

THE HISTORY  
OF  
PROTESTANTISM .

BY THE

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ILLUSTRATED.

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"PROTESTANTISM, THE SACRED CAUSE OF GOD'S LIGHT AND TRUTH AGAINST THE DEVIL'S FALSITY AND DARKNESS."—*Carlyle.*

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[Volume III.]

CASSELL, PETTER, GALPIN & Co.:

LONDON. PARIS & NEW YORK.

[1878AD.]

# Book Twenty-fourth.

## PROTESTANTISM IN SCOTLAND.

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### CHAPTER I.

#### THE DARKNESS AND THE DAYBREAK.

English and Scottish Reformations Compared—Early Picture of Scotland—Preparation—The Scots become a Nation—Its Independence Secured—Bannockburn—Suppression of the Culdees—Establishment of the Church of Rome—Its Great Strength—Acts against Lollards and Heretics in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries—Martyrdom of John Rosby—Bible Readers—Paul Crawar Burned—The Lollards of Kyle—Hector Boece—Luther's Tracts Enter Scotland—The Bible Introduced—It becomes the Nation's One Instructor—Permission to Read it.

ENGLAND, in reforming itself, worked mainly from the political centre, Scotland worked mainly from the religious one. The ruling idea in the former country was the emancipation of the throne from the supremacy of the Pope; the ruling idea in the latter was the emancipation of the conscience from the Popish faith. The more prominent outcome of the Reformation in England was a free State; the more immediate product of the Reformation in Scotland was a free Church. But soon the two countries and the two Reformations coalesced: common affinities and common aims disengaged them from old allies, and drew them to each other's side; and Christendom beheld a Protestantism strong alike in its political and in its spiritual arm, able to combat the double usurpation of Rome, and to roll it back, in course of time, from the countries where its dominion had been long established, and over its ruins to go forward to the fulfilment of the great task which was the one grand aim of the Reformation, namely, the evangelising and civilising of the earth, and the planting of pure churches and free governments.

From an early date Scotland had been in course of preparation for the part it was to act in the great movement of the sixteenth century. It would beforehand have been thought improbable that any very distinguished share awaited it in this great revolution of human affairs. A small country, it was parted by barbarism as well as by distance from the rest of the world. Its rock-bound coast was perpetually beaten by a stormy sea; its great mountains were drenched in rains and shrouded in mist; its plains, abandoned to swamps, had not been conquered by the plough, nor yielded aught for the sickle. The mariner shunned its shore, for there no harbour opened to receive his vessel, and no trader waited to buy his wares. This land was the dwelling

of savage tribes, who practised the horrid rites and worshipped, under other names, the deities to which the ancient Assyrians had bowed down.

Scotland first tasted of a little civilisation from the Roman sword. In the wake of the Roman Power came the missionaries of the Cross, and the Gospel found disciples where Cæsar had been able to achieve no triumphs. Next came Columba, who kindled his evangelical lamp on the rocks of Iona, at the very time that Mohammedanism was darkening the East, and Rome was stretching her shadow farther every year over the West. In the ninth century came the first great step in Scotland's preparation for the part that awaited it seven centuries later. In the year 838, the Picts and the Scots were united under one crown. Down to this year they had been simply two roving and warring clans; their union made them one people, and constituted them into a nation. In the erection of the Scots into a distinct nationality we see a foothold laid for Scotland having a distinct national Reformation: an essential point, as we shall afterwards see, in order to the production of a perfect and catholic Protestantism.

The second step in Scotland's preparation for its predestined task was the establishment of its independence as a nation. It was no easy matter to maintain the political independence of so small a kingdom, surrounded by powerful neighbours who were continually striving to effect its subjugation and absorption into their own wealthier and larger dominions. To aid in this great struggle, on which were suspended far higher issues than were dreamed of by those who fought and bled in it, there arose from time to time "mighty men of valour." Wallace and Bruce were the pioneers of Knox. The struggle for Scotland's political independence in the fourteenth century was a necessary preliminary to its struggle for its religious Reformation in the sixteenth. If the battle of the warrior, "with its confused noise, and garments rolled in blood," had not first been won, we do not see how a stage could have been found for the greater battle that was to come after. The grand patriotism of Wallace, and the strong arm of Bruce, held the door open for Knox; and Edward of England learned, when he saw his mailed cavalry and terrible bowmen falling back before the Scottish battle-axes and broadswords, that though he should redden all Scotland with the noblest blood of both kingdoms, he never should succeed in robbing the little country of its nationality and sovereignty.

It is now the twelfth century; Iona still exists, but its light has waxed dim. Under King David the Culdee establishments are being suppressed, to make way for Popish monasteries; the presbyters of Iona are driven out, and the lordly prelates of the Pope take their place; the edifices and heritages of the Culdees pass over wholesale to the Church of Rome, and a body of ecclesiastics of all orders, from the mitred abbot down to the begging friar, are brought from foreign countries to occupy Scotland, now divided into twelve

dioceses, with a full complement of abbeys, monasteries, and nunneries. But it is to be noted that this establishment of Popery in the twelfth century is not the result of the conversion of the people, or of their native teachers: we see it brought in over the necks of both, simply at the will and by the decree of the monarch. So little was Scottish Popery of native growth, that the men as well as the system had to be imported from abroad.

If in no country of Europe was the dominant reign of Popery so short as in Scotland, extending only from the twelfth to the sixteenth century, in no country was the Church of Rome so powerful when compared with the size of the kingdom and the number of the population. The influences which in countries like France set limits to the power of the Church did not exist in Scotland. On her lofty height she was without a rival, and looked down upon all ranks and institutions—upon the throne, which was weak; upon the nobles, who were parted into factions; upon the people, who were sunk in ignorance. Bishops and abbots filled all the great posts at court, and discharged all the highest offices in the State. They were chancellors, secretaries of State, justiciaries, ambassadors; they led armies, fought battles, and tried and executed criminals. They were the owners of lordships, hunting-grounds, fisheries, houses; and while a full half of the kingdom was theirs, they heavily taxed the other half, as they did also all possessions, occupations, and trades. Thus with the passing years cathedrals and abbeys continued to multiply and wax in splendour; while acres, tenements, and tithings, in an ever-flowing stream, were pouring fresh riches into the Church's treasury. In the midst of the prostration and ruin of all interests and classes, the Church stood up in overgrown arrogance, wealth, and power.

But even in the midst of the darkness there were glimmerings of light, which gave token that a better day would yet dawn. From the Papal chair itself we hear a fear expressed that this country, which Rome held with so firm a grasp, would yet escape from her dominion. In his bull for anointing King Robert the Bruce, in the beginning of the fourteenth century, John XXII. complains that Scotland was still defiled by the presence of heretics. From about this time the traces of what Rome styles heresy became frequent in Scotland. The first who suffered for the Reformed faith, so far as can be ascertained, was James Resby, an Englishman, and a disciple of John Wicliffe. He taught that “the Pope was not Christ's Vicar, and that he was not Pope if he was a man of wicked life.” This was pronounced heresy, and for that heresy he had to do expiation in the fire at Perth.<sup>1</sup> He was burned in 1406 or 1407, some nine years before the martyrdom of Huss. In 1416 the University of St. Andrews, then newly founded, ordained that all who

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<sup>1</sup> See an extract from the original account of Resby, by Bower, the continuator of Fordun, in *The Works of John Knox*, collected and edited by David Laing, Esq., LL.D.; vol. I., Appendix ii.; Edin., 1846.

commenced Master of Arts should take an oath to defend the Church against the insults of the Lollards,<sup>1</sup> a proof surely that the sect was sufficiently numerous to render Churchmen uneasy. A yet stronger proof of this was the appointment of a Heretical Inquisitor for Scotland. The office was bestowed upon Laurence Lindores, Abbot of Scone.<sup>2</sup> Prior Winton in his *Metrical Chronicle* (1420) celebrates the zeal of Albany, Governor of Scotland, against Lollards and heretics.<sup>3</sup> Murdoch Nisbet, of Hardhill, had a manuscript copy of the New Testament (of Wicliffe's translation doubtless), which he concealed in a vault, and read to his family and acquaintance by night.<sup>4</sup> Gordon of Earlston, another early favourer of the disciples of Wicliffe, had in his possession a copy of the New Testament, in the vulgar tongue, which he read at meetings held in a wood near to Earlston House.<sup>5</sup> The Parliament of James I., held at Perth (1424), enacted that all bishops should make inquiry by Inquisition for heretics, and punish them according to the laws of "holy Kirk," and if [necessary] they should call in the secular power to the aid of "holy Kirk."<sup>6</sup>

In 1431 we find a second stake set up in Scotland. Paul Cwarar, a native of Bohemia, and a disciple of John Huss, preaching at St. Andrews, taught that the mass was a worship of superstition. This was no suitable doctrine in a place where a magnificent cathedral, and a gorgeous hierarchy, were maintained in the service of the mass, and should it fall they too would fall. To avert so great a catastrophe, Cwarar was dragged to the stake and burned, with a ball of brass in his mouth to prevent him from addressing the people in his last moments.<sup>7</sup>

The Lollards of England were the connecting link between their great master, Wicliffe, and the English Reformers of the sixteenth century. Scotland too had its Lollards, who connected the Patriarch and school of Iona with the Scottish Reformers. The Lollards of Scotland could be none other than the descendants of the Culdec missionaries, and such of the disciples of Wicliffe as had taken refuge in Scotland.<sup>8</sup> On the testimony of both friend and foe, there were few counties in the Lowlands of Scotland where these Lollards were not to be found. They were numerous in Fife; they were still more numerous in the districts of Cunningham and Kyle; hence their name, the Lollards of Kyle. In the reign of James IV. (1494) some thirty Lollards

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<sup>1</sup> McCrie, *Life of Melville*, vol. i., p. 415; Edin., 1819.

<sup>2</sup> Laing, *Knox*, vol. i., p. 497.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 495.

<sup>4</sup> McCrie, *Life of Melville*, vol. i., p. 411.

<sup>5</sup> Wodrow, vol. ii., p. 67.

<sup>6</sup> Acta Parl. Scotiæ, ii. 7.

<sup>7</sup> Laing, *Knox*, vol. i., p. 407. Dr. Laing gives original notices respecting Cwarar from Fox, Bower, and Boece.

<sup>8</sup> "We can trace the existence of the Lollards in Ayrshire from the times of Wicliffe to the days of George Wishart." (McCrie, *Life of Melville*, vol. i., p. 8.)

were summoned before the archiepiscopal tribunal of Glasgow on a charge of heresy. They were almost all gentlemen of landed property in the districts already named, and the tenets which they were charged with denying included the mass, purgatory, the worshipping of images, the praying to saints, the Pope's vicarship, his power to pardon sin—in short, all the peculiar doctrines of Romanism. Their defence appears to have been so spirited that the king, before whom they argued their cause, shielded them from the doom that the archbishop, Blackadder, would undoubtedly have pronounced upon them.<sup>1</sup>

These incidental glimpses show us a Scriptural Protestantism already in Scotland, but it lacks that spirit of zeal and diffusion into which the sixteenth century awoke it. When that century came, new agencies began to operate. In 1520, Hector Boece, Principal of King's College, Aberdeen, and the fellow-student and correspondent of Erasmus, published his *History of Scotland*. In that work he draws a dark picture of the manners of the clergy; of their greed in monopolising all offices, equalled only by their neglect of their duties; of their promotion of unworthy persons, to the ruin of letters; and of the scandals with which the public feeling was continually outraged, and religion affronted; and he raises a loud cry for immediate Reformation if the Church of his native land was to be saved. About the same time the books and tracts of Luther began to enter the seaports of Montrose, Dundee, Perth, St. Andrews, and Leith. These were brought across by the skippers who made annual voyages to Flanders and the Lower Germany. In this way the east coast of Scotland, and the shores of the Frith of Forth, were sown with the seeds of Lutheranism.<sup>2</sup> By this time Tyndale had translated the New Testament into English, and he had markets for its sale in the towns visited by the Scottish traders, who bought numerous copies and carried them across to their countrymen. When the New Testament entered, a ray from heaven had penetrated the night that brooded over the country. Its Reformation had begun. The Bible was the only Reformer then possible in Scotland. Had a Luther or a Knox arisen at that time, he would have been consigned before many days to a dungeon or a stake. The Bible was the only missionary that could enter with safety, and operate with effect. With silent foot it began to traverse the land; it came to the castle-gates of the primate, yet he heard not its steps; it preached in cities, but its voice fell not on the ear of bishop; it passed along the highways and by-ways unobserved by the spy. To the Churchman's eye all seemed calm—calm and motionless as during the four dark centuries which had gone before; but in the stillness of the midnight hour men welcomed this new Instructor, and opened their hearts to its comforting and

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<sup>1</sup> Laing, *Knox*, vol. I., pp. 6–12.

<sup>2</sup> Lorimer, *Scottish Reformation*, chap. 1; Lond., 1860.

beneficent teaching. The Bible was emphatically the nation's one great teacher; it was stamping its own ineffaceable character upon the Scottish Reformation; and the place the Bible thus early made for itself in the people's affections, and the authority it acquired over their judgments, it was destined never to lose. The movement thus initiated was helped forward by every event that happened, till at last in 1543 its first great landing place was reached, when every man, woman, and child in Scotland was secured by Act of Parliament in the right to read the Word of God in their own tongue.

## CHAPTER II.

### SCOTLAND'S FIRST PREACHER AND MARTYR, PATRICK HAMILTON.

A Martyr Needed—Patrick Hamilton—His Lineage—His Studies at Paris and Marburg—He Returns to Scotland—Evangelises around Linlithgow—is Inveigled to St. Andrews—St. Andrews in the Sixteenth Century—Discussions with Doctors and Canons—Alesius—Prior Campbell—Summoned before the Archbishop—His Brother Attempts his Rescue—Hamilton before Beaton—Articles of Accusation—Referred to a Commission—Hamilton's Evening Party—What they Talk about—His Apprehension—His Trial—His Judges—Prior Campbell his Accuser—His Condemnation—He is Led to the Stake—Attacks of Prior Campbell—Campbell's Fearful Death—Hamilton's Protracted Sufferings—His Last Words—The Impression produced by his Martyrdom.

THE first step in the preparation of Scotland for the task that awaited it was to form its tribes into a nation. This was accomplished in the union of the Pictish and Scottish crowns. The second step was the establishment of its nationality on a strong basis. The arms of Wallace and Bruce effected this; and now Scotland, planted on the twin pillars of Nationality and Independence, awaited the opening of a higher drama than any enacted by armies or accomplished on battle-fields. A mightier contest than Bannockburn was now to be waged on its soil. In the great war for the recovery in ampler measure, and on surer tenure, of the glorious heritage of truth which the world once possessed, but which it had lost amid the superstitions of the Dark Ages, there had already been two great centres, Wittemberg and Geneva. The battle was retreating from them, and the Protestant host was about to make its stand at a third centre, namely Scotland, and there sustain its final defeat, or achieve its crowning victory.

The Reformation of Scotland dates from the entrance of the first Bible into the country, about the year 1525. It was doing its work, but over and above there was needed the living voice of the preacher, and the fiery stake of the confessor, to arouse the nation from the dead sleep in which it was sunk. But who of Scotland's sons shall open the roll of martyrdom? A youth of royal lineage, and princely in mind as in birth, was chosen for this high but arduous honour. Patrick Hamilton was born in 1504. He was the second son of Sir Patrick Hamilton, of Kincavel, and the great-grandson, both by the father's and the mother's side, of James II.<sup>1</sup> He received his education at the University of St. Andrews, and about 1517 was appointed titular Abbot of Ferne, in Ross-shire, though it does not appear that he ever took priest's orders. In the following year he went abroad, and would seem to have studied

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<sup>1</sup> See his exact relationship to the Scottish king traced by Dr. David Laing, *Knox* vol. i., p. 501.

some time in Paris, where it is probable he came to the first knowledge of the truth; and thence he went to pursue his studies at the College of Marburg, then newly opened by the Landgrave of Hesse. At Marburg the young Scotsman enjoyed the friendship of a very remarkable man, whose views on some points of Divine truth exceeded in clearness even those of Luther; we refer to Francis Lambert, the ex-monk of Avignon, whom Landgrave Philip had invited to Hesse to assist in the Reformation of his dominions.

The depth of Hamilton's knowledge, and the beauty of his character, won the esteem of Lambert, and we find the ex-Franciscan saying to Philip, "This young man of the illustrious family of the Hamiltons . . . is come from the end of the world, from Scotland, to your academy, in order to be fully established in God's truth. I have hardly ever met a man who expresses himself with so much spirituality and truth on the Word of the Lord."<sup>1</sup>

Hamilton's preparation for his work, destined to be brief but brilliant, was now completed, and he began to yearn with an intense desire to return to his native land, and publish the Gospel of a free salvation. He could not hide from himself the danger which attended the step he was meditating. The priests were at this hour all-powerful in Scotland. A few years previously (1513), James IV. and the flower of the Scottish nobility had fallen on the field of Flodden. James V. was a child: his mother, Margaret Tudor, was nominally regent; but the clergy, headed by the proud, profligate, and unscrupulous James Beaton, Archbishop of St. Andrews, had grasped the government of the kingdom. It was not to be thought that these men would permit a doctrine to be taught at their very floors, which they well knew would bring their glory and pleasures to an end, if they had the power of preventing it. The means of suppressing all preaching of the truth were not wanting, certainly, to these tyrannical Churchmen. But this did not weigh with the young Hamilton. Intent upon dispelling the darkness that covered Scotland, he returned to his native land (1527), and took up his abode at the family mansion of Kincavel, near Linlithgow.

With the sword of Beaton hanging over his head, he began to preach the doctrines of the Reformed faith. The first converts of the young evangelist were the inmates of the mansion-house of Kincavel. After his kinsfolk, his neighbours became the next objects of his care. He visited at the houses of the gentry, where his birth, the grace of his manners, and the fame of his learning made him at all times welcome, and he talked with them about the things that belonged to their peace. Going out into the fields, he would join himself to groups of labourers as they rested at noon, and exhort them, while labouring for the "meat that perisheth," not to be unmindful of that which

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<sup>1</sup> Dedication of *Exegescos Francisci Lamberti*, &c., quoted in Laing, *Knox*, vol. 1., Appendix iii.

“endures unto eternal life.” Opening the Sacred Volume, he would explain to his rustic congregation the “mysteries of the kingdom” which was now come nigh unto them, and bid them strive to enter into it. Having scattered the seed in the villages around Linlithgow, he resolved to carry the Gospel into its Church of St. Michael. The ancient palace of Linlithgow, “the Versailles of Scotland,” as it has been termed, was then the seat of the court, and the Gospel was now brought within the hearing of the priests of St. Michael’s, and of the members of the royal family who repaired to it. Hamilton, standing up amid the altars and images, preached to the polished audience that filled the edifice, with that simplicity and chastity of speech which were best fitted to win his way with those now listening to him. It is not, would he say, the cowl of St. Francis, nor the frock of St. Dominic, that saves us; it is the righteousness of Christ. It is not the shorn head that makes a holy man, it is the renewed heart. It is not the chrism of the Church, it is the anointing of the Holy Spirit that replenishes the soul with grace. What doth the Lord require of thee, O man? to count so many beads a day? to repeat so many paternosters? to fast so many days in the year, or go so many miles on pilgrimage? That is what the Pope requires of thee; but what God requires of thee is to do justly, and love mercy, and walk humbly. Pure religion, and undefiled, is not to kiss a crucifix, or to burn candles before Our Lady; pure religion is to visit the fatherless and the widow in their affliction, and to keep one’s self unspotted from the world. “Knowest thou,” he would ask, “what this saying means, ‘Christ died for thee’? Verily that thou shouldest have died perpetually, and Christ, to deliver thee from death, died for thee, and changed thy perpetual death into his own death; for thou madest the fault, and he suffered the pain.”<sup>1</sup>

Among Hamilton’s hearers in St. Michael’s there was a certain maiden of noble birth, whose heart the Gospel had touched. Her virtues won the heart of the young evangelist, and he made her his wife. His marriage was celebrated but a few weeks before his martyrdom.<sup>2</sup>

A little way inland from the opposite shores of the Forth, backed by the picturesque chain of the blue Ochils, was the town of Dunfermline, with its archiepiscopal palace, the towers of which might almost be descried from the spot where Hamilton was daily evangelising. Archbishop Beaton was at this moment residing there, and news of the young evangelist’s doings were wafted across to that watchful enemy of the Gospel. Beaton saw at a glance the difficulty of the case. A heretic of low degree would have been summarily disposed of; but here was a Lutheran with royal blood in his veins, and all the Hamiltons at his back, throwing down the gage of battle to the

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<sup>1</sup> Fox, *Acts and Mon.*, vol. iv., pp. 570, 571.

<sup>2</sup> We owe our knowledge of this fact to Professor Lorimer. See his *Patrick Hamilton, &c.*, an historical sketch.

hierarchy. What was to be done! The cruel and crafty Beaton hit on a device that but too well succeeded. Concealing his dark design, the primate sent a pressing message to Patrick, soliciting an interview with him on points of Church Reformation. Hamilton divined at once what the message portended, but in spite of the death that almost certainly awaited him, and the tears of his friends, who sought to stay him, he set out for St. Andrews. He seemed to feel that he could serve his country better by dying than by living and labouring.

This city was then the ecclesiastical and literary metropolis of Scotland. As the seat of the archiepiscopal court, numerous suitors and rich fees were drawn to it. Ecclesiastics of all ranks and students from every part of the kingdom were to be seen upon its streets. Its cathedral was among the largest in Christendom. It had numerous colleges, monasteries, and a priory, not as now, grey with age and sinking in ruin, but in the first bloom of their architecture. As the traveller approached it, whether over the long upland swell of Fife on the west, or the waters of the German Ocean on the east, the lofty summit of St. Regulus met his eye, and told him that he was nearing the chief seat of authority and wealth in Scotland.

On arriving at St. Andrews, Hamilton found the archbishop all smiles; a most gracious reception, in fact, was accorded him by the man who was resolved that he should never go hence. He was permitted to choose his own lodgings; to go in and out; to avow his opinions; to discuss questions of rite, and dogma, and administration with both doctors and students; and when he heard the echoes of his own sentiments coming back to him from amid the halls and chairs of the “Scottish Vatican,” he began to persuade himself that the day of Scotland’s deliverance was nearer than he had dared to hope, and even now rifts were appearing in the canopy of blackness over his native land. An incident happened that specially gladdened him. There was at that time, among the Canons of St. Andrews, a young man of quick parts and candid mind, but enthralled by the scholasticism of the age, and all on the side of Rome. His name was Alane, or Alesius—a native of Edinburgh. This young canon burned to cross swords with the heretic whose presence had caused no little stir in the university and monasteries of the ancient city of St. Andrew. He obtained his wish, for Hamilton was ready to receive all, whether they came to inquire or to dispute. The Sword of the Spirit, at almost the first stroke, pierced the scholastic armour in which Alesius had encased himself, and he dropped his sword to the man whom he had been so confident of vanquishing.

There came yet another, also eager to do battle for the Church—Alexander Campbell, Prior of the Dominicans—a man of excellent learning and good disposition. The archbishop, feeling the risks of bringing such a man as Hamilton to the stake, ordered Prior Campbell to wait on him, and spare no

means of bringing back the noble heretic to the faith of the Church. The matter promised at first to have just the opposite ending. After a few interviews, the prior confessed the truth of the doctrines which Hamilton taught. The conversion of Alesius seemed to have repeated itself. But, alas! no; Campbell had received the truth in the intellect only, not in the heart. Beaton sent for Campbell, and sternly demanded of him what progress he was making in the conversion of the heretic. The prior saw that on the brow of the archbishop which told him that he must make his choice between the favour of the hierarchy and the Gospel. His courage failed him: the disciple became the accuser.

Patrick Hamilton had now been a month at St. Andrews, arguing all the time, with doctors, priests, students, and townspeople. From whatever cause this delay proceeded, whether from a feeling on the part of Beaton and the hierarchy that their power was too firmly rooted to be shaken, or from a fear to strike one so exalted, it helped to the early triumph of the Reformed opinions in Scotland. During that month Hamilton was able to scatter on this central part of the field a great amount of the "incorruptible seed of the Word," which, watered as it was soon thereafter to be with the blood of him who sowed it, sprang up and brought forth much fruit. But the matter would admit of no longer delay, and Patrick was summoned to the archiepiscopal palace, to answer to a charge, of heresy.

Before accompanying Hamilton to the tribunal of Beaton, let us mention the arrangements of his persecutors for putting him to death. Their first care was to send away the king. James V. was then a youth of seventeen, and it was just possible that he might not stand quietly by and see them ruthlessly murder one who drew his descent from the royal house. Accordingly the young king was told that his soul's health required that he should make a pilgrimage to the shrine of St. Duthac, in Ross-shire, whither his father had often gone to disburden his conscience.<sup>1</sup> It was winter, and the journey would necessarily be tedious; but the purpose of the priests would be all the better served thereby. Another precaution taken by the archbishop was to cause the movements of Sir James Hamilton, Patrick's brother, to be watched, lest he should attempt a rescue. When the tidings reached Kincavel that Patrick had been arrested, consternation prevailed at the manor-house; Sir James, promptly assembling a body of men-at-arms, set out at their head for St. Andrews. The troop marched along the southern shore of the Forth, but on arriving at Queensferry, where they intended to cross, they found a storm raging in the Frith. The waves, raised into tumult in the narrow sea by the westerly gale, would permit no passage; and Sir James, the precious hours gliding

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<sup>1</sup> His journey has been doubted. Knox, Spottiswood. and others mention it. Besides, a letter of Angus to Wolsey, of date the 3uth March, 1528, says that the king was at that time in the north country, in the extreme parts of his dominions.

away, could only stand gazing helplessly on the tempest, which showed no signs of abating. Meanwhile, being descried from the opposite shore, a troop of horse was at once ordered out to dispute their march to St. Andrews. Another attempt to rescue Patrick from the hands of his persecutors was also unsuccessful. Duncan, Laird of Ardrrie, in the neighbourhood of St. Andrews, armed and mounted about a score of his tenants and servants, intending to enter the city by night and carry off his friend, whose Protestant sentiments he shared; but his small party was surrounded, and himself apprehended, by a troop of horsemen.<sup>1</sup> Hamilton was left in the power of Beaton.

The first rays of the morning sun were kindling the waters of the bay, and gilding the hill-tops of Angus on the other side of the Tay, when Hamilton was seen traversing the streets on his way to the archiepiscopal palace, in obedience to Beaton's summons. He had hoped to have an interview with the archbishop before the other judges had assembled; but, early as the hour was, the court was already met, and Hamilton was summoned before it and his accusation read. It consisted of thirteen articles, alleged to be heretical, of which the fifth and sixth may be taken as samples. These ran:—"That a man is not justified by works, but by faith alone," and "that good works do not make a good man, but that a good man makes good works."<sup>2</sup> There followed a discussion on each of the articles, and finally the whole were referred to a committee of the judges chosen by Beaton, who were to report their judgment upon them in a few days. Pending their decision, Hamilton was permitted his liberty as heretofore; the object of his enemies being to veil what was coming till it should be so near that rescue would be impossible.

In a few days the commissioners intimated that they had arrived at a decision on the articles. This opened the way for the last act of the tragedy. Beaton issued his orders for the apprehension of Patrick, and at the same time summoned his court for the next day. Fearing a tumult should he conduct Hamilton to prison in open day, the officer waited till night-fall before executing the mandate of the archbishop. A little party of friends had that evening assembled at Patrick's lodgings. Their converse was prolonged till late in the evening, for they felt loth to separate. The topics that engaged their thoughts and formed the matter of their talk, it is not difficult to conjecture. Misgivings and anxieties they could not but feel when they thought of the sentence to be pronounced in the cathedral tomorrow. But with these gloomy presentiments there would mingle cheering hopes inspired by the prosperous state of the Reformation at that hour on the Continent of Europe. When from their own land, still covered with darkness, they turned their eyes abroad, they saw only the most splendid triumphs. In Germany a phalanx of

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<sup>1</sup> McCrie, *Life of Melville*, vol. i., note D.

<sup>2</sup> The articles of Hamilton's indictment, quoted from the Registers, are given in full by Fox, vol. iv., pp. 559, 560. Calderwood, vol. i., p. 76. Spottiswood, p. 63.

illustrious doctors, of chivalrous princes, and of free cities had gathered round the Protestant standard. In Switzerland the new day was spreading from canton to canton with an effulgence sweeter far than ever was day-break on the snows of its mountains. Farel was thundering in the cities of the Jura, and day by day advancing his posts nearer to Geneva. At the polished court of Francis I., and in the halls of the Sorbonne, Luther's doctrine had found eloquent expositors and devoted disciples, making the hope not too bold that the ancient, civilised, and powerful nation of France would in a short time be won to the Gospel. Surmounting the lofty barrier of snows and glaciers within which Italy reposes, the light was circulating round the shores of Como, gilding the palaces of Ferrara and Florence, and approaching the very gates of Rome itself. Amid the darkness of the Seven Hills, whispers were beginning to be heard, "The morning cometh."

Turning to the other extremity of Europe, the prospect was not less gladdening. In Denmark the mass had fallen, and the vernacular Scriptures were being circulated through the nation. In Sweden a Protestant king filled the throne, and a Protestant clergy ministered to the people. In Norway the Protestant faith had taken root, and was flourishing amid its fiords and pine-covered mountains. Nay, to the shores of Iceland had that blessed day-spring travelled. It could not be that the day should break on every land between Italy's "snowy ridge" and Iceland's frozen shore, and the night continue to cover Scotland. It could not be that the sunrise should kindle into glory the Swiss mountains, the German plains, and the Norwegian pine-forests, and no dawn light up the straths of Caledonia. No! the hour would strike: the nation would shake off its chains, and a still brighter lamp than that which Columba had kindled at Iona would shed its radiance on hill and valley, on hamlet and city of Scotland. Whatever tomorrow might bring, this was what the future would bring; and the joy these prospects inspired could be read in the brightening eyes and on the beaming faces of the little company in this chamber, and most of all on those of the youthful and noble form in the centre of the circle.

But hark! the silence of the night is broken by a noise as of hostile steps at the door. The company, startled, gaze into one another's faces, and are silent. Heavy foot-steps are now heard ascending the stair; the next moment there is a knocking at the chamber door. With calm voice Hamilton bids them open the door; nay, he himself steps forward and opens it. The archbishop's officer enters the apartment. "Whom do you want?" inquires Patrick. "I want Hamilton," replies the man. "I am Hamilton," says the other, giving himself up, requesting only that his friends might be allowed to depart unharmed.

A party of soldiers waited at the door to receive the prisoner. On his descending, they closed round him, and led him through the silent streets of the slumbering city to the castle. Nothing was heard save the low moaning of the

night-wind, and the sullen dash of the wave as it broke against the rocky foundations of the sea-tower, to the dungeons of which Hamilton was consigned for the night.

It is the morning of the last day of February, 1528. Far out in the bay the light creeps up from the German Ocean: the low hills that run along on the south of the city, come out in the dawn, and next are seen the sands of the Tay, with the blue summits of Angus beyond, while the mightier masses of the Grampians stand up in the northern sky. Now the sun rises; and tower and steeple and, proudest of all, Scotland's metropolitan cathedral begin to glow in the light of the new-risen luminary. A terrible tragedy is that sun to witness before he shall set. The archbishop is up betimes, and so too are priest and monk. The streets are already all a-stir. A stream of bishops, nobles, canons, priests, and citizens is rolling in at the gates of the cathedral. How proudly it lifts its towers to the sky! There is not another such edifice in all Scotland; few of such dimensions in all Christendom. And now we see the archbishop, with his long train of lords, abbots, and doctors, sweep in and take his seat on his archiepiscopal throne. Around him on the tribunal are the Bishops of Glasgow, Dunkeld, Brechin, and Dunblane. The Prior of St. Andrews, Patrick Hepburn; the Abbot of Arbroath, David Beaton; as also the Abbots of Dunfermline, Cambuskenneth, and Lindores; the Prior of Pittenweem; the Dean and Sub-Dean of Glasgow; Ramsay, Dean of the Abbey of St. Andrews; Spens, Dean of Divinity in the University; and among the rest sits Prior Alexander Campbell, the man who had acknowledged to Hamilton in private that his doctrine was true, but who, stifling his convictions, now appeal's on the tribunal as accuser and judge.

The tramp of horses outside announced the arrival of the prisoner. Hamilton was brought in, led through the throng of canons, friars, students, and townspeople, and made to mount a small pulpit erected opposite the tribunal. Prior Campbell rose and read the articles of accusation, and when he had ended began to argue with Hamilton. The prior's stock of sophisms was quickly exhausted. He turned to the bench of judges for fresh instructions. He was bidden close the debate by denouncing the prisoner as a heretic. Turning to Hamilton, the prior exclaimed, "Heretic, thou saidst it was lawful to all men to read the Word of God, and especially the New Testament." "I wot not," replied Hamilton, "if I said so; but I say now, it is reason and lawful to all men to read the Word of God, and that they are able to understand the same; and in particular the latter will and testament of Jesus Christ." "Heretic," again urged the Dominican, "thou sayest it is but lost labour to call on the saints, and in particular on the blessed Virgin Mary, as mediators to God for us." "I say with Paul," answered the confessor, "there is no mediator between God and us but Christ Jesus his Son, and whatsoever they be who call or pray to any saint departed, they spoil Christ Jesus of his office." "Heretic,"

again exclaimed Prior Campbell, “thou sayest it is all in vain to sing soul-masses, psalms, and dirges for the relaxation of souls departed, who are continued in the pains of purgatory.” “Brother,” said the Reformer, “I have never read in the Scripture of God of such a place as purgatory, nor yet believe I there is anything that can purge the souls of men but the blood of Jesus Christ.” Lifting up his voice once more Campbell shouted out, as if to drown the cry in his own conscience, “Heretic, detestable, execrable, impious heretic!” “Nay, brother,” said Hamilton, directing a look of compassion towards the wretched man, “thou dost not in thy heart think me heretic—thou knowest in thy conscience that I am no heretic.”

Not a voice was there on that bench but in condemnation of the prisoner. “Away with him! away with him to the stake!” said they all. The archbishop rose, and solemnly pronounced sentence on Hamilton as a heretic, delivering him over to the secular arm—that is, to his own soldiers and executioners—to be punished.

This sentence, Beaton believed, was to stamp out heresy, give a perpetuity of dominion and glory to the Papacy in Scotland, and hallow the proud fane in which it was pronounced, as the high sanctuary of the nation’s worship for long centuries. How would it have amazed the proud prelate, and the haughty and cruel men around him, had they been told that this surpassingly grand pile should in a few years cease to be—that altar, and stone image, and archiepiscopal throne, and tall massy column, and lofty roof, and painted oriel, before this generation had passed away, smitten by a sudden stroke, should fall in ruin, and nothing of all the glory on which their eyes now rested remain, save a few naked walls and shattered towers, with the hoarse roar of the ocean sounding on the shingly beach beneath, and the loud scream of the sea-bird, as it flew past, echoing through their ruins!

Escorted by a numerous armed band, Hamilton was led back to the castle, and men were sent to prepare the stake in front of St. Salvator’s College.<sup>1</sup> The interval was passed by the martyr in taking his last meal and conversing calmly with his friends. When the hour of noon struck, he rose up and bade the governor be admitted. He set out for the place where he was to die, carrying his New Testament in his hand, a few friends by his side, and his faithful servant following. He walked in the midst of his guards, his step firm, his countenance serene.

When he came in sight of the pile he halted, and uncovering his head, and raising his eyes to heaven, he continued a few minutes in prayer. At the stake he gave his New Testament to a friend as his last gift. Then calling his servant to him, he took off his cap and gown and gave them to him, saying,

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<sup>1</sup> Now the united College of St. Salvator’s and St. Leonard’s. The Martyrs’ Free Church marks the site of the martyrdom.

“These will not profit in the fire; they will profit thee. After this, of me thou canst receive no commodity except the example of my death, which I pray thee bear in mind. For albeit it be bitter to the flesh, and fearful before man, yet is it the entrance to eternal life, which none shall possess that denies Christ Jesus before this wicked generation.”

He now ascended the pile. The executioners drew an iron band round his body, and fastened him to the stake. They piled up the fagots, and put a bag of gunpowder amongst them to make them ignite. “In the name of Jesus,” said the martyr, “I give up my body to the fire, and commit my soul into the hands of the Father.”

The torch was now brought. The gunpowder was exploded; it shot a fagot in the martyr’s face, but did not kindle the wood. More powder was brought and exploded, but without kindling the pile. A third supply was procured; still the fagots would not burn: they were green. Turning to the deathsman, Hamilton said, “Have you no dry wood?” Some persons ran to fetch some from the castle; the sufferer all the while standing at the stake, wounded in the face, and partially scorched, yet “giving no signs of impatience or anger.” So testifies Alesius, who says, “I was myself present, a spectator of that tragedy.”<sup>1</sup>

Hovering near that pile, drawn thither it would seem by some dreadful fascination, was Prior Campbell. While the fresh supplies of powder and wood were being brought, and the executioners were anew heaping up the fagots, Campbell, with frenzied voice, was calling on the martyr to recant. “Heretic,” he shouted, “be converted; call upon Our Lady; only say, *Salve Regina*.” “If thou believest in the truth of what thou sayest,” replied the confessor, “bear witness to it by putting the tip of thy finger only into the fire in which my whole body is burning.”<sup>2</sup> The Dominican burst out afresh into accusations and insults. “Depart from me, thou messenger of Satan,” said the martyr, “and leave me in peace.” The wretched man was unable either to go away or cease reviling. “Submit to the Pope,” he cried, “there is no salvation but in union to him.” “Thou wicked man,” said Hamilton, “thou knowest the contrary, for thou toldest me so thyself. I appeal thee before the tribunal-seat of Jesus Christ.” At the hearing of these words the friar rushed to his monastery: in a few days his reason gave way, and he died raving mad, at the day named in the citation of the martyr.<sup>3</sup>

Patrick Hamilton was led to the stake at noon: the afternoon was wearing, in fact it was now past sunset. These six hours had he stood on the pile, his

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<sup>1</sup> Alesius, *Liber Psalm*.

<sup>2</sup> Alesius, *Liber Psalm*.

<sup>3</sup> So Fox narrates, on the testimony of men who had been present at the burning, and who were alive in Scotland when the materials of his history were collected. See Laing, *Knox*, vol. I., Appendix iii.; also Alesius, *Liber Psalm*.; and Buchanan, lib. xiv., ann (1527) 1528.

face bruised, his limbs scorched; but now the end was near, for his whole body was burning in the fire, the iron band round his middle was red-hot, and the martyr was almost burned in two. One approached him and said, "If thou still holdest true the doctrine for which thou diest, make us a sign." Two of the fingers of his right hand were already burned, and had dropped off. Stretching out his arm, he held out the remaining three fingers till they too had fallen into the fire. The last words he was heard to utter were, "How long, O Lord, shall darkness overwhelm this realm? how long wilt thou suffer this tyranny of men? Lord Jesus, receive my spirit."

We have given prominence to this great martyr, because his death was one of the most powerful of the instrumentalities that worked for the emancipation of his native land. It was around his stake that the first decided dawn of Scotland's Reformation took place. His noble birth, the fame of his learning, his spotless character, his gracious manners, his protracted sufferings, borne with such majestic meekness, and the awful death of the man who had been his accuser before the tribunal, and his tormentor at the stake, combined to give unusual grandeur, not unmingled with terror, to his martyrdom, and made it touch a chord in the nation's heart, that never ceased to vibrate till "the rage of the great red dragon" was vanquished, and "the black and settled night of ignorance and anti-Christian tyranny" having been expelled, "the odour of the returning Gospel" began to bathe the land with "the fragrancy of heaven."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Milton, *Prose Works: Of Reformation in England*.

## CHAPTER III.

### WISHART IS BURNED, AND KNOX COMES FORWARD.

Growing Discredit of the Hierarchy—Martyrs—Henry Forrest—David Straiton and Norman Gourlay—Their Trial and Burning—Thomas Forrest, Vicar of Dollar—Burning of Five Martyrs—Jerome Russel and Alexander Kennedy—Cardinal David Beaton—Exiles—Number of Sufferers—Plot to Cut off all the Nobles favourable to the New Opinions—Defeat at the Solway, and Discovery of the Plot—Ministry and Martyrdom of George Wishart—Birth and Education of Knox.

BETWEEN the death of Hamilton and the appearance of Knox there intervenes a period of a chequered character; nevertheless, we can trace all throughout it a steady onward march of Scotland towards emancipation. Hamilton had been burned; Alesius and others had fled in terror; and the priests, deeming themselves undisputed masters, demeaned themselves more haughtily than ever. But their pride hastened their downfall. The nobles combined to set limits to an arrogance which was unbearable; the greed and profligacy of the hierarchy discredited it in the eyes of the common people; the plays of Sir David Lindsay, and the satires of the illustrious George Buchanan, helped to swell the popular indignation; but the main forces in Scotland, as in every other country, which weakened the Church of Rome, and eventually overthrew it, were the reading of the Scriptures and the deaths of the martyrs.

The burning of Patrick Hamilton began immediately to bear fruit. From his ashes arose one to continue his testimony, and to repeat his martyrdom. Henry Forrest was a Benedictine in the monastery of Linlithgow, and had come to a knowledge of the truth by the teaching and example of Hamilton. It was told the Archbishop of St. Andrews that Forrest had said that Hamilton “was a martyr, and no heretic,” and that he had a New Testament in his possession, most probably Tyndale’s, which was intelligible to the Scots of the Lowlands. “He is as bad as Master Patrick,” said Beaton; “we must burn him.” A “merry gentleman,” James Lindsay, who was standing beside the archbishop when Forrest was condemned, ventured to hint, “My lord, if ye will burn any man, let him be burned in *how* [hollow] *cellars*, for the *reek* [smoke] of Patrick Hamilton has infected as many as it did blow upon.” The rage of Beaton blinded him to the wisdom of the advice. Selecting the highest ground in the immediate neighbourhood of St. Andrews, he ordered the stake of Forrest to be planted there (1532), that the light of his pile, flashing across the Tay, might warn the men of Angus and Forfarshire to shun his heresy.<sup>1</sup>

The next two martyrs were David Straiton and Norman Gourlay. David Straiton, a Forfarshire gentleman, whose ancestors had dwelt on their lands

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<sup>1</sup> Knox, *History*. Calderwood, *History*. Fox, *Acts and Mon.* Lorimer, *Scottish Reformation*.

of Lauriston since the sixth century, was a great lover of field sports, and was giving himself no concern whatever about matters of religion. He happened to quarrel with Patrick Hepburn, Prior of St. Andrews, about his ecclesiastical dues. His lands adjoined the sea, and, daring and venturous, he loved to launch out into the deep, and always returned with his boat laden with fish. Prior Hepburn, who was as great a fisher as himself, though in other waters and for other spoil, demanded his tithe. Straiton threw every tenth fish into the sea, and gruffly told the prior to seek his tithe where he had found the stock. Hepburn summoned the laird to answer to a charge of heresy. Heresy! Straiton did not even know what the word meant. He began to inquire what that thing called heresy might be of which he was accused. Unable himself to read, he made his nephew open the New Testament and read it to him. He felt his sin; “he was changed,” says Knox, “as if by miracle,” and began that course of life which soon drew upon him the eyes of the hierarchy. Norman Gourlay, the other person who now fell under the displeasure of the priesthood, had been a student at St. Andrews, and was in priest’s orders. The trial of the two took place in Holyrood House, in presence of King James V., “clothed all in red and James Hay, Bishop of Ross, acting as commissioner for Archbishop Beaton. They were condemned, and in the afternoon of the same day they were taken to the Rood of Greenside, and there burned. This was a high ground between Edinburgh and Leith, and the execution took place there, “that the inhabitants of Fife, seeing the fire, might be stricken with terror.” To the martyrs themselves the fire had no terror, because to them death had no sting.<sup>1</sup>

Four years elapsed after the death of Straiton and Gourlay till another pile was raised in Scotland. In 1538, five persons were burned. Dean Thomas Forrest, one of the five martyrs, had been a canon regular in the Augustinian monastery of St. Colme Inch, in the Frith of Forth, and had been brought to a knowledge of the truth by perusing a volume of Augustine, which was lying unused and neglected in the monastery. Lest he should infect his brethren he was transferred to the rural parish of Dollar, at the foot of the picturesque Ochils. Here he spent some busy years preaching and catechising, till at last the eyes of the Archbishop of St. Andrews were drawn to him. There had been a recent change in that see—the uncle, James Beaton, being now dead, the more cruel and bloodthirsty nephew, David Beaton, had succeeded him. It was before this tyrant that the diligent and loving Vicar of Dollar was now summoned. He and the four companions who were tried along with him were condemned to the stake, and on the afternoon of the same day were burned on the Castle-hill of Edinburgh. Placed on this elevated site, these five

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<sup>1</sup> Laing, Knox, vol. i., pp. 58–60, and foot-notes. Calderwood, *History*. vol. i., p. 106. McCrie, *Life of Knox*, vol. i., pp. 356–369, notes.

blazing piles proclaimed to the men of Fife, and the dwellers in the Lothians, how great was the rage of the priests, but how much greater the heroism of the martyrs which overcame it.<sup>1</sup>

If the darkness threatened to close in again, the hierarchy always took care to disperse it by kindling another pile. Only a year elapsed after the burning of the five martyrs on the Castle-hill of Edinburgh, when other two confessors were called to suffer the fire. Jerome Russel, a Black Friar, and Alexander Kennedy, a gentleman of Ayrshire, were put on their trial before the Archbishop of Glasgow and condemned for heresy, and were burned next day. At the stake, Russel, the more courageous of the two, taking his youthful fellow sufferer by the hand, bade him not fear. "Death," he said, "cannot destroy us, seeing our Lord and Master has already destroyed it."

The blood the hierarchy was spilling was very fruitful. For every confessor that perished, a little company of disciples arose to fill his place. The martyr-piles, lit on elevated sites and flashing their gloomy splendour over city and shire, set the inhabitants a-talking; the story of the martyrs was rehearsed at many a fire-side, and their meekness contrasted with the cruelty and arrogance of their persecutors; the Bible was sought after, and the consequence was that the confessors of the truth rapidly increased. The first disciples in Scotland were men of rank and learning; but these burnings carried the cause down among the humbler classes. The fury of the clergy, now presided over by the truculent David Beaton, daily waxed greater, and numbers, to escape the stake, fled to foreign countries. Some of these were men illustrious for their genius and their scholarship, of whom were Gawin Logie, Principal of St. Leonard's College, the renowned George Buchanan, and McAlpine, or Maccabæus, to whom the King of Denmark gave a chair in his University of Copenhagen. The disciples in humble life, unable to flee, had to brave the terrors of the stake and cord. The greater part of their names have passed into oblivion, and only a few have been preserved.<sup>2</sup> In 1543, Cardinal Beaton made a tour through his diocese, illustrating his pride by an ostentatious display of the symbols of his rank, and his cruelty by hanging, burning, and in some cases drowning heretics, in the towns where it pleased him to set up his tribunal. The profligate James V. had fallen under the power of the hierarchy, and this emboldened the cardinal to venture upon a measure which he doubted not would be the death-blow of heresy in Scotland, and would secure to the hierarchy a long and tranquil reign over the country. He meditated cutting off by violence all the nobles who were known to favour the Reformed opinions. The list compiled by Beaton contained above 100 names, and among those marked out for slaughter were Lord Hamilton, the

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<sup>1</sup> Knox, *History. Fox, Acts and Mon. Scots Worthies*; Glasgow ed., 1876.

<sup>2</sup> See a list of sufferers in McCrie, *Life of Knox*, vol. i., pp. 356—369, notes; Edin., 1831.

first peer in the realm, the Earls of Cassillis and Glencairn, and the Earl Mariseshall—a proof of the hold which the Protestant doctrine had now taken in Scotland. Before the bloody plot could be executed the Scottish army sustained a terrible defeat at the Solway, and the king soon thereafter dying of a broken heart, the list of the proscribed was found upon his person after death. The nation saw with horror how narrow its escape had been from a catastrophe which, beginning with the nobility, would have quickly extended to all the favourers of the Protestant opinions.<sup>1</sup> The discovery helped not a little to pave the way for the downfall of a hierarchy which was capable of concocting so diabolical a plot.

Instead of the nobility and gentry of Scotland, it was the king himself whom the priests had brought to destruction; for, hoping to prevent the Reformed opinions entering Scotland from England, the priests had instigated James V. to offer to Henry VIII. the affront which led to the disaster of Solway-moss, followed so quickly by the death-bed scene in the royal palace of Falkland. The throne now vacant, it became necessary to appoint a regent to govern the kingdom during the minority of the Princess Mary, who was just eight days old when her father died, on the 16th of December, 1542. The man whose name was first on the list of nobles marked for slaughter, was chosen to the regency, although Cardinal Beaton sought to bar his way to it by producing a forged will of the late king appointing himself to the post.<sup>2</sup> The fact that Arran was a professed Reformer contributed quite as much to his elevation as the circumstance of his being premier peer. Kirkaldy of Grange, Learmonth of Balcomy, Balnaves of Halhill, Sir David Lindsay of the Mount, and other known friends of the Reformed opinions became his advisers. He selected as his chaplains Thomas Guillian and John Rough, and opening to them the Church of Holyrood, they there preached “doctrine so wholesome,” and so zealously reprov’d “impiety and superstition,” that the Grey Friars, says Knox, “rowped as they had been ravens,” crying out, “Heresy! heresy! Guillian and Rough will carry the governor to the devil!”<sup>3</sup> But the most important of all the measures of the regent was the passing of the Act of Parliament, 15th of March, 1543, which made it lawful for every subject in the realm to read the Bible in his mother tongue. Hitherto the Word of God had lain under the ban of the hierarchy; that obstruction now removed, “then might have been seen,” says Knox, “the Bible lying upon almost every gentleman’s table. The New Testament was borne about in many men’s hands.”

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<sup>1</sup> Sadler, *Papers*, vol. i., p. 94. *Memoirs of Sir James Melvil*, pp. 3, 4; Edinburgh, 1735. Laing, *Knox*, vol. i., pp. 80–84, and notes. Sir Ralph Sadler, in a letter to Henry VIII., 27th March, 1543, detailing a conversation he had with Governor Hamilton, says that “the scroll contained eighteen score noblemen and gentlemen, all well-minded to God’s Word.”

<sup>2</sup> Keith has sought to discredit this allegation, but the great preponderance of testimony is against him. (See Laing, *Knox*, vol. i., p. 91, foot-note.)

<sup>3</sup> Knox, *Hist.*, vol. i., pp. 96, 67; Laing’s edition.

And though, as Knox tells us, some simulated a zeal for the Bible to make court to the governor, “yet thereby did the knowledge of God wondrously increase, and God gave his Holy Spirit to simple men in great abundance. Then were set forth works in our own tongue, besides those that came from England, that did disclose the pride, the craft, the tyranny and abuses of that Roman Antichrist.”<sup>1</sup>

It was only four months after Scotland had received the gift of a free Bible, that another boon was given it in the person of an eloquent preacher. We refer to George Wishart, who followed Patrick Hamilton at an interval of seventeen years. Wishart, born in 1512, was the son of Sir James Wishart of Pitarrow, an ancient and honourable family of the Mearns. An excellent Grecian, he was the first who taught that noblest of the tongues of the ancient world in the grammar schools of Scotland. Erskine of Dun had founded an academy at Montrose, and here the young Wishart taught Greek, it being then not uncommon for the scions of aristocratic and even noble families to give instructions in the learned languages. Wishart, becoming “suspect” of heresy, retired first to England, then to Switzerland, where he passed a year in the society of Bullinger and the study of the Helvetic Confession. Returning to England, he took up his abode for a short time at Cambridge. Let us look at the man as the graphic pen of one of his disciples has painted him. “He was a man,” says Tylney—writing long after the noble figure that enshrined so many sweet virtues, and so much excellent learning and burning eloquence, had been reduced to ashes—“he was a man of tall stature, polled-headed, and on the same a round French cap of the best. Judged of melancholy complexion by his physiognomy, black-haired, long-bearded, comely of personage, well-spoken after his country of Scotland, courteous, lowly, lovely, glad to teach, desirous to learn, and was well-travelled; having on him for his habit or clothing never but a mantle, frieze gown to the shoes, a black Milan fustian doublet, and plain black hosen, coarse new canvass for his shirts, and white falling bands and cuffs at the hands.”<sup>2</sup>

Wishart returned to Scotland in the July of 1543. Arran’s zeal for the Reformation had by this time spent itself; and the astute and resolute Beaton was dominant in the nation. It was in the midst of perils that Wishart began his ministry. “The beginning of his doctrine” was Montrose, at that time the most Lutheran town perhaps in Scotland. He next visited Dundee, where his eloquence drew around him great crowds. Following the example of Zwingle at Zurich, and of Calvin at Geneva, instead of discoursing on desultory topics, he opened the Epistle to the Romans, and proceeded to expound it chapter by chapter to his audience. The Gospel thus rose before them as a grand

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<sup>1</sup> Laing, Knox, vol. i., p. 100.

<sup>2</sup> Fox, quoted by Professor Lorimer, *Scottish Reformation*, p. 99.

unity. Beginning with the “one man” by whom sin entered, they passed on to the “one Man” by whom had come the “free gift.” The citizens were hanging upon the lips of the greatest pulpit orator that had arisen in Scotland for centuries, when they were surprised by a visit from the governor and the cardinal, who brought with them a train of field artillery. Believing the town to be full of Lutherans, they had come prepared to besiege it. The citizens retired, taking with them, it is probable, their preacher, leaving the gates of the city open for the entrance of the Churchman and his unspiritual accompaniments. When the danger had passed Wishart and his flock returned, and, resuming his exposition at the point where the cardinal’s visit had compelled him to break off, he continued his labours in Dundee for some months. Arran had sunk into the mere tool of the cardinal, and it was not to be expected that the latter, now all-powerful in Scotland, would permit the erection of a Lutheran stronghold almost at his very door. He threatened to repeat his visit to Dundee if the preacher were not silenced, and Wishart, knowing that Beaton would keep his word, and seeing some of the citizens beginning to tremble at the prospect, deemed it prudent to obey the charge delivered to him in the queen’s name, while in the act of preaching, to “depart, and trouble the town no more.”

The evangelist went on his way to Ayr and Kyle. That was soil impregnated with seed sown in it by the hands of the Lollards. The church doors were locked against the preacher, but it was a needless precaution. No church could have contained the congregations that flocked to hear him. Wishart went to the market crosses, to the fields, and making of a “dry dyke”<sup>1</sup> a pulpit, he preached to the eager and awed thousands seated round him on the grass or on the heather. His words took effect on not a few who had been previously notorious for their wickedness; and the sincerity of their conversion was attested, not merely by the tears that rolled down their faces at the moment, but by the purity and consistency of their whole after-life. How greatly do those err who believe the Reformation to have been but a battle of dogmas!

The Reformation was the cry of the human conscience for pardon. That great movement took its rise, not in the conviction of the superstitions, exactions, and scandals of the Roman hierarchy, but in the conviction of each individual of his own sin. That conviction was wrought in him by the Holy Spirit, then abundantly poured down upon the nations; and the Gospel which showed the way of forgiveness delivered men from bondage, and imparting a new life to them, brought them into a world of liberty. This was the true Reformation. We would call it a revival were it not that the term is too weak:

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<sup>1</sup> Laing, *Knox*, vol. i., p. 128.

it was a creation; it peopled Christendom with new men, in the first place, and in the second it covered it with new Churches and States.

Hardly had Wishart departed from Dundee when the plague entered it. This was a visitant whose shafts were more deadly than even the cardinal's artillery. The lazar-houses that stood at the "East Port," round the shrine of St. Roque, the protector from pestilence, were crowded with the sick and the dying. Wishart hastened back the moment he heard the news, and mounting on the top of the Cowgate—the healthy inside the gate, the plague-stricken outside—he preached to the two congregations, choosing as his text the words of the 107th Psalm, "He sent his Word and healed them." A new life began to be felt in the stricken city; measures were organised, by the advice of Wishart, for the distribution of food and medicine among the sick,<sup>1</sup> and the plague began to abate. One day his labours were on the point of being brought to an abrupt termination. A priest, hired by the cardinal to assassinate him, waited at the foot of the stairs for the moment when he should descend. A cloak thrown over him concealed the naked dagger which he held in his hand; but the keen eye of Wishart read the murderous design in the man's face. Going up to him and putting his hand upon his arm, he said, "Friend, what would ye?" at the same time disarming him. The crowd outside rushed in, and would have dispatched the would-be assassin, but Wishart threw himself between the indignant citizens and the man, and thus, in the words of Knox, "saved the life of him who sought his."

On leaving Dundee in the end of 1545, Wishart repaired to Edinburgh, and thence passed into East Lothian, preaching in its towns and villages. He had a deep presentiment that his end was near, and that he would fall a sacrifice to the wrath of Beaton. Apprehended at Ormiston on the night of the 16th of January, 1546, he was carried to St. Andrews, thrown into the Sea-tower, and brought to trial on the 28th of February, and condemned to the flames. Early next morning the preparations were begun for his execution, which was to take place at noon. The scaffold was erected a little way in front of the cardinal's palace, in the dungeons of which Wishart lay. The guns of the castle, the gunners by their side, were shotted and turned on the scaffold; an iron stake, chains, and gunpowder were provided for the martyr; and the windows and wall-tops were lined with cushions, and draped with green hangings, for the luxurious repose of the cardinal and bishops while witnessing the spectacle. At noon Wishart was led forth in the midst of soldiers, his hands tied behind his back, a rope round his neck, and an iron chain round his middle. His last meal in the hall of the castle before being led out he had converted into the "Last Supper," which he partook with his friends. "Consider and behold my visage," said he, "ye shall not see me change my colour.

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<sup>1</sup> Laing, *Knox*, vol. i., p. 130.

The grim fire I fear not. I know surely that my soul shall sup with my Saviour this night.” Having taken his place at the stake, the powder-bags were first exploded, scorching him severely; the rope round his neck was then drawn tightly to strangle him, and last of all his body was burned to ashes.”<sup>1</sup>

“It was Wishart,” says Dr. Lorimer, “who first moulded the Reformed theology of Scotland upon the Helvetic, as distinguished from the Saxon type; and it was he who first taught the Church of Scotland to reduce her ordinances and Sacraments with rigorous fidelity to the standard of Christ’s Institutions.”<sup>2</sup>

It is at the stake of Wishart that we first catch sight as it were of Knox, for the parting between the two, so affectingly recorded by Knox himself, took place not many days before the death of the martyr. John Knox, descended from the Knoxes of Ranferly, was born in Gifford-gate, Haddington,<sup>3</sup> in 1505. From the school of his native town he passed (1522) to the University of Glasgow, and was entered under the celebrated John Major, then Principal Regent or Professor of Philosophy and Divinity. After leaving college he passes out of view for ten or a dozen years. About this time he would seem to have taken priest’s orders, and to have been for upwards of ten years connected with one of the religious establishments in the neighbourhood of Haddington. He had been enamoured of the scholastic philosophy, the science that sharpened the intellect, but left the conscience unmoved and the soul unfed; but now loathing its dry crusts, and turning away from its great doctors, he seats himself at the feet of the great Father of the West. He read and studied the writings of Augustine. Rich in evangelical truth and impregnate with the fire of Divine love, Augustine’s pages must have had much to do with the moulding of Knox’s mind, and the implanting upon it of that clear, broad, and heroic stamp which it wore all his life long.

Augustine and Jerome led Knox to the feet of a Greater. The future Reformer now opens the Sacred Oracles, and he who had once wandered in the dry and thirsty wilderness of scholasticism finds himself at the fountain and well-head of Divine knowledge. The wonder he felt when the doctrines of the schools vanished around him like mist, and the eternal verities of the Gospel stood out before him in the clear light of the Bible, we are not told. Did the day which broke on Luther and Calvin amid lightnings and great thunderings dawn peacefully on Knox! We do not think so. Doubtless the Scottish Reformer, before escaping from the yoke of Rome, had to undergo struggles of soul akin to those of his two great predecessors; but they have

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<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 169–171.

<sup>2</sup> *The Scottish Reformation*, p. 154.

<sup>3</sup> An entry in the archives of the Hôtel de Ville of Geneva, first brought to light by Dr. David Laing, places it beyond a doubt that Knox’s birth-place was not the village of Gifford, as Dr. McCrie had been led to suppose, but the Gifford-gate, Haddington. (See Laing, *Knox*, vol. vi., preface; ed. 1864.)

been left unrecorded. We of this age are, in this respect, free-born; the men of the sixteenth century had to buy their liberty, and ours at the same time, with a great sum.

From the doctors of the Middle Ages to the Fathers of the first ages, from the Fathers to the Word of God, Knox was being led, by a way he knew not, to the great task that awaited him His initial course of preparation, begun by Augustine, was perfected doubtless by the private instructions and public sermons of Wishart, which Knox was privileged to enjoy during the weeks that immediately preceded the martyr's death. That death would seal to Knox all that had fallen from the lips of Wishart, and would bring him to the final resolve to abandon the Roman communion and cast in his lot with the Reformers. But both the man and the country had yet to pass through many sore conflicts before either was ready for that achievement which crowned the labours of the one and completed the Reformation of the other.

## CHAPTER IV.

### KNOX'S CALL TO THE MINISTRY AND FIRST SERMON.

Cardinal Beaton Assassinated—Castle of St. Andrews Held by the Conspirators—Knox Enters it—Called to the Ministry—His First Sermon—Key-note of the Reformation Struck—Knox in the French Galleys—The Check Useful to Scotland—Useful to Knox—What he Learned Abroad—Visits Scotland in 1555—The Nobles Withdraw from Mass—A “Congregation”—Elders—The First “Band” Subscribed—Walter Mill Burned at St. Andrews—The Last Martyr of the Reformation in Scotland.

ON Saturday morning, the 29th of May, the Castle of St. Andrews was surprised by Norman Leslie and his accomplices, and Cardinal Beaton slain. This was a violence which the Reformation did not need, and from which it did not profit. The cardinal was removed, but the queen-dowager, Mary of Guise, a woman of consummate craft, and devoted only to France and Rome, remained. The weak-minded Arran had now consummated his apostacy, and was using his power as regent only at the bidding of the priests. Moreover, the see which the dagger of Leslie had made vacant was tilled by a man in many respects as bad as the bloodthirsty and truculent priest who had preceded him. John Hamilton, brother of the regent, did not equal Beaton in vigour of mind, but he equalled him in profligacy of manners, and in the unrelenting and furious zeal with which he pursued all who favoured the Gospel. Thus the persecution did not slacken.

The cardinal's corpse flung upon a dung-hill, the conspirators kept possession of his castle. It had been recently and strongly repaired, and was well mounted with guns; and although the regent besieged it for months, he had to retire, leaving its occupants in peace. Its holders were soon joined by their friends, favourers of the Reformation, though with a purer zeal, including among others Kirkaldy of Grange, Melville of Raith, and Leslie of Rothes. It had now become an asylum for the persecuted, and at Easter, 1547, it opened its gates to receive John Knox. Knox had now reached the mature age of forty-two, and here it was that he entered on that public career which he was to pursue without pause, through labour and sorrow, through exile and peril, till the grave should bring him repose.

That career opened affectingly and beautifully. The company in the castle had now grown to upwards of 150, and “perceiving the manner” of Knox's teaching, they “began earnestly to travail with him that he would take the preaching place upon him,” and when he hesitated they solemnly adjured him, as Beza had done Calvin, “not to refuse this holy vocation.” The flood of tears, which was the only response that Knox was able to make, the seclusion in which he shut himself up for days, and the traces of sore mental conflict which his countenance bore when at last he emerged from his chamber,

paint with a vividness no words can reach the sensibility and the conscientiousness, the modesty and the strength of his character. It is a great office, it is the greatest of all offices, he feels, to which he is called; and if he trembles in taking it upon him, it is not alone from a sense of unfitness, but from a knowledge of the thoroughness of his devotion, and that the office once undertaken, its responsibilities and claims must and will, at whatever cost, be discharged.

Knox preached in the castle, and at times also in the parish church of St. Andrews. In his first sermon in the latter place he struck the key-note of the Reformation in his native land. The Church of Rome, said he, is the Antichrist of Scripture. No movement can rise higher than its fundamental principle, and no doctrine less broad than this which Knox now proclaimed could have sustained the weight of such a Reformation as Scotland needed. "Others sued [lopped] the branches of the Papistrie," said some of his hearers, "but he strikes at the root to destroy the whole."<sup>1</sup> Hamilton and Wishart had stopped short of this. They had condemned abuses, and pointed out the doctrinal errors in which these abuses had their source, and they had called for a purging out of scandalous persons—in short, a reform of the existing Church. Knox came with the axe in his hand to cut down the rotten tree. He saw at once the point from which he must set out if he would arrive at the right goal. Any principle short of this would but give him an improved Papacy, not a Scriptural Church—a temporary abatement to be followed by a fresh outburst of abuses, and the last end of the Papacy in Scotland would be worse than the first. Greater than Hamilton, greater than Wishart, Knox took rank with the first minds of the Reformation, in the depth and comprehensiveness of the principles from which he worked. The deliverer of Scotland stood before his countrymen.

But no sooner had he been revealed to the eyes of those who waited for deliverance than he was withdrawn. The first gun in the campaign had been fired; the storming of the Papacy would go vigorously forward under the intrepid champion who had come to lead. But so it was not to be; the struggle was to be a protracted one. On the 4th of June, 1547, the French war-ships appeared in the offing. In a few hours the castle, with its miscellaneous occupants, was enclosed on the side towards the sea, while the forces of Arran besieged it by land. It fell, and all in it, including Knox, were put on board the French galleys and, in violation of the terms of capitulation, borne away into foreign slavery. The last French ship had disappeared below the horizon, and with it had vanished the last hope of Scotland's Reformation. The priests loudly triumphed, and the friends of the Gospel hung their heads.

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<sup>1</sup> Laing, *Knox*, vol. i., p. 192.

The work now stood still, but only to the eye—it was all the while advancing underground. In this check lay hid a blessing to Scotland, for it was well that its people should have time to meditate upon the initial principle of the Reformation which Knox had put before them. That principle was the seed of a new Church and a new State, but it must have time to unfold itself. The people of Scotland had to be taught that Reformation could not be furthered by the dagger; the stakes of Hamilton and Wishart had advanced the cause, but the sword of Norman Leslie had thrown it back; they had to be taught, too, that to reform the Papacy was to perpetuate it, and that they must return to the principle of Knox if they were ever to see a Scriptural Church rising in their land.

To Knox himself this check was not less necessary. His preparation for the great task before him was as yet far from complete. He wanted neither zeal nor knowledge, but his faculties had to be widened by observation, and his character strengthened by suffering. His sojourn abroad shook him free of those merely insular and home views, which cling to one who has never been beyond seas, especially in an age when the channels of intercourse and information between Scotland and the rest of Christendom were few and contracted. In the French galleys, and scarcely less in the city of Frankfort, he saw deeper than he had ever done before into the human heart. It was there he learned that self-control, that patience of labour, that meek endurance of wrong, that calm and therefore steady and resolute resistance to vexatious and unrighteous opposition, and that self-possession in difficulty and danger that so greatly distinguished him ever after, and which were needful and indeed essential in one who was called, in planting religion in his native land, to confront the hostility of a Popish court, to moderate the turbulence of factious barons, and to inform the ignorance and control the zeal of a people who till that time had been strangers to the blessings of religion and liberty. It was not for nothing that the hand which gave to Scotland its liberty, should itself for nearly the space of two years have worn fetters.

It was another advantage of his exile that from a foreign stand-point Knox could have a better view of the drama now in progress in his native land, and could form a juster estimate of its connection with the rest of Christendom, and the immense issues that hung upon the Reformation of Scotland as regarded the Reformation of other countries. Here he saw deeper into the cunningly contrived plots and the wide-spread combinations then forming among the Popish princes of the age—a race of rulers who will remain renowned through all time for their unparalleled cruelty and their unfathomable treachery. These lessons Knox learned abroad, and they were worth all the years of exile and wandering and all the hope deferred which they cost him; and of how much advantage they were to him we shall by-and-by see, when we come to narrate his supreme efforts for his native land.

Nor could it be other than advantageous to come into contact with the chiefs of the movement, and especially with him who towered above them all. To see Calvin, to stand beside the source of that mighty energy that pervaded the whole field of action to its farthest extremities, must have been elevating and inspiring. Knox's views touching both the doctrine and the polity of the Church were formed before he visited Calvin, and were not altered in consequence of that visit; but doubtless his converse with the great Reformer helped to deepen and enlarge all his views, and to keep alive the fire that burned within him, first kindled into a flame during those days of anguish which he passed shut up in his chamber in the Castle of St. Andrews. In all his wanderings it was Scotland, bound in the chains of Rome, riveted by French steel, that occupied his thoughts; and intently did he watch every movement in it, sometimes from Geneva, sometimes from Dieppe, and at other times from the nearer point of England; nor did he ever miss an opportunity of letting his burning words be heard by his countrymen, till at length, in 1555, eight years from the time he had been carried away with the French fetters on his arm, he was able again to visit his native land.

Knox's present sojourn in Scotland was short, but it tended powerfully to consolidate and advance the movement. His presence imparted new life to its adherents; and his counsels led them to certain practical measures, by which each strengthened the other, and all were united in a common action. Several of the leading nobles were now gathered round the Protestant banner. Among these were Archibald, Lord Lorne, afterwards Earl of Argyle; John, Lord Erskine, afterwards Earl of Mar; Lord James Stuart, afterwards Earl of Murray; the Earl Marischall; the Earl of Glencairn; John Erskine of Dun; William Maitland of Lethington, and others.<sup>1</sup> Up to this time these men had attended mass, and were not outwardly separate from the communion of the Roman Church; but, at the earnest advice of the Reformer, they resolved not to participate in that rite in future, and to withdraw themselves from the Roman worship and pale; and they signalled their secession by receiving the Sacrament in its Protestant form at the hands of Knox.<sup>2</sup> We see in this the laying of the first foundations of the Reformed Church of Scotland. In the days of Hamilton and Wishart the Reformation in Scotland was simply a doctrine; now it was a congregation. This was all that the times permitted the Reformer to do for the cause of the Gospel in Scotland; and, feeling that his continued presence in the country would but draw upon the infant community a storm of persecution, Knox retired to Geneva, where his English flock anxiously waited his coming. But on this his second departure from Scotland, he was cheered by the thought that the movement had advanced a stage. The

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<sup>1</sup> McCrie. *Life of Knox*, vol. i., p. 177.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 175.

little seed he had deposited in its soil eight years before had been growing all the while he was absent, and now when a second time he goes forth into exile, he leaves behind him a living organisation—a company of men making profession of the truth.

From this time the progress of the Reformation in Scotland was rapid. In the midland counties, comprehending Forfar, Fife, the Lothians, and Ayr, there were few places in which there were not now professors of the Reformed faith. They had as yet no preachers, but they met in such places, and at such times, as circumstances permitted, for their mutual edification. The most pious of their number was appointed to read the Scriptures, to exhort, and to offer up prayer. They were of all classes—nobles, barons, burgesses, and peasants. They felt the necessity of order in their meetings, and of purity in their lives; and with this view they chose elders to watch over their morals, promising subjection to them. Thus gradually, stage by stage, did they approach the outward organisation of a Church, and it is interesting to mark that in the Reformed Church of Scotland elders came before ministers. The beginning of these small congregations, presided over by elders, was in Edinburgh. The first town to be provided with a pastor, and favoured with the dispensation of the Sacraments, was Dundee, the scene of Wishart's labours, of which the fruits were the zeal and piety that at this early stage of the Reformation distinguished its citizens.<sup>1</sup> Dundee came to be called the Geneva of Scotland; it was the earliest and loveliest flower of that spring-time.

The next step of the "lords of the Congregation" was the framing of a "band" or covenant, in which they promised before "the Majesty of God and his Congregation" to employ their "whole power, substance, and very lives" in establishing the Gospel in Scotland, in defending its ministers, and building up its "Congregation." The earliest of these "bands" is dated the 3rd December, 1557;<sup>2</sup> and the subscribers are the Earls of Argyle, Glencairn, Morton, Lord Lorne, and Erskine of Dun. Strengthened by this "oath to God" and pledge to one another, they went forth to the battle. The year that followed (1558) witnessed a forward movement on the part of the Protestant host. The lords of the Congregation could not forbid mass, or change the public worship of the nation; nor did they seek to do so; but each nobleman within his own jurisdiction caused the English "Book of Common Prayer," together with the lessons of the Old and New Testament, to be read every Sunday and festival-day in the parish church by the curate, or if he were unable or unwilling, by the person best qualified in the parish. The Reformed teachers

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<sup>1</sup> Laing, *Knox*, i. 300. McCrie, *Life of Knox*, i. 227, 228.

<sup>2</sup> Laing, *Knox*, vol. i., pp. 273, 274; cd. 1846. Dr. McCrie mentions a similar "band" in 1556, but the earliest extant is that referred to in the text. An original copy of it, with the autographs of the subscribers, was discovered in 1860 by the Rev. James Young in the charter-chest of Cuninghame of Balgownic. The author has had an opportunity of comparing it with Knox's copy: the two exactly agree, as do also the names of the subscribers.

were also invited to preach and interpret Scripture in private houses, or in the castles of the reforming nobles, till such time as the Government would allow them to exercise their functions in public.<sup>1</sup> The latter measures in particular alarmed the hierarchy.

It began to be apparent that destruction impended over the hierarchy unless speedy measures were taken to avert it. But the priests unhappily knew of only one weapon, and though their cause had reaped small advantage from it in the past, they were still determined to make use of it. They once more lighted the flames of martyrdom. Walter Mill, parish priest of Lunan, near Montrose, had been adjudged a heretic in the time of Cardinal Beaton, but effecting his escape, he preached in various parts of the country, sometimes in private and sometimes in public. He was tracked by the spies of Beaton's successor, Archbishop Hamilton, and brought to trial in St. Andrews. He appeared before the court with tottering step and bending figure, so that all who saw him despaired of his being able to answer the questions about to be put to him. But when, on being helped up into the pulpit, he began to speak, "his voice," says Knox, "had such courage and stoutness that the church rang again." "Wilt thou not recant thy errors?" asked the tribunal after he had been subjected to a long questioning. "Ye shall know," said he, looking into the faces of his enemies, "that I will not recant the truth, for I am corn and not chaff. I will not be blown away with the wind, nor burst with the flail, but I will abide both."

He stood before his judges with the burden of eighty-two years upon him, but this could procure him no pity, nor could his enemies wait till he should drop into the grave on the brink of which he stood. He was condemned to the flames. A rope was wanted to bind the old man to the stake, but so great was the horror of his burning among the townsmen that not a merchant in all St. Andrews would sell one, and the archbishop was obliged to furnish a cord from his own palace. When ordered by Oliphant, an officer of the archbishop, to mount the pile, "No," replied the martyr, "I will not unless you put your hand to me, for I am forbidden to be accessory to my own death." Whereupon Oliphant pushed him forward, and Mill ascended with a joyful countenance, repeating the words of the Psalm, "I will go to the altar of God." As he stood at the stake, Mill addressed the people in these words: "As for me, I am fourscore and two years old, and cannot live long by course of nature; but a hundred better shall rise out of the ashes of my bones. I trust in God that I shall be the last that shall suffer death in Scotland for this cause."<sup>2</sup> He expired on the 28th of August, 1558.

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<sup>1</sup> McCrie, *Life of Knox*, vol. i., pp. 228, 229.

<sup>2</sup> Lindsay of Pitscottie, *Hist.*, p. 200. McCrie, *Life of Knox*, vol. i., p. 232.

These few last words, dropped from a tongue fast becoming unable to fulfil its office, pealed forth from amid the flames with the thrilling power of a trumpet. They may be said to have rung the death-knell of Popery in Scotland. The citizens of St. Andrews raised a pile of stones over the spot where the martyr had been burned. The priests caused them to be carried off night by night, but the ominous heap rose again duly in the morning. It would not vanish, nor would the cry from it be silenced.<sup>1</sup> The nation was roused, and Scotland waited only the advent of one of its exiled sons, who was day by day drawing nearer it, to start up as one man and rend from its neck the cruel yoke which had so long weighed it down in serfdom and superstition.

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<sup>1</sup> Calderwood, *Hist.*, vol. i., pp. 242, 243.

## CHAPTER V.

### KNOX'S FINAL RETURN TO SCOTLAND.

The Priests Renew the Persecution—The Queen Regent openly Sides with them—Demands of the Protestant Lords—Rejected—Preaching Forbidden—The Preachers Summoned before the Queen—A Great Juncture—Arrival of John Knox—Consternation of the Hierarchy—The Reformer of Scotland—Knox Outlawed—Resolves to Appear with the Preachers before the Queen—The Queen's Perfidy—Knox's Sermon at Perth—Destruction of the Grey Friars' and Black Friars' Monasteries, &c.—The Queen Regent Marches against Perth—Commencement of the Civil War.

It was now thirty years since the stake of Patrick Hamilton had lighted Scotland into the path of Reformation. The progress of the country had been slow, but now the goal was being neared, and events were thickening. The two great parties into which Scotland was divided stood frowning at each other: the crime of burning Mill on the one side, and "the oath to the Majesty of Heaven" on the other, rendered conciliation hopeless, and nothing remained but to bring the controversy between the two to a final issue.

The stake of Mill was meant to be the first of a series of martyrdoms by which the Reformers were to be exterminated. Many causes contributed to the adoption of a bolder policy on the part of the hierarchy. They could not hide from themselves that the Reformation was advancing with rapid strides. The people were deserting the mass; little companies of Protestants were forming in all the leading towns, the Scriptures were being interpreted, and the Lord's Supper dispensed according to the primitive order; many of the nobles were sheltering Protestant preachers in their castles. It was clear that Scotland was going the same road as Wittemberg and Geneva had gone; and it was equally clear that the champions of the Papacy must strike at once and with decision, or surrender the battle.

But what specially emboldened the hierarchy at this hour was the fact that the queen regent had openly come over to their side. A daughter of the House of Lorraine, she had always been with them at heart, but her ambition being to secure the crown-matrimonial of Scotland for her son-in-law, Francis II., she had poised herself, with almost the skill of a Catherine de Medici, between the bishops and the lords of the Congregation. She needed the support of both to carry her political objects. In October, 1558, the Parliament met; and the queen regent, with the assistance of the Protestants, obtained from "the Estates" all that she wished. It being no longer necessary to wear the mask, the queen now openly sided with her natural party, the men of the sword and the stake. Hence the courage which emboldened the priests to rekindle the fires of persecution; and hence, too, the vigour that now animated the Reformers. Disenchanted from a spell that had kept them dubiously

poised between the mass and the Gospel, they now saw where they stood, and, shutting their ears to Mary's soft words, they resolved to follow the policy alike demanded by their duty and their safety.

They assembled at Edinburgh, and agreed upon certain demands, which they were to present by commissioners to the convention of the nobility and the council of the clergy. The reforms asked for were three—that it should be lawful to preach and to dispense the Sacraments in the vulgar tongue; that bishops should be admitted into their secs only with the consent of the barons of the diocese, and priests with the consent of the parishioners; and that immoral and incapable persons should be removed from the pastoral office. These demands were rejected, the council having just concluded a secret treaty with the queen for the forcible suppression of the Reformation.<sup>1</sup> No sooner had the Protestant nobles left Edinburgh than the regent issued a proclamation prohibiting all persons from preaching or dispensing the Sacraments without authority from the bishops.

The Reformed preachers disobeyed the proclamation. The queen, on learning this, summoned them to appear before her at Stirling, on the 10th of May, and answer to a charge of heresy and rebellion. There were only four preachers in Scotland, namely, Paul Methven, John Christison, William Harlow, and John Willock. The Earl of Glencairn and Sir Hugh Campbell, Sheriff of Ayr, waited on the queen to remonstrate against this arbitrary proceeding. She haughtily replied that “in spite of them all their preachers should be banished from Scotland.” “What then,” they asked, “became of her oft-repeated promises to protect their preachers?” Mary, not in the least disconcerted, replied that “it became not subjects to burden their princes with promises further than they pleased to keep them.” “If so,” replied Glencairn, “we on our side are free of our allegiance.” The queen's tone now fell, and she promised to think seriously over the further prosecution of the affair. At that moment, news arrived that France and Spain had concluded a peace, and formed a league for the suppression of the Reformation by force of arms. Scotland would not be overlooked in the orthodox crusade, and the regent already saw in the contemplated measures the occupation of that country by French soldiers. She issued peremptory orders for putting the four Protestant ministers upon their trial. It was a strange and startling juncture. The blindness of the hierarchy in rejecting the very moderate reform which the Protestants asked, the obstinacy of the queen in putting the preachers upon their trial, and the league of the foreign potentates, which threatened to make Scotland a mere dependency of France, all met at this moment, and constituted a crisis of a truly momentous character, but which above most things

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<sup>1</sup> McCrie, *Life of Knox*, vol. i., pp. 251, 252. See their “Protestation,” given in to Parliament, in Laing, *Knox*, vol. i., pp. 309–314.

helped on that very consummation towards which Scotland had been struggling for upwards of thirty years.

There wanted yet one thing to complete this strange conjuncture of events. That one thing was added, and the combination, so formidable and menacing till that moment, was changed into one of good promise and happy augury to Protestantism. While the queen and the bishops were concerting their measures in Edinburgh, and a few days were to see the four preachers consigned to the same fate which had overtaken Mill; while the Kings of Spain and France were combining their armies, and meditating a great blow on the Continent, a certain ship had left the harbour of Dieppe, and was voyaging northward with a fair wind, bound for the Scottish shore, and on board that ship there was a Scotsman, in himself a greater power than an army of 10,000 men. This ship carried John Knox, who, without human prearrangement, was arriving in the very midst of his country's crisis.

Knox landed at Leith on the 2nd of May, 1559. The provincial council was still sitting in the Monastery of the Grey Friars when, on the morning of the 3rd of May, a messenger entering in haste announced that John Knox had arrived from France, and had slept last night in Edinburgh. The news fell like a thunder-bolt upon the members of council. They sat for some time speechless, looking into one another's faces, and at last they broke up in confusion. Before Knox had uttered a single word, or even shown himself in public, his very name had scattered them. A messenger immediately set off with the unwelcome news to the queen, who was at that time in Glasgow; and in a few days a royal proclamation declared Knox a rebel and an outlaw.<sup>1</sup> If the proclamation accomplished nothing else, it made the fact of the Reformer's presence known to all Scotland.

The nation had now found what it needed, a man able to lead it in the great war on which it was entering. His devotion and zeal, now fully matured in the school of suffering; his sincerity and uprightness; his magnanimity and courage; his skill in theological debate, and his political insight, in which he excelled all living Scotsmen; the confidence and hope with which he was able to inspire his fellow-countrymen; and the terror in which the hierarchy stood of his very name, all marked him out as the chosen instrument for his country's deliverance. He knew well how critical the hour was, and how arduous his task would be. Religion and liberty were within his country's grasp, and still it might miss them. The chances of failure and of success seemed evenly poised; half the nobles were on the side of Rome; all the Highlands, we may say, were Popish; there were the indifference, the gross ignorance, the old murky superstition of the rural parts; these were the forces bearing down the scale, and making the balance incline to defeat. On the

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<sup>1</sup> McCrie, *Life of Knox*, vol. i., p. 256.

other side, a full half of the barons were on the side of the Reformation; but it was only a few of them who could be thoroughly depended upon; the rest were lukewarm or wavering, and not without an eye to the spoils that would be gathered from the upbreak of a hierarchy owning half the wealth of the kingdom. The most disinterested, and also the most steadfast, supporters of the Reformation lay among the merchants and trader's of the great towns—the men who loved the Gospel for its own sake, and who would stand by it at all hazards. So evenly poised was the balance; a little thing might make it incline to the one side or to the other; and what tremendous issues hung upon the turning of it!

Not an hour did Knox lose in beginning his work. The four preachers, as we have already said, had been summoned to answer before the queen at Stirling. "The hierarchy," said the lords of the Congregation, "hope to draw our pastors into their net, and sacrifice them as they did Walter Mill. We will go with them, and defend them." "And I too," said Knox, not daunted by the outlawry which had been passed upon him, "shall accompany my brethren, and take part in what may await them before the queen." But when the queen learned that Knox was on his way to present himself before her, she deserted the Diet against the preacher's, and forbade them to appear; but with the characteristic perfidy of a Guise, when the day fixed in the citation came, she ordered the summons to be called, and the preachers to be outlawed for not appearing.<sup>1</sup>

When the news reached Perth that the men who had been forbidden to appear before the queen, were outlawed for not appearing, indignation was added to the surprise of the nobles and the townspeople. It chanced that on the same day Knox preached against the mass and image-worship. The sermon was ended, and the congregation had very quietly dispersed, when a priest, "to show his malapert presumption," says Knox, "would open any glorious tabernacle that stood upon the high altar," and began to say mass. A boy standing near called out, "Idolatry!" The priest repaid him with a blow: the youth retaliated by throwing a stone, which, missing the priest, hit one of the images on the altar, and shattered it in pieces. It was the sacking of Antwerp Cathedral over again, but on a smaller scale. The loiterers in the church caught the excitement; they fell upon the images, and the crash of one stone idol after another re-echoed through the edifice; the crucifixes, altars, and church ornaments shared the same fate. The noise brought a stream of idlers from the street into the building, eager to take part in the demolition. Mortified at finding the work finished before their arrival, they bent their steps to the monasteries.<sup>2</sup> One tempest took the direction of the Grey Friars on the

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<sup>1</sup> Laing, *Knox*, vol. i., pp. 318, 319.

<sup>2</sup> This site is now the burial-place of the city.

south of the town, another rolled away towards the Black Friars in the opposite quarter, and soon both monasteries were in ruins, their inmates being allowed to depart with as much of their treasure as they were able to carry. Not yet had the storm expended itself; it burst next over the abbey of the Charter House. This was a sumptuous edifice, with pleasant gardens shaded by trees. But neither its splendour, nor the fact that it had been founded by the first James, could procure its exemption from the fury of the iconoclasts. It perished utterly. This tempest burst out at the dinner hour, when the lords, the burghers, and the Reformers were in their houses, and only idlers were abroad. Knox and the magistrates, as soon as they were informed of what was going on, hastened to the scene of destruction, but their utmost efforts could not stop it. They could only stand and look on while stone cloister, painted oriel, wooden saint, and fruit-tree, now clothed in the rich blossoms of early summer, fell beneath the sturdy blows of the "rascal multitude." The monasteries contained stores of all good things, which were divided amongst the poor; "no honest man," says Knox, "was enriched thereby the value of a groat."<sup>1</sup>

It is to be remarked that in Perth, as in the other towns of Scotland, it was upon the monasteries that the iconoclastic vengeance fell; the cathedrals and churches were spared. The monasteries were in particularly evil repute among the population as nests of idleness, gluttony, and sin. Dark tales of foul and criminal deeds transacted within their walls were continually in circulation, and the hoarded resentment of long years now burst out, and swept them away. The spark that kindled the conflagration was not Knox's sermon, for few if any of those rioters had heard it: Knox's hearers were in their own houses when the affair began. The more immediate provocative was the wanton perfidy of the queen, which more disgraced her than this violence did the mob; and the remoter cause was the rejection of that moderate measure of Reformation which the lords of the Congregation had asked for, protesting at the same time that they would not be responsible for the irregularities and violences that might follow the rejection of their suit.

Knox deplored the occurrence. Not that he mourned over idol slain, and nest of lazy monk and moping nun rooted out, but he foresaw that the violence of the mob would be made the crime of the Reformers. And so it happened; it gave the queen the very pretext she had waited for. The citizens of Perth, with the lords of the Congregation at their head, had, in her eye, risen in rebellion against her government. Collecting an army from the neighbouring counties, she set out to chastise the rebels, and lay waste the city of Perth with fire and sword.

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<sup>1</sup> Laing, *Knox*, vol. i., pp. 317–324.

## CHAPTER VI.

### ESTABLISHMENT OF THE REFORMATION IN SCOTLAND.

Peace between the Queen and the Reformers—Consultation—The Lords of the Congregation Resolve to Set up the Protestant Worship—Knox Preaches at St. Andrews—His Sermon—St. Andrews Reformed—Glasgow, Edinburgh, &c., Follow—Question of the Demolition of the Images and Monasteries—The Queen and her Army at Leith—The Lords Evacuate Edinburgh—Knox Sets out on a Preaching Tour—His Great Exertions—Scotland Roused—Negotiations with England—England Aids Scotland—Establishment of the Reformation in Scotland.

WHEN the queen regent arrived before Perth at the head of 8,000 men, she found the Reformers so well prepared to receive her that, instead of offering them battle as she had intended, she agreeably surprised them with overtures of peace. Although fully resolved to repel by arms an assault which they deemed none the less illegal and murderous that it was led by the queen, the lords of the Congregation joyfully accepted the olive-branch now held out to them. "Cursed be he," said they, "that seeks effusion of blood, war, or dissension. Give us liberty of conscience, and the free profession of the 'Evangel,'<sup>1</sup> and none in all the realm will be more loyal subjects than we." Negotiations were opened between the regent and the Reformers, which terminated amicably, and the strife ceased for the moment. The lords of the Congregation disbanded their army of about 5,000, and the queen took peaceable possession of the city of Perth, where her followers began to make preparations for mass, and the altars having been overturned, their place was supplied by tables from the taverns, which, remarks Knox, "were holy enough for that use."

The Reformers now met, and took a survey of their position, in order to determine on the course to be adopted. They had lost thirty years waiting the tardy approach of the reforms which the queen had promised them. Meanwhile the genius, the learning, the zeal which would have powerfully aided in emancipating the country from the sin and oppression under which it groaned, were perishing at the stake. Duped by the queen, they had stood quietly by and witnessed these irreparable sacrifices. The reform promised them was as far off as ever. Abbot, bishop, and cowed monk were lifting up the head higher than before. A French army had been brought into the country, and the independence and liberties of Scotland were menaced.<sup>2</sup> This was all the Reformers had reaped by giving ear to the delusive words of Mary of Guise. While other countries had established their Reformation Scotland lingered on the threshold, and now it found itself in danger of losing not only

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<sup>1</sup> Laing, Knox, vol. i., p. 342.

<sup>2</sup> *Memoirs of Sir James Melvil*, p. 49; Edin., 1735.

its Reformation, but its very nationality. The lords of the Congregation, therefore, resolved to set up the Reformed worship at once in all those places to which their authority extended, and where a majority of the inhabitants were favourable to the design.<sup>1</sup>

A commencement was to be made in the ecclesiastical metropolis of Scotland. The Earl of Argyle and Lord James Stuart, Prior of St. Andrews, arranged with Knox to meet in that city on an early day in June, and inaugurate there the Protestant worship. The archbishop, apprised of Knox's coming, hastened in from Falkland with 100 spears, and sent a message to him on Saturday night, that if he dared to appear in the pulpit of the cathedral tomorrow, he would cause his soldiers to shoot him dead. The lords, having consulted, agreed that Knox should forego the idea of preaching. The resolution seemed a prudent one. The dispositions of the townspeople were unknown; the lords had but few retainers with them; the queen, with her French army, was not more than fifteen miles off; and to preach might be to give the signal for bloodshed. Knox, who felt that to abandon a great design when the moment for putting it in execution had arrived, and retire before an angry threat, was to incur the loss of prestige, and invite greater attacks in future, refused for one moment to entertain the idea of not preaching. He said that when lying out in the Bay of St. Andrews in former years, chained to the deck of a French galley, his eye had lighted on the roof of the cathedral, which the sun's rays at that moment illuminated, and he said in the hearing of some still alive, that he felt assured that he should yet preach there before closing his career; and now when God, contrary to the expectations of all men, had brought him back to this city, he besought them not to hinder what was not only his cherished wish, but the deep-rooted conviction of his heart. He desired neither the hand nor weapon of man to defend him; He whose glory he sought would be his shield. "I only crave audience," said he, "which, if it be denied here unto me at this time, I must seek where I may have it."<sup>2</sup>

The intrepidity of Knox saved the Reformation from the brand of timidity which the counsel of the lords, had it been followed, would have brought upon it. It was a display of courage at the right time, and was rewarded with a career of success. On the morrow Knox preached to perhaps the most influential audience that the Scotland of that day could furnish; nobles, priests, and townspeople crowding to hear him. Every part of the vast edifice was filled, and not a finger was lifted, nor a word uttered, to stop him. He preached on the cleansing of the Temple of old, picturing the crowd of buyers and sellers who were busy trafficking in that holy place, when One entered, whose awful glance, rather than the scourge of cords which he carried, smote

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<sup>1</sup> McCrie, *Life of Knox*, vol. i., pp. 264, 265.

<sup>2</sup> Laing, *Knox*, vol. i., pp. 317 -349.

with terror the unholy crew, and drove them forth a panic-stricken crowd. The preacher then called up before his hearers a yet greater crowd of traffickers, occupied in a yet unholier merchandise, therewith defiling, with immeasurably greater pollutions and abominations, the New Testament temple. As he described the corruptions which had been introduced into the Church under the Papacy—the great crowd of simonists, pardon-mongers, sellers of relics and charms, exorcists, and traffickers in the bodies and souls of men, with the sin and shame and ruin that followed—his eye began to burn, his words grew graphic and trenchant, the tones of his righteous yet terrible reproof rung out louder and fiercer, and rolled over the heads of the thousands gathered around him, till not a heart but quailed under the solemn denunciations. It seemed as if past ages were coming up for trial; as if mitred abbots and bishops were leaving their marble tombs to stand at the judgment-seat; as if the voices of Hamilton, and Wishart, and Mill—nay, as if the voice of a yet Greater were making itself audible by the lips of the preacher. The audience saw as they had never done before the superstitions which had been practised as religion, and felt the duty to comply with the call which the Reformer urged on all, according to the station and opportunity of each, to assist in removing these abominations out of the Church of God before the fire of the Divine wrath should descend and consume what man refused to put away. When he had ended, and sat down, it may be said that Scotland was reformed.

Knox, though he did not possess the all-grasping, all-subduing intellect of Calvin, nor the many-toned eloquence of Luther, which could so easily rise from the humorous and playful to the pathetic and the sublime, yet, in concentrated fiery energy, and in the capacity to kindle his hearers into indignation, and rouse them to action, excelled both these Reformers. This one sermon in the parish church of St. Andrews, followed as it was by a sermon in the same place on the three consecutive days, cast the die, and determined that the Reformation of Scotland should go forward. The magistrates and townspeople assembled, and came to a unanimous resolution to set up the Reformed worship in the city. The church was stripped of its images and pictures,<sup>1</sup> and the monasteries were pulled down. The example of St. Andrews was quickly followed by many other places of the kingdom. The Protestant worship was set up at Crail, at Cupar, at Lindores, at Linlithgow, at Scone, at Edinburgh and Glasgow.<sup>2</sup> This was followed by the purgation of the churches, and the demolition of the monasteries. The fabrics pulled down were mostly those in the service of the monks, for it was the cowed portion of the Romish clergy whom the people held in special detestation, knowing that they often did the dishonourable work of spies at the same time that they

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<sup>1</sup> Laing, *Knox*, i. 350. McCrie, *Life of Knox*, i. 267.

<sup>2</sup> McCrie, p. 268.

scoured the country in quest of alms. A loud wail was raised by the priests over the destruction of so much beautiful architecture, and the echoes of that lamentation have come down to our day. But in all righteously indignant mobs there is excess, and however much it may be regretted that their zeal outran their discretion, their motives were good, and the result they helped achieve was enduring peace, progress, and prosperity.

The peace between the queen regent and the Reformers, agreed upon at Perth, was but short-lived. The queen, hearing of the demolition of images and monasteries at St. Andrews, marched with her French soldiers to Cupar-Moor, and put herself in order of battle. The tumult of a mob she held to be the rebellion of a nation, and threatened to chastise it as such. But when the lords of the Congregation advanced to meet her, she fled at their approach, and going round by Stirling, took refuge in Edinburgh. On being followed by the forces of the "Congregation," she quitted the capital, and marched to Dunbar. After a few weeks, learning that the soldiers of the Reformers had mostly returned to their homes, she set out with her foreign army for Leith, and took possession of it. The lords of the Congregation now found themselves between two fires: the queen threatened them on the one side, and the guns of the castle menaced them on the other, and their new levies having left them, they were forced to conclude a treaty by which they agreed to evacuate Edinburgh. The stipulation secured for the citizens the right of worshipping after the Protestant form, and Willock was left with them as their minister. Knox, who had preached in St. Giles's Cathedral, and in the abbey church, had been chosen as pastor by the inhabitants, but he was too obnoxious to Mary of Guise, to be left in her power, and at the earnest request of the lords of the Congregation he accompanied them when they left the capital. On retiring from Edinburgh the Reformer set out on a preaching-tour, which embraced all the towns of note, and almost all the shires on the south of the Grampian chain.

From the time of his famous sermon in St. Andrews, Knox had been the soul of the movement. The year that followed was one of incessant and herculean labour. His days were spent in preaching, his nights in writing letters. He roused the country, and he kept it awake. His voice like a great trumpet rang through the land, firing the lukewarm into zeal, and inspiring the timid into courage. When the friends of the Reformation quarrelled, he reconciled and united them. When they sank into despondency he rallied their spirits. He himself never desponded. Cherishing a firm faith that his country's Reformation would be consummated, he neither sank under labour, nor fell back before danger, nor paused in the efforts he found it necessary every moment to put forth. He knew how precious the hours were, and that if the golden opportunity were lost it would never return. He appealed to the patriotism of the nobles and citizens. He told them what an ignominious vassalage

the Pope and the Continental Powers had prepared for them and their sons, namely, that of hewers of wood and drawers of water to France. He especially explained to them the nature of the Gospel, the pardon, the purity, the peace it brings to individuals, the stable renown it confers on kingdoms; he forecast to them the immense issues that hung upon the struggle. On the one side stood religion, like an angel of light, beckoning Scotland onwards; on the other stood the dark form of Popery, pulling the country back into slavery. The crown was before it, the gulf behind it. Knox purposed that Scotland should win and wear the crown.

The Reformer was declared an outlaw, and a price set upon his head; but the only notice we find him deigning to take of this atrocity of the regent and her advisers, was in a letter to his brother-in-law, in which with no nervous trepidation whatever, but good-humouredly, he remarks that he “had need of a good horse.”<sup>1</sup> Not one time less did Knox preach, although he knew that some fanatic, impelled by malignant hate, or the greed of gain, might any hour deprive him of life. The rapidity of his movements, the fire he kindled wherever he came, the light that burst out all over the land—north, south, east, and west—confounded the hierarchy; unused to preach, unskilled in debate, and too corrupt to think of reforming themselves, they could only meet the attack of Knox with loud wailings or impotent threatenings.

A second line of action was forced upon Knox, and one that not only turned the day in favour of the Reformation of Scotland, but ultimately proved a protection to the liberties and religion of England. It was here that the knowledge he had acquired abroad came to his help, and enabled him to originate a measure that saved two kingdoms. Just the year before—that is, in 1558—Spain and France, as we have previously mentioned, had united their arms to effect the complete and eternal extirpation of Protestantism. The plan of the great campaign—a profounder secret then than now—had been penetrated by Calvin and Knox, who were not only the greatest Reformers, but the greatest statesmen of the age, and had a deeper insight into the politics of Europe than any other men then living. The plan of that campaign was to occupy Scotland with French troops, reduce it to entire dependency on the French crown, and from Scotland march a French army into England. While France was assailing England on the north, Spain would invade it on the south, put down the Government of Elizabeth, raise Mary Stuart to her throne, and restore the Romish religion in both kingdoms. Knox opened a correspondence with the great statesmen of Elizabeth, in which he explained to them the designs of the Papal Powers, their purpose to occupy Scotland with foreign troops, and having trampled out its religion and liberties, to strike at England through the side of Scotland. He showed them that the plan

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<sup>1</sup> McCrie, *Life of Knox*, vol. i., p. 294, foot-note.

was being actually carried out; that Mary of Guise was daily bringing French soldiers into Scotland; that the raw levies of the Reformers would ultimately be worsted by the disciplined troops of France, and that no more patriotic and enlightened policy could England pursue than to send help to drive the French soldiers out of the northern country; for assuredly, if Scotland was put down, England could not stand, encompassed as she then would be by hostile armies. Happily these counsels were successful. The statesmen of Elizabeth, convinced that this was no Scottish quarrel, but that the liberty of England hung upon it also, and that in no more effectual way could they rear a rampart around their own Reformation than by supporting that of Scotland, sent military aid to the lords of the Congregation, and the result was that the French evacuated Scotland, and the Scots became once more masters of their own country. Almost immediately thereafter, Mary of Guise, the regent of the kingdom, was removed by death, and the government passed into the hands of the Reformers. The way was now fully open for the establishment of the Reformation. It is hardly possible to over-estimate the importance of the service which Knox rendered. It not only led to the establishment of Protestantism in Scotland, and the perpetuation of it in England; but, in view of the critical condition in which Europe then was, it may indeed with justice be said that it saved the Reformation of Christendom.<sup>1</sup>

The fifteen months which Knox had spent in Scotland had brought the movement to its culminating point. The nation was ready to throw off the Popish yoke; and when the Estates of the Realm met on the 8th of August, 1560, they simply gave expression to the nation's choice when they authoritatively decreed the suppression of the Romish hierarchy and the adoption of the Protestant faith. A short summary of Christian doctrine had been drawn up by Knox and his colleagues;<sup>2</sup> and being read, article by article, in the Parliament, it was on the 17th of August adopted by the Estates.<sup>3</sup> It is commonly known as the *First Scots Confession*.<sup>4</sup> Only three temporal lords voted in the negative, saying "that they would believe as their fathers believed." The bishops, who had seats as temporal lords, were silent. On the 24th of August, Parliament abolished the Pope's jurisdiction; forbade, under certain

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<sup>1</sup> See account of Knox's negotiations with the English Government in McCrie's *Life of Knox*, vol. i., pp. 283–294. See also Knox's letters to Cecil, Sadler, and Queen Elizabeth, in Dr. David Laing's edition of *Knox's Works*, vol. ii., pp. 15–56, and foot-notes; and Calderwood's *History of the Kirk of Scotland*, vol. i., pp. 490–497, Wodrow ed. 1842.

<sup>2</sup> Laing, *Knox*, vol. ii., p. 92.

<sup>3</sup> Act. Parl. Scot. vol. ii., p. 534.

<sup>4</sup> See copy of Confession in Laing, *Knox*, vol. ii., pp. 95–120; Calderwood, *History*, vol. ii., pp. 17–35.

penalties,<sup>1</sup> the celebration of mass; and rescinded the laws in favour of the Romish Church, and against the Protestant faith.<sup>2</sup>

Thus speedily was the work consummated at last. There are supreme moments in the life of nations, when their destiny is determined for ages. Such was the moment that had now come to Scotland. On the 17th of August, 1560, the Scotland of the Middle Ages passed away, and a New Scotland had birth—a Scotland destined to be a sanctuary of religion, a temple of liberty, and a fountain of justice, letters, and art. Intently had the issue been watched by the Churches abroad, and when they learned that Scotland had placed itself on the side of Protestant truth, these elder daughter's of the Reformation welcomed, with songs of joy, that country which had come, the last of the nations, to share with them their glorious inheritance of liberty.

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<sup>1</sup> Death was decreed for the third offence, but the penalty was in no instance inflicted. No Papist ever suffered death for his religion in Scotland.

<sup>2</sup> Act. Parl. Scot., vol. ii., p. 534.

## CHAPTER VII.

### CONSTITUTION OF THE "KIRK"—ARRIVAL OF MARY STUART.

A Second Battle—Knox's Idea of the Church—Spiritual Independence Essential—Differs from Popish Independence—Calvin demanded a Pure Communion-table; Knox, a Free Assembly—Organisation of Scottish "Kirk"—Ministers, Doctors, Elders, and Deacons—Kirk Session—Presbytery, Synod, and Assembly—Knox's Educational Plan—How Defeated—Mary Stuart—Her Accomplishments—Her Beauty—Her Life in France—Her Widowhood—Invited to Return to Scotland—Sails from France—Arrives at Leith—Enters Holyrood.

KNOX had now the sublime satisfaction of thinking that his country was emancipated from the superstition and thralldom of Popery, and illumined in no small degree with the light of the "Evangel." But not yet had he rest; no sooner had he ended one battle than he had to begin another; and the second battle was in some respects more arduous than the first. He had called the Reformation into being, and now he had to fight to preserve it. But before following him in this great straggle, let us consider those organisations of an ecclesiastical and educational kind which he was called to initiate, and which alone could enable the Reformation to spread itself over the whole land, and transmit itself to after-ages.

Knox's idea of a Church was, in brief, a divinely originated, a divinely enfranchised, and a divinely governed society. Its members were all those who made profession of the Gospel; its law was the Bible, and its King was Christ. The conclusion from these principles Knox did not hesitate to avow and carry out, that the Church was to be governed solely by her own law, administered by her own officers, whose decisions and acts in all things falling within the spiritual and ecclesiastical sphere were to be final. This freedom he held to be altogether essential to the soundness of the Church's creed, the purity of her members, and that vigour and healthfulness of operation without which she could not subserve those high ends which she had been ordained to fulfil to society. This independence he was careful to confine to the spiritual sphere; in all other matters the ministers and members of the Church were to be subject to the civil law of their country. He thus distinguished it from the independence of the Romish Church, which claimed for its clergy exemption from the civil tribunals, and exalted its jurisdiction above the power of the crown. The beginning of this theory was with Wicliffe; Calvin developed it; but in a little city like Geneva, where the same persons nearly composed both the Church and the State, it was neither very easy nor very necessary to draw the line between the two jurisdictions. The power of admitting or excluding members from the Communion-table was all that Calvin had demanded; and he had a hard battle to fight before he

could obtain it; but having won it, it gave a century of glory to the Church of Geneva. Knox in Scotland had more room for the development of all that is implied in the idea of a Church with her own law, her own government, and her own monarch. An independent government in things spiritual, but rigidly restricted to things spiritual, was the root-idea of Knox's Church organisation. Knox hinged this independence on another point than that on which Calvin rested it. Calvin said, "Take from us the purity of the Communion-table, and you take from us the 'Evangel.'" Knox said, "Take from us the freedom of Assemblies, and you take from us the 'Evangel.'" It was, however, the same battle on another field: the contest in both cases had for its object the freedom of the Church to administer her own laws, without which she could exist for no useful end.

A few sentences will enable us to sketch the Church organisation which Knox set up. Parliament had declared Protestantism to be the faith of the nation: Knox would make it so in fact. The orders of ecclesiastical men instituted by him were four:—1st, Ministers, who preached to a congregation; 2nd, Doctors, who expounded Scripture to the youth in the seminaries and universities; 3rd, Elders, who were associated with the minister in ruling, though not in teaching, the congregation; and, 4th, Deacons, who managed the finance, and had the care of the poor. In every parish was placed a minister; but as the paucity of ministers left many places without pastoral instruction meanwhile, pious persons were employed to read the Scriptures and the common prayers; and if such gave proof of competency, they were permitted to supplement their reading of the Scriptures with a few plain exhortations. Five Superintendents completed the ecclesiastical staff, and their duty was to travel through their several districts, with the view of planting Churches, and inspecting the conduct of ministers, readers, and exhorters.<sup>1</sup>

The government of the Church, Knox regarded as hardly second to her instruction, believing that the latter could not preserve its purity unless the other was maintained in its vigour. First came the Kirk Session, composed of the minister and elders, who managed the affairs of the congregation; next came the Presbytery, formed by the delegation of a minister and elder from every congregation within the shire; above it was the Synod, constituted by a minister and elder from each congregation within the province, and having, like the court below it, power to decide on all causes arising within its bounds. Last of all came the General Assembly, which was constituted of a certain number of delegates from every Presbytery. This scheme gave to every member of the Church, directly or indirectly, a voice in her government; it was a truly popular rule, but acting only through constitutional

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<sup>1</sup> Pastors were elected by the congregation, examined by the Presbytery, and admitted into office in presence of the people. Superintendents were admitted in the same way as other officers, and were subject to the General Assembly.

channels, and determining all cases by the laws of Scripture. In the lowest court the laity greatly outnumbered the ministers; in all the others the two were equal. This gradation of Church power, which had its bases in the Kirk Sessions distributed all over the land, found its unity in the General Assembly; and the concentrated wisdom and experience of the whole Church were thus available for the decision of the weightiest causes.

The Reformer no more overlooked the general tuition of the people than he did their indoctrination in the faith. He sketched a scheme of education more complete and thorough than any age or country had ever yet been privileged to enjoy. He proposed that a school should be planted in every parish, that a college should be elected in every notable town, and a university established in the three chief cities of Scotland.<sup>1</sup> He demanded that the nobility and gentry should send their sons to these seminaries at their own expense, and that provision should be made for the free education of the entire youth of the humbler classes, so that not a child in all Scotland but should be thoroughly instructed, and the path to all departments of knowledge and the highest offices of the State opened to every one who had inclination or talent for the pursuit. Such was the scheme proposed by Knox in the *First Book of Discipline*. In order to carry it out, the Reformer proposed that the funds set free by the fall of the Romish Church, after due provision for the dismissed incumbents, should be divided into three parts, and that one-third should go to the support of the Protestant Church, another to the endowment of the schools and colleges, and the remaining portion to the support of the deserving poor. Could these funds have been devoted to worthier objects? Was there any class in the country who had a prior or a stronger claim upon them? How then came it that a third only of the revenues of the fallen establishment was given to these objects, and that the munificent scheme of Knox was never carried out, and to this day remains unrealised? The answer of history to this question is that the nobles rapaciously seized upon these lands and heritages, and refused to disgorge their plunder. The disappointment must have been unspeakably bitter to the great patriot who devised the plan: but while disgusted at the greed which had rendered it frustrate, he places his scheme sorrowfully on record, as if to challenge future ages to produce anything more perfect.

Had the grand and patriotic device of Knox been fully carried out, Scotland would have rivalled, it may be eclipsed, the other kingdoms of Europe, in the number of its educational institutions, and in the learning of its sons. As it was, an instantaneous impulse was given to all its energies, intellectual and industrial. Learning and art began to flourish, where for four centuries previously nothing had prospered save hierarchic pride and feudal tyranny.

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<sup>1</sup> See *First Book of Discipline*, chap. 7.

And if Scotland has attained no mean rank among the nations despite the partial and crippled adoption of the Reformer's plan, how much more brilliant would have been its place, and how much longer the roll of illustrious names which it would have given to letters and science, to the senate, the army, and the State, had the large-hearted plan of Knox been in operation during the three following centuries?

The Reformer was yet smarting from the avariciousness of those who preferred the filling of their purses and the aggrandising of their families to the welfare and grandeur of their country, when another powerful adversary stood up in his path. This new opponent sought to strip him of all the fruits of his labour, by plucking up by the very roots the ecclesiastical and educational institutions he had just planted in Scotland. On the 19th of August, 1561, Mary Stuart arrived at Holyrood from France. There are few names in Scottish history that so powerfully fascinate to this day as that of Mary Stuart. She could have been no common woman to have taken so firm a hold upon the imaginations of her countrymen, and retained it so long. Great qualities she must have possessed, and did no doubt possess. Her genius was quick and penetrating; she was an adept in all field exercises, more particularly those of riding and hunting; she was no less skilled in the accomplishments of her age. She was mistress of several languages, and was wont, when she lived in France, to share with her husband, Francis II., the cares of State, and to mingle in the deliberations of the Cabinet. In person she was tall and graceful: the tradition of her beauty, and of the fascination of her manners, has come down to our days. Had Mary Stuart known to choose the better part, had she taken the side of her country's religion and liberty, she might, with her many valuable and brilliant qualities, her wit, her penetration, her courage, her capacity for affairs, her power of awakening affection and winning homage, have been one of the happiest of women, and one of the best of sovereigns. But these great faculties, perverted by a sinister influence, led her first of all into hurtful follies, next into mean deceptions and debasing pleasures, then into dark intrigues, and at last into bloody crimes. The sufferings of Mary Stuart have passed into a proverb. Born to a throne, yet dying as a felon: excelling all the women of her time in the grace of her person and the accomplishments of her mind, and yet surpassing them in calamity and woe as far as she did in beauty and talent! Unhappy in her life—every attempt to retrieve her fallen fortunes but sank her the deeper in guilt; and equally unhappy in death, for whenever the world is on the point of forgetting a life from the odiousness of which there is no escape but in oblivion, there comes forward, with a certainty almost fated,—the Nemesis, one might say, of Mary Stuart—an apologist to rehearse the sad story over again, and to fix the memory of her crimes more indelibly than ever in the minds of men.

It is at the tragic death-bed of her father, James V., in the palace of Falkland, that we first hear the name of Mary Stuart. A funereal shadow rests above her natal hour. She was born on the 8th of December, 1542, in the ancient palace of Linlithgow. The infant had seen the light but a few days when, her father dying, she succeeded to the crown. While only a girl of six years of age, Mary Stuart was sent to France, accompanied by four young ladies of family, all of her own age, and all bearing the same name with their royal mistress, and known in history as the "Queen's Maries." Habituated to the gallantry and splendour of the French court, her love of gaiety was fostered into a passion; and her vanity and self-will were strengthened by the homage constantly paid to her personal charms. Under the teaching of her uncles, the Duke of Guise and the Cardinal of Lorraine, she contracted a blind attachment to the religion of Rome, and an equally blind detestation of the faith of her future subjects. So had passed the youth of Mary Stuart. It is hardly possible to conceive a course of training that could have more unfitted her to occupy the throne of a Protestant nation, and that nation the Scots.

Fortune seemed to take a delight in tantalising her. A mishap in the tournament field suddenly raised her to the throne of France. She had hardly time to contemplate the boundless prospect of happiness which appeared to be opening to her on the throne of a powerful, polished, and luxurious nation, when she was called to descend from it by the death of her husband. It was now that the invitation reached her to return to her native country and assume its government. No longer Queen of France, Mary Stuart turned her face towards the northern land which had given her birth. She set sail from Calais on the 15th of August, 1561. The anguish that wrung her heart in that hour it is easy to conceive, and impossible not to sympathise with. She was leaving a land where the manners of the people were congenial to her tastes, where the religion was dear to her heart, and where the years as they glided past brought her only new pleasures and brighter splendours. Mary took her stand on the deck of the vessel that was bearing her slowly away, and fixed her eyes on the receding shores of France. The sun sank in the ocean: the shades of evening descended; but the queen made her couch be placed on the vessel's deck. The morning dawned: Mary was still there, gazing in the direction of the shore, which was still in sight. But now a breeze springing up, she was quickly borne away into the North Sea. "Farewell," said she, as the land sank finally beneath the wave, "farewell, happy France! I shall nevermore see thee."<sup>1</sup>

The queen arrived at Leith on the 19th of August. The citizens, who had not reckoned on the voyage being completed in four days, were not prepared to receive her, and they had to extemporise a cavalcade of ponies to convey

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<sup>1</sup> Brantôme, p. 483.

their queen to the palace of Holyrood. This simplicity could be no agreeable surprise to the young sovereign. Nature seemed as much out of unison with the event as man. It had dressed itself in sombre shadows when Mary was about to step upon the ancient Scottish shore. A dull vapour floated overhead.<sup>1</sup> The shores, islands, and bold rocky prominences that give such grandeur to the Frith of Forth were wholly hidden; a grey mist covered Arthur Seat, and shed a cold cheerless light upon the city which lay stretched out at its feet. Edinburgh, which in romantic beauty throws even the Paris of our day into the shade, was then by no means imposing, and needed all the help which a bright sun could give it; and the region around it, which in our times much excels in riches and careful cultivation the country around the French capital, must then to an eye accustomed to the various fruitage of France have looked neglected and wild; for the principle from which were to spring all the marvels which now adorn this same spot had not yet had time to display its plastic energy. Nevertheless, despite this conjunction of untoward circumstances, which made Mary's arrival so unlike the first entrance of a sovereign into the capital of her dominions, the demonstrations of the people were loyal and hearty, and the youthful queen looked really pleased, as surrounded by her Scottish nobles and her French attendants, and dressed in widow's weeds, she passed in under those grey towers, which were destined to wear from this day the halo of a tragic interest in all coming time.

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<sup>1</sup> Knox says: "In the memory of man, that day of the year, was never seen a more dolorous face of the heaven than was at her arrival. The sun was not seen to shine two days before nor two days after." Brantôme also mentions the thick fog (*grand brouillard*) which prevailed, so that they could not see from one end of the vessel to the other. (Laing, *Knox*, vol. ii., pp. 269, 270; Calderwood, *History*, vol. ii., pp. 142, 143.)

## CHAPTER VIII.

### KNOX'S INTERVIEW WITH QUEEN MARY.

Mary's Secret Purpose—Her Blandishments—The Protestant Nobles begin to Yield—Mass in the Chapel of Holyrood—Commotion—Knox's Sermon against Idolatry—The Mass more to be Feared than 10,000 Armed Men—Reasonableness of the Alarm—Knox Summoned to the Palace of Holyrood—Accused by the Queen of Teaching Sedition—His Defence—Debate between Knox and Mary—God, not the Prince, Lord of the Conscience—The Bible, not the Priest, the Judge in Matters of Faith, &c.—Importance of the Interview.

THE nobles had welcomed with a chivalrous enthusiasm the daughter of their ancient kings; and the people, touched by her beauty and her widowhood, had begun to regard her with mingled feelings of compassion and admiration. All was going well, and would doubtless have continued so to do, but for a dark purpose which Mary Stuart carried in her breast. She had become the pivot around which revolved that plot to which those monstrous times had given birth, for the extermination of the Protestant faith in all the countries of the Reformation. If that conspiracy should succeed, it would open the Scottish queen's way to a fairer realm and a mightier throne than the kingdom she had just arrived to take possession of. The first step in the projected drama was the forcible suppression of the Protestant faith in Scotland, and the restoration in it of the Church of Rome. This was the dark purpose which Mary had carried across the seas, and brought with her to Holyrood.<sup>1</sup>

But meanwhile, as tutored by her uncles the Guises, who accompanied her, she dissembled and temporised. Smiles and caresses were her first weapons; the nobles were to be gained over by court blandishments and favours; the ministers were to be assailed by hypocritical promises; and the people were to be lured by those fawning arts of which there lived no greater adept than Mary Stuart. The "holy water of the court" soon began to tell upon the Protestant leaders. Even the lords of the Congregation were not proof against the fascination which the young queen seemed to exert upon every one who entered her presence. If her thinly-veiled Romish proclivities had at first alarmed or offended them, they had been no long time in the queen's presence till their anger cooled, their fears were laid aside, and their Protestant zeal in some measure evaporated. Every man, one man excepted, who entered this charmed circle was straightway transformed. Knox in his *History* has quaintly described the change that passed upon the nobility under this almost magical influence. "Every man as he came up to court," says he, "accused them that were before him; but, after they had remained a certain

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<sup>1</sup> Calderwood, *History*, vol. ii., pp. 130, 131.

space, they came out as quiet as the former. On perceiving this, Campbell of Kinyeancleugh, a man of some humour and zealous in the cause, said to Lord Ochiltree, whom he met on his way to court, ‘My lord, now ye are come last of all, and I perceive that the fire edge is not yet off you, but I fear that after the holy water of the court be sprinkled upon you, ye shall become as temperate as the rest. I think there be some enchantment by which men are bewitched.’”<sup>1</sup>

On the first Sunday after her arrival, Mary adventured on an act, by the advice of her uncles, which was designed to feel the pulse of her Protestant subjects;<sup>2</sup> at all events, it unmistakably notified to them what her future course was to be: mass was said in her chapel of Holyrood. Since the establishment of the Reformation, mass had not been publicly celebrated in Scotland, and in fact, was prohibited by Act of Parliament. When the citizens learned that preparations were making for its celebration in the Chapel Royal, they were thrown into excitement and alarm, and but for the interposition of Knox would have forcibly prevented it. Lord James Stuart, Prior of St. Andrews, and the brother of Mary, stood sentinel at the door of the chapel, all the time the service was going on; the man who carried in the candle trembled all over; and the priest who performed the rite was, at its conclusion, conducted to his chamber by two Protestant lords. The queen’s relatives and attendants threatened that they would instantly return to France, for they could not live in a land where mass could not be said, without which they could not have the pardon of their sins. “Would,” says Knox, “that they, together with the mass, had taken good night of this realm for ever.”<sup>3</sup>

On the following Sunday, Knox, although he had restrained the more zealous of the Protestants who sought by force to suppress the celebration, sounded a note of warning from the pulpit of St. Giles’s. He preached on the sin of idolatry, “showing what terrible plagues God had taken upon realms and nations for the same;” and added, “One mass is more fearful to me than if 10,000 armed enemies were landed in any part of the realm, of purpose to suppress the whole religion.”<sup>4</sup> We are apt at this day to think that the alarm expressed was greater than its cause warranted. So thought the queen’s guards at the time, who said openly in the church that “such fear was no point of their faith.” But, we may ask, had mass no more significance in the Scotland of the sixteenth century than it would have in the Scotland of the nineteenth? Mary had not yet ratified the Act of Parliament establishing the Protestant faith, and alienating the national revenues from the Romish Church. Her refusal implied that what the Estates had done in changing the

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<sup>1</sup> Laing, *Knox*, vol. ii., p. 275.

<sup>2</sup> McCrie, *Life of Knox*, vol. ii., p. 21.

<sup>3</sup> Laing, *Knox*, vol. ii., pp. 270, 271.

<sup>4</sup> Laing, *Knox*, vol. ii., p. 276.

national faith was illegal, and that the Reformation was rebellion. What construction then could her subjects put upon this mass, but that it was the first step towards the overthrow of the Protestant Church, and the restoration of the Romish ritual and hierarchy? Nor did they do their sovereign injustice in so construing it. To compel her subjects to abjure their Protestantism, and to embrace again the creed they had renounced, by soft methods if possible, and if not by the stake and the cord, was Mary's settled purpose. In Italy, in Spain, in France, and in the Netherlands, piles were at that moment blazing in support of the mass. The same baleful fires were but newly extinguished in England and in Scotland; and were they to be lighted before they had well ceased to burn, or the ashes of the noble men who had perished in them had grown cold? Had not all their past experience told them that the stake followed the mass as invariably as the shadow followed the substance; that the written law of the Popish system, and its ineradicable instincts, made it at all times and in all places a persecutor? The Scots would have shown themselves incapable of reading the past, and forecasting the future, had they failed in these circumstances to take alarm. It was the alarm not of timidity, but of wisdom; not of bigotry, but of patriotism.

It is probable that the substance of the Reformer's sermon was reported to the queen, for in a few days after its delivery she sent a message to Knox, commanding his attendance at the palace. This interview has gathered round it great historic grandeur, mainly from the sentiments avowed by Knox before his sovereign, which made it one of the turning-points in the history of the man and of the country, and partly also from the charge which the flatterers of despotic princes have founded upon it, that Knox was on that occasion lacking in courtesy to Mary as a woman, and in loyalty to her as his sovereign; as if it were a crime to defend, in words of truth and soberness, the religion and liberties of a country in the presence of one bent on ruining both. The queen opened the conference, at which only her brother, Lord James Stuart, and two ladies in waiting were present, with a reference to the Reformer's book on the "Regiment of Women," and the "necromancy" by which he accomplished his ends; but departing from the grave charge of magic, she came to what was uppermost in her mind, and what was the head and front of Knox's offending.

"You have taught the people," remarked the queen, "to receive another religion than that which their princes allow; but God commands subjects to obey their prince;" *ergo*, "you have taught the people to disobey both God and their prince." Mary doubtless thought this syllogism unanswerable, till Knox, with a little plain sense, brushed it away completely.

"Madam," replied the Reformer, "as right religion received neither its origin nor its authority from princes, but from the eternal God alone, so are not subjects bound to frame their religion according to the tastes of their

princes. For oft it is that princes, of all others, are the most ignorant of God's true religion. If all the seed of Abraham had been of the religion of Pharaoh, whose subjects they long were, I pray you, madam, what religion would there have been in the world? And if all in the days of the apostles had been of the religion of the Roman emperors, I pray you, madam, what religion would there have been now upon the earth? . . . And so, madam, you may perceive that subjects are not bound to the religion of their princes, although they are commanded to give them reverence."

"Yea," replied the queen, "but none of these men raised the sword against their princes."

"Yet, madam," rejoined Knox, "they resisted, for they who obey not the commandment given them, do in some sort resist."

"But," argued the queen, "they resisted not with the sword."

"God, madam," answered the Reformer, "had not given them the power and the means."

"Think ye," said the queen, "that subjects having the power may resist their princes?"

"If princes exceed their bounds, madam, and do that which they ought not, they may doubtless be resisted even by power. For neither is greater honour nor greater obedience to be given to kings and princes, than God has commanded to be given to father and mother. But, madam, the father may be struck with a frenzy, in which he would slay his own children. Now, madam, if the children arise, join together, apprehend him, take the sword from him, bind his hands, and keep him in prison till the frenzy be over, think ye, madam, that the children do any wrong? Even so is it, madam, with princes who would murder the children of God who are subject unto them. Their blind zeal is nothing but a mad frenzy; and, therefore, to take the sword from them, to bind their hands, and to cast them into prison till they be brought to a sober mind, is no disobedience against princes, but a just obedience, because it agreeth with the will of God."

We must carry ourselves three centuries back, and think of the slavish doctrines then prevalent all over Christendom—that it was taught as infallibly true in theological canons and juridical codes, and echoed back from university chairs, that kings reigned by Divine right, and that the understandings and consciences of their subjects were in their keeping; and we must think too of the high-handed way in which these demoralising and enslaving doctrines were being carried out in Europe—that in every Popish country a scaffold or a stake was the certain fate of every man who dared to maintain the right of one's thinking for oneself—we must transport ourselves into the midst of these times, we say, before we can fully estimate the courage of Knox in avowing these sentiments in the presence of Mary Stuart. These plain bold words, so different from the glozing terms in which she had been

accustomed to be addressed in France, fell upon her ear like a thunder-peal. She was stunned and amazed, and for a quarter of an hour stood speechless. If her passion found not vent in words, it showed itself in the pallor of her face. "Her countenance altered." The past age of feudalism and the coming age of liberty stood confronting each other under the roof of Holyrood. We wait with intense anxiety during that quarter of an hour's silence, to see what the next move in this great battle shall be, and whether it is to be maintained or abandoned by Knox. Vast issues hang upon the words by which the silence is to be broken! If Knox yield, not only will Scotland fall with him, but Christendom also; for it is Philip of Spain, and Pius IV. of Rome, who are confronting him in the person of Mary Stuart.

At last Lord James Stuart, feeling the silence insupportable, or fearing that his sister had been seized with sudden illness, began to entreat her and to ask, "What has offended you, madam?" But she made him no answer. The tempest of her pride and self-will at length spent itself. Her composure returned, and she resumed the argument.

"Well then," said she, "I clearly perceive that my subjects shall obey you, and not me; and shall do what they list, and not what I command; and so must I be subject to Them, and not they to me."

"God forbid," promptly rejoined the Reformer, "that ever I take upon me to command any to obey me, or to set subjects at liberty to do whatever pleases them." Is then Knox to concede the "right Divine?" Yes; but he lodges it where alone it is safe; not in any throne on earth. "My travail," adds he, "is that both subjects and princes may obey God. And think not, madam, that wrong is done you when you are required to be subject unto God; for he it is who subjects peoples unto princes, and causes obedience to be given unto them. He craves of kings that they be as it were foster-fathers to his Church, and commands queens to be nurses to his people."

"Yes," replied the queen; "but ye are not the Kirk that I will nourish. I will defend the Kirk of Rome, for it is, I think, the true Kirk of God."

"Your will, madam," said Knox, "is no reason; neither doth it make that Roman harlot to be the true and immaculate spouse of Jesus Christ. I offer myself, madam, to prove that the Church of the Jews which crucified Christ Jesus was not so far degenerate from the ordinances and statutes given it of God, as the Church of Rome is declined, and more than 500 years hath declined, from the purity of that religion which the apostles taught and planted."

"My conscience," said Mary, "is not so."

"Conscience, madam," said Knox, "requires knowledge, and I fear that right knowledge ye have none."

"But," said she, "I have both heard and read."

“Have you,” inquired Knox, “heard any teach but such as the Pope and cardinals have allowed? You may be assured that such will speak nothing to offend their own estate.”

“You interpret the Scripture in one way, and they interpret it in another,” said Mary: “whom shall I believe, and who shall be judge?”

“You shall believe God, who plainly speaketh in his Word,” was the Reformer’s answer, “and farther than the Word teaches you, ye shall believe neither the one nor the other. The Word of God is plain in itself, and if in any one place there be obscurity, the Holy Ghost, who never is contrary to himself, explains the same more clearly in other places, so that there can remain no doubt but unto such as are obstinately ignorant.” He illustrated his reply by a brief exposition of the passage on which the Romanists found their doctrine of the mass; when the queen said that, though she was unable to answer him, if those were present whom she had heard, they would give him an answer. “Madam,” replied the Reformer, “would to God that the learnedest Papist in Europe, and he that you would best believe, were present with your Grace, to sustain the argument, and that you would patiently hear the matter debated to an end; for then I doubt not, madam, you would know the vanity of the Papistical religion, and how little foundation it has in the Word of God.”

“Well,” said she, “you may perchance get that sooner than you believe.”

“Assuredly,” said Knox, “if I ever get it in my life I get it sooner than I believe; for the ignorant Papist cannot patiently reason, and the learned and crafty Papist will not come in your presence, madam, to have the grounds of his belief searched out, for they know that they cannot sustain the argument unless fire and sword and their own laws be judges. When you shall let me see the contrary, I shall grant myself to have been deceived in that point.”

The dinner-hour was announced, and the argument ended. “I pray God, madam,” said Knox in parting, “that ye may be as blessed within the commonwealth of Scotland, as ever was Deborah in the commonwealth of Israel.”<sup>1</sup>

Luther before Charles V. at Worms, Calvin before the Libertines in the Cathedral of St. Pierre, and Knox before Queen Mary in the Palace of Holyrood, are the three most dramatic points in the Reformation, and the three grandest passages in modern history. The victory in each of these three cases was won by one man, and was due solely to his faith. Luther, Calvin, Knox at these unspeakably critical moments stood alone; their friends could not or dared not show themselves; they were upheld only by the truth and greatness of their cause, and the aid of Him whose it was. A concession, a compromise, in either case would have ruined all; and Worms, St. Pierre, and Holyrood

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<sup>1</sup> Knox, *History* (Laing's edition), vol. ii., pp. 277–286.

would have figured in history as the scenes of irretrievable disaster, over which nations would have had cause to weep. They are instead names of glorious victory; Marathon, Morat, and Bannockburn shine not with so pure a splendour, nor will they stir the hearts of men so long. The triumph of Luther at Worms secured the commencement of the Reformation, that of Calvin in St. Pierre its consummation, and that of Knox in Holyrood its preservation.

## CHAPTER IX.

### TRIAL OF KNOX FOR TREASON.

Distribution of Ecclesiastical Revenues—Inadequate Provision for the Protestant Ministry—First Book of Discipline—Mary Refuses to Ratify the Ecclesiastical Settlement of 1560—Faithlessness of the Nobles—Grief of Knox—His Sermon—Rebuke of the Protestant Nobles—Summoned to the Palace—Interview with the Queen—Knox's Hardness—Mass at the Palace—Threatened Prosecution of Protestants—Knox's Circular—Put upon his Trial for Treason—Maitland of Lethington—Debate between Maitland and Knox—Knox's Defence on his Trial—His Acquittal—Joy of the Citizens—Consequences of his Acquittal—Knox's Political Sentiments—His Services to the Liberties of Great Britain.

IN the room of a sacerdotal hierarchy there had been planted in Scotland a body of teaching pastors. The change had been accomplished with the sanction of Parliament, but no provision was made for the temporal support of the new ecclesiastical establishment. This was a point on which Knox was not unnaturally anxious, but on which he was doomed to experience a bitter disappointment. The Romish Church in Scotland had possessed a boundless affluence of houses, valuables, and lands. Her abbacies dotted the country, mountain and meadowy forest and corn-field, were here; and all this wealth had been set free by the suppression of the priesthood, and ought to have been transferred, so far as it was needed, to the Protestant Church. But the nobles rushed in and appropriated nearly the whole of this vast spoil. Knox lifted up his voice to denounce a transaction which was alike damaging to the highest interests of the country, and the characters of those concerned in it: but he failed to warn off the covetous hands that were clutching this rich booty; and the only arrangement he succeeded in effecting was, that the revenues of the Popish Church should be divided into three parts, and that two of these should be given to the former incumbents, to revert at their death to the nobility, and that the third part should be divided between the court and the Protestant ministers. The latter had till now been entirely dependent upon the benevolence of their hearers, or the hospitality of the noblemen in whose houses some of them continued to reside. When Knox beheld the revenues which would have sufficed to plant Scotland with churches, colleges, and schools, and suitably provide for the poor, thus swallowed up, he could not refrain from expressing his mortification and disgust. "Well," exclaimed he, "if the end of this order be happy, my judgment fails me. I see two parts freely given to the devil, and the third must be divided between God and the devil. Who would have thought that when Joseph ruled in Egypt his brethren would have travelled for victuals, and would have returned with empty sacks to their families!" It was concern for his brethren's interest that drew from

the Reformer this stern denunciation, for his own stipend, appointed by the magistrates of Edinburgh, was an adequate one.

The same cause occasioned to Knox his second great disappointment. He had received from the Privy Council a commission, along with Winram, Spottiswood, Douglas, and Row, to draft a plan of ecclesiastical government. Comprehensive in outline and perfect in detail, incalculable, we have already seen, would have been the moral and literary benefits this plan would have conferred upon Scotland had it been fully carried out. But the nobles liked neither the moral rules it prescribed, nor the pecuniary burdens it imposed, and Knox failed to procure for it the ratification of the Privy Council. Many of the members of Council, however, subscribed it, and being approved by the first General Assembly, which met on the 20th of December, 1560,<sup>1</sup> it has, under the name of the “First Book of Discipline,” always held the rank of a standard in the Protestant Church of Scotland.<sup>2</sup>

A third and still more grievous disappointment awaited the Reformer. The Parliament of 1560, which had abolished the Papal jurisdiction, and accepted Protestantism as the national religion, had been held when the queen was absent from the kingdom, and the royal assent had never been given to its enactments. Not only did Mary, under various pretexts, refuse to ratify its deeds while she resided in France, but even after her return to Scotland she still withheld her ratification, and repeatedly declared the Parliament of 1560 to be illegal. If so, the Protestant establishment it had set up was also illegal, and no man could doubt that it was the queen’s intention, so soon as she was able, to overthrow it and restore the Romish hierarchy. This was a state of matters which Knox deemed intolerable; but the Protestant lords, demoralised by the spoils of the fallen establishment and the blandishments of the court, took it very easily. The Parliament—the first since Mary’s arrival—was about to meet; and Knox fondly hoped that now the royal ratification would be given to the Protestant settlement of the country. He pressed the matter upon the nobles as one of vital importance. He pointed out to them that till such assent was given they had no law on their side; that they held their religion at the mere pleasure of their sovereign, that they might any day be commanded to go to mass, and that it was indispensable that these uncertainties and fears should be set at rest. The nobles, however, found the matter displeasing to the queen, and agreed not to press it. Knox learned their resolve with consternation. He could not have believed, unless he had seen it, that the men who had summoned him from Geneva, and carried their cause to the battle-field, and who had entered into a solemn bond, pledging

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<sup>1</sup> It consisted of forty members, only six of whom were ministers. It met in the Magdalene Chapel, Cowgate. This chapel still exists, and is the property of the Protestant Institute of Scotland.

<sup>2</sup> Dunlop, *Collect. of Confessions*, vol. ii., p. 436 McCrie, *Life of Knox*, vol. ii., pp. 4, 5.

themselves to God and to one another, to sacrifice goods and life in the cause if need were, could have so woefully declined in zeal and courage, and could so prefer the good-will of their sovereign and their own selfish interests to the defence of their religion, and the welfare of their country. This exhibition of faithlessness and servility wellnigh broke his heart, and would have made him abandon the cause in despair but for his faith in God. The Parliament had not yet ended, and in the pulpit of St. Giles's, Knox poured out the sorrows that almost overwhelmed him in a strain of lofty and indignant, yet mournful eloquence. He reminded the nobles who, with some thousand of the citizens, were gathered before him, of the slavery of body, and the yet viler slavery of soul, in which they had been sunk; and now, when the merciful hand of God had delivered them, where was their gratitude? And then addressing himself in particular to the nobility, he continued, "In your most extreme dangers I have been with you; St. Johnston, Cupar-Moor, the Craigs of Edinburgh" (names that recalled past perils and terrors) "are yet fresh in my heart; yea, that dark and dolorous night wherein all ye, my lords, with shame and fear left this town, is yet in my mind, and God forbid that ever I forget it. What was, I say, my exhortation to you, and what has fallen in vain of all that ever God promised unto you by my mouth, ye yourselves are yet alive to testify. There is not one of you, against whom was death and destruction threatened, perished; and how many of your enemies has God plagued before your eyes! Shall this be the thankfulness that ye shall render unto your God? To betray his cause when you have it in your hands to establish it as you please? . . . Their religion had the authority of God, and was independent of human laws, but it was also accepted within this realm in public Parliament, and that Parliament he would maintain was as free and lawful as any that had ever assembled in the kingdom of Scotland." He alluded, in fine, to the reports of the queen's marriage, and bidding his audience mark his words, he warned the nobility what the consequences would be should they ever consent to their sovereign marrying a Papist.<sup>1</sup>

Knox himself tells us in his *History* that this plainness of speech gave offence to both Papists and Protestants. He had not expected, nor indeed intended, that his sermon should please the latter any more than the former. Men who were sinking their patriotism in cupidity, and their loyalty in sycophancy, would not be flattered by being told to their face that they were ruining their country. Another result followed, which had doubtless also been foreseen by the preacher. There were those in his audience who hurried off to the palace as soon as the sermon was ended, and reported his words to the queen, saying that he had preached against her marriage. Hardly had he finished his dinner when a messenger arrived from Holyrood, ordering his

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<sup>1</sup> Knox, *History* (Laing's edition), vol. ii., pp. 381–386.

attendance at the palace. His attached friend, Lord Ochiltree, and some others, accompanied him, but only Erskine of Dun was permitted to go with him into the royal cabinet. The moment he entered, Mary burst into a passion, exclaiming that never had prince been vexed by subject as she had been by him; "I vow to God," said she, "I shall once be revenged." "And with these words, hardly could her page bring napkins enough to hold her tears." Knox was beginning to state the paramount claims that governed him in the pulpit, when the queen demanded, "But what have you to do with my marriage?" He was going on to vindicate his allusion to that topic in the pulpit on the ground of its bearing on the welfare of the country, when she again broke in, "What have you to do with my marriage? or what are you in this commonwealth?" Posterity has answered that question, in terms that would have been less pleasing to Mary than was Knox's own reply. "A subject born within the same, madam," he at once said with a fine blending of courtesy and dignity: "a subject born within the same, madam, and albeit I be neither earl, lord, nor baron in it, yet has God made me (how abject that ever I be in your eyes) a profitable member within the same; yes, madam, to me it appertains no less to forewarn of such things as may hurt it, if I foresee them, than it doth to any of the nobility, for both my vocation and my conscience require plainness of me; and, therefore, madam, to yourself I say, that which I spake in public place:—Whensoever the nobility of this realm shall consent that ye be obedient to an unfaithful husband, they do as much as in them lieth to renounce Christ, to banish his truth from them, to betray the freedom of this realm, and perchance shall in the end do small comfort to yourself." Mary's reply to these words was a burst of tears.<sup>1</sup> Erskine of Dun stepped forward to soothe her, but with no great success. Knox stood silent till the queen had composed herself, and then said he was constrained, though unwillingly, to sustain her tears, rather than hurt his conscience and betray the commonwealth by his silence. This defence but the more incensed the queen; she ordered him to leave her presence and await in the ante-chamber the signification of her pleasure. There he was surrounded by numbers of his acquaintances and associates, but he stood "as one whom men had never seen." Lord Ochiltree alone of all that dastardly crowd found courage to recognise him. Turning from the male, but not manly, courtiers, Knox addressed himself to the queen's ladies. "O fair ladies," said he, in a vein of raillery which the queen's frown had not been able to extinguish, "how pleasing were this life of yours, if it should ever abide, and then, in the end, we might pass to heaven with all this gay gear! but fie upon that knave Death that will come whether we will or no." Erskine now came to him to say that the queen permitted him

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<sup>1</sup> "There are some of that sex," says Randolph, writing to Cecil, and narrating a similar exhibition, "who can weep for anger as well as grief."

to go home for the day. Mary was bent on a prosecution of the Reformer, but her councillors refused to concur, and so, as Knox says, “this storm blew over in appearance, but not in heart.”<sup>1</sup>

Sternly, uncompromisingly, Knox pursues his course! Not an uncourteous, undignified, treasonable word does he utter; yet what iron inflexibility! He sacrifices friends, he incurs the mortal hatred of his sovereign, he restrains the yearnings of his own heart; the sacrifice is painful—painful to himself and to all about him, but it is the saving of his country. What hardness! exclaim many. We grant it; Knox is hard as the rock, stubborn as the nether mill-stone; but when men seek to erect a beacon that may save the mariner from the reef on which the tumultuous billows are about to pitch his vessel headlong, it is the rock, not the sand-heap, that they select as a foundation.

At last, as the queen thought, the Reformer had put himself in her power. Had it been as Mary believed, no long time would have elapsed till his head had fallen on the scaffold, and with it, in all human reckoning, would have fallen the Protestant Church of his native land. During the queen’s absence at Stirling, the same summer, mass was celebrated at Holyrood by her domestics with greater pomp than usual, and numbers of the citizens resorted to it. Some zealous Protestants of Edinburgh forced their way into the chapel, principally to see who of their fellow-citizens were present, and finding the priest attired for celebration, they asked him why he durst do these things in the queen’s absence. The chaplain and the French domestics, taking fright, raised a cry which made Comptroller Pitarrow hasten to their aid, who found no tumult, however, save what he brought with him. Information having been sent to the queen, she caused two of the Protestants to be indicted for “forethought felony, hamesucken, and invasion of the palace.” Fearing that it might go hard with the accused, the ministers urged Knox, agreeably to a commission he had received from the Church, to address a circular to the leading Protestants of the country, requesting their presence on the day of trial. A copy of this letter having been sent to the queen, she submitted it to the Privy Council; and the Council, to her great delight, pronounced it treasonable.

In December, 1563, an extraordinary meeting of Council was called, and Knox was put upon his trial. Mary took her seat at the head of the table with an affectation of great dignity, which she utterly spoiled by giving way to a fit of loud laughter, so great was her joy at seeing Knox standing uncovered at the foot of the table. “That man,” said she, “made me weep, and shed never a tear himself; I will now see if I can make him weep.” Secretary Maitland of Lethington conducted the prosecution, and seemed almost as eager as Mary herself to obtain a conviction against the Reformer. Maitland was a

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<sup>1</sup> Knox, *History* (Laing’s edition), vol. ii., pp. 386–389.

formidable opponent, being one of the most accomplished dialecticians of the age. He had been a zealous Protestant, but caring little at heart for any religion, he had now cooled, and was trying to form a middle party, between the court and the Church. Nothing has a greater tendency to weaken the insight than the want of definite views and strong convictions, and so the secretary was labouring with all his might to realise his narrow and impracticable scheme, to the success of which, as he deemed, one thing only was wanting, namely, that Knox should be got rid of. The offence for which the Reformer was now made answerable was, "convening the lieges" by his circular; but the sting of his letter lay in the sentence which affirmed that the threatened prosecution "was doubtless to make preparation upon a few, that a door may be opened to execute cruelty upon a greater number." Knox had offended mortally, for he had penetrated the designs of the court, and proclaimed them to the nation.

The proceedings were commenced by the reading of the circular for which Knox had been indicted. "Heard you ever, my lords," said Mary, looking round the Council, "a more spiteful and treasonable letter?" This was followed up by Maitland, who, turning to Knox, said, "Do you not repent that such a letter has passed your pen?" The Reformer avoided the trap, and made answer, "My lord secretary, before I repent I must be shown my offence." "Offence!" exclaimed Maitland, in a tone of surprise; "if there were no more but the convocation of the queen's lieges, the offence cannot be denied." The Reformer took his stand on the plain common-sense of the matter, that to convene the citizens for devotion, or for deliberation, was one thing, and to convene them with arms was another; and Maitland laboured to confound the two, and attach a treasonable purpose to the convocation in question. "What is this?" interposed the queen, who was getting impatient; "methinks you trifle with him. Who gave him authority to make convocation of my lieges? Is not that treason?" "No, madam," replied Lord Ruthven, whose Protestant spirit was roused—"no, madam, for he makes convocation of the people to hear prayers and sermon almost daily, and whatever your Grace or others will think thereof, we think it no treason."

After a long and sharp debate between the Reformer and the secretary, the "cruelty upon a greater multitude," for which the summons served on the two Protestants would, it was affirmed, prepare the way, came next under discussion. The queen insisted that she was the party against whom this allegation was directed. Knox contended that its application was general, and that it was warranted by the notorious persecutions of the Papacy to exterminate Protestants. He was enlarging on this topic, when the chancellor interrupted him. "You forget yourself," said he; "you are not now in the pulpit." "I am in the place," replied the Reformer, "where I am demanded of conscience to speak the truth, and therefore the truth I speak, impugn it whoso

list.” At last Knox was withdrawn, and the queen having retired, in order that the judgment of the Council might be given, the lords unanimously voted that John Knox had been guilty of no violation of the laws. Secretary Maitland stormed, and the courtiers stood aghast. The queen was brought back, and took her place at the head of the table, and the votes were called over again in her presence. “What!” said the members, “shall the Laird of Lethington make us condemn an innocent man?” The Council pronounced a second unanimous acquittal. They then rose and departed. The issue had been waited for with intense anxiety by the Protestant citizens of Edinburgh, and during the sitting of Council a dense crowd filled the court of the palace, and occupied the stairs up to the very door of the council-chamber. That night no instruments of music were brought before the queen; the darkened and silent halls of Holyrood proclaimed the grief and anger of Mary Stuart. But if the palace mourned, the city rejoiced.<sup>1</sup>

We have missed the true character of this scene if we have failed to see, not Mary Stuart and Knox, but Rome and the Reformation struggling together in this chamber. Where would Scotland have been today if the vote of the Privy Council that night had consigned Knox to the Castle, thence to pass, in a few days, or in a few weeks, to a scaffold in the Grass Market? The execution of the Reformer would have been immediately followed by the suppression of the ecclesiastical and educational institutions which he had set up, and Scotland plunged again into Popery would have been, at this day, a second Ireland, with a soil less fertile, and a population even more pauperised. Nay, the disastrous consequences of the Reformer’s imprisonment or death would have extended far beyond his native land. Had Scotland been a Popish country at the time of the Armada, in all human probability the throne of Elizabeth would have been overturned. Nay, with Scotland Popish, it may be doubted whether the throne of Elizabeth would have stood till then. If Mary Stuart had succeeded in restoring the Papacy in Scotland, the country would, as an almost inevitable consequence, have fallen under the power of France, and would have become the door by which the Popish Powers would have entered England to suppress its Reformation, and place the Queen of the Scots upon its throne. Had Knox that night descended the stairs of the royal cabinet of Holyrood with a sentence of condemnation upon him, his countrymen would have had more cause to mourn than himself, and England too would, in no long time, have learned the extent of the calamity which had befallen the great cause with which she had identified herself, when she saw the fall of the northern kingdom followed by the destruction of her own Protestant religion and liberties.

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<sup>1</sup> Knox. *History* (Laine's edition), vol. ii., pp. 393—112. McCrie. *Life of Knox*, vol. ii., p. 295.

Even yet we hear at times echoes of the charge preferred against Knox at the council-table of the queen. Tried by the political creed of Mary Stuart, it must be confessed that his sentiments were disloyal. Mary held by the principle, to sovereigns a convenient one, of "the right divine of kings to govern wrong;" Knox, on the contrary, held that "all power is founded on a compact expressed or understood between the rulers and the ruled, and that no one has either divine or human right to govern, save in accordance with the will of the people and the law of God." This is the amount of all that Knox advanced under that head in his various interviews with Queen Mary. His opinions may have sounded strange to one reared in a despotic court; and when the Reformer enunciated them with such emphasis in the Palace of Holyrood, they were before their time; but the world has since seen cause to ratify them, and States of no mean name have acted upon them. Holland embodied them in its famous declaration of independence twenty years afterwards; they received a signal triumph when the British nation adopted them at the Revolution of 1688; and they form, at this day, the basis of that glorious constitution under which it is our happiness to live. Branded as treason when first uttered beneath the royal roof of Holyrood, not a day now passes without our reading these same sentiments in a hundred journals. We hear them proclaimed in senates, we see them acted on in cabinets, and re-echoed from the throne itself. Let us not forget that the first openly to avow them on Scottish soil was John Knox.

Let it be remembered too, that there was then no free press, no free platform, no one organ of public sentiment but the pulpit; and had Knox been silent, the cause of liberty would have been irretrievably betrayed and lost. He had penetrated the design of Mary, inflexibly formed, and craftily yet steadily pursued, of overturning the Reformation of her native land. Knox was the one obstacle in Mary's path to the accomplishment of that design. When nobles and burgesses were bowing down he stood erect, unshaken in his firm resolve, that come what might, and forsake it who would, he would stand by the cause of his country's Reformation. He saw in the back-ground of Mary's throne the dark phalanx of the Popish despots who were banded together to crush the Reformation of Christendom by making a beginning of their work in Scotland, and he stood forward to denounce and, if possible, prevent the perpetration of that gigantic crime. In that chamber of Holyrood, and in the pulpit of St. Giles's, he fought the noblest battle ever waged upon Scottish soil, and defeated a more formidable foe than Wallace encountered at Stirling, or Bruce vanquished at Bannockburn. He broke the firm-knit league of Papal conspirators, plucked from their very teeth the little country of Scotland, which they had made their prey, and, rescuing it from the vile uses to which they had destined it, made it one of the lights of the world, and,

along with England, a mother of free nations. Through all the ages of the future, the foremost place among Scotsmen must belong to Knox.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> One who is neither a Scotsman nor a Presbyterian says justly as generously: “The time has come when English history may do justice to one but for whom the Reformation would have been overthrown among ourselves; for the spirit which Knox created saved Scotland, and if Scotland had been Catholic again, neither the wisdom of Elizabeth’s ministers, nor the teaching of her bishops, nor her own chicaneries, would have preserved England from revolution.” (Froude, *History of England*, vol. x., pp. 193, 194; Lond., 1870.)

## CHAPTER X.

### THE LAST DAYS OF QUEEN MARY AND JOHN KNOX.

Prosperous Events—Ratification of the Protestant Establishment by Parliament—Culmination of Scottish Reformation—Knox Wishes to Retire—New Storms—Knox Retires to St. Andrews—Knox in the Pulpit—Tulchan Bishops—Knox's Opposition to the Scheme—The St. Bartholomew Massacre—Knox's Prediction—His Last Appearance in the Pulpit—Final End of Mary's Crimes—Darnley—Rizzio—Kirk-of-Field—Marriage with Bothwell—Carberry Hill—Lochleven Castle—Battle of Langside—Flight to England—Execution—Mary the Last Survivor of her Partners in Crime—Last Illness of Knox—His Death—His Character.

THE dangerous crisis was now past, and a tide of prosperous events began to set in, in favour of the Scottish Reformation. The rising of the Earl of Huntly, in the north—who, knowing the court to be secretly favourable, had unfurled the standard for Rome—was suppressed. The alienation which had parted Knox and Lord James Stuart, now Earl of Murray, for two years was healed; the Protestant spirit in the provinces was strengthened by the preaching tours undertaken by the Reformer; the jealousies between the court and the Church, though not removed, were abated; the abdication of the queen, which grew out of the deplorable occurrences that followed her marriage with Darnley, and to which our attention must briefly be given, seeing they were amongst the most powerful of the causes which turned the balance between Protestantism and Romanism, not in Scotland only, but over Europe; and, as a consequence of her abdication, the appointment, as regent of the kingdom, of the Earl of Murray, the intimate friend of Knox, and the great outstanding patriot and Reformer among the Scottish nobles—all tended in one direction, to the establishment, namely, of the Scottish Reformation. Accordingly, in 1567, the infant James being king, and Murray regent, the Parliament which met on the 15th of December ratified all the Acts that had been passed in 1560, abolishing the Papal jurisdiction, and accepting the Protestant faith as the religion of the nation. Valid legal securities were thus for the first time reared around the Protestant Church of Scotland. It was further enacted, "That no prince should afterwards be admitted to the exercise of authority in the kingdom, without taking an oath to maintain the Protestant religion; and that none but Protestants should be admitted to any office, with the exception of those that were hereditary, or held for life. The ecclesiastical jurisdiction, exercised by the Assemblies of the Church, was formally ratified, and commissioners appointed to define more exactly the causes which came within the sphere of their judgment."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> McCrie, *Life of Knox*, vol. ii., pp. 158, 159.

The Scottish Reformation had now reached its culmination in that century, and from this point Knox could look back over the battles he had waged, and the toils he had borne, and contemplate with thankfulness their issue in the overthrow of the Papal tyranny, and the establishment of a Scriptural faith in Scotland. He had, too, received legal guarantees from the State that the abolished jurisdiction would not be restored, and that the Protestant Church would have liberty and protection given it in the exercise of its worship and the administration of its discipline. The two years that followed, 1568 and 1569, were perhaps the happiest in the Reformer's life, and the most prosperous in the history of his country during that century. Under the energetic and patriotic administration of the "Good Regent", Scotland enjoyed quiet. The Reformed Church was enlarging her borders; all was going well; and that yearning for rest which often visits the breasts of those who have been long tossed by tempests, began to be felt by Knox. He remembered the quiet years at Geneva, the loving flock to whom he had there ministered the Word of Life, and he expressed a wish to return thither and spend the evening of his life, and lay his wearied body, it might be, by the side of greater dust in the Plain-palais.

But it was not to be so. Other storms were to roll over him and over his beloved Church before he should descend into his grave. The assassination of the Regent Murray, in January, 1570, was the forerunner of these evils. The tidings of his death occasioned to Knox the most poignant anguish, but great as was his own loss, he regarded it as nothing in comparison with the calamity which had befallen the country in the murder of this great patriot and able administrator. Under the Earl of Lennox, who succeeded Murray as regent, the former confusions returned, and they continued under Mar, by whom Lennox was succeeded. The nobles were divided into two factions, one in favour of Mary, while the other supported the cause of the young king. In the midst of those contentions the life of the Reformer came to be in so great danger that it was thought advisable that he should remove from Edinburgh, and take up his residence for some time at St. Andrews. Here he often preached, and though so feeble that he had to be lifted up into the pulpit, before the sermon had ended his earnestness and vehemence were such that, in the words of an eye-witness, "*He was like to ding the pulpit in blads<sup>1</sup> and file out of it.*"

Weary of the world, and longing to depart, he had nevertheless to wage battle to the very close of his life. His last years were occupied in opposing the introduction into the Presbyterian Church of an order of bishops known only to Scotland, and termed *Tulchan*.<sup>2</sup> Several rich benefices had become

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<sup>1</sup> *i.e.*, break the pulpit in pieces. (James Melville, *Autobiography*.)

<sup>2</sup> A tulchan is a calf's skin stuffed with straw, set up to make the cow give her milk freely.

vacant by the death of the incumbents, and other causes; and the nobles, coveting these rich livings, entered into simoniacal bargains with the least worthy of the ministers, to the effect that they should fill the post, but that the patron should receive the richest portion of the income; hence the term *Tulchan bishops*. Knox strongly objected to the institution of the new order of ecclesiastics—first, because he held it a robbery of the Church’s patrimony; and secondly, because it was an invasion on the Presbyterian equality which had been settled in the .Scottish Kirk. His opposition delayed the completion of this disgraceful arrangement, which was not carried through till the year in which he died. In August, 1572, he returned to Edinburgh, and soon thereafter received the news of the .St. Bartholomew Massacre. We need not say how deeply he was affected by a crime that drowned France in Protestant blood, including that of many of his own personal friends. Kindling into prophet-like fire, he foretold from the pulpit of St. Giles’s a future of revolutions as awaiting the royal house and throne of France; and his words, verily, have not fallen to the ground.

His last appearance in public was on the 9th of November, 1572, when he preached in the Tolbooth Church on occasion of the installation of Mr. Lawson as his colleague and successor. At the close of the service, as if he felt that no more should flock see their pastor, or pastor address his flock, he protested, in the presence of Him to whom he expected soon to give an account, that he had walked among them with a good conscience, preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ in all sincerity, and he exhorted and charged them to adhere steadfastly to the faith which they had professed. The services at an end, he descended the pulpit-stairs, with exhausted yet cheerful look, and walked slowly down the High Street leaning on the arm of his servant, Richard Bannatyne; his congregation lining the way, reverently anxious to have their last look of their beloved pastor. He entered his house never again to pass over its threshold.<sup>1</sup> It was meet he should now depart, for the shadows were falling thickly, not around himself only, but around Christendom.

While the events we have so rapidly narrated were in progress, Mary Stuart, the other great figure of the time, was pursuing her career, and it is necessary that we should follow—not in their detail, for that is not necessary for our object, but in their outline and issue—a series of events of which she was the centre, and which were acting with marked and lasting effect on both Romanism and Protestantism. We have repeatedly referred to the league of the three Papal Powers—France, Spain, and Rome—to quench the new light which was then dawning on the nations, and bring back the night on the face of all the earth. We have also said that of this plot Mary Stuart had become the centre, seeing the part assigned her was essential to its success. It is surely

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<sup>1</sup> McCrie, *Life of Knox*, vol. ii., pp. 217, 218.

a most instructive fact, that the series of frightful crimes into which this princess plunged was one of the main instrumentalities that Providence employed to bring this plot to nought. From the day that Mary Stuart put her hand to this bond of blood, the tide in her fortunes turned, and all things went against her. First came her sudden and ill-starred affection for Lord Darnley, the son of the Earl of Lennox; then followed her marriage with him, accomplished through treachery, and followed by civil war. The passion which Mary felt for Darnley, a weak, vain, and frivolous youth, and addicted to low company, soon gave place to disgust. Treated with neglect by her husband, Mary was thrown upon others, and then came her worse than unseemly intimacy with the low-born and low-bred Italian, David Rizzio. This awakened a fierce and revengeful jealousy in the breast of Darnley, which led to the midnight assassination in the palace. A band of vizored barons, with naked swords, suddenly appeared in the supper-chamber of the queen, and seizing her favourite, and loosening his grasp on the dress of his mistress, which he had clutched in despair, they dragged him out, and dispatched him in the antechamber, his screams ringing in the ears of the queen, who was held back by force from rescuing him. Then came the settled purpose of revenge in the heart of Mary Stuart against her husband, for his share in the murder of Rizzio. This purpose, concealed for a time under an affectation of tenderer love, the more effectually to lure the vain and confiding Lord Darnley into the snare she had set for him, was steadily and coolly pursued, till at last it was consummated in the horrible tragedy of the "Kirk-of-Field." The lurid blaze which lighted the sky of Edinburgh that night, and the shock that roused its sleeping citizens from their beds, bring upon the stage new actors, and pave the way for outrages that startle the imagination and stupefy the moral sense. Darnley has disappeared, and now an infamous and bloody man starts up by the side of Mary Stuart. There comes next, her strange passion for Bothwell, a man without a single spark of chivalry or honour in him—coarse-minded, domineering, with an evil renown hanging about him for deeds of violence and blood, and whose gross features and badly-moulded limbs did not furnish Mary with the poor apology of manly beauty for the almost insane passion for him to which she abandoned herself. Then, before the blood of her husband was dry, and the ruins of the Kirk-of-Field had ceased to smoke, came her marriage with Bothwell, whom the nation held to be the chief perpetrator of the cruel murder of her former husband. To take in marriage that hand which had spilt her husband's blood was to confess in act what even she dared not confess in words. From this moment her fatuous career becomes more reckless, and she rushes onward with awful speed towards the goal. Aghast at such a career, and humiliated by being ruled over by such a sovereign, her subjects broke out in insurrection. The queen flew to arms; she was defeated on the field of Carberry Hill; brought as a captive to

Edinburgh; thence sent to Lochleven Castle, where she endured a lonely imprisonment of some months. Escaping thence, she fled on horseback all night long, and at morning presented herself at the castle-gates of the Hamiltons. Here she rallied round her the supporters whom her defeat had scattered, and for the last time tried the fortune of arms against her subjects on the field of Langside, near Glasgow. The battle went against her, and she fled a second time, riding night and day across country towards the Border, where, fording the Solway, she had adieu to Scottish soil, nevermore to return. She had left her country behind, not her evil genius, nor her ill-fortune; these, as a terrible Nemesis, accompany her into England. There, continuing to be the principal card in the game the Popish Powers were playing, she was drawn to conspire against the life and throne of Elizabeth. It was now that doom overtook her. On a dull winter morning, on the 8th of February, she who had dazzled all eyes by her beauty, all imaginations by her liveliness and gaiety, and who had won so many hearts by her fascinating address—the daughter of a king, the wife of a king, and the mother of a king, and who herself had sat on two thrones—laid her head, now discrowned, grey with sorrows, and stained with crimes, upon the block. At the very time that the Armada was being built in the dockyards of Spain, and an immense host was being collected in the Netherlands, with the view of making vacant Elizabeth's throne, and elevating Mary Stuart to it, the head of the latter princess fell on the scaffold.

It is noteworthy that Queen Mary survived all who had been actors along with her in the scenes of crime and blood in which she had so freely mingled. Before she herself mounted the scaffold, she had seen all who had sided with her in Scotland against Knox and the Reformation, die on the gallows or in the field. Before her last hour came the glory of the House of Hamilton had been tarnished, and the member of that house who fired the shot that deprived Scotland of her "Good Regent" had to seek asylum in France. Kirkaldy of Grange, who espoused Mary's quarrel at the last hour, and held the Castle of Edinburgh in her behalf, was hanged at the Market Cross; and Maitland of Lethington, who had lent the aid of his powerful talents to the queen to bring Knox to the block, died, it is supposed, by his own hand, after living to witness the utter wreck of all Mary's interests in Scotland. Bothwell, who had stained his life and conscience with so many horrid deeds to serve her, rotted for years in a foreign dungeon, and at last expired there. The same fatality attended all in other lands who took part with her or embarked in her schemes. Her co-conspirators in England came to violent ends. The Earls of Westmoreland and Northumberland were executed. The Duke of Norfolk, the premier peer, was beheaded in the Tower. All concerned in the Babington plot were swept off by the axe. In France it was the same. Her uncles had died violent and bloody deaths; Charles IX. expired, blood flowing from every opening in his body; Catherine de Medici, after all her crimes, trod the

same road; and last of all Mary herself went to her great audit. As she stands this dark morning before the block in Fotheringay Castle, it could hardly fail to put a double sting into death to reflect that she had seen the ruin of all her friends, and the utter overthrow of all her projects, while the Reformation against which she had so sorely combatted was every year striking its roots deeper in her native land.

From this blood-stained block, with the headless corpse of a queen beside it, we turn to another death-scene, tragic too—not with horrors, as the other, but with triumph. We stand in a humble chamber at the foot of the High Street of Edinburgh. Here, on this bed, is laid that head over which so many storms had burst, to find at last the rest which, wearied with toil and anxiety, it had so earnestly sought. Noblemen, ministers, burgesses pour in to see how Knox will die. As he had lived so he dies, full of courage. From his dying bed he exhorted, warned, admonished all who approached him as he had done from the pulpit. His brethren in the ministry he adjured to “abide by the eternal truth of the Gospel.” Noblemen and statesmen he counselled to uphold the “Evangel” and not forsake the Church of their native land, if they would have God not to strip them of their riches and honours. He made Calvin’s sermons on the Ephesians be read to him, as if his spirit sought to commune once more on earth with that mightier spirit. But the Scriptures were the manna on which he mostly lived: “Turn,” said he to his wife, “to that passage where I first cast anchor, the seventeenth of the Gospel of John.” In the midst of these solemn scenes, a gleam of his wonted geniality breaks in. Two intimate friends come to see him, and he makes a cask of French wine which was in his cellar be pierced for their entertainment, and hospitably urges them to partake, saying that “he will not tarry till it be all drank.” He was overheard breathing out short utterances in prayer: “Give peace to this afflicted commonwealth; raise up faithful pastors.” On the day before his death, being Sunday, after lying some time quiet, he suddenly broke out, “I have fought against spiritual wickedness in heavenly things,” referring to the troubled state of the Church, “and have prevailed; I have been in heaven and taken possession, I have tasted of the heavenly joys.” At eleven o’clock in the evening of the 24th of November, he heaved a deep sigh, and ejaculated, “Now it is come.” His friends desired of him a sign that he died in peace, whereupon, says the chronicler of his last hours, “As if he had received new strength in death, he lifted one of his hands towards heaven, and sighing twice, departed with the calmness of one fallen into sleep.”<sup>1</sup>

The two master-qualities of Knox were faith and courage. The fundamental quality was his faith, courage was the noble fruit that sprang from it. The words of Regent Morton, spoken over his dust, have become proverbial,

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<sup>1</sup> *Smetoni Responsio*. p. 123. McCrie, *Life of Knox*, vol. ii., pp. 224, 232.

“There lies one who never feared the face of man.” John Knox never feared man because he never mistrusted God. His faith taught him, first of all, a fearless submission of his understanding to the Word of God. To thus profound submission to the Bible we can trace all the noble and rare qualities which he displayed in his life. To this was owing the simplicity, the clearness and the rigour of all his views, his uniform consistency, and that remarkable foresight which to his countrymen appeared to approach almost to prophecy. Looking along the lines of the Divine government, as revealed in the Scriptures, he could foretell what would inevitably be the issue of a certain course of conduct or a certain train of events. It might come sooner or it might come later, but he no more doubted that it would come than he doubted the uniformity and equity of God’s rule over men. To this too, namely, his submission to the Bible, was owing at once the solidity and the breadth of his Reform. Instead of trammelling himself by forms he threw himself fearlessly and broadly upon great principles. He spread his Reformation over the whole of society, going down till he had reached its deepest springs, and travelling outwards till he had regenerated his country in all departments of its action, and in all the spheres of its well-being. He was an advocate of constitutional government, and a friend, as we have seen, of the highest and widest intellectual culture. It is no proof of narrowness, surely, but of insight and breadth, that he discerned the true foundation on which to build in order that his Reformation might endure and extend itself. He placed it upon the Bible. His wide and patriotic views on public liberty and education, which he held and inculcated, we gratefully acknowledge; but the great service which he rendered to Scotland was the religious one—he gave it liberty by giving it the “Evangel.” It would have but little availed Scotsmen in the nineteenth century if Knox had wrought up their fathers to a little political enthusiasm, but had failed to lead them to the Bible, that great awakener of the human soul, and bulwark of the rights of conscience. If this had been all, the Scots, after a few abortive attempts, like those of misguided France, to reconcile political freedom with spiritual servitude, would assuredly have fallen back under the old yoke, and would have been lying at this day in the gulf of “Papistrie.” Discarding this narrow visionary project, Knox grasped the one eternal principle of liberty, the government of the human conscience by the Bible, and planting his Reformation upon this great foundation-stone, he endowed it with the attribute of durability.

## CHAPTER XI.

### ANDREW MELVILLE—THE TULCHAN BISHOPS.

The Tulchan Bishops—Evils that grew out of this Arrangement—Supported by the Government—A Battle in Prospect—A Champion Wanting—Andrew Melville—His Parentage—Education—Studies Abroad—Goes to Geneva—Appointed Professor of Humanity in its Academy—Returns to Scotland in 1574—State of Scotland at his Arrival—War against the Tulchan Bishops—The General Assembly Abolishes the Order—Second Book of Discipline—Perfected Polity of the Presbyterian Kirk—The Spiritual Independence—Geneva and Scotland—A Great Struggle.

THE same year (1572) which saw Knox descend into the grave beheld the rise of a system in Scotland, which was styled episcopacy, and yet was not episcopacy, for it possessed no authority and exercised no oversight. We have already indicated the motives which led to this invasion upon the Presbyterian equality, which had till now prevailed in the Scottish Church, and the significant name borne by the men who filled the offices created under this arrangement. They were styled *Tulchan* bishops, being only the image or likeness of a bishop, set up as a convenient vehicle through which the fruits of the benefices might flow, not into the treasury of the Church, their rightful destination, but into the pockets of patrons and landlords. We have seen that Knox resisted this scheme, as stained with the double guilt of simony and robbery. He held it, moreover, to be a violation of one of the fundamental laws of the Presbyterian polity, so far as the new bishops might possess any real superiority of power or rank. This they hardly did as yet, for the real power of the Church lay in her courts, and the *Tulchan* bishops were subject to the jurisdiction of the Synods and Assemblies equally with their brethren; but the change was deemed ominous by all the more faithful ministers, as the commencement of a policy which seemed certain in the end to lay prostrate the Presbyterianism of the Church of Scotland, and with it the Reformed religion and the liberties of the country.

Meanwhile, numerous other evils grew out of this arrangement. The men who consented to be obtruded into these equivocal posts were mostly unqualified, some by their youth, others by their old age; some by inferior talents, others by their blemished character. They were despised by the people as the tools of the court and the aristocracy. Hardly an Assembly met but it had to listen to complaints against them for neglect of duty, or irregularity of life, or tyrannical administration. The ministers, who felt that these abuses were debasing the purity and weakening the influence of the Church, sought means to correct them. But the Government took the side of the Tulchan dignitaries. The regent, Morton, declared the speeches against the new bishops to be seditious, threatened to deprive the Church of the liberty of her

Assemblies, and advanced a claim to the same supremacy over ecclesiastical affairs which had been declared an inherent prerogative in the crown of England.<sup>1</sup> Into this complicated and confused state had matters now come in Scotland.

The man who had so largely contributed by his unwearied labours to rear the Scottish ecclesiastical establishment, and who had watched over it with such unslumbering vigilance, was now in his grave. Of those who remained, many were excellent men, and ardently attached to the principles of the Presbyterian Church; but there was no one who possessed Knox's sagacity to devise, or his intrepidity to apply, the measures which the crisis demanded. They felt that the Tulchan episcopacy which had lifted up its head in the midst of them must be vigorously resisted if Presbyterianism was to live, but a champion was wanting to lead in the battle.

At last one not unworthy to succeed Knox came forward to fill the place where that great leader had stood. This man was Andrew Melville, who in 1574 returned from Geneva to Scotland. He was of the Melvilles of Baldovy, in the Mearns, and having been left an orphan at the age of four years, was received into the family of his elder brother, who, discovering his genius and taste for learning, resolved to give him the best education the country afforded. He acquired Latin in the grammar-school of Montrose, and Greek from Pierre de Marsilliers, a native of France, who taught in those parts; and when the young Melville entered the University of St. Andrews he read the original text of Aristotle, while his professors, unacquainted with the tongue of their oracle, commented upon his works from a Latin translation.<sup>2</sup> From St. Andrews, Melville went to prosecute his studies at that ancient seat of learning, the University of Paris. The Sorbonne was then rising into higher renown and attracting greater crowds of students than ever, Francis I., at the advice of the great scholar Budæus, having just added to it three new chairs for Latin, Greek, and Hebrew. These unlocked the gates of the ancient world, and admitted the student to the philosophy of the Greek Sages and the diviner knowledge of the Hebrew prophets. The Jesuits were at that time intriguing to obtain admission into the University of Paris, and to insinuate themselves into the education of youth, and the insight Melville obtained abroad into the character and designs of these zealots was useful to him in after-life, stimulating him as it did to put the colleges of his native land on such a footing that the youth of Scotland might have no need to seek instruction in foreign countries. From Paris, Melville repaired to Poitiers, where, during a residence of three years, he discharged the duties of regent in the College of St. Marceon, till he was compelled to quit it by the troubles of the civil war.

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<sup>1</sup> *Buik of Univ. Kirk*, p. 53. McCrie, *Life of Melville*, vol. i., p. 154.

<sup>2</sup> James Melville, *Autobiography and Diary*, p. 39; Wodrow ed., 1842.

Leaving Poitiers, he journeyed on foot to Geneva, his Hebrew Bible slung at his belt,<sup>1</sup> and in a few days after his arrival he was elected to fill the chair of Humanity, then vacant, in the famous academy which Calvin had founded ten years before, and which, as regards the fame of its masters and the number of its scholars, now rivalled the ancient universities of Europe.<sup>2</sup> This appointment brought him into daily intercourse with the scholars, ministers, and senators of Geneva, and if the Scotsman delighted in their urbanity and learning, they no less admired his candour, vivacity, and manifold acquirements. The Massacre of St. Bartholomew took place during Melville's residence in Geneva, and that terrible event, by crowding Geneva with refugees, vastly enlarged his acquaintance with the Protestants of the Continent. There were at one time as many as 120 French ministers in that hospitable city, and among other learned strangers was Joseph Scaliger, the greatest scholar of his age, with whom Melville renewed an acquaintance which had been begun two years before. The horrors of this massacre, of which he had had so near a view, deepened the detestation he felt for tyranny, and helped to nerve him in the efforts he made in subsequent years for the liberties of his native land. Surrounded with congenial friends and occupied in important labours, that land he had all but forgotten, till it was recalled to his heart by a visit from two of his countrymen, who, struck with his great capabilities, urged him to return to Scotland. Having obtained with difficulty permission from the Senate and Church of Geneva to return, he set out on his way homeward, with a letter from Beza, in which that illustrious man said that "the Church of Geneva could not give a stronger token of affection to her sister of Scotland than by despoiling herself of his services that the Church of Scotland might therewith be enriched."<sup>3</sup> Passing through Paris on the very day that Charles IX. died in the Louvre, he arrived in Edinburgh in July, 1574, after an absence of ten years from his native country. "He brought with him," says James Melville, "an inexhaustible treasury of learning, a vast knowledge both of things human and divine, and, what was better still, an upright and fervent zeal for true religion, and a firm resolution to devote all his gifts, with unwearied painfulness, to the service of his Kirk and country without recompense or gain."<sup>4</sup>

On his arrival in Scotland he found the battle against the Tulchan episcopate, so incongruously joined on to the Presbyterian Church, halting for one to lead. Impressed with the simple order which Calvin had established in Geneva, and ascribing in large degree to that cause the glory to which that Church had attained, and the purity with which religion flourished in it, and

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<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 41.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 41.

<sup>3</sup> James Melville, *Autobiography*, p. 42.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 44.

believing with Jerome that, agreeably to the interchangeable use of the words “bishop” and “presbyter” in the New-Testament, all ministers of the Gospel were at first equal, Melville resolved not to rest till he had lopped off the unseemly addition which avaricious nobles and a tyrannical Government had made to the Church of his native land, and restored it to the simplicity of its first order. He began the battle in the General Assembly of 1575; he continued it in following Assemblies, and with such success that the General Assembly of 1580 came to a unanimous resolution, declaring “the office of a bishop, as then used and commonly understood, to be destitute of warrant from the Word of God, and a human invention, tending to the great injury of the Church, and ordained the bishops to demit their pretended office *simpliciter*, and to receive admission as ordinary pastors *de novo*, under pain of excommunication.”<sup>1</sup> Not a holder of a Tulchan mitre but bowed to the decision of the Assembly.

While, on the one hand, this new episcopacy was being cast down, the Church was labouring, on the other, to build up and perfect her scheme of Presbyterian polity. A committee was appointed to prosecute this important matter, and in the course of a series of sittings it brought its work to completion, and its plan was sanctioned by the General Assembly which met in the Magdalene Chapel of Edinburgh, in 1578, under the presidency of Andrew Melville. “From this time,” says Dr. McCrie, “the Book of Policy, as it was then styled, or Second Book of Discipline, although not ratified by the Privy Council or Parliament, was regarded by the Church as exhibiting her authorised form of government, and the subsequent Assemblies took steps for carrying its arrangements into effect, by erecting presbyteries throughout the kingdom, and committing to them the oversight of all ecclesiastical affairs within their bounds, to the exclusion of bishops, superintendents, and visitors.”<sup>2</sup>

It may be well to pause and contemplate the Scottish ecclesiastical polity as now perfected. Never before had the limits of the civil and the ecclesiastical powers been drawn with so bold a hand as in this Second Book of Discipline. In none of the Confessions of the Reformation had the Church been so clearly set forth as a distinct and, in spiritual matters, independent society as it was in this one. The Second Book of Discipline declared that “Christ had appointed a government in his Church, distinct from civil government, which is to be executed in his name by such office-bearers as he has authorised, and not by civil magistrates or under their direction.” This marks a notable advance in the Protestant theory of Church power, which differs from the Popish theory, inasmuch as it is co-ordinate with, not superior to, the civil

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<sup>1</sup> McCrie, *Life of Melville*, vol. i., p. 162.

<sup>2</sup> *Buik of Univ. Kirk*, pp. 73, 74. McCrie, *Life of Melville*, vol. i., p. 165.

power, its claims to supremacy being strictly limited to things spiritual, and subject to the State in things temporal. Luther had grasped the idea of the essential distinction between the two powers, but he shrank from the difficulty of embodying his views in a Church organisation. Calvin, after a great battle, had succeeded in vesting the Church of Geneva with a certain measure of spiritual independence; but the State there was a theocracy with two branches—the spiritual administration of the consistory, and the moral administration of the senate—and hence the impossibility of instituting definite boundaries between the two. But in Scotland there was more than a city; there were a kingdom, a Parliament, a monarch; and this not only permitted, but necessitated, a fuller development of the autonomy of the Church than was possible in Geneva. Hence the Scottish arrangement more nearly resembles that which obtained in France than that which was set up in Geneva; besides, Mary Stuart was Romish, and Knox could not give to a Popish sovereign the power which Calvin had given to the Protestant senate of Geneva. Still the First Book of Discipline was incomplete as regards its arrangements. It was compiled to meet an emergency, and many of its provisions were necessarily temporary. But the Second Book of Discipline contained a scheme of Church polity, developed from the root-idea of the supernatural origin of the Church, and which alike in its general scope and its particular details was framed with the view of providing at once for the maintenance of the order, and the conservation of the liberty of the Church. The Parliament did not ratify the Second Book of Discipline till 1592; but that was a secondary matter with its compilers, for in their view the granting of such ratification could not add to, and the withholding of it could not take from, the inherent authority of the scheme of government, which had its binding power from the Scriptures or had no binding power whatever. Of what avail, then, was the ratification of Parliament? Simply this, that the State thereby pledged itself not to interfere with or overthrow this discipline; and, further, it might be held as the symbol of the nation's acceptance of and submission to this discipline as a Scriptural one, which, however, the Church neither wished nor sought to enforce by civil penalties.

It was out of this completed settlement of the Presbyterian polity that that great struggle arose which ultimately involved both England and Scotland in civil war, and which, after an immense effusion of blood, in the southern kingdom on the battle-field, and in the northern on the scaffolds of its martyrs, issued in the Revolution of 1688, which placed the Protestant House of Orange on the throne of Great Britain, and secured, under the sanction of an oath, that the constitution and sovereigns of the realm should in all time coming be PROTESTANT.

## CHAPTER XII.

### BATTLES FOR PRESBYTERIANISM AND LIBERTY.

James VI.—His Evil Counsellors—Love of Arbitrary Power and Hatred of Presbyterianism—State of Scotland—The Kirk its One Free Institution—The Presbyterian Ministers the Only Defenders of the Nation's Liberties—The National Covenant—Tulchan Bishops—Robert Montgomery—His Excommunication—Melville before the King—Raid of Ruthven—The Black Acts—Influence of the Spanish Armada on Scotland—Act of 1592 Ratifying Presbyterian Church Government—Return of Popish Lords—Interview between Melville and James VI. at Falkland—Broken Promises—Prelacy set up—Importance of the Battle—James VI. Ascends the Throne of England.

IN 1578, James VI., now twelve years of age, took the reins of government into his own hand. His preceptor, the illustrious Buchanan, had laboured to inspire him with a taste for learning—the capacity he could not give him—and to qualify him for his future duties as a sovereign by instructing him in the principles of civil and religious liberty. But unhappily the young king, at an early period of his reign, fell under the influence of two worthless and profligate courtiers, who strove but too successfully to make him forget all that Buchanan had taught him. These were Esme Stuart, a cousin of his father, who now arrived from France, and was afterwards created Earl of Lennox; and Captain James Stuart, a son of Lord Ochiltree, a man of profligate manners, whose unprincipled ambition was rewarded with the title and estates of the unfortunate Earl of Arran. The sum of what these men taught James was that there was neither power nor glory in a throne unless the monarch were absolute, and that as the jurisdiction of the Protestant Church of his native country was the great obstacle in the way of his governing according to his own arbitrary will, it behoved him above all things to sweep away the jurisdiction of Presbyterianism. An independent Kirk and an absolute throne could not co-exist in the same realm. These maxims accorded but too well with the traditions of his house and his own prepossessions not to be eagerly imbibed by the king. He proved an apt scholar, and the evil transformation wrought upon him by the counsellors to whom he had surrendered himself was completed by his initiation into scenes of youthful debauchery.

The Popish politicians on the Continent foresaw, of course, that James VI. would mount the throne of England; and there is reason to think that the mission of the polished and insinuating but unprincipled Esme Stuart had reference to that expectation. The Duke of Guise sent him to restore the broken link between Scotland and France; to fill James's mind with exalted notions of his own prerogative; to inspire him with a detestation of Presbyterian Protestantism, the greatest foe of absolute power; and to lead him back to Rome, the great upholder of the Divine right of kings. Accordingly Esme

Stuart did not come alone. He was in due time followed by Jesuits and seminary priests, and the secret influence of these men soon made itself manifest in the open defection of some who had hitherto professed the Protestant faith. In short, this was an off-shoot of that great plot which was in 1587 to be smitten on the scaffold in Fotheringay Castle, and to receive a yet heavier blow from the tempest that strewed the bottom of the North Sea with the hulks of the “Invincible Armada,” and lined the western shores of Ireland with the corpses of Spanish warriors.

The Presbyterian ministers took the alarm. This flocking of fowl birds to the court, and this crowding of “men in masks” into the kingdom, foreboded no good to that Protestant establishment which was the main bulwark of the country’s liberties. The alarm was deepened by intercepted letters from Rome granting a dispensation to Roman Catholics to profess the Protestant faith for a time, provided they cherished in their hearts a loyalty to Rome, and let slip no opportunity their disguise might offer them of advancing her interests.<sup>1</sup> A crisis was evidently approaching, and if the Scottish people were to hold possession of that important domain of liberty which they had conquered they must fight for it. Constitutional government had not indeed been set up as yet in full form in Scotland; but Buchanan, Knox, and now Melville were the advocates of its principles; thus the germs of that form of government had been planted in the country, and its working initiated by the erection of the Presbyterian Church Courts; limits had been put upon the arbitrary will of the monarch by the exclusion of the royal power from the most important of all departments of human liberty and rights; and the great body of the people were inflamed with the resolution of maintaining these great acquisitions, now menaced by both the secret and the open emissaries of the Guises and Rome. But there were none to rally the people to the defence of the public liberties but the ministers. The Parliament in Scotland was the tool of the court; the courts of justice had their decisions dictated by letters from the king; there was yet no free press; there was no organ through which the public sentiment could find expression, or shape itself into action, but the Kirk. It alone possessed anything like liberty, or had courage to oppose the arbitrary measures of the Government. The Kirk therefore must come to the front, and give expression to the national voice, if that voice was to be heard at all; and the Kirk must put its machinery in action to defend at once its own independence and the independence of the nation, both of which were threatened by the same blow. Accordingly, on this occasion, as so often afterwards, the leaders of the opposition were ecclesiastical men, and the measures they adopted were on their outer sides ecclesiastical also. The circumstances of

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<sup>1</sup> McCrie, *Life of Melville*, vol. i., p. 262. See also note AA, ed. 1819. Spottiswood, p. 308. Strype, *Annals*, vol. ii., pp. 630, 631.

the country made this a necessity. But whatever the forms and names employed in the conflict, the question at issue was, shall the king govern by his own arbitrary irresponsible will, or shall the power of the throne be limited by the chartered rights of the people?

This led to the swearing of the NATIONAL COVENANT. It is only ignorance of the great conflict of the sixteenth century that would represent this as a mere Scottish peculiarity. We have already met with repeated instances, in the course of our history, in which this expedient for cementing union and strengthening confidence amongst the friends of Protestantism was had recourse to. The Lutheran princes repeatedly subscribed not unsimilar bonds. The Waldenses assembled beneath the rocks of Lobbio, and with uplifted hands swore to rekindle their “ancient lamp” or die in the attempt. The citizens of Geneva, twice over, met in their great Church of St. Peter, and swore to the Eternal to resist the duke, and maintain their evangelical confession. The capitals of other cantons also hallowed their struggle for the Gospel by an oath. The Hungarian Protestants followed this example. In 1561 the nobles, citizens, and troops in Erlau bound themselves by oath not to forsake the truth, and circulated their Covenant in the neighbouring parishes, where also it was subscribed.<sup>1</sup> The Covenant from which the Protestants of Scotland sought to draw strength and confidence has attracted more notice than any of the above instances, from this circumstance, that the Covenanters were not a party but a nation, and the Covenant of Scotland, like its Reformation, was national. The Covenanters swore in brief to resist Popery, and to maintain Protestantism and constitutional monarchy. They first of all explicitly abjured the Romish tenets, they promised to adhere to and defend the doctrine and the government of the Reformed Church of Scotland, and finally they engaged under the same oath to defend the person and authority of the king, “with our goods, bodies, and lives, in the defence of Christ’s Evangel, liberties of our country, ministration of justice, and punishment of iniquity, against all enemies within this realm and without.” It was subscribed (1581) by the king and his household and by all ranks in the country. The arrangement with Rome made the subscription of the courtiers almost a matter of course; even Esme Stuart, now Earl of Lennox, seeing how the tide was flowing, professed to be a convert to the Protestant faith.<sup>2</sup>

The national enthusiasm in behalf of the Reformed Church was greatly strengthened by this solemn transaction, but the intrigues against it at court went on all the same. The battle was begun by the appointment of a *Tulchan* bishop for Glasgow. The person preferred to this questionable dignity was Robert Montgomery, minister of Stirling, who, said the people, “had the title,

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<sup>1</sup> This document is preserved in Presburg. in the library of George Adonys. (*Hist. Prof. Church in Hungary*, p. 78; bond., 1854.)

<sup>2</sup> *Buik of Univ. Kirk*, pp. 96–99. McCrie, *Life of Melville*, vol. i., p. 262.

but my Lord of Lennox (Esme Stuart) had the milk.” The General Assembly of 1582 were proceeding to suspend the new-made bishop from the exercise of his office, when a messenger-at-arms entered, and charged the moderator and members, “under pain of rebellion and putting them to the horn,” to stop procedure. The Assembly, so far from complying, pronounced the heavier sentence of excommunication on Montgomery; and the sentence was publicly intimated in Edinburgh and Glasgow, in spite of Esme Stuart, who, furious with rage, threatened to poignard the preacher. It shows how strongly the popular feeling was in favour of the Assembly, and against the court, that when Montgomery came soon after to pay a visit to his patron Lennox, the inhabitants of Edinburgh rose in a body, demanding that the town should not be polluted with his presence, and literally chased him out of it. Nor was he, with all his speed, able to escape a few “buffets in the neck” as he hastily made his exit at the wicket-gate of the Potter Row.

The matter did not end with the ignominious expulsion of Montgomery from the capital. The next General Assembly adopted a spirited remonstrance to the king, setting forth that the authority of the Church had been invaded, her sentences disannulled, and her ministers obstructed in the discharge of their duty, and begging redress of these grievances. Andrew Melville with others was appointed to present the paper to the king in council; having obtained audience, the commissioners read the remonstrance. The reading finished, Arran looked round with a wrathful countenance, and demanded, “Who dares subscribe these treasonable articles?” “We dare,” replied Melville, and, advancing to the table, he took the pen and subscribed. The other commissioners came forward, one after another, and appended their signatures. Even the insolent Arran was abashed; and Melville and his brethren were peaceably dismissed. Protection from noble or from other quarter the ministers had none; their courage was their only shield.<sup>1</sup>

There followed some chequered years; the nobles, roused by the courageous bearing of the ministers, made an attempt to free themselves and the country from the ignominious tyranny of the unworthy favourites, who were trampling upon their liberties. But their attempt, known as the “Raid of Ruthven,” was ill-advised, and very unlike the calm and constitutional opposition of the minister’s. The nobles took possession of the king’s person, and compelled the Frenchmen to leave the country. The year’s peace which this violence procured for the Church was dearly purchased, for the tide of oppression immediately returned with all the greater force. Andrew Melville had to retire into England, and that intrepid champion off the scene, the Parliament (1584) overturned the independence of the Church. It enacted that no ecclesiastical Assembly should meet without the king’s leave; that no one should

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<sup>1</sup> James Melville, *Autobiography*, pp. 129, 133. M’Crie, *Life of Melville*, vol. i., p. 273.

decline the judgment of the king and Privy Council on any matter whatever, under peril of treason, and that all ministers should acknowledge the bishops as their ecclesiastical superiors. These decrees were termed the Black Acts. Their effect was to lay at the feet of the king that whole machinery of ecclesiastical courts which, as matters then stood, was the only organ of public sentiment, and the only bulwark of the nation's liberties. The General Assembly could not meet unless the king willed, and thus he held in his hands the whole power of the Church. This was in violation of repeated Acts of Parliament, which had vested the Church with the power of convoking and dissolving her Assemblies, without which her liberties were an illusion.

The Reformed Church of Scotland was lying in what seemed ruin, when it was lifted up by an event that at first threatened destruction to it and to the whole Protestantism of Britain. It was at this time that the storm-cloud of the Armada gathered, burst, and passed away, but not without rousing the spirit of liberty in Scotland. The Scots resolved to set their house in order, lest a second Armada should approach their shores, intercepted letters having made them aware that Huntly and the Popish lords of the north were urging Philip II. of Spain to make another attempt, and promising to second his efforts with soldiers who would not only place Scotland at his feet, but would aid him to subjugate England.<sup>1</sup> Even James VI. paused in the road he was travelling towards that oldest and staunchest friend of despotic princes, the Church of Rome, seeing his kingdom about to depart from him. His ardour had been cooled, too, by the many difficulties he had encountered in his attempts to impose upon his subjects a hierarchy to which they were repugnant; and either through that fickleness and inconstancy which were a part of his nature, or through that incurable craft which characterised him as it had done all his race, he became for the time a zealous Presbyterian. Nay, he "praised God that he was born in such a place as to be king in such a Kirk, the purest Kirk in the world. I, forsooth," he concluded, "as long as I brook my life and crown shall maintain the same against all deadly."<sup>2</sup> Andrew Melville had returned from London after a year's absence, and his first care was to resuscitate the Protestant liberties which lay buried under the late Parliamentary enactments. Nor were his labours in vain. In 1592, Parliament restored the Presbyterian Church as it had formerly existed, ratifying its government by Kirk-sessions, Presbyteries, Provincial Synods, and National Assemblies. This Act has ever been held to be the grand charter of Presbyterianism in Scotland.<sup>3</sup> It was hailed with joy, not as adding a particle of inherent authority to the system it recognised—the basis of that authority the Church had

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<sup>1</sup> See copy of letters, with the cipher in which they were written, and its key, in Calderwood, *Hist.*, vol. v., p. 7 *et seq.*

<sup>2</sup> Calderwood, *Hist.*, vol. v., p. 106.

<sup>3</sup> Act James VI., 1592.

already laid down in her Books of Discipline—but because it gave the Church a legal pledge that the jurisdiction of the Romish Church would not be restored, and by consequence, that of the Reformed Church not overthrown.<sup>1</sup> This Act gave the Church of Scotland a legal ground on which to fight her future battles.

But James VI. was incapable of being long of one mind, or persevering steadily in one course. In 1596 the Popish lords, who had left the country on the suppression of their rebellion, returned to Scotland. Notwithstanding that they had risen in arms against the king, and had continued their plots while they lived abroad, James was willing to receive and reinstate these conspirators. His Council were of the same mind with himself. Not so the country and the Church, which saw new conspiracies and wars in prospect, should these inveterate plotters be taken back. Without loss of time, a deputation of ministers, appointed at a convention held at Cupar, proceeded to Falkland to remonstrate with the king on the proposed recall of those who had shown themselves the enemies of his throne and the disturbers of his realm. The ministers were admitted into the palace. It had been agreed that James Melville, the nephew of Andrew, for whom the king entertained great respect, being a man of courteous address, should be their spokesman. He had only uttered a few words when the king violently interrupted him, denouncing him and his associates as seditious stirrers up of the people. The nephew would soon have succumbed to the tempest of the royal anger if the uncle had not stepped forward. James VI. and Andrew Melville stood once more face to face. For a few seconds there was a conflict between the kingly authority of the sovereign and the moral majesty of the patriot. But soon the king yielded himself to Melville. Taking James by the sleeve, and calling him “God’s sillie vassal,” he proceeded, says McCrie, “to address him in the following strain, perhaps the most singular, in point of freedom, that ever saluted royal ears, or that ever proceeded from the mouth of loyal subject, who would have spilt his blood in defence of the person and honour of his prince:—‘Sir,’ said Melville, ‘we will always humbly reverence your Majesty in public, but since we have this occasion to be with your Majesty in private, and since you are brought into extreme danger both of your life and crown, and along with you the country and the Church of God are like to go to wreck, for not telling you the truth and giving you faithful counsel, we must discharge our duty or else be traitors, both to Christ and you. Therefore, sir, as divers times before I have told you, so now again I must tell you, there are two kings and two kingdoms in Scotland: there is Christ Jesus the King of the Church, whose subject King James the Sixth is, and of whose kingdom he is not a king, nor a lord, nor a head, but a member. . . . We will yield to you your place, and

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<sup>1</sup> Calderwood, *Hist.*, vol. v., pp. 160–166.

give you all due obedience; but again I say, you are not the head of the Church; you cannot give us that eternal life which even in this world we seek for, and you cannot deprive us of it. Permit us then freely to meet in the name of Christ, and to attend to the interests of that Church of which you are the chief member. Sir, when you were in your swaddling-clothes, Christ Jesus reigned freely in this land, in spite of all his enemies; his officers and ministers convened for the ruling and the welfare of his Church, which was ever for your welfare, defence, and preservation, when these same enemies were seeking your destruction and cutting off. And now, when there is more than extreme necessity for the continuance of that duty, will you hinder and dishearten Christ's servants, and your most faithful subjects, quarrelling them for their convening, when you should rather commend and countenance them as the godly kings and emperors did?"<sup>1</sup> The storm, which had risen with so great and sudden a violence at the mild words of the nephew, went down before the energy and honesty of the uncle, and the deputation was dismissed with assurances that no favour should be shown the Popish lords, and no march stolen upon the liberties of the Church.

But hardly were the ministers gone when steps were taken for restoring the insurgent nobles, and undermining the ecclesiastical jurisdiction. The policy adopted for accomplishing this was singularly subtle, and reveals the hand of the Jesuits, of whom there were then numbers in the country. First of all, the king preferred the apparently innocent request that a certain number of ministers should be appointed as assessors, with whom he might advise in "all affairs concerning the weal of the Church." Fourteen ministers were appointed: "the very needle," says James Melville, "which drew in the episcopal thread." The second step was to declare by Act of Parliament that Prelacy was the third Estate of the Realm, and that those ministers whom the king chose to raise to that dignity should be entitled to sit or vote in Parliament. The third step was to enact that the Church should be represented in Parliament, and that the fourteen assessors already chosen should form that representation. The matter having reached this hopeful stage, the king ventured on the fourth and last step, which was to nominate David Lindsay, Peter Blackburn, and George Gladstones to the vacant bishoprics of Ross, Aberdeen, and Caithness. The new-made bishops took their seats in the next Parliament. The art and *finesse* of the king and his counsellors had triumphed; but his victory was not yet complete, for the General Assembly still continued to manage, although with diminished authority and freedom, the affairs of the Church.

The war we have been contemplating was waged within a small area, but its issue was world-wide. The ecclesiastical names and forms that appear on

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<sup>1</sup> McCrie, *Life of Melville*, vol. ii., pp. 62–65.

its surface may make this struggle repulsive in the eyes of some. Waged in the Palace of Falkland, and on the floor of the General Assembly, these contests are apt to be set down as having no higher origin than clerical ambition, and no wider object than ecclesiastical supremacy. But this, in the present instance at least, would be a most superficial and erroneous judgment. We see in these conflicts infant Liberty struggling with the old hydra of Despotism. The independence and freedom of Scotland were here as really in question as on the fields waged by Wallace and Bruce, and the men who fought in the contests, which have been passing before us, braved death as really as those do who meet mailed antagonists on the battle-field. Nay, more, Scotland and its Kirk had at this time become the key-stone in the arch of European liberty; and the unceasing efforts of the Pope, the King of Spain, and the Guises were directed to the displacing of that key-stone, that the arch which it upheld might be destroyed. They were sending their agents into the country, they were fomenting rebellions, they were flattering the weak conceit of wisdom and of arbitrary power in James: not that they cared for the conquest of Scotland in itself so much as they coveted a door by which to enter England, and suppress its Reformation, which they regarded as the one thing wanting to complete the success of their schemes for the total extermination of Protestantism. With senile Parliaments and a spiritless nobility, the public liberties as well as the Protestantism of Scotland would have perished but for the vigilance and intrepidity of the Presbyterian ministers, and, above all, the incorruptible, the dauntless and unflinching courage and patriotism of Andrew Melville. These men may have been rough in speech; they may have permitted their temper to be ruffled, and their indignation to be set on fire, in exposing craft and withstanding tyranny; but that man's understanding must be as narrow as his heart is cold, who would think for a moment of weighing such things in the balance against the priceless blessing of a nation's liberties.

The death of Queen Elizabeth, in 1603, called James VI. to London, and the centre of the conflict, which widens as the years advance, changes with the monarch to England.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### JAMES VI. IN ENGLAND—THE GUNPOWDER PLOT.

Steps to Hinder a Protestant Successor to Elizabeth—Bulls of Clement VIII.—Application to Philip II.—English Jesuits thrown on their own Resources—The Gunpowder Plot Proposed—Catesby—Percy—Preparations to Blow up the Parliament—Pacific Professions of Romanists the while—Proofs that the Plot was Known to the Roman Catholic Authorities—The Spanish Match—Disgraceful Treaty—Growing Troubles.

WHEN it became known at Rome that the reign of Elizabeth was drawing to a close, steps were immediately taken to prevent any one mounting her throne save a prince whose attachment to Roman Catholicism could not be doubted, and on whom sure hopes could be built that he would restore the Papacy in England. The doubtful Protestantism of the Scottish king had, as we have already said, been somewhat strengthened by the destruction of the Spanish Armada. It was further steadied by the representations made to him by Elizabeth and her wise ministers, to the effect that he could not hope to succeed to the throne of England unless he should put his attachment to the Protestant interests beyond suspicion; and that the nobility and gentry of England had too much honour and spirit ever again to bow the neck to the tyranny of the Church of Rome. These representations and warnings weighed with the monarch, the summit of whose wishes was to ascend the throne of the southern kingdom, and who was ready to protest or even swear to maintain any set of maxims, political or religious, which the necessity of the hour made advisable, seeing that his principles of kingcraft permitted the adoption of a new policy whenever a new emergency arose or a stronger temptation crossed his path. Accordingly we find James, in the instructions sent to Hamilton, his agent in England in 1600, bidding him “assure all honest men, on the princely word of a Christian king, that as I have ever without swerving maintained the same religion within my kingdom, so, as soon as it shall please God lawfully to possess me of the crown of that kingdom, I shall not only maintain the profession of the Gospel there, but withal not suffer any other religion to be professed within the bounds of that kingdom.” This strong assurance, doubtless, quieted the fears of the English statesmen, but in the same degree it awakened the fears of the Roman Catholics.

They began to despair of the King of the Scots—prematurely, we think; but they were naturally more impatient than James, seeing the restoration of their Church was with them the first object, whereas with James it was only the second, and the English crown was the first. The conspirators in England, whose hopes had been much dashed by the strong declaration of the Scottish king, applied to Pope Clement VIII to put a bar in the way of his mounting the throne. Clement was not hard to be persuaded in the matter. He sent over

to Garnet, Provincial of the Jesuits in England, two bulls of his apostolical authority—one addressed to the Romish clergy, the other to the nobility and laity, and both of the same tenor. The bulls enjoined those to whom they were directed, in virtue of their obedience, at whatever time “that miserable woman,”<sup>1</sup> for so he called Elizabeth, should depart this life, to permit no one to ascend her throne, how near soever in blood, unless he swore, according to the example of the former monarchs of England, not only to tolerate the Roman Catholic faith, but to the utmost of his power uphold and advance it. Armed with this authoritative document, the Romish faction in the kingdom waited till Elizabeth should breathe her last.

On the death of the queen, in March, 1603, they distantly dispatched a messenger to announce the fact to Winter, their agent at the Court of Spain. They charged him to represent to his most Catholic Majesty that his co-religionists in England were likely to be as grievously oppressed under the new king as they had been under the late sovereign, that in this emergency they turned their eyes to one whose zeal was as undoubted as his arm was powerful, and they prayed him to interpose in their behalf. The disaster of the Armada was too fresh in Philip’s memory, the void it had made in his treasury, and which was not yet replenished, was too great, and the effects of the terrible blow on the national spirit were too depressing, to permit his responding to this appeal of the English Catholics by arms. Besides, he had opened negotiations for peace with the new king, and these must be ended one way or the other before he could take any step to prevent James mounting the throne, or to dispossess him of it after he had ascended it. Thus, the English Jesuits were left with the two bulls of Clement VIII., and the good wishes of Philip II., as their only weapons for carrying out their great enterprise of restoring their Church to its former supremacy in England. They did not despair, however. Thrown on their own resources, they considered the means by which they might give triumph to their cause.

The Order of Jesus is never more formidable than when it appears to be least so. It is when the Jesuits are stripped of all external means of doing harm that they devise the vastest schemes, and execute them with the most daring courage. Extremity but compels them to retreat yet deeper into the darkness, and arm themselves with those terrible powers wherein their great strength lies, and the full unsparing application of which they reserve for the conflicts of mightiest moment. The Jesuits in England now began to meditate a great blow. They had delivered an astounding stroke at sea but a few years before; they would signalise the present emergency by a nearly as astounding stroke on land. They would prepare an Armada in the heart of the kingdom, which would inflict on England a ruin sudden, strange, and terrible, like that

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<sup>1</sup> “Miseram illam fœminam.”

which Philip's fleet would have inflicted had not the "winds become Lutheran," as Medina Sidonia said with an oath, and in their sectarian fury sent his ships to the bottom.

In September, 1603, it would seem that the first meeting of the leading spirits of the party was held to talk over the course the new king was pursuing, and the measures to be adopted. Catesby, a gentleman of an ancient family, began by recounting the grievances under which the Roman Catholics of England groaned. His words kindling the anger of Percy, a descendant of the House of Northumberland, he observed that nothing was left them but to kill the king. "That," said Catesby, "is to run a great risk, and accomplish little," and he proceeded to unfold to Percy a much grander design, which could be executed with greater safety, and would be followed by far greater consequences. "You have," he continued, "taken off the king; but his children remain, who will succeed to his throne. Suppose you destroy the whole royal family, there will still remain the nobility, the gentry, the Parliament. All these we must sweep away with one stroke; and when our enemies have sunk in a common ruin, then may we restore the Church of Rome in England." In short, he proposed to blow up the Houses of Parliament with gunpowder, when the king and the Estates of the Realm should be there assembled.

The manner in which this plot was proceeded with is too well known, and the details are too accessible in the ordinary histories, to require that we should here dwell upon them. The contemplated destruction was on so great a scale that some of the conspirators, when it was first explained to them, shrunk from the perpetration of a wickedness so awful. To satisfy the more scrupulous of the party they resolved to consult their spiritual advisers. "Is it lawful," they asked of Garnet, Tesmond, and Gerard, "to do this thing?" These Fathers assured them that they might go on with a good conscience and do the deed, seeing that those on whom the destruction would fall were heretics and excommunicated persons. "But," it was replied, "some Catholics will perish with the Protestants: is it lawful to destroy the righteous with the wicked?" It was answered, "Yes, for it is expedient that the few should die for the good of the many."

The point of conscience having been resolved, and the way made clear, the next step was an oath of secrecy, to inspire them with mutual confidence: the conspirators swore to one another by the Blessed Trinity and by the Sacrament not to disclose the matter, directly or indirectly, and never to desist from the execution of it, unless released by mutual consent. To add to the solemnity of the oath, they retired into an inner chamber, where they heard mass, and received the Sacrament from Gerard. They had sanctified themselves as the executioners of the vengeance of Heaven upon an apostate nation.

They set to work; they ran a mine under the Houses of Parliament; and now they learned by accident that with less ado they might compass their end. The vault under the House of Lords, commonly used as a coal-cellar, was to be let. They hired it, placed in it thirty-six barrels of gunpowder, and strewing plenteously over them billets, fagots, stones, and iron bars, threw open the doors that all might see how harmless were the materials with which the vault was stored. The plot had been brewing for a year and a half; it had been entrusted to some twenty persons, and not a whisper had been uttered by way of divulging the terrible secret.

The billets, fagots, and iron bars that concealed the gunpowder in the vault were not the only means by which it was sought to hide from the people all knowledge of the terrible catastrophe which was in preparation. “The Lay Catholic Petition” was at this time published, in which they supplicated the king for toleration, protesting their fidelity and unfeigned love for his Majesty, and offering to be bound life for life with good sureties for their loyal behaviour. When the plot approached execution, Father Garnet began to talk much of bulls and mandates from the Pope to charge all the priests and their flocks in England to carry themselves with profound peace and quiet. Garnet sent Fawkes to Rome with a letter to Clement, supplicating that “commandment might come from his Holiness, or else from Aquaviva, the General of the Jesuits, for staying of all commotions of the Catholics in England.” So anxious were they not to hurt a Protestant, or disturb the peace of the kingdom, or shake his Majesty’s throne. The sky is clearing, said the Protestants, deceived by these arts; the winter of Catholic discontent is past, and all the clouds that lowered upon the land in the days of Elizabeth are buried in the “deep sea” of mutual conciliation. They knew not that the men from whom those loud protestations of loyalty and brotherly concord came were all the while storing gunpowder in the vault underneath the House of Lords, laying the train, and counting the hours when they should fire it, and shake down the pillars of the State, and dissolve the whole frame of the realm. The way in which this hideous crime was prevented, and England saved—namely, by a letter addressed to Lord Monteagle by one of the conspirators, whose heart would seem to have failed him at the last moment, leading to a search below the House of Lords, followed by the discovery of the astounding plot—we need not relate.

There is evidence for believing that the projected iniquity was not the affair of a few desperate men in England only, but that the authorities of the Popish world knew of it, sanctioned it, and lent it all the help they dared. Del Rio, in a treatise printed in 1600, puts a supposititious case in the confessional: “as if,” says Dr. Kennet, “he had already looked into the mine and cellars, and had surveyed the barrels of powder in them, and had heard the

whole confession of Fawkes and Catesby.”<sup>1</sup> The answer to the supposed case, which is that of the Gunpowder Plot, the names of the actors left out, forbade the divulging of such secrets, on the ground that the seal of the confessional must not be violated. This treatise, published at so short a distance from England as Louvain, and so near the time when the train was being laid, shows, as Bishop Burnet remarks, that the plot was then in their minds. In Sully’s *Memoirs* there is oftener than once a reference to a “sudden blow” which was intended in England about this time; and King James was warned by a letter from the court of Henry IV. to beware of the fate of Henry III.; and in the oration pronounced at Rome in praise of Ravaillae, the assassin of Henry IV., it was said that he (Henry IV.) was not only an enemy to the Catholic religion in his heart, but that he had obstructed the glorious enterprise of those who would have restored it in England, and had caused them to be crowned with martyrdom. It is not easy to see to what this can refer if it be not to the Gunpowder Plot, and the execution of the conspirators by which it was followed. The proof of knowledge beforehand on the part of the Popish authorities seemed to be completed by the action of Pope Paul V., who appointed a jubilee for the year 1605—the year when the plot was to be executed—for the purpose of “praying for help in emergent necessities,” and among the reasons assigned by the Pontiff for fixing on the year 1605, was that it was to witness “the rooting out of all the impious errors of the heretics.”<sup>2</sup> Copely says that “he could never meet with any one Jesuit who blamed it.”<sup>3</sup> Two of the Jesuit conspirators who made their escape to Rome were rewarded; one being made penitentiary to the Pope, and the other a confessor in St. Peter’s. Garnet, who was executed as a traitor, is styled by Bellarmine a martyr; and Misson tells us that he saw his portrait among the martyrs in the hall of the Jesuit College at Rome, and by his side an angel who shows him the open gates of heaven.<sup>4</sup>

That the Romanists should thus plot against the religion and liberties of England was only what might be expected, but James himself became a plotter towards the same end. Instead of being warned off from so dangerous neighbours, he began industriously to court alliances with the Popish Powers. In these proceedings he laid the foundation of all the miseries which afterwards overtook his house and his kingdom. His first step was to send the Earl of Bristol to Spain, to negotiate a marriage with the Infanta for his son Prince Charles. He afterwards dispatched Buckingham with the prince himself on the same errand to the Spanish Court—a proceeding that surprised

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. Kennet, *Sermon*, Nov. 5, 1715.

<sup>2</sup> “Impios heretioorum errores undiquo evellere.” (Bennet, *Memorial of the Reformation*, p. 130.)

<sup>3</sup> Copely, *Reas, of Conversion*, p. 23. Burnet, *Sermon*, 5th Nov., 1710.

<sup>4</sup> Misson, *Travels in Italy*, vol. ii., part 1, p. 173. Misson adds, in a marginal note, “Some travellers have told me lately that this picture has been taken away.”

everybody, and which no one but the “English Solomon” could have been capable of. It gave fresh life to Romanism in England, greatly emboldened the Popish recusants, and was the subject (1621) of a remonstrance of the Commons to the king. The same man who had endeavoured to stamp out the infant constitutional liberties of Scotland began to plot the overthrow of the more ancient franchises, privileges, and jurisdictions of England.

While the prince was in Spain all arts were employed to bring him within the pale of the Roman Church. An interchange of letters took place between him and the Pope, in which the Pontiff expresses his hope that “the Prince of the Apostles would be put in possession of his [the prince’s] most noble island, and that he and his royal father might be styled the deliverers and restorers of the ancient paternal religion of Great Britain.” The prince replies by expressing his ardent wishes “for an alliance with one that hath the same apprehension of the true religion with myself.”<sup>1</sup> A Papal dispensation was granted; the marriage was agreed upon; the terms of the treaty were that no laws enacted against Roman Catholics should ever after be put in execution, that no new laws should ever hereafter be made against them, and that the prince should endeavour to the utmost of his power to procure the ratification by Parliament of these articles; and that, further, the Parliament “should approve and ratify all and singular articles in favour of Roman Catholics capitulated by the most renowned kings.” The marriage came to nothing; nevertheless, the consequences of the treaty were most disastrous to both the king and England. It filled the land with Popish priests and Jesuits; it brought over the titular Bishop of Chalcedon to exercise episcopal jurisdiction; it lost King James the love of his subjects; it exposed him to the contempt of his enemies; and in addition it cost him the loss of his honour and the sacrifice of Sir Walter Raleigh. Extending beyond the bounds of England, the evil effects of this treaty were felt in foreign countries. For the sake of his alliance with the House of Austria, James sacrificed the interests of his son-in-law: he lost the Palatinate, and became the immediate cause, as we have seen in a previous part of this history, of the overthrow of Protestantism in Bohemia.

James VI. did not grow wiser as he advanced in years. Troubles continued to embitter his life, evils to encompass his throne, contempt to wait upon his person, and calamity and distraction to darken his realm. These manifold miseries grew out of his rooted aversion to the religion of his native land, and an incurable leaning towards Romanism which led him to truckle to the Popish Powers, whose tool and dupe he became, and to cherish a reverence for the Church of Rome, which courted him only that she might rob him of

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<sup>1</sup> *The King of Scotland's Negotiations at Rome for Assistance against the Commonwealth of England. Published to satisfy as many as are not willing to be deceived.* By Authority. Lond., printed by William Dugard, 1650. In this pamphlet the letters are given in full in French and English. They are also published in Bushworth’s Collections.

his kingdom. And the same man who made himself so small and contemptible to all the world abroad was, by his invasion of the laws, his love of arbitrary power, and his unconstitutional acts, the tyrant of his Parliament and the oppressor of his people at home.

## CHAPTER XIV.

### DEATH OF JAMES VI., AND SPIRITUAL AWAKENING IN SCOTLAND.

The Nations Dead—Protestantism made them Live—Examples—Scotland—James VI. Pursues his Scheme on the Throne of England—His Arts—Compliance of the Ministers—The Prelates—High Commission Court—Visit of James to Scotland—The Five Articles of Perth—“Black Saturday”—James’s Triumph a Defeat—His Death—A great Spiritual Awakening in Scotland—Moral Transformations—David Dickson and the Awakening at Stewarton—Market-day at Irvine—John Livingstone and the Kirk of Shotts—The Scottish Vine Visited and Strengthened.

THE first part of the mighty task which awaited Protestantism in the sixteenth century was to breathe life into the nations. It found Christendom a vast sepulchre in which its several peoples were laid out in the sleep of death, and it said to them, “Live.” Arms, arts, political constitutions, cannot quicken the ashes of nations, and call them from their tomb: the mighty voice of the Scriptures alone can do this. Conscience is *the* life, and the Bible awoke the conscience.

The second part of the great task of Protestantism was to make the nations free. It first gave them life, it next gave them freedom. We have seen this order attempted to be reversed in some modern instances, but the result has shown how impossible it is to give liberty to the dead. The amplest measure of political freedom cannot profit nations when the conscience continues to slumber. It is like clothing a dead knight in the armour of a living warrior. He reposes proudly in helmet and coat of mail, but the pulse throbs not in the limbs which these cover. Of all the nations of Christendom there was not one in so torpid a state as Scotland. When the sixteenth century dawned, it was twice dead: it was dead in a dominant Romanism, and it was dead in an equally dominant feudalism; and for this reason perhaps it was selected as the best example in the entire circle of the European nations to exhibit the power of the vitalising principle. The slow, silent, and deep penetration of the nation by the Bible dissolved the fetters of this double slavery, and conscience was emancipated. An emancipated conscience, by the first law of nature—self-preservation—immediately set to work to trace the boundary lines around that domain in which she felt that she must be sole and exclusive mistress. Thus arose the spiritual jurisdiction—in other words, the Church. Scotland had thus come into possession of one of her liberties, the religious. A citadel of freedom had been reared in the heart of the nation, and from that inner fortress religious liberty went forth to conquer the surrounding territory for its yoke-fellow, civil liberty; and that kingdom which had so lately been the most enslaved of all the European States was now the freest in Christendom.

Thus in Scotland the Church is older than the modern State. It was the Church that called the modern, that is, the free State, into existence. It watched over it in its cradle; it fought for it in its youth; and it crowned its manhood with a perfect liberty. It was not the State in Scotland that gave freedom to the Church: it was the Church that gave freedom to the State. There is no other philosophy of liberty than this; and nations that have yet their liberty to establish might find it useful to study this model.

The demise of Elizabeth called James away before he had completed his scheme of rearing the fabric of arbitrary power on the ruins of the one independent and liberal institution which Scotland possessed. But he prosecuted on the throne of England the grand object of his ambition. We cannot go into a detail of the chicaneries by which he overreached some, the threats with which he terrified others, and the violence with which he assailed those whom his craft could not deceive, nor his power bend. Melville was summoned to London, thrown into the Tower, and when, after an imprisonment of four years, he was liberated, it was not to return to his native land, but to retire to France, where he ended his days. The faithful ministers were silenced, imprisoned, or banished. Those who lent themselves to the measures of the court shrunk from no perfidy to deceive the people, in order to secure the honours which they so eagerly coveted. Gladstones and others pursued the downward road, renewing the while their subscription to the National Covenant, “promising and swearing by the great name of the Lord our God that we shall continue in the obedience of the doctrine and discipline of this Kirk, and shall defend the same according to our vocation and power all the days of our lives, under the pains contained in the law, and danger both of body and soul in the day of God’s fearful judgment.” At length, in a packed assembly which met in Glasgow in 1610, James succeeded in carrying his measure—prelacy was set up. The bishops acted as perpetual moderators, and had dioceses assigned them, within which they performed the ordinary functions of bishops. Alongside of them the Presbyterian courts continued to meet: not indeed the General Assembly—this court was suspended—but Kirk sessions, presbyteries, and synods were held, and transacted the business of the Church in something like the old fashion. This was a state of matters pleasing to neither party, and least of all to the court, and accordingly the tribunal of High Commission was set up to give more power to the king’s bishops; but it failed to procure for the men in whose interests it existed more obedience from the ministers, or more respect from the people; and the sentiment of the country was still too strong to permit it putting forth all those despotic and unconstitutional powers with which it was armed. Making a virtue of necessity, the new dignitaries, it must be confessed, wore their honours with commendable humility; and this state of matters, which conjoined in the same Church lawn robes and Geneva cloaks, mitred apostles and plain

presbyters, continued until 1618, when yet another stage of this affair was reached.

Seated on the throne of England, the courtly divines and the famed statesmen of the southern kingdom bowing before him, and offering continual incense to his “wisdom,” his “scholarship,” and his “theological erudition,” though inwardly they must have felt no little disgust at that curious mixture of pertness, pedantry, and profanity that made up James VI.—with so much to please him, we say, one would have thought that the monarch would have left in peace the little kingdom from which he had come, and permitted its sturdy plain-spoken theologians to go their own way. So far from this, he was more intent than ever on consummating the transformation of the northern Church. He purposed a visit to his native land,<sup>1</sup> having, as he expressed it with characteristic coarseness, “a natural and salmon-like affection to see the place of his breeding,” and he ordered the Scottish bishops to have the kingdom put in due ecclesiastical order before his arrival. These obedient men did the best in their power. The ancient chapel of Holyrood was adorned with statues of the twelve apostles, finely gilded. An altar was set up in it, on which lay two closed Bibles, and on either side of them an unlighted candle and an empty basin. The citizens of Edinburgh had no difficulty in perceiving the “substance” of which these things were the “shadow.” Every parish church was expected to arrange itself on the model of the Royal Chapel. These innovations were followed next year (1618) by the Five Articles of Perth, so called from having been agreed upon at a meeting of the clergy in that city. These articles were: 1st, Kneeling at the Communion; 2nd, The observance of certain holidays; 3rd, Episcopal confirmation; 4th, Private baptism; 5th, Private communion.

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<sup>1</sup> “King James, this time, was returning northward to visit poor old Scotland again, to get his Pretended-Bishops set into activity, if he could. It is well known that he could not, to any satisfactory extent, neither now nor afterwards: his Pretended-Bishops, whom by cunning means he did get instituted, had the name of Bishops, but next to none of the authority, of the respect, or, alas, even of the cash, suitable to the reality of that office. They were by the Scotch People derisively called *Tulchan* Bishops.—Did the reader ever see, or fancy in his mind, a *Tulchan*? A *Tulchan* is, or rather was, for the thing is long since obsolete, a Calf-skin stuffed into the rude similitude of a Calf,—similar enough to deceive the imperfect perceptive organs of a Cow. At milking-time the *Tulchan*, with head duly bent, was set as if to suck; the fond cow looking round fancied that her calf was busy, and that all was right, and so gave her milk freely, which the cunning maid was straining in white abundance into her pail all the while! The Scotch milkmaids in those days cried, ‘Where is the *Tulchan*; is the *Tulchan* ready?’ So of the Bishops. Scotch Lairds were eager enough to ‘milk’ the Church Lands and Tithes, to get the rents out of them freely, which was not always easy. They were glad to construct a *Form* of Bishops to please the King and Church, and make the milk come without disturbances. The reader now knows what a *Tulchan* Bishop was. A piece of mechanism constructed not without difficulty, in Parliament and King’s Council, among the Scots; and torn asunder afterwards with dreadful clamour, and scattered to the four winds, so soon as the Cow became awake to it!” (Carlyle, *Cromwell’s Letters and Speeches*, vol. i., p. 36; People’s Ed., 1871.)

A beacon-light may be white or it may be red, the colour in itself is a matter of not the smallest consequence; but if the one colour should draw the mariner upon the rock, and the other warn him past it, it is surely important that he should know the significance of each, and guide himself accordingly. The colour is no longer a trifling affair; on the contrary, the one is life, the other is death. It is so with rites and symbols. They may be in themselves of not the least importance; their good or evil lies wholly in whether they guide the man who practises them to safety or to ruin. The symbols set up in the Chapel Royal of Holyrood, and the five ordinances of Perth, were of this description. The Scots looked upon them as sign-posts which seduced the traveller's feet, not into the path of safety, but into the road of destruction; they regarded them as false lights hung out to lure the vessel of their commonwealth upon the rocks of Popery and of arbitrary government. They refused to sail by these lights. Their determination was strengthened by the omens, as they accounted them, which accompanied their enactment by Parliament in July, 1621. On the day on which they were to be sanctioned, a heavy cloud had hung above Edinburgh since morning; that cloud waxed ever the darker as the hour approached when the articles were to be ratified, till at last it filled the Parliament Hall with the gloom of almost night. The moment the Marquis of Hamilton, the commissioner, rose and touched the Act with the royal sceptre, the cloud burst in a terrific storm light over the Parliament House. Three lurid gleams, darting in at the large window, flashed their vivid fires in the commissioner's face. Then came terrible peals of thunder, which were succeeded by torrents of rain and hail, that inundated the streets, and made it difficult for the members to reach their homes. The day was long remembered in Scotland by the name of "Black Saturday."<sup>1</sup>

The king, and those ministers who from cowardice or selfishness had furthered his measures, had now triumphed; but that triumph was discomfiture. In the really Protestant parts of Scotland—for the Scotland of that day had its cities and shires in which flourished a pure and vigorous Protestantism, while there were remote and rural parts where, thanks to that rapacity which had created a wealthy nobility and an impoverished clergy, the old ignorance and superstition still lingered—the really Protestant people of Scotland, we say, were as inflexibly bent as ever on repudiating a form of Church government which they knew was meant to pave the way for tyranny in the State, and a ritualistic worship, which they held to be of the nature of

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<sup>1</sup> "Just as the sceptre was laying to the cursed Act," says Row, "the loudest thunder-clap that ever Scotland heard was just over the Parliament House, which made them all quake for fear, looking for nothing less than that the house should have been thrown down by thunderbolts." (*Hist.*, ann. 1621.) This storm was the more noticeable that a similar one had burst over Perth in 1618, when the Five Articles were first concluded in the Assembly. "Some scoffers," says Calderwood, said that "as the law was given by fire from Mount Sinai, so did these fires confirm their laws." (*Hist.*, vol. vii., p. 505.)

idolatry; and of all his labour in the matter the king reaped nothing save disappointment, vexation, and trouble, which accompanied him till he sank into his grave in 1625. Never would Scottish monarch have reigned so happily as James VI. would have done, had he possessed but a tithe of that wisdom to which he laid claim. The Reformation had given him an independent clergy and an intelligent middle class, which he so much needed to balance the turbulence and power of his barons; but James fell into the egregious blunder of believing the religion of his subjects to be the weakness, instead of the strength, of his throne, and so he laboured to destroy it. He blasted his reputation for kingly honour, laid up a store of misfortunes and sorrows for his son, and alienated from his house a nation which had ever borne a chivalrous loyalty to his ancestors, despite their many and great faults.

The year of the king's death was rendered memorable by the rise of a remarkable influence of a spiritual kind in Scotland, which continued for years to act upon its population. This invisible but mighty agent moved to and fro, appealing now in this district and now in that, but no man could discover the law that regulated its course, or foretell the spot where it would next make its presence known. It turned as it listed, even as do the winds, and was quite as much above man's control, who could neither say to it, "Come," nor bid it depart. Wherever it passed, its track was marked, as is that of the rain-cloud across the burned-up wilderness, by a shining line of moral and spiritual verdure. Preachers had found no new Gospel, nor had they become suddenly clothed with a new eloquence; yet their words had a power they had formerly lacked; they went deeper into the hearts of their hearers, who were impressed by them in a way they had never been before. Truths they had heard a hundred times over, of which they had grown weary, acquired a freshness, a novelty, and a power that made them feel as if they heard them now for the first time. They felt inexpressible delight in that which aforetime had caused them no joy, and trembled under what till that moment had awakened no fear. Notorious profligates, men who had braved the brand of public opinion, or defied the penalties of the law, were under this influence bowed down, and melted into penitential tears. Thieves, drunkards, loose livers, and profane swearers suddenly awoke to a sense of the sin and shame of the courses they had been leading, condemned themselves as the chief of transgressors, trembled under the apprehension of a judgment to come, and uttered loud cries for forgiveness. Some who had lived years of miserable and helpless bondage to evil habits and flagrant vices, as if inspired by a sudden and supernatural force, rent their fetters, and rose at once to purity and virtue. Some of these converts fell back into their old courses, but in the case of the majority the change was lasting; and thousands who, but for this sudden transformation, would have been lost to themselves and to society, were redeemed to virtue, and lived lives which were not less profit-

able than beautiful. This influence was as calm as it was strong; those on whom it fell did not vent their feelings in enthusiastic expressions; the change was accompanied by a modesty and delicacy which for the time forbade disclosure; it was the judgment, not the passions, that was moved; it was the conscience, not the imagination, that was called into action; and as the stricken deer retires from the herd into some shady part of the forest, so these persons went apart, there to weep till the arrow had been plucked out, and a healing balm poured into the wound.

Even the men of the world were impressed with these tokens of the working of a supernatural influence. They could not resist the impression, even when they refused to avow it, that a Visitant whose dwelling was not with men had come down to the earth, and was moving about in the midst of them. The moral character of whole towns, villages, and parishes was being suddenly changed; now it was on a solitary individual, and now on hundreds at once, that this mysterious influence made its power manifest; plain it was that in some region or other of the universe an Influence was resident, which had only to be unlocked, and to go forth among the dwellings of men, and human wickedness and oppression would dissolve and disappear as the winter's ice melts at the approach of spring, and joy and singing would break forth as do blossoms and verdure when the summer's sun calls them from their chambers in the earth.

One thing we must not pass over in connection with this movement: in at least its two chief centres it was distinctly traceable to those ministers who had suffered persecution for their faithfulness under James VI. The locality where this revival first appeared was in Ayrshire, the particular spot being the well-watered valley of Stewarton, along which it spread from house to house for many miles. But it began not with the minister of the parish, an excellent man, but with Mr. Dickson, who was minister of the neighbouring parish of Irvine. Mr. Dickson had zealously opposed the passing of the Articles of Perth; this drew upon him the displeasure of the prelates and the king; he was banished to the north of Scotland, and lived there some years, in no congenial society. On his return to his parish, a remarkable power accompanied his sermons; he never preached without effecting the conversion of one or, it might be, of scores. The market-day in the town of Irvine, where he was minister, was Monday; he began a weekly lecture on that day, that the country people might have an opportunity of hearing the Gospel. At the hour of sermon the market was forsaken, and the church was crowded; hundreds whom the morning had seen solely occupied with the merchandise of earth, before evening had become possessors of the heavenly treasure, and returned home to tell their families and neighbours what riches they had found, and invite them to repair to the same market, where they might buy wares of

exceeding price “without money.” Thus the movement extended from day to day.<sup>1</sup>

The other centre of this spiritual awakening was a hundred miles, or thereabout, away from Stewarton. It was Shotts, a high-lying spot, midway between the two cities of Glasgow and Edinburgh. Here, too, the movement took its rise with those who had been subjected to persecution for opposing the measures of the court. A very common-place occurrence originated that train of events which resulted in consequences so truly beneficial for Shotts and its neighbourhood. The Marchioness of Hamilton and some ladies of rank happening to travel that road, their carriage broke down near the manse of the parish. The minister, Mr. Home, invited them to rest in his house till it should be repaired, when they could proceed on their journey. This gave them an opportunity of observing the dilapidated state of the manse, and in return for the hospitality they had experienced within its walls, they arranged for the building, at their own expense, of a new manse for the minister. He waited on the Marchioness of Hamilton to express his thanks, and to ask if there was anything he could do by which he might testify his gratitude. The marchioness asked only that she might be permitted to name the ministers who should assist him at the approaching celebration of the Lord’s Supper. Leave was joyfully given, and the marchioness named some of the more eminent of the ministers who had been sufferers, and for whose character and cause she herself cherished a deep sympathy. The first was the Venerable Robert Bruce, of Kinnaird, a man of aristocratic birth, majestic figure, and noble and fervid eloquence; the second was Mr. David Dickson, of whom we have already spoken; and the third was a young man, whose name, then unknown, was destined to be famous in the ecclesiastical annals of his country—Mr. John Livingstone. The rumour spread that these men were to preach at the Kirk of Shotts on occasion of the Communion, and when the day came thousands flocked from the surrounding country to hear them. So great was the impression produced on Sunday that the strangers who had assembled, instead of returning to their homes, formed themselves into little companies and passed the night on the spot in singing psalms and offering prayers. When morning broke and the multitude were still there, lingering around the church where yesterday they had been fed on heavenly bread, and seeming, by their unwillingness to depart, to seek yet again to eat of that bread, the ministers agreed that one of their number should preach to them. It had not before been customary to have a sermon on the Monday after the Communion. The minister to whom it fell to preach was taken suddenly ill; and the youngest minister present, Mr. John Livingstone, was appointed to take his

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<sup>1</sup> Wodrow, *Life of Dickson*. Gillies, *Hist. Collections*, bk. iii., chap. 2, pp. 182, 183; Kelso, 1815.

place. Fain would he have declined the task; the thought of his youth, his unpreparedness, for he had spent the night in prayer and converse with some friends, the sight of the great multitude which had assembled in the churchyard, for no edifice could contain them, and the desires and expectations which he knew the people entertained, made him tremble as he stood up to address the assembly. He discoursed for an hour and a half on the taking away of the “heart of stone,” and the giving of a “heart of flesh,” and then he purposed to make an end; but that moment there came such a rush of ideas into his mind, and he felt so great a melting of the heart, that for a whole hour longer he ran on in a strain of fervent and solemn exhortation.<sup>1</sup>

Five hundred persons attributed their conversion to that sermon, the vast majority of whom, on the testimony of contemporary witnesses, continued steadfastly to their lives’ end in the profession of the truth; and seed was scattered throughout Clydesdale which bore much good fruit in after-years.<sup>2</sup> In memory of this event a thanksgiving service has ever since been observed in Scotland on the Monday after a Communion Sunday.

Thus the Scottish Vine, smitten by the tyranny of the monarch who had now gone to the grave, was visited and revived by a secret dew. From the high places of the State came edicts to blight it; from the chambers of the sky came a “plenteous rain” to water it. It struck its roots deeper, and spread its branches yet more widely over a land which it did not as yet wholly cover. Other and fiercer tempests were soon to pass over that goodly tree, and this strengthening from above was given beforehand, that when the great winds should blow, the tree, though shaken, might not be overturned.

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<sup>1</sup> *Life of John Livingstone*, i. 138, 139; Wodrow Society.

<sup>2</sup> *Select Biographies*, vol. i., p. 348; Wodrow Society.

## CHAPTER XV.

### CHARLES I. AND ARCHBISHOP LAUD.—RELIGIOUS INNOVATIONS.

*Basilicon Doron*—A Defence of Arbitrary Government—Character of Charles I.—His French Marriage—He Dissolves his Parliament—Imposes Taxes by his Prerogative—A Popish Hierarchy in England—Tonnage and Poundage—Ship-money—Archbishop Laud—His Character—His Consecration of St. Catherine Cree Church—His Innovations—The Protestant Press Gagged—Bishop Williams—The Puritans Exiled, &c.—Preaching Restricted—The Book of Sports—Alarm and Gloom.

ALONG with his crown, James VI. bequeathed one other gift to his son, Charles I. As in the ancient story, this last was the fatal addition which turned all the other parts of the brilliant inheritance to evil. We refer to the *Basilicon Doron*. This work was composed by its royal author to supply the prince with a model on which to mould his character, and a set of maxims by which to govern when he came to the throne.

The two leading doctrines of the *Basilicon Doron* are, 1st, the Divine right of kings; and, 2nd, the anarchical and destructive nature of Presbyterianism. The consequences that flow from these two fundamental propositions are deduced and stated with a fearless logic. "Monarchy," says James, "is the true pattern of the Divinity; kings sit upon God's throne on the earth; their subjects are not permitted to make any resistance but by flight, as we may see by the example of brute beasts and unreasonable creatures." In support of his doctrine he cites the case of Elias, who under "the tyranny of Ahab made no rebellion, but fled into the wilderness;" and of Samuel, who, when showing the Israelites that their future king would spoil and oppress them, and load them with all manner of burdens, gave them nevertheless no right to rebel, or even to murmur. In short, the work is an elaborate defence of arbitrary government, and its correlative, passive obedience.<sup>1</sup>

Under the head of Presbyterianism, the king's doctrine is equally explicit. It is a form of Church government, he assures the prince, utterly repugnant to monarchy, and destructive of the good order of States, and only to be rooted up. "Parity?" he exclaims, "the mother of confusion, and enemy to unity." "Take heed therefore, my son, to such Puritans, very pests in the Church and commonweal, whom no deserts can oblige, neither oaths or promises bind; breathing nothing but sedition and calumnies, aspiring without measure, railing without reason, and making their own imaginations, without any warrant of the Word, the square of their conscience. I protest before the great God, and since I am here as upon my testament it is no place

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<sup>1</sup> *The True Law of Free Monarchies; or, the Reciprocal and Mutual Duty betwixt a Free King and his Natural Subjects.* (No paging.) Edinburgh: printed by Robert Waldegrave, printer to the King's Majesty, 1603.

for me to lie in, that ye shall never find with any Highland or Border thieves greater ingratitude, and more lies and vile perjuries, than with these fanatic spirits; and suffer not the principals of them to brook your land, if ye like to sit at rest, except you would keep them for trying your patience, as Socrates did an evil wife.”<sup>1</sup> Such were the ethical and political creeds with which James VI. descended into the grave, and Charles I. mounted the throne.

These maxims were more dangerous things in the case of the son than in that of the father. Charles I. had a stronger nature, and whatever was grafted upon it shot up more vigorously. His convictions went deeper, and were more stubbornly carried out. He had not around him the lets and poises that curbed James. There was no Andrew Melville among the prelates of the court of Charles I. When baffled, he would cover his retreat under a dissimulation so natural and perfect that it looked like truth, and again he would return to his former design. His private character was purer and more respectable than that of his father, and his deportment more dignified, but his notions of his own prerogative were as exalted as his father’s had been. In this respect, the *Basilican Doron* was his Bible. Kings were gods. All Parliaments, laws, charters, privileges, and rights had their being from the prince, and might at his good pleasure be put out of existence; and to deny this doctrine, or withstand its practical application, was the highest crime of which a subject could be guilty. There was but one man in all the three kingdoms who could plead right or conscience—namely, himself. Charles had not Presbyterianism to fight against in England, as his father had in Scotland, but he had another opponent to combat, even that liberty which lay at the core of Presbyterianism, and he pursued his conflict with it through a succession of tyrannies, doublings, blunders, and battle-fields, until he arrived at the scaffold.

We can touch upon the incidents of his reign only so far as they bear upon that Protestantism which was marching on through the plots of Jesuits, the armies of kings, the calamities of nations, and the scaffolds of martyrs, to seat itself upon a throne already great, and to become yet greater. The first error of Charles was his French marriage. This match was concluded on much the same conditions which his father had consented to when the Spanish marriage was in prospect. It allied Charles with a daughter of France and Rome; it admitted him, in a sense, within the circle of Popish sovereigns; it introduced a dominating Popish element into his councils, and into the education of his children. “The king’s marriage with Popery and France,” says Dr. Kennet, “was a more inauspicious omen than the great plague that signalled the first year of his reign.” His second error followed fast upon the first: it was the dissolution of his Parliament because it insisted upon a

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<sup>1</sup> *Basilicon Doron, or, His Majesty's Instructions to his dearest Son, Henry the Prince*, pp. 41, 42. Edinburgh: printed by Robert Waldegrave, printer to the King’s Majesty, 1603.

redress of grievances before it would vote him a supply of money. This spread discontent through the nation, and made Charles be distrusted by all his future Parliaments. His second Parliament was equally summarily dismissed, and for the same reason; it would vote no money till first it had obtained redress of grievances. Advancing from one great error to a yet greater, Charles proceeded to impose taxes without the consent of Parliament. He exacted loans of such citizens as were wealthy, or were believed to be so, and many who opposed these unconstitutional imposts were thrown into prison. “The lord may tax his villain high or low,” said Sir Edward Coke, “but it is against the franchises of the land for freemen to be taxed but by their consent in Parliament.”

The nation next came to see that its religion was in as great danger as its liberty. In a third Parliament summoned at this time, the indignant feelings of the members found vent. In a conference between the Lords and Commons, Coke called the attention of the members to a Popish hierarchy which had been established in competition with the national Church. “They have,” says he, “a bishop consecrated by the Pope. This bishop hath his subaltern officers of all kinds; as vicars-general, arch-deans, rural-deans, &c. Neither are these titular officers, but they all execute their jurisdictions, and make their ordinary visitations through the kingdom, keep courts, and determine ecclesiastical causes; and, which is an argument of more consequence, they keep ordinary intelligence by their agents in Rome, and hold correspondence with the nuncios and cardinals, both in Brussels and in France. Neither are the seculars alone grown to this height, but the regulars are more active and dangerous, and have taken deep root. They have already planted their colleges and societies of both sexes. They have settled revenues, houses, libraries, vestments, and all other necessary provisions to travel or stay at home. They intend to hold a concurrent assembly with this Parliament.” This Parliament, like its predecessors, was speedily dissolved, and a hint was dropped that, seeing Parliaments understood so ill the cardinal virtue of obedience, no more assemblies of that kind would be held.

Tyranny loves simplicity in the instrumentalities with which it works: such are swift and sure. Taking leave of his Parliaments, Charles governed by the prerogative alone. He could now tax his subjects whenever, and to whatever extent, it suited him. “Many unjust and scandalous projects, all very grievous,” says Clarendon, “were set on foot, the reproach of which came to the king, the profit to other men.”<sup>1</sup> Tonnage and poundage were imposed upon merchandise; new and heavy duties fettered trade; obsolete laws were revived—among others, that by which every man with £40 of yearly rent was obliged to come and receive the order of knighthood; and one other

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<sup>1</sup> *History of the Rebellion*, bk. i., p. 67.

device, specially vexatious, was hit upon, that of enlarging the royal forests beyond their ancient bounds, and fining the neighbouring land-owners on pretence that they had encroached upon the royal domains, although their families had been in quiet possession for hundreds of years.

But the most odious and oppressive of these imposts was the project of “ship-money.” This tax was laid upon the port towns and the adjoining counties, which were required to furnish one or more fully equipped warships for his Majesty’s use. The City of London was required to furnish twenty ships, with sails, stores, ammunition, and guns, which, however, the citizens might commute into money; and seeing that what the king wanted was not so much ships to go to sea, as gold *Caroli* to fill his empty exchequer, the tax was more acceptable in the latter form than in the former. One injustice must be supported by another, and very commonly a greater. The Star Chamber and the High Commission Court followed, to enforce these exactions and protect the agents employed in them, whose work made them odious. These courts were a sort of Inquisition, into which the most loyal of the nation were dragged to be fleeced and tortured. Those who sat in them, to use the words applied by Thucydides to the Athenians, “held for honourable that which pleased, and for just that which profited.” The authority of religion was called in to sanction this civil tyranny. Sibthorpe and Mainwaring preached sermons at Whitehall, in which they advanced the doctrine that the king is not bound to observe the laws of the realm, and that his royal command makes loans and taxes, without consent of Parliament, obligatory upon the subject’s conscience upon pain of eternal damnation.<sup>1</sup>

The history of all nations justifies the remark that civil tyranny cannot maintain itself alongside religious liberty, and whenever it finds itself in the proximity of freedom of conscience, it must either extinguish that right, or suffer itself to be extinguished by it. So was it now. There presided at this time over the diocese of London a man of very remarkable character, destined to precipitate the crisis to which the king and nation were advancing. This was Laud, Bishop of London. Of austere manners, industrious habits, and violent zeal, and esteeming forms of so much the more value by how much they were in themselves insignificant, this ecclesiastic acquired a complete ascendancy in the councils of Charles. “If the king was greater on the throne than Laud,” remarks Bennet, “yet according to the word of Laud were the people ruled.” The extravagance of his folly at the consecration (January 16, 1630–31) of St. Catherine Cree Church, in Leadenhall Street, London, is thoroughly characteristic of the man. “At the bishop’s approach,” says Rushworth, “to the west door of the church, some that were prepared for it cried with a loud voice, ‘Open, open, ye everlasting doors, that the king of glory

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<sup>1</sup> Rushworth, vol. i., p. 422. Hume, *Hist.*, chap. 50. Bennet, *Memorial*, p. 154.

may come in.' And presently the doors were opened, and the bishop, with three doctor's, and many other principal men, went in, and immediately falling down upon his knees, with his eyes lifted up, and his arms spread abroad, uttered these words: 'This place is holy, this ground is holy: in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, I pronounce it holy.' Then he took up some of the dust and threw it up into the air several times in his going up towards the church. When they approached near to the rail and Communion-table, the bishop bowed towards it several times, and returning they went round the church in procession, saying the Hundredth Psalm, after that the Nineteenth Psalm, and then said a form of prayer, 'The Lord Jesus Christ,' &c.; and concluding, 'We consecrate this church, and separate it to Thee as holy ground, not to be profaned any more to common use.' After this, the bishop, being near the Communion-table, and taking a written book in his hand, pronounced curses upon those that should afterwards profane that holy place by musters of soldiers, or keeping profane law-courts, or carrying burdens through it; and at the end of every curse he bowed toward the east, and said, 'Let all the people say, Amen.' When the curses were ended, he pronounced a number of blessings upon all those that had any hand in framing and building of that sacred church, and those that had given, or should hereafter give, chalices, plate, ornaments, or utensils; and at the end of every blessing he bowed towards the east, saying, 'Let all the people say, Amen,' After this followed the sermon, which being ended, the bishop consecrated and administered the Sacrament in manner following. As he approached the Communion-table he made several lowly bowings, and coming up to the side of the table where the bread and wine were covered, he bowed seven times. And then, after the reading of many prayers, he came near the bread, and gently lifted up the corner of the napkin wherein the bread was laid; and when he beheld the bread, he laid it down again, flew back a step or two, bowed three several times towards it; then he drew near again, and opened the napkin, and bowed as before. Then he laid his hand on the cup, which was full of wine, with a cover upon it, which he let go again, went back, and bowed thrice towards it. Then he came near again, and lifting up the cover of the cup, looked into it, and seeing the wine, he let fall the cover again, retired back, and bowed as before; then he received the Sacrament, and gave it to some principal men; after which, many prayers being said, the solemnity of the consecration ended."<sup>1</sup>

Laud bent his whole energies to mould the religion and worship of England according to the views he entertained of what religion and worship ought to be, and these were significantly set forth in the scene we have just described. The bishop aimed, in short, at rescuing Christianity from the

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<sup>1</sup> Rushworth, vol. ii., pp. 76, 77. Welwood, p. 275.

Gothicism of the Reformation, and bringing back the ancient splendour's which had encompassed worship in the Greek and Roman temples. When Archbishop of Canterbury, he proceeded to reform his diocese, but not after the manner of Cranmer. He erected a rail around the Communion-table, and issued peremptory orders that the prebends and chapter, as they came in and out of the choir, "should worship towards the altar." He provided candlesticks, tapers, and copes for the administration of the Sacrament. He set up a large crucifix above "the high altar," and filled the window of the chapel with a picture representing God the Father, with a glory round his head.

Such of the clergy as refused to fall into his humour, and imitate his fancies, he prosecuted as guilty of schism, and rebels against ecclesiastical government. Those who spoke against images and crucifixes were made answerable in the Star Chamber, as persons ill-affected towards the discipline of the Church of England, and were fined, suspended, and imprisoned. He made use of forms of prayer taken from the Mass-book and Roman Pontifical; "as if he wished," says one, "to try how much of a Papist might be brought in without Popery." There were some who said that the archbishop was at no great pains to make any wide distinction between the two; and if distinction there was, it was so very small that they were unable to see it at Rome; for, as Laud himself tells us in his Diary, the Pope, twice over made him the offer of a red hat.

It added to the confusion in men's minds to find that, while the Protestants were severely handled in the Star Chamber and High Commission Court, Papists were treated with the utmost tenderness. While the former were being fined and imprisoned, favours and caresses were showered on the latter. It was forbidden to write against Popery. The Protestant press was gagged. Fox's *Book of Martyrs* could not appear; the noble defences of Jewell and Willet were refused licence; Mr. Gillabrand, professor of mathematics in Gresham College, was prosecuted for inserting in his *Almanack* the names of the Protestant martyrs out of Fox, instead of those of the Roman calendar; while the archbishop's chaplain licensed a book in which the first Reformers, who had died at the stake, were stigmatised as traitors and rebels.

Dr. Williams, Bishop of Lincoln, had been the warmest and most powerful of Laud's patrons; but all his past services were forgotten when Williams wrote a book against the archbishop's innovations. The solid learning and sound logic of the book were offence greater than could be condoned by all the favours conferred on Laud in former years; the good bishop had to pay a fine of £10,000 to the king, was suspended by the Court of High Commission from all his dignities, offices, and functions, and sentenced to imprisonment during the king's pleasure. The Puritans were compelled to transport themselves beyond seas, and seek in America the toleration denied them in England. The Dutch and French Protestant congregations, which had flourished

in the nation since the days of Edward VI., had their liberties all but entirely swept away. Such of their members, within the diocese of Canterbury, as had been born abroad, were permitted to retain their own form of worship, but all of them who had been born in England were commanded to repair to their own parish churches, and preparation was made for the ultimate extinction of their communities by the injunction to bring up their children in the use of the English Liturgy, which for that end was now translated into French and Dutch.

The scaffold was not yet set up, but short of this every severity was employed which might compel the nation to worship according to the form prescribed by the king and the archbishop. Prynne, a member of the bar; Bastwick, a physician; and Burton, a divine, were sentenced in the Star Chamber to stand in the pillory, to lose their ears at Palace Yard, Westminster, to pay a fine of £500 each to the king, and to be imprisoned during life. The physician had written a book which was thought to reflect upon the hierarchy of the Church; the clergyman had attacked the innovations in a sermon which he preached on the 5th of November; and the lawyer, who was held the arch-offender, had sharply reprobated stage-plays, to which the queen was said to be greatly addicted.

One sermon each Sunday was held to be sufficient for the instruction of the people; and afternoon and evening preaching was stringently forbidden. That the parishioners might fill up the vacant time, and forget as speedily as possible what they had heard in church, the "Book of Sports" put forth by King James was re-enacted, and every Sunday turned into a wake. James had enjoined that "his good people be not let from any lawful recreation, such as dancing, archery, leaping, vaulting, &c., though none must have this indulgence that abstain from coming to church." And Charles "out of the like pious care for the service of God," it was said, "and for suppressing of any humours that oppose truth, doth ratify and publish this his blessed father's declaration." All ministers were enjoined to read this edict from the pulpit during the time of Divine service, and several were visited with suspension for refusing obedience.

Alarm and discontent, with a smouldering spirit of insurrection, the consequences of this policy, pervaded all England. The more the position of the country was considered, the greater the peril was seen to be. Slavish principles were being disseminated in the nation; the ancient laws of England were being subverted by the edicts of arbitrary power; privileges and rights conveyed by charter, and hallowed by long custom, were being buried under unconstitutional exactions; the spirit of the people was broken by cruel and shameful punishments; superstitious rites were displacing the pure and Scriptural forms which the Reformation had introduced; and a civil and ecclesiastical tyranny was rearing its head in the land. Nor was the darkness of the

outlook relieved by the prospect of any one, sufficiently powerful, rising up to rally the nation around him, and rescue it from the abyss into which it appeared to be descending. It was at this moment that an occurrence took place in Scotland which turned the tide in affairs, and brought deliverance to both kingdoms. This recalls us to the northern country

## CHAPTER XVI.

### THE NATIONAL COVENANT AND ASSEMBLY OF 1638.

Preparations in Scotland for introducing Prelacy—The King's Commission to Archbishop Laud—The Book of Canons sent down to Scotland—The New Liturgy—Indignation in Scotland—The First Reading of the Liturgy—Tumult—The Dean Assailed in the Pulpit—He Flees—The Bishop Mobbed—Charles's Resolve to Force the Canons and Liturgy upon the Scots—Their Resistance—The Four Tables—The National Covenant Framed—Its Provisions—Sworn in the Greyfriars' Church—Solemnity of the Scene—Alarm of the Bishops and the Court—The General Assembly at Glasgow, 1638—The Assembly Overthrows Prelacy.

WE have noted the several steps by which James VI. advanced his cherished project of planting prelacy in Scotland. First came an order of Tulchan bishops. These men were without jurisdiction, and, we may add, without stipend; their main use being to convey the Church's patrimony to their patrons. In 1610 the Tulchan bishop disappeared, and the bishop ordinary took his place. Under cover of a pretended Assembly which met that year in Glasgow, dioceses with jurisdiction were introduced into the Church of Scotland; and a Court of High Commission was set up for ordering causes ecclesiastical. In 1618 some conclusions agreeable to the English Church were passed at Perth. In 1617 an Act was passed in Parliament to this effect, "That whatever his Majesty should determine in the external government of the Church, with the advice of the archbishop, bishops, and a competent number of the ministry, should have the strength of a law." James VI. had made a beginning, Charles I. with the help of his primate purposed to make an end. It is necessary, in order to a true insight into the struggle that followed, to bear in mind what we have already explained, that with their form of Church government were bound up the civil rights of the Scots, since, owing to the recent redemption of the nation from feudalism, the conservator of its liberties was not the Parliament as in England, but the Kirk.

The Scottish bishops, in a letter to Laud, expressed a wish for a nearer conformity with the Church of England, adding for the primate's satisfaction that their countrymen shared with them in this wish. If they really believed what they now affirmed, they were grievously mistaken. The flower of their ministers banished, and their places filled by men who possessed neither learning nor piety, the Scottish people cherished mournfully the memory of former times, and only the more disliked, the longer they knew it, the prelacy which was being thrust upon them. But the wishes of the people, one way or other, counted for little with the king. His Grace of Canterbury was bidden try his hand at framing canons for the government of the Scottish Church, and a Liturgy for her worship. The primate, nothing loth, addressed himself

to the congenial task. The Book of Canons was the first-fruits of his labours. Its key-note was the unlimited power and supremacy of the king. It laid the axe at the root of liberty, both in Church and State. Next came the Liturgy, of which every minister was enjoined to provide himself with four copies for the use of his church on pain of deprivation. When the Liturgy was examined it was found to be alarmingly near to the Popish breviary, and in some points, particularly the Communion Service, it borrowed the very words of the Mass Book.<sup>1</sup> The 23rd of July, 1637, was fixed on for beginning the use of the new Service Book.

As the day approached it began to be seen that it would not pass without a tempest. This summons to fall down and worship as the king should direct, roused into indignation the sons of the men who had listened to Knox, and who saw the system being again set up which their fathers, under the leading of their great Reformer, had cast down. Some of the bishops were alarmed at these manifestations, well knowing the spirit of their countrymen, and counselled the king, with a tempest in the air, not to think of rearing his new edifice, but to wait the return of calmer times. The headstrong monarch, urged on by his self-willed primate, would not listen to this prudent advice. The Liturgy must be enforced.

The day arrived. On the morning of Sunday, the 23rd July, about eight of the clock, the reader appeared in the desk of St. Giles's and went over the usual prayers, and having ended, said, with tears in his eyes, "Adieu, good people, for I think this is the last time I shall ever read prayers in this church." The friends of the new service heard in this last reading the requiem of the Protestant worship. At the stated hour, the Dean of Edinburgh, clad in canonicals, appeared to begin the new service. A vast crowd had assembled, both within and without the church, and as the dean, Liturgy in hand, elbowed his way, and mounted the stairs to the desk, the scene was more animated than edifying. He had hardly begun to read when a frightful clamour of voices rose round him. His tones were drowned and his composure shaken. Presently he was startled by the *whizz* of a missile passing dangerously near his ear, launched, as tradition says, by Janet Geddes, who kept a stall in the High Street, and who, finding nothing more convenient, flung her stool at the dean, with the objurgation, "Villain, dost thou say mass at my lug?" The dean shut the obnoxious book, hastily threw off the surplice, which had helped to draw the tempest upon him, and fled with all speed. The Bishop of Edinburgh, who was present, thinking, perhaps, that the greater dignity of his office would procure him more reverence from the crowd, ascended the pulpit, and exerted himself to pacify the tumult, and continue the service. His

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<sup>1</sup> *The Booke of Common Prayer, and Administration of the Sacraments, and other parts of Divine Service, for the use of the Church of Scotland.* Edin., 1637.

appearance was the signal for a renewal of the tempest, which grew fiercer than ever. He was saluted with cries of “A Pope—a Pop.—Antichrist! Pull him down!” He managed to escape from the pulpit to his coach, the magistrates escorting him home to defend him from the fury of the crowd, which was composed mostly of the baser sort.

If the hatred which the Scottish people entertained of the Liturgy had found vent only in unpremeditated tumults, the king would have triumphed in the end; but along with this effervescence on the surface there was a strong and steady current flowing underneath; and the intelligent determination which pervaded all ranks shaped itself into well-considered measures. The Privy Council of Scotland, pausing before the firm attitude assumed by the nation, sent a representation to the king of the true state of feeling in Scotland. The reply of Charles was more insolent than ever: the new Liturgy must be brought into use; and another proclamation was issued to that effect, branding with treason all who opposed it. This was all that was needed thoroughly to rouse the spirit of the Scots, which had slumbered these thirty years, and to band them together in the most resolute resistance to a tyranny that seemed bent on the utter destruction of their liberties. Noblemen, gentlemen, and burgesses flocked from all the cities and shires of the Lowlands to Edinburgh, to concert united action. Four committees, termed “Tables,” were formed—one for the nobility, one for the barons, a third for the boroughs, and a fourth for the Church. These submitted proposals to a General Table, which consisted of commissioner’s from the other four, and decided finally on the measures to be adopted. The issue of their deliberations was a unanimous resolution to renew the National Covenant of Scotland. This expedient had been adopted at two former crises, and on both occasions it had greatly helped to promote union and confidence among the friends of liberty, and to disconcert its enemies; and the like effects were expected to follow it at this not less momentous crisis. The Covenant was re-cast, adapted to the present juncture, and subscribed with great solemnity in the Greyfriars’ Church at Edinburgh, on the 1st of March, 1638.

The “underscribed” noblemen, barons, gentlemen, burgesses, ministers, and commons promised and swore, “all the days of our life constantly to adhere unto and to defend the true religion;” and “to labour by all means lawful to recover the purity and liberty of the Gospel as it was established and professed” before the introduction of the late innovations; “and that we shall defend the same, and resist all these contrary errors and corruptions, according to our vocation, and to the utmost of that power which God hath put into our hands, all the days of our life.” The Covenant further pledged its swearers to support “the king’s majesty,” and one another, “in the defence and preservation of the aforesaid true religion, liberties, and laws of the kingdom.”

It will not be denied that nations are bound to defend their religion and liberties; and surely, if they see cause, they may add to the force of this duty the higher sanctions of vows and oaths. In doing so they invest the cause of patriotism with the sacredness of religion. This was what the Scots did on this occasion, which is one of the great events of their history. From the Grampian chain, which shut out the Popish north, to the Tweed, which parts on the south their country from England, the nation assembled in the metropolis, one sentiment animating the whole mighty multitude, and moving them all towards one object, and that object the highest and holiest conceivable. For, great and sacred as liberty is, liberty in this case was but the means to an end still loftier and more sacred, namely the pure service of the Eternal King. This added unspeakable solemnity to the transaction. God was not merely a witness, as in other oaths. He was a party. On the one side was the Scottish nation; on the other was the Sovereign of heaven and earth: the mortal entered into a covenant with the Eternal: the finite allied itself with the Infinite. So did the Scots regard it. They stood on the steps of the Divine throne as they lifted up their hands to swear to “the Lord, the everlasting God.” A scene like this stamps, as with photographic stroke, the impress of its grandeur upon a nation’s character, and the memory of it abides as a creative influence in after-generations.

Let us view the scene a little more nearly. The hour was yet early when a stream of persons began to flow towards the Church of the Grey Friars. No one fabric could contain a nation, and the multitude overflowed and covered the churchyard. All ranks and ages were commingled in that assembly—the noble and the peasant, the patriarch and the stripling. One fire burned in all hearts, and the glow of one enthusiasm lighted up all faces. The proceedings of the day were opened with a confession of national sins. Then followed a sermon. The Covenant was then read by Sir Archibald Johnston, afterwards Lord Warriston. He it was who had drafted the bond, and few then living could have taught Scotland so fittingly the words in which to bind herself to the service of the God of heaven. There was breathless silence in the great assembly while the Covenant, so reverent in spirit, and so compendious and appropriate in phraseology, was being read. Next the Earl of Loudon, considered the most eloquent man of his age, rose, and with sweet and persuasive voice exhorted the people to steadfastness in the oath. Alexander Henderson, who not unworthily filled the place which Andrew Melville had held among the ministers, led the devotions of the assembly. With solemn awe and rapt emotion did he address “the high and lofty One” with whom the Scottish nation essayed to enter into covenant, “the vessels of clay with the Almighty Potter.” The prayer ended, there was again a pause. The profound stillness lasted for a minute or two, when the Earl of Sutherland was seen to rise and step forward to the table. Lifting up his right hand, he swore the oath; and

taking the pen, the first of all the Scottish nation, he affixed his name to the Covenant. Noble followed noble, swearing with uplifted hand, and subscribing. The barons, the ministers, the burgesses, thousands of every age and rank subscribed and swore. The vast sheet was filled with names on both sides, and subscribers at last could find room for only their initials. The solemn enthusiasm that tilled the assembled thousands found varied expression: some wept aloud, others shouted as on a field of battle, and others opened their veins and subscribed with their blood.

This transaction, which took place in the Greyfriars' Churchyard at Edinburgh, on the 1st of March, 1638, was the opening scene of a struggle that drew into its vortex both kingdoms, that lasted fifty years, and that did not end till the Stuarts had been driven from the throne, and William of Orange raised to it. It was this that closed all the great conflicts of the sixteenth century. By the stable political position to which it elevated Protestantism, and the manifold influences of development and propagation with which it surrounded it, this conflict may be said to have crowned as well as closed all the straggles that went before it.

“To this much-vilified bond,” says a historic writer, “every true Scotsman ought to look back with as much reverence as Englishmen do to *Magna Charta*.”<sup>1</sup> “It is known by all who are acquainted with this country,” say the nobility, &c., in their Remonstrance, “that almost the whole kingdom standeth to the defence of this cause, and that the chiefest of the nobles, barons, and burgesses [the subscribers] are honoured in the places where they live for religion, wisdom, power, and wealth, answerable to the condition of this kingdom.”<sup>2</sup> The opposing party were few in numbers, they were weak in all the elements of influence and power, and the only thing that gave them the least importance was their having the king on their side. The prelates were thunderstruck by the bold measure of the Covenanters. When Spottiswood, Archbishop of St. Andrews, heard that the National Covenant had been sworn, he exclaimed in despair, “Now all that we have been doing these thirty years byepast is at once thrown down.” Nor was the court less startled when the news reached it. Charles saw all his visions of arbitrary power vanishing. “So long as this Covenant is in force,” said the king to Hamilton, “I have no more power in Scotland than a Duke of Venice.”<sup>3</sup> Promises, concessions, threats, were tried by turns to break the phalanx of Scottish patriots which had been formed in the Greyfriars' Churchyard, but it refused to dissolve.<sup>4</sup> Their Covenant bound them to be loyal to the king, but only while he

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<sup>1</sup> Aikman, *Hist. of Scotland*, vol. iii., p. 453; Glas., 1848.

<sup>2</sup> *Remonstrance of the Nobility, Barons, &c.*, February 27, 1639, p. 11.

<sup>3</sup> Burnet, *Memoirs of the Duke of Hamilton*, p. 60.

<sup>4</sup> Prince Bismarck, in a letter now before us, of date February 21, 1875, addressed to Messrs. Fair and Smith, Edinburgh, who had sent his Excellency a copy of the National Covenant, says: “From my earliest reading of history, I well remember that one of those

governed according to law. Charles placed himself above the law, and was at that moment making preparations to carry out by force of arms the extravagant notions he entertained of his prerogative. To this tyranny the Scots were resolved not to yield. “We know no other bands between a king and his subjects,” said the Earl of Loudon to the royal commissioner, “but those of religion and the laws. If these are broken, men’s lives are not dear to them.” It was not long till the echoes of these bold words came back in thunder from all parts of Scotland.

The king at last found himself obliged to convoke a free General Assembly, which was summoned to meet at Glasgow on the 21st of November, 1638. It was the first free Assembly which had met for forty years; the Marquis of Hamilton was sent down as commissioner. He came with secret instructions which, had he been able to carry them out, would have made the meeting of the Assembly of no avail as regarded the vindication of the national liberties. Hamilton was instructed to take care of the bishops and see that their dignities and powers were not curtailed, and generally so to manage as that the Assembly should do only what might be agreeable to the king, and if it should show itself otherwise minded it was to be dissolved. The battle between the king and the Assembly turned mainly on the question of the bishops. Had the Assembly power to depose from office an order of men disallowed by the Presbyterian Church, and imposed on it by an extrinsic authority? It decided that it had. That was to sweep away the king’s claim to ecclesiastical supremacy, and along with it the agents by whom he hoped to establish both ecclesiastical and civil supremacy in Scotland. Hamilton strenuously resisted this decision. He was met by the firmness, tact, and eloquence of the moderator, Alexander Henderson. The commissioner promised, protested, and at last shed tears. All was in vain; the Assembly, unmoved, proceeded to depose the bishops. To avert the blow, so fatal to the king’s projects, Hamilton rose, and in the king’s name, as head of the Church, dissolved the Assembly, and discharged its further proceedings.

The crisis was a great one; for the question at issue was not merely whether Scotland should have free Assemblies, but whether it should have free Parliaments, free laws, and free subjects, or whether all these should give way and the king’s sole and arbitrary prerogative should come in their room. The king’s act dissolving the Assembly was illegal; for neither the constitution nor the law of Scotland gave him supremacy in ecclesiastical affairs; and had the Assembly broken up, the king’s claim would have been acknowledged, and the liberties of the country laid at the feet of the tyrant.

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events that more particularly affected my feelings used to be the Covenant—the spectacle of a loyal people uniting with their king in a solemn bond to resist the same ambitions of foreign priesthood we have to fight at the present day.”

The commissioner took his leave; but hardly had his retreating figure vanished at the door of the Assembly, when the officer entered with lights, and a protest, which had been prepared beforehand, was read, in which the Assembly declared that “sitting in the name and by the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ, the only HEAD and MONARCH of his Church, it could not dissolve.” The members went on with their business as if nothing had occurred. They proceeded to try the bishops, fourteen in number, who were charged with not a few moral as well as ecclesiastical delinquencies. The two archbishops and six bishops were excommunicated—four deposed and two suspended. Thus the fabric of prelacy, which had been thirty years a-building, was overturned, and the Church of Scotland restored to the purity and vigour of her early days.

When its thorough and memorable work was finished, the Assembly was dismissed by the moderator with these remarkable words: “We have now cast down the walls of Jericho; let him that rebuildeth them beware of the curse of Hiel the Bethelite!”

The Reformed Church of Scotland uprose in new power; the schemes of tyrants who had hoped to plant arbitrary power upon its ruins were baffled; and the nation hailed its recovered liberties with a shout of joy.

## CHAPTER XVII.

### CIVIL WAR—SOLEMN LEAGUE—WESTMINSTER ASSEMBLY.

War with the Scots—Charles sends a Fleet and Army—The Scots March to the Border—Treaty of Peace—Violated by the King—Second War with the Scots—Charles Defeated—Makes Peace—Church of Scotland has Rest—The Long Parliament—Grievances—Concessions of Charles—Irish Massacre—Suspected Complicity of the King—Execution of Strafford and Laud—Civil War in England—Scotland Joins England—Solemn League—Summary of its Principles—Sworn to by the Parliament of England—The Westminster Assembly—Its General Appearance—Its Individual Members—Frames a Form of Church Government and Confession of Faith—Influence of these Documents.

THE Scots had initiated their rebellion by swearing the National Covenant, and they crowned it by continuing to sit in Assembly after the royal commissioner had ordered them to dissolve. In the opinion of Charles I. nothing remained to him but the last resort of kings—the sword. In April, 1610, the king summoned a Parliament to vote him supplies for a war with the Scots. But the Lords and Commons, having but little heart for a war of Laud's kindling, and knowing moreover that to suppress the rights of Scotland was to throw down one of the main ramparts around their own liberties, refused the money which the king asked for. Charles had recourse to his prerogative, and called upon the bishops to furnish the help which the laity withheld. Less lukewarm than the Parliament, the clergy raised considerable sums in the various dioceses. The queen addressed a letter to the Roman Catholics, who were far from being indifferent spectators of the quarrel between the king and his northern subjects. They willingly contributed to the war, and as the result of the joint subsidy Charles raised an army, and marched to the Scottish Border; he ordered a fleet to blockade the Frith of Forth, and he sent the Marquis of Hamilton with a body of troops to co-operate with Huntly, who had unfurled the standard on the king's side in the North.

The Scots were not taken unawares by the king's advance. They knew that he was preparing to invade them. They had sworn their Covenant, and they were as ready to shed their blood in fulfilment of their oath as they had been to subscribe their names. Thirty thousand able-bodied yeomen offered themselves for the service of their country. They were marshalled and drilled by General Leslie, a veteran soldier, who had acquired skill and won renown in the wars of Gustavus Adolphus. Hardly had their preparations been completed when the bonfire, which was to announce the arrival of the invading force, summoned them to battle. Charles's fleet appeared at the mouth of the Forth; but the Scots mustered in such numbers on the shore that not a man could land. The main body of the army, under Leslie, in their uniforms of

olive or grey plaiden, with a knot of blue ribbons in their bonnets, had meanwhile marched to the Border. Their progress was a victorious one, for it was the flower of the Scots that were in arms, whereas the English soldiers had little heart for fighting. Negotiations were opened between the king and the Scots at Dunse Law, a pyramidal hill that rises near the town of that name, on the north of the Tweed. A treaty of peace was concluded, and, though its terms were neither clear nor ample, the Scots in the excess of their loyalty accepted it. They fought for neither lands nor laurels, but for the peaceable practice of their religion and the quiet enjoyment of their civil rights, under the sceptre of their native prince. "Had our throne been void," says an eyewitness, "and our voices sought for the filling of Fergus' chair, we would have died ere any one had sitten down on that fatal marble but Charles alone."<sup>1</sup>

This devoted loyalty on the one side was repaid with persistent perfidy on the other. Next year (1640) Charles anew denounced the Scots as rebels, and prepared to invade them. Not waiting this time till the king's army should be on the Border, the Scots at once unfurled the blue banner of the Covenant, entered England, encountered the king's forces at Newburn on the Tyne, and discomfited them, almost without stinking a blow. The victors took possession of the towns of Newcastle and Durham, and levied contributions from the whole of Northumberland. Meanwhile the king lay at York; his army was dispirited, his nobles were lukewarm; he was daily receiving letters from London, urging him to make peace with the Scots, and he was persuaded at last to attempt extricating himself from the labyrinth into which his rashness and treachery had brought him, by opening negotiations with the Scots at Ripon. The treaty was afterwards transferred to London. Thus had the king brought the fire into England.

The Church of Scotland had rest for twenty years (1640–1660.) The Scots had repelled the edicts and the soldiers of an arbitrary monarch, for though chivalrously loyal to their kings, they would give them no obedience but such as it was meet for freemen to render; and Scotland being again mistress of herself, her General Assemblies continued to meet, her Presbyterian Church government was administered, her flocks were supplied with faithful and diligent pastors, some of whom were distinguished by learning and genius, and vital Christianity flourished. The only drawback to the prosperity of the country was the raids of Montrose, who, professing a zeal for the king's interests, stained indelibly his own character for humanity and honour, by ravaging many parts of his native land with fire and sword. All the while there raged a great storm in England, and the northern country was too near the scene of strife not to feel the swell of the tempest. Nor could Scotland

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<sup>1</sup> Baillie, *Letters*, vol. i., p. 215.

regard her own rights as secure so long as those of England were in question. It was her own quarrel mainly which had been transferred into the sister kingdom, and she felt called upon to contribute what help she could, by mediation or by arms, to bring the controversy between the king and the Parliament to a right issue. The poise of the conflict was in the hands of the Scots; for, balanced as parties then were in England, whichever side the Scots should espouse would be almost certain of victory. Could they hesitate to say whether Popery or Protestantism should be established in England, when by the triumph of the latter a bulwark would be raised against the advancing tide of despotism which was then threatening all Europe? A strange concurrence of events had thrown the decision of that question into the hands of the Scots; how they decided it, we shall see immediately.

In November, 1640, a Parliament met at Westminster. It is known in history as the Long Parliament. The grievances under which the nation groaned were boldly discussed in it. The laws were infringed; religion was being changed, and evil counsellors surrounded the throne; such were the complaints loudly urged in this assembly. Wisdom, eloquence, patriotism, were not lacking to that Parliament; it included the great names of Hyde and Falkland, and Digby, and others; but all this could not prevent a rupture between the king and the people, which widened every day till at last the breach was irreparable. The king's two favourites, Strafford and Laud, were impeached and brought to the block. The Star Chamber and High Commission Court were abolished. Ship-money, and other illegal imposts, the growth of recent years of despotism, were swept away; and the spirit of reform seemed even to have reached the throne, and made a convert of the king. In his speech on the 25th of January, 1641, the king said, "I will willingly and cheerfully concur with you for the reformation of all abuses, both in Church and commonwealth, for my intention is to reduce all things to the best and purest times, as they were in the days of Queen Elizabeth." The olive-branch was held out to even the Presbyterians of Scotland. Charles paid a visit at this time to his ancient kingdom, for the end, as he assured his Parliament of Scotland, "of quieting the distractions of his kingdom;" for, said he, "I can do nothing with more cheerfulness than to give my people a general satisfaction." And, by way of seconding these promises with deeds, he ratified the National Covenant which had been sworn in 1638, and made it law. The black clouds of war seemed to be rolling away; the winds of faction were going down in both countries; the biting breath of tyranny had become sweet, and the monarch who had proved false a score of times was now almost trusted by his rejoicing subjects.

The two kingdoms were now, as a speaker in the English Parliament expressed it, "on the vertical point." The scales of national destiny hung evenly poised between remedy and ruin. It was at this moment that terrible tidings

arrived from Ireland, by which these fair prospects were all at once overcast. We refer to the Irish Massacre. This butchery was only less horrible than that of St. Bartholomew, if indeed it did not equal it. The slaughter of the Protestants by the Roman Catholics commenced on the 23rd of October, 1641, and continued for several months; forty thousand, on the lowest estimate, were murdered; many writers say from two hundred to three hundred thousand. The northern parts of Ireland were nearly depopulated; and the slaughter was accompanied by all those disgusting and harrowing cruelties which marked similar butcheries in the Waldensian valleys. The persons concerned in this atrocity pleaded the king's authority, and produced Charles's commission with his broad seal attached to it. There is but too much ground for the dark suspicion that the king was privy to this fearful massacre;<sup>1</sup> but what it concerns us to note here is that this massacre, occurring at this juncture, powerfully and fatally influenced the future course of affairs, revived the former suspicions of the king's sincerity, kindled into a fiercer flame the passions that had seemed expiring, and hurried the king and the nation onwards at accelerated speed to a terrible catastrophe.

Charles, on his return to England, was immediately presented with the famous *Petition and Remonstrance of the State of the Nation*. This was no agreeable welcome home. Dark rumours began to circulate that the court was tampering with the army in the North, with a view to bringing it to London to suppress the Parliament. The House provided a guard for its safety. These the king dismissed, and appointed his own train-bands in their room. The members felt that they were not legislators, but prisoners. The king next denounced five of the leading members of Parliament as traitors, and went in person to the House with an armed following to apprehend them. Happily, the five members had left before the king's arrival, otherwise the civil war might have broken out there and then. The House voted that a great breach of privilege had been committed. Immediately London bristled with mobs, and the precincts of Whitehall resounded with cries for justice. These tumults, said the king, "were not like a storm at sea, which yet wants not its terror, but like an earthquake, shaking the very foundation of all, than which nothing in the world hath more of horror."<sup>2</sup> The king withdrew to Hampton Court.

Confidence was now at an end between Charles and the Parliament; and the Jesuits, who were plentifully scattered through England, by inflaming the passions on both sides, took care that it should not be restored. After some

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<sup>1</sup> The facts on this head given in Bennet's *Memorial*, pp. 194, 195; Calamy's *Life of Baxter*, p. 143; and Reid's *History of Presb. Church in Ireland*, vol. ii., p. 303, leave little doubt that the king and the Irish Roman Catholics understood one another.

<sup>2</sup> *Eikon Basilike: the Portraiture of his Sacred Majesty in his Solitude and Sufferings*. Page 15. Lond., 1649.

time spent in remonstrances, messages, and answers, the king marched to Hull, where was store of all kinds of arms, the place having been made a magazine in the war against the Scots. At the gates, Charles was refused entrance by the governor, Sir John Hotham, who held the city for the Parliament. Pronouncing him a traitor, the king turned away and directed his course to Nottingham.<sup>1</sup> There on the 22nd of August, 1612, Charles set up his standard, which, as Lord Clarendon takes note, was blown down the same night, nor could it be replaced till two days thereafter, from the violence of the storm then blowing. It was a worse omen that comparatively few assembled to that standard. The king now issued his summons to the gentlemen of the North to meet him at York. The word, "To your tents, O Israel," had gone forth; the civil war had commenced.

This recalls us once more to Scotland, The two kingdoms were at that moment threatened with a common peril, and this summoned them to a common duty. That duty was to unite for their mutual defence. They looked around them for a basis on which they might combine, each feeling that to let the other sink was to betray its own safety. The ground ultimately chosen was partly civil and partly religious, and necessarily so, seeing that the quarrel conjoined inseparably the two interests. The bond of alliance finally adopted was the Solemn League and Covenant. Whether we approve or disapprove of its form, it was in its substance undeniably lawful and even necessary, being for the defence of religion and liberty; and in its issue it saved the liberties of Great Britain.

There is a prevalent idea that the Solemn League and Covenant was a merely religious bond, the device of an exclusive and sour Presbyterianism—a propagandist measure, promoted mainly by propagandist zealots. Nothing could be farther from the truth of history. The Solemn League was the matured and compendious deliverance of the people of England and Scotland on the great question of civil and religious liberty, as it stood in that age; and it put into shape the practical steps which it behoved the two nations to take, if they would retain the blessings of a free Government and a Protestant Church. This bond was framed with much care by the Scottish Parliament and the General Assembly of the Scottish Church, with the concurrence and assistance of the English commissioners who were sent down for that purpose. It was heartily accepted by the ablest statesmen, the most learned divines, and by the whole body of the Protestant people in both England and Scotland. The analysis which Hallam has given of this famous document is remarkably concise and eminently fair. We quote the yet more compendious statement of its provisions by another historical writer, who says: "Looking

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<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 42.

at both Covenants [the National and the Solemn League], and treating them as one document, the principles therein embodied were, the following:—

“1. Defence of Reformed Presbyterian religion in Scotland. 2. Promotion of uniformity among the Churches of the three kingdoms. 3. Extirpation of Popery, Prelacy, and all unsound forms of religion. 4. Preservation of Parliaments, and of the liberties of the people. 5. Defence of the sovereign in his maintaining the Reformed religion, the Parliaments, and the liberties of the people. 6. Discovery and punishment of malignants, and disturbers of the peace and welfare of the nations. 7. Mutual defence and protection of each individually, and of all jointly, who were within the bonds of the Covenant. 8. Sincere and earnest endeavour to set an example before the world of public, personal, and domestic virtue and godliness.”<sup>1</sup>

The signing of the Solemn League by the Scottish Convention of Estates and the General Assembly recalled the memorable scene transacted in the Greyfriars' Churchyard in 1638. Tears rolled down the face of the aged as they took the pen to subscribe, while the younger testified by their shouts or their animated looks to the joy with which they entered into the bond. In the City of London the spectacle was scarcely less impressive, but more novel. On the 25th of September, 1643, the two Houses of Parliament, with the Assembly of Divines, including the Scottish Commissioners, now sitting at Westminster, met in St. Margaret's Church, Westminster, and after sermon the Solemn League was read, article by article, the members standing uncovered, and swearing to it with uplifted hands. Afterwards, Alexander Henderson, who presided over the famous assembly at Glasgow, delivered an address ending with these words:— “Did the Pope at Rome know what is this day transacting in England, and were this Covenant written on the plaster of the wall over against him, where he sitteth, Belshazzar-like, in his sacrilegious pomp, it would make his heart to tremble, his countenance to change, his head and mitre to shake, his joints to loose, and all his cardinals and prelates to be astonished.” The Scots followed up their Covenant by sending an army into England to assist the Parliament against the royal forces. While the controversy is finding its way to an issue through the bloody fields of the civil war, we must turn for a little space to a more peaceful scene.

These civil convulsions, which owed their origin in so large a degree to the innovations and ceremonies of Laud, led many in England to ask whether the National Church had been placed under the best form of government, and whether something more simple than the lordly and complicated *régime* enacted by Elizabeth might not be more conservative of the purity of the Church and the liberties of the nation? Might it not, they said, be better to

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<sup>1</sup> Dodds, *The Fifty Years' Struggle; or, the Scottish Covenantors*. Pages 41, 42. Lond., 1868.

complete our Reformation more on the model of the other Protestant Churches of Christendom? The SCOTS, too, in their negotiations with them in 1640 and 1641, had represented to them how much a “nearer conformity” in worship and discipline would tend to cement the union between the two kingdoms. If the Reformation had brought the two nations together, a yet greater accord in ecclesiastical matters would make their union still stronger, and more lasting. There was profound policy in these views in an age when nations were so powerfully influenced by the principle of religion. From this and other causes the question of Church government was being very anxiously discussed in England; pamphlets were daily issuing from the press upon it; the great body of the Puritans had become Presbyterians; and in 1642, when the royal standard was set up at Nottingham, and the king unsheathed the sword of civil war, the Parliament passed an Act abolishing prelacy; and now came the question, what was to be put in its room?

On the 1st of July, 1643, the Lords and Commons passed an ordinance “for the calling of an Assembly of learned and godly divines and others, to be consulted with by the Parliament for the settling of the government and Liturgy of the Church of England, and for vindicating and clearing of the doctrines of the said Church from false aspersions and interpretations.” To this Assembly 121 divines were summoned, with thirty lay assessors, of whom ten were Lords and twenty Commoners. The divines were mostly clergymen of the Church of England, and several of them were of episcopal rank. It would be hard to find in the annals of the Church, council or synod in which there were so many men of great talents, ripe scholarship, mature theological knowledge, sober judgment, and sincere piety as in the Assembly which now met at Westminster. The works of many of them, which have descended to our day, attest the range of their acquirements and the strength of their genius. Hallam admits their “learning and good sense;” and Richard Baxter, who must be allowed to be an impartial judge, says, “Being not worthy to be one of them myself, I may the more freely speak that truth which I know, even in the face of malice and envy—that the Christian world had never a synod of more excellent divines (taking one thing with another) than this synod and the synod of Dort.” At the request of the English Parliament, seven commissioners from Scotland sat in the Assembly—three noblemen and four ministers. The names of the four ministers—the best proof of whose superiority and worth is that they are household words in Scotland to this day—were Alexander Henderson, Samuel Rutherford, Robert Baillie, and George Gillespie. The elders associated with them were the Earl of Cassilis, Lord Maitland, and Sir Archibald Johnston of Warriston. They met in Henry VII’s Chapel, and on the approach of winter they retired to the Jerusalem Chamber. They were presided over by Dr. William Twiss, the prolocutor—“a venerable man verging on seventy years of age, with a long pale

countenance, an imposing beard, lofty brow, and meditative eye, the whole contour indicating a life spent in severe and painful study.”<sup>1</sup> More the scholar than the man of business, he was succeeded in the chair, after a year’s occupancy, by Mr. Charles Herle—“one,” says Fuller, “so much Christian, scholar, gentleman, that he can unite in affection with those who are disjoined in judgment from him.”<sup>2</sup> At the prolocutor’s table sat his two assessors—Dr. Cornelius Burgess, active and intrepid, and Mr. John White, the “Patriarch of Dorchester.” On either hand of the prolocutor ran rows of benches for the members. There they sat calm, grave, dignified, with moustache, and peak beard, and double Elizabethan ruff, dressed not in canonicals, but black coats and bands, as imposing an Assembly as one could wish to look upon. There with pale, gracious face, sat Herbert Palmer, one of the most scholarly and eloquent men of the day. There was Stephen Marshall, the powerful popular declaimer, who made his voice be heard, in pulpit, in Parliament, in the Assembly, all through these stormy times; there was Edmund Calamy, the grandfather of the yet more celebrated man of that name; there was Edward Reynolds, the scholar, orator, and theologian; there were Arrowsmith and Tuckney, to whom we mainly owe the Larger and Shorter Catechisms; there were Vines, and Staunton, and Hoyle; there were Ashe, Whitaker, Caryl, Sedgwick, and many others, all giving their speeches and votes for Presbyterian government.

On the Erastian side there were the learned Lightfoot, the pious Coleman, and the celebrated John Selden, a man of prodigious erudition, who was deputed as a lay assessor by the House of Commons. His model of Church and State was the Jewish theocracy; “Parliament,” he said, “is the Church.”<sup>3</sup> Apart there sat a little party; they amounted to ten or eleven divines, the most distinguished of whom were Philip Nye and Thomas Goodwin, whom Wood, in his *Athenæ*, styles “the Atlases and patriarchs of independency.” On the right hand of the prolocutor, occupying the front bench, sat the Scottish commissioners. A large share in the debate on all questions fell to them; and their dialectic skill and theological learning, having just come from the long and earnest discussion of the same questions in their own country, enabled them to influence powerfully the issue.

Each proposition was first considered in committee. There it was long and anxiously debated. It was next discussed sentence by sentence and word by word in the Assembly. Into these discussions it is unnecessary for us to enter. Laboriously and patiently, during the slow process of more than five years, did the builders toil in the rearing of their edifice. They sought to the best of their knowledge and power to build it on the rock of the Scriptures.

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<sup>1</sup> McCrie, *Annals of English Presbytery*, p. 145.

<sup>2</sup> Fuller, *Church Hist.*, vol. iii., p. 467.

<sup>3</sup> Baillie, *Letters*, vol. ii., p. 268.

They meant to rear a temple in which three nations might worship; to erect a citadel within which three kingdoms might entrust their independence and liberties. We need not analyse, we need only name the documents they framed. These were, the Confession of Faith, the Form of Church Government, the Directory for Public Worship, and the Larger and Shorter Catechisms, all of which were voted by an overwhelming majority of the Assembly. “It would be difficult to fix upon any point of doctrine,” says an ecclesiastical writer who labours under no bias in favour of Presbytery, “in which the Confession of Faith materially differs from the [Thirty-nine] Articles. It has more system . . . . The majority of the ministers of the Assembly were willing to set aside episcopacy, though there were some who wished to retain it. The majority were also willing to set up Presbytery in its place, though there were a few who preferred the Independent or Congregational government. On one subject they were all united, and that was in their adherence to the doctrines of Calvin.”<sup>1</sup>

There will be various opinions on the system of doctrine exhibited in the four documents mentioned above, compendiously styled the “Westminster Standards.” There will be only one opinion respecting the logical fearlessness and power, the theological comprehensiveness, and the intellectual grandeur of these monuments. The collected genius and piety of the age—if we may not call it the first, yet hardly inferior to the first age of England’s Protestantism—were brought to the construction of them. They have influenced less the country in which they had their birth than they have done other lands. During the succeeding years they have been moulding the opinions of individuals, and inspiring the creed of Churches, in all parts of the world. They are felt as plastic agencies wherever the English sceptre is swayed or the English tongue is spoken; nor are there yet any decided signs that their supremacy is about to pass away.

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<sup>1</sup> Hunt, *Religious Thought in England*, p. 199; Lond., 1870.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### PARLIAMENT TRIUMPHS, AND THE KING IS BEHEADED.

Scotland Receives the Westminster Standards—England becomes Presbyterian—The Civil War—Army of the King —Army of the Parliament—*Morale* of each—Battle of Marston Moor—Military Equipment—The King Surrenders to the Scots—Given up to the English—Cromwell—The Army takes Possession of the King—Pride Purges Parliament—Charles Attainted and Condemned—The King's Execution—Close of a Cycle—Thirty Years' Plots and Wars—Overthrow of the Popish Projects.

IN 1647 the "Westminster Standards" were received by the Church of Scotland as a part of the uniformity of religion to which the three kingdoms had become bound in the Solemn League. These Acts were afterwards ratified by the Estates in Parliament, and sworn to by all ranks and classes in the kingdom. Scotland laid aside her simple creed, and accepted in its room an elaborate "Confession of Faith," composed by an Assembly of English divines. She put her rudimental catechisms on the shelf, and began to use those of the "Larger and Shorter" which had first seen the light in Henry VII's Chapel! Her "Book of Common Order" no longer regulated her public worship, which was now conducted according to a "Directory," also framed on English soil and by English minds. Her old Psalter, whose chants had been so often heard in days of sorrow and in hours of triumph, she exchanged for a new Psalm-book, executed by Mr. Francis Rous, an Independent of the Long Parliament. The discarded documents had been in use for nearly a century, Scotland had received them from the most venerated Fathers of her Church, but she would suffer no national predilection to stand in the way of her honourable fulfilment of her great engagement with England. She wished to be thoroughly united in heart with the sister kingdom, that the two might stand up together, at this great crisis, for the cause of civil and religious liberty. England on her part made greater concessions than Scotland had dared to hope. Though the English Parliament does not appear ever to have ratified the scheme of doctrine and government drawn up, at its own request, by the Westminster Assembly, the Church and nation nevertheless adopted it, and for some time acted upon it. Episcopacy was abandoned, the Liturgy was laid aside, and worship conducted according to the "Directory for the Public Worship of God." The country was divided into Provinces; each Province was subdivided into Presbyteries; and so many delegates from each Presbytery were to form a National Assembly. England was Presbyterian—it is an almost forgotten chapter in its history—and its Presbyterianism was not borrowed from either Geneva or Scotland: it had its birth in the Chapel of Henry VII., and was set up at the wish of its own clergy. And although it flourished only for a brief space in the land where it arose, it has left its mark on

Scotland, where it modified the Presbyterianism of John Knox, and stamped it with the impress of that of Westminster.

From that unique transaction, which, as we have seen, had assembled two nations before one altar, where they swore to combat together for religion, for law, and for liberty, we turn to the battle-field. Fierce and bloody were these fields, as ever happens in a civil war, where the hate and passions of rival factions contend together with a bitterness and fury unknown to foreign strife. The two armies first met at Edgehill, Warwickshire. The hard-contested field was claimed by both sides. To either victory could not be other than mournful, for the blood that moistened the dust of the battlefield was that of brother shed by the hand of brother. The campaign thus opened, the tide of battle flowed hither and thither through England, bringing in its train more than the usual miseries attendant on war. The citizens were dragged away from their quiet industries, and the peasants from their peaceful agricultural labours, to live in camps, to endure the exhausting toil of marches and sieges, to perish on the battle-field, and be flung at last into the trenches, instead of sleeping with ancestral dust in the churchyards of their native village or parish. It was a terrible chastisement that was now inflicted on England. The Royalists had at first the superiority in arms; their soldiers were well disciplined, and they were led by commanders who had learned the art of war on the battle-fields of the Continent. To these trained combatants the Parliament at the outset could oppose only raw and undisciplined levies; but as time wore on, these new recruits acquired skill and experience, and then the fortune of battle began to turn. As the armies came to be finally constituted, the one was brave from principle: the consciousness of a just and noble cause inspired it with ardour and courage, while the want of any such inspiring and ennobling conviction on the other side was felt to be an element of weakness, and sometimes of cowardice. The longer the war lasted, this moral disparity made itself but the more manifest, and at last victory settled unchangeably with the one side, and defeat as unchangeably with the other. The gay and dissolute youths, who drank so deeply and swore so loudly, and who in the end were almost the only persons that assembled to the standard of the king, were on the day of battle trodden down like the mire of the streets by the terrible Ironsides of Cromwell, who reserved their enthusiasm for the fight and not for the revel, and who, bowing their heads before God, lifted them up before the enemy.

The day of Marston Moor, 1st of July, 1644, virtually decided the fate of the war. It was here the Scottish army, 9,000 strong, first took their place alongside the soldiers of the Parliament, in pursuance of their compact with England, and their union was sealed by a great victory. This field, on which were assembled larger masses of armed men than perhaps had met in hostile array on English soil since the wars of the Roses, was a triangle, of which

the base was the road running east and west from York to Wetherby, and the two sides were the rivers Nidd and Ouse, the junction of which formed the apex.<sup>1</sup> Here it was covered with gorse, there with crops of wheat and rye. Forests of spears—for the bayonet had not yet been invented—marked the positions taken up by the pikemen in their steel morions, their corsets and proof-cuirasses. On either flank of their squares were the musketeers, similarly armed, with their bandoliers thrown over their shoulders, holding a dozen charges. They were supported by the cavalry: the cuirassiers in casque, cuirass, gauntlet, and greave; the carbineers and dragoons in their buff coats, and armed with sword, pistols, and short musket. Then came the artillery, with their culverins and falconets.<sup>2</sup> The Royalist forces appeared late on the field; the Scots, to beguile the time, began to sing psalms. Their general, Leslie, now Earl of Leven, had mingled, as we have already said, in many of the bloody scenes of the Thirty Years' War, and so bravely acquitted himself that he was the favourite field-marshal of Gustavus Adolphus. Altogether there were close on 50,000 men on that memorable field, now waiting for the signal to join battle. The sun had sunk low—it was seven of the evening, but the day was a midsummer one—ere the signal was given, and the two armies closed. A bloody struggle of two hours ended in the total rout of the king's forces. Upwards of 4,000 corpses covered the field: the wounded were in proportion. Besides the slaughter of the battle, great numbers of the Royalists were cut down in the flight. The allies captured many thousand stand of arms, and some hundred colours. One eye-witness writes that they took colours enough, had they only been white, to make surplices for all the cathedrals in England.<sup>3</sup>

From this day the king's fortunes steadily declined. He was worsted on every battle-field; and in the spring of 1646, his affairs having come to extremity, Charles I. threw himself into the arms of the Scots. In the Parliament of England the Independent party, with Cromwell at its head, had attained the supremacy over the Presbyterian, and the king's choice having to be made between the two, turned in favour of the Presbyterians, whose loyalty was far in excess of the deserts of the man on whom it was lavished. This was an acquisition the Scots had not expected, and which certainly they did not wish, seeing it placed them in a very embarrassing position. Though loyal—loyal to a weakness, if not to a fault—the Scots were yet mindful of the oath they had sworn with England, and refused to admit Charles into Scotland, and place him again upon its throne, till he had signed the terms

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<sup>1</sup> Markham, *Life of Lord Fairfax*, p. 56; Lond., 1870..

<sup>2</sup> *Life of Lord Fairfax*, pp. 60, 61.

<sup>3</sup> *Life of Lord Fairfax*, pp. 170–175. Two Letters, &c., in *King's Pamphlet*, No. 164.

for which Scotland and England were then in arms. Any other course would have been a violation of the confederacy which was sealed by oath, and would have involved them in a war with England.<sup>1</sup> But Charles refused his consent to the conditions required of him, and the Scots had now to think how the monarch should finally be disposed of. They came ultimately to the resolution of delivering him up to the English Parliament, on receiving assurance of his safety and honour. The disposal of the king's person, they held, did not belong to one, but to both, of the kingdoms. The assurance which the Scots asked was given, but in words that implied a tacit reproof of the suspicions which the Scots had cherished of the honourable intentions of the English Parliament; for, "as all the world doth know," said they, "this kingdom hath at all times shown as great affection for their kings as any other nation."<sup>2</sup>

But the Parliament soon ceased to be master of itself, and the terrible catastrophe was quickly reached. The king being now a prisoner, England came under a dual directorate, one half of which was a body of debating civilians, and the other a conquering army. It was very easy to see that this state of matters could not long continue, and as easy to divine how it would end. The army, its pride fanned by the victories that it was daily winning, aspired to govern the country which it believed its valour was saving. Lord Fairfax was the nominal head of the army, but its real ruler and animating spirit was Cromwell. A man of indomitable resolution and vast designs, with a style of oratory singularly tangled, labyrinthic, and hazy, but with clear and practical conceptions, and a fearless courage that led him right to the execution of his purposes, Cromwell put himself at the head of affairs, and soon there came an end to debates, protestations, and delays. Colonel Joyce was

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<sup>1</sup> Alexander Henderson was appointed to confer with the king. A series of papers passed between them at Newcastle on the subject of Church government, but the discussion was resultless. The king pleaded that his coronation oath bound him to uphold prelacy. Henderson replied that the Parliament and nation were willing to release him from this part of the oath. Charles denied that the Houses of Parliament had this power, and we find him maintaining this by the following extraordinary argument: "I am confident," says he, "to make it clearly appear to you that this Church never did submit, nor was subordinate to them [the Houses of Parliament], and that it was only the king and clergy who made the Reformation, the Parliament merely serving to help to give the civil sanction. All this being proved (of which I make no question), it must necessarily follow that it is only the Church of England (in whose favour I took this oath) that can release me from it. Wherefore when the Church of England (being lawfully assembled) shall declare that I am free, then, and not before, I shall esteem myself so." (*The Papers which passed at New Castle betwixt His Sacred Majesty and Mr. Alexander Henderson, concerning the change of Church Government, Anno Dom. 1646. London, 1649. His Majesties Second Paper, p. 20.*)

<sup>2</sup> The *Eikon Basilike* (p. 183) first propagated the ridiculous calumny that the Scots sold their king. It has since been abundantly proved that the £400,000 paid to the Scots were due to them for service in the campaign, and for delivery of the fortresses which they held on the Border, and that this matter was arranged five months before the question of the disposal of the king's person was decided, with which indeed it had no connection.

sent to Holmby House, where Charles was confined, to demand the surrender of the king, and he showed such good authority—an armed force, namely—that Charles was immediately given up. Colonel Pride was next sent to the House of Commons, and taking his stand at the door, with a regiment of soldiers, he admitted only such as could be relied on with reference to the measures in prospect. The numbers to which Parliament was reduced by “Colonel Pride’s purge,” as it was called, did not exceed fifty or sixty, and these were mostly Independents. This body, termed the Rump Parliament, voted that no further application should be made to the king; and soon thereafter drew up an ordinance for attainting Charles Stuart of high treason. They appointed commissioners to form a High Court of Justice, and Charles, upon being brought before this tribunal, and declining its jurisdiction, was condemned as a traitor, and sentenced to be beheaded. The scaffold was erected in front of Whitehall, on the 30th of January, 1649. An immense crowd filled the spacious street before the palace, and all the avenues leading to it, on which shotted cannon were turned, that no tumult or rising might interrupt the tragedy about to be enacted. The citizens gazed awed and horror-struck; so suddenly had the spectacle risen, that it seemed a horrid dream through which they were passing. A black scaffold before the royal palace, about to be wetted with their sovereign’s blood, was a tragedy unknown in the history of England; the nation could scarcely believe even yet that the terrible drama would go on to an end. They took it “for a pageantry,” says Burnet, “to strike a terror.” At the appointed hour the king stepped out upon the scaffold. The monarch bore himself at that awful moment with calmness and dignity. “He died greater than he had lived,” says Burnet.<sup>1</sup> He bent to the block; the axe fell, and as the executioner held up the bleeding head in presence of the spectators, a deep and universal groan burst forth from the multitude, and its echoes came back in an indignant protest from all parts of England and Scotland.

From this scaffold in front of Whitehall, with the unwonted and horrid spectacle of a royal corpse upon it, let us turn to the wider drama with which the death of Charles I. stands connected, and inquire what were the bearings of the king’s fall on the higher interests of human progress. In his execution we behold the close of a cycle of thirty years’ duration, spent in plotting and warring against the Reformation. That cycle opened with a scaffold, and it closed with a scaffold. It commenced with the execution of the martyrs of Prague in 1618, recorded in preceding chapters of this history, and it closed at Whitehall on the scaffold of Charles I. in 1649. Between these two points what a multitude of battles, sieges, and tragedies—the work of the Popish Powers in their attempt to overthrow that great movement that was bringing with it a temporal and spiritual emancipation to the human race! Who can

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<sup>1</sup> *Hist. of his own Time*, vol. i., p. 55; Lond., 1815.

count the number of martyrs that had been called to die during the currency of that dark cycle? No history records even a title of their names. What oceans of blood had watered the Bohemian and Hungarian plains, what massacres and devastation had overthrown their cities and villages! These nations, Protestant when this cycle began, were forced back and trodden down again into Popish superstition and slavery when it had come to an end. This period is that of the Thirty Years' War, which continued to sweep with triumphant force over all the Protestant kingdoms of Germany till a great champion was summoned from Sweden to roll it back. After Gustavus Adolphus had gone to his grave, the Roman Catholic reaction seemed to gather fresh force, and again threatened to overflow, with its devastating arms and its debasing doctrines, all the German countries. But by this time the area of Protestantism had been enlarged, and England and Scotland had become more important theatres than even Germany. The Reformation had drawn its forces to a head in Britain, and the unceasing aims of the Popish Powers were directed with the view of destroying it there. While abroad Ferdinand of Austria was endeavouring to waste it with armies, the Jesuits were intriguing to corrupt it in Great Britain, and thereby recover to the obedience of Rome those two nations where Protestantism had entrenched itself with such power, and without which their triumphs in other parts of Christendom would have but little availed. Their efforts were being attended with an ominous success. James VI. and Charles I. seemed instillments fashioned on purpose for their hands. Filled with an unconquerable lust of arbitrary power, constitutionally gloomy, superstitious, and crafty, nowhere could better tools have been found. The Jesuits began by throwing the two countries into convulsions—their established mode of proceeding; they marked out for special attack the Presbyterianism of the northern kingdom; they succeeded in grafting prelacy upon it, which, although it did not exterminate it, greatly emasculated and crippled it; they took from the Church the freedom of her Assemblies, the only organ of public sentiment then in Scotland, and the one bulwark of its liberties. In England they managed to marry the king to a Popish princess; they flooded the kingdom with Romish emissaries; they overlaid the Protestant worship with Popish rites; and the laws of England they were replacing with the tribunals of despotism. Their design seemed on the very eve of being crowned with complete success, when suddenly the terrible apparition of a royal scaffold arose before the Palace of Whitehall. It was only a few months before this that the Thirty Years' War had been ended by the Peace of Westphalia, which gave greatly enlarged liberties to Protestantism, and now the western branch of the great plot was brought to nought. So sudden a collapse had overtaken the schemings and plottings of thirty years! The sky of Europe changed in almost a single day; and that great wave of Popish reaction which had rolled over all Germany, and dashed itself against

the shores of Britain, threatening at one time to submerge all the Protestant States of Christendom, felt the check of an unseen Hand, and subsided and retired at the scaffold of Charles I.

## CHAPTER XIX.

### RESTORATION OF CHARLES II., AND ST. BARTHOLOMEW DAY, 1662.

The Struggle to be Renewed—The Commonwealth—Cromwell's Rule—Charles II. Restored—His Welcome—Enthusiasm of Scotland—Character of Charles II.—Attempted Union between the Anglican and Presbyterian Parties—Presbyterian Proposals—Things to be Rectified—Conference at the Savoy—Act of Uniformity—The 24th of August, 1662—A Second St. Bartholomew—Secession of 2,000 Ministers from the Church of England—Grandeur of their Sacrifice—It Saves the Reformation in England.

THIS long cycle, which had seen so many flourishing Protestant Churches exterminated, so many martyrs lay down their lives, and so many fair lands covered with ruins, had ended, as we have seen, in the overthrow of the Popish projects, and the elevation of Protestantism to a higher platform than it had ever before attained. Nevertheless, the end was not yet: the victory was not assured and complete, and the defeat of the Popish Powers was not a final one. The struggle was to be renewed once more, and another crisis had to be passed through before Protestantism should be able to surround itself with such political bulwarks as would assure it against a repetition of those armed attacks to which it had been perpetually subject from the Vatican and its vassal kings, and be left in peace to pursue its evangelical labours.

The fall of the Monarchy in England was succeeded by a Commonwealth. The Commonwealth soon passed into a military Dictatorship. The nation felt that the constitutional liberty for which it had contended on the battle-field had escaped it, and that it had again fallen under that arbitrary government which many hoped had received its mortal wound when the head of Charles rolled on the scaffold. Both England and Scotland felt the heavy weight of that strong hand which, putting away the crown, had so firmly grasped the sceptre. Perhaps England, swarming with Royalists and Republicans, with factions and sectaries, was not yet fit for freedom, and had to return for a little while longer into bonds. But if the forms of the rule under which she was now placed were despotic, the spirit of liberty was there; her air had been purified from the stifling fog of a foreign slavery; and her people could more freely breathe. If Cromwell was a tyrant, he was so after a very different pattern from that of Charles I.; it was to evildoers at home and despots abroad that he was a terror. England, under his government, suddenly bounded up out of the gulf of contempt and weakness into which the reigns of the two Stuarts had sunk her. Rapidly mounted upward the prestige of England's arms, and brightly blazed forth the splendour of her intellect. She again became a power in Christendom, and was feared by all who had evil designs on hand. The Duke of Savoy at the bidding of the Lord Protector

stayed his massacres in the Waldensian Valleys, Cardinal Mazarin is said to have changed countenance when he heard his name mentioned, and even the Pope trembled in the Vatican when Oliver threatened to make his fleet visit the Eternal City. He said he should make “the name of an Englishman as great as ever that of a Roman had been.” At home his severe countenance scared the persecutor back into his cell, and the streets of the capital were cleansed from the horrible sights, but too common in the days of Charles and Laud, of men standing in the pillory to have their noses slit, their ears cropped off, and their cheeks branded with red-hot irons, for no offence save that of being unable to practise the ceremonies that formed the king’s and the archbishop’s religion. His death in 1658 was followed by the Protectorate of his son Richard, who finding the burden, which even the Atlantean shoulders of his father had borne uneasily, insupportable to him, speedily resigned it, and retired into private life.<sup>1</sup>

Weary of the confusions and alarms that prevailed under the “Committee of Safety” that was now formed to guide the State, the nation as one man turned their eyes to the son of their former sovereign. They sent a deputation to him at Breda, inviting him to take possession of the throne of his ancestors. The Scottish Presbyterians were among the most forward in this matter; indeed they had proclaimed Charles as king upon first receiving tidings of his father’s execution, and had crowned him at Scone on the 1st January, 1651. We reflect with astonishment on the fact that, despite all the blood which the two nations had shed in resistance of arbitrary power, Charles II. was now received back without conditions, unless a vague declaration issued from Breda should be considered as such. The nation was stupefied by an excess of joy at the thought that the king was returning.

From Dover, where Charles II. landed on the 26th May, 1660, all the way to London his progress was like that of a conqueror returning from a campaign in which his victorious arms had saved his country. Gay pageanties lined the way, while the ringing of bells, the thunder of cannon, the shouts of a frantic people, and at night the blaze of bonfires, proclaimed the ecstasy into which the nation had been thrown.<sup>2</sup> A like enthusiasm was displayed in Scotland on occasion of the return of the royal exile. The 19th of June was appointed to be observed as a thanksgiving for the king’s restoration, and after sermon on that day the magistrates assembled at the Cross of Edinburgh, where was set a table with wine and sweetmeats. Glasses were broken, trumpets were sounded, drums were beat; the church-bells sent forth their

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<sup>1</sup> For a full and able account of ecclesiastical affairs in Scotland during Cromwell’s administration, see *History of the Church of Scotland during the Commonwealth*, by the Rev. James Beattie; Edin., 1842.

<sup>2</sup> Clarendon, *Hist. of the Rebellion*, vol. vii., p. 505.

merriest peals, and in the evening a great fire, in which was burned the effigy of Cromwell, blazed on the Castle-hill.<sup>1</sup>

Charles was crowned at London on the 29th of May, a truly fatal day, which was followed by a flood of profanity and vice, in England, and a torrent of righteous blood in Scotland. This had been foreseen by some whose feelings were not so perturbed as to be incapable of observing the true character of Charles. Mr. John Livingstone, one of the Scottish ministers sent to accompany the king from Holland, is said to have remarked, when stepping on board the ship with Charles, “that they were bringing God’s heavy wrath to Britain.”<sup>2</sup>

For all who approached him Charles II. had a smiling face, and a profusion of pleasant words. He was as yet only thirty years of age, but he was already a veteran in vice. He was a consummate dissembler. The school of adversity, which strengthens the virtues of other men, had only perfected Charles Stuart in the arts of hypocrisy and falsehood. The English Presbyterians sent over some of their number—among others Reynolds, Manton, and Calamy—to wait on him in Holland; and he so regaled them with pious discourse, after the manner of his grandfather, that they thought they were getting for their king an experienced and matured Christian. “He knew how to bewail the sins of his father’s house, and could talk of the power of godliness as fluently as if he had been pupil all his days to a Puritan.”<sup>3</sup> When seated on the throne he took several of the Presbyterian ministers into the number of his chaplains, and even heard Richard Baxter preach. Charles II. had returned to England with his mind made up touching the form of Church government which was to be established in the kingdom, but the time was not yet ripe for carrying his project into execution. There were two things that Charles lacked notwithstanding his merry countenance and his pious talk; the one was conscience, and the other was a heart. He was the coldest of mankind. He was a tyrant, not from ambition, and certainly not from that sort of ambition which is “the last infirmity of noble minds,” but from the cold, cruel selfishness of the voluptuary; and he prized his throne for no object of glory or honour, the stirrings of which he never felt, but because it enabled him to wallow in low, bestial pleasures. From that throne, as from an overspreading Upas, distilled the poison of moral death all over the kingdom. He restored to England in the seventeenth century one of those royal sties which had disgraced pagan Rome, in the first. His minister was Clarendon, on whom, as Asiatic Sultan on vizier, Charles devolved all the care and toil of government, that he might pass his hours less interruptedly in his seraglio.

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<sup>1</sup> Wodrow, *Hist. of Church of Scotland*, vol. i., p. 02; Glas., 1828.

<sup>2</sup> Bennet, *Memorial*, p. 241.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

The first measure after Charles's restoration was an attempted union between the Anglican and the Presbyterian parties, the latter being the chief promoters of the project. Having as yet free access to the king, the Presbyterians brought in their proposals. The things of which they complained were mainly these:—the great extent of the dioceses, the performance of the bishop's duty by deputy, his assuming the whole power of ordination and jurisdiction, the imposition of new ceremonies, and the arbitrary suspension of ministers. For reforming these evils they proposed that "Bishop Usher's reduction of episcopacy to the form of synodical government, received in the ancient Church, should be the ground-work of an accommodation." They proposed that suffragans should be chosen by the respective synods; that the ministers should be under no oaths or promises of obedience to their bishops; and that the bishops should govern according to the canons and constitutions to be ratified and established by Parliament. As to ceremonies, they humbly represented that the worship of God was perfect without them: that they had been fruitful in disputes, schisms, and the silencing of pious pastors in the past; and being, on the confession of their advocates, in themselves matters of indifference, they prayed to be released from kneeling at the Sacrament, wearing of sacerdotal vestments, making the sign of the cross in baptism, and bowing at the name of Jesus. They also craved a slight revision of the Liturgy.

The answer returned by those with whom they were negotiating, and whom they had not yet been permitted to meet in conference, though desirous of doing so, was not such as to inspire them with sanguine hopes. Some little while after, the king put forth a declaration, containing some concessions which came nearer what the Presbyterians thought might form a basis of union.<sup>1</sup> But neither did this please the Royalist and prelatic party. All it led to was a conference between a certain number of ministers of both parties, who met at the Savoy. The Presbyterian ministers were invited to conference, and encouraged to unbosom themselves, in the way of revealing all their difficulties and scruples. But for what end? That their scruples might be removed, said the prelates; though in truth the real object of the opposite party was that, being masters of the sentiments of the Presbyterians, they might the more easily overreach them. It was a foregone conclusion that no union should be formed; but that, on the contrary, the Puritan element should once for all be purged out of the Church of England. The king and prelates now knew how far the Puritans would yield, and on what points they would make no compromise, and so they were able to frame their contemplated Act of Uniformity, so as to place the Puritan ministers between the alternative, as

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<sup>1</sup> The main provisions of the royal declaration are given in Bennet's *Memorial*, pp. 246–248.

they phrased it, of proving knaves or becoming martyrs. On the 19th May, 1662, was passed the following famous Act:—"That all who had not received episcopal ordination should be re-ordained by bishops: that every minister should, on or before the 24th of August following, being the feast of St. Bartholomew, declare his unfeigned assent and consent to everything contained in the Book of Common Prayer, on pain of being *ipso facto* deprived of his benefice; that he should also abjure the Solemn League and Covenant as an unlawful oath, and swear the oath of supremacy and allegiance; and declare it to be unlawful, under any pretext whatsoever, to take up arms against the sovereign."<sup>1</sup>

Under this Act, equally remarkable for what it tolerated as well as for what it stringently prohibited, it was lawful to preach another gospel than that which Paul preached, but it was a crime to preach at all without a surplice. Under this Act it was lawful to believe in baptismal regeneration, but a crime to administer baptism without the sign of the cross. Under this Act it was lawful to profane God's name every hour of the day, but it was a crime to mention the name of Jesus without lifting one's hat. Some have distinguished between principles and points; in this controversy all the principles were on one side, and all the points on the other; for the men enforcing the latter admitted that for these rites there was no foundation in the Word of God, and that they were matters of indifference.

A space for deliberation was allowed. The 24th of August was fixed upon as the term when they must express their submission to the Act, or abide the consequences. That day had already been marked by a horror unspeakably great, for on the 24th of August, 1572, had been enacted one of the most terrible crimes of all history—the Massacre of St. Bartholomew.

With very different feelings was that day waited for in the halls of the voluptuous court of Charles II., in the conclave of a tyrannical hierarchy, and in the parsonages and homes of the godly ministers and people of England. Issues of tremendous magnitude hung on the part which the Puritan party should act on that day. If they should succumb, farewell to the Reformation in England: it would be laid in its grave, and a great stone rolled to the mouth of its sepulchre. The day arrived, and the sacrifice it witnessed saved the realm of England, by preserving the Protestant element in the nation, which, had the Puritans conformed, would have utterly perished. On the 24th of August, two thousand ministers, rather than submit to the Act of Uniformity, surrendered their livings, and left their sanctuaries and parsonages. They went out each man alone. The England of their day was no free country in which they were at liberty to organise and carry on their Church in a state of secession. They had no great leader to march before them in their exodus;

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<sup>1</sup> Burnet, *Hist. of his own Time*, vol. i., pp. 182, 183; Lond., 1724.

they had no generous press to proclaim their wrongs, and challenge the admiration of their country for their sacrifice; they went forth as Abraham did, at the call of God, “not knowing whither they went,” not knowing where they should find the next meal, or where they should lay their head at night. They were ordered to remove to a distance of twenty miles from their own parish. It was farther enjoined on the ejected ministers to fix their residence not nearer than six miles to a cathedral town, nor nearer than three miles to a royal burgh; and it was made unlawful for any two of them to live in the same place. What a glory this army of confessors shed on England! What a victory for Protestantism! The world thought they were defeated. No; it was the king whom this spectacle startled amid his revels; it was the prelates whom this noble sacrifice at the shrine of conscience rebuked and terrified; it was a godless generation, whom this sight for a moment roused from its indifference, that was conquered.

These men were the strength and glory of the Church of England. The author of *The Reformed Pastor*, surely a fair judge of ministerial qualifications, says of them: “I do not believe that ever England had as faithful and able a ministry, since it was a nation, as it hath at this day; and I fear few nations on earth, if any, have the like.” “It raised a grievous cry over the nation,” writes Bishop Burnet; “for here were many men much valued, and distinguished by their abilities and zeal, cast out ignominiously, reduced to great poverty, and provoked by spiteful usage.” “Worthy, learned, pious, orthodox divines,” says the philosophic Locke, “who did not throw themselves out of service, but were forcibly ejected.”

St. Bartholomew’s Day, 1662, is one of the great outstanding epochs in the long combat of conscience against power. But it is well to bear in mind that the victories of conscience must always, from the very nature of the case, as indeed the St. Bartholomew and all similar days teach us, bear outwardly the guise of defeat, and the checks and discomfitures of power must come in the garb of victory; and thus it is through seeming triumph that error marches to ruin, and thus it is, too, through apparent defeat that truth advances to dominion.

## CHAPTER XX.

### SCOTLAND—MIDDLETON'S TYRANNY—ACT RECISSORY.

Extravagant Loyalty of the Scots—A Schism in the Ranks of the Scottish Presbyterians—Resolutioners and Protesters—Charles's Purpose to Restore Prelacy—Clarendon—Maitland—James Sharp—The "Judas of the Kirk of Scotland"—The Scottish Parliament of 1661—Decline of the Scottish Presbyterians—Acts passed in Parliament—Act of Supremacy—Lays the Scottish Kirk at the King's Feet—The Oath of Allegiance—The Act Recissory—Tyranny and Revolution—Sudden Destruction of Scottish Liberties—Legislation and Drunkenness.

THE Jesuits had anew betaken themselves to spinning that same thread which had been so suddenly and rudely severed on the scaffold which the 30th of January, 1649, saw erected before the Palace of Whitehall. There had been a pause in their schemings during the administration of Cromwell, but no sooner had the head of that great ruler been laid in the grave, and a Stuart again seen on the throne of England, than the Fathers knew that their hour was come, and straightway resumed their plots against the religion and liberties of Great Britain. We have seen the first outburst of that cloud that descended upon England with the advent of Charles II. in the expulsion of the 2,000 Nonconformists; but it was on the northern kingdom that the tempest was destined to break in greatest fury, and to rage the longest. We return to Scotland.

We have seen the extravagant joy with which the king's return was hailed in Scotland. This ecstasy had its source in two causes, and a brief explanation of these will help to make clearer the course which events took afterwards. The first cause was the almost idolatrous loyalty which the Scots bore to the House of Stuart, and from which all their dire experience of the meanness, fickleness, and perfidy which had characterised the recent sovereigns of that house had not been able to wean them. The second was a decay of that spirit of pure patriotism that had animated the Scots in the days of Alexander Henderson, and the immediate consequence of which was a deplorable disunion in their ranks at a time when it behoved them above all things to be united. The schism to which we refer is that known in history as the *Resolutioners* and the *Protesters*, which had arisen in 1651. The question between the two parties into which the once united band was now split, had its first rise in the suspicions of the sincerity of Charles II., that began to be entertained by some of the ministers, who blamed their brethren for admitting him to make solemn professions which all they knew of his conduct and character belied. This led to the formation of a Royalist party in the Church; and the breach between them and their brethren was widened by what soon thereafter took place. Cromwell invaded Scotland with his army, and the question was

raised, shall the whole fencible population be enrolled to resist him, or shall those only who are the known friends of the Reformation be permitted to bear arms? It was resolved to admit all sorts into the army, and the Parliament proceeded to fill up some of the highest military commands, and some of the most dignified and influential offices in the Civil Service, from among those who were the avowed and bitter enemies both of the Presbyterian Church and the civil liberties of the kingdom. The General Assembly of 1651 was divided on the question; a majority supported the action of Parliament, and were termed *Resolutioners*; the minority protested against it, and were known as the *Protesters*. The latter were headed by James Guthrie, who was afterwards martyred. Many plausible arguments were pleaded on both sides; in the ordinary state of affairs the course approved by the Resolutioners was the natural one; but in the circumstances in which Scotland then was, it was, to say the least, inexpedient, and in the end it proved most fatal. It cleft the Protestant phalanx in twain, it embittered the minds of men by the sharp contention to which it led, and above the brutal violence of Middleton, and the dark craft of Sharp, two men of whom we are about to speak, it paved the way for the fall of Presbyterianism and the triumph of Charles II.

Hardly had Charles mounted the throne, when he resumed the work of his father and grandfather in Scotland. His sure instincts taught him that there was no greater obstacle to his cherished object of arbitrary government than the Scottish Kirk watching jealously over the popular liberties, and by the working of its courts reading daily lessons to the people on liberty in the best of all ways, that of teaching them to use their rights, and to defend their privileges. He could no more tolerate an Independent Presbyterian Church alongside an absolute throne than James VI. had been able to do, believing such an anomaly to be just as impossible in the wider realm of Britain as his grandfather had deemed it in the narrower domain of Scotland. But Charles was too indolent to prosecute in person his grand scheme, and its execution was handed over to others. Lord Clarendon, we have said, was his minister, and knowing his master's wishes, one of his first cares was to find fitting tools for the work that was to be done in Scotland. Clarendon accounted himself exceedingly fortunate, no doubt, in discovering two men whom nature seemed to have shaped and moulded for his very purpose. The two men on whom Clarendon's eye had lighted were not only richly endowed with all the vile qualities that could fit them for the base task to which he destined them, but they were equally distinguished by the happy absence of any noble and generous endowment which might have enfeebled the working and impaired the success of those opposite qualities, the possession of which had led to their selection. These two men were Middleton and Sharp.

The first was the less base of the two. Obscurely born, we know nothing of Middleton till we find him acting as "a pickman in Colonel Hepburn's

regiment in France.”<sup>1</sup> He next served under the Parliament in England, “taking the Covenant as he would have put a cockade in his hat, merely as the badge of the side on which he fought.”<sup>2</sup> Afterwards he took arms for the king; he adhered to the royal cause in exile; and on the death of Montrose, Charles’s unacknowledged lieutenant in Scotland, Middleton succeeded to his place. His daring and success on the field brought him rapid promotion. He had now attained the rank of earl. He retained the coarse, brutal, overbearing habits of the camp; he drank deeply, withheld himself from no vice, answered all appeals to reason or justice with a stroke of his sword. Cruel by disposition, and with heart still further hardened by the many scenes of atrocity and outrage in which he had mingled, he was set over the people of Scotland, as the fittest tool for taming their obdurate and haughty spirits into compliance with the mandates of the court.

James Sharp was in some respects very unlike the man with whom he was mated in the infamous work of selling his Church and betraying his country; in other respects he bore a very close resemblance to him. With placid face, stealthy eye, and grave, decorous exterior, Sharp seemed to stand far apart from the fierce, boisterous, and debauched Middleton; nevertheless, in their inner qualities of suppleness, unscrupulousness, and ambition, the divine and the soldier were on a level. Sharp was a person of very ordinary capacity; he had but one pre-eminent talent, and even that he was careful to hide till it revealed itself in the light of its crooked working: he was a consummate deceiver. Sent to London by the Scottish ministers at the period of the Restoration, with instructions to watch over the Presbyterian interests, he not only betrayed the cause confided to him, but he did so with an art so masterly, and a dissimulation so complete, that his treachery was not once suspected till it had borne its evil fruit, and was beyond remedy. The letters which he wrote to his brethren in Scotland, and by which he kept their eyes closed till their Church was overthrown, are embodied in the Introduction to Wodrow’s *History*, and will remain a monument of his infamy to all coming time. His name has become a synonym among his countrymen for all that is dark and hypocritical. He received the wages for which he had undertaken his work, and became known henceforth among his contemporaries as the Archbishop of St. Andrews, and Primate of all Scotland. He stands in the pillory of history as the “Judas of the Kirk of Scotland.”

It was resolved to establish prelacy in Scotland; and only a few months elapsed after Charles II. ascended the throne till a beginning was made of the work; and once commenced, it was urged forward without pause or stop to the end. In January, 1661, the Scottish Parliament was assembled. It was

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<sup>1</sup> Kirkton, *Hist. of Church of Scotland*, p. 60.

<sup>2</sup> Dodds, *Fifty Years’ Struggle*, p. 95.

opened by Middleton, as royal commissioner. The appearance of this man was to Scotland a dark augury of the work expected of the Parliament. Had the nation been fairly represented, the religion and liberties of the country would have been in small danger; for even yet the majority of the aristocracy, almost all the ministers, and the great mass of the people remained true to the principles of the Reformation. But "Middleton's Parliament," for by this name was it known, did not fairly represent the nation. Wholesale bribery and open force had been employed to pack the House. The press was gagged, many gentlemen known to be zealous Presbyterians were imprisoned, and some popular ministers were banished, the better to secure a Parliament that would be subservient to the court. Scotland enjoyed no Act of Indemnity, such as protected England, and not a public man was there in the northern country who was not liable to be called to account for any word or action of his during the past ten years which it might please the Government to construe unfavourably. This let loose a reign of violence and terror. The ministers, though pious and diligent, did not possess the intrepid spirit of Melville and Henderson, and those of their tune. The grand old chiefs of the Covenant—Loudon, Sutherland, Rothes—were dead, and the young nobles who had arisen in their room, quick to imbibe the libertine spirit of the Restoration, and to conform themselves to the pattern shown to them at Whitehall, had forgotten the piety, and with that the patriotism, of their fathers. The great scholars and divines who had illumined the sky of Scotland in the latter days of James VI. and the reign of Charles I.—the Hendersons, the Hallyburtons, the Gillespies—had died as these troubles were beginning. Rutherford lived to publish his *Lex Rex* in 1660, and to hear that the Government had burned it by the hands of the hangman, and summoned its author to answer to a charge of high treason, when he took his departure "to where," in his own words, "few kings and great folk come." The existing race of clergy, never having had the bracing influence which grappling with great questions gives, and emasculated by the narrow and bitter controversies which had raged in the Church during the twelve preceding years, were somewhat pusillanimous and yielding, and incapable of showing that bold front which would repel the bad men and the strong measures with which they were about to be assailed. "The day was going away," but no one had foreseen how black would be the night that was descending on the poor Church of Scotland, and how long its hours of darkness would continue.

The first measure passed in Parliament was of such vast significance that it may be said to have consummated the work which it professed only to have begun. This was the Act of Supremacy, which transferred the whole power of the Church to the king, by making him absolute judge in both civil and ecclesiastical matters. This was a blow at the root. It did not indeed set up prelacy, but it completely subverted the Presbyterian Kirk which Knox had

established in Scotland; for that Church is independent in things spiritual, or it is nothing.

This Act was immediately followed by another, which was meant to carry into effect the former. This second Act imposed an Oath of Allegiance. Allegiance to the king was what every Scotsman was willing to render as fully without as with an oath; but the allegiance now exacted of him went beyond the just measure of obedience due by Scottish subject to sovereign. The new oath bound the swearer to uphold the supremacy of the king in all religions as well as all civil matters; and to refuse the oath, or deny the principle it contained, was declared to be high treason. This left to Scotsmen no alternative but perjury or treason. The whole Scottish nation, only twenty-three years before, had taken an oath which declared that “the Lord Jesus Christ is the only King and Head of his Church,” an expression which was meant to repudiate and shut out the ecclesiastical supremacy of the monarch. The new oath was in flat contradiction of the old, and made the swearer vest in an earthly throne that which he had declared with all the solemnity of an oath was the exclusive prerogative of the Heavenly King. How then could the Scottish people swear this second oath without perjuring themselves? The Act laid a yoke on the consciences of the Christian people. On those who had no conscience, it imposed no burden; but all were not in a condition to swear contradictory oaths, and to feel that they had incurred neither sin nor shame, and the latter class were the greater as well as the more loyal part of the nation.

The flood-gates of tyranny now thrown wide open, the deluge poured in. As if tyranny had become giddy—had grown delirious—an almost insane attempt was made to blot out, and cause to polish from the memories of men, that whole period of the nation’s history during which the Church of Scotland had administered her doctrine and government, subject only to her Divine Head. We refer to the period during which her Assemblies and courts had been free to meet and legislate. The “Act Recissory” was passed. This Act swept away all the Parliaments, all the General Assemblies—in short, the whole legislation of Scotland since the year 1638. All were by a single stroke buried in oblivion. Thus the men who now reigned, not content with having the future in their hands, made war upon the past. The National Covenant was declared an unlawful oath and condemned. The Solemn League was also condemned as an unlawful and treasonable compact. The Glasgow Assembly of 1638, over which Alexander Henderson presided, could not be other than specially obnoxious, seeing it overturned the prelacy of the previous period, and accordingly it was declared to be a seditious and unlawful meeting, and put under the ban of Government.

We know not whether the wildest revolutionist ever committed greater excesses, or showed himself under the spirit of a more delirious madness,

than the men who now unhappily governed Scotland. We behold them scorning all truth and equity, making void all oaths and promises, tearing down all the fences of the State, and leaving the throne no claim to obedience and respect save that which the sword and the gallows can enforce. Although they had plotted to bring all authority into contempt, to vilify all law, and destroy society itself, they could not have adopted fitter methods. In a neighbouring country, liable to be visited with periodic revolutionary tempests, we have seen nothing wilder than the scenes now being transacted, and about to be transacted, in Scotland. In France the tempest rises from below; it ascends from the Communistic abyss to assail the seats of power and the tribunals of justice: in the instance we are now contemplating the storm descended upon the country from the throne: it was the closet of the monarch that sent forth the devastators of order. Never before, perhaps, had country made so swift and terrible a descent into, not social anarchy, but monarchical and military despotism. Scotland up to this hour was enjoying an ample liberty—that liberty was fenced round on all sides by legal securities: a single edict laid them all in the dust, and confiscated that whole liberty which they guarded, and the country went sheer down at a plunge into the gulf.

The tyranny that wrought all this havoc in a moment, as it were, has been stigmatised as “intoxicated.” History has preserved the fact that the intoxication was more than a figure. “It was a maddening time,” says Burnet, “when the men of affairs were perpetually drunk.”<sup>1</sup> Middleton, who presided over this revolutionary crew, was a notorious inebriate, and came seldom sober to the House; and it is an accepted fact that the framers of the Act Recissory passed the night that preceded the proclamation of their edict in a deep debauch.

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<sup>1</sup> Burnet, *Hist. of his own Time*, vol. i., pp. 119–151.

## CHAPTER XXI.

### ESTABLISHMENT OF PRELACY IN SCOTLAND.

Destruction of Scottish Protestantism—Marquis of Argyle—His Character—His Possessions—His Patriotism—His Services to Charles II.—How Required—He is Condemned as a Traitor—His Demeanour in Prison—on the Scaffold—Mr. James Guthrie—His Character—Sentenced to be Hanged—His Behaviour on the Scaffold—His Head Affixed to the Netherbow—Prelacy set up—The New Bishops—Their Character—Robert Leighton—The Ministers required to Receive Presentation and Collation Anew—Will Scotland Submit ?

WE have seen the scheme resumed, after a short pause, of seating a Popish prince upon the throne of England, and carrying over the whole power and influence of the three kingdoms to the interests of Rome. A beginning had been made of the bold project in the restoration of Charles II., whose concealed Popery better served the purpose of the men who were behind the scenes than an open profession of the Romish faith would have done. The next part of the programme was the destruction of the Protestantism of Scotland. The three infamous edicts passed in the Parliament of 1661 had stripped the Presbyterian Church of Scotland of every legal security, had imposed upon the Scots a virtual abjuration of Presbyterianism, and left the Protestant Church of the northern country little better than a wreck. A fourth edict was about to complete the work of the former three. But at this stage it was found necessary to set up the scaffold. There were two men in Scotland of pre-eminent position and influence, who must be taken out of the way before it would be safe to proceed with the measure now contemplated, namely, that of abolishing Presbyterianism and substituting prelacy. These two men were the Marquis of Argyle and Mr. James Guthrie, minister at Stirling.

Archibald, Marquis of Argyle, stood conspicuous among the nobles of Scotland; in grandeur and influence he towered high above them all. Nature had endowed him with excellent talents, which a careful education had developed and trained. He was cautious, eminently wise, liberal in politics, eloquent in discourse, and God-fearing, and to the graces of the true Christian he added the virtues of the patriot. His inheritance was a magnificent one. From those western isles which receive the first shock of the Atlantic wave as it rushes toward the mainland, his possessions stretched southward to the Clyde, and away towards the Tay on the east, comprehending many a grand mountain, many a far-extending forest, many a strath and moorland, watered by great rivers, and dotted with meadow and corn-land—the seat of a mighty clan, who knew no king but the Maccallum-More. To his Highland principedom he added many an acre of the richer south, and he owned many a mansion in the great cities, where he occasionally kept court. In those years when

Scotland had no king, Argyle bore the burden of the State, and charged himself with the protection of the Presbyterian interests.

That he was wholly free from the finesse of the age, that threading his way amid the snares and pitfalls of the time he never deviated from the straight road, and that amid his many plans he never thought of the aggrandisement of his own family, we will not venture to affirm; but in the main his designs were noble, and his aims steadily and grandly patriotic. He had rendered some important services to Charles Stuart when the fortunes of the royal house were at the lowest. Argyle had protested against the execution of Charles I., and when England rejected the son, Argyle was the first to invite Charles to Scotland, and he it was who placed the crown of that ancient kingdom upon his head. He naturally expected that these services, done at a time which made them trebly valuable, would not be wholly forgotten. Argyle posted up to London to congratulate the king on his restoration. It was now that he discovered the utter baseness of the man by whose side he had stood when so many had forsaken him. Without even being admitted into Charles's presence, he was seized, and sent down by sea to Scotland, to be tried by the Parliament for high treason. On Saturday, the 25th of May, 1661, he was sentenced to be beheaded on the Monday following. He was the most prominent Protestant in Scotland, and therefore he must die.

Argyle shrank from physical suffering; but now, sentenced to the axe, he conquered his constitutional weakness, and rose above the fear of death. A deep serenity filled his mind, which imparted a calmness, and even majesty, to his demeanour during the hours between his sentence and its execution. In his prison he had a ravishing sense of God's love, and a firm assurance of his admission into the heavenly joys. All night through he slept sweetly, and rose refreshed in the morning. He dined with his friends on the day of his execution, discoursing cheerfully with them, and retiring after dinner for secret prayer. The procession to the scaffold being formed, "I could die like a Roman," said he, "but choose rather to die as a Christian. Come away, gentlemen; he that goes first goes cleanest." He stopped a moment on his way to execution, to greet James Guthrie, now under sentence of death, and confined in the same prison. They embraced. "Were I not under sentence of death myself," said the minister to the marquis, "I would cheerfully die for your lordship." They parted as men do who are soon to meet again, and Argyle, his step firm, and the light of triumph on his brow, went on his way. On the scaffold he addressed the people with great composure, bidding them prepare for times which would leave them only this alternative, to "sin or suffer." When about to lay his head on the block his physician approached him and touched his pulse, and found that it was beating at its usual rate, calm and

strong.<sup>1</sup> He kneeled down, and after a few minutes' prayer, he gave the signal, the axe fell, and that kingly head rolled on the scaffold.<sup>2</sup> It was affixed to the west end of the Tolbooth, "a monument," says Wodrow, "of the Parliament's injustice and the land's misery."<sup>3</sup>

In a few days Mr. James Guthrie was brought forth to die. Guthrie was descended from an ancient Scottish family, and was distinguished for his piety, his learning, his eloquence, and his sweetness of disposition, combined with great firmness of principle. His indictment charged him with a variety of offences, amounting in the eyes of his enemies to high treason; but his real offence was his being a consistent, eloquent, and influential Protestant, which made it necessary that he should be put out of the way, that Middleton might rule Scotland as he liked, and that James Sharp might march in and seize the mitre of St. Andrews. He was sentenced to be "hanged at the Cross of Edinburgh as a traitor, on the 1st of June, 1661, and thereafter his head to be struck off and affixed on the Netherbow, His estate to be confiscated, his coat-of-arms torn and reversed, and his children declared incapable, in all time coming, to enjoy any office, dignities, &c., within this kingdom." His composure was not in the least disturbed by hearing this sentence pronounced as doom; on the contrary, he expressed, with much sweetness, a hope that it would never affect their lordships more than it affected him, and that his blood would never be required of the king's house. On the day of his execution he dined with his friends in prison, diffusing round the table the serenity and joy that filled his own soul, and cheering the sorrow of his guests by the hopes that found eloquent expression from his lips. The historian Burnet, who witnessed his execution, says that "on the ladder he spoke an hour with the composedness of one who was delivering a sermon rather than his last words."<sup>4</sup> The martyr himself said that he had often felt greater fear in ascending the pulpit to preach than he now did in mounting the gallows to die. "I take God to record upon my soul," said he in conclusion, "I would not exchange this scaffold with the palace or mitre of the greatest prelate in Britain." His face was now covered with the fatal napkin; he made it be lifted a moment, and said, "The Covenants shall yet be Scotland's reviving."<sup>5</sup>

His head was affixed to the Netherbow, and there it remained, blackening in the sun, through all the dark years of persecution that followed. The martyrs on their way to the Grass Market to die passed the spot where these honoured remains were exposed. They must have felt, as they looked up at

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<sup>1</sup> Burnet, *Hist. of his own Time*, vol. i., p. 57; Lond., 1815.

<sup>2</sup> Wodrow, bk. i., sec. 3. Burnet, *Hist. of his own Time*, vol. i., p. 179; Edin. ed.

<sup>3</sup> The body of Argyle was, immediately on his execution, carried into the Magdalene Chapel, and laid upon a table still to be seen there.

<sup>4</sup> Burnet, vol. i., p. 159.

<sup>5</sup> Wodrow, bk. i., sec. 4. Mr. Guthrie's indictment, his speech in court, and his speech on the scaffold, are all given in full in Wodrow, vol. i.; Glas., 1828.

them, that a ray of glory was cast athwart their path to the scaffold, though the persecutor had not meant it so. "Courage," would these mouldering lips seem to say, and strengthened by the thought that James Guthrie had trodden this road before them, the martyrs passed on to the gallows. Having hung all these mournful years, and been observed of many martyr processions, Guthrie's head was at last taken down by a young man named Hamilton, who was at the time a student in Edinburgh, and afterwards became successor at Stirling to the man to whose remains he had performed this kind office.

The two men of all living Scotsmen whom Middleton and Sharp most feared were now in their grave, and the way was open for the execution of the project on which their heart, as well as that of the king, was so much set—the institution of prelacy in Scotland. Accordingly, on the 6th of September, 1661, Charles II. issued a proclamation, restoring "the ancient and legal government of the Church by archbishops and bishops, as it was exercised in the year 1637." The only reason assigned for so vast a change was the king's good pleasure. The royal mandate must serve for the wishes of the people, the law of the country, and the warrant of Scripture. In the December following, five ministers set out for London, and got themselves appointed bishops, and consecrated in Westminster. The first was James Sharp, who now, as the reward of his treachery, obtained the archiepiscopal mitre of St. Andrews. The second was Fairfoul, who was made Bishop of Glasgow. If a slender theologian, he had some powers as a humourist; but his censors said that his morals were not so pure as his lawn. The third was Wishart, who had the See of Edinburgh. He, too, was of damaged character, and had a habit, when he had drunk freely, of emphasising his talk with oaths. The fourth was Sydsarf, now in his dotage, and made Bishop of Orkney. The fifth was a man of pure character, and fine genius, who was thrown in to reconcile the Scots to the new Establishment. This was Robert Leighton, appointed to the episcopal chair of Dunblane. His exposition of the first Epistle of Peter, so chaste and graceful in style, and so rich in evangelical truth, will long remain a monument of his fervent piety. Leighton held that nothing had been laid down, even inferentially, in Scripture on the subject of Church government; and he looked on episcopacy as the best form, but he knew that, as matters then stood in Scotland, the liberties of the nation were bound up with the maintenance of the Presbyterian government; and that government, moreover, he had sworn to maintain. This, if nothing else, ought to have inspired him with a salutary fear of becoming the tool of the tyrant and the partner of renegades in a traitorous scheme for sapping the ancient liberties of his native land, and overthrowing the sacred independence of his Church. His genius and piety but made the part he acted the more criminal, seeing they were employed to support measures which he condemned. The blood of Argyle and Guthrie had to be poured out before he could wear his mitre, and one

would have thought that never could he put it on his head without feeling that it imprinted its red marks on his brow. In those days there were few genuine honours to be gained in Scotland save those which the headsman bestowed.

Soon after their consecration the new prelates arrived in Scotland. They entered Edinburgh with some little pomp, being not unwilling to air their new dignity—all except Leighton, who, as if ashamed of his companions, and unwilling to be paraded in the train of Sharp, stole away when the party approached the city, and made his entrance privately. One of their first acts after setting foot on their native soil was to ordain other ten bishops. These had till now been Presbyterian ministers; their anointing took place in the Chapel of Holyrood. Scotland was now divided into fourteen dioceses, and over each diocese was set a regularly consecrated bishop with jurisdiction. The new shepherds to whom the Scottish flock was committed by Charles II. had all, before receiving their second consecration, renounced their Presbyterian ordination as null. This throws an interesting light on the mission they had now taken in hand, and the condition of that country, as it appeared in their eyes, in which they were to fulfil it. If their Presbyterian ordination was worthless, so was that of all Presbyters in Scotland, and equally worthless were the powers and ministrations of the whole Presbyterian Church. Scotland, in short, was a pagan country. It possessed neither valid pastors nor valid Sacraments, and had been without both since the Reformation; and these men, themselves consecrated in Westminster, now consecrated others in Holyrood, and came with the benevolent design of restoring to Scotland the valid orders of which Knox had deprived it. In short, they came to plant Christianity a second time in Scotland. Let us mark how they proceeded in their work.

On the 8th of May, 1662, the Scottish Parliament sat. The new bishops took their places in that Assembly, gracing it, if not by their gifts of learning and apostleship, on which history is silent, by their titles and official robes. Their presence reminded the Parliament of the necessity of showing its zeal in the king's service, and especially that branch of it on which Charles was at that time so intent, the transforming a Presbyterian country into a prelatic one, and changing a constitutional government into an arbitrary monarchy. The Parliament was servile and compliant. Act followed Act, in rapid succession, completing the work which the king had commenced in his proclamation of the September previous ordaining episcopacy. In the first Act of Parliament it was laid down that "the ordering and disposing of the external government and policy of the Church doth properly belong unto his Majesty as an inherent right of the crown, by virtue of his royal prerogative and

supremacy in causes ecclesiastical.”<sup>1</sup> The next Act restored the bishops to all their ancient privileges, spiritual and temporal; another Act was passed against all resistance to the king’s government; another forbidding all attempts for any alteration in Church or State, and another declaring the Covenants unlawful and seditious. To this Act was added a curious appendage, which would not have been surprising had it issued from the Vatican, but coming from a temporal government was certainly a novelty. A dispensing clause was sent forth from Whitehall, releasing all who had taken the Covenant from the obligation of fulfilling the oath. That oath might or might not be valid, but for the government to publish a release of conscience to all who had sworn it was one of the startling assumptions of this extraordinary time.

One other edict remains to be specially noted. It required all ministers in Scotland ordained since 1649, on or before the 20th of September to present themselves before the patron to take presentation anew to their livings, and before the bishop of the diocese to receive collation. The year 1649 was fixed on as that from which commenced this second ordination because, the strict covenanting party being then in power, patronage had been abolished. But now, patronage being restored, those who had entered the Church by the free choice of the people, and not by the nomination of the patron, were called on to retrace their steps, and begin anew by passing through this ordeal. Collation from the bishop, which was also required of them, implied something more than that they had been informal ministers, namely, that they had not been ministers at all, nor had ever discharged one valid function. One of the clauses of that collation ran thus—“I do hereby receive him into the functions of the holy ministry.” That certainly meant that the man now receiving collation had not till then been clothed with the ministerial office, and that for the first time he was now validly to discharge its functions. The principle on which all these changes proceeded was plainly this, that government was restoring to Scotland a true ministry, which it had lost when its ancient hierarchy was overthrown.

It was not necessary in order to the carrying out of these edicts that Charles II. should leave London, the scene of his case and of his pleasures, and visit the northern kingdom. The royal voluptuary, dearly as he loved power, would perhaps have foregone it in part, had he been required to earn it at the price of anxiety and drudgery. But there was no need he should submit to this sacrifice; he had zealous and trusty tools on the spot, who were but too willing to do the work which he was too indolent to undertake himself. The Privy Council exercised supreme power in his name in Scotland, and he could safely leave with the members of that Council the prosecution of all the schemes of tyranny then on foot. There were men around him, too, of

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<sup>1</sup> See Act in Wodrow, bk. i., chap. 3, sec. 2.

darker counsels and wider schemings than himself—men who, though he little suspected it, were just as ready to thrust him aside as they would have been to dispatch any Covenanter in all Scotland, should he stand in their way; these persons devised the steps which were necessary to be taken, the king sanctioned them, and the perjured and brutal junto who served Charles in Scotland carried them out. We behold the work already almost completed. Only two years have elapsed since Charles II. ascended the throne, and the liberties and religion of Scotland have been all but entirely swept away. What it had taken a century and a half to achieve—what had been painfully won, by the stake of Hamilton, the labours of Knox, and the intrepidity of Melville and Henderson, had, as it now seemed, been lost in the incredibly short space from 1600 to 1602. The tame acquiescence of Scotland at so great a crisis amazes us! Have all become unfaithful? Is there no one to fight the old battle? Of the tens of thousands who twenty-four years before assembled in the Greyfriars' Church-yard of Edinburgh, their hands lifted up to heaven, is there no select band—a thousand? a hundred? fifty?—willing to throw themselves into the breach, and stem the torrent of Popish intrigue and tyrannical violence that is flooding Scotland, and, having overwhelmed it, will next rush on England, burying beneath its swelling wave the Protestantism of the southern kingdom, and along with it the Protestantism of all Christendom? Is there none to avert a catastrophe so awful? We shall see.

## CHAPTER XXII.

### FOUR HUNDRED MINISTERS EJECTED.

The Bishops hold Diocesan Courts—Summon the Ministers to Receive Collation—The Ministers Disobey—Middleton's Wrath and Violence—Archbishop Fairfoul's Complaint—"Drunken Act of Glasgow"—The 1st of November, 1662—Four Hundred Ministers Ejected—Middleton's Consternation—Sufferings of the Ejected—Lamentations of the People—Scotland before the Ejection—The Curates—Middleton's Fall—The Earl of Rothes made Commissioner—Conventicles—Court of High Commission—Its Cruelty—Turner's Troop—Terrible Violence.

THE Parliament, having done its work, dissolved. It had promulgated those edicts which placed the Church and State of Scotland at the feet of Charles II., and it left it to the Privy Council and the bishops to carry into effect what it had enacted as law. Without loss of time the work was commenced. The bishops held diocesan courts and summoned the ministers to receive collation at their hands. If the ministers should obey the summons, the bishops would regard it as an admission of their office: they were not unnaturally desirous of such recognition, and they waited with impatience and anxiety to see what response their citation should receive from the Presbyterian pastors. To their groat mortification, very few ministers presented themselves. In only a few solitary instances were the episcopal mandates obeyed. The bishops viewed this as a contempt of their office and an affront to their persons, and were wroth at the recalcitrants. Middleton, the king's prime minister in Scotland, was equally angry, and he had not less cause than the bishops for being so. He had assured the king that the royal sceptre once firmly stretched out would compel the Presbyterians of the North to bow to the crosier; and if, after all, his project should fail, he would be ruined in the eyes of Charles. To the irascibility and imperiousness with which nature had endowed him, Middleton added the training of the camp, and he resolved to deal with this matter of conscience as he would with any ordinary breach of military discipline. He did not understand this opposition. The law was clear: the king had commanded the ministers to receive collation at the hands of the bishop, and the king must be obeyed, and if not, the recusant must take the consequences—he must abide both Middleton's and the king's wrath.

Having made up his mind to decisive measures, Middleton and the other members of the Privy Council set out on a tour of inspection of the western counties, where the more contumacious lived. Coming to Glasgow, Archbishop Fairfoul complained that "not one minister in his whole diocese had presented himself to own him as bishop, and receive collation to his benefice; that he had only the hatred which attends that office in Scotland, and nothing of the power; and that his Grace behoved to fall upon some other and more

effectual methods, otherwise the new-made bishops would be mere ciphers.”<sup>1</sup> Middleton consoled the poor man by telling him that to the authority of his crosier he would add the weight of his sword, and he would then see who would be so bold as to refuse to own him as his diocesan. A meeting of the Privy Council was held in the College Hall of Glasgow, on the 1st of October, 1662. They met in a condition that augured ill for the adoption of moderate measures. The bishops urged them to extreme courses; with these counsels their own passions coincided; they drank till they were maddened, and could think only of vengeance. It was resolved to extrude, from their livings and banish from their parishes all the ministers who had been ordained since 1649, and had not received presentation and collation as the king’s Act required. In pursuance of this summary and violent decision a proclamation was drawn up, to be published on the 4th of October, commanding all such ministers to withdraw themselves and their families out of their parishes before the 1st of November next, and forbidding them to reside within the bounds of their respective presbyteries. They had three weeks given them to determine which they would choose, submission or ejection.<sup>2</sup>

This Act came afterwards to be known as the “Drunken Act of Glasgow.” It is hardly conceivable that sober men would, in the circumstances, have issued so ferocious an edict. “Duke Hamilton told me,” says Burnet, “they were all so drunk that day that they were not capable of considering anything that was before them, and would hear of nothing but executing the law without any relenting or delay.”<sup>3</sup> The one sober man at the board, Sir James Lockhart of Lee, remonstrated against the madness of his fellow-councillors, but he could recall them neither to sobriety nor to humanity. Their fiat had gone forth: it had sounded, they believed, the knell of Scottish Presbyterianism. “There are not ten men in all my diocese,” said Bishop Fairfoul, “who will dare to disobey.” Middleton was not less confident. That men should cast themselves and their families penniless upon the world for the sake of conscience, was a height of fanaticism which he did not believe to be possible even in Scotland. Meanwhile the day drew on.

The 1st of November, to which Middleton had looked forward as the day that was to crown his bold policy with success, and laying the Presbyterianism of Scotland in the dust, to establish on its ruins prelacy and arbitrary government, was, on the contrary, in the issue to hurl him from power, and lift up that Presbyterianism which he thought to destroy. But to Middleton retribution came in the guise of victory. Hardly four weeks had he given the ministers to determine the grave question whether they should renounce their

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<sup>1</sup> Wodrow, bk. i., chap. 3, sec. 3.

<sup>2</sup> The Act is said to have been the suggestion of Fairfoul, Archbishop of Glasgow. (Wodrow, bk. i., chap. 3, sec. 3.)

<sup>3</sup> Burnet, *Hist. of his own Time*, vol. i., pp. 194, 195.

Presbyterianism or surrender their livings. They did not need even that short space to make up their minds. Four hours—four minutes—were enough where the question was so manifestly whether they should obey God or King Charles. When the 1st of November came, four hundred ministers—more than a third of the Scottish clergy—rose up, and quitting their manses, their churches, and their parishes, went forth with their families into banishment. Middleton was astounded. He could never have believed that the gauntlet he had flung down would be taken up so boldly. It was submission, not defiance, he had looked for from these men. The bishops shared his consternation. They had counselled this violent measure, and now they trembled when they saw how well it had succeeded. They had thought that the Scotland of Knox was dead, and this Act was meant to consign it to its sepulchre; the Act, on the contrary, had brought it to life again; it was rising in the strength of old days, and they knew that they must surely fall before it. Middleton's rage knew no bounds: he saw at a glance all the fatal consequences to himself of the step he had taken—the ultimate failure of his plans, the loss of the royal favour, and the eventual triumph of that cause to which he thought he had given the death-blow.

Meanwhile, the sufferings of the ejected ministers were far from light. The blow had come suddenly upon them, and left them hardly any time to provide accommodation for themselves and their families. It was the beginning of winter, and the sight of the bare earth and the bleak skies would add to the gloom around them. They went forth not knowing whither they went. Toiling along on the rough miry road, or laying them down at night under the roof of some poor hovel, or seated with their little ones at some scantily furnished table, they nevertheless tasted a joy so sweet that they would not have exchanged their lot for all the delights of their persecutors. They had incurred their monarch's sore displeasure, but they knew that they had the approval of their heavenly King, and this sweetened the bitter cup they were drinking. The sacrifice they were now making had only added to their guilt in the eyes of their monarch, and they knew that, distressing as was their present condition, their future lot was sure to be more wretched; but rather than take their hands from the plough they would part with even dearer possessions than those of which they had been stripped. They had counted the cost, and would go forward in the path on which they had set out, although they plainly descried a scaffold at the end of it.

The religious people of Scotland followed with their affection and their prayers the pastors who had been torn from them. The throne had loosened its hold, prelacy had sealed its doom, but the firmness of principle shown by the ministers had exalted the cause of Presbytery, and rallied once more round it the better portion of the Scottish people. The shepherds had been smitten, but the flocks would not long escape, and they prepared to suffer

when their day of trial should come. Meanwhile, lamentation and woe overspread the country. "Scotland," says Wodrow, "was never witness to such a Sabbath as the last on which these ministers preached; and I know no parallel to it save the 24th of August to the Presbyterians in England. Tears, loud wailings, and bursts of sorrow broke in in many cases upon the public service. It was a day not only of weeping but howling, like the weeping of Jazer, as when a besieged city is sacked." The Sunday that followed the ejection was sadder even than that on which the pastors had bidden their congregations farewell. The silence as of death brooded over a large portion of Scotland. All over the western counties of Ayr and Lanark; over many parts of Lothian, Fife, Eskdale, Teviotdale, and Nithsdale the churches were closed. To quote "Naphtali's" song of Lamentation (a well-known book in Scotland)—"Then might we have seen the shepherds smitten and the flocks scattered, our teachers removed into corners, and the Lord's vineyard and sanctuary laid most desolate, so that in some whole counties and provinces 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."

From this scene of desolation let us turn to the Scotland of only two years before, as graphically depicted by an old chronicler. "At the king's return every parish had a minister, every village had a school, every family almost had a Bible, yea, in most of the country all the children of age could read the Scriptures, and were provided of Bibles, either by their parents, or by their ministers . . . I have lived many years in a parish where I never heard an oath, and you might have ridden many miles before you heard one; also you could not for a great part of the country have lodged in a family where the Lord was not worshipped by reading, singing, and public prayer. Nobody complained more of our Church government than our taverners; whose ordinary lamentation was—their trade was broke, people were become so sober."<sup>1</sup> It was from this flourishing condition that Scotland, in the short space of two years, was plunged into her present desolation.

The numerous vacant pulpits had to be filled. The bishops turned their eyes to the northern counties in quest of men to succeed the pious and learned ministers who had been ejected. Some hundreds of raw untaught young men were brought from that part of Scotland, drafted into the Church, and taught to do duty as curates. The majority of them were as incapable as they were unwelcome. They were all of them without liberal education, and many of them lacked morals as well as letters. "They were ignorant to a reproach," says Bishop Burnet, "and many of them openly vicious; they were a disgrace to the order and the sacred functions, and were indeed the dregs and refuse

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<sup>1</sup> Kirkton, *Hist. of the Church of Scotland*, pp. 64, 65.

of the northern parts.”<sup>1</sup> In some cases their arrival in the parish was met by a shower of stones; the church-door was barricaded on Sunday morning, and they had to make their entrance by the window.

Middleton was now drawing near the close of his career. He had dragged Argyle to the block and Guthrie to the gallows, and he had filled up his cup by extruding from their charges four hundred of the best ministers of Scotland, and now his fall followed hard on the heels of his great crime. But in his case, as in so many similar ones, infatuation preceded destruction. Middleton had now few sober hours; for no sooner had the fumes of one debauch been dissipated than those of another began to act upon him. Even Charles became disgusted at his habitual intoxication. His passionate violence and drunken recklessness had completely lost the opportunity for the peaceable establishment of prelacy in Scotland. He had but damaged the king’s interests by his precipitation, and the Earl of Rothes was sent down to supersede him. The new commissioner was a son of that Earl Rothes who had been one of the early leaders of the Covenanters. The son was as distinguished for his profligacy as the father had been for his piety and his talents. He was coarse, avaricious, licentious, and the policy of violence which had been inaugurated under Middleton was continued under Rothes.

It was now that field-meetings termed conventicles arose. The greater part of the pious ministers cast out, and their places filled by incapable men, the people left the new preachers to hold forth within empty walls. It was in vain that the church-doors were thrown open on Sunday morning, few entered save the curates’ dependants, or the reprobates of the place; the bulk of the population were elsewhere, listening to those ministers who, not being comprehended in the Act of 1662, having been ordained before the year 1649, were still permitted to occupy their pulpits; or they had gathered by hundreds or by thousands, devout and reverend, on some moorland, or in some sequestered glen, or on some mountain-side, there to listen to one of the ejected ministers, who, taking his stand on some rock or knoll, preached the Word of Life. It was exceedingly mortifying to the bishops to see their curates despised, their churches empty, and the people travelling miles in all weathers to hear those whom they had extruded. They immediately obtained an Act forbidding any one to preach unless he had a licence from a bishop, and commanding the people to attend their parish churches under the penalty of a fine. This Act was termed the “bishops’ drag-net.” It failed to fill the empty pews of the parish churches. One tyrannical measure only necessitates another and more tyrannical. Archbishop Sharp posted up to London to obtain additional powers. He returned, and set up the Court of High Commission. This was the Star Chamber of England over again. In truth, it bore, in

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<sup>1</sup> Burnet, vol. i., p. 229.

its flagrant defiance of forms, and its inexorably merciless spirit, a close resemblance to the "Holy Office" of the Inquisition. Soldiers were sent forth to scour the country, and if one was found who had been absent from the parish church, or had given a little aid to any of the *outed* ministers, or was suspected of the sin of Presbyterianism, he was dragged to the bar of the High Commission Court, where sat Sharp, like another Rhadamanthus, ready to condemn all whom the soldiers had captured and haled to his dread tribunal. The lay-judges in disgust soon left the entire business in the hands of the archbishop and his assistant prelates. Their process was simple and swift. The labour of compiling an indictment, the trouble of examining witnesses, the delay of listening to pleadings were all dispensed with. The judges walked by no rule or statute, they kept no record of their proceedings, and they suffered no one to escape. All who came to that bar left it under condemnation. The punishments awarded from that judgment-seat were various. Some it amerced in heavy fines: some it ordered to be publicly whipped: some it sent into banishment: others it consigned to dungeons; and some it branded on the cheek with hot irons, and sold as slaves, and shipped off to Barbadoes. The times, bad as they were, were not so bad as to suffer such a court to exist. In two years the High Commission sank under the odium which its atrocious injustice, cruelty, and tyranny drew down upon it.

"*Sir,*" said the minister of Colvend on the Solway, addressing Sharp one day from the bar of this terrible court. "Know you," growled Rothes, "to whom you speak?" "Yes," replied the undaunted pastor, "I speak to James Sharp, once a fellow-minister with myself." Without further inquiry into his offences, he was laid in irons, thrown into the "Thieves' Hole" "in the Tolbooth, with a lunatic for his companion, and ultimately banished to the Shetland Islands, where "for four- years," says Wodrow, "he lived alone in a wild desolate island, in a very miserable plight. He had nothing but barley for his bread, and his fuel to prepare it with was sea-tangle and wreck; and had no more to preserve his miserable life."

In Scotland, Presbytery and Liberty, like the twins of classic story, have ever flourished and faded together. After 1663 no Parliament met in Scotland during six years. The laws were virtually defunct, and the will of the king was the sole authority in the State. Charles II. issued proclamations, his Privy Council in Scotland turned them into Acts, and the soldiers executed them with their swords. It was in this way that the country was governed. Its Presbyterian religion and its constitutional liberties had fallen together.

No part of the country south of the Grampian chain escaped this most terrible tyranny, but the south and west in particular were mercilessly scourged by it. The wretched inhabitants of these counties had been given into the hands of Sir James Turner. Turner was a man naturally of choleric temper, and when his passions were inflamed by drink, which often

happened, his fury rose to madness. His troop was worthy of himself. Drawn from the dregs of the populace, they merited the name, not of soldiers, but of ruffians, who were in their element only when carousing, pillaging, and shedding blood. It would be endless to recount the barbarities which Turner's troop exercised upon the poor peasantry.

The great public offence of each parish was still the empty church of the curate. To punish and so abate this scandal, the following device was fallen upon. After sermon the curate called over the roll of the parishioners, and marked those not present. A list of the absentees was given to the soldiers, who were empowered to levy the fine to which non-attendance at church rendered the person liable. If the family was not able to pay the fine, a certain number of the troop took up their quarters in the house, cursing, blaspheming, carousing, wasting by their riotous living the substance of the family, and, before taking leave, destroying what they had not been able to devour. Ruin was almost the inevitable consequence of such a visit, and members of families, recently in affluence, might now be seen wandering about the country in circumstances of destitution. After the landlord, it came to be the tenant's turn to be eaten up. As the locust-swarms of the East, so passed these miscreant bands from parish to parish, and from family to family, leaving their track an utter waste. The sanctity of home, the services of devotion, the decencies of morality, respect to rank, and reverence for age, all perished in the presence of this obscene crew. Louder and louder every day waxed the cry of the suffering country.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

### BREACH OF THE "TRIPLE LEAGUE" AND WAR WITH HOLLAND.

The same Policy pursued in England and Scotland—Scheme for Introducing Popery and Arbitrary Government—Test Acts—Non-resistance—Power of the Militia Given to the King—Humiliation of the Nation—The Queen-mother—Surrender of Dunkirk—Breach of the "Triple League"—The King's Sister—Interview at Dover—M. Colbert—War with Holland resolved on—How the Quarrel was Picked—Piratical Attack on Dutch Merchantmen by the Navy of England—The Exchequer Seized by the King—An Indulgence Proclaimed—War Commenced—Rapid Triumphs of the French—Duplicity of Louis XIV.—William, Prince of Orange, made Stadtholder of Holland—The Great Issue.

THE great project planned and moved by the Jesuits for reconquering England, and through England subjugating Christendom, and restoring the Church of Rome to her former dominancy in every country of Europe, was proceeding on parallel lines, stage by stage, in both England and Scotland at once. On the 24th of August, 1662, two thousand ministers, who formed the strength and glory of English Protestantism, were driven out of the Church of England. In the November following, a similar measure was adopted in Scotland. Four hundred men, the flower of the Scottish clergy, were extruded from their churches, and soon thereafter forbidden all exercise of their office under pain of death. The Protestantism of Great Britain was not indeed entirely smitten down by these great blows, but it lay wounded and bleeding, and had scarce spirit or strength left it for continuing the battle with a yet powerful foe. This was an entire reversal of the policy which had been pursued before the Restoration. The policy of the Solemn League was to unite the two kingdoms of Scotland and England on a thoroughly Protestant basis, that they might be able in concert to establish a constitutional throne, maintain the authority of the laws, and fortify the domain of civil and religious liberty. Now the policy of the Government was to break up the concord which had been formed between the two countries, that on the ruins of their Protestantism they might plant arbitrary power and the Popish religion. What Charles mainly aimed at, we grant, was absolute power; what the yet deeper plotters around him sought to compass was the restoration of the Romish faith; but they found it easy to persuade the monarch that he could not gain his own object except by advancing theirs. Thus each put their shoulder to the great task, and the king's prerogative and the usurpations of the tiara advanced by equal steps, while English liberty and national honour sank as the other rose.

The first more manifest step of this national decline was the famous declaration inserted in the Act of Uniformity, and which every ecclesiastical functionary, from the Primate of all England down to the village

schoolmaster, was required to subscribe, and in which he declared it to be “unlawful, on any pretence whatever, to take up arms against the king.” This test pledged beforehand all who took it to submit to any act of tyranny, however gross, and to any invasion on their property and person, however monstrous. It left to Englishmen a strange measure of liberty, namely that of passive obedience and non-resistance. Soon thereafter, there followed another declaration which all civil and military functionaries were enjoined to make, and which ran thus: “I do swear I will not endeavour any alteration in the government of this kingdom in Church or State, as it is by law established.” The nation was thus pledged neither to amend anything that might be wrong, however glaringly so, in the existing state of matters, nor to offer resistance to any aggression, however unjust and oppressive, that might be attempted in future. While it disarmed itself, and stood literally manacled before the throne of Charles, the nation armed him with full means for tyrannising over itself, by handing over to him the sole power of the militia, which then occupied the place of the army. Thus was arbitrary government set up. To resist the king, said the men of law, is treason; to dissent from his religion, said the divines, is anathema. What was this but an apotheosis of the prerogative? and the only maxim to which Charles now found it needful to have respect in ruling, was to make the yoke press not too heavily at first, lest the nation should break the fetters with which it had bound itself, and resume the powers it had surrendered.

There now opens a chapter in English history which is sad indeed, being a continuous succession of humiliations, disasters, and dishonours. Soon after Charles II. ascended the throne, the queen-mother, who had been residing in Paris since the execution of her husband, Charles I., came across to pay her son a visit. The ostensible object of her journey was to congratulate her son, but her true errand was to ripen into an alliance a friendship already formed between Charles II. and Louis XIV., termed the Grand Monarch, and truly worthy of the name, if a hideous and colossal combination of dissoluteness, devotion, and tyranny can make any one great. It would mightily expedite the great scheme then in hand that the King of England should be in thorough accord with the King of France, whose arms were carrying the fame of Louis and the faith of Rome over so many countries of the Continent of Europe.

The first-fruits of this interview were the surrender of Dunkirk to the French. This fortress had been deemed of so great importance, that Parliament a little before had it in contemplation to prepare an Act annexing it for ever to the crown of these realms; it was now sold to the French king for £100,000—a sum not more than sufficient to cover the value of the guns and other military stores contained in it. The loss of this important place deeply

grieved the nation, but what affected the English people most was the deplorable sign which its sale gave of a weak and mercenary court.

The next public proof that the Court of England was being drawn into the scheme for the destruction of the Protestant faith, was the breach of the “Triple League” on the part of Charles II., and his uniting with France to make war upon Holland. This famous Alliance had been formed between England, Holland, and Sweden; and its object was to stem the torrent of Louis XIV.’s victorious arms, which were then threatening to overrun all Europe and make the Roman sway again universal. This Triple Alliance, which the great minister Sir William Temple had been at great pains to cement, was at that time the political bulwark of the Protestant religion and the liberties of Europe, and its betrayal was a step to the ruin of more than England. Britain was very artfully detached from her Protestant allies and her own true interests. The Duchess of Orleans, King Charles’s sister, was dispatched (1670) on a private interview with her brother at Dover, on purpose to break this design to him. Having brought her negotiation a certain length she returned to Paris, leaving behind her a lady of acknowledged charms, Madam Carewell, afterwards Duchess of Portsmouth, and the king’s favourite mistress, to prosecute what she had been unable to conclude. Next, M. Colbert, ambassador from the Court of France, came across with 100,000 pistoles to lay out to the best advantage. With so many and so convincing reasons Colbert had little difficulty in persuading the ministry, known as the *Cabal*,<sup>1</sup> to espouse the French interests, and persuade the king to fall out with the Dutch. Mr. Coventry was sent across to Sweden to induce that Government also to withdraw from the League. He succeeded so far that Sweden first grew lukewarm in the cause, and after having armed itself at the expense of the Alliance, and dissembling for a while, it dropped the vizor, and drew the sword on the side of France.<sup>2</sup> Thus Protestant Holland was isolated.

A war with Holland having been resolved upon, the next thing was to pick a quarrel. This task required no little invention, for the Dutch had not only behaved with perfect good faith, but had studied not to give offence to England. A new and hitherto untried device was fallen upon. In August, 1671, the Dutch fleet was cruising in the North Sea, in fulfilment of their treaty engagements: a “sorry” yacht carrying the English flag suddenly sailed into the fleet, and singling out the admiral’s ship, twice fired into her. The Dutch commander, having regard to the amity existing between the two nations, paid a visit to the captain of the yacht, and inquired his reason for acting as he had done. The admiral was told that he had insulted England by

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<sup>1</sup> So termed because the initial letters of their names form that word—Clifford, Arlington, Buckingham, Ashley, Lauderdale.

<sup>2</sup> Andrew Marvell, *Growth of Popery and Arbitrary Government in England*, pp. 28, 29; Amsterdam, 1677.

failing to make his whole fleet strike to his little craft. The Dutch commander civilly excused the omission, and the yacht returned to England, bearing as her freight the quarrel she had been sent to open.<sup>1</sup> This, with a few other equally frivolous incidents, furnished the English Court with a pretext for declaring war against Holland.

The Dutch could not believe that England was in earnest. They were conscious of no offence, and pursued their commerce in our seas without suspicion. A rich fleet of merchantmen, on their voyage from Smyrna, were passing through the Channel, with a feeble convoy, when they were set upon by English men-of-war near the Isle of Wight. The king had thought to seize this rich booty, and therewith defray the expenses of the war which he was meditating. His attempt at playing the pirate upon his own coasts did not succeed: the merchantmen defended themselves with spirit, and the king's prize was so meagre that it scarce sufficed to pay the surgeons who attended the wounded, and the carpenters who repaired the battered ships. The next attempt of Charles II. to put himself in funds for the war was to seize on the Exchequer, and confiscate all moneys laid up there to the use of the State. To the terror of the whole nation and the ruin of the creditors, the Crown issued a proclamation declaring itself bankrupt, "made prize of the subject, and broke all faith and contract at home in order to the breaking of them abroad with more advantage."<sup>2</sup>

While the king's fleet was in the act of attacking the Dutch merchantmen in the Channel, his printers were busy on a proclamation of Indulgence. On the 15th of March, 1672, a proclamation was issued repealing all the penal laws against Papists and Nonconformists, and granting to both the free exercise of their worship. A gift in itself good only alarmed the nation, by the time at which it was issued, and the ground on which it was placed. The Indulgence was based on the king's inherent supremacy in ecclesiastical affairs, a prerogative in virtue of which he might reimpose the fetters on Nonconformists when he chose, and the end would be that only Papists would be free, and the nation would lose its religion. So did the people reason.

It was now (17th March, 1672) that the stroke fell upon Holland. Charles II. and the powerful Louis XIV. united in a simultaneous attack on the little Protestant State, the former by sea and the latter by land. The invasion was the more successful that it had been so little expected. The victorious arms of France poured across the frontier of the United Provinces in an irresistible torrent. The towns and fortresses upon the German side opened their gates to the invaders, and the French made themselves masters of the inland cities "in

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<sup>1</sup> Sir William Temple, *Works and Letters*, vol. iii., pp. 502, 503; Edin., 1754.

<sup>2</sup> Andrew Marvell, *Growth of Popery and Arbitrary Government in England*, pp. 30, 31. Hume, vol. ii., chap. 65.

as little time as travellers usually employ to view them.”<sup>1</sup> This rapid advance of the French armies was aided by an extraordinary drought which that summer rendered their rivers and canals easily fordable, and which may be said to have opened the gates of their country to the enemy.<sup>2</sup>

The English had not the success at sea which the French king had on land, nor did this displease Louis XIV. He had declared by his ambassador at Vienna that he had undertaken this war for the extirpation of heresy, and he had instructed his admiral so to arrange the line of battle in the joint fleets as that the English heretics should have a large share of the promised extirpation. “He only studied,” says Marvell, “to sound our seas, to spy our ports, to learn our buildings, to contemplate our way of fighting, to consume ours and to preserve his own navy, and to order all so that the two great naval Powers of Europe being crushed together, he might remain sole arbitrator of the ocean, and by consequence master of all the isles and continents.”<sup>3</sup>

In truth Louis XIV. wanted but little of accomplishing his whole design. In the short space of three months he had, with his army of 150,000 men, overrun Holland, and reduced the States to the brink of ruin. Many of the richest families, believing all to be lost, had fled from the country. The conqueror was refusing to make peace on any other terms than the establishment of the Romish Church in Holland. The French king, prompted by his Jesuit advisers, scorned to accept of toleration for “the Catholic Apostolic Roman religion,” and demanded its public exercise throughout all the United Provinces, and that provision should be made from the public revenue for its maintenance. The English Government seconded the French king’s demands, and the fall of Holland as a Protestant State seemed imminent. With dragoons hewing down Protestantism in Scotland, with arbitrary edicts and dissolute maxims wasting it in England, with Holland smitten down and Louis XIV. standing over it with his great sword, it must have seemed as if the last hour of the Reformation was come, and the triumph of the Jesuits secured. As Innocent X. surveyed Europe from the Vatican, what cause he had for exultation and joy! He was nearing the goal of his hopes in the speedy accession of a Popish monarch to the throne of England.

It was out of the great wreck caused by the triumph of the Spanish arms in the preceding century that William the Silent emerged, to achieve his mighty task of rescuing Protestantism from impending destruction. Sinking States, discomfited armies, and despairing Protestants surrounded him on all sides when he stood up to retrieve the mighty ruin. A second time was the grand marvel to be repeated. The motto of his house, *Tandem fit surculus*

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<sup>1</sup> Bowyer, *Hist. of King William III.*, p. 17; Lond., 1702.

<sup>2</sup> Sir William Temple, *The United Provinces*, p. 185.

<sup>3</sup> Marvell, p. 46.

*arbor*,<sup>1</sup> was once more to be verified. Out of this mighty disaster produced by the French arms, was a deliverer, second only in glory to the Great William, to arise to be the champion of a sinking Protestantism, and the upholder of perishing nations. The House of Orange had for some time past been under a cloud. A generation of Dutchmen had arisen who knew not, or did not care to know, the services which that house had rendered to their country. The ambition of burgomasters had eclipsed the splendour of the glorious line of William, and the strife of factions had brought low the country which his patriotism and wisdom had raised so high. The office of Stadtholder had been abolished, and the young Prince of Orange, the heir not only of the name, but of the virtues and abilities of his great ancestor, forbidden access to all offices of the State, was living as a private person. But the afflictions that now overtook them chastened the Hollanders, and turned their eyes toward the young prince, if haply it might please Providence to save them by his hand. The States-General appointed him Captain and Admiral-General of the United Provinces.<sup>2</sup> From this hour the spirits of the Dutch began to revive, and the tide in their fortunes to turn. The conflict was nearly as arduous as that which his illustrious progenitor had to wage. He dealt Louis XIV. several repulses, obliged him to surrender some of his conquests, and by his prudence and success so won upon his countrymen, that their suffrages placed him in the high position of Hereditary Stadtholder. We now behold a champion presenting himself on the Protestant side worthy of the crisis. He must wage his great fight against tremendous odds. He is opposed by all the Jesuits of Europe, by the victorious arms of France, by the treachery and the fleet of Charles II.; but he feels the grandeur as well as the gravity of his noble mission, and he addresses himself to it with patience and courage. The question is now who shall occupy the throne of England? Shall it be the Prince of Orange, under the title of William III.? or shall it be a protégé of the Jesuits, under the title of James II. In other words, shall the resources of Great Britain be wielded for Protestantism, or shall its power be employed to uphold Popery and make its sway again triumphant and universal? Fleets and armies, prayers and faith, must decide this question. The momentous issues of the conflict were felt on both sides. The Kings of France and England pressed William of Orange to accept of a sovereignty under them suzerainty, in the hope of beguiling him from his destined mission. The prince replied that he would never sell the liberties of his country which his ancestors had so long defended: and if he could not prevent the overthrow with which they threatened it, he had one way left of not beholding its ruin—and that was “to lie in the last ditch.”

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<sup>1</sup> “At last the sprig becomes a tree.”

<sup>2</sup> Bowyer, *Hist. of William III.*, vol. i., p. 19.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

### THE POPIISH PLOT, AND DEATH OF CHARLES II.

The Issue Adjusted—Who shall Sit on the Throne of Britain?—Peace with Holland—Charles II. a Pensioner of Louis XIV.—English Ships Seized by France—No Redress—Duke of York's Second Marriage—William of Orange Marries the Princess Mary—The Duke of York's Influence in the Government—Alarm—Test Acts—The Duke's Exclusion from the Throne demanded—The Popish Plot—Titus Oates—The Jesuit Coleman—His Letter to Père la Chaise—Murder of Sir Edmundbury Godfrey—The Duke's Exclusion—Attempts to throw the Plot on the Presbyterians—Execution of Essex, Russell, and Sidney—Judge Jeffreys—Illness and Death of the King—What they Said of his Death at Rome.

IN the great war of Truth and Liberty against Error and Slavery which had raged since the days of Wicliffe, and in which there had been so many momentous crises, but no crisis so momentous as the present, the grand issue had now been adjusted. That issue was simply this: Shall a Protestant or a Popish *régime* be established in Christendom? In order to arrive at the final determination of this issue the question had first to be decided, as one of the essential preliminaries, to whom shall the throne of Great Britain belong?—whether shall a Protestant or a Popish sovereign occupy it? The house of Orange had for some time been in obscurity, but it was the singular fortune of that illustrious line to emerge into prominence at all the great epochs of the Reformation, and with its re-emergence the light of victory ever returned to gild again the banners of Protestantism. The present hour produced a second William of Orange, who, devoting himself to the cause of his country and of Christendom, when the condition of both seemed desperate, turned the tide of the French victories which were overflowing Europe, uplifted the sinking balance of the Protestant interests in England, and elevated the cause of the Reformation to so stable a position, that of the second William it may be truly said that he crowned the great struggle which the first William had commenced more than a century before.

We cannot follow in its details the progress of this great struggle, we can only indicate the direction and flow of its current. The veteran warriors of the French king had to retreat before the soldiers of the young Stadtholder, and the laurels which Louis XIV. had reaped on so many bloody fields, he had at last to lay at the feet of the young prince. The English, who had conducted their operations by sea with as little glory as the French had carried on theirs by land, found it expedient in 1674 to conclude a peace with Holland. The union between England and France was thus at an end, but though no longer confederate in arms, the two crowns continued to prosecute in concert the greater plot of overthrowing Protestantism. A deeper influence than

perhaps either Power was aware of, steadily moved both towards one goal. The more successfully to undermine and ruin the Protestantism of Great Britain, England was kept dependent on France. The necessities of the English monarch were great, for his Parliament was unwilling to furnish him with supplies while he and his Government pursued measures which were in opposition to the nation's wishes and interests. In the straits to which he was thus reduced, Charles II. was but too glad to have recourse to Louis XIV., who freely permitted him access to his purse, that he might the more effectually advance the glory of France by lowering the prestige of England, and securing the co-operation of the English king in the execution of his projects, and more especially of those that had for their object the overthrow of Protestantism, which Louis XIV. deemed the great enemy of his throne and the great disturber of his kingdom. Thus Charles II., while he played the tyrant at home, was content to be the pensioner abroad.

The subserviency of the English Government to France was carried still further. After England had made peace with Holland the French king sent out his privateers, which scoured the Channel, made prizes of English merchantmen, and came so close in shore in these piratical expeditions, that our ships were seized at the very entrance of their harbours. The king's Government submitted to these insults, not indeed from any principle of Christian forbearance, but because it dared not demand reparation for the wrongs of its subjects at the hand of the King of France.<sup>1</sup> Instead of enforcing redress, insults were recompensed with favours, and vast stores of warlike ammunition, guns, iron, shot, gunpowder, pikes, and other weapons were sent across, to arm the fortresses and ships of France. This transportation of warlike material continued to go on, more or less openly, from June, 1675, to June, 1677.<sup>2</sup> Such was the reprisal we took of the French for burning our ships and robbing our merchants, as if King Charles were bent on doing what he had urged the Prince of Orange to do in respect of Holland, and were content to hold the sovereignty of England under the protection of France. The two crowns were drawn yet closer by the marriage of the king's brother, the Duke of York. His first wife, a daughter of Lord Clarendon, having died, Louis XIV. chose a second for him in the person of the Princess of Modena, a relation of the reigning Pope. The princess was a pensioner of France, and Louis XIV. admitted her husband to the same honour, by offering his purse to the duke, since their interests were now the same, to assist him against all his enemies.

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<sup>1</sup> We find the Lords of the Committee of Trade presenting to his Majesty in Council in 1676, in the name of all the merchants in London, a list of the ships taken by the French, amounting to fifty-four, and begging his Majesty's interference. (*A List of Several Ships belonging to the English Merchants, &c.*; Amsterdam, 1677.)

<sup>2</sup> Andrew Marvell, p. 69.

While one train of events was going forward, and the throne of England was being drawn over to the side of Rome, another train of events was in progress, tending to link that same throne to the Protestant interests. Another marriage, which took place soon after the duke's, paved the way for that great issue in which this complication of affairs was to end. The Prince of Orange, having finished his campaign of 1677, came across to England, accompanied by a noble retinue, to open marriage negotiations with the Princess Mary. This princess, the daughter of the Duke of York by his first wife, was a lady of graceful person and vigorous intellect, and the prince on seeing her was fascinated with her charms, and eagerly pressed his suit. After some delays on the part of the king and the duke, the marriage was at last arranged, and was consummated to the great joy of the people of both countries.<sup>1</sup> To that general satisfaction there was one exception. Louis XIV. was startled when he learned that an affair of such consequence had been transacted at a court where, during many years, nothing of moment had been concluded without his knowledge and advice. Our ambassador at Versailles, Montague, said that he had never seen the king so moved as on receiving this news. "The duke," he said, "had given his daughter to the greatest enemy he had in the world."<sup>2</sup> Men saw in it another proof that the great conqueror had begun to fall before the young Stadtholder. The marriage placed William in the line of succession to the English throne, though still there were between him and this high dignity the possible offspring of Charles II. and also James, Duke of York.

Meanwhile the kingdom was filled with priests and Jesuits. Their numbers had been recruited by new arrivals in the train of the Princess of Modena. Mass was said openly in the queen's chapel at Somerset House, and the professors of the Romish faith were raised to the highest offices of the kingdom. Charles wore the crown, but the Duke of York governed the nation. The king, abandoning himself to his pleasures, left the care of all affairs to his brother; whom, although a member of the Church of Rome, no one durst call a Papist without incurring the penalty of death. All who had eyes, and were willing to use them, might now see the religion of Rome marching like an armed man upon the liberties of England.

The Parliament was at last aroused, and set about concerting measures to save the country. They had often addressed the king on the matter, but in a manner so little in earnest that nothing came of it. If Charles was of any faith it was that of Rome, and his usual answer to the supplications of the Commons, praying him to take steps to prevent the growth of Popery, was the issue of a new proclamation, which neither hurt the Romanists nor benefited the Protestants. Now the Parliament, more in earnest, resolved to exclude all

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<sup>1</sup> Bowyer, *Hist. of William III.*, vol. i., pp. 95–97.

<sup>2</sup> Burnet, *Hist. of his own Time*, vol. ii., p. 13; Lond., 1815. the possible offspring of Charles II. and also James, Duke of York.

Papists from any share in the government. For this end the “Test Act” was framed. This Act required, “That all persons bearing any office, or place of trust and profit, shall take the oaths of Supremacy and Allegiance in public and open court, and shall also receive the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper according to the usage of the Church of England.” The swearer was also required to subscribe a declaration that he did not believe in Transubstantiation. This test aimed at a great deal, but it accomplished little. If it excluded the more honest of the professors of the Roman creed, and only these, for no test could bar the entrance of the Jesuit,<sup>1</sup> it equally excluded the Nonconformists from the service of the State. Immediately on the passing of the Bill, the Duke of York and the Lord Treasurer Clifford laid down all their offices. These were the first-fruits, but they were altogether deceptive; for while the duke professed to bow to the nation’s wishes by publicly stripping himself of his offices, he continued to wield in private all the influence he had before exercised openly.

The fears of the nation rose still higher. The Test Act had done little to shelter them from the storm they saw approaching, and they demanded other and greater securities. The duke had laid down his staff as commander of the army, but by- and-by he would grasp a yet mightier rod, the sceptre of England namely. The nation demanded his exclusion from the throne. There could be no permanent safety for the liberties of England, they believed, till the duke’s succession was declared illegal. The army lay encamped at Blackheath; this also aggravated the popular terror. The excuse pleaded by the court for stationing the army so near to London was the fear of the Dutch. The Dutch against whom the army are to act, said the people, are not so far off as Holland, they are the men who assemble in St. Stephen’s. The court has lost all hope of the Parliament establishing the Roman religion by law, and here is the army ready at a stroke to sweep away all Parliaments, and establish by the sword the Roman Church and arbitrary government. These suspicions were held as all but confirmed, when it was found that in the course of a single month not fewer than fifty-seven commissions were issued to Popish recusants, without demanding either the oath of supremacy or the test. The Secretary of State who countersigned the warrants was committed to the Tower by the Commons, but liberated next day by the king.

The alarm rose to a panic by an extraordinary occurrence which happened at this time, and which was enveloped in considerable mystery, from which it has not even yet been wholly freed. We refer to the Popish Plot. Few

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<sup>1</sup> “The reverend Fathers of the Society have given order to erect several private work-houses in England for case-hardening of consciences. The better to carry on this affair there are thousands of Italian vizards sent over, that shall make a wolf seem a sheep, and as rank a Papist as any in Spain pass for a good English Protestant.”—*The Popish Courant*, Dec. 11th, 1678. (*The Popish Courant* was published alternately with *The Weekly Pacquet of Advice from Rome*.)

things have so deeply convulsed England. The information was in some parts so inconsistent, incredible, and absurd, and in others so circumstantial, and so certainly true, and the story so fell in with the character of the times, which were prolific in strange surmises and unnatural and monstrously wicked devices, that few people doubted that a daring and widely ramified conspiracy was in progress for burying England and all its Protestant institutions in ruins. Titus Oates was the first to give information of this astounding project. Oates, who had received orders in the Church of England, but had reconciled himself to Rome, appeared before the king and Council, and stated in effect, "That there had been a plot carried on by Jesuits and other Catholics, against his Majesty's life, the Protestant religion, and the government of this kingdom." Oates was only half informed; he was to a large extent guessing, and hence the variations, mistakes, and contradictions into which he fell. He may have been partially admitted into the secret by the conspirators; but however he came by his knowledge, there can be no doubt that a plot there was. The papers of Coleman, the Jesuit, were seized, and these fully corroborated the substance of Oates' information. Coleman's letters during the three preceding years, addressed to Père la Chaise, the confessor of Louis XIV., left no doubt that he was in concert with high personages in France for restoring Popery in England. "We have here," says he in one of these, "a mighty work upon our hands, no less than the conversion of three kingdoms, and by that perhaps the utter subduing of a pestilent heresy, which has a long time domineered over this northern world. There were never such hopes since the death of our Queen Mary as now in our days. God has given us a prince," meaning the duke, "who has become (I may say by a miracle) zealous of being the author and instrument of so glorious a work; but the opposition we are sure to meet with is also like to be great; so that it imports us to get all the aid and assistance we can." In another letter he said, "I can scarce believe myself awake, or the thing real, when I think of a prince, in such an age as we live in, converted to such a degree of zeal and piety as not to regard anything in the world in comparison of God Almighty's glory, the salvation of his own soul, and the conversion of our poor kingdom."<sup>1</sup>

The murder of Sir Edmundbury Godfrey confirmed the popular suspicions, as well as deepened the fear in which the nation stood of the conspirators. Godfrey, who was the most popular magistrate in London, had been specially active in the discovery of the plot, and was the first to take the evidence of Oates relating to it. The Jesuits had dropped hints that he should pay dearly for his pains, and the good man himself knew this, and remarked that he believed he should be the first martyr; and so it happened. After he had been missing four days, his body was found in a ditch near Primrose Hill,

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<sup>1</sup> Hume, *Hist. Eng.*, chap. 67, sec. 3. Hallam, *Constitut. Hist.*, vol. ii., pp. 115, 116.

a mile's distance outside of London, and in such a posture as to make the world believe that he had murdered himself. His gloves and cane were lying on the bank near him, and his body was run through with his own sword. But there was neither blood on his clothes, nor other wound on his person, save a circular discoloration on his neck, showing that he had been strangled, as was afterwards found to have been the fact by the confession of one of his murderers, Prance.<sup>1</sup> The Parliament, from the evidence laid before it, was convinced of the existence of a plot, "contrived and carried on by Popish recusants for assassinating and murdering the king, subverting the Government, rooting out and destroying the Protestant religion." The House of Lords came to the same conclusion.

But seeing the plot, among other objects, contemplated the murder of the king, what motive had the Jesuits to seek to be rid of a man who was at heart friendly to them? Charles II., it was commonly believed, had been reconciled to Rome when at Breda. He was sincerely desirous of having the Roman religion restored in England, and a leading object of the secret treaty signed at Dover between France and England in 1670 was the advancement of the Popish faith in Great Britain. Nevertheless the object of the Jesuits in planning his assassination was transparent: Charles loved their Church, and would do all in his power to further her interests, but he would not sacrifice his crown and pleasures for her. Not so the Duke of York. A zealot, not a voluptuary, he would not stay to balance interests, but would go through with the design of restoring the Church of Rome at all hazards. James, therefore, was the sovereign whom the Jesuits wished to see upon the throne of England.

But the more the Jesuits strove to raise him to the throne, the more resolved were the people of England to exclude him from it. A Bill to that effect passed the House of Commons on November 15th, 1680, and was carried up to the House of Lords by Lord William Russell. It was thrown out of the Upper House by a majority of thirty voices. The contest, in which was involved the fate of Britain, continued. The Parliament struck, time after time, against the duke, but the king was staunch to his interests. The House of Lords and the bishops espoused his cause, and the duke triumphed. The Commons, despite their zeal, failed to alter the succession, or even to limit the prerogative.

But the duke, notwithstanding his victory in Parliament, found that the feeling of the nation, arising from the Popish plot, set strongly against him;

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<sup>1</sup> "Here is lately discovered a strange miracle, beyond that of St. Denis or St. Winifred. A gentleman first stifled and then strangled, that should afterwards get up and walk invisibly almost five miles, and then, having been dead four days before, run himself through with his own sword, to testify his trouble for wronging Catholic traitors whom he never injured." (*The Popish Courant*, Dec. 3rd, 1678.)

and now he set to work to discredit the plot, and to persuade the public that it never had existed save in the imagination of fanatics.<sup>1</sup> The skill of a general is shown in conducting a safe retreat as well as in ordering a successful charge. Treasons are never to be acknowledged unless they succeed. When the Gunpowder Plot failed it was disowned; the credulous were told that only a few desperadoes were concerned in it; in truth, that it was a State trick, a plot of Secretary Cecil against the Roman Catholics. The same tactics were pursued a second time. Writers were hired to render the Popish plot ridiculous, and laugh down the belief of it. One or two conspirators were executed, but in great haste, lest they should tell too much. Coleman, whose papers had supplied such strong evidence of the conspiracy, died protesting stoutly his innocence, and vindicating the duke.<sup>2</sup> But of what worth were such protestations? Treason and murder cease to be such when directed against heretics. To tell the truth at the last moment to the prejudice of the Church is to forfeit paradise; and it is even lawful to curse the Pope, provided it be done in his own interests.

Their success in getting the plot to be disbelieved not being equal to their expectations, the duke and his party next tried to throw it upon the shoulders of the Nonconformists. One of the arts employed for this purpose was to drop prepared papers in the houses of the chief persons concerned in the discovery of the Popish plot; and on their discovery—an easy matter, seeing those who had left them knew where to search for them—to proceed against those in whose dwellings they had been found. Colonel Hansel was one of the first to be arraigned on a charge so supported; but he was acquitted by the Attorney-General, who, in addition to finding Hansel innocent, declared that this appeared “a design of the Papists to lay the plot upon the Dissenters.” This judgment being accounted disloyal by the court, the Attorney-General was dismissed from his office.<sup>3</sup>

The charters of the City of London were next attacked.<sup>4</sup> Parliaments were summoned only to be dissolved. The king was weary of holding such troublesome assemblies. The tragedy of England’s ruin was proceeding apace. It was treason to lament the nation’s approaching fate. There were still a few in that evil time who had courage to open their mouth and plead for the sinking liberties and religion of their country. Among these we mention Johnson,

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<sup>1</sup> “The great work is now to damn that plot which we could not go through with.” (*The Popish Courant*, Feb. 24th, 1679.) *The Weekly Pacquet of Advice from Rome* was at this time seized by order of the court, and the author punished for printing without a licence; the celebration of the 5th of November was suppressed, and it was forbidden to mention the Popish plot, unless it were to attribute it to the Protestant fanatics.

<sup>2</sup> Burnet, *Hist. of his on Time*, vol. ii., pp. 49, 50.

<sup>3</sup> Bennet, *Memorial*, p. 283.

<sup>4</sup> Hume, *Hist. Eng.*, chap. 69, sec. 5.

who won for himself the high displeasure of the court by his *Julian*. This was a parallel between Popery and Paganism, based on the life of the great apostate, in which the author gave a scathing exposure of the doctrine of passive obedience. Johnson was amerced in a heavy fine, and sent to the prison of the King's Bench till it was paid.

Nobler victims followed. The Earl of Essex, Lord Bussell, and Algernon Sidney had met together to consult by what steps they might prevent the ruin of their country. England was a limited monarchy, and that gave its subjects, in their view, the right of resistance when the monarch exceeded his constitutional powers; otherwise, a limited monarchy meant nothing. The excess in the present case was flagrant, the Crown had broken through all restraints, and it behoved every patriot to do what in him lay to recall it within the boundaries of the constitution. So far, and no farther, had these men plotted. Against the life, and the constitutional rule of Charles Stuart, they had devised nothing. But, unhappily, the Rye House plot was contemporaneous with their consultation, and the Government found it an easy matter, by means of the false witnesses which such Governments have always at their command, to connect these patriots with a plot they had no concern in, and in truth abhorred. They were condemned to die. Lord Essex was murdered in the Tower; Russell and Sidney died on the scaffold. With the calmness and joy of Christian patriots they gave their blood for the Protestant religion and the constitutional liberty of Great Britain.<sup>1</sup> Thus the Popish plot, though it had missed its immediate object, gained virtually its end. Charles II. still lived; but the laws of England were being annulled, the nation had sunk deeper in despotism, the enemies of the duke had been destroyed, and his succession to the throne secured.

The work of destruction was carried still farther. No pains were spared to render Nonconformists odious. They were branded with vile names, they were loaded with the guilt of murderous plots, their enemies being intent on drawing upon them a tempest of popular vengeance. The Government had no lack of instruments for executing their base ends; but the hour yielded another agent more monstrous than any the court till now had at its service. This monster in human form was Jeffreys. Regarding neither law, nor reason, nor conscience, he was simply a ruffian in ermine. "All people," says Burnet, "were apprehensive of very black designs when they saw Jeffreys made Lord Chief Justice, who was scandalously vicious, and was drunk every day; besides a drunkenness in his temper that looked like enthusiasm."<sup>2</sup> He made his circuit like a lictor, not a judge; the business of his tribunal was transacted with an appalling dispatch. Nonconformity, at that judgment-seat, was held

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<sup>1</sup> Burnet, *Hist. of his own Time*, vol. ii., pp. 206–209.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. ii., p. 216.

to be the sum of all villainies; and when one chargeable with that crime appeared there he could look for nothing less fearful than death. Jeffreys scowled upon him, roared at him, poured a torrent of insulting and vilifying epithets upon him, and then ordered him to the gallows. "His behaviour," says Burnet, "was beyond anything that was ever heard of in a civilised nation." "On one circuit," says the same authority, "he hanged in several places about six hundred persons . . . England had never known anything like it."<sup>1</sup>

In the year 1683, as Jeffreys was making his northern circuit, he came to Newcastle-upon-Tyne. Here he was informed that some twenty young men of the town had formed themselves into a society, and met weekly for prayer and religious conversation. Jeffreys at once saw in these youths so many rebels and fanatics, and he ordered them to be apprehended. The young men were brought before his tribunal. A book of rules which they had drawn out for the regulation of their society was also produced, and was held by the judge as sufficient proof that they were a club of plotters. Fixing his contemptuous glance on one of them, whose looks and dress were somewhat meaner than the others, and judging him the most illiterate, he resolved to expose his ignorance, and hold him up as a fair sample of the rest. His name was Thomas Verner. "Can you read, sirrah?" said the judge. "Yes, my lord," answered Mr. Verner. "Reach him the book," said Jeffreys. The clerk of the court put his Latin Testament into the hand of the prisoner. The young man opened the book, and read the first verse his eye lighted upon. It was Matt. vii. 1, 2: "*Ne judicate, ne judicemini,*" &c. "Construe it, sirrah," roared the judge. The prisoner did so: "Judge not, that ye be not judged; for with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged." Even Jeffreys changed countenance, and sat a few minutes in a muse; but instantly recovering himself, he sent the young men to prison, where they lay a year, and would without doubt have been brought to the scaffold, had not the death of the king, which occurred in the meantime, led to their release.<sup>2</sup>

Meanwhile, the king's last hour was drawing nigh. To be surprised by death in the midst of his profligacies and tyrannies was a doom unspeakably terrible—far more terrible than any to which he was condemning his victims. Such was the fate of Charles II. The king had of late begun to reflect seriously upon the state of his affairs and the condition into which his kingdom had fallen, which bred him constant uneasiness. He complained of his confidence having been abused, and dropped a hurt with some warmth, that if he lived a month longer he would find a way to make himself easier the rest of his life. It was generally believed by those about the court that the king meant to send away the duke, and recall Monmouth from Holland, summon a new

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<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. ii., pp. 314, 315.

<sup>2</sup> Bennet, *Memorial*, pp. 290, 291.

Parliament, and have his son acknowledged as his successor. This involved an entire change of policy, and in particular an utter frustration of the cherished project of the Romanists, so surely, as they believed, approaching consummation. The king confided his plans to the Duchess of Portsmouth, the favourite mistress; she kept the secret from all save her confessor. Whether the confessor kept that secret we know not; what he would consider the higher good of the Church would, in this instance, release him from the obligation to secrecy, if he thought fit to break it. Be that as it may, the king, who had previously been in good health, was suddenly seized with a violent illness. The symptoms of the malady, all agreed, were those of poisoning. When it became evident that the king was dying, Priest Huddleston was admitted by a back door with the materials for mass, Charles received the Sacrament, and the host having stuck in his throat it was washed down with a draught of water. After this the king became calm. The English bishops were now admitted, but Charles paid no attention to their exhortations. He gave special directions to the duke his brother about his mistresses, but he spoke not a word of his wife, nor of his subjects, nor servants. What a mournful spectacle, what a chamber of horrors! Surprised by death in the midst of his harem! How ghastly his features, and how racking his pains, as he complains of the fire that burns within him! and yet his courtiers gaze with perfect indifference on the one, and listen with profound unconcern to the other. Behind him what a past of crime! Around him are two kingdoms groaning under his tyranny. Before him that great Tribunal before which Charles, as well as the humblest of his subjects, must give account of his stewardship; and yet he neither feels the burden of guilt, nor dreads the terrors of the reckoning. This utter callousness is the saddest feature in this sad scene. "No part of his character looked wickeder, as well as meaner," says Bishop Burnet, "than that he, all the while that he was professing to be of the Church of England, expressing both zeal and affection to it, was yet secretly reconciled to the Church of Rome: thus mocking God, and deceiving the world with so gross a prevarication. And his not having the honesty or courage to own it at the last: his not showing any sign of the least remorse for his ill-led life."<sup>1</sup> Charles II. died on the 6th of February, 1684, in the fifty-fourth year of his age. With his life departed all the homage and obsequiousness that had waited round the royal person; his corpse was treated almost as if it had been so much carrion; his burial was mean, and without the pomp that usually attended the funeral of the kings of England.

If one spoke of the king's death he had to be careful in what terms he did so. His words were caught up by invisible auditors, and a hand was stretched out from the darkness to punish the imprudence of indiscreet remarks. A

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<sup>1</sup> Burnet, *Hist. of his own Time*, vol. ii., p. 274.

physician who gave it as his opinion that the king had been poisoned was seized with a sudden illness, the symptoms of which closely resembled those of the king, whom he followed to the grave in a few days. But at Rome it was not necessary to observe the same circumspection. The death of Charles II. was there made the theme of certain orations, which eulogised it as singularly opportune, and it was delicately insinuated that his brother was not without some share in the merit of a deed that was destined to introduce a day of glory to the Roman Church and the realm of England. Misson has given a few extracts from these orations and epigrams which are somewhat curious. “James,” says the author of one of these pieces, “intending to notify to the gods his accession to the crown, that he might send the important message by an ambassador worthy of them and him, he sent his brother.”<sup>1</sup> And again, “His brother, who is to be his successor, adds wings to him that he may arrive sooner at heaven.”<sup>2</sup> The author of these orations, unable to restrain his transports at the accession of James, breaks out thus—“We will declare that he gives a new day to England; a day of joy; a day free from all obscurity. That kingdom enlightened by the setting of Charles, and the rising of James, shall suffer night no more. O happy England! a new constellation of twins, Charles and James, is risen in thy horizon. Cast thy eyes on them, and care no more for Castor and Pollux. At least divide thy veneration. And while Castor and Pollux will be the guides of thy ships, as they hitherto have been, let James and Charles conduct thee to heaven whither thou aspirest, as thou deservest it.”<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Misson, *Travels in Italy*, vol. II., part i., p. 218.

<sup>2</sup> “Regnaturus a tergo frater, alas Carolo ad cœlum addidit.” (Misson, vol. II, part ii., p. 666.)

<sup>3</sup> Misson, vol. II., part ii., p. 670.

## CHAPTER XXV.

### THE FIRST RISING OF THE SCOTTISH PRESBYTERIANS.

Barbarities—Inflexible Spirit of the Scots—Dragoons at Dairy—The Presbyterians of the West take Arms—Capture of Sir James Turner—The March to Lanark—They Swear the Covenant, and Publish a Declaration—Their Sufferings on the March—Arrive near Edinburgh—Battle of the Pentlands—Defeat of the Presbyterians— Prisoners—Their Trial and Execution—Neilson of Corsac and Hugh McKail—The Torture of the Boot—Execution of Hugh McKail—His Farewell.

IN returning to Scotland, as we once more do, it is necessary to go back some twenty years, and briefly narrate the dismal tragedy which was being enacted in the northern kingdom while the events which have occupied us in the last few chapters were passing in England. The last scene which we witnessed in Scotland was the ejection of four hundred ministers, and the irruption into their parishes and pulpits of an equal number of young men from the northern parts, who were totally devoid of learning, many of them being as devoid of morals; while all, by their glaring unfitness for their office, were objects of contempt to the people. The ejected ministers were followed to the woods and the moors by their parishioners, and dragoons were sent out to hunt for these worshippers in the wilderness, and bring them back to fill the churches their desertion had left empty. The men who acted for the Government in Scotland, brutal, unprincipled, and profligate, observed no measure in the cruelties they inflicted on a people whom they were resolved to bend to the yoke of a despotic monarch and an idolatrous Church. Indecencies of all sorts desecrated the hearths, and fines and violence desolated the homes of the Scottish peasantry. The business of life all but stood still. Virtue fled from the scene of such unhallowed outrage, and many families who had lived till then in affluence, become the sudden prey of greedy informers and riotous spoilers, sank into poverty and beggary. But the spirit of the nation would not yield. Every new oppression but deepened the resolution of the sufferers to stand by their Church and their country, despite all the attempts to corrupt the one and enslave the other. The glorious days of the past, the uplifted hands of their fathers, the majesty of their General Assemblies, the patriarchal and learned men who had preached the Word of Life to them, their own vows, all these grand memories came back upon them, and made it impossible for them to comply with the mandates of the court. Their resistance had so far been only passive, but now the hour was come when a passive resistance was to be exchanged for an active and organised opposition.

The first rising of the persecuted Presbyterians was owing to an occurrence purely accidental. On Tuesday morning, the 13th of November, 1666, four of the persecuted wanderers, whom cold and hunger had forced to leave

their solitudes amid the mountains of Glen-Ken, appeared in the village of Dalry, in Kirkcudbrightshire. They came just in time to prevent one of those outrages which were but too common at that time. A party of Sir James Turner's soldiers were levying fines in the village, and having seized an old man whose poverty rendered him unable to discharge his penalties, they were binding him hand and foot, and threatening to strip him naked and roast him on a gridiron. Shocked at the threatened barbarity, the wanderers interposed in behalf of the man. The soldiers drew upon them, and a scuffle ensued. One of the rescuing party fired his pistol, and wounded one of the soldiers, whereupon the party gave up their prisoner and their arms. Having been informed that another party of Turner's men were at that moment engaged in similar outrages at a little distance from the village, they resolved to go thither, and make them prisoners also. This they did with the help of some country-people<sup>1</sup> who had joined them on the way, killing one of the soldiers who had offered resistance.

All this was the work of an hour, and had been done on impulse. These countrymen had now time to reflect on what was likely to be the consequence of disarming and capturing the king's soldiers. They knew how vindictive Sir James was, and that he was sure to avenge in his own cruel way on the whole district the disgrace that his soldiers had sustained. They could not think of leaving the helpless people to his fury; they would keep together, and go on with the enterprise in which they had so unexpectedly embarked, though that too was a serious matter, seeing it was virtually to defy the Government. They mustered to the number of fifty horsemen and a few foot, and resolving to be beforehand with Sir James, marched to Dumfries, drank the king's health at the cross, and after this display of loyalty went straight to Turner's house and made him their prisoner. The revolt had broken out, and a special messenger, dispatched from Carlisle, carried the news to the king.

It happened that, a day or two before the occurrence at Dairy, Commissioner Rothes had set out for London. On presenting himself at Whitehall the king asked him, "What news from Scotland?" Rothes replied that "all was going well, and that the people were quiet." His majesty instantly handed him the despatch which he had received of the "horrid rebellion." The commissioner's confusion may be imagined. Charles had set up the machine of episcopacy to amplify his power in Scotland, and procure him a quiet reign; but here was an early presage of the troubles with which it was to fill his life. It had already dethroned him in the hearts of his Scottish subjects, and this was but an earnest of the greater calamities which were to strike his house after he was gone.

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<sup>1</sup> Wodrow, vol. ii., pp. 17, 18; Glasg., 1830. Kirkton, pp. 229–231. Blackadder, *Memoirs*, p. 130.

The party who had captured Sir James Turner turned northwards, carrying with them their prisoner, as a trophy of their courage. Their little army swelled in numbers as they advanced, by continual contributions from the towns and villages on the line of their march. Late on the evening of Sunday, the 25th of November, they reached Lanark. Their march thither had been accomplished under many disadvantages: they had to traverse deep moors; they had to endure a drenching rain, and to lie, wet and weary, in churches and barns at night, with a most inadequate supply of victuals.<sup>1</sup> Their resolution, however, did not flag. On the Monday the horse and foot mustered on the high street, one of their ministers mounted the Tolbooth stairs, preached, and after sermon read the Covenant, which the whole army, who were joined by several of the citizens, swore with uplifted hands. They next published a declaration setting forth the reason of their appearing in arms, namely, the defence of their Presbyterian government and the liberties of their country.<sup>2</sup> "Here," says Kirkton, "this rolling snow-ball was at the biggest." Their numbers were variously estimated at from 1,500 to 3,000, but they were necessarily deficient in both drill and arms. Sir James Turner, their enforced comrade, describes them as a set of brave, lusty fellows, well up in their exercises for the short time, and carrying arms of a very miscellaneous description. Besides the usual gun and sword, they were provided with scythes fixed on poles, forks, staves, and other' weapons of a rude sort. Had they now joined battle, victory would probably have declared in their favour, and if defeated they were in the midst of a friendly population who would have given them safe hiding. Unfortunately they gave credit to a report that the people of the Lothians and the citizens of Edinburgh but waited their approach to rise and join them. They continued their march to the east only to find the population less friendly, and their own number's, instead of increasing as they had expected, rapidly diminishing. The weather again broke. They were buffeted by torrents of rain and occasional snow-drifts; they marched along in deep roads, and crossed swollen rivers, to arrive at night foot-sore and hungry, with no place to sleep in, and scarcely any food to recruit their wearied strength. In this condition they advanced within five miles of Edinburgh, only to have their misfortunes crowned by being told that the citizens had closed their gates and mounted cannon on the walls to prevent their entrance. At this point, after several consultations among themselves, and the exchange of some communications with the Privy Council, they came to the resolution of returning to their homes.

With this view they marched round the eastern extremity of the Pentlands—a range of hills about six miles south of Edinburgh—with the intent

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<sup>1</sup> Kirkton, *Hist.*, pp. 234–236.

<sup>2</sup> The declaration is given in Wodrow, vol. ii., p. 25.

of pursuing them way along the south side of the chain to their homes. It was here that Dalziel with his army came up with them. The insurgents hastily mustered in order of battle, the foot in the centre and the horse on the two wings. The action was commenced by Dalziel's sending a troop of cavalry to attack the right wing of the enemy. The insurgents drove them back in confusion. A second attack was followed by the rout of the Government troops. There came still a third, which also ended in victory for the Presbyterians, and had their cavalry been able to pursue, the day would have been won. Dalziel now saw that he had not silly and fanatical countrymen to deal with, but resolute fighters, ill-armed, way-worn, and faint through sleeplessness and hunger, but withal of a tougher spirit than his own well-drilled and well-fed dragoons; and he waited till the main body should arrive, which it now did through a defile in the hills close by the scene of the action. The odds were now very unequal. The Presbyterian host did not exceed 900, the Government army was not less than 3,000. Dalziel now moved his masses to the assault. The sun had gone down, and the sombre shadows of a winter twilight were being projected from the summits above them as the two armies closed in conflict. The insurgents, under their courageous and skilful leader, Captain Wallace, fought gallantly, but they were finally borne down by numbers. As the night fell the fighting ended; in truth, they had prolonged the contest, not for the coming of victory, which now they dared not hope for, but for the coming of darkness to cover their flight. Leaving fifty of their number dead on the battle-field of Bullion Green—for such was the name of the spot on which it was fought—the rest, excepting those taken prisoners, who were about 100, made their escape over the hills or along their southern slopes towards their native shires in the west.<sup>1</sup>

The slaughter begun on the battle-field was continued in the courts of law. The prisoners were brought to Edinburgh, crowded into various prisons, and brought to their trial before a tribunal where death more certainly awaited them than on the battle-field. Fifty had fallen by the sword on Bullion Green, but a greater number were to die on the gallows. In the absence of Rothes it fell to the primate, Sharp, to preside in the Council, “and being now a time of war, several of the lords grumbled very much, and spared not to say openly with oaths, ‘Have we none in Scotland to give order’s in such a juncture but a priest?’”<sup>2</sup> Sharp, on being told of the rising, was seized with something like panic. In his consternation he wrote urgent letters to have the king’s army sent down from the north of England, and, meanwhile, he proposed that the Council should shut themselves up in the castle. His terrified imagination pictured himself surrounded on all sides by rebels. But when he received the

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<sup>1</sup> Kirkton, pp. 242, 245. Burnet, vol i., p. 303.

<sup>2</sup> Wodrow, *Hist.*, vol. ii., p. 20.

news of the defeat of the insurgents, “then,” says Burnet, “the common observation that cruelty and cowardice go together, was too visibly verified.”<sup>1</sup> The prisoners had been admitted to quarter by the soldiers on the battle-field, and in all common justice this ought to have been held as the king’s promise of their lives. The clerical members of Council, however, refused to take that view of the matter, insisting that the quarter to which they had been admitted was no protection, the war being one of rebellion. They were tried, condemned, and executed in batches. With such speed were these judicial murders carried through, that the first ten, who were mostly men of property, suffered only a few days after the battle. They were sentenced to be hanged at the Cross of Edinburgh, their heads to be dispersed over the country, and affixed as monuments in the principal cities, and their right arms to be exposed on the Tolbooth of Lanark, where their hands had been lifted up to swear the National Covenant. They all died with undaunted courage. They might have saved their lives by subscribing the declaration of submission to the bishops, but all of them refused. They fell a sacrifice to Prelacy, giving their blood in opposition to those manifold evils which had rushed in like a torrent upon their country through the destruction of its Presbyterian Government. Nor did their punishment end with their lives. Their families were plundered after their death; their substance was swallowed up in fines, and their lands were confiscated. Their homes were invaded by soldiers, and the inmates driven out to a life of poverty in their own country, or to wander as exiles in a foreign land.<sup>2</sup>

One batch of prisoners succeeded another on the gallows till all were disposed of. “It was a moving sight,” says Burnet, “to see ten of the prisoners hanged upon one gibbet at Edinburgh. Thirty-five more were sent to their counties, and hanged up before their own doors, their ministers (the curates) all the while using them hardly, and declaring them damned for their rebellion.”<sup>3</sup>

Among these sufferers there are two over whose last hours we shall pause a little. These are Mr. John Neilson of Corsac, and Mr. Hugh McKail, a minister. Both were made to undergo the torture of the boot in prison, the Council reviving in their case a horrible practice which had not been known in Scotland in the memory of living man.<sup>4</sup> The object of their persecutors in subjecting them to this terrible ordeal was to extort from them information respecting the origin of the insurrection. The rising had been wholly unpremeditated. Nevertheless the judges continued the infliction, although the two

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<sup>1</sup> Burnet, *Hist. of his own Time*, vol. i., p. 303.

<sup>2</sup> Wodrow, *Hist.*, vol. ii., pp. 43–51. Kirkton, *Hist.*, pp. 248, 249.

<sup>3</sup> Burnet, *Hist. of his own Time*, vol. i., p. 304.

<sup>4</sup> The boot consisted of four narrow boards nailed together, so as to form a case for the leg. The limb being laid in it, wedges were driven down, which caused intolerable pain, and frequently mangled the leg to the extent of bruising both bone and marrow.

tortured men protested that it was impossible to disclose a plot which never existed. The shrieks of Neilson were heartrending; but the only effect they had upon the judges was to bid the executioner strike yet again.<sup>1</sup> The younger and feebler prisoner stood the infliction better than the other. The slender and delicate leg of the young McKail was laid in the boot; the hammer fell, the wedge was driven down, a pang as of burning fire shot along the leg, making every limb and feature of the prisoner to quiver. McKail uttered no groan. Six, seven, eight, ten strokes were given; the hammer was raised for yet another; the sufferer solemnly protested in the sight of God “that he could say no more, although every joint in his body was in as great torture as that poor leg.”

The real offence of McKail was not his joining the insurgents, but his having preached in the high church of Edinburgh on the Sunday preceding that on which the “Four Hundred” were ejected, and having used some expressions which were generally understood to be levelled at the Archbishop of St. Andrews. The young minister took occasion to refer in his sermon to the sufferings of the Church, saying that “the Scripture doth abundantly evidence that the people of God have sometimes been persecuted by a Pharaoh upon the throne, sometimes by a Haman in the State, and sometimes by a Judas in the Church.” The hearers had no difficulty in finding the living representatives of all three, and especially of the last, who stood preeminent among the dark figures around him for his relentless cruelty and unfathomable perfidy. The words changed Sharp into a pillar of salt: he was henceforth known as “the Judas of the Scottish Kirk.”

When Hugh McKail was sentenced to the gallows he was only twenty-six years of age. He was a person of excellent education, great elevation of soul, an impressive eloquence, and his person seemed to have moulded itself so as to shadow forth the noble lineaments of the spirit that dwelt within it. He had a freshness and even gaiety of mind which the near approach of a violent death could not extinguish. On entering the prison after his trial, some one asked him how his limb was. “The fear of my neck,” he replied, “makes me forget my leg.” In prison he discoursed sweetly and encouragingly to his fellow-sufferers. On the night before his execution he laid him down, and sank into quiet sleep. When he appeared on the scaffold it was with a countenance so sweet and grave, and an air so serene and joyous, that he seemed to the spectators rather like one coming out of death than one entering into it. “There was such a lamentation,” says Kirkton, “as was never known in Scotland before; not one dry cheek upon all the street, or in all the numberless windows in the market-place.”<sup>2</sup> Having ended his last words to the people,

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<sup>1</sup> Wodrow, *Hist.*, vol. ii., p. 53.

<sup>2</sup> Kirkton, *Hist.*, p. 249.

he took hold of the ladder to go up. He paused, and turning yet again to the crowd, he said, "I care no more to go up that ladder and over it than if I were going to my father's house."

Having mounted to the top of the ladder, he lifted the napkin that covered his face, that he might utter a few more last words. Never was sublimer or more pathetic farewell spoken.

"And now I leave off to speak any more with creatures, and begin my intercourse with God which shall never be broken off! Farewell, father and mother, friends and relations! Farewell, the world and all delights! Farewell, sun, moon, and stars! Welcome, God and Father! Welcome, sweet Jesus Christ, the Mediator of the New Covenant! Welcome, blessed Spirit of Grace, the God of all consolation! Welcome, glory! Welcome, eternal life! AND WELCOME, DEATH!"

## CHAPTER XXVI.

### THE FIELD-PREACHING OR "CONVENTICLE."

Scotland to be Crushed—Thomas Dalziel of Binns—His Character—Barbarities exercised by his Soldiers—A Breathing Time—Duke Lauderdale—The Indulgence—Its Fruits—The Accommodation—Failure of both Plans—The Conventicle—Field-preaching at East Nisbet, Mearse—Place of Meeting—The Assembling—The Guards—The Psalm—The Prayer—The Sermon—The Communion-tables—The Communicants—The Communicating—Other Services—Blackadder's Account—Terror of the Government.

THE insurgent Covenanters were condemned and executed as rebels. In a constitutional country the law is the king, and whoever rises up against it, be he sovereign or subject, he is the rebel. The opposite doctrine is one which is fit only for slaves.

The Government, feeling themselves to be the real law-breakers, were haunted by the continual fear of insurrection. Having suppressed the Pentland rising, they scattered over the kingdom, and exposed to public view in its chief cities, the heads and other ghastly remains of the poor sufferers, to warn all of the danger they should incur by any disobedience to the edicts or any resistance to the violence of the ruling party. But the Government could not deem themselves secure till the spirit of the people had been utterly crushed, and the down-trodden country rendered incapable of offering any resistance. In order to reach this end they resolved to begin a reign of terror. In Thomas Dalziel of Binns, whom we have already named, they found an instrument admirably adapted for their purpose. This man united the not un-congenial characters of fanatic and savage. If ever he had possessed any of the "milk of human kindness," he had got quit of what certainly would have been a great disqualification for the work now put into his hands. In his wars among the Tartars and Turks his naturally cruel disposition had been rendered utterly callous; in short, he had grown not less the Turk than any of those with whom he did battle. From these distant campaigns he returned to inflict on his countrymen and countrywomen the horrid cruelties which he had seen and practised abroad.

His outward man was a correct index of the fierce, fiery, fanatical, and malignant spirit that dwelt within it. His figure was gaunt and weird. To have seen the man striding along at a rapid pace, with his flinty face, his hard cheek-bones, his gleaming eyes, his streaming beard—for he had not shaved since Charles I. was beheaded—and his close-fitting antique dress, making him so spectrelike, one would have thought that he was other than an inhabitant of earth. The air of hurry and violence that hung about him betokened him crazy as well as cruel.

This man was sent by the Government to be the scourge of the Presbyterians in the western counties of Scotland. He was accompanied by a regiment of soldiers quite worthy of their leader. Void of every soldierly quality, they were simply a horde of profligates and ruffians. Terror, wretchedness, and misery overspread the country on their approach. Dalziel tortured whom he would, shot men on the most venial charges without any forms of law, hung up people by the arms all night, and threw women into prisons and holes filled with snakes.<sup>1</sup> Of the exploits of this modem Attila and his Huns, Bishop Burnet gives us the following account. "The forces," says he, "were ordered to lie in the west, where Dalziel acted the Muscovite too grossly. He threatened to spit men and to roast them; and he killed some in cold blood, or rather in hot blood, for he was then drunk when he ordered one to be hanged because he would not tell where his father was, for whom he was in search. When he heard of any who did not go to church, he did not trouble himself to set a fine upon him, but he set as many soldiers upon him as should eat him up in a night. . . . The clergy (the curates) never interceded for any compassion to their people. Nor did they take care to live more regularly, or to labour more carefully. They looked on the soldiery as their patrons, they were ever in their company, complying with them in their excesses; and if they were not much wronged, they rather led them into them, than checked them for them."<sup>2</sup> These oppressions but burned the deeper into the nation's heart a detestation of the system which it was sought to thrust upon it.

In 1667 came a lull in the tempest. This short calm was owing to various causes. The cry of Scotland had reached even the ears of Charles II., and he sent down Lauderdale, who had not quite forgotten that he had once been a Presbyterian, and was still a Scotsman, to take the place of the cruel and profligate Rothes. The policy of the Court of London had also undergone a change for the better, though not from the high principles of justice, but the low motives of interest. A tolerant policy towards the English Nonconformists was deemed the likeliest way of disarming the opposition of the enemies of the Duke of York, who was known, though he had not yet avowed it, to be a Papist, and the only means of paving his way to the throne; and Scotland was permitted to share with England in this milder *régime*. Its administrators were changed, the standing army was disbanded, much to the chagrin of those who were enriching themselves by its plunder, and Sharp was bidden confine himself to his diocese of St. Andrews.<sup>3</sup> Thus there came a breathing-space, to the afflicted country.

Lauderdale opened his administration in Scotland with an attempted reconciliation between Presbyterianism and Prelacy. In one respect he was well

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<sup>1</sup> Kirkton, *Hist.*, pp. 906, 257.

<sup>2</sup> Burnet, *Hist. of his own Time*, vol. i., p. 306.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 307–309. Kirkton, *Hist.*, pp. 269–271.

qualified for the work, for having no religion of his own he was equally indifferent to that of the two parties between whom he now undertook to mediate. Nature had endowed Lauderdale with great talents, but with nothing else. He was coarse, mean, selfish, without a spark of honour or generosity, greedy of power, yet greedier of money, arrogant to those beneath him, and cringing and abject to his superiors. His bloated features were the index of the vile passions to which he often gave way, and the low excesses in which he habitually indulged. It was easy to see that should he fail in his project of reconciling the two parties, and, on the basis of their union, of managing the country, his violent temper and unprincipled ambition would hurry him into cruelties not less great than those which had made his predecessor infamous.

The new policy bore fruit at last in an Indulgence. In 1669 a letter arrived from the king, granting a qualified liberty to the outed ministers. If willing to receive collation from the bishop, the ministers were to be inducted into vacant parishes and to enjoy the whole benefice; if unwilling to acknowledge the bishop, they were nevertheless to be at liberty to preach, but were to enjoy no temporality save the glebe and manse. This Indulgence grew out of a despair on the part of Government of ever compelling the people to return to the parish churches and place themselves under the ministry of the curates; and rather than permit the country to relapse into heathenism they granted a limited permission to the Presbyterian pastors to discharge their office. The Government, moreover, foresaw that this would divide the Presbyterians. And in truth this consequence followed to a deplorable extent. Those who accepted the Government's favour were accused by their brethren who declined it of homologating the royal supremacy, and were styled the "king's curates;" while, on the other hand, those who stood out against the Indulgence were regarded by the Government as impracticable, and were visited with greater severities than ever. Those who took advantage of the Indulgence to resume their functions might justly plead that the king's letter only removed an external violence, which had restrained them from the exercise of an office which they held from a Higher than Charles, and that their preaching in no sense traversed the great fundamental article of Presbyterianism, namely, that Christ is the sole fountain of all office in his Church. Nevertheless, their conduct tended somewhat to obscure this vital article, and moreover the unbroken union of Presbyterianism was a far greater good than any benefit they could expect to reap from availing themselves of the royal licence. This union was sacrificed by the acceptance of the Indulgence, and heats and animosities began to embitter their spirit, and weaken the Presbyterian phalanx.

The Government made trial of yet another plan. This was the proposal of Archbishop Leighton, now translated to the See of Glasgow, and is known as the Accommodation. The archbishop's scheme was a blending of the two

forms of Prelacy and Presbytery. It was proposed that the bishop should keep his place at the head of the Church and wield its government, but that in doing so he should to some extent make use of the machinery of Presbyterianism. It was easy to see that this method could not long endure; the Presbyterian admixture would speedily be purged out, and only Prelacy, pure and simple, would remain. The scheme was never brought into operation. The amiable and pious archbishop bemoaned its failure; but he ought to have reflected that the men whose unreasonable obstinacy, as doubtless he deemed it, had defeated his project, were maintaining views which subjected them to fines, imprisonment, and death, and in which, therefore, it was to be presumed they were entirely conscientious, whereas he, though doubtless equally conscientious, had no such opportunity of giving proof of it, inasmuch as his sentiments, happily for himself, were in accordance with his interests and honours.

These plans and others to allay the opposition of Scotland, and quietly plant Prelacy and arbitrary government, had been tried, and had all failed. What was now to be done? There remained to the Government only the alternative of confessing their defeat, and desisting from further attempts, or of falling back once more upon the sword. Those who were pushing on the Government have no such word in their vocabulary as “desist.” They may pause, or turn aside for a little, but they never desist. They stop only when they have arrived at success or ruin. The Government was still deliberating whether to turn back or go forward when there appeared on the horizon of Scotland another sign, to them most portentous and menacing. That Presbyterianism which they had driven out of the churches, and were trying to extirpate with the sword, was rising up in the wilds and moorlands to which they had chased it, mightier and more courageous than ever. The outed Presbyterians had found a sanctuary in the heart of their mountains or amid the solitudes of their moorlands; and there, environed by the majestic peaks or the scarcely less sublime spaces of the silent wilderness, they worshipped the Eternal in a temple of his own roaring. Never had the Gospel possessed such power, or their hearts been so melted under it, as when it was preached to them in these wilds; and never had their Communion Sabbaths been so sweet and hallowed as when their table was spread on the moorland or on the mountain; nor had their psalm been ever sung with such thrilling rapture as when its strains, rising into the open vault, died away on the wilds. This they felt was worship, the worship of the heart—real, fervent, sublime.

It will brighten this dark page of our history to place upon it a little picture of one of these gatherings, where children of the Covenant worshipped, far from city and temple, in the holy calm of the wilderness. We shall take an actual scene. It is the year 1677. The Communion is to be celebrated on a certain Sunday in the Mearse, in the south of Scotland. Notice of the

gathering has been circulated by trusty messengers some time before, and when the day arrives thousands are seen converging on the appointed spot from all points of the horizon. The place chosen is a little oblong hollow on the banks of the Whitadder, its verdant and level bosom enclosed on all sides by ascending grassy slopes. Here, as in an amphitheatre, gather the crowd of worshippers. There is no hurry or distraction, each as he enters takes his place in silence, till at length not only is the bottom of the hollow covered like floor of church, but the worshippers overflow, and occupy row on row the slopes that form its enclosure. At the head of the little plain there is a low mound, which serves as a pulpit. There stands the minister about to begin the service. His white locks and furrowed face tell of suffering; he is there at the peril of life, but he betrays no fear and he feels none. He is a true servant of Him who planted the mountains that rise round him, and hung the azure vault above them. The Almighty wing covers him.

Around this congregation of unarmed worshippers, a little way off, are posted a troop of horsemen, who keep watch and ward over the assembly. They may amount to a hundred, and are variously armed. It may be that the dragoons of Dalziel are on the search, or that some of the persecutors have got notice of their meeting, and intend dispersing it with murderous violence. It is to prevent any surprise of this sort that armed scouts are stationed all round them. Outside the first circle of watchers is a second, farther off, and amounting, it may be, to a score of horsemen in all. There is still a third line of watchers. Some dozen men ride out into the wilds, and disposing themselves in a wide circuit, sit there on horseback, their eyes fixed on the distant horizon, ready, the moment the figure of trooper appears on the far-off edge of the moor, to signal his approach to the circle behind them, as they to the inner line. In this way an extent of country some fifty miles in circuit is observed, and the congregation within its triple line worship in comparative security, knowing that should danger appear they will have time to escape, or prepare for its approach.

The day was one of the loveliest that the Scottish summer affords. The sky was without a cloud, and the air was perfectly calm. No gust of wind broke the cadence of the speaker's voice, or lost to the assembly a word of what he uttered. The worship is commenced with praise. The psalm is first read by the minister; then its notes may be heard rising in soft sweet strains from those immediately around him. Anon it swells into fuller volume, waxing ever louder and loftier as voice after voice strikes in. Now the whole assembly have joined in the psalm, and the climax of the praise is reached. The majestic anthem fills the dome over them. It pauses, and again it bursts out; again its melodious numbers ascend into the sky; again they roll away over the face of the wilderness, awakening its silence into song. The moorland begins to sing with its children.

The psalm ended, prayer is offered. The feeling that he is the channel through which the petitions and thanksgivings of the thousands around him are ascending to the Mercy-seat deepens the solemnity of the minister, and enkindles his fervour. With what reverence he addresses the “Most High!” How earnestly he pleads, how admirable the order in which his supplications arrange themselves, and how chaste and beautiful the words in which they are expressed! After the prayer the text is read out, and the sermon commences.

The preacher on the occasion of which we speak was Mr. John Welsh, and his text was selected from the Song of Solomon, ii., 11, 12—that sweetest of all lyrics, which paints the passing away of winter of the Old Economy, and the coming of the spring-time of the Gospel, as comes the Eastern spring with its affluence of verdure, and blossoms, and songs:—“Lo, the winter is past: the rain is over and gone: the flowers appear on the earth: the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land.” The preacher took occasion to refer to the spring-time of the Reformation in Scotland, when the earth was so green, and the skies so fair. Its short summer had been chased away by a winter of black tempests, but not finally, nor for long, he was assured. The Scottish earth would again grow mollient, its skies would clear up, and the Gospel would again be heard in its now silent pulpits. The sight around him showed that the Evangelical Vine had struck its roots too deeply in the soil to be overturned by the tempests of tyranny, or blighted by the mephitic air of a returning superstition. The sermon ended, there followed, amid the deep stillness of the multitude, the prayer of consecration. The communicants now came forward and seated themselves at the Communion-tables, which were arranged much as in an ordinary church. Two parallel tables, covered with a pure white cloth, ran along the plane of the hollow: these were joined at the upper end by a cross table, on which were placed the bread and the wine. The persons seated at the table were no promiscuous crowd. Though set up in the open wilds, the ministers never forgot that the Communion-table was “holy,” and that none but the disciples of the Saviour could be, in their opinion, worthy communicants. Accordingly, as was the custom among the French Huguenots, so also with the Scottish Covenanters, the usual “token” was given to the people on the Saturday preceding, and this “pass” no one could obtain unless he was known to be of Christian deportment. To rally round the war-standard of the Covenant did not of itself entitle one to a seat at the Communion-table, for well did the leaders know that in character and not in numbers lay the strength of the movement. While the bread and cup were being distributed, a minister addressed the communicants in a suitable exhortation. The elders, who were generally men of position, and always men of known piety, waited at table: when one body of communicants had partaken they rose, and others took their places. On the

present occasion there were not fewer than sixteen successive tables: and as the number that each table accommodated was not less than 200, the entire body of persons who that day joined in the celebration of the Lord's Supper could not be below 3,200. Others were present besides the communicants, and the entire assemblage could not be reckoned at less than between 4,000 and 5,000. The services were conducted by five ministers. After "celebration," another sermon was preached by Mr. Dickson, who took for his text Gen. xxii. 14: "And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovah-jireh: as it is said to this day, In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen." The duty he pressed on his hearers was that of walking by faith through the darkness of the night now covering them, till they should come to the mount where the day of deliverance would break upon them. The services were not confined to the Communion Sunday, but included the day before and the day after; the people thus remained three days on the spot, retiring every night from their place of meeting, marshalled in rank and file under their guards; and returning to it, in the same order, next morning. They found resting-places for the night in the villages and farmhouses in the neighbourhood; their provisions they had brought with them, or they purchased with money what they needed.

Before quitting a spot to be sacred ever after, doubtless, in their memory, three sermons were preached on the Monday—the first by Mr. Dickson, the second by Mr. Riddel, and the third by Mr. Blackadder. The same man who closed these public services has left us his impression of this memorable scene. "Though the people at first meeting," says Mr. Blackadder, "were something apprehensive of hazard, yet from the time the work was entered upon till the close of it, they were neither alarmed nor affrighted, but sat as composed, and the work was as orderly gone about, as if it had been in the days of the greatest peace and quiet. For there, indeed, was to be seen the goings of God, even the goings of their God and King in that sanctuary, which was encouraging to them, and terrible to his and their enemies out of his holy place. . . . Many great days of the Son of Man have been seen in thee, O now how desolate Kirk of Scotland! but few like this."<sup>1</sup>

These field-preachings were in truth regarded with terror by the Government. The men who ruled Scotland would rather have seen ten thousand warriors arrayed against them in battle, than have beheld these men and women, armed only with prayers and patience, assembling in the wilds, and there bowing in worship before the God of heaven. And, indeed, the Government had good reason for fear; for it was at the conventicle that the nation's heart was fed, and its courage recruited. While these gatherings were kept up, in vain were all the edicts with which the persecutors proscribed

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<sup>1</sup> Blackadder, *Memoirs*, MS. copy.

Presbyterianism, in vain the swords and scaffolds with which they sought to suppress it. The field-preachings multiplied soldiers for fighting the battles of religion and liberty faster than their dragoons could shoot them down on the moors, or their hangmen strangle them in the Grass Market.

## CHAPTER XXVII.

### DRUMCLOG—BOTHWELL BRIDGE—THE “KILLING TIMES.”

The Conventicle to be Crushed—Storm of Edicts—Letters of Intercommuning—Sharp’s New Edict—His Assassination—The Highland Host—Graham of Claverhouse—His Defeat at Drumclog—Dissensions in the Covenanters’ Camp—Battle of Bothwell Bridge—Prisoners—They are Penned in Greyfriars’ Churchyard—Shipped off to Barbadoes—The “Killing Times”—James II.—His Toleration—The Sanquhar Declaration—The Stuarts Disowned—The Last Two Martyrs, Argyle and Renwick—Importance of the Covenanting Struggle.

DESPAIRING of being able to go through with their designs so long as the field-preachings were permitted to take place, the Privy Council summoned all their powers to the suppression of these assemblages. Lauderdale’s insolence and tyranny had now reached their fullest development. He was at this time, all-powerful at court; he could, as a consequence, govern Scotland as he listed; but proud and powerful as he was, Sharp continued to make him his tool, and as the conventicle was the special object of the primate’s abhorrence, Lauderdale was compelled to put forth his whole power to crush it. The conventicle was denounced as a rendezvous of rebellion, and a rain of edicts was directed against it. All persons attending field-preachings were to be punished with fine and confiscation of their property. Those informing against them were to share the fines and the property confiscated, save when it chanced to be the estate of a landlord that fell under the Act. These good things the Privy Council kept for themselves, Lauderdale sometimes carrying off the lion’s share. Magistrates were enjoined to see that no conventicle was held within their burgh; landlords were taken bound for their tenants; masters for their servants; and if any should transgress in this respect, by stealing away to hear one of the outed ministers, his superior, whether magistrate, landlord, or master, was to denounce or punish the culprit; and failing to do so, was himself to incur the penalties he ought to have inflicted upon his dependants. These unrighteous edicts received rigorous execution, and sums were extorted thereby which amazed one when he reflected to what extent the country had suffered from previous pillagings. It was not enough, in order to escape this legal robbery, that one eschewed the conventicle; he must be in his place in the parish church on Sunday; for every day’s absence he was liable to a fine.<sup>1</sup>

The misery of the country was still further deepened by the machinery which was set up for the working of this system of ruinous oppression. The Privy Council, too large, it was judged, for the quick dispatch of business,

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<sup>1</sup> Wodrow, *Hist. of Church of Scotland*, bk. ii., chap. 12. Aikman, *Hist. of Scotland*, vol. iv., p. 603.

was reduced to a "Committee of Affairs." Sharp was president, and with him were associated two or three others, true yoke-fellows of the "Red Pimate." This court was bound by no statute, it permitted no appeal, and like the cave of ancient story, although many footsteps could be seen going in, there were none visible coming out. Another means of executing the cruel laws which had replaced the ancient statutes of the kingdom, was to raise an additional force, and place garrisons in the more disaffected shires. This, again, necessitated a "cess," which was felt to be doubly grievous, inasmuch as it obliged the country to furnish the means of its own destruction. The peasantry had to pay for the soldiers who were to pillage, torture, and murder them. A yet further piece of ingenious wickedness were the "Letters of Intercommuning," which were issued by the Government against the more eminent Presbyterians. Those against whom these missives were fulminated were cut off from human society: no friend, no relation, durst give them a night's lodging, or a meal, or a cup of cold water, or address a word or a letter to them; they were forbidden all help and sympathy of their fellow-creatures. For a minister to preach in the fields was to incur the penalty of death, and a price was set upon his head. The nation was divided into two classes, the oppressors and the oppressed. Government had become a system of lawless tribunals, of arbitrary edicts, of spies, imprisonings, and murderings. Such was the state of Scotland in the year 1676. Nevertheless, the conventicle still flourished.

Till the field-preaching was entirely and utterly swept away, the persecutor felt that he had accomplished nothing. After all the severities he had put in force, would it be possible to find more rigorous means of suppression? The persecutor's invention was not yet at an end. More tenable severities were devised; and Sharp proposed and earned in Council the most atrocious edict which had yet been passed. The edict in question was no less than to make it a capital crime on the part of any to attend a field-preaching in arms. This was, in fact, to pass sentence of death on four-fifths of the people of Scotland;<sup>1</sup> in some districts the entire population came within the scope of the penalty. But so it was: it was death to be present at a field-preaching; and judges, officers, and even sergeants were empowered to kill on the spot, as traitors, all persons whom they found going armed to the conventicle. This barbarous law only nursed what the Government wished to extirpate. If liable to be murdered by any Government official or spy who met him, what could the man so threatened do but carry arms? Thus the congregation became a camp; the attendees on field-preachings came prepared to fight as well as to worship; and thus were the Covenanters forced by the Government into incipient war.

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<sup>1</sup> Aikman, *Hist. of Scotland*, vol. iv., p. 603.

Through Sharp's influence and cruelty mainly had this unbearable state of matters been realised. His violence at last provoked a terrible retaliation. Only a few days before his departure for London, where the atrocious edict of his own drafting was afterwards ratified by the king, he was surprised at a lonely spot on Magus Moor, as he was passing (3rd May, 1679) from Edinburgh to St. Andrews, dragged from his carnage, and massacred. This was a great crime. The French statesman would have said it was worse—it was a great blunder; and indeed it was so, for though we know of no Presbyterian who justified the act, its guilt was imputed to the whole Presbyterian body, and it furnished a pretext for letting loose upon them a more ferocious and exterminating violence than any to which they had yet been subjected. The edict lived after its author, and his assassination only secured its more merciless and rigorous enforcement.

In this terrible drama one bloody phase is succeeded by a bloodier, and one cruel actor is followed by another still more cruel and ferocious. The Government, in want of soldiers to carry out their measures on the scale now contemplated, turned their eyes to the same quarter whence they had obtained a supply of curates. An army of some 10,000 Highlanders was brought down from the Popish north,<sup>1</sup> to spoil and torture the inhabitants of the western Lowlands. This Highland host, as it was termed, came armed with field-pieces, muskets, daggers, and spades, as if to be occupied against some great fortified camp; they brought with them also shackles to bind and lead away prisoners, whose ransom would add to the spoil they might take in war. These savages, who neither knew nor cared anything about the quarrel, were not a little surprised, on arriving in the shires of Lanark and Ayr, to see neither army nor fortified city, but, on the contrary, the pursuits of peaceful life going calmly on in the workshops and fields. Defrauded of the pleasure of fighting, they betook them to the more lucrative business of stealing. They quartered themselves where they chose, made the family supply them with strong drink, rifled lock-fast places, drew their dirks on the slightest provocation, and by threats and tortures compelled the inmates of the houses they had invaded to reveal the places in which their valuables were hidden. At the end of two months they were withdrawn, the Government themselves having become ashamed of them, and being disappointed that the population, by submitting patiently to this infliction, had escaped the massacre which insurrection would have drawn down upon them from this ruthless horde. This host returned to their native hills, loaded with the multifarious spoil which they had gathered in their incursion. "When this goodly army retreated

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<sup>1</sup> Wodrow, *Hist. Ch. of Scotland*, bk. ii., ch. 13.

homewards,” says Kirkton, “you would have thought by their baggage that they had been at the sack of a besieged city.”<sup>1</sup>

John Graham of Claverhouse and his dragoons next appear upon the scene. His troops are seen scouring the country, now skirmishing with a party of Covenanters, now attacking a field-meeting, and dyeing the heather with the blood of the worshippers, and now shooting peasants in cold blood in the fields, or murdering them at their own doors. Defeat checked for a little their career of riot, profanity, and blood. It is Sunday morning, the 1st of June, 1679. On the strath that runs eastward from Loudon Hill, Avondale, the Covenanters had resolved to meet that day for worship. The rounded eminence of the hill, with its wooded top, was on one side of them, the moss and heath that make up the bosom of the valley on the other. The watchmen are stationed as usual. Mr. Douglas is just beginning his sermon when a signal-gun is heard. Claverhouse and his dragoons are advancing. The worshippers sit still, but the armed men step out from the others and put themselves in order of battle. They are but a small host—fifty horsemen, fifty foot with muskets, and a hundred and fifty armed with halberds, forks, and similar weapons. Sir Robert Hamilton took the command, and was supported by Colonel Cleland, Balfour of Burley, and Hackston of Ratinlet. Their step was firm as, singing the Seventy-sixth Psalm to the tune of “Martyrs,” they advanced to meet the enemy. They met him at the Morass of Drumclog. The first mutual volley left the Covenanters untouched, but when the smoke had rolled away it was seen that there were not a few empty saddles in Claverhouse’s cavalry. Plunging into the moss, trooper and Covenanter grappled hand to hand with each other; but the enthusiastic valour of the latter earned the day. The dragoons began to reel like drunken men. Claverhouse saw that the field was lost, and fled with the remains of his troop. He left forty of his men dead on the field, with a considerable number of wounded. The Covenanters had one killed and five mortally wounded.<sup>2</sup>

It was the heroism, not the numbers, of the Covenanters which had won the field; and the lesson which the victory taught them was to maintain the spirit of devotion, which alone could feed the fire of their valour, and to eschew division. The nation was with them in the main, their recent success had brought prestige to their cause, numbers were now flocking to their standards, some of them men of birth, and seeing the royal forces in Scotland were few, their chances were now better than when they measured swords with the Government at Bullion Green. But unhappily they were split up by questions growing out of the Indulgence, and they laboured under the further disadvantage of having no master-mind to preside in council and command

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<sup>1</sup> Kirkton, *Hist.*, pp. 390, 391.

<sup>2</sup> Aikman, *Hist. of Scotland*, vol. v., p. 5.

in the field. It was under these fatal conditions that, a few weeks afterwards, the battle of Bothwell Bridge was fought.

After Drumclog the Covenanters pitched their camp on Hamilton Moor, on the south side of the Clyde. They were assailable only by a narrow bridge across that river, which might be easily defended. The royal army now advancing against them, under Monmouth, numbered about 15,000; the Presbyterian host was somewhere about 5,000. But they were weakened in presence of the enemy more by disunion than by disparity of numbers. The Indulgence had all along been productive of evils, and was now to inflict upon them a crowning disaster. It was debated whether those who had accepted the Indulgence should be permitted to join in arms with their brethren till first they had condemned it. A new and extreme doctrine had sprung up, and was espoused by a party among the Presbyterians, to the effect that the king by the Erastian power he claimed over the Church had forfeited all right to the civil obedience of the subjects. The days and weeks that ought to have been spent in drilling recruits, providing ammunition, and forming the men into regiments, were wasted in hot discussion and bitter recrimination; and when the enemy at last approached they were found unprepared to meet him. A gallant party of 300, headed by Hackston, defended the bridge for many hours, the main body of the covenanting army remaining idle spectators of the unequal contest, till they saw the brave little party give way before overwhelming numbers, and then the royal forces defiled across the bridge. Panic seized the Presbyterian host, left without officers; rout followed; the royal cavalry pursued the fugitives, and mercilessly cut down all whom they overtook. The banks of the Clyde, the town of Hamilton, in short the whole surrounding country became a scene of indiscriminate slaughter. No fewer than 400 perished. This disastrous battle was fought on Sunday morning, the 22nd of June, 1679.

It was now that the cup of the suffering Presbyterians was filled to the brim. The Government, eager to improve the advantage they had obtained on the fatal field of Bothwell Bridge, struck more terribly than ever, in the hope of effecting the utter extermination of the Covenanters before they had time to rally. Twelve hundred had surrendered themselves prisoners on the field of battle. They were stripped almost naked, tied two and two, driven to Edinburgh, being treated with great inhumanity on the way, and on arriving at their destination, the prisons being full, they were penned like cattle, or rather like wild beasts, in the Greyfriars' Churchyard. What a different spectacle from that which this famous spot had exhibited forty years before! Their misery was heartrending. The Government's barbarity towards them would be incredible were it not too surely attested. These 1,200 persons were left without the slightest shelter; they were exposed to all weathers, to the rain, the tempest, the snow; they slept on the bare, earth; their guard treated them

capriciously and cruelly, robbing them of their little money, and often driving away the citizens who sought to relieve their great sufferings by bringing them food or clothing. Some made their escape; others were released on signing a bond of non-resistance; others were freed when found to be sinking under wounds, or diseases contracted by exposure. At the end of five months—for so long did this miserable crowd remain shut up within the walls of the graveyard—the 1,200 were reduced to 250. On the morning of the 15th of November, 1679, these 250 were taken down to Leith and embarked on board a vessel, to be transported to Barbadoes. They were crowded into the hold of the ship, where there was scarce room for 100. Awful were the heat, the thirst, and other horrors of this floating dungeon. Their ship was overtaken by a terrible tempest off the coast of Orkney. It was thrown by the winds upon the rocks, and many of the poor prisoners on board were drowned. Those who escaped the waves were carried to Barbadoes and sold as slaves. A few only survived to return to their native land at the Revolution.

The years that followed are known as “the killing times; “and truly Scotland during them became not unlike that from which the term is borrowed—a shambles. The Presbyterians were hunted on the mountains and tracked by the bloodhounds of the Privy Council to the caves and dens where they had hid themselves. Claverhouse and his dragoons were continually on the pursuit, shooting down men and women in the fields and on the highways. As fast as the prisons could be emptied they were filled with fresh victims brought in by the spies with whom the country swarmed. Several gentlemen and many learned and venerable ministers were confined in the dungeons of Blackness, Dunottar, and the Bass Rock. Aged matrons and pious maidens were executed on the scaffold, or tied to stakes within sea-mark and drowned. The persecution fell with equal severity on all who appeared for the cause of their country’s religion and liberty. No eminence of birth, no fame of talent, no lustre of virtue could shield their possessor from the most horrible fate if he opposed the designs of the court. Some of lofty intellect and famed statesmanship were hanged and quartered on the gallows, and the ghastly spectacle of their heads and limbs met the gazer in the chief cities of the kingdom, as if the land were still inhabited by cannibals, and had never known either civilisation or Christianity. It is calculated that during the twenty-eight years of persecution in Scotland 18,000 persons suffered death, or hardships approaching it.

There came a second breathing-time under James II. This monarch, with the view of introducing Popery into the three kingdoms, published a Toleration, which he made universal. It was a treacherous gift, but the majority of Nonconformists in both England and Scotland availed themselves of it. The bulk of the outed Presbyterian pastors accepted it, and returned to the discharge of their functions. There was a party, however, who refused to profit

by King James's Toleration, and who continued to be the objects of a relentless persecution. They had previously raised the question whether the House of Stuart had not, by their perversion of the Constitution, religious and civil, and their systematic and habitual tyranny, forfeited all right to the throne. The conclusion at which they arrived they announced in their famous proclamation at Sanquhar. On the 22nd of June, 1680, a little troop of horsemen rode up the street of that ancient burgh, and on arriving at the cross one of them dismounted, and the others forming a ring round him, while the citizens congregated outside the circle, he read aloud the following declaration:—"We do by these presents disown Charles Stuart, that has been reigning, or rather tyrannising, on the throne of Britain these years bygone, as having any right, title, or interest in the crown of Scotland, for government—as forfeited several years since, by his perjury and breach of covenant both, to God and His Kirk, and by his tyranny, and breach of the essential conditions of reigning in matters civil. . . . We do declare a war with such a tyrant and usurper." The reading ended, they affixed their paper to the market cross, and rode away into the moorlands from which they had so suddenly and mysteriously issued.

From this little landward town was sounded out the first knell of the coming downfall of the House of Stuart. It looked eminently absurd in these twenty men to dethrone the sovereign of Great Britain, but however we may denounce the act as extravagant and even treasonable, the treason of these men lay in their not having fleets and armies to put down the tyrant that the law might reign. The Sanquhar Declaration however, with all its seeming extravagance, did not exhaust itself in the solitudes in which it was first heard. It startled the court. The Government, instead of letting it die, took it up, and published it all over the three kingdoms. It was read, pondered over, and it operated with other causes in awakening and guiding public sentiment, till at last the feeble echoes first raised among the moors of Lanark, came back in thunder in 1688 from the cities and capitals of the empire.

The close of the persecution was distinguished by two remarkable deaths. As Argyle and Guthrie had opened the roll of Scottish martyrs, so now it is closed by Argyle and Renwick. It was meet surely that the son of the proto-martyr of the Twenty-eight Years' Persecution, should pour out his blood on the same scaffold on which that of his great ancestor, and of so many besides, had been shed, and so seal as it were the testimony of them all. The deep sleep into which he fell just before his execution has become historic. He was taken aside in presence of his enemies into a pavilion, to rest awhile, before departing to his eternal rest. Equally historic are his last words: "I die with a heart-hatred of Popery, prelacy, and all superstition whatever." Having so spoken he laid his head upon the block.

The scaffold, before being taken down, was to be wetted with the blood of yet another martyr—James Renwick. He was of the number of those who refused to own James as king; and fearlessly avowing his sentiments on this as on other matters, he was condemned to be executed. He appeared on the scaffold on the 17th of February, 1688— calm, courageous, and elevated. In his last prayer he expressed a confident hope that the dawn of deliverance for Scotland was near, and that days of glory yet awaited her. He essayed to address the vast concourse of sorrowing spectators around the scaffold, but the drums beat all the while. There came a pause in their noise, and the martyr was heard to say, or rather to sing, “I shall soon be above these clouds—I shall soon be above these clouds, then shall I enjoy thee, and glorify thee, O my Father, without interruption, and without intermission, for ever.” The martyr’s death-song was the morning hymn of Scotland, for scarcely had its thrilling strains died away when deliverance came in the manner we shall presently see.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> We have quoted a few only of the authorities consulted in the compilation of this brief sketch of the Twenty-eight years’ Persecution. For the information of other than Scottish readers, we may state that details comprehending the dying speeches of the martyrs are to be found in the *Scots Worthies*, *Naphthali*, *Cloud of Witnesses*, *De Foe*, *Simpson’s Traditions*, *Dodd’s Fifty Years’ Struggle*, *McCrie’s Story of the Scottish Church*, &c. &c.

At p. 606 we give an engraving of the Martyrs’ Monument, Edinburgh. Upon the slab of the monument are inscribed the following earnest verses and the notes accompanying them:—

“Halt, passenger, take heed what you do see.  
This tomb doth shew for what some men did die.

“Here lies interr’d the dust of those who stood  
’Gainst perjury, resisting unto blood;  
Adhering to the Covenants, and laws  
Establishing the same; which was the cause  
Their lives were sacrific’d unto the lust  
Of Prelatists abjur’d. Though here their dust  
Lies mixt with murderers, and other crew,  
Whom justice justly did to death pursue:  
But as for them, no cause was to be found  
Worthy of death, but only they were sound,  
Constant and stedfast, zealous, witnessing  
For the Prerogatives of CHRIST their KING.  
Which Truths were seal’d by famous GUTHRIE’S head,  
And all along to Mr. RENWICK’S blood.  
They did endure the wrath of enemies,  
Reproaches, torments, deaths and injuries.  
But yet they’re those who from such troubles came,  
And now triumph in glory with the LAMB.

“From May 27th, 1661, that the most noble Marquis of ARGYLE was beheaded, to the 17th of Febry., 1688, that Mr. JAMES RENWICK suffered; were one way or other Murdered and Destroyed for the same Cause, about Eighteen thousand, of whom were execute at *Edinburgh*, about an hundred of Nobb’men, Gentlemen. Ministers and Others: noble Martyrs for JESUS CHRIST. The most of them lie here.

Meanwhile we behold Scotland apparently crushed. All her noblemen and gentlemen who had taken the side of the nation against the court had perished on the scaffold, or had been chased into exile; her people were lying by thousands in their quiet graves among the moors or in the city churchyards, their withering limbs illuminating with ghastly yet glorious light the places where they were exposed to view; and when Renwick ascended the ladder to die, the last minister of the Presbyterian body still in arms against the Government had fallen. There now remained none but a few country-people around the blue banner of the Covenant. Never did defeat appear more complete. As a nation Scotland seemed to be crushed, and as a Church it seemed utterly overthrown.

Yet in reality Scotland had gained a great victory. By her twenty-eight years of suffering she had so illustrated the fundamental principles of the struggle and the momentous issues at stake, and she had so exalted the contest in the eyes of the world, investing it with a moral grandeur that stimulated England, that she mainly contributed to the turning of the tide, and the triumph of the Protestant cause all over Christendom. The world was then in one of its greatest crises. The Reformation was ebbing in Germany, in France, in Holland, in all the countries of Christendom; everywhere a double-headed tyranny was advancing on men, trampling down the liberties of nations and the rights of Churches. Scotland retreated behind the bulwark of her Presbyterian Church; she fought against the “supremacy of King James,” which meant simply arbitrary government; she fought *for* the “supremacy of King Jesus,” which meant free Parliaments not less than free Assemblies—the supremacy of law *versus* the supremacy of the monarch—conscience *versus* power. Disguised under antiquated names and phrases, this was the essence of the great struggle, and though Scotland lost her people in that struggle she won her cause. Her leaders have all fallen; the last of her ministers has just expired on the scaffold; there is but a mere handful of her people around her blue banner as it still floats upon her mountains; but there is an eye watching that flag from beyond the sea, ready whenever the hour shall strike to hasten across and reap the victory of these twenty-eight years of martyrdom, by grasping that flag and planting it on the throne of Britain.

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“For a particular account of the cause and manner of their Sufferings, see the Cloud of Witnesses, Crookshank’s and Defoe’s Histories.”

The opened book below the slab contains certain texts from *The Revelation of St. John*, namely, vi. 9–11; a part of vii. 14; and a part of ii. 10.

At the very foot of the monument we are told that “This Tomb was first erected by James Currie, Mercht. in Pentland, and others, 1706: Renewed, 1771.”



## CHAPTER XXVIII.

### JAMES II.—PROJECTS TO RESTORE POPYRY.

James II.—Suspensions of the Nation—His Promises to Maintain the Protestant Religion—Joy of the People—Fears of Louis XIV.—His Coronation—Goes to Mass—Imposes Taxes without his Parliament—Invasion of Argyle—Insurrection of Monmouth—These Risings Suppressed—Cruelties of Jeffreys—The Test Act—Debates respecting a Standing Army—State of Protestantism throughout Christendom—Its Afflicted Condition Everywhere—A Moment of Mighty Peril—Hopes of the Jesuits.

CHARLES II. being dead, his brother, the Duke of York, ascended the throne under the title of James II. The peace and quietness in which he took possession of the crown may well surprise us, and doubtless it surprised James himself. Universally suspected of being a Papist, the law which made it capital for any one to affirm that he was so, so far from allaying, rather tended to confirm the wide-spread suspicions respecting him. It was only a few years since the entire nation almost had appeared to concur in the proposal to exclude him from the throne, and strenuous efforts had been made in Parliament to pass a Bill to that effect. Nevertheless, when the hour arrived, James's accession took place with general acquiescence. It is true, that as there had been no tears for the death of Charles, so there were no shouts for the accession of James: the heralds who proclaimed him passed through silent streets. But if there was no enthusiasm there was no opposition: no one thought it his duty to raise his voice and demand securities before committing the religion and liberties of England into the hands of the new sovereign.<sup>1</sup>

Knowing the wide distrust entertained by the nation, and fearing perhaps that it might break out in tumult, James met his Council the same day on which his brother died, and voluntarily made in their presence the following declaration:—"I shall make it my endeavour to preserve this government, both in Church and State, as it is now by law established. I know, too, that the laws of England are sufficient to make the king as great a monarch as I can wish; and as I shall never depart from the just rights and prerogatives of the crown, so I shall never invade any man's property." These words, printed and diffused over the country, quieted the fears of the nation. They were accepted as an explicit promise of two things: first, that James would not change the religion of the nation; and secondly, that he would not tax the people but with the consent of his Parliament.

The nation persuaded itself that it had obtained a sure and solid guarantee of its rights. These few vague words seemed in its eyes an invincible rampart, and it abandoned itself to an excess of joy. It had buried all its suspicions and

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<sup>1</sup> Burnet, *Hist.*, vol. ii., p. 280.

jealousies in the grave of the defunct monarch, and now it had nothing but welcomes and rejoicings for the new sovereign. "The common phrase," says Burnet, "was, 'We have now the word of a king;' and this was magnified as a greater security than laws could give."<sup>1</sup> Numerous addresses from public bodies were carried to the foot of the throne, extolling the virtues of the late king, and promising loyalty and obedience to the new one, under whom, it was confidently predicted, the prestige and renown of England would be very speedily and mightily enhanced. Even the Quakers, who eschew flattery, and love plainness and honesty of speech, presented themselves in the presence of James II. with a petition so artfully worded, that some took occasion to say that the Jesuits had inspired their pen. "We are come," said they, "to testify our sorrow for the death of our good friend Charles, and our joy for thy being made our governor. We are told thou art not of the persuasion of the Church of England, no more than we; wherefore we hope thou wilt grant us the same liberty thou allowest thyself; which doing, we wish you all manner of happiness."<sup>2</sup>

The assurances that were accepted by the people of England as solid securities, and which filled them with so lively a joy, were those of a man whose creed permitted him to promise everything, but required him to fulfil nothing, if it was prejudicial to the interests of his Church. James was feeding the nation upon delusive hopes. Once firmly seated on the throne, he would forget all that he now promised. Meantime, these assurances were repeated again and again, in terms not less explicit, and in manner not less solemn. The religion and laws of England would not be changed, the king would have all men know.<sup>3</sup> And so apparently frank and sincere were these protestations, that if they quieted the alarm of the people of England, they awakened the fears of the French king. Louis XIV. began to doubt James's fidelity to the Church of Rome, and the compact between the crowns of France and England to restore the sway of that Church in all the countries of Christendom, and to fear that he was preferring the safety of his crown to the supremacy of his creed. He wrote to his ambassador in London, inquiring how he was to construe the conduct of the English sovereign, adding, "If he and his Parliament come to a cordial trust one of another, it may probably change all the measures we have been so long concerting for the glory of our throne and the establishment of the Catholic religion."

Meanwhile the king gave orders to prepare for his coronation, which he appointed for St. George's Day. The ceremony was marred by several untoward occurrences, which the people interpreted as bad omens. The canopy which was carried over him broke down. The crown was too big, and sat so

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<sup>1</sup> Burnet, *Hist.*, vol. ii., p. 281.

<sup>2</sup> Bowyer, *Hist. James II.*, p. 10.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 11.

low on his forehead as partially to blindfold him. On that same day his son by Mrs. Sidley died. Certain other things fell out, which, although of less moment, tended to tarnish the pomp of the ceremonial, and to inspire the spectators with inauspicious forebodings. There were surer omens of impending evil presented to their eyes if they could have read them. The king was mounting the throne without legal pledge that he would govern according to law. And though he and the queen had resolved to have all the services conducted in the Protestant form, the king refused to take the Sacrament, which was always a part of the ceremony; “and he had such senses given him of the oath,” says Burnet, “that he either took it as unlawful, with a resolution not to keep it, or he had a reserved meaning in his own mind.”<sup>1</sup>

James, deeming it perhaps an unnecessary labour to preserve appearances before those who were so willing to be deceived, began to drop the mask a little too soon. The first Sunday after his brother’s death, he went openly to mass. This was to avow what till then it was death for any one to assert, namely, that he was a Papist. His next indiscretion was to publish certain papers found in the strong-box of his brother, showing that during his lifetime Charles had reconciled himself to Rome. And, lastly, he ventured upon the bold step of levying a tax, for which he had no authority from Parliament, and which he exacted simply in virtue of his prerogative. These acts traversed the two pledges he had given the nation, namely, that he would not change the religion, and that he would govern by Parliament; and though in themselves trivial, they were of ominous significance, as indicating his future policy. To be an arbitrary monarch, to govern without law, without Parliaments, to consult only his own will, and to plant this absolute power on the dominancy of the faith of Rome, the only stable basis he believed on which he could rest it, was the summit of James’s ambition. His besotted wife, who so largely governed him, and the fawning Jesuits who surrounded him, persuaded him that this was the true glory of a monarch, and that this glory was to be attained by the people being made entirely submissive to the priests, and the priests entirely submissive to the throne; and that to accomplish this it was lawful in the first place to make any number of false promises, and not less dutiful in the second to break them. It was a dangerous course on which he was entering. The scaffold of his father bade him beware, but James took no heed of the warning.

The more sagacious saw that a crisis was approaching. To the indications the king had already given that he was meditating a change of the Constitution, another sign was added, not less ominous than those that had gone before it. The Parliament that had assembled was utterly corrupt and subservient. With a Papist on the throne, and a Parliament ready to vote as the king

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<sup>1</sup> Burnet, *Hist.*, vol. ii., p. 290.

might be pleased to direct, of what force or value was the Constitution? It was already abrogated. Many, both in England and Scotland, fled to Holland, where they might concert measures for the rescue of kingdoms now threatened with ruin. The immediate results of the deliberations of these exiles were the descent of Argyle on Scotland, and the invasion of England by Monmouth, the natural son of Charles II., a favourite of the English people as he had all along been of his father. An adverse fortune pursued both expeditions from their commencement to their disastrous close. Both were ill-planned, both were unskilfully led, and both were inadequately supported. Argyle, in 1685, sweeping round the north of Scotland with a few ships, unfurled the standard of insurrection among the mountains of his native Highlands. Penetrating at the head of 4,000 men to the banks of the Clyde, he was there overthrown; Monmouth, setting sail from Holland at the same time, landed at Lyme, in Dorsetshire, and gathering round his standard a few thousand men, he joined battle with the king's forces and encountered utter defeat. Both leaders were taken and executed. Neither was the crisis ripe, nor were the leaders competent. The neck of England had to be more grievously galled by the yoke of the tyrant before its people should be prepared to adopt the conclusion at which a party of the persecuted Presbyterians in Scotland had arrived, and which had been proclaimed at the market cross of Sanquhar, namely, that the House of Stuart, by their perjuries and tyrannies, had for ever forfeited the throne of these realms. When the hour should have fully come, a mightier deliverer than either of the two would be found to execute vengeance on the royal house, and to break the fetters of the enslaved nations.

The failure of these two attempts had the effect, like all suppressed insurrections, of strengthening the Government which they were intended to overthrow. His enemies discomfited, the next care of James was to take vengeance on them. His foes were entirely at his mercy. This would have been a plea for clemency with ordinary tyrants; but James II. was a tyrant after the pattern of Caligula and other despots of ancient times, and he smote his prostrate enemies with a frightful and merciless violence. He sent Lord Chief Justice Jeffreys, and four judges worthy to sit on the same bench with him, along with General Kirk and a troop of soldiers, to chastise those counties in the west which had been the seat of Monmouth's rising. The cruelties inflicted by these ferocious ministers of the tyrant were appalling. Jeffreys hanged men and women by thirties at a time; and Kirk had the gallows erected before the windows of his banqueting-room, that the sight of his struggling victims might give zest to his debauch. From the bar of Jeffreys there was no escape but by buying with a great sum that life which the injustice of the judge, and not the guilt of the prisoner, had put in the power of the tribunal, and when the Lord Chief Justice returned to London he was laden with wealth as well as blood. Jeffreys boasted with a horrible pleasure that

“he had hanged more men than all the judges of England since William the Conqueror.” Nor did any one gainsay his averment, or dispute his pre-eminence in the work of shedding innocent blood, save Kirk, who advanced his own pretensions—on perfectly good "rounds, we doubt not—to share in the merit of the Lord Chief Justice. Some of the apologists of James II. have affirmed that when the monarch learned the extent of Jeffreys' cruelty and barbarity, he expressed his disapproval of these deeds. If so, he took a strange way of showing his displeasure; for no sooner had Jeffreys returned from the gory field of his triumphs to London, than he was punished by being promoted to the office of Lord High Chancellor of England, and made a peer of the realm.<sup>1</sup>

Among the other prisoners brought to the bar of this ferocious judge was the renowned and most eloquent Richard Baxter. The scene that followed we shall give in the words of Bennet. It will enable us to realise the monstrous tyranny of the times, and the utter shame into which England had sunk. Baxter was committed on Jeffreys' warrant for his paraphrase on the New Testament, which was called a scandalous and seditious book against the Government. Being much indisposed, Baxter's counsel moved for postponement of the trial. “I will not,” cried Jeffreys, “give him a minute's time to save his life. We have had to deal with other sort of persons, but now we have a saint to deal with. I know how to deal with saints as well as sinners. Yonder stands Oates in the pillory, and he says he suffers for truth, and so says Baxter; but if Baxter did but stand on the other side of the pillory with him, I would say two of the greatest rogues and rascals in the kingdom stood there.” “His counsel,” says Bennet, “were not suffered to proceed in the defence of their client, but were brow-beaten and hectorred by the judge in a manner that suited Billingsgate much better than a tribunal of justice. Mr. Baxter beginning to speak for himself, says Jeffreys to him, ‘Richard, Richard, dost thou think we will hear thee poison the court? And, Richard, thou art an old fellow, an old knave; thou hast written books enough to fill a cart, every one as full of sedition—I may say treason—as an egg's full of meat. Hadst thou been whipt out of thy writing forty years ago, it had been happy. I know thou hast a mighty party, and I see a great many of thy brotherhood in corners, to see what will become of their mighty Don, but by the grace of Almighty God I will crush them all.’

“After this strange insult, another of Mr. Baxter's counsel begins to speak, and to clear Mr. Baxter, would have read some passages of the book, but Jeffreys cried out, ‘You shall not draw me into a conventicle with your annotations, nor your snivelling parson neither.’ So that when neither he

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<sup>1</sup> Bowyer, *Hist. James II.*, pp. 33, 34. Barnet, *Hist.*, vol. ii., p. 315. Bennet, *Memorial*, pp. 293–301.

himself nor the lawyers could be heard, but were all silenced by noise and fury, the judge proceeds to sum up the matter to the jury: 'It is notoriously known,' says he, 'that there has been a design to ruin the king and nation, the old game has been renewed, and this has been the main incendiary. He is as modest now as can be, but the time was when no man so ready at "Bind your kings in chains and your nobles in fetters of iron;" and "To your tents, O Israel!" Gentlemen, for God's sake do not let us be gulled twice in an age.' When he had done his harangue, Mr. Baxter presumes to say, 'Does your lordship think any jury will pretend to pass a verdict on me upon *such* a trial?' 'I will warrant you, Mr. Baxter,' says he; 'do not trouble your head about that.' The jury immediately laid their heads together at the bar, and brought him in guilty. This was May 30th, and on the 29th of June following, judgment was given against him that he should pay a fine of 500 marks, lie in prison till it was paid, and be bound to his good behaviour seven years."<sup>1</sup>

The troubles of Monmouth's insurrection having been got over by the help of the army and Jeffreys, the next step taken by the king for the establishment of arbitrary power and the Romish religion in Britain was the abolition of the Test Acts. These declared Papists incapable of serving in public employments, and especially of holding commissions in the army. These laws had been passed, not because the faith of the Romanist was a false one, but because his allegiance was given to another sovereign. But the point in the present case was, Can the king simply in virtue of his prerogative repeal these laws? Parliament had enacted them, and Parliament, it was argued, was alone competent to repeal them. In the Parliament that met on November 9th, 1685, James declared his resolution of forming a standing army, and of entrusting Romanists with commissions in it. The sudden outbreak of the late rebellion, the king argued, showed how necessary it was for the peace of the nation, and the safety of the throne, to have a certain number of soldiers always in pay. And as regarded the second point, the employment of officers excluded by the Test Acts, he had frankly to acknowledge that he had employed many such in the late campaign, and that he had been so well served by them, and they had so approved the loyalty of their principles by their practices, that he would neither expose them to the disgrace of dismissal nor himself to the loss of their services. In short, James declared that he would have a standing army, and that it should be officered by Romanists.

This speech from the throne surprised and bewildered Parliament. They now saw of how little value were the promises with which the king had amused them. Already the sword of arbitrary power was suspended above their heads, and the liberties of England were about to pass into the hands of those whose allegiance had been given to a foreign prince. They had a Popish

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<sup>1</sup> Bennet, *Memorial*, pp. .303–305.

king, and now they were about to have a Popish army. Long and warm debates followed in Parliament. At last the House of Commons resolved to present an address to the king, representing to him that members of the Church of Rome could not by law hold either civil or military employment, nor could their disabilities be removed save by Act of Parliament; but that out of the reverence they entertained for his Majesty they were willing to capacitate by law such a number of Roman Catholic officers as he might be pleased to include in a list to be presented to Parliament. This compromise was not satisfactory to the king; neither did it suit his designs that the Parliament should continue its debates. Accordingly it was prorogued on the 20th of November, 1685, and dissolved on the 2nd of July, 1687. On the ruins of Parliament rose the prerogative.

This was but one of the many calamities that were at this same hour darkening the skies of Protestantism. The year 1685 was truly a fatal one. In all the countries of Europe the right hand of Rome had been upraised in triumph. Just five weeks before James II. dismissed his Parliament, the Edict of Nantes, the only security of the Huguenots, had been revoked in France. The calamities that followed we have already described. Smitten by the whole power of Louis XIV., the Protestants of that unhappy country were fleeing from its soil in wretched crowds, or overtaken by the officers of the tyrant, were rotting in dungeons or pouring out their blood on the mountains and on the scaffold. It was now, too, that the most terrible of all the tempests that ever descended upon the poor Vaudois broke over their mountains. Fire and sword were carried through their land; their homesteads and sanctuaries were razed, a miserable remnant only were left of this once flourishing people, and they, after languishing for some time in prison, were carried to other countries, and for the first time in history their valleys were seen to be empty. Nor did these close the list of Protestant reverses. The Electorate of the Palatinate passed to a most bigoted Popish family. In the same year, too, the structure of arbitrary power in Scotland was advanced a stage. The Parliament which met in May of that year was so submissive that it passed two Acts: the first for “the security of the Protestant religion”—“that is,” says Dr. Kennet, “for the extirpation of the Presbyterians;” and the second for settling “the Excise of inland and foreign commodities upon his Majesty and heirs for ever.” In the preamble of this last Act, they declare “that they abhor all principles that are derogatory to the king’s sacred, supreme, and absolute power and authority, which none, whether private persons or collegiate bodies, can participate of any manner of way, but in dependence on him, and therefore they take this occasion to renew their hearty and sincere offer of their lives and fortunes, to assist, and defend, and maintain his rights and prerogatives against all

mortals.”<sup>1</sup> It was not the Scottish nation that thus basely prostrated itself before the tyrant, placing their conscience as well as their fortune at his service, for the supremacy which was so obsequiously ascribed to him would have been manifestly a violation of their great national oath; the party whose voice is now heard offering this idolatrous worship to James II. is that of the unprincipled, debauched, and servile crew to whom he had committed the government of the northern country, where now scarcely were left any remains of an ancient and sacred liberty.

The present was, perhaps, the gloomiest moment which had occurred in the annals of Protestantism since 1572, the era of the St. Bartholomew Massacre. In fact the gloom was more universal now than it was even then. Everywhere disaster and defeat were lowering upon the Protestant banners. The schemes of the Jesuits were prospering and their hopes were high. Bishop Burnet, who at that time withdrew from England, and made a visit to Rome, says, “Cardinal Howard showed me all his letters from England, by which I saw that those who wrote to him reckoned that their designs were so well laid that they could not miscarry. They thought they should certainly carry everything in the next session of Parliament. There was a high strain of insolence in their letters, and they reckoned they were so sure of the king, that they seemed to have no doubt left of their succeeding in the reduction of England.”<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Bowyer, *Hist. James II.*, p. 48.

<sup>2</sup> Burnet, *Hist.*, vol. ii., pp. 331, 332.

## CHAPTER XXIX.

### A GREAT CRISIS IN ENGLAND AND CHRISTENDOM.

Ireland—Duke of Ormond Dismissed from the Lieutenancy—The Army Re-modelled—Tyrconnel made Lord Lieutenant —Appoints Popish Judges—Lord Chancellor of Ireland—The Charters of the Corporations Abolished—Civil Rights of the Protestants Confiscated—Their Religious Rights Invaded—Protestant Tithes and Churches Seized—Parliament Dissolved—English Judges give James II. a Dispensing Power—A Popish Hierarchy—Clergymen Forbidden to Preach against Popery—Tillotson, Stillingfleet, &c.—Ecclesiastical Commission—Bishop of London and Dr. Sharp Suspended—The Army at Hounslow Heath—A New Indulgence—Seven Bishops sent to the Tower —Birth of the Prince of Wales—Acquittal of the Bishops—Rejoicings—Crisis.

MEANWHILE the Jesuits' projects were pushed forward with great vigour. A universal toleration was published in Scotland. James had recourse to the not uncommon device of employing toleration to establish intolerance, and the object at which he aimed was perfectly understood in Scotland. But it was in Ireland where the king's design of enslaving his kingdoms, and bowing the necks of his people to the Romish yoke, was most undisguisedly shown, and most audaciously pursued. Within less than two months after he had ascended the throne, the Duke of Ormond, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, a man of sterling uprightness, and of inviolable zeal for the Protestant religion and the English interests, was commanded to deliver up the sword of state. The Privy Council was next changed; nearly all the Protestant members were expelled, and their seats given to Papists. The army was re-modelled by Colonel Talbot. It consisted of 7,000 Protestants who had rendered good service to the crown, but their Protestantism was a huge disqualification in the eyes of the monarch, and accordingly all of them, officers and men, were summarily dismissed to make room for Papists. Talbot robbed them before turning them adrift, by denying to the officers compensation for their commission, and by defrauding the private soldiers of their arrears of pay. Talbot was one of the most infamous of men. Abhorred and detested above all men in the three kingdoms by the English in Ireland, this did not prevent his rising to the highest posts in the State. After revolutionising the army, he went across to London, where, through the influence of the queen, and Father Petre, now become the intimate and trusted adviser of the king, he was first created Earl of Tyrconnel, and next appointed Lord Lieutenant of Ireland.<sup>1</sup> The news that the government of Ireland had been put into the hands of Tyrconnel fell like a thunderbolt on the poor Protestants of that country. "Perhaps no age," says Bishop King, "can parallel so dreadful a catastrophe

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<sup>1</sup> Bowyer, *Hist. James II.*, p. 61.

among all ages and sexes, as if the day of doom was come, every one lamenting their condition, and almost all that could abandoning the kingdom.”<sup>1</sup> Animated by a furious zeal, Tyrconnel hastened to the coast, eager to cross the channel, and enter on his work of overthrow in Ireland. But the winds were contrary. The Protestants accounted them merciful winds, for while Tyrconnel was chafing and fuming at the delay, the Earl of Clarendon, who meanwhile held the Lord Lieutenancy, was arranging affairs, and providing, so far as he could, for the safety of the Protestants in prospect of the tempest which all saw was sure to burst as soon as Tyrconnel had set foot in Ireland.<sup>2</sup>

Arrived at last, Clarendon put the sword of state into the hand of Tyrconnel, who lost not a moment in beginning the work for which he had been so eager to grasp that symbol of power. The first change effected was in the important department of justice. The Protestant judges were mostly dismissed, and the weakest and most profligate men in the profession were promoted to the bench. We can give but one specimen of these portentous changes. Sir Alexander Fitton was made Lord High Chancellor of Ireland. He was “a man notorious on record, as convicted of forgery both in Westminster Hall and at Chester, and fined for it by the Lords in Parliament.” He was taken out of the King’s Bench Prison to be keeper of the King’s conscience. “He had no other merit to recommend him but being a convert to the Popish religion; and to him were added as masters in Chancery, one Stafford, a Romish priest, and O’Neal, the son of one of the most busy and notorious murderers in the massacre of 1641.”<sup>3</sup> Ignorant of law, Fitton gave judgment according to his inclinations, affirming that the Court of Chancery was above all laws; and after hearing a cause between a Protestant and a Papist, he would often declare that before giving judgment he would consult a divine—that is, his confessor, educated in Spain, and furnished with distinctions—to satisfy his conscience. “In the year 1687 there was not a Protestant sheriff in the whole kingdom, except one, and he put in by mistake for another of the same name that was a Papist. Some few Protestants were continued in the commission of the peace, but they were rendered useless and insignificant, being overpowered in everything by the great number of Roman Catholics joined in commission with them; and those for the most part the very scum of the people, and a great many whose fathers had been executed for theft, robbery, and murder.”<sup>4</sup>

The next step of the Government for crushing the Protestantism of Ireland was to wrest from the Protestants their Parliamentary vote. Their right to choose their own representatives in Parliament was one of the main

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<sup>1</sup> King, *State of Ireland—apud Bennet’s Memorial*, p. 313.

<sup>2</sup> Bowyer, *Hist. James II.*, p. 62.

<sup>3</sup> Bowyer, *Hist. James II.*, p. 65.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 66.

defences of the people's liberties in both England and Ireland. The great massacre in 1641 had read a lesson which the Protestants of Ireland did not neglect, on the necessity of fortifying that important privilege. With this view they had founded corporations to which Protestants only were admissible; and they had built at their own charges many corporate towns from the charters of which Romanists were excluded. This barrier was thrown down by the dissolution of all the corporations in the kingdom. This sweeping change was effected by the threats or promises of Tyrconnel, by the insinuations of his secretary Ellis, and, when these failed, by *Quo-warrantos* brought into the Exchequer Court. New charters were granted, filled up chiefly with Romanists, or men of desperate or of no fortune; and a clause was inserted in every one of them placing them under the absolute control of the king, so that the Lord Lieutenant could put in or exclude from these corporations whomsoever he would. Thus the barrier of free Parliamentary representation in Ireland was levelled with the dust.<sup>1</sup>

All being now ready—a Popish Lord Lieutenant, a Popish bench of judges, Popish corporations, and a Popish army being set up—the civil rights of Protestants were largely confiscated. Odious and treasonable charges were laid at their door; these were supported by false oaths; fines, imprisonments, and confiscation of estates followed. The Protestant was actually placed beyond law. If a Popish tenant owed his Protestant landlord his rent, he paid him by swearing him into a plot. If a Papist owed his Protestant neighbour any money, he discharged his debt in the same coin. The Protestants were disarmed and left defenceless against the frequent outrages and robberies to which they were subjected. The abstraction of a cow or a sheep from his Protestant neighbour would sometimes be enjoined on the penitent in the confessional in order to absolution. A counterfeit deed would transfer a Protestant estate to a Roman Catholic owner. But at last these petty robberies were deemed too tedious, and a wholesale act of plunder was resolved on. A register was compiled of all the names of Protestants of whatever rank and age who could be discovered, and an Act of Attainder was passed in the Irish Parliament against all of them as guilty of high treason, and their estates were vested in the king.<sup>2</sup>

Their religious rights were not less grievously invaded. James II. professed to be a patron of liberty of conscience, as if the same religion which compelled the King of Spain to set up the Inquisition should require the King of England to practise toleration. There came some curious illustrations of James's understanding of that liberty which he vaunted so much; it seemed to mean an unrestricted right of appropriation on the part of the Romanist,

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<sup>1</sup> Bowyer, *Hist. James II*, p. 66.

<sup>2</sup> Bennet, *Memorial*, pp. 318, 319.

and an equally unrestricted obligation of surrender on the part of the Protestant of whatever the latter possessed and the former coveted. In accordance with this new species of toleration, the priests began to declare openly that the tithes belonged to them, and forbade their people under pain of anathema to pay them to the Protestant incumbents. An Act of Parliament was next passed, by which not only all tithes payable by Romanists were given to their own priests, but a method was devised of drawing all the tithes, Protestant and Popish, to the Romish clergy. The Protestant clergyman was forbidden by the Act to receive any ecclesiastical dues from Roman Catholics, and as soon as his place became vacant by demission or death, a Popish incumbent was appointed to it, who, as a matter of course, received all the tithes. The University of Dublin, the one great nursery of learning in the kingdom, was closed. Protestant schools throughout Ireland were shut up, or converted into Popish seminaries. The Protestant churches in many parts of the country were converted into mass-houses. Their seizure was effected with a mixture of violence and devotion. The mayor, accompanied by the priests, would proceed to the edifice, send to the sexton for the keys, and if these were refused, break open the door; the building entered, the pews would be torn up, the floor cleared, mass would be said, and then the church would be declared consecrated, and not to be given back to the Protestants under pain of sacrilege.

Death was not as yet decreed against the Protestants, but they were called to endure every violence and wrong short of it; and in not a few instances this last penalty was actually meted out to them, though not ostensibly for their Protestantism. Many were murdered in their houses, some were killed by the soldiers, some perished by martial law, and others were starved to death in prisons. Things were in train for a general slaughter, and there is some ground to fear that the horrible carnage of 1641 would have been re-enacted had James II. returned victorious from the Boyne.

We return to England. Parliament, as has already been said, James prorogued on the 20th of November, 1685, and after repeated prorogations, he at last dissolved it on the 2nd of July, 1687. Finding his Parliament intractable, notwithstanding the many methods he had taken to pack it, the king resolved to try another tack. He began to tamper with the judges, in order to procure from them an opinion that the prerogative was above the law. The first with whom he was closeted, Sir Thomas Jones, told the king that twelve judges might be found who were of his mind, but certainly twelve lawyers would not be found who were of that opinion.<sup>1</sup> Jones and all the judges who refused to bend were removed, and others put in their room, who were more at the devotion of the king. The bench, thus re-modelled, was willing to fall

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<sup>1</sup> Bowyer, *Hist, James II.*, pp. 70, 71.

in with the measures of the court, and to advance the royal prerogative to that extravagant pitch to which some fawning courtiers, and a few equally obsequious prelates and preachers, had exalted it in their fulsome harangues: that “monarchy and hereditary succession were by Divine right;” that “the legislature was vested in the person of the prince;” and that “power in the king to dispense with the law was law.” Accordingly the bench, in a case that was tried on purpose,<sup>1</sup> gave it as judgment, first, “that the Kings of England are sovereign princes;” secondly, “that the laws of England are the king’s laws;” thirdly, “that therefore it is an incident, inseparable prerogative of the Kings of England, as of all other sovereign princes, to dispense with all penal laws in particular cases, and upon particular necessary reasons;” fourthly, “that of those reasons and necessities the king is the sole judge;” and fifthly, “that this is not a trust invested in or granted to the king, but the ancient remains of the sovereign power of the Kings of England, which never was yet taken from them, nor can be.”<sup>2</sup> This sapped the liberties of England at their very root: it was an overthrow of the powers of the Constitution as complete as it was sudden: the prerogatives of the three branches of the State—the nation, the Parliament, the throne—were all lodged in the king, and swallowed up in the royal prerogative. This destruction of all law was solemnly pronounced to be law; and the very men whose office it was to preserve the law incorrupt, and its administration pure, were the men who, to their eternal reproach, laid the liberties of England at the feet of the monarch.

This mighty attribute James did not permit to lie idle. It was not to be worn as a State jewel, but wielded as a sword for the destruction of what yet remained of the liberties of England. The king proceeded to exercise the dispensing power without reserve. Promotions, favours, and smiles were showered all round on the members of the Church of Rome. The Popish community, like the fleece of Gideon, was wet with the dew of the royal beneficence, while the rest of the nation was dry. Popish seminaries and Jesuit schools were erected not only in London, but in all the more considerable towns, and Romish ecclesiastics of every rank and name, and in every variety of costume, multitudinous and cloudy like the swarms of Egypt, began to cover the land. The Roman Church was regularly organised. Four Popish bishops were publicly consecrated, and, under the title of Vicars Apostolic, sent down to the provinces to exercise their functions in the dioceses to which they had been appointed. Their pastoral letters, printed by the king’s printer, were openly dispersed over the kingdom. The regular clergy appeared in their habits at Whitehall and St. James’s, and openly boasted that “they hoped in a little time to walk in procession through Cheapside.” A mighty harvest of

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<sup>1</sup> Burnet, *Hist.*, vol. ii., p. 341.

<sup>2</sup> Burnet, vol. ii., pp. 342, 343. Bowyer, *Hist. James II.*, pp. 72, 73. Bennet, *Memorial*, pp. 322, 323.

converts was looked for, and that it might not be lost from want of labourers to reap it, regulars and seculars from beyond the sea flocked to England to aid in gathering it in. The Protestant Church of England was rapidly losing her right to the title of “national;” she was gradually disappearing from the land under the operation of the law referred to above, by which her preferments and dignities were being swallowed up by Popish candidates. Preference there was none, unless one was of the religion of the king and of Edward Petre, Clerk of the Closet, and Father Confessor to his Majesty.

The dispensing power, while daily enlarging the sphere of the Romish Church, was daily contracting that of the Protestant one. A royal order, directed to the bishops, enjoined them “to discharge all their inferior clergy from preaching upon controverted points in divinity.” While the Protestant pulpit was fettered, an unbounded licence was given to the Popish one. The priests attacked the Protestant faith with all the vigour of which they were capable, and their sermons, printed by authority, were dispersed over the kingdom. This order was modelled on a worthy precedent. One of the first acts of Queen Mary, for the restoration of Popery, was a proclamation forbidding all preaching upon controverted points, for fear, it was said, of awakening animosities among her subjects. The same tender regard for the peace of his kingdom moved James II. to issue his edict.

The king’s order had just the opposite effect of that which he intended. It called forth in defence of Protestantism a host of mighty intellects and brilliant writers, who sifted the claims of Rome to the foundation, exposed the falsehood of her pretensions, and the tyrannical and immoral tendency of her doctrines, in such a way that Popery came to be better understood by the people of England than it had ever been before. The leaders in this controversial war were Tillotson, Stillingfleet, Tension, and Patrick. “They examined all the points of Popery,” says Burnet, “with a solidity of judgment, a clearness of arguing, a depth of learning, and a vivacity of writing far beyond anything that had before that time appeared in our language.”<sup>1</sup> Against these powerful and accomplished writers was pitted, perhaps the shallowest race of Popish controversialists that ever put on harness to do battle for their Church. They could do little besides translating a few meagre French works into bad English. On their own soil those works had done some service to Rome, backed as they were by Louis XIV. and his dragoons; but in England, where they enjoyed no such aids, and where they were exposed to the combined and well-directed assaults of a powerful Protestant phalanx, they were instantly crushed. Hardly a week passed without a Protestant sermon or tract issuing from the press. Written with a searching and incisive logic, a scathing wit, and an overwhelming power of argument, they consumed and burned up

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<sup>1</sup> Burnet, vol. ii., p. 346.

the Romanist defences as fire does stubble. The exposure was complete, the rout total; and the discomfited Romanists could only exclaim, in impotent rage, that it was exceeding bad manners to treat the king's religion with such contempt. Tillotson and his companions, however, did not aim at playing the courtier; they were in deadly earnest; they saw the Protestantism of England and of Christendom in danger of perishing; they beheld scaffolds and stakes coming fast upon them; they felt assured that the horrors of Mary's reign were about to renew themselves under James; and they resolved to wield voice and pen with all the energy they possessed, before they should be stifled in dungeons and strangled at stakes. The moral courage and dialectic power of these men largely contributed to the saving of England, for, while on the one hand they diffused among the people a clear and full intelligence on the point at issue, on the other they threw the court on measures so desperate by way of defending itself, that they proved in the end its own undoing.

To silence these Protestant champions, a new Court of Inquisition was established, styled a "Commission for Ecclesiastical Affairs." The members nominated were the Archbishop of Canterbury, Lord Chancellor Jeffreys, the Earls of Rochester and Sunderland, the Bishops of Rochester and Durham, and Lord Chief Justice Herbert. All the persons named refused from the first to act upon it, save Jeffreys and the Bishop of Durham, in whose hands was thus left the business of the newly-created court. The members of the commission were empowered to "exercise all manner of ecclesiastical jurisdiction in the fullest manner;" in other words, to put the Church of England quietly into its grave.

A beginning was made with Dr. Sharp. He was a learned divine, and an eloquent preacher, and had distinguished himself by his able defences of Protestantism and his vigorous attacks on Romanism in the pulpit. This was interpreted into "an attempt to beget an ill opinion in the minds of his hearers of the king and his Government, and to lead the people into schism and rebellion," and consequently a contempt of "the order about preachers." The king sent an order to the Bishop of London to suspend Dr. Sharp. The bishop excused himself on the ground that the order was contrary to law, whereupon both the Bishop of London and Dr. Sharp were suspended by the Court of Ecclesiastical Commission.<sup>1</sup>

This incident convinced the Jesuits that the dispensing power was not safe so long as it rested solely upon the opinion of the judges. The prerogative might be, and indeed was, disputed by the divines of the Church of England. The army would be a much firmer basis for so great a fabric. Accordingly, the Jesuits represented to the king what great things Louis of France was at

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<sup>1</sup> Burnet, vol. ii., pp. 317, 318. Bowyer, *Hist. of James II.*, pp. 77-83.

that hour accomplishing by his dragoons, in the way of converting men to the Romish faith; and James, zealous of rivalling his orthodox brother, and foreseeing how efficient dragonnades would be for upholding the dispensing power, assembled his army to the number of about 15,000 at Hounslow Heath. Erecting a chapel, he had mass said daily at headquarters, although the great majority of the soldiers were Protestants. The nation saw a cloud gathering above it which might burst upon it any hour in ruin. Its forebodings and alarms found expression in a tract which a learned divine, Mr. Samuel Johnson, addressed to the army. "Will you be aiding and assisting," asked he, "to set up masshouses, to erect that kingdom of darkness and desolation amongst us, and to train up all our children to Popery? What service can you do your country by being under the command of French and Irish Papists, and by bringing the nation under a foreign yoke? . . . Will you exchange your birth-right of English laws and liberties for martial and club law, and help to destroy all others, only at last to be eaten up yourselves?"<sup>1</sup> For this patriotic advice, Mr. Johnson was degraded from his office, whipped from Newgate to Tyburn, and made to stand three times in the pillory. He had sown seeds, however, in the army, which bore fruit afterwards.

It was while the king was pursuing this course—trampling down the laws, subjecting some of the most eminent of his subjects to barbarous indignities, and preparing the army to deal the final *coup* to the Protestant religion and the liberties of England—that he published (April 4th, 1687) his "Gracious Declaration for Liberty of Conscience." In this edict his Majesty declared it to be his opinion that "conscience ought not to be constrained," and accordingly he suspended all oaths and tests for office, and all penal laws for nonconformity to the established religion, and in general removed all disabilities from every one, in order that all fit to serve him might be eligible to public employment. All this James granted solely in virtue of his royal prerogative.

To the Nonconformists this Indulgence was the opening of the prison doors. They had been grievously harassed, and having a natural right to their liberty, it does not surprise us that they were willing to part with their fetters. They could now walk the streets without the fear of having their steps dogged by an ecclesiastical bailiff, and could worship in their own houses or in their churches without the terror of incurring the ignominy of the pillory. The change to them was immense; it was freedom after slavery, and their joy being in proportion, the terms in which they thanked James were warm indeed, and in some cases extravagant; though it must be confessed that had this Indulgence been honestly meant, it would have been worthy of all the praises now lavished upon its author. But the gift was not honestly intended.

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<sup>1</sup> Bowyer, pp. 85, 86.

James's Toleration was a sweetened cup holding a deadly poison. The great majority of the Nonconformists perfectly understood the motive and object of the king in granting this Indulgence, and appreciated it at its true worth. It rested solely on the royal prerogative. It did not establish liberty of conscience; it but converted that great principle into a pedestal of arbitrary power. James had given the English nation a year's liberty, or a month it might be, or a day, to be succeeded by an eternity of servitude.

Having set up the dispensing power, James proceeded to use it for the overturn of all institutions and principles, not excepting that liberty for the sake of which, as he said, he had assumed it. The bolt fell first on the two universities. The king sent his mandate to Cambridge, ordering the admission of one Allan Francis, a Benedictine monk, to the degree of Master of Arts, without taking the usual oaths. The senate replied that they could not do so without breaking their own oaths, and besought the king not to compel them to commit wilful perjury. The king insisted that the monk should be admitted, and, the senate still refusing, the vice-chancellor was deprived of his office. The storm next burst over Oxford. The presidency of Magdalen College being vacant, the Romanists coveted exceedingly this noblest and richest of the foundations of learning in Christendom. The king ordered the election of Anthony Farmer, a man of bad reputation, but who had promised to become a Papist. The authorities of Oxford must either violate their oaths or disobey the king. They resolved not to perjure themselves; they refused to admit the king's nominee. James stormed, and threatened to make them feel the weight of his displeasure, which in no long time they did. The president and twenty-five fellows were extruded from the university, and declared incapable of receiving or being admitted into any ecclesiastical dignity, benefice, or promotion. The nation looked on with just indignation. "It was accounted," says Burnet, "an open piece of robbery and burglary when men, authorised by no legal commission, came and forcibly turned men out of their profession and freehold."<sup>1</sup>

The more tyrannical his measures, the louder James protested that he would uphold the Church of England as by law established, and hence the submission of the nation to these attacks upon its rights. But the next step on which the king ventured threw the people into greater alarm than they had yet felt. This was the imprisoning of seven bishops in the Tower. This bold act grew out of a new Declaration of Liberty of Conscience which the king thought right to issue. This declaration was accompanied with an order enjoining the bishops to distribute it throughout their dioceses, and cause it to be read during Divine service in all the churches of the kingdom. Several of the bishops and vast numbers of the clergy refused to read this paper, not

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<sup>1</sup> Burnet, vol. ii., p. 381. Bowyer, p. 123.

because they were opposed to liberty of conscience, but because they knew that under this phrase was couched a dispensing power, which the king was using for the destruction of the laws and institutions of the kingdom, and to read this paper was to make the Church of England accessory indirectly to her own ruin. Six bishops,<sup>1</sup> with the Archbishop of Canterbury, were summoned before the Ecclesiastical Commission, and, after being hectored by Jeffreys, were sent (June 29, 1688) to the Tower. London was thunderstruck.

To prevent tumult or insurrection, the bishops were conveyed by water to their prison. But the thing could not be hid, and the people in vast numbers crowded to the banks of the Thames, and by loud demonstrations extolled the constancy of the bishops, while some, falling on their knees, invoked their blessing as their barge passed down the river. When they arrived at the Tower, the bishops ascended the stairs between a double row of officers and soldiers, who, receiving them as confessors, kneeled to receive their blessing.<sup>2</sup>

While armed force was being put forth to extirpate the Protestant faith, Jesuitical craft was busily exerted to propagate the Roman creed. The city and the country were filled with catechisms and manuals, in which the grosser errors of Popery were glossed over with a masterly skill, and the two faiths were made to wear so close a resemblance that a vulgar eye could scarce discern the difference between them. A Popish orphanage was erected; noblemen were closeted with the king and solicited to be converted; Father Petre was designed for the Sec of York. At last, almost all disguise being thrown off, the Papal Nuncio made his entry into London in open day, passing through the streets in great pomp, preceded by a cross-bearer, and followed by a crowd of priests and monks in the habits of their orders.

To these signs was added another yet more remarkable. The Jesuits had foretold that should the king abolish the penal laws, a work so acceptable to Heaven would not fail to be rewarded with a Prince of Wales. It was now that the prophecy was fulfilled. Rumours had been spread through the nation some time before that the queen was pregnant. On Saturday, the 9th of June, 1688, after playing cards at Whitehall till eleven of the clock at night,<sup>3</sup> the queen made herself be carried to St. James's, where a bed had previously been prepared, and the public were not a little surprised to be told that next morning, between the hours of ten and eleven, she had there given birth to a son. This was the one thing wanted to complete the programme of the Jesuits. James was growing into years; his two daughters were both married to

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<sup>1</sup> They were Ken, Bishop of Bath and Wells, Lloyd of St. Asaph. Turner of Ely, Lake of Chichester. White of Peterborough, and Trelawney of Bristol. The primate was William Sancroft.

<sup>2</sup> Burnet, vol. ii., p. 436. Bowyer, pp. 162, 163.

<sup>3</sup> Bowyer, p. 164.

Protestant princes; and however zealous for Rome, without a son to inherit his crown and his religion, the Papists considered that they but reposed under a gourd, which, like that of sacred story, might wither in a night; but now they were secured against such a catastrophe by a birth which they themselves called miraculous. The king had now been provided with a successor, and the arrangement was complete for securing the perpetuity of that Romish establishment in England which every day was bringing nearer.

There was but one little trouble in store for the Jesuits. On the 30th of June the bishops were acquitted. The presence of the judges could not restrain the joy of the people, and the roof of Westminster Hall resounded with the shouts that hailed the sentence of the court. The echoes were caught up by the crowd outside, and repeated in louder demonstrations of joy. The great news was speedily communicated to the cities of Westminster and London: "Not guilty!" "Not guilty!" passed from man to man, and from street to street; the enthusiasm of the citizens was awakened as the words flew onwards, and so loudly did the two cities rejoice that their shouts were heard at Hounslow Heath. The soldiers now burst into huzzahs, and the noise of the camp fell on the king's ear as he was being that day entertained in the Earl of Feversham's tent. Wondering what the unusual noise might mean, the king sent the earl to inquire, who, speedily returning, told the king, "nothing but the soldiers shouting upon the acquittal of the bishops." "And do you call that nothing?" replied the king, evidently discomposed. There was cause for agitation. That storm, the first mutterings of which had been heard at the Market Cross at Sanquhar, was rolling darkly up on all sides.

But the king took not warning. He was steadfastly purposed to pursue to the end those projects which appeared to him and his Jesuit advisers to be rapidly approaching the goal. He had set up the dispensing power: with it he was overturning the laws, filling the judicial bench with his own creatures, re-modelling the Church and the universities, and daily swelling the Popish and murderous elements in the army by recruits from Ireland; Parliament he had dissolved, and if it should please him to re-assemble it, the same power which had given him a subservient army could give him a subservient Parliament. The requisite machinery was ready for the destruction of the religion and liberties of England. Is the work of two centuries to be swept away? Has the knell of Protestantism rung out? If not, in what quarter is deliverance to arise? and by whose arm will it please the great Ruler to lift up a sinking Christendom, and restore to stability the cause of liberty and truth?

## CHAPTER XXX.

### PROTESTANTISM MOUNTS THE THRONE OF GREAT BRITAIN.

The Movement Returns to the Land of its Birth—England Looks to William of Orange—State of Parties in Europe—Preparations in England against Invasion—Alarm and Proclamation of James II.—Declaration of William of Orange—The Dutch Fleet Sails—A Storm—The Dutch Fleet Driven Back—William's Appeals to the English Soldiers and Sailors—The Fleet again Sets Sail—Shiftings of the Wind—Landing at Torbay—Prince of Orange's Address—The Nation Declares for him—King James Deserted—His Flight—The Crown Settled on the Prince and Princess of Orange—Protestantism on the Throne.

AFTER the revolution of three centuries, Protestantism, in its march round the countries of Christendom, had returned to the land from which it had set out. On the very spot where Wicliffe had opened the war in 1360, Protestantism was now lighting one of the most momentous of its many great battles, inasmuch as this conflict would determine what fruit was to remain of all its past labours and contendings, and what position it would hold in the world during the coming centuries—whether one of ever-lessening influence, till finally it should vanish, like some previous premature movements, or whether it was to find for itself a basis so solid that it should spread abroad on the right hand and on the left, continually gathering fresh brightness, and constantly creating new instrumentalities of conquest, till at last it should be accepted as the ruler of a world which it had liberated and regenerated.

The first part of the alternative seemed at this moment the likelier to be realised. With an affiliated disciple of the Jesuits upon the throne,<sup>1</sup> with its institutions, one after another, attacked, undermined, and overthrown, England was rapidly sinking into the abyss from which Wicliffe's spirit had rescued it, and along with it would descend into the same abyss the remains of the once glorious Churches of Geneva, of France, and of Scotland. Help there appeared not in man. No voice was heard in England powerful enough to awaken into life and action that spirit which had given so many martyrs to the stake in the days of Mary. This spirit, though asleep, was not dead. There were a few whose suspicions had been awake ever since the accession of James II.; and of those who had sunk into lethargy many were now thoroughly aroused by the violent measures of the king. The imprisonment of the bishops, and the birth of the "Prince of Wales," were two events which the nation interpreted as sure portents of a coming slavery. The people of England turned their eyes in search of a deliverer beyond the sea, and fixed them upon a prince of the illustrious House of Orange, in whom the virtues, the talents, and the self-sacrificing heroism of the great William lived over again,

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<sup>1</sup> See Burnet, vol. ii., pp. 395, 396.

not indeed with greater splendour, for that was impossible, not even with equal splendour, but still in so pre-eminent a glory as to mark him out as the one man in Europe capable of sustaining the burden of a sinking Christendom. Besides the cardinal qualification of his Protestantism, William, by his marriage with the daughter of James II, was the next heir to the throne, after that mysterious child, at whose christening the Pope, through his nuncio, stood god-father, and on whom it pleased the king to bestow the title of "Prince of Wales."

Many had ere this opened correspondence with the Stadtholder, entreating him to interpose and prevent the ruin of England; the number of such was now greatly increased, and among others the Archbishop of Canterbury addressed him from the Tower, and the Bishop of London from his retirement in the country. Others crossed the sea, some on pretext of visiting friends, and some, as they said, to benefit by the German spas. A majority of the nobility favoured the intervention of William, and found means of letting their wishes be known at the Hague. Despatches and messengers were constantly crossing and recrossing the ocean, and James and his Jesuits might have known that great designs were on foot, had not their secure hold on England, as they fancied it, blinded them to their danger. The representatives of most of the historic houses in England were more or less openly supporting the movement. Even so early as the death of Charles II., the Elector of Brandenburg is said to have urged William to undertake the deliverance of English Protestantism, offering to assist him; but the prince answered that he would attempt nothing against his father-in-law without an absolute necessity, "but at the same time he protested that if he could not otherwise prevent the subversion of the laws and religion of England, he would undertake the voyage, though he should embark in a fishing-boat."<sup>1</sup> On a survey of the case, it appeared to William that an absolute necessity had arisen, and he proceeded to make preparations accordingly.

In weighing the chances of success, William had to take into account the state of parties in Europe, and the forces, both friendly and hostile, that would come into play the moment he should set sail for England. Ranged against him were Austria, Spain, France, and, of course, the monarch to be attacked, James II. These powerful kingdoms, if not bound in actual treaty, were all of them leagued together by a common faith and a common interest. Austria had held the balance in Europe for five centuries, and was not prepared to resign it. Spain, fallen from the height on which it stood a century before, was nevertheless ready to devote what strength it still possessed to a cause which it loved as dearly as ever. France, her exchequer full, her armies numerous, and her generals flushed with victory, had never been more

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<sup>1</sup> Bennet, *Memorial*, p. 337.

formidable than now. Louis XIV. might make a diversion in favour of his ally, James II., by attacking Holland as soon as William had withdrawn his troops across the sea. To guard himself on this side, the Prince of Orange sought to detach Austria and Spain from France by representing to them the danger of French ascendancy, and that Louis was not fighting to advance the Roman religion, but to make himself universal monarch. His representations were so far successful that they cooled the zeal of the Courts of Vienna and Madrid for the "Grand Monarch," and abated somewhat the danger of William's great enterprise.

On the other hand, the prince gathered round him what allies he could from the Protestant portion of Europe. It is interesting to find among the confederates around the great Stadtholder the representatives of the men who had been the chief champions of the Protestant movement at its earlier stages. The old names once more appear on the stage, and the close of the great drama carries us back as it were to its beginning. At Minden, in Westphalia, William of Orange met the Electors of Saxony and Brandenburg, the Landgrave of Hesse-Cassel, and the Princes of the House of Luneburg, who, on a mutual exchange of sentiments, were found to be of one mind, that the balance of Europe as settled at the Peace of Westphalia after the Thirty Years' War had been grievously disturbed, and that it urgently needed to be redressed by upholding the Protestant Church, restoring the ancient liberties of England, and setting bounds to the growing power of France."<sup>1</sup>

At this moment an event happened which furnished William with a pretext for the warlike preparations he was so busily pushing forward with a view to his English expedition, and also closed the door by which the French might enter Holland in his absence. On the 2nd of June, 1688, the Elector of Cologne died. This principality commanded twenty leagues of the Rhine, and this placed the keys of both the Netherlands and Holland in the hands of its chief. It was therefore a matter of grave importance for the peace and safety of the Dutch States who should fill the vacant electorate. Germany and France brought forward each its candidate. If the French king should succeed in the election, war was inevitable on the Rhine, and for this it behoved William of Orange to be prepared, and so his naval armaments went forward without exciting suspicion. It was the German candidate who was eventually elected, and thus an affair which in its progress had masked the preparations of the Prince of Orange, in its issue extended protection to an undertaking which otherwise would have been attended with far greater difficulty.<sup>2</sup>

Early in September, however, it began to be strongly suspected that these great preparations in Holland both by sea and land pointed to England.

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<sup>1</sup> Bowyer, p. 191. Burnet, vol. ii., p. 456.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 191. Burnet, vol. ii., pp. 457–462.

Instantly precautions were taken against a possible invasion. The chief ports, and in particular Portsmouth and Hull, then the two keys of England, were put into Popish hands, and the garrisons so modelled that the majority were Papists. Officers and private soldiers were brought across from Ireland and drafted into the army, but the king lost more than he gained by the offence he thus gave to the Protestant soldiers and their commanders. The rumours from the Hague grew every day more certain, and the fitting out of the fleet went on at redoubled speed. Orders were dispatched to Tyrconnel to send over whole regiments from Ireland; and meanwhile to allay the jealousies of the people another proclamation was published (September 21st), to the effect that his Majesty would call a Parliament, that he would establish a universal liberty of conscience, that he would inviolably uphold the Church of England, that he would exclude Romanists from the Lower House, and that he would repeal all the tests and penalties against Nonconformity. It had happened so often that while the king's words breathed only liberty his acts contained nothing but oppression, that this proclamation had little or no effect.

The king next received, through his envoy at the Hague, certain news of the prince's design to descend on England. At the same time James learned that numerous lords and gentlemen had crossed the sea, and would return under the banners of the invader. "Upon the reading of this letter," says Bowyer, "the king remained speechless, and as it were thunder-struck. The airy castle of a dispensing arbitrary power, raised by the magic spells of Jesuitical counsels, vanished in a moment, and the deluded monarch, freed from his enchantment by the approach of the Prince of Orange, found himself on the brink of a precipice, whilst all his intoxicating flatterers stood amazed and confounded at a distance, without daring to offer him a supporting hand, lest his greater weight should hurry both him and them into the abyss."<sup>1</sup>

The first device of the court was an attempt to prepossess the nation against their deliverer. A proclamation was issued setting forth that "a great and sudden invasion from Holland, with an armed force of foreigners, would speedily be made," and that under "some false pretences relating to liberty, property, and religion, the invasion proposed an absolute conquest of these his Majesty's kingdoms, and the utter subduing and subjecting them, and all his people, to a foreign Power." Besides this proclamation other measures were taken to rally the people round the sinking dynasty. The bishops were courted; the Anabaptist Lord Mayor of London was replaced by a member of the Church of England; the Duke of Ormond, who had been dismissed from the Lord-Lieutenancy of Ireland, had the garter bestowed upon him; and a general pardon was issued, from which, however, a score of persons were excepted. These measures availed not their author, for late and forced

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<sup>1</sup> Bowyer, p. 204.

amnesties are always accepted by the people as signs of a monarch's weakness and not of his clemency.

On the 3rd of October, the bishops, at the king's command, waited on him with their advice. They strongly counselled an entire reversal of his whole policy, and the now docile monarch conceded nearly all their demands. The reforms began to be put in execution, but news arriving in a few days that the Dutch fleet had been driven back by a storm, the king's concessions were instantly withdrawn. James sank lower than ever in the confidence of the nation.<sup>1</sup> No stay remained to the king but his fleet and army; the first was sent to sea to watch the Dutch, and the latter was increased to 30,000, by the arrival of regiments from Ireland and Scotland.

Meanwhile, on the other side of the German Ocean, the Prince of Orange was providing transports and embarking his troops with the utmost diligence. To justify his undertaking to the world, he published, on the 10th of October, a declaration in six-and-twenty articles, comprehending, first, an enumeration of the oppressions under which the English nation groaned; secondly, a statement of the remedies which had been used in vain for the removal of these grievances; and thirdly, a declaration of the reasons that moved him to undertake the deliverance of England. "His expedition," he said, "was intended for no other design but to have a free and lawful Parliament assembled," to which all questions might be referred, touching "the establishment of the Protestant religion, and the peace, honour, and happiness of these nations upon lasting foundations."

All things being ready, the Prince of Orange, took solemn leave of the States. Standing on the threshold of his great enterprise, he again protested that he had no other objects than those set forth in his declaration. Most of the senators were melted into tears, and could only in broken utterances declare their love for their prince, and their wishes for his success. "Only the prince himself," says Burnet, "continued firm in his usual gravity and phlegm."

On the 19th of October, William went on board, and the Dutch fleet, consisting of fifty-two men-of-war, twenty-five frigates, as many fire-ships, with four hundred victuallers, and other vessels for the transportation of 3,660 horse, and 10,692 foot, put to sea from the flats near the Brielle, with a wind at south-west by south.<sup>2</sup> Admiral Herbert led the van, and Vice-Admiral Evertzen brought up the rear. The prince placed himself in the centre, carrying an English flag, emblazoned with his arms, surrounded with the legend, "For the Protestant Religion and Liberties of England." Underneath was the motto of the House of Nassau, *Je Maintiendray* (I will maintain).

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<sup>1</sup> Bowyer, pp. 206–210.

<sup>2</sup> p. 227.

Gathered beneath the banners of William, now advancing to deliver England and put the crown upon many a previous conflict, was a brilliant assemblage, representative of several nations. Besides the Count of Nassau, and other Dutch and German commanders, there came with the prince those English and Scottish noblemen and gentlemen whom persecution had compelled to flee to Holland. Among these were men of ancient family and historic name, and others distinguished by their learning or their services to the State. The most illustrious of the French exiles joined in this expedition, and contributed by their experience and bravery to its success. With the prince was the renowned Marshal Schomberg and his son, Count Charles Schomberg, and M. la Caillemote, son of the Marquis de Ruvigny. Moreover, 736 officers, mostly veterans, accustomed to conquer under Turenne and Condé, commanded in William's battalions. Besides these was a chosen body of three regiments of infantry and one squadron of cavalry, composed entirely of French refugees. Each regiment numbered 750 fighting men.<sup>1</sup> Marshal Schomberg commanded under the orders of the Prince of Orange, and such was the confidence reposed in his character and abilities that the Princess of Orange gave him, it is said, secret instructions to assert her rights and carry out the enterprise, should her husband fall. Two other refugee officers were similarly commissioned, should both the prince and the marshal fall.<sup>2</sup> Thus had his two greatest enemies provided William with an army. Louis of France and James of England had sent the flower of their generals, statesmen, and soldiers to swell this expedition; and Popish tyranny had gathered out of the various countries, and assembled under one avenging banner, a host that burned to fight the great crowning battle of Protestantism.

The first night the fleet was at sea the wind veered into the north, and settled in the north-west. It soon rose to a violent storm, which continued all next day. The fleet was driven back, some of the ships finding refuge in Helvoetsluys, from which they had sailed, others in the neighbouring harbours, but neither ship nor life was lost, save one man who was blown from the shrouds. It was rumoured in England that the Dutch armament had gone to the bottom, whereupon the Romanists sang a loud but premature triumph over the fancied disaster, which they regarded as a compensation for the destruction of the Armada exactly a hundred years before. To keep up the delusion, and make the English Court more remiss in their preparations, the Amsterdam and Haarlem gazettes were ordered to make a lamentable relation of the great damage the Dutch fleet and the army had sustained, that nine men-of-war, besides smaller vessels, were lost, Dr. Burnet and several English gentlemen drowned, the States out of humour with the expedition, and,

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<sup>1</sup> Weiss, *French Protestant Refugees*, p. 231.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 232.

in fine, that it was next to impossible for the prince to resume his design till next spring.<sup>1</sup>

While waiting for the re-assembling and re-fitting of his fleet, the Prince of Orange issued a declaration to the army in England, in which he told them, “We are come to preserve your religion, and restore and establish your liberties and properties, and therefore we cannot suffer ourselves to doubt but that all true Englishmen will come and concur with us in our desire to secure these nations from Popery and slavery. You must all plainly see that you are only made use of as instruments to enslave the nation and ruin the Protestant religion, and when that is done, you may judge what you yourselves may expect. . . . We hope that you will not suffer yourselves to be abused by a false notion of honour, but that you will in the first place consider what you owe to Almighty God, and next to your country, yourselves, and your posterity.” Admiral Herbert addressed a similar letter, at the same time, to his Majesty’s navy, exhorting them to join the prince in the common cause. “For,” said he, “should it please God for the sins of the English nation to suffer your arms to prevail, to what can your victory serve you, but to enslave you deeper, and overthrow the true religion in which you have lived and your fathers died?” These appeals had the best effect upon the soldiers and sailors; many of whom resolved not to draw a sword in this quarrel till they had secured a free Parliament, and a guarantee for the laws, the liberties, and the religion of England.

The storm continued for eight days, during which the fleet was re-fitted and re-victualled. When all was ready the wind changed into the east. With this “Protestant wind,” as the sailors called it, the fleet a second time stood out to sea. It was divided into three squadrons. The English and Scottish division of the armament sailed under a red flag; the Brandenburgers and the guards of William under a white; and the Dutch and French, commanded by the Count of Nassau, under a blue. The tack chosen at first was northerly; but the wind being strong and full from the east, the fleet abandoned that course at noon of the second day and steered westward.<sup>2</sup> Had the northerly course been persisted in, the fleet would have encountered the English navy, which was assembled near Harwich, in the belief that the prince would land in the north of England; but happily the wind, rising to a brisk gale, carried them right across to the month of the Channel, and at the same time kept the English fleet wind-bound in their roadstead. At noon on the 3rd of November, the Dutch fleet passed between Dover and Calais. It was a brave sight—the armament ranged in a line seven leagues long, sailing proudly onwards between the shores of England and France, its decks crowded with officers and

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<sup>1</sup> Bowyer, p. 229.

<sup>2</sup> Burnet, vol. ii., p. 497.

soldiers, while the coast on either hand was lined with crowds which gathered to gaze on the grand spectacle. Before night fell the fleet had sighted the Isle of Wight. The next day was Sunday: the fleet carried but little sail, and bore slowly along before the wind, which still kept in the east. It was the anniversary of the prince's birth, and also his marriage, and some of his officers, deeming the day auspicious, advised him to land at Portsmouth; but William, choosing rather to give the fleet leisure for the exercises appropriate to the sacred day, forbore to do so. The Bay of Torquay was under their lee, and here William resolved to attempt a landing. The pilot was bidden be careful not to steer past it, but a haze coming on he had great difficulty in measuring his course. When the mist cleared off, it was found that the fleet was considerably farther down-channel than the intended point of debarkation, and as the wind still blew from the east it was impossible to return to it. To go on to Plymouth, the next alternative, involved considerable hazard, for it was uncertain how the Earl of Bath, who commanded there, might receive them. Besides, Plymouth was not nearly so commodious for landing as the Bay of Torquay, which they had passed in the haze. While the prince was deliberating, the wind shifted; there came a calm of a few moments, and then a breeze set in from the south-west: "a soft and happy gale," says Burnet, who was on board, "which carried in the whole fleet in four hours' time into Torbay." Scarcely had the ships dropped their anchors when the wind returned, and blew again from the east.<sup>1</sup>

The landing was safely effected; the peasants of Devonshire flocked in crowds to welcome their deliverer and supply his troops with provisions; the mild air refreshed them after their sea-voyage. The landing of the horses, it was feared, would be a matter of great difficulty; but they were shown a place, says Burnet, "so happy for our landing, though we came to it by mere accident, that if we had ordered the whole island round to be sounded we could not have found a properer place for it." There was, moreover, a dead calm all that morning, and a business which they had reckoned would occupy them for days was got through in as many hours. When the prince and Marshal Schomberg had stepped on shore, William, says Bishop Burnet, "took me heartily by the hand, and asked me if I would not now believe predestination." "He was cheerfuller than ordinary," he adds, "yet he returned soon to his usual gravity."

They had no sooner effected the debarkation of men, horses, and stores, than the wind changed again, and setting in from the west, it blew a violent storm. Sheltered by the western arm of the bay, William's ships suffered no damage from this tempest; not so the king's fleet, which till now had been wind-bound at Harwich. They had learned that William's ships had passed

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<sup>1</sup> Burnet, vol. ii., p. 499. Bowyer, *Hist. of King William III.*, vol. i., pp. 235, 236.

down the Channel, and the commander was eager to pursue them. The calm which enabled William to enter Torbay, had also allowed the king's navy to leave their roadstead, and setting out in pursuit of the enemy they had come as far as the Isle of Wight when they were met by this storm. They were tossed on the rollers of the Channel for some days, and though at last they managed to enter Portsmouth, it was in so shattered a condition that they were unfit for service that year. "By the immediate hand of Heaven," says Burnet, "we were masters of the sea without a blow. I never found a disposition to superstition in my temper; I was rather inclined to be philosophical upon all occasions. Yet I must confess that this strange ordering of the winds and seasons, just to change as our affairs required it, could not but make deep impressions upon me, as well as on all who observed it."<sup>1</sup>

For the first few days it was doubtful what reception England would give its deliverer. The winds were "Protestant," every one acknowledged, but would the currents of the political and social firmament prove equally so? The terror of the executions which had followed the rising under Monmouth still weighed on the nation. The forces that William had brought with him appeared inadequate, and on these and other grounds many stood in doubt of the issue. But in a few days the tide of Protestant feeling began to flow; first the people declared in favour of William—next the gentry of the neighbouring counties gave in their accession to him; and lastly the nobles gathered under his banners. Of soul too magnanimous and strong to be either easily elated or easily cast down, this tardiness of the people of England to assert their liberties, which William had come across the sea to vindicate, drew from the prince a dignified rebuke. Addressing the gentlemen of Somersetshire and Dorsetshire (November 15), we find him saying, "You see we are come according to your invitation and our promise. Our duty to God obliges us to protect the Protestant religion, and our love to mankind your liberties and properties. We expected you that dwelt so near the place of our landing would have joined us sooner; not that it is now too late, nor that we want your military assistance so much as your countenance and presence, to justify our declared pretensions, in order to accomplish our good and gracious design . . . . Therefore, gentlemen, friends, and fellow Protestants, we bid you and all your followers most heartily welcome to our court and camp. Let the whole world now judge if our pretensions are not just, generous, sincere, and above price, since we might have even a bridge of gold to return back; but it is our principle rather to die in a good cause than live in a bad one."<sup>2</sup>

Courage is as contagious as fear. The first accessions to the prince were followed by crowds of all ranks. The bishops, the great cities, the nation at

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<sup>1</sup> Burnet, vol. ii., pp. 499, 500.

<sup>2</sup> Bowyer, *Hist. William III.*, vol. i., pp. 241, 242.

large declared on his side. The king made hardly any show of opposition. The tempests of the ocean had disabled his fleet; a spirit of desertion had crept in among his soldiers, and his army could not be relied on. The priests and Jesuits, who had urged him to violent measures, forsook him now, when he was in extremity, and consulted their own safety in flight. The friends on whom formerly he had showered his favours, and whom he believed incapable of ever deserting him, proved false; even his own children forsook him. No one stood by him at this hour but his queen, and she deemed it prudent to retire to France. The man who but a few days before stood at the head of one of the most powerful kingdoms of Europe, who had fleets and armies at his command, who had around him so numerous and powerful an aristocracy, was in a moment, with hardly a sword unsheathed against him, stripped of all, and now stood alone, his friends scattered, his armies in revolt, his kingdom alienated and his power utterly broken. Overwhelmed by the suddenness and greatness of his calamities, he fled, no man pursuing, throwing, in his flight, the great seal into the Thames; and having reached the sea-coast, the once mighty monarch threw himself into a small boat, crossed the Channel, and sought the protection of the man whose equal he had been till this unhappy hour, but on whose bounty he was henceforth content to subsist.

The throne being thus vacated, a Convention was held, and the crown was settled on the Prince and Princess of Orange. William ascended the throne as the representative of Protestantism. That throne, destined to become the greatest in the world, we behold won for the Reformation. This was the triumph, not of English Protestantism only, it was the triumph of the Protestantism of all Christendom. It was the resurrection of the cause of the French Huguenots, and through them that of Calvin and the Church of Geneva. It was the revival not less of the cause of the Scots Covenanter's, whose torn and blood-stained flag, upheld at the latter end of their struggle by only a few laymen, was soon to be crowned with victory. William the Silent lives once more in his great descendant, and in William III. fights over again his great battle, and achieves a success more glorious and dazzling than any that was destined to cheer him in his mortal life. Protestantism planting herself at the centre of an empire whose circuit goes round the globe, and whose sceptre is stretched over men of all kindreds, languages, and nations on the earth, with letters, science, colonies, and organised churches round her as her ministers and propagators, sees in this glorious outcome and issue the harvest of the toils and blood of the hundreds of thousands of heroes, confessors, and martyrs whom she has reared. One sowed, another reaped, and now in the accession of William III. both rejoice together.

We found Protestantism at the bar of the hierarchy in St. Paul's in the person of John Wicliffe, we leave it on the throne of England in the person

of William III. While the throne of England continues to be Protestant, Great Britain will stand; when it ceases to be Protestant, Britain will fall.

THE END.