

THE LIFE
OF
JAMES RENWICK,

Who was born in the Parish of
GLENCAIRN, DUMFRIES-SHIRE,
Feb. 15, 1662, and where a Monument
was erected to his Memory in 1827.

Suffered Martyrdom
AT EDINBURGH,
February 17th, 1688.



DUMFRIES:
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LIFE OF MR JAMES RENWICK.

MR JAMES RENWICK was born in the parish of Glenearn, in Dumfries-shire, February 15th, 1662. His parents, though not rich, were exemplary for piety. His father, Andrew Renwick, a weaver by trade, and his mother, Elizabeth Corsan, had several children before Mr James, who died young; for which, when his mother was pouring forth her motherly grief, her husband used to comfort her with declaring, that he was well satisfied to have children, whether they lived or died young or old, providing they might be heirs of glory. But with this she could not attain to be satisfied; but she had it for her exercise to seek a child from the Lord, that might not only be an heir of glory, but might live to serve him in his generation; whereupon, when Mr James was born, she took it as an answer of prayer, and reputed herself under manifold engagements to dedicate him to the Lord, who satisfied her with very early evidences of his accepting that return of his own gift, and confirmed the same by very remarkable appearances of his gracious dealings with the child; for, by the time he was two years of age, he was observed to be aiming at prayer even in the cradle, and about it, wherewith his mother conceived such expectations and hopes, that the Lord would be with him and do good by him, as that all the reproaches he sustained, difficulties and dangers that afterwards he underwent, to his dying day, never moved her in the least from the confidence that the Lord would carry him through and off the stage, in some honourable way for his own glory. His father also, before his death, on February 1st, 1679, obtained the same persuasion, that his time in the world would be but short, but that the Lord would make some eminent use of him.

After he had learned to read the Bible, when about six years old, the Lord gave him some sproutings of gracious preparations, training him in his way, exercising him with doubts and debates about childish apprehension, as to the Maker of all things, how all things were made, and for what end; and with strange suppositions of so many invisible worlds, above and beneath, with which he was transported into a train of musing, and continued in this exercise for about the space of two years, until he, by prayer and meditation on the history of the creation, came to a thorough belief that God made all things, and that all which he made was very good. And yet, after he came to more maturity, he relapsed into a deeper labyrinth of darkness about these foundation truths, and was so assaulted with temptations of atheism, that being in the fields, and looking to the mountains, he said, "If these were all devouring furnaces of burning brimstone, he would be content to go through them all, if so be he could be assured there was a God." Out of this, however, he emerged, through grace, into the sweet serenity of a settled persuasion of the being of a God, and of his interest in him.

From his younger years, he made much conscience of obeying his parents; whose order (if they had spoken of putting him to any trade) he would no way decline; yet his inclination was constant for his book, until Providence propitiously furnished him with means of greater proficiency at Edinburgh, by many, who were so enamoured of his hopeful disposition, that they earnestly promoted his education. When he was ready for the university, they encouraged him in attending gentlemen's sons, for the improvement both of their studies and his own; which association of youths, as it is usually accompanied with various temptations to youthful vanity, so it enticed him, with some others, to spend too much of his time in gaming and recreations. It was, then, for no other part of his time can be instanced, that some, who knew him

not, took occasion, from this extravagance, to reproach him with profanity and flagitiousness, which his nature ever abhorred, and disdained the very suspicion thereof. When his time at the college drew near an end, he demonstrated such a tenderness of offending God, &c., that upon his refusal of the oath of allegiance then tendered, he was denied his share of the public solemnity of laureation with the rest of the candidates, but received it privately at Edinburgh. After which he continued his studies, attending on the then private persecuted meetings for gospel ordinances for a time.

But upon a deplorable discovery of the unfaithfulness of the generality, even of non-conformist ministers, he was again for some time plunged into the depths of darkness, doubting what should be the end of such backsliding courses, until, upon a more inquisitive search after such ministers as were most free from these defections, he found more light, and his knowledge of the iniquity of these courses was augmented, and his zeal increased. And being more confirmed, when he beheld how signally the faithful ministers were owned of the Lord, and carried off the stage with great stedfastness, faith, and patience, especially that faithful minister and martyr, Mr. Donald Cargill, at whose execution he was present July 27th, 1681, he was so moved, that he determined to embark with these witnesses in that cause for which they suffered; and he was afterwards so strengthened and established in this resolution, getting instruction about things in and from the word, so sealed with a strong hand upon his soul, that all the temptations, tribulations, oppositions, and contradictions he met with from all hands to the day of his death, could never shake his mind to doubt the least concerning them.

Accordingly, in this persuasion, formed upon grounds of scripture and reason, he, in October 1681, came to a meeting with some of these faithful

witnesses of Christ, and conferring about the testimonies of some other martyrs lately executed, which he was very earnest always to gather and keep on record, he refreshed them greatly by a discourse, shewing how much he was grieved and offended with those who heard the curates, pleaded for cess paying, and defended the owning of the tyrants' authority, &c. ; and how sad it was to him that none were giving a formal testimony against these things; and in the end added, "That he would think it a great ease to his mind to know and be engaged with a remnant that would singly prosecute and propagate the testimony against the corruptions of the times to the succeeding generations, and would desire nothing more than to be helped to be serviceable to them."

At his first coming among them he could not but be taken notice of, for while some were speaking of removing the bodies of the martyrs, lately executed at the Gallowlee, Mr Renwick was very forward to promote it, and active to assist therein, and when the sincere seekers of God, who were interspersed up and down the land, and adhered to the testimony, as Messrs Cameron and Cargill left it, towards the end of 1681, began to settle a correspondence in general, for preserving union, understanding one another's minds, and preventing declensions to right or left hand extremes. In the first of which, (the Duke of York holding a parliament at Edinburgh) they agreed upon emitting that declaration published at Lanark, January 12th, 1682, wherein Mr Renwick was employed proclaiming it, but had no hand in the penning thereof, otherwise it might have been more considerably worded than what it was; for though he approved of the matter of it, yet he always acknowledged there were some expressions therein rather unadvised.

After the publishing of this declaration, the next general meeting, finding themselves reproached and informed against, both at home and abroad, in foreign

churches, as if they had fallen from the principles of the church of Scotland, thought it expedient to send the laird of Earlstoun to the United Provinces to vindicate themselves from these reproaches, and to crave that sympathy which they could not obtain from their own countrymen, Which, at length, through mercy, proved so encouraging to them, that a door was opened to provide for a succession of faithful ministers, by sending some to be fitted for the work of the ministry there. Accordingly Mr Renwick, with some others, went thither. His comrades were ready, and sailed before, which made him impatiently haste to follow. Yet, at his departure, to a comrade, he affirmed, "Though they were gone before him, as they did not depart together, so he saw something should fall out, which should obstruct their coming home together also." This was verified by the falling off of Mr Flint (however forward at that time) to a contrary course of defection.

When he went over, he was settled at the university of Groningen, where he plied his studies so hard, and with such proficiency, from the necessities of his friends in Scotland, who were longing for his labours, and his own ardent desire to be at the work, that in a short time he was ready for ordination. To hasten this, his dear friend Mr Robert Hamilton, who merited so much of those who reaped the benefit of Mr Renwick's labours afterwards, applied to one Mr Brakel, a godly Dutch minister, who was much delighted at first with the motion, and advised that it should be done at Embden, but this could not be obtained, because the principal man there who was to have the management of the affair, was in his judgment, Cœccian. Whereupon Mr Hamilton solicited the classis of Groningen to undertake it, which they willingly promised to do; and calling for the testimonials of Mr Renwick, and the rest who went over at that time, Mr Renwick's was produced, (being providentially in readiness when the others were a-

wanting) and though in a rude dress, was sustained. The classis being convened, they were called in and had an open harangue, whercin open testimony was given against all the forms and corruptions of their church; whereat they were so far from being offended, that after a solemn and serious consideration of their cause, they declared it was the Lord's cause, and cost what it would, though all the kings of the earth were against it, they would go through with it. They all three should have passed together, but upon some differences arising, the other two were retarded. It was the custom of the place, that every one that passes must pay twenty guilders, for the use of the church; but the classis declared, that they would be at all the charges themselves.

But the next difficulty was, that being told it was impossible for any to pass without subscribing their Catechism, and observing that their forms and corruptions were therein justified, Mr Renwick resolutely answered, he would do no such thing, being engaged by a solemn covenant, to the contrary. This was like to spoil all; but at length they condescended that he subscribe the Confession and Catechism of the church of Scotland, a practice never before heard of, in that land; which was accepted. The day of ordination being come, Mr Renwick was called in a very respectful way. After spending some time in prayer, the examination began, which lasted from ten in the morning to two o'clock in the afternoon. Then his friends, who were attending in the church, were called in, (amongst whom was his honoured friend Mr Hamilton, and another elder of the church of Scotland) to witness the laying on of hands, which, after the exhortation, they performed with prayer; the whole meeting melting in tears; and thereafter he had a discourse to the classis. With this solemnity the classis were so much affected, that at dinner, to which he and his friends were invited, the preses declared the great satisfaction all the brethren had in

Mr Renwick; that they thought the whole time he was before them, he was so filled with the Spirit of God, that his face seemed to shine, and that they had never seen or found so much of the Lord's Spirit accompanying any work as that ordination. But no sooner were these difficulties over, than others of a more disagreeable aspect began to arise, which, if they had appeared but one day sooner, might have stopped the ordination, at least for a time. On the very next day, Mr Brakel told them, that a formal libel was coming from the Scottish ministers at Rotterdam, containing heavy accusations against the poor society-people in Scotland, which they behoved either to vindicate, or else the ordination must be stopped; but this being too late as to Mr Renwick, it came to nothing at last.

After his ordination, he had a most longing desire to improve his talents for the poor persecuted people in Scotland, who were his brethren; and having received large testimonials of his ordination and learning (particularly in the Hebrew and Greek tongues) from the classis, and finding a ship ready to sail, he embarked at the Brill; but waiting some days upon a wind, he was so discouraged by some profane passengers pressing the King's health, &c., that he was forced to leave that vessel, and take another bound for Ireland. A sea storm compelled them to put in to Rye harbour in England, about the time when there was so much noise of the Ryehouse plot, which created him no small danger; but, after many perils at sea, he arrived safe at Dublin, where he had many conflicts with the ministers there, anent their defections and indifference; and yet in such a gaining and gospel-way, that he left convictions on their spirits, of his being a pious and zealous youth, which procured him a speedy passage to Scotland. In this passage, he had considerable dangers, and a prospect of more, as not knowing how or where he should come to land, all ports being then so strictly observed, and

the skipper refusing to let him go till his name be given up. But yet at last he was prevailed on to give him a cast to the shore, where he began his weary and uncertain wanderings, (which continued with him till he was apprehended) through an unknown wilderness, amongst unknown people, it being some time before he could meet with any of the societies.

In September, 1683, he commenced his ministerial work in Scotland, taking up the testimony of the standard of Christ where it was fixed, and had fallen at the removal of the former witnesses, Messrs Cameron and Cargill. which, in the strength of his Master, he undertook to prosecute and maintain against opposition from all hands, which seemed unsupportable to sense and reason.

In the midst of which difficulties, he was received by a poor persecuted people, who had lost all that worldly enjoyment they had, for the sake of the gospel. His first public meeting was in the moss at Darmead, where for their information and his own vindication, he thought it expedient not only to let them know how he was called to the ministry, and what he adhered to, but besides to unbosom himself about the then puzzling questions of the time, particularly concerning ministers, defections, &c. ; shewing whom he could not join with, and his reasons for so doing; and in the end telling them on what grounds he stood, and resolved to stand upon; which he resolved (the Lord assisting him) to seal with his blood.

After this the father of lies began to spue out a flood of reproaches, to swallow up and bury his name and work in contempt, which was very credulously entertained, and industriously spread, not only by the profane, but even by many professors. Some said, he had excommunicated all the ministers in Scotland, and some after they were dead; whereas, he only gave reasons why he could not keep communion with them in the present circumstances.

Others said, that he was no Presbyterian, and that his design was only to propagate schism. But the truth was, he was a professed witness against all the defections of Presbyterians from any part of their covenanted work of reformation, &c. Again, other ministers alleged he was a Sectarian, Independent, or Anabaptist, or they knew not what: But when he had sometimes occasion to be among these in and about Newcastle, and Northumberland, they were as much offended as any at his faithful freedom in discovering the evils of their way, and declared that they never met with such severe dealing from any Presbyterian before.

But the general out-ery was, that he had no mission at all. Others slandering him, that he came only by chance, at a throw of the dice; with many other calamities, refuted by the foregoing relations. On the other hand, some gave out that he and his followers maintained the murdering principles, and the delirious and detestable blasphemies of Gib.; all which shameless and senseless fictions he ever opposed and abhorred. Yea, some ministers, more seemingly serious in their essays to prepossess the people against him, said, "That they had sought and got the mind of the Lord in it, that his labours should never profit the church of Scotland, nor any soul in it," assuring themselves he would break, and bring to nothing, him and them that followed him ere it were long; comparing them to Jannes and Jambres who withstood Moses. All which reproaches he was remarkably supported under, and went on in his Master's business, while he had any work for him to do.

In the mean while, from the noise that went through the country concerning him, the Council got notice: and thereupon, being enraged at the report of his preaching in the fields, they raised a hotter and more cruel persecution against him than can be instanced ever to have been against any one

man in the nation; nay, than ever the most notorious murderer was pursued with. For, having publicly proclaimed him a traitor, rebel, &c., they proceeded to pursue his followers with all the rigour that hellish fury and malice could suggest or invent; and yet the more they opposed, the more they grew and increased.

In 1684, his difficulties from enemies, and discouragements from friends opposed to him, and manifold vexations from all hands, began to increase more and more; yet all the while he would not intermit one day's preaching, but was still incessant and undaunted in his work. This made the ministers inform against him, as if he had intruded upon other men's labours; alleging, that when another minister had appointed to preach in a place, he unexpectedly came and preached in the same parish; and for that purpose, instanced one time near Paisley; whereas he went upon a call from several in that bounds, without knowing then whether there was such a minister in that country. It is confessed, that he hath sometimes taken the churches to preach in, when either the weather, instant hazard at the time, or respect to secrecy and safety, did exclude from every other place. But, could this be called intrusion, to creep into the church for one night, when they could not stand, nor durst they be seen, without.

This year, in prosecution of a cruel information against him, the soldiers became more vigilant in their indefatigable diligence to seek and hunt after him; and from them he had many remarkable deliverances. Particularly in the month of July, as he was going to a meeting, a country man, seeing him wearied, gave him a horse for some miles to ride on, when they were surprised with Lieutenant Dundas and a party of dragoons. The two men with him were taken and pitifully wounded. He escaped their hands, and went up Dungavel hill;

but was so closely pursued (they being so near that they fired at him all the time), that he was forced to leave the horse, losing thereby his cloak-bag with many papers, seeing no other refuge, he was fain to run, in their sight, towards a heap of stones where, for a little moment, getting out of their sight, he found a hollow place into which he crept and committing himself by earnest ejaculation to God, in submission to live or die; and also believing, that he should be reserved for greater work that part of scripture often coming into his mind Psal. vi. 8, *Depart from me all ye workers of iniquity* together with these words, Psalm xci. 11, *For he shall give his angels charge*, &c. In the mean time the enemy searched up and down the hill, yet were restrained from looking into that place where he was. Many such sore and desperate chaces he and those with him met with; some continuing whole nights and days without intermission, in the wilde places of the country, for many miles together without so much as a possibility of escaping the sight of those who pursued them.

This year, on the 4th September, letters of intercommuning were issued against him, commanding all to give him no reset or supply, nor furnish him with meat, drink, house, harbour, or any thing useful to him; and requiring all sheriffs, &c., to apprehend and commit to prison his person, wherever they could find him; by virtue of which, the sufferers were reduced to incredible straits, not only in being murdered, but also from hunger, cold, harassings, &c.; in which perplexity, having neither a possibility to flee, nor ability to fight, they were forced to publish an apologetical representation of the approven principles and practices, and covenant engagements of our reformers, &c., restrict and reduce to practice, that privilege of extraordinary executing of judgment, on the murdering beasts of prey who professed and prosecuted a daily trade of

destroying innocents, &c. When this declaration was first proposed, Mr Renwick was somewhat averse to it, fearing the sad effects it might produce; but, considering that the necessity of the case would admit of no delay, he consented, and concurred in the publication thereof. Accordingly it was fixed upon several market-crosses and parish church doors, November 8th, 1684.

After the publication of this declaration, rage and reproach seemed to strive which should shew the greatest violence against the publishers and owners of it. The Council published a proclamation for discovering such as owned or would not disown it; requiring that none above the age of sixteen travel without a pass, and that any who would apprehend any of them should have 500 merks for each person; and that every one should take the oath of abjuration; whereby the temptation and hazard became so dreadful, that many were shot instantly in the fields; others, refusing the oath, were brought in, sentenced and executed in one day; yea, spectators at executions were required to say, whether these men suffered justly or not. All which dolorous effects, and more, when Mr Renwick, with a sad and troubled heart observed, he was often heard to say, though he had peace in his end and aim by it, yet he wished from his heart, that that declaration had never been published.

Neither was the year 1685 any thing better. For it became now the enemy's greatest ambition and emulation, who could destroy most of these poor wandering mountain men, (as they were called;) and when they had spent all their balls, they were nothing nearer their purpose than when they began; for the more they were afflicted, the more they grew. *The bush did burn, but was not consumed, because the Lord was in the bush.*

Charles II. being dead, and the Duke of York, a professed Papist, being proclaimed in February,

1685. Mr Renwick could not let go this opportunity of witnessing against the usurpation by a Papis of the government of the nation, and his design of overturning the covenanted work of reformation and introducing Popery. Accordingly, he and about 200 men went to Saughar, May 28th, 1685, and published that declaration, afterwards called the Saughar Declaration.

In 1787, a proclamation was issued out, February 12th, tolerating the moderate Presbyterians to meet in their private houses to hear the indulged ministers, while the field-meetings should be prosecuted with the utmost rigour of law, &c. A second proclamation was given, June 28th, allowing all to serve God in their own way, in any house, etc. A third was emitted, October 5th, declaring that all preachers and hearers at any meeting in the open fields, should be prosecuted with the utmost severity that law would allow, that all dissenting ministers who preach in houses should teach nothing that should alienate the hearts of the people from the government; and that the privy counsellors, sheriffs, etc., should be acquainted with the places set apart for their preaching. This proclamation, it seems, was granted as an answer to an address for the toleration given in, in name of all the Presbyterian ministers, July 21st, 1687.

Whereupon Mr Renwick found it his duty, not only to declare against the granters, but also against the accepters of this toleration; warning also the people of the hazard of their accession to it, etc. At this the indulged were so incensed, that no sooner was their meeting well settled, than they began to shew their teeth at him, calling him an intruder, a Jesuit, a white devil, going through the land carrying the devil's white flag, and saying that he had done more hurt to the church of Scotland than its enemies had done these twenty years. As also spreading papers through the country, as given

under his hand, to render him odious; which in truth were nothing else than forgeries, wherein they only discovered their own treachery.

Yet all this could not move him, even when his enemies were shooting their arrows at him. Being not only the butt of the wicked, but the scorn of professors also, who were at their ease, and a man much wondered at every way; yet still he continued at his work, his inward man increasing more and more, when his outward man was much decayed; and his zeal for fulfilling his ministry, and finishing his testimony, still increasing the more, the less peace and accommodation he could find in the world. At the same time he became so weak, that he could not mount or sit on horseback; so that he behoved to be carried to the place of preaching, and never in the least complained of any distemper in the time thereof.

In the meanwhile, the persecution against him was so furious, that in less than five months after the toleration, fifteen most desperate searches were made for him. To encourage which, a proclamation was made, October 18th, wherein a reward of £100 Sterling was offered to any who could bring in the persons of him and some others, either dead or alive.

In the beginning of the year 1668, being now drawing near the period of his course, he ran very fast, and wrought very hard, both as a Christian and as a minister. And having for some time had a design to emit something in way of testimony against both the granters and accepters of the toleration, that might afterwards stand on record, he went towards Edinburgh, and on his way, at Peebles, he escaped very narrowly being apprehended. When at Edinburgh, he longed and could have no rest, till he got that which he, with the concurrence of some others; had drawn up in form, delivered; and upon inquiry, hearing that there was to be no presbytery or synod of tolerated ministers for some

time, he went to Mr Hugh Kennedy, a minister of great note among them, who he heard was moderator, and delivered a protestation into his hands, and then, upon some reasons, emitted it in public as his testimony against the toleration.

From thence he went to Fife, and preached some Sabbaths; and upon the 29th of January, he preached his last sermon at Borrowstounness. There he returned to Edinburgh, and lodged in a friend's house on the Castlehill, who dealt in uncustomed goods; and wanted his wonted circumspection (his time being come), one John Justice, a waiter, discovered the house that very night; and hearing him praying in the family, suspected who it was, attacked the house next morning, February 1st, and pretending to search for uncustomed goods, they got entrance; and when Mr Renwick came to the door, Mr Justice challenged him in these words, "My life for it, this is Mr Renwick." After which he went to the street, crying for assistance to carry the dog Renwick to the guard.

In the meantime, Mr James and other two friends essayed to make their escape at another door, but were repelled by the waiters. Whereupon he discharged a pistol, which made the assailants give way; but as he passed through them, one with a long staff hit him on the breast, which doubtless disabled him for running. Going down the Castlewynd, towards the head of the Cowgate, having lost his hat, he was taken notice of, and seized by a fellow on the street, while the other two escaped.

He was taken to the guard, and there kept for some time. One Graham, captain of the guard, seeing him of a little stature and comely youthful countenance, cried, "What! is this the boy Renwick that the nation hath been so much troubled with?" At the same time, one Bailie Charters coming in, with great insolency accused him with bawdy-houses, to which he replied with deserved

disdain. He was then carried before a quorum of the council. And when Graham delivered him off his hand he was heard to say, "Now I have given Renwick up to the Presbyterians, let them do with him what they please." What passed here could not be learned.

He was committed close prisoner, and laid in irons ; where, as soon as he was left alone, he betook himself to prayer to his God, making a free offer of his life to him, requesting through-bearing grace, and that his enemies might be restrained from torturing his body ; all which requests were signally granted, and by him thankfully acknowledged before his execution.

Before he received his indictment, he was taken before the Chancellor, in the Viscount of Tarbet's lodging, and there examined concerning his owning the authority of James VII., the cess, and carrying arms at field-meetings, when he delivered himself with such freedom and boldness as astonished all present. The reason why he was interrogated anent the cess was, that a pocket-book was found upon him, in which were the notes of two sermons he had preached on these points which he owned. There were also some capitals in the same book ; and because the committee was urgent to know the names, he, partly to avoid torture, and knowing they could render the persons no more obnoxious, ingenuously declared the truth of the matter ; which ingenuousness did much allay their rage against him. Being asked by the Chancellor, What persuasion he was of ? He answered, Of the Protestant Presbyterian persuasion. Again, How it came to pass he differed so much from other Presbyterians, who had accepted of the toleration, and owned the King's authority ? and what he thought of them ? He answered, He was a Presbyterian, and adhered to the old Presbyterian principles, principles which all were obliged by the covenant to maintain, and

which were once generally professed and maintained by the nation, from 1640 to 1660; from which they had apostatized for a little liberty, they knew not how long, as you yourselves have done for a little honour. The Chancellor replied, and the rest applauded, That they believed that these were the Presbyterian principles, and that all Presbyterians would own them as well as he, if they had but the courage. However, on February 3rd, he received his indictment upon the three foresaid heads, viz. disowning the King's authority, the unlawfulness of paying the cess, and the unlawfulness of defensive arms; all which he was to answer to on the 8th of February. To the indictment was added a list of forty-five persons, out of which the jury was to be chosen, and a list of the witnesses to be brought against him.

After receiving his indictment, his mother got access to see him, to whom he spoke many savoury words. On Sabbath, February 5th, he regretted that now he must leave his poor flock, and declared, "That if it were his choice, he could not think of it without terror, to enter again into and venture upon that conflict with a body of sin and death; yet, if he were again to go and preach in the field he durst not vary in the least, nor flinch one hairbreadth from the testimony, but would look on himself as obliged to use the same freedom and faithfulness as he had done before." And in a letter, on February 6th, he desired that the persons whose names were decyphered, might be acquainted with it; and concludes, "I desire none may be troubled on my behalf, but rather rejoice with him who, with hope and joy, is waiting for his coronation-hour." Another time his mother having asked him how he was, he answered, He was well, but that since his last examination he could scarcely pray. At which she looked on him with an affrighted countenance, and he told her, he could hardly pray

being so taken up with praising, and ravished with the joy of the Lord. When his mother was expressing her fear of fainting, saying, How shall I look upon that head and those hands set up among the rest on the port of the city? He smiled, telling her, she should not see that; for, said he, "I have offered my life unto the Lord, and have sought that he may bind them up; and I am persuaded that they shall not be permitted to torture my body, nor touch one hair of my head farther."

Monday, February 8th, he appeared before the Justiciary, and when his indictment was read, the Justice-clerk asked him, If he adhered to his former confession, and acknowledged all that was in the libel? He answered, "All except where it is said I have cast off all fear of God: that I deny, for it is because I fear to offend God, and violate his law, that I am here standing ready to be condemned." Then he was interrogated, If he owned authority, and James VII. to be his lawful sovereign? He answered, "I own all authority that hath its prescription and limitations from the word of God, but cannot own this usurper as lawful king, seeing both by the word of God, such an one is incapable to bear rule, and likewise by the ancient laws of the kingdom, which admit none to the crown of Scotland, until he swear to defend the protestant religion, which a man of his profession could not do." They urged, Could he deny him to be King? Was he not the late King's brother? Had the late King any children lawfully begotten? Was he not declared to be his successor by act of parliament? He answered, "He was no doubt King *de facto*, but not *de jure*; that he was brother to the other King, he knew nothing to the contrary; what children the other had he knew not; but from the word of God, that ought to be the rule of all laws, or from the ancient laws of the kingdom, it could not be shewn that he had, or ever could have any

right." The next question was, If he owned, and had taught it to be unlawful to pay cesses and taxations to his Majesty? He answered, "for the present cess, enacted for the present usurper, hold it unlawful to pay it, both in regard it is oppressive to the subject, for the maintenance of tyranny, and because it is imposed for suppressing the gospel. Would it have been thought lawful for the Jews, in the days of Nebuchadnezzar, to have brought every one a coal to augment the flame of the furnace to devour the three children, if so they had been required by that tyrant?"

Then the assizers were called in by fives, and sworn, against whom he objected nothing, but protested, "That none might sit on his assize that professed Protestant or Presbyterian principles, or an adherence to the covenanted work of reformation." He was brought in guilty, and sentence passed that he should be executed in the Grassmarket on the Friday following. Lord Linlithgow, Justice general, asked, If he desired longer time? He answered, "It was all one to him; if it was protracted, it was welcome; if it was shortened, it was welcome; his Master's time was the best." He was then returned to prison. Without his knowledge and against his will, yea, after open refusing to the Advocate to desire it, he was reprieved to the 17th day, which gave occasion to several to renew their reproaches.

Mr M'Naught, one of the curates, made him a visit in his canonical habit, which Mr Renwick did not like. The curate, among other things, asked his opinion concerning the toleration, and those that accepted it. Mr Renwick declared that he was against the toleration; but as for them that embraced it, he judged them to be godly men. The curate leaving him, commended him for one of great gravity and ingenuity, etc. Dalrymple, the King's Advocate, came also to visit him, and declared that

he was sorry for his death, and that it should fall out in his short time. Several Popish priests and gentlemen of the guard, with some of the tolerated ministers, were permitted to converse with him. A priest, at leaving him, was over-heard saying, he was a most obstinate heretic; for he had used such freedom with him, that it became a proverb in the Tolbooth at the time, " Begone, as Mr Renwick said to the priests."

Several petitions were written from several hands, of the most favourable strain that could be invented, and sent him to subscribe, but all in vain; yea, it was offered to him, if he would but let a drop of ink fall on a bit of paper, it would satisfy, but he would not. In the mean time, he was kept so close that he could get nothing wrote. His begun testimony which he was writing was taken from him, and pen and ink removed. However, he got a short paper wrote the night before, which is to be found in the Cloud of Witnesses, as his last speech and testimony,

On Tuesday, the 14th, he was brought before the council on account of *The informatory vindication*; but what passed there cannot be learned, further than their signifying how much kindness they had shewn him, in that they had reprieved him without his application, a thing never done before. He answered with extraordinary cheerfulness, rejoicing that he was counted worthy to suffer shame for the name of his Master. A friend asking him how he was? he said, " Very well;" and he would be better within three days. He told his mother, That the last execution he was witness to, was Robert Gray's; and that he had a strong impression in his mind that *he* should be the next. He often said, He saw need for his suffering at this time; and that he was persuaded his death would do more good than his life for many years could have done. Being asked, What he thought God

would do with the remnant behind him? He answered, "It would be well with them; for God would not forsake nor cast off his inheritance."

His mother and sisters, having obtained leave to see him after some refreshment, in returning thanks, he said, "O Lord thou hast brought me within two hours of eternity, and this no matter of terror to me, more than if I were to lie down in a bed of roses; nay, through grace to thy praise, I may say I never had the fear of death since I came to this prison; for from the place where I was taken, I could have gone very composedly to the scaffold. O! how can I contain this, to be within two hours of the crown of glory!" He exhorted them much to prepare for death; "for it is (said he) the king of terrors though not to me now, as it was sometimes in my hidings, but now let us be glad and rejoice, for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. Would ever I have thought that the fear of suffering and of death could be so taken from me? But what shall I say to it? It is the doing of the Lord and marvellous in our eyes. I have many times counted the cost of following Christ, but never thought it would be so easy; and now who knows the honour and happiness of that? *He that confesseth me before men, him will I confess before my Father.*" He said many times, "Now I am near the end of time, I desire to bless the Lord, it is an inexpressible sweet and satisfying peace to me, that he hath kept me from complying with enemies in the least." Perceiving his mother weep, he exhorted her to remember, that they who loved anything better than Christ were not worthy of him. "If ye love me, rejoice that I am going to my Father, to obtain the enjoyment of what eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor heart conceived." Then he went to prayer; wherein he ran out much in praise, and pleaded much in behalf of the suffering remnant, that the Lord would raise up witnesses that might transmit the testimony to succeeding generations, and that he would not leave Scotland, asserting, with great confidence of hope, that he was strengthened in the hope of it, that the Lord would be gracious to Scotland.

At length, hearing the drums beat for the guard, he fell into a transport, saying, "Yonder the welcome warning to my marriage; the bridegroom is coming; I am ready, I am ready." Then taking his leave of his mother and sisters, he entreated them not to be discouraged; for, ere all were done, they should see matter of praise in that day's work. He was taken to the low Council-house, as was usual; where after his sentence was read, they desired him there to speak what he had to say. He said, "I have nothing to say to you, but that which is written in Jer. xxvi. 14, 15. *As for me, behold I am in your hand.*" &c. He was told that the drums would beat at the scaffold all the time; and therefore they desired him to pray there; but he refused, and declared; he would not be limited in what he would say, and that he had premeditated nothing, but would speak what was given him. They offered him any minister to be with him, but he answered, "If I would have had any of them, I

ny counsellors or comforters, I should not have been here this day. I requite none with me but this one man," (meaning the friend that was waiting upon him.)

He went from thence to the scaffold with great cheerfulness, & one in a transport of triumphant joy, and had the greatest crowd of spectators that has perhaps been seen at any execution, but little was heard, on account of the beating of the drums all the time without intermission, from his first ascending the scaffold until he was cast over. Yet from the friends and others permitted to attend him, there were some of his last words collected.

Then he sang Psalm ciii. read Rev. xix.; then prayed, commending his soul to God through the Redeemer, and his cause to be vindicated in his own time; and appealed to the Lord, if this was not the most joyful day he ever saw in the world, a day that he had much longed for. He insisted much in blessing the Lord in honouring him with the crown of martyrdom, an honour which the angels were not privileged with, being incapable of laying down their lives for their princely Master. He complained of being disturbed in worshipping God, but, said he, "I shall soon be above these clouds; then shall I enjoy thee, and glorify thee, without interruption, or intermission, for ever" Prayer being ended, he spoke to the people much to the purpose of his written testimony, whereof somewhat was remembered, to this effect:

"Spectators, I am come here this day to lay down my life for adhering to the truths of Christ, for which I am neither afraid or ashamed to suffer. Nay, I bless the Lord that ever he counted me worthy, or enabled me to suffer any thing for him; and I desire to praise his grace that he hath not only kept me from the gross pollutions of the time, but also from the many ordinary pollutions of children; and for such as I have been stained with, he hath washed and cleansed me from them in his own blood. I am this day to lay down my life for these three things. 1. For disowning the usurpation and tyranny of James Duke of York. 2. For preaching that it was unlawful to pay the cess expressly exacted for bearing down the gospel. 3. For teaching, that it was lawful for people to carry arms for defending themselves in their meeting for the persecuted gospel ordinances. I think a testimony for these is worth many lives; and if I had ten thousand, I would think it little enough to lay them all down for the same.

"Dear friends, I die a Presbyterlan Protestant; I own the sword of God as the rule of faith and manners; I own the Confession of Faith, Larger and Shorter Catechisms, Sum of Saving Knowledge, Directory for Public and Family Worship, Covenants National and Solemn League, Acts of General Assemblies, and all the faithful contentings that have been for the covenanted reformation. I leave my testimony approving the preaching in the fields, and defending the same by arms. I do join my testimony to all these truths that have been sealed by bloodshed, either on scaffold, field, or seas, for the cause of Christ. I leave my testimony against Popery, Prelacy, Erastianism, &c., against all proflancy, and every thing contrary to sound doctrine and the power of godliness; particularly against

all usurpations and encroachments made upon Christ's right, the Prince of the kings of the earth, who alone must bear the glory of ruling in his own kingdom the church; and in particular against this absolute power usurped by this usurper, that belongs to no mortal, but is the incommunicable prerogative of Jehovah, and against his toleration flowing from this absolute power."

Here he was ordered to have done. He answered, I have near done; and then said, "Ye that are the people of God, do not weary to maintain the testimony of the day in your stations and places, and, whatever ye do, make sure an interest in Christ; for there is a storm coming that shall try your foundation. Scotland must be rid of Scotland before the delivery come; and you that are strangers to God, break off your sins by repentance, else I will be a sad witness against you in the day of the Lord."

Here he made him desist, and go up the ladder, where he prayed, and said; "Lord, I die in the faith that thou wilt not leave Scotland, but that thou wilt make the blood of thy witnesses the seed of thy church, and return again and be glorious in our land. And now, Lord, I am ready; the bride, the Lamb's wife, hath made herself ready." The napkin being tied about his face, he said to his friend attending, "Farewell, be diligent in duty, make your peace with God through Christ. There is a great trial coming. As to the remnant I leave I have committed them to God. Tell them from me, not to weary nor be discouraged in maintaining the testimony, and the Lord will provide you teachers and ministers, and when he comes, he will make these despised truths glorious in the earth." He was turned over, with these words in his mouth, "Lord, into thy hands I commend my spirit, for thou hast redeemed me, Lord God of truth."

Thus died the faithful, pious, and zealous Mr James Renwick, on the third day over the 26th year of his age; a young man, and a young minister, but a ripe Christian, and renowned martyr of Christ, for whose sake he loved not his life unto the death, by whose blood, and the word of his testimony, he overcame, and thus got above all snares and sorrow, and, to the conviction of many that formerly reproached him, was as signally vindicated, as he was in his life shamefully reproached, with all the aspersions, obloquies, and calumnies, that were cast upon him, for prosecuting that testimony for truth, which now he sealed with his blood, in such a treasure of patience, meekness, humility, constancy, courage, burning love, and blazing zeal, as did very much confound enemies, convince neutrals, confirm halts, comfort friends, and astonish all.

He was of stature somewhat low, of a fair complexion, and like another young David, of a ruddy and beautiful countenance. The Viscount of Tarbet, one of the councillors, one day in company, when speaking of him, said, "That he was one of the stillest maintainers of his principles that ever came before them." He was the last that on a scaffold sealed his testimony for religion, liberty, and the covenanted work of reformation in Scotland.