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THE MAKERS OF
THE KIRK BY
T. Ratchliffe Barnett



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THE MAKERS OF THE KIRK
BY T. RATCLIFFE BARNETT



SIGNING THE COVENANT IN GREYFRIARS CHURCHYARD

F. M. Macrae

THE MAKERS OF THE KIRK

BY T. RATCLIFFE BARNETT

AUTHOR OF 'REMINISCENCES OF OLD SCOTS
FOLK,' 'FAIRSHIELS,' 'THE WINDS OF DAWN.'

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TO ALL TRUE SCOTS WHO LOVE
CHRIST'S KIRK AT HOME ABROAD
AND ON THE WAVE-WASHED
ISLANDS OF THE SEA 

S. 31. 60 Ryden Collection

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MAKERS OF THE KIRK

CHAPTER ONE

ST. RINGAN & HIS LITTLE WHITE HOUSE OF GOD

THERE THEY ARE, ON THE SOMBRE SIDE of the old sea cave, as clear as the day they were cut—these three little crosses of Ringan, which the good Sir Herbert found hidden under the immemorial slit and refuse, when he delved out three or four feet of the earthen floor.

It is an ill thing to come at the exact truth about those dim and distant days, when the happenings of even a great man's life were only handed down by word of mouth—but, at least, it may be safely said, that with these three crosses in the holy man's cave the story of the men who made the kirk of Christ in Scotland begins.

He was born of that ancient race of Britons which first heard the name of Christ when the Romans were planting our land with those early wonders of civilization which have always come to men with the glint of the Orient on them. But, both his life and his name float mistily in the half-lights of the long ago. Nynia, Trinyon, Ringan, and even Monenn he was called—this earliest saint of our Scotie Church, whom we now call Ninian.

The very place where he built his Little White House of God has changed its name as many times as those fifteen centuries have changed his—Whithern, Hwitern, Guhitterne, and Quhytorne, that little old town with the broad street on the machars of Galloway,

THE MAKERS OF THE KIRK

which is within hearing distance of the waves that thunder along the sands of Wigton Bay.

So, whether it be the name of the man or the name of his place, this old-time story is all so dim, that we must grope our way by feeling back and back through the surmising lore of many scholars, until we come to the good monk Bede, who is the first to tell us with a very plain certitude of the seat of Ringan's holy war. And this is how Bede quaintly puts it, that "Whithorn was commonly called *By the White Hut (ad candidam casam)*, owing to the fact that he built the church there of stone, a custom unfamiliar to the Britons."

Like many another emigrant of faith in those early times, Ringan had travelled far afield—for he was "regularly instructed at Rome, in the faith and mysteries of the truth." Then, having been set apart in the Eternal City for his sacred adventure, he wandered northwards on weary be-sandalled feet through Europe, and found a father in Christ at Tours, where St. Martin drew his love to God. Still on he trudged to the northernmost shores of Gaul, where the Channel waves made a cold salt barrier between him and his native land of Strathclyde. His heart lay there. And as he stood on the sand dunes gazing over the sea, he had many a home-drawing dream. So, crossing that narrow strip of troublous water, which means so much more to Britain than any other strait in the wide world, Ringan walked his way right up to Cumbria. Again he stood on the beach, gazing yet farther north across the separating seas to the long low line of sanded shores where dwelt the heathen Niduarian Picts. His heart yearned within him to bring his fellow-Britons some news of

ST. RINGAN

Christ. For he had the Gospel of a Fair White Life to tell these men, who were still so rude and savage, and cursed with many a heathen custom.

See him setting out in his coracle, that primitive skin boat with the wicker frame. A few faithful followers launch their coracles after him. They are the fellow-monks who have thrown in their lot with Ringan. And as you see them landing in the evening light on the shores of Southern Scotland, and kneeling round Ringan as he prays on the sunset sands, you are looking on the first of our Scotie saints who laid the foundations of Christ's Kirk by the sea.

We have to limn the outline of their mission to the Southern Picts for ourselves, so meagre are the vitals of history.

To the cave, at first, Ringan came, like many another cave-dweller of that day; and there he set up the Church of Christ in that dim, dark, rock-bound room. If his hand did actually chisel out these three little crosses, how holy must the touch of ours on them be to-day, as we trace their semblance on paper!

At night, the lighted lamp of the saint would glimmer, like the symbol of Christ's light of love among the dark heathen, who might never have heard of God's mercy, but from the lips of some rough Roman soldier. In the early summer dawns, or in the wild nights of storm, the sound of Ringan's singing would float out on the calm airs of morning or on the gusty winds at midnight like the voice of God from heaven, as he and his holy men sang the hymns and psalms of the Early Church. By and by, he won the ear of the listening Picts, and gradually worked his way inland among the

THE MAKERS OF THE KIRK

moss hags and the mountains. Then, at a place convenient, not far from the sea, he set up that little White House of God, which was the first-known church of Christ in our land.

When Ringan came, he found the barbarian Picts in the hands of the Druid priests—those magical witch doctors, whose weird ceremonials we can only guess at. They were the medicine men of the native Pictish tribes, and claimed the right to mediate between man and the Invisible. Like the Roman augurs, they drew vital meanings from the flight of birds, the clouds, and the stars. With their wizard rods of yew, they divined the fates of those who trusted them, and professed a mystic power over fire and water. There are hints of sun worship and human sacrifices in the hoary stones that still stand, becupped and becircled on our lonely moors to-day. But it is all the dimmest guesswork, and the wisest lorist will tell you now that little or nothing is known about these Druids or witch doctors of our early ancestors.

Yet, these were Ringan's rivals when he came to preach Christ to the Niduari Picts. This man who had the true fire of Jesus in his heart, lay many a night in his cave, and dreamed of the darkness and sin around him. He dreamed, too, of Rome, that great city so far away, where he had first been instructed in the things of Christ. He groaned in spirit when he thought of the worldliness and viciousness of those Roman priests whom Jerome had lashed with his knotted scourge of anger. The memories, too, of many an empty, tawdry ceremonial that he had seen in Rome made him long all the more to teach the Pictish heathen the pure and



CROSSES OF ST. WILFRID

ST. RINGAN

simple ritual of Christ's spirit. And always when his thoughts depressed him, and his heart sank in despair at his fruitless efforts to convert his fellow-countrymen, Ringan's eye would turn again to the little crosses on the side of the cave, and give himself afresh to Christ Who had suffered the pains of Calvary to win the world.

So he rose up and went out into the sunlight and the storm again, and began to build a little White House of God in stone. The wattled cells of his brother-monks were all dotted over the holy ground about the fair foundations of this Hut of God. But, one day, when Ringan was busy with his stones and corbels, a Cumbrian priest came paddling in a coracle over the shining sea, with the sad news that St. Martin of Tours, Ringan's dearly beloved father in Christ, was dead. The saint stopped his masonry and called the little community to prayer, and from that day the little White House of God was dedicated to the memory of St. Martin.

From less to more, this outpost of Christ in Galloway grew. We hear of farmlands and granaries, flocks and herds, and wonderful leek beds by the sea. A boat-slip was raised on the shore, and there some of the earliest ships of Britain were built by Ringan's seafaring monks. Church and school, farm colony and garden lands, carpenter's shop and mason's shed—all these were to be found on the machars of Galloway when Ringan preached in his little White House of God. The sound of lowing cattle, and the bleating of lambs; the tinkle of a mason's trowel, and the ring of an anvil; the call of the husbandman as he slowly ploughed the furrows, and the hammer of the shipman

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as he put together his frail craft—these were the sounds that made the daily music of Ringan's mission colony. But above them all was the call of Christ, as Ringan preached the redeeming love of God to the wild marauding Picts who lived and fought on every side round about him.

So, Whithorn is a holy place for a pilgrim of the Kirk to-day, for here, we know, the first remembered man of God came to bring the news of Christ to Scotland.

ST. COLUMBA & HIS DOVE'S
NEST ON A HEBRID ISLE

IT IS A FAR CRY FROM THE LITTLE WHITE House of God at Whithorn to the Dove's Nest on the Hebrid Isle. For, between Ringan and Columba of the blessed memory, there were some who left a name-ly mark on the Christian annals of Scotland.

There is more than a sough about Serf, whose somewhat phantom form flits between the fifth century and the eighth, but whose real personal labours made morsels of history at Culross, Dysart and Lochleven. There are records far more abundant about Kentigern, that "Chief Lord" whose saintly name was Mungo—the "lovable man"—who set up his cell on the green banks of the Molendinar burn, where long afterwards the great cathedral of Glasgow was reared. And Patrick, too, that chief apostle of the Scots who was the first to organize the Christian Church in Ireland, and whose zealous, far-travelled soul burned with a holy fire which all the disappointments of this life could not put out.

All these, and doubtless many more whose names are lost to us for ever, were pioneers of Christ in those distant days, when our forebears were groping after God amid a welter of Druid magic.

Then came a man of God out of Ireland from Finnian's holy school at Clonard—Columba by name—who set out for the little Hebrid isle of Hy, to establish the cause of God in Scotland and, for the first time, make it a great and glorious Church.

Born in the year 521 at Gartan in Donegal, Columba

THE MAKERS OF THE KIRK

came of a royal race. He was the great-grandson on his father Phelim's side of Niall of the Nine Hostages, and he was sib to another king through Ethne his noble mother. But though his hand was almost within reach of the sceptre of Erin, he gave it up for God.

A zealous young monk was this son of Phelim and Ethne—with happy memories of his religious schools at Moville, Leinster and Clonard; a perfect passion for transcribing the Scriptures; and a dreamy eye for visions. Till forty he was a missionary of Christ in Ireland, and founded three hundred churches, the bravest of which were at Kells, Durrow and Derry.

Then, one night at Moville, this monk of Christ who could not keep his fingers off his scribing quill, rose from his sleepless pillow and crept into the monastery church, where a precious psalter lay on the reading desk. It had been brought from Rome by the Abbot himself. See him, night after night, with the hot light of love in his eye and the bitter cold of the dim lit church numbing his fingers, writing out most perfectly the sacred letters! Then, the Abbot discovers him and demands the copy. Columba, with a passion for letters in his soul, refuses. King Diarmid is called in to judge between them, and raps out this haughty verdict: "As the calf goes with the cow, the copy goes with the book."

The blood of kings leapt in Columba's veins at the cruel word, and the kingly monk challenged the kingly coward, who had also violated the rights of sanctuary by slaying one of Columba's penitents. The man of God, in whose heart there now burned the pure white anger of an outraged love, straightway led his men to

ST. COLUMBA

battle against Diarmid at Cooldrevney, and slew so many of Erin's sons that the soul of the Church was stirred against him. So Columba, the martial monk of Christ who could be so gentle and so strong, was excommunicated by the mother Church and sent forth of Ireland to make his home on some distant island, whence Erin's shores could not be seen—and the Irish monks forbade his return, until he had converted as many of the heathen Picts as he had slain in the bloody battle of Cooldrevney.

So, Columcille, the Dove of the Church, went out to find a nest for himself on one of the islands of Scotie Dalriada, to which so many of the Irish Dalriads sailed both before and after him, such as Moluog to Lismore, Brendan to Tiree, Finbarr to Barra, and Donan to Eigg. Among some of these fellow-Dalriads who had been driven by Brude, the Pictish king, to find refuge on the remoter isles, Columba resolved to cast his lot.

On the Irish shore, Columba and his twelve faithful companions launched their coracles. A man of forty-two, full of a love for Ireland and his own folks, with the dool of farewells melting his soul, he pushed off from the beloved shores of that home which was to be no longer home to him, with tears in his eyes and this echo of his own regret in his heart :

“My Derry, my little oak grove,
My dwelling, and my little cell!”

There was silence among his faithfuls as he sang his own coronach in that frail skin-and-wattle boat—and the gluck of little waves was the sole accompaniment to his sorrow. But, as many a man has set out on the voyage of his life with tears to find fame and for-

THE MAKERS OF THE KIRK

tune at the hinder-end, so Columba left Erin to found Christ's Church in Scotland.

On towards the islands of the rising sun they sailed, past the great hills of Jura, and Islay of the long sea arms. At Oransay Columba landed and saw the lost land of Erin lying like a dim blue cloud on the horizon. So on again they paddled northwards, ever led by this exiled monk, who was soldier, sailor and missionary of Christ all in one, until, off the wild Ross of Mull, they came on the little Isle of Hy, with sheltered machars and a rounded hill, a fringe of pure white sand and washed on every side by salt-sea waters of heavenly greens and blues.

Here Columba landed at the Bay of the Coracle, and climbed the hill as the sun went down. Shading his eyes with his hand, he swept the horizon with a far-sighted vision, and saw nothing but a delicate rim of golden waves—

“The salt main on which the seagulls cry.”

Here he had come, and here he would stay, for here there was no heart-rending glimpse of Erin's shores. So, with sea-glamour and the love of God in his soul, Columba called his monks to prayer. And long afterwards he wrote this idyll of his beloved isle:—

“Delightful would it be to me to be in Uchd Ailiun,
On the pinnacle of a rock,
That I might often see
The face of the ocean ;

* * * * *

That I might see its level sparkling strand,
It would be no cause for sorrow;

ST. COLUMBA

That I might hear the song of the wonderful birds,
Source of happiness;
That I might hear the thunder of the crowding waves
Upon the rocks;
That I might hear the roar, by the side of the church,
Of the surrounding sea."

What did Columba and his twelve monks bring with them in their little coracles over the sea? What parchments and fair-writ psalters—what holy vessels and simple vestments—what magic pigments of blue and scarlet and golden leaf? What tools and matlocks? What hopes and desires, and what holy dreams? These things we cannot tell.

But soon, at least, the little isle of Hy, which Adamnan, Columba's life-writer, always called in Latin *Iona*, had a little group of wattled cells set up on the green lawn by the landward strait. Some heaven-born transcriber upset the *u* at a later date and wrote *Iona*. The blunder was like a virtue gone a little way astray, for the Hebrew word for Columba is this same erroneous word *Iona*. And so to-day we call the holiest isle in Scotland IONA, after the great-souled saint who made the Scotie Church.

At last the Dove had found a nest, on his own Hebride Isle!

A better site for his holy work could scarcely be imagined than this little island, with its miniature dells, its long stretches of sand, its quiet bays, and the sheltered channel of iridescent waves which lies between it and the mainland of Mull. About three and a half miles in length by one mile in breadth, with a green plain or machar running across it, the island provided

THE MAKERS OF THE KIRK

land for farming, a little marsh with a stream running out of it to turn the wheel of a grain mill, sheltered waters for landing, and the high hill of Dunii which would break the back of the wintry storms when they swept in from the Atlantic. Moreover, Iona was near enough the mainland for missionarizing the heathen Picts, and yet, far enough away to be safe from all sudden attack. There was fertile land for ploughing, there was water abundant for a farm colony, and the place was central for the whole of Northern Pictland, Dalriada and Strathclyde.

How often must Columba have climbed Dunii, as we can do to-day, to see that ethereal circle of islands and seas!

Away to the north lie the steep blue island hills of Rum and the bluff Scur of Eigg, and beyond them the dim ridges of the Coolins in Skye. Out in the shining west float the long flat islands of Coll and Tiree, and still further south the lofty lands of Islay and the twin Paps of Jura rise from the sea. Turning to the east the desolations of Mull lie right fornent Iona, across the little blue-green strait. All this wonderful panorama you can see on a pearly summer day, with sunshine and blue-white skies, the shimmer of silver seas, and the innumerable laughter of the waves all about you.

And it needs but a little of the seeing eye to people Columba's isle as it was. For the ruins about which the sea winds are blowing to-day are centuries later than Columba's day. It is to Adamnan we must go if we wish a picture of the first Columban monastery in Hy.

The whole colony of cells or huts was floored with rude planks and roofed with wickerwork. Columba's

ST. COLUMBA

own cell was a little bigger than the others, but still it was only a hut, round which the circular creel-like huts of the monks stood. These had sloping roofs of rush-and-heather thatch. The brethren's cells were cast in a circle round a lawn, and outside this circle stood the mill, the barn, the stable, the kiln and the byre. A guest-house was provided for any pilgrim or traveller who might come to stay, and the church or oratorium stood by itself, a little way off, with a side chapel for private prayer. From less to more Columba's monastery grew, until one hundred and fifty monks completed the holy family, and round about this primitive wood-and-wattle settlement a rampart or vallum was thrown to protect the monks and their belongings in case of sudden attack.

You can almost see this busy centre of Christly pioneers—the crowd of little low-roofed huts set on the sunny turf, with the plain church of oaken planks and thatch close by; the Saxon cook busy at his own kitchen hut; the sandalled senior monks, dressed in long white tunics and woollen cloaks with hoods, as they pass to and from the sanctuary in the sun, to worship, or to write their missals, or to teach the pupils of Columcille the scribing art; some of the working brothers to plough; some to labour at the boat slip on the shore; some to prepare the daily meal. Their fare was wholesome and simple—barley bread, fish, eggs, milk, butter, and seal's flesh. From the little refectory would come at times the merry laugh of the butler whose boisterous humour was a trial to the saint. And the rumbling sound tells of the approach of Columba himself in his rough wooden-wheeled waggon which Diormet, at the head of the little horse, guides through the gateway.

THE MAKERS OF THE KIRK

Busy, happy, unaustere was the life of this simple monkish colony, with the laughing seas, the blue skies, and the screaming seabirds all about them. The sound of singing, too, floated out on the salt-sea winds at dusk and dawn, as the brothers chanted their psalms and sang their solemn hymns. For the singing men practised by themselves those very hymns of the heart which Columba wrote down with his own hand; and at the service in the little oaken church with the thatched roof Columba's voice, which in times of storm or passion could be heard a thousand paces off, sounded to the worshippers like the sigh of summer winds.

Supreme in authority as this holy abbot with the martial spirit was in the little isle of Hy, his rule was, nevertheless, marked by the tenderest love.

See him, sitting in his plain little hut, a bare table before him all littered with parchments and pigments and writing quills. He had a consuming passion for transcribing and illuminating. He would sit printing his masterpieces of Scripture with his special attendant close by to whittle a new quill or mix some fresh ink, and a little crowd of white-robed monks crowding about the door to see him work. Once, in the common room, they pressed so closely about him that his ink-horn was upset. He was a namely teacher of scribes, too, and could detect a tiny slip in a long parchment. Yet, in those rude and lowly huts the very finest of our ancient manuscripts were writ and illumined by men who gave their lives to multiply the word of God.

Down by the shore in good weather could be seen a constant procession of coracles and longboats, for

ST. COLUMBA

many pilgrims came to see the celebrated settlement of Columcille. The little machar lands were full of flocks and herds, and the water-wheel of the streamlet turned the mill which ground the corn. The strong firm rule of Columba was soon felt in the most distant parts of the land. For he travelled incessantly. This great preaching pioneer of Christ had a wondrous conciliatory power of love. He not only spread the blessed love of God himself, but he sent out colonies of monks to settle in such distant isles as Tiree, Elachanave, Eigg, Skye, Islay, St. Kilda, Flannan, Rona and Sulsgeir. Yet the wise and strong-souled abbot of Iona kept a firm command over the most distant colony of his missionaries. Judgment mixed with mercy was his rule, and this soldier-servant of God, with the tender love and the quick passion, who forbade a woman on the island and would make a wayward brother stand up to the neck in the sea and recite a psalm, could be as gentle as a child when he had to deal with a broken refugee or a weeping penitent.

See him setting out to reconcile the king of the Picts—Brude of the pagan soul, who had set his face against Christ's Church. It was only two years after Columba's settlement on Iona, and he travelled all the way from the coast to the court of the king near Inverness on foot. Here he breathed an alien air, for Brude was steeped in the superstitions of the Druids, and shut his gates on every monk of Christ. But Columba—so the story goes—made the sign of the cross, and the pagan's gates flew open. It is an ill task to weigh those miracles of the early saints—but we may be sure that Columba worsted the Druids by his own faith in a

THE MAKERS OF THE KIRK

Higher Power than their own poor magic, and made the powers of Nature a means of grace instead of a curse to those pagan Picts. So, when Brude became the friend of Columba and the friend of Christ, the power of paganism was broken in Pictland. For this was Columba's only creed—

“My Druid is Christ the Son of God.”

A far flight and a weary one did the Dove often take from his nest on the Hebrid Isle, for we read in the Book of Deer of a visit paid to Brechin, and of churches dedicated to Columba at Auldearn, Aberdour, Kingussie and in Caithness.

But this consul of Christ was more than soldier, sailor, missionary and pioneer—he was a kingmaker and a statesman too. For when the king of British Dalriada died, Columba with divine audacity named a new king, and crowned one Aidan at Iona as king of all the Dalriads. So to the little Hebrid Isle we must go for the first coronation in Scotland. And although King Aidan was slain by the Angles, he left his realm of Dalriada a united Christian kingdom.

This fiery saint, who had ever a hankering for battles in his soul, fought like a good soldier himself—but he abolished the barbarous custom of women fighting in battle beside their own goodmen. He loved and tamed the birds of Hy, and spoke to the seals and fishes in the blue-green straits as if they were his own children. He made kings and conquered kings—for was not he himself a king in being? He slew the false dragons of the Druidmen, and taught the pagans the simple truth of brotherhood, and over all that land of barbarous lust

ST. COLUMBA

he raised the Cross of Christ and preached the redeeming love of God.

He ruled his happy family of monks with tender pious dignity for four-and-thirty years. With a mystic's vision of coming things he saw the approach of the blessed brother Death when he was in his seventy-seventh year. So with the serenity of a true saint he made a last short journey round the beloved isle on his waggon, blessing the dumbstruck monks as he went.

Then, having blessed the winnowed corn, he turned to Diormet, his faithful attendant, and said:

"I have a little secret for thee . . . this day is called in the sacred volumes Sabbath, which is interpreted Rest, and to me it is truly a Sabbath, because it is the last day of my laborious life. At midnight, when the venerable Lord's Day begins, I shall go the way of the fathers."

While resting by the wayside on his journey back to the monastery, an old white horse came up to him, and snuggled its nose in his breast with a whimpering cry. Diormet made to drive it away. But Columba checked him gently.

"Let be—let this lover of me pour out its bitter grief into my bosom. Lo, thou, as thou art a man and hast a rational soul, canst know nothing of my departure hence, except what I myself have told you—but, to this brute beast, devoid of reason, the Creator Himself hath plainly, in some way, made it known that its master is going to leave it."

Then, blessing the old white horse, he turned away in sadness.

After that, he climbed a little way uphill and blessed

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the monastery which lay at his feet. And these are the strange words of prophecy which Columba of the divine vision spoke :

“Small and mean though this place be, yet it shall be held in great and unusual honour, not only by the kings of the Scots and their people, but also by the rulers of foreign and barbarous nations and their subjects—the saints also of other churches shall regard it with no common reverence.”

With a last look round the shining sea, he returned and entered his little cell. The habit of a lifetime was upon him even in the hour of his departure. So in the very dwam of death he took up his quill to write. But the eye was glazed and the hand was feeble.

“Here,” said he, “I think I can write no more—let Baithan write what follows.”

And last of all, we see him skliffing his way into the dim-lit church, and out again, to lie down with great weariness on the bare ground of his cell, with his head resting on a pillow-stone.

There the brothers stood and watched him dying, while the sound of the sea came moaning up from the darkisland shores. The bell at midnight tolled the hour, and when the dying man heard it he rose. With the last unnatural strength of waning life the weird figure actually ran through the darkness to the church, quicker than any of the dumbfounded monks could follow. Diormet was the first after Columba to get there.

“Where art thou, father?” he cried in great distress, as he groped his way through the dark church.

And when the others came panting up the aisle, they saw, by the glimmering light of a single taper, Diormet

ST. COLUMBA

sitting on the altar steps, with the white head of the saint in his bosom. For a moment the aged eyes opened and looked round on the illumed faces of the still fast-breathing monks. The thin hand moved as if to bless them all. Then the sound of the waves on the shore outby came stealing over his soul, with their last long-loved husheen, as Columba fell on sleep.

THE IONIC MONKS OF LINDISFARNE & THE BLOOD-STAINED SANDS OF HY

ADAMNAN WAS THE TELLER OF COLUMBA'S life story. He wrote but a century later, this Irish monk of Niall's race, and he was the ninth abbot in succession to his namely kinsman. In his story of the Dove's Nest on the Hebrid Isle, he never once makes mention of Rome. For the Church which Columba raised was but a branch of Christ's Church in Erin, and had no vital link in personnel or rule with the papal Church of Italy.

Many a monk, white-robed and sandalled, set out from the independent little Scotie Church of God at Iona to plant colonies of mercy throughout Britain. It was to an oft-repeated appeal from Northumbria that Aidan gladly went from the Hebrid Isle to found a place of Christ on that other isle of Lindisfarne. There this gentle Columban monk established the Church of Christ among the Angles.

He was full of peace and kindness, courage and prayer, and was so forgetful of self that he once gave away his own beast to a poor traveller, even though the horse with its rich trappings was a gift from Oswald, the Ionic king of Bernicia. It was this same good King Oswald who used to leave his royal castle at Bamburgh and go through the country with Aidan to interpret the saint's sermons to the ignorant peasants whose dialect the king knew so well. Aidan, too, was a monastery founder, and set up the far-famed religious houses of Coldingham and Melrose.

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And when gentle Aidan died, a young shepherd called Cuthbert knocked one day at the monastery door in Old Melrose and was admitted a monk. This man of piety herded sheep as a lad on the lonely Lammermoors, and then for thirteen years he shepherded the better sheep of Jesus from his holy stall on a little spit of land (Mail-ros) at a bend of the Tweed. Cuthbert was the missionary of the wilds. He went far and near, among the outlying hamlets, the silent glens, and the untrod places of the hills. He preached to the Angles on the coast, and was not afraid of the wild Brigantes of the inland fells. From Kirkcudbright (Kirk of Cuthbert) in the south to Dull in Breadalbane, and throughout the rolling lands of Lothian, Cuthbert preached and founded Cells of Christ. He was a true son of the Church at Iona. He was of the independent Scotie breed. For, once at a monastery in Ripon he met the monkish agents of Rome—they tried to cast the papal spell over this simple shepherding man of Christ—but Cuthbert, as the Abbot of Lindisfarne, refused their rule, and went back to Old Melrose thrice-thirled to the Scotie Church of Iona.

Both Finan and Colman, Aidan's saintly successors at Lindisfarne, were appointed by the senior monks at Iona, and spread the light of the Gospel still further south, until the darkest parts of England, from the Thames to the Forth, were illumed by Christ. That was a golden age of sainthood, for then the monkish missionaries of Christ were men of pure desire and rare consistency.

But while these Scotie monks of Columba's rule at Lindisfarne were spreading the Gospel throughout

THE IONIC MONKS

the southern lands, the monks of Augustine were also wending their way northward. Thus the two separate missions—the papal missionaries from Rome, and the Columban monks from Iona—met.

We can picture the whole dilemma as we see Colman, the guileless scrupulous Abbot of Lindisfarne, holding weighty arguments with Wilfred, the diplomatic Romanized Abbot of the Benedictine monastery at Ripon. This collision between the Scotie Abbot and the Roman Abbot was all over the date of Easter and the tonsure of the crown! Wilfred for the papacy held by a week day, Colman for the Columbans stood by a Sunday. The Roman monk denied the authority of a mere handful of godly Ionic islanders, and claimed the infallible Petrine authority of the Catholic Church at Rome—the Columban monk, who was totally unskilled in the diplomacies of a slippery sacerdotalism, was staggered by the logic of his superfine opponent, who, however, did not happen to mention that the Romans had twice over changed the date of Easter. King Oswy, even, put in his cynical word and clinched the whole matter with a pompous judgment in favour of the Roman Church.

So this juggle of words over a mere date on the calendar and a paltry clipping of hair, ended by Colman gathering together the few faithful monks who stood by him and retiring into the northern territory. The Columban doctrine was scorned, the Ionic Church was despised, and the whole of Northumbria was soon under the power of Rome. The isle of Lindisfarne was no longer the seat of the bishop, for Wilfred, now the papal head of the Church, sat at York, and even went all

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the way to Gaul to receive Catholic consecration from Romans who were proper canonical souls. For, as the pawky Bede puts it, there was only one bishop in all Britain who was canonically ordained after this great palaver between Wilfred and Colman.

So began the absorption of the ancient Scotie Church by the powerful Roman Church—and such is the glamour of the greater over the less, that the nameliest followers of the Church of Columba now became the docile disciples of the Church at Rome.

And this is the scene which we see when the Roman monks crossed the tidal fords to the isle of Lindisfarne to take up their quarters in the empty cells of their Columban predecessors. These sleek Benedictines who had heard of the far-famed books and missals which had been writ and illumed on this holy isle by Aidan's followers, ranged the monastic settlement for comforts and treasures. But lo! they found no well-stocked cellars and no great storehouses at all. There were neither flocks nor herds on the wind-swept isle. They came only on a few rude huts. For so simple in their ways were these ecstatic geniuses of Christ, that they had not even built themselves permanent dwellings. Yet the Book of Lindisfarne is to-day one of the treasures of the world!

And Colman—what of him? He took his few faithfuls back to Iona of the sad sea waves; then, crossing over to Ireland with his little company, he settled some of them on the Isle of Innisboffin and some in a monastery at Mayo. His work for Christ was all over, and the sorrow of a waning star was in his heart when he laid his head down on his pillow-stone and died.

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After that we hear of many good Columban monks moving up and down the Western Isles, from Sutherland to Skye, from Ross-shire to the Clyde. There was Maelrubha at Applecross, Fillan at Lochalsh and Ardnamurchan, and Adamnan at Dull in Breadalbane. And when we read that this same Adamnan had for a pupil the first scholar-king of England—Aldfrith, Oswy's son—we know that, despite the decline of the Columban Church, Iona still held its place as a school of learning and piety in the Latinized Church of England at the end of the seventh century.

But Adamnan himself gradually came over, for he accepted both the Roman tonsure of the crown and the Roman calendar, and although at first he could not persuade his fellow-monks of Iona to do the same, he crossed over to Ireland and helped to bring the Irish Church under the Roman rule. But his heart was still in the little sea-washed isle of Hy—so he returned to his monastery at Iona as an old man, and shocked the few Columban faithfuls there by coming amongst them with the bare *corona* of Rome on his head. He had indeed conformed, but there was dool in Adamnan's soul when he saw disappointment in the eyes of the faithful who met him on the white sands of Hy, and the wash of the sea waves on the beloved shores sounded sad to the white-haired abbot as he walked to the church to pray. For the habits and the friends of a lifetime are not easy to change after the threescore years and ten. So when Adamnan was within sight of his eighty years, he too laid his head on his pillow-stone and died when the new century had run but four years.

For a few more years Iona was divided betwixt the

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old and the new. Then a learned and gracious English monk called Egberct came to Iona, and by his gentle persuasions infected the Columbans with the Roman spirit. On his death-bed, in the now far-famed monastery of Hy, he smiled when he thought that another Easter Eve would see Iona at the feet of Peter. And so it was. For in 767 the triumph of Rome was complete when a non-Columban abbot for the first time held undisputed sway.

Another generation and even the Columban buildings were demolished. And still again, when the ninth century began, the hardy Norsemen swept down the West with their Viking ships and slew every member of the holy family on Iona. They razed to the ground all the buildings and the church, for these were battle days for monks and men.

So, like the overcome of an old song, the last low sad notes of Columba's music sounded across the salt sea waves that glucked among the blood-stained rocks of Hy.

THE CULDEES: GHILLIES OF GOD IN A DARK AGE

NOW BEGINS THE STORY OF A DIM DARK
age.

The little White House of God which Ringan built at Whithorn became, through time, the seat of a Roman bishop. The Nest of the Dove on the Hebrid Isle was burnt and desolated by the Danish sea-rovers, and the red blood of an abbot stained the glistening white sands of Hy. In England, the primitive Churches of the Columban monks gradually came under the pope at Rome, and the holy record of Christ's gossellers among the sea-lochs and islands of the west of Scotland was for well-nigh two centuries a very misty tale. Such was the evolution of many generations that followed the first Christian settlements among the Picts.

But while we go groping through the dark centuries of Scotland's middle ages for some certain news of Christ's friends and their doings, it is certitude enough for us to know these two large historic facts. On the one hand, the power of Rome advanced slowly but surely from the South, and unified by the compulsion of circumstances the earlier settlements of Christ throughout the land—and on the other hand the Scandinavian sea-lords so overswept the islands and coasts of the North and West, that soon these Viking jarls, with the conquering hammer of Thor, had beaten and welded the whole of the self-defending sects of Scotland into one compact nation.

The Danes first stepped ashore, with an incendiary's torch in the one hand and a warrior's sword in the

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other, at the end of the eighth century; and not until the middle of the thirteenth century, when King Haco was defeated at the battle of Largs was the magerful rule of these Norsemen broken. Well-nigh five hundred years of pagan rule under the fair-haired Vikings who conquered and subdued the greater part of Scotland! Is it a wonder that to-day our mountains and islands and narrow sea straits bear the gallant names of those early fighting navy men, and that even yet in the loneliest Hebrid isles you can see the blue eyes and the flaxen locks of some whose descent is from a hardy Norseman or a lordly Dane!

And yet, it is the blows of experience that make a man or a nation. For, long before the Church of Rome had absorbed the settlements of Christian Scotland, and centuries before the Viking Age came to an end, there was begotten of sheer self-defence a Scots nation with a national Scots Church.

It is to Kenneth MacAlpine that we must give the deathless honour of uniting Pict and Scot into one solid nation, while the Norsemen were beginning to rain hard blows on the heads of all and sundry. In the middle of the *mêlée* Kenneth gathered the various sects of our Scots ancestors together, and, by his sheer genius for reconciling aliens, marshalled them into a common union of strength. This man, whose father was a Scot and whose mother was a Pict, was an ideal king for the task—and the enmity of the Northumbrians on the south, with the sea raids of the Vikings on the north, made all his powers of nation-making start into life. Brave in facing his enemies, he was wise and politic in blending the various races in his own land. So he was

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not only a fearless fighter on sea and land, but he reconciled the peoples of Strathclyde, settled Scots in Pictland, and bred in them all a common fear of conquest from without.

And now we come to Kenneth MacAlpine's place among the men who laid the first foundations of the Kirk in Scotland. For, with a far-seeing eye, he fixed upon Dunkeld, that sweet and central spot, for the new religious capital of Scotland in the memorable year of 849. The old Columban Church had been ruled by abbots—the Church of the new nation was now to be ruled by a bishop. Here we are treading on holy ground. For this Church of God which was at Dunkeld—the first *Ecclesia Scoticana*—embodied the religion of the Scots nation for the next three centuries.

Moreover, at Scone, but a little way down the broad-bosomed Tay, Kenneth MacAlpine set up a stone which was to become a very vital centre of kingly interest. That little red sandstone block, sixteen inches long, is now the King of Britain's Coronation Stone at Westminster. It was at first exactly what Kenneth MacAlpine meant it to be—the visible symbol of the new Scots nation. It is still the visible symbol of the monarchy of the world-wide British Empire.

So, at Dunkeld and at Scone, we have the two great principles of Kenneth's policy united, in the holy cell of a bishop and the crowning stone of a king. The definite establishment of *Ecclesia Scoticana* was an essential part of the constitution of the new Scots nation—and this historic expression, *Ecclesia Scoticana*, was first used in records of the year 878.

Here, then, we have the very first definite and his-

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toric notice of an established connection between Church and State. There was now, in this ninth century, a Scots nation, with a Scots king at its head, and a national Scots Church which existed side by side with the Church in Rome and the Church in England.

But, after this heartsome glimpse of enlightening facts, we have to pass through several centuries of bookless dark obscurity. In the somewhat meagre records of the Viking Age, we look in vain for a guiding thread of Church romance. And yet, there emerges from the mist one face after another of certain down-right men of Christ, who ministered in holy things within *Ecclesia Scoticana*. Those were the Culdees.

As the word *Keledei* indicates, a Culdee was a Friend of God, or a Servant of the Lord. And for centuries those Friends of God kept the life of the Church in Scotland robust and pure. For, in our land of austere simplicity and sturdy independence, there have always been men with brave souls to defend the right, and, when necessary, to dissent from error. So these simple ascetic gossellers, the Culdees, have often been called the dissenters of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.

They were the chief ministers in this same *Ecclesia Scoticana*, and lived a very rigorous life in little monastic communities of twelve, after the manner of our Lord and His disciples. It is an ill task to limn the portraits of these monkish men. Each had a little cell with his own cot or pallet in it, and none possessed anything in the worldly sense, although, like all good orders of Christly souls, the Culdees degenerated in the end through the keeping of offerings in land and wealth. They lived with great continence a life of strict

THE CULDEES

sobriety, and very often chose the loneliest isles of the sea for their churches and cells.

They must not be confounded with ordinary Roman monks, for, being semi-secular ministers of Christ, with liberty to marry, they could never have owned allegiance to the papal system. In the eleventh century, however, there were married clerics everywhere in Christendom, and against this austere sect, who were called the Ghillies of God, the charge of moral corruption was never levelled.

The Culdees, moreover, knew nothing of Apostolic Succession, and were not even elected to office by any ecclesiastical body—for a Culdee son succeeded his Culdee father, and was heir to his father's sacred privileges, as another man is heir to his father's worldly goods. They were devout students of the Scripture, and in the Culdee college little bands of scolos or scholars were prepared for the service of the Church. Above all, they practised charity out of a pure heart, and observed the rites of a very simple worship.

Following the ancient custom of Columba on Iona, one member in every company of those Ghillies of God was called a Soul-friend (*amchara*) and received the confessions of his brethren. Chieftains would occasionally give them grants of certain lands which had belonged to the Druids, and for this the Culdees rendered secular service to the clan. They had the power also to elect a bishop, for in the days of *Ecclesia Scoticana* there was but one bishop whose see was the whole Kingdom, and in the Culdee Church St. Andrew was acknowledged as the national saint in God. Moreover, the centre of the Church had by this time been changed from Dunkeld to St. Andrews.

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It is the Englishman Jocelyn who gives us some idea of those Friends of God in his own day, although his *Life of Kentigern* (1190) is but a bit of pleasant imagining; and as we read his pages we see the shadowy form of many a Culdee at his fastings and vigils in the tiny wooden church, at his frugal meal in the lonely cell, or labouring humbly with the hand in field or workshop at the appointed hour. True to their name as Ghillies of God, they served their Lord Christ in lowliness of life, modesty of dress and diet, and with a constant desire to deny themselves for others.

And yet their portraits are but shadowy silhouettes on the drawn blinds of the past, for all the authenticities of this middle age of Scotie Church history are so deeply plunged in gloom that the very wisest man to-day is loath to dogmatise about the holy orders and other vitalities of this early Church.

Sufficient is it for us to know that at a time when the moral deterioration of the monasteries was lowering the life of Christ in the land, and even bishops were degenerating into secular property lords, those servants of God, the Keledei, held up a clean ideal of the Church and the family before their worldly brothers. The Church in Scotland had now become the Church of St. Andrew, and the Church of St. Andrew was a Culdee Church.

We dare not to-day thrust back our modern religious preferences across the centuries and claim the Culdees as the especial ancestors in Christ of either Protestant believers or Catholic believers—but we can bless God that they were in deed and in truth the servants of God in a dark age and the common forebears of all who this day belong to every branch of Christ's Kirk in Scotland.

THE CULDEES

And this is the Rule of the Keledei, those old-time
Ghillies of God—a sweet clean rule of Christ—which
lies to-day in Trinity College, Dublin, bearing a visible
testimony to those holy men of God who in the dim
and distant centuries followed the way of the Cross:—

“If we be under the yoke of Clergyhood,

Noble is our calling:

We frequent the holy church

At every canonical hour.

When we hear the little bell,

The tribute is indispensable;

We lift up a ready heart,

And cast down our faces:

We sing a Pater and a Gloria,

That no curse fall upon us;

We consecrate the breast and face

With the sign of Christ's cross.

* * * * *

We celebrate and we instruct,

Without weakness and without sorrow,

Noble in the Person we invoke,

The Lord of the heaven and clouds.

We watch, we read, we pray,

Each according to his strength.

* * * * *

Labour for the illiterate,

Guided by pious clerics;

The wise man's work is with his mouth,

The unlearned work with their hands.

* * * * *

Silence and fervour,

Tranquillity without guile,

Without murmur or contention,

Are due from everyone.”

ST. MARGARET QUEEN OF
HEARTS & QUEEN OF SCOTS

THEN THE HAND OF GOD WAS LAID ON Scotland by that most mystical of all the saints—a good woman. And from that time onward the early Celtic Church became Roman Catholic.

Margaret—that pearl of womanhood—was one of the purest and most beautiful characters that ever sweetened the life of Scotland. Her father, Atheling Edward, had fled from England to Hungary. There, in her own mother's land, Margaret was born. And there, doubtless, she was baptized with the devout spirit of the Roman Church, when as yet the wonders of youth were in her soul. From the first she was one of heaven's elected queens, and when she returned to England she brought with her that sweet pervading influence of pure religion which was long afterwards to spread peace and goodwill throughout the rude northern lands that lay beyond the Tweed.

We do not know when this winsome girl, whose mother was a Bavarian princess, returned to England. But there her tutors were Lanfranc, Archbishop of Canterbury, and Turgot, a Benedictine monk, who was her father-confessor and afterwards became her biographer.

When William the Conqueror landed in England then began the great stramash of British history—for he straightway fought a battle, killed the king, and made himself ruler of a new England. Many of the English thralls and Danish refugees made their way in a panic of haste to Scotland, where they were wel-

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comed by Malcolm Canmore, the King of Scots. Like many other refugees, they arrived in extremity, but they stayed to alter the whole destiny of the country to which they fled. For, although at first these Saxon wanderers accepted the Christianity of Scotland as they found it, they ultimately altered its whole character.

It all came about so naturally. A ship sighted on the fairway of the Forth, and the usual group of along-shoremen immediately keep an outlook on the beach. It was the largest ship they had ever seen, and its sails were all tattered with foul-weather gales. Slowly she came up on the tide, and stood in for a little bay on the Fife shores, not far from the king's palace over at Dunfermline. The anchor went out with a rattle and a roar, and in the stillness that followed the little crowds of Gaelic-speaking Scots on the shore could hear the twang of English tongues as the orders to down sail rang out from the deck of this fine ship that had evidently braved terrific storms.

But the gaping crowd stood aside in wonder when the longboats came ashore, and many richly dressed lords and ladies began to wander up the beach. Someone asked for news, and the pitiful story of battle, panic, exile, and flight was poured out. Yonder was Agatha the queen-mother, and by her side the two princesses, Margaret and Christina, her daughters. And this kingly looking man with the fine clothes—who was he? Prince Edgar himself, who should have been King of England!

How the rumour of their landing spread, and what a welcome they all received from Malcolm Canmore,

ST. MARGARET

the great-headed king, who bade them all stay in his royal palace at Dunfermline, which was but a little way over the low hills!

But the stately Princess Margaret was the favourite of King and commoner from the moment she landed. Malcolm, the rude King of the Scots, was smitten with her beauty. He was a magerful man, and a hearty hater of the Catholics. Did he not once tear the nun's veil from his daughter's face, and curse the system that had put it there?

But now this rough anti-papal King could not keep his eyes off the lovely foreign-born Catholic princess. His own wife, Ingiborg, a Norsewoman, was dead. So, after much merry-making at the King's court, a royal wedding took place at Dunfermline, and Margaret, the princess with the winning heart, became the Queen of Scots.

And there you have one of the commonalties of human nature—a Scot of right royal dourness, who fought with all his might against the rising flood of the Catholic invasion from the Saxon South, marrying right off a Saxon woman whose pure gentleness and winsome strength were to mould a whole nation, and himself as well, on the lines of Roman piety!

The power of Margaret's personality was like a mesmerism.

She first of all won the heart of her husband. His beautiful, richly dressed, cultured wife would walk with him in the woods, and read to him out of those wonder books which he had never learned to read for himself. As the sound of the stream mingled with the soft cadences of her Southern voice, Malcolm looked and list-

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ened, and knew that in all Scotland there was none like his fair-faced pure-hearted queen. His very passions were subdued by the witchery of her love. He revelled in the goodness of this holy mistress of his soul. And his devotion showed itself, as all true love should, in many little intimacies of service. The big-hearted husband, who himself could not even read, would slip out of the Queen's room with one of her favourite books, kissing it as he went, and have its boards gorgeously bound in gold and jewels—and then, he would return it as a glad surprise of love. Ah, what a power has a woman's love with either kings or cadgers!

For Margaret lived her creed. She read diligently in the Holy Book, was scrupulous about the services and rites of the Church, went out and in continually among the poor, and with it all took the education of her children and the overlooking of her servants into her own hand.

See her, also, setting an example of humility to the fine ladies of her court, by washing the feet of twelve poor men at Lent, or by taking to live with her in the King's palace twenty-four little orphan children—nursing them on her knee, and feeding them, as only a good mother knows how! Three hundred poor folks were actually lodged in the state apartments on one occasion, for she loved the needy gangrels, and would give her cloak of rich embroidery or the gifts from the altar to those who were cold or hungry or destitute. She thought for every one, and even provided free ferries on the Forth for pilgrims who were travelling to Dunfermline or St. Andrews. Little wonder that even to this day the sheltered bay in Fife is called St.

ST. MARGARET

Margaret's Hope, and that the little old grey, red-tiled town on the Lothian shore is called Queensferry.

The ladies at the courts of Dunfermline Palace and Edinburgh Castle were set, like Dorcas, to work many garments for the poor, and to sew lovely tapestries for the bare halls and ante-rooms of the King's dwelling. Merchants were sent to distant lands to bring back the finest cloths. Cups and dishes of gold were placed on the King's table. But of all the rich things and jewels, the learning and culture which Margaret brought to Scotland, the most priceless gift which she gave to King and country was the pure pearl of her own saintliness. She commended the love of God to the whole nation, and the primitive Scots, who loved the holy personality of this winsome woman, soon grew accustomed to the forms of a religion in which she so thoroughly believed.

For she had more than beauty and piety. She was a very learned woman, with a clear-thinking brain, and of the wisest diplomacy. The dissensions and irregularities of the Celtic Church grieved her pious, orderly soul. So she actually called the leaders of the Church in Scotland together, that every point of divergence might be debated.

Here, surely, was the quaintest assembly of the Church in Scotland ever held! This woman, who was a queen, a religious thinker, and a perfect diplomat all in one, takes the chair and opens the discussion. Lent, Easter, the Mass, the Lord's Day, Marriage—each and all were debated fairly, with the saintly Queen for a director of arguments. She neither domineered nor patronized. But, by the sheer force of her persuasive coun-

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sels, she so won over these Celtic churchmen, that before the assembly was dissolved, the Scots clergy with one voice condemned the many usages of their own Church which were at variance with the Catholic rule. Her quiet diplomacies were consummate. For, while crucifixes, Sacred Hours, the Confessional, Fasting, Penance, the Virgin, and the Mass were all named and accepted, she never once made use of such irritating words as Rome, Pope, Archbishop, or Bishop.

So to this queenly woman with a saintly character very largely belongs the credit of converting the whole national Church of Scotland to the rule and ritual of the Church at Rome. Both King and Queen befriended the devout Culdees; and, indeed, their son Ethelred became the Culdee bishop of Dunkeld.

To-day we remember Queen Margaret most of all by the church at Dunfermline, which she founded; by the little chapel in the castle of Edinburgh, where she used to worship; and by the monastery which she built on the ruins of the Columban church on the holy little Hebrid isle of Hy.

And then came the end to this queenly, motherly saint of God, as it has come to many a good woman—with a dash of dool in it that deepened the shadows of her last hours. She was lying ill in the castle of Edinburgh, high up on the rock yonder, where the winds blow so clean and snell. Malcolm, her husband, had just gathered an army to invade Northumbria; but the presentiments of death were in the Queen, so she begged him not to go. But Malcolm Canmore was angered beyond endurance at William Rufus, and waiving the protests of his beloved Queen, he set out. When be-



ST. MARGARET'S CHAPEL, EDINBURGH CASTLE

ST. MARGARET

sieging Alnwick Castle, Malcolm and his son Edward were slain. It was Edgar who arrived first at the castle of Edinburgh with the sad news. And the dying queen had only to glance at his face to know the worst. "I know it, I know it, my lad. So tell me all the truth."

He told her all he knew. The sick saint turned her face to the wall and prayed. She had lived praying, and she died praying—this greatest, womanliest, and most pious queen that ever sat on

Scotland's throne.

CHAPTER SIX

DAVID

THE CATHEDRAL BUILDER

WHO WAS A SAIR SANCT

IT IS NOT EVERY GOOD WOMAN WHO HAS three sons destined to sit on the throne of kings. But that was Margaret's aftermath—for Edgar, Alexander, and David, the three princes she had taught and trained at her own knee, worked out in detail for fifty-six years the religious revolution which their saintly mother had begun.

But it was the third son, David, whose name will be remembered as one of the men who made the Church in Scotland. From the very first he seemed to set the monk's cowl far above the king's crown. Chronicler Wyntoun tells us that he was "the beld* of all hys kyn"—and certainly there was no namelier king in Scotland for building churches and developing the communities of the land into free towns or burghs.

It was the age of St. Bernard of Clairvaux, the founder of the great Cistercian Order, and David was smitten with Bernard's spirit. He even travelled to Tiron, near Chartres, to see his holy hero—but before he arrived, St. Bernard died. David, however, took home with him to Scotland twelve Tiron monks and an abbot. He placed them over the abbeys at Selkirk and Kelso. Then began the building of one great abbey or cathedral church after another — Kelso, Holyrood, Dunfermline, Melrose, Newbattle, Kinloss, Jedburgh,

* Paragon.

THE MAKERS OF THE KIRK

St. Andrews, and Dryburgh. David poured out monies and land charters on his beloved monasteries.

“He illumynyd in his dayis
His landys wyth kyrkys and with abbayis.”

Before he got the crown on his head there had only been four bishoprics—St. Andrews, Glasgow, Dunkeld, and Moray: when he died there were nine, for he added the bishoprics of Ross, Aberdeen, Caithness, Dunblane, and Brechin.

Like his beauty-loving mother, he had an extravagant passion for the Church, and a real desire to help the poor. So he not only covered the land with brave cathedrals whose very ruins to-day are more beautiful to us than our best achievements in modern architecture, but he would sit in royal state at the gate of his palace and dispense justice to all the poor old women who had complaints to lay before the King.

Religion with a dash of superstition in it touched him at every point in his life. When he was riding out to a hunt, a poor man with a grievance would kneel in supplication as he passed by with the gay throng—and David, sensitive, impulsive, and good-souled, would turn his horse's head and ride back to court to see justice done to the unfortunate suppliant.

Even a great abbey might owe its origin to one of his religious dreams or fancies. For legend has it that while hunting deer in the king's forest which lay to the east of the castle of Edinburgh, a stag unhorsed the King, and in the struggle with the infuriated beast which followed, the antlers came away in the King's hands, and lo! he was holding a holy rood instead of

DAVID

a pair of horns! But the thing was a freit of his own troubled conscience, for he had come out to hunt on the day of the Holy Rood, in defiance of his father-confessor, and for his sins and this mystic deliverance from death, David in true mediæval style resolved to build an abbey on the spot. And to-day Holyrood stands before us as an old-time reminder of this cathedral-building King.

The monks streamed into Scotland to be welcomed without let or stint by the monk-loving King—and in the trail of the monks came traders and immigrants from manylands. With his menseful hand David scattered royal charters for burgh towns, lands and revenues for abbey-churches, and enriched the monasteries with those very endowments and treasures which soon became an irreligious snare to the nobles of the land. For they coveted both the monastic monies and the abbey lands for their own secular use.

Thus the King starved the State to enrich the Church. But cathedrals are a costly ploy. Little wonder, therefore, that poor John Bellenden wrote of David's reign that "the Croon was left indigent throw ampliation of great rentis to the Kirk"—and that James I of Scotland once exclaimed, while standing at David's tomb in Dunfermline Abbey, that "he was ane sair sanct for the Croon."

It was during the reign of this lovenge monarch, too, that the parish first took its place in the Church system of Scotland. We hear men speak of the institution of the parochial system—but, truth to tell, parishes were never instituted at all. Each parish grew out of some local Church which gradually was able to define the

THE MAKERS OF THE KIRK

borders of its own usefulness. So the parish invariably grew out of a local Church—but the local Church never sprang from the parish.

This sair saint, with the passion for cathedral building, raised many of our most beautiful abbey-churches in Scotland, and so surfeited the clergy with money and gear that the people began to cry out at the burden of State debts imposed on them for the support of hordes of monks who had neither Scots blood in their veins nor the Scots speech on their tongues.

So this illustrious King with the kirk-greedy soul left behind him in stone and lime a most glorious record of his monkish passion. You can read that record to-day in the ruins of fair Melrose and royal Holyrood, and many another abbey-church whose beautiful lichen-grey poetry is the despair of every artist in stone. The King who raised them had his mother's mystic mind; and although he was scarcely the authentic saint that she was, he died as she did, with a prayer moving his lips and the sacred silence of eternity filling his soul.

It was at Carlisle one fair May morning in 1153. He lay there stricken with disease—an old man, prepared for his end by much prayer. With all the prudence and devotion of his sainted mother he awaited the coming of the shadowy angel. For, on this Sunday morning, when his servitors approached him they saw that he kneeled in prayer. But when they touched him, being greatly concerned at the majestic stillness of their royal master, they found that he was already in the presence of the great King to whom all princes or peasants are alike.

THE MONKS & THEIR TRAN-
QUIL HOMES OF PRAYER

IT MATTERS LITTLE, ONE WAY OR ANOTHER, whether a man wears a monk's cowl, with a girdle round his waist to secure his ascetic's cloak, or clothes himself most gorgeously with mitre and crozier and the pure white bishop's lawn, or contents himself with a pair of little virgin bands at the neck and the black Geneva scholar's gown on his shoulders—but it matters all in all that he have within him the high sincerity of our fair father, Christ, and the mystic spirit of God, which alone can make the soul of every gospeller white with purity and red with love.

And it was of the mercy of God that, when the world was afflicted with the three great evils of corruption, disorder, and pestilence, He raised up in the middle centuries, throughout the lands of Europe and all over our own sea-girt northern isles, many brothers and sisters of the common life to pray for the souls of their fellows and imitate Jesus Christ by going about continually doing good.

The ideal of a good monk was always white, like the heart of Christ Himself—but, as we see the centuries wearing slowly by, we see also the monk's ideal getting lower and lower, until the fairness of the triple vow of poverty, chastity, and obedience, is all dimmed and muddied with the trafficking of worldly men.

What hope of God's love could our Pictish forebears have had but for Ringan and his White House of God, or Columba and his little monastery of wattled huts on Hy? And from these early mission colonies of the

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good monks sprang the later monasteries of King David I.

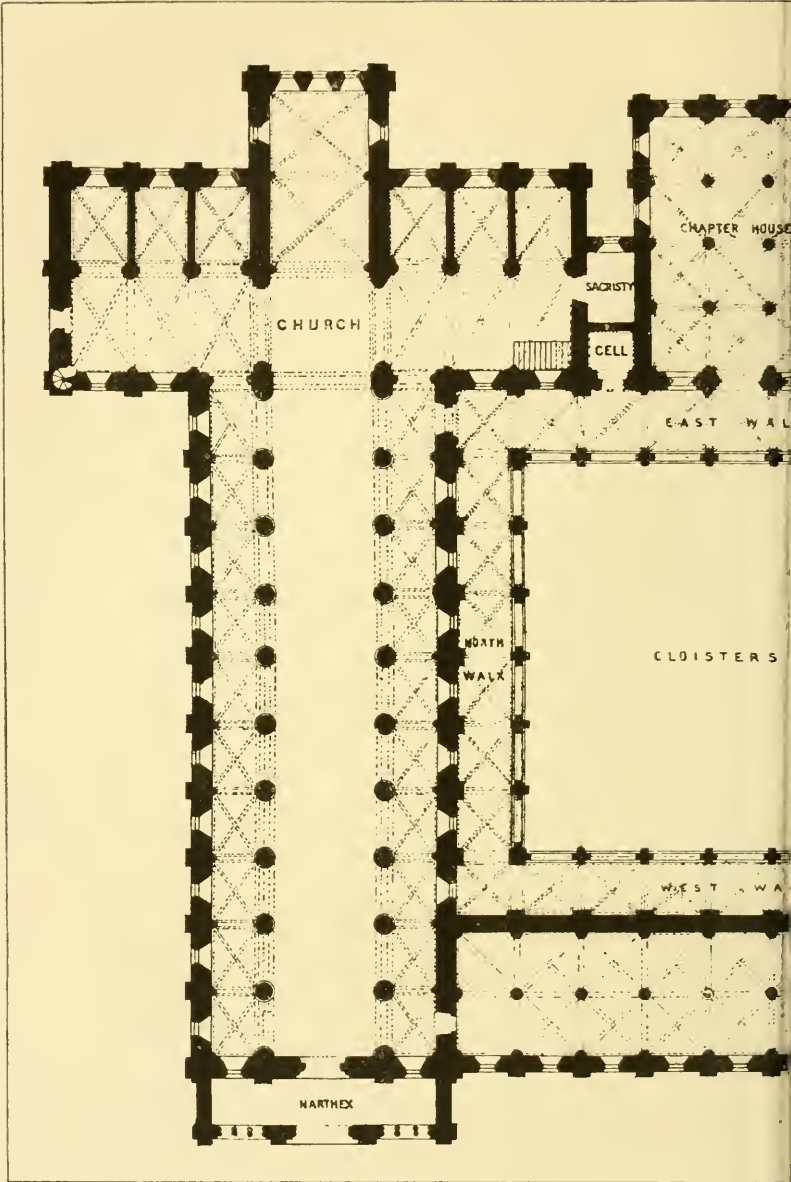
But it is a far cry from Whithorn to fair Melrose. For, from David's time and on, ecclesiastical architecture reached its most elaborate stage, and a monastery in the Middle Ages was a vast building with beautiful ranges of apartments and offices alongside the abbey-church itself.

But, both in the early primitive days and in the late elaborate days, the monastery in Scotland, as elsewhere, was the great centre of culture. Look at the *Book of Kells*, that high-water mark of Celtic decoration, which was executed by monkish hands in a primitive Columban monastery, somewhere in the eighth century—or look at the model plan of a Cistercian abbey, or even at the majestic ruins of an abbey-church of the thirteenth century, and you will realize that all the arts and refinement and craftsmanship of the time were to be found among the eident monks. And the monks reigned supreme in the churches of Europe for a thousand years.

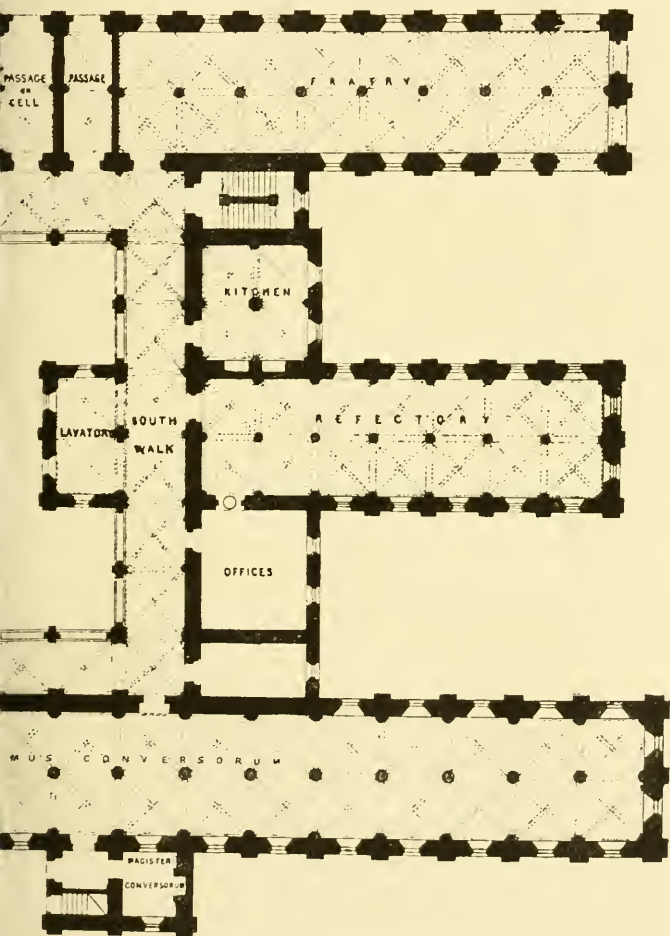
If we could only fall into a deep historic sleep and put the clock of time back for a cycle of centuries, what a wonderful awakening we should have in some sweet lowland vale, where the great bell of the abbey-church was calling the monks to prayer!

* * * * *

The morning sun is shining over fields of waving corn, and the silver sheen of a slow-running river is glinting here and there among the harvest fields. By the river-side a band of lay brothers are busy cutting



PLAN OF CISTER



THE MONKS

the corn; for the harvest has come; and field after field by the river-side, or on the slopes of the low hills that bound the valley, is rapidly whitening for the sickle. Slowly we wend our way along the narrow road that leads to the great abbey church, with a morning greeting to the long-robed harvesters. Some of them are chanting snatches of chorales or psalms to themselves as they mow down the raith corn with a regular sweesh of the scythe.

What an earthly paradise the monks have made of this lowland valley! The cornlands stretch for miles up and down the river-sides, and trees of all kinds offer shade to the country folk who pass along the roadway to the market town or the church. As we draw nearer the monastery, yon great grey mass of architecture shimmering in the heat, orchards stretch on every side of the road, with myriad apples and fruits hanging to ripen in the autumn sun. Rows of little grey houses and some poor thatch huts are clustered round the outer abbey walls; for wherever a great community of monks gather, a great number of merchants and traders immediately set up their little booths or shops. So, in the September sunshine, the monastery bell keeps tolling out the hours, and from the little burgh town about the walls the blue reek from the burghers' houses rises in a homely cloud about the red and brown roofs.

The great gateway in the outer wall stands open, and the friendly brother in the porter's lodge, who has been drowsing in his chair, opens his eyes, and nods a welcome as we pass within the precincts.

Here, in the cloisters, there is plenty of pillared cool-

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ness, and as we walk round the covered corridor, with its low, groined roof of stone, the eye rests with delight on the square enclosure of close-cropped turf, with some little trees in one corner, and a flower-encircled fountain plashing in the centre. The great church runs along the northern side of the cloisters; for in this grey north land, where the sun is sometimes so niggard of heat, the cloisters are nearly always placed on the south side of the abbey church to catch the sun. To-day they make a perfect pocket for the heat, for the sunlight is beaking on the little cloister garden, and the pigeons are crooning to themselves and preening their feathers far up above the clerestory windows.

That low, solemn sound is the chanting of the monks within the church, and here are one or two of the brothers hastening in to take their places at prayer. Standing on the steps of the open porch of the chapter-house, we watch them hurrying along the cloisters. Then we, too, follow them to the church doorway at the western end of the long nave.

Ah, how cool and dark and dimly solemn the whole church is, with the monkish crowd chanting away up yonder near the altar steps, and the summer sunlight streaming through the painted windows, to lay the open floor of the nave in a perfect mosaic of moving colours. How far away the noisy, evil world seems in this vast cathedral, where the tapers are burning on the high altar! Somewhere in the autumn world out by the loud-mouthed burghers must be laughing over their ale, or standing behind their counters to bargain for gain over their silks and foodstuffs, and the busy harvesters must still be toiling over the corn sheaves by the sweat of

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their brow. But here a crowd of holy men are praying, in the mystic gloom, that the sins of the worldling may be forgiven, as they cross themselves before the Real Presence. And here, too, on the holy days, the common people crowd in to hear a preaching friar thundering out the word of God.

So, with a prayer for ourselves and for them, we rise from our knees on the cold stone flags, and steal out again into the blazing sun to watch the crowd of holy men processing from the church to the plain-song of a hymn.

The cloisters and the outer courts are now crowded with monks coming and going on their holy business—for this vast community of brothers in Christ literally teems with interest and activity. In these monasteries the whole book trade of the world, in missal, manuscript, and illumined scroll, is carried on. Within the precincts are to be found the greatest men of their day—statesmen, historians, artists, musicians, lawyers, medical men, poets, schoolmasters, craftsmen, and expert farmers.

As we climb the stair to the library above the chapter-house, someone is speaking in a low, even voice. It is the master of the scribing monks instructing his pupils. There they are, sitting at little tables, with their vellum sheets and skins, writing, illumining, and painting with the rarest pigments the initial letters and ornaments of missals and psalters.

Passing through the fraternity or day-room of the monastery, we enter the refectory, a long, low-roofed hall abutting on the south side of the cloister court, where the monks are now filing in to take their mid-

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day meal at the long oaken tables. And next to the refectory comes the hospitium or guest-house, which runs along the whole western length of the quadrangle. Here all strangers are welcomed as the guests of the abbot.

What a centre of worship, what a school of learning, and what a far-reaching home of wealth and influence is this pile of monastic buildings! It is, indeed, the only school of learning in the land, a college of all the arts and crafts, with many pupils and many professors. Down yonder, across the green quadrangle, we can see, as we stand looking through this window of the guest-house, the abbot entering the open portico of the chapter-house to take his seat among his learned colleagues. For there the deep discussions of the sacred books are carried on, and any who care to stand and listen at the open porch can hear the holy men commenting on their patristic lore.

But who are these brown-faced, besandalled brothers who come slowly and wearily through the cloisters and make for the great stone basin with the running water in yon deep recess beneath the refectory wall? See, they are laving their hands and faces to remove the travel-stains, and one of them is beating his cassock to get rid of the dust. These are some of the travelling friars who have just returned from a preaching tour among the remoter peasants of the glens and hills. And you can see by the way they are welcomed that they are cheerful, human men of God. Now they are off to their little cells to rest.

Down in the cloister court the sun still beats upon us as we make for a little passage or slype which leads

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to the gardens. What a wealth of flowers and spices and simples grow in these well-kept beds! Passing along the flagged paths, we come to a sculptured seat, and sit down in the shadow of a yew tree to dream an hour away; and the moving shadow on a dial before us keeps reminding us of the flight of time, for the sun is westering to the horizon. Yonder, by itself, stands the abbot's lodge, and further off the infirmary. For in this House of Christ the poor are fed, the vagabond can find a safe refuge, and the sick of body as well as the sick of soul are healed. How blessed is the life of sacrifice which these fathers of Christ lead in this holy place, and how much light and truth have shone out from such places to the dark souls of men and women in many lands and many ages. Little wonder that men, women, and even little children curtsy and cross themselves when the pious friars pass along the field paths and the streets of the burgh towns. For without them the land would be lawless and loveless and Christless.

But the sun is sinking. So we rise and pass within the cloisters once more, dark now with gloaming shadows, and out through the gate in the outer walls. It has been a happy, tranquil day. And as we stroll along the highway, with the sweet scents of the new-mown fields drugging the September twilight, a crescent moon rises behind the great grey pile of the monastery buildings, luminous now against the sky, as the bell tolls solemnly the curfew hour.

THE MONKS & HOW THEY
STAINED THE WHITE IDEAL

WE HAVE ONLY TO READ THE HISTORY books, and the black facts come crashing down, one by one, to shatter the monastic ideal. Then follows the outward consequence of this inward corruption—the ruthless smashing of many a priceless window and many a great abbey church, until both monks and monasteries lie side by side in shameful ruin.

St. Benedict himself set forth the white ideal, when he framed the rule of his great Order. Every monastery was to have an abbot as head. Candidates were to be admitted for a year of probation, and their property was to be given to the holy house of their adoption. Every monk was to attend eight religious services in the day, besides working for seven hours. Meals were to be of the simplest kind, and a book was to be read during each repast to prevent conversation. The monks were to sleep in rooms containing not less than ten or twelve brothers, each having his own narrow pallet. Moreover, a light was to be kept burning constantly in each dormitory. Most of the work within bounds was to be done by the brothers themselves, whether it was drawing of water from the well, grinding corn at the mill, working in the gardens, or kneading dough in the bakehouse. A clean, lowly life of service was this monkish rule of Benedict; and this is the instruction in humility which every brother of this bond of Christ received on entering his life of denial:

“When the monk has passed through all these stages of humility, he will soon attain unto that love of God

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which, being perfect, casteth out all fear, and through which he will begin to practise naturally, of set habit, and without anxiety or pain, all those rules which he before observed with dread. He will no longer act from any terror of hell, but from love to Christ, from the energy of right custom, and from joy in that which is good."

Ah, fair white life of sacrifice! How soon the ideal was stained and shattered and blasphemed!

It began in the hearts of the monks themselves, when they exchanged their love of the Eternal for a love of the temporal. The material gradually ousted the spiritual in their lives. Wealth and lands gradually increased, until an abbot very often was more a landlord than a saint. With this increase of riches the monks became men of the world. Then what was temptation to them very soon became the envy of their neighbours. Moreover, when the pagan Danes raided those now rich Christian communities, the monks, in spite of their skill in warfare, had often to call in the help of the surrounding chiefs and neighbours. Those lay outsiders very gladly helped the monks, but they themselves demanded something in lieu of their services. Thus the laity gradually got a footing, and eventually some of them gained complete control of certain monasteries.

From less to more their game of gear went on. Sometimes, in the raid, the monastery was swept away altogether, and the lands belonging to it fell into the hands of a chief or noble. There were other more flagrant cases, where a noble would actually seize the monastery by force. He had only then to call himself abbot,

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and his dependents monks, and so capture the rentals and tithes of the religious house for himself. Thus the love of money, pleasure, land, and power was the root of all the monkish evils.

It is wondrous to read the statutes and annals which relate the story of the guilt of these men, who professed to be Christ's own ministers. In the year 1200 a bishop of Glasgow consulted a French dignitary about the difficulty of dealing with those of his monks who persisted in fighting duels! Sixteen years later we find Pope Innocent III prohibiting the practice of duelling, which "had long prevailed in Scotland, as in England," among bishops, abbots, and priests. Some were so hard pressed for money that they committed the heinous blasphemy of selling the Sacraments. Others kept concubines and lived in open immorality, for which there was no excuse. They visited the *fo-carie* "in strange houses," as the statutes say, and thus made themselves utterly unfit "to handle the body and blood of Jesus Christ."

There were times, too, when religion was put to open shame by sheer buffoonery. Let the Chronicles of Durham provide an instance. It was at Kirkcudbright, on St. Cuthbert's Day, when Ailred, Abbot of Rievaulx, came to pay a visit to the Saint's shrine. A bull was dragged by ropes from a field to be offered as a sacrifice. But the younger monks were more inclined to mischief than to worship. So, setting aside all decorum, they dragged the bull into the cemetery and proceeded to bait it into a fury. The older monks rebuked them for their profanity, but they were only greeted with jeers and laughter, and one of the youth-

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ful blasphemers actually shouted this scurrilous remark:

“No proof has been given of the presence or power of this Cuthbert, although this tightly built little stone church may be his.”

But the blasphemer never spoke again. For, with a roar and a leap, the maddened bull thrust its horns through the monk's body, and tossed him to his death. How utterly unworthy had become some of the successors of the simple Lammermoor shepherd-saint—Cuthbert of the holy heart!

The holiest functions of religion became, at times, the means of the worst crimes. For many a priest committed sin with his own spiritual daughter. Indeed, so common was this foul practice, that statutes had to be issued to deal with the accursed habit of violating the confessional. Here is one: “We forbid the confessions of women being heard between the veil and the altar—they should be heard in another part of the church—beyond earshot, but not out of sight.” This scandalous decay of sexual morality began in the very first century of the Roman rule.

We have seen that it was David, “the sair sanct for the croon,” who first showered endowments of land and moneys on the monasteries, and from less to more these accumulations of wealth grew, until, by the time of the Reformation, about one half of the land in the kingdom belonged to the ecclesiastical authorities!

The Church divided its income into the *temporality* and the *spirituality*—the first term covering all rents from lands and houses, the second covering all moneys received from the tithes or teinds, both small and great.

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The great teind was the tenth sheaf from the harvest field, and the small teind was the tenth of the hay crop, the garden, the dairy, and all the live stock. Thus the Church burdened the people, and taxed them severely for all baptisms, marriages, and funerals.

And how did this powerful, rich, lordly body of ecclesiastics repay the common people for providing them with fortunes? How did the abbots give an account of their stewardship?

The parish church, with its teinds, was often entirely given over to the great abbey or cathedral. The abbot drew the lordly income, and the vicar who preached did all the work of the parish for a petty allowance. Thus the shameless degeneracy of true religion went on. The abbot prospered, and the vicar starved. If chapter and verse be demanded, here is proof—the Abbey of Arbroath had thirty-four parishes, the Abbey of Holyrood twenty-seven, and the Abbey of Paisley thirty.

The next step in this rake's progress was that world-lymen sought now, at all costs, to become abbots. And they succeeded. Not that they were in any degree religious, but that they were simply determined to seize the income of the abbey. To become an abbot was now the most money-making career in the country. So, as a siccar Scots historian has put it, in plain language, "rich livings, with the care of thousands of souls, were held by boys, by infants even, by men deformed in body, imbecile in mind, hardened in ignorance, old in wickedness and vice."

This was the pass to which the pre-Reformation Church in Scotland had come, under the influence of

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the Pope at Rome. The chief places of Christ's ministers had become posts of fabulous profit and power. Great families seized them, and divided the plunder among themselves. A nobleman of doubtful character had only to exchange his doublet for a monk's cowl, and he became a princely abbot of the Church, with a princely rent-roll at his command.

But, sooner or later, the strength of the people asserts itself.

A new light of learning had, for some time, been breaking over the land. Universities had gradually arisen in the chief centres of population—first at St. Andrews, then at Glasgow, then at Aberdeen, and finally at Edinburgh. With the invention of printing, books brought knowledge to the common folk—and knowledge is a dread enemy to tyranny. Men like Wycliffe and Caxton and Tyndale, who were the first to translate and then print the Bible in English speech, did more to enlighten the people about the great impostures of Rome than anyone else. This emancipation of the people through knowledge was a long, slow process. But truth is like leaven. The truth was spread by one faithful man after another, until, after much tribulation, it prevailed.

We have to go far back for the first martyr men in Scotland. As early as 1406 James Resby, an English priest and a Lollard of the school of John Wycliffe, was burnt as a heretic at Perth, for differing from the Church on forty points, two of the very healthy opinions which he held being—that the Pope was not really the vicar of Christ; and that no one could be Pope who was not personally a holy man. Paul Craw, twenty-nine years

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later, paid the same fiery price of martyrdom. He had come over from Bohemia, as Resby had come from England, to preach the free truth of Christ to the common people; but there was an Act of Parliament for such as he, and in the year 1433 Paul Craw was burnt as a heretic at St. Andrews.

Sixty-one years later still, the Lollards of Kyle, as thirty doughty Ayrshire men of Christ were called, raised the ire of the Archbishop of Glasgow, and were brought to trial for preaching thirty-four so-called heresies against the Church. The crime of the Lollards of Kyle was that they believed every faithful man to be his own priest; that they denied that the Pope was the successor of Peter; and that they said the Pope deceived the people by his bulls, indulgences, and pardons. They, too, would have been burned as heretics if the Archbishop had got his way; but, mercifully, the young King was a man of some humour as well as a man of leniency. So James IV ended the trial by dismissing the thirty men of Kyle with a jest.

These early protesters for Christ and freedom were the real spiritual forebears of John Knox.

Meantime, Martin Luther had spoken the truth about Christ to the Continent of Europe, and he rent the Church of Rome in two when he nailed his Thesis to the church door at Wittenberg. The Lutheran doctrine, once aflame, spread like wild-fire through Europe. It leapt the Channel, and set ablazing with holy zeal the hearts of all the earnest seekers after truth in England and Scotland. The Church began to tremble for its life—its poor, corrupt, shameful life. The nobles, with their vast vested interests in Church

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lands and properties, went hand in glove with the priests to suppress the people, who were striving after freedom in doctrine and life. So the parliament of Scotland was called together, and an act was passed prohibiting the sale or importation of Lutheran books or writings in any shape or form.

And still the truth was blazed abroad. Innocent-looking bales of cotton were rolled along the pier at Leith, and inside the cotton bales were scores upon scores of New Testaments, with books written by Luther and his disciples. These the clergy and parliamentarians described in their condemning act as filth and vice!

But the truth was spreading. The fire still burned. The atmosphere of Scotland was electric with the possibilities of religious revolution. God was in the truth. It only needed some man of God now to defy the errors of Rome and to proclaim his faith in this new freedom which the truth promised to bring, and the Reformation in Scotland was begun. At the call of God, a young man came, and his name was Patrick Hamilton.

CHAPTER NINE PATRICK HAMILTON THE FIRST MAR- TYR OF THE REFORMATION

A YOUNG MAN, FOR HE DIED AT FOUR-AND-twenty; a lad with blue blood in his veins, for his great-grandfather was a king; a namely scholar, for he was student both at Paris and St. Andrews, and first published pamphlets in the German town of Marburg—such was Patrick Hamilton, the first martyr of the Reformation in Scotland.

He may well have had a touch of high adventure in his soul. For that right noble and high-tempered knight Sir Patrick Hamilton of Kincavel, his father, died of a sword wound received during a tulzie in the High Street of Edinburgh, when the Douglasses and the Hamiltons flew at each other in a fierce encounter which to this day is known as "Cleanse-the-Causeway!" There was theology as well as swordplay on that fatal occasion. Beaton, Archbishop of Glasgow, was there for the Hamiltons, and Gavin Douglas, Bishop of Dunkeld, was there for his own clan, to see if, by any chance, they might avert bloodshed by argument. Beaton, protesting on his conscience that no mischief was intended, struck his breast to confirm his oath. A suit of hidden mail rang under the blow. "Your conscience, my lord," exclaimed Douglas, "is not a good one, for I heard it clatter!" Then the swords were drawn, and Sir Patrick Hamilton was one of the hot-heads who rose no more.

As a boy, young Patrick Hamilton ran about the gardens and bird-nested in the woods of Kincavel. But where he went to school we do not know. It may

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be that he learned his rudiments at the monastic school of Dunkeld, ruled by that stormy character, Gavin Douglas, Bishop of Dunkeld, a relative of young Patrick's mother. If so, there would be good Latinity and not a little Virgilian poetry going for the lad.

At the age of thirteen he was appointed lay-abbot of Ferne! Such was the ridiculous custom of the time. But the rents of the abbacy took him to Paris, and served to maintain him until he graduated there in 1520. About the time of his arrival in France, Martin Luther was just sending his thunder of protest throughout Europe. The students of Paris were caught in the general fervour of the movement, so Patrick Hamilton joined the young radical reformers, and was soon thirled to the Reformed Faith. Three more years in France confirmed him in his Lutheran opinions, for he had followed Erasmus to the more liberal university of Louvain, and then he returned to Scotland.

We next find him at St. Andrews, where he became a post-graduate student. The high-born scholarly young traveller soon began to make his radical views known. He objected to Aristotle being studied from commentators apart from the text, and was soon brought to book by James Beaton for propounding false doctrines and the foreign opinions of Martin Luther.

At the first scent of danger he took the advice of friends, and slipped over to the Continent again. First he travelled to Wittenberg—but the place was infested with plague. Marburg drew him next—for a new university had been opened there, and he was ever alive to enlightenment. He met Luther, Melanchthon, and Tyndale during this visit to the Continent, and who



PATRICK HAMILTON

PATRICK HAMILTON

can say what new zeal was kindled in his soul by the converse of these great Reformers. At any rate, Patrick Hamilton put pen to paper first in Marburg, and wrote a series of theses in the spirit of Luther himself. These theses were afterwards translated into English, and known as *Patrick's Places*, for, as his translator says, "the book teacheth exactly of certain common-places, which known, ye have the pith of all divinity." So Patrick Hamilton, a Scotsman, was the first man in Marburg who set up a series of theses to be publicly defended—and *Patrick's Places* was the first Reformation book in Scotland.

But the man was a Scotsman, and Germany could not hold him. He etted to be back among his own folks, and so returned in the autumn of 1527 to his native place of Kincavel. The fire of the Lord was in his soul, and a brother and sister were among his first converts. His preaching was the holy means of a revival of religion in the neighbourhood of Linlithgow. The news of this revival soon reached the ears of that wily man James Beaton, Archbishop in St. Andrews. He invited Hamilton at once to a conference. The Lutheran hesitated, then obeyed. So once more he arrived in his old university town by the northern sea.

It is an ill tale, easy to tell. First, there was much politeness, and a courteous request to know his views. He was asked to address the students. Monks visited him in his lodgings to be enlightened, and the Dominican prior Campbell took notes most zealously. This same traitor, Campbell, professed much sympathy, and all the while was preparing his notes for the trial. So the plot thickened, and the illustrious young Lutheran

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of the house of Hamilton continued fearlessly to expound the true Reformed faith. He heeded no warnings, and he took all risks. Then the inevitable end came to his expositions, when the summons arrived for him to appear before the Archbishop's Council. It was quick work. The council condemned him on all points as a heretic, and agreed to pronounce judgment the very next day.

But ill news travels fast, and a rumour arose that Sir James Hamilton and another friend of the family were on the way to St. Andrews with an armed troop to effect a rescue. This only bustled the Archbishop into greater haste. So, calling out his own guard of troops, he arrested Hamilton, and led him to the cathedral to be accused by the Dominican prior Campbell. An honest gospeller to be questioned by a knave.

"My lords," said Campbell, "ye hear he denies the institutions of Holy Kirk and the authority of our own Holy Father the Pope: I need nocht to accuse him no more."

In a trice the Archbishop was on his feet and pronounced Patrick Hamilton to be guilty. He was deprived of Church office, and delivered over to the secular power to be punished on the morrow. The town magistrates, who were mere pawns in the Archbishop's hands, decreed that he should be burned at the stake that same day.

Did ever St. Andrews see a deadlier blaze! It was in front of St. Salvator's College. The martyr handed his gown and cloak to the warden with a solemn injunction. At this stage Beaton pressed on Patrick Hamilton to

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recant, but he only replied, "I will not deny my beliefs for fear of your fires."

Then the fires were lit. The wind blew snell and gusty from the North Sea, and rain showers again and again damped the blaze. At first he was only scorched, and the monks stood by and mocked him for his heresies. Through the blundering of the executioners and the wild wet weather, the strain on the dying martyr was terrible. The fire lasted for six hours. The armed crowd were awed to silence. Monks kept running for bundles of straw to feed the reluctant flames. They even smeared the faggots with gunpowder. And the rain kept hissing on the fire. Still another bystander mocked the martyr for his heresies, and in answer he raised three charred fingers in the agony of death and cried: "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit."

He was but a youth of twenty-four. But from the moment of his martyrdom this was the question on every lip:

"Wherefore was Master Patrick Hamilton burned?"

In supplying an answer to that question, the whole nation was roused to a deep interest in the Reformed faith. So Patrick Hamilton, by his teaching and death, secured the beginning of the Reformation in Scotland.

It was John Knox himself who put it thus:

"There was none found who began not to inquire, Wherefore was Master Patrick Hamilton burned? And when his articles were rehearsed, question was held if such articles were necessary to be believed under pain of damnation. And so within short space many began to call in doubt that which before they held for a certainty."

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And this remark of a merry gentleman to James Beaton has in it a touch of prophetic wisdom:

“My lord, . . . if ye will burn them, let them be burnt in deep cellars, for the reek of Master Patrick Hamilton has infected as many as it blew upon!”

CHAP. X. GEORGE WISHART HIS BURNING & THE PRICE THE CARDINAL PAID FOR IT

IT WAS ONETHING TO BURN JAMES RESBY, an obscure English Lollard, at Perth, and Paul Craw, a Bohemian delegate, at St. Andrews; but it was quite another thing for the Church to burn a princely young Scot of high-born family and great distinction a hundred years after, for no other reason than that he differed from the Pope at Rome. The fat was now in the fire, for the whole nation, from lords to lowly folk, was roused to an active anger against this dastardly deed.

Never was a truer word spoken by an onlooker than that the reek of Master Patrick Hamilton infected as many as it blew upon. People began to read the Bible for themselves, despite the ban of Holy Church. The cause of reform in religion grew all the faster among the people because it was opposed by the Roman priesthood. David Beaton had succeeded his aged uncle, James, as Archbishop of St. Andrews, with the rank of a Roman cardinal. It is this man who will stand forth for ever, as one of the most lurid figures in the history of the Reformation in Scotland. For David Beaton, the cardinal of the cruel heart, was the mell in the Pope's hand to beat the life out of every Lutheran in Scotland. But you cannot kill a cause by killing the men who fight for it. For the blood of the martyrs, in Scotland as elsewhere, has aye become the seed of the Church.

David Beaton, however, played the murderous game with all the might of his ungentle heart.

Monk after monk forsook his cell, and made public the scandalous evils from which he had suffered. Sir

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David Lindsay lashed the Church with the furious satire of his poetry. Before the royal court at Linlithgow, one Ascension Day, his play, *A Satire of the Three Estates*, was staged. Bringing on the stage churchmen of all sorts and conditions, he showed that each was the obedient servant of Avarice and Sensuality, and that King Humanity would have to undertake a reformation if he were to save John Commonwealth.

“The flash of that satiric rage
Which, bursting on the early stage,
Branded the vices of the age
And broke the Keys of Rome.”

The King himself was shocked, and the Cardinal was chagrined. The bishops, to be sure, were admonished, but, despite this diplomatic reprimand, they never ceased to defy the rising spirit of reform among the common folk. It was the people who were now the preachers of truth—the clergy had become the mere ringleaders of debauchery.

So, many reforming monks left Scotland for Germany, such as John MacAlpine, prior of Perth. For the Beatons, both uncle and nephew, continued to burn the heretics. Henry Forrest, a Benedictine, was burnt at St. Andrews because he said Patrick Hamilton's articles were true, and because he possessed an English New Testament. Two men were burnt at Greenside, Edinburgh—David Straitoun, for refusing to pay Church teinds, and Norman Gourlay, a priest, for having married a wife and expressed doubt about purgatory and the Pope.

Then—one, George Wishart, a schoolmaster in

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Montrose, was summoned to appear before Bishop Hepburn at Brechin. Wishart was the son of a Forfarshire laird, and had gained some knowledge of Greek at King's College, Aberdeen. Thereafter he settled at Montrose as a teacher, under the patronage of that prince of linguists, John Erskine of Dun, who introduced so many teachers of foreign languages to the Scots grammar schools.

And George Wishart's sin was this, that he taught even Scots bairns to read the New Testament in Greek! But before the loose and easy Bishop of Brechin could lay hands on him, the schoolmaster made a pair of clean heels for Bristol and Bishop Latimer.

And still the faggot fires burned and the gallows chairs clanked. John Roger, a Blackfriar monk in Dundee, was executed. Four citizens were executed in Perth, the wife of one of them, James Ranaldson, being condemned because she refused in childbed to pray to the Virgin. She was drowned in the Tay, although she begged to be hanged by the side of her good man. This campaign of death must surely have been at its height when the public treasurer entered an item in his accounts for fifty-four cart-horses for the punishing of certain heretics. But the hand of the Red Cardinal was in it all.

The contention for power between these puppets of Rome was not only cruel—it was sometimes even grotesque. For on one occasion Gavin Dunbar, Archbishop of Glasgow, came to actual blows with David Beaton, Archbishop of St. Andrews. It happened at the choir door of Glasgow Cathedral. Dunbar insisted that his official cross should head the procession;

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Beaton objected, and claimed that his cross, being the cross of a papal legate, should take precedence. Words gave place to temper, and the two engaged in a most unholy tuzlie at the church door, cross whacking cross, until both were on the ground. Then followed a merry game indeed, with rent gowns, torn tippets, and broken heads. Thus the Cross of Christ was put to open shame.

And when all was said and done, the Cardinal himself admitted that Scotland was swarming with heresy. Sanction to Bible-reading was granted in 1543. The Bible was on every gentleman's table. Burgesses, all over the land, were becoming Reformers. The common people had risen. And the strength of a nation is the strength of the people.

But what of George Wishart at Bristol?

He spent some time there with Bishop Latimer, but soon came under the suspicion of heresy. With other Scots refugees he left England and made for the headquarters of the Swiss Reformers at Basel, Strassburg, and Zurich. While among them he translated their "Confession" into English, the famous Swiss document known as the First Helvetic.

In a few years he returned to England, and became a tutor of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge. At this time he was a tall scholarly man, of rather melancholy countenance, black-haired, long-bearded, with a round French cap on his head. A courteous, well-travelled man, he invariably wore a long frieze gown, with a black fustian doublet under it, plain black hose, coarse new canvas for his shirts, with white bands at the neck and white cuffs at the wrists. There is a hint among



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the Bristol folk of a certain amount of Scots dourness, and John Knox himself tells us that he was most sharp of eye and speech. Such was the well-grounded scholar who returned as one of the very ablest Reformers to face Cardinal Beaton and all his monkish satellites. He was the first of the Lutherans to set the Reformation in Scotland on a well-organised basis of doctrine.

It was in the year 1544 that Wishart arrived at Montrose, and began to preach and expound in many of the parish churches. But Beaton got at once at the magistrate, and hounded him out of Dundee. A little while in the west country, and again he was back in the neighbourhood of Dundee, ministering to the poor plague-stricken folk. A priest in the pay of the Cardinal tried to kill him, but when the people would have torn this wretched tool of Beaton's in pieces, Wishart took the priest in his arms and saved him from the fury of the mob. He dispensed the Sacrament to many congregations, using the Swiss Confession and the Zurich Communion Office. Gradually he became the ablest mouthpiece of the Scots Reformers, and consequently the bitterest enemy of Cardinal Beaton.

Then his campaign was transferred to East Lothian, and we hear of him thundering out his sermons at Haddington and Ormiston. It was in East Lothian that Wishart met a young man who was destined to be a yet greater Reformer than himself—John Knox. At Haddington, where the smallness of the audience disappointed the preacher; and at Ormiston House, where the preacher stood under the old yew tree and preached to a great assemblage—at both preachings

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John Knox was present, and was honoured by being permitted to bear the two-handed sword before the Reformer. Knox at this time was tutor to three boys at Longniddry House. How little did the good folk at Ormiston think of the converse which George Wishart and young Knox held under the yew tree at Ormiston Hall! And yet, modest as his entrance into the history of Scotland was, John Knox received the inspiration of his life-work from George Wishart, who was shortly to pass through the fires of martyrdom to his eternal reward.

For the Cardinal with the cruel heart had found out his lodgement, and sent Earl Bothwell to arrest Wishart. There were plenty of leal friends about him to fend him against Beaton's attack; but the Cardinal, true to his own evil instincts, took George Wishart by treachery and guile, for Bothwell lied with a smile on his face when he promised to protect Wishart against Beaton, and to set him free.

It was then that John Knox begged leave to accompany him, gauging with true sagacity, it may be, the treacherous diplomacies of a man whom he could never trust.

"Nay, return to your bairns," said George Wishart to Knox, "and God bless you! One is sufficient for one sacrifice."

Bothwell no sooner had got his man than he broke his promise, and handed Wishart over to Beaton, who hustled him off to St. Andrews and put him on immediate trial. When the usual formalities were gone over, and Wishart had defended the principles of the Reformed faith with firmness and ample clearness, he

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was condemned to death. Like the Lord and Master whom he delighted to serve, he was buffeted and insulted during the mock trial.

They refused him the Sacrament on the eve of his death; but on the morning of his martyrdom, when breakfasting with the governor and warders of the castle, George Wishart "discoursed on the passion of our Lord, and thereafter partook of bread and wine and distributed them to all present." And on the first day of March his body was burnt, as Patrick Hamilton's had been in that same old grey east coast city eighteen years before.

Well can we believe the story which that good and learned man George Buchanan told of David Beaton. This cardinal, whose hands were red with the blood of the martyrs, stood at a gaily-decorated window to watch with keen satisfaction the flames licking round the body of the man who had faced him fearlessly to expound those principles of freedom and truth which every Roman cardinal hated.

But with his dying breath George Wishart prayed for his tormentors, and turning his dying eyes to the bedecked window, he warned his persecutor that his own doom would fall in a few days.

There were those in the audience who heard their martyr hero utter the words, and ground their teeth in rage as they turned their faces towards Beaton's window. One of these was Leslie, a brother of the Earl of Rothes.

But the Cardinal was in no way disquieted, and left the burning stake for a wedding feast in Angus, where one of his own daughters was to be married to the Mas-

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ter of Crawford. This inhuman priest, who himself had burnt a fellow-priest for marrying, now calmly signed the wedding contract and called the bride his daughter!

But there is a point of strain beyond which a people's forbearance will break. That point had now been reached. So, three months after the shameful and utterly indefensible burning of George Wishart, St. Andrews saw another squeamish sight, when Norman Leslie, Master of Rothes, John Leslie, his uncle, Kirkcaldy of Grange, James Melvin, and others rushed into Beaton's room in the Castle of St. Andrews and butchered the Cardinal after a horrid struggle. The sound of scuffling feet; the angry voices of men whose souls had again and again been sickened by the blood and fire of martyrdoms; the cries of the traitor Cardinal; and the dull quick thuds of swords on his crimson-clad body—and all was over.

Thus politics are often sib to religion, and deeds are done by outraged men in moments of high provoke which calmer men in later times will shudder at. But, at least, a murderer of his fellow-men had been murdered by their fellow-sufferers—and there were some in Scotland that day who were not even horrified.

CHAP. XI. JOHN KNOX THE GREAT REFORMER OF THE KIRK WHO MADE SICCAR

BEFORE THE FLAME OF GEORGE WISHART'S burning had died out, a fire had been kindled in John Knox's soul that nothing was ever to put out. The work the one man had begun was to be taken up and carried through by the other. For there is aye a holy succession of men raised up for God's work in the world, despite faggot-fires and gallows-trees, and in John Knox, the great Scotsman of God, the Reformation of the Church was to find a final captain of the conscience that conquers. The work of his life was to change the Church of Rome that was in Scotland into the National Presbyterian Kirk of Scotland—and he did it. Henceforth the Church in Scotland became the Kirk of Scotland.

Like all great men, he had a wonderful preparation for his life-work. There is a sough of early days spent in or about the East Lothian town of Haddington. But we know for certain that his mother was a Sinclair and his father a Knox of Ranfurly and Craighends in Renfrewshire. But the eident boy, with the dour determination in his soul, was of those who, in later life, set more store by grit of character than pride of pedigree. He learnt his Latin rudiments at the Grammar School of Haddington, and then, at the age of nineteen, this fervid lad of parts with his bundle on his back took the road that every clever Scots lad took in those days—to the far-famed College of St. Andrews.

In that little grey city of learning and martyr fires two namely bejants walked armin arm by thesea-links.

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The one was John Knox, the other was George Buchanan. Little did they think, as they discussed their Latin prose, that in after years the one was to lay before Queen Mary the new demands of a free faith after the other had tutored her in all the languages of the fine arts. So the conqueror of a queen and the coach of a queen walked arm in arm on the green links by the sea, and little dreamed of the stormy days a beautiful Frenchified girl was to give them both.

Latin was the tongue of the learned in those days; Greek was unknown until John Erskine of Dun first taught it in Montrose in 1534—the town of George Wishart's first schoolmastering. Not for some years later was Hebrew to be known, when John Row, minister in Perth, taught it in 1560.

So John Knox left St. Andrews an expert Latinist; but he was a middle-aged man before he learnt to read the New Testament in Greek; and it was only in his later years of exile on the Continent that he knew Hebrew. But, before bidding good-bye to his college days, he took exception to many of the trivialities of teaching which his college master, the great John Major or Mair, displayed in class. Thus early did the future master of Scotland show his magerful power in challenging those in authority to adopt a more excellent way. Knox was twenty-five when he took orders in the Church and was ordained a priest.

By this time he was infected with the spirit of reform, and was already teaching the principles of the Lutheran Faith to his students at St. Andrews. It was a dangerous task for a young assistant in philosophy. For Cardinal Beaton was master there. So, after

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courting death at great risks in the classroom, the brilliant young philosophical priest, John Knox, fled to the Lothians. There he became an avowed Protestant. At Longniddry House he was engaged as a tutor, and under the yew tree at Ormiston Hall he heard George Wishart preach.

At Longniddry Knox taught and catechised his lads publicly in the chapel, and all the folks in the countryside who cared came and heard him expounding the doctrines of the Reformation. But the Longniddry days soon came to an end. The news of Wishart's burning at St. Andrews very soon arrived. Knox was roused, with many others, to an energy of resistance that was never again to die down. But worse followed, when the whole country rang with the news of Cardinal Beaton's assassination in the Castle of St. Andrews. It was now the one thing or the other for the determined little Scotsman of God. Beaton's successor, John Hamilton, was already out on the hunt for Knox to take his life. The hunted man thought immediately of Germany, but the laird of Longniddry and John Cockburn of Ormiston persuaded him to remain. So what did the intrepid Reformer do, but resolve to take refuge in the most dangerous place in Scotland—within the Castle of St. Andrews among the conspirators!

He entered the castle, took his pupils along with him, taught them there, and preached to the garrison and the other refugees, three of whom were Sir David Lindsay, John Rough, the minister, and Henry Balnaves of Halhill. So well were they all pleased with the preacher, that they asked Knox to become colleague and successor to John Rough. At first he re-

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fused. But afterwards, being called to the office by the whole congregation publicly, he bowed to the people's will, and was so affected by the fervour of the good folk of St. Andrews, that, on hearing the news, he retired to a room and wept. Thus John Knox became the minister of St. Andrews.

In that danger zone he was still the fearless preacher. Let one sentence from a sermon speak for itself:

"As for your Roman Church, as it is now corrupted, . . . I no more doubt that it is the synagogue of Satan and the head thereof, called the Pope, to be the man of sin of whom the Apostle speaks, than I doubt that Jesus Christ suffered by the procurement of the visible church at Jerusalem. Yea, I offer myself by word or writing to prove the Roman Church this day farther degenerate from the purity which was in the days of the apostles, than were the Church of the Jews from the ordinances given by Moses when they consented to the innocent death of Jesus Christ."

Here, indeed, was defiance. But John Knox had counted the cost. He appeared in the parish church, preached his sermon, made good his points, appeared at a convention later on, met his opponents there, argued with them, until he had defeated them on count after count—and calmly returned to his refuge in the castle.

Then, one day, a French fleet appeared in St. Andrews Bay. The Pope's puppets had triumphed by force of gunpowder where they had failed by force of argument. For the castle was besieged, the garrison was captured, and Knox and his friends were taken on board the French ships—prisoners.

For nineteen months the greatest man in Scotland



CARDINAL BEATON

1530'9



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endured the tortures of a galley slave. Rowing at his galley oar in chains; tortured with indignities and pain; well-nigh wearied to death; and sickened by his riff-raff companions—little wonder he was sometimes despondent and despairing. Yet this big-souled man of God never quite lost his humour. Despite an attack of fever, and every foul attempt by his cruel jailers to make him change his religion, he preserved that grim power of the Scot—jesting in extremity.

One day a large wooden image of the Virgin was brought on board and given to every Scots prisoner to kiss.

John Knox threw it overboard.

“Lat our ladie now save herself. She is lycht a-noughe. Lat her leirne to swime.”

After this the strong man was no more asked to kiss a doll.

The galleys sailed to Scotland the very next year, and when lying off St. Andrews, the homely little grey city with its cathedral towers rising above the sea-washed sands, James Balfour asked Knox, who was very ill with fever, if he recognised the place.

“Yes, I know it well—for I see the steeple of that place where God first opened my mouth in public, to His glory—and I am fully persuaded that I shall not depart this life till that my tongue shall glorify His godly name in the same place.”

But a long compass had to be fetched in the voyaging of this good man before he stood once more in St. Andrews.

When he was released from the French galleys, chiefly through the influence of Edward VI of Eng-

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land, he immediately joined the English Protestant Church and settled to preach in Berwick. Here he met Marjory Bowes, who was afterwards to be his wife. The Protestants in England would fain have kept him among them, and he was offered the living of All Hallows, London, and, later, the bishopric of Rochester. But his heart was yearning for his own land, and his eye often travelled northwards, where his soul in exile longed to be. So he was well content to stay for yet a while at Tweedmouth and expound his principles—a return to scriptural simplicity for an ecclesiastical ideal; and the thorough education of the common people as well as of the ministry of the Kirk. Bible Truth, and Education—these were the two foundation facts of Knox's preaching.

But on the accession of Bloody Mary he was forced to bundle and go once more.

This time John Knox went to Geneva, that far-famed city on Lac Lemman, where John Calvin had already laid the foundations of the Reformed Church. Eight hundred Englishmen were on the Continent, seeking refuge from persecution. For a few months Knox ministered to some of these English exiles at Frankfort. Then a call came from the Reformed worshippers at Geneva, and there he settled down as minister.

In Geneva he first met Calvin, that great soul whose powerful preaching won over a whole cityful of folk from the Roman faith to the Reformed. The two men were about the same age—they had the same high sentiments—in mind and character they had the same strong convictions. John Calvin was John Knox's ideal Reformer.

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In the plain little kirk, by the side of the great cathedral, John Knox passed some of the happiest years of his life, preaching the Gospel as a faithful minister to Christ's flock who were outed for their faith and conscience. To-day that little kirk stands sleeping in the sun, with a shady tree rising out of the cobblestones betwixt it and the cathedral walls, and within, nothing but whitewashed walls and plain deal seating—the very mother of all the plain douce country kirks that were yet to be scattered over broad Scotland, as symbols of a plain man's faith in the great simplicities of God. Here John Knox, the man who, above all other men, made the Kirk in Scotland, ministered in holy things for a handful of happy years.

And yet not altogether happy. For the news of persecutions at home rent his soul with sorrow. Once, even, he returned to Scotland to see for himself how it fared with the Reformers there. In 1555, with his life in his hand, he visited the faithful. In Edinburgh he lodged with James Syme. Here, in a little room, he met Erskine of Dun and Maitland of Lethington, who was afterwards to be Queen Mary's secretary. Here he preached, and the crowds were so great that he spoke night and day to congregations that had to come in relays. He condemned the attendance of the Reformed believers at Roman places of worship, and when Maitland of Lethington defended it, Knox crowded argument upon argument until even he gave way. This was the first formal step taken in Scotland to separate the adherents of the new Kirk in Scotland from the papal Church of Rome.

Then, during this secret visit, Knox ventured on a

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stealthy tour up and down the country. The House of Dun in Angus, Calder House in the Lothians, Barr, Kineanleugh, Carnell, Ochiltree, and Gadgirth in Ayr, Finlayston in Renfrew, and again Calder and Dun—in all these places he visited gentlemen of the Reformation, and preached to the common folk, who came to hear him gladly.

A solemn bond was signed by many of the gentlemen of Mearns to renounce Papacy—and this was the first of the many bands, or covenants, which were to become so common in the religious life of Scotland.

Then back again to Geneva, the Reformers' paradise,—and John Knox settled once more to minister to the congregation in the little kirk by the cathedral square. Now came perhaps the peacefulest years in all his life, with a happy fireside of his own, and wife and bairns to make domestic bliss at home, while he walked abroad to preach and teach his beloved doctrines of conscience and free grace. How much he loved his lot in Geneva, these words from a letter he wrote to John Locke will prove:

“I could have wished, yea, and cannot cease to wish, that it might please God to guide and conduct yourself to this place, where, I neither fear nor eshame to say, is the most perfect school of Christ that ever was in the earth, since the days of the Apostles.”

But he knew these happy, quiet years in blessed Geneva could not last. This man of fire and unquenchable zeal was only biding his time. For the seed he had sown in yon far northern land was growing slowly in secret. And one day there would come a call from the faithful to him, when the harvest was ripe for the sic-

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kle. Then, John Knox knew, there would be no more tranquil days for him. He was God's own harvester. So he kept his sickle bright and sharp.

He had not long to wait. For one day James Syme and James Barron walked into his study in Geneva, and handed him a letter. They had come all the way with it from Edinburgh, and the face of John Knox glowed with life and expectancy as he broke the seal.

It was a letter from the Earl of Glencairn, Lords Lorn, Erskine, and James Stewart, informing Knox of the spread of the good cause, and inviting him to come over and take charge of the Reformation in Scotland, for which they were all willing to spend both life and fortune. Knox read the letter again. He read it to his congregation. He read it to John Calvin. And they all said, "Go."

So he rose up, and came to Dieppe. But here he received another letter, asking him to delay, as some had repented of their invitation and were now irresolute.

It was a great set-back to the man of fire. But, like a wise man, he could not spoil the cause by setting himself at the head of a people who were not yet united. So he resolved to wait. He went once more on a preaching tour through France, perfecting his knowledge of the French language the while, until he could write and speak the same with ease. Thus a providence overruled his delay, for, but for this proficiency in French, he could never later on have gained the ear of Mary—that truly Frenchified royal lady who could not understand the plain Scots tongue of her untravelled subjects in Edinburgh. A flying visit to Geneva again, a translation of the Bible into English, and a notorious

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pamphlet on *The First Blast of the Trumpet against the Monstrous Regiment of Women*—all this John Knox accomplished while he was awaiting the call of his country and his God.

Then the great call came, this time from one and all, to come over and help them. He took ship at Dieppe for Leith, and during that voyage his whole heart and soul went out in yearning for the folk in that little northern land who had asked him to see them through this final fight for freedom, in the name of Christ their King. Come storms or calms, he must reach that land of grey weather and sturdy consciences. For God was in this thing. And he himself was God's own chosen captain of the Kirk.

The May day that John Knox landed at Leith was a great day for Scotland. A little crowd of anxious folk, some high in rank, some lowly enough, watched the sloop draw into the harbour, and when the keen-faced man with the long beard and the flowing cloak stepped ashore, there were great greetings and hand-shakings among the Reformers gathered to meet him. For the man who was to make siccar had come. From that moment John Knox became the moving spirit of the Reformation in Scotland. He preached up and down the country, and won the cities of Perth and St. Andrews for the Reformed religion. He became the minister of St. Giles' Kirk in Edinburgh, and won also a large section of the folk there.

But the Queen-regent, Mary of Guise, was against him, and did him great ill with her French money and her French soldiers. Knox, however, was a statesman

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as well as a preacher, and played a counter-move, with England and Elizabeth behind him, so that e'er long the *Treaty of Leith* was signed. Then, indeed, he had the upper hand of the papal party, for the Treaty decreed that all French troops were to be removed, and power was to be given to the Scots Parliament to settle the other affairs of the kingdom. The Treaty was fatal to the Papacy, and the power was left in the hands of the Reformers. Soon the Roman Catholic worship was well-nigh deserted, and when the Parliament met, it sanctioned the Reformed religion, which the Scots people, as a whole, had already adopted. Thus the Presbyterian Kirk became the Kirk of Scotland.

But there was a vast deal yet to do. One of the very first things that Parliament did was to draw up a *Confession of Faith*. This was done with much consideration and painstaking, the hand of John Knox being on the scribe's pen all the while. When presented to Parliament, the Confession was ratified, and the papal jurisdiction was legally abolished, once and for all.

Thus, in the year 1560, Protestantism was established as the national religion in Scotland.

Then followed the great work of completing the organisation of the Reformed Kirk. *The Book of Common Order*, which the English Reformed Kirk at Geneva had adopted, was not considered quite adequate for a great number of confederated congregations. So the Lords of the Privy Council appointed Knox and five ministers to draw up a plan of worship and a constitution according to the Scripture. This they did, and the result was *The First Book of Discipline*.

There were to be four kinds of office-bearers in the

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new Kirk of Scotland—the *Minister*, to whom the preaching and the administration of the Sacraments belonged; the *Doctor* or *Teacher*, whose duty it was to interpret Scripture and confute errors, besides teaching theology in schools and colleges; the *Ruling Elder*, who assisted the minister in exercising ecclesiastical discipline; and the *Deacon*, who had the special oversight of the revenues of the Church, and of the poor.

There were also four different courts of the Kirk. The affairs of each congregation were managed by the minister and elders in a body called the *Kirk Session*, which met once a week, or oftener. A larger body still, consisting of ministers and learned men of various churches from a wider district, was afterwards converted into a *Presbytery* or classical Assembly. The Superintendent met with the ministers and delegated Elders in the district twice a year in what was called a *Provincial Synod*. And, finally, the *General Assembly*, composed of ministers and elders commissioned from different parts of the kingdom met twice a year, to look after the vital interests of the National Kirk at large. Such was, and still is, the general constitution of the Presbyterian Kirk of Scotland. John Knox and his colleagues were its framers in that famous *First Book of Discipline*.

Education was also part of their ideal. In every parish a school, for the teaching of religion, grammar, and Latin; and in every notable town a college, for the teaching of logic, rhetoric, and classical language—such was their splendid plan.

The First General Assembly of the Kirk of Scotland met in the Chapel of St. Mary Magdalene on 20th



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December 1560. It consisted of forty members, only six of whom were ministers. Knox was one of these, and he continued to sit as a member in most of the Assemblies until his death. That same year Marjory Bowes, his wife, died, leaving him two little sons. Thus the bitters and sweets of life are mixed for great as for humble folk. Only, in four years' time, the great Reformer, within sight of his sixtieth year, took to himself a wife again, Margaret Stewart, daughter of Lord Ochiltree, one of the royal Stewarts, a little lass of but sixteen years. Through his second wife John Knox was, curiously enough, related to Queen Mary, his historical antagonist in many a bitter colloque.

For this was one of his hardest tasks—the opposition for six years of Scotland's most romantic queen.

Born and bred as a strict Roman Catholic, she was invited by the Scots nobles to return in 1561—a dangerous invitation in all the circumstances. Trained among the soft elegancies of French life; a beautiful, wayward, impulsive girl; used to flattery, and seldom contradicted—she came to the ruder life of Scotland, where she breathed an alien atmosphere, and was continually opposed and thwarted. On leaving France she was told that it must be the glory of her reign to bring Scotland under the papal power, and on arriving she found most of her people determined to resist Papacy to the death!

Her relentless antagonist was John Knox. He was not a soft man. He did not live in a soft time. Nor was his relation to womankind either very tender or soft-spoken. With other men, the tears of this beautiful girl-queen often won the day. But Mary's tears never

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moved John Knox. And it is well that he gripped her, else Scotland and the Kirk to-day might not have been free.

He had at least four interviews with her.

She summoned him at once for his anti-papal sermons in St. Giles.

"Think you," said she, "that subjects may resist their princes?"

"If princes exceed their bounds, madam, no doubt they may be resisted even by power."

"But you are not the Church that I will nourish," said the queen. "I will defend the Church of Rome—for it is, I think, the true Church."

"Your will, madame," he answered, "is no reason; neither doth your thought make the Roman harlot to be the true and immaculate spouse of Jesus Christ."

"My conscience is not so," said Mary.

"Conscience, madam, requires knowledge; and I fear that right knowledge you have none."

"But I have heard and read," she replied.

"So, madam, did the Jews who crucified Christ."

Thus did John Knox grip Queen Mary.

On another occasion it was the same.

"I cannot be quit of you. I vow to God I shall be revenged"—and we can imagine the stamp of her imperious little foot. Next minute she burst into tears. Ah, those tears!

Knox waited, unmoved, until she had done crying. Then he began his argument again.

"But what have you to do with my marriage, or what are you in this commonwealth?"

"A subject born within the same, madam. . . . When-

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soever the nobility of this realm shall consent that ye be subject to an unfaithful husband, they do as much as in them lieth to renounce Christ."

The Queen began to cry again. Again Knox waited. Then he protested that he never took delight in the distress of any creature, but he was constrained, though unwillingly, to sustain her tears rather than hurt his conscience and betray the commonwealth through his silence.

At that the Queen, in a passion, ordered him from her presence.

In the adjoining room he saw her ladies sitting in their rich dresses.

"O, fair ladies," said he, "how plesing was this lyfe of yours, if it sould ever abyde, and then, in the end, that we might pass to hevin with all this gay gear!"

How strong, how stern, how terrible was this man of conscience, who would rather alienate his noblest follower than budge one inch from what he thought was truth!

"That man," said the Queen on another occasion, "has made me weep, and has shed never a tear himself: I shall now see if I can make him weep."

So she called her council together; but, at the end of the trial, Knox was acquitted.

"And," we read, "that nicht was nyther dancing nor fiddeling in the Court; the madam was disappoynted of hir purpose, quhilk was to have had John Knox in hir will be vote of hir nobility."

This man, who set up the Kirk in Scotland against the fearful odds of Rome, lived from beginning to end in peril of his life, and at last died hard. When apo-

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plexity silenced his thunder in St. Giles, his enemies rejoiced that he would never speak again. But he got back his speech, and in a few days was preaching in St. Giles once more.

The last two years of his life were anything but tranquil. He was protected by night and by day. Muskets were fired at him as he sat in his house. A man in Leith was actually assaulted and mutilated because he was called Knox. From Edinburgh the great Reformer had to fly to St. Andrews. James Melville, then a student, described the last sermon which Knox preached there, in these pithy words:

“He was very weik . . . bot, er he was done with his sermone, he was sa active, and vigorous, that he was like to ding the pulpit in blads, and flie out of it.”

In the summer of 1572 he returned in great weakness of body to Edinburgh. But the lion-heart of the man was as strong as ever. He entered his old pulpit at St. Giles to preach, but half of the congregation could not hear him, so feeble had the great voice become. The thunder was all over, and the silence was coming.

On a November day, worn out in body and soul by his great labours and harassments for Scotland and the Kirk, he lay down to rest, and quietly fell on sleep.

When, two days after, the body was laid in a grave behind the old grey Kirk of St. Giles, it was the Regent Morton who told the story of his life in this one word, “There lies he who never feared the face of man.”

Are we sure that we fully realise what we owe to John Knox in Scotland to-day?

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But for him, the cause of Protestantism in our land would have been lost. He fought the battle of freedom and conscience, both for the people and the Kirk, and he expressed the whole principle of Presbyterianism when he said to Maitland, "Take from us the liberty of Assemblies, and you take from us the Gospel." He laid the foundation of national education when he planted a school in every parish.

But, like all men, he had his faults; and, like all great men, he had great faults.

He was often depressed, melancholy, and "churlish"—the last, his own word. His passions were strong; his zeal betrayed him at times into intemperate language; he was inclined to be obstinate, haughty, and disdainful; an utter stranger to smooth speech, he sometimes irritated where he might have reconciled an opponent. His way with women was more than a trifle domineering. While we wish, on the one hand, that he had written oftener to Marjory Bowes, his first wife, and seldomer to Dame Bowes, his mother-in-law; we wish, on the other hand, that he had not when he was sixty married for his second wife a little girl of sixteen. He is blamed by many a white-fingered dilettante to-day for heading a movement that brought down many a beautiful building, the crash of whose priceless traceries in fair-wrought stone a sensitive ear can almost hear to-day—for did John Knox not once say that "the best way to keep the rooks from returning was to pull down their nests"?

Be it so. The devil with whom this man was wrestling was strong, and his only chance in the fight was to be stronger still.

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He wanted moral leprosy thrown out of Scotland, and he who fights with leprosy cannot always choose his methods. A man who has rowed in French galleys and endured the tortures of a slave is in small danger of being soft-mannered. As well expect a man who sees his wife and children at the windows of a burning house to pick his steps across the muddy street, as expect John Knox to be tolerant or gentle in the face of iniquities which were threatening the life of his beloved land.

He saved Scotland. He set up the Kirk. He begot within the high folk and the plain folk of Scotland that thirst for knowledge and that passion for conscience which, throughout the generations, have bred a character that is often hard with sheer strength and silent with the deepest emotion. A weaker man could not have done it.

So let the churl keep picking holes in the well-worn coat of this kingly Scot—there will always be some who maintain to the end that John Knox, the man who made siccar, was the greatest Scotsman who ever lived.

CHAP. XII. GEORGE BUCHANAN A PRINCE OF SCHOLARS & HIS ROYAL PUPILS

JOHN KNOX AND GEORGE BUCHANAN, THESE sib souls, will ever stand side by side in the history of Scotland and the Kirk. They were born within a few months of each other, they went to the College of St. Andrews together, they took the same side at the Reformation, they were battered by the same blows of experience, and they spoke the truth with the plainest intimacy to the same queen.

The clever lad who was born in Killearn village was no hamebider, for George Buchanan was better known in foreign lands than in his own. In France they called him the first poet of his age, and the greatest man of his time. In Holland the collegers and reading folk talked about him as the wonder of Scotland. He spoke Latin as easily as we speak our mother tongue. There was no better humanist alive. But by the force of circumstances he was early apprenticed to languages. For his father was a Gaelic-speaking highlander, and his mother was a douce lowlander from Haddington, with an East Lothian twang. There was no Gaelic in the Lothians, and there was little English in the highlands; so the little lad in Killearn soon learnt to speak in one language to his father and in another to his mother.

Schooling in Paris, soldiering in Northumberland, and colleging in St. Andrews made a brave start in life for the delicate boy with the prodigious brain; and at twenty-one he was in his beloved France again, for the second time. Life at the Scots College in Paris was no soft affair. Little to eat, pallets of straw on the floor to

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sleep upon, no fires in winter, and a vast deal of hard thinking to do—only a Scots lad of parts and pith could have done it. But he won through, and became a professor at last in the College of St. Barbe.

Ten years of this learned life in Paris, and George Buchanan had become one of the best-known scholars in Europe. The very sun of France got into his Scots blood, and to the end of his life he had something of the polished French manner about him, to soften his dour Scots ways.

Then Scotland again, England, and Bordeaux. He was always on the move. His honest, downright tongue would tell nothing but the truth. He made enemies among the Jesuits wherever he went, and none more bitter than Cardinal Beaton of the cruel heart. We find him even in the Portuguese town of Coimbra sitting in a professor's chair. Next, at Salamanca in Spain, he endangers his life among the Jesuits by eating meat on a certain Friday in Lent rather than sickening himself with conger eels. Finally, in a dungeon of the Inquisition, he suffers many things for all his outspoken heresies. Before leaving Portugal, while he was staying with the kindly monks in a monastery for three months, he wrote his *Translation of the Psalms into Latin Verse*.

Then, back to France again, the country that he loved so well. It was always France again. He spent altogether thirty years of his life in that pleasant land of sunshine, until in the end his friends at home said he was more of a Frenchman than a Scot.

But the heart of a wandering man aye turns to the homeland again, and after twenty-two years of exile



GEORGE BUCHANAN

GEORGE BUCHANAN

George Buchanan became a Protestant, like his old fellow-student John Knox, and returned to his native land. He was now nearly sixty years of age, and, but for a flying visit to England and another to France, he never left his homeland again.

And he came home to a very difficult bit of school-mastering—the tutoring of none other than the beautiful young Queen Mary herself. Here, indeed, was work well suited to a Franco-Scot. Mary was a good linguist, and it was George Buchanan's duty to read Latin with her. She hated John Knox, who angered her, but she loved Buchanan because he knew France, and could speak to her in her own soft tongue.

See them in Holyrood reading their Latin books together! How often they laid them down and began to dream and talk of France, the pleasant sunlit land which they both knew so well; and when, at last, Mary or one of her fair ladies began to sing this plaintive refrain to harp or viol,

“Adieu, adieu, plaisant pays de France,”

the tears would run down the Queen's cheeks, and even sombre-faced Buchanan, her elderly instructor, would sigh with longing when he remembered the vineyard plains and the slow-running, sunny rivers. Thus their common love of France made the grave scholar and the gay Queen intimates.

Anecdotes, tales of travel, and humorous quips enlivened the converse which the old man held with the beautiful girl-queen. If John Knox made Mary cry, George Buchanan made the Queen's cabinet very often ring with laughter. As sunlight to a caged bird, so was his brilliant speech to the unhappy Queen.

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Not that Buchanan was a dapper man of the world. He was far from that. With his lugubrious, long-featured face, slovenly dress, and a waistbelt that was never in its right place, he was scarce the man to sit appropriate in a queen's reception-room. But he was of the royal race of culture, and Mary loved him for his wit and humanity.

Then a day came when the Queen's grave tutor turned away from her in righteous anger. This break in the Queen's weather was inevitable. For when her husband Darnley was murdered in Kirk o' Field, George Buchanan was one of those who believed that this beautiful girl, with the dangerous fascination in her eyes, was implicated in the murder of her own husband.

Darnley was the chief of the clan to which Buchanan belonged, and in those far-off doughty days it was a vital clan law that if the chief were killed, every clansman was bound to do his best to find out the murderer. Buchanan could not kill Mary, but he could use his pen—and there is a terrible power in the pen of a ready writer. So Buchanan wrote about Mary in such a way that the very worst was inferred. Ever after that the elderly tutor and the queenly pupil were bitter enemies. There were no more pleasant talks, no more laughter, no more wistful dreams of France in the royal cabinet.

Religion, too, separated Buchanan from the Queen far more than the murder of Darnley. She was a devout Catholic, and he was a staunch Protestant. This first scholar in the land was a great acquisition to the Reformers. They put him into the prominent positions which his worth deserved. Several times he was a member of the General Assembly, and once, though

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a layman, he was made Moderator. But it was at St. Andrews—that ancient pilgrim-place of Scots martyrs and scholars—that he filled his proper niche, when they made him Principal of St. Leonard's College. There his genius for teaching found ample scope.

And yet this royal schoolmaster could not get away from his royal pupils. For when Queen Mary was driven out, her little son, King James VI, was only four years old. The Reformers were very anxious to bring him up in the now established faith of his native land, so they engaged George Buchanan to be his tutor. Did any man ever, before or since, tutor a queenly young mother and her kingly son?

What a quaint pair they must have made at Stirling Castle, when Andrew Melville and his nephew James visited them—the old scholar and the boy-king! It was an October day, and the two Melvilles were travelling from their old Baldovoy home to Glasgow. They stopped at Stirling to pay their respects to George Buchanan, and this is what James Melville says: "The sweetest sight in Europe that day, for strange and extraordinary gifts of ingyne, judgment, memorie, and language . . ." "There Mr. Andro conferrit at lynthe with Mr. George' Buchanan, then entering to wrait the storie of his country." So, almost within sight of his own birthplace, the old scholar taught the little King, between the chapters of his History.

He taught him many things right well, but he did not teach him to love the Reformers' faith. He was, however, a very perfect dominie, for the little rascal of a king soon found out that Master Buchanan was his master indeed.

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In those days, when a boy-king was learning his letters, another boy, called "the whipping-boy," was always at hand to take a whipping, by proxy, for the King when the royal rebel misbehaved. It was a bad prerogative. George Buchanan did away with the whipping boy, and made young James Stuart the Sixth suffer like the lave.

One day, when the little Earl of Mar was playing with a sparrow, James grew jealous of the bird, and tried to snatch it for himself. A battle of fisticuffs followed between the boys, and the sparrow was killed. When the old scholar heard the tale, he rose from his History in a royal rage, boxed the King's ears until they nipped with pain, and told him that he himself, who had killed the sparrow, came out of a bloody nest.

Change the scene to the Castle schoolroom, where the same two boys were writing an essay on "Archibald Bell-the-Cat." With a spice of true Stuart insolence youngster James looked up and said to his old master, "And who will bell the cat?"—defying him to lay a finger on his royal little body. For answer, Buchanan took hold of the King and gave him the soundest thrashing he ever got. The little snob yelled so loudly that the Countess of Mar came running from another room to see what dreadful thing had happened. All that she saw was the boy-king rubbing the sore place and sobbing like to break his heart.

"Sir," she exclaimed, "art not afraid to lay a finger on the Lord's anointed?"

"Madam," the old man replied, "you will attend to your own business, and leave me to finish mine."

And this he did.

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On yet another occasion, when Buchanan found James making promises which he did not mean to keep, he gave the boy two bits of paper, and told him to sign his name to each. This James did, without taking the trouble to read them. But on one of the papers it was set down that Buchanan was to be king of Scotland for fourteen days. So when the old man received it, he began to behave like a king and to speak to the boys as if they were mere subjects.

James thought that his tutor had gone mad. But a look at the paper which he had signed brought the irresponsible boy to his senses, and showed him that his wise old teacher was laughing at him.

The King never quite forgave George Buchanan for telling him the truth and thrashing him. The great scholar could not continue to box the royal ears, but he continued to write against kings who did not do their duty, and in later years James always looked afraid when anyone who reminded him of Buchanan came near him.

When Buchanan was an old man, a privy councillor, and a writer of many books, Andrew Melville and two friends went to the printers' one day to see the far-famed *History of Scotland* in the press. There were words in it that were certain to displease the King, so the three friends went back to Buchanan and cautioned him.

"But," said he, "are the words true?"

They had to admit that they were.

"Then let them stand—and let the King do as he pleases."

Here, surely, was a Scots Reformer of the right stuff!

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Was ever any man better fitted by conscience, intellect, and experience to write a book on *The Rights of the Crown in Scotland*? He had checked a queen for her sins, he had whipped a king for his insolence, and in a hundred different ways had shown how grotesque was the mischievous claim of the Stuarts to a divine right over their subjects.

And yet this man, who was the greatest scholar of his day, the schoolmaster of a queen and a king, a privy councillor, and the historian of his native land, died in poverty.

He asked his servant, in his last extremity, how much money was in the house. The serving-man told him:

“Not enough to bury you, Master Buchanan.”

“Give it to the poor,” he replied.

“But, sir, who is to pay for the funeral?”

“That matters nocht,” replied the dying man again, “for they can either let my body lie here, or do with it as they please.”

And so it fell out.

George Buchanan, who in Scotland, in England, and throughout the Continent of Europe was considered the greatest of all Scotsmen, was buried in Greyfriars Kirkyard at the expense of the town purse of Edinburgh.

CHAPTER XIII. ANDREW MELVILLE THE PERFERVID SCOT WHO DENIED THE DIVINE RIGHT OF KINGS

IF GEORGE BUCHANAN WAS THE MOST ILLUSTRIOUS contemporary of John Knox, Andrew Melville was the great Reformer's natural successor.

An unflinching, fiery scholar of the first degree, this man came of the true Reformer breed which feared the face of neither king nor courtier, and would brook no interference in the holy affairs of Christ's Kirk. George Buchanan had whipped King James for his sins when he was a little boy, but Andrew Melville was the only man who ever took the King by the coat sleeve and defied him when he came to man's estate.

A man of learning, to be sure, was this James the Sixth; but with all his mental gear he was a twisted soul; and the true gauge of his worth was taken by the man who called him the wisest fool in Christendom.

It was this Stuart king, with the empty heart and the overweening faith in his own divine right, that Andrew Melville set himself to resist, and the very nature of the case made Melville the greatest fighter of his day in the Kirk. The fight, for him at least, lasted thirty years. It was a stormy period of Kirk history. The religion of the Reformers was altogether at the mercy of the regents and the King. But Melville championed both cause and conscience for the common folk, and struck with all his might at James's kingly selfishness.

Andrew Melville had a beloved nephew James, who was but eleven years younger than himself. James

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Melville kept a diary, and wrote down his entries in the homeliest Scots. In this priceless book he paints a very heartsome picture of life in Scotland during the last quarter of the sixteenth century, and gives us many a quaint glimpse of his famous Uncle Andrew.

Like so many of the stalwart leaders of the Kirk, Andrew Melville was the son of a country gentleman, whose place of Baldovy was near Montrose. "He was a sicklie tender boy, and tuk pleasure in nathing sa meikle as his buik." Being bred in good scholarship at the Grammar School of Montrose, he early learned to read Greek, and when he went to St. Andrews, he was the only person there who could read Aristotle in the original. It was John Douglas, Provost of St. Mary's College, who once took the pale-faced boy between his knees and said, "My sillie* fatherless and motherless chyld, it's ill to wit what God may mak' of thee yet!"

From St. Andrews to Paris, from Paris to Poitiers, from Poitiers to Geneva—how the old road to law and learning on the Continent was beaten hard by the feet of scholarly Scots lads in those old days! It was ten long years before his friends in Scotland won any word of him; for he never wrote home; and it was only when the Bishop of Brechin and one, Andrew Polwarth, happened on him sitting in a professor's chair in the University of Geneva, that the long-lost Andrew Melville was found. If a clever Scots scholar went amissing in those days, his friends were safe to look for him in Geneva town. With much reluctance he agreed to return to the Kirk at home. After many farewells, he left Geneva with the great Beza's benediction.

* Delicate.

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He arrived in Scotland just two years after John Knox had died, and a sorry state of affairs he found in kirk, school, and college. A man of Melville's learning was not to be passed by, so with nice diplomacy Regent Morton offered him the post of court chaplain, if by any hap he might be won over to the side of the Episcopalians. But the wiles of diplomacy were ever to Andrew Melville as the red rag to the bull, so he declined the favour, and returned to his old home of Baldovy.

It was at this time that his nephew James was given over to Andrew Melville as a kind of second self. James describes this sacramental act in these quaint words: "He cam to Baldovy to his brother, my father, whar he remeaned that hervest quarter, and whar, within a few dayes efter his coming, I was resigned ower be my father hailelie unto him to veak* upon him as his sone and servant, and, as my father said to him, to be a pladge of his love. And surlie his service was easie, nocht to me onlie, but even to the fremdest † man that ever served him."

Andrew Melville took a foremost part in reviving the learning of his native land. A month after his return the General Assembly appointed him Principal of Glasgow University. St. Andrews claimed him too, but he made his choice, and went to Glasgow, where he remained for six years, teaching and training his students so famously in classics, mathematics, philosophy, and theology, that soon the classrooms, which he had found well-nigh empty, were crowded with students not only from Scotland, but from the European countries as well.

* To wait.

† The greatest stranger.

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St. Andrews claimed him again, and this time, obeying the call, he went to the east-land city by the sea to begin the same untiring work. He remained there as Principal of St. Mary's College for twenty-six years.

But it is as an apostle of the Kirk that Andrew Melville is remembered best. With a dour, independent Scots love of freedom and reform in his very blood and marrow, he faced the King and the Regent, as no other man in the land dared do, and the great scenes of his controversy are best described by his faithful nephew James in that clean braid Scots tongue which is so like the spirit of the men who used it in those brave old days.

Just two years before Andrew Melville's return the affairs of the Kirk were in deep confusion. John Knox was dead. The Kirk could not find a leader to take up his work. Regent Morton, taking advantage of this lull in reform, appointed the Tulchan Bishops, and foisted them on the unwilling Presbyterian Kirk. The word *Tulchan* means a calf's skin stuffed with straw, and this mock affair is put before a calfless cow to induce her to give milk. The Tulchan Bishops, therefore, were a breed of dummy prelates created by the nobles and imposed upon the Kirk, in order that the nobles might suck the Kirk of Scotland almost dry, by seizing for their own use the moneys which belonged to the National Kirk. A bishop had no existence in the Kirk of John Knox; the superintendent being but a superior kind of minister. But, in a moment of leaderless weakness, the Kirk allowed this so-called union between the Anglican and Presbyterian ideals; and the Tulchan Bishops took their empty titles, and handed over the

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money which the titles carried to the nobles who were their patrons. So the calf's skin stuffed with straw tricked the old Kirk cow into giving up her creamy milk.

A fine mess of conscience this for a strong, fiery, reforming soullike Andrew Melville to sit down to on his return from Geneva, where honest Protestants could abide nothing but the clean, simple principles of truth!

So he set himself this life-darg—to defend and lead the Kirk against all interference from King, nobles, and bishops. As Moderator of the General Assembly he helped to draw up that historic document, *The Second Book of Discipline*, and so to ding down the whole shameless system of the Tulchan Bishops. The Kirk, with unanimous vote and voice, declared that every so-called bishop was to do the ordinary work of a minister, and was to be attached to a definite congregation. Surely a simple enough contract in Christ!

But nobles and bishops were alike displeased, for here was nothing but ordinary pay for ordinary work!

One day Regent Morton called on Andrew Melville. They had both quick tempers, and this time the Regent lost his. He began to miscall the ministers who were disturbing the peace of the Kirk with "thair conceats and owersee* dreams, imitation of Genev discipline, and lawes."

Melville confuted him with chapter and verse of Scripture, but the Regent only grew angrier.

"Ther will never be quyteness in this country," he cried, "till halff a dissonne of yow be langet or banished the country."

* Oversea—far-fetched.

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"Tushe! sir," says Mr. Andro. "Threaten your courtiers in that fashion. It is the same to me whether I rot in the air or in the ground—the earth is the Lord's—my fatherland is wherever well-doing is. I haiff been ready to giff my lyff whar it was nocht halff sa weill wared, at the pleasour of my God. I leived out of your countrey ten yeirs, as weill as in it. Yet, God be glorified, it will nochtly in your power to hang nor exyll His treuthe!"

Here was surely brave work from an honest man who knew when and where to strike, guided only by that wonderful sagacity which enabled him to smell out men's dispositions.

Like a wise man, Andrew Melville realised that it was this somewhat ambiguous office of Superintendent that had left a loophole in the system of John Knox for the enemies of reform to slip the office of bishop oncemore into a Presbyterian system. So, when framing *The Second Book of Discipline*, Melville advised the Assembly to abolish the office of Superintendent. And this was done.

Change the scene to Perth, and you see Andrew Melville facing both the King and the nobles. He was instructed to lay before the King a statement of the grievances of the Kirk. The air was electric with the vitalities of life and death, and it was rumoured in the countryside that the deputation would be massacred. Melville was warned of the danger he ran in going to Perth.

"I am nocht fleyed, nor feible-spirited," he replied, "in the cause and message of Christ. Come what God please to send, our commission sall be dischargit."

And so it was.

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But when Melville and the others had recited their complaints, the Earl of Arran cried out in anger:

"What! Wha dar subscrivye thir treasonable articles?"

"We dar," answered Mr. Andro, "and will subscrivye tham, and gif our lyves in the cause."

His flashing glance swept in the King and his whole haughty company as he seized the pen from the clerk, wrote his own name, and called for the others to do the same.

"And that day," says James Melville, "the King and courtiers saw that the Kirk haid a bak!"

Lay the scene, next, in Edinburgh if you will, and the tale is much the same.

Andrew Melville was this time accused of having uttered treasonable language in the pulpit. But this Scot, of the fiery spirit and ample brain, had not studied jurisprudence at Poitiers in vain. So he told the King and Council plainly that they had no business to accuse him in a civil court; of a fault with which only the ecclesiastical courts had a right to deal.

At this speech King and nobles roared out like lions in rage, and there and then threatened Melville with death for his daring to challenge their rights. And at that moment everyone in the room looked on Andrew Melville as a dead man.

But "Mr. Andro, never jarging or daschit* a whit, withe magnanimous courage, mightie force of sprit, and fouth† of evidence of reasone and langage, plainlie tauld the King and Counsall, that they presumed ower bauldie . . . to tak upon tham to judge the doc-

* Swerving or abashed.

† Abundance.

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trin and controll the ambassators and messingers of a King and Counsall graitter nor they, and far above tham.

“‘And that,’ sayes he, ‘yie may sie your weakness, owersight, and rashness in takin upon yow that quhilk yie nather aught nor can do’ (lowsing a litle Hebrew Byble fra his belt, and clanking it down on the burd befor the King and chancelar), ‘thair is,’ sayes he, ‘my instructiones and warrand; let sie quhilk of yow can judge thairon, or controll me thairin, that I haiff past by my injunctiounes.’

“The chancelar, opening the buik, findes it Hebrew, and putes it in the King’s hand, saying:

“‘Sir, he skornes your majestie and counsall.’

“‘Na, my lord,’ says Mr. Andro, ‘I skorn nocht: bot with all earnestness, zeal, and gravitie, I stand for the cause of Jesus Chryst and His Kirk.’”

That day, when Andrew Melville was sitting at the dinner-table in James Lawson’s manse, a macer from the Council appeared and charged him to enter the Castle of Blackness within twenty-four hours. This, then, was to be the price of his brave words—a dungeon in Blackness!

But he was an ill man to tackle both with word and ward. So, long before the King’s guard came for him, Andrew Melville was on his way to Berwick, just across the Border. And there, in a comfortable lodging, he remained in exile for two years.

No sooner was his back turned than Parliament passed the Black Acts. These declared that the King was supreme in all matters of Church and State, by reason of his divine right; that to challenge that was

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treason; that the Assembly was no longer free to use its own right of speech or action; and that bishops being once more reinstated, all ministers who did not submit to their authority would lose their livings.

Such was the old bad doctrine of the Stuart kings—the divine right of the Crown to interfere with the divine right of Christ.

Many ministers were exiled. The people once more grew restive under the lash of a Stuart King's whip. The country was swept with plague. Loyal Scots rose in rebellion when the banished lords, with the English Government behind them, returned. They marched on the King at Stirling, and James, ever a time-server, came to terms.

Back came Andrew Melville, and began the old old task of reorganising the Kirk. Through time Parliament passed an act re-establishing the Kirk on the basis of *The Second Book of Discipline*.

James, wily as ever, tried to conciliate Melville by having him a great deal about the Court. "I have streaked his mouth with cream," said he to a courtier.

Let the scene at Falkland Palace one September day in 1596 answer. For these are the words of *meddum* in which James Melville describes one of the greatest speeches ever delivered to a mischief-making King by an honest, wrathful subject:

"Mr. Andro doucht nocht abyd it, bot brak af upon the King in sa zealus, powerfull, and unresistable a maner, that, howbeit the King used his authoritie in maist crabbit and colerik maner, yit Mr. Andro bure him down, and outtered the commission as from the mightie God, calling the King bot 'God's sillie vassel';

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and taking him be the sleive sayes this in effect, throw mikle hat reasoning and manie interruptions:

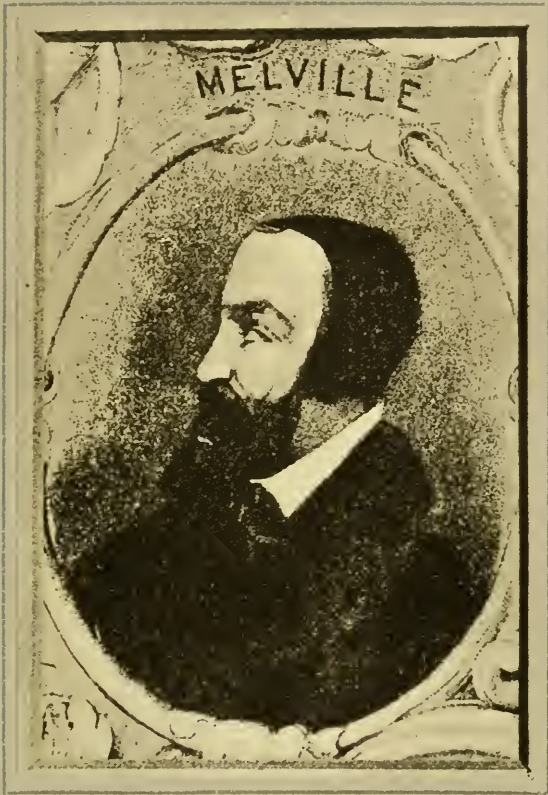
“Sir, we will humblie reverence your Majestie alwayes, namlie in publict bot—sen we have this occasioun to be with your Majestie in privat, and the treuthe is, ye are brought in extream danger bathe of your lyff and crown, and with yow the countrey and Kirk of Christ is lyk to wrak, for nocht telling yow the treuthe—we mon discharge our dewtie thairin, or els be trators bathe to Chryst and yow! And thairfor, sir, as divers tymes befor, sa now again, I mon tell yow, thair is twa kings and twa kingdomes in Scotland. Thair is Chryst Jesus the King, and His Kingdome the Kirk, whase subject King James the Saxt is, and of whase Kingdome nocht a king, nor a lord, nor a heid, bot a member! . . . And, sir, whan ye war in your swadling cloutes, Chryst Jesus rang* friely in this land in spyt of all His enemies.’”

The blood ran hot in Andrew Melville's veins while he was speaking these faithful words; the blood ran hotter in the veins of the King while he listened; and a dirl of pride runs through our souls even yet as we think of those mighty men of old who valued nothing in life but truth, and laid the founds of that freedom in Kirk and country which we enjoy to-day.

To the challenging of that national curse of the Stuart kings—the divine right of a crowned head to interfere in the vitalities of his country and the Kirk—Andrew Melville gave his life.

For when James, the Erastian King who in all things but the dispensing of the Sacraments claimed the

* Reigned.



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powers of a pope, went to England, he summoned the Melvilles and other ministers of the Kirk to a conference at Hampton Court. It was a mere trick to trap them. For in the end Andrew Melville was thrown into the Tower of London, where he was left to languish for four miserable years. This surely was a bitter irony of fate—that while the shifty unscrupulous king was cockfighting and hunting dotterels, the finest scholar in Scotland was cooped up in a damp fireless cell. Summer and winter without a pen or a bit of paper to scribe a thought upon. It sickens honest folk to-day to think how the unconquerable soul of Andrew Melville overcame even that insult—for he scratched his ideas on the walls of his prison with the tongue of his shoe buckle!

Later on he was transferred to a more comfortable room, as, later still, he was released at the request of the French Duke de Bouillon, that he might become professor of Divinity at the University of Sedan. He lived there for eleven years, and died, an exile from his native land.

But, despite the cruelty of kings and the wrath of nobles, nothing could kill or exile or even hurt the truth of God which this man lived to defend. Vigorous thinking, fervid scholarship, sturdy independence, a dauntless courage, and the perpetual claim of conscience to worship God in his own way—these things made Andrew Melville an ideal Scot—and this plain sentence of his beloved nephew James will for ever make his best memorial:—"Scotland never received a greater benefit at the hands of God than this man."

XIV. ALEXANDER HENDERSON MAKER OF COVENANTS & CAPTAIN OF THE KIRK

JOHN KNOX, ANDREW MELVILLE, ALEXANDER HENDERSON—these were the three men who laid their hands on the helm of the Presbyterian Kirk, the one after the other, and steered the ship of Christ in Scotland through many stormy seas. Each in turn took charge, as captain; each laid a straight course for conscience; and each piloted the Kirk between these two sunken rocks, the interfering king and the time-serving bishops.

The outstanding wonder of Alexander Henderson's life was—that he waited for his life-work in the quiet country parish of Leuchars until he was fifty-two years of age; and then, into the nine years that remained, he crowded all that to-day makes him a great historical figure in the annals of the Kirk in Scotland.

There is another curious feature about Alexander Henderson's career. When he was presented to the living of Leuchars by Archbishop Gladstones of St. Andrews, he was such a strong bishop's man, that the douce Presbyterians of Leuchars rose in a body on the induction day and protested against the young Episcopalian being foisted upon them. They locked the Kirk door and defied the law, so that Henderson and his friends had actually to creep into the sanctuary by a window. After that, with the whole parish protesting outside, they went through the mock ceremonial of setting this alien shepherd over Christ's sheep.

But there was a great disciple of Jesus Christ who, long before that, had begun by kicking against the

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pricks of his own conscience, until the turning of his soul came on a sun-baked Syrian road. And the turning came to Alexander Henderson one day when, out of mere cleric curiosity, he went to hear Master Robert Bruce, that prince of conscience-convicters, preach in the parish kirk of Forgan. Henderson sat in the darkest corner of the kirk he could find, but Bruce must surely have seen him; for, when he stood up to preach, he gave out this text: "He that cometh not in by the door, but climbeth up another way, the same is a thief and a robber."

That sermon searched Henderson's conscience and shook his soul. The Divine fire had lit his careless heart at last—and from that day he became a new man in Christ. He was roused to a sense of the people's wrongs. He let go his hold on Episcopacy, and became a convinced Presbyterian. Master Robert Bruce ever after that was his father in God, and to the end of his days Henderson never swerved from his loyalty to the Kirk. He was, indeed, a late developer in grace. But this modest parish minister of Leuchars before he died was to be the most kenspeckle kirkman in the three Kingdoms.

* * * * *

And this is how it all came about.

Charles the First was now on the throne. Like his father, he claimed a pope's prerogative. The old mischief-making shibboleth of divine right was again wounding the people's soul, like a sword thrust into the vitals. But the king cared nothing for the people's soul, or for the bleeding hurts he inflicted, and maintained that he was answerable to God alone for what

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he did. The conscience of his people did not exist to him—he himself was their only conscience—and what a sorry one it was! He hated Protestantism, and was continually harping on this favourite article of his self-made creed—“No bishop—no king.”

Moreover, Charles had gathered round him in the Scots Parliament men of his own kind, mind, and morality; so the Scots Parliament became a mere echo of the king's court. But the Scots people were an independent, conscience-respecting, thinking folk, and although for a long time they were loath to part with their own hankering superstition of a divine right in their romantic, magerful Stuart kings, yet the whole religious genius of the Scots was for Presbyterianism in the Kirk and reform in the State. The inevitable followed. The Kirk and the people ranged themselves against the King and the Parliament.

None but a stupid-headed king would have struck his people so sorely on their most vital part, or forgotten the tragic story of his grandmother—that beautiful, wayward French-bred girl-queen, who had been broken like a reed in her attempt to drive Scotsmen into popery against their will and conscience. He too, alas, was to meet the same fate.

So, when the Kirk of Scotland rose up in rebellion in that far-off day, it was the people of Scotland who rose; for the Scots Kirk has ever been the people's parliament in Scotland. The time had plainly come for a new Reformation in Scotland, and the new Protestants were called the Covenanters. They were men who refused to be put upon—rugged souls who would bow to no king but Conscience—true patriots who, in

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life and in death, were fired with a most holy zeal for a religion that was both pure and free, and that was yet to make Great Britain the first Protestant power in Europe.

* * * * *

A whole volume of history was expressed in the St. Giles' Riot of 1637.

It was a fair summer morning in July, the 23rd of the month, and a Sabbath day, when the new Liturgy of Laud, the king's archbishop, was to be read in the kirks of Scotland for the first time. In St. Giles' the Bishop of Edinburgh, Dr. Lindsay, and Dean Hannay, his willing henchman, were to conduct the service, after the usual early morning service was over.

See the good folks streaming in to the old kirk of St. Giles—nobles in their grand attire, law-lords in their robes, councillors begowned, and all the citizens of the royal town of Edinburgh. There were no regular seats in the kirks of Scotland then, and those fine ladies who wished to sit during sermon had to send their serving-maids with little crepie stools, to sit on them while the congregation assembled, and so secure their places. The kirk was packed, and an unusual stir of excitement was plainly abroad among the great folks and the commonalty. Yonder in the king's place sat Spottiswood, primate and chancellor. Yonder too in a gallery sat Provost Aikenhead, with his rosy face and his rosier nose. Over in a corner sat David Calderwood, the historian, taking notes. Surely some unusual thing was going to happen!

Already the old-fashioned service from the Book of Common Order had been read, the metrical Psalms had

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been sung, and the reader, Patrick Henderson, was reading the lessons from the lectern on which the great Bible rested.

"Mind ye the scene, four years syne, when Master Patrick was draggit frae that very latron* by Bishop Maxwell, to make room for twa white-shirted priests?" said one douce citizen to another in a whisper.

Before his neighbour could make answer, Patrick Henderson, the reader, had closed the Bible and was bidding farewell to the worshippers in these doleful words:

"Adieu, good people, for I think this is the last time of my reading prayers in this place."

A groan ran through the vast assemblage as the reader left the desk.

It was now on the stroke of ten. Through the crowd there ran an indescribable thrill of excitement, like the wind stirring the leafage of a tree. Dean Hannay was making for the desk, with a brown leather-bound folio in his hand.

So innocent a thing is a leather-bound book!

But the sight of it angered the whole congregation. A barbarous tumult arose. Women began to weep, the men shouted, and the serving-maids clapped their hands as the Dean set himself to read Laud's Liturgy. His voice was soon drowned in the uproar, and the fat bishop waddled up the pulpit steps to quell the riot.

"Traitors—bellygods—deceivers—a pope, a pope!"

These were some of the ugly words hurled at him for his pains.

"Wha dare say mass in my lug?" yelled a serving-

* Lectern.

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lass called Jenny Geddes, as she hurled her folding stool straight at the head of the dean. It fell with a clatter on the steps, to be followed only by a shower of Bibles and other creepiestools. Then a rush was made for the pulpit, and the indignant bishop was hauled down without ceremony from his perch.

A thundering order from Spottiswood, the primate, rang through the Church, and the magistrates with their halberdiers swept the angry crew into the High Street. The cobble-stones were next torn up, and amid the general hubbub there was a crash of falling glass, as the windows of St. Giles' were riddled with stones. From less to more the riot spread, and the Bishop that day had to make his way down the street through an infuriated crowd that had nothing but stones and curses to throw at him. Had he not been rescued by the servants of the Earl of Wemyss, he would have been torn in pieces as a public sacrifice.

Thus Scotland seethed with anger at the insult which king and bishops had hurled in the face of her conscience. The Presbyterians were roused to an assertion of their rights, as their fathers had been before them, and they began to withstand all opposition by entering into one solemn covenant after another.

* * * * *

From every part of the Kingdom petitions began to pour in upon the Privy Council, protesting against the innovations. Crowds flocked to Edinburgh, the old grey capital of Scotland, to support these petitions. A special number of deputies were appointed to consider the petitions. The Privy Council approved of the step, and these deputies of the nobles, gentlemen, ministers

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and burghers met in the Parliament House and sat round four tables—hence this fourfold committee was called ever after “The Tables.” The King forbade the meeting of The Tables, but the Scots were in a white heat of indignation. So the King was ignored, and The Tables continued to meet.

Then two men rose to lead the nation at this call of Providence, and planned a renewal of the people’s faith in a great National Covenant. The one was Sir Archibald Johnston of Warriston, the lawyer of the Covenant; the other was Alexander Henderson, parish minister of Leuchars, and the most statesmanlike minister in the Scots Kirk of that day. Between them they drew up the National Covenant, the Magna Charta of Scots religious liberty.

The National Covenant consisted of three parts. The first part was a reproduction of an older Covenant, the King’s Confession of 1581—the second part was a detailed list of Acts of Parliament which condemned Popery and confirmed Presbyterianism; while the third part was a solemn protest against those innovations in worship which had caused the nation to revolt. The second part was the work of Johnston of Warriston; the third part was the work of Alexander Henderson.

Picture the scene in Greyfriars Kirkyard, Edinburgh!

It was a winter’s day, the 28th of February 1638, and sixty thousand folk had crowded into Edinburgh to confess their faith. The National Covenant had been drawn, and the place for the signing was fixed in Greyfriars Kirkyard—the upper yard of the old monastery of the Grey Friars, where a plain, modest kirk

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had been built by the reformers. To-day there is a sough of an old and far-off time about this old kirkyard—but then it was a new resting-place of the dead. How fair a spot it must have been on that snell winter day! The grassy slope fell away northwards to the Grassmarket, where the gibbet stood—that bloody Scots Calvary of the Covenanters. Beyond the Grassmarket rose the rugged castle rock against the clear sky. A new place and a fair place was this to seal the Scots folks' faith that day. But an old place and a sacred place is Greyfriars' Kirkyard to us to-day, with its ancient graves, its mossy turf, its martyr monuments, and its old-time memories of the brave days, long gone by, when our forebears wrenched religious freedom for us from the unhallowed hands of king's men and pope's men.

Early in the morning they came flocking in—nobles, barons, lairds, ministers, and burgesses, with a great concourse of humble folk—to sign the National Covenant.

There is so much to be done, so much to see, and so many weighty words to hear on this great day, that each elbows his neighbour for some word of enlightenment on that teager crowd of noble men and gentle ladies who seem so anxious to get a word with a minister in black cloak and white neck-frill, who is quietly going from group to group.

“Who is he?” says a countryman to an Edinburgh burgess who seems to know all the great folk.

“That one with the roll under his oxters is Alexander Henderson, the minister of Leuchars—the man who is abune a' men in rank this day.”

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A sedate and modest-looking man; with a mild determination on his somewhat anxious face; a furrowed forehead, crowned with a mass of jet black hair; eyes of benignity that are full of a passive courage; a calm firm-set mouth, that is almost hidden by a close-cropped moustache and beard, which rests on a ruff of puckered linen round the neck—throw a black Geneva gown about him, showing glints of a coloured cassock underneath, and you can almost see this tranquil gentleman of Christ now entering the door of Greyfriars' Kirk on that great day of the Covenant.

The church is crammed. Alexander Henderson prays in accents that are full of urgency for decision, the Earl of Loudoun addresses the congregation, Johnston of Warriston reads the Covenant. For a moment there is a hush in the great assemblage, until the Earl of Rothes asks for objectors. But no one speaks, save such as Robert Baillie, who asks some question for enlightenment. Then hands are upheld and solemn oaths are sworn to keep the bond, cheeks run wet with tears, and the process of signing begins.

It was a "fair parchment above an elne in squair," and for hours, within the kirk, men pressed forward to sign their names—Montrose, Rothes, Cassilis and many nobles, barons and commissioners of shires, with Alexander Henderson, Archibald Johnston and all the lave of brave Covenanting ministers. Then the parchment was carried out to the churchyard and spread upon a flat tombstone, where the signing went on till dark—some signing after their names "until daith," while others "did draw their own blood and used it in place of ink."

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It was a dark night, and the three-quarter moon had not yet risen above the hills, so torches and lights were used for those that would write their names ere they slept. A weird night-watch was this in Greyfriars' Kirk-yard, when even the common folk put down their initials, crosses, and marks, to show that they too were one in their faith with the highest in the land. The torchlight revealed tears on many a cheek and blood on many a hand. And the dawn was stealing over the cold grey sea ere some lay down to dream of the doings for Christ's Kirk in Scotland on that great day.

But the work of signing the Covenant had only begun. Many duplicate copies were written and sent broadcast over Scotland. Noblemen conveyed the National Covenant from district to district and from village to village. Ministers commended it to their people in the most out-of-the-way pulpits. It was subscribed in a very short time by almost the whole Kingdom, with the exception of certain great episcopal centres, such as Aberdeen, Inverness, St. Andrews, and Crail. John Livingstone, the noted minister, even rode in disguise with a copy to London, that many loyal Scots who were there might sign.

Let a primate, some mischievous boys, and a king's jester indicate the feelings of the people of the land on this great covenanting protest.

Spottiswood, the primate, who had sat so haughtily in St. Giles' that day of the riot, is now shut up in his lodging in Edinburgh waiting for a safe convoy across the Border, and this is what he writes, in his backroom: "All which we have been attempting to build up during the last thirty years is now at once thrown down."

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Far away on the Moray Firth, the rascallion lads of Fortrose have stolen two of the hated prayer-books, belonging to Bishop Maxwell, from the parish church, and have lighted a fire to burn them on the beach. But the lowe does not destroy them; so they snatch them from the embers, tear them up, and cast them piece by piece into the sea, to make sure.

And in London, as Archbishop Laud is going to a Council meeting, Archie Armstrong, the King's Scots jester, meets him and says, "Mylord, wha is fule noo?" The court clown was immediately reported. He had his motley dress dragged over his ears, lost his place, and was expelled from court. So the wise man became the fool.

Thus the National Covenant was the answer which the Scots folk gave to the attempted patronage of Canterbury and Whitehall.

* * * * *

But the Covenanters had yet to secure the Freedom of Assemblies. So the next time we see Alexander Henderson, he is sitting in the Moderator's chair at the great Glasgow Assembly.

Picture the scene on a wintry day, the 21st of November of that same year. A surging crowd within the nave, chancel and crypts of that vast and beautiful cathedral of St. Mungo, the finest of all the ancient kirks remaining to us in Scotland. Even the city halberdiers cannot control the crowds who are struggling for seats. High up in the clerestory there are crowds of excited women looking down on the moving mass of men below—ministers in black, noblemen in fine clothes, armed men and soldiers with guns and pistols

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clanking their accoutrements wherever they go—while the smoking candles flicker in their sconces and light the dim immensity of the vaulted roofs with a weird meagre glow. Here surely is a solemn setting for the modest minister of Leuchars!

One hundred and forty-four ministers and ninety-six lay members make up this very vital kirk court. Montrose, Argyll, Rothes, Lothian, Cassilis, Eglinton, Wemyss and Home are all there with many others. But two men dominate all the rest—Alexander Henderson, the Moderator, and the Marquis of Hamilton, the King's Commissioner.

This same Hamilton, that inveterate schemer who admitted once to the King that he hated Scotland next to hell, was now troubled above all men. For although the Privy Council sat round his throne to support King Charles and the bishops, yet as he eyed tier upon tier of nobles, lairds, provosts, town-clerks and burgesses, sitting in the cathedral choir, he had an inkling that he was no match for the sagacious little man with the pensive face who had just been put by popular vote into the Moderator's chair, and who speaks now with a whole nation behind him to second every word he utters. There is only one question in every mind within that packed cathedral: "Who is to be the Head of the Kirk in Scotland—King Charles I, or Jesus Christ?"

So the days of debate went on. Amid a sea of other questions this one vital question ever came up above them all—and just a week after the opening sermon, the Marquis stood up and raised objection to the whole Assembly; first, because there were ninety-six lay members in it, and second, because the Assembly had

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no right to pass sentence on the bishops. If the Presbyterians in the Assembly continued to act as they were doing, then he would dissolve the Assembly in the King's name.

Having made this namely speech, the Marquis sat down. The air of the Assembly was charged with an electric fire, and more than one sword was heard clanking on the stone floor. In a hush of silence the Moderator rose. How much for Scotland was to depend on the instant utterance of this one man!

"Then, sir," said Alexander Henderson, "if you must leave, we have no choice but to sit on and do our duty."

Amid the suppressed excitement the Marquis rose, and, followed by all the members of the Privy Council except Argyll, passed down the nave. When they came to the door of the cathedral they found it locked! Then there was an unholy clangour of swords and voices and crashing blows, as the stout oaken door was burst open, and this angry King's Commissioner passed out.

For twenty-one more days the fearless little Moderator presided over the great Glasgow Assembly, incomparably the best man in the Kirk. That great lawyer of the Covenant, Johnston of Warriston, sat at the clerk's table below him.

What brave work they did!

The *Acts* of previous Assemblies establishing Episcopacy were annulled. The *Service Book*, the *Canons*, the *Court of High Commission* and the *Articles of Perth* were abolished. Eight bishops were excommunicated and the other six were deposed or suspended. Above all, the *National Covenant* was upheld. Thus the absolute freedom of Assemblies was secured to the

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Kirk, according to the original enactment in the Book of Polity.

But the modest minister of Leuchars had to pay the price for his nonsuch conduct in the chair. Sorely against his own will, he was made the most-eyed man in Scotland when he was inducted to the High Kirk in Edinburgh. Farewell now to all the quiet simplicities of a country parish! Henceforth he was to stand in the very forefront of the battle for Christ's crown and covenant.

A time of great stress was at hand for all the leaders of the Kirk. Despite the superstitious doctrine of absolute submission to princes, which was still held by some of the Covenanting statesmen, the chief reformers were absolutely determined to keep the Right of Assemblies, and to resist all interference with the conscience of the people and the Kirk in spiritual affairs. Yet it was an ill thing to think of having to take up arms. After much reading and prayer for light on this dark matter, they consulted the great reformers on the continent. There they got no encouragement to bargain about the things of conscience or Christ. Moreover, the indignation of the Scots people as a whole was roused, and soon, by the sheer stress of circumstances, there was no doubt about taking the field.

What a sorry sight the first Covenanting army must have been! A bag of oatmeal on every man's back to last him for ten days; a drove of cattle behind to give milk and butcher meat; a few field-guns made of white iron, tinned, and girded about so as to stand two or three charges, each piece being carried on the back of

VERA EFFIGIES REV.
Viri D'ALEX. HENDERSONI
Scoto Britanni



Yow that can find no object where to Place
Your Wonder Come behold this gracious face
Tis He the great Reformer of his dayes
That powerfull Light Who spread the brighter Rayes
Through Brittain halt benighted which did make
Truth to Triumph proud Babels: Whose to quide

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a pony. Little wonder that, the first time the King saw the Covenanting army he said, "They will certainly beat the English, if it is only to get at their fine clothes!"

* * * * *

And then, after five more anxious years, we see Alexander Henderson in a very different place. He is sitting, with many other distinguished Scots divines, in the Church of St. Margaret's at Westminster. It is Monday, the 25th of September of the year 1643, and the famous Westminster Assembly is drawing up the Solemn League and Covenant.

Sworn by two hundred and twenty members of the House of Commons, and by the divines of the great Westminster Assembly, the Solemn League and Covenant covered a larger ground than the National Covenant in Scotland. It aimed at the victory of true religion throughout the whole land—England, Ireland and Scotland. The English were for a civil or political bond, but the Scots insisted on a religious Covenant. The Scots, with their strong instincts for religious bonds, won the day, and Alexander Henderson drew up the bond.

A grand aim indeed was this great linking up of the whole kingdom for Christ. But the reforming Presbyterians, with Henderson at their head, were too eager for a uniform religion on the lines of Calvin's creed; and in their holy greed for uniformity in spiritual things they were even prepared to coerce their countrymen. In this the Covenanters erred. For a merely nominal agreement in matters of Christ, between men who may

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not be at one in mind about the bond—surely this is not the more excellent way of a willing faith and a perfect love!

It was the dream of Alexander Henderson's life to cure the irreligion of the three kingdoms by a uniform system of Calvinistic presbytery. To that dream he gave his days and nights. But he was doomed to disappointment; for the English had not the same genius for presbytery as the Scots; and in this the little man with the great soul and the pensive eyes misread the temper of his southern neighbours.

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But, notwithstanding the bickers of an angry age, King Charles had a sincere regard for Alexander Henderson, and would have won him over to his side if he could. The plausible Stuart King and the resolute Covenanting minister could not always agree. Neither did they ever quite quarrel. And it is a heartsome thing to remember, that this King, who was so often a thorn in the reformer's flesh, and Alexander Henderson, who so often tried to pull the thorn out, knelt down at times in Holyrood, morning and evening, at the Throne of Grace when this captain of the Kirk had become a royal chaplain.

The man who was most reluctantly dragged away from the quiet of a country parish at the age of fifty into the heat of a nation's controversies, was a perfect master of assemblies. A ripe scholar, a sagacious judge of men, a fearless opponent of error in a people's fight for truth—his whole power lay in his personality. He was apprenticed in the solitude of green pastures and beside the salt sea waves for his short sharp battle in

ALEXANDER HENDERSON

the crowd. Without a single trace of self-seeking, every word and action of his life bore the mark of Jesus Christ. Conscience mastered him like a passion, and this fairest ornament of the Kirk died at last, as he had lived—modest and pious, calm but resolute, winsome, yet very strong.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

CHARLES II THE MERRY MONARCH WHO SPILLED THE BLOOD OF THE COVENANT

IT WAS IN THE YEAR 1644 THAT THE ENGLISH Parliamentary forces won a great victory over the King's men at Marston Moor. The Scots Presbyterians were there and did their best to seal the doom of Charles I with their broad swords and whingers. For within five years the King lost his head, and the English Royalists never forgave the Scots for their hand in this gruesome tragedy. If a Scots Queen had once been done to death in England, so now an English King had been helped on to the scaffold by the Scots reformers. Thus, with the grandmother and the grandson, the pendulum of Scots and English history took a double swing, and there was blood on the end of it both times.

But a bloody head is an awesome thing to look at, and when the Scots Covenanters saw what a havoc the death of Charles I had made in their ranks, they took the rue and actually invited Charles II two years later to come over and be their King. He came, and was crowned at Scone Palace in 1651.

Here was one of the mistakes of the Covenant—and what a price the Covenanters paid for it! They could not shake themselves free from that old national superstition—loyalty to a Stuart king, because he was a Stuart. Be his sins what they might, the Scots folk were the clan, and the Stuart king was their chief; so they kept the clan law and bowed to the chief even when

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it was only to feel the weight of his whip upon their backs.

It was a mixed affair, indeed—for while Charles promised them everything and meant to give them nothing, the Scots reformers shook hands with Charles and kept an eye on his small sword all the while. For he was a Papist at heart, even while he took the oath of Presbytery with his lips. This gay adventurer of a young King listened to Robert Douglas's sermon at the Coronation with his tongue in his cheek, and swore allegiance to both the Covenants, signing them even with his hand. He had publicly disowned but privately encouraged the great Marquis of Montrose, that doughty Scots soldier who had signed the National Covenant and afterwards for royal scruples refused the Solemn League.

Now all was changed. The wind had shifted, and the King once more trimmed his royal sails. So Charles smiled on Montrose's enemy, and allowed the great Marquis of Argyll to put the crown on his head at Scone.

These two men, Montrose and Argyll, will ever be bracketted together in the history books. Each was the holder of a Scots marquisate, each opposed and hated the other, each led different factions in the same national dispute. Yet, Montrose signed the National Covenant and afterwards fought against it, while Argyll did not at first sign the National Covenant but afterwards became one of its chief champions. It is to be feared that ambition spoiled them both, and none was quicker to gauge the possibilities of the game of these two men than Charles. So the slippery King used them both,

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in turn, for his own ends. He betrayed his faith to Montrose whenever it suited him to court Argyll. But the King won the game, when he was crowned at Scone at the hands of the Marquis of Argyll, whose daughter, he hinted, he might even marry. Then, ten years later, when the King had no further use for the great Campbell chief, Argyll's turn came, and he too lost his head, with the callous King's consent.

Montrose and Argyll with Charles II between them! Did anyone ever see a sorrier sight in humanity? For, in the lifetime of the King whom they had both served, their heads adorned the same spike in Edinburgh.

For ten years the King kept up this show of honesty before the Presbyterians. Then in 1658 Cromwell, that great champion of the people's rights, died, and the Commonwealth came to an end. Back came Charles, after a weary round of negotiations, and was crowned at Whitehall with the fulsome enthusiasm of the Restoration.

But Whitehall was not Scone. The pendulum had already begun to swing, and the worst men came to the front. For did not this now flagrantly Papist King maintain that Presbyterianism was not a fit religion for a gentleman?

Let an extract from the *Mercurius Caledonius* of Friday, 25th January 1661, describe how even the Leal Swans of Linlithgow rejoiced at the glorious Restoration:

"At the town of Linlithgow His Majesty hath a palace on the skirts of a most beautiful lake: and this same lake hath been ever famous for the number of swans that frequented it. But when this kingdom, as Eng-

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land, was oppressed with usurpers they put a garrison in this palace of His Majesty, which no sooner done but these excellent creatures, scorning to live in the same air with the contemners of His Majesty, they all of them abandoned the lake and were never seen these ten years, till the 1st of January last. When, just about the same time of the day that His Majesty's Commissioner entered the Parliament House and sat in the chair of State, did a squadron of the royal birds alight in the lake, and by their extraordinary motions and conceited interweavings, the country people fancied them revelling at a country dance, for joy of our glorious Restoration."

But it needed more than a freit of swans to bring peace to Scotland. And the sequel tale to the white swans of Linlithgow Loch is the Story of The Drunken Parliament.

For on this same 1st of January 1661, Charles dispensed with the Committee of Estates, which for nine years had been the only Parliament, and called together a new Scots Parliament in Edinburgh which was made up of a few very carefully selected Carolean gentlemen. Like king, like courtiers—they made themselves so merrily at home in the ancient Parliament House, that this new legislature is even still known as The Drunken Parliament. The Earl of Middleton was the King's Commissioner, the Earl of Glencairn was Chancellor, and Sir Archibald Primrose was Clerk Register.

And what in their jovial bout of law-making did these merry gentlemen of Charles II do?

In six months they upset the life of a whole nation.

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They made the King absolute; demolished the existing Kirk and Government; passed an oath of allegiance; and voted £40,000 a year to Charles. They annulled the Convention of Estates; declared the Solemn League and Covenant to be without any permanent obligation; and revoked all Parliamentary acts and even Parliaments between 1640 and 1648. Last of all, they determined to seal their law-making with the blood of the Covenant by putting the following protestors to death—Samuel Rutherford, the Marquis of Argyll, James Guthrie, and Archibald Johnston, Lord Warriston.

Here indeed was a fine betrayal of the reforming Scots by the King in whom they had trusted. This conscienceless pleasuring great-grandson of Queen Mary was utterly indifferent to the religious traditions of those stern Scots, whose conscience he had sold like a bauble to gain his own ends. Yet every attempt he made to thrust an alien form of Church government upon them made them dour with a deathless desire to keep alive the Kirk which they loved better than life.

* * * * *

And how shall we draw the portrait of this King who knew nothing of patriotism, purity or pity? Simply by setting down a string of facts.

He was a merry monarch with a fine physique. He thought nothing of a sixty-mile ride or a ten-mile walk before breakfast. His good humour and his sparkling conversation never deserted him. Like a pleasant Jesuit, he could adapt himself to all sorts, being most circumspect to a good man like Robert Baillie and unblushingly vulgar to coarse courtiers like Rochester. There can be no doubt about his ability—his plausible

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snake-like ability. For he took the measure of all the place-hunters at his court. A man of some mental adventure, he founded the Royal Society and set up Greenwich Observatory. He could even, on occasion, reward virtue—for he promoted that saintly man, Thomas Ken, to be the Bishop of Bath and Wells, and all because the honest minister of God had reprimanded Charles for his gross conduct. He had also the true Stuart genius for romance, and it would be an ill thing to forget his undying love for his little sister, Henrietta of Orleans, or the truly winsome letters of affection which he wrote to her.

The But in his life, however, was a big thing, for Charles II was a waesome King and a worse man. He could betray his best friend. He was immoral to the core. He starved the very navy to buy jewels and dresses for his mistresses, the Countess of Castlemaine, the Duchess of Portsmouth, and Nell Gwyn. Had you asked Samuel Pepys what he thought, he would have replied in the very words which he afterwards wrote in his Diary:

“He minded nothing but pleasure.”

Worst of all, Charles had no real regard for religion. He courted the Covenanters, and then, when it pleased him, he butchered them in cold blood.

Let John Evelyn describe how this unscrupulous libertine of a Stuart king spent the last Sunday of his life:

“I can never forget the inexpressible luxury and profaneness, gaming and all dissoluteness and, as it were, total forgetfulness of God—it being Sunday evening—which this day se'en-night I was witness of;

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the King sitting and toying with his concubines, Portsmouth, Cleveland, and Mazarine; a French boy singing love songs in that glorious gallery; whilst about twenty of the great courtiers and other dissolute persons were at basset round a large table, a bank of at least £2000 in gold before them; upon which two gentlemen, who were with me, made reflections with astonishment. Six days after that, all was in the dust."

This was the man who, in the name of religion, sent thousands of our pious forebears to their martyrdom, and stained the heather of Scotland with that pure red blood of the Covenant which makes our best tradition. Is it wonderful that, when we sit beside the graves of the martyrs on many a windswept moor to-day, our hearts are sore with remembering and our eyes are full of tears?

CHAPTER SIXTEEN KING'S MEN OF THE KILLING TIME

A WEIRD, GRACELESS COMPANY! THEY SET their heels on the people's neck and thrust their swords through the people's heart, so that we relate the story of their deeds to our children now with a catching of the breath and a pain in the telling.

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The first was a time-serving noble, John Earl of Middleton, the King's Commissioner and the head of The Drunken Parliament. He was of the same degenerate crew as the Earl of Lauderdale and the Earl Rothes; for they were all commissioners of the King, and they all began life by espousing the cause of the Covenant; but when they died, they were all known to be bitter enemies of the Kirk.

Middleton began his career as a soldier of fortune. Without pity and without faith, he rose from poverty to an earldom by his sheer ability to carve a way for himself with his sword.

He was of that unscrupulous human kind that protests over-much—for not only did he fight under the banner of blue at the side of David Leslie, but was “so zealous anent the Covenant that when he took it and held up his right hand, he wished that that right arm might be his death, if ever he should forget his vow.”

This coarse, brutish tippler climbed up the foul and gory steps of his own ambition until he became a peer. He was the King's bosom friend, and Charles made him his representative in Scotland.

“It was a mad roaring time,” says Gilbert Burnet, “and no wonder it was so, when the men of affairs were almost perpetually drunk.”

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See him, with his drunken parliamentarians, the magistrates, the military and the members of the clan Graham, making his way to the gallows tree on the Boroughmuir, and superintending the removal of the poor hashed body of Montrose, headless, heartless, limbless. The peers and barons carry the remains to the Tolbooth Kirk, with bands playing and the crowds cheering. At the kirk, Graham of Gorthie, who was sib to Montrose, climbed the gable, removed the grinning skull from the filthy spike, kissed it, and amid the further cheering of the commonalty encircled it with a coronet and placed it beside the headless body, which was then laid in Holyrood Abbey. Then, on a sunny May day, Middleton, as the King's Commissioner, conducted the burial of Montrose from Holyrood to St. Giles'.

This man, whose father was slain by Montrose, who himself had burned the house of Montrose and shot down his domestics, was now heading the funeral procession of Montrose, mourning in public and drinking in private, on the pay of the King. With merry countenances and a magnificent display of arms, colours, relics, and pageantry, they laid the bones and body of the great Marquis to rest in a splendid tomb, and the ministers, like hoolets, kept out of sight lest the bones of the dead should bleed!

This same Middleton was afterwards so eager for Argyll's execution, that he did not wait for the King's warrant to arrive, but hurried on the dread ordeal and had it all over a day before the warrant came—and all because he was settling to grab the broad acres of Argyll before his rival Glencairn could forestall him.

The very blood from good Master Guthrie's head

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dropped one day from the city spike on to the coach of Middleton as he drove past.

For it was blood and blood money with this time-serving Earl from first to last. Faithless, drunken, ill-tempered, and debauched—this was the man who guided Scotland, and whose word meant life or death to the Covenanters. He was the arbiter of conscience, to high folk and humble folk, who loved the name of Jesus Christ better than life itself.

* * * * *

There are some soldiers, too, whose names will for ever be associated with pitiless enmity to the Covenant.

John Graham of Claverhouse, Viscount Dundee—the Bloody Clavers, as he was called—comes first in order of fame for severity. A little man with a fair face and a hard heart, his lust for blood could not be restrained even on his wedding day. None cursed the Covenant more than he. He called himself a cleanser, and the disease he sought to cure was what he called the plague of Presbytery. But when it came to a bride, he chose Lady Jane Cochrane, daughter of the stout Covenanting family of Dundonald in Ayrshire. Little wonder that her widowed mother was against the match, and that the Royalists suspected Claverhouse of some kind of intrigue. But he was ever the magerful man, so he cared nothing for what folks said of him, and had his way.

“I cannot be infected,” said he, “and for the young lady herself, I shall answer for her. Had she not been right principled, she would never, in spite of her mother and relations, have made choice of a persecutor, as they call me.”

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So Lady Jane was married to a man who was called the wicked-witted, bloodthirsty Graham. Even on the back of the benediction he was off to the moors ere the wedding party broke up on news of some conventicle, to hunt the Presbyterian dogs—and the young bride had to console herself alone.

Here was one of Claverhouse's methods of inquisition. He would gather the boys and girls of a country hamlet together, some of them but little bairns of six years old. The dragoons were drawn up in a line before the trembling children, and then the bairns were commanded to go down on their knees and pray. Clavers told them next that they were to die. And sometimes, to make them more afraid, he would make the soldiers fire over their heads. Then, after this hell-invented fun, he would inform the poor demented bairns that he would spare their lives if only they would tell him where their fathers and brothers and friends were hiding.

He would shoot a lad in his teens, or a humble man before his wife and family. And yet this Bonnie Dundee was the beau-ideal of chivalry to the Royalists. Rather be it said concerning the bairns he frightened, let alone the brave men he butchered and the women whose prayers he mocked, that whosoever shall offend one of these little ones that believe in Christ, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck and that he were drowned in the depths of the sea.

Sir Thomas Dalziel of the Binns was another such. As Commander-in-chief of the King's army in Scotland, he was sent to harry the men of the Covenant. A grim



General Thomas Dalwell who served Charles the second King of great Brittain as Major Generall of his Army at the Battale of Worcester and there after being taken prisoner by the Rebels after long imprisonment made his escape out of the Tower of London went to Muscovie where he served the Emperour of Russia as one of the Generals of his Forces against the Defenders and Rebels till the year 1665 when he was recalled by King Charles the second and there after did command his Majesties Forces at the Defeat of the Rebels at Pentland hills in Scotland and continued Lieutenant Generall in Scotland when his Majesty had any standing Forces in that Kingdom till the year of his death 1685 in the Reign of our present Sovereign James the second of great Brittain - France and Holland King

GENERAL SIR THOMAS DALWELL

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graceless character, with an animal's lust for blood without an animal's instinct for pity, was this same Tam Dalziel of Binns. They knew him first in Linlithgow town for a wild lawless carle. Then he went to Russia and fought among the Tartars, learning barbarous tricks, and becoming such a tartar himself that on his return to Scotland they called him the Muscovy Brute. He was a fierce Royalist, and never shaved his beard after the execution of Charles I. Neither did he wear boots, had usually but one coat on, and went about in an "antick habit." In London, when he walked with the King, crowds of boys used to follow him and jeer at his appearance, to the huge annoyance of the Merry Monarch in his gorgeous clothes.

But none in Scotland durst laugh at Dalziel of the Binns—least of all the mischievous bairns. It is said that his favourite game at Binns was hell, where after a hearty meal and a heartier drink he would lock himself and his guests in a room with a whip apiece, and there they lashed each other with curses until the devil took the side of the last drunken brute who could stand.

He put old women and children to the torture. He would kill old men by slow degrees in loathsome dungeons. He would strike a prisoner at the bar on the mouth with the pommel of his sword until the blood sprang.

At Kilmarnock he bound one woman, threw her into a cellar with toads and reptiles, until her shrieks were weird to hear. He bound another, and put lighted matches between her fingers for hours, until she lost one of her hands and died of the shock. He had a contempt for marriage, but he left an heir.

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There was no more inhuman brute among the soldier-generals of Charles's army than Thomas Dalziel of the Binns.

But there were others, like Sir James Turner, Sir James Johnston, and Sir James Ballantine, whose brutalities and lusts were of the same order, and who were members of this same committee of death. It was Turner who was nicknamed Bloody Bite-the-sheep by the peasantry of Galloway, but both Turner and Ballantine were rivals in stabbing, stripping, burglary, rape, torture by match, imprisoning, and spoiling of the innocent, although a Galloway minister told Sir Robert Moray that Turner was a saint to Ballantine, who once made immoral proposals to the wife of an innkeeper at Balmaghie before her husband, and when the innkeeper stood up to protect his wife, Ballantine struck him dead.

Add to these a notorious Galloway laird—Sir Robert Grierson of Lagg, who was the model for Sir Walter Scott's character of Redgauntlet.

“Redgauntlet was aye for the strong hand, and his name is kenn'd as wide as Claverhouse's or Tam Dalzell's. Glen, nor dargle, nor mountain, nor cave could hide the puir hill folk when Redgauntlet was out with bugle and bloodhound after them, as if they had been sae mony deer. And troth when they fand them, they didna mak' muckle mair ceremony than Hielandman wi' a roebuck. It was just, 'Will ye tak' the Test?'—if not, 'Make ready; present; fire!'—and there lay the recusant.”

To this day in Dumfries and Galloway the name of Grierson of Lagg is remembered with a shiver of the

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shoulders. He jeered at his victims. He would even laugh at them in their death agonies.

When John Bell of Whiteside, that menseful, well-born man, begged leave to spend a few minutes in prayer before he was shot:

“No, no,” snapped out Lagg, “ye have prayed enough.”

And the shot went home. He even refused a decent burial to the body. Some weeks later Lagg met Viscount Kenmure, a kinsman of John Bell's, and when the nobleman accused Lagg of brutality, the only answer he got was a curse.

“Take him if you will, and salt him in your beef barrel.”

Kenmure drew his sword. But Claverhouse was there. So he interposed himself between the two men, and saved some further blood.

Middleton and Claverhouse, Dalziel of Binns, with Turner, Ballantine and Grierson of Lagg—these were a few of the Kingsmen who made the story of the Killing Time. Let those who can, whiten their memory and cleanse their names of blood.

CHAPTER XVII. JAMES SHARP AND HIS WAESOME MURDER ON THE MOOR

IT IS A PITIFUL TALE, AND BOTH THE MURDERED man and his murderers will always have blood on their souls when we remember them.

First a presbyter and then a priest, an archbishop and an archtraitor, James Sharp was the Judas of the Covenant.

Little is known of his early years, but he was settled first as parish minister of Crail. Even then he was the double-dealer. For the lady whom he wished to marry found out that the fine sermons he preached were taken clean cut out of another man's book. She refused him on the spot.

He was a poor parish minister. Crail saw nothing of him for months at a time. He was always out and about on his intrigues—pulling political wires, scheming for his own ends, a true type of Master Facing-both-ways. James Sharp was for ever watching the way the wind blew. Then he trimmed his poor little sails.

He began life as a reforming Covenanter, and afterwards took the line of least resistance, as many another weak man did. When Charles returned to Whitehall at the Restoration, Sharp was actually sent up to London as a deputy of the Kirk. His duty was to see that the shifty King kept the Covenanted faith to which he had with his own hand subscribed.

But James Sharp stayed too long in London. He was so often near the King that he was infected by the King's disease. Treachery is a smittal thing when

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men have selfish souls. But the minister of Crail was a clever letter-writer. Let us examine three of his letters.

The first was written to Robert Douglas in March 1660. It is the letter of a zealous Covenanter who is doing his very best for the Kirk, and he mentions the fact that "the cavaliers point me out as the Scottish Presbyter." So far, so good.

The second letter is to Patrick Drummond, and it is written a few months later. Now he writes as one whose innocence has been injured, and protests that he scorns to prostitute his conscience. These are his words: "I am a Scot, and a Presbyter. My fence is in God, who knoweth that my regard to my country and this Kirk doth preponder any selfish consideration."

The third letter is to the Earl of Middleton, and it is written on 21st of May 1661. And what does he say to the head of The Drunken Parliament?—That he had been conferring with the English bishops about the re-establishment of Episcopacy in Scotland, and that the proposal to substitute Episcopacy for Presbytery has his hearty approval.

Here, at last, the hand of Judas appears. This man has one language for his Covenanting friends whom he befools, and another language for the King, the lords and the bishops whom he flatters. The next historic step is easy to predict. For in December 1661 the bishops were restored. James Hamilton became Bishop of Galloway: Robert Leighton became Bishop of Dunblane: and James Sharp became Archbishop of St. Andrews! So Judas won the toss and got the first prize.

JAMES SHARP

To ease his soul Sharp went to Robert Douglas and told him that he was really the man whom the King would have liked for archbishop. And what did Robert Douglas say? Nothing. He rose, opened the door, and showed James Sharp out. Then, on second thoughts, he called his old acquaintance back.

“James, I see you will engage: I perceive you are clear: you will be the Bishop of St. Andrews. Take it, and the curse of God with it.”

Then with a slap on the shoulder, he shut the door on James Sharp.

* * * * *

Many years pass, and a group of Covenanting prisoners are crowded into Haddow's Hole in the High Church of Edinburgh. They have surrendered on a distinct promise of mercy. But James Sharp is now President of the Council, and when the eleven Covenanters remind the judge that they are under a promise of mercy, this is what James Sharp replies:

“You are pardoned as soldiers—but you are not acquitted as subjects.”

And the eleven men were hanged.

* * * * *

This Court of High Commission which Sharp had restored, with himself at the head of it, had power to sentence a prisoner without evidence; to imprison and banish ejected ministers; to cause even women to be whipped publicly through the streets; to have boys scourged and branded on the face by a hot iron and then sold as slaves. Even to give a morsel of bread to a hunted preacher was to risk being shot by order of the Council.

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And what kind of proceedings did Sharp preside over in this Council?

Take one instance.

Hugh Mackail was brought before the Council. After examination, he was put under torture of the Boot. The prisoner's leg and knee were enclosed in a tight iron case—a wedge of iron was placed between the knee and the edge of the machine—then the executioner, taking a mallet, stood waiting for orders to strike. Eleven times the hammer descended, by the order of Rothes, until the poor limb was shapeless. Yet all that the young martyr said was,

“I protest solemnly in the sight of God, I can say no more, though all the joints in my body were in as great an anguish as my leg.”

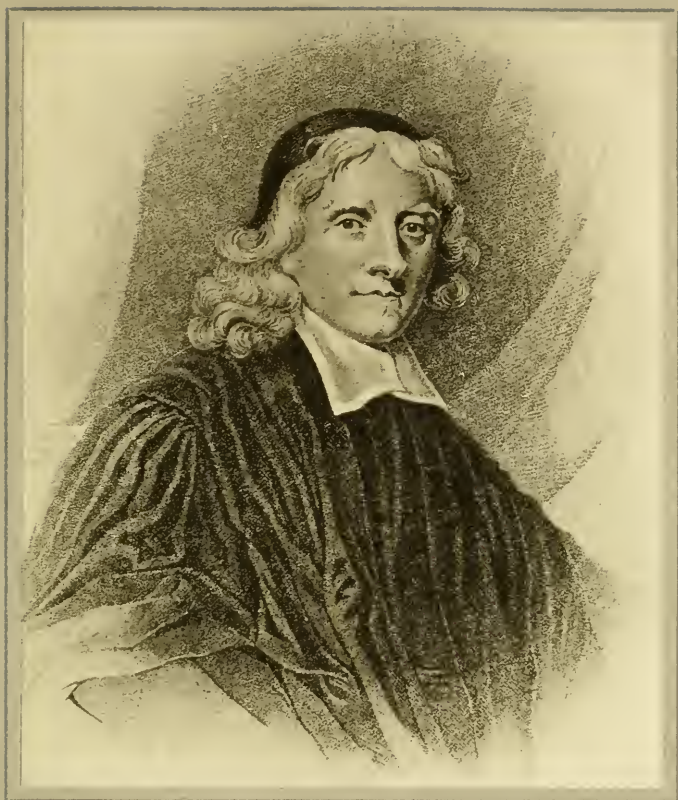
When Sharp was appealed to by Mackail's cousin, he only answered,

“I can do nothing.”

* * * * *

The end came for Sharp when, in 1679, he framed a law to give liberty to kill, without any trial, anyone who went armed to a meeting in the fields. For this he required the King's sanction, and was just on the eve of going to London. Before leaving Scotland, however, he set out on a journey to St. Andrews with his daughter, travelling through Fifeshire in a coach and six.

About the same time a band of thirteen men had foregathered on one of the lonely Fifeshire moors to plan some chastisement for one William Carmichael, a drunken magistrate who, under Sharp, had been persecuting the Covenanters unmercifully. One of the thirteen, who was suspected of treachery, was sent



ARCHBISHOP SHARP

presbyter

JAMES SHARP

away, and the twelve who remained began to search for Carmichael up and down the moor, but in vain. Three of them, wearied and disappointed, went home. The nine who still remained gathered on the moor somewhere about Ceres. So this historic band of desperadoes was reduced from thirteen to nine. Unlucky as the original number was, how tragic was the work of the remainder to be!

A boy, proverbial like all his kind for picking up news, came running to them in breathless haste to tell them that the archbishop's carriage was approaching!

Each man looked at the other. They had come out to whip a drunken sheriff depute, and now the Judas of the Covenant was thrown in their way.

It seemed like a Providence to men who were only too anxious to see Providence in it. So, at least, said John Balfour of Kinloch, better known as Burly—a little ferocious-looking, squint-eyed man who was more of a fanatic than a good Christian. So also thought James Russel of Kettle. They suggested the murder of the archbishop.

"Will you lead us?" they said to David Hackston of Rathillet.

"No," replied he, "but I will go with you."

Burly, who was troubled with no sensibility, cried out:

"Gentlemen—follow me!"

And when the carriage had reached the rising ground of Magus Moor, the archbishop caught sight of a group of horsemen waiting for him.

"Drive! drive!" he cried to the coachman.

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But, just then, Russel came up and fired into the carriage.

“Judas—be taken,” he cried.

Then the racket began. The carriage was surrounded. The horses were set free. The servants were bound.

“Come out!” cried Russel again.

For they did not wish to harm Isabel Sharp, who sat beside her father. But the old man refused. So they shot at him through the window again and again. They thrust at him with their swords. Yet there, in the gloom of the coach, he remained unharmed. They believed him killed, however, and were on the point of riding away, when Isabel Sharp exclaimed, “There is life yet!”

Ah, poor girl! Little did she think what price she would pay for her words.

For again all the horsemen, except Rathillet, crowded about the carriage. Burly told Sharp plainly that this time he must die.

“Gentlemen, spare me, spare me!” gasped the miserable man. But he was dealing with fanatics that day.

“I will give you money,” he cried next. It was a fatal move.

“Thy money perish with thee!” they cried. Again the bullets whizzed and they stabbed wildly at him in the coach. The stabs stung him, and he came out.

They told him to pray. But at that moment he caught sight of Hackston sitting his horse at a little distance—immovable, yet ill at ease, and holding his cloak to his mouth—a miserable picture of a man revolving his doubts and his conscience.

JAMES SHARP

The wounded man crawled over to him on hands and knees.

“Sir—you are a gentleman—you will protect me?”

But Hackston did not move.

“I shall lay no hand upon you,” said he—for he had neither the courage to strike nor the courage to ride away.

So the others fired simultaneously at Sharp. But so loutish or nervous were they that he was not even then killed.

Last of all—they drew their swords.

Was ever a more wretched scene enacted? A group of strong men armed against one old man, wounded and defenceless, crawling on his hands and knees! No wonder Isabel Sharp rushed out to protect her father. But they held her back.

Hackston could stand the sight no longer.

“Spare these grey hairs!” he cried.

But it was too late.

A flash of steel—and the minister who had betrayed his Kirk and murdered his countrymen himself lay murdered on the moor.

There was nothing about him to rob—only his tobacco box, his Bible, and his papers. These they took, and went away to examine them in a barn. Upon opening the little box a live bee flew out. They also found a few nail parings.

“The devil! His familiar spirit!” they exclaimed as the bee buzzed past them.

So with the odour of black magic about him the Judas of the Covenant died.

Even for a traitor and a time-server, his murder was

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a foul deed. How glad to-day are we to know that the leaders of the Covenanting army condemned the murder and repudiated the murderers! Balfour of Burly was a passionate fanatic, but he was not a religious man. Right well the Covenanters knew that, for he had been refused the Sacrament before this. So John Balfour is an example of many men whose help was more a curse than a blessing to the Covenant.

As for Hackston of Rathillet, who stood by and looked on in the vain belief that he was thereby taking no guilty part in this waesome murder on the moor—let a poet of the Kirk in later days limn the features of this miserable switherer.

“I killed the Archbishop while Hackston stood by,
And he was as much in the deed as I;
But, for they had a quarrel, his mind was not clear,
Our nice punctilious cavalier!
O, we must not sully the end we seek
With a personal grudge or a private pique!
So we stand aside, in the noonday sun,
Like a stern old Roman, and see the deed done.
Was he better than I, with my dirk to the hilt
In the old man’s heart, when his blood was spilt?
He had scruples, forsooth—and the priest’s head was
grey,
And he did not the deed, nor yet said it nay.
Bah! Give me a conscience that rules with a will,
Or one that can hold its peace and be still;
But neither the Lord nor the devil will care
For your conscience that scruples and splits a hair.”

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

THE BARS OF CONSCIENCE & THE BONDS OF FAITH

THERE ARE SOME WHO THINK THAT THE Covenanters were a mere handful of humble folk who were hunted on the hills of Scotland by the soldiers of the King, because their faith was narrow and their conscience stubborn. But that is far from true.

The Covenant was strong because the strength of the nation was in it. It embraced the highest in the land as well as the humblest. Nobles, gentlemen, burgesses and common folk—they were all out for freedom of conscience and reform in the Kirk. It was the glory of this struggle, that the nobleman and the shepherd, the countess and the peasant woman, the laird and his labourers, the gentlewoman and her maidservants were all made one in their desire to worship God in their own way, as conscience commanded, and at any price. It was conscience that made the Covenant. It was conscience that kept the Covenant. It was conscience that gave the Covenant its final victory.

But there were many Bars to Conscience, and consequently many Bonds of Faith. The Bars were all made by the King and the King's men, who did not understand the temper of the Scots people; and the Bonds were all signed by these very people who drew them as a means of banding themselves together in their stern resistance of King and bishop.

What were some of these Bars of conscience?

There was the *Great Glasgow Act* of 1662, which decreed that all ministers who did not accept Episcopacy

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and obtain the sanction of patron and bishop before the 1st of November, must leave their parishes. The Bishop of Glasgow said he did not believe there would be more than ten ministers who would abide by conscience and give up their livings and manses. And what reply did the Scots Kirk make to this remark? In the depth of winter nearly four hundred parish ministers said good-bye to stipend, kirk, and manse. The Drunken Parliament was sobered for a moment; the time was extended till the 1st of February; but none of the four hundred came back.

Then the pulpits were filled by a crowd of ignorant hafflin lads for curates. Most of them came from the north, where the highland landlords began to complain that they could not get boys now to herd their cows!

"They were the worst preachers I ever saw," said Burnet, "ignorant to a reproach, and many of them openly vicious, the dregs and refuse of the northern parts."

So the pulpits were filled, but there were no congregations for these hafflin vagabonds to preach to. The people were out as well as the ministers.

Then Parliament passed a handful of Acts to coerce the most determined people in the world.

There was the *Bishop's Drag Net Act*, which imposed heavy fines on all who refused to attend the parish church. There was the *Scots Mile Act*, which required the outed ministers not to reside within twenty miles of their former manses, within six miles of Edinburgh, even within three miles of any royal burgh. These Acts failed to control either ministers or people, for wher-

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ever the ministers went to preach the people followed; with the result that all sorts of conventicles were held in private houses, in the fields, and on remote hill-sides. It was now that the Covenanters began to be known as the Hill-Folk.

Again Parliament tried to stop these gatherings by passing the *Act against Conventicles*, which forbade ministers to preach or pray except in their own houses and among their own families. To preach anywhere else meant imprisonment. If they addressed a crowded congregation on a hillside or in a field, the penalty was death. Anyone who arrested a minister was to receive a reward of £30. If in the arrestment the minister or any of the hearers were killed, a free pardon was to be given to the killer. A free hand, indeed, for any ruffian!

Later on the *Cess Tax* was levied for the upkeep of the soldiers who harried the Covenanters; and, later still, the *Test Act* came, to strike a still more crushing blow at the faithful.

The Test was designed to extinguish every kind of dissent. All people in places of office or trust, with the exception of the King's lawful brothers and sons, were to subscribe to the oath. Suspects were to be prosecuted.

Here is the gist of *The Test*:

"I . . . swear I . . . sincerely profess the true Protestant Religion contained in the Confession of Faith recorded in the first Parliament of King James the Sixth (1567) . . . shall adhere thereto . . . educate my children therein . . . never consent to any change thereto; renounce all such principles inconsistent with the said . . . Religion and Confession . . .; affirm . . . the King's Majesty is

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the only supream Governour . . . in all causes ecclesiastical as weill as civil . . . ; renounce . . . all foreign jurisdictions . . . ; judge it unlawful . . . to enter into Covenants . . . or to . . . assemble . . . in assemblies . . . to treat . . . in any matter of State . . . without his Majestie's special Command . . . or to take up arms against the King . . . ; that there lyes no obligation on me from the National Covenant or the Solemn League and Covenant or any other . . . to endeavour any change or alteration in the Government either in Church or State . . . ; shall mantein . . . and . . . never decline his Majestie's Power and Jurisdiction . . . ; swear that this is myoath . . . without any equivocation, mental reservation or any manner of evasion whatsoever."

Such was *The Test*, and the result was immediate. Eighty, even of the Episcopal ministers, refused to take it. Sir James Dalrymple left the Bench of the Court of Session rather than take it. The Earl of Argyll, son of the great marquis, refused to take it. For that he was thrown into prison in Edinburgh Castle—and, had he not contrived to escape in the disguise of a page-boy holding up the train of Lady Sophia Lindsay, his step-daughter, he would doubtless have kissed the Red Maiden in a few days, as his noble father did before him.

After this, when all *Acts* failed to drive the people into church against their will, the Council granted several *Indulgencies* to the Covenanters, allowing them a partial use of their pulpits subject to the King's authority. The *Indulgence* was an added moral impertinence to men whose consciences were pure. Yet, as in all great movements where the political and the religi-

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ous motives are mixed, this caused bitter dispeace among the ranks of the Covenanters, for forty-two of the banished ministers took advantage of this moral makeshift.

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The immediate result of these various Bars to Conscience was the springing to birth of a large number of Bonds of Faith on the side of the Covenant. These were called Declarations, Protests, and Bonds. For Scotland has ever been the land where Covenants were begotten.

There was the *Great Sanquhar Declaration*. Richard Cameron, the Lion of the Covenant, was the author and hero of this protest, and the manner of making it was dramatic to a degree.

It was a fair June day in the year 1680, and the little old burgh town of Sanquhar was sleeping in the sun. Suddenly the burghers were startled out of their afternoon doze by the sound of clattering hoofs on the causey. They looked out of their narrow windows and saw twenty horsemen cantering along the street with drawn swords and pistols at the cock. Then the burghers and little bairns of Sanquhar crowded down the vennels and street to the market cross, where the soldiers were now drawn up in a cordon.

"It's Richie and his men!" each whispered to the other.

Richard Cameron and his brother Michael dismounted. A Psalm was sung and a prayer was said, the good folks of Sanquhar joining in the first and uncovering their heads at the second.

Then Michael Cameron read a paper amid the breath-

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less silence of the crowd. It was the *Sanquhar Declaration*—a document which was to have a great effect on the cause of the Covenant. It disowned the King, and declared war on him as the unjust oppressor of the Scots Presbyters.

When it was read, Michael Cameron took hammer and nails and fixed it firmly to the market cross. Another prayer was said, and then, unfurling the Banner of Blue, the twenty horsemen formed into line, and clattered down the street again. They were off to the hills once more—rebels against the earthly king, because they chose to serve a heavenly King.

Richard Cameron knew that he had signed his own death warrant. For one morning, when the farmer's daughter at Meadowhead brought him water to wash his hands, he said:

"This is their last washing—I have need to make them clean—for there are many to see them."

Even while he spoke, Dalziel of Binns and his soldiers were on his track. At four o'clock that afternoon, Bruce of Earlshall and a company of dragoons came on the Cameronians lying at the east end of bleak Ayrsmoss. Richard Cameron's force was twenty horse and forty foot—but he saw that escape was impossible. So he gathered his men and said a prayer, repeating thrice these memorable words: "Lord, spare the green and take the ripe!"

"Come, Michael," he cried to his brother, "let us fight it out to the last."

So, like a lion for strength, Richard Cameron, the fighting preacher of the Covenant, drew his sword and led on his little band.

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He fought desperately as one who enjoys the strife. He hacked his way, right and left, among the dragoons, until his white horse ran red with blood. He himself was pierced with a score of swords. And he died, like a hero, having first scattered death among the men who surrounded him.

It was Robert Murray who cut off the head and hands of lion-hearted Richard Cameron and carried them to Edinburgh. They were shown to his old father, who was then lying in the Tolbooth.

"I know them, I know them," moaned the poor old man, "they are my son's. O, Richie, Richie!"

Then Murray took them to the council, and said:

"There are the head and the hands of a man who lived praying and preaching, and died praying and fighting."

And the whaups flew wailing across bleak Ayrsmoss in the twilight, mourning the brave Scots man who would send his Psalms no more adown the moorland winds.

* * * * *

Two months afterwards, Donald Cargill preached at Torwood, between Stirling and Larbert, from the ominous text: "Thus saith the Lord God, remove the diadem and take off the crown." At the close of the sermon, he excommunicated the King, the Duke of York, the Duke of Monmouth, the Duke of Rothes, the Duke of Lauderdale, Sir George MacKenzie and Thomas Dalziel of Binns. This was the *Torwood Declaration*, and there were several others of like kind at Rutherglen and elsewhere. *Societies* for prayer and counsel also sprang up over all the land, and these were banded to-

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gether by correspondence. Sir Robert Hamilton and Alexander Gordon of Earlston kept up correspondence between these societies and the Reformed churches in Holland—and Gordon tells us that in 1683 there were eighty such societies with a membership of seven thousand souls. Meetings were held on many a windswept moor, where gentlemen and lairds, farmers, shepherds, and plain country folk met together for Communion. Many a little bairn, too, was baptized at these moorland gatherings, while on the neighbouring hills, every now and again, the sun would glint on the sword of a sentry who was keeping a strict outlook for the dragoons.

These were the days when the Bible and the sword were carried together to Christ's Kirk on the moor.

The very bairns became affected with their parents' fervour.

One day the boys in Heriot's Hospital determined to administer the *Test* to the school watch-dog! They wrote out an oath, but the wise beast would not swallow it. They put butter on it, but the dog only licked the butter off, and again refused the paper. So the grim young humourists went through a mock trial, and hanged the poor non-juring dog for his Covenanting stubbornness.

More touching is the story of *The Children's Bond*. This was a bond drawn up and subscribed by fifteen little girls in the village of Pentland in the year 1683. Here are the very words of this incomparable confession of faith:

"This is a covenant made between the Lord and us, withour whole hearts, and to give up ourselves freely to Him, without reserve, soul and body, hearts and affec-

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tions, to be His children, and Him to be our God and Father, if it please the holy Lord to send His gospel to the land again."

Oh, godly little bairns—what example they show us as we read their names at the foot of this Covenant of innocence, beginning with the name of Beatrix Umpherston, ten years old! Sweet little Beatrix—we can almost see the earnest innocence on the ten year old face as she slowly spells out her name. How interesting it is to know that, many years afterwards, she married Rev. John M'Neil; that it was her stepfather, James Currie, who in 1706 erected the original Martyrs' Monument; and that Beatrix M'Neil died at the great age of ninety, when Robert Burns was already toddling round his mother's skirts at Alloway.

XIX. THE MARTYR-MEN
A MARQUIS, A COUNTRY
CARRIER & A HERD BOY

“Blows the wind to-day, and the sun and the rain are
flying,
Blows the wind on the moors to-day and now,
Where about the graves of the martyrs the whaups are
crying,
My heart remembers how!

Grey recumbent tombs of the dead in desert places,
Standing stones on the vacant wine-red moor,
Hills of sheep, and the homes of the silent vanished races,
And winds, austere and pure:

Be it granted me to behold you again in dying,
Hills of home! and to hear again the call;
Hear about the graves of the martyrs the peewees crying,
And hear no more at all.”

THEY HAVE LEFT A MARK ON THE STORY
of Scotland that not all the centuries can erase. They
have scattered their graves over many a glenside and
moor, so that to a man with the hearing ear to-day the
wastes of bent grass and the quiet country hill paths
are over-swept with clean caller winds that moan a la-
ment of lonesome sorrow for the men who lie well-happit
in the peat moss, far beneath the blood-red heather—
unknown, nameless, but unforgettable. Their blood has
made strong the thews and sinews as their conscience
has ennobled the very souls of many generations of
Kirk folk, who owe to them whatever is stout in their
character and faith. The martyr-men! They made the

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moors of Scotland a God's acre, and their story is now the Kirk's own Calvary.

* * * * *

Archibald Campbell, 1st and only Marquis of Argyll, laid down his life for the Covenant.

You will not find his name on the National Covenant, for at first he was not a man of steadfast faith. But he owed his soul to Alexander Henderson, and took a stand for Christ after the Great Glasgow Assembly. A strange admixture of truth and timidity, principle and diplomacy, cold courage and home-drawn caution, was this same Archibald Campbell of the grim countenance and the squint eyes. Obliquity of vision and dubiety of spirit have made him one of the problems of history to all who honour the Covenant. And yet in his last phase we see Argyll stepping up the scaffold as a very gallant gentleman and a resolute martyr of Christ.

"Had our Lordship in by been sent a fostering in the old style," says *John Splendid*, "brought up to the chase and the sword, and manly comportment, he would not have had that wan cheek this day, and that swithering about what he would do next."

"There is, I allow," says Argyll of himself in that same book, "a kind of man whom strife sets off, a middling good man in his way perhaps, with a call to the sword, whose justice he has never questioned. I have studied the philosophies; I have reflected on life, the unfathomable problem; and, before God, I begin to doubt my very right to wear a breastplate against the poignard of fate. Dubiety plays on me like a flute."

There you have Argyll—studious, bookish, introspective, expert in the diplomacies, a man whose hand



MARQUIS OF ARGYLL.

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never took kindly to the sword, and whose soul was plastic to the influences that played about him like the winds.

He was no soldier. He had moral courage enough at last to die for his faith; but he had not that physical contempt for the clash of arms which goes so much to the making of a bonnie fighter. At Inverlochy, when his own Campbells were waiting for him to lead them against Montrose, Argyll sailed away for safety in his barge, the *Black Sail*, when the battle was just beginning. He might have stayed had he been left to himself; but his advisers played upon him so that he chose discretion before courage: and he left his clan to be cut down in hundreds, until the waves of Linnhe ran red with their blood.

Moreover, Archibald the Grim was an ambitious man. The eighth man from Robert Bruce; the greatest of highland chieftains; the crowner of a king at Scone; the ettler after a queen's crown for his own daughter Lady Anne—he was now for Charles, and now for Cromwell, a patient fisher in drumly waters, politic, astute, clever, cautious. Yet who can wholly judge a man's actions when all the time the plan at the back of his mind remains hidden, mysterious, unrevealed? This high-born gentleman, whose father had turned Roman Catholic in his dotage, and then wrote an unfatherly letter about his Protestant son to the King, was indeed begotten in a troublous time. With an oblique vision and a wry mouth beneath a high roomy forehead, Argyll, the man of intellect, who hated a dirk, was sent out into life with a swither in his soul.

Yet Archibald Campbell, the great Marquis of Ar-

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gyll, was the foremost gentleman among the Covenanting Scots.

"He had piety for a Christian, sense for a counsellor, courage for a martyr, and a soul for a king," said John Howie of Lochgoin. He chose the Covenant, and made an enemy of the King.

When, six weeks after Charles entered London, Argyll went up to Whitehall to congratulate the King, whom he had crowned at Scone years ago with his own hand, the Covenanters warned Archibald Campbell that he was risking too much. But Argyll was a gentleman, and his only fault on this occasion was that he mistook Charles II for one as well. He never got near the King, who had promised him a dukedom, a garter, and £40,000. A room in the Tower was ready for him, and the moment he set his foot in London he was seized and placed in prison, where he lay for the best part of a year, until he was sent to Scotland for his trial.

And when it came, a mock trial it was. The advocates refused to plead for him. The judges were all King's Counsellors. They meant from the first to condemn him, and they did it. From January to May they harassed him wearily on fourteen counts, but he never lost heart, and although he himself proved his essential innocence, he was condemned to die.

"My Lord," said George Hutchison, the minister, on the morning of his execution, when he walked up to the Maiden, "keep your grip siccar."

"Mr. Hutchison," replied Argyll, "I am not afraid to be surprised with fear."

Then he knelt and prayed, with his head on the block.

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He gave his signal with his hand, and Archibald Campbell was with God.

* * * * *

Five miles from Muirkirk, among the lonely hills stood the little croft of Priesthill. A melancholy moor with a melancholy tale; for here in 1685 lived John Brown, a country carrier, with Isobel Weir his wife. Lonely as Priesthill was, with mile upon mile of heather round it, John Brown, the stout Cameronian, was a marked man. As a carrier he had often to be far and near among the hills of Lanarkshire and Kyle. It was Alexander Peden, the mystical prophet of the Covenant, who married John Brown and Isobel Weir; and when the wedding ceremony was over, this was the weird word which Peden gave the young bride:

“Isobel, you have got a good man—but you will not enjoy him long. Prize his company, and keep linen by you to be his winding sheet: for you will need it, when you are not looking for it; and it will be a bloody one.”

Is it to be wondered at, if Isobel sometimes was a sleepless wife, when the carrier was out overnight on the hills?

Once more it is a May morning. Alexander Peden had been staying overnight at Priesthill, as he often did, and early in the dawning as he was going out at the door he was heard to say to himself, “Poor woman! A fearful morning, a fearful morning,—a dark misty morning!”

Then about six in the morning, after family worship, John Brown, with his spade over his shoulder, went out to a brae-face to cut peats. His nephew, a young lad, was with him. The mist lay low on the hills, and the

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erie silence of the sodden moors rang about them as they dug in the peat trench, shrouded from view.

“Wheesht!” suddenly exclaimed Brown, as he stood and listened, “what was that?”

For answer, there was a thud of horses’ hoofs on the moor, a rattle of bridle chains, and a low whispered word of command—and in a moment the ghostly forms of the dragoons loomed through the mist.

“Here they are,” said the first man. And soon three troops of horses surrounded John Brown and his nephew. Claverhouse himself was at the head of the men.

“To the house, over yonder!” cried Clavers, and the two peat-cutters were led back to Priesthill.

The country carrier had a stammer in his speech, but during all his interview with Clavers he spoke without halting for a word.

“Go to your prayers, for you shall immediately die,” said Clavers.

And John Brown knelt down on the grass before his own door, while his wife, with a little one clinging to her skirts in fear, stood by and witnessed the tragedy.

Three times the brutal Graham interrupted the devotions of the doomed man. Then, when he was done, Clavers spoke again.

“Take good-night of your wife and children.”

And John Brown went over to Isobel Weir. She was standing now with the child in her arms, and her babe not yet brought to birth.

“Now, Isobel, the day is come that I told you would come, when I first waled you.”

“Aye, John, but I can willingly part with you.”

“That is all I desire.”

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Then he kissed his wife. He kissed the child. He kissed the mother for the little one yet to be. He said good-bye.

Would to God there was nothing else to tell!

The crack of six muskets—and John Brown lay on the grass with most of the bullets in his head, for his brains were scattered on the ground.

“What thinkest thou of thy husband now, woman?” asked the bloody Clavers.

“I thought ever much good of him, and as much now think I as ever,” replied the poor dry-eyed widow, who was too stunned to cry.

“It were but justice to lay thee beside him.”

“If ye were permitted I doubt not but that your cruelty would go that length. But how will ye make answer for this morning’s work?”

“To man I can be answerable, and, for God—I will take Him in my own hands.”

Then Claverhouse examined the nephew, mounted his horse, and rode off to some other murderous work.

And what is this that we see?

The young widow left alone for hours on the moorland, with her little crying bairn, and her dead goodman. She gathered with her own hands the remains of her beloved, tied up his head, straightened his limbs and covered him with his plaid.

Then, with the child asleep in by, she sat down by the dead in that silent lonesome place, and wept.

For hours she was left to herself—and him. But, late in the day, old Jean Brown came over from Cumberhead to keep her company—she who had known what it was to have her own husband and two sons

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shot for the Covenant. And there—the two women, one with the white head of age, the other with the comely black head of youth, sat and keened for the dead together, each in the deeps of a woman's darkest Gethsemane.

* * * * *

The very boys were shot down like game-birds.

Andrew Hislop lived with his widowed mother at Hutton in Annandale. They had taken in a dying Cameronian, whose name they did not even know; and when the stranger died, they buried him secretly by night on the moor; for they knew that the penalty for sheltering an outed man was death. But the King's blood-hounds came upon the grave. They unearthed the poor dead Covenanter. They traced the widow Hislop's name on the sheet which was his only shroud. They burned the cottage to the ground, and scoured the hills until they found the boy Andrew Hislop. Claverhouse brought him to Johnstone of Westerhall for judgment. There and then, Johnstone condemned him to death.

But there was some bogling among the murderers ere Andrew Hislop died. Perhaps John Brown's death and the manner of it had discovered a conscience in Claverhouse. For when he ordered the commander of the highland infantry to carry out the sentence, that fiery gentleman drew his men off a little and exclaimed with an oath:

"I'd sooner fight you and your men first!"

"Then the blood of this poor lad is on your head, Westerhall—I am free."

So exclaimed a cowardly judge once before, in a

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Syrian Council, when he condemned by consent the Greatest of all the Martyrs.

After that, Claverhouse gave the order to three dragoons to load their muskets.

The lad was told to pull his bonnet over his eyes. But he refused.

“I can look my death-bringers in the face without any fear, and I have nothing to be ashamed of. But ye will answer for this at the Judgment Day.”

So, with his Bible in his hand and the words of a Psalm on his lips, brave Andrew Hislop looked into the mouth of three guns and received the bullets full in the face.

* * * * *

Thus died a marquis, a country carrier, and a herd boy. So was the strength of the Covenant the strength of the whole people, from nobles to common folk.

* * * * *

Let the Story of Two Rose-trees close our record of the martyr-men.

Halfway between Edinburgh and Leith stood the Gallow Lea, where, on Monday, 10th October 1681, five humble men tasted death for Christ's Crown and Covenant. Patrick Forman, David Farrie, James Stewart, Alexander Russel, and Robert Garnock were their names.

Their bodies were buried below the scaffold, but their heads were taken to the Pleasance Port and fastened to the city gateway.

But those were the days of many a gruesome and loving night-watch. So faithful friends reburied the bodies one night in the West Kirkyard; and again, by night,

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the five heads were taken down and buried in Alexander Tweedie's garden by the south-west corner of the city wall.

Over the spot Alexander Tweedie, with true sentiment in his heart, planted Two Rose-trees, one red and one white.

“I sometimes think that never blows so red
The Rose as where some buried Cæsar bled.”

And so wondrously did these Rose-trees blossom that they became the marvel of the garden to all who walked in it.

Forty years passed away, and, like his own rose-blooms in this garden of strange delights, Alexander Tweedie died. One of the name of Shaw succeeded to the house and garden, and again in the mellow autumn days of 1726 an old Scots gardener was digging in the little pleasance by the city wall. Alas, he was uprooting the Two Rose-trees, as new tenants sometimes will, without a single thought of sentiment for those who have gone before them.

And the spade turned up five skulls! The old gardener took them to his master, who knew something of what had happened forty years before, and the skulls were placed in the summer-house side by side. By this time the martyr-men were held in high reverence. So after consultation with the city magistrates these dear remains of the five Covenanters were decently enclosed and buried in Greyfriars' Kirkyard close to the Martyrs' Tomb.

It is long, long ago. But I doubt not that Alexander Tweedie, as he walked the alleys of his garden at sunset, beneath the city wall, saw often in those Two Rose-



REV JAMES GUTHRIE

1581

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trees of marvellous bloom, an image of that Mystical
Rose of Heaven whose red-white blossoms are the sac-
rifices of some who have come out of great tribulation,
and have washed their robes and made them white in
the blood of the Lamb.

CHAPTER TWENTY THE PREACHERS OF THE COVE- NANT & THE PRICE THEY PAID FOR THEIR SERMONS

THE PREACHERS OF THE COVENANT STOOD in the very centre of the battle. It was for the truth that Scotland was fighting, and it was the truth of the Covenant that formed the text of every Covenanter's sermon. Some of the gentlest blood in Scotland flowed in the veins of those who adorned the doctrine of the Lord among the lonely hills.

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There was John Blackadder of Troqueer, who sprang from the namely Border breed of the Black Band of Blackadders, and in his own later day ranged the hills of Galloway, Dumfries, Lanark and the Lothians, after his little white-washed manse had been burned, and his family sent out into the night of homelessness.

There was James Guthrie of Stirling, whom Cromwell spoke of as the stout man who could not bow, and whom the malignants of Stirling called Mr. Sickerfoot. Guthrie was one of those stout hearts that know no fear. He interviewed the great Montrose before his death, he denounced Middleton openly from the pulpit, he crossed swords with Charles himself, he challenged Cromwell, and at last, lifting the napkin from his face on the scaffold, he cried—"The Covenants, the Covenants shall be Scotland's reviving!"

There was that frugal scholar of the Covenant with a genius for friendship, John Livingston, whose stipend was £4 a year. This man of God, who seemed to

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live on nothing, knew Hebrew and Chaldee, and "some-what also of the Syriack." He could read and speak French, Italian and Dutch, and he sometimes expounded the Scriptures in Spanish and German.

There was Hugh Mackail, the refined lad who went through a whole lifetime's tribulation and torture for Christ's sake, and was martyred at the age of twenty-six. Add to his name that of James Renwick or Rennie, another boy-preacher, whose adventures and hair-breadth escapes make hot reading to this very day. He set a whole nation hunting after him, with a reward of £100 for his capture, and at last, sensitive, highly strung, but refusing to yield up one particle of the truth, he too was executed in the Grassmarket at the age of twenty-six.

Cargill, Peden, Rutherford—did any national movement ever yield such a trio of godly men as these? Let us hear their story, and let them stand as representatives of the faith for all the rest who preached Christ to the outed worshippers on the moors.

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Donald Cargill, "that blest singular Christian," was one of the most winsome preachers of the Covenant.

He had a timid and shrinking nature, and yet he trampled down all his fears and did many brave things for God. The son of a Perthshire gentleman, he was minister of the Barony Kirk, which met in the crypt of Glasgow Cathedral. After seven years' ministry there, he was outed by the Glasgow Act in 1662.

Like many another before and since, Donald Cargill's great work only began with his days of sore trial. His young wife died a year after marriage, and being

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bound by no family^{'s} ties, he made his home among the hill folk, who loved him for his message.

Yet he was a strange admixture of sweetness and sternness, gentleness and fearlessness. If the gentleness of Christ made him great in saintliness, the strength of Christ made him relentless in the things of conscience. Here was one who could sense the things of God with the nicest delicacy, and yet strike blows at the enemies of the Kirk with the cleanest courage.

It was blest Donald Cargill who drew up the Queensferry Paper which contained a solemn confession of faith, an unqualified disavowal of the Government, and a bold declaration in favour of a republic. The Paper was never actually published, but it was found by the authorities, and meant the shadow of death for Cargill.

The finding of it was in this manner.

One day, while Donald Cargill was hiding in one of the numerous vennels of Borrowstounness, his friend Henry Hall arrived. They resolved to make for Queensferry by the shore road, and were strolling through the parish of Carriden when John Park, the disreputable minister of Carriden, who was afterwards deposed for immorality, and James Hamilton, the minister of Borrowstounness, recognised Cargill. Immediately the two parish ministers sent word to Middleton, who was at that time chaplain of Blackness Castle. A posse of soldiers was soon on the track of the two Covenanters, who were ultimately found in an inn at Queensferry.

Middleton went in and introduced himself to them in a friendly way. He even pledged his guests in a glass

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of wine. Then, suddenly, he informed them that they were under arrest. Hall drew his sword, and by making good use of it overcame Middleton. Cargill was wounded, but he escaped on Middleton's horse. Hall would have followed had not a waiter felled him at the door. Finally, some friendly women carried away the wounded man to shelter. The next day he was dead.

But in one of the pockets of the dead man's coat the Queensferry Paper was found. Donald Cargill's name was at once associated with this most advanced of all the Declarations; and from that day blest Cargill was marked down for death.

And yet he was always trying to pour oil on the troubled waters of the Covenant. Did he not wrestle with that band of religious fanatics, The Sweet Singers of Borrowstounness? They were better known as the Gibbites, because they followed the lead of a gigantic sailor of that auld-farrant town, who was locally called Muckle John Gibb. More touched with insanity than piety, the Gibbites believed that all field preachers were backsliders—they would pay no taxes, and they denounced both King and Covenants. This company of twenty-six women and four men left home, under the leadership of the crazy fanatic Gibb, and wandered on the hills in the hope of being free from all temptation. They sang the more mournful of the Psalms, burnt the Bible, and sat down one evening on the Pentland Hills under a vow never to rise until they saw the smoke of the bloody city of Edinburgh rising up to heaven.

Far and near they wandered, until Donald Cargill went out one cold east-windy night, and found this

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miserable band of deluded men and women singing their Psalms in a misty moss-flow between Clydesdale and Lothian. These fanatical saints did much harm to the cause of the Covenant. The Government was only too glad to get a chance of confounding the great religious movement in Scotland with "the demented enthusiastical delusions" of these sweet singers. But not even the persuasions of Donald Cargill could wean them from their mad enterprise, although he spent a whole night in the wilds with these demented followers of the crazy sailor man from Borrowstounness. A troop of dragoons found them, not long after that, at a desert place called Woolhill Craigs. They were conveyed without ceremony to Edinburgh, where the men were lodged in the Tolbooth, and the women were sent to a correction house, having received a flogging all round.

About that same time Donald Cargill went the way of all the great preachers of the Covenant. Sweet-souled, persuasive, tender, yet fearless—he climbed the steps of the scaffold with these tranquil words on his lips: "God knows, I go up this ladder with less fear, confusion, and perturbation of mind than ever I entered a pulpit to preach."

And soon his head was fixed on a spike on the Netherbow Port, next to that of Richard Cameron.

* * * * *

But the most elusive preacher of the Covenant was that weird soul, Master Alexander Peden. As ill to catch as a shred of mist on the moor, he was a very prophet of the Lord, a seer, a man of unearthly foresight with the uncanny repute of magic clinging to his quaint personality.

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His life facts are soon told. He was a bonnet-laird at Auchincloich in Mauchline parish. After colleging in Glasgow, he became a teacher and precentor in Tarbolton and Fenwick. Next he settled at Moorkirk of Glenluce as minister, was ejected for not conforming, and ever after until his death the moors and hills of lowland Scotland became his parish.

We know nothing of his appearance, for a man who was a kindly will-o'-the-wisp was little likely to have his portrait drawn. Yet the record of his most enduring journeys, his hardships so bravely suffered, his resourcefulness, his unearthly powers, and the fact that an intimate companion put it on record that Peden "laid his heavy hand on me"—these things make it certain that Alexander Peden was a strong man, with the starlight of heaven in his eye, and the soul of a herculean saint. Above all, he had the spirit of a mystic within him—far ben.

Like all men who have lived, sleeping and waking, on the edge of death, this man of rare adventure and hairbreadth escape was never at a loss. Cheerfulness and gloom played hide and seek continually in his soul. He was of that order of human kind that Presbyteries do not understand—for the Presbytery of Biggar and Lanark examined him five times over ere they gave him licence to preach—and there were doubtless some in that court of punctilios who would have added a sixth test to this rare spirit who was as far above the mere conventions of the soul as are the stars above the earth.

On the night when he bade his congregation farewell, he entered the pulpit, closed the door tightly behind



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him, and knocked the desk vigorously with the Bible three times, repeating as often these words:

“In the name of my Master, I arrest thee, that none ever enter thee but such as come in at the door as I have done.” And it is remarkable that for a generation none ever preached in Peden’s pulpit until after the Revolution. William Kyle was ordained as Peden’s first successor in 1693.

But for twenty-three years a rock or a moss hag had to serve as Peden’s pulpit, for he was the prince of wandering hillmen. From Galloway to Linlithgow, from Lanark to Ayr he kept the dragoons on the canter all the time. He lived night and day in the open like a gangrel, with his face to the wind and the weather, and his heart aye lifted to God. In the south-east of Scotland you can see to-day many places which are christened Peden’s pulpit, Peden’s cave, Peden’s bed.

His faith in God and his own mother-wit got him out of many a tight corner, for he was of those who believe that Heaven helps them that help themselves. His adventures were myriad.

* * * * *

See that party of horsemen being guided down the brae-face to a ford in the river. They are after Alexander Peden, and they have lost their way. The plain country man going down to the riverside is their guide, and, having pointed out the ford, the horsemen pass over, one by one, and the Captain turns round on the other side to wave his thanks for the help the poor man has given them. The man is Peden himself!

“Why did ye not send a boy to guide them, and save such risk to yourself?” said a friend.

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“No, no—they would have asked questions at the lad,” replied Peden, “and if he had fainted, they would have discovered us.”

And the prophet laughed, for he enjoyed his very death risks.

* * * * *

Again the dragoons are after him, and this time Peden is surely caught, for the river to which he is riding with a whole troop galloping at his heels is in full flood. The spate is terrific, and the dragoons know that they can never swim such a torrent.

But when Peden reaches the river, in plunge horse and rider and swim the awful stream. With a shake of the bridle he climbs the other bank, drenched but saved as by a miracle.

“Lads,” he cries across the swollen flood, with a twinkle in his eye, “ye want my boat for crossing that stream.”

And the dragoons grind their teeth in chagrin as they see him galloping over the hill scot free.

* * * * *

This time he is on the open moorland with one or two of his poor outed friends. It is a dull and lowering day. They sit in a moss hag and discuss the things of the Kingdom. But the gleg ears of Alexander Peden hear a sound. Looking up, he sees a troop of horse quietly casting a cordon round him and his friends.

“Alas, what shall we do?” whispered one of them.

But Alexander Peden answered nothing. He simply went down on his knees in the heather and prayed:

“O Lord, cast the lap of thy cloak over puir auld Sandy—the lap of thy cloak, O Lord.”

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And the mist came down and shrouded him and his friends so securely that the horsemen were confounded, and went plunging in all directions but the right one, with oaths and shouts to find out the whereabouts of their fellows. So Peden and his hillmen crept through the cordon under cover of the mist, and won away.

* * * * *

But he was caught at last, one day, when he was preaching at Knockdow, between Ballantrae and Colmonell. The Privy Council sent him to the Bass, where for four years and three months he was cooped up like a laverock in a cage. Fifteen months in the Tolbooth of Edinburgh followed. How this man, God's gangrel of the windy open moors, must have pined in his cell for a breath of the mountain airs!

He got fresh winds enough in a while, for we next see him on board the *St. Michael* of Scarborough, with sixty-eight Covenanters, bound for the slave plantations of the Indies. Captain Johnston is in charge, and all the prisoners are consigned to one Ralph Williamson of London.

But Peden is as buoyant as ever.

"The ship has never yet been built that will bear us over the sea to the plantations," he exclaimed, like the great Apostle of old who heartened up his fellows in a storm at sea.

So exactly it fell out. For at Gravesend Williamson did not turn up; the skipper of the convict ship for the Indies, who was expecting a gang of ruffians, refused to take the pious Covenanters off Johnston's hands; and that same day Peden and his fellow-captives went

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tramping up the north road for Scotland with a Psalm on their lips and a dirl of joy in their souls.

For seven more years he trekked through the lowlands of Scotland and many parts of Ireland. At times he would kneel down on the Irish shore, and with a spy-glass sweep the sea or the coast-line of the blood-drenched land of home. His heart was there, and he yearned with longing to see his friends again.

"The devil and I puddles and rides time about upon other," he would say in his penitent moods.

"What comes of the poor young kindly honest lad, Renwick, and the poor cold hungry lads upon the hills?"

That was his cry. But near the close of his life he gave up preaching and spent his whole time in prayer. The martyrdom of the Kirk plunged him in deep dool at times. It was to John Clerk of Muirbrook, on whose shoulder he laid "his heavy hand," that the old prophet said:

"O John, there shall be dark days, such as the poor Kirk of Scotland never saw the like, nor ever shall see, if once they were ower. . . . Yet, John, the Church shall rise from her grave, and at the crack of her winding sheet as many as had a hand in her burial shall be distracted with fear. Then shall there be brave days for the Kirk, and she shall come forth with a bonnie bairn-time at her back!"

* * * * *

This quaint old saint of the Covenant, who had been hunted over hill and moorland all his life, died as other men die at last.

He crept home to the old house of Auchincloich to die in his own bed. But the soldiers scented him out

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like a fox, and he had to make for a cave in the neighbourhood.

“Carry me to Ayrsmoss,” he said, “and bury me beside Richie, that I may have quiet in my grave, for I have had little in my life.” So in January 1686 Alexander Peden died, worn out at sixty by his extraordinary privations.

“God has been both good and kind to puir auld Sandy through a long tract of time.”

Such was his own word upon God’s ways with him.

The Boswells of Auchinleck buried him secretly in their own private vault—but the brutal dragoons rifled the tomb, hanged the dead body on a hill above Cumnock, and then buried it contemptuously beneath the gallows-tree.

But no longer does the wandering prophet lie alone on the hill above the town, for gradually men and women began to carry their own dead up to this hill of shame, that they might lay their beloved beside the elusive wanderer who was no longer hunted like a gamecock on the hills. And to-day—the place has become the hallowed God’s acre, where, in the midst of his own kith and kin, puir auld Sandy sleeps until the resurrection day.

* * * * *

And who can forget that other mystic minister of Christ and flower of the Church, famous Mr. Samuel Rutherford? He began life with the glamour of heaven about him, and he kept the glamour to the end. For he was the little fair man who showed the people of Scotland the loveliness of Christ.

Close by the Teviot in the parish of Crailing, little
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Samuel Rutherford used to play beside the village draw-well at Nisbet. There on the summer days the bairns of Nisbet would look with eyes of wonder down into the deep dark well, to see the water springing up for ever and a day. Young Rutherford, in whose eye there was already the glitter of the distant stars, was so fascinated by the mystic deeps of the well that, in seeking its secret, he overbalanced himself and fell in! The other bairns ran home full of alarm to tell the news. But when the anxious mother and the neighbours hurried back, they saw the little fellow, wet and wistful, sitting on a knoll of green grass. And when they asked him how he came there, he replied:

“A bonnie white man came and drew me out of the well.”

At school in Jedburgh, at college in Edinburgh, and in a professor's chair at twenty-three—surely Samuel Rutherford was an eident lad of parts. But a breath of scandal dimmed the brightness of his youth, and after two years' teaching of Latinity he had to resign.

Then came marriage, preparation for the ministry, and his settlement at Anwoth in Kirkcudbright near the Solway Firth.

To-day a quaint little kirk, roofless, ivy-covered, sleeping in the sun, stands by the roadside, bielled by immemorial trees. There for nine years Samuel Rutherford ministered to the country folk, shepherding God's sheep among the soft green Galloway hills that lie around the Water of Fleet. His little manse was called the Bush o' Bield. The minister rose every morning at three o'clock to read and to pray—absorbed in Christ. He would fall asleep at night talking of

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Christ. Yet there was sorrow in Bush o' Bield as well as bird music and sunny hours—for from the narrow door his girl wife and her two children were carried out to be laid under the green green grass of Anwoth Kirkyard.

Anwoth was the first love and the last of this saintly minister of God. To that quiet fold of Christ his thoughts never ceased to return in after days of exile or exaltation. He knew his flock, and could name them every one. His long country walks over the hills and field paths were all taken with one object—to put the people within grips of Christ. The herd-boys, the farmers, and the gentlefolks—from the poorest ploughman to the Viscount Kenmure and his wife, who was a sister of the great Marquis of Argyll—one and all of them loved the little fair man who infected them with such a love of Jesus.

He never could drive the thought of Anwoth from his heart. From Aberdeen, the cold grey northern town of his banishment, he wrote, many years after, with tears in his eyes:

“When I think of the sparrows and swallows that build their nests in the kirk of Anwoth, and of my dumb Sabbaths, my sorrowful bleared eyes look askint upon Christ, and present Him as angry.” For he did not love what he called “the unnatural town of Aberdeen,” and wrote this icy word with his heart still hot with memories of Anwoth: “Northern love is cold.”

But while this saint of the Covenant was quietly shepherding his flock in Anwoth he was also keeping himself in touch with the Kirk strifes of the day. For he was that most wonderful of all men—a practical

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mystic. He was a man of action as well as a lover of ecstatic tranquillity. A profound scholar, a dreamer of dreams, a saintly soul whose greatest passion was the love of Christ, he was, with all that, the most pugnacious theologian in Scotland. Hot-headed, hot-hearted, and of a very subtle wit, he once said of his own strangely-assorted self: "I am made of extremes . . . my mother hath born me a man of contention."

So Samuel Rutherford, like the other fighters of the Covenant, entered the fray. Only—his weapons were the Word of God, his own tongue, and his fearless pen.

When he wrote his famous *Lex Rex* or the *Law and the Prince*, he laid down without hesitation the true principles that govern the constitution of a country. He shattered the mischievous idea of the divine right of kings when he showed that a king was the servant of law, and that the true strength of any land lay in the people. A great book with a great message, it was nevertheless burnt publicly at Edinburgh, St. Andrews and London.

Samuel Rutherford was one of the northern stars at the Westminster Assembly of Divines. He had a hand in drawing up the Confession of Faith and the Catechisms. But in the struggle against the bishops he also took a part. For he could with perfect ease lay aside his letter-writing pen, which wove so many golden thoughts of God and love, and take up his controversial pen which stung the king's men into anger.

"I desire not," said he, "to goon the lee side or sunny side of religion, or to put truth betwixt me and a storm.



SAMUEL RUTHERFORD

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My Saviour did not so for me, who in His suffering took the windy side of the hill."

Nor did Samuel Rutherford ever get the bielly side of the brae. He was tried before the Court of High Commission, and he was banished to the city of Aberdeen, where he suffered that most terrible of all afflictions to him—dumb Sabbaths.

But what moving sermons this little fair man of Christ could preach! "Many times," said a hearer, "I thought he would have flown out of the pulpit when he came to speak of Jesus Christ."

And what surpassing letters he wrote to these godly women, Marion M'Naught, Viscountess Kenmure, the Lady Gordon of Lochinvar, and Margaret Ballantine! There were godly men, too, among his correspondents, like Lord Lothian, to whom he once wrote—"To want temptations is the greatest temptation of all": and Lord Loudon, to whom he wrote—"Events are God's, let Him sit at His own helm": or the Earl of Cassilis, to whom he wrote—"The earldom of Cassilis is but a shadow in comparison of the city not made with hands." Gordon of Earlston, Gordon of Lochinvar, Gordon of Knockbreck—ministers like David Dickson, Hugh Mackail and John Livingstone—plain countrymen, bien burghers, refined gentlewomen—he numbered them all among his friends and his correspondents.

At the end of it all came a glimpse of earthly tribulation even while he was enjoying his first glimpse of the heavenly city. For the Privy Council stripped him of his university offices, deposed him from his pastoral charge in St. Andrews Kirk, and accused him of high treason. Messengers were despatched on that

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old well-worn track between Edinburgh and St. Andrews to bring him to the scaffold, where his friend the Marquis of Argyll had found the martyr's crown. But when they arrived, the messengers found Rutherford on his death-bed.

They handed him the parchment summons, but even while his thin wasted hands held it, he smiled with the ecstasy of heaven already on his face.

"Tell them," said the dying saint, in a voice of supernatural passion, "I have got a summons already before a Superior Judge and Judicatory, and it behoves me to answer my first summons; and, ere your day arrives, I shall be where few kings and great folks come."

The dying man's words were reported, and the Council decreed, with a poor maliciousness, that Rutherford must not be allowed to die within the precincts of the college. But one man in that earthly tribunal—Lord Burleigh—stood up and made protest in these noble words: "Ye have voted that honest man out of his college, but ye cannot vote him out of heaven."

So Samuel Rutherford died, as he had lived, with a vision of Christ before his eyes. He spoke of Him to the last, and at daybreak, after the long night was over, the mystic minister of the love of Jesus passed into the glory of Immanuel's land.

CHAPTER XXI. THE WOMEN WHO SERVED & SUFFERED

WHOCAN EVER RECKON UP THE PATIENCE and the long-suffering of those women who in the Killing Times laboured together in the Gospel for Christ's cause and Covenant? The mothers who keened over their dead sons, the wives who were parted from their stout-souled husbands, the lovers who risked their lives to feed and fend their beloved on the moors. The suffering of children, the ruined homes, the patient carrying of food and comforts in secret, the masking of anxious souls with cheerful faces, the pain, the poverty, the unquenchable fire of faith within. All that makes up a wondrous tale of woman's faith and love and sacrifice, such as Scots folk read to-day with a thrill of pride and not a little heart-burning, amid the easy pleasures of a later age. Mary Rutherford, the Lady Hundalee; Lady Anna Mackenzie; Marion Veitch; Isobel Weir—in high rank and in low rank, their name is legion, and if all their patience and long-suffering and faithful labours were written, the tale would scarce have an ending.

Let three suffice.

* * * * *

There were Isobel Alison and Marion Harvie—the one a young unmarried woman in Perth; the other a serving-maid in Borrowstounness, but twenty years of age. These two girls read their Bibles, attended the field preachings of men like Cameron and Cargill, and were not slow to proclaim their faith and defend their principles. So they were arrested and sent to Edinburgh, for trial before the Privy Council. The Council

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endeavoured to trap them with implicating words, and failed. Dalziel of Binns threatened Marion Harvie with the torture of the Boot. At last they were thrown into the Tolbooth, and condemned to be hanged.

In prison an indulged Covenanted minister—Archibald Riddell—tried to coerce them. In the Council chamber Bishop Paterson taunted them.

“Marion,” said he, “you said you would never listen to a curate. Well, now you shall be forced to hear one before you die.”

“Come, Isobel,” the girl said to her companion in sorrow, “let us sing the Twenty-third Psalm.”

And they drowned the curate’s voice with their singing.

But worse insult was to follow. These brave cleansouled girls were ordered to be executed alongside of three or four disreputable women who had murdered their own infants. And yet, three months after that, other women who were guilty of the same shameful offence were offered their liberty if only they would say “God save the King!”

Each of these girl-martyrs sang a Psalm and read a portion of Scripture on the scaffold. What heart-rending songs these must have been to the listening people, as they watched the two young girls preparing for death.

Here are Marion Harvie’s last words: “I am not come here for murder. I am about twenty years of age. At fourteen or fifteen I was a hearer of the curates and indulged, and then I was a blasphemer and a Sabbath-breaker, and a chapter of the Bible was a burden to

But since I heard this persecuted Gospel, I durst

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not blaspheme nor break the Sabbath, and the Bible became my delight."

At these fearless and innocent words of testimony the major called to the executioner to cast her over, and we read, "that the murderer presently choked her."

* * * * *

Of a different rank, but of the selfsame spirit, was Lady Grissel Baillie. The daughter of Sir Patrick Hume, she afterwards became the wife of Sir George Baillie of Jerviswood. This sparkling, bright, gentle girl wrote that immortal Scots song:

"Werena ma heart licht, I wad dee."

Born at Redbraes Castle in 1665, she was sent to Edinburgh with a letter from her father to Baillie of Jerviswood, when she was only twelve years old! She found Baillie in the Tolbooth prison, and when she was waiting for an answer she saw young George Baillie, the prisoner's son, for the first time. Long, long years afterwards she said of this same George Baillie: "He was the best of husbands and the delight of my life for forty-eight years, without one jar betwixt us."

When her father was in danger of execution Grissel Baillie went to Jamie Winter, the village carpenter and got him to fit up a bed in the family vault at Polwarth Kirk. There she kept her father and fed him for a whole month. The brave girl visited him in the tomb every night at twelve o'clock. She had many difficulties to overcome. The minister's dogs used to bark so loudly that her mother persuaded the good man to hang the dogs,— "lest one of them might go mad," she added, with a twinkle in her eye. Bogles did not terrify

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Grissel so much as the flat tombstones which she was continually tripping over in the dark.

But the food was the difficulty.

Sheep's head was her father's favourite dish, and at table she had often to slip the whole sheep's head stealthily into her lap when the nine innocent brothers and sisters were at their broth.

One day she was detected by her brother Sandy.

"Mother, mother," he cried, "will ye look at Grissel, she has eaten up the whole sheep's heid!"

But the tomb in Polwarth Kirk was no longer safe; so what did this clever-witted Scots girl do?

She went to Jamie Winter again and told him to make a very large wooden box. Then, in an unused room on the ground floor of Redbraes Castle, she started to dig out a great hole in the earth, large enough to take in the box. She durst not use any tools, for fear of the noise. So she dug out the earthen floor with her own strong little hands, until there was not a nail left on her fingers. Then, one night her father was transferred from the tomb to the wooden box in the floor of his own castle. Holes were let into the lid for air, and the laird lived there for three weeks. He was driven out, however, at the end of that time, for water began to accumulate in the box till the whole was filled.

Next we see Grissel Baillie in Holland, where she followed her exiled father. The whole family ultimately found their way there, and they were very poor. Used to much service at Redbraes Castle, they could not even keep one servant in that far-off land of clean frugality.

So Grissel did the work. Young George Baillie had

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found his way over too, a lover now and no mistake. So he had to pay the lover's price, and lend a hand.

It is her daughter, Lady Murray, who gives us the description of how Grissel Baillie made ends meet.

"There was not a week in which she did not sit up two nights to do the business that was necessary. She went to market, went to the mill to have the corn ground—which it seems is the way with food managers there—drest the linen, cleaned the house, made ready the dinner, mended the children's stockings and other cloaths, made what she could for them, and, in short, did everything." And George Baillie always carried the market basket over his arm.

This girl of grit kept all the while a manuscript book in which she wrote down snatches of the songs she composed. Is it wonderful that the refrain of her most famous song embodied the very spirit of her life?

"Werena my heart licht, I wad dec."

And this is the scribing on the tombstone of this brave soul in the kirkyard of Mellerstain:

"Good breeding—good humour—good sense, were her daily ornaments."

* * * * *

One more glimpse—a sad and haunting one—of two good women of Christ.

It was on a May morning of the year 1685 that a strange crowd wended its way down from Wigton jail to the shore of the little river Bladnoch. There were two prisoners—one, an old woman of sixty-three, Margaret Lachlison; the other, a girl of eighteen, Margaret Wilson. Commanding the whole affair was Grierson of Lagg, with Major Winram at his heels.

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At low water the Solway recedes for miles, but when the tide turns, the sea rushes rapidly up the channel of Bladnoch, and by and by overflows its banks. Two stakes were driven into the bed of the stream—one far out, the other nearer the land. To the furthest-out stake they tied the old woman Margaret Lachlison, and to the nearer one they tied the young girl Margaret Wilson.

Then the crowd waited for the martyrs to recant. But they never wavered.

And the tide rushed in.

When the Solway was doing its pitiless work on the old woman, some cried out in excitement to the girl:

“What think ye of your companion now?”

“What do I see,” she replied, “but Christ wrestling out yonder?”

Then she opened her Testament and read aloud from the eighth chapter of the Romans. After that she sang part of the Twenty-fifth Psalm:

“My sins and faults of youth
Do Thou, O Lord, forget:
After Thy mercy think on me
And for Thy goodness great.”

They released her and offered her life, if only she would pray for the King and take the Oath of Abjuration. But she refused.

“I will not. I am one of Christ’s children. Let me go.”

So they thrust her back again, and tied her firmly to the stake.

The tide came tumbling in, and the sound of singing was heard no more.

CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO

THE BATTLES OF THE BLUE BANNER—RULLION GREEN DRUMCLOG BOTHWELL BRIG

NO PEOPLE EVER RISE IN REBELLION, OR suffer the sacrifices of outlawry, unless something very vital is at stake. It was the religious freedom of the Scots nation that was at stake two centuries ago. The people felt that. So they rose up quietly and gradually, but with unflinching steadfastness of purpose, and when the worst came to the worst they fought.

Nothing is so noble as the rebellion of true men and women against whatsoever conscience tells them to be wrong. This is the inner voice of God in the soul. To obey it is to fulfil the highest of all duties. Our stout-hearted forebears, who were hunted on the hills of Scotland like gamecocks, and slaughtered for conscience' sake in the Grassmarket of Edinburgh, were only testifying to the fact that they chose to obey the voice of God within them rather than the voice of any man or king without them. They made many grievous mistakes in the course of their tragic lives. But, from beginning to end, the whole principle of the Covenanting movement was liberty of conscience and freedom of worship. The Covenanters protested first of all by words and bonds; then they emphasised their protest by deeds, when they sacrificed their money, their homes and their kirks: and when at last the insensate civil authorities began to coerce them by torture, fire and sword, the people of Scotland rose up in royal wrath and fought.

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So the history of the Covenant is the history of its battles.

* * * * *

One November day in 1666 four stout Galloway men of the Covenant were making their way, at the risk of their lives, into the little village of Dalry. They had been hiding among the Glenkens, but the bitter weather had driven them down for food to the nearest clachan. They were starving. One of them was McLelland of Barscobe.

When they reached the village of Dalry, the first man suddenly fell on his face. The others behind did the same. The soldiers—little moving spots of red—were in the village street.

“Turner’s blood-hounds!” whispered the one to the other.

So the four starving men lay concealed, and watched. And this is what they saw.

The brutal redcoats seized an old man, and began to ill-treat him for not attending the parish church and paying a heavy fine. Then, when the old Covenanter would not bow, they dragged him away to roast him alive.

The anger of the four hungry men leapt within them like fire. They were racing down the street in a moment. The soldiers were attacked. Angry words, the clash of steel, the crack of a pistol, and a red-coated corporal lay on his back—wounded.

It was that pistol-shot that began the active rebellion of the Covenanters which culminated in the Pentland Rising.

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The rest followed very quickly.

The four men, having drawn blood, continued in arms. They captured one band of soldiers after another. Their numbers grew from less to more. At Irongray Kirk, on the 15th of the same month, there was a regular army of Covenanting men who were armed and willing to fight—fifty horse and about two hundred foot. Sir James Turner was in Dumfries. So this first Covenanting army marched across the old bridge of Dumfries, actually took the town, and went to the house where Sir James Turner was staying.

The noise of the army waked him from sleep. He rubbed his eyes, got up, and looked out of the window at the crowded street.

“What means this rabble?”

“Surrender or die,” came the astounding answer.

And almost before he was right awake, the haughty Royalist found himself riding behind that army of rebels on a little horse—a prisoner.

They were very good to him, and his only complaint was that their graces before and after meat were very long. John Welsh of Irongray prayed with him sometimes if by any means he might lead the rough soldier into a knowledge of the truth. But the preacher had little reward.

“It wold be hard to turne a Turner,” was all he could get out of the King’s man.

Larger and larger grew the army as they trekked through the country on those wet wintry days. The rain and wind, with frost and snow, turned the roads into quagmires. But at Ayr the number grew to 700. At Lanark there were 1200. The Government was al-

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ready indignant at the rebellion, and Dalziel of Binns was ordered immediately to march from Edinburgh to checkmate these men of the Covenant.

Colonel Wallace of Auchans commanded the Covenanters, along with such well-known men as Maxwell of Monreith, John Welsh, William Veitch, Hugh Mac-kail, McLelland of Barscobe, and Neilson of Corsock.

Still the rain and frost and wild inclemency of the weather made miserable going for the ill-prepared Covenanters, and one disappointment followed on the back of another. Two hundred turned back, no help was forthcoming from the Lothian folk, some began to think the whole rising was a mistake, and the terrible weather did the rest with many of those men who had little else than a sword or musket in their hands and a meal-poke on their backs.

Yet it was a brave little army of 900, which Colonel Wallace drew up at Rullion Green to await the coming of Dalziel of Binns and his 3000 regulars.

Did ever men face a fight under gloomier circumstances! They had waded through the pitiless moors and morasses by night to Bathgate, where they could find no resting-beds for their tired, half-drowned, starving bodies. But in spite of the rain and the cold, exhaustion and disappointment, they warmed their hearts with courage, and after the fight the King's men exclaimed at their brave discipline.

The rain had stopped, and on a fair frosty morning Colonel Wallace waited for Dalziel of Binns at Rullion Green. The Covenanters were drawn up on the slopes of Carnethy Hill, with a whole world of moors behind them to which they could escape in case of defeat. A

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clear morning sky above them, with the nip of frost in the air, and the frozen slush and snow for standing ground, hungry, tired and bitterly cold, the Covenanters waited on the slope of the hill for their enemies to appear. Yonder they were at last! coming round the shoulder of Carnethy out of the defile that leads from Currie—Dalziel of Binns with his 3000 regular troops, well fed and well accoutred, to face 900 starved determined men.

A thunder of hoofs on the grass and the cavalry of both sides engage in a skirmish with the morning sun flashing on sabre and stirrup iron. Then it is man to man, and sword against sword, as both armies begin a deadly fight on the level ground. At first the hungry Covenanters get the best of the battle, for they are fighting desperately for faith and freedom as mere mercenaries can never fight. Yonder falls John Crookshanks, and it is not long till Andrew McCormick is down beside him—two fighting ministers from Ireland.

But at length, when the rest of Dalziel's army comes up, the brave little band of Covenanters are hard-pressed. In spite of their fatigue, they twice drive back the regulars, for Colonel Wallace has planted his men in an impregnable position. But numbers begin to tell. The valiant fighters are gradually driven back. Fifty are lying dead on the frosty blood-stained hill. Seventy are taken prisoners. The rest begin to retreat up and over the hill, and when the dusk falls eerily down the moors and glens of Pentland are full of the silent hurrying figures of men who are seeking hiding and shelter for dear life.

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See one big broad-shouldered lion-hearted man galloping off on his horse, with three soldiers riding after him! That is Captain John Paton of Meadowhead, the hero of many a fight. The soldiers ride so fast that they are soon up with him. One of them actually tries to catch his flying cloak. In front of them is a wide treacherous mossy pool out of which three Covenanters are already pulling their plunging horses. The soldiers see it.

“Ha! what will he do here?”

“I have only three of you to reckon with,” cried Paton, as he put his great horse to the pool. A mighty leap, and horse and rider land safely on the other side.

Aswing round, a drawn sword, and John Paton splits the head of the first cavalier as he struggles in the morass. The other two come tumbling over on the horse and body of their dead companion, until the pool is a dreadful death-pit of hottering horses and men.

“Take my compliments to your master and tell him I cannot sup with him to-night,” cried John Paton, as he galloped away into the November night, with a thunder of hoofs on the hill.

* * * * *

But the Covenanters were not always defeated in battle. At Drumclog, on a fair June Sabbath day, the first of the month, in the year 1679, the bugle note of victory sounded high and clear over the sunlit moors.

On the slopes of Loudoun Hill in Avondale a conventicle of the hill folk is being held, and the peace of God lies over hill and vale as the preacher—Thomas Douglas—preaches the Word to the faithful. He has scarce begun to speak, when a musket shot is heard on

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a hill near by. Every eye is turned to the height. The sentinel is running—running with all his might towards the little congregation.

Thomas Douglas stops preaching and looks at the running sentinel.

“You have got the theory,” said he to the congregation, “now for the practice.”

So the fighting men drew out, the women and children were sent to the rear that they might escape over the moors, and in an incredibly short time the peaceful congregation was transformed into a compact army. Claverhouse was at Strathaven, and had scented out the conventicle. Now, there was nothing for it but to stand and fight.

Sir Robert Hamilton was there, new come from his defiant denunciation of King and Government at Rutherglen. David Hackston of Rathillet was there, the soldier with the swithering soul, who had sat on his horse and split his scruple like a hair on Magus Moor. That squint-eyed ferocious man John Balfour of Kinloch was there, with Henry Hall of Haughhead in Teviotdale, and a young lad, William Clelland of Douglas, born poet and born commander. They were all there, with forty horsemen, fifty foot who carried guns, and one hundred and fifty who carried weapons of various sorts, halberts, pitchforks, scythes, and such like.

They had just formed into line when Claverhouse and his soldiers appeared on the ridge and halted. He looked over to the Covenanting army, which was stationed on the opposite hill, with the wide morass of Drumclog between them. Never were two armies better matched, for numbers, for horsemen, and for foot. The

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soldiers might be better armed, but the Covenanters were better accoutred in conscience, conviction and cause.

The sun shone on both that fair blue Sabbath day, and just as the Covenanting army began to move slowly down the hill, with life and death whispering about them in the summer airs, there arose among the hills one of the most glorious sounds that Scots ears can ever hear—the sound of a Psalm sung by men of God with one unhalting voice in unison. It was the 76th Psalm, and the tune was *Martyrs*, plaintive and pathetic, with a minor sough of wildness in it. How wonderful it must have been to hear it that day among the mosshags of Drumclog!

“In Judah’s land God is well known,
His name’s in Isr’el great:
In Salem is His tabernacle,
In Sion is His seat.
There arrows of the bow He brake,
The shield, the sword, the war.
More glorious Thou than hills of prey,
More excellent art far.
Those that were stout of heart are spoil’d,
They slept their sleep outright;
And none of those their hands did find,
That were the men of might.”

So—with a Psalm on their lips and faith in their hearts, strong, prepared, grasping their swords with a grip of steel, the Covenanters went down to meet Claverhouse—slowly, steadily, and with a great restraint on their eagerness. Young Clelland gave a

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quick warning to his men, the soldiers fired on them, and the Covenanters dropped flat on the heather at the first shot. Not one of them was hit.

Then up on their feet the next instant, and volley after volley riddled the soldiers before they had time to reload. Saddle after saddle was emptied with deadly effect. Horses began to plunge in the morass. Neither Claverhouse nor his men knew the morass, but the Covenanters knew all the safe paths through it. So 'Burly' Balfour with his horse and Clelland with his foot splashed safely through, and attacked the bewildered dragoons with the sudden onslaught of hillmen who knew every inch of the ground. Even the women in their fierce anxiety rushed forward and bore away the wounded men of the Covenant. For Scots blood was on fire that day. The hillmen fought with terrific effect. Claverhouse saw his mercenaries flying in every direction. Two of his officers, Captain Blyth and Cornet Crauford, were shot before his eyes. The rout was complete.

Then Claverhouse himself turned his horse to fly. A Covenanter ripped up with a scythe the sorrel charger on which the great man rode, and the disembowelled beast carried him a full mile ere it dropped.

"Wilt thou not tarry for afternoon sermon?" cried John King, chaplain to Lord Cardross, as Claverhouse flew past him. That very morning Graham had been driving King before him as a manacled prisoner.

But on and on fled Clavers and his men—clattering through Strathaven, pounding down the country roads in a perfect panic of fear, passing through villages like a glaive of light, until at last they reached Glasgow—

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a fatigued, dispirited, defeated band of stragglers. They lost forty men in the fight, but only one Covenanter fell, although five afterwards died of their wounds.

* * * * *

After this namely victory of the hillmen at Drumclog, crowds rallied round the Blue Banner. On Hamilton moor, near old Bothwell Brig, a permanent camp was set up for the army of the Covenant. Here men came and went at their pleasure. Sometimes there were 8,000 on the ground, sometimes only 4,000. Sir Robert Hamilton still commanded, with Major Learmont, Captain John Paton, Hackston of Rathillet, Hall, Clelland and Balfour, as his officers. Little discipline was observed. The crowds came and went in the camp, with the memory of one great defeat and one great victory inflaming their souls. Certainly they were all of one mind in the main, but very soon they began to dispute about the side issues of the cause, until disunion spread through the camp like an infection. If only they could have stood shoulder to shoulder, what might these thousands not have accomplished? It is union that is strength. But schism rent them in sunder and weakened their cause. See what havoc followed for these godly headstrong men!

* * * * *

If Drumclog was the glory of the Covenant, Bothwell Brig was the tragedy of the Covenant. Thousands of men in arms, with their leaders quarrelling among themselves. Sir Robert Hamilton declared that all who had any sympathy with the Indulgence, or who had claimed its shelter, were untrue to the cause of the Covenant. He refused also to have anything to do

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with those ministers and their people who had even tampered with the Indulgence. To crown all, he ordered that those dissenters from the Indulgence who refused to repudiate their less courageous friends must be debarred from the camp of the Blue Banner. Here surely was a hard doctrine for a Christian man!

John Welsh of Irongray, a strong and stalwart fighter for the Covenant, came into the camp at Hamilton and pled for more tolerance and more unity. A stout protesting man himself, he was strong enough to consider his weaker brethren. But Hamilton grew angry, resented his interference, and would have expelled even John Welsh. For weeks the miserable wrangle went on. The Covenanters camp became a debating society. Each new arrival had to declare his preference for a side. Hamilton insisted on having his own way. He even dictated what the preachers were to say in their sermons. But John Welsh stood by the moderate Covenanters, and helped to keep them within the camp.

The mischief, however, was done. Multitudes went home in grief and dismay. No proper officers were appointed to control the quarrelling companies of peasant fighters. No plan of battle was thought out. The Commander was neither trusted nor loved. Retribution and punishment must soon follow.

And it did. For a king's army of 15,000 experienced, well-trained men under Monmouth was already marching on Bothwell Brig. When they arrived, they found the Clyde separating them from 4,000 ill-assorted, poorly-armed, quarrelling Covenanters. A truly tragic prospect!

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Again it was a Sabbath morn—the third since Drumclog. The one point of attack between the armies was the old Roman bridge across the Clyde.

Monmouth listened patiently to the declaration which the Covenanters made.

“It is not humble enough,” said he, “but if you disarm, no harshness will be used to you.”

“Yes,” laughed Sir Robert Hamilton, when he heard it, “and we will hang next.”

So the glove was thrown down, and there was nothing for it now but to fight it out.

But what an unequal contest was here!

The king’s army on one side of the Clyde, with the Duke of Montrose at the head of the cavalry, Claverhouse with his dragoons, the Earl of Linlithgow commanding the infantry, the Earls of Airlie and Hume with Lord Mar having their own companies—15,000 king’s men, well fed, well trained, well captained. Dalziel of Binns, that white-headed butcher, would have been there too, but he did not receive his commission from London in time, and came panting up on his charger when the fight was over, too late to glut his soul with slaughtering.

Across the narrow bridge on the other side of the fair running stream, the Covenanting army had certainly the best of the position. They were but 4,000 ill-assorted men. At Drumclog the whole army, with hearts beating in unison, worshipped God and sang a Psalm—but here there was no prayer, no happy concord, no sound of singing. James Ure of Shargartan, a Perthshire gentleman, tells us that no one went through the ranks to see to the proper distribution of powder and

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shot, so that few or none of these peasant fighters had powder and shot to shoot twice.

Yet there were valiant fighters that day on the side of the Blue Banner. Hackston of Rathillet, with Henry Hall and Turnbull of Beaully and three hundred picked men from Galloway, guarded the bridge all Saturday, and through the night, even till the Sabbath dawn.

At dawn the fight began. The wearied three hundred, with only one cannon, guarded the bridge, and fought for three solid hours without losing ground. The bridge was the battle. The three hundred refused to give way. They called back, however, to the thousands behind them to come up and help. But among that great crowd there was no real commander, and every man was bickering with his neighbour.

The three hundred next asked for more powder and shot, but they were only told there was none. Still they fought on and kept their ground with a desperate courage. They begged that, at least, they should not be ordered to retire. Death with a stab in the heart would be better to these stout Galloway men than that.

"Retire—retire!" came the command from Sir Robert Hamilton.

So with broken spirits Hackston and his gallant three hundred, who had stood guard through one whole day and night, and had fought for three hours on the top of all that, had to give up their position by the bridge, and the king's men rushed across. Did ever brave men get a worse reward!

But the shame of Bothwell Brig was yet to come. For when the fighting three hundred had retired, they found that thousands of Covenanters were ready to en-

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gage in a hand-to-hand fight on the moor. But that fight never came; for suddenly there was a cry of consternation—the most terrible cry that ever arose on a battlefield—the cry of brave men shamefully betrayed.

The Covenanter leaders had turned to fly! They abandoned the army to death and slaughter, and were already galloping off the field in the van of a wild, panic-stricken crowd of men, who knew not which way to turn for the want of one clear command. And there, surely, is one of the shamefulest sights in Scots history.

But David Hackston redeemed his soul that day. He commanded his three hundred men to stand. And they stood. He ordered them next to give help to all who needed it. But, alas, there was nothing to do, for every living man was on the run, and their dead companions were round them on every side.

Then, but only then, did David Hackston give the command to his men to retire. Like true soldiers they began to retreat in an orderly manner; but their souls were steeped in sullen silence. The first to meet the foe, they were the last to leave the field.

* * * * *

And what was the aftermath of Bothwell Brig?

Four hundred killed in battle and in flight, with twelve hundred taken prisoners.

In that midsummer of the long ago these twelve hundred were led along the road to Edinburgh. The very dishes, which many a kind-hearted woman held out with food for them as they passed, were knocked to pieces. Thirsty, hungry and faint, they reached Edinburgh, only to be hooted at by the canalyie,* and

* French, *canaille*, rabble.

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penned up in a corner of Greyfriars' Kirkyard like sheep. Forty years before, the National Covenant had been signed with great acclaim in this same God's acre—now twelve hundred Covenanters had to exist here in wooden sheds through summer heat, autumn rain, and winter cold. The cold earth was their bed, and the men who were doing sentry-go intercepted the food and money which their friends sent in from the outside. But their numbers soon dwindled—some being liberated on their oath of non-resistance to the authorities; some escaping over the walls in the night; and many dying of their privations in that awful death-trap.

One wintry morning the remaining two hundred and fifty-seven were marched down to Leith, and put on board a small ship called *The Crown*, destined for the American plantations, where the prisoners were to be sold as slaves. The hold of the ship held one hundred, and the whole two hundred and fifty-seven men were thrust into it. To let the sick lie down, the strong had to stand up night and day. The air was poison. The frightful thirst drove the wretched men to indescribable extremities.

"All the troubles we met since Bothwell," said James Carson, writing to his wife, "were not to be compared to one day in our present circumstances. Our uneasiness is beyond words. Yet the consolations of God overbalance all, and I hope we are near our port, and heaven is open to us."

They were nearer the heavenly harbour than they realised, for a storm wrecked the ship off the coast of Orkney. The prisoners begged to be allowed to take

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their chance of reaching the shore, but the captain answered them by locking them down under hatches.

Then in the night the ship went to pieces. Some of the Covenanters got out when the hull broke up, for nearly sixty reached land. But two hundred were drowned on that awful night under hatches, like rats in a hole, and only a few of their bodies were washed ashore.

To-day in far-off Scarvating, by the moaning northern sea, you may still look with reverence on a row of green grass howes. They are the silent lasting witnesses to the brave hearts that are long since with
God.

CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE WILLIAM CARSTARES THE DIPLOMAT OF THE KIRK AS BY LAW ESTABLISHED

THE NAME OF WILLIAM CARSTARES WILL always be associated with the final settlement of the Kirk of Scotland as Presbyterian. He lived through those dark years of persecution which led up to the Revolution Settlement in 1688, and he knew right well what it was to suffer the pains of exile and torture. Having lived for many years before the Settlement of the Kirk into her true heritage of Presbytery, he lived for many years after the Kirk had been enjoying her blood-bought peace. So William Carstares is the historic link between the old sad days of persecution and the new quiet days of settlement.

Carstares was no fanatic. He was a diplomat, a statesman, an ecclesiastic to the finger-tips. A brave man, for he could suffer the excruciating pains of torture without giving away a single secret. A man of the world—for he was a perpetual traveller to continental lands who always came back again to Scotland to give the best that was in him to the Kirk which he loved. The friend and counsellor of a great king, he was also the succourer of many a poor nameless minister of Christ. Calm, heroic, strong, wise—William Carstares must ever stand high among the men that made the Kirk.

He came of a goodly Fifeshire family—the Carstares of New Grange—and was born in the manse of Cathcart, near Glasgow, where his father John Carstares was minister. The year of his birth—1649—was a

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stormy one for the Kirk, and especially for the manse folk in Cathcart. At the Battle of Dunbar, John Carstares joined the army of General Leslie, for he was willing to fight as well as to preach. He was taken prisoner, however, by Cromwell and sent to Edinburgh, where, after a lenient captivity, he was released. But that was in the year 1650, and the bairn in Cathcart manse was scarce a year old. So mother and child had many a day of dool.

But the mother was as brave and stout of heart as her goodman—for when John Carstares was wandering about, like a gangrel, from one place to another, she wrote this splendid word to the Covenanting preacher: "My dear, I had reason always to bless the Lord that I knew you: and this day I desire to bless Him more than ever . . . that I have a husband wandering and suffering for the truth." There spoke the true wife, and when John Carstares put that letter in his breast-pocket, it burned next his heart like the red, red rose of love.

Young Carstares, therefore, grew up in an atmosphere of Presbyterian persecution. He saw his country quivering under the merciless lash of men like Sir James Turner and Thomas Dalziel of Binns. The prisons were full of Covenanters. The dungeon, the torture chamber, the gallows or the slave ship—that was the order of the day for many a true man of God. The kirks were emptied of the real worshippers, who had to praise God at many a conventicle on the moors in secret. The pulpits were filled with curates who had little learning, less piety, and no discretion. The father of the lad in Cathcart went skulking from covert

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to covert, like a hunted gamecock, under a feigned name, unable to see his wife or child for fear of losing his life. During John Carstares' absence a child was born to him in the manse at Cathcart, and when the wee onedied, this was all that the brave, broken-hearted mother wrote to the brave outed husband: "There are many things sadder than the death of a child, yet I have my own heaviness for him."

William Carstares went to Edinburgh University and graduated. But when it came to theology, his father wisely judged it safer for him and better, that the lad should go to Holland, where there was less distraction. So William Carstares went to Utrecht, and there finished his education.

The great event of his three years' stay in Utrecht was his meeting with William, Prince of Orange. The Prince was greatly attracted to the young Scots Presbyterian. It was a vital meeting; for from that day the Prince was much in William Carstares' company, gaining much knowledge of the parties and affairs in Britain, and indeed giving him a confidence of friendship which never again was broken.

The young theological Scots student was closer in touch with the views of William, Prince of Orange, than any other Scotsman, and doubtless this momentous friendship with the future king of England accounts for the fact that young William Carstares never mentioned any private details in his letters home. He was the wise man from the first.

Very soon he got mixed up in politics and in those diplomatic intrigues which were continually going on in Holland. In 1672 he left Holland with certain letters

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in his wallet which were written in mysterious white ink! He was evidently to be the go-between of the exiled Scots in Holland and the distressed Scots at home. The ship unfortunately was captured, but Carstares escaped. The letters, however, were found, and although the mysterious characters in white ink were unintelligible in cipher, the evidence of some plot was clear. Carstares was now a marked man. He was already on his way once more to Holland. Soon he was back in England, like a stormy petrel of diplomacy, and being recognised was arrested and thrown into the Tower. From that to a prison in Scotland was the next natural step, and William Carstares' life of trouble had begun. He lay in prison for four years ere he was set free.

No sooner was he out than he was in Holland again, for the restless germ of diplomacy was in his blood. Old John Carstares, his father, that stout, blunt old Covenanter, who did not object to use sword or whinger, shook his head over William's diplomacies, and solemnly charged his son to have nothing to do with them. But it was of no avail.

We cannot follow the fearless young ambassador on all his flights of investigation. In the winter of 1679 he is in Ireland—next year he is in Portpatrick—in September he flits to London, where he becomes for a time minister of the Presbyterian congregation at Theobald's. In the very midst of the danger and persecution of England he quietly marries a wife—Elizabeth Kekewich of Trehawk, in the county of Cornwall, and takes her discreetly to Utrecht for a honeymoon. There he finds plenty of good Scots company—Ar-

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gyll, Stair, Loudoun and Melville, with Sir Patrick Hume, Pringle of Torwoodlee and James Steuart, the author of the famous *Accompt*.

But the honeymoon in Utrecht did not last long, for in the year 1683 we find Carstares deep in the Rye House Plot in London, and on a November day a yacht sailed from London for Leith with several distinguished Scots prisoners on board, among whom were Carstares and Baillie of Jerviswood.

So it was the Tolbooth for Carstares again, this time with torture added to confinement.

It is a nerve-shaking tale, but one that should be told in these later days of soft circumstances. The king of England would not have dared to use the Boot or the Thumb-screws in the Tower of London at that date. But in Scotland, peers, prelates and privy councillors looked on regularly while these instruments of torture were being used. Carstares had been nine months in prison and would reveal nothing.

Old John Carstares, his father, was greatly distressed.

"I have a son," said he to a friend, "Mr. William, and a good son, Mr. William Dunlop. They will be aye plot plotting till they will plot the heids aff themselves."

Carstares was warned that if he persisted in refusing to reveal state secrets he would be tortured. He refused again. The questions were written and sent to his cell. But he refused again. He was sent for, and the torture began. One of the bailies of Edinburgh along with the executioner performed the operation. The king's smith was also present with a new pair of thumbkins.

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Carstares' thumbs were put in. The screws were worked. The sweat of his agony poured down his brow and cheeks. The Duke of Hamilton and the Duke of Queensberry rose and left the room.

"I see he will rather die than confess," said the Chancellor.

Perth replied by ordering the executioner to give the screw another turn.

Then Carstares spoke.

"The bones are squeezed to pieces," gasped he.

"If you continue obstinate," roared the Chancellor, "I hope to see every bone in your body squeezed to pieces."

Dalziel of Binns then rose, and, coming close to Carstares, threatened to roast him alive if he would not speak.

But Carstares held his peace.

Then an order was given for the Boot. The Boot was an iron cylinder into which the leg of the victim was inserted up to the knee. Wedges were then driven in between the case and the limb. But on this occasion the hangman was so clumsy that he did not know how to adjust the Boot and wedge.

So, taking off the Boot, he returned to the thumbkins.

Carstares with heroic courage again kept silence, until he almost swooned away. After an hour's torture, the king's blacksmith had to be summoned to undo the screws.

Did ever any man display more resolute courage than William Carstares?

Years afterwards, when the Revolution had been accomplished, these selfsame thumbscrews were pre-

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sented by the Privy Council to William Carstares as a gruesome keepsake. Once King William himself asked to see them. So Carstares, with his own deformed hands, put them on the king's thumbs and gave the screws a gentle turn.

"Harder," said the king, and another turn was given.

"Again," said the king, and this time Carstares gave a sharper turn.

"Stop, doctor, stop!" cried the king, "another turn would make me confess anything!"

After his torture Carstares said, "I would rather die a thousand deaths than be a witness against any that have trusted me."

He vowed that he would never dwell in Scotland until he could see things there go in another channel.

Nor did he.

So in August 1685 we find him with a house at Cleve, where his wife joined him. Then he removed to Leyden and became a minister of the Scots Church there. The story of his torture and his brave silence made him all the more valuable as a friend to the Prince of Orange, who appointed him his private chaplain. Events were moving fast. The call came for William to cross the Channel and sit on the throne of England. Carstares went with him in the same ship. He landed along with him, and when all the troops were ashore, he suggested to the king that they might all praise God. The Prince approved. And there, on the shores of England, the troops stood in line and sang the 118th Psalm, after which William Carstares prayed. Could any man reach a higher stand in life—by the right hand of an earthly king, the army of England all about him, and leading

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their hearts to acknowledge the heavenly King, with the clean Channel winds blowing about their bowed heads?

The Revolution took place in 1688, and through all these momentous months the figure of William Carstares stands out by the side of the new-made king of England, wise, incorruptible, honest, a simple Court chaplain; but more than that, the real adviser of William, and the king's Scots secretary.

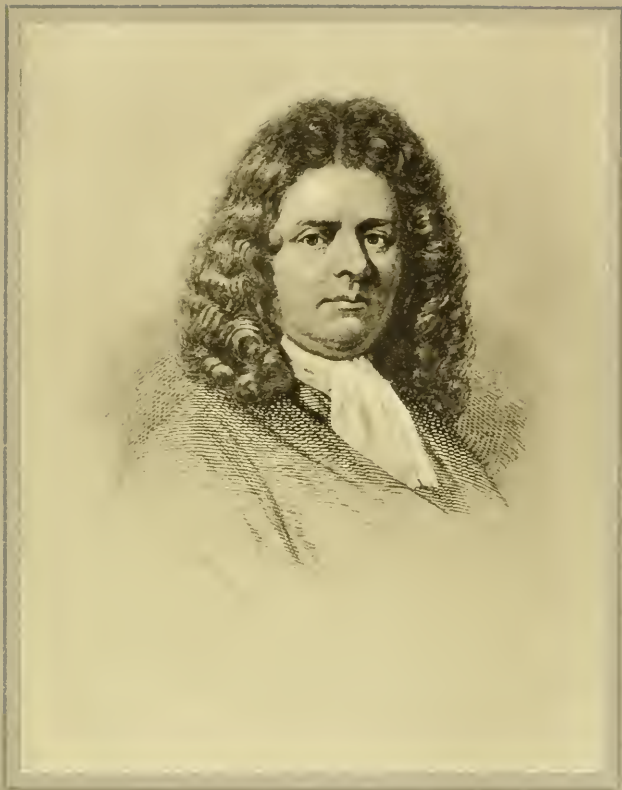
William had no prejudice for one form of worship more than another. He only desired uniformity, and to accept the form of worship which would be most loyal to his own Government. In Scotland he very soon found that the bishops were all for the Stuarts, and that the Presbyterians could be relied on to stand by the new rule. All this William Carstares made clear to William of Orange.

So in 1690 the Revolution Settlement was given to Scotland, and the Presbyterian form of religion was established by the State as the religion of the National Church of Scotland.

However, there was a great deal of coquetting between the new king and the Scots bishops before the Revolution Settlement was accomplished, and in that difficult time it was William Carstares who really persuaded William of Orange to give Presbytery to Scotland as the national religion.

One instance will show you what a fearless man William Carstares was.

In 1694 the king, on the ill advice of Lord Stair and Lord Tarbat, sent orders to Scotland that all ministers of religion were to sign the *Oath of Allegiance* before



PRINCIPAL WILLIAM CASSTONS

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they could take their seats in the Assembly of the Kirk. If they refused to do so the Assembly was to be dissolved. They could not even hold office without taking this oath. It bound the swearer to acknowledge William as King, *de jure* as well as *de facto*, as the phrase went. Here was something like the old hateful unwarrantable interference of the King's civil power in the affairs of the Free Assembly of the Kirk—the old, old bone of contention. Even for the Episcopalians it would have meant a denial of their long-cherished doctrine of the hereditary right.

Lord Carmichael took the King's instructions down to Scotland. Consternation followed. The Commissioners saw the temper of the ministers rising, and sent back a flying packet to the King at Kensington, asking for an immediate reply. Meantime the calling of the Assembly was delayed.

William Carstares was absent from the Court at this critical moment, but on his return he too found a memorial from the ministers in Scotland addressed to him, asking him to see that no harm came to the Kirk. But, just before Carstares' return, Stair and Tarbat had persuaded the King to renew the instructions to administer the hateful oath to all the ministers—and the fatal despatches were signed and sealed once more.

At this stage Carstares returned. He found the memorial. He read it straight through. He inquired what instructions the King had given. He was told. He went at once to the messenger, who was just setting out for Scotland, and made him deliver up his despatches. A truly deliberate and fearless man this William Carstares!

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It was now late at night. Not a moment was to be lost, for the Assembly would meet in a few days. So what is this that we see? William Carstares running down a corridor in Kensington Palace at midnight with a bundle of despatches in his hand. He stops at the door of the King's apartments.

"The King is in bed, sir," remarked the Lord-in-waiting.

"I know—but I must see him now at all costs."

And Carstares walks calmly through the door and goes to the bedside of King William, who is fast asleep.

Carstares draws the bedcurtain, kneels down, and awakes the King of England.

"What is the matter?" exclaims the King, when he sees his friend and confidant kneeling there.

"I have come," said Carstares, "to beg that you will spare my life."

"Is it possible that you have committed any crime worthy of death?" gasps the King.

"Yes," said Carstares, as he holds up the despatches.

"What?" exclaims the King, now thoroughly awake, and with a heavy frown on his brow, "have you presumed to countermand my orders?"

"I have."

And there and then, Carstares craved an interview.

The King heard his old friend most patiently, and when the talk was over he not only gave Carstares the despatches to read, but asked him to throw them into the fire!

"Draw up now," said the King, "instructions to the Commissioners in terms which you think appropriate."

Thus, by taking his life in his hand at a most critical

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moment, William Carstares saved the Presbyterian Kirk in Scotland from catastrophe.

* * * * *

This loyal kirkman, who was so wise, sagacious and deliberate, was a King's man in the best sense. He could not have had greater influence in the affairs of Scotland if he had been Prime Minister. He was the means of saving the Kirk and settling the Kirk. The Jacobites hated him and called him Cardinal Carstares; for none could get behind his strong diplomacies. He was little over forty when the Revolution Settlement was accomplished, and he had many years before him to complete the work of peace in Scotland.

It was a blessed aftermath that came to him in three years. He became Principal of the university of Edinburgh, and minister of Greyfriars' Kirk. From there he was transferred to St. Giles' Cathedral Kirk, and ere he died he had been four times Moderator of the General Assembly of the now firmly established Kirk of Scotland.

What a combination of character was this man! A scholar and a martyr, a man of boundless courage and boundless caution, sagacious and kind, patient, moderate, charitable, the very beau-ideal of a Christian statesman, with the power of speech and the power of silence. A true patriot, who was willing to lay down his life for his country, he was also loyal to his King even while he championed the cause of his Kirk in a time of extreme difficulty.

But a kind heart beat beneath all his diplomacies. Let this incident of his last days speak for the utter charity of William Carstares' Christlike heart.

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One day an ejected Episcopalian clergyman called at the lodging of William Carstares. The curate's clothes were threadbare. Carstares eyed him narrowly and told him to call again in two days, as he had some commissions to give him. The curate promised and went away. He was one of those who had written some scurrilous pamphlets against the Presbyters and his name was Robert Calder. No sooner was his back turned than Carstares ordered his own tailor to make him a suit of clothes, a little tighter than usual but about the same length. The clothes were to be delivered in two days.

When Calder the curate entered the room at the time appointed, he found the great Carstares fuming over his new clothes, because the tailor had made them too tight for him. Neither coat, waistcoat nor breeches would go on.

"Can I ever wear these, think you?" said Carstares, turning to the curate.

"No, sir—it seems impossible."

"Then they are lost if they don't fit some of my friends. What about yourself? Try them on."

The curate with some reluctance agreed, and they fitted him like a glove.

"Capital," cried Carstares. "I shall send them round to-day."

Next day the curate put on the clothes, and was surprised to find a ten-pound note in a pocket. He went at once to the college to restore it to the Principal.

"By no means, by no means—it is not mine," exclaimed the great man, "for when you got the coat, you acquired also a right to everything that was in it."

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Is it to be wondered at, that when William Carstares died and was buried, two men were seen to turn aside from the crowd and burst into tears? They were two Episcopal curates whose families had for some time been supported by the dead Presbyter.

So, beneath all the diplomacies of his life, William Carstares was at heart a very perfect gentleman. While we remember the greatness of his statesmanship in Kings' courts and in Kirk courts, let us never forget as we look

“On that best portion of a good man's life,
His little, nameless, unremembered acts
Of kindness and of love,”

that Christ was the Master of this man's soul.

CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR THOMAS BOSTON OF ETT- RICK & THE MARROWMEN

IT IS HARD FOR US TO-DAY TO REALISE what Scotland was like at the end of the seventeenth century and at the beginning of the eighteenth century. It was a very rough and primitive country, almost treeless, with very few roads. The few roads that did exist were deplorable. Among the common country folk there was little learning and a great deal of superstition. To the people the Kirk stood for religion, school, charity-organisations, and every other public institution. But so gross and illiterate were many of the dwellers in remote parishes that the Kirk had to cultivate a very stern faith, else it would have had no redeeming effect on evil-doers.

There were public Repentance Stools in every kirk for those who had been guilty of a flagrant breach of the Commandments. The Jougs, or iron collars, which you may still see chained to old parish churches like Duddingston, were used for chaining up the more notorious sinners in full view of the assembling worshippers. The Branks, a kind of iron collar, with a movable headpiece and an iron gag attached to go into the mouth, were regularly fastened to the head of ill-tongued women, who also had to endure in silent pain, the shame of being padlocked to the entrance of many a Parish kirk. Ecclesiastical Scotland at the end of the seventeenth century bred saints of a very stern kind.

It was this austere atmosphere into which Thomas Boston was born in the lowland town of Duns on the

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17th day of March 1676. He was a child begotten in the killing time, just three years before Archbishop Sharp was murdered on Magus Moor. He came of douce Presbyterian stock, and began life with the blood of the Covenant in his veins. He had no difficulty in remembering his father's imprisonment in Duns jail, for the little lad had to keep him company one night in the prison cell. There were no golden schooldays for the boys at that hard time. The Dame School and the Grammar School did all that was necessary for the dullest or the brightest-brained boy, and then at thirteen the university began to do the rest.

Thomas Boston was spiritually awakened when he was eleven years of age. It was at Whitsome, a few miles from Duns, that the boy heard godly Henry Erskine preach. This Henry Erskine was the father of Ebenezer and Ralph, who were destined to carry on the story of the Kirk in Scotland after Thomas Boston had prepared the ground for them. So here we have a godly cycle of kirkmen.

Many years after that Whitsome preaching, Thomas Boston referred to the skill with which Henry Erskine cast his gospel line.

"Little wast thou thinking, O my soul, on Christ, heaven, and thyself, when thou went to the Newton of Whitsome to hear a preaching when Christ first dealt with thee—there thou got an unexpected cast." Such is the quaint language he uses to describe his conversion.

What cheerless childhood days young Boston had, and how much the stern doctrines of his later days must have been moulded by the experiences of early youth!

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The boy had a delicate body and a delicate conscience. Look at him crying in his garret yonder because he has committed the sin of playing ninepins one Sunday on Duns Law with another boy! And we actually hear him thanking God later on for this gruesome blessing—that he had seen, as a little boy, the horrors of an open grave in the kirkyard that adjoined the school.

Like many another Scots father, old John Boston set his heart on seeing his son a minister of the Kirk. Thomas had the same desire for himself. But the Bostons were very poor. So Thomas had to spend two years, partly in a notary's office and partly in a malt-store. Then, somehow or other, he managed to enter the College of Edinburgh. But what a typical case it was of the poor Scots scholar! He went through the whole three-years' curriculum and graduated in 1694, yet the total expenses of his college career, including board and lodging, amounted to £10, 14s. 9d. It was a dear degree—bought as many a Scots degree has been, with a price of pure starvation. His diary is pitiful reading about this time, for he tells how severely he dieted himself, how he fainted again and again, how he suffered much from melancholy. The broken health thus founded in college days dogged him to the very day of his death.

A sojourn for a while with Bruce of Kennet as tutor to the family, after he had received licence, brought about the meeting between Thomas Boston and his future wife—Katherine Brown of Barhill, in the parish of Culross.

“I had heard a very savoury report of her . . . and, from the first, something stuck with me. . . . What en-

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gaged me to her was her piety, parts, beauty, cheerful disposition fitted to temper mine, and that I reckoned her very fit to see to my health."

Here surely was a question of utility, with none of that true romance of love which is a mystery of the spirit sweetened with the fragrance of a red red rose.

Thomas Boston was settled as minister of the tiny parish of Simprin, in the south of Scotland, on the 21st of September 1699. The parish does not even exist now. Sixty-two years after Boston's settlement, it was united with the neighbouring parish of Swinton. But still you may see, amid a circle of elm and ash trees, the ruins and gravestones of Simprin Kirk, where Boston's word fell like showers of heavenly rain upon the simple country folk. Sweet is the situation of this old-time kirk to-day, with the lonely Lammermoors on the north and the billowy Cheviots on the south, and all about you the tranquil fields of the borderland and the Merse. Only the east gable of the little kirk stands now. What a narrow house of God it must have been! Five steps carry you from wall to wall, and twenty from end to end. But it was an ample kirk for the Simprin folk, for there were but 88 examinable persons out of a total population of 143 souls. So there was room enough in this tiny stell of Jesus to fold the sheep of God and the lambkins too.

In this sequestered spot Thomas Boston laid the foundations of his later life-work. Here he organized his handful. Here he learned the art of winning souls. Here he wrote the *Soliloquy of Man Fishing*—"that scribble," as he calls it. With very few books, he made the most of his scanty chances of learning. For he had

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a perfect passion for sacred lore. He struggled through the psalms in Hebrew. He set himself to master French from a card of rules which the tutor of a neighbouring family lent him. He faced the steepest problems in theology.

Here, too, he began his married life, with Katherine Brown of Barhill, a life whose years were steeped in sorrow. He himself was never strong, and of the five children born in Simprin two were soon asleep beneath the grassy green of the kirkyard. How godly must have been the touch of Thomas Boston on the souls of men, when he had to pass to the pulpit every Sunday between his children's graves!

One incident in his life at Simprin must be related in Boston's own words; for it moulded not only his own life and preaching ever afterwards, but it became the means of moulding the theology of succeeding generations of Scots men and women.

"As I was sitting one day in a house of Simprin," he writes, "I espied above the window-head two little old books; which when I had taken down, I found entitled the one, *The Marrow of Modern Divinity*, the other, *Christ's Blood Flowing Freely for Sinners*. These, I reckoned, had been brought home from England by the master of the house, a soldier in the time of the civil wars. Finding them to point to the subject I was in particular concerned about, I brought them both away. The latter, a book of Saltmarsh's, I relished not . . . the other . . . I relished greatly; and having purchased it at length from the owner, kept it from that time to this day; and it is still to be found among my books."

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What large consequences flowed for Boston and his Kirk, and indeed for the whole of Presbyterian Scotland, from the finding of this little old book on the window-head of a soldier's house in Simprin!

After eight years of faithful work and preaching in Simprin, Thomas Boston was translated to the parish of Ettrick, where the rest of his life was spent.

If Simprin was a tiny parish, Ettrick was a large one. Stretching ten miles in every direction, it takes in the upper valley of the Ettrick water, with its tributaries the Tima and Rankleburn, and the wide lonely hills which roll away northward to Moffat Water and to Yarrow. Simprin lay among rich farmlands—Ettrick lay in the cup of wide and desolate fells. Rich in ballad-lore and teeming with memories of border forays, the men of Ettrick were the children of romance and war. And yet, although so wide, the parish gave only four hundred souls to Boston for shepherding.

But what a poor, broken-down herding it was for any shepherd to nurse! It was full of dissentient members, Cameronians and separatists, men who were continually doubting the lawfulness of attending the Parish Kirk. With all his Christly courage, Thomas Boston sometimes dreaded pastoral visitation, because there was such need of dealing with the wayward folk. The vacancy had lasted for four years—men had grown careless—they gossiped and chattered so loudly in the kirkyard during service that one of the elders had to be appointed to keep them in order. Morality was at a sorry discount. Swearing was the order of the day. So Thomas Boston began to go about his parish with a bent back and a broken heart. The iron entered so

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much into his soul, that eight years after his settlement in Ettrick he said to his wife:

“My heart is alienated from this place.”

Like every sensitive soul, he was tempted at times to turn his back on duty and run away from the will of God. But to Ettrick he was thirled by the grace of God, and in Ettrick at last he died.

His preaching searched the sinner, found him out, and brought him into grips with Christ. Occasionally his sermons were printed and talked about in Edinburgh. Strangers began to appear in Ettrick Kirk. The inevitable calls followed. But Boston's ten-years' conflict with his wayward parish were over. He stayed on in the midst of a people who had learned to love him.

Then came the result of his preaching and praying and wrestling with sinners in Christ's name—the publication of that world-renowned work, *The Fourfold State*, or, to give the book its title in full: *Human Nature in its Fourfold State, subsisting in the Parents of Mankind in Paradise; Entire Depravity in the Unregenerate; Begun Recovery in the Regenerate: and Consummate Happiness or Misery in all mankind in the Future State.*

What a record of dilatory publishing we have here! From the first Tuesday in January 1712 till the end of November 1720, it took eight years of disappointing delays before the first bound copy of *The Fourfold State* was in Thomas Boston's hands.

Then the book set the soul of Scotland on fire. Edition after edition came rolling out from the press. In city drawing-rooms and in shepherds' cothouses, in the remote highlands and in almost every house in the

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lowlands *The Fourfold State* was discussed and read. For a whole century it influenced the theology and the Christian character of Scotland. True—it was a grim presentiment of the Love of God, such as we cannot always read with approval to-day. But, it is not a book of to-day. It was begotten in a grim age, and we must judge *The Fourfold State* in the light of the age in which it was written.

The name of Thomas Boston will for ever be associated with the *Marrow Controversy*. That little book which he picked up on the window-head of a soldier's house in Simprin, *The Marrow of Modern Divinity*, he read and re-read until it speedily gave a tincture to his preaching.

The book was written by an English gentleman of Brasenose College, Oxford, Edward Fisher, M.A., in the famous year of the Westminster Confession, 1646. It gathered into one the most marrowy passages of the master minds of divinity, and was the conscientious attempt of a conscientious man to find a middle way to the Kingdom of God betwixt extreme theological liberty and extreme theological legality. The book was indeed the very sum and substance of the Covenanted Faith.

Boston had known this precious book for twenty years, when in 1717 the great *Auchterarder Case* came up before the Assembly—a controversy which waged round the proposal to put this very ambiguous question before all who applied for licence to preach in the Kirk of Scotland: *It is not sound and orthodox to teach that we must forsake sin in order to our coming to Christ, and instating us in covenant with God?*

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During the Assembly debate Boston did not speak; but he began to tell his neighbour in the house, the minister of Crieff, about *The Marrow of Modern Divinity*, and its appropriate bearing on the whole difficulty. The minister of Crieff straightway searched through all the Edinburgh bookshops till he got a copy. He gave it after that to Mr. Webster. From Mr. Webster it passed to James Hog, minister of Carnock, who published a new edition of *The Marrow* the very next year.

The Moderator immediately condemned the book. The Evangelicals defended it. The Commission of Assembly, having received a complaint, took the matter up through a Committee, and sat in judgment on *The Marrow*. The result was, that at the next meeting of Assembly in 1720 *The Marrow* was condemned.

The Marrowmen, or those who, like Thomas Boston, defended the book, were wounded to the quick. So a petition was framed by the minister of Ettrick and eleven other like-minded ministers, and this defence of the book was laid on the table of the next Assembly. Then followed the long Marrow Controversy. But the Assembly still condemned the book and rebuked the petitioners.

“I received the rebuke,” said Boston, “as an ornament being for the cause of truth.”

The Marrow Controversy was at an end. But—Ebenezer Erskine was one of the twelve protestors. So the Marrow Controversy of 1722 was really the beginning of that spiritual awakening in the Kirk of Scotland which resulted, eleven years later, in the first Secession from the Kirk under the leadership of this

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same Ebenezer Erskine. Had Thomas Boston been living in 1733, he too would have been among those who founded the Secession Kirk.

But he returned to his beloved Parish of Ettrick, and quietly resumed his preaching and catechising and writing for other ten years.

Never was his declaration of the Gospel of Christ more fragrant than during these his most years. Never did his pen fly more quickly over the paper—for to this period we owe his two books: *The Mystery of Christ in the Form of a Servant*, and that still more heartsome work which was published after his death: *The Crook in the Lot*. When he went to Ettrick sixty persons sat down to Communion—when he dispensed his last Communion seven hundred and seventy-seven tokens were distributed.

Shall we not remember, too, the pathetic study which Boston made of the *Hebrew Accents* during these dying years—those enigmatical dots and dashes which adorn the Hebrew text of the Old Testament, and act as guides to the pronunciation and meaning of the words. They were added long ago by the Massorettes or Jewish Doctors. Over these accents Thomas Boston wrestled and thought and prayed, as many another poor seeker after truth has done. The great ambition of his last days was to publish a book on the subject. The accents became a passion with him. He thought he had discovered their mystical meaning. He believed they were divine. So he started his work.

For three years he toiled at it. A fourth year was taken up in translating it into Latin. But he was dead before it appeared in Amsterdam in 1738. For six long



REV. THOMAS DORTON.

Presbyterian, par. 1732-33

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years he had been asleep beneath the green sod of Ettrick Kirkyard. And it was well. For the book was a failure. His theory was a quaint dream. Surely no stranger book ever issued from a Scots manse to be published in far-off Amsterdam, than Thomas Boston's *Tractatus Stigmologicus!*

But for piety and pastoring Thomas Boston, minister of Ettrick, was a non-such. His quaint strong marrowy English, interspersed every here and there with clean-cut, homely, Scots words, can scarcely be excelled. Through a lifetime of many sorrows, and the harassments of continual ill-health, he struggled divinely to do his Master's will. At the hinder end of his ministry he had sometimes to preach sitting in a torment of pain. Yet he is proud to tell us that despite a frail physique he never spent a silent Sabbath. The gleam of God was always in this man's eye, because the love of God was always in his soul. He was so absorbed in eternal things, that on the last two Sabbaths of his life, when he was utterly spent with pain, he insisted on preaching through the open window of his little manse to his beloved folk, who stood in the garden listening. The winds of Ettrick blew about their uncovered heads, even while the wind of God was blowing through their pastor's soul. It was the last time they were to hear the voice that had so often introduced them to God. For ere another Sabbath dawned, the window through which he preached was closed, and the blinds were all down.

To-day you may stand in Ettrick among the same hill silences and the same caller winds. The shepherd has long since been folded with his sheep—but his name is sought for by many a worshipper's eye, on the grey-green stone which marks his resting-place.

CHAPTER TWENTY-FIVE THE ERSKINES AND THE STORY OF THE SECESSION

FROM THOMAS BOSTON TO EBENEZER AND
Ralph Erskine is but one historic step, and that the most natural. For it was Henry Erskine, the father of these two, who first opened young Boston's eyes to see the heavenly light, and the Minister of Ettrick died just on the eve of the Secession, when the Erskines began their life-work for the Kirk.

Like many of the leaders in the Kirk of Scotland in the past, the Erskines had the best blood of Scotland in their veins. They were the sons of Rev. Henry Erskine, minister of Cornhill, by his second wife Margaret Halcro of Orkney. Henry Erskine was one of the Erskines of Shielfield, in Roxburghshire, the direct descendants of Robert, third Lord Erskine, who was killed at Flodden. Erskine of Dun, who subscribed the Godly Band in 1557; Lord Erskine who was the first Elder in 1639 to take the Covenant; the Earl of Mar; a Tulchan Archbishop of Glasgow—all these were akin to Ebenezer and Ralph Erskine. The Countess of Mar was godmother to Ebenezer, and James Erskine of Grange was best man to Ralph. With all that behind him, it is not to be wondered at, that Henry Erskine, their father, endured innumerable hardships for Christ's sake, like many another nobleman. He was often on the verge of starvation. He was tortured before the Privy Council with the thumbscrews. He was banished to the Bass Rock. He was imprisoned at Newcastle.

On the other hand, Margaret Halcro, the mother of

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the famous brothers, had the blood of Scots royalty in her veins. For she was the granddaughter of Bernard Stewart, one of the Lennox-Darnley-Stewarts of Barscube. Strange to say, she was also an Erskine, for her grandmother was Helen Erskine of Dun, and it was while on a visit to her kinswoman the Countess of Mar, that Margaret Halcro met Henry Erskine, her distant kinsman and future husband.

So the seceders, who were to stand for the people of Scotland for many a generation, had their roots in right royal blood.

Ebenezer Erskine was born on a significant day—the very day on which Cameron and Cargill rode into Sanquhar and posted their fearless declaration on the Market Cross, disowning the King and asserting absolute freedom of faith for the covenanted folk. So all through his boyhood Ebenezer Erskine breathed the air of a protesting faith. He was moved about from place to place, as his father was hunted or persecuted or imprisoned. How they managed expenses in those days it is ill to understand, but Ebenezer went through his university course in Edinburgh, and after laureating in arts began and finished a five-years' course in theology. Colleging was a dangerous affair for an outspoken lad at that time, for while Ebenezer Erskine was at the University, one of his fellow-students, Thomas Aikenhead, was hanged for heresy at the age of eighteen, with the entire sanction of the local presbytery.

From the university Ebenezer Erskine went to the house of the Earl of Rothes as family tutor. There he met Alison Turpie, daughter of a lawyer at Leslie. In

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the spring of the year 1703 he was called by the heritors and elders of Portmoak, and there, with the acquiescence of the parishioners, he was settled as minister on 22nd September of that same year. The kirk and manse were badly out of repair. But nevertheless, within five months of his settlement, Ebenezer Erskine brought home Alison Turpie as his bride.

Leaving Ebenezer Erskine settled in his little manse at Portmoak, let us go back to Ralph.

Ralph Erskine was five years younger than his brother. He was a very impressionistic lad, and by the time he went to the Edinburgh University, Principal Carstares had greatly improved the curriculum. Full of sentiment and poetry, he invariably spent his vacations at Portmoak manse, where his sister-in-law, Alison Erskine, led him to a deeper sense of God and eternal things. Alison Erskine, by her gracious influence in that poor little manse, helped to mould the religious life of Scotland—for she influenced the two Erskines, who were in turn to influence whole generations of seceders.

Ralph became a tutor also, and spent two years in the house of Colonel John Erskine of Culross, a distant kinsman of his own. It is a heartsome thing to remember that one of the little boys, with whom the devout young tutor often prayed, became in after years a very famous man—John Erskine, the Scots jurist, who wrote that weighty book, *The Institutes of the Law of Scotland*. After a time of over-sensitive shrinking from the burden of the ministry, Ralph Erskine was licensed and ordained to the second charge of Dunfermline Parish, with the consent of the great plurality

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of heritors, magistrates, Town Council, and elders. Thereafter he very soon married Margaret Dewar, a daughter of the laird of Lassodie.

How very different were these two brothers in disposition and attainment!

Ralph, the younger, was a versatile, imaginative, genial soul, full of humour, a most cheerful counsellor in sorrow, a lover of music and a maker of poetry. When the neighbours complained of the minister playing the violin, the elders who loved him replied:

“Oor minister is nane the waur o’ his tunes on the wee sinfu’ fiddle.”

He published a volume of “Gospel Sonnets,” which drew a letter from George Whitfield in their praise. A winsome, conservative man, with a singularly quaint and picturesque ministry, Ralph Erskine would probably have lived and died a popular parish minister, had it not been for Ebenezer’s robust influence. As it was, from first to last, Ralph played a heartsome second to Ebenezer’s first-rate leadership of men.

Ebenezer Erskine, a strong, magerful soul, began his ministry at Portmoak, as he himself says, “callously and mechanically, being swallowed up in unbelief and in rebellion against God.” He looked upon the doctrine of Christ as “stuff,” and wearied of nothing so much as to read the history of Christ in the Evangelists. When he preached, his sermons were very long and formal. He repeated them by rote, and kept his eye fixed on a nail in the opposite wall, lest he forget.

And yet! This man was completely changed through the influence of his wife, who was a nervous, emotional

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and deeply religious woman. By one of the mysterious ironies of circumstances, this sweet woman was seized with a fit of profound religious melancholia after the birth of her second child, and although she had led first her brother-in-law Ralph, and was to lead now her husband Ebenezer Erskine into the Kingdom of God, she was tormented with the delusion that she herself had lost all faith in God.

Her husband, in his extremity, and touched perhaps, with some of the religious superstitions of the time, called in four neighbouring ministers to pray with her in turn, that the evil spirit might be cast out. The four men afterwards asked her to pray with them before they left, and this is what Ebenezer Erskine writes in his diary:

“But oh! that her words were now written and printed in a book, that they were graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock for ever! For, to the conviction of all present the spirit of God spoke out of her. There was not, I suppose, a dry cheek among all the ministers or others of the family present. . . . That same day the Lord was pleased to calm her spirit and break the strength of her temptation. . . . This, I think, was the first time that ever I felt the Lord touching my heart in a sensible manner. Her distress and affliction, with her deliverance, were blessed to me. Some weeks after, she and I were sitting together in my closet, and while we were conversing about the things of God, the Lord was pleased to rend the veil and to give me a glimmering view of salvation, which made my soul to acquiesce in Christ, as the new and living way to glory.”

It was a year before the minister of Portmoak gained

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the full assurance of faith. But then—what a stately honoured servant of Christ he became! Like many another high soul, he was yet to be perfected through suffering.

And the suffering came through that very commonplace channel, which has brought suffering to many a country minister's family—an unhealthy, badly-drained manse.

First, Ebenezer Erskine himself was brought to death's door with fever, and his life hung in the balance for a whole year. Then, three young children and his own sister died within two months. Then, the poor mother's health gave way, and of all that remained of his ten children, one after another took either fever or smallpox. Last of all, the mother—sweet Alison Erskine who had led such illustrious souls to Christ—died; and almost before the grave had closed over her, the stricken minister's favourite daughter Isobel died. It is a dark tale to read, with a great deal of sad music in it. But, Ebenezer Erskine, the heavy-hit affectionate father and husband, was purified by these cold austere winds of death which had blown through his soul.

"I take it kindly," he writes in his diary, "that the Lord comes to my family to gather lilies, wherewith to garnish the upper sanctuary, for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven. And oh! it sometimes affords me a pleasing prospect to think that I have so much plenishing in Heaven before me, and that, when I enter the gates of glory, I shall not only be welcomed by the whole general assembly of saints and angels, but, my wife and four pleasant babes will in a particular manner, welcome me to those regions."

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And how did Ebenezer Erskine take his many sorrows?

As a true man should. He threw himself heart and soul into his work. He organized the work of his elders, and put them through a series of testing questions every six months. He organized Praying Societies up and down the parish. He organized the parish school, and got an assistant teacher of such proficiency that the school soon produced scholars like John Mair the Latinist and Michael Bruce the poet. He even organized the parishioners into a volunteer corps. This grief-stricken consecrated man so drilled the people in religion and in patriotism, that after twenty years in Portmoak he reported to the presbytery that there was not a single dissenter in the whole parish.

He had ever a highborn dignity about him, that gave him a certain stately aloofness of bearing.

"You have never heard Ebenezer Erskine?" exclaimed one of his bitter opponents. "Well sir, you have never heard the gospel in its majesty."

Preaching was the delight of his life. Thousands came to Communion. Wherever he went the crowd followed.

Little wonder, then, that after twenty-seven years at Portmoak, he was called to Stirling. When he came to the royal burgh, the provost and magistrates met him. For, was he not to succeed James Guthrie, the first who suffered martyrdom after the Restoration, and the leal Presbyter whom Cromwell once called "the short man who could not bow"?

It was an age of stern theology. In Dunfermline, elders and deacons paraded the town during church

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hours, with a posse of policemen to compel attendance at worship. The very bairns suffered fearful things in the name of religion. Here are the first two questions of Ralph Erskine's Catechism:

"Are you so young that you may not be sick and die?"

"Are you so young that you may not go to hell?"

Poor little lambs of Jesus—how they must have wept on their beds in the dark!

Yet, within two years, Ralph Erskine, the framer of that catechism filled his church, and five thousand members attended Communion.

These two brothers, Ebenezer and Ralph Erskine, who were full of evangelical fervour, entered the Kirk of Scotland when it was rapidly becoming materialized by a spirit of moderatism. It was only natural that as the spirit of moderatism grew, their spirit of protest should also grow. The two spirits could not abide long in the same kirk without some kind of explosion. The explosion came in 1732, and the first secession took place in the Kirk of Scotland.

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As the retiring Moderator of the Synod of Stirling in that same year, Ebenezer Erskine preached a sermon from the text: "The stone which the builders rejected, the same is made the headstone of the corner."

It was a siccar sermon on the existing condition of the Kirk. He declared that the builders of the Kirk had for years been rejecting Christ. He accused the ministers of time-serving and peddling in politics. He accused the heritors of bringing many men into parishes who snuffed the light of Christ out of the church with

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harangues and flourishes of morality, men who, although they had got a smack of the learning in vogue, were utter strangers to the work of grace, and who took care to keep the power on their side by bringing in none but men of their own stamp and spirit. He closed the sermon by urging the Synod to ordain no minister unless he showed personal acquaintance with the power of godliness:

“It is a heavy charge laid by God against some, that they are dumb dogs who cannot bark, but prefer their own carnal ease unto the safety of the Church.”

There spoke John Knox, Andrew Melville, and many another fearless reformer.

The Synod censured Erskine for the sermon, and he immediately protested. Fifteen others, among them his brother Ralph, joined in the protest. Then Ebenezer Erskine appealed to the Assembly, but only three of the fifteen stood by him. The Assembly rebuked him and his three companions, and there and then the four produced a protest and asked that it might be read and recorded. The Assembly refused. So they tabled the document and withdrew.

That might have been the end of the matter, had not a most dramatic incident happened. How small a thing may turn the destiny of kirks or men! The paper slipped from the table, and fell at the feet of “a certain fiery man in the corrupt measures of the time.” He read the protest. Then in a great anger he read it over to the house, and called upon the Assembly to pause in the business that they might consider the insufferable insult committed upon them in the paper.

That paper is historic. For it was signed by Ebenezer

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Erskine and his friends, William Wilson, Alex. Moncrieff and James Fisher. This is the first time that the names of these Four Secession Fathers appear together in any document.

They were rebuked, and asked to retract at the Commission in August. They refused. The Commission then suspended them from the ministry, and the suspension was ratified by the next General Assembly. The Four Protesters then declared their intention to secede from the prevailing party in the Church—and the Secession Kirk was the result.

* * * * *

Who were these other three Fathers of the Secession?

William Wilson was a son of Gilbert Wilson, a Lanarkshire laird who had lost his estate because of his loyalty to the Kirk. His mother was the daughter of another outed laird in Forfarshire. William Wilson himself was one of the Ministers of Perth. A calm thinker, a wise counsellor, and a man of business capacity, he wrote most of the documents connected with the Secession.

Alex. Moncrieff was the well-known laird of Culfargie, on the banks of the Earn in Perthshire. For generations his ancestors had held these lands. His parents, who were folk of eminent piety, sent their son to St. Andrews University and afterwards to Leyden, that he might become a preacher in the Kirk. On his return he was ordained to the parish of Abernethy, where his estate of Culfargie was situated. This man knew no fear. In prayer, he often lost himself in a sheer

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mystical fervour, during a service in the parish kirk, for he was in rapport with the unseen.

"See!" exclaimed a woman one day in the church, "Culfargie is awa tae heaven and left us a' sittin' here!"

He was intensely conservative in his sympathies.

"Father hates everything new," said one of his children, "except the New Testament."

Like many another good man, he had a warm temper. When George Whitfield objected in the town of Dunfermline to the presbyterian form of worship, and sought to give a reason for his objection by pointing to his breast with this remark, "I do not find it here," Moncrieff gave the Bible on the table a sharp rap with his knuckles and replied testily, "But, I find it here."

James Fisher, the last of the four, was the son of the minister of Barr parish in Ayrshire. He was ordained at Kinclaven in Perthshire, and married one of Ebenezer Erskine's daughters. Fisher had a theological cast of mind, and compiled a catechism which still bears his name.

These Four Fathers of the Secession were very cleverly characterized by William Wilson when he compared them to the four living creatures in Ezekiel's vision.

"Our brother Mr. Erskine has the face of a man: our friend Mr. Moncrieff has the face of a lion: our friend Mr. Fisher has the face of an eagle: and as for myself, I think you will all own, that I may claim to be the ox, for as you know, the laborious part of the business falls to my share."

These four men expressed their position in very simple, clean-cut terms. They claimed communion with

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all and everyone who desired with them to adhere to the true Presbyterian Covenanted Church of Scotland, in her doctrine, worship, government and discipline—and particularly with all who were afflicted with the grievances they had been complaining of and who were in their several spheres, wrestling against the same.

With that aim in view, the Four Seceders, holding by their orders as ordained ministers of the Church of Scotland, met one December day in the year 1733, at a roadside hamlet called Gairney Bridge, three miles from Kinross. There they formed themselves into a regular Presbytery, which was afterwards known as The Associate Presbytery. The Assembly, which they had left, tried to wean them back by adopting a more conciliatory spirit towards them, but they refused to resile from their position, and published in 1735 and 1736 two *Testimonies*, in which were stated their doctrinal and historical reasons for seceding.

Ralph Erskine took no part at first in the Secession, although he was present at Gairney Bridge in 1733 as a sympathetic spectator. It was some years before he gained clearness, but in 1740 he gained both clearness and courage, and joined the Secession along with Thomas Mair and Thomas Nairn. His initial reluctance, however, increased rather than impaired the value of his ultimate accession to the cause, and none proved a more shining ornament to the Secession Kirk in Scotland than Ralph Erskine.

What a stupendous task lay before that brave little presbytery of Four!

Appeals reached them from all parts of Scotland asking for supply of preaching and the ordinances of

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religion. They were equal to the call. For in 1737 William Wilson was appointed professor of Divinity, and his little class at Perth was called a Divinity Hall. He was followed in this office by Alexander Moncrieff, then by Ebenezer Erskine, and finally by James Fisher. From less to more the little Kirk of the Secession grew. It still claimed to be a living part of the ancient Kirk of Scotland—and in many ways it was actually recognized as such. For when Ebenezer Erskine left the old parish kirk of Stirling and entered the large new kirk which had been built for him, the old kirk stood empty for seventy-seven years. In spite of the Assembly's action, Erskine remained the real minister of the parish; and when in 1745 the government wished to communicate with the people of Stirling, it was to Ebenezer Erskine that the official message was sent. So, while occupying the position of a dissenting minister, he was recognized by the legal authorities as a parish minister.

CHAPTER XXVI THE BREACH & AFTER: A PUZZLE-PAGE IN THE HISTORY OF THE KIRK

THE NEXT HUNDRED YEARS, FROM 1747 TO 1847, make the puzzle-page in the history of the Kirk in Scotland, and there are some to-day who do not know it.

It began exactly fourteen years after the seceders had left the Kirk of Scotland, for The Burgess Oath, and the taking of it, rent the little Kirk of the Secession in two. How appropriately has this cleavage in the new-born church been called The Breach!

The Burgess Oath had to be taken by all burgesses of Edinburgh, Glasgow, and Perth, and it contained this clause: "*I profess and allow with my heart the true religion presently professed within this realm.*"

The little Secession Kirk, which had now an Associate Synod with three Presbyteries in it, could scarcely afford to divide. But so bitter did the dispute over the Burgess Oath become, that divide the Kirk of the Secession did. Some protested that to take the oath meant to sanction the Established Kirk and all its abuses—and these protesters were called *Anti-Burghers*. Others held that the taking of the oath entailed no such inference—and these were called *Burghers*. The more liberal who took the Burgher view amounted to thirty-two, among whom were the Erskines and Fisher—but the more conservative who held by the Anti-Burgher view amounted to twenty-three.

This minority of twenty-three left the Associate Synod and erected themselves separately into what they called the General Associate Synod. But to the general public,

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who usually call great movements by very plain names, the Breach of 1747 divided the Secession Kirk into two Kirks which were known everywhere as *The Burgher Kirk* and the *Anti-Burgher Kirk*.

But, that was only the beginning of a series of ecclesiastical divorces. For, in 1799, the *Burghers* disputed among themselves once more over their relation to that tormentor of Presbytery, the Civil Magistrate. A few protesters again went out in 1805, and they, with others to the number of fifteen, formed the Original Associate Synod, commonly known as Original Burghers or *Old Lights*.

Once more the *Anti-Burghers* had a dispute on the same lines and over the same civil magistrate, and when the Synod condemned all connection between Church and State, four members protested, went out, and formed the *Constitutional Associate Presbytery*.

So after this state of disruption, during which both *Burghers* and *Anti-Burghers* had divided on the same point, there were in the year 1806 actually four different Associate Synods which had sprung from the one little Associate Presbytery formed by Erskine, Moncrieff, Wilson and Fisher in 1734!

That is a puzzle-page in the history of the Kirk which only a Scot with a clear understanding and a touch of dry humour can comprehend. But the true significance of the whole story is that the seceders had begun to modify their views of the covenant. And though these divisions may seem narrow and even grotesque to us to-day, they yet represented a real attempt on the part of conscientious men to be faithful to Jesus Christ as the only King and Head of the Church.

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Mercifully for Scotland, the Burgess Oath was abolished in a few years' time, and this led to a union between the *Burghers* and *Anti-Burghers* in the year 1820. The two Synods, after constituting separately, met in Bristo Church, Edinburgh, and there they were united on the very same spot where, seventy-three years before, the Breach had divided them. The Church thus constituted was called the *United Secession Kirk*, and embraced no less than two hundred and sixty-two congregations.

Let one more instance be given to show how great was the desire of those seceders to adhere to the exact dictates of a conscience that was already too sensitive. Among the Old Light seceders there was a dispute at one time about the dispensing ritual of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. Some maintained that the minister in repeating the form, *The Lord Jesus the same night in which He was betrayed took bread*, ought to lift the bread in imitation of Christ before giving thanks. The more narrow-minded seceders maintained that such a proceeding savoured of unholy ritual. So the former were called *Lifters* and the latter were called *Anti-Lifters!*

Here surely was a ludicrous fidelity and an overstraining of conscience. But no one can really enter into the history of the Secession Kirk in those quaint days who cannot distinguish between *Burghers* and *Anti-Burghers*, *Old Lights* and *New Lights*, *Lifters* and *Anti-Lifters*.

There was an abundance of hard-headed good sense in the piety of these old seceders, and an almost utter absence of that hysterical emotion which has

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always been characteristic of the Celts beyond the Grampians. Secession religion was essentially a douce kind of lowland piety. The seceders might split over the finest distinctions of principles—but, when it came to violent emotional revivals of religion like the *Cam-buslang Wark*, when the panic-stricken crowd expressed its contrition in convulsions and howls, then the seceders held aloof and disapproved. No one who knows their history or who has been brought up in their tradition will ever accuse men like the Erskines of a lack of piety—but, it was just because of their sober, far-ben sense of God that the seceders gained such a firm grip over the thoughtful people in the southern districts of Scotland. There, emotionalism in religion has never yet found a home.

But this puzzle-page in the history of the Kirk in Scotland within that hundred years is not yet full.

About twenty years after Ebenezer Erskine had seceded, there was a very bad case of enforced settlement at Inverkeithing. The Presbytery of Dunfermline refused to carry out the settlement. But the Assembly of 1752 ordered them to proceed with it against their own will and against the congregation's wishes. It was known that three members of Presbytery were willing to induct while six absolutely refused. So the Assembly decreed that the quorum required must be five, whereas three was the legal quorum. This was a move engineered by the Moderator to catch some of the conscientious six. But, when the day of induction came, the quorum of five was not forthcoming, and the six absentees were there and then summoned to the bar of the Assembly. There they were told that *one* of them was to be deposed

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from the ministry as an example—the particular one to be afterwards selected. There was neither reason, justice nor religion in this decision. But it was upheld, and the choice fell arbitrarily on Thomas Gillespie of Carnock. He was forthwith deposed, and this one good man was the founder of the *Relief Kirk*.

If it was a wonderful spectacle to see the *Secession Kirk* started by four men, it was a still more wonderful spectacle to see the *Relief Kirk* started by one man!

Gillespie had studied in Edinburgh, attending both arts and divinity, but his evangelical tendencies led him to attend the Secession College at Perth as well. Ten days there, however, satisfied him; for the atmosphere of the secession did not suit him. So he went next to Nottingham and studied under Dr. Doddridge. In England he was ordained as an Independent minister, and, on returning to Scotland, was received into the Established Kirk. Very soon he was presented to the parish of Carnock.

Thomas Gillespie was a man of great earnestness and had a particularly guileless soul. He was the last man to deserve expulsion from any Church. But when, by an altogether arbitrary act, the Kirk of Scotland expelled him in 1752, he took to field preaching and drew great crowds after him. The Assembly, by its treatment, gave him the reputation of a martyr. Everywhere he went folk sympathised with him. By and by an old barn was fitted up for him in Dunfermline, and here he reconstituted his session and went on quietly with his work. After six years Thomas Boston of Jedburgh, the son of a famous father, joined him. Then Thomas Collier of Colinsburgh Parish in Fife joined

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Gillespie and Boston—and these three constituted a new Presbytery, which was called *The Relief Presbytery*.

The quaint name expresses the whole principle on which this little Church was founded—it was “for the Relief of Christians oppressed in their Christian Privileges.” The Secession was too narrow for them, the Established Kirk was too dead, and the Cameronians were too extreme.

Gillespie was soon joined by ministers and congregations all over Southern Scotland. Some came from the Establishment, some from the Secession and some from the Cameronians. Presbyteries were formed and a general Synod followed, until the catholicity of the *Relief Kirk* gathered in one hundred and eighteen congregations. But its very width of sympathy was its greatest danger, for there was always a danger of the *Relief Kirk* becoming a mere shelter for those who were discontent with other communions. A hymn-book was used for the first time in the *Relief Kirk*, and for half a century its students were educated at the Divinity Halls of the Established Kirk.

So for many years these two Kirks, the *Secession* and the *Relief*, existed side by side. They were sib, but they were separate. Then in 1821 an overture for union came from the *Relief*, but it was not until 1847 that all preliminaries were arranged. In that year, however, the union took place. The Synod of the *Secession* brought four hundred congregations and the Synod of the *Relief* brought one hundred and eighteen. The ministers and elders marched in procession to Tanfield Hall in Edinburgh, where each Church declared itself

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one with the other, and the new Church thus formed became the *United Presbyterian Church*.

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We may sometimes think, in this very tolerant and luxurious age, that these old seceders were narrow, bigoted and contentious men. But, with all their limitations, they must be judged in the light of their own stern age, not in the light of a new and later age. If they had faults and foibles at which weaker men now smile, at least they were robust self-denying sons of God. They were strong, they were austere, they were unemotional, they were pure. As the sunlight skents on the dark waters of many a mountain tarn and turns its gloom into laughter, so the austerity of the seceders was often relieved by the genial humour of their kindly souls.

Let these two tales of Secession wit suffice:

Ebenezer Erskine had a favourite daughter, Ailie, who was married to a Secession minister, James Scott of Gateshaw. In the dispute over the Burgess Oath, Scott sided with the Anti-burghers. With every consideration of refined feeling Ebenezer Erskine refrained from taking any notice of his son-in-law's opposition, for the sake of Ailie. But, when Scott of Gateshaw came home from the Synod that excommunicated the Erskines, his wife met him with an enquiring look at the manse door. He was evidently ill at ease.

"Well?" said she.

But he walked into the study without replying.

She followed him.

"Well?" said she again, in a slightly more emphatic voice.

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After a long pause came the reply:

“We have excommunicated them.”

Ailie Erskine looked at her husband.

“You have excommunicated my father and uncle? You are my husband. But, never more shall you be minister of mine.”

And she kept her word. For she immediately joined the Burgher congregation at Jedburgh. That was Secession smeddum.

And yet—a spirit of brotherly love lay beneath many a seceder’s contentions. Here is proof of the same:

When Willison of Dundee lay dying in 1750, Ralph Erskine, who had so often opposed him in Kirk affairs, stood beside him as a comforter. A foolish lady, who was present in the room, looked at the two men, and, with a tactless animosity, remarked:

“There will be no secession in heaven.”

The two men smiled as they looked into each other’s eyes.

“Madam,” said Ralph Erskine, turning to the lady, “in heaven there will be a complete secession from sin and sorrow.”

And the dying man in the bed nodded his approval.



FATHERS OF THE SECESSION

THOMAS HAILE	WILLIAM WILKIE	ALEXANDER MONCRIEFF	JAMES FISHER
	FREDERICK ERKIN		WILLIAM AUSTIN

CHAPTER TWENTY-SEVEN JUPITER CARLYLE AND HIS FRIENDS THE MODERATES

IT WAS SIR WALTER HIMSELF WHO THUS described him:

“The greatest demigod I ever saw was Dr. Carlyle of Musselburgh, commonly called Jupiter Carlyle, from having sat more than once for the King of Gods and men to Gavin Hamilton.”

For the minister of Inveresk was one of the best known men of his time. He was a Moderate of the Moderates. As a man of the world, a friend of great folk, and a patron of letters, his tall handsome figure was pointed out to strangers in old-time Edinburgh as a local lion. John Kay, the barber artist, depicts him riding up the Canongate from Musselburgh, flourishing a long riding whip as he goes, to keep an appointment with Monboddo or Kames at William Creech’s shop in the Luckenbooths. In the early days of the nineteenth century he walked the brand new pavement of Princes Street, an old man, fine-featured, and with a colossal dignity that earned for him the nickname of King of the Gods.

Born in his father’s manse at Prestonpans in 1722, and dying in 1805, he was in the best position to tell the story of that period of Scottish history when the literature of our land reached its highest point of merit. And he tells the story of his time in his famous *Autobiography*.

As a youth at Edinburgh College, he saw in 1736 the fury of the mob in the Grassmarket where they hanged the ill-fated Captain Porteous on a dyer’s pole. At that

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very time Ebenezer Erskine was nursing the Secession Kirk in its infancy. And yet, it is an ill thing to imagine that the seceders were still within the hanging days in Scotland!

Nine years later Carlyle volunteered to help the authorities in their ridiculous defence of the city against Prince Charlie's wild Highlanders. Afterwards, when the Prince had not only captured but captivated Edinburgh, and was marching on Tranent, young Carlyle, keeping a look-out from his father's steeple in the dawning of a notable autumn morning, saw John Cope and the English dragoons flying helter skelter before the Highlanders.

He saw also, in his time, the literal passing of the life of Scotland from the ancient to the modern. In his young days the Canongate was tenanted by dukes and lords, and it was not at all uncommon for a peeress to hold a reception in her bedroom after her one o'clock dinner. But when he was an old man the new town had been built, and the Sedan chairs of the Lawnmarket had given place to the ponderous family coaches which bore my lord or lady along the spacious causeways of Princes Street or George Street to an early dinner at five o'clock. It was indeed the bridge between the old and the new that Carlyle crossed; for when he was at school a highland laird could hang a man for stealing a cow; but when he died the Duke of Wellington was a middle-aged man.

Alexander Carlyle was well equipped in the humanities, for he was a student at Edinburgh, Glasgow and Leyden. He drank in the pure milk of Moderatism from men like Dr. Leechman of Glasgow, and was ordained

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in 1748 to the parish of Inveresk. But he does not seem to have had any special fitness for the ministry. Among the Moderates a gospel call was by no means indispensable. Like many another lad of his day, he chose the Church, as he himself admits, because he yielded to the influence of parental wishes, and so agreed to follow out the clerical profession. He lived as minister at Inveresk for fifty-seven years.

Next to Principal Robertson—that dignified little divine of suave manners and punctilious ways, who seldom made a joke and never a mistake of unconvention—Carlyle became the most eminent Moderate in the Kirk of Scotland. In those days Moderatism ruled the Kirk. Moderatism—a very polite name for a very bad thing—represented the spirit of those men who claimed moderation in doctrine, discipline, government and—godliness. The curse of their creed was in this last, that they were content with a very moderate kind of religion. They called their creed a sanctified common-sense, and they condemned their evangelical brethren as high-fliers. A Moderate was always first-cousin to that irritating patron of Presbytery, the civil magistrate. This body of legal or moral preachers who taught the moralities of decent life with never a hint at conversion or saving grace, became the dominant class of clergy in Scotland. Many of them gave their attention to literature and culture, to the advancement of trade and farming, and addressed high sounding discourses to their people on poor laws, benefit societies, and the politer virtues. Tories in politics and strict constitutionalists, they enforced the law of patronage without any reference to the wishes of the people.

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Many of them wrote admirable treatises on agriculture, and it is to the Moderate clergy of the kirk of those days that we owe the best informed accounts of parishes in the *Statistical Account of Scotland* for 1793-7.

If the Evangelicals, in their desire to maintain pure doctrine in life and conduct, went a little too far in their austere advocacy of the repentance stool and the merciless sessioning of delinquents, the Moderates went a great deal further in their flirtations with the world and their laxity of duty, as many a neglected parish testified. There were many great and good men among them, who gained for Scotland a more charitable creed, a greater freedom of thought, and a wiser tolerance of religious opinion—but, the outstanding fault of Moderatism was, that it fostered morality without godliness. At the close of the eighteenth century these Moderates excelled themselves by passing a motion in the Assembly of 1796 disapproving of Foreign Missions; and not long after, when the Haldanes and Rowland Hill brought a revival of religion to the very doors of the Kirk, the Assembly decreed that no countenance should be given to any such fanatical movement.

It was over this section of the Kirk that Jupiter Carlyle held sway. He led it in the Assembly alongside of his chief, Principal Robertson, and his particular friends were men like Dr. Hugh Blair, whose sermons in St. Giles the whole world crowded to hear.

St. Giles in those days was ruthlessly divided into four separate churches, each of which had a separate door, and a minister of different type and doctrine. The Evangelicals, or highfliers, went in by the Tolbooth door to hear Dr. Alexander Webster discourse his se-

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vere Calvinism with black mittens on his hands; those who wished an elegant morality went through the door of the Little Kirk and drank in the platitudes of Dr. Wallace; but most of the St. Giles worshippers passed in by the left-hand door to the High Kirk, where Dr. Blair addressed a fashionable audience of Moderates in the forenoon, while his ultra-evangelical colleague, Rev. Robert Walker, denounced dissipation and play-going in the afternoon to a much poorer and less distinguished congregation. St. Giles was typical of the whole Kirk. The collection plate at each diet was an index to the social status of the two High Kirk audiences—for a shrewd Scots elder who served the tables in the High Kirk of St. Giles said on one occasion to a neighbour that it took twenty-four of Mr. Walker's hearers to equal one of Dr. Blair's.

As a patron of letters Jupiter Carlyle knew most of the famous men of his day. And what a rare day it was! The bench was full of literary lords—Kames, Monboddo and Hailes. Then there were the philosophers like David Hume, Thomas Reid, Adam Smith, Adam Ferguson and Dugald Stewart. Carlyle knew them all, argued with them all, and drank with them all. He was afterwards to suffer for his friendship with the most famous literary minister of the time—Rev. John Home, author of the tragedy of *Douglas*.

"A shrewd clever old carle," said Sir Walter Scott of Jupiter Carlyle, "but no more a poet than his precentor."

Yet the shrewd clever old carle knew Robert Ferguson the poet, and was intimate with Robert Burns himself in that fateful year when the Ayrshire ploughman

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came to Edinburgh to be flattered, fêted and spoiled. Nor would the minister of Inveresk be likely to miss meeting Oliver Goldsmith, when that gaily dressed young student paid a visit to Edinburgh; for Carlyle was a perfect adept at dancing; and poor obscure Goldsmith, dressed up for the occasion, got an introduction to Miss Nicky Murray's very select assembly. The dancing moderate minister and Goldsmith would meet there, and doubtless the young poet would buy a pair of white gloves in the corridor from old Lord Kirkcudbright, the glover, who sold gloves to the dancers.

While it was a hard drinking age, play-going was looked upon as a deadly sin. Only the very broadest of broad Churchmen ever ventured inside the new theatre in the playhouse close. But to the minister of Inveresk there existed no bar between the Church and the world. He drank with the rest. He danced like an expert in an age when dancing was considered devilish. He went to London in 1746, and for some months threw himself heartily into the swirl of the gay world, going to a ball in the Haymarket, to the theatre and opera, cutting a dash in Vauxhall Gardens, and lounging in coffee houses with his friend Smollett over a glass of claret or something stronger. When we consider that in those days these things were anathema to the pious, it gives us some inkling of the shock which public opinion of a more serious kind must have received when the minister of Inveresk did them all with the utmost heartiness.

Most daring of all was the active part Carlyle took in bringing out Home's play of *Douglas*. The rehearsals took place in a tavern and were attended by Carlyle, Home, Ferguson and Lord Elibank. It was

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even rumoured that Dr. Carlyle had played the part of young Douglas, while the minister of the High Kirk, Dr. Blair, had actually put on a skirt and strutted about as Gentle Anna! The play was then produced, and never was there such a success. Although many of the clergy were indignant, a few of the Moderates, along with Home and Carlyle, attended the theatre. Carlyle even wrote a pamphlet on the play, which was hawked about the streets, and became the means of packing the house with all sorts and conditions of the citizens.

This action brought down on Carlyle the censure of his Presbytery. Home quietly resigned his charge. But Carlyle defied his censurers in Presbytery, Synod and Assembly; and, finally, he got off with a mere reprimand.

This was in 1756. Yet, in 1784, when Mrs. Siddons came to Edinburgh, the General Assembly of the Kirk in Scotland, which was then sitting, had to fix important business for the days on which she did not act, for all the younger members, both clerical and lay, were at the theatre by three o'clock in the afternoon to make sure of a seat!

Such was Jupiter Carlyle—a Moderate of the widest school, shrewd in the affairs of the Church and the world, the unfriend of all holy zealotry, more famed for boon companionship than piety, and far more at home in a ballroom or a tavern than in the austere company of men whose one concern was Christ. He lived to a vigorous old age in his manse at Inveresk on the princely stipend of £100 a year, and died but a few weeks before the guns of Trafalgar had thundered the news of Nelson's death across Europe.

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He was not of those whose flame-fed souls were always saying, "This one thing I do"—he was rather of those whose deadly cold spirit of worldly wisdom was bringing the cause of Christ in the Kirk to shame and nothingness.

But early in the nineteenth century a pure strong breath of evangelical religion began to quicken the Kirk from within, and that wind of the spirit blew through the souls of men like Dr. Andrew Thomson of St. George's, Edinburgh, Dr. John Erskine of Greyfriars, Sir Henry Moncrieff, and Dr. Thomas Chalmers. It is here that we touch a new development in the Kirk. For out of Moderatism was begotten Disruption, and the man who led this new secession was Thomas Chalmers.



REV. THOMAS CHALMERS, D.D.

1780 Peabody

CHAPTER TWENTY-EIGHT THOMAS CHALMERS & THE DISRUPTION OF THE KIRK

HE WAS A FIFER BORN AND BRED, FOR HE first saw the light of day in the ancient town of Ayr. It was on a March day of the year 1780, and the snell sea winds with the nip of the North in them gave Thomas Chalmers a caller welcome into a world on which he was to leave his mark. He was the sixth of fourteen children born to John Chalmers, ship-owner and general merchant, and Elizabeth Hall his wife.

We need not tangle over his early years, for there is much to tell of his later. But it is easy to see him at school—a strong, idlesome, merry, generous-hearted lad, full of fun, often in mischief, but wholly unable either to tell a lie or to listen to blasphemy.

Like many another lad, he early made up his mind to enter the Kirk, and before he was twelve years of age his box was packed and he was off for the college in St. Andrews.

For the first two sessions the merry lad continued to play himself, but in the third session he wakened up and came to himself. Never afterwards was that magnificent mind idle or inactive.

St. Andrews was, at that time, overrun with Moderatism. Knowledge was worshipped more than piety. Young Chalmers was doubtless affected by this thirst for getting knowledge, and he developed a great talent for mathematics. That gift for exactitude never left him, and even when he was in the divinity hall, he was pursuing the study of Higher Mathematics in French.

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He had also in his student days a marvellous power of expressing himself in eloquent language, and it is related that when his turn came, as a divinity student, to conduct morning worship in college, the people of St. Andrews flocked to the University prayer hall on the mere rumour that it was to be young Thomas Chalmers.

After licence in 1799, he became an assistant at Cavers Kirk, then mathematical assistant at his old college. It was his great ambition at this stage to become a mathematical professor, for his interest in the Church was entirely second to his passion for science. Truth to tell, when he was presented to the parish of Kilmany in 1803, he threw himself with more zeal than ever into his mathematical studies. Science and not religion was his mistress. He started classes for chemistry and mathematics in St. Andrews on his own account and in utter defiance of the professors. He travelled out nine miles to Kilmany every Saturday night, preached on the Sunday, and returned to his beloved classroom again on the Monday morning.

The result was inevitable. Local ministers began to complain about the absentee member of Presbytery. But Chalmers maintained that he did not neglect his duty, and so he calmly continued his course.

He even lectured to his own folks at Kilmany on chemistry, so overpowering was his love for science. On one occasion he exhibited to them the process of bleaching clothes by means of chemical liquids, after which two of the village wives discussed the minister's eccentricities over their washing boyns.

“Oor minister,” said one, “is naething short o’ a

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warlock. He was teaching the folk to clean claes without soap."

"Ay, woman," said the other, "I wish he wad teach me to mak' parritch without meal."

He erected a new manse and laid out a garden on the same scientific principles. For in his *Journal* Chalmers tells us that he walked to Kilmany and gave directions about his gas tubes—that is, he fitted the manse with tubes for gas, long before the introduction of gas. The tubes remain to this day, but still in Kilmany village there is no gas!

When coffee was introduced as a beverage, Chalmers invented a drink of his own, an infusion of burnt rye, which he constantly used himself, and declared was better than the best Mocha. His very garden was laid out and arranged in scientific order, each bed representing a geometric figure and containing its appropriate species.

A man possessed was Thomas Chalmers, absorbed in matters intellectual, hotly enthused with science, never idle, ever alert in body and in mind, and passionately engrossed in the essence of things.

But—the soul of this man had not yet found God. He assented indifferently to the doctrines of Christ, but his heart was not yet set ablaze with a living love for his Saviour.

But that fire of love divine was yet to be lit, by pain, sickness, and death.

First of all, a favourite uncle was found dead on his knees in the very act of prayer. Chalmers was ill himself at the time, and could not leave his bed. But the news pierced his soul like a poignard. Along and severe

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illness followed. For four months he never left his room. For over six months he never entered his pulpit. For a whole year his parish duties had to wait for his recovery. Then, when it was all over, the minister of Kilmany was a mere shadow of his former self.

But, he had been born again. Death had been so near by him that it introduced him to Everlasting Life. From that time on, Thomas Chalmers preached Christ as he had never known how to do before. His tongue was on fire now. His eloquence was the language of a man who had seen God for himself, and being of that order of humanity that can do nothing by halves, he threw his whole powers into the preaching of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

What a change it meant for the parish of Kilmany! The half-empty church was filled. The sermons convicted soul after soul of sin, and converted many to God. The parish was immediately divided into districts where instruction-lectures were given. Classes were started for the young. Here indeed was a man applying his genius for mathematics to the Kingdom of God! So the fame of these burning discourses on life, death, and immortality began to spread over the whole land.

The sequel of all this is easy to imagine. In 1814, after eleven years in bonnie Kilmany, Thomas Chalmers was called to the Tron Kirk of Glasgow. It cost him a great deal to leave Kilmany, when it came to the bit. He was but thirty-four years of age, and as he looked at the quiet hills which bounded the peaceful valley, he waved his stick and said:

“Ah! my heart is wedded to these hills!” And when

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he came back to his old parish more than twenty years after, he exclaimed:

“Oh, there was more tearing of the heart-strings at leaving the valley of Kilmany than at leaving all my great parish at Glasgow!”

For so the heart of a man clings to the first place and the homeliest place as it does to no other place on earth.

In Glasgow his success as a preacher was phenomenal. Whenever he preached the church was crowded to suffocation. Once a month, on Thursdays at noon, he delivered his *Astronomical Discourses*, and on that day the public coffee-houses, reading-rooms, and business offices were empty for a couple of hours. Everyone was at the Tron Kirk.

On one occasion, when the church was already full, the outer door was burst into splinters by the pressure of the crowd outside. When Chalmers preached in London, people secured their seats at breakfast time for the service at noon. Once the crowd was so dense outside the church, that poor Chalmers himself almost gave up attempting to gain admittance. On another occasion a window of the church was opened, and a plank laid from the sill to the top of the area railings for Mr. Wilberforce and some ladies who wished to gain a vacant place near the pulpit. Lord Elgin waved a welcome from within.

“Lady D——” says Mr. Wilberforce, “no shrimp, you must observe, entered boldly before me, and proved that it was practicable.”

What an eloquence for God was in this man! It overswept his hearers like an irresistible tide. They

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were carried out of themselves. They sat with tears running down their cheeks. The most refined natures were overcome as well as the most ignorant and uncouth. Professor Young of the Greek chair in Glasgow was frequently seen weeping like a child in the Tron Kirk, and on one occasion he was so electrified by the utter passion of Chalmers that he leaped up from his seat to a bench near the pulpit and stood there gazing at the preacher, and weeping all the while in a breathless emotion until the burst of eloquence was over.

So inadequate was the Tron Kirk for the audience, that the Town Council built a new parish kirk of St. John's, and translated Chalmers to this larger sphere. Here he had an ampler scope for developing his parochial ideas and schemes.

In his parish there were over ten thousand souls, two thousand families of working folk. Eight hundred of these last had literally no connection with the church. So Chalmers divided the whole parish into twenty-five districts, and placed each district under a separate management. He established two day schools and between forty and fifty sabbath schools for the instruction of the children of the poor. He also had very definite ideas on the best method for providing for the poor. He disliked any compulsory assessment, and believed in voluntary contributions. So the poor of the parish, at his request, were entrusted to his care by the city authorities. It was a mere experiment. But in four years he reduced the pauper expenditure from £1400 to £280 per annum.

But the enormous task of St. John's Parish, with its innumerable organisations, began to undermine

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Chalmers' constitution, and in 1823 he accepted the chair of Moral Philosophy at St. Andrews. He only remained there one year, however, when he was transferred to the chair of Theology in Edinburgh. Then followed ten busy, intellectual, ecclesiastical years, during which Thomas Chalmers wrote much on Theology and Political Economy.

But in 1834 he was appointed Convener of the Committee on Church Extension, and from this time we must follow his doings in the Kirk Courts with close attention. For it was from this time forward that Thomas Chalmers identified himself with that evangelical section of the Kirk which ten years later came out at the Disruption to form the Free Church of Scotland.

The year 1834 was a momentous one in the history of the Kirk. For the Assembly passed two very vital Acts—the *Veto Act*, and the *Chapels' Act*.

The *Veto Act* was meant to mitigate the evils of patronage, for it gave to congregations the right of refusing to accept the presentee of a patron as their minister, if they disapproved of him. The *Chapels' Act*, on the other hand, had for its object the raising of Chapels of Ease into the status of *quoad sacra* parishes, and the giving to ministers of these chapels a regular ecclesiastical status, with a seat in Church Courts.

So these two Acts asserted the right of the congregation to choose its own minister, and the right of the General Assembly to exercise full powers over the spiritual affairs of every congregation. But on these two very points of congregational liberty and Assembly power the Assembly came into conflict with the Civil

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Power, and over this double question involved in the *Veto Act* and the *Chapels' Act* began that fierce Ten Years' Conflict which ultimately ended in the Disruption.

As Convener of the Committee on Church Extension, Dr. Chalmers was in the very middle of the fray. Government aid had been sought in vain for the growing needs of the Church. So Chalmers appealed to the Christian liberality of Scotland, and in seven years succeeded in raising £300,000 and in building two hundred and twenty new churches.

During that Ten Years' Conflict the Court of Session declared that the Kirk had literally no spiritual jurisdiction apart from the civil control, and that Parliament was supreme in the Kirk, as by law established, as in all other matters. The claim of the Parliament in the nineteenth century did not mean the maiden or the thumbscrews or the scaffold in the Grassmarket—but it was none the less intolerable to men like Thomas Chalmers and those who thought with him.

The whole matter was tested and fought out in three famous cases—the Auchterarder case, the Lethendy case, and the Strathbogie case.

In the Auchterarder case of 1834, the Earl of Kin-noul presented a Mr. Young to the parish. He preached before the people, but in a parish of three thousand souls only two came forward to sign the call. Two hundred and eighty-seven out of three hundred heads of families dissented. Yet, although the case was carried from Presbytery to Synod, from Synod to Assembly, from Assembly to the House of Lords, Mr. Young was declared the true minister of Auchterarder,



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whether anyone came to hear him preach or not. The last touch of grim humour was added to this ridiculous decree when Mr. Young was awarded £10,000 damages!

At Lethendy the whole Presbytery of Dunkeld was interdicted by the Court of Session and forbidden to induct a minister. When the Assembly backed up the Presbytery, the members of the Presbytery were summoned and pronounced liable to imprisonment. Only by a narrow majority of the Bench did the ministers escape the lock-up.

The case at Marnoch in Strathbogie was even more flagrant. For the moderate members of the Presbytery proceeded to induct a Mr. Edwards to the parish of Marnoch, despite the fact that out of two thousand eight hundred souls only one communicant signed the call, and that one was the keeper of the inn where the Presbytery usually dined! The Assembly, having warned the seven moderates in vain, proceeded to depose them. But the minister and the seven moderates appealed to that old referee in ecclesiastical strife, the Court of Session—the Court upheld them against the Assembly, defied the decisions of the whole Church through its supreme Court, and added aggravation to its decision by forbidding the Church to form a *quoad sacra* parish at Stewarton in 1840. Thus even the Chapels' Act was overturned.

Through the whole of that bitter conflict Thomas Chalmers made his voice heard with no uncertain sound.

“Be it known,” said he, “unto all men, that we shall not retract one single footstep—we shall make no sub-
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mission to the Court of Session—. . . They may force the ejection of us from our places, they shall never never force us to the surrender of our principles."

It was after this that Chalmers moved in the Assembly of 1842 the adoption of the famous "*Claim of Rights, Declaration, and Protest anent the encroachment of the Court of Session*," which summed up the whole position of the vast majority of the Assembly of the Kirk in Scotland.

A Convocation of ministers was called for the month of November that same year, and from all parts of Scotland four hundred and seventy-four ministers travelled to Edinburgh and assembled in St. George's Church.

"The whole chivalry of the Kirk of Scotland is in that Convocation," said Lord Cockburn.

Dr. Chalmers preached from the text, "Unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness."

Thereafter, for eight days, the Convocation met in Roxburgh Church, near the University, and the whole idea of a Disruption was faced throughout and unanimously accepted. It was resolved, however, to make a final appeal to the Government, and before separating the members of Convocation were thrilled by the unfolding of a scheme which Dr. Chalmers had conceived of a Sustentation Fund.

"The lifeboat looks almost better than the ship," exclaimed Dr. Nathaniel Paterson.

So every man left the Convocation pledged to go forward and not back.

On 4th January 1843 Sir James Graham sent his celebrated letter, in which the Crown formally rejected the appeal of the Church and intimated to the Assem-

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bly that patronage must be maintained in all its stringency. An appeal which Mr. Fox Maule presented to Parliament was rejected by a vast majority of the House. Parliament had misjudged Scotland, as it has so often done in history, and the voice of Thomas Chalmers was immediately heard all over Scotland, rousing the country with an impetuous enthusiasm that carried all before him.

“I knocked at the door of a Whig ministry, and they refused to endow. I then knocked at the door of a Tory ministry—they perhaps would have endowed, but they offered to enslave. I now, therefore, turn aside from both and knock at the door of the general population.”

Nor did he knock in vain. For, when the great day came, every detail of organisation and finance had been arranged for one of the most dramatic events in the whole history of the Kirk in Scotland.

* * * * *

A great day for Scotland was the 18th of May 1843—the Disruption Day.

Edinburgh streets were crowded. The very winds were heavy with possibilities. On every lip there was a speculation and a guess. The sun flashed on the sabres and helmets of the dragoons, and the morning levee at Holyrood was packed. While the great folk were elbowing each other in the throne room, the portrait of William III fell with a crash to the ground.

“There goes the Revolution settlement,” exclaimed Crauford of Craufordland.

And the levee was over.

In St. Giles' Cathedral Dr. Welsh preached from the text, “Let every man be fully persuaded in his own

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mind." After that men and ministers hurried down to St. Andrew's Church in George Street, where the Assembly was to meet.

Inside, the church was packed—outside, the street was a moving mass of spectators. A strain of martial music, and the King's Commissioner appeared, entered, and took his seat on the throne. Dr. Welsh opened the Assembly with prayer, and thereafter rose with quiet dignity to his feet.

"Fathers and brethren," said he, "according to the usual form of procedure, this is the time for making up the roll. But, in consequence of certain proceedings affecting rights and privileges . . . I must protest against our proceeding further."

He then produced the *Protest*, and, holding it in his hand, read it in a slow deliberate manner. He laid it down on the table, lifted his hat, turned to the Commissioner who had risen, bowed to him, and in perfect silence left the chair and made for the door. Dr. Chalmers followed him—then Dr. Gordon, Dr. M'Farlan, Dr. Macdonald, and the other occupants of the front bench.

As the long line of the ablest and most eminent ministers and men who had ever adorned the Kirk in Scotland passed quietly out, a cheer burst from the galleries, and the cheer was mingled with many a sob of uncontrollable feeling. Bench after bench was emptied, until vacant seats stretched from the Moderator's chair to the back wall.

Outside, a thrill went through the crowd, and cheer followed cheer as Dr. Welsh, with Dr. Chalmers on one side of him and Dr. Gordon on the other, led the

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stream of ministers that kept pouring out from St. Andrew's Kirk.

"Mark you my words," a sagacious citizen had said a few days before, "not forty of them will come out."

And just forty stayed in that day. For, over four hundred ministers walked down to Tanfield Hall in Canonmills.

Someone burst in upon Lord Jeffrey with the news, and disturbed him as he was quietly reading in his room.

"Well—what do you think of it? More than four hundred of them are actually out!"

The book was thrown down, and he sprang to his feet.

"I am proud of my country," he exclaimed, "there is not another country on earth where such a deed could have been done."

When Dr. Chalmers took his seat as the first Moderator of the Free Church of Scotland in Tanfield, the vast Assembly rose and burst into applause. As he gave out the opening Psalm, "O send Thy light forth and Thy truth," the sun burst through the clouds and sklentled a benediction through the windows of the gloom-laden hall, and there were some who remembered, as they sang, with a catching at the throat, that the text of the sermon which Chalmers had preached six months before was, "Unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness."

Five days afterwards, the *Deed of Demission* was signed by four hundred and seventy-four ministers, who thereby signed away of their free will their position and emoluments to the value of £100,000 a year, and every

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missionary in the foreign field did the same. The very first to sign the *Deed* was old Dr. Muirhead of Cramond, who was the oldest minister by ordination to come out. He was eighty-one years of age, and was ordained in the year 1788.

The age of moderation had passed, and an age of zeal had come. The history of the Free Church is the story of an almost romantic charity, for within one year five hundred churches were built and over £300,000 subscribed. Dr. Chalmers launched his famous *Sustentation Fund* for the upkeep of the Gospel ministry. It was founded on the principle that the strong should help the weak. An apostolic preacher, a clear thinker, a sound financier, and a shrewd common-sense Scot was this truly great man. He would not admit that anyone was too poor to give.

“Why,” exclaimed he, with a twinkle in his eye, as he dealt with some Highland brethren who were making a poor mouth, “I believe that I could make out by the Excise returns that, in the island of Islay alone, some £6000 a year is spent on tobacco. The power of little is wonderful. I began with pennies, I now come to pinches, and say that if we got but a tenth of the snuff used by Highlanders—every tenth pinch—it would enable us to support our whole ecclesiastical system in the Highlands.”

This man of God, with the clean-shaven, pale face, the calm fearless eyes, the firm mouth, the magnificent brow, and the heaven-born fire of truth in his soul, gave himself for four years after the Disruption to the arduous task of organising and consolidating the Church of his heart. Beginning with four hundred and seventy-two

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ministers, it added other two hundred and fifty in four years to the regular ministry. It had raised upwards of £450,000 for churches and £100,000 for manses; had built a college with nine professorships, to each of which was attached a salary of from £300 to £400 a year; and had three hundred and forty students in training for the ministry, to whom £700 was distributed in scholarships within one year. Six hundred schools were built at a cost of £50,000. At home, one hundred and ten licentiates and one hundred and sixteen catechists were engaged in instructing the people. Abroad, the Church had missionaries labouring in many lands beyond the seas. A truly wonderful Kirk was this, that could raise a sum of £1,312,000 in the first four years of its existence. It was the Kirk of Thomas Chalmers. He fell quietly asleep after a life of splendid service for his God, his country, and his Kirk, and it was his great reward to know that his name will for ever be thirled to this the most wonderful romance of Christian liberality which the nineteenth century has to record.



REV. NORMAN MACLEOD, D.D.

1775 - 1845

CHAPTER TWENTY-NINE

NORMAN MACLEOD : THE MINISTER OF ALL SCOTLAND

THE MACLEODS OF MORVEN WERE GREAT establishers, and great highlanders, with the mystery and passion and poetry of the sea lochs and the heather hills in their souls. Perhaps there never has been a highland family in Scotland that gave so much to the Kirk in feet and inches as well as in good godly human nature as the Macleods of Morven.

The first Norman was ordained minister of Morven in 1775. He was the son of Macleod of Swordale in Skye, tacksman and armourer to the chief at Dunvegan. How much good clean Presbyterianism has passed through the manse of Fiunary since then! For it was this first Norman of Fiunary who was the grandfather of Norman Macleod of the Barony.

There is no finer picture in the annals of the Kirk than the farewell which the first Norman took of his people when he was an old man. It was communion day in Morven, and the kirk at Fiunary was crowded. The braes and the glens that are to-day silent and deserted, with a sigh of departed races in the winds that blow across the ruined dwellings, were then teeming with folk. The tall white-haired minister was quite blind, yet he had taught the generations to see the deep things of God. When he came from Skye long ago, where the name of Prince Charlie was still a charm, he had brought with him a perfect colony of retainers after the ancient custom, and these settled down on the glebe at Fiunary in Morven. One of them was Rory, faithful as ghillie and beadle, with one eye in his head which

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glittered like a gled's and could see more than most mens' two. And now, Rory too, like the minister whom he led up the pulpit steps, was old and bent.

The little fellow who sat in the manse pew and saw it all was the old minister's grandson, and many years after, when he was world-renowned as minister of the Barony, he wrote of this great day.

When Rory came down from the pulpit he looked back, and saw that the blind old giant was facing the wrong way. So he went up the pulpit stair again and reverently turned him round, laying his hands gently on the book board. And they will tell you yet in Morven of the sound of weeping and wailing which arose within the crowded kirk of Fiunary when the solemn words of farewell were spoken by this blind old father in God to his beloved folk from the hills.

Sixteen children were born to this first Norman in the manse of Morven. His eldest son Norman became minister at Campbeltown, then at Campsie, and, last of all, at St. Columba's, Glasgow. He was the greatest Gaelic scholar of his day, and wrote many songs and poems, among them that song of melting pathos, *Farewell to Fiunary*. He was Dean of the Thistle and Chapel Royal, Moderator of the Kirk, and the beloved friend of all his Gaelic countrymen.

It was his son, the third Norman in direct descent, who became Norman Macleod of the Barony Parish, Glasgow, the greatest of all the Macleods.

He was born at Campbeltown while his father was minister there, but by a wise family arrangement, he was sent back while yet a boy to the old manse of Morven at Fiunary. There he drank in the pure Gaelic

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traditions of his great race, and was educated in the dear old West Highland home of his fathers. After the old minister had preached his farewell in the boy's hearing, he was succeeded by his son John, little Norman's uncle. This John Macleod of Morven was of such stature that he was called the High Priest of Morven. So here, in his uncle's manse, with the high hills of Mull for ever before him, and the sound of many waters all about him, young Norman steeped his soul in beauty and romance.

How pleasant it is to lie becalmed in that sunset sound, and dream long dreams of Gaelic men and old-time things, the glassy waters all golden-washed in the summer twilight, the sound of music floating from a motionless barque where the foreign sailors are singing their strange chanteys, and the lonely little kirk and manse of the Macleods standing above the green-wooded shores of Fiunary, all glamorous in the lam-bent light!

Here, long ago, young Norman of the great heart ranged the hills and haunted the shores, or sailed the waters of the sound with one-eyed Rory at the helm when the seas were racing mountains-high. Here, too, he spent many a night enjoying the *ceilidh* in some crowded hut, with an earthen floor and a peat fire in the middle of it. There it was that the ancient tales went round in the good Gaelic. The women knitted their homespun, the men busked their fishing hooks, and the little bairns who were supposed to be bedded long since in the loft, crept from the blankets and lay listening, open-eyed and in a trance, at the weird legendry, all unconscious of the storm that lashed the

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seas and roared through the mouth of the glen in the pitchy night outby.

Here the boy, who was so full of emotion and imagination and human affinities, learned to love the people, to speak their romantic tongue, and to understand their intimate life. For, to the very end of his highly distinguished career, he was to be the friend of the common folk who heard him gladly, as well as the friend and counsellor of the great Queen who sent for him in her deepest sorrow.

At Fiunary the romance of Norman Macleod's life came to an end, for he soon exchanged the shores and glens of Morven for the parish school at Campsie, the old college in the High Street of Glasgow, and the divinity hall of Edinburgh.

In Edinburgh Thomas Chalmers was his spiritual master. Sitting at the feet of Chalmers, Norman Macleod awoke to the seriousness of life. They were kindred spirits, and, on the recommendation of Chalmers, Macleod became tutor to the son of Henry Preston of Moreby Hall, in Yorkshire. This meant a long period of European travel for Norman Macleod. They went to Weimar with introductions to the Royal Court.

What a change from Morven manse and Campsie, and the Glasgow College in the old narrow High Street! We now see the handsome young highlander waltzing at the state balls, dressed in a court suit with a small sword at his side, or haunting the cafés in silk stockings and buckled shoes, with a turn in the splendid park where the nightingale never ceased to sing. Then the Tyrol, Vienna, Munich, Dresden and home again, having only once lost his head, when he fell in love

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with the court beauty—La Baronne, he calls her—but that did neither him nor her any harm. It was just this clean first-hand knowledge of life, in high places as well as in low places, that made this great humane highlander the understanding friend of the great folk and the humble poor.

His first parish was Loudoun in Ayrshire. Here his real life work began. He had a perfect passion for characters. His sentiment and imagination made him see good in the most crooked life and find affinities with the strangest people. He could enjoy rapturous hours on the lonely mountains, where he worshipped God in solemn awe, and he could by the same sentiment get alongside of the Ayrshire farmers, the Covenanted kirk-goers and the atheistical weavers of Newmilns and Darvel. The parish kirk was soon packed to the door. Sunday-schools sprang up. Prayer meetings were instituted, with special services for young men, and separate gatherings for those who came in poor clothes. For he never forgot the poor.

John Campbell Shairp, an Oxford student and an intimate friend, kept Macleod in close touch with the Tractarian movement; but, being one of the broadest of souls, he could never abide High Churchism. Once, when staying at Moreby, he attended a confirmation at Durham Cathedral, but in spite of the gorgeous building, the magnificent music, and the stately ceremonial, he saw only a vision of a sacrament Sunday in Morven, with no minster but the wide heaven, no organ but the roar of the eternal sea, the plain-faced kirk with its lonely graveyard, and the pure white linen of the saints on the well-worn deal book-boards.

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There you have the true poetry of Scots worship welling up in this big-souled highlander's heart.

It must have been a life-long sorrow to Macleod that he had to part company with Chalmers at the Disruption. For his whole ministry was influenced by the spirit of Chalmers. Yet, they were very different men. While they were equally sincere as ministers, equally zealous for the evangelisation of the masses, and both splendidly gifted for the work of a great pastorate, their life-labour was ruled by very different dispositions. Chalmers was the statesman, Macleod was the zealot. Chalmers was governed more by sheer principle, Macleod was governed more by a big-hearted love of the individual. Chalmers approached the problem of poverty on its economic side, Macleod approached it on its philanthropic side. Chalmers had more head, Macleod had more heart. And yet, with it all, both were shrewd, tender-hearted, great-souled, large-minded ministers of Jesus Christ.

From Loudoun Norman Macleod went to Dalkeith in the very year of the Disruption, with a heart that was breaking with the ecclesiastical strife. He believed with all his heart that the establishment of religion by the state was the bulwark of Protestantism; but in the year 1850 he wrote these words: "The Church of Scotland is daily going down hill." He saw that an inner spiritual revival was needed in the hearts both of ministers and people.

"If we were right in ourselves," he wrote, "out of this root would spring the tree and fruit, out of this fountain would well out the living water."

So he registered two vows—first, that he would de-

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vote himself to reviving the Kirk of Scotland; and second, that he would do all he could to promote unity and peace among all who loved the Lord Jesus Christ.

At Dalkeith he came across the slum dwellers for the first time. Norman Macleod went about preaching in the wynds and closes, and when the Duke of Buccleuch offered him money for a missionary, Macleod showed him that the money would be better spent in employing dressmakers and tailors to clothe those who could not decently appear in a place of worship.

There was always an element of romantic adventure to Norman Macleod in visiting the poor. He would bring home a ragged boy to the manse and hand him over to the housekeeper to wash and dress, and when the little fellow came into the study with a very large but clean shirt on, with rosy cheeks and well-brushed hair, the inevitable talk between the two would begin.

"I'm sure, ye're in anither worl' the nicht, my lad. Were ye ever as clean afore?"

"No."

"What will ye dae noo?"

"I dinna ken."

"Will ye gang awa' and beg the nicht?"

"If ye like."

"No, no—be aff noo to yer bed, and hae a guid sleep."

Norman Macleod was not only a great home missionary, but he had an intense interest in foreign missions, and during his life he visited the Indian Missions of the Kirk and also the Canadian Gaelic Settlements.

Who can read of the visits which he paid along with Dr. John Macleod of Morven to the Scotch settlers

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in British North America without a wave of emotion and tears? Hundreds and thousands of exiled highlanders gave the High Priest of Morven and his now famous nephew Norman a hundred thousand welcomes, as the old Gaelic word has it. How the good Gaelic flowed from the great man's lips in the backwoods! And how the tears of home-sickness and of yearning for the bens, the glens, and the mountain streams of the homeland flowed, when men, women and children who had been born on the shores and in the glens of the Highlands crowded round the deputies to wring their hands and claim some intimate acquaintance! The Macleods had come to explain the constitutional side of the Disruption—but the highland sentiment of the two great men and their vast audiences overcame every other aspect of the visit. It was better so. For it was hard to remember controversy in the presence of these two stalwart sons of Fiunary.

At Picton in Nova Scotia one communion Sabbath morning the bay was dotted with a countless number of boats, and the roads were crowded with pedestrians and horsemen, as hundreds and thousands of Scots settlers flocked to hear the Gaelic sermons. The tent was erected on a beautiful green hill, and the congregation numbered about four thousand.

Let Norman Macleod himself tell the story of that great day.

“John had finished a noble Gaelic sermon. He was standing with his head bare at the top of the white communion table, and was about to exhort the communicants. . . . The exhortation ended, I entered the tent and looked round. I have seen grand and imposing

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sights in my life, but this far surpassed them all. The familiar symbols of the Body Broken and the Blood Shed . . . the solemn attitude of every head bent down to the white board . . . the true highland countenances around me . . . the mighty forests that swept on to the far horizon . . . and all in a strange land with no pastors now. . . . As these and ten thousand other thoughts filled my heart amidst the most awful silence, broken only by sobs which came from the Lord's Table, can you wonder that I hid my face, and lifted up my voice and wept?"

Men from Mull and Morven came to them wherever they went.

Near Lake Simcoe Dr. John Macleod met a woman who immediately burst into tears at the sight of him. He recognised a brooch on her tartan plaid. It had belonged to his own henwife at Fiunary, and here was the henwife's sister!

In another place two old elders, with a parting wail in Gaelic, put their arms round Norman's neck and kissed him on each cheek. No more, no more, the old hills and sea lochs of home for them.

How soul-stirring and unforgettable are the memories of the old country, and the old Kirk, and the old scenes of childhood to our exiled fellow-countrymen in these wastes and silences of the New World; and how often they have said to themselves, with tears in their eyes and dreams in their hearts:

“From the lone shieling on the misty island
Mountains divide us, and a waste of seas—
Yet still the blood is strong, the heart is highland,
And we in dreams behold the Hebrides:

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Fair these broad meads, these hoary woods are grand,
But we are exiles from our fathers' land."

In 1851 Norman Macleod became the minister of the Barony Church, Glasgow.

The parish contained eighty-seven thousand souls, most of whom were working-men and women, and some very poor. But he had a passion for the poor. If other men were sympathetic, Macleod was as wide and warm and genial in his sheer humanity as the summer sun. He electrified Scotland by his overwhelming eloquence. His great voice at times shook with emotion, and his cheeks ran with tears. The divine power of Norman Macleod lay in his common humanity. Moreover, the spirit of his ministry in the Barony was greatly influenced by the work of Thomas Chalmers, who had been in the neighbouring parish of St John's.

The Barony Kirk had no external beauty.

"I have only seen one uglier," said a certain noble lord.

Yet, here in this plain-faced kirk, without an organ, an ornament, or a shred of ritual, Norman Macleod preached the Gospel, and all the world came to hear. The parish soon became a network of home mission effort. Social work, educational work, Sunday schools, Bible classes, night schools—all these sprang up under his direction. He planted four chapels and built six new churches in the parish. He raised money for foreign missions, and taught old men and women in his evening classes to read and write. Savings banks to keep the workman's pennies, refreshment-rooms to keep him out of the public-house—these and many

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other social reforms he instituted with the courage of a pioneer.

And what was the sum and substance of this great Scotsman's preaching? Here it is in his own words: "There is a Father in heaven who loves, a Brother Saviour who died for us, a Spirit that helps us to be good, and a Home where we shall all meet at last." That was all. But what more does a sinful soul need?

Norman Macleod was the supreme sentimentalist of Christendom. He had a consuming pity for prodigals. But when he instituted services for the outcast poor and admitted none with good clothes, the upper classes were so anxious to hear his Gospel that it was no uncommon thing for gentlemen to borrow cast off clothes that they too might be privileged to sit with their submerged brothers.

His life was full of tender, pitiful scenes. One wintry day he was summoned to the bedside of a working man who had hanged himself, but had been cut down in time to save his life.

"Dinna be ower sair on me," the poor wretch kept saying to his wife, "it was for you and the bairns I did it. I could get nae relief frae the parish, and I didna like to beg. But, I kent if I was deid they wad be obleeged to support my widow and weans."

And when Macleod told the story, he ended up by shouting:

"That man was a hero!"

There was infinite humour too in his ministry. See how it mingled with the people's love of him!

One day a United Presbyterian minister was asked to visit a family whom he did not know. Climbing three

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stairs, he found a man lying very ill. After praying with the sufferer, the minister asked the wife if they belonged to his congregation.

"Oh no," said she, "we belong to the Barony; but, ye see, this is an unco smittal fever, and it wad never dae to risk Norman!"

Yet, Norman Macleod, the broad-minded, large-hearted pioneer in the humanising of the love of God in Scotland, was a suspect among the orthodox. He was so unlike the early Victorian type of saint, that many good conventional Christians could not think of him as a consecrated minister of Christ. Those were the days when Sunday was made a day of gloom, with drawn blinds to exclude the sunlight of God. The little bairns suffered most of all—no play, no dolls, no attractive story books, no happy laughter for them on the good God's day. Highland ministers would not even shave on Sunday. God was served with gloom and not with gladness.

So Norman Macleod struck a blow for freedom in the observance of the Sabbath day. He maintained that the Mosaic economy had been nailed to the cross, and that what was lawful or unlawful in the matter of Sabbath should be left to the common-sense, right spirit, and manly principles of Christians.

A storm of abuse soon burst on him, and he awoke one morning to find himself infamous. Friends cut him in the street. Sermons were preached against him. The Presbytery admonished him, and he replied that he would show the admonition to his son as an ecclesiastical fossil. So serious was the affair, that the minister of the Barony was almost deposed. But, we know now

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that Norman Macleod was only striking a first blow in the battle for freedom of thought and creed which has been waged ever since in the Kirks of Scotland. He attacked no good thing. He only struck at the pharisaical application of certain Old Testament customs to the life of a modern Christian state. And at the close of the controversy he embodied his sentiments in this one vigorous verse:

“Brother, up to the breach,
For Christ’s freedom and truth,
Let us act as we teach,
With the wisdom of age and the vigour of youth.
Heed not their cannon balls,
Ask not who stands or falls.
Grasp the sword
Of the Lord
And Forward!”

And his pen was always as busy as his tongue. Even to-day men are asking for cheap editions of *The Starling*, *Wee Davie*, *The Gold Thread*, and *The Old Lieutenant and his Son*. The spirit of these books is so clean, healthy and strong. His name will always be associated with *Good Words*, a magazine which he started to provide a healthful literature for all Christian readers. Yet, here also he was attacked by the pharisee, who declared with a severe face that the stories were secular, and that children ought not to read about astronomy on the Sabbath Day! But the editor held on unmoved, and when he could get men like Dean Stanley, Charles Kingsley, and John Caird to write for him, there was little need for him to be ashamed.

Reminiscences of a Highland Parish is by far his
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most enduring work, for here we have a priceless description of life in a Highland parish at the close of the eighteenth century and at the beginning of the nineteenth.

One of the most illustrious features of the life of Norman Macleod was his intimate friendship with Queen Victoria. With queens or paupers he was always the same. For he understood the human heart whether it beat beneath rags or ermine.

So when the Queen was stricken by the great sorrow of widowhood, the one man she sent for was Norman Macleod. And how did he deal with her? Just as he dealt with the poorest widow in the land. For he told her about an old woman in the Barony who had lost her husband and bairns.

“How can ye bear your many sorrows?” said Norman Macleod to her.

“Ah, sir,” she replied, “when *he* was ta'en it made sic a hole in my hert that a' ither sorrows gang lichtly through.”

So with the widowed Queen, as with the widowed slum-dweller, he was always the same—the tender, understanding, human minister of God to all. Little wonder he was called the Minister of all Scotland.

CHAPTER THIRTY YESTER- DAY TO-DAY & TO-MORROW

TO-DAY THERE ARE SCOTSMEN AND WOMEN sitting in the old kirks of the Motherland remembering. Their heads gleam snow-white in the sunshine which streams through the clear glass windows of the little country kirks in the lowlands and the glens, or the many-coloured windows of the old Cathedral of St. Mungo by the Molendinar or St. Giles on the causey. For, they are full of memories of old-time days and men and things that are ill to forget.

It seems but yesterday since Norman of the Barony was striking his blows for freedom in the plain-faced kirk by the Cathedral gates, and Dr. Guthrie was patting the Cowgate bairns on the head with a kindly hand and a heart that yearned to bield them from the ills of life in the city slums. There is a far-off sough, too, of one great voice answering another—it is James Begg, captain of the Highland host, challenging John Cairns in the first Union controversy between the Disruption men and Secession men—and we rub our eyes in wonderment to think of the bitterness and the debates of those old days. Then, men kept their differences in good repair, as soldiers keep their weapons of warfare sharp: now, men fight for affinities, and regret when their strivings keep them apart.

Two generations ago men lived and died for doctrine. Macleod Campbell, Robert Lee, the Scotch Sermons—what battles royal were fought in the Kirk of Scotland over these! We see, also, a little man of burning genius thrust out of the Free Kirk for believing what we all believe to-day, and the name of Robertson Smith sends

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a stound of pain through us still. James Morison suffered with him on the Secession side, and the last of all the heresy hunts bring to mind the names of Bruce and Dods and Drummond. But now—the whole emphasis has been shifted from the head to the heart. Men are not even sure how to define heterodoxy, and in the Kirk that has fought its way to freedom of thought in the love of God there will never be another heresy hunt.

There was a time, too, when that troubler of the Kirk—the astute Parliamentary hand—stirred the blood of all Scots Presbyters, and set them at variance over Christ and Cæsar, with an eye on the ballot box all the while. But all that is a memory to-day, and the Kirk-folk of Scotland are etting after a more excellent way of agreement in spirit and worship and thought, by joining hands round the Bush that burns and is not consumed.

It began one wet October day in the year 1900, when the men of the Secession Faith and the men of the Disruption Faith met separately for the last time in Synod and Assembly, and then walked from the Synod Hall and the Assembly Hall in two streams until they met at the foot of the Mound. There, the Moderators shook hands, and led the whole in a united procession to the Waverley Market. Thus was formed the United Free Church of Scotland, and the man who will for ever be remembered in the history of this great union is Principal Robert Rainy, who was the first Moderator of this new Church of Scotland, United and Free.

But, a small Highland remnant of twenty-seven claimed their own as the true trustees of the Disrup-

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tion Kirk, despite the majority of six hundred and forty-three that had voted against them. Then came that bolt from the blue which startled Scotland—for the union of these two Kirks became the subject of the finest ganging plea that the old Parliament House of Edinburgh has ever seen. The four Scots Law Lords gave their unanimous judgment for the union, but on an appeal, the English Law Lords, by seven to five, gave judgment for the remnant. So the properties and millions of the Disruption Kirk went to a mere handful of men who could not administer their lovable spoil.

Then Parliament had to redd up its own ravel, by the Elgin Commission, the Churches Bill, and a reallotment of the properties and monies between the two Kirks, according to their powers to use. All that is a tale of yesterday which needs no telling to-day.

But through such oppositions the life of Christ's Kirk in Scotland has ever been developed, and after these shocks of disruption there has come a time of quiet fellowship, like the calm evening light after a day of great and cleansing storm. The old passion for division and subdivision has been transformed by the mercy of God into a new and holier passion for unity. For, after all, is not the blood of the Kirk which John Knox founded, flowing in all our veins, warm and living and strong this very day?

* * * * *

So now the two great Assemblies of the Kirk of Christ in Scotland are drawing still closer round the Bush that burns and is not consumed. The narrowest part of the most historic causey in Scotland is but a symbol of their nearness. On the one side stands the

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stately tower of the Assembly Hall of the Kirk of Scotland—on the other side stands the great Hall of the Kirk in Scotland United and Free—and the narrow lane which leads to the Castle of the ancient kings of Scotland's State is the only barrier between. So narrow it is, that a man of Old Testament vigour could leap the space with ease.

It is an ill thing to forget the grey mother who bore us all, and just as ill a thing for her to forget her own bairns. Her home, through all these centuries, has been yon old weather-beaten Kirk of St. Giles, which stands but a stone's throw down the street. As we look down that auld farrant street of Kings and Commoners, through which most of Scotland's history has been squeezed—kings to their castle, lords to their parliament, martyr-men to the maiden, and plain folks to worship God—there is a sound of calling in the air. It is the call of the blood on both sides of the causey, and the call of the blood is strong. For Freedom of Faith and National Religion Scotsmen have lived and died. For these same things Scotsmen will live to the end. So, when these two priceless rights are secured to every Scots Presbyter, without let or hindrance from King or Parliament, the Grey Mother will only need to open her doors, and all her sundered bairns will pass in, hand in hand, to worship God in yon dim aisles.

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