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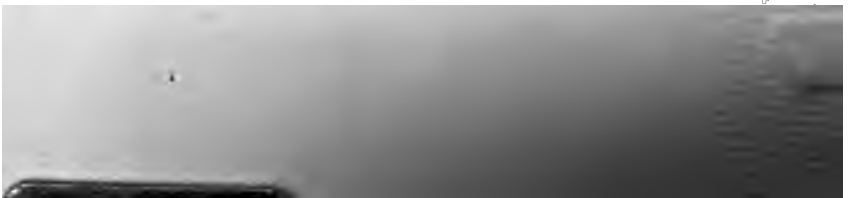
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COVENANTERS OF TEVIOTDALE
AND NEIGHBOURING DISTRICTS

STEWART

1. Covenants.

2. Church History - Gt. Br. - Scotland,
17th century.





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THE COVENANTERS OF TEVIOTDALE.



ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS



From a Photo by

G. A. ROBINSON, HAWICK

Stewart

THE
COVENANTERS OF
TEVIOTDALE

AND NEIGHBOURING DISTRICTS.

BY THE LATE
REV. DUNCAN STEWART, M.A.,
ST ANDREW'S U.F. CHURCH,
HAWICK.

EDITED BY THE
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DENHOLM.

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PREFACE.

THE material for the papers contained in this book was collected in the scanty leisure time of a busy town pastorate, and was given to the public, in the first instance, in the form of popular lectures. These aroused much interest, and a desire for their publication was frequently expressed. Mr Stewart had set himself to comply with this suggestion by recasting the papers and instituting further investigations at the Register House and elsewhere; but, owing to a prolonged illness and the claims of his ministerial charge, the work had been only partly accomplished when his death intervened.

Thereafter, at the request of many who wished to possess the results of her late husband's researches in permanent form, Mrs Stewart resolved to publish a selection of the papers. She did me the honour of asking me to prepare the work for the press. This I have done so far as I could; being led thereto by a great regard for my deceased friend and not by any imagined possession of a special knowledge of the subject.

I found that Chapters I. to VIII., X., XV. to XVIII., had been revised by Mr Stewart; and they are printed very much as they left his hand, save that in some instances, in the interests of space, they have been epitomised when dealing with well-known events. The other papers were still in lecture form and unrevised. These I have gone over with the aid of such books and documents as were available. Some of them are printed in full. In the case of other chapters, portions selected from different lectures, revised and unrevised, have been pieced together by me so as to group as far as possible the facts relating to the various localities.

It must be added that there are frequent acknowledgments in the MSS. of the readiness with which facilities for research were given by the custodians at the Register House and the Advocates' Library, and of the kindness shown by many others in furnishing helpful information.

J. S.

U.F. MANSE,
DENHOLM, *October*, 1908.

*TO THE CONGREGATION
OF
ST ANDREW'S UNITED FREE CHURCH,
HAWICK.*

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REV. DUNCAN STEWART.

A MEMOIR.

THE Rev. Duncan Stewart was born on 18th September, 1841, at Cambushinie, a farm in the parish of Dunblane. A few weeks later he was baptized in Dunblane Cathedral by the Rev. W. Mackenzie, a minister of Evangelical sympathies, who cast in his lot in 1843 with the Free Church of Scotland. Mr Stewart's father, John Stewart, was a farmer in comfortable circumstances, and belonged to that patriarchal type of Scotchmen who, with their sturdy yet warm religious convictions, exercised a very healthful and formative influence in many a country parish of Scotland in the earlier part of last century. On the evening of every week-day, not only the members of the family, but every servant, male and female, connected with the homestead, gathered for family worship; while on Sabbaths the same company came together both morning and evening. Mr Stewart's mother, Catherine Dewar, who was also of the well-to-do farming class, came from Sevre, a farm near Doune. Her son often spoke of her lovingly as being of a God-fearing and sympathetic nature. Deeply imbued with Covenanting sympathies though he was, Mr Stewart used to tell with a touch of humour how his great-grandfather fought on the Jacobite side at Sheriffmuir, and he cherished with some degree of pride part of the belt then worn by this stalwart ancestor.

At the Disruption the family joined the Free Church; and, after the Rev. W. Mackenzie left Dunblane, they had the privilege of being ministered to by another saintly man, the Rev. James D. Burns, whose sweet poems, especially his *Requiem*, Mr Stewart read and loved to the end. One verse in particular he frequently repeated during his last days on earth:—

“Wherefore we will not bewail thee,
But will press the faster on
Till we meet thee, till we hail thee
In the land where thou art gone.”

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Another minister whose influence left its mark upon the growing lad was the well-known and highly-esteemed Rev. H. M. Williamson, afterwards of Belfast. During his ministry at Dunblane the Stewart family removed to the farm of Middleton of Culdees, near Muthill, in Perthshire. Duncan Stewart was then ten years old; but already the seeds of vital religion had been planted deep in his heart. A remark made in a passing way which was overheard by the little fellow, had left a marked impression on his mind. Mr Williamson one day, when on a visit, giving a side look in the boy's direction, said:—"And is this boy to be a minister?" His father replied, "Well, perhaps he may be, *if* he gets the grace of God into his heart." That *if* rang for many a day in his ears: it seemed to loosen a bolt from its fastenings, which in time, by the grace of God, was gently yet irresistibly drawn aside.

At Middleton many buoyant, happy days were spent among those beautiful scenes of "Bonnie Strathearn," which Mr Stewart passionately loved. In that home a large-hearted, yet ever temperate, hospitality was dispensed. There was a numerous circle of relations and acquaintances in the surrounding district, almost a *clanship*; but although many were welcome, no one was more so than a minister of religion. Change of residence necessitated a change of place of worship; and the family decided to go to the Free Church at Auchterarder, where the Rev. Geo. Smeaton (afterwards Professor) was minister. This saintly man left his impress deeply upon Mr Stewart. Quite recently a minister remarked one Sabbath that he could detect much of the Professor's tone and spirit in Mr Stewart's preaching. After Dr Smeaton left for a chair in Aberdeen F.C. College the pulpit of Auchterarder Church was occupied for a time by the Rev. Patrick Robertson, a very genial and gifted man. The Rev. Wm. Milne, subsequently of Calcutta and Montreux, was the next pastor. It was under his ministry that Mr Stewart became a church member; and he always felt that he owed much during the early years of student life to his contact with Mr and Mrs Milne.

While a child at Cambushinie he went to the small school of Kinbuck; and frequently in later days he would take a round-about route by railway for the pleasure of gazing in passing at the little school, with its play-ground,

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and at the fields beyond, behind which was his birthplace. As he pointed out the well-remembered scenes to wife and boy, he seemed in his eager delight to be once more a boy himself. After a time at the Muthill F.C. School, he attended Stirling Academy, where he took various prizes. He had very pleasing recollections of his time there, and used to relate one frolicsome episode with much spirit. A great snowball fight was on with another school, and the Academy boys seemed likely to be beaten, when suddenly one of their number, "Bob" Yellowlees, since Provost, came to the front, and with the tone of a general, cried:—"Stop firing: make two balls each: now charge!" The victory was complete.

On leaving Stirling, Mr Stewart, now a stalwart lad of about fifteen, was still undecided as to the career he should follow; and in after life he felt grateful to his father for having given him some time at home, where he could be made useful, to make up his mind. He was also at this period indebted to an uncle at Bridge of Allan, a good classical scholar, for the bent he gave him towards that branch of study. Having decided to go in for one of the professions, he was sent, at the age of sixteen, to Perth High School, where he received high testimonials from the Rector and other masters, and also took handsome prizes, one of which he particularly cherished—a finely illustrated copy of Sir Walter Scott's poems—evidently a special prize given by the Marquis of Breadalbane for proficiency in composition, mathematics, and kindred subjects.

He left Perth in July, 1859, with a mind not yet resolved as to his future calling; but the time for decision was at hand. It was a period of religious awakening and revival, and Mr Stewart's upbringing and inclinations made him very open to its influences. The Rev. Wm. Steven, of Selkirk, preaching in St Andrew's Church after Mr Stewart's death, said:—"He was brought to the knowledge of the Truth during the great revival that swept over Scotland during the years 1859-60." This life-long friend has also told how that in later years, when he and Mr Stewart, then Border ministers, were rambling over loved scenes in Perthshire, the latter stood still at a gate, and said in his intense way, bringing his hand at the same time firmly down upon the gate:—"It was at this gate, on this very spot, where I gave myself up wholly to be the

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Lord's." The scene can be pictured in the mind : the still night and the figure of the lad in the dim light, alone yet not alone, who, by God's help, was there and then turning the *if* of the past into a reality, which would be a cause for gladness and praise for ever, not only to himself, but to many a redeemed soul afterwards brought to Christ through his instrumentality. Evidences of the impression this period made upon him are to be found in a diary which he kept in those early days. From entries there, it is apparent that during his first session at the University he was striving earnestly to live in touch with Christ and to conform his life to the will of God. That jealousy for God which is so characteristic of the first love of a young believer, and which in its zeal would often crucify what need only be restrained, discloses itself in the following words, written at home after his first session at the University :—"When here I engender a disposition towards laxity in my studies. The blithesomeness of the country, the lovely aspect of the fields now budding and blossoming as the rose, the songs of the feathered creation warbling to one another, tend to draw the mind off its main object. These and other things I think to be reasons unjustifiable and irrelevant, therefore I must put on the bands of determination and endeavour to make resolute efforts to improve the moments as they fly." In this he was perhaps a little hard upon himself ; but it is good to be zealously affected always in a good thing ; and this consuming zeal for God was a life-long characteristic of the man.

The depth of the movement which then stirred Scotland may be gauged from these personal notes. Writing under date 18th September, 1861, he says :—"Since last year I have become a member of the Church. At the Table many desires to be holier were stirred up in my mind. It is Christ through whom we are sanctified, and that by the Holy Spirit setting Him before our souls as the grand object to be desired. I wish to record the earnest instruction communicated to me by Mr Milne previous to my admittance to the Sacrament. During the meetings, which were held in his church in the month of May last, I enjoyed, I hope, much of the presence of the Spirit. Some nights a solemn stillness appeared to pervade the whole church, and many an aspiration was raised in my soul to-

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wards Christ. It seemed to be the result of no human effort, but an answer to believing and ardent prayer."

On one occasion, on arriving at the station on his way home from Edinburgh, he was surprised to find one of the farm servants awaiting him, instead of one of his brothers, as he expected. On nearing the house, he exclaimed to the young man who drove him:—"Where are all those people coming from on a week-night?" "Oh!" said he, "don't you know it is the prayer-meeting skailing?" Soon members of the family were seen approaching, and explanations were not wanting. Shortly before, the father and eldest brother, who died early, along with some godly neighbours, had set up a prayer-meeting in the little school of Langshot on the farm. For some time it was of a very simple description; there was no address, merely reading of the Bible and earnest prayer. Nevertheless the people around came in large numbers night after night. God's Spirit was evidently at work, and deep conviction of sin was usually very manifest before acceptance of the free grace of God took place. Though the work was characterised by this thoroughness, it was not in any way forced or artificially stimulated. Moving deeply under the steady impulse of God's Spirit, the people were carried with it. As Mr Milne, when on a visit to Mr Stewart before going to Montreux, said:—"Those were grand days, when the people just seemed to walk into the kingdom." This is in harmony with the opinion once expressed by Mr Steven, of Selkirk, that the revival begun under Duncan Mathieson in 1859-60 struck its roots deeper into the hearts of the Scottish people, particularly in the country districts, than any before or since. Mr Stewart often took pleasure in telling the story of three members of his father's household—two serving—who were in such agony about their eternal welfare that about five o'clock in the morning a messenger with a trap had to be sent away for the minister, Mr Milne, and who before breakfast time had found peace with God and were ever after consistent Christians.

For some time previous, meetings of the same nature had been going on at Muthill and other places near at hand; and it is somewhat remarkable that frequently the desire to begin such work sprang up in the minds of the people without any connection with other centres. At times ministers, such as Mr Milne, were asked to give

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addresses; and taken as a whole the results were deep and abiding. As time went on, however, some alien elements did enter in; and Mr Stewart used to speak of the shock he experienced, as a young student, through the inconsistency of one who had from time to time given addresses. Those exceptional cases, while disappointing, nevertheless conveyed a lesson. It was probably owing to this experience that, in after years, while Mr Stewart was ever ready to encourage evangelistic work of a solid and healthy nature, he nevertheless was extremely anxious that any carrying on such work in connection with his congregation should probe the conscience before too speedily speaking peace, and should test young converts by the lapse of time before asking them to testify in public.

While at the University in 1863 he underwent his first great trial: his father died after a very short illness. His own record of that event bears a simple but loving testimony to the worth of the departed. "Fatherless! I left home after the Christmas holidays, and my father was then quite well. The last time I saw him was going away to Auchterarder to do business. On the Thursday night after, a telegraphic message fell on me like a thunderbolt announcing that he was dying. I immediately hastened home, having got on to Stirling by the mail train, and from thence to Greenloaning by a luggage train—a weary and sorrowful journey. From Greenloaning I hastened home on foot, and found my father still in life, but unconscious. . . . My father had taken part the previous Monday night at the prayer-meeting: a worthy preparation for the world of spirits. To him we all owe the advantages of a Christian education, impressed equally upon us by example and precept. Well do I remember the great interest he took in the revival from the very beginning. When the movement commenced about Muthill it could very easily be perceived that many an earnest petition was raised from his heart that the Lord would not pass his family by." The answer given by him to Mr Milne, on his first visit to the farm, was characteristic. The minister had asked how the sons were getting on, and the reply was:—"They are doing very well for this world, but I should like to see them preparing for the world to come."

Of his University career, Mr Stewart has left little re-

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cord; but he used to speak of the pleasure he took in Professor Masson's Class of English Literature. That his career could by no means be undistinguished is plain from the very unusual fact that he took the whole of his M.A. degree at one sitting. At the New College, Church History seemed to be his favourite study; and he frequently spoke of the inspiration he received from Dr Rainy. It may be that here lay the incentive to the Covenanting studies of later days. From time to time during his Arts and Divinity courses, Mr Stewart seems to have assisted in mission work in the Canongate and elsewhere; yet he always felt it his duty at that stage to subordinate even work of that noble kind to his studies, and was afterwards accustomed to advise young men accordingly. In 1866, in the course of his third summer recess, he undertook a new mission charge at Newhills, in Aberdeenshire. Money had been left to carry on this work by a generous friend of the place; and the management was left to a large extent in the hands of the Rev. John E. Craven, of Newhills, from whom and the Rev. A. F. Moir, of Woodside, Mr Stewart received support and encouragement. He engaged in this work with great earnestness and enjoyment, and, partly as a result of the successful start he gave it, the mission still exists. Although his work did not call for it, he set himself week by week to prepare two fully written out sermons. But for this, he used to say, he could hardly have accepted the call to Hawick. At different periods, and even in the last summer of his life, he spent some happy hours revisiting the scenes of his early labours and conversing with some, who, although young at the time, still had warm recollections of his work amongst them.

And now there came a point in his life which next to conversion was the greatest crisis Mr Stewart passed through. The trial was so intense that he often said that he should not like to think of another going through the same. For a considerable time he had been resolved to devote himself to the service of Christ in the foreign field, if the way should be opened up for him. With this end in view during his last session he had approached Dr Alexander Duff. This great missionary knew of no opening at the time, but promised to keep the request before him. About the same time a friend, who was to have preached

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at Hawick in the small Exchange Hall to the people who formed the nucleus of the future St Andrew's congregation, finding himself unable to fulfil his engagement, asked Mr Stewart, still a fourth year's student, to go instead. His services proved very acceptable; and in a short time he was requested to preach again. He consented to go, but made it clear that it was not as a candidate; his mind being firmly set upon the mission field abroad. On this occasion the impression made was so great that he was assured that if he were to become a candidate a call would certainly follow. Notwithstanding his declared intention they virtually elected him in August, 1867. He was confirmed in his declination of their proposals by the fact that Dr Duff had now heard of an opening in South Africa. The request of the Hawick people to get him as their pastor being, however, repeatedly pressed, and his mother having fallen into a precarious state of health, Mr Stewart at length said that if another should come forward able and willing to go to South Africa he might feel that God was pointing the way for him to remain at home. A young man did eventually come forward; and this disposed Mr Stewart to think that if he went to Hawick he would not be running contrary to Divine Will. He was accordingly unanimously elected again on 24th November, 1867, and was ordained on 6th February, 1868. The proceedings in connection with that event made a deep impression on his mind; and some jottings in his diary show that he entered upon the ministry with a very high ideal of what his Master required of him. He was introduced by Professor Smeaton; and referring to the Professor's sermon (on Rev. iii. 18) he says:—
"Apply it faithfully to my soul, O Lord: I am terrified lest I be as the angel of the Church of Laodicea." The following resolutions, evidently made at this time, are well worth the attention of ministers, both young and old:—

1. To trust in the Grace of God.
2. To love Christ supremely. May I ever see Him as the Rose of Sharon and the Lily of the Valleys. May I ever abound with love to Him.
3. Not to be contented with a few sparks, but ever to have an increasing flame.
4. To have great affection for my people.

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5. To study every sermon with all my might as under the eye of God.

6. To ever study with a view to conversion and edification in Christ.

7. To study the Bible in such a way that I shall profit by it.

Then follow the significant words:—Hawick will be the making or the unmaking of my character for life: Lord grant the former end.

To the charge thus earnestly entered upon he came with fear and trembling; for the congregation over which he had been set was yet in its infancy, and buildings had still to be provided. Then, however, as always, he had a very unquestioning belief in the reality of the Divine help which is vouchsafed to trusting souls; and in the strength of it he went on. Any apprehensions he had certainly did not lead him to circumscribe his work or look for easy paths. He resolved from the first that above all he would strive to bring non-church-goers into the fold of Christ; and, indeed, he made it a condition of the acceptance of the call that a mission district should be allotted to the congregation. This condition was complied with; and Mr Tainsh, now the Rev. John Tainsh, of the Tron U.F. Church, Glasgow, was employed by Mr Stewart himself for a year to work in conjunction with him. A friendship was thus begun which lasted until Mr Stewart's death.

The preceding pages are largely a verbatim transcript from notes furnished by Mrs Stewart; and the members of St Andrew's congregation and others who came into contact with its pastor after his settlement there, will recognise in this record of his early years many features of the character of their minister, for which they learned to esteem and love him. The intensity of purpose, the eager desire to be of the fullest possible use in the Master's service, which characterised him during his forty years' ministry, were early in evidence in his life. It is too often true that the high-water mark of a pastor's life is to be found somewhere during the first years of his ministry, and that thereafter there are indications that he has succumbed to the temptation to rest content with keeping things going; but there was no hint of this in the case of Mr Stewart. To him conscience was a pretty hard task-

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master. In his eyes his congregation was never so prosperous but that he thought and earnestly desired that it might be better; and, if the correction suggested by this desire fell somewhat sharply at times upon others, the first and severest application was always to himself. The work of the ministry was a very serious business with him, and he went into its various details with great thoroughness. As a truly sympathetic and loving pastor, especially in visiting the sick and dying, he excelled. However tired and busy he might be, when the call to attend a sick-bed came, he unobtrusively and ungrudgingly responded to it. He did not attend to one aspect of his work at the expense of the rest. To hear him speak of any branch of it was to feel sure that his whole soul was there. The Bible Class, for example, no less than his pulpit and other pastoral work, was attended to as a main concern; and deep was the affection which many of the earlier as well as later members entertained for their pastor; many stating that they got nearer him there than anywhere else. Joyous and instructive rambles with Mr Stewart to Ruberslaw and other places of note in the vicinity have left pleasing memories with many of the young people of the congregation. It was no uncommon thing for a country brother, who happened to be in town on a Monday or Saturday, to see the minister of St Andrew's hurrying with his alert step along the High Street, and to get the explanation from him:—"I am hunting up some of the absentees from my Bible Class."

As might be expected from what has been already set down here, he took great pains with his pulpit preparation, and his sermons were eminently Biblical and edifying. His chief concern was to set forth the Gospel and its fruits. This branch of his work was much in his mind: at Communion times, indeed, he was absorbed and almost lost in it. A talk about pulpit themes seemed to afford him great pleasure; and, though so ripely experienced, he was not above inviting and accepting the criticism of comparative novices. Therein, as in many other things, he showed his great humility.

It was perhaps a common interest in the Evangel and his own love of freedom which led to Mr Stewart's enthusiasm for the Scottish Covenanters. He was well versed in the general literature of the subject; and the papers con-

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tained in this volume are part of the fruit of his long-continued and painstaking investigations into this branch of Border history. His work has undoubtedly rescued from oblivion some events in local history which were in imminent danger of that fate, and unearthed a vein rich with hints of heroic life alike among gentle and simple, in which others have since wrought. What Scott, in his wide sphere, did for those traditions and associations of the Border which are deemed more romantic, this busy town minister has to a large degree done in the Border district for other elements in local history not less worthy of preservation.

His services to the causes of Temperance, Sabbath Observance, and the religious instruction of the young, were alike noteworthy. Under his ministry the congregation of St Andrew's made steady progress, until with its handsome and commodious church buildings and manse, which he was largely instrumental in securing, its well organised agencies, and devoted people, it has taken a place in the community as an acknowledged power for good. In the earlier years of his ministry Mr Stewart received from time to time valuable help from his sister, Miss Stewart, who has always shown great interest in the affairs of St Andrew's Church. In his congregational activities he latterly derived much assistance from his like-minded partner in life, whom he married in 1890. Mrs Stewart is the eldest surviving daughter of the late Rev. W. K. Mitchell, of Cluny, Aberdeenshire, previously of Poonah, and granddaughter of the Rev. James Mitchell, the pioneer of the Poonah Mission, whose character and work won many expressions of regard from Sir Bartle Frere, Governor of Bombay, and others in 1866, when the veteran missionary died.* Their only son bears the Covenanting name of John Livingstone.

It is worthy of mention that no less than three missionaries and three ministers have sprung from St Andrew's congregation:—The Rev. James Lyon, India; the Rev. James Beattie, China; and Mr Robert Noble, home missionary in Glasgow and London; the Rev. James Rutherford, of Craigmillar Park, Edinburgh; the Rev. William

* *History of the Missions of the Free Church of Scotland*, By Rev. Robert Hunter, Nagpore. 1873.

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Trotter, formerly of Bannockburn, and now in New Zealand; and the Rev. Walter Beattie, Canada. Of these, a word may be said about Mr Noble, who proved a home-missionary of no ordinary success. More than once Dr Andrew Bonar thanked Mr Stewart for recommending him for the Finneston Mission, and said that he had brought many a member into the Church. His work in London in connection with Dr McEwan's congregation in Clapham Road, was no less notable; for he raised a congregation of some three hundred in a working-class district, and was in all but the name their minister. Not long before the death of Mr Noble, Mr Stewart received a letter from him, in which he stated that under God he owed everything that he had done for Christ to him. He was brought to the Light by a sermon which Mr Stewart preached, and received from him much guidance in his reading preparatory to his work.

All that pertained to the administration of that branch of the Scotch Church to which Mr Stewart belonged got a share of his attention; and though so devoted to his own congregation, he was no less dutiful in his response to the wider claims of his Church. The cause of union with the United Presbyterian Church had no more hearty supporter; and, when disaster seemed to threaten owing to the action of the House of Lords, he was one of those who were prepared to face all risks rather than surrender the Church's right to direct its own action. In politics his sympathies were strongly Liberal; and he was never ashamed to give a reason for the faith that was in him in this respect.

Mr Stewart's personal religion was of a very genuine type. It had nothing of the merely professional about it. "To him to live was Christ." He may not have said such things very often, but others recognised that they were true of him. An earnest desire to serve and please the Master whom he loved was the very open secret of his life. This explains what some might deem defects in his way of looking at things. It is no secret that to many he seemed needlessly strict and even austere; but in his eyes the cure of souls was a great reality with heavy responsibilities. He may sometimes have apprehended evil where none existed, but the mistake was pardonable in view of the motive which led to it. It was not that with

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a grudging spirit he wished to curtail the pleasures of men, but that he loved their souls and was deeply anxious for their weal. He entertained no dislike to pure sport kept within due bounds, and could enter with great heartiness into innocent recreations; but he took no pains to hide his strong antipathy to the gambling and drinking which, to so many, seem necessary accompaniments of sport. If he was narrow, as some said, it was with the narrowness of a man who felt that he had serious work to do, and that much depended on the view he took and the example he set. The defect, if defect there was, was due to his faithfulness. We do not call the soldier narrow who, in his carefulness to guard against the enemy, occasionally mistakes harmless neutrals for foes. The fear, which as a student he expressed, lest a love of nature should draw him away from his studies, was an outcome of the same vein of anxiety which showed itself at times in his attitude to men and manners. He liked to know a man before he committed himself to him, but after that first reserve was passed, there was no more genial companion or generous friend. Mr Stewart showed to advantage nowhere so much as in his own home, by the fireside, and at his hospitable table. There his keen sense of humour and rich fund of anecdote made intercourse with him a great pleasure. His character has been well summed up by one long associated with him, the Rev. W. A. P. Johnman, of St George's U.F. Church, Hawick:—"He was a Puritan of the truest type, faithful to the word and to the work of God; without rigidity, for no smile ever beat his in suffusing the face with radiance. When he laughed you saw into his soul." The words of Professor Orr, of Glasgow U.F. College, accord with this:—"Mr Stewart was a man for whom I had the profoundest respect—a genuine man, and a man of God, single-minded and devoted as few are to his Master's service. I had no warmer or better friend in Hawick, and will always cherish and revere his memory."

Until a few years ago, so far as man could see, there was every prospect of Mr Stewart being able to carry on his work vigorously to ripeness of age; but four years before the end of his ministry and life he had a severe attack of influenza, which necessitated some months of rest. Two years thereafter another illness, involving a

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serious operation, still further drained his strength. He to all appearance, however, made a good recovery from the direct effects of this illness, and had taken up congregational duties once more with much vigour and buoyancy of mind. Yet he seemed also to have heard a voice from afar summoning him away; for after his last illness he often said to friends that having been face to face with death he looked upon life with different eyes. One of them, the Rev. A. M. Craig, Kelso, records that Mr Stewart, shortly before his death, said to him with peculiarly solemn emphasis:—"I want every sermon I preach to tell." Coming home from church one Sabbath evening during his last winter on earth, his thoughts evidently led him to talk of heaven, and through them there seemed to run recollections of a friend whom he had loved almost with the love of a son for a father—the saintly Dr Andrew Bonar; for he said, "I sometimes think that when I enter heaven, after my Saviour, I shall see Andrew Bonar." His last sermon was preached on the closing Sabbath of 1907 from the words:—"So teach us to number our days that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom," and the earnestness of his pleadings will not soon be forgotten. On New Year's Day following he presided over the accustomed united prayer meeting in his church, and gave as his greeting to the people:—"I wish you all a Happy New Year and a Happy Eternity." It was like his benediction; for it was his last public utterance.

Then came a few days of an illness which care was expected to remove, but which apparently carried with it a presentiment of some approaching change, either death or the giving up of his loved work; for about half-an-hour before the end, when heart failure supervened, he said calmly:—"O God, prepare Thy servant for whatever Thou art preparing for him; for I am Thy servant, but very unworthy." Soon thereafter he asked Mrs Stewart to bring him a drink of cold water, as he felt very thirsty. She went to procure it, but the draught of refreshing was to be given elsewhere and by other hands. His devoted wife found him, after her momentary absence, at the very point of death, with an expression on his countenance as of a pilgrim contented with the sight of Home.

THE COVENANTERS OF TEVIOTDALE AND NEIGHBOURING DISTRICTS.

CHAPTER I.

THE SIGNING OF THE COVENANT AT HAWICK IN 1638.

IN the seventeenth century a contest was waged in Scotland, to be acquainted with which is a duty incumbent on every Scotsman. If we appreciate the civil and religious liberties we to-day enjoy, we shall hold that contest in everlasting remembrance. To the Covenanters, far more than to any others, are we indebted for our freedom. By their resisting unto blood they not only flung off a blighting tyranny, but also put a love of liberty in our Scottish blood, which can never be dislodged. Besides, they have transmitted other influences which have immensely helped to make Scotland's character and raise her to the present position she occupies among the nations. It is an undoubted fact that their struggle greatly promoted vital religion. On that blood-stained page of our nation's history we see more convincing evidences of the truth of Christianity than in the elaborate productions of many an apologist. Even one man acting under the influence of principle is himself a powerful argument in favour of the Christian religion; but when we turn to the Covenanters we see multitudes of men and women acting bravely for conscience sake while the tyrant's sword was hanging over their heads.

Charles I. received a fatal inheritance from his father. His mind was filled by James VI. with extreme ideas about the Divine right of kings to do whatever suited their royal pleasure, and about the duty of subjects to submissively take their opinions as to matters, civil and religious, from their kingly masters. From the same source there came to him a detestation of the system of church government prevalent in Scotland called Presbytery. James hated this partly on account of its Calvinism, but chiefly

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on account of the antagonism it offered to his notions with regard to the absolute power of kings. From the very first, Scottish Presbyterianism asserted the principle of the Church's spiritual independence as a religious society. It also greatly helped to awaken in the Scottish people a love of representative government in matters civil. Opinions and prejudices averse to such freedom were instilled into Charles' mind from his earliest years, and eventually led him into antagonism with a people, one of whose characteristics had been loyalty to their kings.

He had not been long on the throne when he determined to compel his Scottish subjects to profess the faith of which he himself approved. Scarcely any other nation in Christendom had been in a state more dead than that in which Calvinistic Presbytery found Scotland at the Reformation; but this conception of Christianity so transformed the nation that Carlyle could say of the change, "this that Knox did for his nation we may really call a resurrection as from death."* It was Charles' will that Scotland should abandon the Presbytery which had done so much for her and adopt Episcopacy. He was impelled to this by his belief that the Episcopal form of church government would prove a pillar to uphold his despotism, and that Presbyterianism, from its very nature, would lead the people to agitate for liberty. Orders accordingly came down from London that the Scottish Church should be made Episcopal, and that a liturgy approved by the King be introduced into its services. "Let every minister," said an order of the Privy Council, "procure within fifteen days two copies of the liturgy for the use of his congregation, on pain of being treated as a rebel against King and law." The King thus challenged the right of Christian men and women to worship God according to the dictates of conscience: and the Covenanting struggle is the answer of the Scottish people to that challenge. A nation has never risen against its rulers in a worthier cause.

This crisis brought many able and noble men to the front; but the real leader in the emergency was Alexander Henderson, minister at Leuchars. Under his wise guidance a meeting was convened representative of all classes in the nation. Thereat the deputies avowed their loyalty

* Lectures on Heroes. Lect. IV.

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to the King and besought him to rescind his obnoxious decree. This appeal was disregarded, and it was intimated that further meetings would be looked upon as rebellion. The people met this attack upon their liberties in a remarkable way. They put their names to a Covenant, appealing to the Most High and pledging themselves at all hazards to stand by His cause and one another. The fact was that the harassment to which James VI. had subjected Presbyterianism, had prepared the people to resist this attack upon their religion in a serious spirit. That earlier persecution had deepened the earnestness of the ministers, and their preaching had such power that the moral character of whole towns and districts was immeasurably changed for the better. This was the case especially in the south and west of Scotland, and it strongly disposed the nation to stand by those services which had done so much for her, and to take a solemn Covenant to resist unto blood the intrusion of an earthly monarch into that sphere where she was convinced the Redeemer had a sole right to reign. Cries for the Covenant came from all Protestant parts of the land; and specially from the districts where vital religion had taken a firm hold of the people's heart. It was a great day when the Covenant was unrolled in any district; a kind of Pentecostal time, when people felt influences from above solemnising and thrilling their souls.

Copies of the Covenant were sent through all parts of the country, enthusiastically received and numerous signed. One was unrolled in Hawick in the presence not only of the assembled townsmen, but of a concourse, gathered from Teviotdale, Tweeddale, Rulewater, Alewater, and even distant Yarrow. The work was not done in Hawick, as elsewhere, if it was not preceded by exceedingly solemn religious services. The scene at the signing in Greyfriars' Churchyard is burned into the heart of every true Scotchman. We do not know the name of the minister who preached, or who in prayer lifted up the hearts of the people to the throne of God; but we can still see at Cavers, in the possession of Captain Palmer-Douglas, the very parchment which was unrolled for signatures in Hawick 270 years ago. The heading of the parchment is as follows:—

“ Bond of Union and Confession of Faith subscribed at

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first by the kingis majestie and his household in the yeir of God 1580. Thairefter by persons of all rankis in the yeir 1581 by ordinance of the Lordis of Secret Counsall, and actis of the Generall Assemblie, subscryved againe by all sortis of persons in the yeir 1590 by a new ordinance of counsall at the desyre of the Generall Assemblie, with a general band for mentenance of the trew religion and the kingis persone, and now subscryved in the yeir 1638 by us noblemen, barons, gentlemen, burgesses, ministers, and commones underscrybeing; togidder with our resolution and promeis for the causis efter specified to mentein the trew religion, and the kingis majestie according to the confession foirsaid and actis of parliament the tenor qr of folloueth."

The Hawick Covenant seems to be a verbatim copy of the Covenant signed in Greyfriars' Churchyard. That document contained a Covenant signed in 1580, another in 1590, and a part specially prepared for 1638 by Alexander Henderson; and the heading of this parchment contains the same. When copies of the Covenant were sent out from Edinburgh it was the custom for many of the nobles to append their signatures. Accordingly, when this one was brought out to Hawick it already bore such signatures. Upon it may be seen the names of Drumlanrig, Lothian, Lindesay; and there also, in his own handwriting, so distinct and bold that it is one of the first things in the parchment which attract the eyes, is the signature of Montrose, who, afterwards, by his dashing military exploits on the other side, for a time struck terror through Presbyterian Scotland. The first to come forward at Hawick and write his name on the parchment was the representative of a family who, for service to their country and the devotion of many of their members to the cause of Evangelical religion, have had a history unsurpassed by any other family in the south of Scotland. Sir William Douglas of Cavers, who was then Sheriff of Teviotdale, heads the list of local signatures. The name of his son Archibald is also there. Elliot of Stobs came forward and wrote his name, so did Scott of Harden, Scott of Sinton, Scott of Headshaw, Scott of Altoune, Scott of Falnesh, Scott of Breidhauch, Scott of Goldilands, J. Turnbull of Mynto, Walter Langues of Brierihill, Robert Gledstains, Todschauhauch; Scott of Burnfoot, William and Robert Scott,

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bailies of Hawick; Cunningham, minister of Hawick; Clerk, minister of Wilton, &c., &c. The parchment also bears the names of ministers from Crailing, Morebattle, Kelso, Sct. Marie Kirk of the Lowes, &c.* Sir J. A. H. Murray, who has carefully examined it, and made very important researches on the subject, says:—"Hawick was the place whither the multitudes crowded amid tears and acclamation to sign the sacred document."† At Edinburgh the enthusiasm was so great that some opened their veins to fill their pens; and some signatures on the Hawick Covenant‡ have a tint which suggests the same medium.

The practice seems to have prevailed of vowing adherence to the Covenant in the churches. The Session Record of Ashkirk Parish Church contains the following:—"8 April, 1638. The said day the parochme being weil convened, in presence of yame all ye 24 chapter of Josua was red and efter ye covenant being red Mr Alexr. (Reid) tuik the people, bothe gentill men and gentill women, and ye comonis both man and woman and causit yame yeild up yair hands and sweir yame selfs to be faithfull servands, and to stand to ye defence of Chrystis trew gospell, and to defend yat trew religion bothe be yair lyffs and meines all the dayis of yair lyff, and to defend ye kingis majestie in all his godlie advis to ye uttermost of yair power; and yair after Mr Alexr. (Reid) teichit upon the 24 of Josua quhilk contenit ye covenant Josua caussit the people mak to serv God and to cast away yair idol gods quhilk was yair sinne, and to walk stedfast in ye law of ye lord."

* "Transactions of Hawick Archæological Society," April, 1863.

† The same, February, 1864.

‡ It is engrossed on a complete sheep skin, 36 inches by 30.

CHAPTER II.

RATIFYING THE COVENANT.

BORDERERS AT THE GLASGOW ASSEMBLY OF 1638.

THE signing of the Covenant awakened in the people the love of liberty and religion. Charles at first treated the new movement with contempt, and gave unmistakable signs of royal wrath. The Covenanters, however, persevered legally and prudently, though boldly. A very respectful supplication was drawn up stating their grievances and describing their proceedings. John Livingstone, afterwards minister of Ancrum, was deputed to present it at Court. No sooner did Charles hear of his arrival in London than he issued an order for his instant apprehension; and Livingstone only escaped by a precipitate flight to Scotland. Though they got many similar rebuffs, the Covenanters did not as yet throw off their allegiance. They were, however, determined that they would not yield to tyranny.

One request they urged was that the King would permit a General Assembly. Charles detested such meetings, and did everything in his power to prevent one being held; but the request was pressed so firmly that he most reluctantly gave his consent. The Assembly was summoned to meet in the High Church of Glasgow on 21st November, 1638. No pains were spared on the part of the Covenanters to make it a gathering which would thoroughly represent Scotland. Some have alleged that it was a mere assemblage of peasants; but the flower of Scotland's nobility was there. Representing the King as Lord High Commissioner was the Marquis of Hamilton, of whom it was said, "if the King have many such men he is a well served prince."* With him, as chaplain and private adviser, was a Dr Walter Balcanquhal, "reputed a perfect nonsuch, even among Scots, for intriguing ability."† Beneath the Commissioner and on either hand sat the Lords of the Privy Council to render him all assistance in their power.

* Baillie, Vol. I., p. 125, Edinburgh, 1841.

† "Masson's Life of Milton," Vol. II., p. 10.

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The Assembly was composed of one hundred and forty-four ministers sent by fifty-three Presbyteries, and ninety-six lay members, one being sent by nearly every Presbytery, and one at least from each of the Royal Burghs.† Alexander Henderson, minister at Leuchars, was elected Moderator; no one objecting but himself, and no one refusing to vote but the Commissioner. The Moderator was admirably fitted for his difficult position. Professor Masson describes him as "the greatest, the wisest, and the most liberal of the Scottish Presbyterians, the greatest man in the Church after Knox—a Cabinet Minister without office, and yet a man who has never received justice in general British history."* He was helped in the work of the Assembly by a very notable band of ministers and laymen. Some of the former had been instrumental through their preaching in transforming whole parishes and leading hundreds to the Lord. It would be interesting to consider some of these, but our object is to see the men from the Borders and the part played by them in a gathering which perhaps sent a more ennobling influence thrilling through the people than that produced by any other public meeting ever held within the land.

Not far from the Moderator, and sometimes in consultation with him, there sat a little man with two quick eyes, whom we must notice, because he was a son of Teviotdale; and also because of his letters which are still eagerly read throughout Protestant Christendom. Richard Baxter said—"Hold off the Bible, such a book as Mr Rutherford's Letters the world never saw." Samuel Rutherford was born at Nisbet, at the foot of the hill of Piniel-heugh. It is thought that his father was a farmer. There is a tradition that one day, when a boy engaged at play, he fell into a well. His companions rushed away for help, but when they returned they found him sitting cold and wet on a knoll. On being asked how he got out, he replied:—"A bonnie white man came and drew me out." "The bonnie white man" was no doubt a Teviotdale ploughman, but,

† Cunningham ("Church History of Scotland" Vol. II., 13) says—"It consisted of 140 ministers, 2 professors, not ministers, and 98 ruling elders from presbyteries and burghs. Of these ruling elders 17 were noblemen, 9 were knights, 25 were landed proprietors, and 47 were burgesses—all men of some consideration."—Ed.

* "Life of Milton," Vol. III., p. 16.

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to use Dr Bonar's words, "it is plain that his boyish thoughts were already wandering in the region of the sky." One Marquis of Lothian so venerated his memory that he used to lift his hat every time he passed the cottage where he was born. The parish of Nisbet was united to Crailing in 1606, and the minister to whose church Rutherford was brought in his early years was the celebrated David Calderwood. Stirring events took place within the Presbytery of Jedburgh when Rutherford was a boy and young man, which were no doubt talked about at every fireside in the district, and which must have made a deep impression on his mind. Calderwood and George Johnstone of Ancrum were boldly resisting King James' attempt to introduce Episcopacy and Episcopal ceremonies into the Church; and about the time* Samuel Rutherford left his father's home to attend Edinburgh University, Calderwood was removed from the parish of Crailing and lodged in prison for his non-conformity. What effect this minister's preaching had on young Rutherford we are not told; but no doubt his sufferings helped to turn his youthful mind to the great question which was then agitating Scotland's Church. It is somewhat remarkable that in Rutherford's Letters we find only one reference to his native district.† The words would lead us to believe that the religious temperature of Nisbet was very low in his early years:—"My soul's desire is that the wilderness, and that place to which I owe my first breathing, in which I fear Christ was scarce named as touching any reality or power of godliness, may blossom as a rose."†

Rutherford was ordained at Anwoth, in Kirkcudbrightshire, in 1627; but after a nine years' ministry he was banished by the High Commission Court to Aberdeen. While in durance there he wrote a large number of his ever-memorable letters. In the troubles which arose after the signing of the Covenant he was allowed to return to his loved work at Anwoth—"fair Anwoth by the Solway;" and at the end of the same year he was sent as a member to this Assembly. From the account of the proceedings we infer that though he seldom spoke, he threw his whole heart into the work.

David Calderwood, who was minister of Crailing in

* 1617

† Letter 344, Bonar's edition.

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Rutherford's boyhood, was also present at this Assembly. He had suffered for his opposition to King James' efforts to introduce Episcopacy.* The occasion was this. Law, Bishop of Orkney, was sent down from a "packed" Assembly as a "visitor" to the Presbytery of Jedburgh. His errand was to concuss the Presbytery into cancelling an election of Assembly members and substituting other representatives more likely to be subservient to the King's wishes. He was boldly opposed by Calderwood, Johnstone, minister of Ancrum, and John Boyd, of the second charge in Jedburgh. For this these men were "put to the horn;" but through the intervention of Lord Lothian the punishment was limited to confinement within the bounds of their own parishes.

In 1617 King James, when on a visit to Scotland, secured the concurrence of Parliament in an attempt to impose Episcopacy on the Church; but the best ministers resolutely opposed this tyranny. So vigorous was their protest that the King saw that it would be dangerous to proceed any further at that time. He vented his wrath, however, on some of the ministers, of whom Calderwood of Crailing was one. Summoned before a High Commission Court held at St Andrews, at which the King was present, he was subjected to a trial in which that pedantic monarch took a characteristic part. At one point the King whispered to the Bishop of St Andrews, who looked at Calderwood and said:—"His Majesty saith, that if ye will not be suspended spiritually ye shall be suspended corporally." To this he boldly replied:—"Sir, my body is in your Majesty's hands, to doe with it as pleaseth your Majesty; but als long as my body is free, I will teache, notwithstanding of their sentence." Calderwood answered indeed with such coolness and point that the King frequently lost his temper and called him "a false puritan." The courtiers also reviled and even struck him. The matter ended in Calderwood being deprived of his parish on the Teviot, imprisoned, first in St Andrews, then in Edinburgh, and ultimately banished to Holland. A petition was presented that his banishment be delayed on account of the tempestuous weather, but it was refused by the King, who rudely remarked—"If he be drowned in

* In 1608.

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the seas he may thank God he hath escaped a worse death."

In 1625 he returned to Scotland, but had to remain in retirement till 1638,* when he saw evidences that the principles for which he had contended so long were about to triumph. Being without a charge, he could not be a member of Assembly; but he rendered most important help in the proceedings.† Johnstone of Warriston was a "non-such" for a clerk, but he frequently sought and got help from Calderwood. It was some time before he obtained a charge. Though an able dialectician, he seems neither to have possessed a pleasant utterance nor a conciliatory manner. He was at length, however, in 1640, settled in Pencaitland. The dark clouds gathered again before the close of his life, and he had to flee from Pencaitland. He died in Jedburgh in 1650, and was interred in Crailing, where he began his ministry.

Another member of the Assembly was Robert Cunningham, minister of Hawick, who was ordained in 1625, and who exercised a powerful influence in the district. We have no account of any speech he gave; but he attended the meetings regularly and fearlessly supported the cause of freedom. Hawick has always shown keen sympathy with the cause of freedom and progress, and has often uttered her voice loudly on their side; she therefore ought not to forget that one of her ministers was a member of the great Assembly which accomplished so glorious a reform in Scotland.

The other two clerical members from the Presbytery of Jedburgh were James Wilkie of Crailing and Robert Brownlie, minister of Kirkton; the latter of whom was cruelly murdered in his manse after the battle of Philiphaugh by some followers of Montrose.‡ One of them, William Murray, brother to Patrick, Earl of Tullibardine, was put to death for his share in the deed. The two lay members were Sir William Douglas of Cavers and Robert

* During this period he collected materials for his History. Chambers's Ency.—Ed.

† "Baillie's Letters," Vol. I., pages 138, 139, 156. "He lived all the time beside the moderator's chamber and furthered what he could by his studies all our proceedings." Baillie, I., 138.—Ed.

‡ "Scott's Fasti," Vol. II., 503, Craig Brown's "Selkirkshire," I., 194-

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Simpson, burghess of Jedburgh. Kelso Presbytery was represented by Simpson of Sprouston and Penman of Morebattle, and by Andrew Ker of Linton, elder.

Earlston Presbytery was represented by Maitland, minister at Glenkirk and Cockburn of Gingilkirk, while the two elders were Lord Cranston and Alexander Hume, burghess of Lauder.

Selkirk or Melrose Presbytery was represented by William Jamieson, minister of Langnewton; Martin of Ettrick; Knox of Bowden; and Sir John Ker of Cavers, elder.

The minutes show how regularly Sir William Douglas of Cavers, elder from Jedburgh Presbytery, attended all the meetings. The name—Douglas—has a most important place in Scotland's heart and history. One of his ancestors was the hero of Otterburn, and the exploits of others are known to every Scotsman. The speeches he delivered and other work he did, testify how bravely this descendant of the great Douglas fought for the freedom of his Church and country at the Assembly of 1638. Soon after the Assembly began Henderson requested that a committee be appointed to assist him in ordering the business, and one of its members was Sir W. Douglas. The work required from this committee was so hard that any others, save thoroughly efficient men, would have been utterly useless. Sir William Douglas was put on this committee not because he was a knight or the laird of Cavers, but because he had the reputation of being an intelligent and hearty Covenanter, and also of possessing gifts which could render efficient work. At night and early morn, when the Assembly was not sitting, Alexander Henderson spent long time with this committee, much of it often in prayer.

The Commissioner read a paper from the Bishops, declining the Assembly's authority for several reasons, one being that it contained elders as well as what they called clergy. Replies were given to their every objection, and Sir William Douglas was one of those who rose and offered to prove that the office of ruling elder was "warranted by the Word of God and by the acts and practice of our own and other reformed churches."* The champion of

* "Stevenson's History," p. 305, Edinburgh, 1840.

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the Bishops, however, did not accept the challenge.

When matters had got to a deadlock in the Assembly and the Royal Commissioner, stormed, burst into tears, and set before them the dangers of disobeying the King, there was no faltering on the part of the members, and not one of them rose to propose a compromise. Fortified by the conviction that the question at issue was one concerning God and their consciences, they would not give way. Some of Scotland's noblest men pleaded earnestly with the Commissioner when he threatened to dissolve the Assembly. Among them was Sir William Douglas. He referred to the Commissioner's kindness, but asked how he could leave the Assembly seeing he had already allowed it to be lawful?* All, however, was of no avail. The Commissioner requested Henderson to conclude the Assembly, and on being refused, dissolved it in the King's name, declared further proceedings unlawful, and walked away.

And now another question needed decision. The State had separated from the Church. Would the Assembly go on without any connection with the State and continue a meeting declared to be unlawful? Had they then dissolved, Scotland's history would have been different. That Assembly adopted action which helped to make us freemen, and gave England also a great impulse to strike for liberty. Only one or two weak-kneed ministers from Angus left with the Commissioner. All the other members remained, and the Borderers among them.

In the proceedings of this Assembly there is frequent reference to Sir William Douglas. He was on a committee appointed to make a report with regard to the Confession of Faith; not, of course, the Westminster one. Baillie says that some ministers on this committee were not of the fittest, but bears testimony to the ability of the elders. From this we conclude that Douglas was well versed in theology. He was also appointed a member of a committee to provide ordinances, evidently by voluntary subscription, for a destitute district of Dumfriesshire.

Among other drastic doings of the Glasgow Assembly, it excommunicated two Archbishops and six Bishops; deposed four Bishops and suspended two. One of the

* Report of proceedings.

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Bishops—John Abernethy—had at one time been minister of Jedburgh. Seemingly devoted to Presbyterianism in his early days, under Court influence he accepted the post of constant moderator of Jedburgh Presbytery; but Calderwood of Crailing and others refused to recognise such an office. In course of time he became Bishop of Caithness; but ultimately he returned to Presbyterianism. There is a suspicion here of a Border "Vicar of Bray"; but it is satisfactory to know that he was only received back as a minister "upon his public repentance to be made in the Kirk of Jedburgh."*

* "Balfour's Annals," Vol. II., p. 311. In 1606 he joined with forty-one other brethren in a Protestation to Parliament against Bishops and Bishops. John Row, the historian, quaintly remarks with regard to this:—"Of the which subscribers, three, within three years after, received a new illumination, and imbraced each one of them a Bishopric, contrare to this their Protestation, viz:—Mr William Cowper, the Bishoprick of Galloway; Mr Adam Ballantine, the Bishoprick of Dunblane; Mr John Abernethie, the Bishoprick of Catness; so inconstant were they." History, p. 430.—Ed.

CHAPTER III.

" BETWEEN THE SIGNING AND THE SIFTING."

JOHN LIVINGSTONE OF ANCRUM AND HIS WORK.

WE grossly wrong the Covenanters if we think of them as mere political agitators and bigoted sectaries; and we only see the central principles in the character of the majority of them when we recognise the faith and fear of God by which they were actuated. Religion was the fountain from which true Covenanters drew their strength, and it was unswerving faith in its verities which sustained them in their long struggle. This was eminently true of John Livingstone, minister of Ancrum, who might fittingly be called the McCheyne of his time. He not only manifested a deep-rooted confidence in God, but was largely instrumental in inspiring it in others, and thus preparing them for the trials which lay before them. The life and preaching of this very notable Scotsman exercised a powerful influence on the Borders. One secret of the much-enduring persistence and sublime heroism of the Covenanting movement is to be found in the faithful work and Christ-like lives of men of his stamp, of whom God seemed to raise up a large number for a time of special need.

John Livingstone was born in the manse of Kilsyth on 21st June, 1603. His father, a most faithful preacher, was a descendant of Lord Livingstone, and his mother was related to the house of Dunipace. In that manse, however, he found something more important far than relationship to nobles—he found from his earliest years a home filled with the fear of God. The consistent lives of his parents and their conversation with ministers like Robert Bruce, who was a frequent visitor, especially at Communion seasons, filled young Livingstone's heart with eager desires to find the Great Unseen One, in whose company they seemed to him to obtain their greatest joy. "I do not remember," he says, "the time or means whereby the Lord at first wrought on my heart. When I was very young I would pray with some feeling." In houses, where the

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young are surrounded with influences like those which John Livingstone experienced in his holy but happy Covenanting home, many are brought to Christ so early in life that they cannot any more than he tell the date of conversion.

At the age of ten he was sent to study the Classics at a school in Stirling, where he continued nearly four years. At fourteen he went to Glasgow University. This is an age too early for youthful minds to grapple successfully with the subjects of a University education; but Livingstone's mind must have developed earlier than usual; for it is quite evident that he studied enthusiastically and profitably and acquired that mental strength and those habits of thinking which sustained him through a life of activity, and gave him that copious flow of speech which afterwards proved so powerful an instrument in preaching Christ. His favourite professor was Robert Blair, who afterwards had to leave his chair and preach at the hazard of his life in moor and glen. One act connected with his life at college deserves notice. When he was about seventeen years of age, along with several student friends, he sat down at a Communion Table in a Glasgow church. The King had ordered the people to observe this ordinance kneeling, and the officiating clergyman on this occasion commanded the communicants to conform; some did so, but the students continued sitting; and when asked to communicate according to the Court fashion, Livingstone boldly replied that there was no warrant for this in God's Word. He had in consequence to rise and leave the church.

After finishing his course at the University and taking his M.A. degree when eighteen years of age, Livingstone returned to his father's manse at Lanark, to which parish he had been translated. It was now necessary to decide to what he would devote his life. He had a great desire to pursue scholastic studies, and prepared to compete for a vacant regentship in the College, but to his disappointment it was given to another without any examination. Thereupon he wished to study medicine in France, but his father objected. A way to an easy life presented itself about the same time. His father purchased some land in the parish of Kilsyth; and, drawing out title deeds in the name of his son John, wished him to settle on it and marry. Such was

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his love of study, however, that this offer seems to have had no attraction for him. "Seeing this course would divert me from all study of learning I refused it." In order to settle the question—"To what am I to devote my life?" he resolved to spend a whole day alone with God. To a cave in a secret place on a small stream near Lanark he repaired and spent the whole day in thinking and praying over the subject. Livingstone speaks of being moved by "many to's and fro's" in that cave. We can conceive that the dark prospects before Covenanting preachers and his own unworthiness produced many "fro's;" but we can scarce imagine any thoughts save noble and unselfish ones producing "to's." "After many to's and fro's, and much confusion and fear anent the state of my soul, I thought it was made out to me that I behoved to preach Jesus Christ." It would have been better for Scotland if every man's decision to be a minister had been formed only after thus considering the subject a whole day before God. From that decision Livingstone never flinched. He devoted himself to the study of divinity, and was licensed to preach in 1625. For some time it seemed as if no sphere of regular labour were open to him. He was asked to become minister of Anwoth and of other parishes; but unexpected difficulties always blocked the way. For some years he lived partly with his father and partly in the house of the Earl of Wigtown, and preached wherever he was invited. It is evident that during this time he devoted himself with great intensity to the study of his Bible and theology. As the mountain tarn goes on quietly gathering water from the mists and lofty rocks until it overflows and sends them down in a refreshing stream to the parched plain, so did Livingstone's soul go on storing up the water of life from the Word of God and the publications of the Reformers, until its volume became so great that it broke out in vitalising streams over Scotland. The Shotts' Revival, which Dr Walker says has not had sufficient importance attached to it in the Scottish Church, took place under the preaching of Livingstone during this period of his life. The inmates of castles, as well as of cottages, were brought under the Spirit's power on that memorable day. A daughter of Lord Boyd was one of the hearers, and was led to decide for Christ. She was afterwards married to Pringle of Torwoodlee, near Gala-

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shields, and lived a long and singularly consistent life, enduring much for conscience sake.

The Scotch Bishops seem to have had no sympathy with the kind of work done at Shotts; for they evidently considered the presence of such a preacher in Scotland most dangerous. Although he had calls from various parishes, they succeeded in preventing his settlement and in driving him from the country. He at length was allowed to settle at Killinchy, in the north of Ireland. But even this was too near for those prelates; and one of their number was sent to influence the King against him. He was accused not only of non-conformity, but also of "stirring the people to ecstasies and enthusiasms." It can be proved from his own words that the latter part of the charge was quite untrue.* The King, however, ordered him to be tried and censured. The Bishop of Down, acting on these instructions, deposed him; but after nearly two years of hardship he was restored by Strafford.

In 1635, as Livingstone was proceeding to Edinburgh to be married to Janet Fleming,† he was told that Spotswood had issued orders for his apprehension. He, however, went boldly forward, and was married publicly in the West Church of Edinburgh in the presence of a goodly number of friends and nobles. He led his wife back to Ireland, only to receive fresh persecution.

Wherever Livingstone went the prelates followed him with their hatred, as the Romans followed Hannibal. He had now been engaged in preaching for nearly ten years, and rest seemed as far off as ever. The prospects of Covenanting preachers were so dark that Livingstone and his wife, along with others, resolved to leave Britain altogether and seek a home in the new world.

"It was not proud adventure,
It was not thirst of gold,
It was not sordid need that drove
Those men from house and hold.

In zeal for pure free worship
They sought the land untrod,
They burned to find a resting place
For conscience and for God."

* Wodrow's Select Biographies, Vol. I., p. 146.

† "How faithful an yokefellow, I desire to leave to the memory of others."—LIVINGSTONE.

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When the ship was about half-way across the Atlantic winds and waves were raised, as Livingstone believed, to drive it back again to the coast of Ireland. He was not, however, long in that land before a more fierce storm of persecution arose. Parties were despatched to apprehend and imprison him, and he was only saved through the timely warning of a friend. From Ireland he passed over to Scotland, and before many months passed his prospects brightened. The power of the prelates was broken for the time being in 1638; and in that year Livingstone became minister of Stranraer. Numbers of his former hearers were in the habit of coming thither to attend his Communion. He was a member of the famous Glasgow Assembly along with his father. While minister of Stranraer he was sent as chaplain to accompany the Covenanting army which fought for its country's liberty; and was one cold night nearly chilled to death in a tent at Choicelee wood, near Duns. He was also sent on frequent missions to the north of Ireland. On one occasion, at least, he was sent to London to confer with the King in name of the Covenanters, and was in great danger.

He was translated in 1648 to Ancrum, in Teviotdale. The transportation of his wife, six children, four or five servants, books and furniture, in the autumn of that year over rough roads must have been difficult enough; "but," he says, "the Lord brought us all safe thither." The Earl of Lothian, who was a Covenanter, took an interest in his settlement; and it is understood that some of Livingstone's letters are still in the possession of the Lothian family. He dwelt in a house belonging to Lothian until a manse was built for him, the lintel stone of which is still to be seen at Ancrum. He had scarce been a year in his parish when he was asked to leave his loved work of preaching to become one of the commissioners to negotiate with Charles II. as to the terms on which he should be received as Scotland's king. Alexander Henderson was usually chosen for work of this kind, but he was now no more; and the next man the Scotch Church deemed most competent was the minister of Ancrum. His narrative of the proceedings shows that to him the whole work was most ungenial. He became very soon convinced that Charles had no sympathy with the Covenanting cause, and so thoroughly distrusted his sincerity that he "was glad

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when the treaty was like to break off and sad when there was appearance of closing it."* The King ultimately swore the Covenant; but Livingstone seems to have been persuaded that the reason was not that he believed it, but because he saw no other way to the throne. Livingstone despaired of proper government under such a king, and declined to go with the Scotch army which took up arms for him. He thus escaped being present at the disastrous battle of Dunbar.

When he was absent in Holland an accident befell Mrs Livingstone, which is thus recorded:—"My wife, riding by the mill of Nether Ancrum, through the unskilfulness of the servant that rode before her, fell in the mill-dam, and was carried down the trough till with her body she stopped the outer wheel then fast going." From her perilous position she was rescued, but was so bruised that she took fever. On recovering she wrote to her husband that she thought she was an emblem of what the treaty they were concluding was like to bring on Scotland.

Oliver Cromwell, who wrote of Livingstone as "a man as highly esteemed as any for piety and learning,"† invited him into his presence; and, knowing that he was a member of the party called Protesters, had long conversations with him, sparing no pains to bring him over to his side. He found him true as steel to the cause of monarchy, and possessed of as great boldness as any Ironside who ever risked life on the battlefield. Livingstone prayed for the King in his presence, but was nevertheless treated with a respect that bears good testimony to the generosity of the Great Protector.

The parish of Ancrum was far more populous two hundred and fifty years ago than it is to-day. Land on which but few dwellings are now visible was then dotted over with houses in which a hardy and healthy peasantry abode. Regarding the character of the inhabitants when he came to Ancrum, he says:—"They were a landward, simple people, who for some time had not so much of the Gospel as to despise it. . . . They were tractable, but very ignorant, and some of them loose in their carriage, and it was a long time before any competent number of them was brought to such a condition as we might adven-

* S.B., Vol. I., p. 174. † Carlyle "Letters and Speeches," III., 88.

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ture to celebrate the ordinance of the Lord's Supper.* It appears that the Border thieves were then in the habit of making visits to Teviotdale under the cloud of night, and ministers' manses were not exempted. "The moss-troopers were in the night-time seeking for me at my house, and I was not like to be long in safety.† In spite of such difficulties he persevered in his work; preached, lectured, catechised, and visited. The church, the roofless walls of which still stand in a lovely situation on the banks of the Ale, was crowded with an attentive and solemnised congregation. Communion services began, which were largely attended. The people "saw the Lord's power and His grace in His sanctuary." Ancrum was not transformed into a paradise; for there were many, about whose lives he wrote with deepest sadness; but we have clear evidence that a most blessed change was produced on others, and that the fear of God entered and dwelt in houses where it was before unknown. Men and women travelled long distances to listen to Livingstone's preaching. Here is the testimony of one of those hearers—Walter Pringle of Greenknow, in Berwickshire, who afterwards endured severe suffering for the Covenanting cause:—"In the year 1651 I became a constant hearer of that lively man, Mr John Livingstone, going every Sabbath day from Stichel to Ancrum. By the way, I have had many a sweet hour, and I ever heard him with great delight and profit to my soul, always esteeming the Word spoken by him not to be his, but God's. Beyond any that ever I knew, he hath brought his wisdom, learning, and parts, whereof he hath a very large share, most in subjection to God; so that not by these, but by the movings of the Spirit of Truth, did he speak out of the abundance that was in his heart. . . . I am debtor more than I can express to this worthy man; for besides the hearing of him preach I have had sweet fellowship with him, ever delighting in his company."‡

Livingstone writes, "that some two or three years after the English had in a manner subdued the land, there began some reviving of the work of God in the land in several parts. Sundry were brought in by the ministry of the Word, among which there were some also in the parish

* S.B., I., 169.

† S.B., I., 187.

‡ S.B., I., 435

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of Ancrum and other parts of the south; in Teviotdale and Merse; Communion were very lively, and many ran to them. We had several monthly meetings in these two shyres.* There is an account of one of these lively Teviotdale Communion in the MSS. of one of Livingstone's hearers—Robert Bennet, laird of Chesters and Rafflet, in Ancrum parish—now in the possession of Mr R. D. Turnbull, of Deneburn, Denholm.† One of the MSS. is headed:—"At Wilton Church, the 22nd of June, 1656, being the Lord's day, and His Supper being celebratt ther be Mr John Livingstone, minister of Ancrum." The minister of Wilton at that time was named Langlands; but, as no reference is made to him by Bennet, we infer that for some reason he was absent. The MS. refers to another minister present called Mr Rutherford, and contains a short account of his sermon, which bears a very striking resemblance to the style and language of Samuel Rutherford. It is highly probable, therefore, that he assisted at this Communion. Bennet came from Chesters; and, to a Communion conducted by John Livingstone and Samuel Rutherford, no doubt so great a concourse gathered from all parts of Teviotdale that the action sermon had to be delivered in the churchyard, for that was common in those days. The old Wilton Church is now surrounded with factories and streets of well-built houses, along which on week-days is heard the sound of busy traffic, but in those days it stood among green parks or crofts which sloped down to the banks of Teviot. To this Covenanting Communion the beautiful lines of Principal Shairp describing a Scotch Sacramental Sabbath might be applied:—

“ And the folks are flowing
Both from near and far, enticed
By old wont and reverent feeling,
Here to keep the hallowed tryst,
This calm sacramental Sabbath
Longing for a sight of Christ.

While the kirkyard throng and thronger
Groweth, some their kindred greet,
Others in lone nooks and corners
To some grass-grown grave retreat.
There heed not the living, busy
With the dead beneath their feet.

* S.B., 1., 186. † Mr Turnbull died in 1893; a kindly gentleman who gave cordial help to Mr Stewart in his researches.—Ed.

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Here on green mound sits a widow
Rocking crooningly to and fro,
Over him with whom so gladly
To God's house she used to go.
There the tears of wife and husband
Blend o'er a small grave below.

Meek and very lowly
Souls bowed down with reverent fear,
This their first Communion day,
To the awful Presence Holy
Dread it is to draw so near,
Pain it were to turn away."

The preparatory services, held then on the week-days, were fitted to exercise the people's minds deeply about the awful subject of sin, and to bring them to the Communion yearning for a delightful and refreshing meeting with Christ. Whether or not he was at the preparatory services, his own writing shows that the laird of Chesters came that day to Wilton old church feeling keenly his sinfulness.

Rutherford preached from Psalm cxix. 38. He insisted on separation unto God. "The Lord is not content with outward profession. He searcheth the secrets of the hearts. Our Lord's way with a sinner is, first, he lets him taste of the sour before He brings him into the sweet, to try their faith in Him; but Satan does not so. His best is first." Such were some words, as we ascertain from Bennet's short notes, that fell from Rutherford's lips at this Wilton Communion. At a Sacramental service he often spoke like a man in heaven, and made deep impressions on his hearers.

Livingstone, it is likely, spoke that day not only in the church, but also in the churchyard. He was now fifty-three years of age. His father had so good a voice that he was the minister once selected to address a welcome to the King's representative when entering Edinburgh, and the son had probably the same gift. His rule, at any rate, was to speak in natural tones without singing or affectation.* Through the kindness of one of his descendants I have a photograph of a painting of John Livingstone, still preserved in New York, from which we can form an idea of his appearance. He has kind but penetrating eyes. His face bears marks of suffering, but looks refined and

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meditative, showing moreover gravity and determination. There is no doubt that he was the most successful preacher of his time. His great power lay in his tenderness and pathos. He warned the ungodly in words and tones which thrilled, but, above all, he proclaimed the free offers and calls of the Gospel as if they came out of the heart of Him who cried—"If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink." Solemn memories must have thrilled his soul at this Wilton Communion; for the day happened to be the one following his own birthday and the anniversary of the Revival at Shotts. He served one or more tables; and his work was not done as usual if he did not in Wilton Church speak with a pathos, unction, and power which swept his hearers' souls into the Holy of Holies, and kept them spell-bound there drinking most precious blessing in the very presence of Christ. The Communion Table was a place at which Covenanters expected the greatest joy and profit outside the gates of heaven.

One of the texts from which Livingstone preached at Wilton, very likely to a large crowd in the open air, was Isaiah lv. 3—"Incline your ear and come unto Me, hear and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David." At their table services the Covenanting preachers tried to feed Christians with the finest of the wheat, but at Communion times they had also one or more services in which they addressed those who were not communicants. Most solemn effects were on such occasions often produced by those services. Livingstone's sermon at Wilton from the above text seems to have been addressed to this class, and from Bennet's short account we conclude that he came to very close quarters with his hearers. His subject was "Coming to Christ." He strove to thrill their hearts with the thought that Christ was present inviting every one to enter into an everlasting covenant with Himself, and that they were in a position in which they had to choose or refuse the Redeemer. Once when Richard Cameron was preaching on a similar theme, he managed to flash the truth with such power on the hearts and consciences of the listeners that they were completely overpowered and "fell into a state of calm weeping." We are not told what effects were produced on the men and women of Teviotdale when at Wilton Church they listened to a preacher in many

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respects greater far than Richard Cameron; but we know that to one who was present the day proved a most eventful one. Robert Bennet, proprietor of the fertile and fair lands of Chesters on the banks of the Teviot, had been led by the preaching in Ancrum Church to think deeply about his sins, and for some reason or other followed his pastor to Wilton communion on that summer day. He was then about thirty-five years of age, and he records that previously he had made many vows and promises, but for a long time he had been so overtaken with "corruptions" that he writes bitter things against himself. We have no reason to believe that he was guilty of any gross outward sin, but he had begun to compare himself with the standard set before him in God's Word, and saw such shortcomings in his heart and life that he trembled. On that 22nd of June, 1656, the Word came to Bennet's soul with such power that he yielded himself to God more entirely than he ever did before. In a paper describing his experience on that summer day, he writes:—"The Lord, who is rich in mercy to all that call on Him, by providence in my portion of Scripture that morning, did not leave me comfortless, but held forth the sweet promise of Isaiah chapter lv. verse 7, 'Let the wicked forsake his ways, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon.' Quhairunto as I could with heart and goodwill, I engaged, with my hands lifted up, to the Most High to forsake all my wicked ways; and, as He would enable, to devote myself to His feare; and solemlie vowes myself to be a Nazarite unto God; and earnestly beggs a heart to call Him my God and Father, and nocht depairt from His wayes, and mak me mindfull of my vowes, and enable me with strenth from above to perform the sam. So help me God. (Signed) ROBERT BENNET." The Covenant thus made had a most powerful influence on Bennet's walk and conversation. He renewed it each year on 16th January as long as he lived. His wife's extravagance brought him into troublesome debt, but he faced all trials in a noble spirit. The kind of life he set himself to lead may be known from the rules which he laid down for himself preserved in his papers. Some of these are as follow:—

"Have due impressions of God and His omniscience

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upon your spirit, and of his faithfulness both as to His word and work."

"Be much in self-examination. Haggai—Consider your wayes, and sie ye be passed the new birth"

"Be diligent and keep you at your duty. . . . Keep a good bridle upon your worldly affairs. Seek ye the Kingdom of God and all other things subservient thereunto."

"Gard against the snares of ane ill tym"

"Enter into ane personall soule covenanting with Christ, and bind yourself over unto Him."

"Follow the footsteps of the flock and resort the ordinances of a godlie ministrie quhair the joyfull sound of the gospell is to be heard."

"Tak up your ground right in Jehovah, that rock is such against quhom the gates of hell sall not prevail."

There are other papers from Bennet's pen describing communion services at Stow, where Livingstone assisted, and much blessing was experienced, and also similar services at Cavers, Oxnam, &c. We shall meet Bennet again and see how he acted during the days of persecution. As we look on papers, written by his own hand in Edinburgh prison, and the very words penned by him in his dreary dungeon on the Bass Rock, we see proofs of the sore sufferings he endured for keeping true to the holy covenant he made with God on Wilton Communion Sabbath.

It is evident that Livingstone had access to the houses of not a few members of the aristocracy, and exercised among them a good influence. "The gentlemen of that country with whom I conversed most were Sir Andrew Ker of Greenhead, Sir William Scott of Harden, Sir Gideon Scott of Haychester, Sir Walter Riddell of that ilk, and his son; Sir Archibald Douglas of Cavers, and his son; Walter Pringle of Greenknow, George Pringle of Torwoodlee, Alexander Pringle of Whytebank. All these, and their ladies also, as also the Lady Stobs, the Lady Newton, and Mrs Elliot of Craigend, I looked upon as well-affected persons, and have been oft well refreshed at exercises in their houses and at communions where some of them had interest."* From what is here said it may be concluded that many of the gentry in the Border district

* S.B.I., 186.

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were then not only Presbyterians, but also heartily devoted to Evangelical religion. Their houses were open to ministers who would speak faithfully, like Livingstone, about the necessity of conversion and consecration to God. It is certain that Livingstone's ministry produced a most blessed change on Ancrum. He shrunk, with loathing, from writing or speaking in a boastful spirit regarding the effects of his ministry; but in a letter to his people, written after he was driven away by the persecutors, he says:—"My labour amongst you hath not been altogether in vain, but some have given evidence of a real work of the Spirit of grace upon their heart and life, of which number some are already in glory and others wrestling through an evil world; and I trust some that have not yet given great evidence of a real work of the Spirit of God upon their heart may have the seed of God in them that may in due time bud forth, at least at their death."*

See note as to Livingstone's descendants in appendix.

* S.B., I., 227.

CHAPTER IV.

HOW BORDER MINISTERS ACTED DURING THE SIFTING.

THERE had been years of comparative rest and enjoyment of blessed Gospel privileges, but very soon after the reins of government were put into the hands of Charles II., the love of ministers and people to religion was put to the severest test. Before the Scotch consented to crown Charles as their monarch he bound himself by the most solemn pledges by which man could give assurance to his fellow men, and signed their Covenant. No sooner, however, did he find the English crown safe on his head than he flung his pledges to the winds and revealed himself an accomplished hypocrite, a "royal high villain" and debauchee. What Charles II. hated above everything else was earnestness in religion. He knew right well that the Covenanters were men deeply in earnest. Livingstone, in Holland and on the way back to Scotland, tried to waken him up to the need of being thoroughly upright, straightforward, and sincere, and told him plainly that if he did not really believe the Covenant he ought for no consideration whatever to pledge himself to its principles. Other Covenanting preachers as plainly announced that, with all his royal blood, he would not escape the wrath to come unless he forsook his sins and turned to God. Charles detested such preachers, and when the power was put in his hands he set himself with determination to sweep them and all their Covenanting out of his kingdom.

The measures he adopted are well known. Two creatures were selected to manage Scottish affairs, who, to please His Majesty, were capable not only of casting off their former professions, but also of carrying out any tyrannical orders that issued from his palace. Scotland's power of rightly estimating character will have sadly degenerated when she thinks of one of these men, named James Sharp, as anything else than the Judas of his country. Time showed already that many had been swept into the Covenanting movement, not by conviction, but by sympathy with the popular enthusiasm prevalent around

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them. Various causes had now brought on a reaction. The blind devotion of the party of Resolutions to the cause of monarchy effectually prevented any strong united action of Covenanters on safe lines. The character of the new Parliament can be ascertained from its popular name of the "Drunken Parliament." Charles saw that he could now safely carry out the policy recommended of old by the King of Rome, who struck down the tallest poppies.

The stroke fell first on two outstanding figures—the Marquis of Argyle and James Guthrie, minister of Stirling. Had death not anticipated the hangman, Samuel Rutherford, the saint of the Covenant, who was born in Teviotdale, would have shared the same fate. After removing Argyle and Guthrie, the Court went on quickly with its work against Presbytery. At the King's request Parliament restored Prelacy, forbade meetings of synods and assemblies, and threatened punishment on any who preached against the change. The Covenants were publicly burned. Four Scotchmen were sent to England, ordained by English prelates, and set over the Scottish Church. It became evident that few ministers would recognise their Episcopal superiority; and the Council, under the influence of drink, it is said by Burnet, agreed to issue a proclamation on 1st October, 1662, banishing from their parishes and depriving of their livings all ministers ordained since 1649, who would not before the 1st November accept collation from the bishops of the dioceses. A study of the action taken by faithful Covenanting ministers, when subjected to the Council's persecuting proclamation, is well fitted to exercise an ennobling influence. From lists given by Wodrow we find how the ministers in the different Presbyteries acted in 1662.* We must content ourselves with a consideration of those belonging to the Presbytery of Jedburgh.

When John Livingstone of Ancrum heard that the head of his friend James Guthrie was fixed to the Nether Bow, he was convinced that the days of his own ministry were numbered. On 12th October, 1662, larger numbers of people wended their way through the beautiful glen in which stands the parish church of Ancrum and along the banks of the river Ale than had been seen on any Sabbath

* Wodrow, I., 326.

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for many years. It was the day of Communion. The services were unusually solemn; for many came there with a presentiment that it would be the last occasion on which they would eat and drink the bread and wine along with their pastor. Livingstone was dressed that day in deepest mourning, not only for James Guthrie, but for his daughter Marion, who died in the manse of her husband, Mr Scott, minister of Hawick, during the preceding July, and was buried in St Mary's Churchyard.* It is evident that on the Sabbath Livingstone sought to bring the people as near as possible to Christ. On the following Monday he spoke to the congregation about the times, told them that on any day he might be dragged away from Ancrum, and that he wished to give a farewell address. The substance of his discourse is in print. He tried to convince his hearers, by calm reasonings, that questions were at stake which could on no account be surrendered. "It is thought," he said, "that some things that Christians stand upon are but fancies and nice scrupulosities, and if there be anything in them, it is but a small matter. . . . Indeed, if they be none of Christ's small things let them go; but if it be one of His, will ye call that a small thing? His small things are very great things. . . . There never was a trial since the beginning of the world, but in the while it was a trial, it was a small thing. . . . A gardener is appointed to keep his master's ground. Then cometh one and saith, 'I will not meddle with your fruit-trees, your flowers, nor your herbs. I will but only cast down your walls, and cut up your hedges, and that is but a small thing.' 'You will undo all in so doing (saith the other), for the wild beasts and boars of the forest will come in.' Our blessed Lord Jesus was of another mind when He said, 'The servant that was faithful to Me in a little, I will make him ruler over much.'"[†]

Robert Leighton is reported to have said—"If all the brethren have preached to the times, may not one poor brother be allowed to preach for eternity."[‡] The words have a very pious sound; but the good man who uttered

* "List of John Livingstone's children," written on his Bible, and now printed in "The Livingstones of Callendar and their principal Cadets." A family History compiled by Edwin Brockholst Livingstone.

[†]S.B. I., 204. [‡] According to "Chambers's Ency." Art. "Leighton," this story is unauthenticated.—Ed.

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them was led into queer courses and company. John Livingstone was certainly under strong temptations to refrain from speaking to the times if he looked at his own and his family's worldly interests. By what considerations he was impelled to take a different and more manly course will be seen by his own aptly illustrated reference to the subject—"You will say, may not a man be silent at least, and what need him go hazard himself and his ministrie, let be his family and all things else, by speaking some things that he had better forbear? What needs him do so? Faith and repentance, let him preach these. Truly, we think that weell; faith and repentance we think very comprehensive duties; and I confess I never delight to hear a man that the most of all his preaching is that we call on the publick, and to meddle with State matters. But there are times and seasons wherein a man's silence may bring a curse upon his head. Take this comparison. There is a besieged town, and there is a watchman appointed with a captain and a guard at the West Port. Now, he hath commission from the State to sound the trumpet whenever he perceives any danger. . . . Weell, he seeth the enemy coming on—he doth like a wise man, how? He marches his men all to the East Port, which is the far stronger, and there he stands where there is none to oppose him; he is a sicker man, he thinks he will only preach against Popery and not meddle with other controversies . . . he will preach love to God, love to our neighbour. Now, should a man be silent that way; how shall he look for a blyth sight of Christ on his death-bed, when His Master shall say, 'Ha, sir, I know you well enough . . . you spoke, as they say, where none speired at you; you were stout then, but when My cause came in hand, when you might have done good service to have borne up My banner when it was like to fall, you would not; therefore, now get you gone.'"^{*}

These are short extracts from the address he delivered; and we can conceive what impression they produced, and with what feelings the hearers left the church. A very short time afterwards he was informed that the Privy Council had resolved to summon twelve or sixteen ministers before them, of whom he was one. At first he

^{*} S.B., I., 208.

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thought they designed the same punishment as that inflicted on James Guthrie; but, ascertaining it would only be banishment, he appeared before them on 11th December, 1662. An account of what passed is written by himself. On refusing to promise to observe the 29th May as the anniversary of the King's Restoration, he was told that he was a suspected person and required to take the oath of allegiance, owning the King's supremacy in things civil and ecclesiastic. His own account leads us to conclude that, for some reason or other, the members of the Council were anxious that he should yield; but he stood firm as a rock and proved more than a match for Middleton in argument. When he was asked to take time to consider whether he might not see his way to take the oath, he declared his mind was so clear that it would be mocking their Lordships to delay. He was sentenced to remove within forty-eight hours north of the Tay, and there remain till within two months he depart out of all the King's dominions. He had a wife and several young children at Ancrum, and humbly asked permission to see them; but was peremptorily forbidden to return to that district. He subscribed his own sentence, and said he would not cease to pray for the King, the country, and its rulers; but when asked to promise that he would not hold conventicles or preach he gave no answer. On 9th April, 1663, he sailed away from the shores of Scotland, and in eight days arrived at Rotterdam, where he had liberty to preach, and spent pleasant days in the congenial company of John Brown of Wamphray and other exiles from their native land for non-conformity. He died in exile in 1672.

By the act of Council already referred to, the devotion of ministers to the Covenant was put to the severest test. All ordained since 1649 who did not accept its terms were threatened with sore sufferings. They had set before them the prospect of being not only deprived of their livings in time to come, but of the last year's stipend for which they had served. No provision whatever had been made, no time was afforded them to have houses ready for their families; for the trial was sent suddenly. Yet when the dark, wintry day arrived on which they had to decide what course they would take, it was found that nearly four hundred Scotch ministers, rather than accept Episcopacy, chose to forsake their earthly all, to turn their backs on

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dwelling endearing to them by many hallowed associations, and go forth trusting for support to the God whose guidance they thought they were following. Their act has exerted a powerful and ennobling influence on Scotland.

In the Presbytery of Jedburgh only five ministers conformed to Episcopacy; and the unfaithful ones were the ministers of Castleton, Jedburgh, Crailing, Hopkirk, and Hownam. Regarding the first four we can find no record of anything remarkable about their lives save that they were admitted to their livings, preferred self to principle, and died. Thomas Abernethy of Hownam had a strange career. In early life he served as a soldier in Germany, was seduced to the Romish faith, in which he remained nine years, became a Jesuit priest, and studied at Rome.* Baillie writes†: "In the heat of all these actions God did much encourage us with Father Abernethie, the Jesuit's conversion. On Thursday [24th August, 1638] after Mr Andrew Ramsay's sermon, made for the purpose, in a large hour's space, he made a very sweet discourse of his errors and reclaiming by the grace of God, with many tears of his own and the most of his hearers; thereafter with great desire he subscribed our Covenant and spake much to the commendation of it. After all our diligence to try we can find no appearance of hypocrisy in the man . . . he knew, six years since, when he was last at Rome, a conclusion past in the congregation De Propaganda Fide, for to use means to draw the Church of England to that of Rome; but to meddle no farther with our Scottish Church than an association with England, upon hopes by this conformity alone to gain us fully in time." He published a speech entitled "Villany and Hellish Plots Wrought in the Pope's Court Against Our Three Kingdoms," &c. He was admitted minister of Hownam in 1640; but in 1662 he cast away his flaming profession, abjured the Covenant he swore, and conformed to Episcopacy.‡ Thomas Abernethy evidently had the power of adapting his religion to the changing times.

The other eleven ministers of Jedburgh Presbytery stood faithful. John Livingstone's case has already been con-

* Scott's "Fasti," II., 502. † Letters, I., 102.

‡ Scott's phrase is ("Fasti" II., 502)—He conformed to Episcopacy, and continued, 28th April, 1669.—Ed.

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sidered, and a short account of the other ten will be given so far as known. Five were ordained after 1649 and left their manse and their livings rather than conform to Episcopacy.

James Ainslie, minister of Minto, was admitted to his charge on 9th December, 1652. Objection was taken to his admission because he was a Freemason; and, before he was taken on trials, the Presbytery of Kelso was consulted. It was found that in the purest times of the kirk Masons were admitted, and the objection was not sustained.* We have not yet found any particulars regarding Ainslie's ministry; but at any rate he preferred principle to worldly considerations. He was restored to the church of Minto in 1690. Where he lived and how he acted during the twenty-eight years' persecution we have not been able to ascertain. His name has not yet been found among those who held conventicles.

James Gillon of Cavers, as also Ainslie, was a student of the famous David Dickson at Edinburgh College. Many of the young men who left his class-room became thorough champions of Presbytery and earnest preachers of Evangelical doctrine. It appears that Gillon's ministry produced good fruit at Cavers. For standing firm to principle he was banished from his church, manse, and pleasant parish.

Hew Scott, because he would not abjure the Covenant, was banished from his beautiful parish of Bedrule, on the banks of the Rule and under the shadow of Ruberslaw. Gavin Elliot,† at the same time and for the same reason, had to leave Kirkton, on the other side of Ruberslaw, after a ministry of ten years and a half.

John Scott, another student of David Dickson, was called to be minister of Hawick on 8th February, and admitted on 29th July, 1657. In the following year he was married to Marion, daughter of John Livingstone of Ancrum, when she was only sixteen. Marion Livingstone was mistress of Hawick manse only three years, being removed by death in July, 1661. Her father must have been a frequent visitor to the town, and must often have preached to his son-in-law's flock. John Scott, on being

* Scott's "Fasti," part II., p. 506.

† Wodrow, I., 326, gives no indication as to the date of Elliot's ordination.—Ed.

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asked to recognise prelacy, refused, and was banished from Hawick church, manse, and parish. We have no account of Mr Scott's last meeting with his flock, whether it was at all like the last Sabbath of Alexander Peden at his ejection, when so loath were pastor and people to separate that he continued among them till the shades of night descended. Scott had a spirit like his father-in-law, and was a preacher of his stamp. A perjured king might expel him from Hawick, deprive him of his bread, and cast him out as a homeless wanderer; but no power on earth could shut his lips and prevent him from preaching Christ's Gospel. In opposition to the law banishing him from the district, he came back to places where his Hawick flock could hear the Evangel from his lips. The solitude of Earlside and other secluded spots in the country round were broken by the tramp of men thirsting for the water of life, and by the voice of John Scott proclaiming the message of salvation.

In Colonel Wallace's account of the Pentland rising in 1666 we find that John Scott and Major Gilgour were present for some time with his bold little army in their sore marches under lashing November rain, and offered to bring help from Teviotdale; but Rullion Green was fought and lost, and we conclude that Teviotdale men were not forward in time owing to the slow means of transit and the distance. Colonel Wallace, however, in his narrative expresses considerable disappointment at the two leaving him at Bathgate.*

After Rullion Green, Covenanters were hung up in tens together at a time; good men were horrified at hearing of the fearful torture and death of noble Hugh McKail; but John Scott was not deterred from preaching in the fields. Search was made for him and others, and he found it necessary to flee to the north of England. The strength of Presbyterianism near the Scotch border in Cumberland and Northumberland is largely due to Covenanting ministers who laboured there during the days of persecution. Crookshanks states in his history† that "Messrs Welsh,

* McCrie's "Memoir of Veitch and Brysson," 406, 413, 415.

† Vol. I., edited by Dr Omond, Monzie, p. 388. Dr Wm. Crookshank was minister of the Scots Congregation in Swallow Street, Westminster, and died in 1769. Dr Omond describes his work as an abridgement of Wodrow's.

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Gabriel Semple, Samuel Arnot, and John Scott of Hawick . . . were very useful in Cumberland and Northumberland, reclaiming sinners and instructing many who scarcely ever had the Gospel preached among them before."

Hawick has been long noted for sympathy with sound, progressive, political movements; but John Scott once took part in a meeting which showed little sympathy with what might be called a progressive Covenanter movement. Richard Cameron may be termed a progressive Covenanter in this sense, that he followed Covenanting principles to their logical and legitimate consequences. He cast off allegiance to the persecuting Stuart kings and taught his hearers to do the same. He spoke out loudly against what was named the "Indulgence." Several Covenanting ministers, who would on no account conform to Episcopacy, got freedom from the Government to preach in their parishes under certain conditions, and were in consequence called the "Indulged." Cameron publicly declared that such ministers were not acting in accordance with their principles, and urged their hearers to leave their ministrations. There is no doubt that he was taking the most straightforward and effective course for breaking the power of the persecutors. Had Scotch Covenanters universally and heartily adopted his policy they would ere long have become a strong and united phalanx, quite able to cope with their enemy, and Bothwell might have been another Bannockburn.* Many, however, would not cast off allegiance to Charles, bad as he was: and others, who were thought good Covenanters, saw no harm in accepting

* "Insignificant in station, youthful, and with little experience as a preacher, he stedfastly championed the freedom of the Church from civil control, as great men in other lands and other times had done." Profr. Herkless, "Richard Cameron," p. 71. Cameron's position is well described in the words of a Border poet:—

"When King and Lords and Church forgot
Their Greater Head who left her free,
And failing hearts remembered not
Her dear immortal liberty,

A scattered remnant still could raise
The head unshamed no prince could daunt,
And strike a blow in evil days
For Christ and Crown and Covenant."

From "In Borderland" by R. S. CRAIG, Hawick, 1899.—Ed.

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the Indulgence or in holding communion with the Indulged. A very few young preachers followed Cameron; and those who were more conservative felt their attacks so keenly that they held a meeting to deal with them about their forwardness on 28th August, 1678. The meeting was attended not only by the Indulged, but by some who would on no account themselves take any Indulgence. One of the latter class was its Moderator, John Scott, outed minister of Hawick. He, and those who acted with him, would not separate from the others, and deplored the disunion produced by Cameron's party. They endeavoured at the meeting to convince two young preachers that they were following dangerous courses, but with little success. Richard Cameron himself refused to appear before them. We do not know what John Scott said, but we wonder at his presiding over such a meeting; for his father-in-law, John Livingstone, at Rotterdam, on 7th October, 1671, wrote a letter to the parishioners of Ancrum denouncing the Indulgence, as follows:—"Some ministers accepted that which they called an Indulgence of their ministrie without any public testimony either of their adherence to the oath of God and work of reformation or against these usurpations. Oh! for a head turned into waters, and eyes a fountain of tears, to deplore day and night such an indignity done to the Son of God without a witness, and such shame cast upon the Church of Scotland.

. . . . If any ministers have had a hand in contriving or procuring that Indulgence, I suppose they have done more mischief to the poor Church of Christ in that land than all the prelates and all their hirelings."* Richard Cameron and his followers could scarcely have used stronger language than Livingstone in these sentences. In the course he took on this subject, however, Scott was acting along with John Welsh and some of the best field-preachers at the time.

We do not trace Mr Scott's course through every year; but we have evidence that through the long persecution he stood true to the Covenant, and endured no small amount of suffering. In December, 1681, on the night when the Earl of Argyle, who was afterwards martyred, escaped from prison in the disguise of a page and holding up the

*S. B. I., 248-249.

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train of his step-daughter, one of the first to meet him was Mr Scott, who, along with others, planned his conveyance to London. When the Earl mounted a horse prepared for him, the minister of Hawick advised him to ride on, without ever slackening bridle till he arrived at Torwoodlee, and gave him a verbal token by which he would be received. We have evidence that Scott lived till he saw the persecutors expelled from the throne; but it does not appear that he was restored to his former parish. Not every town can point to a minister with such a record as the minister of Hawick.

These five were the younger ministers ordained since 1649 who were loyal to principle and expelled. There were older ministers in the same Presbytery who were equally firm, and who, though not expelled, were confined to their parishes. This was imposed on Martin of Eckford and Davidson of Southdean; the latter of whom, however, afterwards acted inconsistently.

The minister of Wilton at the time was John Langlands, brother of the laird of Langlands. Langland's ministerial character may be inferred from his having such preachers as Livingstone and Rutherford at his Communions. He was ordained in 1641, refused to bend under the yoke of prelacy, and was in consequence confined to Wilton parish. Evidently he was afterwards subjected to greater suffering, and preferred losing the living altogether to signing the test. Sir J. A. H. Murray writes:— "John Langlands, minister of Wilton, who was one of the 'confined,' was a brother of the laird of Langlands. The extent and value of Wilton glebe is said to be owing to the fact that his brother granted him, while incumbent of Wilton, fifty acres of the land known as Wilton Mains, as an addition to his emoluments of office, and these lands, in the ensuing troubles, were either seized for the church or through some legal process lapsed into its permanent possession."* The Langlands estate comprised the ground on the banks of the Teviot near Wilton Church. The glebe, obtained as stated above, makes Wilton now one of the best livings in the Established Church.

The oldest minister in Jedburgh Presbytery was James Ker of Abbotrule, one of the Kers of Littledean, a Border

* Paper on "Teviotdale Covenanters," in proceedings of Hawick Archæological Society, February, 1864.

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family whose members suffered for their devotion to the Covenant. Along with Scott of Oxnam and Penman of Morebattle, he acted as chaplain of Lord Lothian's regiment* when it fought for the Solemn League and Covenant in England.† In the parish of Abbotrule, occupying so beautiful a situation among Border hills, he had been minister for thirty-eight years, when he was asked to conform to prelacy, but he unhesitatingly refused. So far as we can see, he never accepted any indulgence, and during the whole persecution stood most consistently to his principles.

Though Ker was oldest, the first minister in Jedburgh Presbytery who suffered for the Covenant after the Restoration of Charles II. was John Scott of Oxnam. In many respects his life is an interesting one. The first work in which he engaged after licence was acting as chaplain in Lothian's regiment, in which many Teviotdale soldiers served. After his settlement in Oxnam he was a strong Protester and an intimate friend of John Livingstone and Samuel Rutherford. Four letters of the latter are addressed to John Scott of Oxnam.‡ To his flock at Ancrum Livingstone wrote from his place of banishment:—"Go where ye can hear the Word sincerely preached by a sent minister, who will witness against the evils of the time, without which, I apprehend, whatever a man's gifts be, the Lord will not send the blessing. Oxnam is not far off, and I hope Mr Scot doth and will declare for the sworn Reformation, and testify against the present defection; but I dare not bid you hear any of the intruded hirelings whom they call curates."§ Scott was one of the ministers who distrusted Sharp, and who met in Edinburgh along with James Guthrie and two elders in August,

* General Assembly Commission Records for 1646-47, p. 57. † The entry in the Assembly Records runs thus:—"having received a list for ministers to the General's Excellence, viz:—Mr David Forest in St. Andrews, Mr Walter Greig in Cowper, and Mr John Duncan in Dunfermline Presbytery; and for the Earl of Lothian's regiment, Messrs Jas. Kerr and John Scott in Jedburgh, and Wm. Penman in Kelso Presbytery, do appoint the said Mr David Forest for the General's, and Mr John Scott for Lothian's regiment." Penman conformed after the Restoration, Wodrow, I., 326.—Ed.

‡ Bonar's edition. Letters 344, 349, 350, 352, also 357, addressed to him and other prisoners in the Castle of Edinburgh in 1660.

§ S.B., I., 251.

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1660, to congratulate the King on his return and at the same time remind him of his solemn pledges to the Covenant.* That very night Scott and all the others were imprisoned in Edinburgh Castle.† Here they were subjected to so great hardships that one of them—Ramsay of Mordington—went deranged in his mind. Oxnam was left without a minister till Scott returned from prison to his pulpit in November, 1661. In 1662 he refused to conform, and was confined to his parish, being ordained before 1649. In 1664 Mr Scott had the boldness to assist at a Communion outside Oxnam, and for this illegal act he had to appear before the High Commission Court, originated and presided over by James Sharp. Wodrow did not ascertain what was done to Scott on this occasion; but no one ever appeared before this cruel Inquisition and came out again without having severely felt its fangs. It is evident that for some time he was not only deprived of his living, but driven out of Oxnam; for we find that a curate named Hume was presented to this parish by Charles II. and drew the stipend for at least two years. In 1669 Scott's name re-appears as "Indulged." He was restored to his former parish; but subjected to harassment. In July, 1673, he was summoned for not observing the anniversary of the King's Restoration and severely fined.

Scott opposed the doctrines preached by Richard Cameron. We have before us the copy of a letter found among the Wodrow MSS.,‡ and written by him on 5th December, 1678, defending the meeting at which the outed minister of Hawick acted as Moderator and before which Cameron was summoned. He calls it a meeting of "suffering ministers," and bewails the divisions of the Covenanters. Scott died in 1681. His wife seems to have settled in Kelso, deserted the parish church, and attended conventicles. "Elizabeth Rae, relict of Mr John Scott of Oxnam," is found in a list of names given in by the curate of Kelso to the persecutors to be dealt with for "church disorders,"§ i.e., attending the ministrations of Covenanting preachers.

* Wodrow, I., 66.

† "Rutherford's Letters," No. 357.

‡ Wodrow, MSS. (folio), Vol. 59, No. 96.

§ See Bonar's "Rutherford," note to letter 344.

CHAPTER V.

HOW THE PEOPLE ACTED IN SOME BORDER PARISHES.

WE have seen how ministers acted. Presbytery, however, had been so understood and received by the Scottish people that they were as ready to suffer for its principles as ministers. Our object now is to consider how Scottish Covenanting men and women acted under a most cruel persecution. We certainly neither pronounce the Covenanters perfect nor defend all their actions; but we have no hesitation in asserting that they were the noblest personages of their time in Scotland, and exhibited a heroism which their countrymen are under solemn obligation to remember. Samuel Rutherford's recorded prayer* for Teviotdale was answered during the persecution, for that district produced so much devotion to principle that it may be said to have "blossomed as the rose."

The Government of Charles II. not only removed ministers, but put curates in their parishes to teach the people the religion approved by the State. The place of Livingstone at Ancrum remained vacant till 1664, when a person named James Scott was settled. We do not know how the pulpit was supplied during the interval; but it is stated in "Naphthali" that in other parts of Scotland during the same time, after the ejection of ministers:—"No preaching was to be heard, nor could the Lord's day be otherwise known than by the sorrowful remembrance of those blessed enjoyments whereof now we are deprived." When Scott came to Ancrum he was lying under sentence of excommunication pronounced against him, twenty years before, by the Presbyterian Church. It is interesting to know how he was received. The people assembled on the day of his settlement; and, though they offered no personal violence, they let it be unmistakably known that the intruded curate was unwelcome. One country-woman, filled with horror at the sin she thought Scott was committing, endeavoured to speak to him, but he refused to listen. Carried away by her earnest desire to warn the man, she caught hold of

* Bonar's edition of "Rutherford's Letters," No. 344.

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his cloak, whereupon he immediately struck her with his staff. Her two brothers at once stepped forward to protect her from violence, and some boys were provoked to throw stones. They, however, did not strike Scott. This was straightway proclaimed a treasonable tumult. The Sheriff, now no longer Douglas, who had abandoned the Sheriffship rather than abjure the Covenant, imprisoned the woman, her two brothers, and the boys. Even this was not deemed a sufficient punishment for an offence so dreadful. The whole company had the honour of being summoned before the High Commission Court, presided over by the great Archbishop James Sharp. The boys confessed that they each threw a stone when they saw the new minister striking the woman, whereupon the gentle Prelate exclaimed—"Hanging is too good for them." The sentence of the Court was that the boys be scourged through the streets of Edinburgh, branded on the face with a hot iron, and sent to the West Indies to be sold as slaves. It is said that these four Ancrum boys bore the terrible punishment with a courage which would have honoured strong men. No other charge could be brought against the two brothers save that of protecting their sister from the violence of Scott; but for this they were banished to Virginia, though they had helpless families depending on them for support. The men who endured treatment so savage were called Turnbull, and occupied the farm of Ashieburn, near Ancrum village. For some reason or other comparative clemency was shewn to the woman who raised the whole tumult, for they only sentenced her to be scourged through Jedburgh streets. When Burnet, the bishop of the diocese, was asked to spare her this sentence, as she might be with child, he replied that he "would cause claw the itch out of her shoulders."* The state of public feeling in Jedburgh can be guessed from Kirkton's description of the execution of the sentence:—"When the day of her suffering came, the executioner chose rather to be kind to his innocent neighbour than true to the bishops; so he permitted her to keep on her clothes, scarce ever touched her, and hurt her not at all. Her brother [another one] led her by the hand, and the execution was attended with more laughter than tears, the people proclaiming the

* Wodrow, I., 394.

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executioner had made the bishop a false prophet; and the bishops were more bitterly cursed than she was whipped.*

In place of Livingstone's son-in-law, a curate named Kinear was settled in Hawick, regarding whom almost nothing is recorded. Against the character of a curate called Chisholm, who was settled in Lilliesleaf, serious charges were made. The Covenanting spirit at Cavers was so strong that a considerable time elapsed before the persecutors ventured to settle one named Somerville, grandfather of Dr Somerville, once minister of Jedburgh. The minutes of the Conformist Presbytery contain the following:—"At Jedburgh, 7th September, 1675. This day report was made of the meeting of the Presbytery at Cavers, the 18th day of August, the whilk day the brethren being convened to give institution to Mr Thomas Somerville, conform to the Archbishop, his order, and the Presbytery's ordinance, they found the church and churchyard door fast shut, whereupon they sent the Presbytery officer to Sir W. Douglas, his house, to demand the keys; but he could not get access neither to Sir William nor his lady (Dame Katherine Rigg); only met with their daughter, whose answer was that no keys were to be had there; so that the brethren were necessitate, without preaching and ordinary solemnities, to give Mr Somerville institution at the kirk-style. Likewise it was ordainit that a letter should be written to the Archbishop to acquaint his grace of this affront; and also that when they came to execute his grace's commands a number of women were convened in the churchyard with their laps full of stones, as a guard to keep us out of church and churchyard; and besides, some women railed on us, calling us soul-murderers and the devil's servants." What punishment was inflicted on these bold Cavers ladies has not yet been ascertained.

Episcopal clergymen have done noble work for Christ in all parts of the world; but it was soon found that the curates of Charles II. had no influence in advancing the cause of Prelacy in Scotland. These men have been so

* "Kirkton's History," p. 210. The following appears in Wodrow's MS., 8vo., xxix., in the Advocates' Library, and may bear upon the same case:—

"One in the parish of Ancrum about the time of Livingstone's deposing from that parish, a curate intruding upon the parish, his wife with others opposing the same, was constrained to pay £12 Scots with other troubles and expenses, which extended to £200 8s 4d."—Ed.

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described by writers belonging to different parties that, with very few exceptions, they seem to have been a class of pastors who could have sat to be painted as representatives of Bunyan's false shepherds. Burnet, himself a bishop, says:—"They were the worst preachers I ever heard; they were ignorant to a reproach; and many of them were openly vicious." Work was certainly imposed on them most loathsome to any men of noble character. They were required to send in from their parishes lists of men and women to be persecuted for worshipping God as their consciences dictated. They did not, however, manage to change, to any extent, the Presbyterian service in their churches. In the Episcopal Establishment the mode of worship remained, in all material parts, the same as in the Covenanted Church. The feeling of antagonism among the people was so strong that in very few places indeed did they venture publicly to introduce the Prayer Book. Burnet used it when curate of Salton, and it was also publicly used in the College of Edinburgh and by the curates of Kilmarnock and Mauchline; but almost nowhere else. In private, however, it was extensively used.*

Charles soon found that if the Scotch were to be made Episcopalians something else must be done than settling curates over them. Services began to be held outside the parish churches by the expelled Covenanting preachers; and one of the first, if not the very first, to whom is due the honour of beginning these, was Gabriel Semple, afterwards minister of Jedburgh. There were many men and women throughout Scotland quite willing to acknowledge Charles as their civil monarch and give him all his dues, who denied his authority in religious matters. Having given considerable time and attention to the reading of their Bibles, they understood that there was a spiritual sphere where another Monarch held sway; and when the King intruded into this sphere they vowed that they would remain loyal to Him who alone was Head of the Church and Lord of the conscience. They saw in charge of the curates a church set up by Charles, of which he was head; but out on the hillsides or the lonely moors, where the preacher's voice was accompanied by the cry of the lapwing or the music of the tinkling rill, they found the

* See note at p. 104 in "Memoirs of John Blackader."

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church of which Christ was Head. They felt sure that it was owned and supported unmistakably by Him; and so in thousands they turned their backs on the curates and made their way to the conventicles.

These services became very frequent at an early date on the Borders. Wodrow affirms that field-meetings were exceedingly common in Merse and Teviotdale and other districts during 1674. "Convenient places were pitched upon on mountains, mosses, and muirs; and considerable numbers gathered to them. At these meetings many souls were converted and edified; and not a few who had been profane or indifferent, and well enough satisfied with the incumbents, entirely left them."* On June 12, 1675, Charles wrote to his Scotch Council complaining of the "increase of conventicles in Teviotdale and East Lothian."† In 1677 he wrote as follows:—"Charles R. Right trusty and well beloved, &c. We have been very much concerned at the accounts we have had, not only out of Scotland, but from several other hands, of the great and insufferable insolencies lately committed by the fanatics, especially in the shires of Ayr, Renfrew, Stewartry of Kirkcudbright, and other adjacent places; and also in Teviotdale, and even in Fife, where numerous conventicles which by Act of Parliament are declared rendezvouses of rebellion, have been kept with solemn communions of many hundreds of people. . . . These insolencies being so recent, have moved us to provide fit and timeous remedies; and therefore we have appointed some of our English forces to march to the north, near the Scots border, and a part of our army in Ireland, to lie at Belfast, near the sea-coast towards Scotland. . . . Cause the heritors and life-renters engage and give bonds for their tenants, and others that live upon and possess their lands, that they shall keep no conventicles, that they shall live orderly and obedient to the laws; and by causing the tenants and masters of families give the like bonds, by causing every parish and the heritors of it give surety that no conventicles shall be kept within any part of the parish. . . . Punish the disobedient . . . by fining, imprisonment, or banishment."‡ The conventicles of Teviotdale had

* "Wodrow's History," Vol. II., p. 234.

† Wodrow, II., 280.

‡ Wodrow, Vol. II. 376-377.

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evidently become so important that letters were written about them by Charles Stewart from his palace. It was resolved to apply the strong arm of force to put down Covenanting and drive the people inside the parish churches. Garrisons of soldiers had, as early as 1675, been placed at the house of Branksham or Newark, at the house of Hunthill, at the house of Blane in the Merse, at the house of the laird of Riddell . . . to prevent all disorderly meetings, and in case any conventicle be held . . . ordain them . . . to apprehend the minister, &c.*

Cavers was one of the very first places in Teviotdale in which conventicles were held. Sir William Douglas, who was a grandson of the Sir William we have already spoken of, withdrew from all public offices when these could only be held at the cost of abjuring the Covenant. When Mr Gillon was expelled, the Douglas family also withdrew from the parish church, and would not cross its doors to hear the intruded curate. A young man names James Osburne, who studied and held a bursary in Glasgow University, was engaged by Sir William to act as chaplain in his house and tutor to his family. It is highly probable that numbers from the neighbourhood attended his ministrations in preference to entering the parish church. On August 3, 1676, Douglas and Osburne were summoned before the Privy Council, and, failing to compear, were both denounced and proclaimed outlaws.† Thus the voice of Osburne was for a time silenced; but he will come again before us in connection with the sufferings of Lady Douglas.

At Eckford large conventicles were held. Tradition asserts that the praise of Covenanters at their meetings on Gateshaw Brae, in a neighbouring parish, was heard, sometimes at night, at a considerable distance. The great seat of conventicles in this district, before 1679, was on the banks of the Kale, near the house of Henry Hall at Haughhead.

‡A MS. in the Advocates' Library gives a few notes as to

*Wodrow, Vol. II. 282-283.

†Wodrow, Vol. II. 333.

‡Wodrow MSS. in Adv. Library 8vo. Vol. XXIX. "An account of Sufferers in Teviotdale, &c."

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Oxnam parish, which show the trouble and stress introduced into that quiet valley among the hills by the high-handed action of the Government:—

One man “for refusing to lift militia arms lost his hire when it was within two or three days of the term. It was done by his master without any shadow of law, and himself put to wandering, and not any desired to hire him since.

“Another in the same parish for the reset of one man all night paid £15 sterling to Graden.*

“Some others in that parish for hearing a preaching and at other times paid 2500 merks.

“An aged man in that parish for hearing one preaching, and neer heard another neither before nor since, paid £24 Scots.”

Thus smoothly for Graden and his men; but in the following it is not difficult to discern the figure of a resolute Borderer stoutly defending his gear until overcome by superior numbers.

“Another in the same parish for contumacy. They came with four officers; and, when they could not prevail, they came again with seven and took away a ‘meer,’ and six of them went behind six oxen belonging to him. They were rescued at that time, and they went away. Within two or three days after, Graden, with his officers and others, to the number of eleven or twelve, came and spoiled the house, and sware the rest of the town what he had on the ground, and took away all that he found, being thirteen sheep and two nolt and a meer, and took away a lad and a lass to prison, and threatened them with death to tell where he was. But this is not all; but he lost the season of the beer seed, and could not get reset for his beasts, nor a house for himself, but was made to sell them at a small rate and to ill debtors, and himself put to wander, and could not get a house for a long time.”

* Ker of Graden, one of the persecutors

CHAPTER VI.

ARCHIBALD RIDDELL, A BORDER FIELD PREACHER.

THE caricature of the Covenanters drawn by Sir Walter Scott in *Old Mortality* is altogether unworthy of that writer, being about as gross a misrepresentation as ever came from any pen. It is difficult to find in the English language abler or finer writing than the crushing reply to Scott in Dr McCrie's *Review of Tales of My Landlord*. Instead of being the incoherent fanatics represented by Scott, the field preachers received a liberal education; several of them were gentlemen by birth, and others were fully abreast of the culture of their time. The Borders produced one field preacher, to know whose life and character is to know that Scott's description is grossly unfair. Archibald Riddell was the third son of Sir Walter Riddell, proprietor of "Riddell's fair domain" in Roxburghshire. During the persecution, Riddell, along with Welsh, Semple, and others did work which entitles his name to be remembered by all lovers of freedom. The Riddells of Riddell gave more than one minister to Scotland's Presbyterian Church, and were noted for their love of Evangelical religion and their consistent adhesion to the Covenanting cause.

Scarce any other Border family can boast an older history than the Riddells of Riddell. Sir Walter Scott, in the *Lay of the Last Minstrel*, writes:—

" Ancient Riddel's fair domain,
Where Aill, from mountain freed,
Down from the lakes did raving come,
Each wave was crested with tawny foam
Like the mane of a chestnut steed."

In a note to the first of the above lines he asserts that this family was settled at Riddell as early as 727; but one of their representatives differs from Sir Walter and mentions the reign of David I. as the time when Walter Riddell, a descendant of Monsieur Riddell, a companion of William the Conqueror, acquired the property under the name of Wester Lilliesleaf. The present representa-

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tive of the family possesses a Bull from the Pope, which must have been granted between 1154 and 1159, confirming the property to the brother of Walter Riddell. The mansion-house, which is now in the possession of Mr Sprot, gives evidence of great antiquity.

Archibald Riddell, whose history is here narrated, was quite young when Charles II. was restored. Along with his parents he attended the ministry of Mr Thomas Wilkie at Lilliesleaf, regarding whom Pringle of Greenknowe writes:—"Often have I been refreshed by hearing Mr Thomas Wilkie, minister of Lilliesleaf, whose scholar I was in the year 1638, who did frequently shed tears while he was preaching."* From infancy he was also under an excellent home influence. His father's thorough consistency of character was attested by the severe sufferings he endured. His mother was Janet Rigg, the great-granddaughter of John Row, the able coadjutor of John Knox, and daughter of William Rigg of Athernie,† a hearty and intelligent supporter of the Reformation from both Popery and Prelacy. He was so successful in business that with the money he made, he purchased several estates, the chief of which was Athernie in Fife. He gave voluntarily every year £350 for pious uses. Three of Samuel Rutherford's most pithy letters from Aberdeen are addressed to William Rigg, who was one of his correspondents.‡ He was also an intimate friend of John Livingstone, who writes as follows in *Memorable Characteristics*:—"William Rigg, one much exercised in spirit . . . and most zealous in the cause of God. When bailie of Edinburgh . . . he was a terror to evil-doers. He was for some time prisoner in Blackness because he would not communicate kneeling. The Lady Culross wrote to him in prison that the darkness of Blackness was

* Wodrow, "Select Biographies," I., 423.

† The old house of Athernie stood a little inland from the present mansion; only a gable of the old house remains. It overlooked a pretty glen through which runs a burn that falls into the sea near the churchyard of Scoonie. "Bonar's Rutherford."

‡ Bonar's edition, Nos. 114, 256, 273. In one (256) Rutherford writes:—"Your letter, full of complaints, bemoaning your guiltiness hath humbled me . . . ye seem to be too much on the law's side . . . nevertheless, I am sure ye desire to take God's part against yourself. Whatever your guiltiness be, yet when it falleth into the sea of God's mercy, it is but like a drop of blood fallen into the great ocean."

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not the blackness of darkness. . . . I have been often with him at private meetings when he hath prayed, and observed that always he began with most heavy and bitter complaints and confessions deeper than any I have heard; and sundry times before he ended he expressed unspeakable assurance and joy and thanksgiving, but sometimes also he continued and ended just as he began."† We have every reason to believe that his daughter, Janet Rigg, possessed not only her father's name, but also his pious spirit, and brought to the house at Riddell a sacred influence which healthily affected its subsequent history. John Livingstone acknowledged on his deathbed that Lady Riddell "had been very useful to him and his family."* Her house was one of those in which "he was oft well refreshed at exercises." The house of Riddell occupies a charming position in a beautiful Border district, and we can imagine how it was managed when Walter Riddell and Janet Rigg were proprietors.

Trained under such influences, Archibald resolved to be a preacher. In the church established and endowed by Charles, the way to wealth and high position was open for young men like him; but the church owning the Lord Jesus Christ as her only King and Head had for him attractions greater far, and to her work he consecrated himself. It needed great strength of character to make such a choice, for the Covenanting Church could offer him no stipend, manse, glebe, or comfortable sphere of labour; but a congregation out on the moor or moss, often under the biting snow or pelting rain, and as a likely reward for preaching to them imprisonment, banishment, or hanging. From his vow to be a preacher in that persecuted church Archibald Riddell never flinched.

He was secretly ordained to be Covenanting minister of Kippen, near Stirling, about 1670. Here he was subjected to constant trouble in carrying on his work. By attending his ministrations the people of Kippen made themselves liable to severe suffering. Some were seized, imprisoned, and banished. When preaching at a place called Lochleggan the soldiers surprised his hearers, seized Donald Connell in Buchlyvie and several others, who were im-

† S.B., I., 342.

* Wodrow's S.B., I., 291.

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prisoned and afterwards shipped at Leith to be carried abroad, but rescued at London. "Others were confined, and their horses, cattle, and goods poynded and carried to Doune by Drummond of Denstone, who was then judge in that place." Though carried on at a disadvantage so fearful, his preaching seems not to have been without good effect in Kippen. About the time he was minister, or shortly after, Ure of Shargarton left the Episcopal Communion and joined the Covenanting Church, and in doing so exposed himself to the rage of the persecutors, who drove him from his house and compelled him to spend many a wintry night in the woods. A large number of Covenanters from Kippen fought most gallantly at Bothwell Bridge.*

Riddell's work was not confined to Kippen, for along with Blackader he held conventicles in different parts of the country.† In 1672 he preached to a large conventicle held in a secluded part of the parish of Bathgate. Notice was brought that a party of dragoons, under command of Lieutenant Inglis, was searching for them in the moors; but another report came that they were at a distance and evidently returning to their quarters, and the service was continued. Hundreds were grouped round Riddell and listening to his preaching; they thought themselves so safe that the usual precautions were not observed, when suddenly the dragoons burst upon their view. "Upon which the most part got over a bog hard by, where horse could not follow; but many stood on the other side thinking themselves safe. Meantime the dragoons came up and apprehended several on the spot, among others, Sandilands, Lady Hilderstone's brother. Then they approached to the side of the bog and shot over among the people, as they usually basely did on such occasions, to shoot bullets among such a promiscuous multitude of men, women, and children, though they found them without arms. One of their shot lighted on ane honest man, an heritor in Bathgate parish, called John Davie, and killed him dead on the spot. They carried their prisoners to the garrison at Calder, with a great booty of cloaks, plaids, Bibles, and what else they could lay their hands on, spoil-

* Notices of James Ure, in "McCrie's, Veitch and Brysson," 438.

† "Memoirs of Blackader," p. 153.

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ing the poor people as they had got the victory over a foreign enemy. This was the ordinary practice; however, the minister escaped among others.* Wodrow asserts that the atrocious persecutor, Thomas Kennoway, was one of the attacking party, and that he killed Davie and took fourteen prisoners, who were banished from the country.† Although he had such risks to run we find Riddell again holding a conventicle in the house of "Mr Patrick Glass, Corstorphin."‡

These conventicles became so popular that the Government got alarmed and issued orders on 4th June, 1674, for the apprehension of the preachers, of whom Archibald Riddell was one. "The Council further declare that the soldiers and their assistants are hereby indemnified of any slaughter committed in apprehending any one of them."§ With such a proclamation issued against him, where could Archibald Riddell find a shelter? His father, Sir Walter, was now dead||: his mother was alive, and his brother, Sir John, was like-minded with himself, yet for him there was no entrance to the home of his youth. At the house of Riddell a troop of Government horse and foot was soon afterwards quartered¶ to seize field preachers, keep down conventicles, and by their swearing, drinking, and Sabbath-breaking set examples of true loyalty to Charles II. We have no account of his wanderings, but he was unlike others if not sometimes in great straits. Though a rough soldiery had been let loose to sweep the preachers from the land, field meetings became exceedingly frequent and were attended by large crowds. A power mightier far than that which any State could wield was present convincing men of sin, drawing them to God, and thus recruiting the Covenanting ranks. On one occasion a conventicle was held at Eckford, "attended by many

* "Memoirs of Blackader," p. 157.

† "Wodrow's History," IV., 152. There is a tombstone in Bathgate churchyard with an inscription to Davie "Thomson's Martyr's Graves," II., 110.

‡ Register of Secret Council, May 6, 1674.

§ "Wodrow's History," II., 234.

|| He died in 1669. "Jeffrey's History and Antiquities of Roxburghshire," IV., p. 204.

¶ 50 footmen and 12 horse ("Law's Memorials," p. 79), Edinburgh, 1819.

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thousands," spoken about far and wide, and most galling to the prelates of the Scottish Episcopal Church.*

Blackader affirms that public preaching "broke up" or began "in 1675-76 in the fields in Merse and Teviotdale (where there was frequent preaching in houses long before).

It broke up in Tweeddale about June, 1677."† Throughout Teviotdale in 1677-78 field meetings were frequent and attended by crowds. Arrangements were made in the spring of 1678 for holding a Communion in the fields in Teviotdale. The day and place were fixed; the most noted Covenanting preachers were engaged to officiate, and Archibald Riddell was one. Expectation was roused far and near; and large numbers, not only on the Borders, but in distant and different parts of the country, were getting ready, when the subject became so public that danger was apprehended, and it was deemed prudent to change the place of meeting.‡ Instead of the beautiful amphitheatre at Haughhead, on the banks of the Kale, or any other spot in Teviotdale, the place that had to be selected was East Nisbet, on the banks of the Whitadder in Berwickshire. Let us imagine ourselves there. It is a sweet and calm Sabbath morning in a Scottish spring.§ The Whitadder is softly murmuring at your feet. In front is an oblong hollow on which Communion tables covered with white cloth are set, and around are gentle slopes covered with green pasture. Into this amphitheatre crowds are solemnly and silently entering. Large numbers are there from Teviotdale, Selkirk, Gala Water, and distant parts of the country. On they come until the hollow is as densely packed as ever was the floor of church on a Sacramental Sabbath. The worshippers overflow and crowd the green slopes. On looking round before the service begins you see horsemen stationed at different spots keeping watch. There was need for such precau-

* Kirkton 380, "Wodrow's History," II., 347.

† "Memoir," p. 179-180.

‡ "Blackader's Memoir," p. 182-183.

§ In some writers the time is given as summer. This is incorrect. Mrs Goodal, who was present, writes — "I must make mention of three, Communion days the Lord trusted me with in Scotland. The first was at East Nisbet in the year 1678 in the spring of the year, another at Carrick, August 4th, 1678, and the third in the South at Cherretrees. Wodrow, S.B., II., 484.

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tion; for the Earl of Hume, a noted persecutor, had threatened if the proposed Communion were held to burst among them with his dragoons, give "his horses the Communion wine for drink, and trample the sacred elements under foot." At first the people apprehended danger, but soon they were made to feel that around them were spread the wings of Almighty God. Five ministers were present to take part in the work; John Welsh, John Blackader, Archibald Riddell, Mr Dickson, and Mr Rae.* The action sermon was preached by Welsh. There were sixteen tables, at which 3200 communicants sat down. Some of the tables were addressed by Mr Riddell. The majority spent the Sabbath evening in surrounding villages and farms, and nearly the same number of people assembled on the following Monday, when three sermons were preached, one of which was from Mr Riddell. That Communion was never forgotten by many who were present. Blackader says:—"There was a solemnity in the place befitting the occasion, and elevating the whole soul to a pure and holy frame. . . . Few such days were seen in the desolate Church of Scotland, and few will ever witness the like. There was a rich and plentiful effusion of the Spirit shed abroad on many hearts. Their souls, filled with heavenly transport, seemed to breathe in a diviner element, and to burn upwards as with the fire of a pure and holy devotion. The ministers were visibly assisted to speak home to the conscience of the hearers. It seemed as if God had touched lips with a live coal from his Altar, for they who witnessed declared they carried more like ambassadors from the court of heaven than men cast in earthly mould. . . . 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."†

The next sphere in which we find Riddell labouring was far distant from the Borders. It was at Craigdow Hill, near the water of Girvan, and about four miles from Maybole. The day was the 4th August, 1678. Communion tables covered with white cloth had been set on the heather,

* Rev. John Dickson, ejected from Rutherglen 1662, for seven years a prisoner on the Bass. Rev. John Rae, ejected from Symington, near Biggar, died in prison on the Bass.—Ed.

† "Memoirs," p. 188.

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which was just bursting into bloom. It was one of the first conventicles in Ayrshire at which the Sacrament was to be dispensed, and a vast concourse gathered. Law asserts that ten thousand were present.* Lawson says it was attended by about seven thousand.† John Welsh and Richard Cameron, then a probationer, were present. John Kid, who was afterwards hanged at Edinburgh, and other ministers were also there. The action sermon was preached by Archibald Riddell, and notes of it, in John Howie's handwriting, are in the possession of the Rev. W. H. Carslaw, from which we learn not only the text but the very words which dropped from his lips on that Communion Sabbath. His text was Psalm lxxxii. 10—"Open thy mouth wide and I will fill it." The sermon is arranged under four heads. "(1) A true sense of our great need of the privileges of the Gospel; (2) a right sense of their worth and excellency; (3) a large and insatiable desire; (4) a readiness or preparedness of mind to receive the food provided." Towards the close of the sermon, the following passage occurs:—"Now for a word of application. It is the duty of the people of God to open their mouths wide. Communicants who are come from far, ye see your duty. It may be some have travelled sixty miles, and some eighty, and what would ye think to lose your aliment only for the not opening of your mouths. This is the day wherein Christ discovers Himself: this is the day wherein He shakes His lap among you: this is the day wherein His hand is in His treasures that He has to bestow. Now open your mouths and receive Christ, or it shall not be well afterwards. . . . It may be God has work for some of you, and that this meal may set you on. He gives you it. It's hard to say, but some of you may have a testimony to give for Christ ere many days come about. It may be some of you may have to go to prison, and God gives you this day on purpose that ye may be strengthened for it. Do not expect that the storm is over and that Scotland's troubles are at an end. Zion, that must bring forth the man-child, has more pangs to suffer: Therefore, ye must open your mouths wide. It is hard to say, but in the strength of this meal ye must go above the

* "Memorials," p. 140.

† "Covenanters of Ayrshire," p. 29.

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clouds, and it may be ye will not get another mouthful till ye be above the sun."

At the close of the action sermon the Communion services began. Men and women were not allowed indiscriminately to sit at the Communion Table. Though set up in the open-air among the heather, the Covenanters remembered that none had any right to sit at the Table save the Lord's true disciples. Tokens of admission were previously given, and to obtain them it was not sufficient merely to have signed the Covenant, but in every case indispensably necessary to possess a character becoming the Gospel of Christ. At the Table Archibald Riddell spoke the following words:—

"Now, here is a goodly company, and ye have been hearing the strangest and greatest news that ever was heard in the world. Ye have heard that our Lord was dead and is alive again, and now lives for evermore. But O, Sirs, tell me did ye ever to this day get a sight of Him? Saw ye ever your Redeemer? Saw ye ever the King of glory? What would ye think to be brought up to Calvary and see Christ hanging on the cross? How, think ye, did the women look on Him when they saw the blood coming from His hands and feet and side, and heard Him cry, 'My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?' O, men and women, could you have a sight of Him? (taking a piece of bread in one hand and a cup of wine in the other, he said), Come, come, sirs, do ye see Him now? Behold your King. . . . What if a new host of Highlanders* should come amongst you and should press you to take the bond, what would ye do? On that night that Peter took the Communion he cursed and swore, and said that he knew not Christ. What if some of you who sit at this Table shall lift up your heel against the Son of God before the sun go down, and be made to eat the bread of carefulness and drink the wine of astonishment!"

After all the Tables were served, Riddell is reported to have spoken as follows:—

"Because the day nears to an end, and for other reasons, we are necessitated to break up. We hope there

* The Highland host had made their ravaging expedition in the West that same year, and had returned some months before this conventicle was held.

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are some who have prepared themselves who have not been admitted to this Table. This is a great privilege, but folk may win to heaven though they do not formally partake of this ordinance; and where there is a suitable appetite and desire the Lord accepts the will for the deed. But now, my friends, ye have this day been witnesses of an exalted Christ. Ye are they before whose eyes He has been set forth crucified among you; and ye are they amongst whom He has done great things and has lifted up His banner. I hope there are some here who will reckon such a day as this well worth a prison, and it may make Carrick and the places about forget the misery that the Highland host inflicted. These savages thought to make us turn our backs on His cause and to rid the countryside of what they call conventicles. God has dispersed them; and has covered a Table for us, and brought together an assembly greater than any that has been before. It is likely some will be angry at us for this day's work. We will be charged with sedition and rebellion. But such a feast as this is worth all the reproach as well as other things we have to suffer."

Such is a specimen of Riddell's preaching: so far as known to us, never before printed* The man who can caricature or hold up such preaching to mockery is in a state of mind not to be envied. Whatever sneers may be levelled at it, there can be no doubt that this preaching produced most blessed effects. Some, whose lives afterwards proved their consistency, attributed their conversion to words which on this day touched their hearts. Mrs Goodal was present at Craigdow and East Nisbet, and writes regarding these Communion:—"I set them down to keep me in mind what confirming days they were unto me. He made His love known to me, and He drew my heart after Him in Covenant transactions with Him: tongue cannot express it; it is better felt nor it can be exprest."†

On 13th August following, Mr Riddell preached at Renfrew.‡ We find him again at Kippen in May, 1679—

* The MSS. in which they appear were shewn at the Glasgow Exhibition in 1888. Dr Carslaw, of Helensburgh, has kindly permitted the above to be printed.

† "Wodrow's S.B.," II., 484.

‡ Notes of his sermon are in possession of Mr Naismith, Stonehouse.

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“Mr Riddell keeping another meeting near by.”* These words may imply that he was the preacher at another meeting on Fintry Craigs, where the hearers were fired at by the soldiers.

In the indictment against Lady Douglas of Cavers, she is charged with being at conventicles in Roxburghshire and Selkirkshire, at which Archibald Riddell was one of the preachers. The persecuting Meldrum requested a Civil Court to ask John Scott of Wells and others to answer the following question:—“Whether Archibald Riddell and other Covenanters were at any time since the late Rebellion in their houses, or did there or any place elsewhere speak, eat, or drink with them . . . whether they were present at any of their house or field meetings . . . if they knew their wives and servants were present thereat?”† &c. He was outlawed in June, 1679, for being at Bothwell; imprisoned, but liberated on proving that he had taken no part whatever in that rebellion.‡

In September, 1680, while returning along with Thomas Turnbull of Knowe from Moffat, where he had been drinking the waters, he was apprehended by the laird of Graden and his brother, James Ker. He was imprisoned, first in Jedburgh and then in Edinburgh. On October 1st he was examined before the Earl of Linlithgow and others; and, though there seemed to be a disposition on the part of his judges to make it easy for him to resile, he refused to yield. Thus:—Lord Advocate. “I am sorry that such a person as you should drink in such irrational, brutish principles, and would desire you for your good . . . to quit them.” Ans.:—“My Lord, I have not taken up those principles hastily and rashly, they have cost me study and exercise, and I have sought the Lord anent them, and find them so well grounded that I hope through grace I shall not soon quit them.”§ On December 8th he was again examined, and in answer to the Justice Clerk’s question:—“Will you but say that you resolve not to

* Russel’s account regarding the death of Sharp appended to “Kirkton’s History,” p. 432.

† Wodrow, MSS. folio, XXXIII., 65.

‡ Wodrow, III., 115, 191.

§ Wodrow, III., 200.

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preach in the fields, as long as matters continue as they are?" he replied:—"Really, my lord, I am afraid to say, or do anything that has the appearance of a straiter hedge about the exercise of my ministry, than Jesus Christ has drawn before me."* For simply refusing to come under an engagement which might limit the commission given him to preach, he was sent back to Edinburgh prison, where he was kept other seven months.

During his imprisonment he did a thing which brought upon him obloquy from other Covenanters. Within the walls of Edinburgh prison two followers of Richard Cameron were at the same time confined, named Isabel Alison and Marion Harvie, one of whom confessed before her judges that she blessed the Lord for the preaching of Archibald Riddell.† By the persecutors Riddell was asked, and consented,‡ to endeavour to persuade these women, when under sentence of death, to abandon their opinions about casting off allegiance to the King. He was no doubt actuated by motives, which seemed to himself both conscientious and kind. By those who refuse to give a helping hand to any cause until they have evidence that it is fully ripe, he would be deemed exceedingly wise. The opinions held on this subject by Isabel Alison and Marion Harvie were in a few years taken up and thundered forth in every city of the Empire. These two women refused to yield, left their testimonies against the course recommended to them by Riddell,* and went to death with the utmost serenity. One of them, Marion Harvie, though only twenty years of age, exclaimed, as she walked to the scaffold:—"Behold, I hear my Beloved saying unto me, 'Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away.'"†

Tidings were brought to Archibald Riddell in prison that his mother was dying, and permission was given, at his earnest request, by the Council, on April 6th, 1681,‡ to visit her on giving security that he would return to his

* Wodrow, III., 202.

† "Cloud of Witnesses," p. 136, Thomson's edition.

‡ "Cloud of Witnesses," p. 122, 125.

* "Cloud of Witnesses," p. 128, 140.

† See Dr Smellie on this incident in "The Men of the Covenant," p. 361.—Ed.

‡ Wodrow, III., 264.

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dark confinement at the end of nineteen days. Lady Riddell had seen sore sufferings falling on her house and on many on and around Riddell's fair domain. Her husband, Sir Walter, was one of the most upright and religious gentlemen in Roxburghshire; but for being a Presbyterian and submitting, as others did, to Cromwell, he was compelled in 1662 to pay a fine of £6600.* Others in her immediate neighbourhood had been banished from their native land, and lost their all; but we have no doubt that on her deathbed she encouraged her son to prefer prison to an accusing conscience.

Not long after he returned, he needed to exchange his prison in Edinburgh for a more secluded one. On June 9th following he was cited to appear before the Council, and sentenced to imprisonment on the Bass Rock for breaking his confinement in Kippen, keeping conventicles, and marrying, and baptizing in a disorderly manner.† Amid all the striking Firth of Forth scenery, there is scarce any object that stirs the imagination like that dark mass of rock rising perpendicularly out of the sea. Many innocent and noble men were imprisoned there. How dreary to Riddell must life have been on this rock, where he was almost completely cut off from the society of friends. The dungeons were damp, unhealthy, sometimes full of stifling smoke, so that the inmates had often to thrust out their heads from the windows for air. The food supplied was frequently bad, and had to be purchased by the Covenanting prisoners at an exorbitant price. There being no well on the rock, the water obtained was often preserved rain, which, to be palatable, had to be mixed with oatmeal. Under the sufferings some contracted diseases which lasted for life. From the rude soldiers they received wanton mockery.

For three and a half years Archibald Riddell was confined in this prison. During all the time he was there he had as fellow-prisoner John Blackader, who preached at the famous conventicle on Lilliesleaf Moor, and who no doubt had been a welcome visitor at the house of Riddell. Another prisoner at the same time was John McGilligan, minister of Fodderty, in the Highlands, who had been sent to the Bass for refusing to conform to Episcopacy

* Wodrow, I., 273.

† Do. III., p. 264.

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and preaching Christ in the fields. Another was Michael Potter, who for years continued preaching outside the parish churches, though hunted by the persecutors from place to place at the instigation of the Bishop of Dunblane, and who, some years after the Revolution, became himself minister of Dunblane, and died there in a good old age after a useful ministry. With these three noble men Riddell must have had some fellowship; for the prisoners were at times permitted to walk in pairs on the Rock; but this privilege was only granted rarely and for a short time during the day. Liberty would at once have been granted if he had simply intimated that he would no more engage in preaching, or that he would become an Episcopalian; but he realised that the call to preach was given him by Christ, and he preferred any suffering to disobeying his Master. We have no account of his experience under sufferings so trying and protracted; but his fellow-prisoner McGilligan describes the "sweetness of heavenly joy" with which he was upheld at that time. At the end of 1684 a petition was presented to the Privy Council promising that if Riddell were liberated from the Bass he would remove to America. The prayer of this petition was granted on the condition that "he be transported to East Jersey in America and never return to this kingdom thereafter without special licence from the Council."* The interests of Episcopacy were deemed in danger so long as a voice like his was likely to preach in Scotland.

On 9th June, 1681, Riddell landed on the Bass as a prisoner and never left it till the Council ordered him on 24th December, 1684, to be released and to leave his native land for America in a ship hired by George Scott of Pitlochrie, and soon thereafter to sail from Leith. He consented that himself and family should embark on this ship on account of his relationship to Scott's wife, who was his cousin and a sister of Lady Douglas of Cavers. Scott was once a professed Covenanter, had himself been a prisoner on the Bass for attending conventicles; but afterwards conformed, and was now engaged in the most unworthy work of carrying out for an intended plantation Covenanted prisoners given over to him by the perse-

* "Bass Rock" p. 364.

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cutors. In this ship Riddell met Jean Moffat of Netherbarns, and also some who, for attending conventicles near Kippen, were sent to Dunnottar and banished from their native land.* The fearful sufferings endured on board are described in another place. Mrs Riddell, George Scott of Pitlochrie himself, and his wife, who is called a "worthy lady" by John Fraser, Lady Athernie, and others died on the passage.† Mr Riddell was exceedingly useful in comforting the sick and dying.

After his arrival in America he had calls from several congregations, but chose Woodbridge, in New Jersey, where he stayed with a Covenanter named McLellan from Kirkcudbrightshire, who greatly valued his preaching. On hearing that the Stuarts were expelled, he set sail in 1689 for his native land. His feelings can be imagined as the vessel came in sight of Britain on a beautiful morning at the beginning of August. The oppressor's chains have been broken, his country is now the home of the free, soon he will tread its shore, and no one will question his right to preach Christ's Gospel anywhere. Just as such thoughts must have been thrilling through his mind a French man-of-war came in sight, captured the vessel on which he was sailing, and carried him and all on board prisoners into France. Chained to his son, who was only about ten years of age, and whose wrist was so small that three different chains had to be made before one was found to fit, he was forced with other prisoners to travel on foot for six weeks till they came to Toulon, where he was "imprisoned in an old ship lying upon the sea." After continuing here about a month he had to travel to Denain, near St Malo, and there was cast, along with others, into an old vault. They were compelled to lie on straw, which was changed only once a month and swarmed with vermin.‡ After enduring such sufferings, Mr Riddell and his son were exchanged for two priests who were prisoners in Britain. He returned to Scotland, and it is said his losses were more than made up, that he and his children were in the end in better circumstances far than

* "Veitch and Brysson," p. 447.

† Letter of A. Douglas to Francis Gladstone of Whitlaw, dated 11th May, 1686, Wodrow, MSS., Vol. XXXVI., 4to, 66.

‡ Wodrow, IV., 335.

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had they conformed. No man is eventually a loser by following principle at all hazards. He became minister of Wemyss, then of Kirkcaldy, and was ultimately translated to Trinity Church, Edinburgh. In 1708 he got the Master's call to enter his heavenly rest, and left behind him the reputation of being a faithful and efficient minister of Christ.

CHAPTER VII.

GABRIEL SEMPLE, MINISTER OF JEDBURGH.

WE do not quite cease connection with the Riddells when we take up the life of Gabriel Semple, who was a Border field preacher, and after the Revolution became minister of Jedburgh; for his second wife was Alison, sister of Archibald Riddell. He was born in 1631 or 1632. His father was Sir Bryce Semple of Cathcart; his mother was descended from the Lauderdale family. She "gave herself much to prayer and the reading of practical divinity," and her training made ineradicable impressions on Gabriel's mind from his earliest years. He was surrounded with powerful Royalist influences; for the parents were staunch supporters of the King, and bred their children to support the course taken by the Marquis of Montrose.

The plague being prevalent in Glasgow, Gabriel was sent to school at Hamilton, and seems to have been greatly interested in the stirring events of 1648. The Duke of Hamilton and his supporters during that year persuaded the Scottish Parliament to raise an army for the purpose of attempting the deliverance of Charles I. from his English conquerors. This undertaking, known in history as the Engagement, was popular among all classes except the ministers. Semple writes that "all the town of Hamilton, the school and the master were for it," and that his "own inclinations ran that way also." Evidently he was on intimate terms with the family of its great promoter at Hamilton Palace; for when some Glasgow ministers vindicated themselves before the Duke for not encouraging the undertaking, Gabriel Semple got admission to the hall where the conference took place and heard all the proceedings. Hamilton, who had been made a Duke since acting as Commissioner at Glasgow Assembly of 1638,

Much of the matter contained in this chapter is taken from an Autobiography of Gabriel Semple in manuscript, which belonged to the late Profr. Lee of Glasgow University, and was kindly lent to Mr Stewart by W. J. Lee, Esq., of Lincoln's Inn.

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sat regularly in the parish church, and was an attentive hearer of the minister, Mr Naismith, often riding into the country in his company and showing him great kindness. One Sabbath, when Semple was in church, the minister, in the course of his sermon, boldly denounced a war with England. After pronouncing the benediction he bowed as usual to the Hamilton pew, but the Duke was so mortally offended that instead of returning the customary acknowledgment he sat still and frowned. Naismith, however, nourished no resentment, but went to him as he was mounting his horse to assume command of his army, and in very earnest but kind language expressed strong disapproval of his undertaking. It would have been well for Hamilton had he accepted this advice; for his expedition ended in the disastrous defeat at Preston, in Lancashire, and his own death at London. Instead of helping the King, it only served to hasten on his execution.

A favourable impression was evidently produced on young Semple by the preaching he heard at Hamilton. From his earliest years he desired to be a minister, but a singular and sad event in his father's family was the means of determining him to cast in his lot with the Covenanted Church. His eldest brother, who had been trained to be a keen Royalist, was for some time in the Court of Charles at London, and by his "great parts and learning" gained the favour of Montrose, under whom he fought at Philiphaugh, and would have been highly advanced had that cause prevailed. Sir Bryce Semple of Cathcart formed the very highest expectations regarding the future of their brave and accomplished son. Trouble, however, cast over them its dark shadow. Their eldest son was laid down on a bed of sickness a short time after Philiphaugh. The best doctors were consulted, but pronounced his case hopeless, as the disease was consumption. On his deathbed this bold officer saw One greater than any earthly king, had good assurance that his sins were forgiven, and said that "Christ spake more to him than all the ministers did." Before his death he "took a great remorse for his malignancy and following" Montrose, "testified the same to all his acquaintances and others who visited him, among whom were many of the chief nobility, as the Marquis of Argyle." From his deathbed he urged the ministers to stand loyal to the Covenant.

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His conversion made "some change on his parents," and proved a great blow to the Royalist cause, "because of the great esteem he had among all who knew him."

In 1649 Gabriel went to Glasgow College to study for the ministry of Scotland's Covenanted Church. He records that, when a student, he saw Cromwell and Lieutenant-General Lambert entering a church in Glasgow one Sabbath, that the preacher was Mr Durham, who in their presence prayed that the King might become "so good that he might stop the mouths of all his enemies." A debate took place between Cromwell and some ministers regarding the invasion of Scotland, and Semple states that it was whispered, even in the Protector's army, that the ministers overcame him in argument. During his student days the college and country were ringing with the disputes between Resolutioners and Protesters. He testifies that the Protesters "were most single in the purging and planting of churches with properly qualified ministers." In the Presbytery of Paisley, where all favoured the Protesting side except one, they admitted two godly young men who were not of their sentiments to churches. He adds:—"The like I never heard of, nor know of the other side."

In 1657 he was licensed to preach, and soon got two unanimous calls—one to his native parish of Cathcart and the other to Kirkpatrick-Durham, in Dumfriesshire. Though Cathcart offered greater temporal advantages, he preferred the other, because he was "a greater stranger there; the place less laboured," and he thought he might be more useful in the Presbytery. In this sphere of labour he had considerable success. Two intimate friends were John Blackader and John Semple of Carsphairn. In 1662 he was ordered to leave Kirkpatrick-Durham. He was quite ready, in obedience to the civil power, to abandon manse and stipend, but felt himself bound to his flock by ties which could not be broken by any earthly power. He accordingly, before removing, spoke to them to the following effect:—"I was by them called to be their minister and now authority commanded me to depart, but if they would call and invite me to tarry with them and take their hazard with me, I was willing to run my hazard." "After they came from the church, some of them said among themselves I had made them a fair offer, but they

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never, any of them, came to desire me to tarry with them. Then I was free to go, and went to a gentleman's house well affected, to Corsack, which was more convenient for the parish I left than the kirk was to them; for it lay toward the middle of the parish, and nothing but a small water between the parish and Corsack." Mr John Welsh, when driven from Irongray, came to the same house.

In some books credit is given to John Welsh for beginning field meetings, but it is evident that Semple preceded him at this work. "Upon the Lord's Day first after our settling there, in respect of the danger of adventuring to preach, I thought myself obliged to try the first hazard and that Mr Welsh should forbear, and so I preached to such as came to hear, who filled a little hall. The next Lord's Day the house could not hold them, but they stood in the close, and so I preached to them. The third Lord's Day the close could not hold them, so they went to the garden, and then that place was not convenient. The multitude was so great that we took to the open field, near the house. Mr Welsh forbore all this time."* It became law that two ministers could not remain in the same place, and Semple had to separate from Welsh and return to his brother's house in the west.

Field preaching was a novelty, attended by danger to hearers as well as preachers, and Semple felt constrained to set some time apart "to ask light and determination from the Lord what to do in the matter." The result was that he became so fully persuaded regarding the path of duty that he devoted himself to the work in a solemn covenant with God. He joined Welsh again and preached to large crowds in fields, mosses, and moors. Often he was in sore straits, as is evident from the following instance, given by Adam Blackader in a reference to his father's sufferings in the Wodrow MSS.†:—"One evening in 1665, before my father fled to Edinburgh for refuge, I was playing in the close with the rest of the children. We see three gentlemen on horseback riding into the close; which, when my mother saw, and perceiving who they were [Mr Welsh, Mr Semple, and another] she clasped her hands and cried, 'Now, Lord, help me, for

* See Wodrow, III., 267.

† Quoted in "Crichton's Memoirs of Blackader," p. 117.

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I have neither black nor white to give them!"—these were her very words. They alighted, put their horses into the stable, and came in to my father, who made them very welcome. After they had put off their greatcoats and were smoking a pipe, in comes a fellow with a good fat wether sheep on his back and calls for my mother—"Mistress, here's a wether such a lady has sent you." Supper was served in course of time, and only when the strangers and her husband were partaking of it did Mrs Blackader tell how it had been provided.

As field preaching spread persecution increased. The curates called the congregational rolls at the close of their services, gave the names of absentees to soldiers, who waited on them during the week; and, by fining, driving away their cattle, copious curses and imprisonment, sought to ensure their attendance at the Episcopal services. Patriotic men groaned under the yoke and began to consider how they could break it to pieces. "Some were for appearing in hostile array." By leading Covenanters Semple was sent to Galloway to ascertain the wishes of the people. Before he could bring a report to Edinburgh he heard that some Covenanters under the galling persecution had risen in arms and seized Sir James Turner, the Government commander at Dumfries. Semple boldly joined this party, and preached to them at Tarbolton, where they were first organised into an army. At Lanark he again preached to the horsemen and a crowd of spectators with such power that several at once joined their ranks. He accompanied this brave band when they marched, sometimes at night, under lashing November rain, and arrived at their destination nearly as wet as men who had swum across a river.* He saw them facing fearful odds in their bold attempt to secure freedom, and was present at Rullion Green, where they drove back the hosts of Dalziel, and only yielded when overpowered by superior numbers. He came off the field with Barscobe, and felt convinced that had five hundred more men been on the Covenanting side the victory would have been theirs. "Pentland had harmony, love, and sympathy, wanting nothing but men and arms. Bothwell had both, and wanted harmony; but was plagued with division."

* "Every little burn was a river." Wallace's narrative. —Ed.

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Had this first insurrection taken place in summer its results might have been another Bannockburn. Semple, however, declares that "those who suffered death afterwards at Edinburgh, obtained the victory they lost at Pentland, and overcame by the blood of their testimony."

After this disaster a proclamation was read at the market crosses, making it treason to converse with or reset Gabriel Semple, and ordering all loyal subjects to pursue him as the worst of traitors. He found shelter in a remote spot in the bosom of the Cheviots, not far from Yetholm, at the "house of Mrs Ker of Wells," where he was kept in so close hiding that few members of the family were aware of his being in their dwelling. It was dangerous to remain in Scotland, and he sought shelter at Hazelrig, in Northumberland, where he found Henry Hall of Haughhead and made his first adventure to preach after the Pentlands' defeat. Here, however, he remained only a short time; for about November, 1667, he visited Ireland. What induced him on this occasion to leave the country we are not told, but he may have been influenced by a sentence of the Justiciary Court at Edinburgh, passed in his absence in the month of August, condemning him and others to be "executed to death and demeaned as traitors."* Though an indemnity was offered in the following October to some who were in this rebellion, Semple was expressly excepted.†

Along with other two Covenanters he visited Dublin and other parts of Ireland, where he received great kindness from Irish Protestants,‡ but returned ere long to Hazelrig, which, for several years, became his headquarters. Here again he found the congenial company of Henry Hall, who had been compelled by persecution to leave Teviotdale. The districts about the English border were then notoriously "ignorant, barbarous, and debauched with all manner of wickedness,"§ and were on that account considered by the persecutors to be perfectly free from all unsettling Covenanting tendencies. Owing to this, and because they were in England, fugitives from Scotland

* Wodrow, II., 74.

† Wodrow, II., 92.

‡ "As all the banished did," Wodrow, III., 268.

§ "Semple's Autobiography" (MS.)

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were for some time left unmolested. Semple at once devoted himself to the evangelisation of the people. The Communion was dispensed, when Gilbert, afterwards the famous Dr Rule, and Mr Russel, minister of Berwick, assisted. A small but select number sat at the Table, among whom were Henry Hall and a Christian gentleman named Justice Ogle. Hazelrig villagers were present as spectators, and were very deeply impressed by the Covenanting service; for "several on that occasion were brought to the Lord that had not the least profession of religion before, and continued in the same."† Semple's meetings went on increasing, and reports regarding the great blessing received spread far and wide. Not only Borderers on the English side, but men and women walked twenty and thirty miles from Scotland to hear his preaching. The parish church of Ford was placed at his disposal and the Communion dispensed to great assemblies. Soon this large building could not contain half the number who came, and they had to meet in the fields. "The curate of the church was a simple body and melancholy," and offered no objections; the proprietors saw that the work was to the outward advantage of the district; and so the Covenanting religious services went on unmolested, and produced a most blessed change on the habits and morals of the people.

In this Northumberland parish Semple for several years found pleasant work, and his family had a happy home. During that time he not only preached in English parishes adjoining Ford, but also frequently entered Scotland and addressed large conventicles on mosses and hillsides during day and sometimes also during night. He thus became obnoxious to the government as a field preacher exerting a powerful influence against Episcopacy. In 1674 the Scottish Council offered £400 for his apprehension, and an indemnity for slaughter committed on any who dared to stand up in his defence.* His name is mentioned in connection with conventicles which he addressed in different parts of Fife, Stirlingshire, and Kirkcudbright. Lady Douglas of Cavers was charged with having been present at field meetings where he

† "Semple's Autobiography" (MS.)

* Wodrow, II., 234.

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preached in the years 1679-82.† Undoubtedly his voice was heard either on Ruberslaw or other spots in the neighbourhood of Cavers. On 6th February, 1679,‡ to quicken the search for him, three thousand merks were offered for his apprehension; but nineteen days thereafter he preached at Langside, and on the 21st March following delivered a sermon at Mill-house in Kilbride fitted to convince his hearers that his danger was entirely forgotten and his whole soul consumed with intense desire to persuade them to close at once with Christ. Before him on that occasion were some who had suffered a short time before from the ravages of the Highland host, and to them he addressed pathetic appeals to pray for their enemies.* Although frequently in great peril, he always managed to get back to his Border home; but a time came when even there he was no longer safe. His wife, Alison Riddell, died at Hazelrig, and was so greatly respected that the "generality of the gentry of Merse and Teviotdale and from other places" attended her funeral at Yetholm, where her sister, Lady Thirlestane, was also previously interred. Her removal not only made a great blank in Semple's family, but proved a great loss to the persecuted who flew there from Scotland, to whom she had shewn herself a nursing mother. Soon after her departure, Hazelrig and the English borders got due attention from the persecutors; the preaching was hindered and the district continued no longer the shelter it had been in days bygone. Semple found it uneasy and uncomfortable to remain longer in the parish of Ford, and was forced to leave a place where he not only spent happy days, but did work which was largely owned by God.

He returned to Scotland a short time before the battle of Bothwell, but took no part in that rising, being convinced that Sir Robert Hamilton and his followers would either "command all or mutiny." When told that his presence might have helped to end division, he replied, "When division becomes a plague the Lord only can cure it, ordinary means will not do." Besides, at the time he was in very feeble health, and living far away from the

† Wodrow, III., 406.

‡ Wodrow, III., 15.

* "Faithful Contendings," appendix p. 131 (Glasgow, 1780.)

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scene of conflict with his nephew at Blackcastle in Haddingtonshire.

On the 26th June, 1679,* Charles, by the grace of God, King of Great Britain, defender of the faith, &c., issued a proclamation declaring it treason for any one to harbour or correspond with Gabriel Semple and others; and afresh instigated his subjects to put forth every effort to secure their apprehension. Semple, obeying the proclamation of a Higher King, "preached here and there," and for other two years eluded all attempts of his pursuers to seize him. Apparently he had now no regular home. The wanderings and sore hardships to which he was exposed severely impaired his health. His nephew, Sir Patrick Hepburn, found him "sick of the ague," in the house of a friend, who was Chamberlain to Lord Tweeddale at Beltane, and invited him to his own house at Blackcastle, near Cockburnspath. Somewhat against his judgment, he accepted the invitation. From his nephew he no doubt received all attention and comfort, for his house had evidently been already a favourite and frequent resort; but his hiding-place became known to the persecutors. A party of horsemen surrounded Blackcastle on the morning of a Lord's Day in July, 1681. Semple was so sick that he made no attempt to escape, and the commander of those who apprehended him was induced to leave him in his sick-bed till instructions regarding him arrived from Edinburgh. On the following Tuesday night, orders came which necessitated the preacher to journey to Edinburgh prison. He was so feeble that he had to ride on horseback behind his nephew, William Semple, until Haddington was reached, where a friend provided a calash. As he passed inside the door of the Canongate Tolbooth, where dreadful sufferings had been often endured, he prayed, "Lord, sanctify this prison to me." On the very same day, and a short time before he entered, Donald Cargill had been taken out to the scaffold, and the gaoler offered him the gown which the martyr wore in prison; but he declined to put it on, being unwilling to "carry on his body the remembrance of the death of that worthy man."

Next day, which was the 28th July, 1681, Semple was taken to a place from which he saw the notorious Duke of

* Wodrow, III., 115.

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York, riding in great state to open the Scottish Parliament, and went back to his cell thinking that severe sufferings were awaiting him now that he was in the power of so cruel a personage. While he was spending dreary weeks in prison, Parliament passed the Test Act and other measures which greatly delighted the Duke's heart. Holyrood also was the scene of grand festivities and balls countenanced by the Duchess of York and the Lady Anne, afterwards Queen Anne. "Tea," it is said, "for the first time heard of in Scotland, was given as a treat by the Princesses to the Scottish ladies who visited at the Abbey."*

After Parliament rose, a petition was presented to the Privy Council craving liberty for Semple on account of his sickness. The Duke, who, of course, presided, was in a better humour than usual, through Parliament proving so obsequious, and release from prison was granted "upon surety to appear when called under penalty of £500 sterling." Rapacious advocates and clerks, however, thinking that the re-opening of his case might give them an opportunity of squeezing money out of him, represented that his petition had been forged, and had him again called before a committee of Council. But they were baffled. One member of the committee before which he appeared was Lord Maitland, a friend of his family, who induced Bishop Paterson to withdraw and put no ensnaring questions. The depute-clerk then read aloud the petition to which exception had been taken, but added what was not in it at all, viz. : that Bothwell was acknowledged to be a desperate rebellion, his object being to rouse the spirit of the Covenanter at once to disown it, and thus make himself liable to fining. Semple heard all in silence, and asked a sight of the paper. Finding that it was exactly as it had been written at first, and that it contained no such admission as had been read by the clerk, he coolly said, "I own this supplication in my hand to be mine," and prayed for the spirit of grace to be given to the King. The committee could, of course, do nothing else than dismiss him, and the clerk lost the money he expected to gain by uttering a lie. Other charges were brought against him, and within a few weeks he was again

* "Omond's Lord Advocates," I., 216.

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cited to appear; but on the advice of friends he fled to "England, into Lancashire and Yorkshire and Cumberland," where he lived till the death of King Charles. He was "not known" in the districts where he sojourned; his health was no doubt weak, and his only reference to work done at this time is as follows:—"I found the Honest in those places kind and discreet, and conversed with them in their private meetings, of which they were very observant in sundry places."

His autobiography, though evidently composed after the Revolution, ends abruptly with the death of Charles II. We find him, in July, 1688, engaged in his loved work of preaching in his native parish of Cathcart.* We have obtained from Mr Tudhope, Lesmahagow, a copy of a sermon preached by Semple during the same year in Clydesdale. He had on this occasion "a multitude" of hearers, and speaks as if he had been in the habit of frequently preaching on the mountains at the time and of being exposed to great danger. "What," he asked, "is the matter how long we suffer in the furnace if with the company of the Son of God? Let me tell you, Sirs, if we want His company it's because we are not in the furnace of affliction. . . . A day of His company on a hill top is worth a thousand." These words shew how noble was the spirit of this preacher, after being severely tried by nearly twenty-eight years of persecution. In this sermon Semple declared his conviction that the rule of the oppressors was drawing to an end; and not many months afterwards James was dethroned and William and Mary became the recognised sovereigns of England and Scotland. Prelacy also was abolished by the Scottish Parliament as a great grievance to the nation. Very soon after the Revolution the people of Kirkpatrick-Durham ousted the curate as an intruder; and in 1689 Semple returned to the parish of which he had been minister before the Restoration of Charles II. One of the last things he did before he left his manse in 1662 was to place in a "hole in a couple where it could not be seen" a paper he had written describing his leaving, giving the text from which he preached on the preceding Sabbath, and naming those who withdrew along

* MSS. of lecture and sermon then delivered, in possession of Dr Carslaw, Helensburgh.

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with him. One of his first acts after re-entering his manse was to put a pen-knife in the same "couple," and to find that though his house for some time had been occupied by a "vicious curate," this paper had never been touched and was still legible after twenty-seven years. We can conceive with what feelings he read it to his wife* and several elders who were with him at the time. How many who then withdrew were alive now? Did any yield? Could they say that all who lived, and whose names were on that paper, were consistent Covenanters at the end of these long years? Since he last saw it, through what trials and strange experiences had he passed! He found then that he had acted wisely in so long and loyally preferring principle to worldly pelf and comfort. It is allowable to imagine how he and his family might that night in the manse have sung the 126th Psalm:—

"When Sion's bondage God turned back
As men that dream'd were we,
Then filled with laughter was our mouth
Our tongue with melody;
They 'mong the heathen said, the Lord
Great things for us hath wrought,
The Lord hath done great things for us
Whence joy to us is brought."

The next scene in which we find Semple appearing is the first General Assembly held after the Revolution. The Scottish Parliament, which met in April, 1690, abolished the Royal Supremacy Act of 1669, restored all Presbyterian ministers who had been ejected for not complying with Prelacy, ratified the Westminster Confession of Faith, legalised the ejections of curates during the interregnum, vested the government of the Church in the ministers expelled in 1661 and afterwards, and such as should be admitted and approved by them, and appointed them to choose members to hold a General Assembly. The meeting was held on 16th October, 1690. Semple had been a minister for thirty-three years, but this was the first Assembly of which he was a member; for none had been held since his ordination. When he first took his seat and looked around, no doubt he felt sad at missing the faces of James Guthrie and others whom he had seen in

* This was his third wife, Margaret Ker, daughter of Sir Robert Ker of Etal.

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Assemblies in the grand days when he was a student. Among the 180 members who composed it were, however, Henry Erskine, old William Erskine, Michael Bruce of Anwoth; Kirkton, the historian; Fraser of Brea; Hog of Kiltarn; and Sir J. Riddell of Riddell. According to the narrative of a Jacobite, the "first remarkable thing,"* which came before this Assembly was the disposal of calls to Gabriel Semple. The production of this writer bears evidence that on some subjects it is far from reliable, but from Dr Rule's criticism we have reason to believe that he is correct in asserting that "twelve parishes" in Northumberland presented a request that Semple should be settled among them, and gave, among other reasons, that "he took compassion on them when they lay weltering in their blood and no eye to pity them, that he had been twenty-four years among them during the days of persecution. It is also asserted that Dr Rule, who assisted at the Hazelrigg Communion, where so great blessing fell, pleaded in favour of Semple being sent to these Northumbrians.

Another petition for his ministry was presented from the parishioners of Jedburgh. Sir Patrick Scott of Ancrum, one of the members for Roxburghshire, seems to have been an Episcopalian as he undertook to present a petition to Parliament for the rabbled curates,§ and Dr Rule asserts that Jedburgh at this time had "many Jacobites;"† but Presbyterian principles were evidently in the ascendant. In less than twenty-one days after, the curate of Jedburgh was deprived of his benefice by the Privy Council, and the parishioners "pitched upon Mr Michael Bruce to be their minister,"‡ a lineal descendant of an uncle of Bruce of Bannockburn, and great-grandson of the preacher Robert Bruce. He had been pastor of Killinchy in Ireland, but was ejected by Charles II., and preached afterwards in "kilns, barns, or woods." Returning to Scotland, where he held conventicles in defiance of a

* "Historical Relation of the late General Assembly," p. 37; in a letter from a person in Edinburgh (John Cockburn, D.D.) to his friend in London (London 1691.)

§ "Account of the Late Establishment of Presbyterian Government by the Parliament of Scotland," 1690, p. 57 (by Bishop John Sage), London, 1693.

† "Rule's Second Vindication," p. 77, Edinburgh, 1691.

‡ Register of Privy Council, 19th September, 168

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sentence of outlawry, he was seized, imprisoned, and sentenced to banishment in Tangiers. § Their choice of Bruce shewed that the people of Jedburgh were strongly Presbyterian; for he was one of the most faithful and fearless Covenanting preachers. He never stooped to accept any indulgence, and, besides, was a man of "genius and liberal education." When he preferred "fair Anwoth by the Solway" to Jedburgh, the people addressed a call to Gabriel Semple, who had often held conventicles in their neighbourhood. Kirkpatrick-Durham also expressed to the Assembly the wish of its people to retain his services. The consideration of these three calls occupied the Assembly's attention for a considerable time. The Jacobite writer asserts that Rule pleaded that Semple be sent to Northumberland, for "it was charity to plant the Gospel in England;" but Rule himself asserts "there was no mention made of planting the Gospel in England; he whom our author imputeth this to never thought that they of the Church of England had not the Gospel; nor was it said that between Berwick and Newcastle they wanted the Word of God; but that the Presbyterians wanted the ordinances of the Gospel, not being allowed to enjoy them with the Church unless they would comply with human ceremonies in the worship of God; which they could not do with a good conscience." After prayer for direction, the Assembly by a majority voted in favour of Jedburgh.

Semple's name is also found in this Assembly's proceedings in connection with a petition from the Cameronians. The followers of Cameron and Renwick did for their country what well entitled them to attention. During the persecution they made no compromise with the tyrant, and never swerved from the path which led straight to freedom. When the news flashed through Scotland that William of Orange had landed with an army in England, the first men who took up arms and could be depended on for defending Parliament were Cameronians; and they came forward not as mercenaries, but as volunteers, refusing pay out of devotion to their country's welfare. When the opportunity was at their disposal they shewed no spirit of retaliation, but spoke out as fearlessly against "rabbling" as against tyranny, and issued a manifesto

Not carried out. "Treas. of Covt.," p. 364.

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recommending those who had been persecuted to seek redress of wrongs in "an orderly and legal manner." The regiment of soldiers they raised, under Cleland, the hero of Drumclog, performed at Dunkeld one of the noblest deeds recorded in Scottish history; for they drove back the army which, under Claverhouse, overcame Mackay at Killiecrankie, and were the means of finishing that war and saving their country from an invasion of semi-savages. Three Cameronian ministers became members of the General Assembly; but during its deliberations a petition was presented from lay members of the Societies asking the Church to aim at realising the grand ideal attained between 1638 and 1648, years which were called "years of the right-hand of the Most High." This paper proceeded from men and motives, entitling it to something very different from the sneers it has drawn from certain Scottish historians. Had James Renwick been then alive to represent and lead the Cameronians, there would either have been a very different Revolution Settlement or a far more powerful Dissenting Church. The Committee of Overtures appointed Gabriel Semple and Fraser of Brea to confer with those who brought the petition. They showed that a Solemn League and Covenant with England was now impossible, that the paper contained references fitted to offend some ministers, and therefore could not be publicly read; but would be given in open Assembly to those appointed to draw up a Monitory Letter and Causes of a Fast.

Semple's ministry at Jedburgh extended over sixteen years. In 1699 he made frequent but unsuccessful attempts to obtain Thomas Boston as his colleague. He was assisted for some time in his work by Gabriel Wilson, afterwards minister of Maxton; and it was when on a visit to Jedburgh that Boston made the acquaintance of this minister, which afterwards grew into a close intimacy. Semple died at Jedburgh on 8th August, 1706, in the seventy-fifth year of his age. Boston writes regarding him as follows:—"Mr Gabriel Semple, minister at Jedburgh, one of the old sufferers, who in the time of the persecution was eminently countenanced of God with success in the work of the Gospel, especially in the borders

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of England.”* “Invited by Mr Gabriel Semple . . . I preached at Jedburgh February, 27, 1703, forenoon and afternoon. The congregation being convened again, about a quarter of an hour after, he, from the reader’s desk, made a short discourse on the fifth command, particularly the duties of husbands and wives. The things he insisted on were indeed common and ordinary; but they were delivered in such a manner, and such power accompanied them, that I was in a manner amazed; and they went out through me, and in through me, so that I said in my heart, ‘Happy are those that hear thy wisdom.’”†

* “Memoirs,” p. 89 (Edinburgh, 1776).

† “Memoirs,” p. 171.

CHAPTER VIII

A WINTER'S DAY ON LILLIESLEAF MOOR.

LILLIESLEAF MOOR, which then extended westward to Satchels and Grundistone, was the scene of many a conventicle. From Government papers we are warranted to infer that field-meetings were held for some time regularly nearly every Sabbath during summer and winter on Lilliesleaf and Hassendean moors, Blackridel hill, and other places in the neighbourhood. Meldrum, the notorious Border persecutor, made the following statement before the Privy Council:—"The shire of Selkirk and the country there about is notoriously known to be the most disorderly part of the kingdom, and there have been always more conventicles there than in any other shire."* The place in the neighbourhood of Selkirk where conventicles were most frequently held seems to have been Lilliesleaf Moor.†

Wodrow writes that "the harvest and winter of 1676 was a time of very hot persecution through the country; and an outed minister scarcely might venture to appear."‡ Several preachers had to leave Scotland and seek refuge in England. Field-meetings, however, abounded at that time in Berwickshire and in the places near the English border.* We have a pretty full account of one held on a short wintry Sabbath—26th November, 1676.§ The preacher was John Blackader, afterwards imprisoned on the Bass Rock, whose tombstone is still standing in North Berwick churchyard. Any district may well be proud to claim a connection with Blackader. He helped to lodge deeply in Scotland's heart the conviction that on religious subjects she is under obligation to take her laws direct from Christ as her only Head and to suffer no interference

* Register of Secret Council. Decreta, 16th December, 1680.

† "Lislie moor, the common and ordinary place and rendezvous of these seditious, rebellious and disorderly meetings." Decree against Bennet of Chesters.—Ed.

‡ History II p. 342.

* History II. p. 342. § "Bass Rock," p. 206.

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from the civil power. Large numbers travelled on that wintry day to hear him preaching on Lilliesleaf Muir. Some walked, others came with their wives riding behind them on horseback. In Government papers it is stated that three or four hundred armed men were present. § In addition to these, no doubt unarmed men and women were present in larger numbers. It is called a "very great conventicle." The service was just about to begin when news arrived that the Sheriff of Roxburghshire had been seen not far off, at the head of horsemen; and that he was evidently searching for the conventicle. Will the people disperse? They knew that though their meeting was forbidden by Charles' law, it was quite in accordance with the higher law of Christ. Their souls were thirsting for the Water of Life; and stalwart Borderers cried, "We will not disperse without preaching." Some one, however, suggested that a few minutes' walk would bring them into Selkirkshire, where they would be outside the jurisdiction of the Sheriff of Roxburgh.* Accordingly they lifted the wooden tent that had been provided for the preacher, entered Selkirkshire, set watchmen on the neighbouring heights, and began the service in their new place of meeting. The spot where they assembled must have been in the detached part of Selkirkshire on the south side of the river Ale and extending towards Grundistone. It thus could not have been more than four and a half or five miles from Hawick. A hollow, eastward from Langton Height and near Satchels, corresponds best to the written description of the place where this conventicle was held. The burn divides Selkirkshire from Roxburghshire; and the hollow is so secluded that though thousands were assembled they could only be seen by those on the neighbouring heights. There is a brae near the burn which corresponds to that described in Blackader's Memoir. †

Blackader's subject was one of the most solemnising about which the human tongue can speak. Bennet of Chesters was present, and from his MSS. we learn that the text in the forenoon was Isaiah liii. 11—"He shall see

§ "Bass Rock," p. 207.

* "Memoirs of Blackader," p. 190.

† Local tradition gives no help in determining where the conventicle was held. All about this conventicle seems to have been almost entirely forgotten in the district.

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of the travail of His soul and shall be satisfied." In "Faithful Contendings" we have a report of the sermon, which appears to be the very same as that which Blackader preached on the Monday after the great Communion at East Nisbet, and also in the parish of Kilbride. The sermon, even as reported, has a strong savour of the anointing of the Holy Spirit, and shews that the preacher was utterly incapable of uttering incoherent ravings like those which Sir W. Scott puts into the mouths of the Covenanting ministers whom he caricatures. It gives good grounds for McCrie's testimony regarding Blackader:—"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."* The flock which gathered on that lonely muir was led to the richest pastures. It has been sometimes said that Covenanting preachers were narrow, and did not preach the Gospel freely; but this charge is shewn to be baseless by the following words which fell on the ears of the great multitude assembled near Satchels brae:—

"But, graceless person, who art yet lying in enmity against God, what wilt thou say if thou shalt find it in Scripture that all this His soul's travail was for enemies and them that are ungodly. . . . What wouldst thou say if thou shalt find thy name engraven upon the soul-sufferings of Christ? Read Romans v. 6. When we were without strength Christ died for the ungodly. He died not for saints or friends; but for ungodly persons like unto thee, even enemies. Now, enemy and sinner! what sayest thou to that? Canst thou lay any claim to it? or hast thou any use for the soul-sufferings of Christ? . . . We obtest and charge you before the great Judge of the quick and the dead, and by all the torments of hell and all the joys of heaven and earth, and by that precious immortal soul of yours, that, be what ye will, ye come in now and have a share of the soul-travail of Christ. Is thy name Sin? then He was made sin. Is it abominable, des-

* "Sketches of Scottish Church History," Vol. II., p. 184, 4th Edition

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titute of righteousness, yea sin and all sin, then He was made sin in the abstract for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him."

We can conceive what impressions would be made by such an appeal as the following:—

"I would again ask you what answer shall we take back to our Master that may be a satisfying report of you? Shall we take back this word that now ye are content to take Him in all the terms that ever He offered Himself unto you? Shall we take Him these good news, that here we have found out a willing people, that is willing to follow Him through the wilderness and to bear His cross and witness for Him? and that ye will adhere unto His truths closely and follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth? Come away, poor man and woman, that is glad to close the bargain; thou hast been as it were putting thy hand to the pen and yet dare not seal it. He loves that thou shouldst set thy seal to it; seal it with thy hearty consent; say with Thomas, if thou canst say no more, 'My Lord and my God.'"

The forenoon has been spent in listening to words like those which we have quoted, and the service has ended without interruption, which was considered a very great privilege. Then there was a short interval; but the congregation did not diminish. On another occasion in a different part of the country they even set a chair for Blackader among the snow, and the people pulled bunches of heather and sat on them that the preaching might continue.

The afternoon service began on this Teviotdale muir, and the text was Matthew vii. 4. About the middle of the sermon a watchman on one of the heights gave a signal which apprised the people that the Sheriff at the head of his horsemen was fast approaching. The preacher exhorted his hearers to be calm. All kept their places, and no panic arose. Two horses were put at the disposal of the minister that he might at once escape, but the brave Blackader refused to separate from his congregation. Soon the horsemen are in view, "riding furiously at full gallop," but the sight did not at all disconcert these Border Covenanters. They remained calmly on the place where before they had been singing psalms. The only changes which took place were that the armed men placed themselves at

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the outside of the congregation; and that a grey cloak was put on the minister and a broad blue bonnet on his head, which so completely disguised him that the persecutors never discovered his name. In their libel they put down Williamson as the preacher instead of Blackader. Onward came the military most furiously, as if they meant to dash among the people; but, seeing not a single man or woman fleeing across the muir, but all standing firm, they judged it most prudent to call a halt and view the Covenanters before venturing with their swords to enforce the law. "They drew up on the burn-brae over against the people;" and, after viewing them carefully, became so damped that for some time they neither advanced nor spoke. At length the commander mustered courage to exclaim—"I charge you to dismiss in the King's name;" but the reply was sent back from several parts of the congregation—"We are all met here in the name of the King of Heaven, to hear the Gospel, and not for harm to any man." A female was seen issuing from the ranks of the Covenanters, boldly facing the horsemen, going all alone up the brae, seizing the bridle of the commander's horse, and uttering in his ears the words—"Fye on ye, man; fye on ye, the vengeance of God will overtake you for marring so good a work." The Sheriff "stood like a man astonished;" for he was addressed by his own sister. One of the soldiers rode forward among the people pretending to laugh, but really endeavouring to get a sight of the preacher, and for this purpose approaching as near the tent as possible; but he was ordered at once to go back to his own company. The horsemen were afraid to make an attack, and spent their time in doing nothing more than looking at the Covenanters and asking them to dismiss. On no account would they be prevailed upon to disperse at the order of the Sheriff, and he called out two of the leaders, Robert Bennet of Chesters and Thomas Turnbull of Standhill, and tried to induce them to use their influence to get the people to depart. These men no doubt stipulated that he and his horsemen should first leave the place. That very night John Blackader, escorted by Turnbull of Standhill and other six gentlemen, made his escape on horseback, rode all night, and arrived at Edinburgh about daybreak. He wished to avoid danger, for next day the roads would be crowded with gentry from

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Edinburgh riding "to the race at Caverton-edge."* Robert Bennet writes that he himself, for being present at that conventicle, had to engage to the Sheriff to appear before the Secret Council upon the hazard of his fortune.† Soon afterwards he was sentenced to imprisonment on the Bass Rock.

The crowds which gathered at those conventicles did not spring out of the ground. By means of the histories of the period, documents which have been preserved and tradition, we can trace many of them home to laird's hall, farm-house, and cottage. One of them was Lady Scott of Woll. The beautiful estate of Woll lies pleasantly on the banks of the river Ale in the parish of Ashkirk. John Scott of Woll was Chamberlain to the Duchess of Buccleuch. It is not known how his wife became a Covenanter. She may have been related to the Scotts of Harden, and may have gone with Lady Scott to conventicles, where she heard such men as John Welsh, John Blackader, and Donald Cargill, and thus have been led to cast in her lot with those who stood up for the liberty of Christ's Church. At all events, Lady Scott of Woll became an earnest Covenanter, and gave up her attendance at the parish church of Ashkirk. Such a line of action was sure to lead to suffering, and her name may still be read in the lists of men and women who had to pay a penalty for declining State guidance in matters of religion.

In the Register House are preserved the minutes of Courts held at Jedburgh, Peebles, and Duns during the times of persecution. Those minutes are evidently signed in their own handwriting by the judges who sat on the bench, Balcarres and Drumelzier. The objects for which those Courts were held are stated to have been "to try delinquents from withdrawing from worship in the parish churches, all irregular baptizers of their children, or reseters of rebels or traitors." Lady Scott was summoned to appear before this tribunal. It must have been very trying for her to appear in such a position. One in her position could probably have found means to avoid the necessity of compliance with this citation; but there was evidently no

* "Memoirs of Blackader," p. 190-192.

† Bennet's MSS.

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attempt on her part to shun the trial which her adherence to the Covenant had brought upon her. On 17th October, 1684, she appeared before the Lords at Jedburgh, and the only charge brought against her was that of withdrawing herself from the Ashkirk Parish Church. She at once confessed that she had done so, that she had been absent for a year and a half; but made no promise whatever that she would return. For this she was "fined £300 Scots, and ordained to make payment thereof to the cash-keeper." Other and very severe fines seem to have been imposed on Scott of Woll for his wife's non-conformity. It is stated by Wodrow* that he and others were exorbitantly fined. All this suffering, however, so far as can be ascertained, proved utterly powerless to drive Lady Woll from her principles. Her position as wife of the Chamberlain of Buccleuch might have made her shrink from being openly fined in a court of law, but she was evidently braced for the ordeal by the conviction that she was enduring suffering for Christ's sake.

There were others from the same neighbourhood who, in order to avoid imprisonment and suffering, had to flee from their homes. Raperlaw seems to have been a place noted for Covenanting; for the name of Thomas Turnbull and Isobel Scott in "Reperlaw" are found in the lists of fugitives; and that of James Middlemis, Reperlaw, appears in his own handwriting on the Hawick Covenant preserved at Cavers House. There were many other such fugitives belonging to the district of Ale water, of whom the following may be mentioned:—Isobel Turnbull, servant in Riddell; Isobel Dodds in Bewlie; Agnes Young in Firth; Christian Hislop, cottar in Midlem; Helen Newbiggin, Elizabeth Scott, Isobel Thorburn, Isobel Walker, and Helen Martin, all in Midlem; William Robertson, servant on Clarilaw; Alexander Service and George Young in Lilliesleaf; John Smeal, wright in Lilliesleaf; Bessie Donaldson, daughter of a weaver in Lilliesleaf; and John Turner in Lilliesleaf Mill. The mention of these names is sufficient to show how widespread the movement was.

A few miles to the south-east lies Barnhills, on the estate of Minto, a place immortalised in connection with Border history. It has an old Border keep, which carries the

* Vol. IV., 137.

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mind back to the time when houses needed not merely to afford protection against wind and weather, but also against sword and fire. Sir Walter Scott has assigned it a place in one of his poems. Barnhills, however, has associations which ought to encircle it with a fresh interest in the eyes of those who appreciate suffering for Christ's Crown and Covenant. In this district a tradition survives that a Covenanter, who lived at Barnhills, had to seek shelter on Minto rocks. His name and any facts regarding his sufferings have been forgotten. In the persecutors' papers, however, still lying in the Register House, are found not only the names of Barnhills' Covenanters, but important particulars regarding their sufferings. Evidence can be adduced to show that conventicles were held either in one or more houses at Barnhills or in some lonely retreat in the open air. One Mark Young, residing at Barnhills, had long been under the displeasure of the persecutors for nothing else but absenting himself from the parish church and attending such meetings. He lived with his mother, and had several brothers who resided in Bedrule. To save himself from prison he fled at one time out of the country. At length, however, Mark Young was apprehended and lodged in Jedburgh Tolbooth. On 8th October, 1684, he was brought before the Lords for examination; and here is the persecutors' account of what took place.* "He was asked if he thought the Covenant lawful, and answered in the affirmative. He thought it not lawful to keep the church, but would keep it before he lost his life for staying from it. Being asked if he frequented conventicles with his brothers George, James, and Robert Young in Bedrule, printed fugitives, he acknowledged that he had; but refused to declare where they used to frequent. Refuses to take the oath of allegiance."

On the 15th October of the same year, Mark Young appeared again before a Court at Jedburgh. With him as fellow-prisoners appeared that day George Henderson, farmer in Newton; John Turnbull in Bedrule; Robert Whyte in Tofts. All the prisoners refused to take the oath of allegiance, were sent back to prison, and the advocate was requested to frame a libel against them. On the following day they appeared before the same Court

* Justiciary Records for 1684.

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charged with being at field-meetings, harbouring, and resetting rebels. Not a single witness was brought forward to give any evidence against them. On no other ground than his own answers to their questions on 8th October the judges pronounced the following sentence on Mark Young: — "Held him to be confessed, and therefore banished the said Mark Young to the plantations, and ordained him to be carried to prison till he and the others are transported by a sure guard to Edinburgh tolbooth; the magistrates and keepers whereof were ordained to receive them and detain them in sure prison until they were disposed of by His Majesty's Privy Council."

One of the most cruel of the persecutors was Captain Bruce. He was in the habit of making short work with Covenanters. In other parts of the country he shot people on the spot without any trial. This notorious man had for some time a commission in Teviotdale. In the Register House I found a letter in his own handwriting, dated from Kelso, which gives an account of the persecuting work in which he was engaged. Once, with the view of finding out who did not attend the parish church, he visited Easter Barnhills with his dragoons. There were some with whose excuses he refused to be satisfied. He read over the test and showed the signatures of some who lived on the other side of the Teviot. There were two, however, at Barnhills who would neither take that test nor give any promise to attend the curate's church. The one was a lady named Bessie Turnbull and the other her cottar, Robert Young. Bruce gave orders that they should be seized; and his dragoons took them away from Easter Barnhills and lodged them in Selkirk Tolbooth. How Bessie Turnbull acted afterwards I have never found out; but the name of Robert Young is found in the list of those banished from their native land to the plantations.

CHAPTER IX.

LADY DOUGLAS OF CAVERS.

BY brave deeds and arduous work accomplished for their country's weal, the family of the Douglasses have gained for themselves an important place in Scotland's heart. Among others whose names ought to be held in undying remembrance is one connected not with Bannockburn or Otterburn, but with a cause not less glorious. Tradition tells of a Lady Douglas of Cavers, who showed great loyalty to the cause of the Covenant. Generation after generation has spoken of her as the "Gude Leddie," who opened her house at Cavers to shelter such preachers as Alexander Peden and Donald Cargill. To revive her memory is to call up an elevating influence.

The Douglasses of Cavers are one of the oldest and noblest families in Scotland. The lady, whose sufferings are described in this chapter, came not from highly titled, but certainly from truly noble ancestors. Her maiden name was Catherine Rigg. She was a great-granddaughter of Catherine Row, the daughter of Dr John Row, minister of Perth, and the able coadjutor of John Knox in the work of the Reformation. Her grandfather was a wealthy merchant of Edinburgh, named William Rigg, who purchased the estate of Athernie in Fife.* Few particulars are known regarding his eldest son, Thomas Rigg, the father of Catherine; but there is every likelihood that in her early years she came under the gracious influence of her grandfather. At any rate, when she came to Cavers she was heartily and intelligently attached to the principles of the Covenanting Church; and, what is even more important, there is reason to believe that she was an earnest Christian. It is said, "a mighty religious good woman she was as any could be in her time."

In March, 1659, she was married to Sir William Douglas, younger of Cavers. It is likely that she had visited the Borders before she came as a bride; for her aunt, Janet

* See further as to William Rigg on p. 62, Chap. VI.

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Rigg, was married to Sir Walter Riddell of Riddell. In her girlhood she doubtless spent happy days in the house of Riddell with her cousins, John and Archibald, who afterwards suffered so severely for their adherence to the Covenant. The Douglas to whom she was married was a grandson of that Sir William who was an elder at Glasgow Assembly, and fought against Montrose. At the time of their marriage the clouds of trouble were beginning to gather over the nation. Cromwell had passed away in the preceding September; and his son Richard was unequal to the task of succeeding him. General Monk commanded the forces in Scotland; and for some time Covenanters had full liberty to preach the Gospel. In many of the parishes faithful men were ministering: John Livingstone was at Ancrum, and John Gillon was at Cavers. From the papers of Bennet of Chesters it may be inferred that there were in those days great gatherings of praying people and great blessing at the Communion held in Cavers Church. But this time of privilege was not permitted to last. In less than four years sufferings began, which continued with greater or less intensity during nearly the whole period Catherine Rigg spent in the Borders.

In October, 1662, the minister of Cavers had to leave his kirk and manse because he would not take a "test" abjuring the principles of the Covenant. Very soon after he left, the devotion of Sir William Douglas and his family to the same principles was severely tried. Sir William and his ancestors in Cavers had for a very considerable time been Sheriffs of Teviotdale. This was considered a position so honourable and important that it was eagerly coveted even by the highest nobles. In the old days of Border reiving, blood had even been shed between competing families. On one occasion a Douglas, who lived at Hermitage Castle, entered St Mary's Church in Hawick and carried away to a death by starvation a man, who had been preferred to himself for the office of Sheriff of Teviotdale. Sir William Douglas had been legally installed into this office, but soon after the minister of Cavers had to abandon his manse, he was told that the only condition on which the Government would continue to recognise him as Sheriff was his taking a test abjuring the national Covenant.

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In the days of Bruce, James Douglas preferred fighting for his country to a life of ease; and Sir William had a soul which esteemed loyalty to principle more precious than all the honours and emoluments of his high office. He was at once removed from it. I have not been able to ascertain who was appointed his successor; but I find that in 1669 the Duke of Monmouth, who married Anne, the heiress of Buccleuch, was appointed Sheriff. Sir William and his family now withdrew from all public affairs, and lived in private. They withdrew also from the ministrations of the Episcopal curates, who were sent to occupy the pulpit at Cavers. In 1675, when Thomas Somerville, grandfather of Dr Somerville, for nearly fifty years minister of Jedburgh Parish Church, was ordained curate of Cavers by the Conformists, Sir William and his family kept aloof and would give no countenance to the proceedings.* Although the family at Cavers declined to take part in the form of worship which was countenanced by the authorities, they paid all the Government taxes, rendered the king all his civil dues, and strove to give no offence. But it was in vain. Ere long they were subjected to severe suffering in connection with a subject with which the State had no right to intermeddle. In order to further the establishment of a prelatial church in Scotland, it was enacted that the education of families of rank be only entrusted to men who conformed to Episcopacy. Parents were forbidden to employ any tutors to teach their children save those who had certificates from bishops. Sir William and his lady naturally felt that the religious education of their children was a matter for which they alone were responsible, and that they were under obligation to God to give their family the very best training in their power. Ignoring this iniquitous enactment, therefore, they employed as tutor a cultured and learned young preacher named James Osburne, of Covenanting sympathies. They were, however, commanded to dismiss Osburne from their house, and take in his place a teacher to be nominated by the bishop. This Sir William would not do; and, in consequence, the Privy Council charged him with employing as a chaplain and teacher of his children a man who was "not licensed nor authorised under the hand of the

* See further on p. 56, Chap. V., as to this.

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bishop," and summoned him to compear before them on the 3rd August, 1676, and produce also the offending Osburne. Douglas got this summons at Cavers; but, regarding it as his duty to pay no attention to it, did not compear. In his absence the Council denounced him as a rebel, and ordered him to be "put to the horn."* Before the persecutors could carry out their decree against him, however, Sir William Douglas was removed by death in the following December. Osburne made his escape from Cavers; and Lady Douglas was left alone to face the gathering storm.

The Government and the Church it was seeking to foist on Scotland, apprehensive of the danger that might arise if the young Douglasses of Cavers were educated under the supervision of their own mother, appointed subservient guardians to look after them, one of whom was Elliot of Stobs, and another a brother of Sir William's, who had renounced the Covenant. It is not difficult to imagine the deep sorrow which would fill Lady Cavers' heart when she saw her eldest son torn away from her home to be educated for years in principles which she deemed hurtful to his spiritual weal. After being absent for some years, he was allowed to return for a short time to Cavers for the good of his health. To find that her son had been trained by some frivolous curate to scoff at the Covenant and other religious subjects, must have been a bitter experience for such a mother. It was no wonder, therefore, that when the time came for his return to this training she should refuse to allow him to leave Cavers, and set herself to counteract the evil education he had been receiving. She was so successful in this and in the training of her other sons that the guardians became alarmed, and lodged such an information against her that this devoted widow was summoned to appear before the Privy Council on 27th January, 1680. The Council ordered her to deliver her sons within eight days to the guardians appointed by Government, "to be educated as they should order." It must have been with a sad heart that Lady Douglas again saw her eldest child torn from her dwelling, but her conscience would testify that it was by power which she could no more resist than the mother bird can resist the sportsman's gun.

* Wodrow, Vol. II., p. 333.

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Lady Douglas returned from the Privy Council with a spirit as undaunted as that of the hero of Otterburn. She determined to cast in her lot and her whole influence with the cause which she believed to be the cause of God. She accordingly turned her back on the Church which King Charles had set up, travelled far to attend conventicles, and threw open her house and grounds to the persecuted Covenanting preachers. A glorious work was carried on for years under her influence at Cavers. Within the bounds of that estate sermons were delivered which drew hearts to God, and for many a day were spoken of round the firesides in Teviotdale. Large numbers attended these meetings, whether held in summer or winter; and one who was never absent was the Lady herself dressed in her widow's garb.

Among the preachers at these gatherings were well-known men like Archibald Riddell, Gabriel Semple, John Welsh, Donald Cargill, and Alexr. Peden, and others as faithful though not so famous. Of these, James Osburne, the former tutor, was one. Though denounced as a rebel, he frequently came back to Cavers and preached at the risk of his life. Through an eventful career he stood completely faithful to Covenanting principles, and ultimately, after the Revolution, was appointed Professor of Divinity in Aberdeen University. Thomas Douglas, who framed the famous Rutherglen Declaration, and was one of the eighty daring men who so notably published it in that town, was another of those preachers. He had preached and fought at Drumclog moreover, and was altogether a rebel much sought after by the Government, a large sum of money being offered for his capture. Notwithstanding the fact that it was a crime to give him food or even speak to him, he was one of the men whom Lady Douglas invited to Cavers. Other names of preachers at Cavers which have been handed down are those of Samuel Arnot, who had been minister of Tongland in Kirkcudbrightshire; Matthew Selkirk and David Williamson, afterwards minister of St Cuthbert's Edinburgh. Cavers House is said to have been sometimes crowded at those meetings, the people even standing outside. Lady Douglas was accused of attending conventicles at a distance as well, Lilliesleaf Moor being mentioned as one of the places.

Thus the widowed Lady of Cavers lived her life, having

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the reputation far and wide of being filled with the fear of God. The poor and afflicted in many a humble cottage called her blessed, for her cheering visits and Christ-like deeds. One day, however, when Cavers was clothed with the green of spring, emissaries from Edinburgh came and put into her hands a document drawn up by the King's Advocate,* charging her with throwing off all fear of God and other awful crimes. A copy of the summons which was left that day at Cavers is extant; and it is instructive to note what were called crimes by the exemplary Government of that period. She had been guilty of attending conventicles in Roxburgh and Selkirk, and of hearing at them Donald Cargill and others preach, expound Scripture, and pray. She had convened three hundred persons, some within and some without her house at Cavers, to hear one or other of these vagrant preachers. She had permitted one of these preachers to intimate a fast to be kept at her house for Philiphaugh's good success against the laird of Meldrum.† She had entertained at her house Thomas Turnbull of Standhill; John Clunie, barber in Hawick; and had employed as her gardener Robert Davidson, all notorious dissenters from the Episcopal Church. For these so-called crimes Lady Douglas was summoned to compare personally before the Privy Council under pain of being pronounced a rebel.

She at first disregarded this summons, but, on being threatened to be treated as a rebel, she appeared before the Council on 16th November, 1682.‡ No witnesses were brought forward to prove what was alleged against her. She was herself asked to state on oath if they were true. Some of the best lawyers of the day, however, were of opinion that the law did not require her to depone against herself; and accordingly she refused to give her oath for such a purpose. Without more ado the Council found her guilty, fined her 9000 merks,§ and ordered her to be imprisoned until it was paid. On a friend becoming her cautioner for £1000 stg. that she would appear on the

* "Bluidy Mackenzie."

† See note in appendix.

‡ Wodrow, Vol. III., p. 406.

§ Wodrow, MSS. (Folio), XL., No. 20.

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following Thursday, she was set at liberty for three days. Again she appeared; and, when asked if she would renounce the Covenant and attend no more conventicles, she stood firm as a rock, and would give no promise whatever. She refused also to pay her fine, which amounted to more than her income for three years. There and then she was sentenced to be imprisoned in the tolbooth of Edinburgh, and thence taken to Stirling Castle, to be kept there a fast prisoner till further order from the Council.

On the following Monday she was taken under the charge of the notorious General Dalziel to Stirling. The reason for her imprisonment at this place, probably, was that the prisons in the capital were full. Even Stirling Castle was so full that Dalziel had to take a prisoner out of it to make room for Lady Douglas. This prisoner is supposed to have been William Erskine, a preacher who had often held meetings in Teviotdale, and who was at this time transferred to Blackness.* The imprisonment to which Lady Douglas was thus subjected must have severely tested her loyalty to principle. Besides the irksomeness of her confinement, she knew that all her income was being cut off from herself and the younger members of her family. There could scarcely fail to be a temptation to yield in their interests. She went through this long and trying ordeal, however, with a noble endurance. Life in prison then was full of hardship, and very soon her health became so affected that the doctor testified that she must have release for some time otherwise the consequences would be fatal. Liberty would, of course, at once have been hers if only she had been ready to abjure the Covenant; but she preferred dying in prison to making any such promise. She was released on 10th July, 1683, but only on finding caution that she would re-enter prison on 15th October following. Three letters are extant written by Mr Gledstones,† factor for Cavers, to Lady Douglas's eldest son, who had been forcibly taken from

* Honest Mr William Erskine, as Blackader calls him ("Memoirs," p. 179), was kept in prison for seven years, and became so broken down under the treatment he received that he petitioned the Council to have compassion on him, but the only favour granted was that he was allowed to walk about the Castle and take the air in charge of a keeper. ("Scott's Fasti," Vol. II., p. 706.)

† Wodrow, MSS. (Quarto), XXX., 113-114.)

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his home to be educated according to the ideas of the Government, and who during her imprisonment was living on the Continent. These letters, which are dated Edinburgh, October 2nd, 1683; October 23rd, 1683, and Cavers, May 24th, 1684, throw much light upon this period of the history. The factor urges the young laird to make an effort to release his mother from prison and his tenantry from ruin.† He also tells him that he had seen her during her period of respite, and found something pressing more heavily on her mind and causing her more grief than the thought of returning to her dark prison at Stirling. She had seen a letter of her eldest son to his uncle, and was deeply cut by one expression in it, which led her to think that he was not living in France as he ought to live. The factor mentions this frankly to Sir William.‡

In October, 1683, according to her bond, she re-entered her prison; and her health in consequence again became impaired. Besides her eldest son, she had four other sons and a daughter. The impossibility of attending to their education, the impoverishment of her own and their circumstances, impelled her to present another petition craving for liberty; but it was disregarded. Her eldest son, who had returned to London in May, 1684, did what he could in her behalf; but without success. His guardians had by this time succeeded in inducing him to profess himself an Episcopalian. He seems to have been a man actuated by a spirit entirely different from that of his mother. There is a paper in the Register House having the "test" at the top and the signature of the young laird of Cavers underneath, with these words:—"Sir William Douglas of Cavers took this test on his knees before the Council." His object in taking the test was not to get release for his mother, but to be appointed Sheriff of Teviotdale. Again and again, however, he approached the Council on her behalf; but they knew that she would rather die in prison than abjure the Covenant. At length,

† See further as to this on page 128.

‡ Gledstones was himself a sufferer for the Covenant. For resetting and speaking to Covenanters on Cavers estate, he was summoned to a court at Jedburgh, thence taken to Edinburgh and imprisoned until his health was in danger. He petitioned for and got liberty upon caution to answer when called for. Letter, 2nd October, 1683.

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in December, 1684, more than two years after Dalziel brought her to Stirling, the door of her prison was thrown open, but only on the following conditions:—that she should pay £500 stg., and promise never to return to Cavers, but depart furth of the kingdom and never come back without permission of the Council or the King. These promises she made rather than purchase liberty by doing what was forbidden by her conscience. Thus Lady Catherine Douglas won her title to a place beside the other illustrious names of that noble family.

CHAPTER X.

PEDEN AND WELSH ON RUBERSLAW.

THE hill of Ruberslaw inspired Riccalton, the famous minister of Hobkirk, to write a poem, called "A Winter's Day," which in turn inspired Thomson to produce "Winter," the first and best of all his writings.*

. . . "Dark Ruberslaw
With Jed and Rule, where Thomson's, Leyden's song
Was first inspired by breath of Border glen,
That freshened all our British poesy." †

If the connection of Ruberslaw with the Covenanters were fully known, written, and sung, scarce any other Border hill would have an equal charm for Scottish hearts. Leyden, in his poem on Ruberslaw, refers as follows to the retreats of the Covenanters being often discovered by the cry of the clamorous lapwing:—

"From Etna's gulf a fury came
Breathing wide the wasting flame,
Gore her writhed arm distains
Which heaves a hundred cumbrous chains ;
And Persecution o'er our land
High brandishes her burning brand :
In vain the mists roll from on high
To bloat the monster's blood-shot eye,
While the shrill, shrieking lapwings trace
The wanderings of a peaceful race." ‡

Though we have no proofs from history or Government papers, the tradition of the district has long very confidently asserted that Alexander Peden climbed this hill and preached to large congregations of Borderers. In the Statistical Account of Cavers it is stated that "The hollow dells and rocky recesses of Ruberslaw were once the haunts of the persecuted Covenanters; and not only the place, but the very stone on which the volume of God's Word was laid when the celebrated Alexander Peden declared its

* "Somerville's Life and Times," p. 129.

† "Veitch's Tweed," p. 44.

‡ "Leyden's Poems" (Centenary Ed.), p. 123.

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truth, is still pointed out." A Hawick poet, named James Storie, wrote :—

" That Peden preached often here
It has been heard of far and near,
And some can yet point out the stone
Which he did lay his Bible on." *

A short distance above Shankend Railway Station, in a valley running westward which is now a solitude, but bears evidences that in some places it was once cultivated and dotted over with human dwellings, a few old ash trees and mounds may be seen marking the site of a farm steading. † Its name was Langside, and the tenant during the persecution, according to tradition, was a consistent Covenanter. Early one week a man of striking appearance, but dressed in ploughman's garb, presented himself at Langside; asked to see the farmer; told him he wanted work; was ready to thrash the corn stacks he saw in the barnyard, or do anything else about the farm if he would allow him to live for a few days in his house. His offer was accepted. Many things about the stranger drew to him the whole Langside household. During the day he helped the shepherd and plied the flail so energetically in the barn that the farmer was convinced he was getting a good return for his hospitality. At night all listened attentively round the fireside to his talk and striking stories. On Saturday night the farmer told his visitor in great confidence that Alexander Peden was expected to preach on Ruberslaw on the morrow; that himself and several from his house intended to hear him; and that if he wished he was welcome to a place in the cart. The stranger said he knew about the proposed conventicle; intended to be there also; but wished to go early, and would not burden the horse. On Sabbath morning he was away long before the others. The curiosity of the Langside family can be imagined when, after having arrived at Ruberslaw, they waited to get their first sight of Peden, turning eager eyes to the place used as a pulpit. To their astonishment, the person who stepped forward to conduct the service turned out to be the man who had been plying the flail in their

* "Storie's Poems," p. 10. Jas. Storie, a Cameronian, who once lived at Cavers, and died in 1855.

† The spot is beside a plantation, the ash-trees have now disappeared.

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own barn. They themselves had been entertaining Peden unawares. It is said that at the conclusion of the service they spoke to the preacher, and that he returned with them to Langside, and preached several times on a haugh which was long known as "Peden's Haugh."

It takes some climbing to reach the spot where Peden is said to have preached; but, arrived there, a view spreads out before the eyes in some respects not rivalled in Scotland. Hills, glens, and streams, renowned in Border song, legend, and history, are seen in their varied and enchanting beauty. One who visited the place wrote:—"Teviotdale has never been rightly seen by those who have not viewed it from the summit of Ruberslaw." A spot on the west side of the hill is known as the scene of the conventicles. From "Peden's pulpit" a speaker could easily address a large audience gathered on the great plateau that stretches out beneath. By some it is asserted that this romantic pulpit among the rocks possesses remarkable acoustic properties. A speaker in the pulpit can be heard far more easily over the green than at other positions which, at first sight, might be thought more convenient. When a stiff wind was blowing one day from the east, the space, which the Covenanting audience would occupy, was nearly as still as the inside of a church. A few steps in front of this natural pulpit lies a large block of stone, on which a baptismal basin could have been laid; for parents brought their children thither to be admitted to the Church by Christ's appointed ordinance. A predecessor of James Miller, of Lochburnfoot, who resided at Harwoodsyekefoot, carried a child to the top of Ruberslaw to be baptized, and in doing so not only went a long journey, but made himself liable to severe fining. A visitor is at once impressed with the thought that a safer spot could scarcely be found for a conventicle than near the summit of this hill. Enemies could not approach without being seen, even when they were miles away, and those present could easily escape in an opposite direction long before their pursuers could gain the summit. It might be profitable to describe Peden's appearance, how he preached, and how his hearers became thrilled with the conviction that another Voice more powerful than his was addressing solemn messages to their consciences from this rocky pulpit; but the prophet has been described by other writers, and these pages must

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be devoted, as far as possible, to describing the sufferings of men and women who have never yet got the remembrance to which they are entitled.

Other spots, not far from Ruberslaw, claim a connection with Peden. Sir J. A. H. Murray writes:—"One of these secluded nooks," in Denholm Dean at the base of the hill, "about a quarter of a mile below the cottage, formed by the deep bed of one of the transverse cleughs that descend into the burn from the side of Ruberslaw, carpeted and lined with the scented whorls of the woodruff and overshadowed with ivy-laden trunks, many of which, green in death with a drapery not their own, bend across it from brim to brim, is still affectionately remembered as Peden's Vale; for there the 'prophet' lay concealed while the troopers scoured the neighbourhood in search of him." A thorn tree is pointed out in a secluded part of Earlside farm, in the Slitrig valley, near which he is said to have preached. About half-an-hour's walk from Hawick, near the road leading through this valley and on the farm of Acreknowe, tradition marks another spot at which a congregation would be nearly as well concealed from view as if they were inside walls.* Sir J. A. H. Murray states that the "remote shepherd's cot at Wolfcleuch-head, near the sources of the Borthwick, often boasted that its humble walls afforded a safe retreat to the venerable Peden." It is said that this cottage occupied so secluded a position among the hills that though persecutors heard the sounds of cocks crowing near its door they were baffled in finding out where it stood. Covenanting traditions also linger round recesses on the Trow Burn.

For some time indeed before the rising, which began at Drumclog, field meetings were very frequent on the Borders, largely attended, and greatly blessed. An account of these is given by George Brysson, who was often himself present. In his interesting *Memoirs* he tells how he was drawn to such meetings. When an apprentice in Edinburgh, the happy and consistent lives of two Covenanting servants convinced him that they had got something from religion and the ministers they attended, of which

* In this case tradition gets some confirmation from the fact that in the list of fugitives published by royal authority on 5th May, 1684, are found the names of two men from that farm, William Armstrong and Thos. Storie. Wodrow, IV. 24.

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he was entirely destitute. He requested to be taken to one of the services, and was so impressed by the preaching that he resolved never again to hear the curates. On one occasion he heard the Border Covenanting preacher, James Kirkton of Mertoun, who held conventicles in Edinburgh; and describes as follows the effects produced on his mind:—“He was made to speak out my case in every particular, as though I had written down my mind to him in every circumstance; and he made such free offer of Christ as made me to see Him a complete Saviour. . . . My very heart and soul were made to close with Him in the offers of the Gospel; for by the power that came along with the Word, the Lord opened my prison-doors, and in a great measure He proclaimed liberty to a captive and made His power to be known towards me; so that I was made to wonder at His surprising love and goodness towards such a wretched sinner as me.”* Brysson that day saw not only Kirkton, but the Saviour. To conventicles he afterwards betook himself, because at them he heard the preaching which satisfied the cravings of his soul. His father threatened to disown him if he did not give up attendance at services forbidden by the law of the land; but he replied, “I am firmly resolved to hear the Gospel preached by His faithful ambassadors, cost what it will, through the grace of God, though you should disown me.” Such firmness drew from his father the words, “God forbid! my dear bairn, that ever I should hinder you from going where you may get most good for your soul.” After his father’s death he came to his mother’s farm, near the North Esk in Mid-Lothian, to oversee her affairs. The landlord and curate used entreaties and threats, all in vain, to force him to abstain from conventicles. To field meetings held by Blackader and others he thus refers:—“By this time field meetings became frequent on Gala-water, to which place I, with several others, went frequently every Sabbath, though sometimes eight, ten, or twelve miles distant, all the summer on foot, without wearying; and never thought journey more sweet and refreshing, having sweet conference one with another and often frequent prayer by the way, and amongst other things that the Lord would bring the Gospel nearer our borders, which accord-

* “Memoirs of George Brysson,” p. 269-70.

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ingly was granted. The Gospel then had good success, and there was a wonderful love amongst the people of God, though His people then got their bread with the peril of their lives, enemies being raging and often disturbing their meetings.”*

Brysson travelled further south than Gala-water to attend these meetings. He convoyed the celebrated John Welsh on one occasion into Teviotdale, and was present when he preached on Ruberslaw. All who went to conventicles made themselves liable to cruel persecution. Yet Ruberslaw was that Sabbath day alive with a great concourse of earnest worshippers. John Welsh, who occupied the pulpit among the rocks, was a great-grandson of John Knox, and possessed a large portion of his fearlessness. After ejection from his parish of Irongray, he engaged for nineteen years in field preaching. The Government offered £500 for his apprehension, blood-hounds were put on his track, Claverhouse once rode forty miles on a wintry night in search of him, yet he never was captured. Kirkton writes:—“I have known John Welsh ride three days and two nights without sleep and preach upon a mountain at midnight in one of the nights.” “He had the confidence at that time to have a dwelling-house near Tweedside, where, I have heard him say, he dwelt as pleasantly for some weeks as ever he did in Scotland; and sometimes when Tweed was strongly frozen over he preached in the midst of the river, that either he might shun the offence of both nations, or at least the two nations might dispute his crime.”† Once when hotly pursued Welsh entered the house of a gentleman noted for hostility to himself, and was kindly received. In conversation his own name was mentioned and the difficulty of apprehending 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 accompanied him next morning. When they arrived a chair was provided for him; but to his astonishment the man whom he himself had entertained the previous night turned out to be the notorious preacher, John Welsh. He listened attentively, however, and at the close of the service he exclaimed, when

* “Memoirs,” p. 281.

† “Kirkton’s History,” 219, 372.

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Welsh, according to promise, gave him his hand, "You said you were sent to apprehend rebels, and I, a rebellious sinner, have been apprehended this day."*

The preacher who could address and keep an audience of eight thousand spellbound has begun his sermon from the rock-pulpit on Ruberslaw, and the crowd is listening with rapt attention, when a signal from one of the watchmen apprises them that they are in danger. The leading men, no doubt, go to the top of the hill and see a company of horse and a company of foot approaching. Intelligence of the conventicle had been brought to the military; and two companies, commanded by the Earls of Dalhousie and Airlie, were coming to make an attack. An escape could easily have been made before their arrival; but the brave Covenanters were in no mood for flight. Burly Borderers examined guns and swords which they still retained and brought along with them. The horsemen and soldiers "surrounded the mount," climbed upward as far as they deemed it safe, and then sent a message warning that they would fall upon the worshippers unless they dispersed. The bold reply was sent back, "We are met for the worship of God in the fields, being deprived of the kirks, and will dismiss when sermon is over; but not till then." After getting this reply the persecutors, instead of boldly executing their threat, according to Brysson, "went about the hill and viewed us; and, seeing us very numerous and also well armed, they left us."† After they left, the service was doubtless resumed; and at its close, when the people were descending the hill to their homes, they were, we believe, thinking and conversing far more about the solemn truths they had heard than about the soldiers who interrupted them. For under Welsh's preaching hearers often felt their "infinite need of reconciliation," and in their hearts called the heavens and the earth to witness that they had entered into an everlasting covenant with Christ.

On that side of Ruberslaw which slopes to the Teviot there is a deep and thickly-wooded glen called Hagburn, to which tradition points as a scene of conventicles. Little

* McCrie's "Sketches of Scottish Church," II., 187.

† "Veitch and Brysson," 282. See Storie's poem on the Ruberslaw conventicles in appendix.

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Dean, opposite Little Cavers, through which flows the Honey Burn, has similar associations connected with it. Doubtless to the gatherings in these places and on Ruberslaw many went from the neighbouring village of Denholm; for it also had its Covenanters. Andrew Nicoll, a tenant in Denholm, had to appear before a court in Jedburgh on a charge of absenting himself for a year from the parish church, and was fined "as ane tenant for one year, £78."* William Scott, in Denholm, for two years' absence, was fined "for two years as ane tenant, £156." Besides these names the same paper contains that of Janet Wright, in Midlem, who, for absenting herself from her parish church was fined £156, or two years' rent, and for an irregular baptism, £50. The money, of course, was Scots; nevertheless a year's rent then would mean very much what a year's rent means now. Besides the Denholm names mentioned, others were reported by the curates for attending field meetings and forsaking the parish church:—John Stewart in Denholm and Elizabeth Turnbull, his spouse; Thomas Shiel in Denholm and Agnes Hall, his spouse; William Storie in Denholm and Marion Beattie, his spouse; Adam Tudhope, tailor, in Denholm and Helen Dryden his spouse; Helen Stewart, sister-in-law to William Scott in Denholm; Bessie Stewart in Denholm, and others in Ashybank and Bedrule. It is quite likely that some of these had to take to the caves and moss-hags to avoid persecution. To have had so many men and women who endured for Christ's sake, adds lustre to this lovely Border village.†

* MS. in Register House dated December, 1684.

† See note on the Cameronian Church at Denholm, in appendix.

CHAPTER XI.

CAVERS—A PARISH OF THE MARTYRS.

It has sometimes been asserted that the Covenanting spirit was not strong in Teviotdale, but investigation dispels that error. Places associated with the Covenant are to be found throughout its whole length, and in the various watergates opening into it. Taking Hawick and its immediate neighbourhood as a sample, it can be shown that this section of the Borderland did not fall much behind any part of Scotland in its contribution to that never-to-be-forgotten struggle, to which we owe the religious freedom we now enjoy.

In his life of Alexander Peden, published in 1902, the Rev. J. C. Johnston of Dunoon, author of the *Treasury of the Scottish Covenant*, acknowledges the connection of Peden with Teviotdale, and says that "Peden's pulpit" is pre-eminently on Ruberslaw.

No papers written during the persecution have yet been found referring to visits paid by Peden to Teviotdale, but we have evidence from tradition, and history proves that he was brought into a close connection with Cavers Covenanters, and could thus have been brought by them to the district. That connection is described when an account is given of some of these sufferers. The first is William Laing of Earlside, who was brought into intercourse with Peden, which makes it quite probable that the "prophet" was invited to this district.

Laings have lived for hundreds of years in Teviotdale, and are a well-known Border family. On the Covenant of 1638, still preserved at Cavers, you can see the name of "Walter Langues, Brierihill," in his own handwriting. At the very beginning of the struggle we thus find a Laing openly avowing himself an adherent of the Covenant, and pledging himself to its principles on the very same paper on which are the names of Sir William Douglas, Elliot of Craigend, and Brownlie, minister of Kirktown, who was afterwards martyred. What was the

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subsequent history of Walter Laing, we have no means of knowing; but William Laing of Earlside had a history and character which well deserve to be remembered. He was not only patriotic but godly, one whose actions shewed that he valued adherence to truth and principle more highly than all the pelf the world could lay at his feet.

Before the Restoration of Charles II., William Laing attended church either at Cavers, Kirktown, or Hawick; but in 1662 the ministers of these parishes refused to put on the yoke of Episcopacy, and were on that account expelled from their charges. Henceforth he never would cross the door of a parish church to hear an intruded curate. In open-air conventicles he took a very warm interest. He came, in consequence, under the notice of the persecutors, and frequently the solitude of Earlside was broken by the approach of dragoons eager to drag him to punishment. Instead of living comfortably in his own house, he had to spend many a night outside. In 1678 he was captured, brought to Edinburgh, and lodged in prison. On 13th September, 1678, William Laing, along with others from Cavers, was brought first before a committee of the Privy Council and then before the Council itself. In the charges brought against him, found in the MS. account of his trial, we get some information regarding the part he took in the struggle. He was accused of "being present at divers house and field conventicles, kept at Lilslieuir, Hassendeanmuir, Blackriddelhill, or about or near the said places, where he has heard John Welsh, Samuel Arnot, Mr G. Semple, Mr Riddell, Mr Robt. Traill, Mr George Johnstone, Mr John Blackater, Mr David Williamson, and divers other declared rebels, outed and intercommuned ministers, has been a ringleader and convener of the people to the said disorderly and seditious meetings, and has harboured and reset." William Laing had the reputation of being a leading Teviotdale Covenanter, one of the first who was informed where a conventicle was to be held, and who spread the tidings to those who could be trusted. By the Council he was asked to give the names of others who had been present with him at Teviotdale conventicles, and on refusing, was sentenced to be banished to the plantations unless he paid a fine of 500 merks Scots previous to 1st November, and promised to live orderly, which meant to abjure his prin-

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ciples. The fine was not paid, and for other three months Laing experienced the discomforts of close imprisonment in Edinburgh. On December 12th the Council gave a warrant to the Earl of Linlithgow to take Laing and other sixty Covenanters out of prison, deliver them to Johnstone, commander of a vessel lying at Leith, to be conveyed to London, in order to be transported to Virginia, and there kept in slavery for life.*

William Laing was put on board this ship at Leith and sailed away, expecting never more to see his home at Earlside, never again to hear the murmuring of the burn, and never more to look on the fair mountain scenes around his farm. He was quite willing to be a slave for the rest of his life, rather than do what was forbidden by his conscience. Many who were banished never returned, but Laing on this occasion came back. He had been a considerable time in prison, and was for months away from Scotland. Changes had taken place during his absence fitted to depress a Covenanter, but Laing was not downcast. I believe that when his family, on the night of his return, saw him take down the big ha' Bible for worship, and heard him engaging in prayer, they were deeply solemnised, and felt that he came back more firmly attached than ever to the Covenant. Most fervently, no doubt, he besought blessing on Scotland's Covenanted Church, on the outed preachers, and all who were suffering for obeying conscience. We can explain his increased firmness when we go back to Leith and become aware of an influence with which he came into contact during his passage to London. He went on board Johnstone's ship sentenced to slavery; but he found other sixty in the ship under the same condemnation for similar causes. Among them were other two tenants of the laird of Cavers, whom he knew well, also William Turnbull, brother to the laird of Bewlie Hill, and Mr Abercorn, chaplain to Lady Douglas, whom he had often heard preaching the Gospel at conventicles. The Government of the day put on board the same vessel, to be sold as a slave, another, who was one of the most patriotic and religious men Scotland ever produced. Alexander Peden was one of his fellow-prisoners.† William Laing had Peden's company from

* Wodrow, II., 476.

† Wodrow, II., 476.

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Leith to London, had frequent opportunities of conversing with him, and heard him preaching and leading them to the mercy throne. It is said that Peden greatly cheered his fellow-prisoners, urging them to stand firm, and telling them the vessel was not built which would take them to America. They could have seized the commander of the ship and made their escape; but Peden urged them to prefer endurance of suffering to following such a course. The voyage was five days longer than was expected. When they arrived in London the vessel, intended to take them to America, was not to be found. Johnstone, instead of retaining, set them all at liberty. The English shewed them great kindness when they knew the cause of their sufferings, and Wodrow affirms "they generally got safe home after they had been absent about nine months."*

William Laing and other Teviotdale Covenanters were thus associated with Peden in this ship, and it is not unlikely that he may by them have been invited to preach in this district. Sir J. A. H. Murray states that the localities where conventicles were said to have been held are the windings of Wilton Burn, a spot called Mitchellslack, on the farm of Southfield, and the vicinity of Earlside. Some years ago I was told of a tree on Earlside called Peden's thorn tree. What I suppose to be this tree bears marks of age. It may be difficult to prove that it was there during the days of the persecution; but it grows on what would be an ideal place for a conventicle.† Many hundreds could assemble on the level ground and grassy slopes rising on each side of the burn and be completely concealed from the view of all except those very near. It would be pleasant to hear the singing accompanied by the sound of the water playing with the stones in its channel, and rushing downward to the Slitrig. It is highly probable, almost certain indeed, that conventicles were held here in the days of William Laing unknown to the persecutors. Peden may or may not have preached, but Laing was charged with harbouring other outed ministers; and, when any such one was at Earlside, a conventicle was sure to be held. As the inhabitants of the surrounding district were so strongly Covenanting, a considerable number

* II., 476.

† This thorn tree is the first seen in the burn above Cogsmill.

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could in a short time be called together without travelling very far.

We can conceive how Peden's influence during the voyage to London would help to strengthen Laing's adherence to the Covenant. After 1679 I can find no mention of his name till 1684. Owing to the sentence he had incurred, it must have been unsafe for him to hold the farm of Earlside. In 1683 it was tenanted not by him, but by James Laing, probably his son. Where and how the father lived we do not know. A MS. informs us that Teviotdale Covenanters, like Laing, "were put to forsake their houses and hide themselves in hills and mountains." On May 5th, 1684, a list of fugitives was affixed to the market cross* in every town in the south and west, and severe penalties were threatened to those who sheltered or gave them any help. All the King's subjects were ordered to do their utmost to apprehend them before the 1st August. In Wodrow's history it is stated that, on 17th May, 1684, William Laing† in Hawick, John Harper in Fenwick, and others appeared before the Privy Council. I cannot affirm with absolute certainty that this "William Laing in Hawick" was William Laing, formerly tenant of Earlside, but it is difficult to see how he could be any other. Sir J. A. H. Murray writes of him as the very same person, and this opinion seems well founded. This Laing, as Wodrow tells, was banished. In the Advocates' Library I found a list of Teviotdale men who were banished during and after 1679. Their names are given and the parish to which each man belonged. If this man had been a Hawick Laing, then it would have been stated that he belonged to that parish. In this list we find the following:—"In the parish of Cavers, William Laing and James Story banished in the year 1684." There was only one Laing from Teviotdale banished in 1684, and it is here stated that he belonged to the parish of Cavers. In that case it is almost certain that he was William Laing of Earlside. He may be called William Laing in Hawick, because he was captured in the town and for other reasons. Sir J. A. H. Murray states that he had a brother in Hawick named James, a Conformist and helper of Claverhouse. Fraternal feelings may have incited him to shelter the

* Wodrow, IV., 12, 25.

† Wodrow, IV., 8.

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fugitive in his distress, or something else may have brought him to the town, and when there he may have been recognised and seized. I have examined lately the MS. account in the Register House of his appearance before the Council, and it contains more information than Wodrow's History. The historian makes a mistake, which might easily be done, in regard to the date of the meeting; for it is clearly 16th and not 17th May. The following is stated in the Acta of the Privy Council:—"William Laing in Hawick, . . . John Harper in Fenwick," and others, "prisoners in the tolbooth of Canongate for the alleged being in the rebellion, reset of rebels, and for church disorders, and examinations taken by the committee, repeated by His Majesty's advocate at probation against them and opinion of the committee in the matter, with what was answered by the said defenders at the bar, who judicially adhered to their said confessions and refused to take the oath of allegiance, and having considered His Majesty's letter authorising them to restrict their punishment to banishment, ordain the said William Laing," and others, "to be banished to the plantations in America, and discharge them ever to return to the kingdom under the certification of being proceeded against according to law, and farther ordain them to be delivered to Master George Lockhart to be carried off the kingdom in his ship, bound for the said plantations, give order and warrant to the Magistrates of Edinburgh and Bailies of the Canongate to deliver to him such of the prisoners now sentenced. The said George Lockhart hath found caution to transport the said prisoners to the foresaid plantations in America (sea-hazard, mortality, and pirates being always excepted), and to produce certificates from the Governor of their landing betwixt . . . and the first day of November, 1685, under the penalty of 10,000 merks for each of them in case of failure."* Here Laing is charged with taking part in the rebellion which ended at the battle of Bothwell Bridge on 22nd June, 1679. He sailed along with Peden to London in December, 1678. It would have been possible for him to be back at Earlside before June, 1679, and in that case it is almost certain that he took part in the attack on Hawick Tower, and marched with the others to the

* Acta, 16th May, 1684.

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west. It is to be noted, however, that his fellow-prisoner, Alexander Peden, was only approaching the Borders on his homeward way when he heard of the fight at Bothwell, and exclaimed, "I tell you, Sirs, our deliverance will never come by the sword." If, therefore, Laing came back from London in the company of Alexander Peden, it is evident that he could not have taken part in the rebellion.

From what is stated in the MS. account, I conclude that Laing stood unbending as a rock before the Council, and boldly confessed that he attended conventicles, and would not be driven inside the curate's church. Moreover, his opinions have advanced somewhat from those he held on one subject in earlier years. He always avowed himself a Covenanter, but there is no evidence that at earlier stages he refused to own himself a subject of Charles II. Now it is said that he declined to take the oath of allegiance. His protracted and severe sufferings, therefore, instead of making his heart faint, have helped to press him forward to the advanced and logical position taken up by Richard Cameron, who openly declared that the Stuarts had forfeited all right to continue on the throne. He had opportunities of meeting Richard Cameron; for from the minutes of the Presbytery of Jedburgh it appears that this preacher was for some time chaplain to Lady Douglas of Cavers.† His connection with Harden is well known. Does it not invest Cavers with a fresh interest when we have evidence that he, who is called the "Lion of the Covenant," resided and often preached the Gospel in its old house?

Sir J. A. H. Murray states that, after his second capture, William Laing of Earlside was banished in the ship of the notorious Walter Gibson, and that might be inferred from Wodrow's pages;* but in the minute of Privy Council, which has been already referred to, it is stated that the ship in which he was sentenced to be conveyed to America was that of George Lockhart. We should like to know how it fared with him after he sailed away from Scotland under this sentence; but it is very difficult to find out the histories of those who were banished. A Covenanter, named John Matthison, from Dumfriesshire, was sent to America, not in the same ship, but during the same

* Wodrow, IV., 8.

† Minutes of 5th September, 1677.

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summer and about the same time as William Laing, and after a long absence he got back to Scotland and wrote an account of his sufferings. On the voyage they were crowded under deck, offered food which would have been loathed by dogs, and could get scarcely any fresh air. Many of them died and never saw the shores of America. Matthison writes:—"Their cruelty to us was because we would not consent to our own selling or slavery; for then we were miserably beaten, and I received nine blows upon my back very sore, so that for some days I could not lift my head higher than my breast." These Covenanters, therefore, reduced to bondage for their religion, were often subjected to treatment similar to that described in *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. Matthison escaped from slavery, made his way on foot through Virginia and Pennsylvania, and ultimately reached a port, from which he sailed back to his native land. The following is told regarding his arrival at his own home:—"When he entered his own house his wife was preparing dinner, for the reapers were busy among the yellow corn. She did not recognise him; he was a wayfarer, she fancied, who had come in at the door to rest himself. She pressed him to take some food, and, with hands full, went out to the workers with their portion. But, as she passed him, he rose, and followed her at a respectful distance. Turning her head she saw him, and, mistaking his intention, said to the bystanders, 'The gangrel body wants a second dinner.' The words drew the eyes of the reapers towards him; when one of his own sons whispered to his mother, 'If my father is living yet, that is he.' She looked keenly into the stranger's face, and then ran into his arms, crying 'My husband!'"*

There was no such touching return of William Laing to Earlside. No information about him after he was sentenced to slavery can be ascertained from Government papers. He disappears in that heart-breaking bondage. The tradition in this district reported to me is that William Laing was so ill-treated in the ship on which he sailed to America that he died, and that his body was thrown over board. I have never as yet heard any tradition regarding the Covenanters of this district which has not been confirmed to some extent. For example, there is a tradition

* Smellie's "Men of the Covenant," 323.

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that Peden was at Langside, near Shankend, and in Government papers we find that there was a Covenanter named Robert Elliot in Langside. Again, Thomas Reid, who was wont to attend lectures in this church, told me that in his youth he heard it stated that there were Covenanters at Barnhills, and their names have since been found and a short account of their trial before the Court of the persecutors. I am certain that the tradition regarding William Laing is true, at least to this extent, that he never returned to Scotland, and never on earth again saw his own family. Wodrow asserts regarding the many banished at this time:—"Most part of the prisoners died in Carolina, and scarce half-a-dozen of them ever returned to their native land."* We read of several Teviotdale men who were banished to America for their religion, but we know of none who ever returned.

We have seen Laing enduring persecution year after year, driven from his home and from his native land, but whether did he or his enemies triumph? He was assailed by many shocks, but we see him bearing them as the rock in the ocean breasts the giant billows and dashes them back in foam. He was not contending for outward points or matters of doubtful disputation, but for the great principles both of civil freedom and the spiritual independence of the Church. How do we explain such noble endurance? He had a faith which saw an Unseen God, committed both soul and body into His care, and let himself be guided and strengthened by His almighty hands.

Another Laing still remains to be mentioned as a sufferer. Lady Douglas of Cavers was one of those in this district most severely oppressed. For refusing to conform to the Episcopal Church, for being present at conventicles addressed by Donald Cargill, John Welsh, and such ministers, and for harbouring Covenanters, she was dragged away from her pleasant home in green Cavers, exorbitantly fined, and imprisoned in Stirling Castle. In February, 1683, an arrestment was served on tenants of hers on Cavers estate, arresting for payment of her fine† all rents due by them. In paying what was then due, they

* Wodrow, IV., 11.

† This fine was made over to Sir Adam Blair and Sir William Lockart, in lieu of a debt due to them by the King, and the arrestment was evidently in their favour.

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thought they did all that the arrestment required. They were movable tenants, and took their farms every successive year in April. When the following Martinmas arrived, Lady Douglas's factor called on them for payment of the half-year's rent.* They thought that by law she was entitled to the money, and paid their rents to her agent. In January, 1684, they were summoned before the Sheriff of Roxburghshire to pay, over and above what they had already paid at the time of the arrestment, the whole of the rents of the year from April. They pleaded that, according to law, they were liable only for what was due at the time of the arrestment, and that as no new arrestment was served they felt shut up to pay to Lady Douglas the first half-year's rent. The persecuting Meldrum's power with the Sheriff was so great that he issued a decree requiring them to pay the current year's rent also, i.e., to pay a half-year's rent twice. They took all legal means to obtain redress, but only brought severer dealings on themselves. They were torn by Meldrum's dragoons from their farms, imprisoned in Jedburgh for some time, and then liberated and told to go home and make up as speedily as possible the whole of the money they were required to pay. The winter had been so severe that many of their cattle and sheep perished. They went home, therefore, seeing no means of raising the money, and expecting to have all taken from them, and to be turned away penniless from their holdings. In answer to earnest representations sent to him by the factor, Mr Gledstones, young Sir W. Douglas returned to Cavers and got the proceedings against them stopped. One reason why they suffered so great cruelty was on account of their well-known sympathy with Lady Douglas in her religion. One tenant subjected to such oppression was James Laing of Earlside, and the others were William and Jean Stavert in Earlside, James Leyden there, William Douglas in Kirktown, James Harkness there, and James Turnbull also in Kirktown†

* According to regulations laid down by the Government a large portion of these rents had to be paid over to the young laird of Cavers, whom the Government had put under guardians in order to have him trained in the Episcopal faith, and who was now living on the Continent. See chapter on Lady Douglas.

{ † Wodrow, MSS. XXXIII., folio 67.
{ Wodrow Hist., IV., 54.

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If the life of another Covenanter, also a tenant of the laird of Cavers and a companion of William Laing in work and tribulation, were fully known and written, I believe that it would exercise a most healthy influence in Teviotdale. We do not find many particulars, but certain facts are stated regarding James Mossman which create a thirst to know more about him and warrant us to believe that he was a most fearless, noble, and straightforward man. He was tried along with the farmer of Earlside, but the fine in his case was 1000 merks, whereas that imposed on Laing was 500.* This seems clear proof that in the opinion of the persecutors he did more work than the other for the Covenanting cause. In his indictment he was charged with being present at conventicles held by the ministers already named, and it is stated—"more particularly, James Mossman hath conversed and conducted the said Mr John Welsh and others up and down the country in arms, and hath furnished them with horses to that purpose, and hath sent horses for that purpose from his own house to Edinburgh and other places for the said persons." I conclude that Thomas Waugh in Hawick and James Mossman, on the estate of Cavers, were leading men in arranging when and where conventicles were to be held. The one wrote for preachers and the other sent horses to bring them. The religious services which they arranged to be held on Ruberslaw, Langnewton Moor (we have historical proof that Welsh also preached there), Hassendean Moor, and other places, were then doing splendid work. Many who had been living without God, had their hearts turned to Him and their lives entirely changed. Careless men heard these field preachers and went away to set up family worship in their houses and to live under the fear of God. The Government of Charles II. detested such work, and determined to put it down by force. Meldrum's dragoons ranged through the country in search of those known to frequent conventicles, and spared neither oaths, nor threats, nor fining to drive them inside the Episcopal Church. Mossman, Waugh, and others managed for years to elude the search. When danger came near they managed to get timely warning and found a way to places where they could not be

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caught. The names of Mossman and others were sent to Edinburgh, and there was consultation among the leading persecutors as to how they might be captured. In a letter I found not long ago in the Edinburgh University Library, I think I discovered the plan upon which they resolved. The letter is dated Earlston, 3rd September, 1678, and is written by an officer named Strachan, who was in command of a body of dragoons located there for the time, and who had been sent out for the purpose of hunting for Border Covenanters. Strachan, in this letter, states that James Mossman had been specially named in the instructions given him by the Privy Council as one whom he was to be sure to take all means to capture. He writes further that he sent a number of dragoons a long distance to seize him. They no doubt rode swiftly from Earlston, came entirely unexpected, captured Mossman and dragged him away from his home in Cavers to an Edinburgh prison. Great dismay was caused in Teviotdale. Strachan says that the capture of others like him "so alarmed the country that none of these sort of persons stayes at their own houses." James Mossman was tried along with William Laing. He refused to yield, and was sentenced to pay 1000 merks before 1st November, and henceforth live orderly, i.e., conform, or be banished to a life of slavery in America. He would not bend to do what conscience forbade, and was shipped to London in the same vessel in which Laing and Peden sailed. What was his history, after being liberated along with the others, we have not been able to discover. We do not find his name again in connection with Cavers Covenanters. It would be unsafe for him to come again to Teviotdale. He may have remained in England, emigrated or spent the remainder of his life in another part of Scotland. What a privilege it will be to meet James Mossman on the golden streets on which he is now walking, and get what information he can give regarding Teviotdale conventicles, the places where they were held, the numbers who attended, the ministers who preached, the men and women who were impressed and converted by the Word, their sufferings and hairbreadth escapes from the persecutors. Only in heaven will the pages be fully written out which record the grand events that took place in this district during that part of its history. It would invest any place with a halo if we

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could say, "Here stood the house of James Mossman, and here we tread the ground which he farmed." There is no doubt he was a tenant in the barony of Cavers, and the farm he occupied was called "The Mount." I know of no such name now. The place may have been Cavers' Knowes, but that is not certain.

Another tenant on Cavers estate, imprisoned with Mossman, sentenced to the same punishment, and sent on the same ship with Peden, was John Cavers. Respecting him nearly the same is said as about Laing. Indeed, you can scarcely look on a spot round Earlside which is not associated with Covenanters. William Elliot of Penchrise was imprisoned and fined for attending a conventicle at Abbotrule. We have the names of others who lived at Ederstoneshiels, Acreknowe, Stobs, Barns, and Langside.

Any who say that the Covenanting spirit was not strong in Teviotdale, simply shew their utter ignorance of the state of the district at the time. I have here an exact copy of an account of the "Sufferings in Teviotdale,"* which was written by a Border Covenanter and sent to the historian Wodrow. This MS. is preserved in the Advocates' Library. It contains a list of Teviotdale men killed at Bothwell Bridge, and there are ten whose names are all here. Other sixteen Teviotdale men were taken prisoners at that battle, and we have their names also. Many others were there and escaped. Sir Robert Hamilton declared that when others on that disastrous day would not obey him, "a company of Teviotdale men willingly offered themselves."†

In this paper a list of those banished to the plantations after 1679 is given, and we find eighteen names from Teviotdale. Others were banished before 1679 and about that time whose names are not included. I have the names of other ten Teviotdale men all banished to a life of slavery. Every one of the twenty-eight had sufferings to face similar to those of William Laing. I believe if these men had been asked to choose between hanging and being sentenced to a life of slavery, they would with one voice have replied, "We prefer to be at once hung in the Grass-

* Wodrow, MSS. 8vo., Vol. XXIX.

† "Faithful Contendings," 191. "Finding a company of Teviotdale men who alleged they wanted a captain, they willingly offered themselves to me." R. Hamilton's letter to the Societies, 7th December, 1684.

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market." When twenty-eight of her sons chose the awful life of slavery rather than renounce the Covenant, shall we not say that the Covenanting spirit was strong in Teviotdale?

Considering its size and population, Cavers, for loyalty to the Covenant, will, in my opinion, compare favourably with any other parish in Scotland. In this parish scores endured imprisonment and sufferings of various kinds. Enter Cavers and you enter a parish of the martyrs. Its minister was a martyr,* and besides those killed at Bothwell it had at least five other men whose lives were given in loyalty to the Covenant. How many parishes can claim six martyrs? We do well to remember these noble men. Had they preferred ease and shunned those awful sufferings, what kind of freedom would have been ours to-day? Once when giving a lecture on James Renwick in another town, I had among my hearers a clergyman of the Church of England, who thanked me very warmly, and said that, Episcopalian as he was, his sympathies were with the Covenanters. When we study the Covenanters, do we not come into contact with men who draw our attention to God and ring into our souls the testimony that to be right with Him and follow His Son, is infinitely more important than all that this world can give?

* In the commotion which arose over the attempt upon the life of Archbishop Sharp in Edinburgh in 1668, the authorities, according to Kirkton, in their anxiety to get hold of the would-be assassin dealt harshly with "several honest people of the town." "Another act of cruelty they committed at this time was: Upon pretence of searching for the bishop's assassin, they seized Mr James Gillon, late minister at Cavers, and made him run on foot from Curry (whither he had retired for his health) to the West Port of Edinburgh at midnight, and then was carried off to prison; and when the Council found the mistake, they did indeed suffer him to goe to his chamber; but his cruell usage had disordered him so, that within two dayss he died." History, 284.—Ed.

CHAPTER XII.

THE CAPTURE OF HAWICK TOWER.

IN certain districts of Scotland the connection of every hill, glen, and farm with the Covenanting struggle is most carefully and jealously remembered. Parents point out the different places to their children, and proudly describe the scenes enacted there. It is well for districts thus to cherish the memory of a struggle which has exercised so ennobling an influence on our people. There are places, not a few, throughout Teviotdale, which, on account of their connection with Covenanters, deserve never to be forgotten.

One of them is Bewly Hill, near Lilliesleaf. The land of this district had far more proprietors two hundred years ago than it has to-day. Bewly Hill at that time was in the possession of a family named Turnbull, of whom there seem to have been several brothers. Previous to the Restoration of Charles II. the Turnbolls attended church at Lilliesleaf. When the Covenanting preacher, Thomas Wilkie, was expelled from that charge for non-conformity, they at once turned their backs on the parish church, and never crossed its door to hear the notoriously ungodly curate Chisholm, who was intruded in his place. The Turnbolls made no secret whatever of the fact that they were Covenanters. They were thoroughly straightforward and noble. Of anything mean, tricky, or involving compromise of principle they were utterly incapable. Bewly Hill became one of the great rallying points for Covenanters in the Borders. On one occasion a conventicle was held in its immediate neighbourhood, attended by thousands, and the preacher was Mr George Johnstone, the outed minister of Newbattle, who at another time preached on the west side of Ruberslaw. On another occasion a conventicle was held in a lonely retreat on Bewly Hill. Just as the people were listening to the preached Gospel the persecutors burst among them, commanded by one Captain Buckham, and "killed seven and maimed others for life."

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William Turnbull of Bewly Hill was banished to the plantations along with a merchant in Hawick named Wauch. It is highly probable that he needed to sacrifice his life for the Covenanting cause, for we never read of him as being again at Bewly Hill. Walter Turnbull was the eldest brother and the owner of the estate; and his loyalty to principle was put to the very severest test. Sheep, cattle, and every article on which the persecutors could lay their hands were taken away from his farm. Under all these sufferings Walter Turnbull proved himself a most consistent and steadfast Covenanter; never took any test, never compromised principle, and took a part, as we shall see, in the struggle for religious freedom, which entitles his name to be cherished in everlasting remembrance as one of the bravest and noblest men our district has ever produced.

Another place having Covenanting associations which entitle it to remembrance in this district is Standhill, a farm near the railway about half-way between Hassen-dean and Belses. Standhill was at that time a small estate owned by Thomas Turnbull. Previous to the Restoration he was a regular hearer of John Livingstone in the parish church at Ancrum. From the references Livingstone makes to Standhill in the letter he sent from Rotterdam to his flock at Ancrum, we have reason to believe that Thomas Turnbull was one of those who, under his ministry, underwent the change called conversion. There is no doubt whatever that he was one of Livingstone's most intimate friends. After his own pastor's banishment he left Ancrum parish church, and during the persecution remained one of the most consistent and outstanding Covenanting laymen in Teviotdale. Books he studied most carefully at Standhill were William Guthrie's *Trial of a Saving Interest*, Andrew Gray's *Sermons*, and Samuel Rutherford's *Letters*. From Rotterdam Livingstone recommended him to buy several copies of these and lend them to others, that from them the people might get the Bread of Life, which the hireling curates were unable to give. His house at Standhill was no doubt one of the places where, on Sabbaths, meetings were held "for prayer and mutual upstirring." In this district, as well as in other parts of the country, under the ordeal of persecution there were some exceedingly sad

Capture of Hawick Tower.

falls; some of the very hands which in Ancrum church before Livingstone, and in Hawick church before his son-in-law, John Scott, were solemnly uplifted to swear the Covenant, afterwards signed the "test" abjuring all its principles. Dragoons scoured the district, visited every suspected dwelling, and under threats of imprisonment compelled the inmates to sign papers on which the test, renouncing the Covenant, was either written or printed.

I have seen and examined many of these papers with the autograph signatures of people in this district, for they are carefully preserved in the Edinburgh Register House. Thomas Turnbull of Standhill preferred enduring the severest sufferings to inscribing his name on any such papers. By attending the ministrations of the jolly and godless curate who professed to preach in Ancrum church, Turnbull could have obtained an easy and pleasant life for himself at Standhill; but the loss of his earthly all and a shelter in a cave or moss-hag were far more tolerable to him than trampling on principle with all its holy requirements. His faithfulness brought several visits of the persecuting soldiery to Standhill, the memory of which has not yet altogether perished in this district. A tower once stood on the farm; and a tradition survives that a Covenanter, when hotly pursued by the persecutors and knowing not where to get a shelter, rushed within its walls. He got access to a lower storey through a small opening in the floor, then making his escape by a door, hid himself under tall broom growing on what are now carefully cultivated parks (now called Huggan's park).

When conventicles were held in this district Thomas Turnbull boldly took his stand near the ministers, making no secret whatever of the fact that he was in thorough sympathy with them. On one occasion, when the dauntless Blackader was surprised by the military while preaching on a lonely moor in Teviotdale, Turnbull took his position, with sword in hand, by his side and escorted him safely away from the scene of danger. Under the persecution, in which "he suffered the loss of all that could be carried away from his farm," he kept his garments clean, never took any test, and along with his sons, as we shall afterwards see, did good work in fighting for the religious liberty we are to-day enjoying.

In books and MSS. describing the persecuted the name

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of Thomas Turnbull of Knowe is often found. From this frequency and the connection in which his name occurs, there can be no doubt whatever that this man was an outstanding Covenanter. His name gets a prominent place in Government papers; on one occasion it is put alongside the names of Henry Hall and Walter Turnbull. It may be remarked in passing that the Turnbulls of this district were a brave clan, though at one time noted for their cruelty and lawlessness. A great change, however, seems to have been produced on them by the preaching of Livingstone, Scott, Gillon, and other like-minded ministers; for the most frequent Covenanting name in Teviotdale was Turnbull. The Turnbulls had more members than any other family in this part of the Borders who suffered for their loyalty to the cause of Christ's Crown and Covenant.

In MSS. in the Advocates' Library and the Register House it is frequently stated that Knowe is in the parish of Hassendean. The only place bearing the name that could have been in the old parish of Hassendean, stands in the beautiful glen through which Hassendean Burn flows. There is a house and small steading, called Knowetonhead, evidently of recent construction. Built into the wall of the steading by the roadside is a stone with the letters:—

T. T.

1628

H. T.

One who never was aware that a Covenanter had once possessed Knowe, told the author that the initials T. T. stood for Thomas Turnbull, who at one time was proprietor* They are probably the initials of the grandfather of the Covenanter. It is said that the dwelling-house of this small property stood about fifty yards to the north-

* Among some data about the Turnbulls supplied to Mr Stewart by the late Mr Turnbull, Deneburn, Denholm, are the following—"1623 Thomas Turnbull was a Juryman at the Circuit and designed of 'Knowe.' This is the same place which was originally called East Mains of Hassendean." "1640 Thomas Turnbull granted a charter of the lands of Knowe in favour of John Turnbull his son," "1650 John Turnbull resigned the lands of Knowe in favour of himself in liferent, and Thomas Turnbull his eldest son in fee."

In a paper on "The Parish and Kirk of Hassendean," Mr Vernon, secretary of the Hawick Archæological Society, states that Horsliehill is mentioned in a charter as Wester Hassendean.—Ed.

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west of Teviotbank west gate. It therefore occupied one of the most lovely sites in Teviotdale. Below the height on which it stood flowed the Teviot with clearer waters and in another channel than that in which it runs to-day. To the south lay Ruberslaw

"That lifts his head sublime,
Rugged and hoary with the wrecks of time."

Eastward and westward stretched the valley, whose beauties have been sung by many a poet. On the opposite side of the glen stood the church and churchyard of Hassendean.

How Thomas Turnbull, laird of Knowe, became a Covenanter is not known. In the year 1680 he is described as being still a young man. The session records of Hassendean show that a John Turnbull of Knowe was a member of that church after the Restoration; and, according to Wodrow,* John Turnbull of Knowe was fined £2000 Scots, along with many others throughout the kingdom, for their alleged acquiescence in the so-called usurpation of Cromwell. That historian adds:—"The persons contained in this act of fines, as far as I can now learn about them, were, generally speaking, of the best morals and most shining piety in the places where they lived, and chargeable with nothing but being Presbyterians, and submitting to their conquerors when they could do no better." This John Turnbull was very probably the father of Thomas, and it is evident from Wodrow's words that he belonged to a class not favourably regarded by the new Government. The parish church of Hassendean during the persecution was occupied by a curate named Scott, who conformed to Episcopacy. From what is stated and quoted in a well-written paper of the Hawick Archaeological Society it appears that Scott was a very respectable man. Whether he took any part in the proceedings against Thomas Turnbull has not been ascertained. At any rate, Turnbull's adherence to the Covenanting cause brought him somehow or other under the notice of Meldrum, the most outstanding of the persecutors in this district. Even a slight knowledge of the treatment to which Covenanters were subjected is sufficient to show that whatever might induce men and women to attend the

* I., 271.

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curates' church, it required something stronger far than worldly motives to lead them to take the Covenanting side. One crime with which he was charged was that of "resetting," i.e., entertaining in his house or holding intercourse with Covenanting preachers. There is scarcely room to doubt that such preachers were welcomed to this house of Knowe on the banks of the Teviot. We can conceive them arriving in disguise and early in the morning stealing away to Ruberslaw, the recesses of Hagburn, or Earlside, to preach in the open air.

Soon he had to flee from the banks of the Teviot. It is not known where he found refuge, but for a time he was in the vicinity of Moffat Well, and there met in with Archibald Riddell, the field preacher. The two men evidently became intimate friends. They left Moffat together to return to Teviotdale, journeying in company past St Mary's Loch and through the "Dowie Dens of Yarrow." As they were approaching Selkirk they were met, pursued, and apprehended together by the persecuting laird of Graden and lodged first in Jedburgh prison and afterwards in Edinburgh. Turnbull was arrested in September, 1680, and tried for his life in the following January.* The general charge against him was that of treason, committed in connection with the rising which culminated at Bothwell Bridge. A MS. in the Edinburgh Justiciary Record Office contains a full account of his trial. It is that authorised by the Judges who tried him and written by the Clerk of Court.† When Thomas Turnbull was brought forward for trial four Judges sat on the Bench with the Lord Justice Clerk, whose name was Maitland of Dudhope. Sir George McKenzie, of ill name, was the advocate who conducted the case for the Crown. The indictment against him and others, who were tried at the same time, was in the following words:—

"Thomas Turnbull of Knowe, George Dun of Pielhill, Robert Scott, younger of Hassendean, indited and accused of treason at the instance of Sir George McKenzie, Lord Advocate, against them, and Thomas Turnbull of Standhill, Walter Turnbull of Bewlie, William Paterson, heritor

* Wodrow, III., 197.

† The author acknowledges indebtedness to Mr Veitch, Clerk of the Court of Session, not only for giving access to the various MSS. but also for considerable help in deciphering them.

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in Hawick, Ralph Davidson of Greenhouse, Andrew Young of Cavertoun, John Scott of Weens, Robert Ker of Priestoun, George Hume of Graden, and James Turnbull of Swanshiel.

“It is of veritie that the said Thomas Turnbull and Walter Turnbull and the other persons above-mentioned, and their associates and accomplices, shaking off all fear of God, conscience, and sense of duty, allegiance and loyalty to His Majesty, their native prince and sovereign, have presumed to commit and are guilty of the said crimes, in so far as John Balfour of Kinloch, D. Hackston of Rathillet, and others, having in a most cruel and sacrilegious manner killed his Grace, Archbishop Sharp, they went into the southern shires and there avowed rebellion against the King, under Robert Hamilton, and on the 29th of May they and their accomplices having published Acts of their own coining, they burnt Acts of Parliament, and upon a day of June they and their accomplices attacked His Majesty’s forces at Loudon Hill, and at Glasgow killed several of His Majesty’s soldiers, but being resisted marched up and down the country in a hostile manner. The said Walter and Thomas Turnbull and the haill remanent persons above-mentioned, and their accomplices, to the number of five or six hundred, did likewise rise and join together in arms in the southern shires in ane open, avowed and desperate rebellion against the King’s Majesty in the month of June, 1679, marched up and down the shires of Berwick, Roxburgh, Selkirk, and Peebles, in ane warlike and military posture, being modelled and framed in troops and companies, . . . did come to the burghs and towns of Kelso, Jedburgh, Selkirk, Hawick, Roxburgh, Melrose, and other burghs and towns in the said shires, where His Majesty’s militia were posted, . . . did most treasonably besiege the Tower and Castle of Hawick, and by storm and violence did take the same, . . . carried away with them all the goods and the arms of many country gentlemen who transported them thither for safety and custody. In the storming and in-taking of the which Castle several of His Majesty’s subjects, who were therein, were dangerously hurt and wounded, particularly Mr John Purdom, schoolmaster of Hawick, and were at length necessitate to capitulate and submit themselves to the persons above-named and their accomplices.

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“ And suchlike upon the day of June, 1679, the hail persons above-named and their accomplices, did most treasonably resist and oppose a party of His Majesty’s forces at Bewly Hill, under command of the Master of Ross, when several of the said rebels were killed and wounded; and, the persons foresaid having made their escape, they and their accomplices marched to Hamilton, where they joined with the murderers of the late Archbishop of St Andrews, did fight at Bothwell Bridge, &c., which, being proved, they ought to be punished with forfeiture of life, lands, and goods to the terror of others.”

On the first day of the trial the above indictment was read, and proof was adduced that criminal letters had been served at the houses of the accused and the different places in the kingdom where at that time it was customary to read them. Thomas Turnbull of Standhill, Walter Turnbull of Bewly, William Paterson in Hawick, Ralph Davidson of Greenhouse, Robert Ker of Prieststoun, Hume of Graden, and Turnbull of Swanshiel did not appear, none of them having yet been apprehended, and were all declared outlaws. It was intimated the same day to the Lords that several who had been summoned to appear as witnesses against the accused had not appeared, and they were all summarily adjudged to be “ in ane unlaue ” and fined each a hundred merks Scots. Most likely these witnesses did not appear because they were Covenanters themselves, or were well known to have strong sympathy with the cause. Their names were John Clunie, barber in Hawick, Andrew Turnbull in Appletree Hall, John Elliot in Southfield, . . . Walter Cavers in Todshawhaugh, Robert Scott in Horbie or Sorbie Hill, William Elliot in Penchrist, Walter Turnbull in East Port of Hawick, Thomas Murray in Nether Chatto, William Turnbull, servitor to Lady Langlands, John Turnbull in Minto, John Wilkie in Hassendean, Patrick Wright in Gribot.

On the 12th January the trial was resumed, when the relevancy of the charges was discussed. Mr David Thorris, advocate, appeared for Turnbull of Knowe, and there is a long account of the speech he delivered in his behalf objecting to the relevancy of the libel. He said Turnbull denied being present at Drumclog, Bothwell, and the fight at Bewly Hill; that he took no part whatever in attacking the Tower and Castle of Hawick. He objected

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to the relevancy of some of the charges brought against him because no particular days were specified. He said that Turnbull admitted his being a Presbyterian, but denied the charge of rebellion, inasmuch as he had never taken up arms against the Government. Though he had been present at a conventicle held at Lilliesleaf Muir, he was not on this account liable to punishment. Many loyal subjects were present, although of Presbyterian principles. That conventicle, though unlawful at that time, was now indemnified. The fact of his having arms on that occasion implied no crime; for he was a gentleman, and all gentlemen within the kingdom were known constantly to wear arms when they went abroad. As a proof that he went to that conventicle solely to hear preaching, he came there with his wife riding behind him on the same horse and carried her so, riding behind him, back to his own house. After a discussion by the opposing advocates, the Lords found the charges relevant and adjourned consideration of the proof to another day. On the 13th of January the charges against Walter Turnbull and Thomas Turnbull of Standhill were tried before a jury of fifteen. Evidence was given against them by several witnesses from Hawick, and they were both pronounced guilty of rebellion. On 24th January, 1681, witnesses were brought forward by Sir George McKenzie to prove the charges laid against Thomas Turnbull of Knowe.

The first witness called was William Turnbull of Sharp-law, forty years of age, and married. His evidence, as written in the minutes of the Court of Justiciary, is as follows:—"Depones he knows Turnbull of Standhill, Turnbull of Knowe, and Jn. Ffala. On Friday before the skirmish at Bewlie Brig the deponent and Newhouse, being coming from Lilliesleaf to Hassendean, was met by some horsemen coming from Lothian-ward, and was carried back as prisoner to Lilliesleaf Muir, and a number of persons who were then on the muir consulted together and advised those persons who took them and brought them prisoners to Lilliesleaf Muir to let them go, which accordingly was done; but immediately Turnbull of Standhill and other two or three horsemen came out after them and took them prisoners, and took their horses from them. Depones there was a considerable number of rebels in arms there on horseback, commanded by Standhill, whom

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they called captain, and this was before they went to sermon at Lilliesleaf. All that were there joined together and heard sermon. Mr David Williamson preached. The troop of rebels came up a considerable time before sermon. Standhill brought deponent up to the place where the people and the rebels were altogether to hear sermon. When he was brought back by Standhill and the other two rebels on horseback, they brought him back where the troop of rebels and people were together, and at that place he saw Turnbull of Knowe walking, and his cloak about his mouth, with a small sword. There were some rebels there on foot with picks, muskets, and a drum. After sermon was done the company exercised. He did not see Turnbull of Knowe exercise with those rebels. Knows no more as to him. . . .”

The next witness was Walter Riddell of Newhouse, in the immediate neighbourhood of Hawick, thirty-five years of age, married. “Depones that he being taken prisoner with Turnbull of Sharplaw as they were going to Hassen-dean, they were brought again to Lilliesleaf Muir, but there after consultation with the rebels that were upon the muir they were permitted to go; but immediately Turnbull of Standhill, with two rebels on horseback, came riding out with pistols in their hands from the place where sermon was, and took them prisoners, and brought them back and took them into the place where sermon was, where was a number of country people, and there they dismounted the deponent and Sharplie and took their horses from them. There was a troop of rebels about two or three pair of butts from the place where the conventicle was held, and that they were drawn up and were there before the deponent came up, which was a long while before sermon began. Thereafter a foot company of rebels came up with picks, muskets, and a drum, and joined with the people to hear sermon, when Mr Williamson preached. . . . He saw Turnbull of Know walking there at the preaching, and saw, as he thought, the scabbard of a small sword about him; but did not see the hilts of a sword. He saw him standing some time hearing sermon. He knows not if there was a sword in the scabbard or not, and knows no more as to him. . . . He cannot be positive as to whether Know had a sword. He

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did not join with the foot company of rebels in arms to hear sermon; for the company stood behind the minister to guard him. Know stood before him with the multitude."

The next witness called was Walter Gladstanes, Town-clerk of Hawick, aged thirty-six years, married. "Depones he knows Turnbull of Standhill and saw him amongst the rebels that took the Castle of Hawick, and took away the militia arms and the town arms that were there. . . . He believes he had the command, because of the deference he had from the rest. He saw him there in arms both on horse and foot. The Castle was taken in by him and the rest of the rebels on Sabbath before the defeat of the rebels at Bewly Bog."

The next witness, James Nubie, Sheriff-officer of Roxburgh, "Depones he saw Turnbull of Standhill come to the town of Hawick with troops and companies of rebels on horse and foot, and that he was their commander at the taking of the Castle. The rebels took their orders from him. He knows nothing as to Turnbull of Know's accession to the rebellion."

The next witness was John Scott, carrier in Hawick, who deponed to the same effect as the others.

The next witness was William Laying in Hawick, aged twenty-eight, married. "Depones he saw Turnbull of Standhill at the besieging of the Castle of Hawick, where he was reputed commander of the party who took in the Castle and took away arms. Knows nothing as to Know and Ffala." The next witness was John Halliday, Sheriff-officer in Lindean, who deponed as follows:—"He saw Turnbull of Know at Lilliesleaf Muir mounted on a little lyard ousell mare with a sword about him, as he thought, for he saw the scabbard of it. It was after the sermon he saw him. There was a great troop of rebels on horseback in arms within four or five pair of butts of the place where the preaching was held, and that there was a company of rebels there on foot with picks, muskets, and a drum, depones that he saw Turnbull of Standhill riding up and down with the rebels in arms; he did not see Turnbull of Know drawn up with the troop of rebels on horse nor exercise with the foot nor in the company with any other armed men, and that he was on the road that leads

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to his own house, depones he saw Standhill that day command a party of rebel troops that were upon the muir."

Walter Oliver in Hawick, aged forty years, married, deponed:—"He did see Turnbull of Standhill at Lilliesleaf Muir on Friday before Bewlie Bog, and that he had command there."

This closed the proof, and then His Majesty's Advocate protested for ane assize of error in case the inquest should assoilzie, i.e., should the jury bring in an acquittal the Lord Advocate reserved to himself the power of indicting them for giving a wrong verdict. This was, of course, simply an attempt to terrorise the jurors and prevent them from giving a verdict according to the evidence. There is in fact in these records an account of the trial and severe punishment of a jury for giving a verdict contrary to the wishes of the Advocate for the Crown. On January 25th the jury found Thomas Turnbull of Knowe and John Ffala not guilty; but the Crown Advocate did not insist on the right he reserved to himself, for what reason is not stated.

Thomas Turnbull of Knowe figures also in these records as a witness in connection with another trial which arose out of the attack upon Hawick Tower. On 20th December, 1682, Alexander Hume, portioner of Hume, was brought before the same Court, and the main charge laid against him was taking part in attacking the Tower and Castle of Hawick. Thomas Turnbull of Knowe was called as a witness, and deponed:—"He saw ane Alexander Hume, who resembles this pannel, upon Friday before Bewlie Bog at a preaching at Lilliesleaf Muir, and that he saw him at another on Sunday thereafter near Lilliesleaf Muir, but does not know whether he had arms, and at the first time he heard him named, and the second time he knew him, but says he does not think he could know him now and this pannel resembles him, and depones there was at Lilliesleaf Muir about 200 or 300 men at a conventicle, and that some of them had something like swords, for he saw the ends of scabbards, depones on his great oath he knows no more as to Alexander Hume,

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depones he knows not if this pannel be that Alexander Hume or not, but he resembles him.*

Robert Scott of Hassendean, aged forty, married, depones:—"He knows Alexander Hume, he saw him at a conventicle at Huntlaw before Bothwell Bridge, where were 400 or 500 men in the field."

William Turnbull of Sharplaw was another witness, and depones:—"He saw one called Alexander Hume at the conventicle at Lilliesleaf Muir, that he was riding on a bay horse or mare, and had a cloak lined with red about him and a black velvet cape, that the manner how he came to know him was that Walter Riddell of Newhouse soliciting to get back the deponent's horse and his own, Standhill came in and said they were such folks as had taken the bond, upon which Alexander Hume said they should get or horse then. 'Get them gone.' Being interrogated if the pannel be the man, he cannot certainly say that it is he. The man he saw had black hair. The pannel has a periwig. The periwig being taken off, witness said he looks like him."

James Nubie, officer in Hawick, was another witness. "Depones he saw the man that was called Alexander Hume riding on a bay horse or mare, and that he had pistols before his saddle, and a cloak lined with red, and his own hair, which was blackish, and that it was at Hawick where he saw him, and that there were with him five or six score of rebels, who came to take in the Castle and take away the arms, and who the next day did it, and that he was riding upon the fore-end of the troop, that to the best of his knowledge the pannel is the man, and this is the truth as he shall answer to God."

James Scott, called Ormiston, Bailie of Hawick, aged forty years, married, "Depones he was at Hawick when a party of rebels came there, and that they were said to be

* The Rev. J. Wood Brown, in his "Covenanters of the Merse," has a luminous account of the movements which centred round Lilliesleaf Moor in June, 1679. In the course of it he says that Turnbull, of Knowe, afterwards turned King's evidence against the cause. The only thing countenancing such an opinion that I can find in Mr Stewart's notes of the trial, excerpted from the Justiciary Records, is an entry under date 7th February, 1681: "Said day Thomas Turnbull got a relaxation." His evidence at Hume's trial, quoted above, is more like that of a man giving it perforce, than of one who was treacherously desirous of helping the prosecution. He was still a printed fugitive in 1684 (Wodrow, IV., 26). Ed.

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commanded by Alexander Hume, as he was informed, that he saw the commander of the party mounted on a brown horse or mare, he knows not which, and that he had a cloak lined with red and a black cape upon his head, and that to the best of his knowledge this pannel is he."

On December 21st the jury, by a majority of votes, found Alexander Hume guilty of being a commander of a party of rebels' horse at the besieging of the Castle of Hawick. On the jury who pronounced this verdict was John Scott of Woll, afterwards Chamberlain of the Duchess of Buccleuch. There is evidence which leads to the belief that the Chamberlain was in favour of acquitting Alexander Hume.

On December 22nd the Lords sentenced him to be "taken to the market cross of Edinburgh on Friday, 29th December, betwixt two and four o'clock in the afternoon, and there to be hanged on a gibbet till he be dead." In spite of the earnest petitions of his wife, his execution was hurried on, and he met his doom on 29th December, 1682, giving a noble testimony* on the scaffold.

It is interesting to know that when the love of liberty incited some of the noblest hearts in this district to buckle on their swords and make an attempt to fling off the yoke of tyranny, a hundred and twenty brave Covenanting horsemen besieged and captured what was then called the Tower and Castle of Hawick.† Where they took their stand, how they stormed the walls and took the fortification is not known; but the evidence shews that in the course of the operations they made use of the old churchyard, where very likely the Covenant was taken forty years before.

Thomas Turnbull of Knowe, as we have seen, was found not guilty of rebellion, but he soon again, with all his respect for law and order, fell under the displeasure of the

* This may be read in full in Wodrow, III., 418-20.

† For eight hundred years it (the Tower) has existed as a place of local importance . . . some time after 1669 it passed into the hands of its present owners, the Scotts of Buccleuch . . . it was modernized about the end of the eighteenth century . . . "The Tower Knowe" on which it stands was, before the days of intervening buildings, elevated enough to afford a view eastwards of a portion of the valley, and to enable the Slitrig water, on whose eastern bank it stands, to be drawn round it by means of a moat." From article in "Border Magazine," Feb., 1904, by J. R. P.

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persecutors; and the sole cause was his turning his back on the curates and going to conventicles. One day the dragoons were seen riding toward the house of Knowe. They searched the steading, the glen, the banks of Teviot, but no Thomas Turnbull could they discover. They, however, had no intention of going away with empty hands; they accordingly drove the horses out of the stables, and the cattle from the outhouses. From Knowe they took property to the value of 7000 merks.* What were the thoughts of Turnbull's wife as she saw herself thus reduced to want? When David Steel lay on the ground near Lesmahagow, with his head pierced by many balls, his youthful wife, Mary Weir, who had an uncommon attachment to him, gazing on his manly and honest face, now pale in death, exclaimed, "The archers have shot at thee, my husband, but they could not reach thy soul; it has escaped like a dove far away, and is at rest." As she bent over his corpse and gathered up his fair hair and the shattered fragments of his skull, she prayed, "Lord, give strength unto thine handmaid that will prove she has waited for Thee in the way of Thy judgments." From what we know of Thomas Turnbull's wife and his sister Marion, we have reason to believe they had a strength which shewed they also waited on the Lord in the way of His judgments. Both of their names appear in the list of those who were dealt with by the persecutors. They too were obliged to flee from the banks of the Teviot. In Berwick they found a shelter for some time.† After the Revolution the family returned to Knowe, and James Pringle of Torwoodlee, who knew them well, writes regarding Thomas Turnbull, "He lives in far better condition than he was before."

After the Revolution Thomas Turnbull of Knowe be-

* "In the parish of Hassendean the Laird of Knowe lost by Meldrum and others in the space of three years the sume of 7000 merks." Wodrow, MSS. 8vo., Vol. XXIX.

† An entry in the Justiciary Records of date 10th December, 1683, casts a little light on their history at this period: "The Lords have considered a petition given in by Thomas Turnbull, of Knowe, with a certification of his residing in England both at the time and before and since the Circuit. They allow the petitioner a relaxation upon caution, and upon finding thereof ordains to keep him out of the printed rolls." His attempt to get caution does not seem to have been successful; for his name appears in the list of denounced fugitives fixed on market crosses in May, 1684.—Ed.

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came an elder in the church of Minto. His name is found as the chief elder of his time in the Session minutes of that church. In Minto old churchyard, now within the policies, his tombstone may be seen right in front of "the joughs," which still hang on the roofless wall of the old church. The letters are old and worn, but they may with pains be deciphered:—"Here lies Thomas Turnbull of Know, who died in the 78 year of his age, and was buried on the 6 of October, 1730; also Agnes Mackie, his spouse, who died in the 58 year of her age, and interred the 4 of January, 1716."

The course of the men who attacked Hawick Tower may now be briefly described. Their object was to get arms to break some of the most unjust laws and one of the basest tyrannies under which a people ever groaned. Some condemn their action as rebellion, but as well condemn all heroic struggles for liberty in the world's history. A necessity was laid upon those men to fight as best they could for breathing space to their own souls.

The next scene in which they figure is the defence of Bothwell Bridge. A large number of Teviotdale men joined the army that gathered under Sir Robert Hamilton; and there is good reason to believe that the position which those Borderers occupied on that battlefield was the defence of the bridge itself. Walter Turnbull of Bewly and Thomas Turnbull of Standhill both escaped from Bothwell. They never were captured, but the following sentence was pronounced over them on 2nd February, 1681:—"Adjudged to be executed to the death, demeaned as traitors, when they shall be apprehended, their names, memory, and honours to be extinct, their posterity may never hereafter bruick or joyce any honours, their tenements, annual rents, goods, gear, to be forfeited and remain perpetually with His Majesty." How and where they managed to live with that sentence hanging over them is not known. After the Revolution they both returned to their estates. Turnbull of Standhill had two sons, who seem to have become early possessed with the Covenanting spirit. The eldest son took part in Argyle's expedition, and distinguished himself by the bold defence he made in the west when Rumbold was taken. The

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account of his wanderings, escapes, and how he must have hid himself, after that expedition failed, would make a thrilling narrative. He was afterwards killed fighting gallantly for his country in King William's service at Winnoxberg in Flanders. The second son, after the Revolution, became Governor-Depute of Dumbarton Castle.

CHAPTER XIII.

THOMAS WAUCH AND OTHER HAWICK COVENANTERS.

THE names of several persons belonging to Hawick who suffered for the Covenant are mentioned in the records of that time; but probably the man who endured most and who did the most important work for the cause in that Border town, was a merchant named Thomas Wauch. It is quite likely that some of his descendants are still in Hawick, though I have heard of none of that name claiming connection with the Covenanters. In Wodrow's *Church History* we find the name of Thomas Wauch, merchant in Hawick, the charges brought against him, and little more.* In the MS. copy of the proceedings of the Privy Council I find statements which give a fuller account regarding him; and, so far as I know, these have never before been made public. On 21st November, 1678, Thomas Wauch, merchant in Hawick, was brought before the Privy Council in Edinburgh along with William Turnbull, brother of Walter Turnbull, laird of Bewly Hill. The following charges were brought against the two:—"They have upon the first, second, and remanent days of April, May, June, and remanent months of the year 1674; upon the first, second, third, and remanent days of the months of January, February, March, and remanent months of the years 1675, 1676, and 1677; and upon the first, second, third, and remanent days of January, February, March, April, May, June, July, August, September, and October in this present year, 1678, upon one or other of these days . . . were present at divers house and field conventicles kepted at Lilliesleaf, Blackriddell Hill, Has-sendean Muir, Terito Muir, Haughhead, and divers other places in Teviotdale and the Merse, where they heard Mr John Welsh and Mr Robert Traill, declared rebels and traitors; Mr George Johnstone, Mr David Williamson, Mr Riddell, Mr John Blackater, and other intercommuned and vagrant preachers not authorised." Are we not warranted from these words to conclude that in the opinion of

* Wodrow, II., 484.

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the persecutors conventicles were regularly held in this Border district in the years 1674 to 1678. Then it is said that "William Turnbull and Thomas Wauch did not only invite and desire the people in the country to meet and convene in the fields at the said places, and invite and desire the said ministers to keep those conventicles, but also at divers times before and after the said meetings did harbour, reset, supply, correspond, and keep company with the said declared rebels in their houses and elsewhere, and did guide and conduct them to several places in this and the other side of the border of England armed in a hostile manner." From these words I infer that several of the ministers, John Welsh, Robert Traill, and others, had often come to the house of Thomas Wauch. Very likely now and again strangers were noticed walking along the streets of Hawick with blue bonnets on their heads and plaids round their shoulders. Some might suppose they were shepherds wishing to sell wool to the merchants; but others knew better, and said, "Yes, they are shepherds, but not from the hills; and they are in Hawick concerned about something more valuable far than merchandise." Of the two men, Thomas Wauch was evidently considered to take the more important part in Covenanting work; for in the MS. it is stated, "further the said Thomas Wauch hath made it his work to convoy the said persons through the Merse from place to place, and to carry about the ministers' tent in which they preached . . . and hath travelled to and from Ireland for keeping a correspondence betwixt the ministers there and those frequenting the Merse and Teviotdale." It is quite evident from these words that there was something like an organisation in Teviotdale for keeping up preaching outside the curates' churches, and that Thomas Wauch in Hawick acted as a kind of corresponding secretary. The last charge against the two was "that they have constantly during the said space withdrawn from the public ordinances and worship of God in their parish churches." The two men did not deny the charges. Thomas Wauch was asked to depone as to who were present at the conventicles, and on refusing was sentenced to be transported to the plantations to a life of slavery. We find the name of William Turnbull, who received a similar sentence, in the list of those who sailed with Peden from Leith to London. He re-

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turned again to Teviotdale. We look in vain, however, in that list for the name of Thomas Wauch. It is likely that he was transported at another time and in another ship, and was never again seen in Hawick.

Another prominent name was that of John Clunie, barber in Hawick. It is evident from the notices of him that he was an outstanding Covenanter and a godly, Christian man, who was ready to endure the loss of his possessions before he would leave the path in which he believed his Lord wished him to go. He was frequently entertained by the family of Cavers, and doubtless the reason for this was respect for his godliness and consistency of life. In 1684 a proclamation was issued by Charles II. containing the names of men known as Covenanters, and requiring magistrates to apprehend them as rebels. Several from Hawick appear in the list; and that town will not err if she holds in permanent remembrance the names of those sons who were denounced as rebels at every market-cross in Scotland because they stood in those days of stress for Christ's Crown and Covenant. The names as they appear in Wodrow's *History* are as follow:—Thomas Braiden, merchant in Hawick; William Turnbull, merchant there; Robert Gledstanes there; Walter Scott, brother to Thomas Scott, tailor there; John Clunie, barber there; Thomas Turnbull, called Captain; John Ramsay in Hawick; John Turnbull, candlemaker, Hawick, for reset.

While Hawick's claim to a place in the muster-roll of the Covenant is thus made good, and there is a strong probability that in Thomas Wauch it had a martyr, it is to be feared that Covenanting principles were by no means popular in the Town Council of the time. In 1681 the bailies subscribed a test in which they not only abjured the Covenant, but also the fundamental principles of civil freedom. Wilson, the editor of the *Annals of Hawick*, attributes this to the influence of the Duke of Monmouth, who had married the heiress of Buccleuch, and who afterwards allied himself with the Covenanters in his attempt to take the crown from James VII. The name of the principal bailie of Hawick at that time was Laing, and he was keenly opposed to the Covenanters and in league with their most cruel foe, Graham of Claverhouse. In the *Annals* it is stated that George Deans was fined for dis-

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obedience given to Bailie Laing . . . for refusing to go to Galashiels with an express from Colonel Graham of Claverhouse." From this Wilson concludes that the notorious persecutor had been in Hawick, and in great favour with Bailie Laing and the Town Council. It is certain at least that he was in the neighbourhood; for the very first work he did in Scotland was to surprise a conventicle near Galashiels, chiefly attended by the ladies of the district.

A Covenanting memory lingers in the name of one of the United Free Churches in Hawick. The late Mr Wallace, of the Free Church, in his *Statistical Account of the Parish of Hawick*, makes the following reference to Alexander Orrock, a former minister in that town:—"For profound learning, independence of character, and extensive charity, this man deserves to be held in grateful remembrance." Mr Orrock endured sufferings, during the days of persecution, which should not be forgotten. When a young man, he was engaged to preach at a house called Kinkel, near St Andrews. Alexander Hamilton, proprietor of Kinkel, was a most hearty and consistent Covenanter. After the Restoration he was subjected to great trouble on account of his religious opinions. Though living so near the seat of the notorious Archbishop Sharp, he refused to conform to Episcopacy; not only so, but he boldly threw open the door of his house to the ejected Presbyterian ministers.* All Covenanting wanderers got a hearty welcome to Kinkel, where they not only got shelter, but had liberty to preach. This was all done within a short distance of the Archbishop's palace, and drew down upon Hamilton Sharp's angry displeasure. There was not a house in St Andrews more orderly than that of Kinkel, not a man who lived a more thoroughly consistent life than its owner, yet both caused sore pain to the "pious Archbishop." He could not tolerate such a man as Hamilton in his neighbourhood. The first step he took to break up the peace of this household was to summon its owner to appear before his Episcopal Courts at St Andrews; but Hamilton boldly refused, alleging that such Courts had no jurisdiction whatever over him. Then he publicly excommunicated him from the pulpit;

* Wodrow, III., 145.

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but the people of St Andrews were so disgusted at hearing a person of Hamilton's well-known piety and character excommunicated for nothing but his conscientious non-conformity that every time the sentence was read they rose from their seats and walked out of the church. When the "gentle Archbishop" found his excommunication treated with such contempt, he resolved to seek the help of the civil power to break up this godly household which was endangering the interests of the "Apostolical Succession." He got him intercommuned, i.e., so thoroughly boycotted by the law of the land that he was obliged to flee from his own house and endure innumerable hardships.* Then he had a company of soldiers sent to garrison the house, who drove out Mrs Hamilton and her family, and thus hushed most effectually all the praying and preaching. Thereafter the "pious Archbishop" had a little more peace of mind, but he did not as yet get full rest. Orders were given to search for Hamilton most carefully. One day his horse was killed under him. At last he was captured, bound with cords, and imprisoned for eighteen months. Sharp had meantime breathed his last on Magus Muir, and Hamilton was liberated, but was still subjected to great harassing. After several years' absence, he at length got back to his own house; but returned as strong a Covenanter as he had been before enduring so terrible hardships. He was prepared to be a dutiful subject in things civil, but on no account whatever would he conform to the religion established and endowed by the Government. Immediately after his return Covenanted preaching was resumed in Kinkel. One who at this time lived in this house was Mr Orrock, who afterwards became minister of Hawick. At that time he must have been young, but there is reason to believe that he was the man who officiated at this time in the house of Kinkel. The mere fact that Orrock was dwelling in a house so sorely persecuted for conscience sake and so consistently religious, is a very high testimony to his character and to his hearty devotion to Covenanted principles. The Primate of St Andrews, who was now named Ross, was as bitterly opposed as Sharp to the toleration of such a household as that of Kinkel. Through his influence a company of soldiers

* Wodrow, III., 145.

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was sent to the place, who apprehended Hamilton and Orrock, carried them both to Edinburgh, and lodged them in prison. A former minister of Hawick, therefore, who preached year after year with great acceptance, spent a short time of his youth inside a prison, and the only ground, on account of which he was sent there, was his holding meetings in the house of Alexander Hamilton near St Andrews. His imprisonment was due to nothing else but the displeasure of the Archbishop of St Andrews, for it was illegal. The King, a short time before, had issued a declaration of liberty, and Orrock had done nothing whatever contrary to that declaration. In a short time he was liberated, but thereafter he fell under the displeasure of another persecutor. In the year 1688 Alexander Orrock had occasion to go to Dundee. He was evidently not engaged to do regular work there. Possibly he may have gone to assist some of the ministers; but any preacher who wished to preach regularly in Dundee had to satisfy an individual who was living at that time in the town, and who took good care that no preacher was allowed to follow his vocation with whom he had any reason whatever to be displeased. Graham of Claverhouse, Viscount Dundee, attended far more carefully to the work done in every pulpit than any Archbishop.* Orrock had only preached two Sabbaths in the town when Graham became convinced that his preaching was of so dangerous and unsettling a kind that his voice must be at once hushed and no more allowed to impair the loyalty of the law-abiding people of Dundee. In one of his prayers Mr Orrock petitioned heaven's mercy throne that the "Lord would purge the King from heart idols." To assert that a royal person had a heart which needed to be purged from idols was a fearful heresy in the eyes of Claverhouse. It seemed virtually to declare that the King was an idolater. He therefore made a complaint to the Privy Council, who, upon receiving it, issued an order forbidding Mr Orrock to preach any more in Dundee. After the Revolution, Alexander Orrock became minister of Hawick. It does not come within the compass of these papers to give a full account of his labours subsequently. From an appearance he made before the General Assembly

* *Wodrow*, IV., 455.

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in 1705 we conclude that Mr Orrock was exceedingly fearless in stating his opinions publicly. Thomas Boston sat in the Synod of Merse and Teviotdale along with him, and in his *Memoir* calls "Mr Alexander Orrock, minister at Hawick, a man of vast parts and the greatest assurance I ever knew."* He laboured in Hawick from 1690 to his death in 1711, and bequeathed 9000 merks for the endowment of a Grammar School in the town, and a large sum of money to the poor, and to his successor in office his whole library, which was both valuable and extensive.

* "Memoirs" 170 (Edinburgh, 1776.)

CHAPTER XIV.

REIVING AFTER A NEW FASHION IN RULEWATER.

THE reivers on this occasion had the law on their side. Once upon a time the King in Edinburgh sent out word to have every tenth Turnbull hung, so turbulent had the clan become, which was duly done in a haugh on the lands of Spittal, called the "Dead Haugh" to this day, lying where the Rule turns away from the hillside to cast itself into the Teviot. By the time of our story, many of the Turnbells and their neighbours in Rulewater had become godly, and even somewhat particular about the quality of the preaching they listened to. At any rate, they would on no account accept the preachers provided by the Crown. This pleased King Charles as little as freebooting pleased his ancestor, and so to change their mood he resolved to send officials among them, empowered to make them the victims of the same sort of thing for which their forefathers were hanged.

Adam Urquhart, laird of Meldrum, and Henry Ker of Graden were appointed to superintend the execution of the laws against Non-conformists in Teviotdale, Selkirk, and the Merse. Urquhart was made a Justice of Peace in each of these shires.* An Act had been passed making it legal to bind heritors under heavy fines not only for themselves, but also for their wives, children, tenants, and cottars, that none of them should attend conventicles. Urquhart, or Meldrum, as he is usually called, seems to have used or abused the power thus conferred upon him to the full. He and others like him were accustomed to wink at conventicle-going on the part of some, so long as an annual sum was paid them for the permission. In fact, when all that is recorded in print and manuscript regarding Meldrum is put together, an unmistakable suggestion of a very dark character is presented. He was a man who, for cruelty, came little short of Claverhouse, and for greed far outstripped him. At the head of his dragoons, who, in their carousals, sometimes drank the devil's health, and accom-

* Wodrow, III, 57-58.

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panied generally by a notorious depute named Kennoway, he overran the district, driving people inside the parish churches, compelling parents to have their children baptized by the curates, and fining most exorbitantly and arbitrarily any whom he even suspected of non-conformity.

In the parish of Bedrule lived a widow whose three sons refused to enter the parish church to hear the intruded curate. On their account she was compelled to pay a fine of £95 18s, and see besides valuable property taken away from her farm.* That, however, was not sufficient. On another day, at the head of his troopers, Meldrum presented himself at the widow's house, searched everywhere for her three sons, and when they could nowhere be found, arbitrarily laid hold of one of their brothers, and carried him away to prison. For nothing else but refusing to answer the questions put to him, he was detained for more than a year, until he, along with another similarly situated, made his escape. In the meantime another visit was paid to the farm by the troopers, who carried the widow herself away to prison, and detained her there for six weeks. Then upon caution given they let her go again. Another time the troopers were hounded on by the underling of the curate of Bedrule, and she was next lodged in Jedburgh prison. By the payment of a considerable sum of money she obtained release; but no longer was there a home for her in her farm at Bedrule. Merely for having sons who were Covenanters, she was banished from her former house. Only with the greatest difficulty could she find a shelter. The landlord, who gave her a house, was obliged to swear, as he should answer at the great day, that "if it were known any of her sons came to visit her, he should burn the house and her within it."*

In another part of Teviotdale Meldrum once seized an aged man, who was no Covenanter, but who had once heard a field preacher, though he never heard another "neither before nor since," and for nothing else but this compelled him to pay a fine of £24 Scots.*

This persecutor got notice of a field meeting to be held in Teviotdale, but to his disappointment it had broken up before he and his troopers arrived. Thereafter he seized some people on no other ground than his own suspicion

* Wodrow, MSS. 8vo., Vol. XXIX.

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that they had been present, and laid them in prison. Because one of them would not answer questions addressed to him, he kept matches burning between his fingers till they were almost reduced to blackened bones, then sent him as a prisoner to Edinburgh, where his life became endangered on account of the brutal usage to which he had been subjected.

Abbotrule is rendered attractive not only by its seclusion and Border beauty, but also by its historical associations. On what is now the grassy hill of Bonchester, the Romans encamped, while in later times the valley below was often alive with soldiers collected from all parts of Scotland before marching to invade England. In Covenanting days Abbotrule was often trodden by hundreds in search of the Water of Life which flowed at its conventicles. Previous to the Restoration, James Ker, son of Ker of Littledean, was minister of Abbotrule. The Kers of Littledean were sufferers for the Covenant. The name of Margaret Ker, called Old Lady Littledean, appears as a victim at a time subsequent to that at which the events occurred at Abbotrule which are here set down. On October 17, 1684, she stood as a culprit before the Lords in a Court held at Jedburgh; and the only charge brought against her was withdrawing from the parish church for two years. She refused to "depone or take the oath of allegiance," and was severely fined.*

The old church of Abbotrule, which is situated in a most lovely neighbourhood, is now a ruin; but in the days of Ker its walls echoed with preaching which awakened sinners to life and filled their hearts with love of truth and principle. At the Restoration, Ker refused to conform, but was not expelled from his parish. He was, however, deprived of his stipend, and lived on Grange, which was his own property, and at that time a considerable estate. The curate who took his place was unpopular, and to strike terror among his people and force them to come to his church, he gave the name of a Non-conformist parishioner to the persecutors in 1672, and advised that he should be compelled to be a soldier or "bluecoat," an occupation then from its associations as loathsome to such

* Minutes of Courts held at Jedburgh, etc., in Register House.

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an one as the inside of a prison. The man could only get exemption by paying £100.*

James Ker would not abstain from preaching; and the people of Rulewater would not abstain from coming to hear. On Sabbath, the 4th March, 1680, large numbers made their way to the house of Grange in Abbotrule. The doors were thrown open, and in a short time rooms, passages, and kitchen were crowded. James Ker occupied a position where all could hear, and began the service. At the time he was seventy-nine years of age. On that day at least 500 hearers were present. The people are listening with rapt attention; but, hark! a sound is heard outside, and it waxes so loud that they are constrained to turn their attention away from the aged preacher. They soon become conscious that the sound proceeds from approaching horsemen. Meldrum, the Claverhouse of the district, hems them in on all sides; their ears are dinned with oaths and curses. They no doubt protest that being within doors their meeting was not contrary to law; but Meldrum disregarded all such appeals, and according to his own confession afterwards, lifted from this Covenanting congregation 10,000 merks as fines.† When a charge of oppression for such conduct was afterwards brought against him by the laird of Philiphaugh, it was found that only one worshipper had been without doors that day.† It was very likely on this occasion that, when abusing and scoffing the aged minister, he got the reply, "Sir, I was a minister before you had a being, and will be one when you are gone."

Meldrum did not, however, content himself with fining and scoffing, he also carried a number from the Grange to prison, among whom was James Ker, who was confined first in Jedburgh and afterwards in the Canongate gaol, Edinburgh. An old gentleman was present who had been banished for his loyalty to Charles II., and who was therefore entitled to some consideration. He was asked to promise to attend no more such meetings, and, on refusing, was dragged away to prison. "The gentleman could not have liberty without ingadgement; within a few weeks

* "Wodrow's History," II., 196. "A poor countryman" Wodrow says.

† "Wodrow's History," III., 240.

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took sickness and died in prison.”* One man, therefore, lost his life for attending that conventicle held in the house of Grange.

On 6th May, 1680, James Ker appeared before the Privy Council, and was charged with the following offence:— “ True it is and of verity that upon the 14th day of March last, being the Sabbath day, Mr James Ker, albeit he be an outed and unlicensed minister, did most presumptuously take upon him to keep a conventicle at a place called Grange, in Roxburghshire, where he did preach, expound, pray, and exercise the other functions of the ministry.” William Elliot of Penchrist also appeared, and was charged for being present at the same conventicle. “ The Lords having considered the libel with the confessions of Mr James Ker and Mr Elliot . . . ordain James Ker to find caution not to keep conventicles hereafter under the penalty of 5000 merks Scots, and on finding the said caution, ordain him to be set at liberty. . . . Fine William Elliot £25 Scots, and ordain him to be set at liberty on paying it.”§

It would take too long to describe all who in Abbotrule and the neighbouring district had to suffer for adhesion to the Covenant. A few may, however, be mentioned. Andrew Gordon had to flee from Abbotrule, “ was taken in Bewcastle,” and along with a fellow-parishioner, named Robert Cameron, was banished to America.† Walter Loraine, in the same parish, was killed at Bothwell.† George Shiels and Thomas Scott in Nether Bonchester died in prison.† Another in the parish of Abbotrule was taken by Meldrum and had to pay £40 Scots. “ At another time five nolt were taken from him by Graden, and his house spoiled by the dragoons. Also from a neighbour of his in the same parish were taken two nolt, and both sent to wandering beside.”†

Wodrow makes a mistake in asserting that Baptie was minister of Abbotrule.‡ The name of the curate of the neighbouring parish of Southdean at that time was

* Wodrow, MSS. folio., Vol. XL. No. 20.

§ Register of Secret Council, Decreta.

† Wodrow, MSS. 8vo., XXIX.

‡ History, II., 341.

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Baptie.‡ The state of feeling in Southdean is known from the fact that Baptie in 1676 complained of a riot committed upon his person, and had letters issued from the Privy Council against the persons concerned. We have no particulars about the riot; but if any person, working in the fields, had called out "Devil servant" to the curate passing along the road, or some expressions like those used at Cavers, they would have been regarded as rioters. The curates of Southdean and Hobkirk, and the other Conformist members of Jedburgh Presbytery, seem to have had no sympathy whatever with the cause of freedom, but rather to have been admirers of the means used to put down conventicles and persecute the Covenanters. This can be proved from their own statements with regard to the subject, made a short time after the conventicles which we have described were held. In October, 1684, Courts were held at Jedburgh by Lords Balcarres, Drummelzier, and Yester "to try delinquents, such as withdrawers from divine worship, all irregular baptizers of their children, since the Act of Indemnity, or resettlers of rebels and traitors." If delinquents continued obstinate, the Lords were to "tender to them the oath of allegiance, together with the bond, and if they refused to subscribe the oath they were to be banished to His Majesty's plantations," &c. We find the names of a great many in Tevotdale and other parts of the Borders who were required to appear before these Courts. Wives were summoned for resetting their husbands. Such as were obstinate or contumacious and would not take the test abjuring the Covenant, were banished to the plantations or otherwise punished. Ministers were cited to appear and give lists of those guilty of "church disorders" in their parishes. On October 8, 1684, the absence of Thomas Liddell, minister of Hobkirk, was excused on a letter being read from him "bearing that he had broken his leg and was therefore unable to travel." He had, however, sent up lists of such irregular persons as were in his parish, subscribed with his own hand. "The elders of the parish being present deponed."

At the afternoon diet on 10th October, 1684, the ministers of the Presbytery of Jedburgh desired access to the Lords in the same Court. It is quite evident that these

‡ Scott's "Fasti," II., 513,

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men came on this occasion voluntarily, and to express their own opinions on the objects for which the Courts were held. Their spokesman is called "Mr William Galbraith, parson of Jedburgh," and the minutes assert that "he in name of the rest of the brethren very sincerely expressed their duty and loyalty to His Majesty, and the great sense they have of his Royal protection and gracious care for all those of their function, and desired to give their testimony of the prudent methods their Lordships have made use of for suppressing all disorder and discovering persons guilty of crimes, and that the same have proved very effectual, which was a great encouragement to them in the discharge of their duty, and for which they gave their humble thanks with profession of their stedfast resolution to continue in their duty as becomes; and hereby witness His Majesty's goodness to them and by supplicating Almighty God for all happiness to him, and that He may bless their Lordships for their concern in the well-being of the country and of punishing all crimes conform to the laws of this kingdom."* Such were the words used by the curates of Jedburgh Presbytery regarding the breaking up of conventicles like those held at Abbotrule, and the persecution of men and women for simply worshipping God as their consciences dictated. Others brought complaints against the wicked Meldrum; but the curates followed no such courses. The spirit of these words might come from men seeking to act as "lords over God's heritage;" but most certainly not from Him who said—"Put up again thy sword into his place; for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword."†

* The above quotations and facts are found in Minutes of the Court in Edinburgh Register House.

† In the list of fugitives contained in Wodrow (Vol. IV.) appear the following from Rulewater :—Archd. Shiel in Mac-side, John Shiel in Gatehousecote, Adam Rutherford in Bonchesterside, Walter Shiel in Abbotrule, Robert Scot, son to John Scot in Weins, George Scot, son to Thos. Scot in Bonchester, . . . Turnbull, son to Adam Turnbull in Hawthornside and three brothers George, Robert and James Young in Bedrule.

The following were banished to the Isles of America, Carolina, Jersey and "Gemeco":—James Oliver from the parish of Hobkirk, James Young and James Hobkirk from "Bether Roull" parish. In the parish of Hobkirk, James Bolstowne banished and sent away by sea and suffered shipwreck. Wodrow, MSS. 8vo., Vol. XXIX.

CHAPTER XV.

GILBERT ELLIOT AND WILLIAM VEITCH.

THE Elliots of Minto have produced statesmen, lawyers, soldiers, and poets, who have made the family name well known throughout Britain: they also produced one whose sufferings for the Covenanting cause bring them no little lustre. On the wall of the dining-room of Minto house hangs a painting of Gilbert Elliot, who became not the first Earl, but the first Lord Minto. The painting presents this Elliot, not as he appeared in the trying times of persecution, but many years afterwards, when he was enjoying prosperity as a judge of the Edinburgh Court of Session. Though the features are not exactly what some might expect in one who had to seek shelter among the hills to save his life; yet they are in many respects striking. The first sight of the painting gives you the idea of a personage of great decision and strength of character. The bold, open eye confirms Wodrow when he says that Gilbert Elliot was noted for "unshaken probity, integrity, and boldness against all unrighteousness and vice."*

The Elliots of Minto are a branch from the family of Elliots at Stobs. Gilbert Elliot of Minto was born in 1651. He was a son of Gavin Elliot, laird and miller of Midlem Mill, on the water of Ale, who was the third son of Gilbert Elliot, proprietor of Stobs.† With his grandmother, the Lady Stobs, our subject, Gilbert Elliot, passed much of his childhood. From references made to her character by John Livingstone of Ancrum and the sufferings she underwent for absenting herself from the curates' church, we are warranted to conclude that Lady Stobs was in hearty sympathy with the Covenant. Her maiden name was Margaret Scott.‡ She was a daughter of Walter Scott of Harden, called "Auld Wat;" and her mother was the "Flower of Yarrow." When Margaret

* Vol. IV., 232.

† "Life and Letters of Sir Gilbert Elliot." By the Countess of Minto, Vol. I., p. 5, 6.

‡ p. 3.

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Scott left Harden as the bride of the laird of Stobs, the people were living in a semi-savage state. The kind of nest at Harden out of which she came, can be inferred when it is stated that her dowry consisted of "half a Michaelmas moon." One clear moonlight night her father, at the head of his men, set out from Harden, rode very likely into England, stole as many cattle as he could drive away, left half of their number at Stobs, and told his daughter Maggie that this was all the portion she would ever get from him. Her brother, young Scott of Harden, while engaged in a similar foray by night in Tweeddale was taken prisoner. Next morning he was shown a gallows, and a lady called "Muckle mou'd Meg," and summarily told to choose between them. After considerable hesitation he decided to decline the gallows, and went back to Harden with a wife instead of booty. Into the midst of such people Presbyterian ministers were sent to labour; and under their preaching a remarkable change soon took place. No more marauding parties issued from Stobs or Harden to steal property from their fellow-men. There is reason to believe that Margaret Scott, daughter of Auld Wat of Harden, underwent the change called conversion. The great evangelical preacher, John Livingstone of Ancrum, was a frequent visitor at Stobs, and was on friendly terms with the Elliots. Lady Stobs is described by him as a "well affected" person,* and her house is mentioned as one of the places where he was oft refreshed by religious exercises. A new interest is given to Stobs when we know that its old house, occupying a more elevated site than the present castle, and with a beautiful view of the Border hills, had sometimes within its walls the great preacher of the kirk of Shotts, leading its inmates in prayer to God's mercy throne. How changed had Stobs become since Auld Wat left "half a Michaelmas moon" for his daughter's dowry! When the persecution began the devotion of Lady Elliot to principle can be known from the fact that she was severely fined for refusing to cross the door of the curate's church. We can understand, therefore, how well she was fitted to exercise an influence

* "Life and Letters of Sir G. Elliot," p. 7.

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on young Gilbert Elliot similar to that which Lois exercised on Timothy.

An aunt whom he frequently met, no doubt also exercised a very considerable influence in forming his character. In the parish of Minto is a place called Craigend, which was then the possession of Gilbert Elliot, second son of Stobs, and uncle of our subject.* Mrs Elliot of Craigend was in the habit of going to Ancrum to hear the preaching of Livingstone. It is highly probable that she was another who came out from the world and took a decided stand on the side of Christ. In one of his letters from Rotterdam to the parishioners of Ancrum, Livingstone requests that it be read to Mrs Elliot.† When the persecution began not a few who had previously made a loud profession abjured their principles. The names of persons in farms and cottages near Minto Rocks are still to be seen in their own handwriting on paper presented to them by the persecutors, containing a renunciation of the Covenant. The name of Mrs Elliot of Craigend is found on no such paper; but it is found in the list of those who were heavily fined for non-conformity.‡ She thus appears to have been a lady who considered that religion was not only to be confessed in days of prosperity; but to be owned and suffered for in days of persecution. Little is known about Gilbert Elliot's own father and mother; but we know that he spent much of his time with his grandmother, Lady Stobs, and frequently met Mrs Elliot of Craigend. The influence they exerted on his youthful mind could not fail to be beneficial.

In early life he also met John Livingstone, and it is known that this preacher had great influence in drawing the young to consider religion favourably. This influence will be manifest when we consider what Livingstone did for another young man whose fortunes helped greatly to shape and determine the life of Gilbert Elliot. In the neighbourhood of Selkirk, at a place called Greenhead, lived a family named Ker, intimately related to the Elliots of Stobs.§ Sir Andrew Ker, the chief of this

* "Life and Letters of Sir G. Elliot," p. 7, note.

† Wodrow's S.B., Vol. I., 254.

‡ Wodrow, MSS. 8vo., Vol. XXIX. List of fines imposed by the Laird of Graden.

§ "Life and Letters of Sir G. Elliot," Vol. I., p. 8.

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family, was not only an unflinching Covenanter, but possessed a reputation for piety not unlike that of Hedley Vicars in recent times. Soon after the Restoration he fell under the displeasure of the persecutors, was torn away from his house at Greenhead, and imprisoned in Edinburgh. One of his fellow-prisoners was Pringle of Greenknow, who makes the following reference to the imprisonment:—"On the 26th of September, 1660, I was imprisoned in Edinburgh Castle with Sir Andrew Ker of Greenhead, with whom I had very sweet fellowship for fifteen days. My imprisonment with him was one of the sweetest times I have yet had; for both of us were led forth to rejoice in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, and were most willing through His grace and strength to forsake all for Him. The Lord our God keep us ever in the same mind." We can understand how great an influence would be wielded for good on the Borders, when, among the upper classes, were found men who not only so fearlessly took their stand on the side of religion, but also knew how to draw from it such blessed peace in their sufferings. The Kers of Greenhead esteemed principle of so great importance that for its sake they took joyfully the spoiling of their goods. Sir A. Ker was imprisoned and fined thousands of pounds.* In 1684 the Lady Greenhead, for carrying her beliefs into practice and refusing to attend the ministrations of the Episcopal curate, was fined £16,000. On 16th October, 1684, another William Ker, called uncle of the laird of Greenhead, was summoned to appear before a Court held at Jedburgh for withdrawing from the parish church. When put to the test he refused to take the oath of allegiance, and was thereupon compelled to pay a fine of £100 sterling and find caution to appear when called before the Privy Council of Edinburgh under penalty of 5000 merks. Those Kers, who esteemed principle so much more highly than pounds, were intimately related to the Elliots; and their house was one to which young Gilbert Elliot was frequently brought.

At this time a tutor was instructing the young members of the Greenhead family, named William Veitch. He was the son of a Lanarkshire minister, and had finished

* "Memoirs of Veitch," p. 19.

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his Arts' course at Glasgow University. William Veitch and Gilbert Elliot became closely attached to each other, and they continued to be intimate friends to the end of their lives. When he came to the Borders, William Veitch had no intention whatever of studying for the ministry, but wished to devote himself to medicine. At Greenhead, however, John Livingstone was a frequent visitor. The two young men heard him engaging in religious exercises in the house, and listened to his cheerful conversation. These visits of Livingstone had such an effect on William Veitch that he abandoned altogether his intention of becoming a doctor, and devoted himself, heart and soul, to the ministry of the Covenanting Church. In coming to such a decision he must have been guided by something entirely different from worldly motives; for at the time there was no prospect whatever of a stipend or comfortable means of living. Charles II. had just ascended the throne, and was devising means to drive Presbyterian ministers in hundreds from their manse and their churches. From his vow to be a Presbyterian minister, formed at such a time, Veitch never flinched.

Gilbert Elliot left the Borders to devote himself to the profession of the law in Edinburgh; while William Veitch left Greenhead to become a preacher. A full record of his life would make a large and interesting volume. Only the most striking events and those connecting him with the Borders and Gilbert Elliot can be considered here. In 1663 he went to Calder, in Morayshire, to be chaplain to Sir Hugh Campbell; but after thirteen months he was forced to leave by a law forbidding any to be thus employed who had not a licence from a bishop. He returned to Lanark, where his father resided, after being ejected from his church. In November, 1664, Marion Fairlie became his wife, though she had many suitors, and was strongly dissuaded from casting in her lot with one who had the dark prospects which lay before every consistent Covenanting minister.

They had lived together only two years when sore trials began. William Veitch took part in the rising which ended so disastrously at Rullion Green. In the course of this he performed some most daring work and had several very narrow escapes, which are described in his *Memoirs*. He got back to a shepherd's house about a

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mile from his dwelling of Westhills of Dunsyre, and sent his horse to his own stable; but before he could return to his home he was exposed to great danger. On the Friday after the battle, taking his servant along with him, he had gone to settle an account with his landlord, when suddenly he came upon troopers searching for himself and another. His servant was so frightened that he ran back; but Veitch, who wore a shepherd's dress, fearing that flight might bring suspicion on himself, went boldly to a green where some country men were holding the enemies' horses, and said to one of them:—"What think ye of this night, Hughie; will it snow?" Hughie, who knew him well, replied:—"Willie, take two of these horses and lead." He took hold of the bridles, held the horses, while the riders were searching his landlord's house, and another party was searching his own for himself. When they mounted he showed them all deference, held the stirrups, took off his greasy bonnet, and kept it under his arm.

He determined to seek shelter in England, and next day his wife was sent along with a trusty servant to the house of Mr Fleming, minister of Stobo, whither he himself followed, and arrived at midnight. He took her up behind him on horseback, rode to Glenvetches before day, the next night to Torwoodlee, and thence to his brother's house at Westruther. The day following he was shown a Government proclamation ordering the immediate apprehension of all who had been engaged in the rebellion. His own name was in the list. At night he fled from his brother's house; but as his wife was not in a condition to accompany him, he left her there and got safely to Newcastle. The fatigue and exposure he endured brought on a dangerous illness; but on his recovery he returned, at considerable risk, to see his wife, who had gone back from Westruther to her own family. He advised her to remove to Edinburgh, as she was being subjected to great annoyance from troopers searching the house in which she was living.

After another narrow escape he got safely again to Newcastle, and thence he went to London, where he frequently preached, but his main sphere of labour was Reedsdale. He had been licensed to preach before leaving Scotland, and it is probable that he was ordained

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secretly about this time by some ministers, one of whom was Henry Erskine.

In 1671 he took his wife and two sons in creels from Edinburgh to a moorish and retired part of the parish of Rothbury, in Northumberland, called Falalies. He held religious services at Falalies, but also attended to farming to get bread for himself and his family. He had, however, scarcely settled when the Romanists, who abounded in the district, stirred up persecution, which obliged him to go further up the country, where he got a residence at Harnam Hall from the Babington family, who shewed him considerable kindness. He remained here for at least four years; and large numbers resorted to his meetings.

Early in the summer of 1676 he attended a meeting of field preachers and their friends, held at Hume, in Berwickshire, at a very serious crisis. In April of this year the Duke of Lauderdale got an Act, made applicable to the whole kingdom, making heritors liable to severe fining "in case any conventicles be held on the ground of their lands or in houses belonging to them."* The preachers met for conference at Hume soon after this Act became law: they were exceedingly downcast, and some thought that the holding of field meetings would now be impossible. When Veitch was asked his opinion, he declared that since Lauderdale was the author of so malicious an Act, their best reply would be to set up conventicles in his bounds. The bold and humorous proposal at once dispelled despondency and filled the meeting with a hopeful spirit. Every one liked it; but when the question rose, "Who would bell the cat," or hold the first meeting "in Lauderdale's bounds," no preacher residing in Scotland would undertake the work. On being importuned to do it himself, Veitch replied:—"Well, gentlemen, if you be so unanimous and forward for the thing, seeing I proposed it, upon the condition ye will keep it up as far as possible, I will venture to set it up Sabbath next at the Blue Cairn in Lauder moor; and you may warn them, if you please, from Dan to Beersheba to be there." In an elevated part of Roxburghshire, between the Gala and the Leader, there is a farm called Blue Cairn. Near the present farmhouse there is a large hollow, with sloping

* "Veitch's Memoir," p. 120.

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heights in front and on either side, where thousands could be easily accommodated, entirely concealed from the view of any one not quite near, and where they could also hear a preacher not speaking loudly, for the place possesses excellent acoustic properties. Access could be had to the spot from different directions, without attracting much attention. In it is a well with clear refreshing water, still called the "Covenanters' Well." To this hollow, tradition asserts that Veitch made his way the very next Sabbath. As he ascended the rising ground he had a view of a most charming Border district; but, when he entered the place, suddenly he saw a sight which must have more deeply stirred his heart than the scenery around; for there, crowded in the hollow and on the green slopes, were more than four thousand men and women gathered to hear him, from the vales of the Leader and the Gala, from Tweeddale and Teviotdale. The windows of heaven were opened, and blessings from God fell on their hearts that day; a great impulse was given to Covenanting work; and other conventicles were soon held in the Merse and Teviotdale. Rather than see this meeting go down, Mr Veitch offered to come back again from England; "which he frequently did."

How often conventicles were held at Blue Cairn is not recorded; but after "several years," at the earnest request of Covenanters in the east part of the Merse, it was transferred to Fogo Moor. Veitch was again the preacher, the audience was large, and blessing fell. It was found, however, that Blue Cairn was a safer and more convenient place for a conventicle than Fogo Moor; for the first one held there was also the last. At night-fall, before the preacher could be far away, horsemen and footmen came to the district and searched for him all night. They thought it was needless to enter the house of old Lady Pringle of Stitchell and passed it by; but it was the place where Veitch found refuge.

Lauderdale was an angry man when he heard how many meetings had been held on his own grounds. A heavy bill was in fact due by him under the Act framed by himself. He was eager to know what minister dared to begin the meetings; and, on being told by Sir Alexander Don that the minister was William Veitch, he exclaimed—"My own relation! I'll think upon him."

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After Major Babington's death, the new proprietor refused to continue Veitch as his tenant, and he had to remove to Stanton Hall, in Longhorsely parish.* His work in this place was not carried on without danger. He had many wonderful escapes, but one night he was roused from sleep by soldiers, apprehended, and carried away to Morpeth gaol.† When Charles II. heard of Veitch's apprehension, he ordered him to be sent from England to Edinburgh, "to be proceeded against, with the utmost severity of law." The prisoner had to pay the expenses of his journey. When he entered Scotland he was delivered to a troop of Airly's horse, who conveyed him to the Edinburgh Tolbooth, where he got an apartment more comfortable than he expected, through the efforts of unknown friends in high positions.

On 22nd February, 1679, he was brought before a committee of the Privy Council, presided over by Archbishop Sharp. He was remanded; and a letter came soon after from the King, commanding him to appear before the Criminal Court in order that the sentence of death pronounced on him after the battle at the Pentlands, might be intimated to him and carried into effect as soon as possible. Veitch, being now in extreme peril, wrote to his relation, the Duke of Lauderdale, asking him to intercede in his behalf; but, though this personage at times showed that he was not without generosity, he knew that the King was so bent upon securing the prisoner's death that any intercession from him then would be utterly useless. Few of Veitch's other friends at this time had any hope of ever seeing him released from the impending danger. The King's Government in Scotland would do nothing for him. The lords of the Criminal Court did not like to put a man to death on the ground of a sentence passed against him in his absence thirteen years before; but the tyrant forced them often to do work they loathed. There was now only one human source from which Veitch himself could venture to draw any hope. He requested Gilbert Elliot, whom he met at Greenhead, and who was now a writer in Edinburgh, to become his agent, go to London and do all he could to influence the King in his behalf.

* "Memoir," p. 66.

† 71.

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This work was likely to be attended with considerable risk, but Elliot undertook it heartily; for he was bound to Veitch by close ties of friendship. It would take long to tell all the means he tried, and how unweariedly he persevered in London. He so represented the case to the Whig statesman, Lord Shaftesbury, that he became very deeply interested in Veitch's favour, being convinced that he was proceeded against illegally. This nobleman spoke to Prince Rupert and the Duke of Monmouth, and persuaded them to unite with himself and other peers in signing a petition to the King requesting that this prisoner be brought back to England to be tried there. The Duchess of Monmouth was Anne Scott, Duchess of Buccleuch. We do not know if Gilbert Elliot persuaded her to speak to her husband in behalf of the Border preacher, but he certainly became so interested that he supported the prayer of the petition before the King. Most peremptorily did Charles refuse to give any heed to it, remarking that he wondered Veitch was not already executed, that he deserved more than one death. When Monmouth personally interceded for his release, he gruffly replied—"I have written with mine own hand to execute him, and what I have written, I have written." When the request of the King's son was so rudely refused, whose efforts could be expected to succeed?

Instead, however, of relinquishing the work he undertook, Gilbert Elliot, with Shaftesbury's consent, adopted a very bold course in the interests of his friend. He took copies of the petition signed by Shaftesbury, Monmouth, Rupert, and other peers, containing testimonies that Veitch had lived thirteen years peaceably in England; but had been dragged away to Scotland to be tried for old alleged crimes. Few men at that time would have ventured publicly to charge Royalty with acting unjustly; but Gilbert Elliot one day took his stand at the door of the English Parliament and delivered to the members, as they were assembling, copies of the petition, containing virtually a charge of this kind. A great sensation was immediately produced. It appeared to those who read the petition that one, entitled to the privileges of an English subject, was being deprived of his rights. The Lords, under the influence of Shaftesbury, declared that, if they found the facts as represented, they would pass "an order

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for his remanding" when they sat down in their Council Chamber. One of the Tory members hastened to the King, described the feeling which had risen, and very plainly declared that the King could only prevent an immediate Parliamentary inquiry by giving him authority to announce that he had sent an "express for Scotland to stop all procedure against the criminal." To this the King, no doubt most reluctantly, gave his consent. Had he not done so, proceedings would have ensued in the English Parliament which might have proved not only unpleasant but dangerous to himself.

The "express" arrived in Edinburgh in time to save Veitch from having sentence of death intimated to him. He was, however, still kept close in prison, and events thereafter happened which led him to apprehend that if ever he came out it would only be to mount the scaffold. It was believed that Archbishop Sharp wished his death, and when he was killed at Magus Moor a rumour rose and came to Veitch's ears that he would be "sacrificed to his ghost." About one o'clock one morning in the month of June he was wakened from sleep in prison by the galloping of a horse on the street and the loud sounding of a horn. On leaning over the window he heard a messenger telling the sentry who guarded the lodging of the Major-General of the Forces, that the Covenanters had that day beaten Claverhouse at Drumclog, killed his horse, were on their way to Glasgow, and that reinforcements were urgently needed. Not long afterwards word came to him that strife had broken out in the Covenanting army, and he sent out a letter, "sewed within the sole of a woman's shoe," entreating them to accept any reasonable terms from Monmouth. Then his spirits sank when he heard that all was lost, and that hundreds of Covenanting prisoners had been brought to Edinburgh.

Monmouth, who was now in Scotland, prepared a list of ministers, in which he included Veitch, to be recommended to the Scotch Privy Council for liberation from prison. No sooner was the list read than Bishop Paterson strongly opposed the release of Veitch, and a majority voted that his name be excluded. Monmouth was so incensed that he rose from the Council table, threatened that he would post to London, and that his first work there would be to plead personally before the King for

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Veitch's liberation. Veitch, knowing, no doubt, how Monmouth had been treated in making a similar attempt on a former occasion, had no hope that he would succeed; but the belief that he would gain his request from the King instigated Lauderdale to take a step to which he could never before be moved. Certain high officials, before Monmouth came to Scotland, informed Lauderdale that the law would not justify the taking of Veitch's life, and that the King should be advised to alter the sentence of death into one of banishment. Lauderdale refused to do this, alleging that the King was hotly bent on his execution, "stirred thereto by the Duke of York, and he by the priests in Northumberland," and that he must have "some weeks for cooling." A spy, however, whom Lauderdale's jealousy employed to watch all Monmouth's movements in Scotland, sent him information of the threat he uttered at the Council table, and then he hesitated no longer, but said, "On my conscience we will do it, and Monmouth shall not have the honour and credit of it. We'll send for the lords instantly and tell the King a new story that will make him do it." A sentence releasing Veitch from prison, but banishing him from Scotland, was signed by the King and Lauderdale, and delivered to Gilbert Elliot, who despatched it at once to Edinburgh. On 25th July, 1679, Veitch came out of the prison, where he had been closely confined for six months under dread of death.

Mr and Mrs Veitch, now involved in heavy debt, returned to Stantonhall, three miles from Morpeth, in the following August. Friends in the district rejoiced; but the attitude of his enemies was so threatening that Veitch withdrew for a time. When he resumed preaching, he chose, as his sphere of labour, a part of the English Borders, westward from Stantonhall. At Keilderhead, Wheelcauseway, and other places he often preached; and great crowds listened to him on the lonely moors at Deadwater. Most blessed changes were wrought on the people. Robberies and fighting, formerly fearfully common, became almost unknown in some places, under the power that accompanied the Gospel proclaimed by him and other banished ministers from Scotland. "Some of the gentry on both sides of the Borders . . . were forced to see and say that the Gospel has done that which their most severe execution of the laws could never accomplish.

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Strother, who commanded the persecuting forces in the north of England, informed the Scotch Council that the notorious William Veitch was hiding somewhere about Carter Fell. Orders were at once sent to Meldrum and Lord Lothian, who commanded the Teviotdale Militia, to march into England, join their forces with those of Strother, and make a great effort to capture the field preacher. They came accordingly in great numbers to the Carter hill, and closely searched the neighbourhood. He heard the baying of their dogs, the galloping of their horses, and even looked out frequently on them without ever being observed. His hiding place was a hut among the rocks, so covered with turf and heather that it could not be distinguished from the ground. This refuge was placed at his disposal by Thomas Steel, chamberlain of Jedburgh forest, who constructed it for himself when he was persecuted for his religion. For some time Veitch remained in this retreat; and his servant, Sanders Stevenson, climbed the hill every night with "milk, bread, and cheese." On one occasion he was accompanied by Thomas Steel, who consulted with Veitch as to how they should ascertain if Argyle had landed and what had happened. A trusty messenger was despatched to Scotland, who soon returned with a full account of the disaster which had befallen the expedition. A few days afterwards they heard that a similar fate had come upon Monmouth in England. Though Veitch knew that suspected persons were closely watched, he became so anxious to see his family that he left Carter Fell; and at length, after incurring great risks, succeeded in joining them in Newcastle, where they were then residing. After many ups and downs, in which he was doubtless cheered by the firm persuasion of his noble wife "that she would see Presbytery established and her husband a settled minister in the Church of Scotland ere she died,"* the imminent peril under which he had lived so long was removed by King James' Act of Toleration.

Soon he received and accepted a very hearty invitation to be their minister from the Non-conformists of Beverley, in Yorkshire. On week-days he went up to the Wolds, preached in large barns, and got great companies to travel

* "Memoirs," 169.

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from these districts to his Sabbath services. A great reformation took place. The Popish party opposed him, but a stately meeting-house was erected, his family joined him, and he never had greater satisfaction in any ministerial work than at this time. At the end of six or seven months he accepted an urgent call to return to Scotland, though very strongly pressed to remain in Beverley. On his way back he was persuaded to preach for a short time at Darntoun, where so great blessing fell that he was only drawn away by being reminded of his promise to return to his native land. When he came to Darntoun the Non-conformist congregation numbered eighty hearers, and could not give a minister more than £10 a year; when he left, after two months' work, their numbers were 400 or 500, who gave his successor £60 a year and built a new meeting-house.

The invitation to return to Scotland came from the people in the parishes of Hownam, Eckford, Oxnam, Morebattle, and places adjacent, and was subscribed at Whitton on 2nd November, 1687, by more than seventy masters of families. He entered upon this new sphere in April, 1688. On week-days he preached at different times in the different parishes; but the meeting-house was at Whittonhall, near Morebattle. There Veitch was supported, not by the State, but by the voluntary contributions of his hearers, who came not only from the above-named places, but also from the parts on the other side of the Border, where he had preached in the days of persecution. With the exception of the followers of James Renwick, who would take no toleration from a Popish King, and continued to worship God on moor and mountain, the other Covenanters generally gave up their services in the open air and repaired to the meeting-houses tolerated by James outside the parish churches. The Privy Council Register* bears evidence that there was one at Jedburgh before the Revolution; and the minutes of Jedburgh Presbytery lead us to infer that there was a meeting-house at Hawick as early as August, 1687. At Whittonhall Veitch had to be circumspect, for proceedings might have been instituted against him on account of his connection with Argyle. The attendance, however, at his

* 19th September, 1689.

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church increased, and very considerable success followed his work. He was little more than six months in Teviotdale when Scotland's heart was gladdened by the news that William of Orange had landed at Torbay. Soon thereafter the outed Covenanting ministers assembled in Edinburgh; and William Veitch was asked to preach at one of their first public meetings, when he had a house crowded with all classes. He prayed for William and Mary, though James was still Scotland's acknowledged King, and spoke so boldly against the Prelates that they sent a messenger next day to intimidate him; but he brought back from Veitch the bold reply—"Put on your spurs."

Except at Smailholm, there seems to have been no "rabbling" of the curates on the Borders, but the people generally disliked those men, forsook their churches whenever the government was changed, and eagerly sought the ministrations of Covenanting preachers. Veitch's ministrations were in great request. "For a time he had to dispense ordinances to a whole country side."* One of his most interesting services at this period was at the church of Lauder, which he was appointed by the Privy Council to preach vacant. Lauder is not far from the scene of his field meetings at Blue Cairn, and when the report spread that he was coming, a vast concourse of people gathered from all quarters. On his arrival he found the doors and windows securely fastened with nails, by orders of Lady Lauderdale, to prevent his entrance; and her influence in the district was still so strong that no magistrate could be got to open them. In this emergency some of his old hearers at Blue Cairn told him that if he said the word the doors would soon be open. It is not recorded how the work was done; but soon Lauder parish church was crowded in every part. We can imagine the feelings of the people as they contrasted their circumstances with those of the days when they worshipped God on the green slopes of Blue Cairn under the blue canopy of heaven.

Veitch was attacked in a publication called *Scottish Presbyterian Eloquence Displayed*, issued soon after the Revolution by a member of the Prelatical party, which

* Supplement to "Memoirs," p. 194.

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bears plain marks of foul-mouthed calumny; though some modern writers have evidently perused its filthy pages more carefully than the writings of the Covenanters. There is a reference in it to a religious service held by Veitch at Jedburgh, which is evidently a gross caricature. At any rate, there was a considerable amount of competition for his services. He declined calls to Crailing and Melrose; but accepted one to Peebles, an interesting account of which is given by his wife. He was settled there in 1690, and laboured for four years; but, through the opposition of the Duke of Queensberry, the legal stipend was withheld. He became minister of Dumfries in 1694, and engaged in active work till 1715. His death took place in May, 1722, on the day after his wife's decease, and the two, who had been so often divided in life, were buried together on the same day in the old church of Dumfries, having been married fifty-eight years.

After the failure of Argyle's invasion, Gilbert Elliot escaped to Holland; but in 1687 remission of his sentence was asked and granted by the King "in consideration of the sufferings of his father, Gavin Elliot, for the Royalist cause during the reign of Charles I."* In November of the same year he appeared personally before Edinburgh officials, and made application to be admitted as an advocate. They, however, at first shrank in fear from speaking to him, lest converse with such a man might be considered a crime on their part, and would hold no intercourse with him till he shewed his remission.† After the Revolution in 1688 the tide of his affairs entirely turned; for men then came into power who remembered and rewarded the services he rendered to Veitch and Argyle in the days of persecution. He was at once appointed to the well-paid office of Clerk of the Privy Council, and had his name enshrined along with those of immortal Scotch worthies in the Act of Parliament rescinding fines and forfeitures. In 1692 he was made a knight, and a baronet in 1700. The name, Sir Gilbert Elliot, became well known, and highly honoured, throughout Scotland; not

* "Life and Letters of Sir G. Elliot," pages 5 and 13.

† V. note by McCrie, p. 99.

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only on account of his character and abilities as a lawyer, but also on account of his past connection with the Covenantee cause. He had extensive practice as an advocate, and in a few years acquired Minto; for this estate came into the possession of the Elliots not by inheritance, but by purchase.* The money which purchased it was made by Gilbert Elliot in the positions he obtained after the dethronement of James. The "sunbright hills" and fertile fields of Minto were thus in a manner the reward for noble work done in behalf of a persecuted minister of Christ. Well might the Countess of Minto affirm that his courage and ability in seeking the release of William Veitch drew notice to him, which "laid the foundation of his future fortunes."†

In 1703 Sir Gilbert Elliot was elected to represent Roxburghshire in the Scottish Parliament, which considered the question of Union with England. There seems to have been keen opposition to the abolition of the National Legislature throughout the Borders. Jedburgh's representative, Walter Scott, voted against the main articles, and Selkirk's representative, Robert Scott, voted against nearly every article. Roxburghshire had four representatives, three of whom were for Union; but the fourth, Sir Gilbert Elliot, voted against the principal articles. It is evident that, though not opposed to a Union, he was strongly opposed to the abolition of the Scottish Legislature. The first Elliot of Minto contended for the right of Scotland to make her laws and manage her own affairs by a home Parliament. In 1705 Sir Gilbert Elliot was elevated to the Bench in the Court of Session, and took the title of Lord Minto. He thus lived to dispense justice in the place where he himself was sentenced to death. Sometimes he visited Dumfries, of which town Veitch was minister, to hold Circuit Courts; and on these occasions always spent some time most pleasantly with his old friend. It is said that when his lordship entered the manse and sat down beside the minister in his room, he was wont to look at him and say, "Ah! Willie, Willie;

* "Veitch's History and Poetry of the Scottish Border," p. 459 (Glasgow, 1878.)

† p. 9.

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had it no been for me, the pyets had been pyking your pate on the Nether Bow Port;" to which Veitch replied, "Ah! Gibbie, Gibbie; had it no been for me, ye would ha'e been yet writing papers for a plack the page."*

* See McCrie's note, p. 9

CHAPTER XVI.

THE COVENANTERS OF KELSO AND HOWNAM.

AT the Restoration of Charles II. the ministers in the Presbytery of Kelso all proved faithless to their principles with the exception of Robert Boyd of Linton, John Somerwel of Ednam, and Samuel Row of Sprouston, who, on account of non-conformity, were expelled from their churches and manses and endured sufferings more or less severe. There were, however, men in that district, who showed such loyalty to the cause of Christ's Crown and Covenant that their names are well entitled to notice. The Earl of Mar, who was stationed at Alnwick with a troop of horse and five of dragoons, on one occasion got orders to march to Kelso and seize Frank Pringle of Rowiston, bailie of Kelso, John Brown, and James Handiside, for nothing else but absenting themselves from the services of the curates in the parish church. George Hume of Graden and Andrew Young of Cavertoun seem also to have been most consistent Covenanters; for their names are found by the side of the foremost adherents to the Covenant in the Borders. All of them were eagerly pursued; and, in their absence, on the 10th of January, 1681, were declared outlaws and their goods and gear forfeited to His Majesty's use. John Ffala, who lived in the town of Kelso, was taken prisoner at the fair of Whitsom, and lay for a long time in prison. In January, 1681, he was brought before the Justiciary Court in Edinburgh, and charged with taking part in an attack on the Tower of Hawick, with opposing the Royal forces at Bewly, and with being at Drumclog and Bothwell Bridge. He defended himself by proving an *alibi*, which was sustained, and he was set at liberty. Three years afterwards, along with Adam Tait, in Kelso, he appeared before a Justiciary Court held at Jedburgh, and the charges brought against them were resetting of rebels and being at field conventicles. Tait and Ffala both refused to take the oath of allegiance. No witnesses were brought against them. They were both sentenced to be trans-

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ported to the plantations on the 16th October, 1684. Kelso thus had men who, rather than trample principle under foot, would submit to be torn away from their homes and transported to the West Indies to be sold as slaves. It is believed that John Ffala died in prison;* but what Adam Tait's fate was I have not succeeded in finding out. Kelso had women as well as men who were prepared to endure severe trial rather than prove untrue to their religion. A widow, named Mrs Mein, once appeared before a Court at Jedburgh, and the only charge brought against her was refusing to attend the church as established by the Stuarts. Otherwise she lived a most blameless and consistent life. For nothing else but being two years absent from church, Agnes Mein had to pay a fine of £156 Scots.

Three men from the Kelso district took part in the fight at Bothwell, and were made prisoners at the close. These were William Hardie from the town of Kelso, and Walter Waddel and Thomas Cairns from Sprouston. In all likelihood they fought under their fellow-Borderer, Henry Hall of Haughhead, whose part in the Covenanting struggle is so well known.

That place on the banks of the Kale was a rendezvous for Covenanters, and many conventicles were held in its vicinity. A Communion, at which Archibald Riddell officiated, along with others, was once celebrated in Eckford parish, when thousands were present. It is not known where this took place; but most probably the spot was Haughhead. The author once saw Haughhead under the weird light of a foggy November afternoon near sunset. It is a beautiful spot, and it is pleasant to walk along the green banks of the little stream that flows through the secluded dale; pleasant it is to look on the old trees and on the caves in the rocks, where, according to tradition, Covenanting sufferers once found shelter; but it is pleasanter far to send the memory wandering back to the thrilling scenes that again and again were enacted there two hundred years ago. If there is any spot in all Teviotdale deserving to be often visited and to be kept sacred in the right sense it is Haughhead; and that not merely because in the old ruined house there lived

* Wodrow, IV. 177.

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one of Scotland's noblest sons, a man who gave up his life fighting for the liberties we to-day enjoy; but because Christ, God's Son, again and again manifested Himself powerfully to the hundreds and thousands who sometimes assembled, at the risk of their lives, to worship Him on these green haughs.

Haughhead is not the only place in the valley of the Kale with Covenanting memories worthy of being cherished. The call to William Veitch, which was subscribed at Whitton in 1687 by more than seventy masters of families, shows that the people of the district were widely permeated by Covenanting principles; and the little village of Hownam may well be proud of the part one of her sons played in those testing times.

Hownam, originally Hownham, is understood to be composed of two words *ham* and *owen*, signifying dwelling-place of Owen, who was some noted personage in the district during the twelfth century. The village occupies an exceedingly pleasant situation among the Cheviots, where two streams, the Kale and the Capehope, unite their waters, which are fed by numerous streamlets, abounding with trout and flowing through quiet pastoral glens. The part of the parish towards the English border consists of a series of hills, possessing springs of clearest water and dells of great beauty. The place bears evidences that in former days it was more numerously peopled than at present. Amongst the hardy Borderers who inhabited this parish the Covenanting spirit was strong. Hector Rae, whose name in his own handwriting can still be seen on the Cavers Covenant, was minister from 1609 to 1639. Though his successor conformed to Episcopacy, Covenanting preaching was eagerly sought by the parishioners. Very seldom do we read of generosity manifested by the persecutors of the Covenanters; but an act of kindness, by one of the most notorious of them, brought a preacher to Hownam who seems to have been a power for good, Mr John Owens, an English Puritan clergyman, was ejected* from his charge at Stannerton; and, for afterwards preaching in a private house, was severely fined and imprisoned at Newcastle. After enduring great harshness he was only discharged on payment of money by his friends.

* In 1662.

The Covenanters of Kelso and Hownam.

The Duke of Lauderdale, under the influence of what motives we do not know, "made him kind offers of a settlement at Hownam in Scotland, which he at first refused, but afterwards accepted, through the persuasion of Rutherford's son-in-law."* Though Owens, after the Revolution, became minister of Hownam, it is likely that at first he obtained some private refuge in the parish. His Puritan spirit no doubt pressed him to his loved work of preaching. Tait, in *Border Church Life*,† writes, regarding Owens in Hownam:—"In some quiet corner of the parish he found a refuge from his English persecutors. Probably he taught the children of shepherds and other hillmen, or held little conventicles in quiet nooks, never disturbed by the dragoons of Claverhouse and Dalziel. . . . Doubtless the impression made by his life and work in that sequestered region had its share in educating the people for the coming Secession, of which the centre was at Gateshaw Brae."

There is no doubt that considerable numbers of the parishioners of Hownam absented themselves from the ministrations of intruded clergymen, sought the Bread of Life at conventicles, and thus brought frequent visits to their quiet glens from dragoons under Meldrum and other leaders. I quote only some particulars regarding sufferings in Hownam from a paper sent to the historian Wodrow, and written by one who got the account from some of the sufferers:—

‡ "From one in the parish of Hownam was taken the summe of 500 merks. His servant paid four rex dollars. Another paid 433lb 12sh ood. From another in that parish was taken 7 nolt with all that he had, and got nothing of them but what he bought back again; and when he had bought them back again they fetcht two kyne that he never got."

"From another was taken three kyne and their followers, one ox, and twenty ewes."

"Another was robbed of three horses. From another was taken two kyne and their followers. . . ."

* Calamy's "Non-conformists' Memorial," III. 80. (See Scott's "Fasti," II., 502.—Ed.)

† p. 30 (Kelso, 1889.)

‡ Wodrow, MSS. XXIX. 8vo.

The Covenanters of Teviotdale.

“One man in the same parish was apprehended and carried to Kelso. They took a horse and two swords and a pair of pistols from him at the same time. Next day they sold his horse at Duncce for 5lb sterling, before ever they let him know what they had against him.” From Duns this Covenanter was taken to Edinburgh at his own expense. “When they came to Edinburgh Meldrum caused take the prisoners into an ale-house and ordered four troopers to wait on them; and what the troopers did drink Meldrum caused the prisoners to pay and for their fire also. Then he was brought before the Counsell and questioned whether he was conformable and did hear the regular clergy. And upon his denial the bond was tendered; and he was carried to the boots and threatened therewith, if he wold not take it. So he denyed the taking of it and was shut up in prison, quhair he lay 7 weeks. And beside his maintenance, which in that place was costly, he was every night for bed and fire 10sh. Scots. . . . The Counsell ordered him to give Meldrum a 1000 merks bond to compeir before him in Teviotdale and give his answer to what he had to lay to his charge. So he was liberat. . . . He lived without molestation till the next summer. Meldrum summoned him on the Sabbath day for the payment of his bond of compearance. . . . He wrote to the Sheriff that what Meldrum did was not according to law.” . . . He was summoned to Edinburgh, and when he desired to appear before a Court and clear himself from false charges of disloyalty and carrying arms with Richard Cameron, whom he never saw, Meldrum pleaded that he might be sent to Teviotdale, where he himself was holding Courts and “causing them pay what he pleased for not going to the church.” After the Covenanter went to his home in Hownam he was dealt with most mercilessly by the persecutor. He took from him more than eleven score sheep, known to be worth much more than the bond of compearance, for the payment of which the non-conformist was being pursued. No doubt he thought he was free from trouble when the persecutors had torn so much from him; but next summer he was seized by Ker of Graden, imprisoned in Jedburgh, “where he lay twenty-two weeks at his own expense.” When brought before the persecutor he was asked to swear that he would answer what questions were put to him, and

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on refusing to do this till he knew what the questions were, he was told that he was not acting according to law, and detained in prison. By a friend this Covenanter was advised to try the power of money on his persecutors, and the offer of one hundred merks not only induced Graden to set him immediately at liberty, but also to give him a discharge for things past. He was not long in his home, however, when Meldrum again seized him. He showed Graden's discharge, but this only irritated Meldrum, who declared it "signified nothing." One and a main charge brought against him was that of carrying arms at Bothwell. He showed, however, that he was lying in Edinburgh prison when the battle of Bothwell was fought; notwithstanding he was dragged from Hownam to Kelso, thence to Duns, thence to Jedburgh, thence to Melrose, and thence to Edinburgh, all at his own expense. On the journey from Melrose Meldrum left the party and ordered an officer, in this man's hearing, to shoot the prisoners at once if any attempt was made to rescue them. He lay in Edinburgh prison for seven weeks, and then the Court of Justiciary set him at liberty; "but he must give bond to answer when called." For simply refusing to conform to Episcopacy and refusing to hear the intruded curates, this man paid 3000 merks, besides spending long time in prison. "They left him not anything when they last carried him to Kelso." The writer of the MS. in which all these facts regarding this sufferer are found asserts—"All this was heard from his own mouth and more than is here inserted."

It would be interesting to have the name of such a sufferer; but no names are given in the MS. In the Record of the Court of Justiciary for January 25, 1681, we find the following:—"William Gledstanes, in Hunnum, prisoner in Canongate Tolbooth, petitions, shewing that he has now lain a long time in prison for no other cause but upon the pretence of being a witness against the rebels in Berwick and Roxburgh, and though he was carried in here to the diet he was never made use of, and seeing the petitioner is prisoner for no other cause, therefore craving the said Lords would be pleased to set him at liberty. They ordain him to be set at liberty on finding caution to appear whenever he shall be cited to appear as a witness against any of the rebels." What the Justiciary

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Court did to William Gledstanes is very similar to what the MS. asserts to have been done to the Covenanter, whose sufferings it records, so that he is likely to be the same person. Often Covenanters were detained on the pretext that they might be got to give evidence against others.

In Hownam there were other sufferers. We have only selected some of those referred to in the Wodrow paper. "John Elliot in Hownam was captured in Northumberland, and banished from his native land to the American plantations"* for nothing else than standing true to the Covenant.

There was another who endured severer sufferings than any in this parish. The piety, consistency, and steadfastness unto death of John Gilry deserve to be reverently cherished, not only in the place to which he belonged, but over Scotland.

He was a wright in Hownam. His name in the Record of the Justiciary Court is given as John Ker, but John Gilry is found in the copies of two letters written by himself, and also in his last testimony.† He took a more advanced position than William Gledstanes, having adopted the opinions of Richard Cameron. In his eyes Charles II. had so acted as to make it impossible for Covenanters any longer to own him as their King. He had, therefore, no hesitation in taking up arms and joining with those who banded together in Teviotdale, marched to Bothwell, and sought to throw off the yoke of tyranny. He says in his last testimony that he dared not sit still, but "goe out to Bothwell." It is likely that he took his place with Walter Turnbull of Bewlie, and formed one of the gallant band who for a time successfully defended the bridge. Others were captured, but he escaped. Regarding his experience on this occasion, he writes:—"The Lord brought me wonderfully through several straits, and not without several manifestations of His love eminently seen in His dealings towards me."‡ We conclude that in and after this battle he had some wonderful escapes. How thankful we should have been if he had described how he got back to the Cheviots. For him there would be no

* Wodrow, MSS. 8vo., Vol. XXIX.

† See Wodrow, IV., 58.

‡ Last Testimony.

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safety for a considerable time in his own house. He must have spent many a night among the hills, and very likely was one of those who sought refuge in the caves on the banks of the Kale at Haughhead. He was captured by Ker of Graden, "robbed of his money, being five dollars; and his mear was taken from him; and himself thrown into prison."† He managed, however, to get away. A second time he fell into their hands, and such precautions were taken that he had a presentiment that a second escape for him would be impossible. Very likely when he was being carried off from Hownam feelings rose in his soul like those expressed in the beautiful lines of Lady John Scott of Spottiswoode:—

"Shall I never see the bonnie banks o' Kale again,
Nor the dark craigs o' Hownam Law,
Nor the green dens o' Chatto, nor Twaeferd's mossly stane,
Nor the birks upon Philogar's shaw?
Nae mair! nae mair!

I shall never see the bounds o' Cheviot mair.

Shall I never watch the breakin' o' the summer day
Ower the shouther o' the Deer buss height,
When the Stainshe! and the Mote and the flowery Bughtrigg brae
Redden slowly wi' the morning light?
Nae mair! nae mair!

I shall never see the bounds o' Cheviot mair." *

After this second capture he was lodged in Edinburgh prison. We have seen copies of two letters written by himself, and one is dated:—"From the eiron hous in the toun ed. December 27, 1683." The name of the friend to whom he writes is not given, and the reason can easily be conceived. He is addressed as "Dear billie." In the lists of the persecuted in the Register House we find the name of "William Gilry, fugitive from Hownam, reset by Euphen Kerr, his mother." It may have been to a brother that John Gilry addressed these letters. In them he expressed earnest wishes to get the right use of suffering. His heart's great anxiety was to get through without offending God, or doing anything to bring reproach on His cause. He writes:—"God has hitherto helped me, I may say to the commendation of His free grace, beyond myself, or as it had not been myself. . . .

†Wodrow, Vol. XXIX. 8vo.

* From "The Bounds o' Cheviot" in "Songs and Verses," Edinburgh 1904.

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A very short time after writing these words John Gilry mounted the scaffold. His anxiety had been to come through without doing anything to bring reproach on the Covenanting cause. He had strength given him to meet the hangman without any faltering; for Wodrow* asserts that "he died in much serenity and peace, adoring free grace and adhering to the truths of Christ and firmly trusting in Him for salvation."†

At his trial Gilry owned the Covenant, but disowned Charles II. as his sovereign, and refused to pray for him. It may surprise some to read of one who was animated by the spirit which breathes in his written papers acting in this fashion; and, in fact, such conduct has often been vigorously denounced. But, in disowning the Stuarts, Gilry only did what England and Scotland were constrained to do little more than four years after his execution. He could not pray, as he was urged, without owning Charles as his King. In his last testimony he wrote:—"I durst not pray that superstitious and set form of prayer. . . . Others may swallow that down; that is a matter of conscience to me." In an eloquent sermon, Dr Charteris, a former minister of Wilton parish, referred as follows to Covenanters like Gilry:—"In the midst of the fiery furnace of persecution men appeared assuming the high character of witnesses for God, and maintaining it in the face of danger and death. Though few in number . . . they lifted up the fallen standard of religious liberty and generously devoted themselves. They would swear no oaths, subscribe no bonds, take no tests, nor yield to any imposition on conscience. They would not pray for the King, because that might be construed as owning a title which, in their judgment, he had forfeited; and they resolved, whatever it might cost, to be ingenuous and open, decisive and unembarrassed, both in word and deed." John Gilry's spirit would no doubt incite him to pray most earnestly for Charles as an individual. George Martin, from Dailly, in Ayrshire, an-

* IV., 58.

† Along with John Gilry was executed James Muir at Cessford-boat. This is *not* Cessford in Morebattle parish. In an Act of Parliament quoted by Wodrow, IV., 491, we find that the proper word is Crossford-boat.

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other tried at the same time and hung on the same afternoon along with Gilry for the very same cause, died "forgiving all persons all the wrongs done to him, and wishing them forgiveness, as he himself desired to be forgiven of God, and entered eternity in much peace and joy."*

* Wodrow, IV., 58.

CHAPTER XVII.

JEAN MOFFAT OF NETHERBARN, MRS FRASER OF ALNESS.

SIR WALTER SCOTT has invested Abbotsford and its lovely neighbourhood with a halo so lustrous that they yearly attract visitors from all parts of the civilized world. Opposite Abbotsford, on the other side of the Tweed, is a farm called Netherbarns, which had the honour of producing a heroine, the knowledge of whose history is fitted to give an added interest to the residence of the Great Minstrel. The life of this noble sufferer is not so well known as it deserves to be. Indeed, many of the facts about to be set down have been obtained from MSS. in the Advocates' Library and the Register House, and other hitherto unpublished sources.

In the lists contained in Wodrow's *History* and the *Cloud of Witnesses* of those banished "for owning Christ supreme Head of His Church" and no other crime, the name of Jean Moffat is found;* but nothing more than her name. She was the daughter of James Moffat, tenant of the farm of Netherbarns, the fields of which slope upward from the Tweed over against Abbotsford.

James Moffat of Netherbarns was a most consistent Covenanter. When Thomas Lowes was expelled from the parish church of Galashiels, after the Restoration, Moffat must have left and never again crossed its doors to hear the intruded clergyman. His daughter, Jean, in all probability was early led by him to attend conventicles, addressed by John Welsh, Blackader, Wilkie, and Lennox. The younger McCrie writes regarding Blackader:—"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."† From the Covenanters' preaching or from her father's teaching and influence, Jean

* "Cloud of Witnesses," p. 531; Wodrow, IV., p. 332.

† "Sketches," Vol. II., 184.

Jean Moffat of Netherbarns.

Moffat felt a power which drew her heart to God. Out on Meigle Potts hill, in the fields at Torwoodlee, or in green spots beside Gala water, she found a Church dis-owned and persecuted by the State, to which nevertheless she felt powerfully attracted, not because she could sit among the wild flowers under the blue canopy of heaven, but because Christ there seemed to own the preaching of His Word and to manifest His presence. Very soon she and other members of the Netherbarns family came under the notice of the persecutors; for the dragoons got the names of all absentees from the curates' church. She was waited upon and threatened, but to no purpose.

Men and women who spent their Sabbath in drinking and gambling got easily off; but there was no mercy for those who sought food for their souls at the Covenanters' meetings.* Jean Moffat was summoned before the Civil Courts, and for merely absenting herself from the Episcopal Church and attending conventicles a heavy fine had to be paid to prevent her imprisonment. On no account would she enter that church, and the process of fining went on until the large sum of 1000 merks was extracted from James Moffat for his daughter's non-conformity.† After fining proved utterly powerless, severer measures were tried to drive this young lady to abandon her principles. For James Moffat and his family, life in their own home became impossible. One day dragoons were seen riding towards Netherbarns, and this time they came on a more merciless errand than before. The house was ransacked as completely as if it had been attacked by lawless brigands. All the goods were carried off, the horses, cattle, and sheep were driven away, the stacks in the barnyard and the corn in the granary were sold. Neither bed nor bread was left. James Moffat at this time escaped; but was outlawed. Some members of his family were seized and carried off to prison,‡ and among them was his daughter Jean. I have been unable to find out what happened to the others; but from that day Jean was separated from her father, and never saw him again

* "Debauching was loyalty, gravity smelled of rebellion," Kirkton, p. 114.—Ed.

† Fraser on Sanctification. Short account of the author, p. VII.

‡ Torwoodlee MS.

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till years of sore suffering had passed away and great changes had taken place. James Moffat remained without a home till the downfall of the Stuart dynasty. In papers in the Register House we find the name of James Moffat of Melrose as a prisoner and a petition describing the "miserable starving condition in which he and others were kept;" "driven from prison to prison," "their means taken from them for alleged irregularities;"* but it is not certain that this was the tenant of Netherbarns. If he were the person, he was only a very short time out of prison when he was again attending conventicles. There is no doubt whatever that his name was given to Lord Tweeddale for attending a conventicle held by James Renwick near the "Gairmoor Well in Day's Forest in Lauderdale" in July, 1686. One of the witnesses examined regarding the conventicle asserted that he saw there "one James Moffat that had been a tenant to Gallowshiels in Netherbarns whom Haining had formerly fined."† Tweeddale, in a report to General Drummond, makes reference to him as "on Moffit let out of prison within thir few days." A lieutenant named Somervall was sent with a party to search for those present at Renwick's meeting, and in his report regarding James Moffat, writes:—"As for James Moffat, it's declared by all yt knows him in the countrie yt he has no settled residence any wher this two or three years bygon."‡

Our object at present, however, is to give a full account regarding the sufferings of his daughter. Jean was torn away from Netherbarns and ultimately lodged in Edinburgh prison. On 18th May, 1685, she and other prisoners for religion, greatly to their surprise, were taken out of their dungeons, and without any intimation or hint of what was intended, were driven to Leith three hours before sunset. More than 200 men and women were put in open boats, and at break of day landed at Burntisland. There they were huddled together in two rooms, utterly insufficient for their accommodation, kept for two days, and not allowed even for a moment to separate from each other. It was evident that the persecutors intended to

* Warrants in Register House, 8th May, 1686.

†,‡ Warrants in Register House, 20th July, 1686. Parcel of papers found regarding this Conventicle and collected.

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subject them to some terrible ordeal of suffering. Nothing was allowed for their subsistence, and a good many of them were not even permitted to purchase bread and water.* While they were in this condition a messenger arrived from Edinburgh, offering to bring back all who would take the oath of allegiance, acknowledging the King's supremacy in things spiritual. In that company were some feeble women. How strong the temptation to regain their liberty and get back to their homes! With the exception of forty, who yielded through their extreme sufferings, they declared that they would face any trial rather than bend their wills to admit that any king could lord over their consciences as regards religion. The paper, written by the messenger Wedderburn, gives their names and how each acted. Among others, Jean Moffat "refused to renounce the Covenant."† Those who refused to yield had their hands tied with cords behind their backs, were committed to the militia of Fife, and driven northward through "the most remote by-ways." Any well-affected persons, who approached to offer or sell them bread, were roughly beaten away.‡ At night the rudest shelter was provided. After being ferried over the Firth of Tay, they were driven through Forfarshire; and at one point on the way were compelled to spend a stormy night on a bridge, with soldiers guarding them at each end. They got their first sight of the place for which they were bound when they saw the imposing and grim castle of Dunnottar on a cliff jutting out into the German Ocean. Some escaped by the way, but 166 Covenanters§ entered this fortress as prisoners. They had been driven like beasts for a week, and were now worn and weak; but their past sufferings were small compared with those awaiting them in that dark prison. There are wooded glens, bold cliffs, and some of the finest scenery in Scotland near Dunnottar, but in those days there were awful dens within its walls. On 24th May, 1685, these Covenanters were thrust, men and women together, into a vault

* Wodrow, IV., 323.

† Warrants in Register House, 20th May, 1685.

‡ Account written by one of the prisoners—John Fraser. Wodrow MSS. quarto, 165.

§ Wodrow says 167, IV. 323.

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where they sank ankle-deep in sand. One of them wrote : —“ We could not sit without pressing and leaning upon one another.* None was allowed to leave that vault, for any purpose whatever. Some died, and their corpses were left among the others to pollute the air. Dunnottar is deserted and ruinous now, but this very vault can still be seen. A visitor is struck by the appearance of apertures all along the walls. The tradition is that when a prisoner displeased his keeper, he was made to stand with his back to the wall; his hands were brought backward over his shoulders, and wedged into these apertures. From some openings being lower than others, it is thought that women, as well as men, were subjected to this torture. After spending two days of awful suffering in this vault, forty of the men were taken out of it and imprisoned in a dungeon underneath. A visitor, on looking round, cannot repress amazement at the very thought of forty men being able to live for a considerable time in such a place. They could scarce get standing room; for it is only fifteen and one-fourth feet by eight and three-fourth feet. There is no window whatever, and the only aperture, communicating with the open air, is level with the floor, and through it flows the water of a little fountain. One of the men imprisoned in this dungeon was named John Fraser, and from a paper written by his hand afterwards, many of the facts stated in this chapter are taken. He says that each prisoner took his turn, in lying flat with his head almost level with the damp ground, to get a breath of fresh air through this opening. In doing this, Fraser contracted dysentery and rheumatism.

The need for giving a short account of this sufferer, before further details are given of the history of Jean Moffat, will afterwards appear. He was a native, not of the Borders, but of the Highlands, being related to the Frasers of Lovat. He had gone, a considerable time before, to London, carried his Covenanting principles with him, and instead of conforming to Episcopacy, attended ordinances held according to the Presbyterian model. John Fraser lived, for six years, a most exemplary life in London, but a time came when the arm of the persecutor was brought heavily down on all meetings which bore

* Fraser's MS. *ut supra*.

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any resemblance to those held by Covenanters. In the latter end of 1684, Fraser attended a meeting, held on a Sabbath, in Foster Lane, near the Guildhall, London. Alexander Shields was the preacher, and most of the hearers were Scotsmen living in the capital. The service had not long begun, when officers of the law entered and dragged away to prison Fraser and all others present whom they could seize. The London authorities fined and dismissed the majority, but determined to apply severer measures to John Fraser and other eleven prisoners. Scotsmen were considered "more than ordinarily seditious and rebellious against the laws." Nothing more than non-conformity to Episcopacy could be charged against these twelve men, yet no fine and no bail would be accepted, and they were all shut up in Newgate prison, "in a common, nasty room, near the vilest malefactors." It was resolved to despatch them all to Scotland to be tried by Scotch law; but this was prevented by the death of Charles II., and they were kept other seven weeks close prisoners in Newgate. They were then marched through London streets, manacled in pairs, and sent by sea to prison in Edinburgh. Shortly afterwards they were taken before the Scotch Privy Council; and, not being compliant enough to abjure their principles, were remanded to prison, where they continued some weeks. When the news of Argyle's landing on the west coast of Scotland spread a panic among the persecutors, all the prisoners for religion were ordered to Dunnottar. This explains Fraser's imprisonment there.

His sufferings in the dark and narrow dungeon so weakened his body that he would have succumbed had not the lady of the Governor of the castle pitied their dreadful condition, and persuaded her husband to remove him and other eleven to a larger room. The women were also removed from the large vault and put into two rooms. These changes, no doubt, brought some relief; but their sufferings still continued very great. Nothing to eat or drink, not even cold water, could they get without money. The brother of the Governor, living at Stonehaven, was the only party, along with the soldiers, who had free access to sell provisions, which were supplied at an extortionate price. One countryman, who came to sell food, was punished with what was called the "wooden mare"

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for gently chiding the soldiers for not giving him admission.

Sickness broke out among the prisoners who continued in the large vault; and their lot became so miserable that twenty-five risked going through the window and down the precipitous rocks at night. They were discovered, as they were passing the washing-house, which was then between the Castlegate and the sea, and fled into the country; but fifteen were captured, beaten, and abused, then laid down on their backs, and matches were kept burning between their fingers till the blackened bones appeared. Some died from the effects. On a petition being presented by the wives of two of the prisoners, the Privy Council sent orders that they should be more leniently treated and get more convenient rooms; but this so incensed the Governor that he meted out great displeasure on those who would not sign a paper in his favour, asserting that they were not at all cruelly used.

It was now the middle of July. For two months Jean Moffat has been imprisoned in dark Dunnottar. What dismal sights has she seen! How haggard and emaciated must have been her appearance! One day in July two nobles entered the prison and made offers to all who would take the test and engage to attend the parish church. How trying the situation of this Border maiden! The constancy of Margaret Wilson, the Solway martyr, has been often described, but Jean Moffat of Netherbarns was also supremely tried. Death by drowning would make any heart shudder, but it was a quick death. To continue much longer in her unhealthy prison meant for Jean a life which was itself a death. But to trample principle under foot was something far more horrible to Jean Moffat, and so she declined to take their test. In the eyes of these noble Covenanting ladies, religion was not a plaything to be patronised a little on Sundays and at charitable society meetings and then cast aside at the call of the giddy world. Rather it was to be owned and carried into practice everywhere, whatever might be the hazard. A firmness, which could not be moved away from principle by the approach of death in the polluted air of Dunnottar, was not the product of fanaticism, but of a faith which brightened up their dungeon with the realised presence of the Saviour.

Jean Moffat of Netherbarns.

Janet Linton, a fellow-prisoner of Jean Moffat, wrote on 17th July, 1685, as follows to her husband from the vault:—"I have had the fever, my body is very weak, but I have been strengthened from my Master. . . . My dear heart, bless the Lord on my behalf that ever it should have pleased such a holy God to look upon such an unworthy sinner as I am, or to have honoured the like of me to suffer any thing for His name's sake, or to bear His cross in a day when there is so few longing to wear his livery; and He has kepted me from denying His name before a godless generation."* We can conceive how the prisoners would be encouraged and strengthened by reading a beautiful letter, secretly conveyed to them, from Alexander Peden. It shews his talents and spirit in an entirely different light from the idea given of them by his "Prophecies," which are not authentic, and by some of his reported sermons, which are evidently incorrect. Peden wrote:—"Christ's fulness is most straitened when it wants a vent. . . . And now when it has come to your door either to sin or suffer, I counsel you to lay your account with suffering, for an outgate coming from any other airt will be prejudicial to your soul's interest. . . . He sends none a warfare on their own charges."†

The Covenanters endured these fearful sufferings for three months, and then the gates of Dunnottar were opened, and they were taken out and driven to Leith. Their number was now reduced to a hundred, twenty of whom were women, and one was Jean Moffat. John Fraser was so infirm that he could only walk with difficulty; yet the wicked Governor of the castle spoke such evil words regarding him to the captain of the escort, that he was not allowed to ride any part of the sixty-six miles, though this was not denied the other prisoners.

After spending some time in the common prison at Leith, they were all called before the Lords of the Privy Council. In the Register House lies the deliverance of the meeting of Council, which seems to have been a special one held in the tolbooth at Leith on 18th August, 1685, and presided over by Athole. The prisoners were asked to take the oath of abjuration, and told that on doing

* Janet Linton's Letter in "Longmuir's Guide to Dunnottar Castle," p. 72.

† Letter in "Treasury of the Scottish Covenant," p. 594.

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this they would be set free, but that a refusal would bring a sentence of banishment from Scotland. There were some, who had hitherto stood firm, on whose minds the fear of banishment across the seas had such an effect that they yielded and renounced the Covenant. Not so Jean Moffat of Netherbarns. All the terrors the persecutors could wield proved utterly powerless to drive her from her principles. She would not take an "outgate" from banishment, by doing what her conscience deemed sin. The Council, in their deliverance, name "John Fraser" and upwards of forty other men, "Jean Moffat" and other eighteen women; and they add, "the said persons having now, in presence of the Council, refused to take or sign the oath of allegiance, and the women aforesaid having altogether refused to own His Majesty's authority, or to take the oath of abjuration, the Lords of His Majesty's Privy Council hereby banish the haill forenamed persons, men and women, . . . to His Majesty's plantations abroad, and discharge them ever to return to this kingdom hereafter without the King or the Council's special licence, under the pain of death to be inflicted on them without mercy . . . order them to be delivered to Mr George Scott of Pitlochie, and by him transported to His Majesty's plantations in East New Jersie . . . order the Bailies of Leith and keeper of the tolbooth to deliver the haill forenamed persons to the said Mr George Scott, when he shall require them, . . . if need be recommends to General Dalziel to allow him such a party of His Majesty's forces as he shall think fit for that effect. . . . And in regard Janet Fumartin, flatly and boldly in face of Council, denied the King to be her lawful sovereign and his authority, the said Lords ordain her to be processed before the justices for her life.

"ATHOLL.

"i. p. d."

Such was the sentence pronounced at Leith by the Privy Council on Jean Moffat. Shortly afterwards she and others were put on board the ship of Pitlochie, and given to him to be used as slaves on a plantation he desired to establish, or sold to others as he chose. Other Covenanting prisoners were sent away on the same ship as well as those from Dunnottar. It is interesting to know what

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were their feelings as they bade farewell to Scotland. We find a letter written on Pitlochrie's ship before it sailed, and dated, "Road of Leith, August 28th, 1685." It asserts, "We are banished for keeping by our Covenants. . . . We leave our testimony to all that was done by His faithful servants, to wit, such as Mr Donald Cargill and Mr Richard Cameron. Mr James Renwick declares his Master's message faithfully * " . . . &c., &c.

Among the signatures to this letter appears that of Jean Moffat.

Horrible sufferings were experienced during the voyage. The meat offered to them stank before they left Leith Roads. Fever broke out, and swept away both crew and prisoners. Often during one day three or four corpses were thrown overboard. While the pestilence raged on deck, the winds and waves raged around and drove the ship out of its course. Some went mad. Scott of Pitlochrie died, as did also his wife, whom Fraser calls a worthy lady, and who was a sister of Lady Douglas of Cavers. It might be thought that the sight of death, working so near, would have awed the hearts of the crew. Alas! no, for evil passions raged so fiercely in their hearts that they threw down great planks among the Covenanters when they saw them engaging in the worship of God. The commander of the ship, who was a ruffian named Hutton, from Newcastle, urged Scott's son-in-law not to steer the ship for New Jersey; but for Jamaica, where slaves were selling at high prices. An arrangement was nearly concluded, by which they were to share the spoils, when a storm arose and upset plans by carrying the ship to New Jersey on 13th December, 1685. They had been seventeen weeks on board, and were in a state so emaciated that one died while they were carrying him ashore. Sixty prisoners who went on board at Leith were found to have gone down to watery graves, and "whose blood," Fraser writes, "will be found on the enemy's skirts, as really as if they had shed it at the Grassmarket."† One who died was the wife of Archibald Riddell, who, after his imprisonment on the Bass Rock, was sent to America

* Wodrow MSS., Vol. XXXIII., folio, 111.

† Fraser's MS. ut supra.

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on Pitlochrie's ship.* Among the few who stepped on the shore of the New World were Jean Moffat and John Fraser. Harsh enough treatment was experienced for some time. They received no kindness from the people they first met, save that "showed for their money." About sixteen miles, however, from the place where they landed was a town, which "had a Gospel minister," and when the people there heard of the Covenanters' sufferings they sent men and horses to convoy them to their own houses, where they were freely and kindly entertained for the winter. In spring they were again thrown into prison by Scott's son-in-law, who pursued them for four years' service as slaves. In a short time, however, the tide of their affairs entirely changed. Men and women, who are steadfast to principle, will not always suffer. The judges of the province, before whom they appeared, on hearing the case set them all free. The Covenanters considered it safest to be at as great a distance as possible from Scott's son-in-law and the notorious Hutton, and therefore made their way to New England, where they had not only freedom to worship God according to conscience, but "were lovingly entertained and employed according to their several stations and capacities."†

John Fraser, who was so severely persecuted in Britain, was found in America to be possessed of such gifts that he was licensed as a preacher of the New England Presbyterian Church. He was settled in the town of Waterbury, in Connecticut, where his ministerial labours proved highly successful. Jean Moffat was not long in New England before she found a happy home at Waterbury. She became Mrs John Fraser, and proved an excellent minister's wife. The two first saw each other when their hands were bound with cords, and when they were sentenced to imprisonment in Dunnottar. They were one in bearing, month after month, reproach for Christ, one in readiness to endure any suffering rather than bend their wills to do what was forbidden by conscience.

After the Revolution in 1688 they returned to Scotland, and Mr Fraser became minister of Glencorse, near Edinburgh. They could now easily and safely com-

* Letter to Francis Gladstone of Whitlaw, by A. Douglas. Wodrow MSS., 4to., 65.

† Fraser's MS.

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municate with Netherbarns, near Galashiels, to which James Moffat had returned, and "where he lived for many years, and left his two sons inheritors of his virtues and possessors of much more wealth than he had been master of before all was taken from him."* Who can rightly describe the first meeting between Jean Moffat and her father in their home beside the Tweed, after being separated for years and enduring such fearful sufferings? How hearty the thanks which must have ascended to the God who brought them safely through wanderings so many and dealings so mysterious!

At the end of the seventeenth century there was a scarcity of ministers who could speak Gaelic; the General Assembly, therefore, sent three or four every year to preach throughout the Highlands, and one generally sent to this work was Mr Fraser. On some of these occasions, the people of Alness, near Dingwall, having heard his preaching, were so pleased that they sent a call to him to become their minister, which was supported by Munro of Fowlis. The call, however, was declined, and so strong was the desire in Glencorse to retain his services that a new church was built. In the course of next year another call was sent from Alness, and on its being declined, appeals were taken to the Superior Courts. Late on the evening preceding the day on which the General Assembly was to consider the case, the inmates of Glencorse manse were wakened by the cry of "fire," and saw flames bursting from the new church, the last seat of which had only a few hours before been finished. Mr Fraser's first exclamation was:—"This will not do, I must use the little remaining Earse I have, it seems, and go and preach Christ in my native country." Mrs Fraser at once acquiesced, and the Assembly agreed to his translation. In 1696 John Fraser and Jean Moffat began work in Alness. Their manse occupied a lovely situation. Instead of the Tweed, the Cromarty Firth was seen, and the Fyrish hills in place of the Eildons. They were now near the friends of Fraser, who was a cadet of the Lovat family, and possessed the estate of Pitcalzean, in the parish of Nigg. His sister was married to a Mr Porteous in Inverness, whose father came to Scotland with Cromwell and remained. Mr Fraser carried in his body the

* Torwoodlee MS. ut supra.

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marks of the terrible sufferings inflicted on him at Dunnottar, but he laboured for fifteen years in Alness with "great fidelity and success."* He died in November 1711. On the wall of Alness parish church a tablet is still visible with a Latin inscription, some parts of which are almost effaced by time and weather; but any one can easily read at the end the two words—"Jeanna Moffat." The tablet was erected by her in memory of her husband and eldest son, and the translation of the inscription is as follows:—"To the memory of Mr John Fraser, buried here, who, after he was driven into exile across the Atlantic ocean, into the West Indies, for Christ's cause and Covenant, returned again to his own country; he earnestly discharged the duties of this church; he roused the careless; *as a* Boanerges he wounded; *as a* Barnabas he consoled; he was *firm as* a brazen wall for the truth delivered to the saints. After he spent fifteen years here with much of the presence of God, he was at length received into the bosom and joy of his Father on the 7th November, 1711. His son, Mr John Fraser, a young man of highest promise, is also buried here, who, after he passed through a philosophical course, under a very distinguished teacher, with the highest applause, at the desire of God removed to heaven on the 9th June, 1712. In her sorrow, Jean Moffat, the beloved wife and now separate partner of the former, but the mother of the latter, has caused this *insignificant* mausoleum to be erected as a memorial of affection."†

John Fraser and Jean Moffat had two sons and one daughter. The eldest son is referred to on the tablet. The daughter, Catherine, married the Rev. John McArthur, minister first of Killearnan and thereafter of Logie Easter, where he died in 1744. After his death she retired to her mother's estate of Pilcalzean, and lived in comfort, having her carriage. She is said to have possessed a masculine disposition.‡

* Fraser on Sanctification, VII.

† The letters on tablet are much decayed. I am indebted for the full inscription given above to Mr Munro, Free Church Minister of Alness.

‡ "She was wont to attend the county meetings at the end of Oct. and of April, and some of the lairds were wild characters, but if any of them ventured on an improper expression in her presence, he was soon made to feel the weight of her arm, as she usually carried with her a long staff." Letter to Mr Stewart from Dr Gustavus Aird of Creich.

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The second son, James, probably named after his maternal grandfather, James Moffat of Netherbarns, gave such good promise when young, that his brother John advised his mother to take good care of his education. It is said that either during his academical or theological studies he became sceptical regarding some doctrines of Christianity, but he "fought his doubts, would not make his judgment blind," and partly through the instrumentality of his sister emerged into a state in which he possessed a well-grounded and undoubting faith. In 1726, in his twenty-sixth year, he became minister of his father's parish, Alness, and exercised a most blessed influence on the people. His preaching made impressions on the young as well as the old. One, named Hugh Ross, who afterwards became a spiritual power in the district, was under his sermons led to Christ in his fifteenth year.* In Kennedy's *Days of the Fathers in Ross-shire*, there is a sketch of James Fraser. He was unequally yoked; but this trial wrought together for his good. He was one of the meekest and gentlest of men, and possessed an intellect of a very high order. Three of his "Sermons on Sacramental Occasions" are in print, regarding which Russell of Kilmarnock† wrote:—"I have been much edified with the perusal of these sermons. My acquaintance with the author is one of the happiest circumstances of my life." Fraser wrote a treatise on the *Scripture Doctrine of Sanctification*, which has such merits that an edition of it has been printed by the Religious Tract Society. The exegetical and theological talents of the author of this book have been greatly admired by several who have carefully studied its contents. The late Dr Robert Macpherson, Professor of Divinity in Aberdeen University, testified that he received the greatest benefit from this work on sanctification, and considered that Fraser's intellect in many respects resembled that of Cicero.‡ There is a painting of Fraser still in existence, and the features of character appearing most prominently on the face are calmness, meekness, and penetrating thoughtfulness

* Letter from Rev. Charles Ross, Tobermory.

† Burns' "Black Russel."—Ed.

‡ This testimony and other particulars regarding John Fraser's family were given by Dr Aird Creich.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE COVENANTERS OF TWEED AND GALA.

THE parish of Melrose is noted for its beautiful landscape, for its old Monastery, which sent out missionaries to evangelise the Borders in the days of Aidan and Cuthbert, for its Abbey, still imposing in its ruins, and for scenes like the Rhymer's Glen associated with ballad and legend. Though not so well known, the associations of Melrose with the Covenanting cause may well add to its fame. During the persecution, after the Restoration of Charles II., the people showed strong attachment to the Covenant, and this, too, in spite of ministers who had not been faithful. Thomas Forrester was ordained in 1627, and the kind of influence he exerted can be judged from the serious charges brought against him at the Glasgow Assembly of 1638. Baillie, in his *Letters*, asserts that this man was charged with avowing that "preaching was no part of God's essential worship, and that all prayers should be read out of books. He made his altar and rails himself, stood within, and reached the elements to those who kneeled without. . . . He used to sit at preaching and prayer, baptize in his own house, made a way through the church for his kine and sheep, made a waggon of the old Communion Table to lead his peats in, held that to make the Sabbath a moral precept was to Judaize . . . caused lead his corn in on it, . . . affirmed our Reformers to have brought more damage to the church in one year than the Pope and his faction had done in a 1000 years."* Baillie adds:—"This monster was justly deposed."

Alexander Scott became minister of Melrose on 16th February, 1640, and died before 23rd August of the same year. He was succeeded by David Fletcher in 1641. Kirkton† asserts that Fletcher was a man of "many pious prefaces, but who never missed an opportunity of

* Baillie, I., 165.

† p. 136.

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embracing this present world." Wodrow calls him a "remarkable worlding." After the Restoration he conformed to Episcopacy, and was raised to the high position of Bishop of Argyle.* Wodrow adds:—"Melrose was a good stipend, and Fletcher continued a while preaching there, and because of his preaching there he boasted of his diligence beyond the rest of his brethren, who, it must be owned, for the most part preached little or none." Kirkton states that after Fletcher became a bishop "he never had almost one day's peace, because of sorrow and sickness."†

There were men and women in Melrose, however, not a few, who were quite ready to endure any amount of suffering before they would follow their minister's example in conforming to Episcopacy, or ever again cross the door of the parish church to hear his or the curate's preaching. From the minutes of Jedburgh Presbytery we find that conventicles were held in Teviotdale as early as 1666. Sir Walter Scott gives the following account of one held near Melrose about the same time:—"I received the following description of such a scene from a lady whose mother had repeatedly been present on such occasions. The meeting was held on the Eildon hills, in the bosom betwixt two of the three conical tops, which form the crest of the mountain. Trusty sentinels were placed on advanced posts all around, so as to command a view of the country below and give the earliest notice of the approach of any unfriendly party. The clergyman occupied an elevated temporary pulpit, with his back to the wind. There were few or no males of any quality or distinction, for such persons could not escape detection, and were liable to ruin from the consequences. But many women of good condition and holding the rank of ladies ventured to attend the forbidden meeting, and were allowed to sit in front of the assembly. Their side saddles were placed on the ground to serve for seats, and their horses were tethered or piqueted, as it is called, in the rear of the congregation. Before the females, and in the interval which divided them from the tent or temporary pulpit, the arms of the men present, pikes, swords, and muskets, were

* History I., 237.

† Page 136.

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regularly piled in such order as is used by soldiers, so that each man might in an instant assume his own weapons."* We owe gratitude to Sir Walter for this description, but had a writer, with the Covenanting sympathies of James Dodds, got information from the daughter of one who was present, we should have had an account of this conventicle which would have immortalised the connection of the Eildon hills with the Covenanters.

Mounted horsemen paid frequent visits to the farms and houses in Melrose parish, and by threats sought to remove the scruples of those who declined to attend the ministrations of Fletcher and the curates. There is a tradition that Claverhouse, once at least, visited this district. In the *Statistical Account*, it is stated:—"Near the village of Newstead the old channel of the river is beautifully marked; and what was formerly a deep pool and perilous eddy, across which Claverhouse is said to have been ferried, is now a fine meadow, but still continues to be called the 'wheel.'" The occasion on which Claverhouse thus crossed the Tweed is said to have been immediately before or after the conventicle held near Galashiels. Very soon afterwards he had to leave the Borders for work in the west of Scotland. On the 1st June, 1679, he was beaten at Drumclog and driven in headlong rout to Glasgow.

The news of this defeat of Claverhouse stirred every Covenanting district in Scotland. New hope entered the hearts of the oppressed, and it was resolved to make a great effort to cast off the persecutors' yoke. Many in the Borders were waiting for an opportunity to throw themselves into such a movement. Men in Teviotdale had been eager to join those who fought at the Pentlands; but could not get forward in time. Parties in different districts now banded together, armed themselves and got ready to march to the help of their brethren in the west. The people of Melrose were deeply moved and yearned to strike a blow for religious freedom. The blue banner of the Covenant was unfurled, and a camp seems to have been formed in the parish. Men, with blue bonnets, plaids, and swords, gathered from the neighbourhood, and

* "Tales of a Grandfather," p. 230 (Edinburgh, 1869.)

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not only heard preaching and sang psalms, but enrolled themselves to be disciplined and prepared for military service. The local leaders were Walter Turnbull of Bewly Hill and Thomas Turnbull of Standhill—two of the bravest and noblest men the Borders ever produced. A small party of these Covenanting soldiers was sent out from Melrose to the south on a certain expedition, very likely to open the way for others to join them from Teviotdale and Liddesdale, but they were met and defeated at Bewly Bog by a more numerous force of Government troops from Selkirk. Seven Covenanters were slain, some died in the fields from wounds received, and others were maimed for life.* Though defeated at Bewly, though they lost ten men who were captured near Gala Water, and knew that fresh forces were being sent against them, the Borderers who took up arms did not become disheartened, but marched in hundreds to the west, where they joined the army of Sir Robert Hamilton. Walter Turnbull of Bewly Hill was the officer who commanded under Hackston at the defence of Bothwell Bridge, and it is likely that men from his own district were placed under him and took part in keeping Monmouth's army at defiance for hours, and only retired when their ammunition failed. We do not know how many from Melrose were present at that battle, but John Young and Andrew Cook were taken prisoners, marched to Greyfriars' churchyard, Edinburgh; and, by all the terribly severe sufferings to which they were there exposed, could not be forced to abjure their principles. They were drowned at the Orkneys, as they were being transported to America to be sold as slaves, and can thus be claimed as Melrose martyrs.

In the Torwoodlee MS., by Pringle, it is stated:—
“ James Mein, feuar in Newstead, and Jo. Mein, his son, were very much objects of the persecutors' rage. James escaped from Bothwell Bridge, but Jo. was taken, and lay a long time in the Greyfriars' with the rest of the prisoners at Edinburgh, from whence he found means to escape; but his father and he were both afterwards seized by Meldrum. His father lay half a year in the prison at Kelso, the son was tossed betwixt Selkirk, Jedburgh, and Edin-

* Wodrow MSS., 8vo., Vol. XXIX.

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burgh prisons for several months, but found means again to escape and fled to England, where he continued till the happy Revolution, after which he served in the army under the late Lord Polwarth, and is now in the magistracy of the burgh of Selkirk. His father lost his lands without recovery for his alleged being at Bothwell Bridge, though he was never processed, and his goods for his wife's non-conformity. There were very many in the regality of Melrose who suffered as well, though not so much as they under the hands of Meldrum and Pringle of Blindlie."

The names of others referred to in Pringle's MS. can be found elsewhere, and deserve mention. Adam Linlithgow in Melrose and Thomas Hallywell in Gattonside could not be forced by all the threats of dragoons to abjure their principles and attend the Episcopal Church. They were also charged with taking part in the rebellion, which just means taking up arms and marching with others to Bothwell Bridge. They had to flee from their homes, were searched for, but could not be found. Regarding these two Melrose men, we find in the Record of the Justiciary Court for 2nd August, 1683, the following:—"Being often called and not compearing for the crimes of treason, rebellion, and reset of rebels and other treasonable crimes, were outlawed, put to the horn, and their movable goods and gear to be escheat and in brought to His Majesty's use for their contempt and disobedience."

In Newtown and neighbourhood several refused to conform to Prelacy and endured sufferings more or less severe. In the Edinburgh Register House, lists are found of names in St Boswells and other parishes sent in by the curates for absenting themselves from ordinances and attending conventicles. I select one in Newtown, in Melrose parish. Not far from the entrance to Melrose churchyard, and near the grave of Sir D. Brewster, there stands an old tombstone with the inscription:—

Here lyes
Nicoll Cochran,
Portioner in Newtoun,
who died January 20, 1708 years.
His age 63, and Isobel Millne his spouse,
who died December 24, 1712.
Her age 69.

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Nicol Cochrane was a baker and lived at Newtown, near the place where the United Free manse is built. One of his descendants still lives in Edinburgh. Nicol was an unflinching Covenanter. He required frequently to leave his house and live outside for safety, because his name had been given to the persecuting dragoons. One night, when sleeping in his own house, he was wakened by the loud neighing of his pony. There was something about the animal's neighing which so startled him that he sprung from his bed. On opening his door he heard a sound by which he was greatly alarmed; for it was a noise made by approaching horses. He knew at once that the dragoons were out, and he suspected that it was to his house they were galloping and for himself they were searching. He hurriedly put on his clothes, unloosed his pony, and sprung upon its bare back, for he had no time to get a saddle. He was quickly carried through the romantic and spacious dell in which Bowden burn flows and borne over the Tweed to a morass on the opposite side, in which he found a hiding place. Meanwhile the dragoons arrived at his house, and with their swords stabbed the bed on which he had so recently been sleeping. On another occasion, when the dragoons paid a visit during the day, he had not time to escape, but hid himself in a thicket near his house, where he could not be discovered. He and many others were in fear of being captured if they spent a night in their own houses, but he never yielded. After the Revolution, Robert Wilson was ordained minister of Melrose, and left behind him an influence so elevating that his memory was gratefully cherished in the parish for generations. According to the Session Records, Nicol Cochrane, his fellow-Covenanter, John Mein of Newstead, and other four were set apart by Mr Wilson to the office of the eldership on December 13th, 1691.

In Eildon village there lived a small farmer named Williamson, who, for non-conformity to Episcopacy, fell under the displeasure of the persecutors. Tradition asserts that he was compelled to forsake his house and find refuge, both during night and day, wherever he could outside. It is said that a thicket on one of the slopes of the Eildon hills afforded him for some time a safe hiding-place. No doubt he often ventured to the summits of

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these hills, and we can conceive his feelings when he looked on Ruberslaw, Langnewton Moor, Lilliesleaf Moor, Meigle Potts, and other places all around where he had often attended conventicles. Hogg, the Ettrick Shepherd, in the *Hunt of the Eildon*, writes:—"Would you see an amphitheatre of *perfect beauty*, where nothing is wanting to enrich the scene, seat yourself at the angle of the Roman camp on the top of the north-east Eildon?" Williamson must have felt that he was safer when seated there than when he was industriously working on his own farm, where his enemies could come on him unawares. One night, when he risked going to his own house, the alarm was raised that the dragoons were approaching. A Bible in any dwelling was always considered good evidence that its possessor was a Covenanter, and specially so if it appeared to have been well used. On that evening Williamson's Bible was lying on the table beside him, and, taking it up, he rushed from his home into the byre, lay down in the stall in front of his cattle, and covered himself and his precious book with straw. One dragoon entered, and turning up the straw with his sword discovered the Covenanter. On receiving a little money, however, he did not apprehend him, but came out uttering such oaths that no other thought it necessary to prosecute the search in the same place. The late Henry Carruthers, long a highly respected elder in St Andrew's Church, Hawick, was directly descended from Williamson. The Bible then used is still in the possession of the Rev. A. Wilson, Congregational Church, Paisley, who is another descendant.

On the 5th of May, 1684, a list of persons who had taken arms on the Covenanting side or who had harboured Covenanters was proclaimed from the market crosses of the principal Scotch burghs and other places. The King's subjects were required not only not to shelter them, but to do their utmost to apprehend them or give information regarding their haunts. If such wished to escape suffering they had at once to leave their homes. In that list we find the following names of persons belonging to Melrose or neighbourhood:—"James Blackie, portioner of Melrose; David Gibson, chapman there; Andrew Clark, merchant in Gattonside; James Mercer, lately in Melrose, now in Yarrow; Andrew Turnbull, farmer at the bridge-

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end of Melrose; Nicol Cochran, in Newton; John Wright, smith in Darnick; Walter Davidson, feuar in Melrose; Patrick Davidson there; Patrick Black, servant to Andrew Tanno there; Thomas Benzie, chapman traveller; Michael Shiel, son to James Shiel in Haugh-head; Robert Mabane, in Newstead; George Moffat, servant to Buckholm; Thomas Symington there; David Martin, in Gattonside; James Forsan, miller in Newstead; John Lauchop, in Melrose; Robert Mercer, in Darnick, for reset; Adam Linlithgow, in Melrose; Thomas Halywell, in Gattonside." In the same list we find "John and Andrew Riddles in Newton for reset, and Andrew Turnbull, feuar there, for reset."

Another influence which helped the Covenanting cause in this district must also be mentioned. Since Dryburgh became the resting-place of the earthly remains of the Great Minstrel, it has been invested with an interest which has every summer drawn many a visitor to its sombre shades. A house once stood quite near, on the banks of the Tweed, which, for some time in Covenanting days, attracted far more visitors than the ruins of the hoary Abbey. It is said that of those who now visit Dryburgh few enquire regarding the house in which Henry Erskine lived. Things were different during the persecution. Some of the Scotch Covenanters only get their right place when they are ranked among the noblest characters ever seen on this world. Henry Erskine was one of their best men. He was more concerned with maintaining a deportment pleasing and consistent before God than with doubtful questions. He was also one of their most successful and powerful preachers. In many respects he was a very attractive personage. By him Thomas Boston was won for Christ. He was settled at Cornhill, near Coldstream, and though in a short time what had been a spiritual waste became under his ministry a fragrant garden of the Lord, he was ejected, without stipend, from his charge, after the Restoration, for simply refusing to put on the yoke of Episcopacy. From his brother he got a shelter in a house near Dryburgh for himself and his family. The site of the place is still marked, though perhaps not so well as is deserving. In one of the Wodrow MSS. in the Advocates' Library, Edinburgh, it is stated that "*great multitudes* resorted from all parts of the country to this

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house." The voice of Erskine, preaching the Gospel, was the attractive power. Many a conventicle was held both outside and inside the building. His preaching was blessed not only for the refreshment of the persecuted; but for the conversion of large numbers in the district around who lived without God. Within this house God often owned those whom the Government harassed. When the family finished supper one night not a piece of bread, nor a handful of meal, nor a copper remained in their dwelling. Next morning when the children were dressed and could get no breakfast they began to cry aloud, and cut their parents' hearts to the quick. Henry Erskine, who was a cheerful, humorous man, had undoubting faith that his God would not forsake him, and bade them listen to a tune on the cithern or guitar till their breakfast was ready. While he was playing, a loud knocking was heard at the door, and when it was opened there stood before them a man asking help to take in a load. "You have surely come to the wrong Erskine's house," they said. He replied, "No, it is to Henry Erskine's house I have been sent." The load was found to contain sufficient to supply their wants.

Henry Erskine's house was within easy access of the parishioners of Melrose. We believe he preached not only at Dryburgh, but sometimes at Blue Cairn, Ruberslaw, and throughout the Border country. What attracted the multitudes was that they found food freely offered by this servant of God, better far than the bread which perisheth. Many gaze with admiration on the masonry and architecture of grand old Dryburgh Abbey, which remains imposing and beautiful after the lapse of centuries. Though no trace of Erskine's labours remains near the house, it will be found that he did work there more lasting than any of the fine buildings. Undoubtedly his preaching was an influence which helped to make Melrose blossom as it did in the persecution. He continued till he was interrupted by dragoons one Sabbath morning at family worship, and was hurried to prison. He was sentenced to be sent to the Bass, but this was changed to banishment from Scotland.

The persecutors seemed to have a strong belief in the power of severe fining to advance Episcopacy. They evidently thought that if they could associate in men's minds

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the profession of Presbyterianism with the loss of large sums of money they could induce them to abandon it and adopt something cheaper and easier. Accordingly soldiers were sent to exact large sums from all who did not attend the Episcopal Church, who were married or got their children baptized by Covenanted preachers, who attended conventicles, or otherwise manifested non-conformity. In Melrose parish this plan was enforced most rigorously. Some no doubt yielded, but there were men and women, not a few, in the district ready to give up their earthly all rather than adopt a religion thus imposed, and who saw principles at stake so precious in their eyes that they were prepared to surrender their lives before compromising them in any way. In a Wodrow* MS. it is asserted that after 1679 Melrose parishioners paid £40,823 Scots to Meldrum and Pringle of Blindlie in fines in preference to conforming to Episcopacy. That sum was exacted during a certain time only, and by two of the persecutors. Riddel of Haining and commanders of regiments encamped at Earlston sometimes engaged in the same work of fining. We have reason to believe that Melrose, for religion's sake, endured spoiling of goods to an amount much larger than £40,823 Scots.

The parish of Galashiels and neighbouring parishes had many loyal Covenanters and associations with the Covenanted cause which are not very well known. Before the Privy Council, Meldrum, the leading agent of the persecutors in the Border district, asserted, in 1680, that "the shire of Selkirk and the country thereabout be notoriously known to be the most disorderly part of the kingdom, and there have been always more conventicles there than in any other shire." Such a statement from such a man is a very important testimony to the strength of Covenanted principles in the district. The connection of Torwoodlee and Blue Cairn with the Covenant has been partly printed. Tradition asserts that on the hill of Meigle Potts, overlooking Galashiels, field meetings were frequently held.

In the summer of 1679 a conventicle was held in the parish, in what place is not now certainly known, though tradition points to a spot in the direction of Clovenfords.

* 8vo, Vol. XXIX.

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The majority of hearers was composed of ladies. The preacher was Thomas Wilkie, then a probationer, but after the Revolution minister of the Canongate, Edinburgh. While the service was proceeding, the tramp of approaching horses was heard, and the dragoons rode up, no doubt with

"oaths and dreadful laughter
and shouts all breathing slaughter."

The ladies of Torwoodlee, Galashiels, and Newton younger, the laird and lady of Ashiestiel, the lady Fernylea, Mrs Jean Hunter, spouse to Mr Pringle, and his daughter, and others were present, and were cited to appear for trial before the Council.* Some, not occupying such high positions, were given over to the tender mercies of the notorious Meldrum. The preacher was captured, carried to Edinburgh, and ordered to be imprisoned on the Bass Rock, but on account of the King's indemnity, after the battle of Bothwell Bridge, the sentence was not carried into effect. The commander of the dragoons who made this bold attack on the ladies of Galashiels was the notorious Claverhouse. Though better known in the west and south-west of Scotland, he visited the Borders also, and a knowledge of the kind of work in which he engaged in the district leads to the conclusion that his true character is drawn by Dr McCrie in the *Review of Tales of My Landlord*, and not by such writers as Scott and Aytoun.†

* Wodrow, III., 61.

† Claverhouse is called the "gallant Graham." Here are some instances of the kind of gallantry shewn by him in the Borders, quoted at p. 303 of Dr McCrie's "Miscellaneous Writings" from MSS. sent to Wodrow. "In the year 1683, the Highland Host, when searching for wanderers, came to a poor man's house in Teviotdale, near Hawick, where they found some prohibited goods, as they called them, for which they rifled the house and took away the man's wife with a child about nine weeks old. And when the poor woman, burdened with her child, was not able to hold foot (keep pace) with them, some of these savages cried to Claverhouse that they could not get her along, he answered and bade them, if she would not gang to put a rope about her neck and trail her." At another time, when they were marching through the hill country of Eskdaille and the Forest, these barbarous Highlanders complained to Claverhouse that they could not get the women and children out of (along) the way and he commanded them to "bind the little ones to the meikle ones and gar them harl them." Is the word "gallant" applicable to a man capable of such work? The really gallant parties in the struggle have never got the justice to which they are entitled.

The Covenanters of Tweed and Gala.

Robert Young and Robert Magill, from the parish of Galashiels, were taken prisoners at Bothwell Bridge, subjected to a severe imprisonment for months in the open air in Greyfriars' Churchyard, and then sentenced to be banished to America and sold as slaves. The ship in which they were forced to sail was wrecked at the Orkney Islands. Robert Magill escaped to land, but Robert Young went down to a watery grave, and can thus be claimed as a Galashiels martyr. In a MS. sent, after the Revolution, to Wodrow, the historian, and giving an account of the sufferings in the district, Pringle of Torwoodlee writes:—"The very looms, the means of their livelihood, were taken from the weavers, such as George Frater, Thomas Wilson, and Adam Paterson in Galashiels. This last had 400 merks taken from him, and all of them obliged to leave the place in a sort of banishment, and with their small families to throw themselves for their subsistence on God's providence and the goodwill of honest people, neither of which ever failed them."

Ashiestiel, romantically overhanging the Tweed, a few miles above Netherbarns, and the "well loved home" of Sir Walter Scott in his "early happy days," has associations with the Covenanters which well deserve to be remembered in immortal verse. John Murray was then proprietor, and had the reputation of being "a gentleman of singular piety." He worshipped God daily with his family, regularly paid all his taxes, and showed himself a most loyal subject of Charles in things civil, but refused to allow any earthly king to lord over his conscience in things religious. For nothing else but refusing to become an Episcopalian and for attending conventicles, he was dragged to prison, and after being kept there for some time was released "upon surety to appear when called."* From prison he came back to Ashiestiel with a spirit in no way broken, but more firmly resolved to act as formerly. Immediately thereafter he was seen at nearly every conventicle within a reasonable distance of his house. Before Sheriff Murray of Philiphaugh he confessed that he had been present at "nine several conventicles since his being before the Council." Attending conventicles was punishable by fining, but Murray, on

* Register of Privy Council, 1680.

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another occasion, confessed that he had been at one held in his own house, and that he entertained the preacher, Thomas Wilkie, all night. Many a time the sound of Covenanting preaching was heard in Ashiestiel. In neighbouring glens and secluded nooks near the Tweed large numbers gathered to worship God, as they thought conscience required, and often the worshippers felt drops from heaven falling upon their souls. Many a visit did the dragoons of Meldrum make to Ashiestiel, and much sore suffering did they inflict. All John Murray's goods were taken to the market cross of Selkirk and there sold, and Pringle adds, "scarcely any manner of outrage being omitted." These sufferings, however, failed entirely to keep him from owning the cause which he believed to be the cause of God. "His house continued to be a sanctuary for good people and Gospel preaching till honest people might show themselves to the world at the happy Revolution."* John Murray was chased from his home and heritage and obliged to seek shelter in Edinburgh; but he carried devotion to principle with him, and brought it unimpaired through the hot persecution.

Near to Ashiestiel there is a farm called Williamhope, in a secluded glen among the hills, which was a favourite haunt of the Great Minstrel. Remains of the old Ettrick Forest are to be seen, and, no doubt, in olden days, the place was often all alive with the sounds of the chase. Through this glen flows a small burn, to which Sir Walter Scott refers as Glenkinnon's rill. In his Introduction to Canto first of the magnificent poem of *Marmion*, composed at Ashiestiel, he thus describes the neighbourhood as it appeared in bleak November:—

"No longer Autumn's glowing red
Upon our Forest hills is shed ;
No more beneath the evening beam
Fair Tweed reflects their purple gleam ;
Away hath passed the heather bell
That bloomed so rich on Needpath Fell ;
Sallow his brow and russet bare
Are now the sister heights of Yair.
The sheep before the pinching heaven
To shelter'd dale and down are driven,
Where yet some faded herbage pines,
And yet a watery sunbeam shines ;

* Torwoodlee MS. in Advocates' Library.

The Covenanters of Tweed and Gala.

In meek despondency they eye
The wither'd sward and wintry sky,
And far beneath their summer hill
Stray sadly by Glenkinnon's rill ;
The shepherd shifts his mantle's fold
And wraps him closer from the cold ;
His dogs no merry circles wheel
But shivering follow at his heel ;
A cowering glance they often cast
As deeper moans the gathering blast."

After the Restoration of Charles II. this glen was visited by men, who sent a colder shiver through some of its inhabitants than any blast by which it was ever swept. The dragoons of Meldrum often rode along Glenkinnon's rill in search of adherents to the Covenant. John Stoddart, who owned Williamhope, was a most upright and inoffensive man, but was long an "eye-sore" to the oppressors for nothing else but his refusal to conform to Episcopacy. He was seized and dragged away from his pleasant home among the Tweeddale hills. Pringle of Torwoodlee writes that "he was tossed from one prison to another for several months to bring him to a compliance with the Episcopal clergy and ensnaring oaths of that time." Stoddart, however, convinced his persecutors that they might imprison him for life, but could not force him to abjure his principles. Then an effort was made to squeeze money from his possession. He was offered and obtained liberty by paying "three years' rent of his estate."

From his prison John Stoddart came back to Williamhope with a spirit firmly resolved to stand by his principles at the risk of even more severe suffering. In 1681, in a complaint brought before the Privy Council by the notorious persecutors, Meldrum, Riddell of Haining, Elliot of Dinlaybyre, Pringle of Blindlie, and Ker of Graden, against Sheriff Murray of Philiphaugh, for hindering them in punishing Covenanters, it is asserted, "Likewise John Stoddart of Williamhope, who was put in prison formerly by Meldrum, and put at liberty by a committee of the Council . . . has constantly since syne kept and frequented conventicles, and has been fined by the said Sheriff for several since that time, . . . said Sheriff does countenance him and the like and personally pleads for them, propounds excuses and frivolous defences on their behalf."

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Though John Stoddart endured severe sufferings, he came safely through the time of persecution,* but his brother William, whom the oppressors supposed to have been at Bothwell Bridge, had a different history. He was befriended by Sheriff Murray,† but Meldrum and his fellows vowed his ruin. He escaped from Williamhope and found his way to wilds among the hills where he could not be captured. The search for him became so keen that he dared not resort to the farm steading or to a single house in the district, and it was dangerous for any one to bring him help. Pringle writes:—"He could find no shelter but amongst the hills from the rage of his enemies, and in such a way of living died at length in the fields." Williamhope can claim William Stoddart as a martyr.

It seems to have been a notorious practice of the persecutors—Meldrum, Pringle of Blindlie, Riddell of Haining, and Ker of Graden—to squeeze as much money as possible yearly out of the pockets of those attending conventicles, and never to call them before Courts as long as payment was made. Pringle of Torwoodlee wrote:—"Patrick Elliot and Thomas Wood, now in Caddonlee, had their share in the common distress, being obliged to pay to Mr Riddell of Haining considerable sums of money, equal to their yearly rents, and to transact or at least to pay yearly the one the sum of £100 Scots, the other the sum of a 100 merks Scots for their liberty to hear preaching where they thought fit." The same persecutor paid frequent visits to the house of James Baptie in Peel,‡ and gave him liberty to attend conventicles as long as he yearly paid to him £100. The Covenanters never could be convinced that the Episcopal Church, in countenancing such men and methods, proved itself to be the Church of Christ.

* In the old churchyard of Yarrow is a tombstone with this inscription—"Here lyes John Stoddart of Williamhope, who died the 15th day of June 1692, of his age 67."

† Register of Privy Council.

‡ On the grounds of Peel, which adjoins Ashiestiel, near the way to Williamhope, there is a rising ground on which Sir W. Scott liked often to sit all alone and which is still called the "Sheriff's Knowe." The place is a charming one to visit on a summer day.

CHAPTER XIX.

SOME COVENANTERS OF THE PRESBYTERY OF SELKIRK.

THE town of Selkirk contributed several names to the list of Covenanting sufferers.* When the persecution began Mr John Shaw was minister. He refused to conform to Episcopacy; and, though not at first expelled from the town, had sufferings more or less severe inflicted on him. From his actions I infer that John Shaw was a faithful Evangelical minister. The number who endured sufferings in Selkirk would lead to the belief that the people had enjoyed the kind of preaching which produces martyrs. Mr Patrick Shaw, son of the minister of Selkirk, early declared himself on the Covenanting side, took up arms, and fought for his country's liberty under Colonel Wallace at the Pentland Hills. He managed to escape capture on that disastrous day, but was obliged to leave his native land and seek refuge in Holland, where he died in a few years; it is said, "to the great grief of all who knew him."

It appears that several men went out with Patrick Shaw to fight for Covenanting principles at the Pentland rising. Francis Beattie, another Selkirk man, "for his alleged appearance at the Pentlands, was fined £240, his house and goods taken from him, himself banished the town, and in banishment he died in a few years. Another Selkirk merchant, for being at the Pentlands, was seized by the town bailies, kept fast in prison until "all he had was squeezed out of him." One work to which the Selkirk bailies of those days seem to have devoted themselves, was compelling all parents to have their children properly baptized by the curate intruded into the parish church. A certain Selkirk weaver, named William Brown, never having entered the parish church after Mr Shaw ceased to preach there, carried his child to a field meeting and had it baptized by an outed Presbyterian minister. His case was at once reported to the magis-

* Many of the facts in this chapter are taken from the Torwoodlee MS.

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trates, whose names were then William Waugh and William Scott, by whom he was at once deprived of all his possessions and thrown into prison. In gaol severe sufferings were inflicted on William Brown to force him to conform to the worship established in the parish church; for some time "he was allowed neither meat to eat nor clothes to lie on, nor his wife to see him." All, however, proved utterly powerless to extort from him any promise that he would in future listen to the curate. William Brown could part with his earthly all, and even life itself, but for no consideration would he part with the peace of his conscience. In the Torwoodlee MS. it is stated that Waugh obliged him to serve him in slavish drudgery the most of the time of the persecution.

"John Wilson," another Selkirk merchant, "was obliged to flee to England, being amerced in much more than he was worth. Robert Nelson, Oakwood; Andrew Ker, tenant there; and Robert Harvie in Broadmeadows, were all fined more than they were worth for their non-conformity, and so were forced to abscond."

Selkirk had also its Covenanting heroine. One, Mrs Mitchelhill, kept her house open to shelter persecuted ministers, and delighted to show kindness to "honest suffering people;" and for nothing else but this she was dragged away from her native town and ultimately lodged in Edinburgh prison. From what is said regarding her, I infer that all the sufferings with which they threatened her utterly failed to force her to abjure her principles. She stood firm when they set before her the prospect of banishment from Scotland to the plantations. God restrained them, however, from carrying their purpose into execution. Somehow or other Mrs Mitchelhill obtained her freedom, even before King James' Toleration, and returned again to her habitation.

Previous to 1679 there lived a merchant in Selkirk named George Dun, ruled by the fear of God both in his house and all his dealings with his fellow-men, fond of his Bible and of the society of lively Christians. Careful watch had been kept over him, as was done over Covenanters generally. At length he was noticed one day walking out the road peacefully in the company of Archibald Riddell, the Covenanting preacher. It was a suspicious circumstance in the eyes of the authorities to be seen

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in the company of Riddell, and George Dun was at once seized and lodged in prison. Probably for the purpose of inflicting severe sufferings on him, he was transferred from prison to prison, and ultimately lodged in the Edinburgh tolbooth, "where he endured a tedious and painful imprisonment." At length he was brought upon trial for his life. The charge preferred against him was his being at Bothwell Bridge. One informer had been got to assert positively that he had seen him there, but when put upon oath in the witness-box he relented and said, "he now believed that might not be the man." Thus George Dun escaped with his life, but "all he had was taken from him to the value of upwards of 3000 merks." He endured suffering rather than prove untrue to principle, and by following this course he ultimately prospered, for he became tenant of Tinnis, on the Yarrow, where, it is said, "he became possessed of double what he lost for the safety and peace of his conscience."

One Covenanting preacher who visited this district was Mr George Johnstone, at one time minister of Newbattle. In a MS. it is stated that Johnstone once preached on the west side of Ruberslaw. He was on one occasion passing through Selkirk, and was entertained by another merchant of the town named Jo. Wigham. Information was lodged against Wigham, and he was apprehended. He had once been gardener to Riddell of Haining, one of the persecutors, nevertheless for his reset of George Johnstone he had "no exemption from the oppression then in force." Haining persecuted most mercilessly some of his own tenants who paid their rents regularly.

When James VII. was proclaimed King, Robert Hogg, another merchant in Selkirk, was overheard by some of the informers saying "that it was illegal to proclaim a Papist for their king, and that he hoped to see a Protestant fill the throne." For showing such interest in the Protestant religion, Robert Hogg was obliged to abscond, and his house and goods, by order of the magistrates, were forfeited.

It does not require a close acquaintanceship with Covenanting times to be aware of the fact that devotion to Covenanting principles was not confined to the more populous centres. Indeed, many of the names which shed bright lustre on the cause came from remote glens and moor-

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lands; and research has shown that Selkirkshire and the adjacent counties had also men and women in sequestered places who cherished high thoughts of what was due to conscience and to God.

In 1684 Circuit Courts were held at Jedburgh, and Covenanters who refused to attend the curates' churches had their names given in and were summoned to appear. The following names were sent in:—Helen Low in Harden, Andrew Clerk in Melsington, and Margaret Bell, his spouse, Thomas Borthwick in Howpasley, and Isobel Laidlaw, spouse to James Borthwick in Howpasley. These were all guilty of withdrawing from the curates' churches and attending field meetings. The dragoons were sent in search of them. I do not know what was done to Helen Low in Harden; but when the dragoons arrived at Melsington they searched in vain for Andrew Clerk and his wife. For nothing else but non-conformity they had to flee from Melsington and hide themselves where best they could.

The history of the Borthwicks of Howpasley is somewhat interesting. The father of Thomas and James Borthwick was called William Borthwick, and he possessed the estate of Raeshaw, at the head of Gala Water. A dispute arose between him and a neighbouring family named Pringle about a march. William Borthwick, it seems, was in the habit of spending his time too much in the tavern. Once when there he was told that James Pringle had used a friend of his very ill. He immediately went to his house, gave him a challenge to fight, and in the combat Pringle was killed. Borthwick fled for his life, and spent some years in the solitudes of Eskdale. When the duel had been forgotten and he had some reason to believe that he would be safe from prosecution, he took the farm of Howpasley. Whether he repented of his wickedness I know not, but his two sons, William and Thomas, seem to have been men of a different stamp. They refused to conform to the Episcopacy established and endowed by Charles II., and were driven forth from Howpasley. Their farm was given to another tenant. All their stock was taken away with the exception of a few sheep which were grazing on the farm of Glendinging, belonging to the Westerhall family. The persecutors, however, scented out the sheep at Glendinging

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and determined, if possible, to become possessed of them. One day they were all driven into a fold and made secure there with the object of being removed at the persecutors' pleasure. When no one was watching, the shepherd allowed them to escape over the dyke. Soon they made their way to the hills, and were thus preserved.* It is almost undoubted that Clerk of Melsington had all his property in like manner taken from him. Others in the district yielded, and familiar names, in well-known farms, could be given of persons who preferred taking the test to enduring such sufferings; but there is reason to believe the Clerks and Borthwicks never yielded.

The Grieves of the farm of Buccleuch, on the Rankleburn, figure honourably in Covenanting annals. James Grieve, for his unflinching adherence to the cause, was summoned to appear before one of the Circuit Courts held at Peebles. We have no account of his trial, but the judges put the same test before him which Jean Moffat refused, and they told him he was shut up to the alternative of taking that test or at once leaving his farm of Buccleuch, lying so pleasantly among the hills, and his earthly all and being banished from the country. We do not know what influences were brought to bear on James Grieve at Peebles; but in an evil moment he yielded and took that hateful test abjuring the Headship of the Lord Jesus Christ over His Church. Melanchthon and the very best of men have fallen into mistakes. Nobility of character often appears eminently in repentance and frank confession of wrong-doing. It is possible that James Grieve might have lived quite comfortably at Buccleuch after subscribing that test; but it is more likely that he went back to his home among the hills with conscience smiting him to the very quick. Days were doubtless spent in bitterest sorrow and in crying to God for forgiveness for what he had done. Secret confession of his fault, however, would not satisfy the tender conscience of James Grieve. There was a small company of Covenanters in the habit of meeting secretly among the glens of Ettrick; and in order to be restored to the membership of this persecuted and despised church he made a humble and public confession of the defection he had fallen into at Peebles.

* From a MS. supplied by Mr A. Hay Borthwick, Ladiesyde, Melrose.

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Just as Peter, after weeping bitterly over the denial of his Lord, so James Grieve after this frank and open repentance had a strength breathed into his heart which made him thenceforth a fearless witness for Christ's Crown and Covenant. Shortly thereafter the solitude of Rankleburn was broken by the tramp of Claverhouse and his dragoons. The place for which they were bound was Buccleuch, and the man for whom they sought was James Grieve. Principle was now, however, far more important in his eyes than all the world could give. He could leave the comforts of his home, could see the persecuting soldiers rifling his house, emptying his byres and stables, gathering his sheep from the hills, driving or taking away all that he had and reducing him to beggary—he could see all that; but on no account whatever could he subscribe again the test he took at Peebles. He suffered loss to the value of 12,000 merks, but he would not trample on principle with all its awful requirements. Very likely he had to live without a home, but unflinching adherence to principle has the promise of the life that now is as well as of that which is to come. After the Revolution he returned to Buccleuch, prospered better than ever he did before, and, it is said, "left his children in possession of much more than he lost." The Torwoodlee MS. adds that "the Nicolls, three or four brothers in Buccleuch, were turned out of all that they possessed, but to save the Duchess of Buccleuch's people in that shire from more particular sufferings, Jo. Scott of Wool, one of her chamberlains, paid at one time to Meldrum 2600 merks."

CHAPTER XX.

THE COVENANTERS OF LANGHOLM AND LIDDESDALE.

WHEN the persecution began the name given to the local Presbytery was not Langholm, but Middleby. It consisted of ten charges. The strength of Covenanting principles in any district, can be estimated by the way in which the ministers acted when they were put to the test by the bonds which the Government sought to impose on them soon after the Restoration of the Monarchy in 1660. Only four of the ministers in the Presbytery of Middleby conformed to Episcopacy, and the other six stood true to the Covenant and endured sufferings more or less severe. A list of Conformists is given in Wodrow's *History*. That writer has made a mistake with reference to one of them, named David Laing, whom he mentions as minister of Gretna. He was really minister of Canonbie. The other three who yielded were Thomas Allan, minister of Wauchope; William Graham, minister of Kirkpatrick-Fleming; and James Craig, minister of Hoddam. We know little more regarding these Conformists save that each one of them during the time of his incumbency regularly lifted his stipend.

The other six ministers of the Presbytery of Middleby stood true to the Covenant, and it is well for us to call to mind what they suffered in consequence. Hugh Scot refused to accept collation from a bishop, and had to give up his stipend and manse at Middleby, to leave his parish and depend on Providence for support. There is little recorded regarding his history, but it is known that he resisted all temptations to trample principle under foot, took no test, accepted no indulgence, and on his death-bed in 1680 could look back on a life spent in consistent adherence to his ordination vows.

Alexander Crawford gave up his manse and stipend at Dornock before he would bend his neck to allow the yoke of Episcopacy to be put on it.

William Bailie had been only two years minister of Annan when the persecution began. It must have been a

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sore trial to any one to forsake a comfortable home in a place so pleasant, but he went out at once, though he knew not how he was to be supported or where he was to get a shelter in the cold, wintry weather.

James Pringle, the minister of Westerkirk, was expelled for the same reasons as the others. Though for years he did not preach in the parish church of Westerkirk, it is almost certain that he often preached to many of his parishioners, who assembled to hear him on the hillsides or in quiet recesses on the banks of the Esk. Unlike many of his brethren, he saw his way to accept from the Government in 1679 what was called an "Indulgence." He, however, only preached a short time in his former pulpit when he was again expelled; and it is thought that the sole reason for this was that he declined to sign a test abjuring the Covenant and the liberties of Christ's Church. Some other good Covenanting preachers as well as he accepted Indulgences, which were given by the Government in order to entrap them and set discord to work mischief in their ranks. The course recommended by Richard Cameron was to take no Indulgence and no money whatever from a Government which refused to own the Church's spiritual independence. This proved itself to be the policy not only most consistent with the Covenant, but also the most wise one. When we see James Pringle choosing rather to abandon manse, stipend, and glebe than take pen in hand to sign the test, we must acknowledge that he stood true to all the vital principles of the Covenant. The word "Pringle" is said to come from *peregrinus*, signifying "pilgrim," and this is indicated on the coat-of-arms of the Pringle family.* James Pringle needed to make two pilgrimages away from the manse of Westerkirk. How far he had to journey we do not know. He was proprietor of Burnfoot, but was not allowed to remain there. He died about five years after his second expulsion.

Langholm has produced eminent merchants, sailors, soldiers, medical and literary men like David Irving, author of *George Buchanan's Life*, of whom it has good reason to be proud. It has, moreover, a connection with a Covenanting minister, the memory of which ought to exer-

* See the Scallop-shells on the escutcheon of Wilton Lodge, Hawick, which formerly belonged to Pringles.

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cise an ennobling influence on the people. When the persecution began, Robert Law was minister of Langholm. For some time he acted as assistant to the preceding clergyman, and was ordained there in 1657. He was not only a pious, but a learned and able man, greatly beloved by his parishioners, and no doubt exercised a good influence among his brethren in the Presbytery. He had been a student under the celebrated David Dickson at Glasgow College, and evidently drank deeply of his spirit. If it were asked what kind of preaching was heard in Langholm, or Staple Gorton as it was called, when Robert Law was minister, it would be a correct description of it to say that he freely and most earnestly offered a Christ to every sinner out of hell, but faithfully announced that a hell was awaiting every sinner who would not come to Christ. There is reason to believe that most blessed effects were accomplished. An Act had been passed by Parliament requiring all ministers who were ordained since 1649 to obtain a presentation from a patron and collation from a bishop. It would have been quite easy for Robert Law to get such a presentation. The bishops would have welcomed him, and would at once have given him what would have entitled him to remain in the manse and draw the stipend of Langholm. On no account whatever would he apply for either presentation or collation. Robert Law was not an extreme man, and would never have been a martyr for a doubtful or unimportant point; but when eternal and immutable principle was concerned he stood firm as a rock. Charles II., when he came to deal with the Scottish Parliament, found that the members could be so managed that they were ready to bend before his will and pass whatever measures he wished. When, however, he came to deal with the Covenanting ministers he soon found that he had come in contact with entirely different men. They were quite willing to pay all his taxes, to give him all his civil dues, and to act as most loyal subjects; but when he intruded into a sphere in which conscience told them that Christ and not he had jurisdiction, they declared they could not obey him. Charles thought that by the application of a little force he could extort obedience from nearly every one of them. He therefore got the Privy Council to decree that, failing obedience, ministers ordained since 1649 would have to

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remove out of their parishes on the first of November. Four hundreds ministers very speedily showed that they would bear whatever sufferings he might inflict before they would obey so vile an edict, and thus they saved Scotland and gained one of the grandest victories that ever was won for our people. Robert Law was one of the four hundred. Many things were at stake. He would have to give up not only future stipend, but the stipend of the past year, for which he had wrought hard, to leave Langholm manse and Langholm parish, and go out and find a subsistence he knew not how; but when he found that all these losses could only be averted by outraging conscience he resolved at once to make the surrender, and he had the undoubting faith that God would go with him. The day came for him to bid farewell to his people and to preach to them his last sermon. That was a most painful day in many a parish in Scotland. In some churches the people sat still and would not leave till they were compelled to do so by the approach of night. What were the feelings of Robert Law when on that day he came out of the old church of Langholm and felt that most likely he would never again preach within its walls? He was at the time thirty-two years of age, and had a wife and family dependent on him for support. It was not the merry month of May, but dark November, when the trees were all bare and the hills brown, still even at that time the view spreading out before him from the door of Langholm old church was a most charming one. Was it regretfully and reluctantly that he separated himself from the beautiful Border hills, the windings of the Esk, and the fair scenes around? Any one could not but feel sorrow at having to leave such a place as Langholm; but regarding Robert Law it is said, "he was not only a learned and a pious man, but also a cheerful sufferer for religion." He was possessed with the spirit which the writer of the epistle to the Hebrews commended when he wrote, "Ye took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring inheritance." His wife, whose name was Marion Meiklejohn, interposed no objection to his leaving his charge for such a cause; for she was like-minded, and "spent much of her time in doing good."

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The course of events at Langholm after Robert Law was thus driven away was not singular. In some parts of the country, after the ministers were expelled, the churches were shut, and there was no preaching and no service on the Sabbaths. One writer says, "In whole counties the Lord's Day was not otherwise known than by the sorrowful remembrance of those blessed enjoyments whereof we are now deprived." Apparently such darkness for a time settled down on Langholm. Nearly two years passed before a curate was settled in the church of Robert Law. Even by some Episcopalians it has been admitted that the preaching of these curates was not fitted to do much good. Finnie, the curate of Dornock, in this district, became a Papist, and was one of those who wrote satirical lampoons on Presbyterian ministers.

Where Robert Law found a home after he was driven out of Langholm I have not yet been able to ascertain. There was one work which no power on earth could induce Robert Law to abandon, and that was preaching Christ's Gospel. Though it has not yet been found out where he lived, there are pages in history and minutes of the Privy Council which tell us of the preaching of Robert Law. We learn that in July, 1674, he had lain for some time in Glasgow prison, and the sole charge brought against him was preaching at conventicles. From Glasgow he was removed to Edinburgh prison. On the 28th July, 1674, he appeared before a Civil Court, and no other charge could be brought against him save preaching in houses, but before he could obtain liberty he had to give bond and caution for 5000 merks to appear when called.* In the Register of the Privy Council we find the following:—"The Lords of His Majesty's Privy Council do hereby authorise the Lord Chancellor to give orders to parties of that troop of horse . . . under his command to pass to such places where field conventicles are to be kept, and to apprehend the persons who shall preach or pray at these field conventicles, as also to apprehend Mr John Welsh, Mr Gabriel Semple. Mr Archibald Riddell;" and among the others mentioned is Mr Robert Law. "To any who shall apprehend Mr John Welsh and Mr Gabriel Semple they shall have for each of them £100 sterling,†

* Wodrow, II., 270.

† Wodrow, II., 234, says £400.—Ed.

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and for each one of the rest 1000 merks; and it is hereby declared that those who shall secure the said persons and their assistants are hereby indemnified of any slaughter that shall happen to be committed in the apprehending of them."

This proclamation was issued twelve years after Robert Law left Langholm. We have every reason to believe that under no sufferings to which he was subjected was he ever induced to take any test or compromise any principle, and that he came untarnished through the long persecution. Any who suffer for principle will not always suffer. The persecuting Stuarts were expelled from the throne of Great Britain, and then the tide of Robert Law's affairs entirely turned. He was restored to his church and manse of Langholm. I have no doubt there was a crowded, even closely packed, church the first day he occupied the pulpit. What changes have taken place since he was last in that church nearly twenty-eight years before on a dark November day! How many faces does he miss which he saw when he preached his farewell sermon? What changes do the people see on the pastor they loved so dearly?

Though he had been so long absent from Langholm church it is probable that he was not so long absent from Langholm parishioners. In all likelihood he often in disguise, but yet at considerable risk to himself, came back to the district, and may even have preached at "Peden's View." It would be a joyful day when the people saw their minister again in the pulpit of Langholm church; and many joyful and also profitable days would doubtless follow; for Robert Law continued in Langholm till he was removed by death in 1702, in his seventy-second year.*

The parish of Ewes, away among the lonely hills, is the only one in the old Presbytery of Middleby not yet noticed. There is some reason to believe that Cuthbert, or St Cuthbert, preached in Ewes; and if any one were now visiting Scotland with the principles which actuated him and with the light he enjoyed, he would find himself far more at home in a Protestant than in a Romish church.

* One of his daughters married Sir John Halliburton.

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John Lithgow or Linlithgow was the name of the parish minister of Ewes when the persecution began. He had been inducted in Ewes in 1646, and therefore did not come under the Edict of the Privy Council, or what is called the "drunken act," which swept the other ministers away from their charges. He was, however, well known to be an honest and sincere Covenanter, who refused to attend meetings of Presbyteries which owned the King's supremacy in things spiritual, and in other ways unmistakably made it known that he would not conform to Episcopacy. Such an one could not fail to fall under the displeasure of the unscrupulous men then in power. In November, 1664, two years after the other ministers were expelled, a messenger from the Civil Courts appeared at the church of Ewes one Lord's Day, met Mr Lithgow on the floor of his church when he was coming from the pulpit after finishing the service, and before two witnesses intimated to him that he was suspended from the function of the ministry, putting into his hands a copy of the Act of Suspension. To him was not granted the privilege of preaching a farewell sermon; for he was forbidden ever again to enter his pulpit. He had been eighteen years minister of Ewes, and it must have been a painful wrench to tear himself away from his pleasant home and happy life among these Border hills. That sentence of suspension would at once have been removed if John Lithgow had but intimated that he renounced the Covenant and accepted Charles II. as supreme both in Church and State. He never for one moment, however, hesitated as to his line of conduct. He was quite ready to renounce not only life in Ewes, but also life on earth before he would trample on principle or do anything forbidden to him by his conscience and his God. Some of the other ministers very likely found it difficult to obtain a shelter for themselves and their families after their expulsion, but he had a property at Reidpath, near the junction of the Leader and the Tweed, and found a home there. Here he found himself near Henry Erskine, the father of Ebenezer and Ralph Erskine, who, after being expelled from his charge at Cornhill, had retired to a house at Dryburgh on the banks of the Tweed. The two ministers were very intimate. John Lithgow preached frequently at conventicles in different parts of Teviotdale and the Merse. It is not

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unlikely that he preached at Blue Cairn, which was not far distant from Reidpath, and also on Ruberslaw. Both Henry Erskine and John Lithgow were frequently in great danger; for a troop of dragoons was stationed for a considerable time at Earlston in their vicinity, who scoured the country in search of field preachers and all known to sympathise with their work. The author has a copy of a letter he found in the library of the University of Edinburgh, dated Earlston, 3rd September, 1678, and signed by John Strachan, in all probability the notorious Captain Strachan, which describes the work in which he was engaged when hunting for Covenanters. John Lithgow did not escape, for he was seized and taken to Edinburgh. He and Henry Erskine appeared on the same day, and very likely together at the very same time.

The following with regard to them is contained in the records of the Privy Council:—

“6th June, 1682.

“Henry Erskine in Dryburgh and Mr John Linlithgow in Reidpath having kept conventicles within the shires of Roxburgh, Selkirk, and the Merse . . . Both parties compeared. The verity of the libel was referred to their oaths, and they, having refused to give their oaths, the Lords held them confessed, and the Council fines ilk ane of them in the sum of five thousand merks, and ordains them to be carried prisoners to the Bass, to remain there till they pay their fines, and to find caution either to forbear the same disorders in time coming or remove themselves furth of the kingdom; ordains them to be carried to the tolbooth to remain there till to-morrow, at which time the said Lords recommend to the General to send them to the Bass by a party.”

On the monument erected to Henry Erskine at Dryburgh Abbey, near the grave of Sir Walter Scott, it is stated that he was imprisoned on the Bass. This is a mistake; for the sentence was not carried into effect. In the Register of the Privy Council is found the following:

“The said two ministers presented a petition to the Council to be allowed to remove furth of the kingdom. They were not able to pay the fines. The Council suspend the executing of the fines imposed, and they finding sufficient caution ilk one of them under the penalty of 5000 merks to depart from the kingdom and not to return

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without His Majesty's or the Lords' special licence, the Council ordains them to be set at liberty that they may provide for their departure furth of the kingdom."

John Lithgow was sentenced to imprisonment on the Bass Rock, and the condition on which that sentence was repealed was that he banish himself from Scotland. Henry Erskine went to England, and it is likely that John Lithgow went to the same country. No doubt he carried on his work of preaching, and succeeded there in winning many to Christ. After the Revolution of 1688 he was restored to his charge at Ewes, and preached again in the church from which he had been expelled. He and Robert Law of Langholm were members of the same Assembly, and in 1694 he retired from Ewes and spent his remaining days on his estate at Reidpath.

There are some who maintain that the Covenanting spirit was not strong in the Border district. That is so far disproved by the fact that a majority of the ministers in the Presbytery of which Langholm formed a part, abandoned their position and emoluments rather than remain in connection with a church which was forced by the State to abjure the Covenant and conform to Episcopacy. The Covenanting spirit was also strong among the people. The contour of the district would make the work of dragoons pursuing fugitives to be attended with considerable difficulties. Very likely on this account fewer were seized than in other places. Still, there were men and women in the district who were fined, imprisoned, and made to endure other sufferings for their religion. I examined MSS. in the Register House; and, when engaged in that work, found I had not time to transcribe the names of those in the different districts on whom the persecutors inflicted sufferings. These papers are documents written by the officials of the Government. Among them are minutes of Courts held at Jedburgh for trying absentees from the church established by Charles, and "irregular baptizers of children," as they are called, who were simply parents who had their children baptized by non-conformist ministers. There is a minute which states that "Delinquents in the parishes of Westerkirk, Staple Gorton, and others were cited to appear." Two of those delinquents are thus referred to:—"Allison Buckle, spouse to Thomas Vair, a printed fugitive, and Elspeth

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Paterson, spouse to McAlla, another printed fugitive, having compeared, the Lords recommended to Andrew Plumber of Middlestead to remove and dispossess the said persons with their families and not suffer them to stay within his jurisdiction, and committed them prisoners till further orders."

These are two instances. I believe there were others who endured similar sufferings. These two ladies from Langholm were cast into prison, and their families were driven out of their homes for nothing else than worshipping God as their consciences dictated.

Children even were not safe from the cruelty of the persecutors. There must surely have been a sensation in Jedburgh on 17th October, 1684, when the news spread that a girl, under thirteen years of age, was to undergo trial that day before the Lords in Circuit there, and that the sole charge brought against her was absenting herself from the curate's church and listening to Covenanting preachers. Were there any crowds who gathered round the Court door anxious to get a sight of the maiden? How were the persecutors so anxious that she should be taken many miles away from her own home and punished for her religion? It is very likely that Margaret Scott, for that was her name, had become noted for her love of Christ, her love of evangelical preaching, and her thoroughly consistent Christian life. Wherever there were men and women with such characters, the persecutors generally could not rest till they brought them before their Courts. Regarding her it is said:—"Margaret Scott, sister to the laird of Renaldburne, being pursued at the advocate's instance for withdrawing from ordinance, the Lords accepted her brother caution for her orderly behaviour in the future, she being a very young woman not above thirteen years of age."* Renaldburne is in Eskdale, where James Renwick was in the habit of preaching. Tradition asserts that the Scotts of Renaldburne befriended Andrew Hislop, who was a young man living with his mother. Westerraw, a noted persecutor, in ranging through the fields discovered one day a newly-made grave, dug up the body, and found it that of a Covenanter. He traced it to the house of Mrs Hislop, who had simply

* Minute in Register House of Court held at Jedburgh.

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admitted to her home one night one of the suffering wanderers, who, sorely indisposed, died soon afterwards, and was buried by her at night in the fields. The persecutor first spoiled the house, then pulled it down about the widow's ears, and sent her and her family to wander in the moors. Wodrow* tells how Claverhouse came upon her son Andrew in the fields on 10th May, 1685, and took him to Eskdale to Westerraw. Johnstone of Westerraw, notwithstanding the evident reluctance of Claverhouse, passed sentence of death upon Hislop in virtue of powers conferred on him by the Privy Council. It is thought that Claverhouse had remorseful thoughts about the recent murder of John Brown at Priesthill. Yielding, however, to the urgency of Westerraw he ordered the execution. Some Highlanders under his command declined to obey, and the dastardly work was done by three of the other troopers. Youth as he was, Andrew elected to meet his death with open eyes, holding up his Bible and charging his murderers to answer for their deed by it at the great day. There is an old tradition that the martyr's father was a farmer in Wauchope, about two miles from Langholm, and that he had a cousin who was farmer in Tarrasfoot.†

When we pass on to the Covenanters of Castleton and Liddesdale we come to men who also gave up their lives for Christ's Crown and Covenant.‡

The whole Border district was greatly agitated when news spread through the country of the victory gained over Claverhouse at Drumclog. Men resolved to buckle on their swords and strike a blow for freedom. The Covenanters of the Borders banded together, attacked, and captured Hawick Tower, and afterwards marched to Hamilton-muir, near Bothwell. The defence of Bothwell Bridge was one of the bravest deeds in Scottish history. Again and again the noble band who held that position drove back the whole hosts of Monmouth. The officer who commanded there, under the brave Hackston, was Walter Turnbull from Bewly Hill, near Lilliesleaf. Many men from Liddesdale were at Bothwell; and it is highly

* IV., 250.

† Furnished by Mr John Hyslop, J.P., Langholm.

‡ There were other sufferers. Lady Mangerton, *e.g.* was fined hundreds of pounds for her Non-conformity.

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probable that not a few of them helped to defend the bridge under Turnbull. Among those who fought at Bothwell were William Scot, John Pringle, Alexander Waddel and John Innes or Unnes from Castleton, in Liddesdale. They were taken prisoners, stripped almost naked, and treated more like beasts than human beings.

On 24th June, 1200 of these prisoners, including these four men, were huddled into a part of Greyfriars' Churchyard, Edinburgh, and kept there for nearly five months, with no covering but the sky and no couch save the graves on which they stood during the day. Their sufferings pass description: living there for month after month, without sufficient shelter from wind and cold, and allowed a diet that could do little more than keep body and soul together.* When cold November approached, an offer of liberty was made to all who would sign a bond abjuring their principles, and some were tempted to yield. There, at the end of these four months of suffering, were William Scot, John Pringle, Alexander Waddel, and John Innes, with unshorn beards, and rags round their bodies. How sweet to them would it have been to get back to their homes in fair Liddesdale! Yes, but the fire of determination is still lighting up their eyes and unyielding resolution is still depicted on their manly brows. The four heroes at once refused to sign that bond. After all their sufferings, they remained (to adapt the words of Milton)—

“Unshaken, unseduced, untterrified,
Their loyalty they kept, their love, their zeal,
Nor number, nor example with them wrought
To swerve from truth or change their constant mind.”

Along with more than two hundred and forty others who were equally firm, these men, one cold November morning before Edinburgh folks were out of their beds, were driven down to Leith, put on board a ship, and stowed under deck in a hole not sufficient to accommodate a hundred. It were sickening to describe their awful sufferings in that darksome den. Now they are taking into their souls the thought that they are not only torn away from Liddesdale, but banished from Scotland to be sold

* They were allowed, at the approach of winter, to have shingle huts erected over them, which was boasted of as a great mercy. “Chambers's Traditions of Edinburgh,” p. 270.—Ed.

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as slaves in the West Indies. Yet their hearts were upheld, for one who afterwards escaped said:—"Our uneasiness was beyond measure, but the consolations of God overbalanced all." Soon after the vessel sailed it encountered stormy seas. At the Orkney Islands, being in imminent danger, the Covenanters entreated to be taken on shore and put into the nearest prison. Paterson, the captain of the ship, ordered the hatches to be locked and chained down on them. The ship at length struck on the rocks. The ruffian Paterson and his sailors escaped; but they disregarded the cries of the poor Covenanters, and would not open the hatches and give them a chance of saving their lives. Notwithstanding, some of them got out and swam to land; but William Scot, John Pringle, Alexander Waddel, and John Innes, from Liddesdale, all perished in that raging Orcadian sea, which was a less bitter enemy to them than the persecutors who tore them from their Border homes. Do not men deserve to be kept reverently in remembrance who suffered so much to win the liberties we now enjoy? Liddesdale can claim these four men at least as martyrs. If we study the Covenanters rightly, we shall feel an influence rising from them inciting us to earnestly seek for right principles, and even to surrender life itself rather than in any way compromise truth.

CHAPTER XXI.

RINGAN OLIVER OF SMAILCLEUCHFOOT, AND OTHERS FROM JED WATER.

THE particulars of the history of Ringan Oliver, so far as it is known, are obtained not from books or MSS. but from traditions. He lived at Smailcleuchfoot on the banks of Jed Water. Of his early life nothing has been preserved. He is said to have been a man of great bodily strength. The severe, the stern, and even the muscular were prominent in his life; but in all the district where he lived he was known to be a man of unimpeachable integrity of character, one who carried his religion into all his dealings with his fellow-men, and whose whole soul turned with loathing from anything mean or dishonourable. When the persecution began Ringan Oliver had no hesitation whatever regarding the course he should follow. For religion's sake he became a homeless wanderer. He was an intimate friend of Henry Hall, and seems to have accompanied him when he needed to leave Haughhead and find shelter in caves or woods. At Hall's side he fought at Drumclog, and gained the special approbation of the leaders for his bravery on that occasion. After Drumclog he seems to have come back to his native district, and to have assisted in raising troops to swell the numbers who gathered under the flag of Sir Robert Hamilton on the banks of the Clyde. Most likely he was a member of the Covenanting band who with great daring rode to Hawick under the leadership of Turnbull of Standhill to lay siege to the Tower. At Bothwell Bridge he was one of the 300 who, for hour after hour, bore the whole brunt of the battle, and again and again drove back in confusion the thousands by whom they were attacked. On this occasion he was badly wounded, having had his hip dislocated, but was borne to a place of safety by friendly hands. At Inchbonny, near Jedburgh, is still preserved the sword with which Ringan Oliver fought for the cause of liberty at Bothwell, and it is one which Sir Walter Scott often handled and was most anxious to possess, being an exceedingly fine weapon.

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After this disastrous battle, Ringan Oliver became a proscribed fugitive, and dared not visit his pleasant farm on the banks of the Jed. Many a time he was in great danger and reduced to sore straits, but throughout the whole persecution he continued to witness most consistently for the principles of the Covenant, would not accept any test, or make the slightest compromise. He spent much of the time with Henry Hall, of whose company he was exceedingly fond, and to whom afterwards he became related by marriage. A short time before Hall was taken prisoner at Queensferry, Ringan Oliver had parted from him to go to another place on other work; and it was a source of great grief to him ever afterwards that he was not within reach of his friend when he was set upon by the soldiers of Dalziel. More is known regarding the life of Ringan Oliver after the Revolution in 1688. At the battle of Killiecrankie he specially distinguished himself, fighting against the Highlanders under Graham of Claverhouse. He and several friends, after that defeat, kept together and got safely to Dunkeld early next day. They were refreshing themselves in the house of a friend, when, through the windows, they saw a Highlander of great stature, strongly built and fully armed, walking proudly on the streets, and boastfully defying any canting hypocrite or rebellious Whig to come out of the hole where he was hiding and do battle with him. Ringan's friends at once saw his spirit was stirred within him; they entreated him to pay no attention to the braggart; but he cried, "God, do so to me, and more also, if I do not either humble this Philistine or be humbled by him." The words were scarcely spoken, when the window was thrown up and Ringan Oliver was out on the street, with flashing sword in hand. He exposed himself at a fearful disadvantage, being exhausted after the previous day's exertions; while his opponent was fresh and better armed. For some time it appeared doubtful on which side victory would declare itself. At length, however, Ringan Oliver's friends lost hope. They saw him borne to his knees, and his exulting enemy preparing to give the finishing blow. But the watchful Covenanter was calmly waiting his opportunity. The Highlander left part of his body unprotected by his target, and Ringan instantly dealt a blow, which laid him a lifeless corpse at

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his feet. Along with his friends he made his escape southward; but, badly wounded as he was, he was soon back again at Dunkeld, and a member of that brave Cameronian band, who, for hour after hour, bore the attacks of the whole Highland army, five times at least more numerous than themselves, and at length drove them back. Lord Macaulay's description of how the Puritan Cameronians fought at Dunkeld is one of the most thrilling in our annals. Ringan Oliver from Jed Forest was one of the men who took part in that never-to-be-forgotten deed, and who made the hills around Dunkeld echo with the sound of a psalm, ascribing thanks to God for driving back the army which came against them flushed with victory from Killiecrankie.

After the war ended Ringan Oliver returned to his pleasant abode on the Jed Water. There he spent many a happy day greatly respected by every one for his thorough consistency of character. He did not, however, become a member of the church established and endowed in Scotland by William of Orange after the Revolution. It ought to be remembered that there is a church in Scotland older than that church; the church holding the principles so faithfully preached by Richard Cameron. Soon after the Revolution the Cameronians in this part of the Borders built a meeting-house at Denholm, where religious ordinances were supported by the freewill offerings of the people. These Cameronians kept a very high ideal before them, and disdained to receive support from a State that was not covenanted. In all likelihood Ringan Oliver was a member of this Cameronian church at Denholm, and Sabbath after Sabbath listened to preaching within the old meeting-house. At all events, it is known that he continued a Cameronian. On account of his unswerving uprightness, downright honesty, and unbending truthfulness, he became immensely respected in all his neighbourhood. The Marquis of Lothian held him in high esteem, frequently visited him and took his advice about many important matters. Having to be absent for a time in England, the Marquis took Ringan to his castle, showed him a room in which his most valuable papers were deposited, gave him the key, and entrusted the whole keeping to his care. Ringan accepted the trust, but soon found reason to regret doing so. Very soon after the Marquis left, his

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son, who seems to have been a profligate spendthrift, appeared at Ringan's house and demanded the key, but was met by an instant refusal. He plied him with all kinds of promises and threats, but sooner would the Covenanter give up his life than break his plighted word. The key was in safe keeping. The young spendthrift found he might as well try to move the Dunion or Ruberslaw as to move Ringan Oliver from the promise given to his father. After a few years the old Marquis died, and the young scapegrace became lord of Ferniehurst with a heart full of determination to be revenged on Ringan Oliver for refusing to give the key that admitted to the room in which lay his father's valuables. As the story goes, he sought revenge by an exceedingly cruel method. Ringan Oliver carried out his principles so far, that without compulsion, he would not appear before any Civil Court whatever which was not covenanted. The young Marquis knew this well, and he determined to adopt a plan which would bring the arm of the civil power heavily down on the man whom he so intensely hated. All kinds of insults were heaped on him and borne most patiently. At length, one beautiful harvest day, the Marquis, at the head of various retainers, went out to hunt with hounds. The ground he chose was a field of barley fully ripe on the farm of Smailcleughfoot. He was doing what I suppose at that time was illegal even for a landlord, but he knew Ringan Oliver would claim no redress from any Court in Scotland. To see a field of barley overrun with dogs and horses was too much even for a Covenanter to bear, especially a Covenanting farmer. Ringan's spirit was so deeply moved that he boldly appeared before the Marquis and vowed that if he did not desist he would shoot his hounds, but he was only laughed at. The deed, however, followed the word, and soon two of the hounds lay dead. That was all that was wanted. Ringan Oliver was summoned before the Court at Jedburgh for shooting the hounds, but refused to appear. As the story goes, he was besieged in his own house, his servant shot, and himself carried to Edinburgh and imprisoned there for several years. A tradition survives that after his release the Marquis, when driving along a lonely road near Jedburgh, noticed a man approaching, and on being told that it was Ringan Oliver at once exclaimed, "Then I am a dead man." Ringan, however,

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passed on his way silently, and returned no evil for the terrible wrong the Marquis had inflicted on him so wantonly and wickedly. Such was one of the men who drew the sword for civil and religious liberty on the Borders.*

He was not the only one from Jed Water who took part in the struggle and suffered in doing so. William Ronaldson, webster in Jedburgh; William Lamb in Bonjedburgh; and John Hogg, weaver in Bonjedburgh, were outlawed for attending field meetings. The Lady of Timpendean was fined £1405† for refusing to attend the parish church; and for a similar offence George Douglas, laird of Bonjedburgh, was fined £40,500† and imprisoned for three months in Edinburgh.

Three men from the town of Jedburgh—John White, Robert Turnbull, and John Mather—took part in the battle of Bothwell Bridge. The two former were killed,‡ and John Mather was taken prisoner. He was one of the twelve hundred who were barbarously confined in Grayfriars' Churchyard; and one of the smaller band, who, after five months of fearful suffering, chose exile rather than accept liberty on what they believed to be compromising conditions. Their fate has been often described. John Mather, from Jedburgh, was one of those who perished in the raging Orcadian sea.

The parish of Southdean, at the head of Jed Water, famous for its connection with the poet Thomson, had its share in the sufferings of Covenanting times. One of Wodrow's MSS.§ records that James Oliver of Ashtrees, in the parish of Sowdane, who was banished to Jamaica, paid to Meldrum 100 merks, also to Graden 30 rex dollars, also at a Circuit Court in Jedburgh 14 rex dollars, at another time £4 stg.; and that notwithstanding all other losses troopers were quartered on him. Another "componed" with Graden for 20 dollars, but though that persecutor

* In Captain Tancred's valuable book on "Rulewater and its People" (page 267) it is stated that when Ringan was released he was placed under the supervision of the authorities, and was obliged to remain in Edinburgh, and died there in Cross-causeway in 1736, and was buried amongst the martyrs in the churchyard of Old Grayfriars. (Ed.)

† So in Wodrow, IV., 52: The Wodrow, MSS. 8vo, Vol. XXIX., says "Merks." (Ed.)

‡ Wodrow, MSS. 8vo. XXIX.

§ 8vo. XXIX.

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promised to be his "warand," he turned him over into the hands of Meldrum. There were banished belonging to the same parish George Young and Andrew Scot, and also John Sintone, who was taken in Ridsdale. The same document may possibly refer to the latter when it says that in the year 1683, one in the parish of Sowdan, through the persecution of the curates and Circuit Courts, was constrained to wander abroad, and was taken in England and carried to prison in Newcastle, and there confined to perpetual prison according to their law; and his family reduced to straits upon the account of refusing the oath of allegiance; also that his mother and brother-in-law, upon the account of resetting him, were taken and carried to prison and had to pay 15 dollars.

Another was taken in the same parish and cast into prison in Edinburgh by Moraslaw and the rest of the heritors. He was carried before the Council and sentenced to death. The authorities, however, contented themselves with cutting off a piece of his ear. The MS. adds, "by Providence he was spared, and continued in prison the space of about three years."

The "fugitive lists" contain the following names from Jed Water:—Thomas Oliver, son to Jas. Oliver in Ash-trees; Andrew Jardine in Dykeraw; and Andrew Oliver, son to Andrew Oliver in Barnkine.

CHAPTER XXII.

RICHARD CAMERON IN TEVIOTDALE.

BESIDES the field preachers who, from the place of their birth or the frequency of their appearances in Teviotdale, may be regarded as Border field preachers, others of much more than local reputation found their way to the district. Among them was Richard Cameron, who became known as the "Lion of the Covenant." Falkland, in Fife, has the distinction of being his birthplace. The exact date of his birth is not certain, but it seems to have been about 1650. The house in which he was born is still pointed out. Research has, however, furnished very few particulars as to his early days. It appears that at the date of Cameron's birth, and for some time afterwards, his father was an Episcopalian, though he subsequently became a sufferer for the Covenanting cause. In course of time he became filled with the desire, which has animated many a Scotch parent, to give his son a College education. Some years ago title-deeds of his house were discovered; and it was found that he had borrowed £40 on his dwelling in order to give effect to this desire. It has been ascertained that Richard took the degree of M.A. at St Andrews. Thereafter he obtained the post of parish schoolmaster at Falkland, conjoined with which office was that of precentor to the curate in the established church. Field meetings were being held in Fifeshire at this period; and it is probable that Cameron was deeply influenced by them. This could not be winked at by the ecclesiastical authorities; and he lost his appointments at Falkland and had to seek a home elsewhere. According to Professor Herkless in his monograph on Cameron in the *Famous Scots Series*, "nothing is known of his career between his departure from Falkland in 1673 or 1674, and his licence as a preacher in 1678, save the incident of the chaplaincy at Harden and the occasional visits to Edinburgh, referred to in documents among the Wodrow MSS." The following, however, from the minutes of Jedburgh Presbytery, of date September 5th, 1677, admits a little more light into

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this obscure time:—"In obedience to an act of last synod ordaining the presbytery to send in the names of chaplains and schoolmasters within their bounds, they can find only two chaplains, viz., Mr Matthew Selkirk, who has been thir several years bygone and yet is chaplain to the laird of Bonjedward, and Mr Richard Cameron, who is present chaplain to Lady Cavers, relict of Sir William Douglas, and but lately entered since Whitsunday last." This period of service at Cavers seems to have preceded his time of similar work in the house of Sir W. Scott at Harden; for it is said that Cameron, after his break with the Scotts, went southwards. His Cavers connection may have been the means of his introduction to Harden.

Harden House stands on an eminence from which a pleasant view of Border hills and pastures spreads out far and wide. It was a place which had not the best of names in the olden days. When food was needed at Harden the inmates never thought of obtaining it by honest purchase, but a pair of spurs was put on a plate and then the lord of the place sounded his bugle-horn, gathered his retainers, rode over the Borders, collected as many of the fattest cattle as he could see, without asking any one's permission, and drove them as speedily as possible into the secluded glen which the house overlooks. All such habits had been entirely abandoned when Richard Cameron came there to be tutor or chaplain. The noted freebooter, commonly called Wat of Harden, died in 1629; and we have reason to believe that his family came under the influence of Covenanting preachers and were entirely changed. His daughter, Lady Elliot of Stobs, underwent a great spiritual transformation, and endured severe fining rather than desert her principles. John Livingstone of Ancrum was a frequent visitor at Stobs, and no doubt often met members of the Harden family. It is a little difficult to find out whether the lord of Harden, during Cameron's residence, was the son or grandson of the notorious freebooter.* I cannot speak with certainty, as I have not been able to obtain all the information on the subject I could wish. Lady Scott was a daughter of the house of Kilmarnock.†

* Crookshanks (*History II.*, 243) states that in 1683 Sir Walter Scott was nearly seventy years of age—Ed.

† Wodrow, *IV.*, 230.

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How long Richard Cameron lived at Harden we cannot ascertain, but it is undoubted that while there he not only diligently performed the work for which he was engaged, but also devoted his spare hours to the study of Covenanting literature. I believe one book he studied with intense earnestness when living at Harden was Samuel Rutherford's *Lex Rex*. If Cameron studied the books written by Royalists on the subject of the people's rights and the king's power, he would find something entirely different in Rutherford's book, something that would appeal powerfully to his sense of justice and waken up all within him that was noble. One author says that passing from the study of the sycophantic supporters of the claims of the Stuart kings to the study of *Lex Rex* is "like emerging from a charnel-house into the natural light and healthful breezes of heaven." The people's rights, as members of the State, are very clearly expounded in Rutherford's great work. The book, of course, appears in the dress and style which were fashionable at the time, but it contains so clear statements of popular rights and so bold thoughts that the most advanced lovers of freedom in our own day may read it with profit. Here is one principle laid down in *Lex Rex*:—"The power of creating a man a king is from the people." Here is another:—"If the king have not the consent of the people he is an usurper; for we know no external lawful calling that kings have now or their family to the crown, but only the call of the people." How very different are these principles of Rutherford's from the doctrines about the divine right of kings to lord it over their subjects and the duty incumbent on all to take their laws, civil and ecclesiastical, from their monarchs, without any questioning whatever. On many subjects we have advanced far since his time, but the main principles, taught by the Covenanters with respect to the rights of the people, are the principles by which the Government of Britain at the present day is carried on. On certain questions connected with the State they formed a high ideal, no doubt a most glorious ideal, but an ideal which they themselves found it impossible to realise, an ideal, in fact, to which we have never attained, and which will probably never be attained on this earth till the King of the Covenant come in His glory, put an end to the differences which at present exist and cause men to see eye to eye; but it is never-

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theless beyond all doubt that the Covenanters clearly and logically stated, as well as boldly struggled for, the rights of man. Richard Cameron found the study of *Lex Rex* as bracing for his soul as the breezes on Harden's heights were for his body.

There was, however, one question which he revolved again and again in his mind as he walked through Harden Glen or roamed on the hills around; and it was the great question of his life, the right solving of which made him strong to do the great work he accomplished for Scotland. He had abandoned Episcopacy and become fully persuaded in his own mind with regard to Presbytery; but the question came to be, "What was the course of duty Presbyterians ought to follow in the peculiar circumstances of the country?" He began to think that some Presbyterians, though older men than himself, were not acting consistently with their own principles. The question arose over what was called the "Indulgence." The Government had granted liberty to some of the Covenanted ministers to officiate in their parishes on certain conditions, though they did not accept collation from bishops. They had not full liberty or the full stipend, but they received an annuity and were carefully watched. The measure looked like a liberal one, and was therefore called the "Indulgence;" but it was really an artful attempt to sow dissension among the Covenanters. Several of the ministers had accepted it. Cameron had already come out from among the curates, and the question which for some time agitated his mind was, what relation ought he to take up to the ministers who had accepted the "Indulgence." It was very plain to him that as long as Presbyterians pursued such a policy there could be no united action among them that would be likely to have any power in resisting the tyranny by which they were oppressed. It seemed to him that the men who accepted the "Indulgence" simply put themselves in a position in which they were of little or no use to the Covenanted cause. What weighed most heavily, however, with Cameron was the conviction that they were guilty of compromising one of the vital doctrines of Scotland's Church. From the very first Scottish Presbyterians held the Headship of Christ over His own Church. The civil Magistrate must, of course, get all his dues; but, according to the Covenanters, there

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was a sphere within which Christ alone must reign, and into which no earthly power must be allowed to step. But were not the men, who professed to be Presbyterians and yet were accepting the "Indulgence," allowing the Stuart kings to enter this sphere? They were, no doubt, refusing to own the authority of prelates, but they were accepting manses, glebes, and livings on conditions that allowed the Stuart kings to give them directions, as Cameron thought, in the management of purely spiritual affairs. These were the great subjects that occupied Cameron's mind in considering the question of the "Indulgence." They are subjects which have engaged Scotland's attention largely during the last two centuries, and they will undoubtedly wield a mighty power ere long in settling questions of our day very different from the "Indulgence."

Richard Cameron had very considerable abilities, but it must be admitted that in regard to genius and statesmanship he cannot bear comparison with many on the pages of Scotland's history; nevertheless I hold that Cameron was a great man and animated by a spirit so noble that it well deserves to be transfused into the hearts of his countrymen. We are living in an age when utility, interest, and worldly comfort are the considerations, which with many have greatest influence in settling all questions; but Cameron had arrived at a state of mind in which these had not the weight of a feather when set against principle and truth. In his chamber of prayer or in his solitary walks on the Border hills Cameron again and again put the question, What say principle and truth regarding the "indulged" ministers. He listened very attentively, and he heard their voices exclaiming, "Come out from among them and be ye separate, touch not the unclean thing." There are many in our times who hear principle and truth uttering their voices, but instead of obeying become deaf, inattentive, and indifferent. All of us come to times when we need to decide what influence those voices are to exercise over our lives. Harden, standing on its precipitous height in the valley of the Borthwick, ought to be forever sacred in our eyes, because there Richard Cameron vowed in most trying times that at all hazards he would walk in the course pointed out to him by conscience. There is an exceedingly interesting book by Lyttleton, in which

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he considers what voice spake to Saul of Tarsus on the road to Damascus. By very striking and beautiful reasoning he shows that no worldly considerations whatever could have influenced Saul to take the course he did. We may also say no worldly considerations could have influenced Richard Cameron to follow the course he took at Harden. It could not have been the love of power or wealth, for his decision brought his feet into a path in which his eyes must have frequently seen terrible objects which never before engaged their attention—the prison and the scaffold. It could not have been the love of fame, for it would almost have required a prophet's eye to see beyond the scorn and the suffering to the halo which now surrounds his name. We believe that Richard Cameron thought that no other powers than principle, truth, and patriotism influenced his soul when he decided to come out from among the "indulged" and be separate. His decision was formed not suddenly, but after calm deliberation, and his adhesion to it was soon put to the test.

He was not a curate, but an indulged Presbyterian minister, who occupied the pulpit of the parish church of Robertson. What was his name I have not yet been able to ascertain. The Scotts of Harden were in the habit of regularly waiting on his ministry. Whether Richard Cameron ever entered his church is not stated in any of his biographies. A day, however, came when he was asked to accompany Lady Scott to the parish church. He was a man who would scorn with all his heart to refuse to give the courtesy and respect to which superiors were entitled. He accompanied Lady Scott all the way from Harden House to the old church standing in a most pleasant site on the hillside, but his conscience would not allow him to cross the door. Instead of entering he turned back and spent most of the Sabbath in religious exercises in the chamber allotted to him in Harden House. He ever afterwards looked back to that day as one of the most memorable in all his life. His room in Harden was brightened up by the conscious presence of his Saviour. He felt that whoever disapproved the course he had taken, he had evidences that it was approved by his Master. He said afterwards that he had that day "much of the Lord's presence, and got clear glimpses of many temptations to which he was liable." On the following Monday he was called to

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account by Sir William and Lady Scott for what they called his rude and improper conduct in not entering the church. He stated very courteously but very plainly to them the reasons which influenced him to take the course he did, and expounded very clearly the opinions he was constrained to hold regarding the "Indulgence." At the time Sir William and Lady Scott seem to have been not only displeased, but angry. Cameron, however, was quite prepared to give up his situation as tutor at Harden rather than surrender his conscientious convictions. His words, though received with so great displeasure at the time, were never forgotten by Lady Scott, but drew her to take a decided stand for the Covenanting cause. Dr Ker writes:—"Richard Cameron is perhaps, taken all in all, the main figure in that heroic period of the Scottish Church." His name became afterwards the "watchword of men willing to dare all and lose all for conscience sake." It ought never to be forgotten that one of the steps which led onward to this heroic life was taken at Harden. When Cameron left the valley of the Borthwick and took his last look of Harden House, he knew he was losing the means by which his bread was won; but he went on his way firm and courageous, though it did not appear to human eye what else he could now be but a homeless wanderer. His influence did not pass away with him. Though Lady Scott was at first highly offended at the conduct of her tutor, time and the reasons he gave seemed to convince her that she was wrong and he was right; for soon thereafter she ceased attending the parish church, and went instead to the field meetings for the Bread of Life. For no other reason than his wife's withdrawal from the parish church, Sir William Scott of Harden had a decret passed against him by Meldrum, the persecutor, and others, fining him more than £46,000 Scots*; and, being unable to pay, he was subjected to a long imprisonment. Probably owing to Cameron's influence, Covenanting principles were so deeply implanted in the Harden family that several of them endured severe sufferings for the cause. Wodrow† writes of Sir William Scott of Harden, younger:—"This gentleman, besides his personal hardships, had suffered consid-

*Wodrow, III., 447.

† IV., 230.

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erably in his estate under our general oppression; for because they could not reach his life and fortune they found means to affect his estate, for his mother's not keeping of the church, to the value of three or four thousand pounds sterling."

It is said that after leaving Harden, Cameron directed his way southward and became acquainted with the famous field preacher John Welsh, remaining in his company for a considerable time, "enjoying his Christian instruction and attending with much spiritual advantage upon his public ministry." Welsh was not long in Cameron's company when he formed so high an opinion of his piety, abilities, and knowledge of Christian doctrines that he urged him to undergo the usual examination necessary for obtaining licence to be a Covenanting preacher. For a considerable time Cameron refused, not from lack of a desire to be a preacher of Christ's Gospel, not from any difficulty in giving a sincere and hearty adhesion to the doctrines taught in Scotland's Presbyterian Church; but on account of scruples regarding the "Indulgence." He had formed so strong opinions on this subject that he knew right well if he became a preacher he must express them, and in doing so give great offence to not a few who professed to be Covenanters. How Welsh dealt with the difficulty we are not told, but he could not have said that one condition of licence would be silence regarding the "Indulgence," otherwise licence would never have been accepted by Cameron. So earnestly did Welsh urge him to become a minister that at last he consented. The place where licence was given was in the house of Henry Hall at Haughhead, on the banks of the river Kale, a tributary of the Teviot. The roofless walls of Henry Hall's house are still standing, and have been looked on with great interest by many a sympathiser with the Covenanting struggle. Never-to-be-forgotten scenes were witnessed at Haughhead. When the time came that landlords over all Teviotdale dared not permit Covenanting preachers to hold field meetings on their grounds, they knew right well that a hearty welcome was theirs to the lands of Henry Hall at Haughhead. One field preacher, named George Barclay, declared "the best days that ever I had in preaching the Gospel were in the bounds of worthy Henry Hall at Haughhead." Blackader, Archibald Riddell, and, I

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have no doubt, Alexander Peden and many others, addressed large gatherings of people in the same place. Memories of such men linger round Haughhead, but the fact ought also to be cherished that the heroic Richard Cameron was licensed to preach the Gospel within its walls. Teviotdale has produced many great men, but it may be questioned if it ever sent forth so notable a licentiate as Richard Cameron. So far as can be ascertained, there are no traces of his ever having been in the district again after he obtained licence to preach in 1678. He goes elsewhere to some two further years of strenuous and daring life for Christ's Crown and Covenant; and dies, sword in hand, at Aird's Moss, "when in Wellwood's dark muir-land the mighty were falling."

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE PRINGLES OF TORWOODLEE.

AFTER Charles II. ascended the throne George Pringle, proprietor of Torwoodlee, in the neighbourhood of Galashiels, a member of the family to which the Pringles of Wilton Lodge belonged, fell under the displeasure of the persecuting Government, and endured sufferings which entitle his name to be remembered by all who appreciate unswerving devotion to principle. Several members of the Pringle family were noted not only for their adherence to the Covenant, but for their thoroughly consistent religious lives. In the exceedingly interesting autobiography of Walter Pringle of Greenknowe there is not only an account of the Covenanting struggle, but a very edifying history of the struggle of a soul smitten with conviction of sin and thirsting after peace with God and conformity to His will. George Pringle of Torwoodlee seems to have been like-minded. By Wodrow, the historian, he is called a "gentleman of a fine spirit and singularly religious." A very good testimony in favour of Pringle's religious character is the fact that one of his intimate friends was John Livingstone of Ancrum, who was a frequent and most welcome visitor at Torwoodlee. All that has been said of the house of Riddell might be applied to the house of Torwoodlee when George Pringle was its head. The Pringles were one of the first families in this district who stood up for the Reformation from Popery, and for generation after generation they fearlessly adhered to Scotland's Presbyterian Church amid all the attacks made upon it by Papists and Episcopalians. George Pringle, who was called a man of "masculine presence," fought for Charles Stuart in nearly all the actions he had against Oliver Cromwell in Scotland, yet all this important service availed nothing in his favour after the Restoration. For simply acting as Justice of Peace in the days of Oliver he was severely fined; but he incurred the displeasure of the Government mainly on account of his sternly upright and consistently religious

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character and his refusal of all oaths which compromised the vital principle of Christ's Headship over His Church. From all public business Pringle retired in 1662. Year after year he refused to conform to Episcopacy, but he took no part whatever in the struggles for liberty at Rulion Green, Drumclog, and Bothwell Bridge. His house was kept open as a sanctuary to all the persecuted who needed shelter and hospitality. Thus in strictest quietude he spent his days.

One dark December night in 1681 a man, plainly dressed, but of noble bearing, rode swiftly on a sweating steed to Torwoodlee, asked for the master of the house, spoke one word in his ears, and was heartily welcomed, getting the best entertainment that the house afforded. Next morning a fresh horse, a supply of money, and a trusty servant were placed at the stranger's disposal, and he hastened away. Soon after that night troubles fell thick and heavy on the owner of Torwoodlee. The stranger was the Earl of Argyle, who was afterwards martyred. Immediately after Argyle escaped that day from imprisonment in Edinburgh Castle, under the disguise of a page holding up the train of his step-daughter, Lady Sophia Lindsay, he was met by Mr John Scott, son-in-law of John Livingstone. Mr Scott had been minister of Hawick, but at the Restoration, refusing to take the oath which required him to trample principle under foot, he was deprived of his church, manse, and stipend, and driven away from his parish. During the whole persecution Mr Scott never accepted any indulgence from the Government, and often, at great risk, preached Christ's Gospel in the fields. He was one of those who took part in planning the escape of the great Argyle, met him after he was safely out of Edinburgh Castle, saw him on horseback, gave him a verbal token, and advised him to ride on without ever drawing bridle till he arrived at Torwoodlee. In escaping from Torwoodlee to England Argyle was recognised; and Pringle's horses and servants accompanying him were also recognised. Search was instantly made for the man who had helped a prisoner to escape, and Pringle needed to flee from his own house and seek lodgings in several retired spots, which were kept so secret that he could not be found out.

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Three years pass away, and we find Pringle back again at Torwoodlee. His connection with Argyle seems now to have been forgotten. Another day the tramp of horsemen is heard approaching his mansion-house; this time, however, it is no persecuted sufferer who comes seeking shelter, but the persecuting dragoons, who were ravaging the southern shires under the command of Riddell of Haining and the laird of Meldrum. For nothing else but refusing to attend the services of the Episcopal curate at Galashiels these persecutors exacted from Pringle 5000 merks Scots, gave a receipt for this amount exempting him from further prosecution, "or, if he were, that that sum should be allowed in the first payment." The superiors of Haining and Meldrum utterly disregarded all their receipts, and within a few weeks summoned Pringle before another Court and compelled him to pay a fine of £2000 sterling for non-conformity. A short time thereafter rumours were circulated about plots formed against the Government. Several gentlemen in the Border district were apprehended. Orders were sent to Meldrum to seize Pringle of Torwoodlee on this charge. Instead of at once hasting to the work, however, he sent Pringle notice that a party was coming to take him from his house. This was simply giving him an intimation to escape, but what were Meldrum's motives in giving it we do not well know. It is said he was not able to pay back the money for which he gave the receipt, and in this way sought to keep the bargain he made. George Pringle at once left his house, lurked for some time in different places, and ultimately made his way to Holland. When the dragoons arrived at Torwoodlee they searched in vain for its owner, and seizing his only son, James, a young man only sixteen years of age, carried him to Edinburgh, and kept him in prison more than three months without any crime being laid to his charge. The prisons, however, became so crowded that it was difficult to find accommodation for all, and James Pringle was admitted to bail for £5000 sterling, but was not allowed to go out of Edinburgh. Two months thereafter he was brought before a secret committee of the persecutors, presided over by the Duke of Queensberry. He was asked to conform to the religion established and endowed by Government, but he refused; he was asked to give information regarding his father, to tell who informed

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him of his coming arrest, but he refused to turn informer against his father. Then the executioner was brought into his presence, and James Pringle was bidden to look at him and his dread instruments of torture which had extorted agonising cries from many a sufferer. Queensberry loudly and roughly threatened that if he did not give the desired information "every bone of his body would be broken, every joint disjointed, his flesh ript up, and boiling lead and oil poured into him." Brave young Pringle stood before them unyielding as a rock, and instead of carrying their threats into execution they sentenced him to be imprisoned in the Castle of Edinburgh, where none were permitted to see or speak to him except the keepers and the chaplain, who possessed such a character that his visits were liked worst of all. Again he was admitted to a £5000 sterling bail. Wherever he went he was most carefully watched. He dared not transfer his residence from one place to another without entering into a bond to comply with the oppressive restrictions of the men in power.

The elder Pringle was one of those who sat in Council with Argyle and Monmouth in Amsterdam. By the former he was despatched to this country to prepare the people in some parts for the coming expedition. What work he did during that time I have not been able to find out. After the failure of Argyle's attempt, George Pringle found his way back again to Holland. Processes were carried on in the Law Courts against him in his absence. His lands were declared forfeited and for ever annexed to the Crown, and were afterwards gifted to Lieutenant Drummond, a creature of the persecutors. His goods and gear were all taken away, and sore sufferings fell on his family. Notwithstanding his large bail, James Pringle, his son, was a second time seized and imprisoned for three months in Blackness Castle, where he was barbarously treated by the Governor. His brother, Pringle of Caddonlee, was deprived of "nearly all he was master of" by Riddell of Haining. His daughter, Mrs Pringle of Greenknowe, was also summoned to appear before the Circuit Courts, and her husband was severely fined. Banishment from his pleasant home at Torwoodlee, from his family, and his native land, the loss of his estate,—these were terrible sufferings for a man to bring on himself, but

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George Pringle endured all that before he would trample on principle or do what he believed was forbidden to him by his God. From what inward sources he drew encouragement in his trials the world has never known. His relative, Pringle of Greenknowe, when banished from his family and home for the same cause, wrote:—"On Saturday last I was in the fields thinking what might become of my wife and family in my absence, but I was led to this comparison of a king sending one of his servants into a hazardous piece of service, and if the king should say to that servant, 'Be not troubled for your wife and children, for I will take them into my care,' then that servant needed not be anxious for them, and far less should I, the servant of the King of kings, the God of truth, who can and will perform his word. Upon this I was made to give up my wife and children unto God, with full assurance that He would take care of them." No doubt the soul of George Pringle had encouragement from similar sources. We know well that there was one fact which never failed to nerve and incite him to stand true at all hazards to the Covenanting cause, and that was the heroic spirit of his lady, Mrs Pringle. Never did she ply her husband with pawky counsels to hide his light under a bushel in order to avert suffering. Frequently she had intelligence of troubles about to fall on him, and when she advised her husband of them she never urged him to avert them by compromising principle, but rather prepared him to face them boldly for his country's sake. It is said, "She bore all her difficulties with an unexampled serenity and evenness of temper; one evidence of which was, when the harpies of that time came and seized her estate, set her lands, and rummaged her house, her only son lay upon her hand despaired of by the physicians, and her husband driven from his house and in danger of a public death for his firm adherence to the good old cause, she showed such contentment and acquiescence under all those complicated disasters as is rarely to be found, and in her darkest night rejoiced in the faith and hope of those days she lived to see after the Revolution. She was a daughter of Brodie of Lethin."*

* Wodrow IV., 229.

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After the Revolution Pringle was put in possession of his estate and spent happy days at Torwoodlee. He was a member of the Scottish Parliament which voted the Crown to William of Orange. In 1689 he died greatly regretted throughout his district. Mrs Pringle outlived him about a year. He was succeeded by his son James. In the Advocates' Library, Edinburgh, I found a MS. by James Pringle giving an account of Covenanting sufferers in this district, from which I have learned many of the facts in this and other papers.

[This chapter had not been revised by Mr Stewart.]

APPENDIX.

Note to Chapter X.—Extract from Poems on Several Subjects, by James Storie.

According to Storie, shots were fired and blood shed at Ruberslaw :—

“ And providence hem kept from harm
They did but meet with one alarm,
When a smart skirmish was performed,
If I, thereon, am right inform'd,
Two troops of horse, on one clear day
For to attack them did essay
In martial order took the road
On the right point, right up the Dod.
The congregation did repair
To the west side, then joined in prayer,
Upon the cliffs there did appear
A chosen band to guard the rear,
Who had been through great danger brought
For they had under Leslie fought ;
The post of honour had sustained,
And were unto sharp-shooting trained,
That so their aim might steady be,
Then each did kneel upon one knee.
Then did their musquetry direct,
Deliberate slow, but sure effect ;
According to sharp-shooting laws,
Between each volley a long pause.
This waste of time they did endure,
Lest smoke their victims should obscure,
They several men and horse did gore
Ere carabines began to roar.
The horsemen in that deadly range,
With horrid oaths return'd exchange,
The mortal hail of these platoons
Did rake and gall the fierce dragoons ;
Precipitate they fled amain
And left behind them several slain.
On leaving off the bloody fray,
They on for Jedburgh took the way,
Where they in council did contrive
Their loss of honour to retrieve.

But ere they got their vengeance scope
The Covenanters did elope,
And refuge took in a deep dell
Somewhere beyond the Carter Fell.
That such a scene as this befell,
I heard a Cameronian tell,
For this same feat and many more
Are handed down among that core.”

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Note to Chapter X., on Cameronian Church at Denholm.

—A memento of the strength of the Covenanting spirit in Denholm exists in the shape of the old Cameronian meeting-house still in use as a place of worship. The late Dr W. H. Goold, an authority on such matters, in a letter to Mr Stewart, stated that the district would be under what was called the "Teviotdale Correspondence." This, according to Dr Goold, was part of an extensive confederacy which sought to resist the prevailing tyranny and achieve the deliverance of their country, and which had associations or societies stretching over the whole south of Scotland from the banks of Tweed to the bars of Ayr. Out of these societies the congregations of the Reformed Presbyterian Church were in the course of time developed. The history of Denholm congregation, so far as Dr Goold could ascertain it, is as follows:—Between 1754 and 1760 Messrs Hall and Innes left the Reformed Presbyterian Church on a question of doctrine connected with the Atonement, and constituted themselves into a separate Presbytery at Falkirk in October, 1761. In their minutes it is stated that at a meeting of the Presbytery in Glasgow on 12th June, 1769, the people of Denholm gave in a paper praying for a moderation; but the Presbytery found the application to be "premature in regard to the smallness of their number."

At Edinburgh on 12th July, 1769, a paper was presented to the Presbytery, in which the subscribers acceded to communion with the Presbytery. They describe themselves as formerly in communion with the Established Church, and assign eight reasons for leaving it and joining the Presbytery, such as improper connection between Church and State, civil supremacy over the Church, the exercise of patronage, the prevalence of unsound doctrine, and impurity of communion. The reasons are fully stated and signed by Walter Stott, James Hopkirk, John Scott, John Johnston, William Stott, and William Hendry; other names are mentioned as adhering. The Presbytery granted their prayer to be disjoined from the Edinburgh congregation and erected into a separate charge. An ordination of elders was sanctioned at Denholm in 1770.

A Mr John Arnot seems to have received a call to Denholm about this time, but he had difficulties in taking ordination. He was meanwhile employed as a preacher,

Appendix.

most frequently, it would seem, at Denholm, but often at Glasgow and Orwell. At length there is a minute of a meeting of Presbytery at Edinburgh on 15th December, 1773, agreeing that the ordination should take place at Denholm on 19th January, 1774. Before that date, however, Mr Arnot seems to have died. All that the following minute says is, "the meeting at Denholm having been prevented by the sickness and death of Mr John Arnot soon after the last meeting of Presbytery."

The Rev. Jas. Duncan was ordained on 22nd January, 1783. There had been a long and keen competition on the part of the Glasgow congregation for his services, but Denholm succeeded at last in securing them. He remained there till August 7th, 1809, when he accepted a call to Linktown in Fife.

Note to Chapter III.—The following interesting information with regard to some of the descendants of the Rev. John Livingstone, who took a notable part in the history of the United States of America, was supplied to Mr Stewart by Edwin Brockholst Livingstone, Esq., F.S.A. (Scot.), himself a descendant of the Covenanter:—Robert, the youngest son of John Livingstone, was born at Ancrum on 13th December, 1654, and shared his father's exile at Rotterdam. He went to New York, or, as it was then called, New Amsterdam, in 1674, two years after his father's death. He was the founder of the American Livingstones. His knowledge of the Dutch language was of immense service to him, as it was only in that year that the New Netherland was finally ceded to England; and it was possibly in the possession of the Dutch when he landed at New Amsterdam. He was shrewd and persevering, and rapidly got on. He settled in Albany, where he became nearly at once Town-clerk and Secretary for the Indian Affairs, a most important office in that frontier town in those stormy days, with only the Indians separating them from the French in Canada. During his adventurous career he held several offices under the Government, and was much trusted by the New York Governors. At one time he was Speaker of the New York House of General Assembly, while for some years he was a member of the King's Council. In 1686 he obtained a manorial charter from

The Covenanters of Teviotdale.

the Governor raising his lands to the rank of a Manor or Lordship of Livingstone. In 1715, after many vicissitudes arising from political troubles in the province, he obtained a confirmatory patent from the Crown with the great privilege of returning a member to the Colonial Assembly—then consisting of twenty-seven members. Thus his manor became a regular "close borough," returning only members of the family to the House until the Revolution, when this privilege was abolished.

Naturally, from their Presbyterian descent the Livingstones became the champions of the Whig party in the province which for many years was known by the name of that family. At the Revolution the chief member of the family espoused the American cause, three of them served in the Continental Congress, one was on the Committee that drew up the Declaration of Independence, while another, Philip Livingstone, was one of the New York representatives who signed it. His younger brother, William, was also a member of this Congress; but, owing to his having been appointed to command the New Jersey Militia prior to the passing of the Declaration, he was unable to sign that document, his services being required to defend New Jersey from the British. After independence was secured he was elected to be the first State Governor, which office he held until his death many years later. During colonial times he was for many years the leader of his party, and his writings in the Liberal cause helped greatly in forwarding the aspirations of the friends of liberty.

Note to Chapter XI.—One of the charges brought against Lady Douglas, viz., that she permitted a preacher to intimate a fast to be kept at her house for Philiphaugh's good success, requires some explanation. The author's information with regard to it was obtained from MSS. in the Register House. This "fast" was a thanksgiving service held for the following reason. Philiphaugh was Murray, the Sheriff of Selkirkshire. Meldrum was Adam Urquhart, laird of Meldrum, the principal persecutor in this district, invested by the Government with power to hold courts and fine those whom he found to be non-conformists. Murray, believing that such courts interfered with the jurisdiction of Sheriff

Appendix.

Courts, boldly petitioned the Privy Council, charging Meldrum with oppression, wrongous imprisonment, and exaction of fines in Teviotdale to the amount of 100,000 pounds. He brought home these charges so convincingly that the Council felt impelled to suspend Meldrum for a month. This was in November, 1680; and for this victory over the oppressor Lady Douglas had her thanksgiving service. Philiphaugh came off with great reputation, but his triumph, unfortunately, was short-lived. Meldrum was soon again, through Court influence, engaged in the work of persecution in Teviotdale and Selkirkshire. He came back incensed against Murray, and evidently bent on securing his ruin. In the Register House I found a long minute of the Privy Council, which contains some interesting information regarding Covenanters and conventicles in this district not previously known to me. According to that minute, Meldrum on that day appeared before the Privy Council pursuing Murray and charging him with hindering him in his work of putting down Covenanting. He said that on account of the course pursued by Murray "conventicles are become so frequent in that shire that authority is contemned." Meldrum held a court in Selkirk on an early day in May, 1681, at which he was to sit in judgment on certain Covenanters whom he had apprehended. Murray boldly appeared at the same court along with Scott of Woll, a Justice of the Peace, and ordered all Meldrum's prisoners to go home and appear before himself the next Thursday. When that day came he discharged them with small fines. One of the prisoners was Murray of Ashiestiel, a gentleman of singular piety who was chased from house and heritage by Meldrum's oppression, and had all his goods driven to the market cross of Selkirk and there sold (Torwoodlee MSS.) Meldrum sought to stir up feeling in the Privy Council against Philiphaugh by asserting that he was favouring men like Ashiestiel. He brought also other charges against him. The Council found that Meldrum had proceeded diligently and faithfully in his work, delayed pronouncing sentence on Philiphaugh till the next Council day, found James Murray, his Sheriff-depute, guilty of intercommuning with rebels, and sent him to prison to be tried by the Court of Justiciary.

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