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uncle David Adam

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RENEWICK MONUMENT

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LIFE

OF

JAMES RENWICK,

THE LAST OF THE SCOTTISH MARTYRS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF THE
HISTORY OF THE COVENANTERS, &c.

(William Sims)

“Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than
to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season.”—PAUL.

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PREFACE.

To the friends, whether of religious or civil liberty, no period of Scottish history is more painfully interesting than that which intervened betwixt the Restoration of Charles II. and the Revolution in 1688. During that dismal epoch, the storm of persecution, which raged with such relentless fury throughout the whole length and breadth of the land, swept away, year after year, multitudes both of the most illustrious patriots, and the

most eminent ministers of Christ. No conscientious Presbyterian, indeed,—a name at that time almost identical with resistance to tyranny and oppression equally in the church as in the state—on whom the persecutors could lay their murderous hand, was spared; the sword of the military, or the axe of the executioner, continually thinning the ranks of the upright, unoffending, and godly Covenanters.

Nor, of the thousands who were thus “persecuted for righteousness sake,” is there one whose memory deserves to be held in more venerated estimation than JAMES RENWICK; who, though the last, is well entitled to be placed amongst the highest, in the noble list of Scotland’s martyrs. For, without the smallest disparagement to those other worthies and men of renown, it may

with truth be affirmed, that, while in learning, piety, zeal, and courage, he was inferior to none, nay in some of these respects superior to many of them, the varied sufferings which, though much younger in years, he was called to endure, were at least equal to those of the most distinguished of them all.

In submitting, accordingly, to the perusal of those who reverence the memory of our persecuted fathers, the following memoir of this eminent martyr, no apology, it is presumed, can be required. Though dead, he yet speaketh, not only by his example, but by his writings, some of which have left a memorial of his piety and talents, far more durable than any monument either of brass or of stone could have been. His Collection of Letters, in particular, which

breathe a very different spirit from that of which his enemies have accused him, lay open to the pious reader the riches of a mind, and the amiable feelings of a heart, sanctified by grace, and devoted to the best interests of mankind. In them, Mr. Renwick himself unreservedly discloses his principles, his trials, his comforts; and they beautifully exhibit and illustrate the influence on his own heart and conduct, of those precious doctrines of truth and godliness which he preached, with such glowing ardour and powerful success, to the persecuted wanderers through the mountains and glens of their native land. From them, therefore, the writer of the succeeding pages has introduced as copious quotations as the limits of the work would admit, interspersing them in those parts of the narrative to

which they appeared most appropriate ; and by this means has, he trusts, been enabled to present to the public such a faithful portrait of the martyr's character, as may tend, in some measure, to counteract the effect of those numerous calumnies by which his memory, in common with that of the other Covenanters, has long, and especially of late, been so malignantly aspersed.

November 1832.

LIFE
OF
JAMES RENWICK.

CHAP. I.

Introductory remarks—birth and parentage of Renwick—his youthful piety—difficulties which he had to encounter—he joins the persecuted Covenanters—is sent, by the United Societies, to Holland, to complete his studies and receive ordination—keeps up a close correspondence with his brethren in Scotland—the Classis of Groningen cheerfully accede to grant him ordination—solemnity that attended his being set apart to the work of the ministry—testimony of the Classis to his piety and talents.

THE overthrow of popery, and establishment of presbytery in Scotland, at the period of the Reformation, gave great offence to the bigoted house of Stuart. James VI., notwith-

standing his professions to the contrary, was a decided enemy to presbyterianism, and no sooner ascended the throne of England than he compelled the nation to submit to a modified episcopacy. The accession of his son, Charles I., in 1625, rendered the yoke which had been imposed on the Scottish church still more galling. Prelacy, with all its appendages, though detested by the people, was attempted to be built on the ruins of presbyterianism; and many eminent Christians, for condemning the unhallowed and tyrannical measures of government, were subjected to persecution.

Unable longer to endure the oppressions under which they groaned, the presbyterians, in 1638, renewed the National Covenant; and, in a general assembly held at Glasgow, they completely abolished episcopacy, and restored presbyterianism to its original purity. The proceedings of that assembly were ratified by parliament in 1640; and so earnest were the Scots to perpetuate and extend the benefits of this second reformation, that another covenant, entitled "The Solemn League," was drawn up and subscribed, not only by the people in Scotland, but by multitudes both in England and Ireland. In the assembly of di-

vines, held at Westminster in 1643, with the assistance of commissioners from the church of Scotland, the Solemn League was sworn, and those ecclesiastical standards, which have ever since been adhered to in Scotland as agreeable to the word of God, were drawn up, and appointed to be received throughout both kingdoms.

The tragical death of Charles I., who was beheaded by the English republican army in 1649, was followed by the hasty proclamation of his son, Charles II., in Scotland. He was then at the Hague, a town in Holland. Having agreed to the conditions of the commissioners appointed to treat with him, he arrived in Scotland in 1650, when he solemnly swore the covenants, and was crowned at Scoon, on the 1st of January 1651. In the mean time, Oliver Cromwell having invaded the kingdom, and obtained a decisive victory over the Scots at Dunbar, subjected the nation to his arbitrary authority, destroyed the liberty of the church judicatories, and endeavoured to spread independency throughout the land.

When both kingdoms, wearied out by military despotism, determined to restore Charles to the throne, great efforts were made, on the

one hand, by the presbyterians, to secure their religion; and, on the other, ample promises were given by the king, that he would preserve inviolate the ecclesiastical privileges of his Scottish subjects. He was accordingly raised to the throne on the 29th of May 1660. But no sooner had he obtained the crown, than he manifested his determination to oppose to the utmost that covenanted reformation, to uphold and defend which he had repeatedly bound himself by solemn oath. He immediately claimed and exercised an arbitrary authority in matters ecclesiastical as well as civil; re-established episcopacy in its most odious form to the people; and persecuted unto death all who refused to renounce their religion, and implicitly bow to his impious mandates. The first blow fell on the Marquis of Argyle, a nobleman of genuine piety and known loyalty, who had supported the interests and placed the crown on the head of his ungrateful monarch. The sword of persecution, now unsheathed, was bathed in the blood of the innocent; and from that period till the Revolution, it was never kept back from blood. Upwards of eighteen thousand Scottish presbyterians suffered martyrdom, in one form or other, during the reigns of Charles

II. and his brother James; while those ministers who escaped the sword or the scaffold, either voluntarily took refuge in foreign countries, or were banished, by the council, from their native land.*

It was during this arduous struggle for religion and liberty, that the subject of the following memoir commenced and terminated his eventful life;—one who has left a name that will not soon be forgotten by any who revere the memory of our persecuted fathers.

JAMES RENWICK was born in the parish of Glencairn, in Nithsdale, on the 15th of February 1662. His parents, Andrew Renwick and Elizabeth Carson, were poor,—his father being a weaver by trade,—but exemplary for piety, and greatly respected by all with whom they were acquainted. When his mother, for example, was pouring forth her sorrows for the death of several of her children who died in infancy, previous to the birth of James, her husband uniformly endeavoured to comfort her, by declaring that “he was well satisfied

* For a full account of the transactions of that eventful period, the reader is referred to the History of the Covenanters, already published.

with having children, whether they lived or died, young or old, provided they might be heirs of glory." Unable, however, to attain to that composure of mind and entire resignation to the divine will, which she beheld exemplified in her husband, Mrs. Renwick, like Hannah of old, earnestly sought a child from the Lord, who might not only be an heir of glory, but be devoted to the service of Christ so long as he was pleased to spare him on earth. Accordingly, when James was born, he was received by the pious mother as the answer of her prayers, and she resolved to dedicate him to the Lord for ever. Nor did she wait long till several remarkable appearances of the Lord's gracious dealings with the child were strikingly manifested. When scarcely two years of age he was observed to be aiming at prayer; and though his father had a strong presentiment that his time on earth would be short, yet both he and his mother were firmly persuaded that he would one day prove a distinguished ornament in the church of Christ.

When scarcely six years of age young Renwick began to evince an earnest desire to be made acquainted with divine things; and even then doubts and inquiries, far above the ordi-

nary capacity of children, filled his mind. The creation of the world, the end for which it was made, and in what manner it was formed, were frequent subjects on which his infantine mind was fixed, and concerning which he evinced the utmost solicitude to obtain information. Though all these doubts were solved previous to his arriving at his eleventh year, yet even afterwards he was frequently assailed by temptations to scepticism, insomuch that one day, when walking in the fields, and casting his eyes on the surrounding mountains, he exclaimed, "If these were all devouring furnaces of burning brimstone, I would be content to go through them all, if so be I could be assured that there is a God." From all these temptations he was, however, shortly afterwards delivered, and through divine grace attained to that "peace and joy in believing," which it is the province of the Holy Spirit alone to bestow.

From his earliest years young Renwick was distinguished for his scrupulous observance of the fifth commandment. The will of his parents was uniformly his will, and their order a law which he conscientiously obeyed. This will appear strikingly evident from the fact, that even when his heart was set on coming forward

to the ministry, he never raised one objection to several propositions of his father to apprentice him to a trade. Divine Providence, however, ordered otherwise. Though his parents were unable to provide for his education, his amiable disposition so captivated the hearts of several pious individuals, that means were soon furnished for carrying him forward in his studies. When ready for the university, he was advised to undertake the tuition of a limited number of gentlemen's sons, which not only furnished him with means for defraying his expenses while prosecuting his studies, but proved of immense advantage to his own improvement. But there is no situation without its temptations, and few perhaps are more so than that of a sudden transition from the society of the poor to the company of the rich. This was peculiarly experienced by young Renwick. From attachment to his pupils, he was unwarily led to join with them in several of their games and recreations, which gave occasion to some of his enemies afterwards to accuse him, most unjustly, of the crime of profanity.

During the period that Renwick attended the university, the persecution of the covenanters was fearfully increased. The dismal

scenes which were daily taking place around him, and the depressed condition of the presbyterian church throughout the land, deeply affected his mind. He beheld with regret the unhallowed measures which were resorted to by government, to wound the consciences and destroy the peace of the faithful; and, young as he was, he resolved to refuse compliance with the iniquitous mandates of the oppressors. When, accordingly, the period of his studies drew to a close, he decidedly refused the oath of allegiance, which was ordered to be tendered to every student of divinity; and though he was consequently denied his share of the public solemnity of laureation with the rest of the students, he shortly afterwards received it privately in Edinburgh.

The unjustifiable compliances of many of the presbyterian ministers exceedingly distressed the tender mind of Renwick; and it was not till after he had carefully examined every point on which the more conscientious presbyterians and the episcopalians disagreed, and earnestly sought direction from above, that he arrived at the resolution to "cast in his lot" with those who were counted by their persecutors "the offscouring of the earth." He was led to form this determination chiefly

from the fact, that the ministry of those unyielding covenanters whom the government had marked out for destruction, was highly honoured of God. The execution of Donald Cargill in particular, in July 1681,* whose last words he was privileged to hear, made such a deep impression on his mind, that he firmly resolved to espouse the cause—though to human appearance now almost desperate—which that martyr had sealed with his blood.

Field preaching having ceased on the martyrdom of Mr. Cargill, which consequently deprived the covenanters of the public ordinances of religion, the people formed them-

* This distinguished martyr was one of the ministers of Glasgow, previous to the Restoration; but in consequence of his determined opposition to episcopal intrusion and tyranny, he was compelled to flee for his life, and become a wanderer like many of his brethren in the most sequestered places of the country. After nearly twenty years of persecution, during which he continued to preach the gospel to the oppressed covenanters, he was apprehended on the 11th of July 1681. He was, in a few days afterwards, condemned and executed, with his last breath testifying against the unhallowed proceedings of the persecutors, and encouraging his distressed countrymen and followers to persevere in their adherence to the principles of the Reformation.

selves into societies for prayer and religious conference. To these proscribed meetings Mr. Renwick resorted, where his piety, talents, and zeal rendered him so conspicuous, that the eyes of all his brethren were directed to him, as to one whom they hoped would in due time supply the place of that ministry of which they had been deprived. "When I consider," said he, at a meeting held in October, "the Scripture saying, that they that make mention of the name of the Lord must not keep silence; that they must be instant in season and out of season; that they must set the trumpet to their mouth, and show Israel their sins:—it is afflicting to observe how unlike to this ministers now are. I saw nothing among them that I was acquainted with, but every one studying his own safety, and nothing like giving a testimony against the wrongs done to the cause of Christ." As an evidence of his zeal too in behalf not only of the truth, but of those who had suffered in its defence, we may mention here, that about this time he, along with one or two of his brethren, removed the bodies of several martyrs which had been buried at the foot of the Gallowlee gibbet, and at the risk of his life interred them in St. Cuthbert's cemetery.

For the purpose of keeping alive that spirit of genuine religion which seemed all but extinguished among presbyterians, the society people nominated deputies to attend general meetings of the body, with full powers to adopt such measures as the exigency of the times required. The first meeting of the united societies was held at Logan House, in Lanarkshire, where, in consequence of the dreadful persecution which raged throughout the country, it was resolved to draw up a public testimony against the defection and danger of the times. Mr. Renwick had no hand in the framing of this paper, in which were several unguarded expressions of which he disapproved; but, yielding to the wishes of his brethren, he with several others published it at Lanark.* No sooner, however, was this declaration emitted, than the most injurious reports were circulated both in Britain and on the continent against the covenanters, who were charged with having apostatized from the principles of the Reformation. To counteract the unfavourable impressions which

* It is but justice, however, to the society people to state, that all the exceptionable expressions in the Lanark Declaration were observed soon afterwards, and corrected in their *Informatory Vindication*.

their enemies had made on the minds of those who had hitherto befriended them, the next general meeting appointed the Laird of Earlstoun to repair to the United Provinces, for the purpose of vindicating his brethren from these reproaches, and of soliciting from foreigners that sympathy for them which they found it impossible to obtain from their own countrymen. This measure, as beneficial as it was wise, proved the means of securing for the destitute covenanters a continuation of that ministry which otherwise they might never have obtained, until at least the Revolution.

The hopes of his persecuted countrymen being, as already stated, directed towards Mr. Renwick, he and several other young men were sent to Holland about the close of the year 1682, for the purpose at once of completing his studies and of receiving ordination. Previous to the meeting which fixed upon him as one that was worthy of being set over them in the Lord, Mr. Renwick wrote to Mr. Hamilton at Lewarden a letter, dated October 3, 1682, in which he says, "We have no news to write you, but this is clearly to be seen, that the fear and terror of the Lord is legibly written upon the consciences of malignants and backslidden professors: there is not so

much heart and hand to be seen amongst any as amongst the poor remnant. And how can it be otherwise with these backsliding professors, for they are suffering and sinning, and sinning and suffering. In their suffering they want the world's peace, and by their sinning they want the sweet enjoyment of a peaceable conscience, and break and mar their peace with God.—Worthy Mr. Brakel's letter was very refreshing to us all who have heard it. He may expect a line from the remnant when they meet, which, God willing, will be on the 11th of this instant, it being called sooner than expectation for the choosing out of these young men. But go who will, the work they are to go for is most weighty, and their going in such a manner is also most weighty; but there is all furniture with Him who is the light and the life of men. O that none may go but those whom the Lord sends, and goes along with; and whom he helps and will help to look to himself, and to himself only, for all frame and furniture suitable." And in another letter addressed to the Rev. William Brakel in Holland, dated the 5th of the same month, he says, "I think it is to be remarked, and may be clearly seen at this time, that the terrors of the Lord are legibly written upon

the consciences of all the compliers with the horrid abominations of this land. They are really deadened, and it is no wonder, for they have forsaken the Lord, and he hath forsaken them. A guilty conscience is bad company, and what means all this terror of sudden and sore judgments from the Lord? and there is not so much spirit, courage, and voidness of slavish fear among any, whether avowed malignants or compliers with them, as amongst the poor remnant, who are desiring to be helped of the Lord in all things to make a right choice. O pray for the Lord's return to poor Scotland, and for his appearance unto the rejoicing of his people and confusion of his adversaries."*

When Mr. Renwick arrived at the United Provinces, he repaired to the university of Groningen, where he prosecuted his studies with so much assiduity that in a very short time he was declared to be ready for ordination. During this period he frequently wrote to his friends in Scotland and other places; and in all his letters his humility, piety, and zeal for the honour of Christ, are

* These extracts, and several of those which follow, are from a Collection of Mr. Renwick's Letters, published in Edinburgh in 1764.

conspicuously manifested. "O my dear sir," says he in a letter to Mr. Hamilton, dated January 18, 1683, "I cannot express the case I am in, partly with our dear friends falling into the hands of our Lord's enemies, and partly with my being so long detained from my brethren. I cannot tell what may be before my hand, but my longings to be in Scotland I cannot express; I would spare no pains or travel, and fear no hazard, only I do not think it duty to go on deliberately in a seen hazard, where there is no probability of safety." Again, in a letter to the same individual, dated February 6, he says, "O that now when I write to you there were for every drop of ink that falls from my pen, a tear falling from mine eye. There is more than cause enough for it, yea, I cannot say but I am made to see the same; for, in some measure I see and know the poor afflicted, tossed, and wandering remnant, in such a case as the waters have overflowed their heads, the Lord having covered himself with a cloud. But for all this, woe is me! mine eye doth not rightly and thoroughly affect my heart. O, if we could consider that the Lord doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men; and then reflect upon our griefs and afflictions in this day, we would be

put with amazement to wonder at the greatness of our sins. O let us cry and wrestle with the Lord, that he would preserve a remnant from being swallowed up by this weighty cloud of wrath hanging over our heads, ready to break forth, now when we are so ripening for the same. As for my own present case, I am in a confused, anxious, and disconsolate condition at present; yet I dare not say but the Lord is kind, though I be froward; and I think that which my soul would take as the greatest proof of his kindness would be a melting frame of spirit from himself." And in the prospect of his being himself ordained a minister of the gospel of the Son of God, he writes as follows:—"Many objections arose in my heart, flowing all from the sense of my own unfitness, but the Lord answered them with that word, 'I have laid help upon one that is mighty.' But O, it is a weighty work indeed! Who is fit for opening up the mysteries of salvation? Who is fit for declaring our Lord Jesus Christ, prophet, priest, and king in Zion, without any competitors, and for opening up the same? Who is fit for dispensing these glorious benefits of the covenant of redemption? And why is he calling

poor unworthy me out to such a great and glorious work? I think he is saying, that 'the excellency of the power may be of himself and not of me.' So, having the mouth of all objectors stopped, I offer myself in all trembling, fear, and humility; yet, having great reason to believe in him for all things, though I be altogether unfit. Wrestle, and desire all true lovers of Zion to wrestle, with the Lord, that you and we may be directed in this great affair. O set time apart, and seek the mind of the Lord therein. You will meet with difficulties in it, but I trust the Lord will take care of his own work, and direct you wisely. For my own part, I desire nothing but what may be for the advantage of the cause, and I hope the Lord hath so framed my affections, that whatever is seen not to be advantageous, I shall not desire."

Anxious to hasten Mr. Renwick's ordination, his intimate and esteemed friend Mr. Hamilton applied to Mr. Brakel, an eminent minister in Holland, who immediately entered into his views, and proposed that the solemn transaction should take place at Embden. This arrangement was, however, abandoned, in consequence of the scruples of Mr. Renwick and his friends to employ in so momentous a

work individuals whom they considered not sound in the faith. Mr. Hamilton, therefore, next applied to the Classis of Groningen,* and having received a favourable answer from them, Mr. Renwick's testimonials were produced and sustained. At the meeting of the Classis, Mr. Renwick and Mr. Flint, one of his companions, were accordingly called in, and at the request of the assembly delivered their preliminary discourses, in which they faithfully pointed out the corruptions and defections of the Dutch church. Instead of offence being taken at the pointed remarks of the candidates, every one of the members expressed himself highly satisfied; and to the honour of the Classis it ought to be mentioned, that the usual fees which were exacted of candidates were on this occasion paid by the members themselves.

Although it was intended that both Mr. Renwick and his companion should have been ordained at the same time, yet, when the hour arrived, the latter requested that his ordination might be delayed,—a request exceedingly unwise, as he himself afterwards found

* The Classis is an assembly similar to the presbytery of the Scottish church.

when he could not obtain an equally favourable opportunity. The Classis accordingly proceeded in the case of Mr. Renwick alone, but they had scarcely commenced before a circumstance occurred which threatened to prove an effectual bar to the ordination. That was, the intimation that every candidate was previously required to subscribe the formula and catechisms of the Dutch church. There being many points in these catechisms with which Mr. Renwick could not agree, he not only decidedly refused to affix to them his signature, but unhesitatingly pointed out to the Classis several corruptions in their church which those subordinate standards sanctioned, against which he informed them he was bound by solemn covenant to testify. After a few minutes' consultation, however, the difficulty was overcome, and that too in a manner which did the greatest honour to the Classis, while, at the same time, it completely met the views of the pious and conscientious Renwick. The Confession of Faith and Catechisms of the Church of Scotland were produced, and, though quite unprecedented in that country, tendered to Mr. Renwick for signature. In the presence of his friends he was then solemnly ordained to the ministry by the laying on

of hands and fervent prayer, during which the whole assembly melted into tears.* But we shall here give a few extracts from the official testimony of the Classis to his regular ordination, from which it will appear how highly esteemed he was by those eminent divines by whom he was set apart to the sacred work of the ministry.

“ The Classis of Groningen to the reader, sendeth greeting.—It hath not come to pass without the special providence of God, that the ancient church of Scotland, suffering so many and so great tribulations, and reduced to extremities as a flock without a shepherd, and a vineyard without a labourer, did fall upon this resolution, to send over some of their youth to our universities in the United Provinces, that not only they might be prepared for the holy ministry, but also confirmed in the same, that by their ministry, in Christ the Saviour, the church might be built up in-

* One of the members afterwards declared, that “ he had never seen such tokens of the Lord’s being with them” as on the above occasion; and another stated, that though he had been twenty years a minister in that place, he had never witnessed a scene so affecting and so countenanced by the Spirit of God,

to everlasting salvation. Of these, one notable and learned young man of great hope, Mr. James Renwick, master of arts, according as Mr. Brakel did attest to us in write concerning his call, did appear before the Classis at Groningen, after he had diligently for some time exercised himself in the study of theology, and given proof of his progress therein, by the university testimony of D. Johannes a Marck, the principal professor of theology in our university, did require of us a theological examination, and after that a confirmation in the ecclesiastical ministerial functions, to whom we neither would nor ought deny it. In the appointed day, he delivered to us a text of Scripture, from Philip. i. 28, 29, practically and methodically handled, written in Latin; and before the Classis, in presence of the deputies from the Synod, he answered to all the heads of Christian doctrine, both doctrinally and controversially propounded, pertinently and learnedly; and in the original tongues, the Hebrew and Greek, showed himself sufficiently skilful: so that, by common suffrage, he was judged worthy to be ordained to the public ministry in the church of Christ. In which—after he had subscribed with his own hand that he should teach ac-

ording to the word of God, and the Scottish confession agreeable therewith—in the presence of the whole Classis, and of three men of the Scottish nation, he was confirmed after our wonted manner, by imposition of hands. Wherefore we do grant to Mr. James Renwick the power of preaching the word of God, of administering the sacraments, and of using the power of the keys in the church of Scotland, (now warfaring under the cross,) by which he was sequestered unto his ministry; heartily praying, that the Lord God may confirm this his ministry now confirmed by us, pour forth upon him abundantly the gifts of his Holy Spirit, uphold him in constancy, strengthen him with patience against all troubles and persecutions, make him a fruitful and blessed labourer, and long preserve him to the church; that the groaning church of Scotland may in great measure reap heavenly comforts from his ministry, and continually grow in faith, being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are, by Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God, until, out of this spiritual warfare, it may be translated into the heavenly triumph. Written at Groningen, 10th May 1683," and signed by three of the examiners.

The day following Mr. Renwick's ordination, a circumstance occurred which, had it taken place one day sooner, would have stopped, or at least retarded this important transaction. A formal libel had been drawn up against the society people by the Scottish ministers in Rotterdam, containing accusations against the covenanters, which it would have taken a considerable time to have fully answered. But the ordination being completed before this paper came to hand, the Classis not only dismissed it, but expressed their decided disapprobation of its contents, and promised to befriend Mr. Renwick and his adherents to the utmost of their power.

Mr. Renwick's feelings on being set apart to the office of the ministry, will best appear from his own words, contained in a letter dated May 30, and addressed to Mr. Hamilton:—
“ You know,” says he, “ what a great work the Lord hath laid upon me, and how he hath laid so many obligations upon me to be for him, and him only. I hope that you will be mindful thereof, praying that he will endow me with zeal, courage, resolution, constancy, tenderness, and humility; and give a door of utterance, that with all boldness I may speak all his words, and that he may follow the same

with his rich blessing. I do not think but trials and difficulties are abiding me, but if He be with me, I shall not care. We must not this day seek for ourselves great things, when the Lord is bringing evil upon all flesh, and is breaking down what he hath built, and plucking up what he hath planted. O I must say this indeed to the praise of his free grace, that he is continuing and increasing his kindly dealing with my soul. O that I could praise him, and recommend him to all flesh.”

CHAP. II.

Mr. Renwick's return to Scotland—he narrowly escapes being apprehended—is called by the society people to be their minister—dreadful state of the country at that period—his first sermon—its effects—he is continually in danger of his life—afflicting interview between him and Jobu Brown—efforts of the persecutors to accomplish his ruin—his providential and hairbreadth escapes.

IMMEDIATELY after Mr. Renwick's ordination, he felt the utmost solicitude to return to Scotland. That unhappy country was indeed never absent from his mind; but now he burned with fervent zeal to take part with his persecuted and dejected brethren in all their trials, and to administer to them the consolations of that gospel which he was authorised to proclaim. Having accordingly taken farewell of his friends at Groningen, he repaired to Rotterdam, with the view of seizing the first opportunity which occurred of embarking for Scotland. The upbraidings

which he there received from several ministers, of whom other things might have been expected, did not in the smallest degree either intimidate or dishearten him. On the contrary, he resolved to cast in his lot with those covenanters in his native land who were "despotic, afflicted, tormented," and to brave alike the scorn of pretended friends and of open foes, that he might approve himself to be a faithful minister of Christ. "The Lord himself knows," says he, "that nothing that ever I was trusted with was such an exercise to me, as my being detained now out of Scotland. My longings and earnest desires to be in that land, and with that pleasant remnant, are very great. I cannot tell what may be in it, but I hope the Lord hath either some work to work, or else is minded presently to call for a testimony at my hand; and if he give frame and furniture, I desire to welcome either of them."

In the beginning of July, Mr. Renwick embarked at the Brill; but being detained some days in the harbour waiting for a favourable wind, he was so harassed by several of the passengers insisting on him to drink the king's health, and so shocked at their profane conversation, that he left the vessel, and went aboard another, bound for Ireland. Here, too

he found himself in the midst of difficulties. A violent storm rendering it necessary to put into Rye harbour in England, at the very time when there was so much disturbance throughout the kingdom concerning the Ryehouse plot, he narrowly escaped being apprehended. Efforts were made, both by the tide-waiters and the master of the vessel, to betray him into the hands of his enemies. But Divine Providence frustrated all their machinations, and in the beginning of August he arrived safely at Dublin. With the ministers of that city he had several disputes; but, notwithstanding their decided hostility to the cause which he had espoused, they were constrained to acknowledge that "he was a pious and zealous youth."

While he remained at Dublin, he wrote a letter to Mr. Hamilton, in which he says, "I think the Lord hath had a special hand in my coming to this place, for he hath not suffered me to be idle; and, blessed be his name, he hath kindled a fire which, I hope, Satan shall not soon quench. For the people of this place were following men who did not follow the Lord, thinking they were right enough; but now some of them are saying, we have been misled, we never knew before this that we were standing between the Lord's camp and the ad-

versary's. Blessed be the name of the Lord who lets me see, that 'He will see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied,' and gives me many confirmations of his calling me to this work, wherein my only desire is to be faithful. O rejoice in him who hath called me forth to fight against those who oppose themselves, notwithstanding of all their malice at me, and pretended friends, their meeting to consult upon my apprehension. I shall say no more; he hath found some who have engaged to do for me, in taking me home to Scotland. But I have the more patience here, because of the Lord's doing great things."

Notwithstanding Mr. Renwick's sanguine hopes of being conveyed to Scotland without trouble or danger, he experienced very great difficulty in obtaining a passage for that country, and much greater in landing; and had not the master of the vessel, who was no friend to the cause, set him ashore during night, he would probably have been arrested as soon as he had set his foot on Scottish ground. After enduring much fatigue, and encountering many dangers, in travelling through places where no covenantèr durst appear, he arrived at length among several of the society people, who im-

mediately gave him the right hand of fellowship.

Although regularly ordained by the Classis of Groningen, Mr. Renwick declined engaging in the ministerial work until he had received a regular call from the people. That call was however soon given, the general meeting of the society people, which met at Darnead in Clydesdale on the 3d of October, earnestly entreating him to supply the place of those faithful ministers who had been cut off by the hands of their cruel persecutors. With that call he willingly complied, and immediately afterwards commenced his ministerial work in Scotland; "taking up," says Shields, "the standard of the testimony of Christ, and for Christ, upon the same ground where it was fixed and had fallen, at the removal of the former renowned witnesses, Mr. Richard Cameron and Mr. Donald Cargill; which in the strength of his Master, he undertook to prosecute against such oppositions from all hands, as seemed insuperable to sense and reason, and could not but have deterred the most daring that had no other principle or end for their support and encouragement but humour or interest. An undertaking it was to him as difficult and desperate as that of 'Athanasius alone against the

whole world ;' or that of a child threshing down a mountain ; which yet, against all the arrows of archers which shot at him, and hated him, he was helped to achieve and attempt effectually, and overcome with no despicable success, while his bow abode in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the mighty God of Jacob."*

Nor is this picture too highly coloured. There is no person who is at all acquainted with the history of Scotland, but must acknowledge that the horrors of that period, too justly designated by the sufferers *killing time*, were almost beyond description. Nothing short of a total abandonment of the civil rights of the people, and a complete and unreserved relinquishment of their religion, would satisfy a blood-thirsty government and a persecuting hierarchy. But while every presbyterian was the object of hatred to these unfeeling tyrants, the society people were summarily doomed to destruction, and hunted like wild beasts on the mountains by a lawless and brutal soldiery.

Such was the dismal situation of Scotland, and such the heart-rending condition of the faithful few who stedfastly adhered to their

* Shields' Life of Renwick, p. 60.

covenanting principles, when Mr. Renwick appeared among them. By accepting the call of the meeting at Darmead, therefore, he fearlessly put his life in his hand, and declared it to be his resolution, "singly and alone," to set his face against every species of tyranny and oppression, as well as to maintain the cause of truth amidst the wreck of that once beautiful church which was now all but totally destroyed. His first sermon was preached in a moss, at Darmead, on the 23d of November, from Isaiah xxvi. 20, "Come my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee; hide thyself, as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast." This sermon, which does equal honour to his piety and his talents, will bear a comparison, in regard both to its composition and its sound evangelical doctrine, with many of a much later date.* In the preface to that discourse,

* It may be interesting to the reader to state his heads of method in illustrating the above text. These are, "1. The invitation, *Come*. 2. The persons invited, or the determination thereof, *My people*. 3. That which they are invited unto, the chambers of the Lord's protection and presence. 4. Their carriage, and that which they are to do there, *Shut thy doors about thee, and hide thyself*. 5. The safety of these

he conceived it proper, both for the information of his hearers and his own vindication, to give a succinct account, not only of his appointment to the ministry, but of the principles to which he conscientiously adhered. He also plainly stated his own views of some of those points which at that period distracted the minds of presbyterians, and more particularly his reasons for refusing to join with the other ministers in Scotland who had receded in no small degree from the principles which they had sworn to maintain.

The effects produced by this sermon were just what might be expected. While the pious covenanters rejoiced at the message of salvation which he had delivered, his faithfulness in rebuking sin, and his boldness in pointing out the defections of professed Christians, raised up against him a host of enemies. The profane heaped upon him every opprobrious epithet which their wicked hearts could devise; and those presbyterians who had been led away with many of the defections of the times, loaded him with reproach. He was ac-

chambers, being an hiding-place, or rather the determination of the continuance of their hiding, *until the indignation be overpast.*"

cused of having excommunicated all the ministers in Scotland, although he had done no more than stated his reasons why he could not conscientiously join with them in christian communion. The report was industriously circulated, even by ministers, that he was no presbyterian, but an upstart enthusiast, who, having no commission to preach, taught the wildest doctrines and the most disgraceful heresies to an ignorant and a deluded rabble. Nay, some of those ministers, who ought to have known other things, proceeded the length to declare, "that they had sought and obtained the mind of the Lord in this matter, and that Mr. Renwick's labours should never profit the church of Scotland, nor *any soul in it!*" assuring the people, "that God ere long would break and bring to nothing him and them that followed him;" and comparing them to Jannes and Jambres who withstood Moses. Though grieved for the authors of these unjust and unchristian reproaches, Mr. Renwick was enabled to persevere in the good work which he had begun, "committing his cause to him who judgeth righteously."

But if those who ought to have strengthened rather than weakened his hands, in his efforts to disseminate, among a poor and an oppressed

people, the pure gospel of the Son of God, thus reviled and upbraided him, we may conceive somewhat of the fury which filled the minds of the council and prelates, and the vengeance which they determined to execute both on himself and his followers. The persecution, dreadful already, was now fearfully increased. The whole country was filled with savage dragoons, who murdered in cold blood all whom they suspected of favouring presbytery; numerous proclamations were issued against Mr. Renwick and his followers, denouncing them traitors and rebels; and every individual, under pain of being treated as one of those proscribed outlaws, was prohibited from resetting, harbouring, supplying them with food, or any other necessary of life, or even conversing with them, but, on the contrary, was commanded to deliver them up into the hands of the military.

Notwithstanding the dreadful sufferings, consequent upon such atrocious proceedings, to which Mr. Renwick was exposed, he neither fainted under them, nor abandoned his work. At the risk of his life, and exposed to the pitiless storms of winter, he preached, baptized, and catechised in the open fields, or on the sides of mountains. Nor was he deserted by

any of his genuine followers, many of whom would have shed the last drop of their blood in his defence.* Hunted from place to place, his life was continually in jeopardy from open foes or false friends; and often, like his Divine Master, he had not where to lay his head, the cleft of the rock or the swampy moss being at once his home and his bed. But "none of these things moved him, neither did he count his life dear to himself, that he might finish his course with joy, and the ministry which he had received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God."

The imminent danger to which Mr. Renwick was exposed in Clydesdale induced him to repair to Ayrshire, where the following traditional account of his reception at the house of John Brown, of Priesthill,† in the district of Kyle, is preserved. Almost sinking with fatigue, he arrived at Priesthill; Brown was from home; and the family were busily engaged in

* That the number of Mr. Renwick's adherents was much greater than his enemies would allow, is evident from the fact, that in the short space of three months he baptized nearly *six hundred* children.

† This eminent Christian and unoffending covenanter was afterwards murdered in cold blood by Graham of Claverhouse.

preparing the wool of their flocks for a neighbouring fair. The eldest daughter Janet (by a former marriage) and the herd boy were teasing the wool, and the shepherd was carding it, while Mrs. Brown sat nursing her first-born son at one side of the fire, with the faithful watch-dog lying at her feet. At the sound of Mr. Renwick's footsteps, the dog started up, and ran to the door, barking at the approach of a stranger. Janet and the herd were almost as soon at the door as the dog, commanding him to be silent. The herd caught the dog in his arms, and returned with him into the house, while Janet followed, leading the stranger, first looking to her mother for encouragement, and then to her guest. She led him to her father's chair with a courtesy that seemed to give rise to strong emotions in his heart. Mr. Renwick, who was unknown to any in the house, was pale with fatigue and sickness.* His shoes were worn out, and a shepherd's plaid hung round him, seemingly for disguise; for by his dress and speech, they were convinced that he was of

* "The stranger," says the writer from which this account is taken, "was young in years, of a little stature, and fine fair countenance."

superior rank. While the servants gazed on him, Mrs. Brown was at a loss to know whether she should welcome him as a sufferer, or consider him as a spy ; and she accordingly left Janet to perform the kind offices the stranger required, while she lulled her boy to sleep, by singing a verse of an old song. During Mrs. Brown's song, Mr. Renwick's countenance brightened up, and he more cheerfully accepted of the child's endearing attentions, who placed him in the warmest corner, helped him off with his drenched plaid, and, in short, imitated all the kind offices she had seen her mother perform to her father, to the no small amusement of the rest of the family. On Mr. Renwick it had a different effect. He burst into tears, and cried, " May the blessing of him that is ready to perish rest upon you, my dear bairn. Surely God has heard my cry, and provided me a place to rest my head for a night. O that I had in the wilderness a lodging-place of wayfaring men, that I might leave my people, and go from them ; for they be an assembly of treacherous men."

At this moment John Brown entered. He gazed at Mr. Renwick for an instant, and then, with great deference, informed him that he

was welcome to his house. "Do you know me?" said Mr. Renwick. "I think I do," replied Brown. "It was in this house that the societies met that contributed to send you to Holland, and now I fear they have not received you as they ought." "Their reproach has not broken my heart," rejoined Mr. Renwick; "but the excessive travelling, night wanderings, unseasonable sleep, frequent preaching in all weathers, especially in the night, has so debilitated me, that I am unfit often for my work. The reproach of those who called me to the ministry I look upon as a device of the enemy to stop the Lord's work; but blessed be his grace that has kept me from mixing anger or scorn of them with my sorrow. Some have declared that I will never be honoured of the Lord to do his poor remnant good. But one thing I know, and may say, that the Lord has done me good. Oh I let none fear a suffering lot. Enemies think themselves satisfied that we are put to wander in mosses, and upon mountains; but even amidst the storms of these last two nights, I cannot express what sweet times I have had, when I had no covering but the dark curtains of night. Yea, in the silent watch, my mind was led out to admire the deep and inexpressi-

ble ocean of joy, wherein the whole family of heaven swim. Each star led me to wonder what He must be, who is the Star of Jacob, of whom all stars borrow their shining. Indeed, if I may term it, I am much obliged to enemies; they have covered me many a table in the wilderness, and have made me friends where I never expected them."

Every one of the family now strove which of them should show the greatest kindness to their much respected guest; while he, by his conversation and prayers, animated and cheered them in their resolution to continue in the faith stedfast unto the end. Having remained two nights under the hospitable roof of John Brown, during which time his health rapidly recovered, Mr. Renwick took leave of the family, and recommenced his wanderings among the scattered covenanters.

The labours and privations of this eminent minister of Christ are almost incredible. He had already, during the latter months of the year 1683, braved the rage and persecution of foes, and the scorn and reproach of false friends. But in 1684 his labours were much more abundant, his trials far more severe, his dangers greatly increased. He was, in short, encompassed by a host of enemies, at once

treacherous and cruel. Yet, like his Divine Master, he "neither failed nor was discouraged." Scarcely a day passed over his head on which he did not preach to many or to few as he found opportunity; and even at the dead hour of night, he was often employed in a similar work. The utility of these labours to the people who had the courage to wait upon his ministry will appear strikingly evident from the following remarks made by Sergeant Nisbet in his Diary: "I went sixteen miles to hear Mr. Renwick, a faithful servant of Jesus Christ, who was a young man, endued with great piety, prudence, and moderation. The meeting was held in a large desolate moor. He appeared to be accompanied with much of his Master's presence. He preached on Mark xii. 34. In the forenoon, he gave us several marks of the hypocrite, with pertinent applications. In the afternoon, he gave us several marks of a saved believer, and made a large, full, and free offer of Christ to all sorts of perishing sinners. His method was clear, plain, and well-digested, suiting the substance and simplicity of the Gospel. This was a great day of the Son of Man to many poor exercised souls, who this day got a Pisgah view of the Prince of Life."

Irritated at his perseverance in instructing the people, many of the indulged ministers turned informers, and gave notice to his persecutors where these proscribed meetings were to be held; while, on the other hand, the council and prelates, filled with rage at his contempt of their impious mandates, and his undaunted constancy in the defence of presbyterian principles, left no means untried to effect not only his destruction, but the destruction of every covenanter throughout the kingdom. They accordingly filled the country with dragoons, the meanest of whom was authorized to put to death without distinction every covenanter on whom he could lay his murderous hands. Nor did these unfeeling ruffians either pity or spare. The groans of the sufferers, whom they often tortured before putting them to death, were exulted over with more than fiendish satisfaction. Still, however, Mr. Renwick, who was accounted the chief and the leader of these obnoxious nonconformists, escaped their hands. To bring him in, therefore, "dead or alive," was the unwearied effort of every minion employed by a cruel and an iniquitous government. The hairbreadth escapes of Mr. Renwick were consequently as numerous as they were remarkable. But in order

to give the reader a more correct idea of the vigilance of his enemies, and of the signal interpositions of Divine Providence in his behalf, we shall here insert a few extracts from his own letters.

In one of these letters, addressed to Mr. Hamilton, and dated July 9, 1684, he says, "Your letter which I received was wonderfully sweet and refreshing to me, and was made a means in some measure to prepare me for what I was to meet with; for immediatly thereafter, I was involved in such troubles as before I had not been trysted with, but all indeed to manifest, in a wonderful manner, the Lord's love and power to and for his people. On the Sabbath after your letter came to my hand, we met for public worship near the whin bog in the Monkland; but that country being generally apostatized into an open hostility against the Lord, some went quickly away to Glasgow, and gave notice unto the enemies' forces; howbeit we heard thereof ere forenoon's sermon was ended, yet continued till that part of the work was gone about; and thereafter thought it fit to depart from that bounds, and that the armed men should keep together for their better defence and safety; which, through God's goodness, was a mean to

keep the enemy from noticing and pursuing strangers. Notwithstanding, they kept up a pursuit and search, which proved very obstructive to our general meeting, which was upon the Thursday thereafter. For upon that very day, they came with horse and foot to search those moors where we were, and came near upon us ere we got anything concluded. We in all haste set forward through the moss, having no outward strength to fly unto, but by crossing the way of the adversary; whereupon we expected an encounter; yet committing ourselves unto the Lord's hand, we went on until we came unto another certain moss, where we staid until night, and got much of our business done. On the Saturday night thereafter there was a competent number of us met in a barn for worship, and had not well begun until we heard both the drums and trumpets of the enemies; but we thought it most expedient to set watches without, and continue at our work till we saw further. Nevertheless, in all these tumults and dangers, the Lord's goodness was so manifested to his people, that he not only hid them under his wings and preserved them, but also he kept their spirits from the least fear, confusion, or commotion; yea, the very sight of some of

them would have made resolute soldiers amongst us. So after this hazard was over, some of us thought it convenient to stay where we were (it being a woody place.) until the Sabbath day was past. But ere the middle of the day we got an alarm that the enemy was within two miles or thereabout, coming toward that airth; whereupon we went over Clyde; but so soon as that was, we, being in number about six or seven, had almost rencountered with a party of the enemy's horse, who at the crossing of our way had inevitably met with us, if that the Lord had not so ordered it, that a friend of ours had seen them ere they saw us, who thereupon came running toward us with a white napkin flourishing in his hand; whereupon we halted, and when he came to us, we lurked among some bushes until the enemy past by. And thereafter we setting forward by two and two upon our journey, which was intended to be but short, some two of us met with one of the adversary's number upon horseback, who presently fled with all his might towards Lanark, we being within three short miles thereof, which forced us to take a desperate course, in running through that plenished country into Darnead moss, still expecting to foregather

with that hostile town of Lanark, both horse and foot; but the Lord's power and goodness were such towards us, that we escaped all their hands."

And in another letter dated August 23, he says,—“On the 30th of July, when I was going with other three to the general meeting, we espied two dragoons meeting us, and not expecting any more to be following, we went forward, not dreading them; but when we came within word and shot, we saw a party of about twenty more very near upon us, whereupon seeing there was no probability of resisting them, we turned up to a hill called Dungavel. But my three neighbours being on foot, and I on horseback, they compassed about the foot of the hill, but I took up to the height, being hotly pursued by many of the party; some whereof were at my right hand to keep me from the mosses, and others behind, who always as they came within shot, discharged upon me. So being near unto the top of the hill, and finding myself beset round about, and seeing no visible door to escape, I thought fit to quit the horse which I had, and to wait till I saw what God did in it. Thus I went up to the top of the hill upon foot, and seeing myself so encompassed that I could not run

from thence, and that I was in no ways able to fight with them, I judged it my best to clap upon the ground; so I went unto a caim, which by situation was about six or seven paces of ground out of all their eyes, thinking to lie down upon it, all the hill being green, and bare in that place, knowing that God could carry their sight over it; so coming to the top of it, I espied in it a pit, and lay down in it, winning by God's goodness to a cheerful submission to death, torture, or whatever his will might be. But I was in no small measure confident that no evil at that time would happen unto me, the Lord giving me that Scripture, Psal. vi. 8, "Depart from me all ye workers of iniquity," which was so powerful, that I was made, I think, a hundred times to repeat it over, ere I could get myself stayed; together with that other, Psalm xci. 11, "For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways;" which was such unto me, that I lifted up my head to see these angels, but, considering my folly in that particular, I was made to laugh at my own witlessness. So I lay still unto the sun set, sometimes praying, and sometimes praising God; though, ah! I can do neither to purpose. But all the joy that the Lord's works of won-

der for me did afford, were swallowed up in sorrow, because of what befel my dear brethren, who (all that were with me,) fell into the enemies' hands, one of them receiving eleven wounds. Then, after all, when I thought of drawing off the hill, not knowing the way to one friend's house in the whole country, I besought the Lord, that as he had hid me, so he would lead and guide me. Thus I set my face towards Clyde, and after I had travelled about four miles, I met with Windhill, with whom I staid about two days, and kept a meeting upon the second night, even while the militia were searching that side of the country; and twice that night I very narrowly escaped, as it had been even out of their very paws. O, time would fail me to relate the Lord's works of wonder for poor unworthy me; for even since I have in one day escaped three or four signal hazards."*

* Renwick's Letters.—We thought it much better to give the account of these transactions in Mr. Renwick's own words, in which the reader will perceive at once the piety and the humility of this unoffending but persecuted servant of Christ.

CHAP. III.

The council issue letters of intercommuning against Mr. Renwick—his tranquillity of mind amidst so much danger—the persecution against the covenanters increased—Apologetic Declaration—privations and sufferings of Mr. Renwick—Sanquhar Declaration—expedition of the Earl of Argyle—Mr. Renwick refuses to join with that nobleman—differences among the society people—letter from Mr. Renwick to his friends in Friesland—his interview with Mr. Peden—increase of his labours and sufferings—he is outlawed by the council.

NOTWITHSTANDING the atrocities which were daily committed by the persecutors throughout the kingdom, Mr. Renwick continued to preach the gospel to his afflicted countrymen wherever he found opportunity. The most sequestered places were chosen for assembling the people to hear the word of God; and, though the country was filled with a multitude of armed savages, who continually prowled about searching for conventicles and their

supporters, it is somewhat remarkable, that these meetings were in general concluded before the military reached the places where they had been held. The repeated disappointments of this kind which the military had received so enraged the council that they determined to adopt other and more effectual measures for suppressing conventicles and destroying their supporters. Mr. Renwick being the most obnoxious of the covenanters, was accordingly cited to appear before them,* and of course failing to appear, great rewards were offered for his apprehension. Nor was this enough. On the 19th of September the council indicted him in absence; and immediately afterwards issued against him letters of intercommuning, of the tenor following:—

“ Forasmuch as Mr. James Renwick, a seditious vagabond,† and pretended preacher,

* “ The lords of his majesty’s privy council appoint Mr. James Renwick, and other vagrant preachers, to be summoned, by way of dispensation, at the cross of Edinburgh, and pier and shore of Leith; and those summons are declared to be as sufficient as if they were personally cited.” Wodrow, vol. iv. p. 70.

† The low and contemptible scurrility of these tyrants appears as conspicuous in this paper as their abominable cruelty.

being lawfully summoned to have compared to have answered and underlien the law, for his being in the late rebellion at Bothwell-Bridge in 1679;* keeping and preaching at field conventicles in arms, several times since, and particularly at Blackloch, Welshole, Craig, Spittalhole, Greenock, and several other places; for maintaining and asserting several treasonable and rebellious principles against us and our authority and government; whereby some of our unwary subjects have been infected with and debauched into the same wicked, unnatural, and seditious principles with himself:† we command and charge all

* Mr. Renwick was not at Bothwell, being at that time a student at college.

† The ungovernable rage of the council appears here in a most prominent point of view. It is true that Mr. Renwick and the society people disowned the tyrannical and persecuting government which at that period domineered over an oppressed people. But let any man read Mr. Renwick's sermons, and say, if the council here were not guilty of the most barefaced and impudent calumny. It was not the tyranny of either king or judges that he particularly insisted on in his discourses to the people. His chief aim was to preach the gospel of Christ, the doctrines of which were unknown to and disregarded by the prelates and their

and sundry our lieges and subjects, that they nor none of them presume, nor take upon hand, to reset, supply, or intercommune with the said Mr. James Renwick, rebel foresaid; nor furnish him with meat, drink, house, harbour, victual, nor no other thing useful or comfortable to him; or to have any intelligence with him by word, writ, or message, or any other manner of way whatsoever, under the pain of being esteemed art and part with him in the crimes foresaid, and pursued therefor with all rigour, to the terror of others. And we hereby require all our sheriffs, &c. to apprehend and commit to prison the person of the said Mr. James Renwick, wherever they can find or apprehend him."

The effect which this furious mandate had on the mind of Mr. Renwick will appear from the following extract from one of his letters:—
"Though the world think my case most miserable, yet, I think, it is so happy that I know not a man this day upon the face of the earth with whom I would exchange my lot. O, it is more sweet and pleasant to be swimming in the swellings of Jordan for Christ and with

hivelings, which we shall more particularly show in the course of the narrative.

Christ, than to be wallowing in the pleasures of sin and delights of the flesh; yea, though Christians had not a heaven hereafter, I cannot but judge their ease, even here, happy beyond all others, as the Psalmist saith, 'Thou hast put gladness in my heart, more than in the time when their eorn and their wine increased.' And when the world frowns most, I know it is the time wherein the Lord smiles most upon his own. O, therefore, let none of them fear a suffering lot. Enemies may feel satisfied that we are put to wander in dark stormy nights through mosses and mountains; but if they knew how we were feasted, when others are sleeping, they would gnash their teeth for anger; nay, while they are pining away in dusk envy and pale fear, I am feeding in peace and joy. Let enemies therefore never think that they can make the people of God's case miserable, while He lives and reigns; and I know well he hath that to give, and will give it, which will sweeten all the sufferings of his followers. And I may say this to his praise, that I have found so much of his kindness and supply in setting about his work in such hard circumstances, that though the prevailing of a body of death sometimes, and desire to be with himself,

makes me long for a dissolution ; yet, I think I could be content to dwell, if it were a thousand years, in this infirm and weakened body of clay, with continual toil and hazard, to carry his name to his people. O, poor fools, what can they do? The greatest wrong they can do, is to be instrumental in bringing a chariot to carry us to that higher house, and should we not think this the greater favour? The Lord is still increasing his people in number and spiritual strength ; and many a sacrifice he is taking off their hands ; for there are not many days wherein his truths are not sealed with blood, and that in all places, so that I think within a little there shall not be a moss or mountain in the west of Scotland which shall not be flowered with martyrs."—We leave the reader to draw his own conclusions from the contrast which appears in these two documents betwixt the piety of the sufferer and the fury of his enemies.

The persecution against the covenanters was now increased to an alarming extent. By means of a horde of unprincipled and villainous informers their most secret places of hiding were discovered ; besides those who perished on scaffolds, great numbers of them

were shot in the open fields without trial or sentence of any kind whatever; in short, their utter extermination seemed to be inevitable, unless some method was devised for preserving a remnant from falling into the hands of their merciless foes. Human nature indeed could hardly be expected to endure the dreadful oppression which was the lot of the faithful few who at that period continued stedfast to the Reformation principles; and it can excite no surprise therefore that they endeavoured to obtain some relief. They were cast out of the protection of all law in their own country; they were prevented from seeking an asylum in a foreign land; and they were uncertain, but that every moment of their lives might be the last. What, we would ask their calumniators in the present day, would *they* have done had they been placed in similar circumstances? Would *they* have tamely submitted to the sword of the murderous military or the axe of the executioner without a murmur? No, say they, but we would have conformed! Yes, and by so doing they would have tamely yielded up all the rights, both civil and sacred, to which, as Britons and as Christians, they were entitled. But our fathers felt and acted otherwise; and it is well for us, their degenerate

children, that they possessed another spirit. Their constancy amidst tribulation of every kind, has secured to us those privileges and blessings of which we, by our unhallowed censures of their noble intrepidity, declare ourselves to be utterly unworthy.

In treating of the sufferings of the covenanters at this period, Mr. Shields has the following just remarks :—“ In such a strait and pinch of perplexity, having neither ability to fight, nor possibility to flee, nor probability to hide themselves, nor means of sustentation to preserve themselves alive by hiding, they were forced to fall upon such expedients, to prevent their utter extermination, as in other circumstances they would never have thought upon, and, after they should get a little breathing, did never mind to prosecute.” The expedient to which this writer refers was the publication of a paper entitled, “ The Apologetick Declaration and Admonitory Vindication anent Intelligencers and Reformers,”* which was

* For a particular account of this paper see History of the Covenanters, vol. ii. pp. 231—235. It may, however, be proper to give here a few sentences of this nervous but grossly misrepresented document. “ We do hereby jointly and unanimously testify and declare, that as we utterly detest and abhor that hellish principle of

submitted to a general meeting held in the month of October. When it was first read Mr. Renwick expressed his disapprobation at some strong, and as he conceived, rather irritating expressions contained in it; but on a little reflection, though he could have wished several of the more objectionable passages expunged, he gave his consent to its publication.

killing all who differ in judgment and persuasion from us, &c. ; yet we do hereby declare unto all, that whosoever stretcheth forth their hands against us, by shedding our blood actually, or stirring up enemies to the taking away of our lives, shall be reputed by us enemies to God and the covenanted work of reformation, and punished as such, according to our power. We are sorry from our very hearts that any of you should choose such courses, either with bloody Doeg to shed our blood, or with the flattering Ziphites, to inform persecutors where we are to be found ; and we desire you to take warning of the hazard that you incur by following such courses ; for sinless necessity for self-preservation, accompanied with holy zeal for Christ's reigning in our land, and suppressing of profanity, will move us not to let you pass unpunished. Call to remembrance, all that is in peril is not lost, and all that is delayed is not forgiven. Therefore expect to be dealt with as ye deal with us, so far as our power can reach, not because we are actuated by a sinful spirit of revenge for private and personal injuries, but mainly because by our fall reformation suffers damage."

It was accordingly fixed on many of the market-crosses and church doors on the 8th day of November.

The great aim of the covenanters in the publication of this paper was to impress the minds of persecutors and informers with a wholesome terror; and in regard to the latter class the end was in some measure gained. But while it deterred not a few of the informers from continuing to give intimation to the military of those places where the wanderers were hid, it increased the fury of the council, who lost no time in devising other and still more barbarous measures for accomplishing their destruction. Accordingly, on the 22d of November, an act was passed, ordaining "every person who owns, or *will not disown*, the late treasonable declaration, upon oath, whether he have arms or not, to be immediately put to death." Orders were also given to convene all the inhabitants of every suspected parish, males and females, above fourteen years of age, and to put to death on the spot every individual who refused to disown the obnoxious paper. Nay, so determined were the council to proceed to extremities, that no person was allowed to travel without a certificate of his principles and loyalty, which certificate he could not receive

unless by taking an oath of abjuration, by which the Apologetic Declaration and its authors were renounced.

These furious orders, which were executed to the very letter, rendered many places in Scotland literally fields of blood. But the heart sickens at the bare recital of such impious and inhuman proceedings, the effects of which filled the tender mind of Mr. Renwick with so much commiseration and grief, as to lead him frequently to say, that "though he had peace in his aim and end by it" (viz. the Apologetic Declaration) "and for the time durst not but concur in the emitting of it, and could and would defend all that was in it; yet he wished from his heart that that declaration had not been published." His sympathy for others often indeed made him forget his own sufferings, though of the most severe description; yet these sufferings were not forgotten by his affectionate followers and brethren in tribulation. Can we, for example, read the following sentences, without feelings of the deepest sorrow at his hardships and distresses, and of the highest admiration at his undaunted constancy, amidst dangers and deaths, in prosecuting his Master's work? He was forced to lie "many nights and days, with crowding

numbers, in caves and holes under ground, without room to sit or stand, without air, without refreshment, or hope of relief, save what was had from heaven ; the murderous pursuers sometimes coming over and by the mouth of the hole while they were praying or praising undiscovered : And when forced from thence, he has been often compelled, wet and cold, hungry and weary, in great hazard, to run bare-footed many miles together, for another subterraneous shelter. Yet under all these straits and inconveniences, having no time nor place to study, no library but the Bible, no closet but a moss-hag or a mountain-glen, no place of assembling together but the most inaccessible places in the wilderness—such was his zeal for propagating and promoting the gospel, such his diligence in preaching, baptizing, catechising, &c. that in the worst times few weeks passed without several public exercises, which, to obtain access to, cost him incredible travel. Yea, all that were acquainted with his work then, will acknowledge he did then, even in these circumstances, labour as much in all the parts of the ministerial work as he could have access, as ever they knew any could do in the best of times ; yet still with complaint and regret that he could do so lit-

tle, and under convictions of felt insufficiency, and fears of short-comings."*

The sufferings of Mr. Renwick and his faithful adherents were fearfully increased during the year 1685. It is true that the death of the tyrant Charles II., which took place in the beginning of February, relaxed for a very short period the persecution against the covenanters. But it was soon renewed, and if possible augmented, by his popish brother James VII., who unblushingly avowed it to be his determination to exterminate presbyterianism from the land. Against the accession to the throne of this professed papist and cruel persecutor, Mr. Renwick, at the request of the united societies, drew up a declaration, which was published at Sanquhar upon the 28th of May. In this paper these unyielding covenanters say,—“A few wicked and unprincipled men having proclaimed James, duke of York, though a professed papist and excommunicated person, to be king of Scotland, &c.; we, the contending and suffering remnant of the pure presbyterians of the church of Scotland, do here deliberately, jointly, and unanimously protest against the foresaid proclamation; in

* Shield's Life of Renwick, p. 92.

regard that it is choosing a murderer to be a governor, who hath shed the blood of the saints—the height of confederacy with an idolater, which is forbidden by the law of God—contrary to the declaration of the Assembly 1649, and to many wholesome and laudable acts of parliament, and inconsistent with the safety, faith, conscience, and Christian liberty of a Christian people, to choose a subject of antichrist to be their supreme magistrate.—And farther, seeing bloody papists, the subjects of antichrist, are become so hopeful, bold, and confident, under the perfidy of the said James, duke of York, and popery itself like to be intruded again upon these covenanted lands, and an open door being made thereunto by its accursed and abjured harbinger prelacy, which these three kingdoms are equally sworn against; we do in like manner protest against all kind of popery in general and particular heads, &c. Finally, we being misrepresented to many as persons of murdering and assassinating principles,* all which principles and

* It is quite natural to suppose that their persecutors would endeavour, however unjustly, to render the covenanters odious; but what shadow of excuse can modern historians have, who wilfully continue to propagate these disgraceful calumnies? The works of the

practices we do hereby declare, before God, angels, and men, that we abhor, renounce, and detest, as also all manner of robbing of any, whether open enemies or others, which we are most falsely aspersed with, either in their gold, their silver, or their gear, or any household stuff. Their money perish with themselves; the Lord knows that our eyes are not after these things. And in like manner we do hereby disclaim all unwarrantable practices committed by any few persons reputed to be of us, whereby the Lord hath been offended, his cause wronged, and we all made to endure the scourge of tongues; for which things we have desired to make conscience of mourning before the Lord, both in public and private."

A few days before the publication of this paper, the Earl of Argyle, according to previous agreement with the Duke of Monmouth and a number of exiled gentlemen, sailed with an expedition for Scotland, with the view of overturning the tyrannical government of James, and of recovering the rights, both civil and sacred, of the nation. Strenuous efforts

author of *Waverley* for example, and those of *Chambers*, against the covenanters, do no honour to their authors.

were made by the Earl's friends to secure the co-operation of the society people in this unsuccessful attempt at a revolution. But though Mr. Renwick and his adherents earnestly wished to obtain for themselves and the nation deliverance from that intolerable yoke under which they groaned, they decidedly refused to join with Argyle. Their reasons for so doing are given in the following statement, drawn up by Mr. Renwick, with concurrence of the delegates from the different societies scattered throughout the country:—That though they highly esteemed the Earl, and were convinced of his honourable intentions, yet they could not join in his expedition, “because it was not concerted according to the ancient plea of the Scottish covenanters, in defence of our reformation expressly, according to our covenants, national and solemn league; because no mention was made of these covenants, nor of presbyterian government; and because some persons were too promiscuously admitted to trust in that party, who were then, and since have discovered themselves to be enemies, by taking the test; yea, some that had accession to the blood shed at Airmoss, namely, Sir John Cochran, who had a hand in bringing the forces thither, and since hath treacherously

redeemed his life by turning a traitorous informer against his fellow-associates."

For his refusal to join with Argyle, Mr. Renwick was loaded with the greatest reproach. But not to mention the unnecessary and shallow excuses which have been made by some of his biographers,—of the insufficiency of so despised and insignificant a party as the society people was, to be of any effectual service to the Earl,—we have only to refer to the reasons above noticed, to show the consistency of these uncompromising and conscientious covenanters in refusing to concur in an enterprise which they plainly foresaw would only rivet the chains of despotism still faster on an enslaved people. In addition, however, to what has been already stated, we shall give the following account of the society's proceedings relative to this affair, as well as Mr. Renwick's own reflections on its disastrous termination. "Before Argyle brake," says he, "many of our friends were greatly puzzled whether the Lord was calling them to follow their former methods, or to draw altogether by themselves, and to emit a declaration of their own; whereupon there was a meeting appointed to consider the matter, and also a day for prayer, but the Lord disappointed our

meetings, one after another, until Argyle was apprehended, and his party scattered." "I think," says he in another letter, "that Scotland shall be made a waste land, ere God's controversy against it be ended. I think the Lord (until he raise his work again) will guide and manage it more by providences than by instruments; and this is, that his hand may be alone seen in it, and that he may get the glory; and what is most glorifying to him, should it not be most pleasant and rejoicing to us? And what is for us this day, but that we make Christ sure for ourselves, and spend our days here below in admiring his loveliness and condescendence, and our own happiness in enjoying such a portion? But this is a great work; time is not equal for it, therefore we shall get eternity for it. O let us study the increase of the beauty of holiness, for happiness is inferior to it. It is by holiness we are made like unto God, and is not this true nobility? O what is like unto it? If we knew more of this study and attainment, desertion would be less of our exercise, and we should enjoy more of the smilings of countenance and breathings of his Spirit. While in this pilgrimage also, let God's will be ours in all things; whatever he may carve out for us, or

any that we are concerned in, let us say *amen* to it, for if he will it, it is enough for us; yea let us lay our account with the worst of it, that whatever come we may not be surprised."

Among the few presbyterians who came to Scotland with Argyle, were one or two ministers, who, instead of assisting Mr. Renwick in his arduous labours, teased and thwarted him by their reproaches and machinations. Pretending at first to favour the principles of the covenanters, they, along with several of the conforming presbyterians, attended the general meeting of the societies, only, alas! to sow the seeds of strife and dissension. It would afford the reader little gratification to give a detail of the debates which took place upon the appearance of these liberal presbyterians among the society people. It is sufficient to say, that while they evinced a latitudinarianism which cannot be justified, Mr. Renwick and his adherents manifested, in some points of comparatively small moment, a spirit so contracted, that, especially considering the circumstances in which they were placed, clearly showed they were men of like passions with ourselves. We make these remarks, not because we consider Mr. Renwick to have been blameworthy in holding fast the minut-

est article of Christian truth ; but because he was so tenacious in contending for matters which to us appear of minor importance, and which, if peace could have been maintained and unity promoted, might have been safely conceded. On the other hand, we must acknowledge, that we very much doubt if even some general concessions would have satisfied these dissentients from the general voice of the united societies ; on the contrary, from their intemperate language, we are disposed to conclude, that, in many cases, not principle, but passion, dictated their hostility to the decisions of their brethren.

One of the most virulent and vexatious of Mr. Renwick's opposers was Robert Cathcart, who proceeded the length of writing a scurrilous libel against him, in which he accused that upright covenanter of error, heresy, and pride ; and although Mr. Renwick fully and satisfactorily answered all his accusations, he nevertheless continued his unworthy attempts to traduce the character and impugn the principles of that eminent minister of Christ.*

* It is somewhat singular that Wodrow, who is in general a faithful historian, should with great minuteness give Cathcart's accusations against Mr. Renwick, but altogether omit the elaborate and triumphant ar-

He even endeavoured to prevent Mr. Renwick from preaching in several places where the people were desirous of hearing him; and, with concurrence of a few individuals whom he gained over to his views, entered a protest against his preaching in any part of Wigtonshire.

But passing farther notice of the unworthy attempts of men of whom we might have expected better things than to defame the character of one of the most shining lights in Scotland at that period, we shall give here a few extracts from a letter addressed by Mr. Renwick to the "Societies of Strangers at Lewarden in Friesland," dated February 18, 1686, in which the humility, piety, and Christian courage of the writer is remarkably displayed.—"As to the present case, I wot not well what to say anent it, there are so many mercies and judgments in it to be spoken of. God hath taken this last year many from us, by banishment, and by death on scaffolds, especially on the fields, where none for the most part were to see them die but the executioners; and yet God fills up their rooms again; neither are these things permitted to damp such as are left. Some swears of the latter. That he had a purpose to serve by so doing, is no excuse in a writer of history.

have, which is more sad, fallen off from us ; and yet God is filling up their places also, and making others more stedfast ; and notwithstanding both of persecutions and reproaches, the Lord hath opened doors for me in several places of Scotland where there used to be no such access before, and hath multiplied my work so upon my hands, (I speak it to his praise,) that I have observed my work to be in some shires threefold, and in some fourfold more than it was. O that God would send forth labourers, there seems to be much ado in Scotland with them. Also it is almost incredible to tell what zeal, what tenderness, what painfulness in duty, what circumspectness in walk, in many young ones of ten, eleven, twelve and fourteen years of age, in many places of Scotland ; which I look upon as one of the visible and greatest tokens for good that we have. . . . I am daily looking out, either to be presently killed where I may be found, or else dragged into a prison or scaffold ; . . . but, O fear not difficulties ; for many trials that, when looked upon at a distance, seem big and mounting, yet when they and you meet, ye shall find them nothing. If I could commend any thing beside Christ, it would be the cross of Christ. These things

which make carnal onlookers think my condition hard and miserable, make me think it sweet and pleasant. I have found hazards, reproaches, contempt, weariness, cold, night watchings, stormy tempests, and deserts so desirable, that it is a greater difficulty to me not to be ambitious of these things than to submit to them. O rejoice in the cross, for it is all paved with love; the fewer that will bear it, it is your greater honour to be friends to it. Follow Christ, taking up his cross, and set none else before you as your leader, for man is a poor, fallible, changeable creature: let it therefore be your care not to fall upon the stumbling-blocks cast in your way. Woe to the world because of offences. Though you have your own share of the revilings of this time, yet be not reproached with reproachers: though the sourness of others grieve you, yet let it not infect you; and let zeal be accompanied with meekness, that ye may be free from passion and prejudice; and let meekness be backed with zeal, that ye may be free of lukewarmness and indifference: Let meekness be extended toward all persons, and zeal against all sins; and if ye would not lose your ground, be positive against sin in the first proposal and motion thereof. O take a look at God, as he

is the Being of beings. Doth not all the pieces of the creation, heaven, earth, and sea, sun, moon, and stars, the commonest creature that moveth upon the earth, bear large characters of his wisdom, power, and goodness? Do not the various instruments that execute his will, signified by four chariots (Zech. vi. 1.), bringing about various dispensations, signified by the different colours of the horses; whether calamities of war, signified by the red; or other doleful miseries, signified by the black; mixed dispensations, black and white, so to speak, of mercy and judgment, signified by the grizled and bay; or dispensations of mercy, signified by the white? I say, do not all these come forth from between the two mountains of brass? The one mountain signifieth his unalterable decree, and the other his effectual providence. . . . But again, take a look of him as he is our Saviour, in his condescendency, love, power, faithfulness, and other properties. Much might be said of these things; but not the thousandth part of the truth can be told. When we win to his house above, they that have been most ravished with his love, and most eloquent to speak forth the praise of his comeliness and properties, will see that they have been but at best babes learning to speak."

But while the reproaches and persecutions of the conformists gave Mr. Renwick comparatively little uneasiness, he felt with the utmost keenness the alienation of one who had hitherto been his steady friend. This was Mr. Alexander Peden, who, having been deceived by the false representations of Mr. Renwick's opponents, had, in an unguarded moment, uttered against him some expressions of displeasure, which gave to his enemies a momentary triumph. When on his deathbed, however, he requested an interview with Mr. Renwick; which being granted, the following conversation took place between them. "Are you the Mr. James Renwick about whom there is so much noise?" "Father," replied Mr. Renwick, "my name is James Renwick, but I have given the world no ground to make any noise about me, for I have espoused no new principles or practices, but what our reformers and covenanters maintained." Mr. Peden then desired him to give a distinct account of his principles, which Mr. Renwick having done, the dying saint thus addressed him:—"Sir, you have answered me to my soul's satisfaction. I am very sorry that I should have believed any such evil reports of you, which not only quenched my love to, and mar-

red my sympathy with you, but led me to express myself bitterly against you ; for all which I have sadly smarted. But, Sir, ere you go, you must pray for me ; for I am old, and going to leave the world." With this request Mr. Renwick cheerfully complied ; upon which Mr. Peden took him by the hand, saying, " Sir, I find you a faithful servant to your Master. Go on in a single dependance upon the Lord, and ye will get honestly through, and clear off the stage, when many others who hold their heads high will lie in the mire and make foul hands and garments."

The discouragements, reproaches, and persecutions of every kind against which Mr. Renwick had to contend, never once damped his courage, nor deterred him from prosecuting his work. He continued to preach, catechise, and administer the ordinances to the oppressed wanderers throughout the country, undaunted by frowns or maledictions, and regardless of the more terrific threatenings of the persecutors. While travelling through Galloway, he received a very insolent protest, from a person of the name of Hutcheson, against his preaching anywhere in that quarter of the country. But "choosing to obey God rather than man," he decidedly refused to desist from

declaring to all who were willing to hear him, "the whole counsel of God."

His contendings with adversaries, and his resolute prosecution of his Master's work, will however best appear from the following extracts of a letter addressed by him to Mr. Hamilton:—"I had written to your honour far sooner, but as my work keepeth me busy, so much of it lies in the remote corners of the land, as Galloway, Nithsdale, Annandale, &c. I have not been near Edinburgh since the 16th of October 1685, and I have travelled since through Clydesdale, Eskdale, some of the Forrest, Annandale, some of Galloway, Kyle and Cunningham; and all these ways I examined the societies as I passed through, several other persons coming to hear, and I found my work greater this last journey than ever before; also in Lower Cunningham, where there had never been any field preachings, I got kindly acceptance, and great multitudes came to hear; and I have had several calls since from that country side: such like have I found through Renfrew. Moreover, the Lord hath wrought a change upon the barony of Sanquhar, the parish of Kirkconnel, and these dark corners; generally they come to hear the gospel, and are quitting many of

the defections of the time; yea, I may say, to the Lord's praise, that our meetings were never so numerous, and the work did never thrive more than since men opposed it so much." As for Mr. Langlands* and I agreeing, there is little appearance of it; for I am where I was, and he is rather farther off, than nearer hand. As for disowning the Lanark Declaration, I think you look upon it as so false, that I need say nothing; and as for the ministers, they know not what to do concerning us, for, so far as I can know, they cannot two of them agree (for the most part) about one thing. I heard of none of them coming forth to the country as yet, but Mr. Langlands and Mr. Alcorn, and they travelled through some of Kyle, through Carrick, some of the shire of Galloway, and some of Clydesdale, and their preachings were kept in a great measure obscure. And as for such as are gone off from us, they are the most bitter against us. Alexander Gordon went to the Bass and Blackness with an information against us, containing many charges, wherewith I hear the ministers of Edinburgh are displeas'd, he having done it without their advice.

* This was another of Mr. Renwick's opponents.

Howbeit we have written about six sheets of paper in answer to it, and we are to meet within two days about the concluding upon it; however we will do nothing in it rashly, for every word in such a matter ought to be well weighed and considered. But there are none gone off from us but those who at that party's appearance in summer went off; also we have had some conference with some of them which may lead to good results. O, dear Sir, cry, cry for labourers to God's vineyard in Scotland, for I cannot express how much need there is of them; great is the work that is here for them. Now, go on resolutely in the strength of our God, and regard not your opposers. Hold fast what is right; be not reviling unto a reviler, nor scoffing unto a scoffer; let zeal and meekness be your companions, the one in your one hand, and the other in your other hand, and wait on the Lord, and he shall give testimony for you."

But while the labours as well as difficulties of Mr. Renwick were now daily increasing, he had the satisfaction of seeing other two ministers raised up to assist in disseminating the glorious gospel of the Son of God among his poor and afflicted countrymen. These were Messrs. David Houston and Alexander

Shields, who, on the 12th of December, were received by the general meetings of the societies as fellow-workers with their beloved pastor in the perilous work of instructing and comforting the wanderers.

The increase of Mr. Renwick's adherents, notwithstanding the utmost efforts of the persecutors to destroy them, still farther inflamed the indignation of the council. Renewed efforts were accordingly made to obtain possession of Mr. Renwick's person, on whom the council laid the whole blame of preventing the covenanters from conforming to the mandates of government.

As a contrast, however, to the outrageous proceedings of the council, we shall give a few extracts from a letter written by the martyr to several ladies at Lewarden. "You have learned," says he, "both from the Bible and experience, that the Christian's journey to the kingdom is through much tribulation; and I hope you have laid your account for all that can come in your way. Our natures would have the road so squared, as that we might travel easily, but it lies through many difficulties; we would have it through a valley of roses, but it lies through a valley of tears; we would have it to be so as to be travelled sleep-

ing, but it must be travelled waking, and watching, and fighting. But whatever folks do think, when great necessity for, and advantage by, every difficulty is seen, the more that they meet with, the way is the more pleasant to the believer; and a sight of the recompense of reward makes bold and resolute to pass through every opposition. There are two things at which I cannot wonder enough; and these are, the invaluableness of Christ, and the low value which the children of men put upon him. Judas sold him for thirty pieces of silver, but many now a-days sell him for less; and though they could get ten thousand worlds for him, they do but make a mad and foolish bargain who would quit him for these. But you who have made choice of Christ, what think you of your choice? O, admire his excellency, and wonder at your own happiness; and bend all your love towards him who hath made you so happy. Seek to shed abroad the savour of his sweet ointments, by a holy and spiritual walk: improve dispensations to his glory and your own good: lean upon him in your travel through the wilderness; and though there be fiery serpents and drought in it, yet solace yourselves with his company who

hath said, 'I will never leave you, nor forsake you.' Regard not losses, regard not reproaches, for he is your exceeding great reward. I doubt not but you meet with your own measure of reproaches and contempt at the hands of this generation, for the great kindness you have shown to a wounded and wronged wrestling party in the furnace of affliction. But as this doth endear our affections unto you so much the more, so I hope you are better fixed than that these should prove a stumbling-block unto you."

CHAP. IV.

Mr. Renwick's faithfulness and courage—tolerations granted by James to the "moderate Presbyterians"—these tolerations are decidedly rejected by Mr. Renwick—his reasons for so doing—he is persecuted by the indulged ministers—his arduous labours affect his bodily health—a reward offered by the council for his apprehension, dead or alive—his consolatory letter to his friends under sentence of banishment.

THE dreadful persecution which raged throughout the country against the covenanters in 1686, was fearfully increased during 1687. Greater vigilance was used in order to discover their hiding-places; every effort was made to prevent their assembling in any spot, however sequestered, for divine worship; and all who fell into the hands of the military were either murdered on the spot, or dragged to prison, to receive in a few days the sentence of death or of perpetual banishment.

Though these sanguinary measures thinned

the ranks of the wanderers, they did not in the least abate their ardour for the religion of their fathers. On the contrary, preferring suffering to sin, they decidedly refused to abandon the public worship of God ; but, when driven from one solitary but hallowed spot—whither they had repaired to hear from Mr. Renwick's lips the message of God to his oppressed people—they speedily reassembled in another. Nothing, in short, could deter Mr. Renwick from preaching, or the people from hearing, the "glorious gospel of the grace of God." "Having made a progress through Galloway," says Mr. Renwick, "I found never such an open door for preaching the gospel, the people coming far better out than they did before ; and we got eight field meetings kept there without disturbance, and six in Nithsdale, many coming out who were not wont to come, and none in any of these places staying away that came out formerly." Also, in a letter dated July 15, 1687, he says, "My business was never so weighty, so multiplied, and so ill to be guided, to my apprehension, as it has been this year ; and my body was never so frail." And again he says, "Since my last, I have travelled through many damps and deeps, and seen discoveries of many

things; the Lord, by all dispensations, saying, that he will have malice and mistakes, right and wrong, righteousness and unrighteousness, brought to light. O noble contrivance! O noble way! What shall the upshot of all the losses, sufferings, and contendings and difficulties of the remnant be, but the clearing the cause to all beholders, so that he who runs may read the righteousness of it? Shall not truth be made thereby more precious and known? The Lord will have a people to reap the sweet fruit of that we are put to this day. Let us then be content to lay name, credit, enjoyments, life, and all, under his feet, that he may stand thereupon, to advance the glory of his own name, and to bring about the advancement of his kingdom."

Nor was it only for public worship, that Mr. Renwick and his adherents, at the peril of their lives, from time to time assembled. Stated general meetings of the societies for mutual edification, and concerting measures for the welfare of the whole body, were held in different parts of the country as often as circumstances would allow. At one of these meetings, held in the beginning of March, a paper was drawn up, entitled, the "Informatory Vindication," which being revised by Mr.

Renwick, was printed in Holland, and circulated throughout the kingdom. In this interesting and candid document they say, "Whatever may have been our miscarriages, this is our sincere and professed design, purpose, and resolution, to lay out ourselves to the utmost of our power, according to our places and stations, for promoting and propagating the work of reformation; stedfastly wrestling against the corruptions and innovations of the times, continuing successively the testimony for the reformation."*

These avowed intimations of the covenanters to maintain and contend for the principles of the reformation, called forth from the government renewed and still more severe denunciations of vengeance against them. James was a bigoted and a violent papist, and he was determined, at all hazards, to promote the advancement of his own religion, and to crush the Protestant faith throughout the realm. In order to accomplish his purpose, both caution and cunning were, however, absolutely necessary. While, therefore, he openly protected Roman Catholics, he found himself compelled

* For a more particular account of this paper, see *Hist. of the Covenanters*, vol. ii. p. 311.

to grant for a short time some toleration to those who were styled the "moderate presbyterians," but, of course, doomed the more consistent and decided covenanters to certain destruction.

Three proclamations were accordingly issued by James, each of them advancing a step farther than the one which preceded it, in the measure of toleration which it granted to the "moderate" presbyterians, and in its threatenings of vengeance against the wanderers. In the first, which is dated February 12, the tyrant says, "We, by our sovereign authority, prerogative royal, and *absolute power*, which all our subjects *are to obey without reserve*, do hereby allow and tolerate the *moderate* presbyterians to meet in their private houses, and there to hear all such ministers as either have or are willing to accept of our indulgence al-lenarly, and none other; and that there be not any thing said or done contrary to the well and peace of our reign, seditious or treasonable, under the highest pains these crimes will import. In the mean time, it is our royal will and pleasure, that field conventicles, and such as preach or exercise at them, or who shall any wise assist or connive at them, shall be prosecuted according to the utmost severity of our

laws made against them." The second indulgence, which is dated March 31, granted the "moderate" presbyterians liberty to preach in private houses "during his majesty's pleasure," but, of course, commanding the iniquitous laws already framed to be executed to the very letter on the covenanters. And the third, which was issued on the 28th of June, is still more favourable. "We," says the popish monarch, "by our sovereign authority, &c., give the presbyterians leave to meet and serve God in their own way and manner, be it in private houses, chapels, or places purposely hired or built for that use, *so that they take care that nothing be preached or taught among them which may any way tend to alienate the hearts of our people from us or our government,** and that their meetings be peaceable, &c. And do farther command all our judges and magistrates, and officers of our forces, to prosecute such as shall be guilty of field conventicles."

The last of these ensnaring indulgences was accepted of by the greater part of the presbyterian ministers, who soon found, to their sad

[* That is, to preach nothing against popery, but tamely to submit to every restriction which the tyrant was pleased to impose upon them.

experience, that popery, not presbyterianism, was the religion which the crafty monarch intended to protect.* Mr. Renwick and his adherents acted a nobler part. They decidedly refused to accept of an indulgence which proceeded from an usurped absolute power over the church of Christ, and declared, that "nothing can be more vile than when the true religion is tolerated under the notion of a crime, and when the exercise of it is allowed only under heavy restrictions." "There is a liberty," says Mr. Renwick, in a letter to Mr. Hamilton, "now issued forth from the arrogated, absolute, and uncontrollable power of the intruder and usurper upon the prerogative of the great God, bounded with the restriction,

* "Before the publication of this indulgence," says Mr. Renwick, "sundry presbyterian ministers who had been more lurking formerly, began to travel through the country, and officiate in houses, and that in somewhat of a public manner. But Mr. Samuel Arnot preaching upon a Sabbath, in the daylight, about a mile from Glasgow, a considerable number of people being within and without doors, a party of soldiers went out of the town and scattered the meeting, apprehending near to an hundred men and women, stripping them of their clothes, taking their money from them, and laying them in prison."

that his government may not be spoken against, and nothing said that may alienate the hearts of people from him; prescribing the place of preaching to be only in houses; inhibiting the worship of God in the fields; commanding the severe execution of all the iniquitous laws against all such meetings; and requiring ministers to give up their names to some one or other of their civil powers; which restricted and strangely qualified liberties to presbyterians is conveyed through the cassing and disabling all our penal laws and statutes enacted against papists. But, right honourable Sir, if I had the tongue of the eloquent, and the pen of a ready writer, my desire would be to employ both in praise of the Great King. O, who is like the Lord amongst the gods? who is like him, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders! We are rebels and outlaws, we are lost and undone for ever; but He hath made a covenant with us, and given himself a ransom; this covenant is everlasting, well ordered in all things and sure.* It hath all fulness in it

* That the covenanters exalted the covenants, national and solemn league, above the covenant of grace, as has been unblushingly maintained by some writers, is here

for the matter ; all wisdom for the manner ; all condescendence in the terms ; it is most engaging in its end, being made to bring about the peace and salvation of sinners ; and it is most necessary, for there is no journeying to heaven without it. This, then, is the chariot that will carry us into the joy and rest of our Lord ; this is the chariot wherein his glory and our good ride triumphantly together. O, happy are they who are taken up into this chariot ! They stand upon love, they sit upon love, and if they fall, they fall soft, for they fall upon love."

The decided opposition which Mr. Renwick manifested to the indulgence, raised up against him many additional enemies from among those who had accepted of the toleration. Epithets the most opprobrious were heaped upon him, calumnies the most disgraceful were laid to his charge ; and, as if his life was not in sufficient jeopardy already, every effort was made to put him into the hands of those who thirsted for his blood. Instead, however, of fainting or being discouraged, he redoubled

decidedly disproved. However attached they were to these transactions, they knew better things than to set up human compacts above divine.

his exertions in the cause of Christ; and, aware that his time on earth could not be long, he exerted all his energies, both of body and mind, to instruct, comfort, and warn his despised and afflicted countrymen. "Our troubles are growing," says he at this time, "and enemies are stretching out their hands violently to persecute; and they want not instigations from our false brethren; so we are made the contempt of the proud, and the scorn of them that are at ease. Our sufferings were always rightly stated, but never so clearly as now; and why should we not endure these trials? for they shall work for truth's victory, and Christ's glory. O, let all the suffering remnant keep clean hands, for therein shall be their strength; and wait with patience, for he will not tarry, who cometh to plead his own cause, to lay claim to his own interest, that is basely and deceitfully abandoned, and betrayed into the hands of man, to give a fair decision."

That the accepters of the indulgence were violent persecutors of Mr. Renwick, is too evident from the uniform tenor of their language, as well as from their unremitting efforts to discover to the council the place of his abode. They styled him an intruder, a Jesuit,

a white devil, who traversed the country, bearing "the devil's white flag,"* and one who had done more mischief to the church of Scotland, than its enemies ever did during the whole period of the persecution. But it would be endless, and far from being edifying, to enumerate the misrepresentations, aspersions, and calumnies, with which he was assailed by multitudes who yet professed to bear the presbyterian name. He was, in one word, a man who was everywhere spoken against;—one who, like the Psalmist, was encompassed with innumerable enemies, who were continually laying snares for his soul; but, though like that eminent saint, he was "a wonder unto many," God was his strong refuge; and, through divine grace, he persevered in proclaiming to that generation, "whether they would hear, or whether they would forbear," the whole counsel and will of the Lord. So unwearied, indeed, were his labours throughout the country, that his bodily strength rapidly decayed. He even became unable

* It is the first time we ever heard of any devil being *white*, or of any of the powers of darkness bearing *white colours*. But what will not malice do?

either to mount or to sit upon horseback, and was consequently under the necessity of suffering himself to be carried by his friends to the places where he had appointed the people to assemble for public worship. "Excessive travel," says he, "night wanderings, unseasonable sleep and diet, and frequent preachings in all seasons of weather, especially in the night, have so debilitated me, that I am often incapable of my work. I find myself greatly weakened inwardly, so that I sometimes fall into fits of swooning and fainting. I take seldom any meat or drink, but it fights with my stomach; and for strong drink, I can take almost none of it. When I use means for my recovery, I find it someways effectual; but my desire to the work, and the necessity and importunity of people, prompts me to do more than my natural strength will well allow; and to undertake such toilsome business, as casts my body presently down again. I mention not this through any anxiety, quarrelling or discontent, but to show my condition in this respect. I may say, that under all my frailties and distempers, I find great peace and sweetness in reflecting upon the occasion thereof; it is a part of my glory and joy to

bear such infirmities, contracted through my poor and small labour in my Master's vineyard."

The fury of his persecutors continued to keep pace with his own zealous efforts to promote the spiritual interests of his brethren. Nay, so violent were the council against him, that in less than five months after the toleration was granted, no fewer than fifteen desperate attempts were made to apprehend him, from some of which he narrowly escaped. Finding all their efforts hitherto to be unavailing, the council issued another disgraceful and blood-thirsty proclamation, dated December 9, 1687. "Forasmuch," say they, "as one Mr. James Renwick, a flagitious and scandalous person, has presumed, and taken upon hand, these several years bygone, to convocate together numbers of our unwary and ignorant commons to house and field conventicles,—(which our law so justly terms the nurseries of sedition and rendezvouses of rebellion,)—we, out of royal care and tenderness to our people,* being desirous to deliver all our loving subjects from the malign influence of

* Truly "the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel."



such a wretched impostor, have, therefore, prohibited and discharged all our subjects, that none of them offer or presume to harbour, reset, supply, &c., but do their utmost endeavours to pursue him, as the worst of traitors. And if, in the pursuit of the said James Renwick, he or any of his rebellious associates, resisting to be taken, any of our subjects shall happen to kill or mutilate him, or any of them, we hereby declare, that they, nor none assisting them, shall ever be called in question: and that their doing thereof shall be reputed good and acceptable service to us. And for the better encouragement to such as shall apprehend and bring in the person of the said Mr. James Renwick, traitor foresaid, *dead or alive*, he or they shall have the reward of ONE HUNDRED POUNDS STERLING money, to be instantly paid to him by the commissioners of our treasury."*

While the persecutors were thus earnestly seeking to destroy this devoted servant of Christ, Mr. Renwick not only continued to

* Here was a bribe which made the council's minions doubly active in searching for the martyr, and, as we shall afterwards see, assisted in proving the means of his apprehension.

preach the gospel both in public and in private, but employed his pen in animating and comforting those whom their enemies had condemned to be exiled from their native country. The following extracts from a letter, which he wrote about this time to a number of prisoners lying under sentence of banishment, for their adherence to the presbyterian faith, must, amidst so many instances of cruelty and suffering, be peculiarly acceptable to the reader.

“ Beloved friends,

“ It is both my duty and desire to sympathize with all who are suffering for the precious name of Christ, especially with you who are called to partake so deeply of the afflictions of the children of Zion. You are now to be banished out of your native land—but, considering the preciousness of the cause for which you are persecuted, you may rejoice that you are counted worthy to suffer such things: for it is no less than the gospel of Christ, and his great prerogatives, as he is King of his own church, which he hath purchased with his blood, and as he is supreme Governor and Sovereign of the whole world. O, is not this a precious cause? are not these great heads of sufferings?

If every one of you had a thousand worlds of enjoyments and a thousand lives, they would be all too little to signify your love to Christ, and your respect to so honourable a cause. You cannot glorify your Lord so much on earth, as by being faithful to the work of your testimony, and suffering for him now, when men are declaredly topping with him about his supremacy both in his kingdom of grace and power. O, my friends, regard not what you may meet with in this present world, but be careful to have matters standing right between God and you: see that ye attain to a saving interest in Christ, for if that be not secured, your duties will not be acceptable; and whatever ye may endure here for a profession, ye may lay your account with lying under his wrath and curse, and the immediate strokes of his severe vengeance, to all eternity. O make Christ your own, and then ye may defy devils and men to come between you and your happy state. Give yourselves wholly to his disposal, for he is gracious and faithful, and will order every thing for his own glory and your good. Study to maintain his cause whole, and wherever your lot may be, keep up the testimony of the church of Scotland. Quit none of your sworn and received

principles, whatever way those may insinuate upon you who are engaged and persisting in a course of defection. Make no tampering or bargaining with any, where it will infer a condemning of the cause of your sufferings, and ustifying of the iniquitous sentence that men have past upon you. Keep all stedfast, and unite together in the truths of God; and beware of defection which breedeth division. Fall not away from any of the words of Christ's patience; but shun all unnecessary questions, peedless strifes, and vain janglings. Live at peace among yourselves, so far as holiness may sustain no prejudice by it, and this will be both pleasant and profitable for you. Now, O beloved, what shall I say unto you? I have no time to enlarge. Do not say, because of your banishment, 'Is there any sorrow like unto your sorrow?' for I am persuaded, that those whom you leave behind you have a greater sorrow. I do not say that any should flee out of Scotland, or leave it without a necessary and sufficient call; yet that is coming upon the inhabitants which will make the ears of them that hear thereof to tingle! The consumption determined shall pass through, and the Lord will quiet his Spirit in our destruction; for his 'soul shall be

avenged on such a nation as this.' And who knoweth but your banishment may be for the preservation and hiding of, at least, some of you, until the indignation overpass. But when the time of gathering cometh, the Lord will bring again his banished; he 'will bring them from all places whither they have been driven: he will say to the east, give up, and to the west, keep not back.' Fear not a long sea voyage; for 'they that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in the great waters, these see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep.' Yea, though the deep should be your grave, or though ye should die in a strange land, yet your death of that kind shall be a testimony, and cry for vengeance upon persecutors; and it will be an outlet of all your misery and an inlet of your everlasting glory. But if the Lord shall meet you with providential mercies whither ye are carried, and give you any tolerable ease, safety, or sustenance, then, I say, as ye would not have your blessings cursed, ye would not lose the badge of Christians and sufferers, sit not down upon these things, content not yourselves with these things, and forget not the case of the remnant whom ye leave behind you. Now, I commend you all to the grace of God, hop-

ing not to forget you in any weak addresses to the throne of Him who is the hearer of prayer ; and hoping to be remembered by you in like sort, I am, beloved friends, your sympathizing friend and servant in the Lord,

“ JAMES RENWICK.”*

* Renwick's Letters, pp. 200—203.

CHAP. V.

Protestation by Mr. Renwick against the indulgence given to the tolerated ministers—he preaches his last public sermon—he repairs to Edinburgh—is apprehended and committed to prison—he is privately examined by the chancellor—his indictment—his behaviour in prison—his trial before the Justiciary Court—he is condemned and sentenced to be executed—the feeble attempts of his enemies to shake his constancy or to induce him to waver in his principles—he is again examined by the council—his letter on that occasion to several Christian friends—his dying testimony.

FROM the vigilance of his enemies, both open and secret, Mr. Renwick perceived that he could not now much longer escape their hands, and that consequently the period of his labours was drawing to a close. He accordingly drew up a paper against the indulgence, with which he hastened to Edinburgh in the beginning of January 1688, in order to pre-

sent it to the tolerated ministers, a meeting of whom he expected to take place about that period. On his way to the metropolis he passed through Peebles, in the vicinity of which town he proposed to preach to a number of people who had been secretly apprised of his approach. In this he was however disappointed, the emissaries of government having seized several of the people, dispersed the rest, and very narrowly missed apprehending himself.

Arriving in Edinburgh on the day following, and finding that no meeting of the presbyterian ministers was to take place for some time, Mr. Renwick repaired to Mr. Hugh Kennedy, the moderator of their last meeting, and delivered the protestation into his hands. In this nervous and faithful document, he says, " We witness against this present toleration, I. In respect of the granter, considered either as to morals, or religion, or relation. He is to all considering men a person of that character whose dainties are not to be desired ; and that when he speaketh, it is not to be believed. He is known of all to be an excommunicated papist, and a sworn votary and vassal of Antichrist, and enrolled in the society of Jesuits ; and therefore, being in his principles pro-

fessedly treacherous, he cannot be trusted. 2. In respect of its design ; which he himself expresseth to be to unite the hearts of his subjects to him in loyalty, and to their neighbours in love ; which is to incline and induce them by flattery to co-operate in setting up and settling his tyranny in the undisturbed possession of all his usurpations, and to incorporate them with Babylon. 3. In respect of its fountain, from whence it flows and is given forth, a despotical and arbitrary domination, outerying and surmounting the height of Ottoman tyranny. 4. In respect of its conveyance, and that is through the conduit of the most apparent means of establishing popery, and subverting protestantism, by stopping and disabling all penal laws enacted against papists, and leaving in force, nay commanding to execute according to their rigour, all laws made against honest presbyterians. 5. In respect of the nature and extent of it. It is toleration, which is always of evil, for that which is good cannot be *tolerated* under the notion of good, but countenanced and encouraged as good. Therefore it reflects upon our religion when a toleration is accepted, which implies such a reproach ; seeing it is not ratified as a right, nor encouraged as a religion, but toler-

ated under the notion of an evil to be suffered. 6. In respect of its conditions, limitations, and restrictions, by which all the kinds of power that Christ hath seated in his church is invaded, invalidated, and evacuated. And 7. In respect of the manifest and manifold scandal of it, we cannot but witness against the acceptance thereof, so offensive to the generation of the righteous, so dishonourable to God, disgraceful to the protestant religion, and prejudicial to the interest thereof." Having next testified, in very pointed language, supported by Scripture quotations, against the accepters of the indulgence, Mr. Renwick adds,—“ We abhor that principle that we are invidiously calumniated with, of casting off the ministry, or disowning all the ministers of the church of Scotland. We hope all are not, and shall not be so far left in this hour of temptation, so to abandon the word of the Lord's patience as thus to forget and forego the hitherto continued testimony for the covenanted reformation, by embracing a toleration so plainly and palpably eversive thereof; and doubt not but there are some of our dear and reverend brethren who dare not concur in this conspiracy, who both mourn in secret, and are willing to witness their dislike at the

sins and scandals of this course, as they find occasion, whom only misinformation by the industry of our traducers does demur from concurring in this testimony. But as for our declining brethren involved in the guilt of this defection, though we respect and reverence them in the Lord, as our beloved brethren, yet out of love to them, and to the souls of the people whom they and we must answer for, we cannot but witness against them, and obtest them, in the bowels of Christ, to relinquish this course, or otherwise we must warn all that would be free of the sin of it, and escape the judgments wherewith it is like to be pursued, to discountenance them while they continue in it."*

* As this protestation occupies no fewer than forty-eight closely printed octavo pages, it is evident that the above are only a few sentences extracted from it.

The following remarks on this paper by Mr. M'Gavin, author of "the Protestant," &c. well deserve a place here. "The fact that King James's toleration, with its conditions, was accepted by the presbyterian ministers generally, tended, of course, to increase the severity of the persecution against the faithful few who refused it, and they were so few that it was hoped by their enemies that they would soon be extirpated

After delivering this paper to Mr. Kennedy, Mr. Renwick repaired to Fife, where he preached several sermons, two of which are

altogether; and, but for the happy revolution that soon followed, this would probably have been the case, as the inquisition in Spain and Italy effectually suppressed the Protestant religion in these countries. I have no hesitation in calling them the *faithful few*, though it has been fashionable, from that day to this, to treat them and their memory with all manner of contempt. They were faithful to the word of God, so far as they understood its meaning and application,—faithful to their own consciences and their solemn engagements. They adhered honestly and faithfully to what they conscientiously believed to be the truth, which many of them sealed with their blood, while the great body of their brethren gladly submitted to accept the boon, which the king intended not for them, but for the papists, by means of whom he hoped soon to crush them all. What they rejected was not toleration generally, but THE toleration offered by the king, which was clogged with conditions with which they could not conscientiously comply; such as owning the king's prerogative and supremacy, or headship of the church. It would have been acknowledging that the king, who was a papist, had a right to grant liberty to worship God as his word requires, which implies a right to withhold that liberty, and thus they would have yielded to his impious claim to be sovereign lord of their consciences."

published.* He then crossed the Frith, and on the 29th of January preached his last sermon at Borrowstouness, from Isaiah liii. 1, "Who hath believed our report, and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?" In this interesting and affecting discourse, Mr. Renwick particularly insists on the different doctrines, founded on the word of God, which ministers had long declared to the people of Scotland; such as "the sinfulness and misery of their natural state; their own inability to deliver themselves; the provision of a Saviour and Redeemer in the person of the Son of God; their necessity of closing with Christ in all his offices; the necessity of holiness of heart and conversation; the danger of complying with the abominations and defections of the times in which they lived;" and concerning each of these he asks the important question, "Have you believed this report?" He concludes his discourse in the words following, which may be considered the last which he uttered in public as a minister of the gospel of Christ:—"It is a sure token of sad wrath and desola-

* These sermons are preached from Psalm xlv. 10, and Luke xii. 32.

tion approaching when preaching hath little or no other effect than to make the hearts of people more fat, their ears heavy, and to shut their eyes that they neither see, hear, nor understand, for then may we look for dreadful desolations, as it is Isa. vi. 9—12. O, this is the great sin of Scotland, that the report of the gospel hath not been believed by the generality of the people; that that which the faithful ministers of Christ have had in commission from him to tell them, hath not been credited as it should. And what doth this say, but that desolation and wrath are approaching? Happy are they who are preparing for the same."*

Mr. Renwick returned to Edinburgh on the 30th of January, and lodged in a friend's house on the Castle-hill. In consequence, however, of the numerous spies who prowled about the city, he was soon found out, and a scheme devised for his apprehension. John Justice, a customhouse-officer, who had been for some time on the alert, proceeded to the house with a strong guard at seven o'clock the following morning, and, under pretext of searching for contraband goods, demanded admittance. No

* Renwick's Sermons, p. 588, *et seq.*

sooner had Justice entered than he exclaimed, " My life for it, this is Mr. Renwick;" and immediately called upon his associates to assist him in carrying " the dog Renwick" to prison.

Perceiving that he was recognised, Mr. Renwick, with two of his friends, attempted to escape by a back door; but finding that avenue guarded also, he discharged a pistol, which caused his assailants to retreat to some little distance with the greatest precipitation. Seizing the opportunity, he immediately rushed through them; but one of the party having struck him a blow on the breast, he fell several times in running down the Castle Wynd, and had reached the head of the Cowgate only, when he was seized and lodged in the guard-house. Struck with his youthful appearance and small stature, Graham, captain of the guard, cried out, " What! is this the boy Renwick that the nation hath been so much troubled with?" Bailie Charters, too, coming in at that moment, accused him of frequenting houses of bad fame: but " in patience possessing his soul," Mr. Renwick disdained entering into any refutation of so absurd and atrocious a calumny. He was then carried before a quorum of the council; and

when Graham delivered him off his hand, he was heard to say, "Now I have given Renwick up to the presbyterians, let them do with him what they please." What passed at this interview with his persecutors could not be ascertained.

He was afterwards committed to prison and laid in irons. Here, so soon as he was left alone, he betook himself to prayer, unreservedly surrendering his life to God, supplicating His grace to enable him to endure whatever sufferings his enemies might inflict upon him, and earnestly entreating that He who can "restrain the wrath of man" would prevent his persecutors from torturing his body; all which petitions were strikingly answered, and by him thankfully acknowledged previous to his execution.

Before receiving his indictment, he was taken before the chancellor, in the Viscount Tarbet's lodgings, and privately examined concerning his owning the authority of James VII., the paying of the cess, and the carrying of arms at field meetings. To each of these interrogatories he returned answers with so much firmness and decision as at once to astonish and perplex his adversaries. The reason he was so particularly examined concern-

ing the cess was, on account of a pocket-book being found on him, in which were the notes of two sermons which he had preached on the points at issue. There were also some initials in the same book; and because the committee were urgent to know the names of the persons alluded to, he, partly to avoid torture, and partly because he was aware that the persons alluded to were already proscribed, told them the whole truth. The following conversation then took place between the chancellor and the martyr —“ *Chan.* Of what persuasion are you? *Ren.* Of the protestant presbyterian persuasion. *Chan.* How comes it to pass that you differ so much from other presbyterians who have accepted the toleration and owned the king’s authority? And what do you think of them? *Ren.* I am a presbyterian, and adhere to the old presbyterian principles—principles which all are obliged by the covenant to maintain, and which were once professed and maintained by the nation from 1640 to 1660, from which the clergy have apostatised for a little liberty—they know not how long, as you yourselves have done for a little honour. *Chan.* We believe that these are the presbyterian principles, and that all presbyterians would own

them as well as you, if they had but the courage."

On the 3d of February Mr. Renwick was indicted to stand trial before the justiciary court. Among other charges of minor importance, the following accusations were brought against him :—That in consequence of having shaken off the fear of God and regard to his majesty's laws and authority, as well as having entered into the society of some rebels of most damnable and pernicious principles and disloyal practices, he had taken upon him to be a preacher to these traitors, and had become so desperate a villain as openly to preach in the fields, declaiming against the king's authority, asserting that he was an usurper, and that it was unlawful to pay cess, but lawful for subjects to rise in arms and make war against him and those commissioned by him; for which crimes he had been denounced and intercommuned, and a reward of one hundred pounds sterling offered for his apprehension; notwithstanding which, he had still persisted in his obstinacy, keeping conventicles in the fields, and requiring his hearers to come armed to these rendezvouses of rebellion.

After receiving his indictment, his persecutors granted permission to his pious mother to

visit him. On one of these short but sweet intervals, he expressed to her his regret that now he must leave his poor flock; but he immediately added, "That if it were his choice, he could not think of it without terror to enter again into, and venture upon, that conflict with a body of sin and death; yet if he were again to go and preach in the field, he durst not vary in the least, nor flinch one hairbreadth from the testimony, but would look on himself as obliged to use the same freedom and faithfulness as he had done before." On another occasion his mother having asked him what were his feelings in so trying a situation? "Since my last examination," replied Renwick, "I can hardly pray." Seeing her startled at his answer, he added, "I can hardly pray, being so much taken up with praising, and ravished with the joy of the Lord." "But how shall I look upon that head," said she, "and those hands set up among the rest upon the ports of the city? I have so much of self, that I shall never be able to endure it." With a smile, he told her that she should never be called upon to endure such a trial; "for," said he, "I have offered my life to the Lord, and have sought that he may bind them up, that they may do no more; and I am persuaded that

they shall not be permitted to torture my body, nor touch one hair of my head farther."

On the 6th of February he wrote a letter from prison to a friend, desiring him to acquaint those persons whose names had been found in his memorandum-book, of the necessity under which he had been laid to state their names to the council. In this letter he says, "I have no cause of complaining of my lot; there is a great necessity for it, and the Lord hath seen it for his glory, and he maketh me joyful in it. But there is one thing that doth a little trouble me, and yet when I look upon it again I think there is not much cause of trouble. The matter is this; when I was apprehended and searched, there was found upon me a little memorandum, containing the names of some persons to whom I had lent, and from whom I had borrowed, some books; as also a direction of letters to some doctors of divinity, or ministers, abroad. Upon this I was interrogate in the tolbooth by a committee, who said they had orders to torture me if I was not ingenuous. So as to the direction to the doctors or ministers abroad, which were full in the memorandum, I told that there was a purpose of writing letters to them, but none were written; and being asked

about the scope and design of the letters, I told it was to represent our sufferings, and to procure their sympathy. It was asked with whom I kept correspondence abroad; I replied, with Mr. Robert Hamilton, which I thought could do no injury. As to the names of other persons which were written short, I judged there was no hazard in explaining their names, who were in the same hazard already: so I told that A. S. was Alexander Shields," &c. " Now I shall say no more as to this, but only advise persons in my circumstances, either not to write such memorandums, or not to keep them upon them, which I did inadvertently and inconsiderately. You may communicate this to whom you think fit, especially to the persons concerned, but see that you take along with you all the circumstances. I have no further to write at this time, for I resolve to write some after this, which I would have made public. I desire that none may be troubled upon my behalf, but rather rejoice with him who, with hope and joy, is waiting for his marriage and coronation hour."*

Mr. Renwick was placed at the bar of the

* Renwick's Letters, pp 216—219.

justiciary court on the 8th of February; and, on his indictment being read, he was asked if he acknowledged the charges there brought against him. "All," he replied, "except where it is said that I have cast off all fear of God; *that* I deny; for it is because I fear to offend God and violate his law, that I am here standing ready to be condemned." He was then interrogated if he owned authority, and especially king James VII. as his lawful sovereign? "I own all authority," replied the prisoner, "that hath its prescriptions and limitations from the word of God; but I cannot own this usurper as lawful king, seeing, both by the word of God, such an one is incapable to bear rule, and likewise by the ancient laws of the kingdom, which admit none to wear the crown of Scotland, until he swear to defend the protestant religion, which a man of his profession could not do." The following questions were then pressed upon him,—Could he deny him to be king? Was he not the late king's brother? Had the late king any children lawfully begotten? Was he not declared to be successor by act of parliament? "True," he replied, "James was no doubt king *de facto*, but not *de jure*; that he was brother to the other king, he knew nothing to the contrary;

what children the other had he knew not: But from the word of God, which ought to be the rule of all laws, or from the ancient laws of the kingdom, it could not be shown that he had, or ever could have, any right." He was next asked, if he owned, and had taught it to be unlawful to pay cesses and taxes to his majesty. "For the present cess," said he, "exact- ed for the present usurper, I hold it un- lawful to pay it, both in regard it is oppressive to the subjects, for the maintenance of tyran- ny, and because it is imposed for suppressing the gospel. Would it have been thought law- ful for the Jews, in the days of Nebuchadnezzar, to have brought every one a coal to augment the flame of the furnace to devour the three children, if so they had been required by that tyrant? And how can it be lawful, either to oppress poor people for not bowing down to the idols the king sets up, or for their brethren to contribute to what may help forward their oppression?" "Do you acknowledge," it was farther inquired, "that you have taught your hearers to come armed to your meetings, and, in case of opposition, to resist?" "It were inconsistent with reason and religion," replied Mr. Renwick, "to do otherwise; yourselves would do it in the like circumstances. I own

that I taught them to carry arms to defend themselves, and to resist your unjust violence." "Do you acknowledge the note-book," said his persecutors, [namely, the manuscript book found on his person when he was apprehended,] "with the two sermons in it, and that you have preached them?" "If you have added nothing," answered the prisoner, "I will own it, and am ready to seal all the truths contained therein with my blood."

The base and illegal practice which then prevailed, of selecting for jurymen such as the council knew would submit to be fined rather than serve, was resorted to in Mr. Renwick's case;—a considerable number of the forty-five being attached to presbyterian principles. Fifteen were however at length obtained devoted to the cause of tyranny;* and on the

* The following are the fifteen who condemned this eminent servant of Christ, and whose names deserve to be recorded to their utter disgrace throughout every age:—James Hume of Kimmergem; John Hume of Ninewells; John Martin; Alexander Martin; Robert Halyburton; Thomas Lawrie; Archibald Johnston; Thomas Wylie; James Hamilton; William Cockburn; James Hamilton, jun.; Robert Currie; Joseph Young; John Cunningham of Glasgow, and Finian Bannatyne of Kaims, *Chancellor*.

prisoner being asked if he objected to any of them, he replied, that he did not, but "protested that none might sit on his assize who professed protestant or presbyterian principles, or an adherence to the covenanted work of reformation." Having gone through the farce of a trial, a verdict of *guilty* was of course returned against him, and he was condemned to be executed in the Grassmarket on the Friday following. On being asked by Linlithgow, Lord Justice-General, if he desired longer time, he magnanimously replied, "It was all one to him; if it were protracted it was welcome; if it were shortened it was welcome; his master's time was the best."* With the view of inducing him to comply, he was, however, without his knowledge, respited by the court till the 17th; but he steadily refused to make any concessions which in the smallest degree might be considered as a receding from his principles.

* Though none who suffered during the former part of that distressing period spoke with greater fortitude, freedom and boldness, than Mr. Renwick, yet none was treated with so much moderation. The lenity of his judges in the judiciary court in particular was somewhat astonishing; for they permitted him to say what he pleased without either threats or interruption, although he gave none of them the title of lord, except Linlithgow, who was a nobleman by birth.

During the few days now allotted to him on earth, though his friends were denied all access to him, he was teased and harassed both by papists and prelates. Bishop Paterson, in particular, often visited him. On one occasion the Bishop said to him, "Think you none can be saved but those of your principles? Will you kill yourself with your own hands, seeing you may have your life upon so easy terms?" "I never said nor thought," replied Renwick, "that none could be saved except they were of those principles; but these are truths for which I suffer, and which I have not rashly concluded on, but deliberately and of a long time have been confirmed, that they are sufficient points to suffer for." The Bishop then took his leave of him, expressing his sorrow that he was so tenacious, adding, "It was a great loss he had been of such principles, for he was a pretty lad." The evening previous to his death, the Bishop again sent to him, requesting to know if there was any thing in which he could be of service to him. But while Mr. Renwick thanked him for his offer, he returned an answer intimating that he knew nothing that he could do, or that he himself could desire.

Mr. M'Naught also, one of the curates, paid

Mr. Renwick a visit in his canonical vestments, at which the prisoner expressed his dislike. Among other questions, the curate asked him his opinion concerning the toleration, and those who had accepted of it. To which Mr. Renwick replied, that he was decidedly against the toleration ; but candidly acknowledged that he thought the accepters of it to be godly men. On leaving him, the curate commended him as being a person at once ingenuous and firm.

Another visitor of Mr. Renwick was Dalrymple, the King's Advocate, who expressed his regret that he was to suffer death, and more especially that he himself had been obliged to take such an active part in his condemnation. He at the same time entreated Renwick to petition for pardon, and to own the king's authority ; which he, however, declined to do. Several popish priests who also visited him, left him as they found him, declaring, as they retired, that he was a most obstinate heretic.

A number of petitions were written by several individuals, in the most favourable terms, praying for a commutation of his sentence, and sent to Mr. Renwick for his signature : But he absolutely refused to do any thing farther in his own behalf, or to give the smallest colour to the ungenerous surmisings which had been

raised against him, namely, that he had apostatized from his principles for the purpose of saving his life.

On Tuesday the 14th, Mr. Renwick was brought before the council and interrogated concerning the "Informatory Vindication;" but what passed between him and his persecutors on that occasion, was never known, farther than what is contained in the following letter, which he himself wrote to a few Christian friends the day following:—

"*My dear friends in Christ,*—I see now what hath been the language of my reprieve; it hath been that I might be farther tempted and tried; and I praise the Lord that he hath assisted me to give farther proofs of stedfastness. I have been assaulted by some popish priests; but the last time they came, I told them I would debate no more with such as they were, and that I had lived and would die a protestant, and testify against the idolatries, heresies, superstitions, and errors of that antichristian way. But yesterday I was cast into a deep exercise, and made to dwell under an impression of the dreadfulness of every thing that might grieve the Spirit of God. I found sin to be more bitter than death, and one hour's hiding of God's face more insupportable. And

then at night I was called before a part of the council, and the chancellor produced the Informatory Vindication, and asked if I knew it. I answered, I did know it. And being interrogated, I confessed that I had a great hand in the writing of it. They pressed me to tell my assistants: I told them they were those whom they persecuted; but would satisfy them no farther. They also urged me upon pain of torture to tell where our societies were? who kept our general correspondence? and where they were kept? I answered, though they should torture me, which was contrary to all law after sentence of death, I would give them no farther notice than the books gave. I was, moreover, threatened to tell my haunts and quarters, but I refused to make known to them any such thing. So I was returned to prison. Such exercise as I had was very needful for such a trial; and I would rather endure what they could do unto me, than have dishonoured Christ, offended you, and brought you into trouble. But I hope, within less than three days, to be without the reach of all temptations. Now I have no more to say: farewell again in our blessed Lord Jesus."

After his examination by the council concerning the Informatory Vindication, Mr. Ren-

wick not only enjoyed extraordinary composure of mind, but appeared uncommonly cheerful. He rejoiced that he was counted worthy to suffer for the name of Christ. To the question, "How he was?" which was put to him by one of his friends, he returned the answer, "Very well;" and that he would be better within three days. He told his mother, that the last execution he was witness to, was that of Robert Gray, when he felt a strong impression on his mind that he himself should be the next. He often said, that he saw it to be necessary that he should now suffer, and that he was persuaded his death would do more good than his life, though he should be spared for many years. And when asked, "What he thought God would do with the remnant he left behind him?" He replied, "It would be well with them: for God would not forsake nor cast off his inheritance."

The day preceding his death he wrote what is called "his Dying Testimony," in which he says, "It hath pleased the Lord to deliver me up into the hands of men, and I think fit to send you this salutation, which I expect will be the last. I dare not desire to have escaped this lot, for no less could have been for his glory and vindication of his cause on my be-

half;—and now my blood shall either more silence reproaches, or more ripen them for judgment, but I hope it will make some more sparing to speak of those who shall come after me; and so I am the more willing to pay this cost, for their instruction and my successors' ease. Since I came to prison, the Lord has been wonderfully kind to me; he has made his word to give me light, life, joy, courage, and strength; yea, it has dropped with sweet smelling myrrh unto me;—[he here quotes a number of passages of Scripture.]—O what what can I say to the Lord's praise! It was but little that I knew of him before I came to prison; but I have found sensibly much of his divine strength, much of the joy of his Spirit, and much assurance from his word and Spirit concerning my salvation. I have met with many assaults in prison, some from the indulged party, and some from prelates; but by the strength of God I was enabled to stand, that they could neither bend nor break me. I was also assaulted by some of the popish party, but they found none of their own stuff in me, &c. . . . Now my dear friends in precious Christ, I think I need not tell you, that as I have lived, so I die in the same persuasion with the true reformed and covenanted

presbyterian church of Scotland ; that I adhere to the testimony of the day, as it is held forth in our Informatory Vindication, and in the testimony against the present toleration ; and that I own, and seal with my blood, all the precious truths, even the controverted truths that I have taught. I would exhort you to make sure your personal reconciliation with God in Christ ; for I fear many of you have that yet to do, and when you come where I am to look pale death in the face, you will not be a little shaken and terrified, if you have not laid hold on eternal life. I would exhort you to much diligence in the use of means, &c.— Do not fear that the Lord will cast off Scotland, for he will certainly return again, and show himself glorious in our land. But watch and pray, for he is bringing on a sad overthrowing stroke, which will make many say, That they have easily got through that have got a scaffold for Christ. I may say this to his praise, that I have found his cross sweet and lovely to me ; for I have had many joyful hours, and not a fearful thought since I came to prison. I am now longing for the joyful hour of my dissolution, and there is nothing in the world that I am sorry to leave but you : but I go to better company, and so I must take

my leave of you all. Farewell, beloved sufferers and followers of the Lamb ; farewell, Christian intimates ; farewell, Christian and comfortable mother and sisters ; farewell, sweet societies, and desirable general meetings ; farewell, night wanderings in cold and weariness for Christ ; farewell, sweet Bible and preaching of the gospel ; farewell, sun, moon, and stars, and all sublunary things ; farewell, conflicts with a body of sin and death : Welcome, scaffold, for precious Christ ; welcome, heavenly Jerusalem ; welcome, innumerable company of angels, and general assembly and church of the first-born ; welcome, crown of glory, white robes, and songs of Moses and the Lamb ; and, above all, welcome, O thou blessed Trinity, and one God ! O, Eternal One ! I commit my soul into thy eternal rest."

CHAP. VI.

Mr. Renwick's last letter—his conversation with the captain of the jail on the morning of the day of his execution—affecting interview between him and his mother and sisters—his preparations for death—his behaviour on the scaffold—his address to the spectators immediately before his execution—his appearance and character—his writings—monument to his memory—description of his field-preachings.

ON the day of his execution, Mr. Renwick wrote a letter to Mr. Robert Hamilton, Le-warden, which being the last that came from his pen, we shall give here entire.

February 17, 1688.

“ Right Hon. and Dear Sir,

“ This being my last day upon earth, I thought it my duty to send you this my last salutation. The Lord hath been wonderfully gracious to me since I came to prison ; he hath assured me of his salvation, helped me to give

a testimony for him, and own before his enemies all that I have taught, and strengthened me to resist and repel many temptations and assaults: O, praise to his name!

“ Now, as to my testimony, which I left in your hands when I entered into the work of the ministry, I do still adhere unto the matter of it; but I think the manner of expression is in some things too tart, and it containeth sundry men’s names, some whereof are now in eternity: also, it is not so pertinent to our present affairs; for the state of our controversies is altered: therefore, I judge it may be destroyed, for I have testimony sufficient left behind me in my written sermons, and in my letters. But if this trouble you, and if you desire to keep it for yourself, and your own use, you would keep this letter with it, and not publish farther abroad: yet you may make use of any part of the matter of it that may conduce to the clearing of any controversy. And as for the direction of it unto you, if I had lived, and been qualified for writing a book, and if it had been dedicated to any man, you would have been the man: For I have loved you, and I have peace before God in that; and I bless his name that I have been acquainted with you.

“ Remember me to all that are friends to you, particularly to the ladies at Lewarden, to whom I would have written if I had not been kept close in prison, and pen, ink, and paper kept from me. But I must break off. I go to your God and my God. Death to me is a bed to the weary. Now, be not anxious ; the Lord will maintain his cause, and own his people ; he will show his glory yet in Scotland. Farewell, beloved and comfortable Sir,

“ JAMES RENWICK.”

On the morning of that day, the captain of the jail waited on him, and entreated him to forbear casting any reflections on his opponents, or even to mention the causes for which he suffered death. “ What the Lord gives me to speak,” replied the martyr, “ that I will speak, and say neither more nor less.” The captain next informed him, that he might still preserve his life, provided he would affix his signature to a petition which he laid before him. “ I never read either in Scripture or in history,” rejoined Mr. Renwick, “ of martyrs petitioning for their lives when called to suffer for the truth, though they might require them not to take away their life, and remonstrate against the wickedness of murder-

ing them ; but in the present circumstances, I judge it would be found a receding from truth, and a declining from the testimony for Christ."

His mother and sisters, together with one or two friends, were now permitted to see him, with whom he took some small refreshment, and spent the few moments which intervened betwixt and his execution, in exhortation, prayer, and praise. Among other remarks which fell from his lips, he said, when returning thanks after partaking of the refreshment provided for him,—“ O Lord, thou hast brought me within two hours of eternity, and this is no matter of terror to me more than if I were to lie down on a bed of roses ; nay, through grace, to thy praise, I may say, I never had the fear of death since I came to this prison ; but from the place where I was taken, I could have gone very composedly to the scaffold. O, how can I contain this, to be within two hours of the crown of glory !” He then exhorted every one of them to prepare for death ; “ for it is,” said he, “ the king of terrors, though not to me now, as it was sometimes in my hidings : But now, let us be glad and rejoice, for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. Would ever I have thought that the fear of

suffering and of death, could be so taken from me? But what shall I say of it? It is the doing of the Lord, and marvellous in our eyes. I have many times counted the cost of following Christ, but never thought it would be so easy. And now, who knows the honour and happiness of that, 'He that confesseth me before men, him will I confess before my Father.'" He several times said, "Now I am near the end of time, I desire to bless the Lord; it is an inexpressibly sweet and satisfying peace to me, that he hath kept me from in the least complying with enemies." Perceiving his mother weeping, he gently cautioned her against giving way to undue sorrow, reminding her, that they who loved any thing better than Christ, were declared to be unworthy of him, and adding, "If ye love me, rejoice that I am going to my Father, to obtain the enjoyment of what eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor heart conceived." He then kneeled down and prayed, mingling praises with all his supplications. In particular he pleaded much in behalf of the suffering remnant, that the Lord would raise up witnesses that might transmit the testimony to succeeding generations; and that Scotland might not be given up for the iniquities of the inhabitants thereof.

When the drum beat for his execution, in an ecstatic frame of spirit he exclaimed, "Let us be glad and rejoice; the bridegroom is coming, and I can in some measure say, I am ready." He then took leave of his mother and sisters, entreating them not to suffer themselves to be overcome with grief, but rather to praise the Lord for his kindness to so unworthy a servant; "for ere all be done," said he, "you shall see matter of praise in this day's work." Having, as was usually done with criminals, been conveyed to the low council-room, his sentence was read to him, and an invitation given him to say there what he intended to utter before he suffered. "I have nothing to say to you," replied the martyr, "but that which is written in Jeremiah xxvi. 14, 15, 'As for me, behold I am in your hand, do with me as seemeth good and meet unto you; but know ye for certain, that if ye put me to death, ye shall surely bring innocent blood upon yourselves, and upon this city, and upon the inhabitants thereof.'" Finding this stratagem to fail, his persecutors next desired him to pray in the place where he was, assuring him that he would be heard by none when on the scaffold, seeing the drums would be beat during the whole of the

time of his execution. With this request also he refused to comply, and told them, that as he had premeditated nothing, he would submit to no restrictions, but whether they allowed him to be heard by the spectators or not, he would speak what was given him at the moment. They then offered him a minister to attend him to the scaffold; but he replied, "If I would have had any of them for my counsellors or comforters, I should not have been here this day. I require none with me but this man," meaning the friend who stood beside him.

Mr. Renwick was now conducted to the scaffold, which he ascended with the greatest cheerfulness. Here he was met by one of the curates, who officiously accosting him, said, "Mr. Renwick, own our king, and we shall pray for you." "I am come here," replied the martyr, "to bear my testimony against you, and all such as you are." "Own our king, and pray for him, whatever ye say of us," returned the curate.* "I will discourse no

* The conduct of this officious and cruel episcopalian, who could thus wantonly tease and harass a dying man, is just a specimen of the abominable proceedings of the persecuting prelates, during the whole period of episcopal rule.

more with you," rejoined Mr. Renwick ; " I am in a little to appear before Him who is King of kings, and Lord of lords, who shall pour shame, contempt, and confusion on all the kings of the earth who have not ruled for him."

He then sang part of the hundred and third psalm, and read the 19th chapter of Revelation ; after which he prayed, commending, like Stephen, his spirit into the hands of his Redeemer, and the cause for which he suffered, to be vindicated, in the time and manner appointed by the Most High. He once and again blessed the Lord, that he had honoured him with the crown of martyrdom, " an honour," he said, " which the angels themselves were not privileged to enjoy, being incapable of laying down their lives for their Princely Master." He at one time complained of being annoyed in worshipping God ; but immediately added, " I shall soon be above these clouds, then shall I enjoy Thee, and glorify Thee, without interruption, for ever."

Notwithstanding the base practice of the beating of drums, of which he had complained when engaged in prayer, he addressed the spectators to the following effect :—" Spectators, I am come here this day to lay down my

life for adhering to the truths of Christ, for which I am neither afraid nor ashamed to suffer; nay, I bless the Lord that ever he counted me worthy, or enabled me to suffer any thing for him; and I desire to praise his grace that he hath not only kept me free from the gross pollutions of the time, but also from many ordinary pollutions of children; and such as I have been stained with, he hath washed me from in his own blood. I am this day to lay down my life for these three things: 1st. For disowning the usurpation and tyranny of James, Duke of York. 2d. For preaching that it was unlawful to pay the cess expressly exacted for bearing down the gospel. 3d. For teaching that it was lawful for people to carry arms for defending themselves in their meeting for the persecuted gospel ordinances. I think a testimony for these is worth many lives; and if I had ten thousand, I would think it little enough to lay them all down for the same. Dear friends, I die a presbyterian protestant. I own the word of God as the rule of faith and manners. I own the Confession of Faith, Larger and Shorter Catechisms, Sum of Saving Knowledge, Directory for Public and Family Worship, Covenants National and Solemn League, Acts of General Assemblies, and all

the faithful contendings that have been for the work of the covenanted reformation. I leave my testimony, approving the preaching of the gospel in the fields, and defending of the same by arms. I adjoin my testimony to all those truths that have been sealed by blood, shed either on scaffolds, fields, or seas, for the cause of Christ. I leave my testimony against popery, prelacy, crastianism, &c. against all profanity, and every thing contrary to sound doctrine and the power of godliness; particularly against all usurpations and encroachments made on Christ's right, who is the 'Prince of the kings of the earth,' who alone must bear the glory of ruling in his own kingdom, the church; and in particular against the absolute power usurped by this usurper, that belongs to no mortal, but is the incommunicable prerogative of Jehovah; and against this toleration flowing from that absolute power."

Here Mr. Renwick was ordered to be done; to which he replied, I am almost finished, and then added, "Ye that are the people of God, do not weary to maintain the testimony of the day in your stations and places; and, whatever ye do, make sure an interest in Christ; for there is a storm coming that shall try your foundation. Scotland must be rid of Scotland

before the delivery come: and you that are strangers to God, break off your sins by repentance; else I will be a sad witness against you in the day of the Lord."

His persecutors now peremptorily commanded him to go up the ladder. Here he prayed amidst great interruption, saying, "Lord, I die in the faith that thou wilt not leave Scotland, but that thou wilt make the blood of thy witnesses the seed of thy church, and return again and be glorious in our land." He then said to his attending friend at the time the napkin was tying over his face, "Farewell! be diligent in duty; make your peace with God through Christ: there is a great trial coming. As for the remnant I leave, I have committed them to God. Tell them from me not to weary, nor be discouraged in maintaining the testimony; let them not quit nor forego one of those despised truths. Keep your ground, and the Lord will provide you teachers and ministers; and when he comes he will make these despised truths glorious in the earth." He was then turned over the ladder with these words in his mouth, "Lord, into thy hands I commit my spirit, for thou hast redeemed me, Lord God of truth."

Thus died the amiable and pious James Renwick, one of the most upright and consistent of the Covenanters, as well as one of most distinguished patriots and Christians in that or in any succeeding age. He was but twenty-six years of age when he fell a victim to popish, prelatiç, and tyrannical cruelty ; and was the last who publicly sealed with his blood in Scotland that testimony for adhering to which so many of his brethren had suffered death during the preceding twenty-seven years. His appearance was uncommonly prepossessing, being of a very fair complexion, and “ of a ruddy and beautiful countenance ;” and notwithstanding the reproaches which had been heaped upon him during his lifetime, his death excited the greatest interest in the public mind. The purity of his character, the integrity of his life, and his firm adherence to the principles which he had espoused, together with his youth and comeliness of person, filled even the minds of his persecutors with admiration and pity. The Viscount of Tarbet, one of the privy council, when speaking of him afterwards one day in company, remarked, “ That he was one of the stiffest maintainers of his principles that ever came before them. Others,” he added, “ we used always to cause

one time or other to waver, but him we could never move. Where we left him, there we found him. We could never make him yield or vary in the least. He was the man we have seen most plainly and pertinaciously adhering to the old way of presbyterian government, who, if he had lived in Knox's days, *would not have died by any laws then in being.*"

Nisbet, who was a cotemporary and a follower of Mr. Renwick, in his own quaint style delineates his character and method of preaching in the following interesting manner:—"The latter end of this year,"* says he, "I heard that great man of God, Mr. James Renwick, preach on Song iii. 9, 10, when he treated greatly on the covenant of redemption agreed on between God the Father, and God the Son his equal, in favour of the elect; as also on the covenant of grace established with believers in Christ. O this was a great and sweet day of the gospel, for he handled and pressed the privileges of the covenant of grace with seraphic-like enlargement, to the great edification of the hearers: Sweet and charming were the offers which he made of Christ to all sorts of sinners. There was one thing

* Namely 1678.

this day that was very remarkable to me ; for though it was rain from morning to night, and we wet as if we had been drenched in water, yet not one fell sick ; and though there was a tent fixed for him, he would not go into it, but stood without in the rain and preached ; which example had a great influence on the people to patience, when they saw his sympathy with them : And though he was the only minister that kept closest to his text, and had the best method for the judgment and memory of any that ever I heard, yet now when he preached, the people crowded close together because of the rain, he digressed a little, and cried with a pleasant melting voice, ‘ My dear friends, be not disturbed because of the rain, for to have a covenant interest in Christ, the true Solomon, and in the benefits of his blessed purchase, is well worth the enduring all temporal, elementary storms that can fall on us : And this Solomon, who is here pointed at, endured a far other kind of storm for his people, even a storm of unmixed wrath : And O, what would poor reprobates in hell give for this day’s offer of sweet and lovely Christ ! and how welcome would our suffering friends in prison and banishment make this day’s offer of Christ. I, for my own part, as the Lord

will keep me, shall bear my equal share of this rain, in sympathy with you.' And he returned to his sweet subject again, and offered us grace and reconciliation with God through Christ, by his Spirit. Words would fail me to express my own frame, and the frame of many others; only this, we would have been glad to have endured any kind of death, to have been home at the uninterrupted enjoyment of that glorious Redeemer, who was so lively and clearly offered to us that day. But now, with a grieved heart, I must bid a final farewell, while in time, to this worthy minister, and highly honoured martyr; for within two months after this he was apprehended, and executed at Edinburgh, February 17, 1688.

“ He was a lively and faithful minister of Christ, and a worthy Christian, such as none who were entirely acquainted with him could say any other but this, that he was a beloved Jedidiah of the Lord. I never knew a man more richly endowed with grace, more equal in his temper, more equal in his spiritual frame, and more equal in walk and conversation. Many times when I have been thinking of the great Mr. Knox, Mr. Welch, Mr. Davidson, Mr. Bruce, Mr. Rutherford, Mr. Durham, and others of the worthy reformers, I have thought that the great Mr

James Renwick was as true and genuine a son and successor to those great men as any that ever the Lord raised up in this land, to contend for truth, and preach the gospel to lost sinners. He seemed to come upsides with them in soundness of principles, in uprightness of practice, in meekness, in prudence, in zeal for the glory of God, in giving testimony for the truth, and against sin and defection : so that though he was the Joseph who was sorely shot at and grieved, yet he was the Caleb that followed the Lord fully. When I speak of him as a man, none more comely in features, none more prudent, none more brave and heroic in spirit, and yet none more meek, more humane and condescending. He was every way so rational, as well as religious, that there was reason to think that the powers of his reason were as much strengthened and sanctified as any mere man I ever heard of. When I speak of him as a Christian, none more meek, and yet none more prudently bold against those who were bold to sin ; none more frequent and fervent in religious duties, such as prayer, converse, meditation, self-examination, preaching, prefacing, lecturing, baptizing, and catechising ; and none more methodical in teaching and instructing, accompanied with

a sweet charming eloquence, in holding forth Christ as the only remedy for lost sinners. None more hated of the world, and yet none more strengthened and upheld by the everlasting arms of the great Jehovah, to be steadfast and abound in the way of the Lord to the death; wherefore he might justly be called Antipas, Christ's faithful martyr. And as I lived then to know him to be so of a truth; so by the good hand of God, I yet live, thirty-six years after him, to testify that no man upon just grounds had any thing to lay to his charge—when all the critical and straitening circumstances, when that suffering period is well considered—save that he was liable to natural and sinful infirmities, as all mere men are, when in this life; and yet he was as little guilty in this way as any I ever knew or heard of. He was the liveliest and most engaging preacher to close with Christ of any I ever heard. His converse was pious, prudent, and meek; his reasoning was the same, carrying alongst with it a full evidence of the truth of what he asserted. And for steadfastness in the way of the Lord, few came his length. He learned the truth, and counted the cost, and so sealed it with his blood. Of all the men that ever I knew, I would be the least in danger of com-

mitting a hyperbole when speaking to his commendation. And yet I speak not this to praise man, but for the glory and honour of God in Christ, who makes men to differ so much from others, and in some periods of the church more than others."*

In addition to the writings which we have already noticed, and of which Mr. Renwick was the chief author, namely, *The Informatory Vindication*, and the *Testimony against King James's Toleration*, he left behind him a *Collection of Sermons*, which have been published in two volumes; a *Collection of Letters*; a *Treatise on the Admission of Ruling Elders*; a *Testimony in Defence of the Persecuted Presbyterians of Scotland*,† &c. and a few other pieces of minor importance.

It only remains for us to state here, that a neat monument, twenty-five feet in height by ten at the base, to the memory of the last of Scotland's martyrs, has been erected, near the village of Minnyhive, Dumfries-shire, and within the limits of the ancient farm of Knees, at no great distance from the remains of the

* *Mem. of Nisbet*, pp. 200, et seq.

† A few extracts from this singular paper will be found in the *Appendix*.

old farm-house where, tradition says, the martyr was born. It stands on an eminence, from which it may be seen, at the distance of several miles, down the glen in which the village of Minnyhive is situated, as well as at a considerable distance in other directions. The inscription on the monument is as follows :—

In Memory
of the

LATE REV. JAMES RENWICK,

The last who suffered to the death for attachment to the
Covenanted cause of Christ in Scotland.

Born near this spot,

15th February 1662 ;

And Executed at the Grassmarket, Edinburgh,

17th February 1688.

“ The righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance.”—*Psal.* cxii. 6

Erected by Subscription M.DCCC.XXVIII.

The late James Hastings, Esq. gave a donation of the ground on which this monument is erected. The subscription, amounting to about L.100 sterling, was collected from all denominations of Christians ; and the gentleman who took the most active part in suggesting and carrying through the undertaking, was the

Rev. Gavin Rowat, minister of the Reformed Presbyterian Congregation at Whithorn.*

In conclusion, we give the following account of Mr. Renwick's preaching-stations from Burns's Wodrow.

The people in Lochwinnoch parish, and the district contiguous, used to go to Duchal Moor, to the celebrated Craigminnan hill, for the purpose of attending conventicles, and receiving baptism from their favourite preachers. Renwick frequently preached there. It stands on the boundary between Lochwinnoch and Kilmacolm parishes, but it belongs properly to the latter. The spot which was used for worship is situated on a beautiful green hill, a little way nearer the Lady-muir than Craigminnan. On this spot there is a great circle, or a *big ring*, as the neighbours used to call it, raised, of earth and some stone mixed with it. Their sentinels watched on the neighbouring hill, Craigminnan. There is a similar spot near this, which is looked on by the neighbours with a holy reverence. This spot is near the Lint-hills, where Renwick once preached. A large grey stone marked the sacred spot; but this

* Dr. Burns's Note in Wodrow's Hist. vol. iv. p. 54.

stone was lately removed for some agricultural improvements.*

Well might the poet, on visiting such a spot, or reading the description of it, thus graphically picture out the man of God making known to his persecuted followers the glad tidings of salvation.

“ In solitudes like these
 Thy persecuted children, Scotia, foiled
 A tyrant's and a bigot's bloody laws.
 There, leaning on his spear,—
 The lyart veteran heard the word of God,
 By Cameron thundered, or by Renwick poured
 In gentle stream; then rose the song, the loud
 Acclaim of praise. The wheeling plover ceased
 Her plaint; the solitary place was glad,
 And on the distant cairns the watchman's ear
 Caught doubtfully at times the breeze-borne note.
 But years more gloomy followed; and no more
 The assembled people dared, in face of day,
 To worship God, or even at the dead
 Of night, save when the wintry storm raved fierce,
 And thunder peals compelled the men of blood
 To couch within their dens; then dauntlessly
 The scattered few would meet, in some deep dell,
 By rocks o'er-canopied, to hear the voice,—
 Their faithful pastor's voice. He, by the gleam
 Of sheeted lightning, op'd the sacred book,

* Burns's Wodrow.

And words of comfort spoke : Over their souls
His accents soothing came,—as to her young
The heathfowl's plumes, when, at the close of eve,
She gathers in, mournful, her brood dispersed
By murderous sport, and o'er the remnant spreads
Fondly her wings ; close nestling 'neath her breast,
They, cherished, cower amidst the purple blooms.

APPENDIX.

No. I.

*An Elegy upon the death of that famous and faithful Minister and Martyr, Mr. James Renwick,—
composed immediately after his execution, 1688.*

HERE'S work, alas! for mourners to deplore—
This fatal stroke, sadly presaging more.
In such a day let's hang our harps on willows,
Its not a time of laying heads on pillows.
In such a day of wrath and consternation,
In such a day of dread and desolation,
A day of trial and of treading down,
A day wherein our head hath lost its crown,
A day of blasphemy, rebuke, and trouble,
A day of darkness and of sorrows double,
A day of great vexations and confusions,
A day of great temptations and delusions,
A day of jumbling, manifold distractions,
A day of stumbling, manifest defections,
A day of famine of the Word of Life,
A day of sinning, suffering, and strife.

* * * * *

In such a day, to lose a faithful witness
 And champion, accomplished, with fitness,
 To strive for Christ's prerogatives and laws,
 Must be bemoan'd by all that love his cause.
 Come therefore all ye *doves*, that dwell in th' rock,
 Come and deplore this wrath-presaging stroke ;
 Come chased *birds*, hotly pursued to mountains ;
 Come hunted *harts*, which pant and bray for foun-
 tains ;
 Come *wand'ring sheep*, without a shepherd straying ;
 Come *hidden ones*, afraid of false bewraying ;
 Come all ye *faithful followers* of the Lamb,
 Whose hearts in zeal do for his glory flame,
 Whose hearts in fervent love to Christ are burning,
 Whose hearts do melt out at the eyes in mourning ;
 Come, with a flood of tears the valleys fill,
 And make your voice resound from hill to hill ;—
 Cause all the mountains circling round from *Car-
 rick*,
 With roaring noise rebound as far as *Berwick* ;
 From *Carn-table* skirts, and *Ahingilloch*,
 To *Marock's* towering heights, and heads of *Kil-
 lock* ;
 From *Tintoch-tops*, and all the hills of *Clydesdale*,
 To all the hills of *Galloway* and *Nithsdale* ;
 From these about *Black-gannoch* and the *Lothers*,
 To *Crawford-moor*, and *Tweddale* hills, and others ;
 Wherein ye hunted were, through all the glens,
 Wherein ye hiding places sought in dens,
 Wherein ye often forced were to flights,
 Wherein ye often filled were with frights,

Wherein your hands were strengthened,—heads supported,
Your minds confirmed, and your hearts comforted,
While your renowned *Renwick*, now a *martyr*,
Was passing through, preaching in every quarter,
His Master's glorious and gracious banner
Displaying faithfully, in lovely manner,
Like to a voice in wildernesses crying,
Making a noise most sweet, as swans when dying ;
Declaring all God's counsel and revealed
Truths, which alive h' asserted,—dying sealed.
But now in those waste desolate recesses,
No voice is heard but mourning for distresses,—
No voice is heard, but that of grievous groaning,
The glory gone, deplorably bemoaning.
Come therefore and put on your *sable* ; saints
Fill all the hills and vales with sad complaints,—
Whereof the *echo* may be heard in heaven,
In lamentation for the blow that's given
Unto the wounded weeping remnant left,
Which of their *Renwick* is of late bereft ;
By murdering violence of beasts of prey—
Rome's bloody whelps! torn from his house of clay.
How may his little flock, alas, complain,
How may they now so great a loss sustain !
Scotland hath lost,—the world hath lost a *man*,
Whose room supply there few surviving can,
The church hath lost a *son*, more pure and dearer
Than *Ophir's* gold ; the truth a *standard bearer* ;
Zion hath lost, by this complex disaster,
A *witness, wrestler, mourner, and a pastor* ;

The scattered sheep a most laborious *leader* ;
 Poor hungry souls have lost a painful *feeder* ;
 The sufferers have lost a *sympathiser* ;
 The doubtful halting souls a good *adviser* ;
 The weak, a wise encouraging *supporter* ;
 The wanderers and mourners, a *comforter* ;
 The tempted souls, a *counsellor* in terrors ;
 The ignorant, a *guide* to keep from errors ;
 The zealous from extremes, a holding *bridle* ;
 The lazy sort a *spur* from being idle.
 The temporizing sort of faint compliers,
 Duty's deserters, and Christ's truths deniers,
 May boldly now proceed in their backsliding,
 Since that they are delivered from his chiding—
 Who never ceased to be a free *reprover*,
 Nor sins and snares in season to *discover*.
 How insupportable is such a cross !
 How irreparable is such a loss !
 Oh, let us now make search that we may know
 What may the meaning be of such a blow ?
 What sins have this procured ?—let's meditate
 What further sorrows may it prognosticate ?
 Our misimprovements let us now confess,
 Of such enjoyments our unworthiness
 Of *Renwick's* gracious message, little prized,
 And of his precious ministry despised ;
 Our barrenness and base ingratitude,
 Our weariness of that angelic food
 Whereof the worth we know now by the want,
 And must henceforth in tears the loss lament ;
 These have this rod in righteousness extorted,

From a just God, and left us uncomforted ;
A rod which we may sadly now suppose—
A fatal forerunner of future woes—
Impendent on this base degenerate age ;
The perishing of worthies must presage,
That they delivered are from that which we
Are called to fear, but cannot bear nor flee.
But though our loss be great, his gain is glory,
His life, his death, shall be renowned in story.
Which death to us most costly and most painful,
Shall to the *covenanted cause* be gainful ;
In that, in place of a reproached pastor,
A martyr now renowned by this disaster,
Is left us, to their everlasting shame
Who ceased not with lies to load his name,
And with reproaches foully to bespatter—
Which malice did contrive, and madness scatter ;
Which fraud invented—as its father fained—
Fury did vent, and folly entertained.
Now shall his name, in monuments of praise,
(Which to his fame posterity shall raise,)
Still stand recorded,—that he was a martyr,
Fruitful in life, faithful in his departure.
Contemned indeed by apostates and scorners,
But eminent among all Zion's mourners.
For *love* undoubted, and undaunted *faith*,
For *constancy* unto his final breath,
For *patience* abiding in all trial,
For *piety* and humble *self-denial*,
For *meekness* true, in *condescending* tender,
For *strickness* due (he'd not a hoof surrender,)

For uniform true *zeal* and *moderation*,
Of more than ordinary elevation ;
Which with an equal pace did still advance
'Gainst all defection and extravagance :
All bastard zeal opposing with all boldness,
As well as dead *Laodicean* coldness.
For ministerial diligence much famed—
A workman needing not to be ashamed ;
In preaching all the counsel God revealed,
His ministry on many souls was sealed ;
Which in his Master's strength he did commence,
And unto his fulfilment did advance,
Against the violentest opposition,
That ever any youth in his condition
Had to conflict with, and at such a season,
When dangers seemed invincible to reason.
For like another *Athanasius* bold,
He all the world opposed and controlled,
And had all sorts of men upon his top,
All *prelatists*, all vassals of the *Pope*,
Who did pursue him with all rage and rigour,
With might, and malice, violence, and vigour.
Those brethren, also, whom, though still he loved,
He could not join with, but their sins reprov'd ;
Who unto men their ministry subjected,
Or had submit to mischiefs they enacted,
Or by disorders had their charge perverted,
Or had their duty in its day deserted ;
Or were in foul compliances involved,
Or those to daub and plaster were resolved,
Or shamefully were silent at the times'

Iniquities, when duties went for crimes ;
With those to strive, zeal for his Master's glory,
And indignation at their silly, sorry,
Foolish, and feeble, fainting cowardice,
(That few their *all* for truth durst sacrifice,)
His generous soul did vigorously excite,
For which by some he was opposed with spite,
With malice, envy, and with cruel rage,
That nothing could unto his death assuage.
Yet maugre all assaults,—his bow abode
In strength—his hands confirmed by *Jacob's* God.
By frowns, from duty ne'er could he be daunted,
By flatteries he ne'er could be enchanted ;
No fear of danger could him ever scar
From diligence, nor disadvantage mar ;
Nor any want of good accommodations,
Could stop his pastoral exercitations.
In painful preaching, visiting, baptising,
In conferences, and in catechising :
Even when in wandering he had no repose,
But hags, or hiding holes, in fear of foes :
Nothing to lay his weary head upon ;
No couch but grass—no pillow but a stone ;
No better chamber oftimes he could have,
Than a dark den,—no closet but a cave.
Yet, under all this inconvenience,
He could possess his soul in patience ;
His Master's favour above all things loving,
Himself, as his true minister, approving,
By purity, by charity unfeigned,
By verity in sanctity maintained,

By wisdom, patience, by the Spirit's light,
 By righteousness on the left hand and right—
 Caring for neither calumnies nor honour,
 So that he might his conscience exoner.
 As a deceiver, yet approven true ;
 As though well known, yet known but to a few ;
 As daily dying, and yet living still,
 As chastened, yet above their reach to kill ;
 As sorrowful, yet joying evermore ;
 As poor, yet making many rich in store ;
 In many wants, in manifold distresses,
 In pinching, prison, and in wildernesses,
 In painful labours, and in weary watching,
 In cold and hunger, still in fear of catching ;
 In many perils both by sea and land,
 From enemies, and from false brethren's hand :
Holland in part, *Britain*, and *Ireland* know,
 What perils he was forced to undergo :
 In none of which, he any rest could find,
 But everywhere both foes and friends combined,
 By tongue and hand, him still to persecute,
 In a most keen and violent pursuit.
 Hence, such a price was set upon his head,
 As did entice to catch him, quick or dead,
 Hell's hottest harpies, villains, vilest vermin,
 Who by all means to take him did determine.
 Therefore, in fury they the chase did follow,
 By *hue* and *cry*, and many hideous hollow—
 Through cities, country, villages of boors,
 Through wettest mosses, and through wildest
 moors,

Through highest mountains, and remotest glens,
 Compelling him to caves, and hidden dens ;
 Where weary, cold, and hungry, he could find
 No comfort, but what from the heavens shined.
 Yet after all, their proud designs were done,—
 His work to them proved *Sisyphus* his stone ;
 Still with renewed force afresh returning,
 The bush did burn, but did not waste in burning.
 His despicable followers, though few,
 The more they were afflicted, more they grew.
 All *proclamations*, cruel *prohibitions*,
 All *circuit courts* of *Spanish inquisitions*,
 (Imposing conscience-cozening oaths and bonds,)
 Recusants, banishing to foreign lands,
 Or murdering by bloody butchers' hands,) }
 Could never either yet their cumbers finish,
 Nor so much as their numbers yet diminish,
 Nor crush, nor cool his unappalled zeal,
 Nor of his ministry cancel the seal,
 Engraven on the hearts of many bearers,
 Who were *Jehovah's* followers and fearers ;
 Which now's impressed with a deeper stamp,
 Since the expiring of this burning lamp,
 Whose latest sparklings hath so brightly blazed,
 That many eyes were dazzled and amazed,
 To see now visibly without a cloud,
 (And legibly in characters of blood,)
 The adversaries' tyranny disclosed,
 Their calumnies confute, that him opposed ;
 That those despised truths have overcome,
 For which contending he got martyrdom.

His testimony for his Master's cause,
 The church's liberties, and nation's laws ;
 (For which in life he mightily contended,)
 Now by his death to many much commended ;
 Who searching what could be the cause, or crime,
 Wherefore he lost his life at such a time,
 Did find, that only he was too distinct
 In speaking that which many others think.

This was the only crime, was on him charged,
 Though to the height of heinousness enlarged—
 Because these soul-enriching *rendezvous*
 Of Christ's *militia*, in the fields or house,
 The devil's grand eye-sore, and great vexation
 Of all his friends and foes of reformation ;
 (Where hungry souls with heavenly food were
 nourish'd,
 And where a banner faithfully was flourished
 For the *regalia* of the church's head
 And liberties, wherewith he hath her freed,)
 He never suffer would to be suppressed,
 Nor that the duty should not be confessed ;
 Nor when it was declared capital,
 And when by law discharged as criminal ;
 And by its old promoters now deserted,
 Whom *Popish tolerations* have perverted.

In such a case he vigorously contended,
 That *meetings* should be valiantly defended,
 By *arms defensive*, which the laws of nature,
 And law of God allows to every creature ;
 When now they were in daily jeopardice
 Of having blood mixed with their sacrifice.

This also was his crime, or rather crown,—
 That he would not a *popish monster* own,
 Sitting upon a throne of tyranny,
 Usurped by rapine, blood, and treachery ;
 Nor pay allegiance to his *absolute power*,
 As pimp employed for the *Romish whore* ;
 Nor say, a robber's sacrilegious rod
 Was now the sacred ordinance of God ;
 When such in sacred writ is called rather
 A *fox*, or *dog*, than a *politic father*.

In fine,—for this he also was indicted,
 Because to bear the cross he us invited,
 Rather than pay an execrable *cess*,
 Imposed our gospel-meetings to suppress,
 For raising forces, tyranny to strengthen,
 Our much-enthralled misery to lengthen,
 For ruin the weak remnant left devoting,
 The church and state supremacy promoting ;
 For tests of lawless loyalty enacted,
 And for betraying liberty exacted ;
 The full amount then of his accusation,
 Of all his troubles, the alone occasion,
 Was, *that at wickedness he'd never wink ;*
But still spake out what others durst but think.
 From which, unto the death he would not swerve,
 But boldly spake his mind without reserve,—
 To *prelatists*, and *papists*, in their fury,
 And to *professors* sitting on his jury.
 Invincibly he all their tricks withstood,
 Inflexibly resisting unto blood ;
 And for his life to *supplicate* disdained,

Lest he should have his *testimony* stained,
By which through blood of Lamb he overcame,
And loved not life too dearly for the same ;
Which fruitfully he affirmed during breath,
And faithfully confirmed by his death ;
In such a measure of humility,
Of patience, meekness, zeal, and constancy,
That it to enemies hath been confounding,
To neutralists' conviction much redounding,
To hesitants' and halters' confirmation,
And to all Zion's mourners consolation.
Hence in a bloody chariot he hath gone,
To see and stand before *Emmanuel's* throne,—
His hands wth palms, his head with pleasant bays,
His clothes in white do sparkle glistening rays
Of glory :—Glory singing, and salvation
To Him that brought him out of tribulation,
Unto the throne and temple of his God,
Where everlastingly he hath abode ;
Where without intermission night or day,
Where without interruption or delay,
Without all cares, without all faints or fears,
Without all snares, without all plaints or tears,
He serves, he sings, he sees the Lamb that's feeding,
And unto lovely living waters leading :
Where leave we him, full of *Jehovah's* joy,
Whom no more sin nor sorrow can annoy ;
And rest lamenting, while in vale of tears,
Our growing grief, and fresh recurring fears.

No. II.

A Testimony by Mr. James Renwick to the Presbyterian cause in Scotland, left in the hands of Mr. Hamilton, previous to his engaging in the work of the ministry.

I. I add my testimony and seal to the Scriptures of truth contained in the Old and New Testaments, in the divine authority thereof; in the fulness thereof, being a full and the only rule of faith and manners; so that nothing ought to be added thereto, and nothing taken therefrom; and nothing brought into the house of God, either in doctrine, worship, discipline, or government, without or contrary to his royal will therein contained; and in the holiness or spirituality thereof, and particularly to these great truths, O great truths! as, 1st. That there is a God, and that that God is three in one and one in three. 2d. That he is merciful yet just, just yet merciful. 3d. That he is only merciful in his Son Jesus Christ, with whom (O glory to God and good-will towards men) the covenant of redemption was made. 4th. That in and through which covenant of redemption only, he entered into the covenant of grace with his elect. 5th. That in the covenant of grace he hath promised to help us to perform the conditions required on our parts.

So that it is the only perfect and complete righteousness of his Son, which must make us free before God; yet in order to the making of his righteousness to be ours, it must be imputed by his Spirit, and received by faith, producing sanctification as the fruit thereof. Therefore they that think their life to be in God, they must also know that life to them must come from him.

2. I add my testimony and seal to our Confession of Faith, Larger and Shorter Catechisms, first agreed upon by the assembly of divines at Westminster, and approved by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland; to our Covenants, National and Solemn League; to the doctrine, worship, discipline, and government of the Church of Scotland, according thereunto, and to our acknowledgment of sins and engagement to duties.

3. I add my testimony and seal to our noble declarations, viz. those published at Rutherglen, Sanguhar, and Lanark, whereby that wretched tyrant, Charles Stuart, was faithfully rejected and freely cast off. I add also my seal to that solemn bond called the Queensferry papers, in all the articles thereof, according to the true and corrected copy.

4. I add my testimony and seal to all the faithful testimonies given to the truth by our noble and worthy martyrs, particularly those that have been given upon that head, viz. the declining altogether of that man, Charles Stuart.

5. I add my testimony and seal to all the faithful

wrestlings of the Lord's people belonging to the Church of Scotland, either in the land or forth thereof.

6. I add my testimony and seal to all the appearances of the Lord's people for truth in Scotland, ever since the beginning of our reformation; but particularly in our later times at Pentland, Drumclog, Bothwell Bridge and Airdsmoss, where our valiant worthies fell. And, O what shall I more say! but I desire with my whole soul to add my testimony and seal to every thing that hath been done for truth, either by word, writ, or action.

As, on the one hand, I desire to declare plainly for truth, yea all truth; so, on the other hand, I likewise desire to declare freely against sin, yea all sin, testifying and bearing witness against all the wrongs done to the holy Lord God, ever since the reformation began in our land, against popery, prelacy (that is, church government by archbishops, bishops, their chancellors and commissaries, deans, deans and chapters, arch-deacons, and the other ecclesiastical officers depending on that hierarchy) erastianism, quakerism, superstition, heresy, schism, profaneness, and whatsoever is contrary to sound doctrine and the power of godliness; against all the causes of the Lord's wrath with our land, and against all the steps of our defection. And particularly,

1. I testify and bear witness against the condemning, hindering, and neglecting the purging of the judicatories and armies of the kingdom in the

year 1649, and afterwards, from scandalous and disaffected persons to the Lord's cause, that the same might be made up of Christian zealous men, of known integrity and affection thereunto, as the Lord in his word hath commanded.

2. I testify and bear witness against those public resolutions of the church and state, for bringing in the malignant party, first to the army, and then to the judicatories.

3. I bear witness and testify against the authorizing of commissioners to close a treaty with this now-rejected tyrant, for the clothing him with power upon his subscribing such demands as were sent unto him, after he had given many clear evidences of his enmity to the work and people of God, and was still continuing in the same; and then admitting him to the crown, notwithstanding of new discoveries of his malice and disaffection towards the Lord's work.

And if it should be objected, that the third article of our solemn league and covenant binds us to defend his person and authority—We answer, that article is only conditional, binding us no otherwise to him than in the defence of the true religion and liberties of the kingdom, as it is there in express terms. But now, he having broken that condition, and instead of defending and maintaining true religion and civil liberties, he hath broken down and destroyed both; so that in nowise can that be sustained which our backsliders, void both of the spi-

rit of zeal and knowledge, have so frequently in their mouths, viz. though he hath broken to us, yet let us keep to him; for by so saying, they make that condition in the fore-mentioned article, and also often reiterated in the coronation oath, to be nothing but a mocking of God and a cheating of men. For the more clear uptaking whereof I produce the sixth article of that same solemn league, which is morally and continually binding, wherein we are sworn that we shall never suffer ourselves, directly or indirectly, by whatsoever combination, &c. to be divided from this blessed union, &c. together with the second article, wherein we swear to endeavour the extirpation of popery, prelacy, &c. without respect of persons; Charles himself is not there exempted.

I shall not take up time to speak against the foolish and needless pretences of those who say, that the *primores regni* (or chief men of the kingdom, as they call them) behoved to concur with the rejection of that tyrant ere it could be legally done; for I altogether deny that, because it is manifest, that the power of government is naturally and radically in the people, unitedly in the people, and singularly in every one; so that any rank, or any company thereof, may, from the privilege which God and the law of nature hath allowed them, cast off a tyrannous yoke, and ought of necessity to do it in such a case as ours is this day, when that tyranny is not only a yoke of oppression upon our jaws, but of transgression upon our heads; for it is a duty incum-

benton all ranks of persons, and the omission thereof will be charged on every degree, without respect to the high or to the low. And by that same power they may set up governors over themselves, men fearing God, who may rule them according to the royal will of the Supreme Lawgiver, whenever they are in case to do it. I grant, indeed, it were desirable to see the *primores regni*, men fearing God, and zealous for his cause; yet when they are the principal men in all wickedness, making themselves slaves to all manner of sin, and servants to Satan, as at this day they do in Scotland, being the tyrant's own creatures, the want of them can neither exempt the people from their duty, nor deprive them of their privileges. Hence from all this, and much more that might be said, I conclude the lawfulness of rejecting that wretched tyrant, yea, not only so, but also the necessity thereof. Yet, that I may speak a word more particular to the necessity of it.

Let us look back upon what he did, when first he was admitted to the crown, notwithstanding (as hath been insinuated before) of his often swearing to the contrary with his hand lifted up to the most high God; how that, I say, he, avowedly breaking all these ties both to God and man, cut the neck of our noble constitution of church and state government, arrogating to himself a blasphemous supremacy in matters ecclesiastic, altogether inconsistent with the kingly office of our blessed Lord Jesus Christ, and an arbitrary power in matters civil, by

virtue of the same supremacy altogether destructive of the liberties of the kingdom, contrary to the very law of nature, making his supremacy in the one and the other so collateral and co-equal, that by him it is made essential to the crown by the act explanatory of the supremacy; declaring the same to be inherent to the crown to him and his successors; so that he cannot be owned nor acknowledged as king, nor any succeeding upon that foundation, be who they will, without denying of Jesus Christ, and being guilty of lese-majesty against the King of kings, who will not give his glory to another. Therefore the rejecting of that wretched tyrant, and all depending on him, is not only lawful, but also necessary, to all those who desire to be subjects to Jesus Christ. And none can pretend any distinction, unless they would cheat themselves out of the truth, and become guilty of his blasphemous robbery of the Son of God; for he hath no civil power distinct from his supremacy; that, I say, his supremacy is the foundation of all power he pleads for, and takes all acknowledgment of him as an acknowledgment thereof. And why may we not? seeing it is made essential to the crown: And moreover, doth not that general act recissory, by virtue of that supremacy, (whereby he rescinded whatever our parliament had done in favour of the reformed religion) introduce another kind of civil government, which so much troubles men's tongues and wearies our ears, but a constitution of pure tyranny, a fabric of rebel-

lion against God, upheld by the pillar of perjury, and cemented with the blood of the saints.

Moreover, I cannot here pass by the vanity of those who, blindfolding themselves, use so to distinguish, viz. they cannot own or acknowledge some of his civil acts, such as imprisoning, stigmatising, and murdering the Lord's people, yet they must hold by that which they call his power; but, O what blindness does that betray! for there can nothing in him be considered, but that which they call his power in the establishment and exercise thereof. Now, the establishment is clear to be upon the ruins of the work of God, and our engagements to him; the foundation thereof being that blasphemously arrogated supremacy, with the act explanatory thereof, whereby sacrilege and monstrous tyranny are established by a law decree, and exercised by that general act rescissory, declaration against our covenants, murdering of the Lord's people, bearing down of his work, &c. So then let them speak their minds, and say, whether they think the establishment of that power or the exercise thereof, is to be owned. If they own and acknowledge the one, the acknowledgment of the other will necessarily follow upon it. Is not the one the root, and the other the branches? the one the spring, and the other the streams? O poor, poor Scotland! thou art now become a home-born slave, because thou wast not valiant in contending for the truth. The Lord hath, in his just judgment, corrected thee for breaking his command-

ments, by joining with the people of these abominations, and desiring a king, whom he hath given thee in his wrath, and will take him away in his displeasure. But blessed be the name of the Lord who hath stirred up a pleasant party of valiant and noble heroes, whom he hath honoured to pull the crown off that tyrant's head, in order to the crowning of the Lord Jesus Christ again in Scotland, and helped some of them to seal the same with their precious blood; to whose sufferings, even upon that head, I desire with my whole heart and soul to add my testimony and seal, certifying it to all men, that if even if I had the Lord's countenance and peace in any duty, it was in rejecting of that poor wretched tyrant. O remember what the Lord is calling for at your hands in these loud crying commands.

4. As I testify and bear witness against all that own that rejected tyrant, or any of his acts and laws, (abusively so called) in their possession; so also I bear witness and testify against all that own him any way in their practice, by subjecting themselves to him and his demands, and particularly against the paying of that dreadful cess, whereby they bear down the work and people of God; that sinful locality whereby they decline the Lord's cause, and strengthen wicked men in their wickedness, especially against the paying of that which they call their own locality, viz. money to these ruffian bloody soldiers for their beds; because it is the thing that some men, more out of self-love than

love to God, plead for; but let them pretend what they will therein, they do evil that good may come of it, and their condemnation is just: Against the paying of that annuity, whereby they pay tithes to Baal's priests: against the paying of feu-duty, and every thing that contributes to the upholding of that throne of iniquity. Moreover, I testify and bear witness against the compearing before these enemies courts, thereby strengthening them in their wickedness, and homologating their robbery of God; against all bonding, tampering, or complying with them, directly or indirectly: I say, indirectly, because some men cheat themselves out of the truth by conniving at the compliance and bargaining of others with the enemies on their account; a practice which condemns the Lord's cause, and is disapproved of himself.

As I testify and bear witness against the wrongs done to the holy Lord by all ranks, the tyrant and his accomplices, and all who strengthen that throne of iniquity, so also I testify and bear witness against that church-destroying party, the ministers of Scotland, for the great and many wrongs that they have done to the Lord's cause, both first and last, And particularly,

1st, I testify and bear witness against their sinful and shameful surrendering up of the privileges of the Lord's house into the hands of men, by leaving their flocks, as hirelings, when they saw the wolf coming; whereby they did virtually non-istrate themselves by their becoming servants of men, not

remembering that they were ambassadors for Christ, nor minding the practice of the holy apostles.

2dly, I testify and bear witness against them for their handling the word deceitfully, for their ambiguous way of doctrine, and not being particular in their applications, unless it had been against these whom the Lord raised up to be zealous and faithful, and by this means called duty sin, and sin duty, making light to become darkness, so that many poor things did stumble and fall. O sad, sad, to think on the blood of souls which is in the skirts of these men.

3dly, I testify and bear witness against that church-destroying indulgence, first and last, whereby that idol was worshipped in his blasphemous supremacy, and which hath wrought to the hands, and accomplished the desigus of the malignant adversary all alongst. I bear witness and testify against the compliance therewith, and connivance thereat, both of ministers and people; against silence thereat, and unfaithfulness in not witnessing faithfully against the same; yea, and against all the sins of the time, as the Lord hath commanded.

4thy, As I testify and bear witness against these ministers for their unfaithfulness all alongst, so also I testify and bear witness against their malice at those whom the Lord stirred up to be faithful in their places and stations, and particularly their censuring of worthy Messrs. Welwood, Kid, and Cameron, for faithfulness to their Lord and Master; Mr. Cameron being censured merely for

preaching against that sinful indulgence. Also I testify and bear witness against them for their false calumnies and reproaches cast upon the way and people of God, particularly on those fore-named worthies, and Mr. Cargill, all faithful messengers of Jesus Christ, and on the much honoured Robert Hamilton, that valiant contender, both at home and abroad, for his Master's truths, against whom their hands have been in a signal manner, because he hath been honoured of the Lord to have his hand against their treachery. O Scotland, Scotland! many pastors have destroyed the Lord's vineyard in thee, O Scotland. Thy prophets, O Scotland, are like foxes in the deserts, they have not gone up into the gaps, neither made up the hedge, for the house of Israel to stand in the battle, in the day of the Lord. They have seduced the people, saying, Peace, peace, when there was no peace. One built up a wall, and, lo, others daubed it with untempered mortar; but blessed be the Lord's most holy name, who hath delivered his people out of their hands, and performed his promise.

THE END.

ERRATUM.

P. 64, last line, for *Reformers*, read *Informers*.





X
A

David Jack

Millerhill

1842

