, at other times as a sportsman, he would solicit from them a night's lodgings; and by the humour of his conversation, and joining with them in their amusements, he gradually succeeded in working an entire reformation among them. There is an anecdote told of him in one of these excursions, which, as it has been erroneously ascribed to a late eccentric clergyman in London, may be here restored to its proper original, Mr Guthrie. One day having visited one of his people in disguise, he peremptorily insisted on the goodman of the house performing family worship, and would not allow him to go to bed without his at least making the attempt. The man, after many ineffectual excuses, at last began, "O Lord, this man will have me to pray, but thou knowest that I cannot pray." "Stop," said Mr Guthrie, "you have done well enough; I could not pray a better prayer myself." Upon which he prayed with the family: and having prevailed on the man and his wife to promise to visit the church next Sabbath, they went and found, to their astonishment, that their late impracticable guest was no other than their minister; a discovery which issued in their becoming exemplary in their attendance at church.*

* On one occasion, at a meeting of his brethren, Mr Guthrie, who had been more than ordinarily gay and cheerful, was asked to pray, which he did in such a solemn and affecting manner, that the grave Mr Durham could not help expressing his amazement, telling him that if he had laughed half so much he could not have prayed for a long time after. Mr Guthrie replied, that were it not for his laughing, his complaint would soon make him sad enough. But, said Mr Durham, "are your people not offended at your joining in their plays and sports?" "No," said the good man, "they are rather blythe to see me do it."—*Wodrow's Analecta, MS.*

Mr Guthrie's extraordinary reputation pointed him out as a special object of jealousy and dislike to the archbishop of Glasgow, who could not prevail upon him in any way to acknowledge his authority. The Earl of Glencairn, then Chancellor, being on a visit to the archbishop, asked him as a particular favour that Mr Guthrie might be overlooked; the prelate, however, refused, saying, with a disdainful air, "That shall not be done—it cannot be; he is a ringleader and keeper up of sedition in my diocese." The Chancellor said little, but when he came down stairs, his attendants observed him agitated to such a degree that "the buttons were springing off his coat and vest." Being asked what ailed him, he replied, "Woes me! we have advanced these men to be bishops, and they will trample upon us all."*

Accordingly, in July 1644, Mr Guthrie was suspended; but the archbishop could not prevail on any of his curates to intimate the sentence; "there was such an awe upon their spirits," says Wodrow, "which scared them from meddling with that great man." At last one of them, the curate of Calder, was induced, by a bribe of five pounds sterling, to execute the will of the prelate. With great difficulty Mr Guthrie prevailed on his people to refrain from violently opposing the party who were sent with the curate; for they were quite prepared to sacrifice their lives in the cause of their beloved pastor. The miserable curate who had sold himself to this work of iniquity, preached to his own party without disturbance; but, we are as-

* Wodrow's Anal. MS., vol. ii. p. 145; Hist. Account of Senators of Justice, p. 350.

sured, never preached again.* "He died in a few days," it is said, "in great torment, of an iliac passion; and his wife and children died all in a year or thereby. His reward of five pounds was dearly bought; it was the price of blood, the blood of souls."†

We cannot help adverting here to the decided piety which distinguished all who suffered at this period in the cause of the Covenant. Without a single exception, they were men of conscience, men of prayer, many of them men of deep-toned devotion; and all of them, either previous to their being singled out for suffering, or before they died, gave remarkable evidence of their being sustained and comforted by the hopes of the Gospel.‡ This, in the case of the ministers, had not only a vast influence in securing them the sympathies of the people, who were not blind to the contrast between them and the careless irreligious curates who supplanted them, but even gained them the involuntary respect of their enemies. The Earl of Glencairn, who died about this time, earnestly sought, on his deathbed, the services of a Presbyterian pastor. The Earl of Rothes, and the Earl of Annandale, both bitter persecutors of the Presbyterian ministers during their lives, were equally anxious to have their attendance, and actually obtained it, during their last moments. Such instances made the Duk

* Mr Guthrie, proceeding, no doubt, on the general ground, that Providence seldom fails to put a mark, in this world, on the instruments employed in afflicting his public servants, forewarned him that he might expect some judicial stroke.

† Scots Worthies, p. 294.

‡ "There was never a Presbyterian troubled in his conscience on his deathbed, because he kept his Covenant, and disowned bishops; but many a poor curate was sore tormented for what he had done."—*Kirkton*, 15

of York one day say, that "he believed that Scotsmen, be what they would in their lifetime, were all Presbyterians at their death." *

Meanwhile, during the year 1665, the oppressions of the soldiery became perfectly intolerable, particularly in the west, where Sir James Turner and Sir William Bannatyne vied with each other in plundering and harassing the unhappy peasantry. A faint idea of these exactions may be formed, when we state, that, within a few weeks, the curates and soldiers gathered upwards of 50,000 pounds Scots from the west country, purely for nonconformity. In Galloway and Dumfriesshire they levied a still larger sum, in addition to the fines imposed by the State on landed proprietors, which amounted to many hundreds of thousands.† To crown the whole, after committing these outrages, the soldiers would compel the poor people to sign a declaration that they had been used by them with the greatest tenderness and civility!‡ It seemed as if Government intended to try the utmost limits to which the endurance of the people would go. During six years had they seen the legal securities for their beloved Reformation one after another rescinded, their civil liberties laid low, their ministers scattered, and a set of men intruded into their churches, whose practice, not to speak of their principles, made them little better than public nuisances. And now, simply because they would not consent, at the command of their rulers, to renounce their religion, they found themselves placed under a barbarous military execution; while all liberty of petitioning, or addressing the

* Wodrow, vol. i. p. 219. † See Wodrow's Lists. ‡ Kirkton, 281.

throne, for redress of their grievances, was discharged under the highest penalties. Few people, in any other country, would have submitted so long under such circumstances, as they did, silently, and without a murmur; still hoping that Providence would open a door of relief, and that the cry of their oppression might come up to heaven.

But oppression, when long continued, will make even wise men mad. A circumstance, purely accidental, which took place in November 1666, led to a partial and ill-advised rising in the west country, which was followed by the most disastrous consequences, not only to those immediately engaged in it, but to the whole body of the Presbyterians through the country, who took no part in the insurrection. While the brutal and unlicensed soldiery of Sir James Turner were at the height of their insolence, and a great part of the west had been laid waste by their devastations, many families, even of the best rank, being scattered and forced to hide themselves in muirs and mountains,—four fugitive countrymen passed through the village of Dalry in Ayrshire. A party of soldiers had seized a poor old man, who could not pay his church fines, and were threatening to strip him naked, and roast him on a red-hot gridiron. The countrymen interfered, and were pleading with them to desist, when the soldiers fell upon them with their swords, and a scuffle ensued, which ended in one of the soldiers being wounded, and the rest compelled to deliver up their prisoner.* On the

* Wod., vol. i. p. 241; Kirkton, p. 229; Blacad. Mem., p. 136; Turner's Memoirs.

the countrymen, knowing what they might expect for performing this act of humanity, resolved, as a first measure of security, to seize on a party of soldiers stationed in the neighbourhood. This, with the aid of some of their companions, they accomplished, one of the soldiers only being killed on attempting resistance. Subsequently they were joined by some of the gentlemen of the country, who, raising a small force, surprised Sir James Turner in his bed at Dumfries, making him prisoner, and disarming his soldiers.* The news of this rising struck a terrible panic into the bishops, and those at the head of affairs in Edinburgh, who immediately ordered General Dalziel to march to Glasgow, despatched an exaggerated account to London, and issued a proclamation, ordering all to lay down their arms, and submit within 24 hours, without, however, any promise of indemnity. This amounted, of course, to little more than a summons to the gallows. The insurgents, therefore, only thought of increasing their numbers and fighting it out. On reaching Lanark, their numbers amounted to nearly 3000 horse and foot, but ill-accoutred and undisciplined. Here the leaders of the party drew up a short declaration, stating the design of their appearance in arms, which they declared to be simply, "sinless self-defence," in the way of adhering to their solemn Covenant, and deliverance from their manifold grievances, "the just sense of which (they say) made us choose rather to betake ourselves to the fields for self-

* "On arriving at Dumfries they marched to the Cross, and drank the king's health, a labour they might well have spared, for they had cruel thanks."—*Kirkton*, p. 232.

defence, than to stay at home burdened daily with the calamities of others, and tortured with the fears of our own approaching misery." In token of their cause being a religious one, they joined in renewing the Covenant, confessing the late heinous violations of it, and pledging themselves to stand to its defence. But, oppressed as the Presbyterians in the west had been, they were not prepared for joining in any considerable numbers with an expedition which they regarded as premature and hopeless. The devoted little band, instead of finding new accessions as they advanced, had the mortification to see their numbers daily dropping away. Colonel Wallace, a brave and enterprising officer, who had taken the command, used all his efforts to keep them together; but on approaching Edinburgh, from which they were led to expect great support, they found the whole city in arms against them.* Harassed with long marching in the midst of a severe winter, surrounded by their enemies behind and before, half-drowned and half-starved, "they looked," says Kirkton, "rather like dying men than soldiers going to conquer." Yet in this pitiable plight, reduced to 900 men, they resolved to stand their ground; and at the Pentland Hills, on a spot named Rullion Green, the conflict began by an attack of a body of horse under the command of Dalziel. This attack was nobly met; the royal troops were repelled by Major Learmont, at the head of a body of the Covenanters, among whom were two Irish ministers, Mr Crookshanks and Mr M'Cormack, who

* See an interesting Narrative of the Rising at Pentland, by Colonel Wallace; Mem. of Veitch and Brysson, p. 388, *et seq.*

had been active in encouraging the people to this undertaking, and bravely fell in the first onset. It is said, that had they followed up their advantage, the Covenanters might have gained the victory;* but their horses being untrained, and they themselves spent with fatigue, the superior numbers and discipline of the enemy at last prevailed; and after a desperate conflict, the insurgents were defeated, with the loss of 50 killed, and as many taken prisoners. The rest made their escape in the darkness of the night. This skirmish was fought on the 28th of November 1666. It is allowed even by Sir James Turner, who was present, being still kept a prisoner among the Presbyterians, and who has written a minute though rather disingenuous account of the whole affair, that "the rebels, for their numbers, fought desperately enough."†

Thus ended this most unfortunate, ill-concerted, and ill-timed rising,—an attempt which was disapproved of and lamented by the great body of the Presbyterians, and which can only be justified by the vexatious and oppressive conduct of the bishops and their underlings, clerical and military, who goaded the poor people to such a pitch of irritation, that the wonder is how they bore it so long. To brand it, however, by the odious name of rebellion, would be an abuse of terms, and a libel on the worthy men who

* Wodrow, i. 251, on the information of a minister present.

† At one time he tells us, that he had not "seen less of divine worship any where than he saw in that army of theirs." "I am sure," he says, "in my quarters my guards neither prayed nor praised for any thing I ever heard;" and yet, in the same breath, he complains of the tediousness of their graces before and after meat, which gave him even more annoyance than the scarceness and bad quality of his victuals, the main theme of his lamentations.

were engaged in it, all of whom disclaimed being actuated by rebellious motives, or any design to overturn the government of the country. All of them, without exception, at this period owned the king's authority, and submitted to every thing save Episcopacy; and this they could not do without renouncing that covenant which, they conscientiously believed, was obligatory on themselves and the whole land. Their simple object was to free themselves and their countrymen from the horrible oppression under which they groaned, and to lay their grievances at the foot of the throne, and claim redress, which they had no access to do in any other way but in arms. They cannot be condemned for this, without condemning the very principles upon which our ancestors acted, with more success, at the period of the Revolution. And had they succeeded, there can be no doubt, that, instead of being stigmatized as rebels, they would have earned the praise of patriots. But while the tyranny under which they suffered is sufficient to justify their appearance in arms, and vindicate them from the charge of rebellion, the end for which they suffered, and the spirit in which they died, justly entitle them to the honour of martyrdom. This distinction is so well stated by one of themselves in his "dying testimony," and is so necessary to the right understanding of the quarrel, that it may be here introduced.—"Although the insupportable oppressions under which I and many others did groan, were enough to justify our preserving and defending of ourselves by arms, yet know that the cause was not ours, but the Lord's; for we suffered all our grievous oppres-

sions, not for evil-doing, but because we could not in conscience acknowledge, comply with, and obey Prelacy, and submit unto the ministry of ignorant, light, and profane men, who were irregularly and violently thrust upon us; neither did we only or mainly design our civil liberties, but the liberty of the Gospel, the extirpation of Prelacy, the restoration of our faithful pastors, the suppression of profanity, promoting of piety, the saving of ourselves from unjust violence, until we had presented our grievances and desires; and, in a word, the recovering of the once glorious, but now ruined work of reformation, in doctrine, worship, discipline, and government, according to the National Covenant, and Solemn League and Covenant, to which I declare my adherence, and through grace shall seal the same with my blood."*

* The Testimony of John Neilson of Corsack, who died at Edinburgh, December 14, 1666, Naphtali, p. 323.—Some have blamed them because they made the defence of the Gospel one of their declared objects; and among others, Mr M'Gavin, in his notes to his edition of the Scots Worthies, condemns this, while at the same time he owns, that "in a civil and political view, they suffered enough to provoke resistance." He would have allowed them to fight for an object purely civil and political; but because religion was mixed up in the quarrel, he conceives that they ought to have suffered "with the meekness of lambs led to the slaughter," in which case "their murderers might have become ashamed or tired of their work!"—*Scots Worthies*, p. 294. We question much whether this is the language either of nature or of revelation. It obviously proceeds upon a fallacy. The sword of persecution can only reach religion through the side of our civil freedom; and therefore, although the Presbyterians at Pentland, being religious men, professed it as their chief object to defend themselves in the enjoyment of their religion, on which they placed most value, they may be vindicated for doing so on the simple ground, that before their enemies could have laid their hands on the sacred ark of religious freedom, they must have first trampled on all their civil and natural rights as free-born Britons. It is to be regretted that Mr M'Gavin should have meddled with the Scots Worthies at all. He has spoiled the simplicity of Howie's style by attempting to modernise it, and done little more than betrayed his own presumption by the comments he has made on the text.

We may conclude this brief defence of our fathers with the words of a worthy minister, who survived the dangers of this period, and lived to see the Revolution :—" It is easy to ly always under the sunblinks of royall favour, and to scandalize others as enemies to the king and to authoritie; whereas, if themselves were but far less and shorter while crossed and crushed in their interests, as we have seen examples enough to give us a taste of this" (referring to the rebellions of the Jacobites), " they would be much more impatient, and readier to cry out against their sovereign and rulers; and, *it may be, readier to put their hand to the hilt of their sword*, than most of the Presbyterians." *

All who were engaged in, or suspected of being accessory to, this ill-fated enterprise, were treated with the most unrelenting severity. With regard to the poor prisoners, " very quick despatch was made with them." They were crowded, like so many cattle, into a dungeon; and though they had been taken prisoners on the field of battle, upon quarter asked and given, the greater part of them were brought to trial and condemned to suffer death as traitors and rebels.† " It was a moving sight," says Burnet, " to see ten of these prisoners hanged upon one gibbet." They all declared their innocence of the crime of treason or rebellion. " We are condemned by men," they said, " and esteemed by many as rebels against the king, whose authority we acknowledge. But this is our rejoicing,

* Patrick Simpson, minister of Renfrew, MS.—P.S. against *Hackston's Ghost*, p. 73.

† Out of the 50 prisoners, 35 were brought to the scaffold, of whom 20 were executed at Edinburgh, 7 at Ayr, and the rest in different parts of the country.

the testimony of our conscience, that we suffer not as evil-doers, but for righteousness, for the word of God and testimony of Jesus Christ, and particularly for our renewing the Covenants, and in pursuance thereof defending and preserving ourselves by arms, against the usurpation and insupportable tyranny of the prelates, and against the most unchristian and inhuman oppression and persecution that ever was enjoined and practised by unjust rulers upon *free, innocent, and peaceable subjects.*"* Again, "we declare, in the presence of God, before whom we are now ready to appear, that we did not intend to rebel against the king and his just authority, whom we acknowledge for our lawful sovereign." "I am condemned," said another, "I shall not say how unjustly, as a rebel against man; but the Lord God of gods he knoweth, and all Israel shall know, that it is not for rebellion against God, but for endeavouring to recover the blessed work of reformation, and for renewing of the Covenant, from the obligation whereof (seeing I made my vow and promise to the Lord), neither I myself, nor any human authority can absolve me. And if any account this rebellion, I do plainly confess, that after the way which they call heresy, I worship the God of my fathers."† All of them, indeed, laid their blood at the door of the prelates, and expressed their confidence that if the king only knew the cause in which they suffered, he would never consent to their death. But all access to the royal ear was care-

* Joint Testimony of the ten who were executed December 7, 1666, Naphtali, pp. 306, 311.

† Testimony of Neilson of Corsack in Naphtali, p. 323.

fully barred; and even on the scaffold, when, for their own vindication, they said any thing reflecting on the bishops or the defection of the times, their voice was drowned by the beating of drums.

One of those who suffered was Mr Alexander Robertson, a preacher. He was a man of great boldness and resolution, being among the first in Edinburgh who proposed joining the insurgents in the west, and it was in his chamber that the consultations were held on this subject. He acted as a captain in the army that fought at Pentland, though he, with others, attempted to dissuade Colonel Wallace from persevering in the attempt, after finding that so few came forward to join them. This individual, as well as his companions, solemnly disclaimed, in his dying speech, any rebellious purpose against the government:—"I do solemnly declare, as a dying man, that I had no worse design than the restoring of the glorious work of reformation according to the Covenant, and more particularly the extirpation of Prelacy, to which his majesty and all his subjects are as much obliged as I. And let that be removed, and the work of reformation be restored, and I dare die in saying, that his majesty shall not have in all his dominions more loving, loyal, and peaceable subjects, than those who, *for their not compliance with prelacie*, are loaded with the reproaches of phanaticisme and rebellion." *

The firmness with which these sufferers endured not only the terrors of an ignominious death, but the tortures which sometimes preceded it, astonished their adversaries, and left a strong impression on the mul-

* His last speech is to be found in Naphtali. I have quoted the above,

titude. The two persons, however, who were most distinguished both for their high character and their extraordinary sufferings on this occasion, were John Neilson of Corsack, and Mr Hugh M'Kail, preacher of the Gospel. Neilson was a gentleman of property, remarkable for the mildness and generosity of his disposition. He was the means of saving the life of Sir James Turner; for he not only gave him quarter, but on some of the party having offered to shoot him, Corsack interfered, saying—"You shall as soon kill me, sir, for I have given him quarters."* Mr M'Kail was a young man of 26 years of age; and having been licensed at the very time when Prelacy was introduced, he gave mortal offence to the rulers by the first sermon he preached in Edinburgh, in which he declared that "the Church of Scotland had been persecuted by a Pharaoh on the throne, a Haman in the state, and a Judas in the church."† This was the real source of their enmity against him, for he had very little to do with the rising at Pentland. Both these excellent gentlemen were subjected at their trial to the diabolical torture of the *Boot*,—an instrument of cruelty which had not been used in Scotland for upwards of

however, from a copy of it in my possession, written by his own hand, and dated on the very day of his execution. It could only be for their non-compliance with prelacy that they were put to death; for they distinctly tell us they were offered their lives, if they would have subscribed the declaration acknowledging the bishops.

* Crichton's Memoirs of Blackader, p. 138.

† M'Kail was at first chaplain to Sir James Stuart of Kirkfield. Wodrow describes him as "universally beloved, singularly pious, and of very considerable learning." After giving offence by the sermon referred to, he went to the continent, where he improved himself by travelling. He seems to have had a turn for elegant literature, as appears from the Latin verses he composed in prison.

40 years before, and the very appearance of which the people had forgotten; but the bishops and other rulers had got a new pair made for the present occasion, and they were brought into frequent requisition during the subsequent years. This instrument was made of four pieces of narrow boards strongly bound together, of a competent length for the leg. Into this case, after the criminal's leg was laid in, wedges were driven down with a hammer, which caused intolerable pain, and frequently mangled the limb in a shocking manner, compressing the flesh, and even forcing the marrow out of the bone. The two martyrs bore this horrible torture with the most surprising fortitude, though poor Corsack, the "meek and generous gentleman," as he is described by those who knew him, was so cruelly tormented, that he shrieked in a terrible manner, enough to move a heart of stone. Rothes, however, in the most unfeeling manner, frequently called out to the executioner to "give him the other touch."* M'Kail was treated in the same manner, and received ten or eleven strokes of the hammer, without giving vent to any expression of impatience or bitterness. The object of all this cruelty was to ascertain from them the secret causes and agents of this rebellion, as they called it; but it was in vain; torture itself could not extract more from them than what they knew; and before receiving his last strokes, M'Kail solemnly protested, in the sight of God, that he could say no more, though all the joints in his body "were in as great torture as that poor leg;" and that, to the best of his knowledge, the rising in the west was

* Wodrow, i. 258, 259, fol.

purely accidental, arising from a discontent between the people there and Sir James Turner.

The behaviour of this excellent young man in prison after condemnation, was equally remarkable for Christian fortitude, humility, and faith. His cheerfulness never forsook him. Some having asked how his shattered limb was, he replied,—"The fear of my *neck* now makes me forget my leg." He prayed with and encouraged his fellow-sufferers, frequently exclaiming—"What, Lord, shall be the end of these wonders?" His appearance on the scaffold, Saturday, December 22, excited "such a lamentation," says Kirkton, "as was never known in Scotland before; not one dry cheek upon all the street, or in all the numberless windows in the market-place." The extreme youthfulness and delicacy of his appearance, the comeliness and composure of his countenance, struck every beholder,—a thrill of mingled pity and horror ran through the crowd; and while those given to swearing cursed the bishops, others were fervently praying for the youthful martyr. After delivering his last speech, and on taking hold of the ladder to go up, he said, in an audible voice,—"I care no more to go up this ladder, and over it, than if I were going to my father's house." Then turning to his fellow-sufferers, he cried —"Friends, be not afraid; every step in this ladder is a degree nearer to heaven." Before being turned over, he removed the napkin from his face, saying—"I hope you perceive no alteration or discouragement in my countenance and carriage; and as it may be your wonder, so I profess it is a wonder to myself; and I will tell you the reason of it. Besides the jus-

tice of my cause, this is my comfort, what was said of Lazarus when he died, that the angels did carry his soul to Abraham's bosom; so that, as there is a great solemnity here, of a confluence of people, a scaffold, a gallows, and people looking out of windows; so there is a greater and more solemn preparation of angels to carry my soul to Christ's bosom." He then ended with that noble burst of Christian eloquence, so much admired, and so often imitated:—"And now I leave off to speak any more to creatures, and begin my intercourse with God, which shall never be broken off. Farewell, father and mother, friends and relations; farewell, the world and all delights; farewell, meat and drink; farewell, sun, moon, and stars!—Welcome God and Father; welcome sweet Jesus Christ, the Mediator of the new covenant; welcome blessed Spirit of grace, the God of all consolation; welcome glory; welcome eternal life; and welcome death!"

These were atrocious scenes; but they derive an additional shade of atrocity from the fact, which rests on the best authority, that before these executions were finished, a letter came down from the king, addressed to Sharp, as president of the council, discharging them from taking any more lives; and that this letter, instead of being instantly communicated to the council, was kept back by the archbishop, till all who had been condemned were executed. From other sources, it seems probable that this letter arrived before the execution of M'Kail; in which case the death of that youth must be viewed as the personal act of

the infatuated Sharp, who, likely, never forgave him for that word—"a Judas in the Church." *

Though we have already dwelt sufficiently long on these details, we cannot help noticing the fate of two young gentlemen, the Gordons of Knockbreck, in Galloway, who were executed at this time. These youths, who were distinguished for their piety, learning, and talents, as well as for their ardent attachment to each other, had suffered much from the rapacity of the soldiers. As they were pleasant in their lives, so in their deaths they were not divided; for when they were turned over, they clasped each other with affectionate ardour, and endured the pangs of death in each other's arms.

In the west country, numbers were executed for the same cause. But there, so convinced were all classes of the innocence and moral worth of those who suffered, that no executioner could be prevailed upon to carry the sentence into effect. One of the prisoners at last, bribed and dragged into the service, executed his companions, but soon afterwards died himself in despair. In Irvine, the hangman, a poor simple Highlander, named William Sutherland, peremptorily refused to execute the good men merely for opposing the bishops, whom, he said, "he had never liked since he knew how to read his Bible." Solicitations, promises, and threats, were all used with him, but in vain. They threatened him with the *boots:* "You may bring the boots and the spurs too," said William,

* This fact was not forgotten by those who assassinated him; for when he cried pitifully for mercy, he was told, that "as he had never showed mercy to any, so mercy he should have none himself."— *Wodrow; Kirkton*, 255.

"you shall not prevail." They swore they would pour melted lead on him,—they would roll him in a barrel full of pikes; but the Highlander stood firm. They then put him in the stocks; and the soldiers having charged their pieces, and blindfolded him, rushed on him with frightful shouts and imprecations, but all in vain. Confounded at his fortitude, they declared that the devil surely was in him. "If the devil be in me," said William, "he is an unnatural devil, for if he were like the rest, he would bid me take as many lives as I could; but the spirit that is in me will not suffer me to take good men's lives." "Tell me," said one of the judges, "who put these words into your mouth." "Even He who made Balaam's ass to speak and reprove the madness of the prophet," replied William. At length, finding that they could make nothing more of him, they allowed him to escape.

CHAPTER XIII.

General Dalziel—Anecdotes of the Persecution—Mitchell's Attempt to Assassinate Sharp — the Indulgence— the Bishops' Evangelists — Leighton's Accommodation — Field Meetings — Description of a Scottish Covenanter's Communion.

Our last sketch concluded with an account of the executions which followed on the defeat at Pentland. These, however, afford a very imperfect idea of the sufferings entailed on the Presbyterians, particularly in the west of Scotland, in consequence of that ill-timed insurrection. The enemies of the Church are seldom at a loss for want of instruments fitted to execute their persecuting measures; and at this period they found one remarkably well qualified for their purpose, in the person of General Dalziel, who was sent with a body of troops into the west.

Thomas Dalziel of Binns was a rigid veteran, who had served under the Czar of Muscovy against the Turks and Tartars, and in that barbarous warfare had become inured to blood, pillage, and torture, and hardened against all feelings of humanity. His beard, which he had never shaved since the execution of Charles I., hung down, white and bushy, almost to

his girdle; and his whole appearance was as savage as his manners. Such was the military and political bigot, who, ignorant of every thing but martial law, blinded by inveterate prejudice, and heated by habitual intemperance, was commissioned to rectify the disorders which religious oppression had created, and reconcile a free people to civil and ecclesiastical bondage.

As a specimen of his doings in the west country, it may be mentioned, that a sergeant having apprehended a man named Finlay, who had acknowledged that he was accidentally at Lanark when Colonel Wallace and his men passed through it on their way to Pentland, brought him before Dalziel; and simply because he would not, or rather could not, give any satisfactory account of the rich Whigs he had seen there, the General ordered him to be instantly taken out and shot. When the poor man was carried out, neither he nor the lieutenant who was to execute the sentence believed the General to be in earnest; and he so earnestly begged "one night's time to prepare for eternity," that the lieutenant returned to Dalziel, and entreated that he might be spared till the next day. The brutal commander repeated his order, saying to the officer, "I'll teach you, Sir, to obey without scruple." The poor man was instantly shot, stripped naked, and left lying on the ground. The sergeant who had conveyed the prisoner from his own house, and who had gone to sleep, no sooner beheld this bloody spectacle on awakening next morning, than he sickened at heart, refused all sustenance, and died in a few days. *

* This deed, which was too much for the heart of the unsophisticated

On another occasion, one of the *Whigs*, as they were called, being hotly pursued, ran for shelter into the house of a poor country woman, and escaping by another door, threw himself into a ditch, where he concealed himself so effectually under the water, that the soldiers could not discover the place of his retreat. Incensed at missing their prey, they seized on the poor woman, who could give no other account of the matter than that she saw a man run through her house, and dragging her to head-quarters at Kilmarnock, they threw her into a dungeon full of toads and other reptiles, where the shrieks of the poor creature were heard by the whole neighbourhood, not one of whom durst come to her relief, for fear of sharing the same fate. Another woman, whom they charged with being accessory to her husband's escape in female clothes, they tortured, by binding her and putting lighted matches between her fingers for several hours, till she lost one of her hands, and died in a few days from the effects of the barbarous treatment.

But it would occupy too much of our space to recount the various devices of torture and oppression which were employed on the wretched tenantry at this time. "Sir James Turner, and Sir William Bannatyne, had, by their cruelties, driven the poor people of Galloway into despair, but they were saints compared to Tom Dalyell and his soldiers. Meantime the poor Whigs either wandered in a strange land, or lurked, under dissembled names, in remote

soldier, is vindicated by a modern commentator on our history, who merely observes with regard to it, that "General Dalziel was a *very strict disciplinarian in military matters.*"—*Note to Kirkton's History, by Sharpe*, p. 256.

places of the country, or hid themselves in caves or coal-pits; and indeed it was a sad winter, the first time ever Scotland endured so much tyranny."* "Dalziel acted the Muscovite too grossly," says Burnet. "He threatened to spit men, and to roast them; and he killed some in cold blood, or rather in hot blood; for he was then drunk, when he ordered one to be hanged because he would not tell where his father was, for whom he was in search. By this means all people were struck with such terror, that they came regularly to church; and the clergy were so delighted with it, that they used to speak of that time as the poets do of the golden age. They never interceded for any compassion to their people; nor did they take care to live more regularly, or to labour more carefully. They looked on the soldiery as their patrons; they were ever in their company, complying with them in their excesses; and, if they were not much wronged, they rather led them into them, than checked them for them."†

It is very difficult for us to form an idea of the state of things from general descriptions. We shall select a particular example. A son of the Rev. John Blackader gives the following artless but graphic account of one of these scenes, which took place when he was a boy of ten years of age:—"About this time (the end of winter 1666), Turner and a party of sodgers from Galloway, came to search for my father, who had gone to Edinburgh. These rascally ruffians beset our house round, about two o'clock in the morning, cursing on us to open the door. Upon which we

* Kirkton. † Burnet's Hist., i. p. 349.

all got up, young and old, excepting my sister, with the nurse and the child at her breast. When they came in, the fire was gone out: they roared out again, 'Light a candle immediately, and on with a fire quickly, or else we'll roast nurse and bairn and all in the fire, and mak a bra' bleeze.' When the candle was lighted, they drew out their swords, and went to the stools and chairs, and clove them down to make the fire withall; and they made me hold the candle to them, trembling all along, and fearing every moment to be thrown quick into the fire. They then went to search the house for my father, running their swords down through the beds and bed-clothes; and among the rest they came where my sister was, then a child, and as yet fast asleep, and with their swords stabbed down through the bed, where she was lying, crying, 'Come out, rebell dog.' They made narrow search for him in all corners of the house, ransacking presses, chests, and flesh-stands. Then they went and threw down all his books from the press upon the floor, and caused poor me hold the candle all this while, till they had examined his books; and all they thought whiggish, as they termed it,—and brave judges they were!—they put into a great horse-creel and took away. Then they ordered one of their fellow-ruffians to climb up to the hen-bauks, where the cocks and hens were; and as they came to one, threw about its neck, and down to the floor wi't; and so on, till they had destroyed them all. Then they went to the meat-amry, and took out what was there; then to the meal and beef barrels, and left little or nothing there. All this I was an eye-witness to, trembling and shiv-

ering all the while, having nothing but my short shirt upon me. So soon as I was relieved of my office, I begins to think, if possible, of making my escape, rather than to be burnt quick, as I thought, and they threatened. I goes to the door, where there was a sentry on every side, standing with their swords drawn; for watches were set round to prevent escape. I approached nearer and nearer, by small degrees, making as if I were playing myself. At last I gets out there, making still as if I were playing, till I came to the gate of the house; then, with all the speed I had (looking behind me, now and then, to see if they were pursuing after me), I run the length of half-a-mile in the dark night, naked to the shirt. I got to a neighbouring toune, called the Brigend of Mennihyvie; where, thinking to creep into some house to save my life, I found all the doors shut, and the people sleeping. Upon which I went to the cross of the toune, and got up to the uppermost step of it; and there I sat me down, and fell fast asleep till the morning. Between five and six, a door opens, and an old woman comes out; and seeing a white thing upon the cross, comes near it; and when she found it was a little boy, cries out, 'Save us! what art thou?' With that I awaked, and answered her, 'I'm Mr Blackader's son.'—'O my puir bairn! what brought thee here?' I answers, 'There's a hantle of fearfull men, with red coats, has brunt all our house, my breether, and sister, and all the family.'—'O puir thing,' says she, 'come in and lye down in my warm bed;' which I did; and it was the sweetest bed that I ever met with." *

* Memoirs of Rev. J. Blackader, p. 130-133.

All this time the *finings* were imposed with increased severity; and it enhances, in no small degree, our disgust at this tyranny, when we are informed that the persecutors were incited as much by avarice as by cruelty, in the measures which they pursued. The rising at Pentland was a rich harvest to the soldiery, and a perfect windfall to debauched and impoverished country gentlemen; who, no doubt, were actuated, in a great measure, by hostility to the principles of the Presbyterians, but still more by the motive which was avowed by Sir William Bannatyne, who, on one occasion, when a farmer asked him for what he was fined, honestly replied, "Because you have gear, and I must have a part of it."

The year 1667 brought a temporary respite to the suffering Presbyterians, in consequence of a change in the administration. The Duke of Lauderdale supplanted the cruel Earl of Rothes in the royal favour, and, though in London, took on him the management of affairs in Scotland. Lauderdale had been once a Presbyterian, and, it is said, retained his attachment to that form of government even after it had been subverted. He was now, however, a courtier; and being anxious to please the king, while, at the same time, he was unwilling to press matters to extremities with the Presbyterians, his great policy, for some time at least, was to effect an accommodation between them and the Prelatical party. Violent in his passions, coarse in his manners, and devoid of all religious principle, he was not the person best fitted for accomplishing such an object. But his measures at first showed at least a desire to do so. The standing army,

much to the discontent of the officers, and of the council, who had shared the plunder between them, was disbanded; an indemnity was passed in favour of such as had been at Pentland, provided they signed a bond of peace; Turner and Bannatyne were called to account for their extortions and misdemeanours, and dismissed his majesty's service; and Archbishop Sharp was disgraced in consequence of the king having discovered his duplicity, from two letters he sent to court, one of which, directed to Lauderdale, affirmed that all was going on well in Scotland, while the other addressed to another nobleman, gave quite an opposite account of matters. There was even some talk of allowing liberty to Presbyterian ministers to exercise their ministry without any dependence on the bishops.

This favourable turn of affairs, however, received a considerable check by an incident which occurred the following year (1668). It is hardly possible to exaggerate the odium in which Archbishop Sharp had fallen throughout Scotland. He was regarded as at once a traitor to his country, a perjured apostate from his religion, a persecutor of his brethren, a hypocrite, and a profligate. Without giving implicit credit to all the reports which were propagated against his private character, his public conduct was unquestionably enough to brand him with infamy. As abject in adversity as he was arrogant in prosperity—fawning and obsequious to those in power, insolent and supercilious to all others—grasping and ambitious, but ready to stoop to the lowest artifices for gaining his objects—it is no wonder he should have been alike despised by the nobility, whom he aped, and

obnoxious to the common people, who regarded him as the prime mover of all their oppressions. The wonder is, how, in such an age, when the passions of men ran so high, without the artificial embankments, or the regular channels which, in modern times, restrain them, or afford them legitimate vent, he should have escaped so long without some personal injury. Of this, indeed, he himself professed to entertain some alarm; and at one time the provost of Edinburgh appointed a guard to secure his lodging. The soldiers employed in this duty, as if they had been tainted with the popular feeling, or ashamed of their office, determined that if they must keep the prelate safe, he should get no sound sleep; every half hour they gave him a false alarm; one sentinel crying, *Stand!* and another, *Present, fire!* as if some were coming to assault him; till he was obliged, for the sake of rest, to retreat into the castle.*

His apprehensions, so far as the great body of the people were concerned, were perfectly unfounded; but who can answer, in such circumstances, for the wayward conduct of individuals? One *James Mitchell*, a preacher, who had been involved in the insurrection at Pentland, and had been excluded from the indemnity, took it into his head to be avenged on the archbishop, whom he regarded, not only as the instigator of the bloody persecutions against his brethren, but as actuated by a particular malice towards himself, and as having used every means to prevent him from obtaining mercy at the hands of Government. Whatever might be his views or motives, it is certain that his

* Kirkton, 254.

enterprise was entirely his own act, projected and performed without advice or concert with any other person. He seems to have been a zealous and conscientious man; though, if we may judge from this action, his zeal was neither enlightened by knowledge, nor tempered by moderation. In June 1668, having armed himself for the purpose, he watched the archbishop in Edinburgh, and on his entering his coach discharged a pistol at him loaded with three balls. The archbishop escaped unharmed, but one of the balls struck the wrist of Honeyman, bishop of Orkney, who was in the act of entering the vehicle at his back. After discharging the pistol, Mitchell coolly walked away to his lodgings, shifted his clothes, and returning to the street, mingled with the crowd. "The cry arose," says Kirkton, "that a man was killed; the people's answer was, *It's but a bishop!* and so there was no more noise." Notwithstanding all the exertions of the council to discover the assassin, he could not be found till six years afterwards, when we shall have occasion to notice his fate. Honeyman lived some years after this, though his wound never seems to have been properly healed. As to Sharp, we are informed that at first he took it very devoutly. Burnet says, that when he called on him he said, with a very serious look, "My times are wholly in thy hand, O thou God of my life!" "This," adds the bishop, "was the single expression savouring of piety that ever fell from him in all the conversation that passed between him and me."*

This most unjustifiable and foolhardy attempt fur-

* Burnet, i. 400.

nished a pretext to the council for molesting the peaceable Presbyterians, whom, without the slightest evidence, they charged with having been privy to the design of Mitchell. Nothing indeed is more characteristic of the spirit of malice against the truth which animated the rulers of these times, than the disingenuous and disgraceful policy, by which, on this and many other occasions, the crime of one, or of a few individuals, was made the crime of the whole party. But if there was little sympathy with the act, there was still less with the eagerness shown to bring the actor to justice. It was remarked as very wonderful, that though a strict search was made in Edinburgh for the aggressor on the bishops,—though the town was at that time full of those who were lurking in consequence of their share in the rising at Pentland,—yet few if any were apprehended. Among the narrow escapes which were made, none was more singular than that of Maxwell of Moncrieff, a gentleman of extensive property. On the hue and cry being raised, this gentleman betook himself for shelter to the house of his stabler, who kept an inn. The landlord told him very coldly that he had no place to put him in, but pointing to a large empty meal-barrel which stood in the public drinking room, said that if he chose he might hide himself under that. He had hardly got into this strange receptacle, when the constable and his men came in to search the house, and sat down to drink in the very room, with the barrel at the end of their table. "I know," said one of the fellows, "there are a great many Whigs in town, and may be some of them not very far off." "I would not wonder," said another of

them, with an oath, and striking on the top of the barrel, "but there may be one of them under *that*." At this the rest laughed, as a good jest; and they went away, leaving the gentleman to escape, after having tasted, it may be supposed, the bitterness of death.

The year 1669 is remarkable for the introduction of the famous Act of *Indulgence*, which was granted by the king on the 7th of June, and which professed to grant relief, on certain conditions, to those ministers who could not conform to the established order. It is needless here to enter into a history of this act, which, whatever might be the intentions of its original projectors (the Earls of Tweeddale and Lauderdale), became in reality the occasion of a most lamentable division among the Presbyterians, and the means of aggravating the sufferings of those who could not conscientiously accept of it. The two great objections which were made against it were, 1*st*, That it implied an acknowledgment of the Erastian supremacy claimed by the king and the government over the Church. 2*nd*, That it imposed restrictions on ministerial liberty and faithfulness, by confining the ministers within certain bounds, and forbidding, under the name of sedition, all condemnation of the late innovations in Church and State. Several of the ministers, anxious to resume their labours among their people, were induced to accept of this indulgence, contenting themselves with declaring, in general terms, that they held themselves responsible for the exercise of their ministry, not to the king, but to the Lord Jesus Christ, from whom they had received it; and promising to behave themselves in the exercise of it

with all becoming prudence. They reasoned, that the acceptance of the Indulgence was merely embracing the liberty which belonged to them of right to preach the Gospel, and no more implied a recognition of the supremacy claimed by the civil powers who granted it, than the act of a prisoner walking out of his cell to the enjoyment of the liberty of which he had been unjustly deprived, implied an acknowledgment of the authority by which he had been imprisoned. They were less successful, however, in reconciling with a faithful adherence to their former vows, and with common honesty, their submission to the restrictions which were imposed on their ministry. We should think charitably as to the motives which led them to accept of the Indulgence, considering their trying circumstances. But it is much to be questioned how far their compliance was consistent with the principles of Presbyterianism, and how far they could be justified in accepting of this boon, while their brethren who refused were exposed to severe hardships in consequence of their compliance. There can be no doubt that the example of those who accepted became a powerful argument, in the hand of the persecutors, against all who conscientiously refused the Indulgence, and who were stigmatized thenceforth on this account, as impracticable bigots, condemned even by their own brethren.

With respect to the Indulgence itself, it was neither calculated to allay the heats and divisions of the country—the elements of which still raged in the form of bitter antipathies between the supporters of Presbytery and Episcopacy—nor was the measure agreeable to either of the contending parties. The bishops

dreaded it as the forerunner of their downfall, and were only reconciled to it by the artifices of Sharp, who promised to have it so clogged with restrictions, from time to time, as to convert it into a snare and a bone of contention to the Presbyterians. In this he succeeded so well, that within a few years a complete breach took place between the *indulged* and *non-indulged*, the latter of whom charged the former with defection and perjury, and became almost as much alienated from "the king's curates," as they called them, as from "the bishops' curates."

In the same spirit of accommodation, another plan was attempted, with as little success, in the following year (1670). Finding that the people, notwithstanding all the laws passed against deserting their parish churches, still preferred the services of the non-indulged Presbyterians, the council resolved to send a deputation to the west, composed of the ablest and subtlest of the episcopal clergymen whom they could find, to try if they could effect by reasoning and cajolery, what they had failed to do by force of arms. Leighton, now archbishop of Glasgow, took an active part in this negotiation, being anxious to employ lenient measures, with the view of uniting the Presbyterians and Episcopalians. The deputation consisted of six persons, among whom the chief personage who figured in the debates which ensued, was Gilbert Burnet, afterwards bishop of Sarum; another was a Mr James Aird, commonly called "Bishop Leighton's *ape*, because he could imitate his shrug and grimace, but never more of him;" * the rest were obscure char-

* Kirkton, 294.

acters, of whom nobody had ever heard before. The common people called them "the Bishop's Evangelists." There never was a more complete failure than this attempt to convert the Presbyterians. They could never gather a congregation, and never pretended to have made a single proselyte to Prelacy. The people, familiarised with the points of the controversy which was then agitating the country, and in which their dearest civil and religious rights were involved, were able to answer all the arguments which "the bishop's evangelists" could produce, and stood firm to their principles, unabashed by the presence of the noblemen who accompanied the deputation, and steadily refusing the offers of money by which they attempted to bribe the poorer sort to hear the curates. "The people of the country," says Burnet, "came generally to hear us, though *not in great crowds.* We were indeed amazed to see a poor commonalty so capable to argue upon points of government, and on the bounds to be set to the power of princes in matters of religion,—upon all these topics they had texts of Scripture at hand, and were ready with their answers to any thing that was said to them. This measure of knowledge was spread even among the meanest of them, their cottagers and their servants." * "So they returned disappointed of that senseless wyle, the like of which they never essayed, first or last, but only this once,—force and cruelty being their ordinary arguments." †

Disappointed in this object, Archbishop Leighton, in the end of this year, introduced his famous *Accom-*

* Hist., vol. i. p. 431. † Memoirs of Blackader, p. 169.

modation, the object of which was to reconcile Presbytery with a moderate Episcopacy. The meetings of Presbytery were to be kept up, as they had been previous to 1638; the bishop was to be constant president or moderator, but to waive the right of putting a negative on their proceedings; in other respects, the form of Episcopacy was to be maintained, and no minister was to be ordained or inducted without his presence. In short, the bishop was to govern the Church, in conjunction with inferior presbyters in presbyteries and synods. It was easily seen, from the very first, that this was a mere snare to entrap the Presbyterians into an unperceived subjection to the bishops; it was materially the same with the old device of *constant moderator*, by which King James formerly introduced Episcopacy; and submission to it by the Covenanters, after Prelacy had been so solemnly condemned and abjured by the Church of Scotland, would have involved them in a shameful breach of vows and defection from attainments, for which no example could be drawn from the practice of their fathers, who had before that period submitted reluctantly to sit under bishops. Long conferences were held with the ministers on this subject, but without success; nor can we, after all that has been said about the stiffness and bigotry of the Presbyterians, either wonder at or wail over the result. Such compromising measures, are seldom conceived in good faith, or followed with happy consequences. Episcopalians there have been, and there are, like Archbishop Leighton, with whom we would delight to live in fellowship, and for whom we "would even dare to

die." But, as systems of policy, Episcopacy and Presbytery are, in our judgment, incapable of amalgamation; the genius of the one is directly opposed to that of the other; and any plan of accommodation which can be proposed must necessarily involve the sacrifice, on one side or on the other, of principles essential to their proper efficiency. The real design of the Accommodation was not union, but the extinction of Presbytery. And had our ancestors yielded to it, Prelacy would certainly have triumphed. The motives of Archbishop Leighton in this matter we are not disposed to suspect: it would appear that he was actuated by a real desire to produce peace; but it is equally undeniable, that, with all his readiness to make concessions, he was a keen supporter of Episcopal authority, and contemplated, as the result of his measure, its ultimate ascendancy. Burnet speaks highly in praise of the part which the archbishop and he acted in this affair; but he adds: "Thus was their treaty broke off, to the amazement of all sober and dispassionate people, and to the great joy of Sharp, and the rest of the bishops, who now, for a while, seemed even pleased with us (*i. e.*, Leighton and Burnet), because we had all along *asserted Episcopacy*, and had *pleaded for it in a high and positive strain*." How could he then find fault with the opposite party for asserting Presbytery, and pleading for it in as "high and positive a strain?" And what peace could be expected from a union, in which both parties were allowed to hold such opposite opinions? "The reproaches," says one of the ministers employed in this conference, which was managed by the Presbyterians

with the utmost candour and good temper,—"the reproaches of *ungovernable* and *unpeaceable* may indeed be bitter unto ingenuous spirits, let be sincere lovers of the Prince of peace; and the persecution of men may possibly proceed to afflict and vex; but seeing that, through Satan's and the world's known enmity against the Lord and all his followers, these things are, in place of the opprobrium, become rather the badge of truth, only let our conversation be as becometh the Gospel, and let us stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the pure ordinances of God's house once given unto us, nothing terrified by our adversaries. There is, I confess, one temptation, which doth more speciously insinuate, and that is, the loss of the liberty of the Gospel, which men may possibly, in their displeasure, abridge or totally take from us. But as this solicitude is not more praiseworthy, when devolved on our Lord and Master, than subtilely deceitful, when its application is, *Spare thyself;* so let none of these things move us, neither let us reckon our lives dear unto ourselves, so that we may finish our course with joy, and the ministry which we have received of the Lord Jesus. Let, therefore, truth, simplicity, and godly sincerity be our main study, and faith and entire submission our only establishment; knowing, and on this resting, that not only our peace here shall be our portion, and the end everlasting life; but that God can as easily of our ashes raise up ministers to himself, as of stones children to Abraham." *

Previous to this time, field-meetings had been very

* Case of the Accommodation Examined, p. 96.

rare, and were held, for the most part, in private houses or barns; now, however, they began to be held in the open fields, and were resorted to by great multitudes from all quarters of the country. The ministers who officiated at these meetings were those who had refused the Indulgence, or to whom, from their known hostility to the Prelatical government, the benefits of that act were not extended. In these times, few gentlemen rode to any distance unarmed, and as many of them brought their arms with them to the field-meetings, though merely for personal defence, the bishops began to represent them as tumultuary assemblages, and "rendezvouses for rebellion." Among the first "armed conventicles," as they were termed, was one kept by Mr Blackader and Mr Dickson at Beath-hill, above Dunfermline, on the 18th of June 1670. An immense multitude had assembled. While the minister was preaching, a lieutenant of the militia came up on horseback, evidently with the view of reconnoitering their position, and was in the act of riding off to bring up his troops, when some of the gentlemen told him very civilly to wait till the service was over. The officer upon this began to bluster, when one of the gentlemen, drawing his pistol, told him he would shoot him on the spot unless he remained quiet; so that he found himself obliged to sit peaceably on his horse until public worship was concluded, when he was set at liberty. Exaggerated accounts of this "horrid insult" were speedily conveyed to Edinburgh, where the ruling powers took the alarm; and immediately the severest edicts were passed against "conventicles." All field-meetings were made treasonable,

and in the case of the preacher, it was declared to be a capital crime to be present at them,—a piece of blood-thirsty legislation, which the king is said to have condemned, and which was not, for some time at least, carried into execution.

Instead of having the effect of repressing conventicles, all the efforts employed by government only seemed to augment their number, and increase the boldness of those who frequented them. Ever since the severities exercised on those who were at Pentland, the cause of Prelacy had been on the decline; the people, who were almost to a man against the Indulgence, began gradually to leave the churches empty, and to follow the proscribed preachers, whom they admired for the zeal, the fidelity, and the freedom with which they delivered their message. They still disclaimed all violent designs, seeking only self-defence in the enjoyment of their religious privileges; but they met in such numbers and array, as to set the militia at defiance, and on one occasion, a very large meeting was held within sight of the palace of Archbishop Sharp. The effects produced by the services on these occasions were very remarkable; the ministers were visibly countenanced in their labours, and instances are on record of the most abandoned characters, and even of the troopers themselves, who had come to disturb the meeting, having been suddenly struck with conviction, and brought to repentance.

In course of time they began to celebrate the communion also in the open fields; and these were indeed, to the weary wanderers, many of whom had suffered for their love to the Gospel, "times of refreshing from

the presence of the Lord." The following account of one of these communions, held at East Nisbet in Teviotdale, is drawn by one who witnessed, and was a leading minister on the occasion which he describes, and will afford a better idea of the scenes to which we refer than any ideal picture :—

"We entered on the administration of the ordinance," says Mr Blackader, "committing it and ourselves to the invisible protection of the Lord of Hosts, in whose name we were met together. Our trust was in the arm of Jehovah, which was better than weapons of war, or the strength of hills. The place where we convened was every way commodious, and seemed to have been formed on purpose. It was a green and pleasant haugh, fast by the water side (the Whittader). On either hand there was a spacious brae, in form of a half round, covered with delightful pasture, and rising with a gentle slope to a goodly height. Above us was the clear blue sky, for it was a sweet and calm Sabbath morning, promising indeed to be one of the days of the Son of man. There was a solemnity in the place befitting the occasion, and elevating the whole soul to a pure and holy frame. The communion tables were spread on the green by the water, and around them the people had arranged themselves in decent order. But the far greater multitude sat on the brae face, which was crowded from top to bottom, full as pleasant a sight as was ever seen of that sort. At first there was some apprehension, but the people sat undisturbed, and the whole was closed in as orderly a way as it had been in the time of Scotland's brightest noon. And truly the spectacle of so many grave,

composed, and devout faces, must have struck the adversaries with awe, and been more formidable than any outward ability of fierce looks, and warlike array. We desired not the countenance of earthly kings; there was a spiritual and divine Majesty shining on the work, and sensible evidence that the great Master of assemblies was present in the midst. It was indeed the doing of the Lord, who covered us a table in the wilderness, in presence of our foes; and reared a pillar of glory between us and the enemy, like the fiery cloud of old that separated between the camp of Israel and the Egyptians, encouraging to the one, but dark and terrible to the other. Though our vows were not offered within the courts of God's house, they wanted not sincerity of heart, which is better than the reverence of sanctuaries. Amidst the lonely mountains we remembered the words of our Lord—that true worship was not peculiar to Jerusalem or Samaria—that the beauty of holiness consisted not in consecrated buildings or material temples. We remembered the ark of the Israelites which had sojourned for years in the desert, with no dwelling-place but the tabernacles of the plain. We thought of Abraham and the ancient patriarchs, who laid their victims on the rocks for an altar, and burnt sweet incense under the shade of the green tree.

"The tables were served by some gentlemen and persons of the gravest deportment. None were admitted without tokens, as usual, which were distributed on the Saturday, but only to such as were known to some of the ministers, or persons of trust, to be free of public scandals. All the regular forms were gone

through. The communicants entered at one end, and retired at the other, a way being kept clear to take their seats again on the hill side. The communion was peaceably concluded, all the people heartily offering up their gratitude, and singing with a joyful voice to the Rock of their salvation. It was pleasant, as the night fell, to hear their melody swelling in full unison along the hill; the whole congregation joining with one accord, and praising God with the voice of psalms.

"There were two long tables, and one short across the head, with seats on each side. About 100 sat at every table. There were 16 tables in all, so that about 3200 communicated that day."*

We feel averse to injure, by any reflections of ours, the impression which this beautiful and authentic description of a Scottish Covenanters' communion is fitted to leave on the mind of the reader. But we cannot conclude the present sketch without observing how much their enemies have belied these brave, pious, and much-enduring men, when they represent them as animated by the spirit of the gloomiest bigotry and the wildest fanaticism,—enemies to all civil order, and strangers to every thing that can humanize and exalt mankind. We have seen how peaceful, how holy, how harmless their intentions were; and after reading such a description from the pen of an old Presbyterian minister, can we suppose they were the men of coarse and vulgar minds, so incapable of relishing the beauties of external nature, or entering into the finer feelings of our

* Blackader's Mem. MSS. Adv. Lib.; Crichton's Memoirs of Blackader, p. 198-206.

nature, as they have been represented? And on contemplating such a scene as that now described, the reflection is apt to rise—were these the men who, in a few years afterwards, were trampled on by the dragoons of the bloody Claverhouse,—shot in the fields, or dragged as felons to attest, by a more ignominious death on the scaffold, how dearly they loved, and how deeply they feared, the God of their fathers? If in after years some were driven by oppression almost literally mad,—if hunted from mountain to moor, and from moor to mountain, they gave way to excesses, which, in the hour of cool reflection, and in the day of peace, we cannot vindicate, these certainly cannot be traced either to the character of the men or of the religion which they professed, but to the ruthless violence and tyranny of their enemies, who were thus rendered responsible, not only for the blood which they shed, but for those very excesses which they made the pretexts for shedding it.

CHAPTER XIV.

The Blinks—Trial and Execution of Mitchell—Assassination of Archbishop Sharp—Severe Proceedings against the Presbyterians—Sir George M'Kenzie—Graham of Claverhouse—The Skirmish at Drumclog—Battle of Bothwell Bridge.

THE interval between 1669, when the Indulgence was introduced, and 1679, the year immediately preceding that on which we now enter, was a period of comparative quiet to the Presbyterians, who, though still molested in various ways for their nonconformity, continued, notwithstanding the severe edicts passed against them from time to time, to convene in large numbers for public worship in the open fields. Many of the landed proprietors and tenantry suffered severely from the fines imposed on them for this offence, but they took joyfully the spoiling of their goods; and the brief intervals of peace, during which they were permitted to enjoy the precious ordinances of religion, and which were emphatically termed in rustic phrase *the blinks*, amply compensated for the passing storms which preceded and followed them. Hitherto these meetings, or conventicles as they were called, though held in

wild and unfrequented parts of the country, and attended by some in arms for self-defence, had been conducted with all the peaceableness and decorum of a worshipping assembly collected within the walls of a chapel. As we advance, however, the scene assumes a darker and sterner aspect. Through the unrelenting violence of persecution, these decent congregations were transformed into what their persecutors had at first, either from terror or in malice, falsely represented them to be,—battalions of armed men, prepared to take the field against their aggressors.

Several causes concurred to produce this change. By a series of tyrannical and oppressive measures, the minds of the people at large had gradually become soured and exasperated against the Government, and particularly against the bishops, whom they regarded as the chief instigators of all these obnoxious proceedings. But certain incidents, rising out of embittered feelings in the breasts of individuals, prepared the train for the explosion. Among these may be mentioned, in the first place, the cruel treatment and execution of Mr James Mitchell, the preacher, who, some years before, had attempted the life of Archbishop Sharp. How he had contrived to elude his pursuers since that daring enterprise, we are not informed; but in 1674, he was recognised at a minister's funeral, and apprehended. Sharp, it is said, retained a lively recollection of the features of the man, but there was no other proof; and though Mitchell freely confessed his accession to the rising at Pentland, he would not acknowledge that he was the person who made the attempt on the Archbishop, until he obtained an as-

surance of his life. This was given him by the chancellor, in these solemn words,—"Upon my great oath and reputation, if I be chancellor, I will save your life." Sharp, also, is said to have sworn, with uplifted hands, that no harm should come to him, if he made a full discovery.* Upon these assurances, Mitchell confessed that he was the person who had made the attempt. Having thus induced him to become his own accuser, the Council consulted what should be done with him. Some were for cutting off his right hand; others, alleging that he might learn to practise with his left, proposed that both hands should be amputated; others, that he should be sent to the Bass Rock, then an ordinary place of confinement. First, however, it was thought necessary to make him repeat his confession in a court of judicature. On being brought before the court for this purpose, the judge, who was no friend to Sharp, whispered to the prisoner in passing to the bench, "Confess nothing, unless you are sure of your limbs as well as your life." Alarmed at this suggestion, and knowing that his former confession, being extrajudicial, could not be legal evidence against him, Mitchell refused to repeat or judicially subscribe it. Offended at this, the council passed an act, in which, after stating the fact that the prisoner "did confess upon his knees that he was the person, *upon assurance given him by one of the committee as to his life, who had warrant from the Lord Commissioner and Secret Council to give the same,*" they declare, that since he had retracted his confession, they likewise recalled their promise of pardon; "the meaning of

* Burnet, i. 176.

which," says Burnet, "was this, that if any other evidence was brought against him, the promise should not cover him; but it was still understood, that this promise secured him from any ill effect by his own confession."* Whatever the understanding of the council might be, Mitchell was sent to the Tolbooth, where he lay for two years, forgotten by all but Sharp, who could not rest so long as he was in life. In 1676, he was again brought before the council to be examined by torture concerning his share in the Pentland insurrection. The firmness with which the prisoner bore this shocking and disgraceful treatment, invests his character with an importance which did not otherwise belong to it. He boldly refused to become his own accuser. "Sir," cried the president, pointing to the *boots* lying on the table before him, "we will cause a sharper thing make you confess; you see what is on the table!" "My lord," said Mitchell," "I confess that by torture you may cause me to blaspheme God, as Saul did compel the saints; but if you shall, my lord, put me to it, I here protest before God and your lordships, that nothing thus extorted from me shall be made use of against me in judgment. To be plain with you, my lords, I am so much of a Christian, that whatever your lordships shall legally prove against me, if it be a truth I shall not deny it; but, on the other hand, I am so much of a man, and a Scotsman, that I can never hold myself obliged by the law of God, nature, or the nation, to become mine own accuser." The executioner was called, and having bound the prisoner in

* Burnet's Hist., i. 177.

an arm-chair, he asked which of the legs he should put in the boot. They said he might take any of them he pleased; and he was about to select the left, when Mitchell said, "Since the judges have not determined, take the best of the two, for I freely bestow it in the cause," and put his right leg into the engine. "My lords," he then said, "not knowing that I shall escape this torture with my life, I beseech you to remember, he who showeth no mercy shall have judgment without mercy. And I do entreat that God may never lay it to the charge of any of you, as I beg that He may be pleased, for his Son Christ's sake, to blot out my sins, and never lay them to my charge here or hereafter." Nine strokes were given to the wedges of the horrid instrument, and after every stroke, to the question if he had any more to say, he replied, "No more, my lord." At the ninth he fainted, through the extremity of agony, and the executioner exclaimed, "Alas! my lord, he is gone, he is gone," upon which he was carried to prison in the chair in which he had suffered.

He was afterwards sent to the Bass; and other two years did this maimed prisoner, against whom nothing had as yet been legally proved, lie in confinement, till Sharp being determined to have his life, he was brought to trial in January 1678. The prisoner's counsel pleaded in his behalf the promise of life which had been given him; but, to the astonishment of the whole country, it was confidently denied by Rothes the chancellor, and the other lords of council, that any such promise had been made to him. Sharp, likewise, solemnly denied that he had given any such assurance,

and that, too, in the face of the deposition of the person to whom he had made it. It was then proposed to examine the registers of the council to ascertain the fact; but the Duke of Lauderdale said he was sure it was not possible, and would not give himself the trouble to look for it. Mr Mitchell was condemned to suffer death; and as soon as the court broke up, their lordships went up stairs, where, to be sure, they found the act recorded, and signed by Rothes, as president of council. Some proposals were then made to grant a reprieve to the criminal; but Sharp insisted that the sentence should be carried into effect, on the ground that if favour were shown to such an assassin, it would be in effect exposing his person to any man who would attempt to murder him. "Then," said Lauderdale, with his usual coarseness, "let Mitchell glorify God in the Grassmarket."* And there, accordingly, he was executed on the 18th of January, submitting to his fate with the utmost heroism and resignation.†

We will not be expected to vindicate the crime with which this person stood charged. Had it been legally proved against him, his ignominious end was no more than what the law demanded, and little more could have been said, than that this was another added to the list, if not of martyrs to the truth, at least of victims to the tyranny by which the truth was oppressed, and its followers driven to desperation. With the exception of this one rash act, perpetrated under mistaken notions of duty, the character of the man seems to have been irreproachable, notwithstanding the asper-

* Burnet, i. 181.

† Wodrow, i. 375-377, and 510-513, fol.; Naphtali, Appendix.

sions which have been cast on him by those who have attempted to vindicate the judges by blackening the character of the criminal.* But even had Mitchell been as base and unprincipled as they would represent him, this could never justify the shameful breach of public faith and perversion of justice manifested in his treatment.†

On this tale of perfidy and cruelty we would not have dwelt so long, had it not been closely connected with a tragedy of a different description. We refer to the assassination of Archbishop Sharp. The details of this transaction are too well known; for it has been the policy of the enemies of our Presbyterian ancestors to paint it

* We allude to Dr Hicks, Lauderdale's chaplain, and to the writer of a scurrilous pamphlet, published after the Revolution, which was filled with such notorious falsehoods, that even Hicks disclaimed it publicly, but which have been republished by Mr Sharpe in his edition of Kirkton's History.— *Wodrow*, ii. 454.

† "And thus," says Fountainhall, "they hunted this poor man to death, a prey not worthy of so much pains, trouble, and obloquy, as they incurred by it, and some of their own friends and well-wishers desired they had never dipt in it, but only kept him in perpetual imprisonment; for it made a wonderful noise in the country, who generally believed the law was stretched to get his neck stretched, and they feared preparatives; and satires and bitter verses immediately flew abroad like hornets in great swarms, which were caressed and pleasantly received, speaking much acrimony, and an almost universal discontent. He was but a simple melancholy man, and owns the fact in the papers he left behind him, as an impulse of the Spirit of God, and justifies it from Phineas killing Cosbi and Zimri, and from that law in Deuteronomy commanding to kill false prophets that seduced the people from the true God. *This is a dangerous principle, and asserted by no sober Presbyterian.* On the scaffold they beat drums when he began to touch the Chancellor. They say Major Johnston undertook to stob him, if he had attempted an escape, or any had offered to rescue him. The Secret Council would have given him ane reprievall, *if the archbishop would have consented.*"—*Fountainhall's Historical Notices of Scottish Affairs, MS.*, p. 184. This work is now in course of publication by the Bannatyne Club. All the facts stated in the text are confirmed by Fountainhall, who represents the conduct of Sharp and the council in a light still more odious than we have done.— *Hist. Notices*, p. 182, *et seq.* Also his *Historical Observes, App.*, No. 3.

in the most hideous colours, and bring it forward on all occasions, as quite sufficient to justify all the severities they suffered, and to verify all the calumnies which have been propagated against them. The circumstances of the case in which the accounts on both sides materially agree, were briefly and simply these:—A fellow of the name of Carmichael, a bankrupt merchant, and once a bailie in Edinburgh, had long acted in Fifeshire as a subordinate agent of Sharp, in prosecuting the non-conformists. In this office Carmichael recommended himself to his employer by his extreme severity,—harassing, fining, torturing and imprisoning, men, women, and children. From these oppressions it was vain to seek redress; they were inflicted under the sanction of that very law to which, in other circumstances, the sufferers would have had recourse for protection; and, with their spirits fretted and chafed by the atrocities of this despicable oppressor, they were driven to adopt a mode of relief which can never be vindicated, and from which they themselves would, in better times, have recoiled with horror. On the 3d of May 1679, twelve persons, including some gentlemen of good family, met together, and resolved to rid themselves of Carmichael by putting him to death, or at least by frightening him from that part of country.* While watching for their victim, they were unexpect-

* Among these the principal persons were David Hackston of Rathillet, and John Balfour, or Burley, as he was sometimes called—both brave men—though it does not appear that Balfour was a religious character, which Hackston certainly was. James Russell, another of the conspirators, who afterwards drew up an account of the transaction, was "a man of a hot and fiery spirit," and appears to have been the chief instigator of the attack on the archbishop. The whole of them may justly be termed enthusiasts, and no fair specimen of the sober and serious portion of the Presbyterian population.

edly apprised that the archbishop himself was in the neighbourhood, and would shortly pass that way. In the excited and enthusiastic state of their minds, they looked upon this substitution of the master for the agent, as a sort of providential call upon them to free the country from one whom they justly regarded as the principal cause of all the bloodshed and oppressions of their brethren. "It seems," said they, abusing the language of piety, "that the Lord hath delivered him into our hands." During the hurried consultation which ensued, about mid-day, in a place called Magus Moor, near St Andrews, the carriage of the archbishop drove up. He was on his return from Edinburgh, where he had only two days before succeeded, after a great struggle, in prevailing on the council to agree to a severe proclamation against conventicles, making it treason for any to be found at field-meetings in arms; and on the following week he was to have taken a journey to court, to use his interest for more vigorous and cruel measures against the Presbyterians. The bishop was accompanied by his daughter, and no sooner saw the approach of the conspirators than he took the alarm, and ordered the coachman to drive with all possible speed. The carriage, however, was soon stopt—the servants disarmed, and the bishop sternly ordered to come out, and prepare for death. "I take God to witness," said the leader of the party, "that it is not out of any hatred of your person, nor from any prejudice you have done, or could do to me, that I intend now to take your life, but because you have been, and still continue, an avowed opposer of the Gospel and kingdom of Christ, and a murderer of his

saints, whose blood you have shed like water." He was then reminded of his perjury and cruelty, particularly in the case of James Mitchell. To all this, Sharp only replied, by earnest entreaties for mercy. He promised them indemnity—he offered them money—he even engaged to lay down his Episcopal function, if they would spare his life. But the conspirators had gone too far to recede. They remembered his past perfidy, and paid no respect to his promises; they remembered his cruelties, and told him that as he had shown no mercy to others, he was to expect none from them. They earnestly and repeatedly called on him to pray, and prepare for death, and upon his refusing to do so, one of them fired upon him in the coach. The wretched man was at length compelled to come out, and on his knees repeated his cries for mercy, appealing particularly to Hackston, who stood aloof, refusing to lay hands on him, but declining to interfere in his behalf. One of their number only pled for his life; the rest, after in vain attempting to prevail on him to prepare for his fate, fell upon him with their swords, and, notwithstanding the frantic cries of his daughter, despatched him with numerous wounds.

It is impossible to justify this bloody and cruel action on any sound principles, and the great body of the Presbyterians, though they regarded it with awe, as the judgment of Heaven, yet, viewed as the deed of man, condemned and disclaimed it. The mind revolts from contemplating such a scene, and the horror which it is fitted to inspire is enhanced rather than abated by the reflection, that the wretched man too well deserved his fate, and was hurried into eternity without

manifesting any signs of repentance for his past life. From the account which we have given, it appears that the whole affair was unpremeditated, unthought of, till within a few minutes of its execution,—that it was the deed of a few desperate and hard-driven men, who acted without any concert with their brethren; and that it arose from their proceeding on the dangerous and indefensible principle, that, the doors of public justice being shut, it became the duty of private individuals to execute the vengeance of God on notorious oppressors of the Church. At the same time, it is impossible not to feel indignant at the attempt made by the Government at the time to fasten this crime on the whole body of Scottish Presbyterians. In a proclamation issued on the day after the assassination of Sharp, after describing the offence in the most exaggerated terms, it is added, "Daily instances whereof we are to expect, whilst field-conventicles, those rendezvouses of rebellion, and forgers of all bloody and jesuitical principles, are so frequented and followed." "These field-conventicles," says Wodrow, "were hitherto as free of any such doctrine as the churches were, and neither taught nor vindicated this attempt upon the bishop; and if we shall judge of principles from incidental actions of some in a society, we know where to lodge many murders in cold blood, for one alleged upon the frequenters of conventicles. And as in the whole of these 28 years I am describing, there are but four or five instances of any thing like assassinations attempted that I mind of, and *none of them ever defended* that I know of; so, in a few months' time, we shall find 20 times that number cut

off, without any process or ground, by people upon the other side."* There can be no question that the period of which we now treat was characterised by a striking disregard of human life. Allowances must be made for this on both sides. But when we hear the wailings of certain modern writers over the murder of Archbishop Sharp, and the execrations which they launch, not only against the actual perpetrators, but the whole of the Presbyterians of these times, we are tempted to inquire why so much indignation should be expended on this deed, while not a drop of sympathy is allowed for the hundreds of poor people who were slain in fields, and in cold blood, by a ruthless soldiery, for no other crime than a bare suspicion that they were Whigs, or because they would not answer the ensnaring questions put to them in such a way as to please their military judges and executioners? If it is alleged that these persons were put to death at least under the sanction of law—we might answer in the words of the patriotic Lord Russel, who suffered shortly after this, that "killing by forms of law is the worst sort of murder." And if it is because the deed was assassination, that their sympathies for Sharp are so powerfully awakened, we are entitled to ask, why are they not prepared to manifest the same virtuous abhorrence of the same crime in all similar cases?†

* Wodrow, vol. i. p. 35.

† Where is their sympathy for Dr Dorislaus, who, because he had acted as assistant counsel against Charles I., was assassinated by twelve individuals under the employment of the Marquis of Montrose, while he was unsuspiciously seated at table in his lodgings at the Hague? Where is their sympathy for Ascham and others, who were shortly after assassinated by the royalists? Where is their indignation at the assassination of Colonel Rainsborough,—with regard to which, Mrs Macaulay remarks, Clarendon, "to his eternal infamy, applauds every circumstance of the

It is a remarkable fact that, notwithstanding all the efforts made by the Government for apprehending the actors in the assassination of Sharp, none of those actively concerned were ever discovered. Mr Hackston, indeed, afterwards suffered, but it was for his appearance in arms, not for his share in this transaction. The only person who suffered expressly for the archbishop's death, was a poor weaver named Andrew Guillan, whose only share in the matter was that he was called out of his house to hold the horses of the actors; and even he was discovered merely by a trick of the advocate at his trial. At one of his examinations, the advocate was aggravating the crime, and looking to Andrew, observed how shocking it was to murder the bishop when he was on his knees praying. The simple man was so struck with the falsehood of this, that, forgetting his situation, he lifted up his hands and cried out, "O dreadful! he would not pray one word for all that could be said to him." This sealed his doom. But the fact, that such a deed should have been committed in open day, by such a

foul unmanly deed."—*Brodie*, iv. 137, 264. And what Presbyterian writer has even spoken of the death of Archbishop Sharp in any way approaching to the following by a royalist writer, describing the assassination of Captain Manning, the spy? "His treachery being discovered, he was, by his majesty's command, sent to a strong castle. But his perfidiousness was so highly resented at court, that one of his majesty's servants (though contrary to order) pistolled him as he was lighting out of the coach at the castle gate, which, though it came far short of his desert, yet was not so well done, in sending the devil his due before his time, and wronging the hangman of his labour."—*England's Triumph*, p. 52. It is Gibbon, we think, who declares that he is more shocked and disgusted by reading the accounts of the execution of Servetus at Geneva, and the murder of Archbishop Sharp, than by all the tales of persecution, heathen or Christian. This frank acknowledgment of the infidel betrays the real truth, and leaves us no room to doubt that hatred to true piety, and not mere disgust at its perverted form, was the real source of the feeling expressed.

number of men, and yet not one of the actual perpetrators should have been discovered, affords a striking proof of the universal detestation into which Sharp had fallen.*

If any of the Presbyterians expected that the fall of the archbishop would free them from persecution, they were grievously mistaken. Indeed, if we may judge of the Divine mind from the consequences, we should say that Providence intended to teach them that it is not by such methods that his Church is to look for deliverance from oppression. The death of Sharp was made the occasion of more bloodshed than ever he had been responsible for during his life. For several years after this, the first question put to any who were suspected of Presbyterianism, was, "Do you think the death of Archbishop Sharp was murder?"—a question which many had no hesitation in answering in the affirmative, though others scrupled to answer it at all, while some boldly declared that in their opinion it could not be called murder. Those who declined answering the question did so, partly because they were indignant at being questioned as to a fact with which they had no concern; and partly because, though they themselves would have had no freedom to engage in it, they could not bring themselves to condemn the

* Sir Walter Scott's *latest* opinion as to Sharp's death is as follows:—"Such was the progress of a violent and wicked deed, committed by blinded and desperate men. It brought much scandal on the Presbyterians, though unjustly; for the moderate persons of that persuasion, comprehending the most numerous, and by far the most respectable of the body, disowned so cruel an action, although they might be at the same time of opinion that the archbishop, who had been the cause of many men's violent death, merited some such conclusion to his own."—*Tales of a Grandfather*, vol. ii. p. 259.

motives of the actors, or to rank them with common murderers, or blood-thirsty assassins. This, however, did not avail them; their silence was taken as consenting to the deed, and they were executed accordingly. The annals of the Inquisition itself, it is believed, will in vain be searched for a species of persecution equal to this—that men should be condemned to death, not for any crime with which they were charged, but for the *thoughts* they entertained, or rather for the thoughts which their judges presumed them to entertain, about a crime committed by others!

The place of Sharp at the council-board was soon supplied by others animated by the same spirit, and determined to prosecute the same measures with a rancour heightened by revenge. Sir George M'Kenzie, who had been made Justice-General the preceding year, was a person in all points qualified for carrying into execution the designs of the prelates. Harsh, haughty, and tyrannical in his disposition, mean and unscrupulous in his measures, and ingenious only in devising falsehoods to extenuate their atrocity, he was the fittest instrument that could have been found to execute the cruel laws under which he attempted to hide and justify the malignity of his nature. Burnet calls him "a slight and superficial man,"—a very imperfect description of one whose errors were those of the heart rather than the head; and who is more justly characterised in the indignant lines of the author of "The Sabbath,"

> "Whose favourite art was *lying* with address,
> Whose hollow promise helped the princely hand
> To screw confessions from the tortured lips.
> Base hypocrite! thy character pourtrayed

> By modern history's too lenient touch,
> *Truth* loves to blazon with her real tints,
> To limn, of new, thy half forgotten name,
> Inscribe with infamy thy time-worn tomb,
> And make the memory hated as the man."

It may be thought strange, considering the little sympathy which the rulers at this time met with in the country at large, how they could succeed in procuring so many convictions, by jury, in the criminal courts. But this is easily explained. In the first place, they took special care to select the jury from such classes of society or parts of the country as were most favourable to their measures. Thus, at the trial of Mitchell, the jury was mostly composed of disbanded soldiers. Then, should any of the jurymen, as was frequently the case, show a reluctance to convict the prisoners, they were brow-beat by the court, or threatened by the king's advocate with an *assize of error*. This relic of barbarous times was a power intrusted to the public prosecutor, to bring any of the jurymen, or a majority of them, to trial, for not having decided according to the law as laid down to them. Of this absurd and tyrannical engine to intimidate the jury from deciding according to their convictions, M'Kenzie made ample use; he no sooner observed any symptoms of hesitation, or of a desire to befriend the prisoners at the bar, than he would frown at them, and tell them that if they did not give their verdict according to law, he knew what to do with them.

The sacred seat of justice being thus polluted and converted into an engine of tyranny, the prelates found another instrument equally well adapted for their pur-

pose in the open field. We refer to *John Graham* of Claverhouse,—a name, the very sound of which, till of late years, carried a shuddering sensation through every Scottish breast; and the late attempts to invest which with the best attributes of the hero, have only had the effect of reviving the infamy under which it will certainly descend to the latest posterity. We shall not attempt to describe the character of this person. The unvarnished account of the actions of his life,—a life spent in the pursuit of a military renown, acquired by massacring, in cold blood, the helpless, unarmed, and unoffending peasantry of his country,—will furnish the best commentary on his character, as indeed it is the only picture of the man that has been handed down to us by genuine history.

It will be necessary, however, now to return to the west country, where the invasion of the Highland host was succeeded by a series of oppressions, which at length exasperated the country people to resistance. Among these oppressions, we may notice the imposition of the *cess*, as it was termed,—a tax raised expressly for the purpose of maintaining the army intended to put down field-conventicles. A more obnoxious tax can hardly be conceived. That they should not only be severely fined and punished for attending these meetings, but compelled to pay for the means employed for suppressing them, was such an outrage on the feelings of the people, that we might be prepared to hear, it would be almost universally resisted. Yet the greater part submitted to pay the tax, contenting themselves with entering a protest

against the use to which it was to be applied,—thus declaring their readiness to suffer for the cause of religion, if they should be called to account for their protest, and at the same time avoiding even the appearance of refusing the magistrate's just right to levy cess and custom on the subjects, or of suffering for doing so. This, however, proved another "bone of contention" among the Presbyterians; the stricter and more rigid among them considering that, by paying the tax, they were implicating themselves in the guilt of the purpose to which it was avowedly to be applied. The ministers who were banished to Holland loudly inveighed against the practice. It was no doubt very easy for them, placed at a distance from the scene of oppression, as it may be easy for us, who are free from all such exactions, to protest against those who yielded to them. But much may be said in behalf of those who submitted, against their will, to an imposition which they had no power to resist, and which, had they resisted, would have been wrested from them with the loss of all they possessed. On the other hand, the principles upon which some of the Presbyterians afterwards resisted the impost, and which are vindicated at great length in the "Hind let Loose," were founded on the tyrannical character of the governors, and natively led to the casting off all allegiance or submission to the civil government.

Meanwhile, the severe edicts passed against all who appeared at conventicles, had only the effect of inducing them to meet in greater numbers. On the 29th of May 1679, the day appointed for celebrating the restoration of Charles, a body of them, amount-

ing to 80 armed men, under the guidance of Mr Robert Hamilton, came to Rutherglen, where they extinguished the bonfires kindled in honour of the day, and affixed a declaration to the Cross, condemning all the proceedings of Government since the Restoration; in confirmation of which testimony, they publicly burnt at the Cross all the acts which had been emitted against the covenanted Reformation, "as our enemies," said they, "perfidiously and blasphemously have burnt our holy covenants through several cities of these covenanted kingdoms." Without stopping to inquire how far this decisive step was consistent with prudence, we cannot fail to admire its honesty and boldness. The country, however, was not prepared for a general rising, and no due means had been taken to follow up the movement, or to meet the consequences to which it speedily led. The Government took the alarm, and Claverhouse was despatched to the west with a body of dragoons, having unlimited power to kill and destroy all whom he found in arms. On his way, he came suddenly on the town of Hamilton, where he seized Mr John King, chaplain of Lord Cardross, with about fourteen others, and carried them away as prisoners, bound two and two, his men driving them before them like so many sheep. On Sabbath morning, the 1st of June 1679, intelligence was brought to a large field-meeting which was held that day at Loudonhill, of the approach of Claverhouse and his dragoons; upon which, all who were armed resolved to leave the meeting, face the soldiers, and, if possible, relieve the prisoners. Accordingly, about 40 horse, and 150 or 200 foot, came up with Claverhouse

and his party near Drumclog, in the parish of Evandale, about a mile east from Loudonhill.

The particulars of the skirmish which followed are well known, having furnished matter for fictitious as well as authentic narratives, by writers of opposite parties, coloured according to their principles or prejudices.* The following are the simple facts, in which all authentic accounts agree:—After a short and very warm engagement, Balfour of Burley, with some horse, and Colonel Cleland, with some of the infantry, boldly crossed the morass which lay between the combatants, and attacked the dragoons of Claverhouse with such impetuosity, that they were soon put to flight, leaving about 40 killed on the field. Claverhouse's horse was shot under him, and he himself narrowly escaped. Before commencing the engagement, he had given the word "No quarters," and ordered those who guarded King and the other prisoners to shoot them, in the event of his troops being worsted; but the soldiers were soon compelled to flee for their own safety, and the prisoners escaped. The dragoons who were taken prisoners by the Covenanters received quarters, and were dismissed without harm, much to the displeasure of Hamilton, who insisted on

* A very animated and graphic account of the battles of Drumclog and Bothwell Bridge appeared some years ago in an American work, and is reprinted in the last edition of the Scots Worthies. It is said to have been taken from the lips of the Laird of Torfoot, a veteran Covenanter, who had emigrated to America. The laird's description of the manly prowess, the generosity, and cheerful devotion of the Covenanters, presents a most striking contrast to Sir Walter Scott's picture in his Tale of Old Mortality. Both descriptions are highly coloured; but while the main facts are the same, there appears much more verisimilitude in the tale as told by the Covenanter than in that of the novelist. The integrity of the American editor seems to be placed beyond all question.

their being dealt with as they intended to have dealt with the Covenanters.

Panic-struck, and filled with rage at his defeat, Claverhouse fled from the field of Drumclog, and never slacked rein till he reached Glasgow. Thither he was pursued by Hamilton, who made an attempt to take possession of the city; but the inhabitants not only refused to rise, but shamefully maltreated his soldiers who fell wounded in their streets. At this time, Sir Robert's troops amounted, according to his own account, to about 6000 horse and foot. They consisted, it is true, chiefly of raw undisciplined countrymen, ill supplied with arms or ammunition. But had they been properly managed, such was the courage and determination which they displayed, that they might have kept the royal troops in check, and have procured, if not victory, at least honourable terms of submission. Unhappily, however, about this time, a spirit of disunion began to appear among their leaders, who, instead of combining against the common enemy, spent their time in hot disputes about points in which the most hearty and genuine friends of the Presbyterian cause differed from each other.

These disputes referred to the Indulgence; and it may appear strange that there should have been any controversy about a subject, with regard to the sinfulness of which all of them were agreed. The question agitated was not, whether the Indulgence was lawful, but whether the acceptance of it should be expressly condemned in the proclamation to be made by those who were in arms, and numbered among their causes of fasting. This was opposed by some as inex-

pedient, because it would hinder many from joining them who were cordial friends to Presbytery; and it was proposed that this point should be reserved for the determination of a free General Assembly.* At the head of this party was Mr John Welsh, a non-indulged minister, who had been intercommuned for preaching in the fields for many years. Among all the eighteen ministers present, there was not one who had accepted the Indulgence, or who approved of it. Sixteen of these ministers, while they condemned the Erastianism of the Indulgence, and deplored the conduct of their brethren who had accepted of it, were not prepared to exclude them from joining their ranks, and aiding them to assert the common cause of their church and country. Though they themselves could not conscientiously submit to the restrictions imposed, or the acknowledgments implied, in accepting of that insidious measure, they were disposed to make allowances for such of their brethren as had yielded to it under the influence of strong temptation or plausible arguments; and they justly pled, that whatever ecclesiastical censure their conduct might afterwards be found to deserve, to deny them, in the meantime, the opportunity of vindicating their rights and liberties by excluding them from the army, would be no less presumptuous and unjust in principle, than it was preposterous in the present circumstances of the country.

This temperate and rational view of the subject was opposed by only two of the ministers—namely, Mr Cargill and Mr Douglas; but these were supported by a considerable number of the lay leaders of the

* M'Crie's Miscellaneous Writings, Review of Tales, &c., p. 437.

army, at the head of whom was Mr Robert Hamilton.* Hamilton appears to have been "a pious man and of good intentions, but of narrow views, severe in his temper, and altogether unqualified, by want of military talents and experience, for the command which he assumed. He is charged, and apparently not without reason, with having been active in pushing Cargill, Cameron,† and some other ministers, to those extremes which produced a breach between them and their brethren, with whom they had, until of late, acted in concert."‡ This party now began to maintain, that the king, by assuming an Erastian power over the Church, had forfeited all right to the civil obedience of his subjects—a principle which had never been known in the Church of Scotland before, and which was afterwards carried to a great extent by Richard Cameron and his followers, who from him were termed Cameronians. On the present occasion, they insisted, that there should be inserted in the statement of their quarrel a decided condemnation of the conduct of those who had taken the Indulgence; and proceeding on a mistaken view of the principles advocated by the Church of Scotland in the time of the Engagement, and by the Protesters in their con-

* He is sometimes styled Sir Robert in the accounts of this period. He was a gentleman of good family, being brother to Sir William Hamilton of Preston, to whose title and estates he would have succeeded, had he not disowned the authority of William and Mary.—*M'Crie's Mem. of Veitch, &c.*, p. 452.

† Richard Cameron was not present at Bothwell, being at that time in Holland; but he returned to Scotland shortly after. He declared to the ministers who licensed him, "that he would be a bone of contention among them; for if ever he preached against a national sin in Scotland, it should be against the Indulgence and separation from the Indulged."—*P. Walker's Biograph. Presbyteriana*, vol. i. p. 292.

‡ M'Crie's Mem. of Veitch, &c., Notices of James Ure, p. 452.

tendings against the Public Resolutions, refused to admit any into their ranks but those who would condemn and testify against the Indulgence.*

The violence, pertinacity, and extravagance of this party, prevailed over the more sober counsels of their brethren; and the consequence was, that several of the latter left the army in disgust. Still, however, the great body of the people remained, and though placed in the most unfavourable circumstances for meeting the enemy, they drew up with determined front at Bothwell Bridge, where they awaited their approach. The Covenanters behaved with the utmost gallantry; but, overpowered by superior numbers, they soon gave way, and the royal army obtained an easy victory over troops divided and disheartened by the conduct of their leaders. The dragoons of Claverhouse, burning with revenge at their recent defeat, pursued after the fugitives, and more fell in the flight than in the field. Four hundred fell on the field of battle; twelve hundred surrendered themselves prisoners—many of whom were reserved to suffer a more ignominious death on the scaffold. But a system of indiscriminate carnage took place after the fight on all in the neighbourhood whom the soldiers suspected of being Presbyterians, whether they had been on the field or not; so that multitudes perished, of whom no account was taken, and no record has been preserved. This, however, was but "the

* M'Crie's Memoir of Veitch, &c., *Ibid.* p. 453; Wilson's Relation of the Rising at Bothwell Bridge, p. 13, *et seq.* This writer's account is tinged with much party prejudice, and requires to be compared with other authorities. He lays the whole blame of the failure at Bothwell on Mr Welsh and his friends, whom he denominates the *Erastian* party!

beginning of sorrows." Scotland was placed under martial law, or rather at the mercy of military executioners; and many who never had been near the field of battle, nor taken any share in the rising, were slaughtered in the fields or on the public roads, while engaged at their usual labour, on the bare suspicion of their being inclined to favour the cause in which their countrymen had fallen.

The conduct of the Government towards the prisoners was characterised by the most disgraceful injustice and inhumanity. An act of indemnity, indeed, was passed, but accompanied by so many limitations, that the governors were left at ample liberty to select as many victims as they chose, to glut their vengeance, and appease the manes of Archbishop Sharp. The two ministers, Messrs King and Kid, who had been rescued by the Covenanters at Drumclog, were afterwards apprehended and brought to trial. These gentlemen proved most satisfactorily, that, though found among the insurgents, they had taken no share in their proceedings—that they were in fact detained among them by force—that they had refused to preach to them, and so far from encouraging them to rebellion, had used every argument to persuade them to return to their former loyalty and obedience; and that they had seized the first opportunity of escaping before the battle at Bothwell Bridge.* Notwithstanding these proofs of innocence, they were first subjected to the torture of the boots, and though nothing more could be elicited from them, they were condemned to die. On the afternoon of the same day, August 14, 1679,

* Petition of Messrs John King and Kid, Wodrow, iii. p. 133; Burns' ed.

on which the king's indemnity had been published by the magistrates of Edinburgh, amidst the sound of trumpets and ringing of bells, these two innocent men were led forth to execution. As they approached the gibbet, walking hand in hand, Mr Kid remarked to his companion with a smile, "I have often heard and read of a *kid* sacrifice." On the scaffold they behaved with a serenity and fortitude becoming the cause in which they suffered. Both of them bore faithful witness to the covenanted Reformation, as attained between 1638 and 1650, testifying against the Public Resolutions, the Act Rescissory, and other defections from that cause, but solemnly disclaiming the charge of rebellion under which they suffered, and vindicating themselves from the imputation of Jesuitism with which their enemies maliciously attempted to blacken their characters. "For that clause in my indictment," said Mr Kid, "upon which my sentence of death is founded, viz., personal presence twice or thrice with that party whom they called rebels; for my own part, I never judged them, nor called them such. I acknowledge, and do believe, there were a great many there that came in the simplicity of their own hearts, like those that followed Absalom long ago. I am as sure, on the other hand, that there was a great party there, that had nothing before them but the repairing of the Lord's fallen work, and the restoring of the breach, which is wide as the sea; and I am apt to think that such of these who were most branded with mistakes will be found to have been most single. But for rebellion against his majesty's person or lawful authority," he added, "the Lord knows my soul

abhorreth it, name and thing. Loyal I have been, and wills every Christian to be so; and I was ever of this judgment, to give to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and to God the things that are God's." "I thank God," said Mr King, "my heart doth not condemn me of any disloyalty. I have been loyal, and do recommend it to all to be obedient to the higher powers in the Lord. And that I preached at field-meetings, which is the other ground of my sentence, I am so far from acknowledging that the Gospel preached that way was a rendezvousing in rebellion, as it is termed, that I bless the Lord that ever counted me worthy to be a witness to such meetings, which have been so wonderfully countenanced and owned, not only to the conviction, but even to the conversion of many thousands. That I preached up rebellion and rising in arms against authority, I bless the Lord my conscience doth not condemn me in this, it never being my design; if I could have preached Christ and salvation in his name, that was my work; and herein have I walked according to the light and rule of the Word of God, and as it did become (though one of the meanest) a minister of the Gospel."* Having made these solemn declarations of their principles, the two ministers were strangled to death, and their heads and arms having been cut off on another scaffold, were affixed beside the withered remains of James Guthrie.

Five of the common prisoners were then selected for execution, and though not one of them had been implicated in the death of Archbishop Sharp, of which

* Naphtali, pp. 427, 437, 438.

they were accused, they were condemned and sent to be executed on Magus Moor, where they were hung in chains at the spot where the primate was killed. No reason can be assigned for this shameful act of the Government, but that, in their rage at not discovering the real perpetrators of that outrage, they determined to throw the odium of it on the whole body of the Presbyterians.

The fate of the rest of the prisoners was hardly less deplorable. Twelve hundred of them were huddled together into the Greyfriars' churchyard, with no other lodging than the cold earth, and not a covering to shelter them from the inclemency of the weather—exposed to the brutal insults and ill treatment of the soldiers who guarded them, and who, if any of them attempted to lift a hand or a head to relieve their posture, were sure to shoot at them. In this condition they were confined for five months; a few of them contrived to make their escape over the wall; some of them were set free upon signing a bond, obliging themselves never again to take up arms against his majesty; and out of 400 who remained, some died in prison, others, worn out with hunger and suffering, were liberated on petitioning for liberty to sign the bond. The rest, to the number of 257, were banished as slaves to Barbadoes. Early in the morning, November 15, 1679, these poor prisoners, many of whom were labouring under disease contracted by their barbarous confinement, were taken out of the Greyfriars' churchyard, and, without any previous warning, either to themselves or their friends, were put aboard a ship in Leith roads, under the command

of one Paterson, a papist, who had contracted with the Government to transport them. There the 257 were stowed into a place hardly capable of containing a hundred persons, so closely packed, that the greater part were obliged to stand, in order to make room for their sick and dying companions to stretch themselves; many of them fainted, or were suffocated from want of air; and the seamen, as if the spirit of persecution had infected their usually generous natures, treated them with an inhumanity too shocking to be described. At length, the vessel was overtaken by a storm on the coast of Orkney, and struck on the rocks; all might have easily escaped; but, after securing the crew, the inhuman captain ordered the hatches to be locked upon the prisoners;—some forty or fifty contrived to save themselves by clinging to the boards of the ship, but 200 met with a watery grave. The wretch who was guilty of this cold-blooded murder was never called to account. But the fate of those who perished was merciful, when compared with that of their companions who escaped this martyrdom. These were banished as slaves to the plantations in Jamaica and New Jersey, where they were compelled to labour under a burning sun, in the same gang with the negroes; and of 260 who were so disposed of at different times during the persecution, very few remained to be released from their bondage at the Revolution.

The rising at Bothwell may be vindicated on the same principles as that at Pentland, and on principles somewhat different from those on which several who were actually engaged in the attempt, and suffered for

it, were inclined to vindicate themselves. Some of these excellent men now went the length of disowning the authority of the king and government altogether. They contended that, by overturning the true religion, by setting up Prelacy and Erastianism, by ruining the covenanted work of reformation, and by persecuting to the death its faithful adherents, Charles had perfidiously violated the conditions of government sworn at his coronation, and forfeited all right to their allegiance. Another party, however, much more numerous, though less conspicuous, because less violent and extreme, defended their appearance in arms on other grounds. While they condemned the proceedings of the government as arbitrary and tyrannical, they were not prepared to renounce their allegiance to it in civil matters; they held, with the compilers of our Confession, that "infidelity or difference in religion doth not make void the magistrate's just and legal authority, nor free the people from their due obedience to him;" and though they lamented as much as their brethren the general defection of all classes from the engagements of the Covenant, they could not see how this denuded the sovereign of his authority, which they were ready to acknowledge so long as he was, by the common consent of the nation, recognised as its ruler. At the same time, they considered themselves warranted to assume the attitude of self-defence, against the intolerable oppressions, and illegal encroachments which had, "contrary to all law and humanity," been practised on them; and the reasons on which they justified their appearance in arms were chiefly these,—that all other

modes of redress had been closed against them; and that they found it necessary for the defence of the Protestant religion and Presbyterian government, and for the preservation of his majesty's person and throne from the projects of Popish adversaries. A declaration embodying these views was prepared and presented at the council of war, before the battle of Bothwell Bridge; but through the opposition of the more violent leaders, it was unhappily rejected.* There is reason to believe that this paper contained the sentiments of the most judicious, as well as of the great majority of the suffering Presbyterians; and that, had it been adopted, it might have recommended their cause more to the country at large, procured greater accessions to their numbers, and perhaps have ensured their success.

In venturing these remarks, we are far, very far from allowing that those of the Covenanters who openly cast off allegiance to Charles suffered justly. However far they might be mistaken in stating the grounds of their appearance in arms, they were perfectly justified, in our opinion, by the monstrous tyranny under which they groaned, in making that appearance. We will soon see that they would have suffered with equal certainty, though they had never disowned their allegiance in civil matters. It surprises us not to hear the charge of rebellion, under which they died, still repeated by the High Church Tory, or the Scottish Jacobite; it is entirely in unison with the whole profession and practice of the party. But when the same charge is brought against our

* This Declaration is given in Wodrow, vol. iii. p. 96.

ancestors by any professing to be the friends of civil and religious liberty, we are entitled to regard their professions with suspicion, and their conduct with contempt. At the bar of Heaven, the rulers of that period not only stood charged with apostasy from their solemn engagements; they were waging war with the essential principles of justice, and undermining the liberties of the country. The patriot who lifts his arm, prematurely, to vindicate these liberties, may perish, and involve others, more feeble or less forward, in his fall. But, as in the case before us, the cry which he raised, ere his voice was stifled in death, like the alarm shot of the faithful sentinel, for which he pays the forfeit of his life, serves to awaken the slumbering garrison; and after years of ominous silence and long-suffering, it will find its echo in the thunder of a nation's wrath against the merciless tyrants.*

* "They did not disown the king until they were persuaded, that, by violating his oaths and engagements, he had forfeited all claim to their allegiance. And if they called Charles Stuart a tyrant, it was not until they had some reason to think him so. The Presbyterians, in general, had no factious design to overturn the throne, or trample royalty contemptuously under their feet; they wished only to reduce its prerogatives within safe and reasonable limits. The allegation that the ancient leaders of our Church were republicans or democrats, needs no other refutation than referring to the Standards of the Church, to her confessions and apologies, and even to the Solemn League and Covenant itself."—*Crichton's Memoirs of Blackader*, p. 319.

CHAPTER XV.

Sketches of celebrated Field-preachers—John Blackader—John Welsh—Archibald Riddel—Martyrdom of Mr Hume—Richard Cameron—Hackston of Rathillet—The Gibbites—The Society People—Barbarities of the Persecutors—Martyrdom of Isabel Alison and Marion Harvie—True Grounds of the Sufferings of our Martyrs—Martyrdom of Margaret Wilson—Military Executions—John Brown of Priesthill—Westerraw and Lagg — Retaliations—Enterkin Path—Patience of the Sufferers—Death of Persecutors.

One object of these sketches being to afford the reader a correct idea of the most distinguished characters who appeared in the history of our Church, as well as of the scenes in which they acted, we may take occasion here to notice some of the field-preachers, who rendered themselves the special objects of the vengeance of the Government at this period. And we shall commence with those who, though neither indulged nor approving of the Indulgence, did not disown the authority of Government, or refuse allegiance in civil matters, but who, loyal as they were, suffered for resisting the Erastian encroachments made by the civil rulers on the royal prerogatives of the King of Zion.

Among these a chief place is due to Mr John Blackader, to whom we have had occasion already to refer. Bold in spirit, stedfast in the faith, and dauntless in the exercise of his office, he was one of those denominated the *three first Worthies*, because he, with Mr Welsh and Mr Semple, were among the first to unfurl the banner of the Covenant in the Lomonds, and preach the Gospel in the fields of Galloway and Nithsdale.* The sufferings which he underwent, and the hazards which he ran in the course of his eventful life, would furnish materials for the most interesting romance. His eloquent and powerful discourses in the fields and fastnesses of Teviotdale, were blessed, not only for the refreshment of the persecuted Presbyterians who flocked from all quarters to hear him, but for the conversion of many of the inhabitants of these neglected districts, who, living in ignorance of the Gospel, had hitherto been addicted to rapine and every species of outrage. Possessing a cultivated and well-balanced mind, warm-hearted but cool-headed and sagacious,† he lamented the excesses into which some of his brethren were driven, and used all his efforts to prevent those divisions and irritations which he foresaw would lead to the most disastrous results.‡ This excellent man, who was allied to a family of rank, though disclaiming all rebellious sentiments and practices, was at last apprehended; and because he would not bind himself to refrain from

* Blackader's Sufferings, Adv. Lib.; Crichton's Memoirs, p. 314.

† "Grace formed him in the Christian hero's mould
Meek in his own concerns—in's Master's bold;
Passions to Reason chained, Prudence did lead;
Zeal warm'd his breast, and Reason cool'd his head."—
Epitaph on Mr Blackader's tomb, Memoirs, p. 310.

‡ See Letter of Mr Blackader to Mr M'Ward in the Appendix.

preaching wherever Providence might call him, was sent to the Bass, in the unhealthy dungeon of which, after a long imprisonment, he contracted a disease which terminated his useful life.

Mr John Welsh was the son of Josias Welsh, minister of Temple-patrick in Ireland, who was designated "The Cock of the North," and grandson to the celebrated John Welsh of Ayr. He was, consequently, great-grandson of the illustrious reformer John Knox; and he seems to have inherited from this line of truly noble ancestry, the piety, the zeal, and the indomitable fortitude which distinguished them. He was settled in the parish of Irongray; and the reader cannot have forgotten the affecting scene which took place when he was ejected from his charge in 1662. But though compelled thus to leave the scene of his pastoral labours, Mr Welsh did not remain idle; he was constantly engaged in preaching at field-meetings, and frequently, notwithstanding all the edicts passed against him, returned and preached, sometimes once a-week, in his old parish, and baptized all the children. Nothing is more remarkable than the escapes which this faithful and undaunted minister met with on these occasions. He was present at all the insurrections,—at Pentland, Drumclog, and Bothwell Bridge; and there, as elsewhere, he took an active but unsuccessful part in endeavouring to allay the animosities regarding the Indulgence, and counselling the younger and more violent leaders to adopt moderate measures. "He was," says Kirkton, "a godly, meek, humble man, and a good popular preacher; but the boldest undertaker (adventurer) that ever I knew a minister in

Christ's Church, old or late; for notwithstanding all the threatenings of the State, the great price of £500 set upon his head, the spite of bishops, the diligence of all blood-hounds, he maintained his difficult task of preaching upon the mountains of Scotland many times to many thousands, for near twenty years, and yet was kept always out of his enemies' hand. It is well known that bloody Claverhouse, upon intelligence that he was lurking in some secret place, would ride forty miles in a winter night, yet when he came to the place, he always missed his prey. I have known Mr Welsh ride three days and two nights without sleep, and preach upon a mountain at midnight on one of the nights. He had for some time a dwelling-house near Tweedside, and sometimes when Tweed was strongly frozen, he preached in the middle of the river, that either he might shun the offence of both nations, or that two kingdoms might dispute his crime." After all his dangers, he died peaceably in his bed in London, on the 9th of January 1681.

The intrepidity and self-possession of this worthy minister, to which, no doubt, under Providence, he owed many of his escapes, are illustrated by the following anecdote:—On one occasion, being pursued with unrelenting rigour, he was quite at a loss where to flee, but depending on Scottish hospitality, he called at the house of a gentleman of known hostility to field-preachers in general, and to himself in particular, though he had never seen Mr Welsh before. He was kindly received. In the course of conversation, Welsh was mentioned, and the difficulty of getting hold of him. "I am sent," said Welsh, "to *apprehend*

rebels; I know where he is to preach to-morrow, and will give you the rebel by the hand." The gentleman, overjoyed at this news, agreed to accompany his informant next morning. When they arrived, the congregation made way for the minister and his host. He desired the gentleman to sit down on the chair, at which, to his utter astonishment, his guest of the previous night stood and preached. During the sermon, the gentleman seemed much affected; and at the close, when Mr Welsh, according to his promise, gave him his hand, he said,—"You said you were sent to apprehend rebels, and I, a rebellious sinner, have been apprehended this day."

There is only one instance recorded in which Welsh spoke in a prophetic or foreboding strain, but it is one of the most remarkable we have met with. A profligate youth at the University of St Andrews, who had come to hear Mr Welsh preach, threw something at him in mockery, which struck him. Mr Welsh paused, and before the whole multitude, which was very large, said,—"I know not who has put this public affront on a servant of Jesus Christ; but be he who he may, I am persuaded there will be *more present at his death* than are hearing me preach this day!" It turned out to be a son of Sir James Stanfield of Newmilns, near Haddington; and, strange to say, some years after, this unhappy youth was executed for the murder of his own father!

As a specimen of the manner in which the loyal and peaceable Presbyterians who suffered at this period vindicated themselves, we might refer to the case of Mr Archibald Riddel, brother to the Laird of

Riddel, who was charged, in 1680, with preaching at conventicles. Mr Riddel denied that he had been preaching in the fields, but allowed that he had done so in private houses, while the people stood without doors. Preaching even in private houses, without the consent of the incumbent of the parish, was now accounted high treason as well as preaching in the fields. "Will you be content," said the Lord Advocate, "to engage not to preach in the fields after this?" "My Lord, excuse me," said Riddel, "for I dare not come under any such engagement." "This is strange," observed the Advocate, "that Mr Riddel, who has had so much respect to authority as not to preach in the fields since the indemnity, will not, out of the same respect, be content to engage to behave hereafter as he has behaved heretofore." "My Lord Advocate, I can answer somewhat for the time past, but not for the time to come; I have not, since the indemnity, judged myself under a necessity to preach out of a house, but I know not but He who has called me so to preach, may, before I go out of the world, call me to preach upon tops of mountains, yea upon the seas; and I dare not come under any engagements to disobey his calls." "If I were of Mr Riddel's principles," said the Advocate, "and did judge in my conscience that the laws of the land were contrary to the laws of God, and that I could not conform to them, I would judge it my duty rather to go out of the nation and live elsewhere, rather than disturb the peace of the land by acting contrary to its laws." "My Lord," replied Mr Riddel, "if I do any thing contrary to the laws, I am liable to the punishment due by the law." "That is

not sufficient," said the Advocate; "a subject that regards the public good of the land, should, for the peace and welfare thereof, either conform to the law, or go out of the land." The reply of Mr Riddel to this reasoning, which has been the convenient logic of persecuting governments at all times, is worthy of notice:—"My Lord, I doubt *that* argument would militate against Christ and his apostles as much as against us; for they both preached and acted otherwise against the laws of the land; and not only did *not* judge it their duty to go out of the land, but the apostles, on the contrary, reasoned with the rulers,—*whether it be better to obey God or man, judge ye.*" "Will you promise not to preach in the open fields?" cried the judge from the bench. "My Lord, I am willing to undergo what sufferings your Lordship will be pleased to inflict on me, rather than come under such an engagement."

The other case to which we here advert is that of Alexander Hume of Hume, in 1682. This worthy gentleman, whose only real offence consisted in his having attended conventicles, was accused, without any proof, of having had intercourse with some of the rebels; and indeed it was part of the cruel mockery of justice then practised, to insert as a preamble in every indictment against the Presbyterians, all the insurrections that had taken place, with the murder of Archbishop Sharp, though they had nothing more to do with these acts than the judges who sat on the bench before them;—a practice resembling that of the bloody inquisitors of Spain, who clothed the victims whom they condemned to the fire for heresy,

with cloaks, on which hideous likenesses of monsters and devils were painted, to inflame the bigotry and quench the sympathy of the spectators. It is said that a remission of Mr Hume's sentence came down from London several days before his execution, but was kept up by the Earl of Perth, a bigoted Papist and persecutor; and when his lady, Isobel Hume, fell on her knees before Lady Perth to entreat for her husband's life, urging that she had five small children, she was repulsed in the most insulting manner, and in terms which cannot here be repeated. On the scaffold, this pious and excellent sufferer vindicated his character from the aspersions of those who had thirsted for his blood. "The world represents me as seditious and disloyal," he said, "but God is my witness, and my own conscience, of my innocency in this matter. I am loyal, and did ever judge obedience unto lawful authority my duty, and the duty of all Christians. I was never against the king's just power and greatness; but all a Christian doth must be of faith, for what clasheth with the command of God cannot be our duty, and I wish the Lord may help the king to do his duty to the people, and the people to do their duty to the king." He then said,—"My conscience bears me witness, I ever studied the good of my country. I hope I shall be no loser that I have gone so young a man off the stage of this world, seeing I am to make so blessed an exchange as to receive eternal life, the crown of glory. I bless His name he made me willing to take share with his persecuted people; for I hope I shall also share with them in their consolations. Farewell all earthly enjoyments;

farewell my dear wife and children—dear indeed unto me, though not so dear as Christ, for whom I now suffer the loss of all things; I leave them on the tender mercies of Christ. And now, O Father, into thy hand I commend my spirit; Lord Jesus, receive my soul!" When the rope was put about his neck, he concluded by singing the last verse of the seventeenth psalm,—

> "But as for me, I thine own face
> In righteousness will see;
> And with thy likeness, when I wake,
> I satisfied shall be."

These instances are sufficient attestations of the fact that there were many among the Presbyterians who suffered at this period perfectly unimpeachable in their loyalty, and whose only crime, even in the judgment of their accusers, was, that they would not, and could not, comply with the dictates of human authority when these conflicted with the divine. And they show the falsehood of the pretence set up by the persecutors, that none were condemned during this period for their religion, but simply for sedition and rebellion. It is certain that there were some who went the length of disowning Charles and all his minions, and did not scruple to do so in the face of their persecutors; but the examples we have given (and many more might have been added) are sufficient to prove that, even in the case of those who went this length, it was not simply because they refused allegiance to the tyrant that they were condemned to die, but that they would have suffered with equal certainty, though they had professed the utmost loyalty, provided they qualified that profession by declaring that they could not obey him in matters of religion.

At the head of those who set the authority of the government at defiance, and disowned all allegiance to the civil rulers, stood *Richard Cameron*. He was originally of the Episcopal persuasion, but having been led to hear the Gospel preached in the fields, he forsook the curates, and took license from the outed ministers. He entered on his labours with all the ardour of a new convert, who, tracing his first serious impressions to field-preachings, could not bring himself to think with patience of those who availed themselves of the Indulgence. Finding that he could not help preaching against it, though he had come under a promise to refrain from it, he retired for a time to Holland, but returned after the stipulated period, in 1680, burning with a desire to disburden his conscience. His sermons were filled with predictions of the fall of the Stuarts, and the sufferings of Scotland which would precede it. But his course was brief; for in July of that same year, Bruce of Earlshall, a violent persecutor, came upon him and his followers with a troop of dragoons, at a meeting held in a desert place called Airsmoss. On seeing the enemy approach, and no way of escape, the people gathered close around their minister, when he offered up a short prayer, repeating thrice the memorable words,—"*Lord, spare the green, and take the ripe!*" He then turned to his brother Michael, saying—"Come, let us fight it to the last; for this is the day that I have longed for and the death that I have prayed for —to die fighting against our Lord's avowed enemies; and this is the day we will get the crown." And there, accordingly, he died, fighting manfully back to

back with his brother. The enemy, foiled in their object, which was to bring him to an ignominious end, wreaked their vengeance on the inanimate body of the hero. They cut off his head and hands, and carried them to his father, who was then confined in the Tolbooth of Edinburgh, tauntingly inquiring if he knew to whom they belonged. "I know them, I know them," said the poor old man; "they are my son's, my dear son's. Good is the will of the Lord, who cannot wrong me nor mine." They were then fixed upon one of the ports of the city, the hands close to the head, with the fingers upwards, as if in the posture of prayer. "There," said Sir Robert Murray, "there's the head and hands of a man who lived praying and preaching, and died praying and fighting."

In the same skirmish at which Cameron fell, David Hackston of Rathillet was taken prisoner. Having been one of those present, though not active, at the death of Archbishop Sharp, a large reward was offered for his apprehension; and having fallen into the hands of his enemies, they determined to pour upon him all the vials of their wrath and revenge. Upon his trial, he boldly refused to own that the bishop's death was murder; and he was the first of those who, at the bar, openly declined the king's authority, as a usurper of the prerogatives of Jesus Christ. Being brought to the scaffold, first his right hand was struck off and then his left; he was then drawn by a pulley to the top of the gallows, and suffered to fall with all his weight three times; while yet alive, his heart was torn out of his body, and then—but we refrain from adding more. Even at this distance of time, the flesh creeps,

and the blood runs cold, at the bare recital of the cruelties perpetrated, under the sacred name of justice, on this unhappy gentleman.

Had our space permitted, we might have spoken of *Donald Cargill*, who was executed about the same time; *Alexander Peden*, and other remarkable characters of the period. We shall only observe regarding them, that as the persecution waxed hot, they became more distinguished for that prophetic spirit which has furnished as much ground of profane ridicule to their enemies, as matter of superstitious veneration to some of their indiscriminate admirers. Here, also, the middle course appears to be the safest and the most rational. That they were men of God cannot be questioned, for they were men of prayer; and that they were favoured with very extraordinary pre-impressions of what was to come, which were actually verified in many instances, cannot be denied, without questioning facts which have been amply attested. But in the case of many of them, and of *Peden* in particular,* it is equally vain to deny that much must be ascribed to the workings of a heated imagination, excited almost to frenzy by the incessant watchings, turmoils, and apprehensions of a life embittered by persecution, and spent in lonely caves and gloomy deserts. Placed in such circumstances, they were exceedingly prone, if not to create ideal pictures of misery, at least to exaggerate the reality. If the remains of some of these worthies appear to us sometimes rhapsodical, and sometimes even bordering on

* Wodrow denies, on the best authority, the genuineness of the strange book entitled Peden's Prophecies.—Vol. iv. 397.

irreverent familiarity, we must remember that, not only were the younger ministers of that period deprived by persecution of the advantages of a liberal education, or at least of leisure for study, but that, in order to feel their eloquence, we must have been born in the same century, and stationed on the same spot, and environed with the same perils as their hearers; and we ought not to criticize with the nicety of modern taste, productions which, homely enough as they came from the lips of the speaker, must have become still more so, after passing from mouth to mouth in the traditions of a devout but unlettered peasantry.*

It would be equally unjust and ungenerous, however, to confound the high-toned and regulated enthusiasm of such men with the wild dreams and frantic extravagancies of fanaticism. About the close of the persecution, a small sect arose, named the Gibbites or Sweet Singers, whose opinions and practices were highly extravagant and even impious. They derived their name from John Gibb, a sailor in Borrowstounness, who seems to have been labouring under insanity, but prevailed on about thirty persons, chiefly women, to adopt his ridiculous notions. They denounced all besides themselves as backsliders, protested against all kinds of toll, custom, and tribute, and not only abstained from the use of ale, tobacco, and other exciseable articles, but that they might be placed beyond the reach of all such temptations, undertook a pilgrimage to the Pentland hills, where they remained

* We refer particularly to the *Biographia Presbyteriana* of Patrick Walker, and similar works, of which the enemies of Presbyterians have taken so much advantage.

for some days, with a resolution to sit till they saw the smoke of the desolation of Edinburgh, which their mad leader had predicted. Like all other fanatics, they soon began to renounce the authority of Scripture, and some of them actually burnt their Bibles. Against this sect, none opposed themselves more zealously than Cargill and his followers, who regarded the ravings of Gibb as an impious caricature of their principles. The Duke of York and our Scottish rulers heard of them with undisguised satisfaction, as opportunely furnishing a pretext for exciting odium against the Covenanters. The Gibbites, as well as the Quakers, were gently dealt with, connived at, and even encouraged, while the faithful witnesses, with whom they were identified, were prosecuted without remorse.*

The truth of history, however, requires that we should state here some of the steps taken by that party of the Presbyterians usually called Society People or Cameronians. One Henry Hall of Haughead, in Teviotdale, a gentleman who was intimate with Mr Cargill, and had suffered great persecution, was apprehended at Queensferry with a paper in his possession disowning the Government, and containing some very strong and exceptionable sentiments. This paper, it appears, was merely a scroll drawn up by Hall and Cargill, calculated rather as a manifesto for a general rising of the people, than for a suffering and subdued handful of men. It was never sanctioned by any meeting; but having fallen into the hands of the governors, it was considered as indicating the sentiments

* Wodrow, iii. p. 548, &c.; Life of D. Cargill, in Walker's Biograph. Presbyter., vol. ii. p. 16-21.

and designs of all the Presbyterians. The *Queensferry Paper*, as it was called, was thenceforth quoted and used against all who were suspected of Presbyterianism. Shortly after this, Cameron, Cargill, with some others, having broken off from the rest of the Presbyterian ministers, published a declaration at Sanquhar, differing a little, but in the same strain with the Queensferry paper. The *Sanquhar Declaration* openly declared war against Charles as a tyrant and usurper. This was followed up by one of the most singular scenes, perhaps, recorded in the history of the times—*the Torwood excommunication*. In a meeting held at Torwood, in Stirlingshire, Mr Cargill, after divine service, pronounced, with all solemnity and formality, the highest sentence of excommunication against King Charles, the Duke of York, the Dukes of Monmouth, Lauderdale, and Rothes, General Dalziel, and the advocate Sir George Mackenzie; in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, casting them out of the Church, and delivering them up unto Satan.

These proceedings, we may well believe, irritated the ruling powers more than ever; and though unshared in and unapproved of by the rest of the Presbyterian ministers, they were eagerly laid hold of as pretexts for still greater severities against the whole of them. The furnace was "heated one seven times more than it was wont to be heated." Into the history of the persecutions which followed we cannot minutely enter. It would, indeed, be a task as superfluous as disagreeable; for the subsequent period down to 1688, exhibits little more than a series of executions, civil and military, differing from each other only in their

degrees of horror and atrocity. Conceiving that they had now at length obtained what Bishop Burnet declares they had long thirsted for,—a feasible pretence for laying the whole country under martial law, and fattening on the spoils of a population driven to despair by their oppressions,—burning with rage, under a guilty consciousness that the charges brought against them by the Society people were perfectly true,—and what is equally certain, smarting under the very excommunication which they pretended to despise, they "cried havoc! and let slip the dogs of war." Statutes and proclamations fiercer than ever were levelled at the heads of ministers who preached, and all who attended, at conventicles,—letters of *intercommuning* were passed against many of the most obnoxious, by which all were prohibited, under the pain of death, from having any intercourse or communion with the proscribed individuals,—all suspected of these practices were dragged to the circuit courts, and strictly questioned,—the prisoners were tried *super inquirendis*, that is, on the evidence squeezed out of their own lips by insidious questions, or the application of the torture, by the boots, by the thumbikins, or by lighted matches tied between the fingers, and allowed to burn the flesh to the bone; and upon the evidence thus procured, without a single witness to bring home the crime, many were condemned. No rank, no sex, no age, was exempted from these inquisitorial proceedings. The father was compelled, by torture, to bear evidence against the son, the son against the father, the wife against the husband, the husband against the wife; and, loyal as they might be them-

selves, if found guilty of sheltering, or even of speaking with an intercommuned fugitive, even though the dearest relative, without informing against him, they were held guilty of his crime, and liable to suffer death.

The cruelties of this period, it has been justly, and not too strongly remarked, "were savage, worthy of cannibals; they were refined, worthy of fiends."* By degrees, the whole frame of government seemed converted into one vast court of inquisition, in which the Episcopal clergy of all ranks held a conspicuous place, as informers, witnesses, or judges. The infliction of death seemed to be regarded by these inquisitors as too easy and summary a punishment to satiate their fury; the poor victims were insulted in the court, and even struck, when awaiting their doom, on the scaffold. "When James Robertson (who was executed with two others in 1682) offered to speak upon the scaffold, he was interrupted by the ruffling of drums; and when complaining of this, Johnston, the town-major, *beat him with his cane* at the foot of the ladder, in a most barbarous manner."† Even mere children did not escape from the malignity of the persecutors. "A party of the enemy," says one who himself shared in the sufferings he describes, "came to search for some of the persecuted party. When the people of the house saw the enemy coming, they fled out of the way; but the cruel enemy got my dear brother into their hands. They examined him concerning the persecuted people where they haunted; but he would not open his mouth to speak one word

* Lorimer's Hist. of Prot. Ch. of France, p. 335. † Wodrow, iii. p. 415.

to them. They flattered him, they offered him money to tell where the Whigs were, but he would not speak; they held the point of a drawn sword to his naked breast; they fired a pistol over his head; they set him on horseback behind one of themselves, to be taken away and hanged; they tied a cloth on his face, and set him on his knees to be shot to death; they beat him with their swords and with their fists; they kicked him several times to the ground with their feet,—yet, after they had used all the cruelty they could, he would not open his mouth to speak one word to them; and although he was a comely proper child, going in ten years of age, yet they called him a vile ugly dumb devil, and beat him very sore, and then went on their way, leaving him lying on the ground sore bleeding in the open fields." *

Nothing, however, presents the Government in a more odious and despicable light than their treatment of the tender sex. The cruel usage of "comely proper children going in ten years of age" may be ascribed to the indiscriminate fury of a ruthless and unreflecting soldiery. But when we see simple unlettered females dragged from the duties of the kitchen or the farmyard, to answer for their religious belief before learned chancellors and mitred dignitaries, and sent to expiate their errors by an ignominious death on the scaffold, we cannot reflect on the conduct of their inhuman persecutors without feelings of mingled indignation and contempt. The trial and execution of Isabel Alison, a young unmarried woman, in Perth, and

* Memoirs of the first years of James Nisbet, son of John Nisbet of Hardhill, written by himself, p. 70.

another young female, Marion Harvie, may, as Wodrow has remarked, be well regarded as "a flaming proof of the iniquity of the period." Isabel had occasionally heard Mr Cargill and others preach in the fields; and having, in her simplicity, acknowledged having held converse with some who had been declared rebels, a party of soldiers was forthwith sent to carry her to Edinburgh. When brought before the Council, the most captious and ensnaring questions were put to her, and she was brought, by threats and promises, to acknowledge that she had conversed with Rathillet, Balfour, and other characters obnoxious to the Government, expressed her approbation of the Sanquhar declaration, and disowned the authority of her judges. Marion Harvie, it would appear, was still more humble in station than her companion. She was a servant girl, only about 20 years of age, and belonged to Borrowstounness. They had nothing to lay to her charge but what she owned—namely, her being present at field conventicles. When interrogated as to the Sanquhar declaration and other papers, she declared she knew nothing about them. Some of the counsellors told her, that "a rock, a cod and bobbins would set her better than these debates." "And yet," says Wodrow, "they cast them up to her, and murder her upon them." After being examined before the Council, these two poor women were brought before the criminal court. "This was the constant practice at this time, the one day to bring such as fell into their hands before the Council, and there engage them by captious questions into a confession of statutory crime, and next day to pannel them before the justi-

ciary, where, if they were silent, they were asked if they would quit the testimony they had given yesterday." The answers given by these females to the interrogatories of their judges, which are recorded by themselves with great simplicity, manifest much good sense and quickness, with a mixture of those mistaken views as to the civil government into which it was very natural for such persons to fall. Both of the women were condemned to be hanged in the Grass-market, and the bloody sentence was executed on the 26th of January 1681. Just when they were going out to the place of execution, Bishop Paterson, whose character, if we may believe the uniform testimony of the time, was stained with crimes of no ordinary description, had the insolence to come into the prison and interrupt their devotions. "Marion," he began, "you said you would never hear a curate; now you shall be forced to hear one before you die," upon which he ordered one of his suffragans to pray. As soon as he began, she said to her fellow-prisoner, "Come, Isabel, let us sing the twenty-third psalm." They did so, and drowned the voice of the curate. But this was not the only circumstance calculated to disturb and annoy these humble sufferers in their dying hour. They were executed in company with five profligate women who had been found guilty of murdering their own children, and railed on by one of the Episcopal functionaries, who assured them "they were on the road to damnation; while, without any evidence of their penitence, he was sending the other wicked wretches straight to heaven. However," it is added, "they were not commoved, but sang some suitable

psalms on the scaffold, and prayed; and thus died with much composure and joy." Marion was remarkably supported. "Behold," she cried, "I hear my Beloved saying unto me, 'Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away.' I am not come here for murder! I am about twenty years of age; at fourteen or fifteen I was a hearer of the curates and indulged, and then I was a blasphemer and a Sabbath breaker, and a chapter of the Bible was a burden to me; but since I heard this persecuted Gospel, I durst not blaspheme, nor break the Sabbath, and the Bible became my delight." Upon this the major called to the executioner to cast her over, and "the murderer presently choked her."*

If we are asked, What were the grounds of all this suffering? We would reply, in general, that the main cause in which our martyrs suffered and died, was that of the Covenanted Reformation. In other words, they died for approving of the various steps of reformation which the Church and nation of Scotland had been led to take, during both the first and second reforming periods, and particularly between the years 1638 and 1650; they died for their adherence, not only to the Protestant religion, but to Presbyterianism in opposition to Prelacy and Independency; they died for their adherence to the Confession of Faith, and the other Westminster standards, as the standards of

* Cloud of Witnesses, Scots Worthies, vol. ii. p. 299-317. Wodrow, iii. 275, 276. Fountainhall's Historical Observes, pp. 26, 27. This last writer observes very coolly, "Some thought, the threatening to drown them privately in the North Loch, without giving them the credit of a public suffering, would have more effectually reclaimed them nor (than) any arguments which were used." How true is it, that "the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel!"

uniformity agreed upon, and sworn to by Scotland, England, and Ireland; they died for maintaining the continued obligation of the National Covenant and the Solemn League, and for condemning the sad defections from these attainments, and the glaring violations of these engagements with which all ranks and classes were chargeable. These were the main and real grounds on which they endured so much, in the forms of torture, banishment, imprisonment, and death. It is plain, that had they not held these principles, or had they been less faithful in maintaining them, they would never have writhed under the rack, nor dyed the scaffolds and the fields with their blood. Of all the martyrs during the period of the persecution, from the first to the last—from the coroneted head of Argyll down to the courageous and devoted Renwick, —from "the lyart veteran," down to the mere child, who was hardly capable of understanding the points of quarrel, though he could deeply feel the injustice of his persecutors, not one suffered without owning this cause. Here there was no wavering, no faltering, no symptom of disunion or disagreement among the band of sufferers. With one mind and one mouth they bore their testimony to the same work, and gloried in sealing it with their blood.

It generally happens, however, that the testimony of the Church is made to bear upon some single point, essentially involving the whole cause of truth, and testing the fidelity of its followers. And at this period, that point was the royal prerogatives of the Lord Jesus Christ, as the only King and Head of his Church. It should never be forgotten, that the overthrow of

the Reformation at the period of the Restoration of Charles, with the scenes of bloody persecution which followed on it, must be traced to the Act of Supremacy, by which the king was declared supreme in all matters and causes, ecclesiastical as well as civil. Against this gross Erastian usurpation, the Presbyterians protested from the beginning; and as the whole series of persecuting measures afterwards adopted by the Government proceeded on this impious assumption of the powers of Christ, it is easy to see how the whole contendings of the faithful party in the land were reduced to the point of asserting the sole Headship of Christ over his Church. This became, with them, "the word of Christ's patience," and nobly did they "keep it in the hour of temptation." They justly deemed it worthy of all the sufferings they could endure; and they shrunk from uttering the slightest word which might compromise the truth, or indicate the least relaxation of their testimony in its behalf.

Seldom have the rulers of this world been brought to acknowledge cordially, thoroughly, and practically, that the Church has a Head in heaven, to whom she is bound to pay implicit and undivided homage. And too often has the recognition of this principle, which is so honourable to Christ, and forms the highest element in every well-constituted establishment of Christianity, been clogged with limitations, enabling the civil powers, when so disposed, to assume the spiritual prerogative, and assail the independence of the Church. It is equally true, however, that this has seldom, if ever, been attempted avowedly in opposition to the sacred rights of the Redeemer. Those who suffer

for resisting the encroachment, are uniformly represented as rebels, suffering for factious opposition to the will of the monarch, or the law of the land.

None were more sensible of the real cause for which the Covenanters suffered, or felt more bitterly conscious of its importance, than those who were most active in conducting the persecution. But, with the meanness and malignity which are the invariable characteristics of the persecutor, they attempted, by various stratagems, to shift the odium from themselves to their victims, and represent them as suffering for any other cause than the true one. Among these stratagems were the "ensnaring questions" which they put to the prisoners, such as, "Was the rising at Bothwell rebellion or not?" "Will you pray for the king?" By these questions, which they well knew many of them would not answer, or would answer in such a way as to betray their condemnation of the Government, they attempted, in the absence of all evidence, to fix upon them the stigma of rebellion; while, in reality, their offence consisted in their refusing to hear the curates, or their having attended field-meetings. It was not uncommon to offer the poor people their lives, provided they would simply say, *God save the king*. Many refused to do this; and when we consider the construction put upon the phrase by their persecutors, we need not wonder at it; for by uttering this salutation, they meant them to acknowledge not only the civil authority, but the ecclesiastical supremacy of the king. When the prisoner at the bar asked the meaning in which they put the words, he was told, they meant owning his person and government, and

approving all his titles as head of the Church and State. Sir George Mackenzie, in his "Vindication of the Government during the reign of Charles II.," has had the audacity to assert that none suffered during this reign who would say, *God save the king*. This is simply a base falsehood, for many suffered who were quite ready to say it. But when we consider, not only that the poor people who refused to do so, looked upon it as a virtual renunciation of all their principles, but that their persecutors regarded it in the same light, it is hardly possible to conceive a piece of more shocking and ingenious cruelty. The test, though really intended to elicit a renunciation of their religious profession, was, at the same time, so plausibly worded as to make the refusal of it appear little better than mere obstinacy, and to represent those who refused it as a set of fools, dying under a frantic delusion, fitted to excite derision rather than pity. It was like the drop of incense which the early Christians were required, by their pagan persecutors, to let fall on the altars of their gods—the slightest token, indeed, but still a token, quite intelligible and well understood, of their renouncing the Christian faith. The following case will show how far these innocent sufferers were from being unwilling to use the terms prescribed, provided they were not understood in a sense completely eversive of their principles,—or, in other words, meant to involve them in perjury.

Gilbert Wilson was a farmer in good circumstances in Wigtonshire. He and his wife were both conformists to Episcopacy; but their children having imbibed better principles, refused to hear the Episco-

pal incumbent. For this reason, though yet scarcely of the age to make them obnoxious to the law, they were pursued, and fled to bogs, hills, and caves for shelter. At last Gilbert's two daughters, Margaret and Agnes, the one 18 years old, the other a mere child about 13, were apprehended, and both of them, by their merciless judges, were condemned to death. By going up to Edinburgh and paying a large sum of money, the father succeeded in purchasing the life of Agnes, his youngest daughter; but Margaret, along with an old woman of 63, was adjudged to suffer death, by being bound to stakes planted in the sea within flood mark, near Wigton. Margaret's relations used all means to prevail upon her to take the oath, and promise to hear the curate, but she stood fast in her integrity, and was not to be shaken. She and her aged companion were tied to the stakes, in the presence of an immense crowd, and surrounded with soldiers. The old woman's stake being a good way beyond the other, she was the first that suffered; and while she was struggling in the water, some one asked Margaret, what she thought of her friend now? "What do I see," she replied, "but Christ, in one of his members, wrestling there? Think you that *we* are the sufferers? No; it is Christ in us, for he sends none a warfare upon their own charges." The water covered her while she was engaged in prayer; but before life was gone, they pulled her up till she recovered the power of speech, when she was asked by Major Windram, who commanded, if she would pray for the king. She replied, that "she wished the salvation of all men, and the damnation of none." "Dear Margaret," said one of

the bystanders, deeply affected, "say *God save the king*." She answered with great steadiness, "God save him, if he will, for it is his salvation I desire." "Sir," they cried to the major, "she has said it! she has said it!" The major approaching her, on hearing this, offered her the *abjuration oath*, charging her instantly to swear it, otherwise to return to the water. The poor young woman, thus cruelly deluded with the hope of life, firmly replied, "I will not; I am one of Christ's children! let me go." Upon which she was again thrust into the water, and drowned. Thus died these two women, simply because they would not take the abjuration oath, which bound the swearers never to take up arms against the king on any pretext whatsoever, and called on them to "abhor, renounce, and disown" all who had done so. What possible danger the Government could apprehend from old women of 60, and girls of 18, taking up arms against the king, it is hard to say. Every feeling of humanity rises up to execrate an administration which could have recourse to such gratuitous and unmanly cruelties to support its authority.

These, however, were the most decent of the proceedings of this period—they were conducted with at least the forms and the semblance of justice. The year 1684 introduced a practice more barbarous and revolting, when the common soldiers were empowered, without indictment or process, to put to death any suspicious persons they might meet with, upon their refusing to take the oaths, or answer the questions they put, to their satisfaction. The cruelties and murders exercised under this barbarous law it would be

in vain to attempt to enumerate. The case of John Brown, the poor carrier, whom Claverhouse shot before his own door, and in the presence of his wife, is too well known to be more than adverted to. "Go to your prayers immediately," cried Claverhouse, "for you must die." Poor Brown prayed, then kissed his wife and children—"God bless you all," he said,—"may all purchased and promised blessings be multiplied." "No more," vociferated Claverhouse. "You six there," counting six soldiers, "shoot him instantly." The men, hardened as they were, had been so much affected by Brown's prayer, that they hesitated to obey the order; upon which, Claverhouse, drawing his pistol, shot him dead with his own hand. "What thinkest thou of thy husband now, woman?" fiercely demanded the ruffian. "I ever thought much good of him," sobbed the poor widow; "and *now* more than ever." "Wretch!" said Claverhouse, "it were but just to lay thee beside him." "If you were permitted, I doubt not but your cruelty would go that far," cried the poor woman; "but how will you answer for this morning's work?" "To *man* I can be answerable," said the remorseless Claverhouse, "and as for God, I will take *him* into my own hand!"

He then marched away, leaving the poor widow with her husband's mangled corpse! She set the children on the ground; she gathered up the scattered brains, and covering his body with her plaid, she sat down and wept over him.

The Duke of York had declared "there would never be peace in Scotland till the whole of the country south of the Forth was turned into a hunt-

ing field." And in the years 1684 and 1685, there was every appearance that his threatening would be realized. During this, the hottest period of the persecution, and emphatically termed by the people *killing time*, the lives of the lieges were left at the mercy of military executioners, who scoured the country, hunting in all directions in search of fugitive Presbyterians. Blood-hounds were employed to discover the retreats of "the wanderers," as they were called, who, on being found, were immediately brought out and shot, without any proof, process, or inquiry. The slightest pretext was sufficient. If the person whom they met could not produce a pass,—if he made the least scruple to swallow the oath,—or if, after doing so, the soldiers should still suspect him, he was instantly deprived of life. If a countryman was seen running across the road, or walking more hastily than usual through a field, he was shot at as a suspected person.

A specimen or two of these doings may suffice.* A lieutenant and three soldiers passing along the road, found a poor man sleeping on a bank, with a small pocket-bible lying near him. This circumstance having roused their suspicions, they awoke the man, and asked him if he would pray for the king? He replied that he would with all his heart. The lieutenant was about to let him go, when one of the soldiers said—"But, sir, will you renounce the Covenant?" The man hesitated a moment; but on the question being repeated, he firmly replied,—"Indeed, sir, I'll as soon renounce my baptism." Upon this, without farther

* The instances here adduced are selected chiefly from Wodrow, who was at great pains to ascertain, by written attestations, the truth of the information he collected.

ceremony, they shot the poor man on the spot. On another occasion, some soldiers perceived a countryman lying in a field engaged in reading. They called to him, but the man being deaf, and not making any reply, they fired at him, on which he started to his feet. Again they cried to him, and before the poor man could recover from his amazement, a second shot laid him dead on the field. Five of the wanderers had taken refuge in a cave near Ingliston, in the parish of Glencairn. Their place of concealment was discovered to the enemy by a base "intelligencer," who had formerly associated with them, pretending to be one of the sufferers. When the soldiers came up, they first fired into the cave, and then rushing in, brought them forth to execution. Without any questions being put, or any offers of mercy made, the whole five were immediately shot by orders of the commanding officer. One of them being observed to be still alive, a wretch drew his sword and thrust him through the body. The dying man raised himself, and, weltering in his own blood and that of his companions, cried out, with his last breath,—"Though every hair of my head was a man, I would die all those deaths for Christ and his cause!"

In the bloody proceedings of this period, the names of Johnston of Westerraw, and Grierson of Lagg, vie with that of Claverhouse in infamous notoriety. Westerraw was an apostate from Presbyterianism, and, like all apostates, more bitter and unrelenting in his hatred to his former brethren than the worst of their old oppressors. Claverhouse having apprehended a young man named Andrew Hislop, whose

only crime was, that one of the wanderers had permission to die in his mother's house, brought him to Westerraw, on whose property the alleged crime was committed, and who, to signalise his loyalty, instantly passed sentence of death on him. Claverhouse, who seems to have had some relentings from reflecting on the murder of Brown, urged the delay of the execution; but Westerraw insisting on it, he yielded, saying,—"The blood of this poor man be upon you, Westerraw; I am free of it." He then ordered a Highland gentleman, captain of a company who were travelling with him, to execute the sentence. This the gentleman peremptorily refused, and drawing off his men to some distance, swore he would fight Claverhouse and his dragoons before he did it. Claverhouse then ordered three of his own men to do it. When they were ready to fire, they desired Andrew to draw down his cap over his eyes. "No!" said the undaunted youth, "I can look my death-bringers in the face without fear, and I have done nothing whereof I am ashamed;" and holding up his Bible, and charging them to answer for what they were to do at the great day, when they would be judged by *that book*, he received the murderous fire without shrinking.

Grierson of Lagg was, if possible, a still more revolting character. The cruelties which others inflicted simply under the impulse of passion or malice, seem to have afforded this monster absolute delight. He would jeer at the victims whom he butchered in cold blood, and exult over their agonies with a kind of fiendish glee. When they requested a few moments

to prepare for death—"What!" he would exclaim, with oaths and imprecations, "have you not had time enough to prepare since Bothwell?" Having been challenged by one of his companions for his cruelty to one whom he knew to be a gentleman, and particularly for not allowing his dead body to be buried, Lagg answered, with an oath, "Take him if you will, and salt him in your beef-barrel." It was quite customary with him, and with the soldiers at this period, in their drunken orgies, to personate devils, and lash one another with whips, in jesting imitation of hell!

"Wonderful," says Wodrow, "were the preservations of the persecuted about this time. The soldiers frequently got their clothes and cloaks, and yet missed themselves. They would have gone by the mouths of the caves and dens in which they were lurking, and the dogs would snook and smell about the stones under which they were hid, and yet they remained undiscovered." But the reader may be more inclined to wonder at the patience of these sufferers, and at the fact that, notwithstanding the extraordinary provocation they received, there is not one well-authenticated instance of their having taken revenge on their persecutors.* The only instance in which they even attempted, after the defeat at Bothwell, to oppose force to force, took place at Enterkin Path, where a small body of countrymen succeeded in rescuing some prisoners from a detachment of dragoons. Enterkin Path is a steep and dangerous ascent on a mountain

* Two soldiers found killed at Swine Abbey, and a wretched curate, named Peirson, who was killed in a scuffle, are the only cases resembling retaliation which were adduced against the Covenanters, and in neither of these could it be shown that the sufferers had any share.

of that name in Dumfriesshire, with a tremendous precipice beneath. Along this path the dragoons were conveying to Edinburgh nine prisoners, bound together in couples upon horses, when their progress was arrested by a voice from the hill above. "It was misty," says Defoe, in his account of this affair, "as indeed it is seldom otherwise on the height of that mountain, so that nobody was seen at first; but the commanding officer hearing somebody call, halted, and cried aloud, 'What do ye want, and who are ye?' He had no sooner spoken, than twelve men came in sight upon the side of the hill above them. One of the twelve answered by giving the word of command to his men, 'Make ready!' and then calling to the officer, said, 'Sir, will ye deliver up our minister?' The officer answered, with an oath, 'No, Sir.' At which the leader of the countrymen fired immediately, and aimed so true at him, that he shot him through the head, and immediately he fell from his horse; the horse, fluttering a little, with the fall of the rider, fell over the precipice, rolling to the bottom, and was dashed to pieces. The rest of the twelve men were stooping to give fire upon the body, when the next commanding officer called to them to hold their hands, and desired a truce. It was apparent that the whole body was in a dreadful consternation; not a man of them durst stir, or offer to fire a shot. 'Go, Sir,' said he to the minister, 'you owe your life to this —— mountain.' 'Rather, Sir,' said the minister, 'to the God that made this mountain.' When the minister was come to them, their leader called again to the officer, 'Sir, we want yet the other prisoners.' They

were also delivered. 'Well, Sir, but' says the officer, 'I expect you will call off those fellows you have posted at the head of the way.' 'They belong not to us,' says the honest man; 'they are unarmed people, waiting till you pass by.' 'Say you so?' said the officer; 'had I known that, you had not gotten your men so cheap.' Says the countryman, 'An' ye are for battle, we'll quit the truce, if you like.' 'No,' says the officer, 'I think ye be brave fellows; e'en gang your gate.'" *

Such is the only instance in which the severities of this time can be said to have roused these persecuted people to forcible resistance. "The Society People," indeed, who were now the special objects of the vengeance of Government, being the only class who still persisted in holding field conventicles, published, in October 1684, "A Declaration anent Intelligencers and Informers," in which they not only declared war against Charles, but solemnly warned all who chose, "either with bloody Doeg to shed their blood, or with the flattering Ziphites to inform persecutors where they were to be found," that they would not let them pass unpunished. "Call to your remembrance," they said, "*all that is in peril is not lost, and all that is delayed is not forgiven!*" While we must disapprove of this step, as unwarranted by Scripture, and affording too much countenance to the dangerous principle of the infliction of justice by private individuals, we cannot blame with much severity those who were

* Memoirs of the Church of Scotland, Part iii. pp. 189-195. Defoe had either heard another version of this story, or improved on what he heard. Wodrow states that the soldiers fired first on the countrymen.—Vol. iv. p. 173.

driven to it, when we reflect that they were deprived of the protection of law, and hunted like wild beasts in the wilds and on the mountains to which they fled for shelter. The threatening which it conveyed was never carried into execution, and may be said to have gained its object, by intimidating for a while the base spies and traitors who made a traffic of their blood. It was the cry of the oppressed, wrung from them by the extremity of suffering,—the instinctive raising of the hand to protect the head,—the language of human passion, wound up to the desperate calmness of defiance, which imparts a kind of dignity to the sufferer, while it makes the persecutor pause and tremble.

Yet it would be wrong to suppose that this was a general feeling among the persecuted. On the contrary, never perhaps was the gentle, forgiving, and long-suffering spirit of the Gospel, more strikingly illustrated than in the sufferings of this period. "They took joyfully the spoiling of their goods, knowing that they had in heaven a better and an enduring substance." On the scaffold they forgave their enemies, and prayed for their executioners. Some of them carried submission even to an excess; and nothing conveys a more affecting idea of the "great fight of afflictions" they endured, than the simple fact, attested by Wodrow, that many of them, seeing their friends cut down around them in such numbers, and their own lives in such constant jeopardy, were seized by a *tædium vitæ*—a weariness of life—which made them careless of danger, and induced them even to court the crown of martyrdom. On one occasion, when an execution took place, one of the spectators, struck with the glar-

ing cruelty and injustice of the deed, gave expression to his feelings in an exclamation against it. He was immediately seized, and persisting in his opinion of the transaction, was hanged the next day on the gallows which had excited his indignation. The brutal judges, aware of the existence of this feeling, instead of sending them directly, as they often did, from the bar to the gibbet, would remit them to jail, scoffingly informing them that they would not be admitted to the joys of martyrdom so soon as they expected!

But though these bitter and malignant persecutors escaped the human vengeance which they provoked, —though not one of them was called to account, or suffered death, or even any personal hardship worth the mentioning, at the Revolution, it was remarked, that few of them escaped the judgments of Heaven. Of those who took the most active share in these bloody persecutions, very few came to an ordinary or peaceful death. The Duke of Rothes was seized with such remorse on his deathbed, that, as we remarked before, he was fain to send for some of the persecuted ministers to comfort him. They came, but the wretched man was beyond the reach of consolation; their prayers were drowned in the groans he uttered under the horrors of a guilty conscience. His friends, shocked at the scene, were compelled to leave him; and the Duke of Hamilton, on taking his departure, said, in tears, "We banish these men from us, and yet, when dying, we call for them: this is melancholy work!" Cruel and bloody as were the deaths of our martyred fathers, they were enviable in comparison to those of their murderers. Over the

grave of the martyr we bend with a pleasing melancholy: for there was "hope in his death." From the deathbed of the persecutor we recoil, hopeless and horrified, instinctively breathing the prayer, "Gather not my soul with sinners, nor my life with bloody men!"

CHAPTER XVI.

The Test—Trial of Earl of Argyll—Sir Hugh Campbell — Mr William Carstairs — Baillie of Jerviswood — Hume of Polwart—Execution of Argyll—Prisoners in Dunottar Castle—James' Indulgence—Execution of Renwick—Character of Scottish Prelacy—Alarm of the Country—The Revolution.

To understand the following part of our history, it is necessary to revert for a little to the famous Test, which was enacted in August 1681. This engagement, which was in the form of a long complex oath, bound the swearer to acknowledge the supremacy of the king in all causes, ecclesiastical as well as civil,—to renounce the Covenants,—to condemn all assemblies as illegal which were held without the royal sanction, and on no pretext to endeavour the alteration of the government in Church or State. At the same time, with glaring inconsistency, it included a profession of the true Protestant religion contained in the old Scots Confession of 1567,—a clause introduced, it is said, much against the will of the Duke of York, whose main design in imposing the oath was to extirpate Presbyterianism, and thus prepare the way for the introduction of Popery. He knew very well that

no honest Presbyterian would submit to such an oath, and he took care, in the act enjoining it, to exempt himself and the Papists from the necessity of swearing it.

Nothing gives a darker picture of the state of public morals at the time, than the history of this self-contradictory Test. Though at first proposed only for persons in public trust, it was soon converted into a general test of loyalty, and imposed on all, even the simplest countrymen. Few had sufficient firmness of principle to refuse it, so much had all sense of religion been worn off from the minds of men by the numerous oaths which were from time to time imposed on the nation, and by which conscience was debauched, and a spirit of atheism engendered among all classes. Some outcry was made against it at first; but, after all, not one of the counsellors refused it, except the Earl of Argyll. The Prelatic clergy, with very few exceptions, and the bishops, without an exception, swallowed the oath. The divines of Aberdeen, after publishing their objections against it, which closely resemble those of the Presbyterians,* tamely submitted with the rest.

In the midst of this shameful degeneracy, the Earl of Argyll, son of the Marquis of Argyll, who was martyred in 1661, distinguished himself by his patri-

* For example, the following is one of their exceptions:—"How can I swear that I believe the king's majesty to be the only supreme governor over all persons, and in all causes, when the forementioned Confession obliges me to believe Jesus Christ to be the only Head of the Church? And when I believe all ecclesiastic authority to be derived from Christ, and not from secular princes; and when I believe the king's power to be cumulative, and not destructive of the intrinsic power of the Church?" &c.— *Wodrow*, iii. p. 304.

otic firmness and fidelity. When called upon, as a member of privy council, to take the test, he made the following declaration:—"I take it, in as far as it is consistent with itself and the Protestant religion; and I do declare, I mean not to bind up myself, in my station and in a lawful way, to endeavour any alteration I think to the advantage of the Church or State, not repugnant to the Protestant religion and my loyalty." With this explication, he was allowed to take the test; but the Duke of York, determined to get rid of this patriotic nobleman, whom he disliked for his father's sake, and for his sound Protestant principles, made it the pretext of a prosecution against him for *high treason!* After a trial remarkable for the greatest mockery of justice and perversion of law which ever disgraced our civil judicature, the Earl was brought in guilty, and committed to the Castle. Finding that the Duke of York, his inveterate enemy, was resolved on his destruction, he was induced by his friends to avail himself of the means of escape provided for him. On the 20th of December, about nine o'clock at night, he escaped out of the Castle, in the disguise of a page, holding up the train of his step-daughter, the Lady Sophia Lindsay.*

At this time, the prospect of the accession of the Duke of York to the throne, his well-known bigotry and devotedness to the Romish Church, and the obvious tendency of his policy, filled the country with a dread of the restoration of Popery. This feeling pervaded all classes—of which, perhaps, there cannot be

* Fountainhall's Decisions, i. 167.—A minute account of the manner in which he effected his escape to Holland, with the aid of Mr Veitch, is given in M'Crie's Memoirs of Veitch, &c., p. 127, *et seq.*

a better proof than the fact, that it descended even to schoolboys and apprentices. On Christmas 1681, a few days after the escape of Argyll, they publicly burnt the Pope in effigy at the Cross of Edinburgh. The students at the University having been severely punished for this the preceding year, the preparations were on this occasion conducted so quietly that none suspected the design. Having fixed a chair on the spot where the gallows stood, they tucked up his Holiness in a red gown and mitre, with two keys over his arm, a crucifix in the one hand, and the test in the other; and having applied fire to the figure, "it brunt lenty at first, till it came to the powder, at which he blew up in the air."* The boys at Heriot's Hospital adopted a more ingenious mode of testifying their sentiments. Finding that the dog which guarded the outer gate of the Hospital held "a public office," they voted that he ought to take the test, or be hanged. They offered him the paper, which he absolutely refused; they then rubbed it over with butter, which they called "the explication of the test;" and when again presented, he licked off the butter, but rejected the paper; upon which, after a long trial, in ridicule of the absurd reasoning of the crown lawyers on Argyll's case, they found the dog guilty of *leising-making*, and actually hanged him.† In Glasgow the same spirit was manifested in a different manner. The students put on favours and coloured ribbons, in token of their being Protestants. For this some of their

* Fountainhall's Hist. Obs., p. 55.

† Ibid., p. 56.—In this work the curious account of the trial of the dog is inserted, p. 303.

leaders were arrested, and, among others, the young Marquis of Annandale, who briskly defended himself and his companions. In addressing the bishop who sat as their judge, he had called him only "Sir." "William," said his regent, "you do not understand whom you are speaking to; he is a greater person than yourself." "I know," said Annandale, "that the king has made him a spiritual lord; but I know likewise that my father's son is not to be compared with the son of the piper of Arbroath."*

It has been often said, and generally supposed, that the Presbyterians who suffered during this period were chiefly persons in the lower ranks of life. This, however, is an error which may easily be rectified by a glance at the annals of the persecution, and the lists of proscribed individuals. These will be found to comprehend some of the highest of the nobility, and the greater part of the gentry and substantial yeomanry of the country. The poorest classes were in general hostile to the Covenanters, and too often lent themselves as informers against them.

Among the gentlemen who suffered at this period for their attachment to the cause of religion and liberty, we may briefly notice Sir Hugh Campbell of Cesnock, the Rev. William Carstairs, Robert Baillie of Jerviswood, and Sir Patrick Hume of Polwart, who were all brought into trouble in consequence of being suspected of accession to the Ryehouse Plot, in 1684, for their supposed share in which those illustrious patriots, Lord Russell and Algernon Sidney, had suffered death.

Sir Hugh Campbell was brought to trial on this

* Wodrow, iii. p. 345.

charge; but finding no evidence to implicate him in the plot, they determined to ruin him by accusing him of accession to the rising at Bothwell, and permitting conventicles to meet on his estate. Sir Hugh proved his innocence of these crimes beyond all doubt; but one witness remained, named Ingram, who had been heard to swear that he would be revenged on him for some supposed injury, and on whose evidence his prosecutors depended. Ingram held up his hand to take the oath. "Take heed what you are about to do," said Sir Hugh, looking him steadily in the face, "and damn not your own soul by perjury; for as I shall answer to God, I never saw you in the face before, nor spoke to you." The man was staggered by this appeal to his conscience, and refused to depone the promised falsehood. A loud shout of applause proclaimed the delight of the audience at this failure of the proof. The disappointed judges were incensed; and Sir George Mackenzie, the Lord Advocate, declared, in a passion, that "he never heard of such a *Protestant roar*, except in the trial of Shaftesbury." The jury, having brought in a verdict of "not guilty," were insulted, and threatened with imprisonment for joining in the applause; the witnesses were kept in confinement; and Sir Hugh himself, though he escaped with his life, was committed a prisoner to the Bass, and deprived of his estate, which was given to one of his judges.

The Rev. William Carstairs, afterwards Principal of the University of Edinburgh, and well known as the confidential correspondent of King William, was suspected of the same plot; and refusing to betray any

of his friends, was subjected, about the same time, to the torture of the *thumbikins*—an instrument newly introduced, which was attached to the fingers, and, by means of a screw, made to compress the joints, so as to produce the most exquisite pain.* The minister endured this torture with the greatest fortitude, steadily refusing to answer any questions which might implicate his friends. After some time, however, worn out by rigorous confinement, he agreed to make some disclosures, upon receiving a solemn promise from Government that "nothing he said should be brought, directly or indirectly, against any man in trial." His evidence involved Robert Baillie of Jerviswood, as one who had met with others to consult what steps should be taken for the support of the Protestant religion, in the event of the Duke of York succeeding to the crown. To the disgrace of the Government, as well as his own unspeakable distress, this evidence was not only published and hawked about the streets, but adduced by the king's advocate as "an adminicle of proof" against that worthy gentleman. Mr Carstairs lived to take a prominent part in the Revolution. He was more distinguished as a politician than as a clergyman; and from the influence he possessed over King William in the management of the civil affairs of Scotland, he was generally known at court by the name of "Cardinal Carstairs." †

* After the Revolution, Mr Carstairs procured the instrument by which he had been tortured, which is still in the possession of his descendants. It is said that King William, being curious to see it, inserted his royal fingers in the thumbikins; and Carstairs, at his desire, having given the screw a turn, his majesty exclaimed, "Hold, hold, Principal; another turn, and I would confess any thing."

† The character of this worthy and much respected minister has suf-

Robert Baillie of Jerviswood was one of the most amiable and engaging characters of this dark period of our history. Gentle in disposition, and bland in manners, yet firm and faithful to his religious principles, pious and learned, he united accomplishments rarely to be found among the gentlemen of his age, with the virtues of the patriot and the martyr. Attached to the cause of liberty and Protestantism, his well-tried loyalty could not shield him from the malice of a Government who were bent on subjecting the nation to the iron yoke of Popery and despotism. He was thrown into prison, where he contracted an illness which brought him to the gates of death. His enemies, eager to obtain possession of his property, and afraid he might die in their hands before his attainder enabled them to reach it, made sure, in the first place, of £5000, by fining him to that amount; and when to all appearance a dying man, and unable to stand, they dragged him from his sick-bed to the bar on an impeachment of high treason. He appeared in his night-gown, attended by his sister, who administered cordials to him, to prevent him from sinking during the trial. His pretended crime was "intercommuning with rebels,"—in other words, having harboured or conversed with fugitive Presbyterians; along with which they attempted to combine a charge of accession to the Ryehouse plot, by shamefully producing against him the evidence which they had procured from Carstairs.* The evidence com-

fered from the misrepresentations of it in the very *Moderate* account of his life drawn up by Dr M'Cormick, and prefixed to his State Papers.

* Jerviswood had been arrested on this charge in England, and was

pletely failed; even the judges were satisfied of his innocence; but the Council had determined he should die. It was in vain that he appealed to their sense of justice. "Did you not," he said, addressing Mackenzie, who acted as king's advocate, "did you not own to me privately in prison that you were satisfied of my innocence? And are you now convinced in your conscience that I am more guilty than before?" The whole audience fixed their eyes on the person thus addressed, who appeared in no small confusion, and replied, "Jerviswood, I own what you say, but my thoughts *there* were as a private man; what I say *here* is by special direction of the privy council;" and, pointing to the clerk, he added, "He knows my orders." "Well," said Jerviswood, on hearing this unprincipled avowal, "if your lordship have one conscience for yourself, and another for the Council, I pray God forgive you; I do." Then, turning to the Justice-General, he said, "My lord, I trouble your lordships no longer."

The trial concluded at one o'clock in the morning, December 24, 1684; and his sentence was, to be taken *that same day* (no time could be lost), between two and four o'clock, to the market-cross of Edinburgh, there to be hanged on a gibbet till dead, and thereafter his head to be struck off and his body quartered. When this doom was pronounced, he said, "My lords, the time is short, the sentence is

offered his life if he would consent to turn king's evidence. He replied to this, with a smile,—"They who can make such a proposal to me, know neither me nor my country."—*Dalrymple's Memoirs of Great Britain*, vol. i. p. 89.

sharp; but I thank my God who hath made me as fit to die as ye are to live."

When sent back to prison, "he leaned over the bed and fell into a wonderful rapture of joy, from the assurance he had, that in a few hours he would be inconceivably happy." Being asked how he was, he answered, "Never better, and in a few hours I'll be well beyond conception! They are going to send me in pieces and quarters through the country; they may hag and hew my body as they please, but I know assuredly nothing shall be lost, but all these my members shall be wonderfully gathered, and made like Christ's glorious body." On the scaffold, he behaved with the utmost serenity, though unable, from bodily exhaustion, to go up the ladder without support. He began to say, "My faint zeal for the Protestant religion has brought me to this end"—when the drums were ordered to beat, and he resigned himself to the executioner. Their spite against the dead body of this saint was very great, "and I am told," says Wodrow, "the quarters of it lay in the thieves-hole for three weeks, before they were placed as in the sentence."* "And thus," says Bishop Burnet, "a learned and worthy gentleman, after twenty months' hard usage, was brought to such a death in a way so full, in all the steps of it, of the spirit and practice of the courts of the Inquisition, that one is tempted to think that the steps taken in it were suggested by one well studied, if not practised, in them." It is gratifying

* Wodrow, iv. 104-112, and *Addenda*.—"Mr Baillie of Jerviswood had his life taken from him at the cross, and every body was sorry, though they durst not show it."—*Lady Murray's Memoirs*, p. 41.

to reflect, that while the names of his persecutors have been forgotten, or are only remembered with execration, the memory of this excellent gentleman is still embalmed in the pages of history, and in the hearts of all good men, and that his descendants have risen to opulence and honour in the country.*

Baillie's friend and companion in tribulation, Sir Patrick Hume of Polwart, escaped from prison, and lay for a long time in a place of concealment so remarkable, that it is not surprising he should have eluded all the efforts of his pursuers. With the assistance of a faithful domestic, to whom alone the secret was imparted, his wife and daughter conveyed a bed during night to the family burying-place, in a vault under ground at Polwart Church, where Sir Patrick remained safe during a whole month, with no light except what was admitted through a small aperture at the one end of the vault. As night approached, his noble and amiable daughter, Grisell, afterwards Lady Grisell Baillie,† repaired to this gloomy receptacle with his victuals, and remained with him till daybreak. The following interesting account of these midnight interviews is given by Lady Murray, the daughter of the youthful heroine. "Lady Grisell had at that time a terror for a churchyard, especially in the dark, as is not uncommon in that age, by idle

* Among his illustrious descendants, is the present Marchioness of Breadalbane. "You have truly men of great spirits in Scotland," said Dr Owen to a friend; "there is for a gentleman, Mr Baillie of Jerviswood, a person of the greatest abilities I ever almost met with."

† She was married to George Baillie, son of the martyred Jerviswood, between whom and Lady Grisell a mutual attachment had been formed in the prison, where they were accustomed to meet while their fathers were in confinement.

nursery stories; but when engaged by concern for her father, she stumbled over the graves every night alone without fear of any kind entering her thoughts, but for soldiers, and parties in search of him, which the least noise or motion of a leaf put her in terror for. The minister's house was near the church; the first night she went, his dogs kept such a barking as put her in the utmost fear of a discovery; my grandmother (the wife of Sir Patrick) sent for the minister next day, and upon pretence of a mad dog, got him to hang all his dogs. There was also difficulty of getting victuals to carry him, without the servants suspecting; the only way it was done was by stealing it off her plate at dinner into her lap. Many a diverting story she has told about this and other things of the like nature. Her father liked sheep's head; and while the children were eating their broth, she had conveyed most of one into her lap; when her brother Sandy, the late Lord Marchmont, had done, he looked up with astonishment, and said, 'Mother, will ye look at Grisell; while we have been eating our broth, she has eat up the whole sheep's head!' This occasioned so much mirth amongst them, that her father, at night, was greatly entertained by it, and desired Sandy might have a share of the next. His great comfort, and constant entertainment (for he had no light to read by), was repeating Buchanan's Psalms, which he had by heart from beginning to end, and retained them to his dying day."* Sir Patrick Hume ultimately escaped out of the country, and after the Revolution

* Memoirs of George Baillie of Jerviswood, and of Lady Grisell Baillie, by their daughter, Lady Murray of Stanhope, p. 36-38.

was created Earl of Marchmont, and Chancellor of Scotland. The good old Presbyterian retained the same composure and cheerfulness of mind till his death, which was at the age of eighty-four.

In February 1685, died Charles II., and was succeeded by his brother, the Duke of York, under the title of James VII. of Scotland, and II. of England. The accession of an avowed Papist to the throne, in itself a flagrant breach of the constitution, was followed by other steps paving the way for Popish ascendancy. The Scottish Parliament, more ready than the English to favour the projects of James, without even requiring him to take the coronation oath, vowed the most slavish submission to his will. Several unsuccessful attempts were made to avert the catastrophe. Among these was the invasion of the Earl of Argyll, the progress and issue of which form the matter of civil history. The last moments of this unfortunate nobleman come more properly within our province. His whole demeanour, after his apprehension, was marked by a calm fortitude and Christian resignation becoming the son of the proto-martyr of the Covenant. His last Sabbath on earth was spent with the most heavenly devotion. To his sister, the Lady Lothian, who was much affected on taking farewell of him, he said, "I am now loosed from you, and all earthly satisfactions, and long to be with Christ, which is far better. It seems the Lord thought me not fit to be an instrument in his work; but I die in the faith of it, that it will advance, and that the Lord will appear for it. I hear they cannot agree about the manner of

my death; but I am assured of my salvation: as for my body, I care not what they do with it. Sister," he added, while his heart filled at the thought of his afflicted wife, "sister, *be kind to my Jeanie.*" About an hour before his execution, he dined with great cheerfulness, and having been accustomed to sleep a little after meals, he lay down and took his usual repose. An officer of state, coming to visit him at this time, would not believe that he was asleep, till the door of the apartment was softly opened, and he was permitted to look in. He instantly rushed home in a state bordering on distraction. "Argyll within an hour of eternity, and sleeping as pleasantly as a child!" His conscience smote him, when he thought how differently he would have felt in the same circumstances. On the scaffold, the Earl's deportment was equally becoming. Having addressed the multitude, prayed, and forgiven his enemies, the Episcopal clergyman who attended, said aloud, "This nobleman dies a Protestant." Argyll stepped forward and said, "I die not only a Protestant, but with a heart-hatred of Popery, Prelacy, and all superstition whatsoever." He then laid his head on the block, and saying, "Lord Jesus, receive me into thy glory," he gave the fatal sign by raising his hand, and the axe severed his head from his body.

Though the Earl of Argyll had been for several years a member of the Government, and in this capacity may be said, in one sense, to have participated in the guilt of their procedure, yet he seems to have been all along animated by a genuine love to liberty and religion. His unsuccessful effort to free his

country from the chains of despotism, entitles him to our gratitude as a patriot; and the manner of his death ranks him in the list of our martyrs.

The unfortunate attempt of Argyll led to still greater severities against the Presbyterians. The jails of Edinburgh being filled with prisoners, it was resolved, on hearing the first news of the invasion, to transport a number of them to Dunnottar Castle, a fortified place on the east coast of Scotland, near the village of Stonehaven, the ruins of which still remain. Some of them were allowed to escape on taking the oath of supremacy. The remainder, who stood faithful, to the number of 167 persons, men and women, after being driven like so many cattle through Fife and along the coast of Angus, were thrust promiscuously into a dark vault under ground, full of mire, and with only one window looking to the sea. In this horrid situation they were pent up during the whole summer; many of them died from disease; and the lives of the rest were made bitter by the barbarous conduct of their keepers. It seemed to be the policy of Government to compel these poor people to forswear themselves, by pushing them to the utmost verge of human endurance; and their inflexible fidelity had only the effect, uniformly observed in the history of persecution, of inflaming the rage and malignity of their persecutors. Twenty-five of the prisoners made their escape one day down the rocks on which the castle was built; but fifteen of these, betrayed by the low people of the neighbourhood, were apprehended, and cruelly tortured. They were bound hand and foot on a form, with a fiery match betwixt every finger, six soldiers waiting on

by turns to keep the matches alive. Some of them expired under this diabolical treatment, while others were shockingly mutilated, the very bones of the fingers being burnt to ashes.

Soon after this, however, a change took place in the policy of Government, which gave a temporary respite to the suffering Presbyterians. James, having awakened the jealousy of the nation by the dissolution of his Parliaments, and the admission of Papists to places of power and trust, found it necessary, for the accomplishment of his darling purpose, to ingratiate himself with the Dissenters. With this view, he published, in 1687, various acts of indulgence, professedly with the view of giving "liberty of conscience," and "allaying the heats and animosities among the several professors of the Christian religion," but really in order to rescind all penal statutes and disabilities affecting the Papists. In the very act of granting these indulgences, James challenged a dispensing and absolute power, directly at variance with all civil and religious liberty. "We have thought fit to grant," said he, in one of his proclamations, "and by *our sovereign authority, prerogative royal, and absolute power, which all our subjects are to obey without reserve*, do hereby give and grant our royal toleration." Besides this unconstitutional stretch of authority, the indulgences were at first clogged with various restrictions. The toleration was only extended to "moderate Presbyterians," and to such as were willing to accept of the boon, permitting them to meet in private houses, but discharging them to meet in barns or meeting-houses, and with a renewal of all the former

severities against preaching in the fields. In this shape, not one of the Presbyterians accepted of the Indulgence. In April of the same year, however, James published his "Declaration for Liberty of Conscience," in which still farther concessions were made; and this was followed, in July, by a third toleration, abolishing all penal laws for nonconformity to the religion established by law, and taking off all the former restrictions, except the prohibition of field-meetings. Of the Indulgence in this form, many of the Presbyterian ministers deemed it their duty to accept the benefit. "The Cameronians," says Dr Cook, "who had renounced their allegiance to a tyrannical sovereign, acted consistently when the Indulgence was offered to them, and they boldly refused to take advantage of what had flowed from so polluted a source."*

It is impossible not to admire the heroism of these men, who ventured, in their individual capacities, to anticipate the judgment uttered in the following year by the voice of the three kingdoms. Though with some of the principles on which they vindicated their opposition to Government we cannot agree, yet it cannot be denied that the attitude of daring fidelity assumed by this persecuted remnant, presents a striking and honourable contrast to the pusillanimity of the nation in submitting so long to the domination of a tyrant, who, by casting off all regard to the constitution of his country, had given the signal of defiance to all the friends of civil and religious liberty. Nor can we justify the conduct of those Presbyterian ministers who accepted of the Indul-

* Cook's History of the Church of Scotland, vol. iii. p. 431.

gence, and particularly of some who went so far as to thank the king for the insidious measure, as "a gracious and surprising favour." To avail themselves of the liberty granted them to exercise their ministry without molestation, was no more than to resume those rights, of which they had been wrongfully and forcibly deprived; but to do so in the way of pledging their loyalty, without protesting against the monstrous usurpation of power from which the Indulgence flowed, and the design for which it was obviously granted—the establishment of Popery—was involving themselves in a recognition of spiritual tyranny in the act of accepting religious liberty. The readiness with which they grasped at this dangerous boon, indicated a spirit wearied and worn out by long persecution, and which manifested itself, after the Revolution, in too tamely submitting to encroachments on their spiritual independence. In their trying circumstances, it is easier for us to censure them for what they did, than to say how they ought to have acted. Meanwhile, the ministers did all in their power to gather up the scattered fragments of their constitution. On the 30th of August 1687, the Synod of Glasgow and Ayr met in a house at Glasgow, and resolved on measures for the licensing of preachers and the settlement of congregations. They were thus prepared, in some measure, for what Providence intended to do for the deliverance of their beloved Church.

Prelacy had now ruled over the Church of Scotland for nearly twenty-eight years, during which time its reign had been traced in blood, and upheld by oppression. It is a curious fact, that during all this

time no attempt was made to introduce the ceremonies of the English Church. The form of worship differed very little from that practised by the Presbyterians. Our Prelatic clergy had no liturgy, no ceremonies, no surplice, no altars, no crossing in baptism.* What is more remarkable, they had no confession of faith, no standard of doctrine or discipline, no rule to guide their practice, except the will of the bishops, which again was regulated by the will of the king. A more singular Church, perhaps, never appeared on earth; it was neither Popery, Prelacy, nor Presbytery, but a strange jumble of all the three;—the king being pope; his council the cardinals; the bishops moderators; and the dragoons of Dalziel and Claverhouse, what Mackenzie once called them, the "ruling elders." The king, as supreme head of the Church, deposed ministers, set aside bishops, and gave directions both as to the matter and manner of preaching. In 1670, a law was actually passed condemning the practice of lecturing! The minister might preach, as long as he chose, from a single verse; but was forbidden, on pain of treason, to select two or more for the purpose of exposition.

From the days of Archbishop Laud, the Prelatists (we deny their exclusive claim to the title of *Episcopalians*), the Prelatists of Scotland (with the exception of Leighton, who retired in disgust at their proceedings, and Charteris, with a few others, who refused the Test) were not only Arminian in their doctrine, but quite prepared to symbolize and coalesce with Popery, had James succeeded in his designs,—not so much from conviction, as from absolute lack of all principle, and

* Sir G. Mackenzie's Vindication, p. 7.

abundant attachment to their benefices.* Scottish Prelacy, indeed, has ever betrayed a strong leaning towards Popery; and as this proved its ruin at the Revolution, so it is one of the most hopeful symptoms of its being destined never to rise again, that its efforts to do so, in modern times, have been marked by the same fatal predilection.† Our danger unquestionably lies in the plausible pretensions of a "moderate Episcopacy."

As the termination of its reign approached, Prelacy again dipped its hands in blood. After all others had ceased to hold field-meetings, contented with the liberty they enjoyed, or unwilling to expose themselves and their hearers to almost certain destruction, by maintaining an unequal war with the royal forces, one individual alone continued to outbrave the fury of the Government by persevering in the practice. This was Mr James Renwick. Born of poor but pious parents, he was early devoted to the work of the ministry, and after finishing his course at the university, he went abroad, and received license in the United Provinces. In September 1683, he returned to Scotland, and joining himself to the Society People, became their minister. With the ardour of youth, and the zeal of a martyr, he entered into all the extreme measures of his party; he penned the Sanquhar declaration, and preached with great keenness against all who accepted the various indulgences and tolerations of the period. It may be easily conceived that such a

* See Letter of the Scots Bishops to the King, Nov. 3, 1688, in Wodrow, iv. p. 408; Cook's Hist., iii. pp. 436, 437.

† See Appendix, Note C, *Semi-Popery of Scottish Prelacy.*

character would be specially obnoxious to the Government. Young as he was, they thirsted eagerly for his blood, and set a high price upon his head. After a variety of hair-breadth escapes, he was at last apprehended in the beginning of February 1688. When brought before the Council, he boldly avowed his principles, disowning the authority of the king, and acknowledging that he taught his people that it was unlawful to pay cess, and lawful to come in arms to the field-meetings to defend themselves against the king's forces. The Council, struck with his ingenuousness and extreme youth, employed various methods to induce him to qualify or retract these sentiments, but in vain. He stood firm, and was brought to the scaffold. There he displayed the same noble intrepidity of mind, mingled with a spirit of cheerful and elevated devotion. "Lord," he said, in his last prayer, "I die in the faith that thou wilt not leave Scotland, but that thou wilt make the blood of thy witnesses to be the seed of thy Church, and return again and be glorious in this land. Now, Lord, I am ready; the bride, the Lamb's wife, hath made herself ready!" He died, February 18, 1688, in the 26th year of his age.*

We are told that "the drums beat all the time, from his first ascending the scaffold, till he was cast over, without intermission." The Government were too conscious of the injustice of their cause, and too much afraid of the impression likely to be produced by the home truths which came from the lips of this faithful witness, to allow him to be heard. But they

* Life and Death of James Renwick, by Shields, Biograph. Presby., vol. ii.; Wodrow, iv. 445.

failed to stifle his testimony; and his death may be said to have sealed their doom. He was the last that suffered martyrdom in Scotland. May God grant he may be the last that ever will!

"During these twenty-eight years of persecution, it is computed that not less than 18,000 people suffered death, or the utmost hardships and extremities, on account of religion. Of these, about 1700 were banished to the Plantations; and of this number, 200 were lost in shipwreck, by the carelessness, or rather, as it appears, the cruelty of the seamen. About 750 were banished to the northern islands, and doomed to wear out a miserable existence on these then unpeopled shores. Those, in addition, who suffered imprisonment, and the privations accompanying it, are computed at above 2800. Those killed in the several skirmishes and insurrections, are reckoned at 680, and those who went into voluntary banishment about 7000. About 498 were murdered in cold blood; 362 were executed by form of law. The number of those who perished through cold, hunger, and other privations, in prison, or in their wanderings upon the mountains, and their residence in caves, cannot be well calculated, but will certainly make up the sum total to the number above specified." *

But, as Defoe has beautifully remarked, "it would

* Scots Worthies, Supplement, p. 568.—The above is given as the fullest summary I have met with of the sufferings of this period. The computation, though probably well founded, is higher than that in other accounts. That given in the "Answer to Presbyterian Eloquence," p. 26, is confessedly imperfect. In a short pamphlet, entitled "Short Memorial of the Sufferings and Grievances of the Presbyterians," printed in 1690, pp. 33-38, the numbers are given as follows:—Banished as slaves, since 1678, 700.—(This does not include those banished before and after the

be endless to enumerate the names of the sufferers; and it has not been possible to come at the certain number of those ministers, or others, who died in prison and banishment,—there being no record preserved of their prosecution in any court of justice; nor could any roll of their names be preserved in those times of confusion any where, but under the altar, and about the throne of the Lamb, where their heads are crowned, and their white robes seen, and where an exact account of their number will at last be found."*

The time, however, was fast approaching when this system of ecclesiastical tyranny, with the civil despotism to which it owed its existence, was doomed to fall. Had James been content to rule according to the laws of the land, and to enjoy the exercise of his own religion, no prince bade fairer for a prosperous reign. But when the interests of the kingdom of darkness seem to require it, Satan exacts sacrifices from his slaves far more costly than those usually required from the servants of God. When Christ is to be crucified, or antichrist is to be exalted, the high churchman must renounce his creed, and the liberal statesman his consistency, Herod must sacrifice his animosity to Pilate, and the monarch must risk both life and crown. To secure the triumph of

affair at Pentland.) Slain in the several skirmishes, about 400 some odds. Executed on scaffolds, under colour of law, 140. This, however, does not appear to include those executed by the assizes held in different parts of the country, and by private gentlemen acting under commission. "As for the number of such as have been forced to a voluntary exile to foreign countries," this writer says, "we think it impossible to come to any reckoning of them." Wodrow, who had the best means of information, seems to have despaired of drawing out a complete list of the numbers who suffered during the persecution.

* Memoirs of the Church of Scotland, p. 158.

Popery, James, yielding to the promptings of bigotry and his confessor, rushed on his own ruin. His fourth and last Indulgence brought matters to a crisis. The bishops and clergy of England, animated by a very opposite spirit from that of our Scottish Prelatists, were the first to sound the alarm. The pulpits resounded with their sermons against the approaches and dangers of Popery. James vainly attempted to alarm the clergy, and stop the flame in its progress, by the appointment of a court of commission, for punishing ecclesiastical offences, under the direction of the infamous Jeffreys. The bishop of London being brought before this tribunal, denied the legality of the court, and pled that he was subject, in the discharge of his duty, to his ecclesiastical superiors alone. Other six of the bishops, for petitioning against the contemplated innovations, were thrown into the Tower. From that moment the fate of the house of Stuart was sealed. James fell a victim to his own infatuated policy, by attempting to subvert the freedom and religion of the country, and establish Popery on the basis of arbitrary power.

In Scotland, as the hour of deliverance approached, a gloomy and portentous cloud hung over the nation. Every thing seemed prepared for the re-establishment of Popery. The highest places of power and trust were in the hands of avowed Papists. Many of our nobility and gentry had already joined the Church of Rome. Swarms of Jesuits and seminary priests were daily coming over. Popish schools were set up at Holyroodhouse, and Popish tracts were busily circulated. The booksellers' shops were ransacked for all

works against Popery, which were strictly prohibited, on the ground of their reflecting against "the king's religion." A feeling of mingled suspicion and alarm pervaded all classes; even a cross look would expose a man to danger. But when hope was at the lowest, and the cloud at the darkest, it pleased Divine Providence to send deliverance. In January 1689, the tyrant James fled from the country, and was succeeded on the throne by King William, amidst the acclamations of an emancipated people. Presbytery was restored to the Church, and liberty to the nation, of Scotland; and the sufferings of a twenty-eight years' persecution were terminated by a bloodless and glorious REVOLUTION.

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX.

NOTE A, p. 88.

MR TYTLER'S CHARGE AGAINST JOHN KNOX.

Mr P. Fraser Tytler, in his "History of Scotland," has advanced a very serious charge against Knox, of having been guilty of accession to the murder of David Riccio. This extraordinary charge is founded on an unsubscribed and unauthenticated list of the conspirators, which Mr Tytler found attached by a pin to a document in the State Paper Office, and in which list was included the name of John Knox. The proof furnished by this list, though contradicted not only by all we know of the Reformer's character, but by another list discovered in the same Office, which is well authenticated, and does not contain the name of Knox, and by the explicit disavowal of the conspirators themselves, Mr Tytler attempts to confirm by conjectures drawn from the supposed sentiments and feelings of the Reformer, and his connection with those engaged in the conspiracy. In reply to this charge, the author of the foregoing pages inserted a letter in the "Witness," which appeared in other newspapers at the time, and led to a correspondence with Mr Tytler. That correspondence the author has been urgently requested to subjoin to the present work; a request with which he the more willingly complies, as, besides the importance of the subject, it may serve to show how much truth there is in the assertion, which has been made in certain periodicals, —that Mr Tytler's charge has never been answered. It has been answered by others, as well as in the following com-

munication, in which, as the author has every reason to believe, he merely gave expression to the feelings and convictions of the Presbyterians of Scotland.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE WITNESS.

SIR,—In the seventh volume of his History of Scotland, lately published, Mr P. Fraser Tytler has broadly charged the Protestant ministers, and particularly John Knox, with having been privy to the murder of David Riccio. The importance which he himself attaches to his discovery of "this fact, now stated," as he affirms rather hastily, "for the first time," appears from his formal announcement of it in his preface, and the space which he has devoted, in his proofs and illustrations, to the confirmation of the charge. As it has been quoted with no small triumph in some newspapers, and none have come forward in defence of the Reformer, I hope you will grant me the privilege of your columns for a few remarks on what I consider a most groundless and unwarranted aspersion.

Mr Tytler begins by stating "the popular belief on this point," in the language of Dr M'Crie:—"There is no reason to think that he (Knox) was privy to the conspiracy which proved fatal to Riccio. But it is probable that he had expressed his satisfaction at an event which contributed to the safety of religion and of the commonwealth, if not also his approbation of the conduct of the conspirators." This is quoted from "the Life of Knox, edited by Dr Crichton," which, it is well known, is merely a reprint of the *first* edition, with some notes taken from subsequent editions. The second edition of Knox, from the numerous additions and amendments made in the text, might be said to be almost a new work. I must suppose that Mr Tytler was not aware of this fact when quoting, as he does throughout the whole of this discussion, from Dr Crichton's edition; for it is not generally held to be courteous dealing in the literary world to quote from a brother author's first edition, more especially in a historical work which has reached the sixth. The consequence is, as we shall see, that the author's latest discoveries and conclusions are not fairly given. Meantime, I may state, that in the fifth edition of the Life of Knox, the last published under the author's own

eye, the latter part of the sentence quoted above runs thus: "If not also his approbation of *the object of the conspiracy.*"—Vol. ii. 146, sixth edition, p. 294. What this "object" was, of which Knox approved, will afterwards appear.

The only piece of evidence really original, on which Mr Tytler founds his charge, that Knox "was precognizant of the intended murder," is a stray slip of paper, which he found "pinned to" a letter of Randolph to Cecil, in the State Paper Office, purporting to be a list of "such as were consenting to the death of David," or "privy thereunto," and containing, among other names, those of "John Knox and John Craig, preachers." This list he supposes to be in the hand-writing of a clerk employed by the Earl of Bedford, then at Berwick; and having farther, as he thinks, discovered that Bedford and Randolph were made acquainted with the conspiracy against Riccio, he concludes that this was an authentic list of those implicated in the murder. This is the first time, I believe, that the public were ever required to credit a charge so seriously affecting the character of any individual, on the faith of a bit of paper, without seal or signature, tacked by a pin to another document. But granting that Mr Tytler is as correct as he is confident in asserting the genuineness of this list, I beg to observe, 1*st*, That the list bears internal evidence of having been drawn up in haste, and without correct knowledge of the particulars. It concludes with these words,—"All these were at the death of Davy and privy thereunto, and are now in displeasure with the Q., and their houses taken and spoiled." On which Mr Tytler remarks,—"It is certain this cannot mean that all whose names are to be found in the list were personally present at the act of the murder; it should be understood to mean, that all these were at the murder of Davy, *or* privy thereto." Now, allowing this to be quite "certain," I ask, was it true that *John Craig* was "in displeasure with the Queen," or that *his* "house was taken and spoiled?" So far from this, we know that Craig was rather a favourite with the Queen; that he remained in town quietly discharging his duties, and suffered no molestation from her. Must we, then, insert another convenient *or*, and suppose that this bungling clerk of the pin meant to say, "*or* are now in displeasure with the Queen," &c., intending still that Craig was privy to the murder of Davy? If so, I

have just as good reason to contend that the last clause should be interpreted in favour of Knox, and to allege that "it should be understood to mean," that "all these were either privy to the murder, *or* are now in displeasure with the Queen;" which last supposition certainly was true, so far as Knox was concerned. Mr Tytler seems to have overlooked the purpose for which he himself has said this document was promised; he would represent it as a confidential list of the conspirators, prepared by Randolph, from his previous knowledge of, or communication with the parties; whereas, it appears from Bedford's previous letter to Cecil, that what they promised to send him was an account of "such as be now gone abroad,"—*i. e.*, fled to different parts on the Queen's approach to Edinburgh. Knox, we know, was one of these; and there can be little doubt, that this circumstance alone, conveyed to them by report, induced Randolph, or the clerk, to add his name and that of Craig, as fugitives, to the list of those implicated in the plot; though, from the distance at which they lived from the scene, their information was, in one point at least, incorrect. This is farther confirmed by the fact, that the list is far from being a complete one. It contains only sixteen names; whereas, in the "Charge on the persons delated for the slaughter of Riccio," issued 19th March, there are no less than seventy-one, including lords, knights, and servants, all of whom had fallen "in displeasure with the Queen," and were "gone abroad,"—though neither Knox nor Craig are mentioned among them. —*Keith*, App. 130. Randolph's letter is written on the 21st March, and yet even then the writer of this is ignorant of the real state of matters. So much for the pinned list.

2. Mr Tytler has discovered another list of those implicated in the plot, in which no mention is made of Knox or Craig. One would suppose that this might have satisfied him that the former one was incorrect; but with a singular pertinacity, which I leave the reader to characterise, he labours to prove that the pinned document was the genuine list, and the other a corrected copy. For this preference he has given us no reason but his own conjectures, founded on the circumstances that the first was sent to Cecil confidentially, while the other was to be submitted to the Council of England; and that Morton and Ruth-

ven, in sending their account of the matter, desired Cecil to "amend and qualify any thing he thought extreme or rudely handled;" from which very natural request, Mr Tytler infers it to be likely that they would provide him with an amended list of the conspirators! They would, says he, "have an especial object in keeping the names of Knox and Craig out of the list." And of this object we are required to judge from the following sentence:— "It is come to our knowledge," they say to Cecil, "that some Papists have bruited that these our proceedings have been at the instigation of the ministers of Scotland. We assure your Lordship, however, upon our honour, that there were none of them art nor part of that deed, nor were participate thereof." Words could not be more precise; and, let it be observed, they occur, not in a letter sent to the Council of England, but to Cecil, their confidential correspondent. And yet, though Mr Tytler takes advantage of this distinction to charge these noblemen with having garbled the list, when his object was to inculpate Knox and the ministers, he will allow no weight to it in this case where the effect would be to exculpate them. On the contrary, he actually supposes that, writing to their friend Cecil, they attempted to palm upon him a deliberate falsehood; and he quotes it as only affording an evidence that they had an object in keeping the ministers' names out of the list! Not content with this, he attempts to find an equivocation in the words "art and part;" because, forsooth, Morton, before his execution, fourteen years after, denied he was guilty art and part in Darnley's murder, although he subsequently confessed he foreknew and concealed it. I may safely leave it to all unbiassed readers to say, if such an interpretation can, with any fairness or feasibility, be put on the language of a private and confidential letter, so solemnly denying that the ministers had used any influence to instigate the proceedings against Riccio, or had any share or participation in them.

3. Mr Tytler, like all the partizans of Mary, would fain make it appear that the murder of Riccio, with all its horrible accompaniments, had been deliberately planned long before; whereas, he must surely be aware, that there is the strongest evidence for believing, that the conspirators intended only to bring him to public execution, and that the scene in the Queen's chamber was entirely owing to

the hot-headed King, whose jealousy and hatred of the wretched minion would admit of no delay, and hurried the matter to a premature issue. Spottiswood tells us that the slaughter of Riccio was committed in the outer chamber or gallery of the palace, by the retainers of the nobles, "who had no commandment from the contrivers so to kill him, it being their purpose to have brought him to public execution, which they knew would have been to all people a most grateful spectacle." The same account is given by Knox, Buchanan, and all except those whose object it was to exaggerate matters. Ruthven "takes God to record, that none of these horrid things were meant or done" which the Queen and her friends published on the subject; he desired his accomplices only to "carry the man down to the King's chamber." And Dr M'Crie has added, in a note, which Mr Tytler might have seen, had he consulted any other than the first edition of the "Life of Knox," that "Douglas of Lochleven, who was engaged in the combination against Riccio, says that it was their purpose to have 'punished him by order of justice, but men proponit, and God disponit otherways, by sic extraordinar means, quhilk truly my own heart abhorred when I saw him; for I never consented that he should have been used by (beside) justice, neither was it in any nobleman his mind.'" —Vol. ii. p. 145. This seems to prove distinctly that there was no original intention, even among the conspirators, to assassinate Riccio; nor is this contradicted either by the articles of agreement with the King, or the bond of assurance, as might easily be shown. How much less reason have we for imagining that the ministers of Edinburgh contemplated such a deed! The real object of the conspiracy was, to secure the restoration of the banished lords, and, in this way, the establishment of the Protestant religion against the plot which had been formed for its extirpation,—an object which the contrivers, it appears, thought they could not accomplish without the execution of Riccio. Although, therefore, it should be granted, in the absence of all positive evidence, and merely on the presumptions stated by Mr Tytler, that Knox was apprised by some of his friends of the existence of such a conspiracy, he may be supposed to have approved of its ultimate *object* without being charged with foreknowledge of what he himself calls the "marvellous tragedy," which even

some of the actual conspirators never contemplated, and which took the whole nation by surprise. In the same light it was, doubtless, regarded by Randolph and Cecil, by Murray, and the other banished noblemen. But unwilling to occupy a single inch of space in your paper beyond what is requisite for the present purpose, I forbear to say more on this point. With regard to Knox's sentiments on the delicate subject of tyrannicide, on which his accuser builds so much, I shall add nothing to what my father has said; only one cannot help smiling to see the use which Mr Tytler makes of the admission, that Knox might have approved of the slaughter of Riccio "so far as it was the work of God," by insinuating that he "gave a silent consent to it, so far as he considered it the work of God," before the work was done! This is certainly an odd way of approving of the Divine procedure in providence. Besides, even Knox's approbation of the deed *when done*, would afford no ground for Mr Tytler's allegation. Because Mr Chalmers in his "Caledonia," and Sir Walter Scott in his "Minstrelsy," have expressed their high admiration of the dastardly Hamilton, who assassinated "the Good Regent" Murray, am I warranted to conclude that these gentlemen were quite capable of being privy to such another diabolical murder?

4. The interpretation which Mr Tytler puts on the fast which happened to be held in Edinburgh at the time of Riccio's death, is nothing new; he has been anticipated here by poor Walter Goodall, who pretended to see no other design in the lessons and prayers which were ordered to be used on that occasion, than to prepare for the murder of "Seignor Davie." The fact, however, is, that this fast was appointed in December of the preceding year, when no such event was contemplated. The ministers did not conceal their objects in appointing this service. They boldly avowed that their desire was to have the banished lords restored; and when it is considered, that a bloody plot had been devised by the Guises, and signed by Queen Mary, having for its object the *extirpation of all Protestants*, it is not easy to say where they could have found passages of Scripture more suited to their circumstances than those which spoke of the plots and cruelties of the ancient enemies of Israel. I shall only add, that it seems passing strange, that Mr Tytler should have adverted so slightingly

as he has done, to one plot, with the Queen at its head, which, if it had succeeded, according to the designs of the conspirators, would have involved Scotland and England in one mass of carnage—and should have reserved all his indignation for another plot, with the King at its head, which issued only in the barbarous execution of a despicable menial of the Court.

5. The last, and indeed the only thing in the shape of evidence adduced by Mr Tytler, is the fact, that Knox, on the approach of the Queen to Edinburgh, retired to Kyle. This is no new charge. It was first stated by Keith (p. 333), and is repeated by Goodall (i. 257), that Knox "hid himself in the west country, thereby plainly taking upon him to have been one of the contrivers (at least abettors) of the ungodly deed." It is rather fatal, however, to the hypothesis of these writers, that it is not supported by a single contemporary authority. Neither Sir James Melville, Lord Herries, the author of Memoirs of James the Sext, Sir James Balfour, Buchanan, Spottiswood, nor any writer of the period whom I have met with, many of them sufficiently willing to tell, had it been suspected, have hazarded such a conjecture. Knox himself gives a sufficient reason for his flight on the approach of the incensed Queen: "All that knew of her cruel pretence and hatred towards them flew here and there." Mr Tytler says, he "fled in extreme agony of spirit;" and refers, in proof of this, to "his prayer added" (prefixed) "to his answer to Tyrie." It is plain he never saw more of that prayer than what is quoted in the Life of Knox, and doubtful, if he did, whether he might not have misunderstood it. The sins over which Knox there mourns, are "chiefly those, whereof the warld," he says, "are not able to accuse me." The prayer breathes the spirit of Christian resignation, and that ardent desire to be released from the troubles of this life, which he so often expressed. What Mr Tytler sneeringly calls his "extreme agony of spirit," was grief for the situation of his flock, his wife, and children. "Tyrie, in his reply, scoffs at this amiable expression of piety," says Dr M'Crie, "and in so doing, the Jesuit discovers that he was as great a stranger to conjugal and parental feelings as he was to the rules of logic."—Vol. ii. 209 (not in first edition).

I must not intrude longer on the patience of your readers by adducing the contrary evidence which might be fur-

nished against this charge, but cannot refrain from quoting the testimony of his secretary—"good, godly Richart Bannatyne"—who may be supposed to have known his master's character better than Mr Tytler. When Knox was accused by Robert Hamilton of St Andrews, of being "as great a murtherer as any Hamilton in Scotland, and, therefore, suld not cry out so fast against murtherers, he being privy to an attempt to assassinate Darnley at Perth," the Reformer no sooner heard of the charge, than he challenged the defamer to make it good, and Hamilton was glad to retract. Upon which Bannatyne said to him, "Gif I knew my maister to be sic a man, I wold not serve him for all the geir in Sanct Andrews."—*Ban. Memorials*, p. 261. Of the character of Mr Tytler's attempt to fix this stigma on our illustrious Reformer, I shall say nothing. It seems very much of a piece with his charge against the martyr Wishart, which proved a complete failure. And I am much deceived if this renewed attack on our Reformers will redound much more to his credit.—I am yours, &c.

THOMAS M'CRIE.

George Square, Dec. 2, 1840.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CALEDONIAN MERCURY.

SIR,—In the "Caledonian Mercury" of the 14th December 1840, which has been sent to me here, I find a letter from Mr Thomas M'Crie, the son of the late learned biographer of Knox, in which, in answer to some remarks I had made, in the seventh volume of my History of Scotland, on the accession of Knox to the conspiracy for the murder of David Riccio, he accuses me of having sneered at the Reformer's grief, and scoffed at his amiable expressions of piety. Such is the only sense that I can attach to the following passage:—"Mr Tytler says, he (Knox) 'fled in extreme agony of spirit,' and refers, in proof of this, to his 'prayer added (prefixed) to his answer to Tyrie.' It is plain he never saw more of that prayer than is quoted in the Life of Knox, and doubtful, if he did, whether he might not have misunderstood it. The sins over which Knox there mourns, are chiefly those 'whereof the world,' he says, 'are not able to accuse me.' The prayer breathes the spirit of Christian resignation, and that ardent desire to be

released from the troubles of this life, which he so often expressed. What Mr Tytler sneeringly calls his 'extreme agony of spirit,' was grief for the situation of his flock, his wife, and children. 'Tyrie, in his reply (says Dr M'Crie), scoffs at this amiable expression of piety, and in so doing the Jesuit discovers that he was as great a stranger to conjugal and parental feelings as he was to the rules of logic.'"

In reply to this strange passage I beg to assure Mr M'Crie, that I read the prayer of Knox to which he alludes, and which was first pointed out to me by his father's work, *in the original*, that I weighed it with attention, and on its evidence stated, that Knox fled from Edinburgh in great agony of spirit. There is not in the sentence in which I have mentioned this fact, nor in the whole historical remarks on the assassination of Riccio, one word which can by any ingenuity be strained into a sneer or a scoff against the Reformer. Indeed, it was not possible there should be; for I can say, with great sincerity, that these remarks, and the whole narrative regarding the accession of the Protestants to this conspiracy, were written with a single eye to the discovery of the truth, under a feeling of deep responsibility in bringing forward evidence which implicated a great man, and with a wish to weigh all in the balance of impartiality and charity.

I am quite aware that I am in no way entitled to complain that my arguments should have failed in convincing Mr M'Crie, or any one else; but I *have* a right to complain when a gentleman who is, if I am not mistaken, a minister of the Church of Scotland, comes forward, and in a public paper represents me as a sneerer and scoffer upon subjects which I hold as sacred as he does himself.

I call upon Mr M'Crie, therefore, by the name he bears —a name which I have never alluded to without respect— to retract, as publicly as it has been made, an expression which has, no doubt, hastily escaped him; and when this is done, I promise to show him that he has been equally hurried in his defence of the Reformer, and that the main argument upon which he relies is erroneous and untenable. —I am, Sir, your very obedient servant,

PATRICK FRASER TYTLER.

Devonshire Place, London,
December 21, 1840.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CALEDONIAN MERCURY.

SIR,—In your paper of Thursday last, I observe a letter from Mr Patrick Fraser Tytler, in which, referring to mine which lately appeared in your columns, that gentleman complains that I have accused him "of having sneered at the Reformer's (John Knox's) grief, and scoffed at his amiable expressions of piety," and concludes by "calling upon Mr M'Crie to retract as publicly as it has been made an expression which has no doubt hastily escaped him;" adding, "when this is done, I promise to show him that he has been equally hurried in his defence of the Reformer." Granting, Sir, that I had been guilty of the piece of indiscretion here complained of, it appears somewhat extraordinary that Mr Tytler should suspend his reply to a vindication of Knox from a charge so deeply affecting not only the honour of the Reformer, but indirectly that of the Protestant cause, upon such a condition. But waiving this, I beg to say that I never represented, nor meant to represent, Mr Tytler "as a sneerer and scoffer upon sacred subjects." My words were, "What Mr Tytler sneeringly calls 'his extreme agony of spirit,' was grief for the situation of his flock, his wife, and children." And then followed a quotation from the Life of Knox, referring to Tyrie the Jesuit, whom Dr M'Crie accuses of "scoffing at this amiable expression of piety"—my object in introducing which was to show, that this same prayer, to which Mr Tytler alludes, had been misunderstood before, and that Dr M'Crie considered that the grief therein expressed might be easily accounted for by the "conjugal and parental feelings" of the Reformer. Though I cannot see that my language properly admits of the sense which Mr Tytler says is "the only sense" he can attach to it, I regret that the brevity requisite in such communications should have led him to such a conclusion. Indeed, it could hardly have been my intention to charge him with "having sneered or scoffed at expressions of piety," occurring in a prayer, of which I had just stated that I had reason to believe that Mr Tytler "never saw more than is quoted in the Life of Knox;" and to tell the truth, my impression was, from his referring to the Notes in the Life, as his sole authority, that he had, at the time, seen no more of it than what is there quoted, which is, "Now, Lord, put an

end to my miserie." I cannot, therefore, be expected to retract a charge which I never intended to bring.

What I did charge Mr Tytler with, was his having alluded sneeringly, not to the piety, but to the *grief* expressed by Knox in that prayer. And considering that, when Mr Tytler spoke of the Reformer as having "fled in extreme agony of spirit" from Edinburgh to Kyle, he intended to represent him in the light of a criminal fleeing from justice, I still hold that I was entitled to view his language in the light of a sneer, indicating contempt of the feelings of distress which he expresses in that prayer, and insinuating that the "miserie" which he prayed God to "put an end to," arose not from causes such as those assigned in the prayer, for which every pious mind must feel respect, but from remorse, or a cowardly sense of conscious but unconfessed guilt as a murderer. If, however, Mr Tytler means to deny that this was his intention in using the words, as I must suppose from his declaring that, in all he has said, there is "not one word which can by any ingenuity be strained into a sneer or scoff against the Reformer," I am bound to acknowledge my mistake; and rather than stand in the way of his promised demonstration, willingly express my regret that I should have so understood his meaning.

I may be allowed to add, that I carefully endeavoured to avoid, in my letter, the least expression of personal disrespect for Mr Tytler, not less from regard for his own character, and the uniform respect with which he alludes to the name of my father, than from aversion to mingle with this question the asperities of private controversy. Mr Tytler's "impartiality and charity," as a writer, are fair subjects of dispute, and must be tried by another standard than his own professions. Meanwhile, before again bringing, or attempting to substantiate such serious charges against our Reformers, he may learn, perhaps, to improve still more in these cardinal virtues of the historian, by finding how easily a charge may be brought against himself, of which he is consciously innocent; and how deeply he feels himself aggrieved by being even suspected of sneering at the piety of the man whom he charges with accession to a barbarous murder.—I am, Sir, your most obedient servant,

THOMAS M'CRIE.

George Square, Dec. 25, 1840.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CALEDONIAN MERCURY.

SIR,—I have read last night in the "Caledonian Mercury" of the 26th December, Mr M'Crie's second letter on the subject of Knox and Riccio. He there states, that he never meant to accuse me of sneering at the Reformer's "piety," but at his "grief," and adds, that if this was not my intention, he willingly expresses his regret for having misunderstood my meaning. This explanation I readily accept. I beg again to affirm, that I had not the slightest intention of conveying a sneer either at the piety or the grief of the Reformer, and that, having carefully read over the passage in question, with a wish to alter, in a subsequent edition, any words to which this meaning might be attached, I am unable to find them.

And now, Sir, having had an opportunity of distinctly disclaiming a groundless imputation, I must be permitted to close the *public* part of this correspondence. I have promised to show Mr M'Crie that he has been hurried in his defence of the Reformer, and that the main argument upon which he relies is erroneous. This, however, I purpose to do, not by entering into a newspaper controversy, a method ill adapted for the discovery of truth, and quite uncongenial to my habits, but by communicating to him some additional remarks and extracts, which probably I shall afterwards publish.

I have, in conclusion, Sir, only to express my best thanks to you for the insertion of my letters, and to subscribe myself, your very obedient servant,

PATRICK FRASER TYTLER.

London, 34, *Devonshire Place*,
Dec. 30, 1840.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CALEDONIAN MERCURY.

SIR,—Mr Patrick Fraser Tytler has transmitted to me, according to his promise, some remarks on my defence of KNOX, with the view of convincing me that I have been "hurried" in that attempt; and as this promise was publicly given, I consider it my duty to state, with equal publicity, and without saying any more at present, that,

so far from convincing me, Mr Tytler has not touched the main points on which I relied, and has only confirmed me in the persuasion, that his charge against Knox is unsupported by any evidence worthy of credit.—I remain, yours, &c. THOMAS M'CRIE.

George Square, Feb. 8, 1841.

Here ends the published correspondence. With regard to the *private* communication referred to in the last letter, as Mr Tytler did not appear to wish or expect its publication by me (whatever use he may intend to make of it in his second edition), I shall refrain from publishing it here. His courtesy in the whole of this correspondence I most gratefully acknowledge. But after Mr Tytler having apprised the public of his intention to transmit to me documents which would convince me that I had been "hurried" in my defence of Knox, and that my "main argument is erroneous and untenable," it would be leaving him an unfair advantage in the controversy, were I to say nothing more than that he had failed in convincing my mind. I shall, herefore, take the liberty of giving the purport of his communication, and the substance of my reply to it.

The documents which Mr Tytler sent me referred *exclusively* to one of my statements—namely, that *even granting* that Knox was apprised beforehand of the conspiracy against Riccio (of which there is not the slightest credible or satisfactory proof), it did not follow that he consented to the *murder* of that person, inasmuch as there was strong evidence that the conspirators themselves did not originally, or unanimously, contemplate his murder at all. In opposition to this, which the reader will perceive was a mere subordinate part of the defence, but which Mr Tytler is pleased to call my "main argument," the extracts which he sent were intended to show, that Ruthven and Morton, with the other conspirators, had resolved, some time before, on the assassination of Riccio; and that their resolution was known to Randolph and Cecil. .This is the sole purport of Mr Tytler's private communication.

In reply to this, after expressing my regret that, the charge against the Reformer being public, Mr Tytler should have contented himself with a private answer to the defence, and my fears that such a method would neither

do justice to the memory of the Reformer, nor give satisfaction to the public,—there being many besides me who required to be convinced of the truth of his allegation,—I remarked, in substance, that his documents still left room for the supposition, which rests on the best authority, that the conspirators did *not* at first contemplate the murder of Riccio. The reports of the murderous designs *of the king* against Riccio had no doubt reached the ears of the English diplomatists, for he took very little pains to conceal them. But that even Ruthven, the chief person to whom the king communicated his purpose, neither wished nor projected the tragical result, appears from his own account:—"The said Lord Ruthven *counselled him to the contrary*, and thought it not decent that he should put hand on such a mean person;" but the king persisting in his design, "Ruthven affixed a day whereon David should be slain, *though he would have him rather to be judged by the nobility.*"—*Keith*, Append. 121. That the *other* conspirators (if such they can be called) were taken by surprise, appears very evident from the language of Douglas of Lochleven, who was one of them. I give the whole passage relating to the subject from the original manuscript. It is a striking passage, and exhibits the light in which good men at the time viewed the event, both as the doing of man, and as the "disponing" of Providence,—in the former point of view distinctly condemning it, and in the latter acknowledging the influence of the prayers of the Church in effecting the deliverance which followed, in terms so simple and devout, that he must be singularly prejudiced indeed who would construe them into an approbation of the crime which was overruled for good:—"The king, the queen's husband, noways content with him (Riccio) that he should pretend to rule, [and] that he could get nothing donne for him at the queen's hand, took purpose by [advice] of som other lords of the religion, as the Earl of Morton, the Lord Ruthven, Lindsay, the Secretary, and diverse barons, and was of purpose to have given him and punished him by order of justice. But *men proponit* and *God disponit* otherways, by some extraordinar means, which truly my own heart abhorrit, when I saw him; for *I never consentit that he should be used by* (beside or against) *justice, neither was it in any nobleman his mind.* But always (nevertheless) it stayed the forfeiture

of the noblemen of the religion at that time ; *and the fasts and prayers of the Kirk were heard, which never returnit fra God in vain.*"—*Lochleven Papers*, in possession of the Earl of Morton.

To this I may now add the testimony of David Hume of Godscroft, who may be almost termed a cotemporary historian, and possessed the best means of information. He tells us that the noblemen had determined that Riccio " should be carried to the city, and *have his trial by assize*, and so *legally and formally* (for they had matter enough against him) condemned and executed at the market-cross of Edinburgh." On apprehending him, however, at the palace, which they were obliged to do by the king's orders, their attendants, hearing the noise of scuffling made by Huntly and Bothwell in the court below, and " not knowing what it might import, but fearing that he might be rescued from them, fell upon him and stabbed him with their daggers, *sore against the will, and besides the intention of Morton and the rest of the noblemen*, who thought to have caused execute him upon the scaffold, so to have gratified the common people, to whom it would have been a most acceptable and pleasant sight."—*Hume's History of the House of Douglas and Angus*, vol. ii. p. 159–161. Speaking of Hume, Mr Pinkerton says, " This writer, who composed his work about the year 1630, has often original and authentic information."—*Hist. of Scotland*, vol. i. p. 216. " It is true," says Dr M'Crie, " that Hume lived nearly to the year 1630, and might finish his history in his old age ; but he was born between 1550 and 1560. Being the confidential adviser and agent, as well as the kinsman of Archibald (the third of that name) Earl of Angus, he had access to the family papers of that nobleman, and to other valuable sources of intelligence."—*Life of Melville*, vol. ii. p. 436. Writing of him, Andrew Melville says, " I love the sincere zeal and undaunted spirit of that excellent man, and upright friend. Would to God that the equestrian, not to say the ecclesiastical order, could boast of many Godscrofts !" I take the liberty of saying, that the testimony of such a writer is infinitely more worthy of confidence, and more likely to contain the truth, than any flying reports, which, caught up by a stranger, and hastily transmitted to his correspondents without much examination, may have found their way into the State Paper Office.

With all the facts on both sides now before him, every reader may form his own theory of the matter. To us it appears very plain, that the king alone was bent on murder, —that some of the lords, rather than not compass their ends—the removal of Riccio, and the return of their friends —were willing to humour him, though their wishes pointed another way; that these, knowing the king's temper, and not being sure what might happen in the scuffle, took the precaution of getting a document under the king's hand which might secure them in any event; that some others of them, owing to circumstances or known character, were not intrusted with the secret of a bloody chance at all; that, *a fortiori*, the ministers and Knox were in this last predicament; that, if apprized of any such design at all, it is highly improbable they were let deeper into the mystery than that a plot was in agitation, which was to issue in the seizure of the favourite, and his being dealt with according to law; but that afterwards, people who knew little of the minute history of the event, and cared little for the character of the implicated parties, above all, who had no objection to attach a stigma to the ministers, ascribed the crime of the few to all who were suspected of being cognizant of any part of the plot, or who had any interest, near or remote, in its issues.

But even granting what Mr Tytler is so anxious to prove, that there had been a formed and fixed purpose that Riccio should be *assassinated*, this does not affect the "main argument" in my vindication, which rests on the glaring invalidity and inconclusiveness of the only piece of evidence upon which Mr Tytler attempts to implicate Knox in the guilt of accession to the murder. That evidence, we repeat, does not go beyond the miserable scrap of paper which he found pinned (by some person unknown) to a document in the State Paper Office, in which paper is a list (written by some person unknown) containing the names of Knox and Craig among the conspirators who had fled. The incorrectness of this unsubscribed and suspicious paper has been shown, from its containing the name of Craig, who was never suspected of the plot, and never left the city. It is disproved by an authenticated list of the conspirators, in which no mention is made, either of Knox or Craig, and by the official lists of the proscribed individuals, published after the whole plot had been re-

vealed by the king to Mary, who would have gladly availed herself of the slightest pretext to have involved John Knox in the odium and guilt of the conspiracy. And it is distinctly contradicted by the conspirators themselves, who declare that the ministers had no share whatever in aiding or abetting the transaction. Beyond this, in all that Mr Tytler says, there is an entire want, not only of proof, but of an attempt at proof, that the lords made Knox cognizant of their designs. And yet, without attempting to support the authority of this unauthenticated, disproved, and contradicted document, Mr Tytler contents himself with attacking a mere collateral statement, to which the advocate of Knox might have had recourse, on the supposition that his accuser had proved him to have been cognizant of the conspiracy, but which, properly speaking, forms no necessary part of his defence from the charge. The reader is left to draw his own conclusions.

The conjectures drawn from Knox's sentiments, interests, and connections, by which Mr Tytler attempts to support his charge, are unworthy of farther notice. Mr Tytler may entertain the opinion that murder was not so alien to Knox's principles, but that he might know of the purpose to slaughter Riccio. But that is merely Mr Tytler's opinion; and the opinion that a man of Knox's piety, prudence, and intelligence, was not likely to be a party to such a proceeding, is at least equally deserving of credit. That there exists in the breasts of some in our day, as there certainly did in his own day, an *animus* against the Reformer, which prepares them for believing, on the slightest evidence, or what has the appearance of evidence, that he was capable of the most monstrous crimes, we have no doubt. But we beg to hold Mr Tytler to the point. Before advancing such a serious charge against the Reformer, in an historical work laying any claim to impartiality, he ought to have produced the clearest, the most direct, and the best authenticated proof. Instead of this, his charge hangs by nothing more than the slip of paper already characterised, which, in the opinion of the best judges, has been pronounced as worthless as the pin by which it was preserved from annihilation. It has been justly asked by the talented editor of the "Witness," in his ingenious reflections on this controversy, "What would be thought of a similar accusation in any Justiciary Court in the kingdom,

or where could a jury be found of twelve men, of plain sense, who would not at once dismiss it as frivolous and unfounded, without so much as entering the jury box?"

If this be a specimen of the spirit in which Mr Tytler means to continue his history, we venture to predict, that it will stamp a character on his work which will cast suspicion on every other statement which it contains. Posterity will pay but little regard to charges so slightly supported, even though they may receive the passing smile of party-spirited reviewers. Meanwhile, however, we cannot but regret the injury which must be done to the cause of truth and righteousness, by the revival of such aspersions; not to speak of our historical literature, which is in imminent danger of suffering damage from a trifling and delusive antiquarianism, which leads its votaries to overestimate old manuscripts, and place them above the most accredited documents of history, especially if they happen to be found in a charter chest or a State Paper Office.

I shall only add, that several gentlemen of the highest name in the literary world, and critically versed in our national history, to whom I have submitted the whole of this correspondence, published and unpublished, entirely agree with me in concluding that Mr Tytler has completely failed in his attempt to implicate Knox in this conspiracy, and that the evidence on which he suspends his charge is not entitled to the smallest consideration. Should he return to that charge in a second edition, it may be found advisable to enter into more detail, and to have recourse to some more widely known medium of defence.

NOTE B, p. 494.

EXTREMES REGARDING THE INDULGENCE.

From Mr John Blackader to Mr M'Ward, Dec. 27, 1679.—Wodrow MSS., fol. 59, 129.

"I must crave leave to repeat, that I am more and more convinced, from unquestionable evidence, that as there hath been indeed a grievous defection and stepping aside by

complying with these Indulgences, first and last, and yet like to be worse and worse; so there are some of late that have both spoken and practised so insolidly and inconsiderately (to say no worse), in venting themselves against the same, as have tended more to the strengthening of the opposite party, than to convincing and reclaiming them from their error, as is ever usual by the like practices. That holy and necessary duty of faithful and zealous bearing testimony to the truth and ways of God, and against error and sinful courses, is such a duty as needs to be managed with as much solidity, circumspection, fear and trembling, as any I know. For herein the truth is much concerned, especially when we have to contend with such of whom several are, and otherwise have been eminent and pious, as will not be denied in our case. I say the carriage of some (within these two years), of whom I shall not doubt but they are pious and well-meaning, hath been such in diverse things, as have more irritate and stirred up strife than edified, whereby the former beauty and blessed success of the Gospel at these meetings called conventicles, hath been observed to be much marred and eclipsed, and the Indulged there-through to rest more secure, and put farther from resenting their course and practice; as others, also, who once appeared zealous against the same, have been tempted to turn cool, and some of them stoutly to plead in the behalf of that indulgence; and others, who, I hope, will be found continuing stedfast in their zeal against that course, are much weakened in what weight and authority they might have had in following those more solid means and ways they have used, and were yet intending to use more, in witnessing against that evil, being looked upon by the indulged as approvers of all the extravagant courses of others against them; and, on the other hand, they are branded as unsteadfast and unfaithful cloakers of, and connivers at, the indulgence and indulged, because they do not insist and dwell *ad nauseam* upon this woeful subject, and at the same rate they themselves do, and because they have sometimes freely admonished them to carry with more godly prudence and caution, more conducible to their intended scope. You know it hath been incident to the Church in former times, and will be so long as she is militant, and labouring with many imperfections and byassed inclinations, that in such times of tryall, she hath had, and

readily will have, some that, either out of ignorance, inadvertance, or worse, do precipitate themselves upon extremes and excesses upon the right as well as the left hand. We know, and no doubt yourself also cannot but know, that there is great need, in our days also, to take heed that the way of God (which is strait and lyeth in the just mids), and that which is our good, be not evil spoken of. I will not particularly dip into these differences and debates which fell out amongst that party, before the late disaster at Hamilton (Bothwell Bridge), any farther than to tell you, that, to the best of my information and judgment which I can pass thereupon, these debates were so ill and imprudently managed, and with such furious, hot, peremptory, and needless contentions, by some few on both sides, that it will be hard to give a determinate decision which of the two had most influence on that miscarriage and sad result, wherein the Lord is to be adored in all submission; and all of us have cause to lie in the dust before him upon many accounts."

NOTE C, p. 549.

SEMI-POPERY OF SCOTTISH PRELACY.

In ascribing to Scottish Prelatists a decided leaning to the Church of Rome, I have stated a truth which, there is reason to think, none of them will question, and with which few of them will be offended. It has always been the boast of this section of the Episcopal Church, that they approach nearer, in their forms and doctrines, to the Church of Rome than any other communion. And from the days of James VI., who acknowledged the Church of Rome to be his "mother church, though defiled with some infirmities and corruptions," they have certainly shown a strong disposition, as he expressed it, to "meet her in the midway." An attempt of this kind was made by William Forbes, first bishop of Edinburgh, who died in 1634, in a work which, having been published after his death, in 1658, by Bishop Sydserf, with high approbation, may be fairly viewed as expressing the sentiments of the Scottish

Prelatists of that period. This work is entitled "Considerationes Modestæ et Pacificæ Controversiarum, Justificatione, Purgatorio, Invocatione Sanctorum, Christo Mediatore, et Eucharistia." The general character of this work is thus most justly described by Dr Irving:—"Any honest plan for promoting peace may seem to merit praise; but it is a very indifferent method of securing the peace of the Protestant Church, by offering to meet the Papists half way. This is reforming backwards."—*Lives of Scottish Writers*, vol ii. p. 6. On the point of justification, the doctrine advocated by Bishop Forbes is Arminianism in its grossest form. With regard to prayers for the dead, he holds the practice to be "not only lawful, but in some sort useful to the dead," p. 256; and though, with some Papists, he disclaims an expiatory purgatory, he insists there must be "some middle state, not in heaven, but in some place in the heavens known only to God, where the souls of the departed are perfecting themselves by sad sighs for the full fruition of God. The ancient practice of prayers and offerings for the dead, ought not therefore to be discarded by Protestants as altogether useless," pp. 266, 267. On the intercession of angels and saints, "whatever the more rigid Protestants may have taught," the bishop thinks that "the blessed martyrs and saints are pleading for the Church, and their prayers are far from being useless;" there ought, therefore, to be "a calling unto, rather than a calling upon them, *advocationem potius quam invocationem*," pp. 275, 300. "In the Supper, by the admirable power of the Holy Spirit, we communicate invisibly with the substance of the body of Christ, not otherwise (*haud secus*) than if we visibly did eat and drink his flesh and blood," p. 386. In fine, "the sacrifice offered in the Supper is not only eucharistical, but also, in a sound sense, propitiatory, and may be beneficial, not only to the living but to the dead," p. 466.

From this brief account of Bishop Forbes' work, the reader will perceive that he and his friends were prepared to meet the Papists somewhat more than half way. It is exactly of a piece with the attempts of Thorndike and others in the Church of England, to explain away the doctrinal articles of the Church of Rome. The *altum silentium* he maintains on the power of the Pope, and other points, tells its own tale. Those who have been paying any atten-

tion to the signs of the times will not be surprised to learn that this specimen of the Puseyism of the 17th century, after lying in oblivion for nearly 200 years, has been lately brought into notice by our Scottish Prelatists; and that an advertisement has just appeared, announcing a new edition of the "*Considerationes*," under the auspices of a Presbyter of the Church of England, who assigns as his reason for republishing this work of "the first bishop of Edinburgh after the *desolation* of the Church, the revival in some of a hope, distant and slender, of healing the *mournful schism* which has, for 300 years, rent the Western Church!" This is, in fact, nothing more than was to be expected from the repeated attacks lately made by that party on the character of our reformers, and the venom poured on all who attempt to follow their steps. Every thing seems to be preparing for another and a desperate struggle with the Man of Sin.

NOTE D.

ANALOGIES BETWEEN PAST AND PRESENT TIMES.

I have not thought it necessary to do more than advert, in passing, to the numerous analogies and coincidences which the preceding History of the Church of Scotland presents to the present position and prospects of that Church. Every reader will be able to perceive them, and must draw his own conclusions. But appearing, as this little work does, on the very eve of a crisis which threatens a renewal of the scenes we have been describing, we cannot conclude without noticing the striking parallel between the present times and those particularly of 1662, when by the act of the Privy Council at Glasgow, between 300 and 400 ministers were ejected from their charges for non-compliance with the law of the land re-establishing Prelacy. —P. 401. It is impossible to take up any treatise written about that period, without observing, in the first place, the similarity between the arguments then used by the persecutors, and those now employed against the Church. The following, from a very rare pamphlet, remarkable for

its ability and moderation, which was published in 1677, entitled, "An Apology for, or Vindication of, the Oppressed and Persecuted Ministers and Professors of the Presbyterian Reformed Religion in the Church of Scotland,"* may give some idea of what we allude to:—

"But many place the demerit of these severe punishments in the disobedience of the laws establishing Prelacy,—the now great cry of those engaged in the present course, for justifying of all enormities committed in the administration of government. *Ans.* To this we say, first, that all divines and lawyers assert, if non-obedience be separated from contempt of authority (as in many cases it may be), that the demerit of disobedience is not rigorously to be pursued with punishments." "*Is it not a sad matter in this case, that we meet with no other thing from any, for satisfying of our consciences, and bringing us the length of cheerful obedience to this thing, but the cry, Law, law!* which, in the matters of God, can be no sure bottom to our consciences, seeing we, as Christians, are under a law antecedent and superior to that of men's!"—Pp. 8, 9. "We shall consider next some of these exceptions, most commonly used against us, with which we are publicly and privately branded, for rendering us odious and hateful to all. 1. That we refuse to give that obedience to the magistrate, his laws and commands, that, under pain of damnation, is enjoined to all subjects in the Word of God," &c.—P. 50. "The true state of the question is, whether a Church, constituted according to the rules of the Word, provided and settled with ministers regularly called and submitted to, should yield to the magistrates and prelates *violently ejecting their ministers, and thrusting in other ministers upon her, not only without, but against, her consent.*"—P. 74. "All power of the prelates and their creatures in the Church, is by law fountained in and derived from the magistrate, and in its exercise subordinated to him (as is evident from the *Act of Restitution*, Parl. Carl. 2, Sess. 1). 1. They are expressly made to have a dependence upon, and subordination to, the king, as supreme to them in their Church judicatories and administrations. 2. The government of the Church, in its

* This tract was written by Mr Hugh Smith, minister of Eastwood, assisted by some of his brethren, and particularly by Mr Alexander Jamieson of Govan, "who," says Wodrow, "was justly reckoned one of the acutest philosophers and most solid divines at this time in Scotland."—*Life of James Wodrow, by his son, Robert Wodrow*, p. 54.

ordering and disposing, is annexed to the crown as one royal prerogative thereof. 3. The giving of Church power to Church officers is supposed to be the effect and deed of his laws and acts, *without which all power in the Church is declared to be null and void.*"—Pp. 79, 81. In the *Act against unlawful Ordinations* (as they call them), the ordination of persons to the ministry, by ministers of Jesus Christ that have not conformed to Prelacy, is, *by the sole authority of the magistrate, made void; and all ministerial acts and Church benefits depending thereon, declared to be null.*"—P. 162.

These old acts may probably be found of some use shortly: it seems quite unnecessary to have recourse to new acts of Parliament to accomplish the same work. What part the Church of Scotland may be led to take, in the event of such legislation being revived, remains to be seen. Meanwhile, if the enemies of the Church are to renew the acts which led to the Persecution and issued in the Revolution, it becomes her friends to imitate the fidelity of "the oppressed and persecuted ministers and professors of the Presbyterian reformed religion in the Church of Scotland," and to avoid their mistakes. In this pamphlet there is one thing condemned and lamented in the conduct of ministers and congregations at the crisis of 1662, which deserves attention. The author, while he makes all allowances for the suddenness of the act, and the good intentions of the sufferers, says, "Yet we judge it the infirmity and sin of congregations and ministers, *that they did not cleave to one another as pastors and flocks.* We do not plead for ministers *keeping to the accessories of the ministry,—as kirks, stipends, manses, glebes, &c.*, which were, by divine precept, their *right*, but not in their *power* to hold; but we assert it was sin, that they continued not in the exercise of the ministry, pastoral oversight of the flocks, keeping up the government of the Church, we had been in the possession of; and people's not adhering to their ministers in hearing and receiving of ordinances from them, and not affording them all due encouragement and maintenance, all which was done by ministers and churches in times of sorer persecution than ours."—P. 28.

It is our earnest prayer and hope that the Church of Scotland may be enabled to act a faithful part in this time of trial, of which it may be so truly said, she ought "not to think it strange, as though some strange thing had hap-

pened to her." Her safety obviously lies in returning to the old ground occupied by the martyrs and confessors during the period which forms the latter portion of our history, from 1638 to the Revolution. On no other ground can she surely, successfully, and consistently, advocate or suffer for the principles which she is now endeavouring to defend. From that period down to the present, there has been a gradual declension, from which she is beginning to emerge; and, next to the success of the plots of her enemies, we should deplore her taking her stand on the profession made subsequently to the Revolution. Let us close these sheets with the eloquent conclusion of the pamphlet we have referred to :—

"Oh that all engaged in this war against the Lord and his Anointed, would read and consider the second Psalm, and yet hearken to what is there foretold anent the issue of it, which will be sad and heavy to them that obstinately set themselves in opposition to Christ and his kingdom. Let none that side with Christ in this quarrel be afraid or ashamed to appear in its defence against all sorts of opponents; for as we have the full light and evidence of the Word of God to justify its righteousness from the reproaches of men, so we have the righteous and Almighty God to take our part, who, on the account of his justice and supreme dominion, is engaged to own them that own Him in this cause. In contending for these, we contend not for honours, dignities, and the riches of this world; but only for the laws, ordinances, and servants of Christ Jesus, and that obedience and subjection to him in them that he requires of all in his Word; yea, for the royal dignities and supereminent prerogatives of his righteous and glorious crown, which the Father hath placed on his head, giving him a name above all names,—that in the name of this JESUS all knees should bow, yea, shall bow. Who needs to be afraid who own such a King, and have him on their side, who, in his own person, overcame and triumphed over all his enemies, and yet again will do so in the persons of his weak, contemned, and persecuted servants and people? The Lord build up the walls of Jerusalem, and make her a peaceable habitation! Amen."

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Edinburgh : John Johnstone, Printer, 104, High Street.