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X

HISTORICAL MEMOIRS

OF

ROB ROY

AND THE

CLAN MACGREGOR.

BY K. MACLEAY, M.D.

“So shalt thou list, and haply not unmov'd,
To a wild tale of Albyn's warrior day ;
In distant lands, by the rough West reprov'd,
Still live some reliques of the ancient lay.”

Lord of the Isles.



GLASGOW:

DUNCAN CAMPBELL, 143, BUCHANAN STREET.

MDCCCXL.

John H. Kellar, Architect.

HISTORICAL MEMOIRS

OF THE

CLAN MACGREGOR.

THE numerous clans who formerly inhabited the lofty regions of the Scottish mountains, rested their claims of superiority on the antiquity of their origin.

The clan Gregor, or, as they were anciently known, the clan Alpin, one of the most distinguished tribes of that country, could date their beginning from a very distant epoch. They were the descendants of Alpin, a Scottish king of the ninth century; or, with more probability, they assumed that name at an earlier age, from the circumstance of their being in possession of the extensive range of mountains then denominated Albyn, which form a considerable portion of the Grampian chain, and this by evident analogy, constituted the appropriate name of clan Albyn or Alpin.

Various Celtic annals are favourable to the extreme antiquity of this race; and an ancient chronicle in that language, relating to the genealogy of the clan Macarthur, declares that there is none older excepting the hills, the rivers, and the clan Alpin.

The fierce and disorderly state of society which prevailed

among the clans for many ages, affected the clan Gregor in no greater degree than it did others ; but to the peculiar situation of their country may be attributed the horror with which they were regarded, and that marked them as the most unruly and violent members of the state.

Placed on the confines of the Highlands, and protected by the bold and almost inaccessible mountains that surrounded them, inducements were continually presented for exerting those lawless habits which they had acquired. But in those days the system of depredatory war that they pursued, was looked upon as venial, because it obtained among all the clans, who were equally prone to spoliation ; —the opposition usually given to the Macgregors on such occasions, was the cause of many sanguinary deeds of which they were guilty.

The extensive boundaries originally occupied by this clan, stretched along the romantic wilds of the Trosachs and Balquidder to the more northerly and westerly altitudes of Rannach and Glenurchy, comprehending a portion of the counties of Argyll, Perth, Dumbarton, and Stirling, which appropriately were denominated the country of the Macgregors. The stupendous aspect of these rugged acclivities ; the deep retirement of their woods ; and the security of their vallies, rendered those regions difficult of access, and sheltered the inhabitants from the sudden and desultory intrusion of other marauding and ferocious bands, while they were equally safe from the immediate cognition of the law, and the consecutive infliction of the military.

Tradition fixes the primeval residence of one great branch of the clan Gregor, among the fastnesses of Rannach, the central part of Druim Albyn. At all events, it is certain that their chief, Alister Macgregor of

Glenstrae, lived in that district before the year 1600. But, several centuries prior to that date, they were an important race, connected with many of the most distinguished families of the time ; and from the early house of Alpin descended the long unfortunate line of Stuart princes, who, for so many generations, swayed the Scottish sceptre, and from whom have come down the succession of British sovereigns to the present day: hence their crest and motto are denominative of their origin—a crowned lion, with the words, “ *Sriogal mo dhream,*”—my tribe is royal. This continued to be the clan motto until a later period, when the chief attended the king on a hunting expedition. His majesty having attacked a wild boar, found himself no match for the animal, and was nearly worsted, when Macgregor, observing the king's danger, asked his liberty to assist him against the ferocious beast. His majesty assented, and said, “ *E'en do, bait spair nocht,*” whereupon Macgregor having torn up a young oak by the root, kept off the boar with one hand, until he got an opportunity of using his sword, and killing him with the other. This expression of the king's was afterwards adopted on the shield of the Macgregors.

In the eleventh century, this clan appears to have been in favour with the monarch, as their chief received the honour of knighthood, and accompanied Macduff, the thane of Fife, in an expedition to the North Highlands, to quell some commotions among the refractory clans of those districts. Nor does it seem that the Macgregor of that period was inattentive to the duties of religion, for his son became abbot of Dunkeld, and as such, held unlimited control over the spiritual concerns of his clan.

By such marks of superiority the power and ambition of the clan were gradually extending ; and when they were

farther dignified by a title of nobility, and become lords Macgregors of Glenurchy, their consequence appeared so well established, and their vassals so numerous, that they could cope with the most elevated families of the kingdom. If we except the clan of Macdonald, the territories occupied by the Macgregors, for some centuries, were more considerable than those of any other tribe; and in order to secure their inheritance in various quarters, a lord Macgregor of the thirteenth century, built the castles of Kilchurn on a peninsulated rock in Lochawe, the castle of Finlarig at the west, and that of Ballach, since named Taymouth, at the east end of Loch Tay, together with the old castle in the lake of Lochdochart, and other strong holds. The original appearance of these fortresses, during the violent contentions of the different clans into whose hands they successively fell, was varied by additions or mutilations, suitable to the wild taste of the occupiers, or sombre architecture of the times.

It was at a very remote period that the district of Rannach became the property of the Macgregors; and that in a manner which shows the barbarous character of the age:—It chanced that the then laird of Appin, whose name was Stewart, a branch of the primeval lords of Lochawe, was travelling with his lady and their usual retinue of walking attendants, from the city of Perth to their property in Argyllshire. In passing through Rannach they were interrupted and plundered of their baggage, and otherwise maltreated, by a certain tribe of the natives, now only known by the patronymic of "*Clan-ic-Jan-bhui*,"—the grand-children of yellow John. In order to revenge this injury, Stewart collected a body of vassals, and marched with them to Rannach. On his way, at Loch Tuille, a small lake at the head of Glenurchy, near the

present road through Glencoe, he was joined by a son of the chief of Macgregor, who resided in a castle on a small island in that lake. The devoted clan of "*ic-Janbhui*," with their wives, their children, and their kindred, were cruelly put to the sword; and Stewart, in return for the services rendered him by Macgregor, placed him in the possessions of the exterminated race, where he remained, and was the founder of a new family, which afterwards became chief of the name.

During the variable fortunes, and severe struggles of Robert the Bruce for the independence of his country, the chief of Macgregor supported him at all hazards; and after the defeat of the Scottish army at Methven, occasioned by their negligent security, Macgregor, whose clan was present, conducted Bruce, with his followers and their ladies, to the fastnesses of his own country, where they encountered many hardships, though treated with all the native hospitality of those regions.

The slaughter of the red Cumyn of Badenoch in the cloisters of the monastery of Grey-Friars, at Dumfries, drew many enemies on Bruce; and from its being executed on a spot deemed holy as the confessional of monks, it was considered an impious offence on the sanctity of the place.

Alexander, lord of Argyll, being married to the aunt of Cumyn, became the declared foe of Bruce, and was eager to revenge the death of his friend. Learning that Bruce and some of his fugitive patriots had taken shelter among the hills of Braidalbane and Balquhidder, he assembled twelve hundred of his vassals, in order to pursue the royal party, who were not aware of his intention, and being scattered in different places among the mountains, only four hundred could be collected to give a hasty opposition to

the men of Argyll. They met near the site of the present inn of Tyndrum, in Braidalbane, and at the separation of the roads to Glencoe, Glenurchy, and Glendochart, which is still called Dalreigh, or the King's Field. The contest was fierce ; but so unequal, on the side of Bruce's army, that a precipitate retreat for their safety became necessary ; and the singular escape of Bruce from three of his enemies, who overtook and assailed him, is known to every one. On this occasion Macgregor appeared with a body of his clan, repulsed the king's pursuers, and relieved him from his perilous situation. The men of Lorn, amazed at his extraordinary bravery, and terrified at the known fierceness of the Macgregors, withdrew to their own country.

After this the forces of Bruce dispersed and left the mountains ; and he, having placed himself under the guidance of Macgregor, was conducted to the borders of Loch Lomond, and there lodged in a cave at Craigcrostan, (afterwards frequented by Rob Roy,) secure from all his enemies, till an opportunity took place of his being conveyed across the lake.

In the subsequent battle of Bannockburn, that glorious exertion for Scottish freedom, the army of Bruce was principally composed of Highlanders. His undaunted prowess had gained him their esteem, and his title to the throne called forth all their support. The chief of Macgregor appeared on that day at the head of his people ; and a circumstance, of which he was the cause, though purely superstitious, yet consonant to the notions of the age, contributed to inspire the whole army with that enthusiastic valour which proved so successful :—A relic of St Fillan had long been preserved in the family of Macgregor, and this saint, being, from some traits in his history, a favour-

ite with the king, the chief carried it, enshrined in a silver coffer, along with him to the field the day before the battle, and committed it to the care of the abbot of Inchaf-ray, who, in case of defeat, secreted the relic, and exhibited the empty casket as containing it. The king, while at his devotion over the precious shrine, and particularly imploring the aid of the saint, was startled by its suddenly opening and shutting of its own accord. The priest hastening to know the cause of alarm, was astonished to find that the arm of the saint had left its place of concealment, and had again occupied the casket that belonged to it. He confessed what he had done ; and the king immediately caused the story to be proclaimed through the whole army, who regarded the miracle as an omen of future success. From the victory which crowned the Scottish patriots on that memorable occasion, and the supposed influence of St Fillan, Bruce caused a priory to be erected in Strathfillan in 1314, which, in grateful respect, he dedicated to his favourite apostle.

The population of the clan Gregor had often increased so much, as to become too great, even for the wide domains which they occupied, and this produced frequent migrations to other districts, where various patronymics were assumed by the different septs who in this way had branched off from the parent stem. Even so late as the year 1748, the Grants, Mackinnons, Macnabs, and Mackays, and others who had departed from the Macgregors, held several conferences with them, (during a meeting which lasted for fourteen days in Athol,) for the purpose of petitioning parliament to repeal the attainder that hung over them ; but some disagreement having taken place among their chiefs, as to the general name under which all of them should again be rallied, their meeting

and resolutions were broken off, and no farther notice taken of the proposal.

But the Macgregors were early marked as a prey to the rapacity of their neighbours. The power and consequence they had acquired, excited the jealousy and envy of different inferior chieftains in their vicinity, who exerted every address to render them odious in the eyes of majesty, which alone could attempt to curb the fierce and independent spirit of this clan; and a stratagem no less wicked than dastardly was practised, and brought upon them for the first time, the displeasure of government:— Prior to the battle of Harlaw, formerly noticed in our Introduction, the Maedonalds, lords of the isles, besides other extensive boundaries, possessed and ruled over the provinces of Lorn and Argyll; but their frequent opposition to the royal prerogatives, gradually reduced their importance as well as their lands, and after the defeat they sustained at that time, their domination scarcely reached beyond the limits of their native isles.

This reduction of the Maedonalds, was the signal for many needy inferiors, and desperate adventurers of various tribes, under sanction of the crown, to subdue their vassals and take forcible possession of their lands; and in that manner the Campbells speedily grasped at those districts just named, which surround the fine lake of Lochawe. Still desirous of farther extending their arms, a knight of that name, about the year 1426, instigated the subordinate clan of Macnab to insult and commit outrages on the Macgregors. Incensed at such treatment, the Macgregors hastened to chastise them, and a battle ensued at Glendochart, wherein the Macnabs were cut off to a man. This affair was represented to the king in so false and aggravated a form, to suit the purposes of the knight

of Lochawe, that he obtained letters of fire and sword against both parties, and procured a large military force to assist his own martial adherents in reducing them. But although both clans now found it necessary to combine their efforts for mutual defence, and fought the Campbells in several bloody trials, they were unsuccessful, and lost part of their estates, which were seized upon by the knight and his friends.

In the reigns of James the Third and Fourth, the prejudices that had undeservedly been excited against them, continued with unabated virulence ; and as the enactments of those monarchs permitted the execution of cruel and unjust measures, the Macgregors were perpetually exposed to the attacks of other hostile clans, who gradually deprived them of considerable portions of their lands. Thus situated, they were often led to punish their enemies, and in particular the Macnabs, who, being the hirelings of the laird of Lochawe, were often incited to continue their depredations. But the Macgregors, though persecuted with increasing barbarity, were still loyal, and regarded the severities of the king as arising from the insidious machinations and advice of his courtiers.

In the faction stirred up against James the Third, headed by his unnatural son, the laird of Macgregor, (for they had now lost the title of nobility,) espoused the cause of his king, which, after his death, so incensed James the Fourth, that he took every means in his power to oppress and annoy the clan, and deprive them of their property, which he portioned off to his favourites in lots suitable to their rapacious desires. A natural son of the duke of Albany laid hold of Balquhiddy, and a large share of the surrounding country ; a second son of their enemy of Lochawe, seized the lands of Glenurchy ; and betwixt

the years 1465, and 1504, they were also bereaved of the great countries round Loch Tay, Glenlyon, Rannach, Taymouth, and many others.

In order to conciliate family feuds, which, in those days, was a matter of no easy accomplishment, a chief of the Macgregors married a lady of the house of Lochawe, or Glenurchy ; but the tranquillity thus obtained was of short duration, for the chief, when on a hunting party, and not thinking of danger, was basely murdered on the hill of Drummond, in Brae-mar.

During the tumultuous and distracted monarchy of James the Fifth and his unhappy daughter, the Macgregors, still a powerful tribe, were their firm adherents, and repeatedly went forth to chastise the insolence of different clans who were inimical to them ; but their attachment to their sovereigns brought upon them the enmity of the regent Murray, who pursued them with ordinances peculiarly inhuman ; and had he not fallen a just expiation of his crimes, they would have had cause to dread the total extirpation of their race.

About this period, the chief of the Macgregors entered into bonds of agreement with the heads of several clans, for their mutual defence and support,—“ for the special love and amitie between them faithfully to serve ane anuther in all causes with their men and servants, against all wha live or die, and to maintain ane anuther’s quarrel, *hinc inde*, for behoof of all our kinsfolk, and ablise us to abyd firm and stable under all hazards of disgrace and infamy.” Subscribed “ with their hands led to the pen.”

The outrageous contentions of factious and aspiring men in power, which at this time, 1570, involved the kingdom in all the miseries of civil war, seemed fully to justify the Macgregors in resorting to such arrangements,

and in adopting measures that tended to secure them from the tyrannical attacks of a disorderly and profligate government.

At this time was published,—“Ane admonition to the Trew Lordis maintainaris of Justice, and obedience to the King’s Grace,”—written by the celebrated George Buchanan, the Scottish historian and poet, who was then lord privy-seal; but dictated in such homely and barbarous terms as do not correspond with the elegance of his Latinity, or give a favourable impression of his taste, and encourage no other belief, than that the court at which he lived, was equally unpolished as it was licentious. Of this long address, we shall only transcribe that part in which the Macgregors are noticed, Buchanan being their inveterate enemy. It follows:—“And howbeit the bullerant blude of a king and a regēt about yair hartis, quhair of ye lust in yair appetite, genis thame lytill rest, daylie and hourlie making new prouocatioun, zit yat small space of rest quhilk yai haue, besyde ye execution of yair crueltie, thay spend in deuysing of generall vnquyetnes throu the haill couētrie, for not cōtent of it yat yai yame selfis may steill, brybe, and reif, thay set out raches on every syde, to gnau the pepillis banis, efter that thay haue consumit the flesche, and hountis out ane of thame the clan Gregour, ane vther ye Grantie and clan Chattan, &c.; and sic as wald be haldin the halyest amāgis yame, scheu plainlie ye affectioun yai had to banies peice and steir vp troublis, quhē thay bedit all thair fyne wittis to stop the regent to ga first north, and syne south, to puneis thift and oppressioun: and quhē thay sau, that thair counsall was not authorisit, in geuing impunitie to all misordour, thay spend it in putting downe of him that would haue put all in gudc ordour.”

Though this clan had often experienced the undue coercion of the government, for crimes of which they were only supposed to have been guilty, they were not yet remarkable for the commission of any glaring act of atrocity; and in various edicts issued from the councils of the state for the suppression of misdemeanour, and the repulsion of the inroads of the Highlanders, the Macgregors were not individually pointed out as a sept more to be dreaded than others of their countrymen; and the decree put in force against them, near the close of the sixteenth century, appears to have been called up for an offence of which they had no share; but which, notwithstanding, involved them in greater ruin than the actual perpetrators.

In those times, many of the great landholders of the Highlands had large portions of their properties occupied as deer forests; and though game laws, of the present form, did not then exist, there were yet rules in force for the protection of such forests, setting them apart for the private use of the owners; but, from the quantities of game which abounded over all the Highland hills, it was not considered any crime for the natives to kill a deer or a hare, wherever they were found, so that it was common to encroach on the boundaries of the forests with impunity.

Some young men of the clan Donald of Glencoe, from the North Highlands, having, about 1588, wandered from the recesses of their own mountains, were found trespassing in Glenartney, an extensive deer forest belonging to the king, or nominally his. They were seized by the under forester and his men, when carrying off a deer. As a punishment for this offence, those guardians of the forest cropped their ears, and then allowed them to depart.

This being considered a disgraceful chastisement, the Macdonalds soon returned with some of their clan, and

killed Drummond of Drummondernoch, the man who had so treated them, and having cut off his head, they went, with savage assurance, to the house of his sister, Mrs Stewart of Ardvorlich, situated on the bank of Lochearn. Her husband was not at home, and as they were strangers, whose flagitious irruptions had formerly made them unwelcome guests, they were received with considerable apprehension, and not with the usual kindness of Highland hospitality. She, however, placed some bread and cheese before them, until better entertainment could be prepared, and left the room for that purpose. Before she returned, they placed her brother's head, still dropping with blood on the table, and put a piece of bread and cheese in its mouth in derision of such fare. She recognised the horrid spectacle, and was so much affected that she ran out of the house in a state of furious distraction. Her disconsolate husband long sought her through the woods and mountains; and, to heighten his distress, she was in the condition of pregnancy. The season of harvest was fortunately conducive to her preservation, and though a wretched maniac, heedless of her own deplorable situation, or the misery of her friends, she continued to wander over hills and lonely glens, living on such fruits and berries as grew spontaneously among those wilds. After a long absence, some of her own servants employed in milking cattle on the high pastures of the farm, beheld a half-famished female form, lurking among the brushwood. Terror had painted her in their imagination as the spectre of their lady, and they told their master the frightful tale. He conjectured the truth, and means were concerted for recovering the fugitive. She was taken, and happily, after her delivery, her senses returned, to the great joy of her family; but the son she bore was of fierce and un-

governable passions, and when he grew up, his appearance became savage; and his having murdered his friend and superior officer, lord Kilpont, indicated an inhuman disposition.*

The Macdonalds having exhibited such proofs of barbarity at Ardvorlich, carried the head of Drummondernoch along with them, and proceeded to Balquhiddy, at no great distance, among their friends the Macgregors.

This action, however savage, was regarded as a just retaliation for the affront put on the Macdonalds; and the Macgregors, with their chief, having assembled on the following Sunday at the kirk of Balquhiddy, they all laid their hands on the head of Drummondernoch, previously set on the altar, and swore to defend the Macdonalds from the consequences of this deed.

James the Sixth, at this time, being married by proxy to Anne of Denmark,—“his majesty’s dearest spouse,”—her arrival in Scotland was daily expected; and the king, desirous to entertain his queen and her foreign suite in the most sumptuous manner, ordered lord Drummond of Perth, who was styled Stewart of Strathearn, and principal forester of Glenartney, to provide venison upon the occasion, and it was while thus employed that his substitute was killed, as has just been stated.

Greatly enraged at this outrage, executed in seeming contempt of his feelings and authority, James and his

* Lord Kilpont, son of the earl of Airth, and Monteith, had joined the marquis of Montrose in August 1644, just before the battle of Tippermuir, with four hundred men. Three days thereafter he was basely murdered by James Stewart of Ardvorlich, for having refused a proposal of Stewart’s, who offered to assassinate Montrose, of which Kilpont signified his abhorrence, as disgraceful and devilish. Stewart, lest he might be discovered, stabbed him to the heart, and fled to the covenanters, who pardoned and promoted him; but Montrose was deeply affected at the loss of his noble friend.

council forthwith issued a denunciation of fire and sword against the clan Gregor, though it is believed that the order was granted on false information, furnished by their vindictive neighbours, who contemplated their overthrow, and who maliciously conjoined their name with the Macdonalds, who were the real authors of the murder, in consequence of the vow said to have been taken in the kirk of Balquhiddy. But the decree was proclaimed with thoughtless and precipitate credulity, and declared that:—

“Ye cruel and mischievous proceedings of ye clan Grigor, so long continueing in blood, slaughters, heirships, manifest reifs, and stouths, committed upon his Hieness’ peaceable and good subjects Inhabiting ye Counties eovest ye brays of ye Highlands, thir mony years bygone, but specially heir after ye cruel murder of umquill Jo. Drummond of Drummondrynych, be certain of ye said clan, be ye council and determination of ye haill avowand to defend ye authors yrof quoever wald perseu for revenge of ye same, &c. Likeas after ye murther committed, ye authors yrof Cutted aff ye said umquill Jo. Drummond’s head, and carried the same to the Laird of M’Grigor, who, and his haill surname of M’Gregors, purposely conceived upon the next Sunday yrafter, at the kirk of Buchquhiddy; qr they caused ye said umquill John’s head be pnted to them, and yr avowing ye sd murder, laid yr hands upon the pow, and in Ethnic and barbarous manner, swear to defend ye authors of ye sd murder.” At the same time, “A commission, to endure for the space of three years, was granted to the earls of Huntly, Argyll, Athol, Montrose, lord Drummond, the commendator of Inchaf-fray, Campbell of Lochinell, Campbell of Glenurach, Campbell of Caddell, Campbell of Ardkinglas, M’Intosh of Dunashtane, Sir John Murray of Tullibardine, Buchanan

of that Ilk, and Macfarlane of Ariquocher, to search for and apprehend Alister M'Gregor of Glenstrae, and all others of the clan Grigor or yr assistors, culpable of the said odious murther, qrever they may be apprehended. And if they refuse to be taken, or flees to strengths, and houses, to pursue and assege them with fire and sword."

This warrant, in the hands of such powerful chieftains, willing to put down and destroy the Macgregors, was followed up without delay ; and lord Drummond, impatient to take "sweet revenge," as he termed it, for the death of his cousin Drummondernoeh the forester, appointed a day with Montrose to beset the valley of Balquhiddel, and execute his purpose, even before he had time to ascertain who were the actual murderers of his relation : and in this expedition lord Drummond was joined by a party under Stewart of Ardvorlich, no less eager to avenge the fate of his brother-in-law. Having settled their mode of assault, the parties were punctual to their agreement, and stormed the habitations of the unsuspecting Macgregors, who, taken by surprise, were slain with such insatiable thirst for blood, that on one farm alone, thirty-seven of the clan, who had not the means of defence, were butchered in cold blood.

It appears, that even after this foul and cowardly massacre at Balquhiddel, which they were unwilling to attribute to James, the Macgregors were still firm in their allegiance, and in a subsequent trial of importance, stood forward in his support. Affairs in Scotland had, about this time, assumed a complexion of distortion, the consequence of recent changes in the system of religion, and the government of the church ; and the factions thereby produced, irreconcilable to each other, were at constant

variance, and called up the hatred and hostility of the parties, whose differences nothing less than open war could appease. Many flagrant acts of atrocity had taken place among the great families of the Highlands, and their subordinate branches, when the popish lords, Angus, Huntly, and Errol, supported with money from abroad, assembled their followers and bade defiance to the king. James had delegated his authority to the earl of Argyll, a youth without talent or experience; but who commanded a numerous host of vassals. Argyll, at first declining to oppose the insurgents, though solicited by the king, and implored by the clergy, was at length persuaded to invade their lands, in conjunction with the lord Forbes, under the condition, however, of receiving the properties of all those whom they should conquer. Argyll craved the assistance of the chief of Macgregor and his followers, with that of other clans; and having collected an army of seven thousand men, marched into Badenoch and laid siege to the castle of Ruthven. In Glenlivet they were met by the rebellious lords with an inferior army; yet the incapacity of Argyll occasioned the discomfiture of his troops, and an almost total defeat, in which the Macgregors were severely cut up, they having had the most arduous and important duty of the day assigned to them.

Among those who were outlawed for having joined the confederate lords on this occasion, was Cameron of Lochail. Argyll had taken possession of his lands, and when application was made to the king to have them restored, it was refused, unless Cameron agreed to enter into indentures with Argyll to root out the clan Gregor, a proposal that he readily consented to, and which soon produced a battle with the disappointed Macgregors. It

took place in the braes of Lochaber, where Macgregor had gone to chastise Locheil; but he, being joined by his allies the Macdonalds, presented a formidable array. Macgregor, however, with the assistance of the Macphersons of the same country, attacked his enemies, and totally routed them.

But, wilfully forgetting their adherence to his interest in the contest of Glenlivet, in which many of their bravest friends had perished; and when the tranquillity of the northern shires no longer required the aid of the Macgregors in his cause, the inveterate enmity of James towards them seemed to return, with all the pusillanimous ingratitude of which his character bore such indubitable proofs. By a letter from him to the laird of Macintosh, still extant, he thus expresses himself:—"Right traist Freynd, we greet you heartilie well. Having hard be report of the laite pruife given be you, of your willing disposition to our service, in prosequiteing of that wicked race of M'Gregor, we haif thought meit hereby to signify unto you, that we accompt the same as maist acceptable pleasure and service done unto us, and will not omitt to regard the same as it deserves; and because we ar to give you out of our aein mouth sum furdre directioun thair anent,—it is our will, that upon the sight hercof ye repair thither in all haist, and at yr arriving we sall impairt or full mynd, and heir wt all we haif thought expedient, that ye, befoir yor arriving hither, sall caus execut to the death Duncane M'Can Caim," (a chieftain of the Macdonalds, and a relation of the Macgregors,) "latelie tane be you in yar last expedition agains the clan Gregor, and caus his heid to be transportit hither, to the effect the same may be affixt in sum public place, to the terror of other malefactors, and so commit you to

God. From Halyrud hous, the penult day of ———, in the year 1596." Signed, "James R."

The black knight of Lochawe or Glenurchy, wishing, as he pretended, to adjust some disputed marches betwixt his property and that of the chief of Macgregor, appointed what he called, a friendly meeting at Killin, for that purpose ; but, having hired eight assassins, they were hid in a closet adjoining the room where the meeting was held. Upon a signal given they rushed out upon the too credulous and unguarded Macgregor. He, however, forced his way out of the house, and jumped into a deep pool of the river close by, dragging several of the assassins along with him, two of whom were drowned. Having got to the opposite bank, he was so weak with the wounds he had received, and loss of blood, that the remaining ruffians easily finished his life. But not satisfied with this, the villains sent his horse to his father, in token of his fate, and afterwards murdered the old man in his hundredth year.

From the coercive measures by which the knights of Lochawe thus treated the Macgregors, and deprived them of their lands of Glenurchy, a deadly feud originated ; but owing to the persecution which the latter, at the same time, suffered, from the malignant and cruel acts of the legislature, they never afterwards were in a condition to recover, from the Campbells, any portion of their ancient inheritance, so unjustly wrested from them. About this period, James, the chief of clan Gregor, was ensnared and taken prisoner by Sir Colin Campbell. In a manner shamefully inconsistent with the acknowledged laws of clan warfare, even in more remote and savage times, the prisoner was put to death in cold blood, at Kennmore, in presence of " the earle of Athol, the justice clerk, and

sundrie other nobill men ;” and Sir Colin himself stood over the executioner who beheaded Macgregor, to see that he did his duty. This knight is said to have been “ane great justiciar, all his tyme, and to have caused execute to the death many notable lymmaris.”

But this clan, though proscribed and harassed on all hands, still bore up against the torrent of opposition with unsubdued spirit, and a resolution that never forsook them ; and which, even in the times of their greatest adversity, would not submit to an insult or an act of injustice, with impunity.

Sir Humphrey Colquhoun, the laird of Luss, and his followers, about this time, seem, with others, to have been their determined enemies ; and if contemporary historians are to be relied on, were generally the aggressors in exciting quarrels, or committing depredations, and heirships, as they were called, on the clan Gregor ; but these were usually balanced by similar acts of retaliation on the lands and effects of Luss and his tenantry.

The contiguity of their possessions rendered such hostility more frequent and fearful, until at length their dissensions became so enormous as to call for the interference and mediation of their friends : and the chief of the Macgregors, (Alexander of Glenstrae,) not being averse from a reconciliation, went from his country of Rannach to Lennox, in the spring of 1602, accompanied by two hundred of his friends and kinsmen, for the purpose, and with a full resolution of extinguishing the feud that had so long subsisted betwixt his brother, who lived in Balquhider, and the chief of the Colquhouns.

This crafty individual, though aware of the purpose of Macgregor’s approach, had no wish that any amicable arrangement should be effected ; and having laid his plans

accordingly, he collected all his retainers and dependents, with many Buchanans, Grahams, and others of his neighbourhood, to the number of five hundred horsemen, and three hundred foot, intending, if the result of the meeting was not agreeable to his inclinations, to cut off the retreat of the clan Gregor, and overthrow them while in his own country. Macgregor, though he had previous information of Colquhoun's insidious design, had yet the prudence to conceal his indignant feelings, and kept the appointment. The annals of that period do not state the exact result of that conference, only the parties seem to have separated good friends.

Pacific measures, however, were incompatible with the enmity which long had excited their mutual spoliation, and their meeting was no sooner dissolved than the laird of Luss followed the Macgregors, in order to set on them by surprise on their way home, through the valley of Glenfruin, not suspecting that his insincerity was known to his antagonist, who was apprehensive of treachery, and consequently was upon his guard.

There was then no road along the right bank of Loch Lomond, as in the present day. The borders of that charming lake are so steep and woody, that, before the formation of roads throughout the Highland districts, it was hardly possible to pass that way. The road, therefore, from Dumbarton to Argyllshire, left the present line near the bridge of Fruin, and passed to the west along the valley of that name, in a circuitous direction, to the head of Loch Long, and again turned eastward to the head of Loch Lomond, and Glenfalloch.

Near the middle of Glenfruin, about six miles from the confluence of its river with the lake, the Macgregors, when peaceably returning home, were fiercely beset by the Col-

quhouns. Macgregor immediately formed his clan into two divisions, one of which he himself commanded, and gave the other in charge to his brother, who, having taken the circuit of a hill, assailed the laird of Luss and his followers in a manner they did not expect. The conflict was maintained on both sides, with the utmost courage; but the inherent bravery of the Macgregors, though opposed by the fearful odds of four to one, was yet victorious. Luss and his followers, unequal in valour, were beaten, dispersed, and numbers of them lay dead and maimed in every direction; and when the Macgregors had chased the remaining fugitives, even into the Lomond, where several of them met a death less honourable than that inflicted by the swords of their enemies, it was found, that besides many leading gentlemen, and burgesses of the town of Dumbarton, who had followed Luss, there were also left dead on the field two hundred Colquhouns, of whom a multitude were at the same time made prisoners. Of the Macgregors, it is remarkable, that two only were slain. John Glass, the brother of their chief,* and another; but many of them were dangerously wounded.

This battle, which nearly annihilated the name of Colquhoun, was unfortunately productive of another calamitous event.

The town of Dumbarton was, in those days, celebrated for a famous seminary of learning, where all the sons of

* This person was respectably connected, being married to a daughter of Sir John Murray, afterwards earl of Tullibardine; and he possessed fifteen farms in Balquhidder, besides a fortress situated at the south-eastern extremity of Loch Voil, called "the castle of Macgregor's isle." But although his father-in-law laid hold of these lands for behoof of his widow and children, and was the intimate friend of James VI., such considerations did not stay the vengeance of that monarch, nor prevent their being included in the sweeping denunciation of the clan which followed, it being represented that John Glass Macgregor was the chief opponent of Luss.

the neighbouring gentry were sent to be educated, many of whom were Colquhouns. When these young men heard of a meeting where several of their friends were to be present, nearly eighty of them set off to Glenfruin. The Colquhouns became alarmed for the safety of the boys, and to keep them from harm, locked them up in a barn; but, when the Macgregors won the day, they killed the guard to whom the charge of the barn was entrusted, and set fire to it, by which inhuman act all the boys were burnt to death. Another account of that horrible transaction, states, that no sooner had the superior courage of the men of Rannach prevailed, and the discomfiture and rout of their enemies become general, than an attendant of Macgregor's, of the name of Fletcher, was ordered by him to take care of the boys, when their former guard was killed, until the battle was over. In the meantime, the boys, impatient of their confinement, wished to be released, and became noisy; but the wretch who stood watch over them, eager for the destruction of the whole race, put them to death. As they were the children of gentlemen, Macgregor was anxious to restore them in safety to their parents, and having returned to the barn for that purpose, he asked their guard where they were. The villain, brandishing his sword, said, "that can tell you." Macgregor, struck with sorrow and indignation at the atrocity of the deed, would instantly have cut down the murderer, but he fled, while Macgregor exclaimed, that his clan was ruined.*

* This barn stood near the place where the Colquhouns made the first assault, and the site of it is still pointed out. Close by runs a rivulet, the Gaelic name of which signifies, "the burn of the young ghosts;"—and in the former superstition of the country, it was believed, that if a Macgregor crossed the stream alone, after sun-set, he would be scared by some unhal-
lowed spectre.

Every spring, after this tragical event, a ceremony, in commemoration of

After the unhappy result of this journey, undertaken by the chief of the clan Gregor with the avowed intention of reconciliation, he and his people returned to their own country, deeply lamenting the loss of lives that had been occasioned by the obstinacy and foul conduct of Luss, whose treachery had forced them to take such measures for their own defence. The resolution which Luss had secretly formed of cutting off the Macgregors while they were in his own country, and seemingly in his power, and, as he believed, unsuspecting of his plan, confirms his guilt as the aggressor, so that to him seemed due that blame and execration so unjustly bestowed on the Macgregors in their own consequent proscription. Had Macgregor's design been hostile, he would not so quietly have taken his departure, after the termination of an unsuccessful conference; nor would Luss have attempted to surround, and take him by surprise, when he was calmly marching back to his own dominions.

Of this combat, however, a partial statement, representing the Macgregors as a set of cruel murderers, who had deliberately butchered the Colquhouns, was soon there-

it, was performed by the young men attending the academy of Dumbarton. The boys of the two highest classes assembled, on the morning of the anniversary, at the gate of the seminary, from whence they marched in military array, with the Praetor walking before, and the Usher behind them, to a field at some distance, where they spent the day, having provisions along with them. In the evening, the *dux* of the first class, was stretched as a corpse, on a board provided for the occasion, and covered with the clergyman's gown, which was always used for the purpose. He was then carried by a few of his companions, the rest following as at a funeral, their wooden guns reversed. When they arrived at the church-yard, the supposed dead body was laid on a particular grave-stone, when the whole attendant boys set up a cry of lamentation, after which they dispersed, leaving their companion as he lay. When they were gone, he got up and also left the church-yard. This ceremony was kept up until the year 1757, and confirms the circumstance of the murder of the Colquhoun boys at Glenfruin, which, by many, has only been considered as a fictitious story.

after transmitted to Edinburgh, where king James the Sixth then resided. This account, sent by the laird of Luss, was accompanied with two hundred and twenty bloody shirts, many of which, it was believed, had been so stained by the way, and were presented to the king, it is said, by sixty widows of those slain in Glenfruin, who rode upon white poney, each carrying a long pole to expose those murderous proofs, and give the exhibition its due effect on the mind of his majesty.

However melancholy those mourning dames might appear when they set out on their journey, they returned with different feelings; for having arrived at Drymen, they are reported to have had recourse to some of their native beverage, which so elevated their disconsolate spirits, that they quarrelled ere they reached their homes, to which many of them were obliged to be carried; and this seems to prove, that they were a parcel of hirelings, procured for the purpose of imposing on the credulity of the king.

Unfortunately for the clan Gregor, they had no friend at court to plead their cause, and give a faithful account of the unhappy affair, so that the former misguided malevolence of James towards them, which, owing to the pressure of more imperative concerns, had been dormant for some time, was easily rekindled, and he instantly denounced letters of rebellion and intercommuning against them.

But we have before remarked of this monarch, that although mean and unaccomplished, he was vain and unprincipled; and from religious weakness, credulous, and readily submitted to imposition. Destitute of inborn sentiment, of manly resolution, his opinions and decisions varied with every breath, and were altered according to the whim and selfish designs of all those who came in his

way. Sincerity, indeed, does not seem to have formed any part of the character of his family ; and some of them neither hesitated at the violation of veracity, nor blushed when their dissimulation was exposed.

With a king of such imbecility, the blessings of justice and liberty were incompatible. A total disregard to every feeling of humanity, alone could have dictated those dreadful cruelties he decreed against the clan Gregor ; and the act of his council, dated in August, 1603, will remain a proof of his vindictive temper. This paper ordered that the name of Macgregor should be for ever abolished ; that all who bore it should forthwith renounce it ; and that none of their posterity should ever afterwards take the name, under pain of death. The declaration was also accompanied by a private order to the earl of Argyll, and the Campbells, to pursue, slay, and if possible, to extirpate the race of clan Gregor ; and it is a matter much to be deplored, that in following up these instructions, every feeling of sympathy and mercy, every sense of shame and justice, seem to have been laid aside and disregarded ; and the young, the old, the female as well as the male, were indiscriminately butchered by the miscreants thus commissioned, until a dreadful catalogue of horrors was presented to the nation, which would have been disgraceful to the most wicked and barbarous savages of antiquity.

But such was the determined and unexampled bravery of the Macgregors, which was well known to their implacable foes, that the latter never dared attack them, unless with numbers greatly superior ; and even with that advantage, it was generally by stealth they came upon them ; or by pacing after them in the dark, overpowered them by surprise. By those dastardly measures, the Macgregors were greatly reduced : and suffered the most

terrible hardships. Their country was filled with troops ready to destroy them, so that all those who were able, were forced to fly to remote places, amidst rocks, and woods, and mountains, while those whom the frailty of age, the influence of disease, or the inability of childhood prevented from escaping, fell an innocent sacrifice to their ferocity.

Thus dispersed and harassed ; but not dispirited, they could seldom collect a force in any respect equal to their enemies. On one occasion, the son of Campbell of Glenurchy, at the head of two hundred chosen men, came upon them at a place called Ben Duaig. Among these were some of the clan Cameron, clan Nab, and clan Donald ; and, although Macgregor's men amounted to only sixty, he gave them battle. The young laird of Glenurchy, being in disguise, was not known, and escaped unhurt ; but seven gentlemen of his name were killed ; and of the Macgregors, Duncan Abarach, one of their chieftains, and his son.*

After this skirmish, the Macgregors were unable to make any head. Still hunted down and murdered, they were almost completely subdued, but not until perhaps, an equal number of the clan Campbell had fallen by their swords.

Though now nearly overcome by the various snares,

* This was the son of the Macgregor formerly mentioned as having been assassinated at Killin. He was named "Abarach," from his having been bred and educated in Lochaber ; and being a stout man of fine appearance, he was looked upon, among his countrymen, as a hero of promising parts. Duncan Dow, the black knight of Glenurchy, dreading that this person, at that time young, vigorous, and brave, would make his old head answer for the murder of his father and grandfather, and likewise deprive him of lands he had unjustly acquired, endeavoured, long before the contest of Ben Duaig, to be reconciled to Macgregor. By the influence of Locheil, Abarach was induced to keep quiet, and to accept from Sir Duncan, part of the Macgregor lands which he had wrested from them, so that, until a short time before the assault just mentioned, they were on good terms.

and modes of slaughter made use of against them ; and having their lands forfeited, and their goods confiscated, the king and his council still continued their sanguinary commands ; and after the above stated conflict, a new edict of revenge was given out, by which “ all receptors and harbourers, and those who intercommuned with the clan Gregor, were to be fyned and punished :” and all these fines and forfeitures, were given by his majesty to the earl of Argyll, the commander of these murdering bands, “ and converted to his use and benefit, as a recompense.”

During all this persecution, no one was generous enough to undeceive the king and his ministry, or to point out the injustice with which the clan Gregor were treated. This may be accounted for by the peculiarity of their situation, as the lands they occupied were placed near the properties of several great chieftains, all of whom were desirous of the extermination of the race, that they might the more easily lay hold of such portions of the Macgregor's territory, as would best suit themselves : and this alienation of their country eventually took place, and occasioned the destruction of the clan.

Alexander Macgregor of Glenstrae, the chief of clan Gregor, had, during their reverse of fortune, suffered many severe trials and privations. Often within the grasp of his enemies, his escape was almost miraculous : and, although he for some time inhabited the most inaccessible recesses, and remained from day to day among the dreary wilderness of his country, in perfect safety, yet having become wearied of his seclusion, he took the resolution of making the wrongs and sufferings of his people known to the king. It was, however, impossible for him to pass beyond the fastnesses of the Highlands without discovery by the emissaries of Argyll, the arch foe of his clan. He

therefore, sent that person an offer, that if he would permit him to travel into England, to state his grievances to the king, he would give him thirty of the principal and most reputable persons of his name as hostages, and in pledge for his return. Argyll, with that treachery for which he was so eminent, readily consented, and Macgregor having surrendered himself, with his thirty companions, was, according to Argyll's promise, conducted to Berwick, but was not allowed to proceed to London, where James then was. Argyll, indeed, kept his word of permitting him to travel to England; but from Berwick he was brought back to Edinburgh, where, without trial or delay, the unfortunate chief was hanged, along with his thirty hostages. This perfidious breach of faith in Argyll, sanctioned by the privy council, and by which they expected at once to quell the Highland districts, and extinguish the name of the clan Macgregor, had no such effect, and only tended to render Argyll despicable in the eyes of all honest men.*

* In the following lines, Montgomerie, the Ayrshire bard of his day, twits king James for employing himself in the punishment of an imaginary crime, in the alleged massacre of the Colquhouns, at the battle of Glenfruin, and neglecting to punish real enormities:—

“ Schir, clenge your cuntrie of thir cruel crymes,
 Adultries, witchcraftis, incests, sakeless bluid;
 Delay not, bot as David did, betymes
 Your company of such men soon seclud.
 Out with the wicked; garde ye with the gude,
 Of mercy and of judgment sey to sing.
 Quhen ye suld styk, I wald ye understude;
 Quhen ye suld spair, I wish ye war benyng;
 Chuse godly counsell; loirn to be a king.
 Beir not thir burthens longer on your bak;
 Jump not with justice for no kind of thing;
 To just complaints gar gude attendance tak;
 Their bloody sarks cryis always in your ciris,
 Prevent the plague that presentlie appeiris.”

At this odious period of Scottish history, few of the Macgregors were permitted to die a natural death. As an inducement to murderers, a reward was given for every head of a Macgregor that was conveyed to Edinburgh, and presented to the council; and those carried off in a natural manner, were quietly and expeditiously interred, by their friends, as the very receptacles of the dead were not held sacred. When the grave of a Macgregor was discovered, it was common for the villains employed in this trade of slaughter, to profane those sepulchres, dig up, and mutilate the bodies, by cutting off the head to be sold to the government, who seemed to delight in such merchandise.

A wretch named Duncan Campbell, baron, or laird of Drumcrasg, in Glenlochry of Perthshire, was an active collector and dealer in this horrid traffic, for which reason he was denominated "*Donacha nan ceann*,"—Duncan of the heads. Of this worthy protegee of Argyll's, it is told, that, being on his way to Edinburgh, with a select assortment of heads for the amusement of the humane rulers of the state, and, at the same time, with a view of receiving the reward for his diligence which the law enacted, they happened, by the roughness and irregularity of the road, or some other cause, to make a strange sort of noise. The villain, startled at this, seemed appalled by a momentary impulse of conscious infamy, and abandoned the horse that carried his prize. A countryman who observed his agitation, inquired into the cause, and was told that the panniers on the horse's back contained heads for the lords at Edinburgh, whither he was carrying them, and that though they were all children of the same family, they could not yet agree. This answer did not satisfy the inquirer, who immediately became suspicious of

Campbell, and he asked what kind of heads they were? "Heads of the king's enemies, the Macgregors,"—was the reply. "Then," said the countryman, "thy cruel head shall keep them company,"—and laying hold of the horse, gave Campbell a blow that brought him to the ground. This was a chieftain of the Macgregors in disguise. He whistled, and three stout fellows sprung out of the surrounding wood. They examined the panniers, and were struck with horror. Campbell was instantly put to death, and the heads of their kindred buried in secrecy. While this dreadful practice, so shocking to humanity, continued, a person of some distinction among the clan Macgregor, who was forced to shelter himself among the mountains, died at a miserable cottage in the braes of Glenurchy. The kind peasantry who witnessed his dissolution, anxious to prevent that decapitation to which his remains would be subjected, if discovered by the blood-thirsty followers of the laird of Glenurchy, who were prowling over the country for such purposes, had the body clandestinely interred in a remote and unfrequented situation. A short time thereafter, a supernatural appearance is said to have presented itself to the foster-brother of this person, named Macildonich, who lived at a considerable distance, which complained in grievous terms of the place and manner in which he was buried, requesting of Macildonich to convey his body to Glenurchy church-yard, the burial-place of his ancestors. This man immediately recognised the well-known voice, and complied with its desire. He raised the body of his deceased friend, carried it on his shoulders, and re-interred it in the proper place, at the distance of fifteen miles, in the course of one night, and that the new dug grave might escape the

vigilance of his enemies, he also dug round several others to give the same appearance.*

Though several great proprietors of the Highlands exerted their energies against them ; the principal enemy, and most insatiate foe of the clan Gregor, was Archibald, seventh earl of Argyll. He and his family had benefited

* A gentleman of the clan has favoured us with a little poem, founded on this tradition ; but whether it is a translation from the Gaelic language, or an original, we have not authority to state, though we believe it of the latter description :

“ Oh Macildonich ! cried the shade,
How sweet the slumber of thine eye,
While low in dust my corse is laid,
Without a friend, or kinsman’s sigh.

Dark is my dwelling on the heath,
No dear, no friendly ashes nigh ;
Cold, cold my lonely bed of death,—
Oh bear me where my fathers lie.

The moon, pale gleaming o’er the vale,
Will guide thy steps by yonder tree ;
Beneath a rock is dug my cell—
Oh, then—a long farewell to thee.

Then slowly o’er the wild it flew,
Faint as the fading beam of night ;
His friend, well Macildonich knew,
And quickly hied him o’er the height.

He bore the death cold corse away,
Through many a lone and darksome glade ;
And e’er the blushing dawn of day
Beside his parents, Gregor laid.

He laid him by his kindred dust,
And often dropt the swelling tear,—
The green turf marks his place of rest,
The nettle grey, the dark yew near.”

most materially by their inhumanity towards that devoted clan, and for every one they destroyed, they received an ample reward. In 1607, almost the last portion of their lands were bestowed on that nobleman, for "inbringing of the laird of Macgregor," in the honourable way we have stated; and, in 1611, being still considered a "barbarous and thievish race," he was ordered to root them out; and not averse from such employment, he brought some of their "principals," as he called them, "to justice." But he neglected the true means of reformation; for, having dragged the parents to untimely death, he left their children unprovided with food, and destitute of raiment, who naturally as they grew to manhood, resented their fathers' as well as their own wrongs.

Unhappily for this race and for their country, the more they were oppressed, the more did they contemn and give opposition to the laws. Their state of long and rigid proscription led many of them to abandon every rule of equity, and every sense of rectitude; and they attached themselves to bands of marauding wanderers, who regarded neither religion nor moral duty in the prosecution of their spoliations. To experience any feeling of compunction for a crime, was incompatible with the course of life which they led; and the appropriation of every thing that came within reach to their own use, was scarcely looked upon as an offence. For this condition of many of the clan Gregor, we must blame the imbecility and credulity of the legislature, who believed that no one could steal a cow, hough (hamstring) cattle, or set fire to a house, but a Macgregor; and, under this belief, they were constantly letting loose their acts of vengeance upon the unfortunate race. In January, 1613, they were implicated for being at the fire-raisings, murders, slaughters, and depredations

upon the lairds of Glenurchy, Luss,* and Aberuchil; and it was enacted, that they “suld at no tyme thairefter beare nor wear ony kynd of armour bot ane pointless kniff to Cutt thair meate under payne of Deade:” and in another act in June of the same year, 1613, all those who were formerly of the name, were forbidden to meet in any part of the kingdom, “in gryiter numberis nor four persones, under the said pain of Deade.”

For some years before the demise of James the Sixth, the violent edicts that had been followed up so successfully against the Macgregors, found some relaxation, and the clan were not molested; but although the legislature had ceased from oppression, the neighbouring clans were not disposed to quietness, and the Macgregors were still treated as an outlawed and vagabond race, often precluded from those mercies that are the common privileges of mankind. The determined rancour of their inveterate opponent, the earl of Argyll, had brought upon them such general and destructive slaughter, that they eagerly looked for the time when his sanguinary propensity would be sated.

* The laird of Luss, who fought the battle of Glenfruin, was, some time before this, killed in the castle of Banachra, situated at the opening of that valley, and the Macgregors were unjustly accused of committing this murder. The following is believed to be the true account:—Colquhoun of Luss having been at a great party in Edinburgh, had grossly insulted the Countess of Mar. About the same time, the laird of Macfarlane, whose lands lay about the north end of Loch-Lomond, had, in a foray to the Leven, killed five gentlemen of the name of Buchanan, for which he fled, and concealed himself in Athol. He there met lady Mar, who, anxious to revenge the affront formerly given her by the laird of Luss, promised to obtain Macfarlane's pardon, if he would dispatch Colquhoun. Macfarlane accordingly set off, collected a few of his people, and went by water to Rosscow. He was noticed by Colquhoun, who fled to Banachra, at a short distance, and concealed himself in a vault. Macfarlane followed, dragged him from his hiding place, and murdered him. It is said his blood still stains the floor on which the deed was perpetrated.

One of his clan, Campbell of Achnabreck, was related to a family of the clan Gregor, and from some conciliatory overtures which that person had made to his chief in their behalf, some gleams of hope broke through the dark cloud that so long had hung over them:—Achnabreck, along with his nephew, a young chieftain of the Macgregors, of promising parts, went, by a special invitation from Argyll, to pay him a visit at his castle of Inverary, and was received with apparent attention and kindness; but after Macgregor had retired to his bed-chamber, he was treacherously laid hold of and carried out of the house. Next morning, Achnabreck's servant, on opening the window of his master's apartment, started back; and being questioned by his master as to the cause of his alarm, replied, that Macgregor was hanging on a tree facing the window. Filled with grief and horror at so base a breach of hospitality, Achnabreck instantly determined to be revenged; but Argyll, and the person who instigated him to murder his guest, had fled to Edinburgh to avoid the uncle's vengeance, and took up their lodging in that house near the Tron Church, long afterwards occupied by the commissioners on the Scots forfeited estates. Thither Achnabreck followed them; and, rushing into their room with a drawn sword in his right, and a cocked pistol in his left hand, he accused Argyll of his infamous and dastardly violation of confidence, and told him briefly, that he must either instantly die himself, or be the executioner of his diabolical counsellor. Argyll, in self-defence, and with the meanness of a coward, plunged his dagger into the bosom of his friend and adviser, who was present.

Such perfidious treatment, so wantonly put in practice, was not calculated to restrain the impetuous spirit of a valiant clan; and being wholly excluded from every benefit

of the laws of the land, they considered themselves free to exercise their own powers, in levying compulsory imposts of black-mail, or other contributory fees, as best suited their peculiar circumstances: and, as the government had marked them for its prey, they, in return, disregarded its enactments, and were heartily disposed to give opposition to all its friends and supporters. Under such impressions it will not appear surprising that the Macgregors continued their irregularities, and were accused of various deeds of "heavy oppression, having broken forth over the counties of Perth, Stirling, Clackmannan, Monteith, Lennox, Angus and Mearns, the sheriffs of which, with the stewarts of Stratherne, Monteith, Bamffe, Invernesse, Elgin and Forres, along with the earls of Errole, Montrose, Athol, Perth, Tullibardin, Sea-fort, the lords Stormount, Ogilvie, the lairds of Glenurchy, Lawers, Grantullie, Weymes, Glenlyon, Glenfallach, Edinample and Grant, were ordered to hunt, mutilate, and slay them, for their rebellious practices." This curious act, 1633, says, "That by the great care of his highness umwhill dearest father of eternal memory, the clan Gregor was supprest and reduced to quietnesse; yet that of late they are broke out. And for the timeous preventing the disorder that may fall out by the said name and clan of Macgregor, ratifie all acts against the wicked and rebellious clan, and ordain that every one of them, as they come to the age of sixteen years, shall thereafter give their appearance before the Lords of Privie Council, to find caution for their good behaviour and obedience in all time coming, and to take to them some other surname. And farther, for the better extinguishing and extirpating of the said wicked and lawless Limmers, ordaine that no minister nor preachers within the bounds of the High-

lands shall at any time hereafter baptise and christen any male childe with the name of Gregour. Whatsoever person shall receive, supply, or intercommoun, with the saids rebels, or supply them with meate, drink, lodging, or weapons, or any other necessaries, shall be punished in their bodies, goods, and geare."

In putting this order in force, many people lost their lives, and others had narrow escapes from the hands of the clan. The laird of Lawers, mentioned in the order of parliament just quoted, had, from the situation of his lands in Strathearn, favourable opportunities to entrap them, and his vigilance had rendered him successful in seizing three men, whom he gave up to their fate. A party of them, however, with a chieftain at their head, beset his house one night, with an intent to murder him, for the injury he had done their friends. For this purpose they dragged him from his bed; but his wife interposed, and on her knees craved time to allow him to pray. They meant no injury to the lady, and yielded to her request; and having thus gained a moment's respite, he implored their mercy still farther, and requested leave to pray in a chapel near at hand. To this they also consented. On the way to the chapel he told them, that, if they would spare his life, he would give them 1000 merks on the afternoon of the following day. They agreed to his proposal, and having given him his liberty, they returned to his house at the appointed time to receive his ransom. Lawers in the interim, had obtained the sum, and was in the act of paying it, when the house was surrounded with military whom he had collected. The Macgregors, after some resistance, were taken, and forwarded to Edinburgh, where they expiated their crime on the scaffold.

Another of their declared foes, the possessor of Edin-

ample, who had at this time devised many plans to inveigle them, was not so fortunate in his escape as his neighbour of Lawers. The reward which the lords of the privy council had offered for every Macgregor who was brought in, was of itself a powerful inducement to some puisne barons, as they were denominated, to lay every snare for them; as the apprehension of a Macgregor produced more money than the properties of many, and besides gave them more importance in the estimation of the legislature. The laird, or baron of Edinample, being named in the commission before quoted, which he regarded as very honourable, considered himself bound to harass the Macgregors, and always kept some armed men near him for that purpose. Having heard that five of them were in a public house at the head of Lochearn, a short distance from his place, he set out one winter evening, by moon-light, to lay hold of them. Not being endowed with much inherent courage, he went cautiously into the house, as if without any hostile design. Appearing in no better costume than the countrymen of his vicinity, he was not at first recognized, but was asked to sit down and partake of some whisky which the Macgregors were enjoying after a long chase of a deer they had killed, and which lay on the floor. He complied, and drank some glasses. Meanwhile one of the Macgregors having gone out, was surprised to see several men in the other apartment, for there were only two in the house, and some standing outside the door: and having learned from the landlord who their guest was, and what was his intention, the Macgregor, with a ready judgment, speedily devised a stratagem to get quit of the unwelcome visitors. He said that Edinample had sent him to desire that his lads would go into the barn, and drink some whisky till he should call for them; and the coldness of the night

made this no disagreeable message. The whisky and a light were immediately procured, with which they went to the barn, accompanied by Macgregor. He drank their healths, and waited till every man, seventeen in number, had a glass of whisky, and then going out, he locked the door, and carried away the key. Returning to his friends, with whom Edinample, ignorant of the condition of his men, still continued to drink and sit quietly, he collared him and accused him of treachery. His astonished companions having heard what their clansman said, were instantly for putting him to death, but from this they were dissuaded. He was, however, ordered to take the dead deer on his back, and accompany them along with it. He remonstrated against this, being, as he said, a gentleman; but it was in vain, the sight of an unsheathed dirk made him comply. They took the road towards Balquhiddar, and having travelled several miles, during which Edinample frequently fell under his burden, from the roughness of the road deeply covered with snow, they halted in the middle of a desolate heath. There they took from him his load, and stripping him of his clothes, left him in a state of complete nudity, to the mercy of the cold, and to get home as he best could.

The first earl of Braidalbane, denominated John Glass, had a respectable tenant, Duncan Macgregor, of the family of Ardchoille, (anciently the rallying rock and war word of the clan Gregor,) who was the son of Duncan Abarach Macgregor, that fell in the conflict of Ben Duaig with the Campbells, as formerly noticed; he held in lease several possessions in Glenlyon, with that of Coircharmaig in Glenloch. Being an enterprising and valiant man, he was induced by the persuasion of Braidalbane, who was the implacable enemy of all the neighbouring proprietors,

to raise a "*Creach*," plunder of goods or cattle, from lands in Appin of Dul, belonging to Sir Alexander Menzies of that ilk. Menzies, for this wanton attack, demanded restitution of Braidalbane, which being refused, with the earl's equivocal manners, and habits of dissimulation, the knight commenced an action for spoliation against him. The earl, from his recent elevation to nobility, perceived the danger of his situation, had he acknowledged being the instigator of the outrage on Menzies's property; and with his usual subtlety and disregard of truth, he declared that his tenant Macgregor had acted unlawfully, and without his knowledge in the foray, and that he would speedily deliver him up to justice. When we consider the subsequent conduct of this nobleman, as to the part he acted in the dastardly massacre of Glencoe, and the duplicity he practised upon his coadjutors of the cabinet, the instance of his perfidy now to be stated, will perhaps not excite surprise. Braidalbane, after the successful inroad of Macgregor, invited him to his house at Ballach, now Taymouth, and expressed his obligation to him. Some time thereafter, when he was accused by Menzies, and likely to be disgraced, he again sent for Macgregor, to whom he still owned his thanks, and made him sit down to a refreshment; but the earl had previously concealed a party of soldiers behind a bed in the room, who, at a certain signal, sprung upon Macgregor, made him a prisoner, and immediately carried him towards Edinburgh. Another of the clan Gregor, Macgregor of Inverardrain, although he had formerly been at variance with Duncan, determined to rescue him; and for that purpose, followed the party to Falkland, which they reached the first night. The prisoner, however, advised his friend to desist and return

home, as he would himself effect his escape, which he soon after accomplished. He seized upon a sword, belonging to one of the soldiers, asked their commands for Braidalbane, and walked off, none of them daring to prevent him. This party was commanded by a son of the laird of Lawers, who was so much affronted by the escape of his prisoner, that he never returned to his country. Macgregor, on his way home, called upon the earl, who at the time was in bed. He ran to his chamber, and, throwing open the curtains with his sword, upbraided the astonished earl for his shameless conduct, and told him that his life was in his hand: but that the only requital he demanded for his ill treatment, was an immediate renewal of a lease of his possessions—a request which the earl did not think it safe to refuse.

A person of consequence among the clan, about this era, possessed some land among the hills of Braidalbane. It chanced that a man from Ardkinglas, of the name of Sinclair, in passing Macgregor's fold, while his dairy-maid was employed in milking the cows, asked some milk to drink, which the woman refused: but he rudely compelled her to give him a pailful. Having quenched his thirst, he threw away the vessel, and spilled the remainder.

The dairy-maid having complained of the treatment she had met with, Macgregor immediately sent a party after Sinclair to bring him back, but he being refractory, a scuffle ensued, in which he was killed. Campbell of Invercraw, hearing of the fate of Sinclair, who was his vassal, resolved upon the destruction of Macgregor; who, however, was apprized of the design. The law at this time, having declared that no more than four Macgregors should be seen together: this chieftain was obliged to leave his house during the night, to avoid the implacable

resolution of Inveraw, and take refuge among the hills. One stormy night, however, which was tremendously awful, he did not deem it necessary to take his usual precaution, supposing that no human being would venture abroad. But he was mistaken ; for at the moment he was consoling his family, and saying that they would not be in danger from their enemy on such a night, Inveraw and his party beset the house, murdered every soul within, and set it on fire.

The long-continued and unjustifiable severities to which the clan had been subjected, rendered them wholly regardless of the laws : and as they were seldom permitted to remain in the undisturbed possession of any land which they either accidentally might have retained, or which they rented, they were in a manner forced to form associations for mutual defence, as well as for purposes of spoliation, which their state of outlawry seemed to authorise ; and many of them having consequently become desperate, assimilated into bands, pursuing the loose and unprincipled occupation of banditti. Of this description a confederacy was entered upon in 1630, under solemn engagements and systematic rules, and conducted by a party of bold and enterprising Macgregors. They had, for some years, conducted themselves with such moderation among their own countrymen, that the law, violent and unrelenting as it still continued, could take no hold of them ; and though they persevered in the old system of exacting black-mail, as a recompense for their services in protecting the property and cattle of those who paid such contributions, it was not regarded as criminal, but was sanctioned by the government, and regular charters, which were considered legal, were frequently entered into for that purpose.

This sect of Macgregors, however, from their vagabond lives, and ill-conducted schemes, had wantonly, or of necessity, committed several outrages over the country. They were headed by two brothers, Patrick and James Macgregor, with the denominative term of Gilderoy. But they ultimately became so notorious, that the elder brother, with three of his companions, were taken in Athol by John Roy Stewart, a singular character of his day; and, being sent to Edinburgh, were executed. This Roy Stewart of Kincardine in Strathspey, though intimately connected in marriage with the Macgregors, seemed not to regard such ties; and the younger brother, James, equally despising Stewart for his opposition, set fire to his house, and killed Stewart himself. Gilderoy was soon after way-laid by the military, and, with seven of his followers, conducted to Edinburgh, and hanged on Leith Walk. This person was the subject of the beautiful Scottish melody of Gilderoy.*

Before this time, the earl of Moray was the friend and ally of Donald Macgregor, a chieftain of the family of

* “ Gilderoy was a bonny boy,
 He had roses till his shoon;
 His stockings were of silken soy,
 Wi’ garters hanging down.
 It was, I ween, a comlie sight
 To see so trim a boy:
 He was my joy and heart’s delight,
 My handsome Gilderoy.

“ The queen of Scots possessed nought
 That my love let me want;
 For cow and ewe he to me brought,
 And e’en whan they were skant:
 All these did honestly possess
 He never did annoy,
 Who never failed to pay their cess
 To my love Gilderoy.

Glengyle. He was the father of the afterwards celebrated Rob Roy, and during the minority of the chief who was his nephew, he was styled, "Tutor of Macgregor." He assisted the earl with three hundred of his clan, in an expedition to the north, to quell an insurrection of the Macphersons, who had risen against the earl as proprietor of the lands they possessed. Having succeeded in putting down the insurgents, in returning through the forest of Gaig, in Lochaber, belonging to the earl of Huntly, Macgregor was challenged for shooting a deer, which he retorted by killing the forester, who was also a Macpherson, of the family of Cluny.

For his aid at this time, the earl of Moray granted him a lease of a farm, which still remains in possession of the family.

From his situation as guardian of his chief, he took upon himself all the rights and privileges of his superior. As such, he was engaged by the heiress of Kilmaronock, on the banks of the Leven, whose name was Cochrane, to protect

" My Gilderoy, baith far and near,
 Was fear'd in every town ;
 And bauldly bare away the geir,
 Of mony a lowland loon :
 For man to man durst meet him nane,
 He was so brave a boy ;
 At length, wi' numbers he was taen,
 My winsome Gilderoy.

" Of Gilderoy sae fear'd they were
 Wi' irons his limbs they strung ;
 To Edinborow led him thair,
 And on a gallows hung.
 They hung him high aboon the rest,
 He was sae bauld a boy ;
 Thair died the youth wham I lud best,
 My handsome Gilderoy."

her lands from the depredation of thieves, for which service he received sixteen bolls of meal yearly. The lady, after having paid this tribute of black-mail for several years, at length declined to continue it, supposing herself secure, as the irruption of thieves had become less frequent in her neighbourhood. Macgregor, however, obstinately persisted in his demand, which was as firmly opposed ; and, seeing that force was necessary, he brought down a body of men, assisted by his son-in-law, Macdonald of Glencoe, who plundered and laid waste the lady's property, and obliged her to feu it off to various persons ; and hence the number of small lairds who now hold these lands.

During the arduous and destructive campaigns of Montrose in defence of his sovereign, the Macgregors and other clans from the mountains, united their energies, and followed that enterprising though unfortunate nobleman, in his undaunted career against the covenanters.

The tenets and frantic zeal of that sect were perfectly obnoxious to the Highlanders ; and in every battle where their opponents were overthrown, they exulted no less over them as enemies to the king, than as differing from themselves in principles of religious belief.

The Macgregors were much respected and beloved by Montrose, for the extraordinary courage they exhibited on many occasions, and he did not fail to represent their loyalty to the king, who afterwards rescinded the acts of Parliament against them, and permitted the restoration of their name and other immunities, of which they had been deprived: and although no act of the legislature was given out as individually applicable to the clan Gregor for sixty years thereafter, yet they were included with other refractory clans of the Highlands, in many inter-

mediate decrees of Parliament for the suppression of their outrages, and the general reformation of their country.

The exile of Charles the Second, and the subsequent usurpation of Cromwell, were incidents of extreme vexation to the Highlanders ; and the moment the commander of Cromwell's troops left Scotland, some inefficient gatherings of the clans began to take place. When accounts of their defection had reached the Lowlands, the earl of Glencairn, with a degree of romantic chivalry which attended all his exploits, hastily set out to join them and take the command ; and having procured the co-operation of several chiefs, among whom the chieftain of Glengyle, with two hundred of his men, attended, he marched from the neighbourhood of Lochearn, and at the pass of Aberfoyle met, and beat with great loss, a large party of the Protector's army from the castle of Stirling.

Macgregor and his clan accompanied the small army of Glencairn, afterwards consisting of five thousand men, through various parts of the Highlands, until the latter was superseded by lord Middleton, who took the command.

While this desultory army was in Ross-shire, a circumstance took place, which, though not immediately connected with our subject, may still be narrated, as exhibiting the rude manners of the times :—The first act of Middleton's authority was to order a review of the troops, which accordingly took place ; and when it was over, Glencairn invited the general and superior officers to dine with him, at the laird of Kettle's house, four miles south of Dornoch, where he had his quarters. They were entertained with all the hospitality the country could afford ; and after dinner, Glencairn, addressing their new commander, said,—“ My lord general, you see what a gallant army these worthy gentlemen here present and I

have gathered together, at a time when it could hardly be expected that any number durst meet together; these men have come out to serve his majesty at the hazard of their lives, and of all that is dear to them: I hope, therefore, you will give them all the encouragement to do their duty, that lies in your power." On this, Sir George Monro started from his seat, and said to Glencairn,— "By G—, my lord, the men you speak of are nothing but a number of thieves and robbers; and ere long, I will bring another sort of men to the field." The chief of Glengarry, conceiving himself implicated in this insulting remark, got up to chastise the impertinent baronet; but Glencairn checking him, said,— "Glengarry, I am more concerned in this affront than you are." And turning to Monro, replied,— "You, Sir, are a base liar; for they are neither thieves nor robbers, but gallant gentlemen, and good soldiers." Middleton commanded silence. Next morning Glencairn and Monro met to decide the dispute in the field. They were on horseback, and having fired their pistols without effect, they drew their swords, when Monro having his bridle-hand wounded, begged to dismount. Glencairn agreed, and at the first bout, Monro was cut on the brow, and gave up. The earl was then in the act of running him through the body when his servant forced his sword aside, saying,— "My lord, you have enough of him." Glencairn was put under arrest, and being completely disgusted with the bad treatment he had received, left the army which he had formed, in a secret manner, and took with him his own troop and some volunteers. Middleton's elevation was of short duration: he was deserted by the principal leaders, and being surprised among the hills of Lochaber, his army was wholly dispersed.

The executive government of the usurper, though rigorous in many instances against the Highlanders, yet sanctioned and enforced the exaction of black-mail among them.* But there can be no doubt that this practice led to more general and oppressive extortions, being often made a pretence for the indiscriminate spoliation of those who had come under no such stipulation.

It will appear singular that the clan Macgregor, though thus persecuted, and run down with such incessant cruelty and unfeeling wantonness, were generally accounted loyal, and seemed attached to every succeeding monarch who reigned over the kingdom.

But the ungracious requital they experienced, showed a degree of barbarity and wickedness in those sovereigns, which cannot be too much regretted, as they did not ap-

* " At Stirling, in ane quarter scssioun, held by sum Justices of his highness' peace, upon the third day of February 165⁹, the Laird of Touch being Chyrsman.

" Upon reading of ane petition given in be Captain M'Gregor, mackand menton, That severall heritors and inhabitants of the paroches of Campsie, Dennie, Baldernock, Strablane, Killearn, Gargunnoch an uthers, wtin the Schirrefdome of Stirling, did agree with him to oversee and preserve thair houses, goods and geir frae oppression, and accordinglie did pay him ; and now that sum persónes delay to mack payment according to agreement and use of payment, thairfor it is ordered, that all heritors and inhabitants of the paroches afairsaid, make payment to the said Captaine M'Gregor, of their proportiones for his said service, till the first of February last past, without delay. All constables in the severall paroches are hereby comandit to see this order put in execution, as they will answer the contrair. It is also hereby declared, that all qo have been ingadgit in payment, sall be liberat, after such time that they goe to Captaine Hew M'Gregor, and declare to him that they are not to expect any service frae him, or he to expect any payment frae them. Just copie.

" Extracted be JAMES STIRLING, Cl. of the peace for Archibald Edmonstone, bailzie of Duntreath, to be published at the kirk of Strablane."

pear to consider the Macgregors as human beings, or mortals endowed with rational souls.

The first act of lenity passed by government in their favour, as we have remarked, was not until 1663, they having, for the space of two centuries before, been regarded as a proscribed and outlawed race. During this period, multitudes of the clan were compelled to renounce their name and their country. They migrated into distant regions where they were unknown, being only then in safety; for the edicts of the legislature held them up to such universal reproach, that with the name of Macgregor was coupled some horrible idea—frightful not only to old women and children, but to men who had the popular character of courage in the field, and wisdom in the state.

That they were, however, misled, and instigated to such inhumanity by the neighbouring heads of clans, is not to be disputed. Jealous of that race, they trembled at their bravery and increasing power; while the extensive territories they at one time held in their possession, called forth their envy; and their rapacity left no means untried to ruin the clan Gregor, which their influence with a profligate council too readily effected.

But after the removal of the proscription under which the Macgregors were kept down for ages, the government was sensible of the injustice of their treatment; and the general amelioration of the condition of the Highland districts, though it has not been successful, became an object of public interest.

MEMOIR
OF
ROB ROY MACGREGOR,
AND SOME
BRANCHES OF HIS FAMILY.

“The eagle he was lord above,
But ROB was lord below.”

WORDSWORTH.

WHILE the clan Gregor laboured, as we have attempted to describe, amidst hardships and calamities nearly unparalleled in the history of the British nation, a champion arose among them, whose disposition led him to avenge, though he could not effectually redress their wrongs; and who supported, with undismayed resolution, the native hardihood and valour of his race:—This was the celebrated ROBERT MACGREGOR, or ROB ROY. He was denominated Roy—a Celtic or Gaelic phrase, significant of his ruddy complexion and colour of hair, and bestowed upon him as a distinctive appellation among his kindred;—a practice long adopted, and still followed in the Highlands, where names are bestowed from the most trifling fortuitous incidents, or bodily appearance, and often in derision, which



HUNTING TOWER

W. Bank - 1842

always adhere not only to those who receive them, but to their posterity.

Rob Roy was the second son of Donald Macgregor, of the family of Glengyle, a lieutenant-colonel in the king's service, by a daughter of Campbell of Duneaves or Taineagh, consequently of no discreditable birth.

The family of Glengyle owed their origin to the fifth son of the laird of Macgregor, about 1430. He was named Dugald Ciar,—of the mouse colour. Having been received into the family of a person of the name of Macintyre, who resided at Invercarraig in Balquhidder, he afterwards became his heir. Ciar had two sons; but Gregor Dow the youngest, appears to have been the founder of the Glengyle branch of the clan. He was first a cotter under a subordinate tribe, named M'Cruiter, who held some lands from the laird of Buchanan; but these tenants having lost their means, and Gregor growing richer, eventually expelled them. Being of good repute, and in favour with the young laird of Buchanan, he got a lease of Glengyle, which was afterwards renewed to his great-grandson, when the lands fell into the hands of the family of Montrose. Gregor's residence was then at Inverlochlarig, among the braes of Balquhidder, and as the oral genealogical accounts denote, he was the "Fear Tighe," or head of the house. Gregor Dow was married to a Macgregor, a relation of his own, by whom he had Callum, or Malcom.

This Callum, while a young man, was implicated for an outrage on the property, and an attempt to carry off the person, of an heiress in Strathtay; and having failed to appear at Perth to answer for his conduct, he was outlawed. Under this sentence he continued for several years, wandering about the most unfrequented parts of

the Highlands, but chiefly among the recesses of his own country. The young lady whose abduction he had tried, was distantly related to the earl of Argyll, who made several exertions to seize Callum. Near the head of Balquhiddy, at that period, stood a small public house, which Callum occasionally frequented for refreshment, and to hear what news was stirring; but to avoid detection, his visits were in the dark. Argyll, with his wonted antipathy for the clan Gregor, having heard that Callum often resorted to this house, went to it one night with a party of men, expecting to surprise Macgregor; but he was disappointed. He stepped in, however, and got some whisky, with its usual accompaniment of bread and cheese. While thus employed, Callum arrived at the house; but took his wonted precaution of looking through a small window to see who was within. He was surprised to see Argyll, and listening to his conversation, heard him say, that he "wished he had as firm a hold of Callum Macgregor, as he had of a piece of cheese he was then cutting." Callum's servant, who also heard the wish, cocked his gun to shoot Argyll; but his master would not allow him. A few days thereafter, Callum wrote to Argyll, mentioning the narrow escape he had, when Argyll, in gratitude, instantly applied to the privy council for Callum's pardon, which he obtained, and Macgregor was restored to his liberty.

Callum was first married to a daughter of the laird of Macfarlane, whom he repudiated, and afterwards married a lady of the house of Keappoch, in Lochaber, by whom he had two sons, John and Donald. This Donald, as before noticed, married the daughter of Campbell of Taineagh, who had two daughters and two sons—John, and our hero, Rob Roy.

During the early years of Rob Roy Macgregor, he was not observed to possess any remarkable feature of that characteristic sagacity and intrepidity which afterwards distinguished him among his countrymen. The education he received, though not liberal, was deemed sufficient for a man who was only intended to follow the quiet avocations of a rural life ; but he was endowed with strong natural parts, and readily acquired the essential, though rude accomplishments of the age. The use of the broad sword was among the first arts learned by young men, being considered an indispensable qualification for all classes ; and Rob Roy could soon wield it with such dexterity as few or none could equal. In this he was favoured by a robust and muscular frame, and uncommon length of arm—advantages which made him daring and resolute. His knowledge of human nature was acute and varied, and his manners were complacent when unruffled by passion ; but, roused by opposition, he was fierce and determined.

At an early period, he studied the ancient history, and recited the poetry of his country ; and while he contemplated the sullen grandeur of his native wilds, corresponding ideas impressed his soul, and he would spend whole days in the admiration of a sublime portraiture of nature. The rugged mountains, whose summits were often hid in the clouds that floated around them ; the dark valley, encircled by wooded eminences ; the bold promontory, opposed to the foaming ocean and sometimes adorned by the castle of a chieftain ; the still bosom of the lake that reflected the surrounding landscape ; the impetuous mountain cataract ; the dreary silence of the cavern—were objects that greatly influenced his youthful feelings, and disposed his mind to the cultivation of generous and manly sentiments. These impressions, received when his imagi-

nation glowed with the fervour of youth, were never afterwards eradicated. They continued to bias his temper; and to give his disposition a cast of romantic chivalry, which he exemplified in many of his future actions.

His parents were of the Presbyterian church, in which faith he was also reared; but he was not free from those superstitious notions so prevalent in his country: and although few men possessed more strength of mind in resisting the operation of false and gloomy tenets, he was sometimes led away from the principles he had adopted, to a belief in supernatural appearances.

Though possessed of qualities that would have fitted him for a military life, the occupations assigned to Rob Roy were of a more homely description. It was customary at that time, as it is at present, for gentlemen of property as well as their tenantry, to deal in the trade of grazing and selling cattle, and to this employment did Rob Roy also dedicate himself. He took a track of land in Balquhiddy for that purpose, and for some years pursued a prosperous course. But his cattle were often stolen, in common with those of his neighbours, by hordes of banditti from the shires of Inverness, Ross, and Sutherland, who infested the country, so that to protect himself from the depredations of these marauders, he was constrained to maintain a party of men; and to this cause may be attributed the warlike habits which he afterwards acquired.

In the latter days of his father, Rob Roy assisted him in all his concerns, especially in that of collecting his fees of protection; and after the old man's demise, he pursued a similar course of life, and received such black-mail from many proprietors of his vicinity—an engagement which he fulfilled with more determination and effect than had formerly been experienced; and it was in a pursuit after

some thieves that he gave the first proofs of his activity and courage. A considerable party of Macras, from the western coast of Ross, had committed an outrage on the property of Finlarig, and carried off fifteen head of cattle. An express informed Rob Roy of the circumstance, and being the first call of the kind he had received, he lost no time in collecting his followers, to the number of twelve, and they set off to overtake the men of Ross and their spoil. They travelled two days and a night before they obtained any other information as to their track, than at times seeing the impression of the cattle's feet on the ground. On the second night, being somewhat fatigued, they lay down on the heather to rest till morning, in a dreary glen situated near the confines of Badenoch. It was deep and dark, and appeared encompassed by mountains whose tops were not visible to the eye. No sound disturbed the silence of night, except the hoarse croaking of the raven, as she sought her nest among the crags. A river that ran along the valley, was hid by thick coppice-wood that skirted its margin, through which a half-formed path conducted the traveller.

Rob Roy and his men had not long stretched themselves on the heath, when one of them discovered a fire at some distance. This he communicated to his companions, and they went on to reconnoitre, when they found it was a band of tinkers who had pitched a tent close by, and were carousing. Their mirth, however, was turned into terror when they beheld Rob Roy and his party, as they little expected such intrusion in so secluded a place. But they soon recognised Macgregor, whose appearance was so striking, that to have seen him once was sufficient to impress his features on the memory, and fix his image in the recollection of the most indifferent observer.

The tinkers informed him that they had seen the Macras, who were at no great distance, and two of the fraternity agreed to conduct his party to the spot, for which they set out, after having partaken of such fare as the wallets of the gang could afford.

The freebooters had halted for the security of their spoil, in a narrow part of the glen, confined by semicircular rocks, where the Macgregors overtook them just as they were setting out, and as the morning began to dawn on the lofty pinnacles of the mountains. Rob Roy, with a voice which resounded among the craggy acclivities, charged them to stop on their peril; but as they disregarded the order, he instantly rushed upon them, and before they had time to rally, six of their number were wounded and lay prostrate on the ground. Eleven who remained, made a stout resistance, and it was not until two were killed, and five more wounded, that they gave up the contest. Four of Rob Roy's lads were sorely wounded, and one killed, and he himself received a cut on his left arm from the captain of the banditti. The booty being thus recovered, were driven back and restored to the rightful owner.

Rob Roy received great praise for this exploit, achieved under such disadvantageous circumstances, and those who had not formerly afforded him their countenance, were now anxious to contribute a donation of black-mail.

In raising this tax, Rob Roy was sanctioned, if not by act of Parliament, at least by custom and local institution; an instance of which has formerly been given. He was for some time employed in assisting the police of the different districts in collecting imposts that were paid for maintaining the "Black Watch," a corps of provincial militia, whose duty it was to protect the lives and pro-

perties of the people from distant plunderers. This corps, wholly composed of Highlanders, were supported by levies thus laid on, which were extorted in a manner no less compulsory than the more private contribution of black-mail, a modification of the same tax. These independent companies of the Black Watch, from the celebrity they acquired, afterwards became regular troops, and were the origin of the gallant 42d regiment of foot, for a long time known by the name of the Highland Watch.

Rob Roy, whose private engagements of protection were thus in a great degree authorized, freely claimed these dues of black-mail as his just right, and sometimes extorted them by strong measures, which gave rise to reports of his being unjust and cruel.

This tributary impost had long been suffered to prevail in the Highlands, and though it often became oppressive, the custom of many ages had confirmed the practice, so that it was considered neither unjust nor dishonourable to enforce it ; and from its effects being in general beneficial in securing the forbearance and protection of those to whom it was paid, it was commonly submitted to as an indispensable usage. It consisted of money, meal, or cattle, according to agreement.

The respectability of his connexions, and his birth as a gentleman, entitled our hero to be treated as such ; and he was received into the first families, and admitted to the best company in his country.

He formed a matrimonial engagement with Mary, a daughter of Macgregor of Comar, who was a woman of an agreeable temper and domestic habits ; active and economical in the management of her family ; and though steady and resolute, was yet far from being the inhuman virago she is represented in the late novel of Rob Roy ;

nor does it appear, excepting on one occasion, afterwards to be mentioned, that she took any part in the desultory concerns of her husband.

Rob Roy was not, as has been said, possessed of any patrimonial estate. His father usually lived in Glengyle as a tenant, and took upon himself latterly the tutorship of his nephew, who was tacksman of these lands ; but Rob Roy afterwards became proprietor of the estate of Craigcrostan in the following manner :—When Macgregor was driven from his possessions in Glenurchy, by the Campbells, he bought the lands of Inversnait and Craigcrostan, then of small value, although of considerable boundaries, extending from the head of Loch-Lomond twelve miles along its eastern border, and stretching far into the interior of the country, and partly round the base of the stupendous mountain of Ben-Lomond. On the demise of the chief in 1693,* he left his property to a natural brother, Archibald, who was laird of Kilmannan. This person was succeeded by his son Hugh, who courted a daughter of the laird of Leny ; but Rob Roy, from what cause is not known, raised suspicions against him in the mind of the young lady, who, in consequence, rejected her lover. He then paid his addresses to a daughter of Colquhoun of Luss, and their marriage-day was fixed, when Rob Roy again interfered, and Miss Colquhoun also refused to fulfil her engagement. Mortified at such treat-

* This Gregor Macgregor died at the age of thirty-two, and was buried on the island of Inchcallich, (witch's isle,) in Loch-Lomond. He gave instructions some time before his death, that no woman should, at any after period, be interred in his grave. Many years having elapsed, the body of a woman was, by accident, placed in it, as the people who attended her funeral were not aware of Macgregor's request. Some of his clan heard of the circumstance, and holding the promise of their fathers as sacred and binding on them, they removed the corpse of the woman from the place, and interred it elsewhere.

ment, the young chieftain went to Falkirk, where he married a woman of mean extraction, which so displeased his friends, that they no longer regarded him as their connexion : but Rob Roy, now vexed to see him discarded, altered his behaviour, and afterwards paid him much attention. The young man, by this treatment, was so thoroughly disgusted with his clan, that he gave up his estate to Rob Roy, and leaving his country, was never heard of ; nor was it ever known whether Rob Roy gave value for the property, or if it was gifted to him : he afterwards, however, took the title of Craigcrostan, and was sometimes denominated *baron* of Inversnait, a term long applied to puisne lairds all over Scotland.

The peculiar constitution of clanship among the Macgregors, formed a bond of union which no privation could tear asunder, nor contention overcome ; and the modifications of that system which Rob Roy adopted among those who followed him, brought their compact to a plan of such solidity, as rendered them the terror of surrounding countries.

In many of those desultory forays from the mountains, which took place in his day, and spread dismay and misery among the inhabitants of the Lowland borders, Rob Roy was not the commander. Several other tribes who assumed his name, were often guilty of rigorous extortion, and committed irregularities which he would have considered disgraceful ; and some of his boldest conflicts were manifested in chastening the imprudence of those marauders.

Many of those evils which arose from feudal manners, and hereditary antipathies, still remained in the Highlands with unabated virulence ; and at this time were greatly aggravated by the madness of church politics, that defied

all rational restriction, led to the commission of barbarities shocking to nature, and rendered the parties no less despicable as men, than unworthy as Christians.

The great families of Montrose and Argyll, long at variance on political topics, were now at personal animosity; and, jealous of the growing importance of each other, were anxious to conciliate the friendship of Rob Roy, whose independent mind, and daring spirit, made him either a valuable auxiliary, or a formidable enemy.

When Macgregor was fairly settled, and tacitly confirmed as laird of Craigcrostan, he was still a young man, and he was naturally elated with an acquisition that gave him some consequence in his country. Montrose, his near neighbour, foreseeing the necessity of gaining his confidence, made a proposition to enter into copartnery with him in the trade of cattle-dealing—a plan in which he readily acquiesced; and being considered a good judge of cattle, and a successful drover, Montrose had every reliance on his abilities. He accordingly advanced Rob Roy 1000 merks (about £50 sterling) who was also expected to lay out a similar sum, and the profits were to be divided. But this was not the only pecuniary transaction which took place betwixt them, for Montrose, at different times, gave him money on the security of his estate.

About this time, Highland cattle were in great request in England, and to that country Rob Roy was in the habit of making frequent journeys for carrying on this traffic. During these excursions to the south, from his obliging disposition, lively conversation, and strict regard to his word, which no consideration could induce him to violate, he gained the esteem of all who knew, or did business with him.

On the other hand, the earl of Argyll, whose family had been the scourge of the clan Gregor, not only relaxed from all severities against that people, but was now willing to form an alliance with Rob Roy, whose character for resolute bravery had now become notorious, hoping, from his local situation, that he would be a source of constant annoyance to Montrose.

Other motives, certainly more commendable, though not so probable, have been assigned as the cause of Argyll's attention to Rob Roy. Argyll, it is said, felt conscious of the cruelties and injustice his ancestors had exercised over the clan, and was inclined to befriend Rob Roy, their descendant, who seemed determined to support the former consequence of his progenitors. To this he was also incited from the belief, that out of respect for him, Rob Roy had assumed the name of Campbell, that of Macgregor being under proscription; but Rob Roy, though he did this in compliment to his mother, and in compliance with the law, was yet acknowledged in the country, and by his clan, under no other name than that of Macgregor. His signature, however, afterwards appears to a writ dated in 1703, as "Robert Campbell of Inversnait."

Though Rob Roy, in common with his clan, was compelled to resign his family name, the wrongs which his ancestors had sustained still rankled in his bosom, and he spurned at the overtures of Argyll: but an incident afterwards took place, that effected an important change in his sentiments and conduct towards Montrose, and laid the foundation of a lasting friendship betwixt him and Argyll, which materially influenced his future destiny.

In his transactions with the marquis of Montrose, Rob Roy was the active manager. He had carried them on

with various success for some time ; but a Macdonald, an inferior partner, being on one occasion intrusted with a large sum of money, fled from the country, and eluded pursuit, which greatly shattered Rob Roy's trading concerns, and he was neither able to pay Montrose his money, nor to support his own credit. The copartnery being dissolved from this circumstance, Rob Roy was required to make over his property in satisfaction of the claims of Montrose against him ; but this he rejected, as contrary to his principles and purpose. The threats and entreaties from Montrose's factor, Graham of Killearn, were equally unavailing, and a law-suit was at length instituted against Rob Roy, in which he was compelled to give up his lands in wadset (mortgage), to Montrose, under the condition that they should again revert to himself, when he could restore the money. Some time thereafter, Rob Roy's finances having improved, he offered to return the sum for which his estate was held ; but it was pretended, that besides interest, and various other expenses, the amount had greatly increased, and that it would take time to make out the statement. In this equivocal manner he was amused, and ultimately deprived of his property.

The circumstances of the revolution, which had just taken place, produced great commotions in the Highlands, where the natives were well affected to the expelled house of Stuart ; and many of the chieftains were arraying their people to be in readiness for acting in their cause.

Argyll at first attached himself to the Prince of Orange ; but not having been restored to his property and jurisdictions since the attainder and judicial murder of his father, he was faltering in his sentiments, and, like the majority of his countrymen, was desirous of having his followers in readiness to proceed as occasion might require. And

aware, that in the unsettled state of the times, Rob Roy would be a valuable auxiliary, he renewed his entreaties to him, and, from his late disagreement with Montrose, he readily promised his assistance.

The suspicions of Montrose were awake, and he kept a watchful eye over the conduct and transactions of Argyll, of whose intimacy with Macgregor he had been informed; and, eager for the destruction of a family who appeared to rival him in greatness, he wrote a letter to Rob Roy, in which he promised that if he would go to Edinburgh, and give such information as would convict Argyll of treasonable practices, he would not only withdraw the mortgage upon his property, but in addition, give him a sum of money. Rob Roy, however, despising the offer, took no other notice of the letter than to forward it to Argyll, who soon took occasion to confront Montrose with a charge of malevolence. But Rob Roy was the sufferer, for Montrose immediately procured an adjudication of his estate, and it was evicted for a sum very inadequate to its value.

The resentment of Macgregor was now kindled into fury, not so much for the loss of his property, as from the forcible expulsion of his family, during his absence, under circumstances of the utmost indignity and barbarity, by Graham of Killearn. This man, with the wantonness and cruelty of a savage, treated Mrs Macgregor in a manner too shocking to be related,* an outrage which her husband never forgave, and which certainly justified the measures of retaliation he afterwards adopted.

The civil discord which had prevailed in the nation, during the atrocious reign of Charles the Second, became still more dreadful on the accession of his brother James,

* See Macgregor Stirling's *History of Stirlingshire*, p. 715.

whose bigotry permitted the most odious crimes, and authorised such oppression and cruelty as the mind shudders to contemplate. In such scenes of horror, Rob Roy had often been present, not as a perpetrator, but a silent spectator, whose soul burned with indignation at their wickedness, regretting, that although his arm was powerful, it was not sufficiently vigorous to crush the whole band of inhuman wretches who implicitly executed the bloody commands of the king. After he had been expelled from his estate, he went to Carlisle, in order to recover a sum of money due to him. Returning by Moffat, he observed an officer and a party of military engaged in hanging on a tree four peasants, whom they called fanatics. While this execution was going on, a young woman who was bound to the same tree, bewailed the fate of her father and brother, two of those who suffered. The deadly work being completed, four of the soldiers seized the young woman, unloosed her from the tree, and having tied her hands and feet, were carrying her towards the river, to plunge her in the flood, regardless of her tears and entreaties for mercy. Our hero interposed, his heart being wrung with sympathy, and amazed at such unmanly cruelty, commanded the perpetrators to stop, demanding an explanation, "Why they treated a helpless female in so barbarous a manner?" The officer, with an arrogant tone, "desired him to be gone, otherwise he would be used in the same manner, for daring to interrupt the king's instructions." The miscreants, basely exulting in their barbarity, were about to toss the girl into the stream over a steep bank. Rob Roy, thus derided, became frantic with rage, and with herculean strength, sprung upon the soldiers, and in an instant eight of them were struggling in the water.

The officer and the remaining ten men were so much confounded, that they stood motionless. In this pause Rob Roy cut the cords that bound the girl, and drawing his claymore, attacked the officer, who speedily fell. The soldiers beset him on all sides, but having killed two of them, the rest fled to the town, and left him master of the field, to the unspeakable joy of the young woman, and the great delight of the peasantry who stood around.

Leaving the field of action, our hero immediately bent his course towards home, pursuing his journey with all expedition, lest he might be overtaken by the military, for his interference with them on this occasion; but when he found himself, as has been stated, thus forcibly deprived of his property, and in a manner which he considered both unjust and oppressive on the part of Montrose and his factor, he seemed to feel it as a duty he owed to himself and his family, to take ample revenge on the authors of his misfortunes; and for that purpose he retained a party of men, who were no less resolute than himself, and keen to enter on exploits that promised them redress.

His first act of hostility against Montrose was at a term, when he knew the tenantry of that nobleman were to pay their rents, of which notice had been given them of the time; but two days previously Rob Roy and his lads called upon them, and obliged them to give him the money, for which, however, he granted them acknowledgments "that it was on account of Montrose."

In this compulsory manner he levied the rents from the tenants for several years, and Montrose, conscious perhaps, that he had taken undue advantage of Rob Roy, seemed to overlook the matter until a subsequent occasion, when the factor was collecting his rents at Chapel-laroch, in Stirlingshire.

Rob Roy had given out some days before, by proclamation at the church door, that he had gone to Ireland, and the factor consequently concluded that he would meet with no interruption in his duty. Towards evening, however, Rob Roy placed his men in a wood in the neighbourhood, and went himself, with his piper playing before him, to the inn of Chapellaroch, where Killearn was attended, as a matter of compliment, by several gentlemen of the vicinity. Alarmed at the sound of the pipes, they all started up to discover from whence it proceeded; and Killearn, in great consternation, beheld Rob Roy approaching the door.

He had finished his collection, but the bags containing the money were hastily thrown for concealment on a loft in the room. Rob Roy entered with the usual salutation, and the factor, though he trembled for his money, at first had no suspicion of his final purpose, as he laid down his sword, and partook of the entertainment, which was no sooner over, than he desired his piper to strike up a tune. This was a signal to his men, who, in a few minutes, surrounded the house, and six of them entered the room with drawn swords, when Rob Roy, laying hold of his own, as if about to go away, asked the factor, "How he had come on with his collection." "I have got nothing," said Killearn, "I have not yet begun to collect." "No, no, chamberlain," replied Rob Roy, "your falsehood will not do with me, I must count fairly with you by the book." Resistance being useless, the book was exhibited, and according to it, the money was given up, for which Rob Roy granted a receipt.

But from the infamous treatment his family received from Killearn, together with the part he had acted in the infringement of the contract that deprived him of his pro-

perty, Rob Roy was resolved to punish him, and he had him immediately conveyed and placed in an island near the east end of Loch-Ketturin, now rendered conspicuous as the supposed residence of the fair ELLEN, the LADY of the LAKE.

“—————The shore around ;
 ’Twas all so close with copse-wood bound,
 Nor track nor pathway might declare
 That human foot frequented there,—
 Here for retreat, in dangerous hour,
 Some chief had framed a rustic bower.”

In this island was Killearn confined for a considerable time ; and, when set at liberty, was admonished by Rob Roy no more to collect the rents of that country, which he meant in future to do himself, declaring, that as the lands originally belonged to the Macgregors, who lost them by unfair attainder, and other surreptitious means, such alienation was an unnatural and illegal deprivation of the right of succeeding generations ; and, from this conviction, he continued to be the constant enemy of the Grahams, the Murrays, and the Drummonds, who then claimed, and still inherit, those extensive domains.

The steady adherence of the Highlanders to the expatriated house of Stuart, was so well known, and so much dreaded by every prince who succeeded them on the British throne, that their motions were constantly watched with a jealous eye, and they were constrained to hold their communings, which related to the affairs of the exiles, in the most secret and clandestine manner.

Some time subsequent to the unsuccessful attempt of the Highland clans under Dundee, at Killiecrankie, a great meeting of chieftains took place in Braidalbane, under pretence of hunting the deer ; but in reality for the purpose

of ascertaining the sentiments of each other respecting the Stuart cause. Opinions were unanimous; and a bond of faith and mutual support, previously written, was signed. By the negligence of a chieftain to whom this bond was intrusted, it fell into the hands of captain Campbell, of Glenlyon, then at Fort-William, who, from his connexion with many whose names were appended, did not immediately disclose the contents; but from the deserved odium which was attached to that person, from having a command in the party who perpetrated the infamous massacre of Glencoe, he was justly despised and execrated, even by his nearest friends; and when it was known that a man of such inhuman feelings held this bond, those who signed it were seriously alarmed, and various plans were suggested for recovering it. Rob Roy, who was at this meeting of the clans, had also affixed his name; but on his own account he was indifferent, as he regarded neither the king nor his government. He was, however, urged by several chiefs to exert himself, and if possible to recover the bond. With this view he went to Fort-William in disguise, not with his usual number of attendants, and getting access to captain Campbell, who was a near relation of his own, he discovered that, out of revenge for the contemptuous manner in which the chieftains now treated the captain, he had put the bond into the possession of the governor of the garrison, who was resolved to forward it to the privy council; and Rob Roy learning by accident the day on which it was to be sent, took his leave, and went home. The despatch which contained the bond was made up by governor Hill, and sent from Fort-William, escorted by an ensign's command, which in those countries always accompanied the messages of government. On the third day's march,

Rob Roy, and fifty of his men, met this party in Glendochart, and, ordering them to halt, demanded their despatches. The officer refused ; but was told that he must either give up their lives and the despatches together, or the despatches alone. The ferocious looks and appearance of his antagonist bespoke no irresolution. The packet was given up ; and Rob Roy having taken out the bond he wanted, begged the officer would excuse the delay he had occasioned, and wishing him a good journey, left the military to proceed unmolested. By this bold exploit many chieftains saved their heads, and the forfeiture of a number of estates was prevented.

We have formerly noticed, that several mighty chiefs of the Highlands had augmented their territories by the suppression of inferior lairds, who did not hold their lands by subordinate charters. In order to reduce these unprotected barons, and annex their properties to the estate of the more powerful families, a knighted clevè of the house of Argyll was commissioned, and, among some others, he had seized upon a small estate in Glendochart. This iniquitous practice was insisted upon after the junction of the kingdoms under the Sixth James, that it might be known upon what grounds landlords held their estates ; but our hero, considering it as repugnant to justice, was determined to redress the grievance. He therefore sent his men to Glenurchy, to waylay the obnoxious knight at a defile which wound along the craggy cliffs of Ben-Cruachan. After waiting for some time, they readily effected their purpose, secured the baronet, and conveyed him towards Tyndrum, where Rob Roy met them. He reproached the knight with his injustice, and made him sign a letter, restoring the lands to the right owner : and, when he had done this, he took him to St

Fillan's pool, near that place, and ducking him heartily, told him, that from the established virtues of that pool, a dip in it might improve the knight's honour, so that he would not again rob a poor man of his lands.*

* This baronet had rendered himself despicable by many similar acts of irregularity, prior to this period, one or two of which we shall state for the reader's amusement :—Having heard that Maclean of Kingarloch, though he could show a long line of ancestry, could produce no charter or legal feoffment by which he held of a superior, the knight set out by sea with a party of armed vassals, to fasten on this property, and turn out the owner ; but his ungracious employment always created suspicion, and made him be regarded as a dangerous scourge. But Maclean was aware of him, and observed his approach. He hastily collected some armed men, placed them in a concealed situation, and walked alone to the shore to receive the knight. On their way towards the house, the baronet asked Maclean if he had a charter for his lands ; to which he replied that he had ;—and coming immediately on his armed band, who then brandished their swords,—“ There,” said Maclean, “ is my charter !” The knight asked no more questions, and they parted as friends.

But he was more successful with another estate, the proprietor of which was a more fit object for his designs, being a man of imbecile judgment. His name was Macdougall : he had been married for several years, but having no children to heir his property, the baronet advised him to turn off his wife, and that he would provide him with another. This was accordingly done, the knight got him a near relation of his own, and immediately brought an action against him for bigamy, seized his lands as a forfeiture, and added them to the estate of his patron.

A near relation of the knight's, Campbell of Calder, was going by boat to visit his property of the island of Islay. In passing through a narrow channel on the west coast of Argyllshire, he was fired at from the shore and killed. Suspicion of this murder fell upon Campbell of Tirifour : but no proof of his criminality could for some time be obtained. The prying genius of the baronet, however, found a track in which, by the old rule of a Scots proverb, he made the discovery. He knew that this Campbell of Tirifour had a wife, whose pride and vanity were her leading passions, and, according to her own estimation, fitted her for a more elevated rank. In the absence of her husband, the knight frequently waited upon her with a view of extracting some confessions regarding his guilt ; but the lady was no less cautious than the baronet was cunning, until one day he assumed more than ordinary seriousness in his manner. He told her that he had long respected her abilities and appearance, and regretted to see her in a situation so far beneath her deserts ; that having thus professed himself her admirer, no

Contracts of *wadset*, as they were called, were then a common practice in the Highlands, and as we have observed, many small proprietors were swallowed up by superiors, from unfair advantage which was taken under

means appeared by which he could promise himself the happiness of raising her to importance, unless it were to get quit of her husband, by declaring, and proving him to be the assassin of Calder. The lady heard and believed the promises of the knight, to confirm which he gave her a written assurance, that upon her giving such information as would convict her husband of the imputed murder, he would himself marry her. Satisfied with this paper, she exhibited the required proof of her husband's guilt, and his life as well as his property was the expiation. Turned out of her house, and become despicable from having brought her husband to the gallows, she at last applied to the knight that he might fulfil his promise of making her his wife. He received her politely, and told her, that from his being bred for the church, he was ready to perform his promise, and would marry her to any man she pleased. Mortified at the disappointment, shocked at her own conduct, and the duplicity of the knight, despair took possession of her mind, and her end was miserable.

The animosity which the Campbells bore to the more ancient clans, was always a source of contention, particularly with the Macdonalds, their most powerful rivals. A tribe of this clan, under the distinguishing name of MacIans, (sons of John,) occupied the extensive wilds of Ardnamurchan, (point of the great ocean,) and were regarded by the Campbells as fit objects of spoliation. From the success that had attended some of the knight's exploits in that way, he marched at the head of an armed force, with an avowed intention to wrest from that people their ancient jurisdiction. But, suspicious of his purpose, and not deficient in the native intrepidity of their race, they met him and his followers at Strontian, the south-eastern boundary of their country, determined on opposition. Each party halted on the opposite banks of the river; but the Campbells seeing the resolution of their opponents, their pretended demands of feu duty were easily accommodated, and mutual forbearance took place. As both clans were preparing to depart, one of the Campbells made a signal insulting to the Macdonalds, and degrading to their proud spirit. This was instantly resented. One of the Macdonalds levelled his piece, and killed the fellow on the spot; but no other hostility was then offered on either side. The head of the dead man was cut off, and forwarded by an express to the privy council at Edinburgh, with a false and aggravated account, stating the lawless condition of the MacIans, and craving letters of fire and sword against them, which, from the temper of the king's administrators, were readily granted, and speedily put in force by the baronet and his sanguinary band, whereby the Macdonalds were expelled, and their country wrested from them.

the supposed obligations of those agreements. Many flagitious means were adopted to evade and disannul the privileges of the needy proprietor ; and, from the extraordinary authority which a superior claimed over his vassals during the feudal ages, it was scarcely possible for the inferior to resist his rapacity, or to defend his lawful heritage against such powerful odds.

The lands of Glengyle were under a redeemable bond of this description, when Rob Roy's nephew succeeded to them. A neighbouring chieftain had lent a sum of money on them, which, if not repaid in ten years, the lands were to be the forfeiture, though the sum was not half their value. Rob Roy, knowing that every advantage would be taken of the contract, gave his nephew the money, for the purpose of retiring the bond. The period of redemption had only a few months to run ; and, under pretence that the bond could not then be found, the money was refused. Rob Roy, in the mean time, having been otherwise engaged, the matter lay over, and the bond was allowed to expire. The holder of it sent a party to take possession of the lands in his name, got himself infested on them in the common form ; and young Macgregor was ordered to remove himself, his dependants, and cattle, in eight days. Rob Roy could not suffer such treatment ; and having assembled his *gillies*, set out to obtain restitution. The chieftain whom he sought was then in Argyllshire, whither our hero proceeded ; but he met him travelling in Strathfillan, took him prisoner, and carried him to a small inn not far distant. He told the chieftain that he would not allow him to depart until he gave up the bond of Glengyle, and desired that he would instantly send for it to his castle. The chieftain, aware of Rob Roy's disposition, and apprehensive of personal injury, agreed to give it up

when he got home ; but our hero put no trust in his promise, and he was forced to comply. Two trusty men, along with two of Rob Roy's, were despatched, and at the end of two days returned with the bond. When it was delivered, the chieftain demanded his money ; but Rob Roy would pay none, telling him that the sum was even too small a fine for the outrage he had attempted, and that he might be thankful if he escaped in a sound skin.

The arbitrary and uncertain tenures by which proprietors in the Highlands held their lands, and supported their consequence for many ages, had even at this late period of their history, scarcely experienced any amendment ; and frivolous and unjust pretences were often considered sufficient to deprive a man of his right. Against such acts of violence, though overlooked by the indifference of government, Rob Roy Macgregor manfully and openly drew his sword. He was the strenuous opponent of every deed of cruelty or breach of faith, especially if committed upon those under the pressure of misfortune ; the orphan, the widow, the poor, were those for whom he stood boldly forward, and proclaimed himself the champion ; and, to supply their wants with the means of the rich, was his greatest delight ; and an appeal to his generosity was never disregarded. Lest his own resources might not be adequate to those charitable ends, he entered into agreement with different proprietors for their mutual defence ; and a contract, founded upon this reciprocal basis, was entered into betwixt him and Buchanan of Arnprior ; and with the Campbells of Lochnell, Glenfallach, Lochdochart, and Glenlyon, about the same time.

On the estate of Perth, a clansman of Rob Roy's occupied a farm on a regular lease ; but the factor, Drum-

mond of Blairdrummond, took occasion to break it, and the tenant was ordered to remove. Rob Roy hearing the story, went to Drummond castle to claim redress of this grievance. On his arrival there, early in the morning, the first person he met was Blairdrummond, in front of the house, whom he knocked down, without speaking a word, and walked on to the gate. Perth, who saw this from a window, immediately appeared, and, to soften his asperity, gave him a cordial welcome. He told Perth that he wanted no show of hospitality, he insisted only to get back the tack of which his namesake had been deprived, otherwise he would let loose his legions on his property. Perth was obliged to comply, the lease was restored, and Rob Roy sat down quietly and breakfasted with the earl.

Graham of Killearn, who was the chamberlain or factor on the estate of Montrose, was second cousin to that nobleman, and left no means untried to recover the rents of his lord, in which he had often displayed great want of humanity and fellow-feeling. Being in the constant practice of distressing those tenants who were in arrear, he was consequently despised in the country. He had once sequestered the goods and cattle of a poor widow for arrears of rent ; and, when Rob Roy heard of the matter, he went to her, and gave her the three hundred merks she owed, at the same time desiring her when she paid it to get a receipt. On the legal day, the officers of the law appeared at the widow's house to take away her effects, when she paid their demand ; but Rob Roy met them after they left her, made them surrender the money they had extorted, and gave them a good drubbing, with an advice never to act in the same manner.

Under similar circumstances he relieved a needy tenant

on the same estate, who was deficient in the rent of three years. When the man afterwards offered to repay the loan, our hero would not receive it, as he said he had got it back from Killearn.

Feuds and violent conflicts of clans, still continued prevalent, with all the animosity which marked the rude character of the times ; and a contest having arisen betwixt the houses of Perth and Athol, Rob Roy was requested to take part with the former : and, though Perth was no favourite with him, he readily agreed to give his assistance, as a return for a good office, and as he would undertake any thing to distress Athol. Having assembled sixty of his clan, he marched to Drummond castle with seven pipers playing. The Atholmen were already on the banks of the Farn, and the Macgregors and Drummonds proceeded to attack them ; but they no sooner recognized the Macgregors, whom they regarded as demons, than they fled from the field, and after the loss of several men, were pursued to the precincts of their own country.

The practice of carrying off the cattle of other clans was still common in those countries ; and the followers of Rob Roy were no less guilty of these habits, when necessity, or the unfriendly disposition of such tribes occasioned dispute : and Montrose being considered his worst enemy, the estate of that nobleman was often plundered, and the cattle driven even from the parks that surrounded his house. A meal store which Montrose had at a place called Moulin, usually supplied the wants of Rob Roy's family in that article ; and when any poor persons in his neighbourhood were in need of it, he went to the store-keeper, ordered the quantity he required, gave a receipt for it, and made the tenants carry it with their own horses to his house, or wherever else it was wanted.

The cause of provocation which Rob Roy had sustained from Montrose and his dependants, constantly kept alive that spirit of opposition with which he regarded them; and, though he had them often in his power, he never intended to take any serious personal revenge, preferring occasional retaliation on their property.

But the harassing state in which that nobleman was kept by the depredatory incursions of our hero, induced him to apply to the privy council for redress; yet, dreading the enmity of Rob Roy, his name was intentionally kept out, and the act was expressed in general terms,—“to repress sorners, robbers, and broken men, to raise hue and cry after them, to recover the goods stolen by them, and to seize their persons.”

This decree, however, though despised by Rob Roy, made him more watchful of his foes. But though generally favoured by fortunate incidents, he could not always expect to escape with impunity; and having by many coercive means pressed hard on Montrose, that nobleman, under authority of the act of council, called out a number of his people, and sent them, headed by a confidential Graham, and accompanied by some military, to lay hold of Rob Roy, but he chanced to be absent with his band, when the Grahams assailed his house during the night. Having learned the course he had taken, they arrived by day-break next morning, at Crinlarach, a public house in Strathfillan, where our hero and his men had taken up their quarters for the night—he in the house, and they in an adjoining barn. The Grahams immediately broke open the door. Rob Roy was instantly accoutred to meet them, and levelled them man by man, as they approached, until his own lads, roused by the noise, attacked the Grahams in the rear with such determination, that they

retreated to some distance, leaving behind them several of their party sorely wounded ; and Rob Roy having fortified his men with a glass of whisky, ascended the hill towards the head of Loch-Lomond. The Grahams, expecting still to obtain some advantages over them, followed at a short distance, till the Macgregors shot some of the military, and drowned one soldier in a mill-dam, when the Grahams thought proper to withdraw.

After this inglorious attempt to overcome Rob Roy, though with five times the number of men, Montrose ceased for a while to give him any obstruction, until now grown, if possible, more adventurous than ever, he made a descent into the plains, and swept away cattle, and almost every moveable article, from the country round Balfron, and in Monteith—an outrage commonly called *the herriship of Kippen*. On this occasion, he was pursued by some country people who were sufferers, assisted by a party of military from Cardross castle, who would have overtaken him ; but one of his men, Alister Roy Macgregor, fired on the pursuers from behind a dyke, and killed the foremost, which so intimidated the rest, that they not only dreaded proceeding farther, but made the best of their way home.*

This appears to have been the greatest misdemeanour of which he stood accused, as it seriously attracted the notice of government ; and the western volunteers were marched into the Highlands to curb his insolence, and that of his marauding clan, as they were denominated. These volunteers went to Drymen ; but finding their entertainment very bad, and the people much disaffected, they lay upon their arms all night, dreading the approach of the

* An humorous Gaelic song, composed on the occasion, is still chanted in that country, detailing the swiftness of the retreat.

Macgregors, who were within a few miles of them, to the number, as they heard, of five hundred; but they were not molested, being allowed to depart in peace. Several parties of horse, however, were afterwards dispersed over the country to apprehend Rob Roy, and a reward of £1000 being offered for his head, he was obliged for some months to take shelter in the woods, and in his cave at the base of Ben-Lomond, on the banks of the lake.

This celebrated recess had formerly sheltered the gallant Bruce from enemies who sought his destruction; and our hero, with the highest veneration for the memory of a patriot king, believed that he could not consecrate to himself a more appropriate retreat. The entrance is near the water's edge, among huge fragments of rock, broken from the lofty mountain crags that seem to overhang the lake, which are fantastically diversified by the interspersion of brushwood, heath, and wild plants, nurtured to extreme growth in the desert luxuriance of solitude. The access to this subterraneous abode is extremely difficult and hazardous, from the precipitous ruggedness of the surrounding heights, which almost exclude a passage to human feet.

In this seclusion Rob Roy was perfectly secure, and had he been attacked in it, could have defended himself from almost any number of men; but he frequently left it, and took excursions to distant parts of the country to see his friends and enjoy their fellowship.

While under this concealment he was only attended by two men. One day, when travelling in a sequestered place along the side of Lochearn, they were unexpectedly met by seven horsemen, who demanded their names and what they were, to which an evasive answer was given; but from our hero's great stature and warlike appearance, they had



Engraved by

W. H. P. S.

LOCH LOMOND.



no doubt of his being the person they sought. There was no time for reply, and they sprung up the hill, followed by the troopers. Rob Roy rapidly gained the higher ground, where neither the horses nor fire of the riders could touch him; but his companions were not so lucky, as they were overtaken, and, in defending themselves, were killed. Being exasperated at this, he fired upon the troopers in return, and killed three of them and four of their horses, when the remainder galloped away.

Having continued to wander from place to place, somewhat forlorn, though not broken in spirit, he became solicitous about the safety of his family, and went to see them privately. Some days before his arrival, a message from the duke of Athol was sent to his house, requesting a visit from him at Blair castle. But Rob Roy, though he believed that Athol had then no deadly enmity towards him, did not incline to trust himself in such hands without some written assurance of his personal safety. He therefore wrote to Athol, wishing to have his commands, and candidly stated his want of confidence in his Grace. Athol, who had previously corresponded with the court regarding the most effectual plan of securing our hero, immediately replied to his letter, and gave him the most solemn promises of protection, saying that he only wanted to have some conversation with him on certain political points. This letter was followed by an embassy, who gave even more positive assurances that no evil was intended, and delivered to him a protection from the government, when our hero consented, and fixed a day for being at Blair. He accordingly set out on horseback, attended by a servant, and on his arrival, Athol ran to embrace him, protesting he knew not how to express the joy he felt at the sight of so brave a gentleman; but, as his duchess would not

suffer any person to enter the castle armed, he requested him to lay aside his sword and dirk, which he did, and they walked into the garden, where they met the lady, who expressed her surprise at seeing Rob Roy unarmed. This remark having given the lie to her husband, Rob Roy now felt he had done wrong in parting with his arms, and he gave Athol a look that perfectly declared his feelings.—“I understand you, Macgregor,” said he; “but you have committed so much mischief, that you must be detained, and sent to Edinburgh.” “I am betrayed then!” said Rob Roy; “has a man of your quality such a mean rascally soul, as to forfeit his word, his faith, his honour, for a pitiful reward?” and, clenching his fist in his face, continued—“Villain! you shall repent this.” He would have knocked him down, but the garden door instantly opened, when an officer with sixty men entered, and made Rob Roy a prisoner.

Our hero being thus perfidiously ensnared, was removed for the night, to a paltry inn of the village, while Athol immediately despatched a messenger on horseback to Edinburgh, to inform the court and his friends of his having succeeded in apprehending Rob Roy, and desired a party of military from the commander-in-chief to receive and carry him to the capital.

Athol, however disgraceful the circumstance was to himself as a man, was vain of effecting the seizure of our hero, which no other had been able to accomplish; and, not satisfied with the account of his prowess which he sent to Edinburgh, he also transmitted to the secretary of state in London, an elaborate detail of his wonderful exertions in laying hold of “the desperate outlaw and undaunted robber,” as he termed him: and so publicly did he announce himself the champion who had conquered Rob

Roy, that in a few days it was known all over Scotland. The issue, however, which soon overturned this bravado, placed Athol low in the eyes of all men.

The party of military sent from Edinburgh to receive our hero, proceeded to Kinross. He was to be delivered to them by a band of undisciplined mercenaries that Athol had demanded from the governor of Perth, who set out for Dunkeld for that purpose. They were met by Athol, but he desired them to return, being resolved to dismiss the soldiery, and escort the prisoner by his own vassals, that the whole merit and profit might accrue to himself; and, until they could be got ready, Rob Roy was detained at Logierait under a strong guard. But although in confinement, our hero was not idle. He conciliated the good offices of his attendants by profuse libations of his country's beverage, and as they considered him a gentleman, he was allowed more than ordinary freedom.

Having written a letter to his wife, his servant, who had previously received his instructions, was ordered to get his horse in readiness to go off with it; and the animal being brought from the stable, Rob Roy, under pretence of delivering a private message to the servant, was allowed to walk to the door along with a sentinel, while the others, nearly inebriated, had no suspicion of his design. Appearing in serious conversation with the servant, he walked a few steps from the door, till getting close to his horse, he quickly leaped into the saddle, and was out of sight in a moment.

The mortification of Athol and his party on this escape of our hero, was very great, as they expected that he would have given some information prejudicial to Argyll, whose politics were in opposition to those of the administration.

Rob Roy's family at this time lived at the farm of Portnellan, near the head of Loch-Ketturin, and his enemy, the factor of Montrose, hearing of his return from Athol, and of his being at home, assembled a multitude of the tenantry, in order to take him by surprise. They accordingly proceeded, with Killlearn at their head, and surrounded our hero's house in the morning before he was out of bed ; but he speedily appeared, sword in hand, when they fled with the utmost precipitation.

From this place he afterwards removed to Balquhiddel, where a farm, to which he and his family claimed some right, was taken by his connexions the Maclarens ; but the Macgregors kept them out by force. The Maclarens, who were also related to the Stewarts of Appin, applied to them, and Appin assembled a strong body of his clan, to put his friends in possession. The parties came in sight of each other near the Kirkton of Balquhiddel. After a pause, which men naturally make before they assail their friends and kinsmen, Rob Roy stepped forward, and challenged any of his opponents to fight with the broad sword. This was accepted by Stewart of Invernahyle. When they had fought for some time, a parley was demanded, and terms of accommodation being agreed to, they separated without bloodshed.

About this time, the government, either ashamed of their frequent opposition, or despairing of being able to get hold of Rob Roy, withdrew the horsemen who pursued him, and he could proceed without restraint in his usual courses ; but he had still to guard against his inveterate enemy, Athol, who had so basely treated him, and whose machinations were even more alarming than the denunciations of the law.

Rob Roy, however, considering himself justly entitled

to retaliate on the duke, frequently ravaged the district of Athol, carried away cattle, and put every man to the sword who attempted resistance ; yet, for all his caution, he had again nearly fallen into his hands.

The duke having sent a party of horse, they unexpectedly came upon him, and seized him in his own house of Monuchaltuarach, in Balquhiddel. He was placed on horseback, to be conveyed to Stirling castle ; but on going down a steep defile, he leaped off, and ran up a wooded hill, where the horsemen could not follow. Athol, on another occasion, sent twenty men from Glenalmond, to lay hold of him. He saw them approaching ; but did not shun them, though alone. His uncommon size, the largeness of his limbs, the fierceness of his countenance, and the posture of defence in which he placed himself, intimidated them so much, that they durst not go near him. He told them, that “he knew what they wanted ; but if they did not depart, none of them should return.” He desired them to “tell their master, that if he sent any more of his pigmy race to disturb him, he would hang them up to feed the eagles ;” and having sounded his horn, for he often carried one, Athol’s men became alarmed, and speedily took their leave.

Although Rob Roy, from his great personal prowess, and the dauntless energy of his mind, which, in the most trying and difficult emergencies, never forsook him, was the dread of every country where his name was known, the urbanity and kindness of his manners to his inferiors, gained him the good will and services of his whole clan, who were always ready to submit to any privation, or to undergo any hardship to protect him from the multitude of enemies who watched to destroy him ; and one or two, among many instances of their attachment, may here be

mentioned:—a debt, to a pretty large amount, which he had long owed to a person in the Lowlands, could never be recovered, because no one would undertake to execute diligence against him. At length a messenger at Edinburgh appeared, who pledged himself, that with six men, he would go through the whole Highlands, and apprehend Rob Roy, or any man of his name. The fellow was stout and resolute. He was offered a handsome sum if he would bring Rob Roy to the jail of Stirling, and was allowed men of his own choice. He accordingly equipped himself and his men with swords, cudgels, and every thing fitted for the expedition; and having arrived at the only public house then in Balquhiddel, he inquired the way to his house. This party were at once known to be strangers, and the landlord learning their business, sent notice of it to his good friend Rob Roy, and also advised them not to go farther, lest they should have reason to repent of their folly; but the advice was disregarded, and they went forward. The party waited at some distance from the house, and the messenger himself went to reconnoitre.

Having announced himself as a stranger who had lost his way, he was politely shown by our hero into a large room, where—

“——all around, the walls to grace,
Hung trophies of the fight or chase;
A target there, a bugle here,
A battle axe, a hunting spear,
And broad-swords, bows, and arrows store,
With the tusked trophies of the boar,”

which astonished him so much, that he felt as if he had got into a cavern of the infernal regions; but when the room door shut, and he saw hanging behind it a stuffed

figure of a man, intentionally placed there, his terror increased to such a degree, that he screamed out, and asked if it was a dead man? To which Rob Roy coolly answered, that it was a rascal of a messenger who had come to the house the night before; that he had killed him, and had not got time to have him buried. Fear now wholly overcame the messenger, and he could scarcely articulate a benediction for his soul, when he fainted and fell upon the floor. Four men carried him out of the house, and, in order to complete the joke, and at the same time to restore the man to life, they took him to the river just by, and tossed him in, allowing him to get out the best way he could. His companions, in the mean time, seeing all that happened, and supposing he had been killed, took to their heels; but the whole glen being now alarmed, met the fugitives in every direction, and gave every one of them such a complete ducking, that they had reason all their lives to remember the lake and river of Balquhidder.

These people were no sooner out of the hands of the Macgregors, than they made a speedy retreat to Stirling, not taking time on the road to dry their clothes, lest a repetition of their treatment should take place: and upon their arrival there, they represented the usage they had received, with such exaggerated accounts of the assassinations and cruelties of the Macgregors, magnifying their own wonderful escape, and prowess in having killed several of the clan, that the story being reported to the commander of the castle, he ordered a company of soldiers to march into the Highlands, to lay hold of Rob Roy. A party of Macgregors, who were returning with some booty which they had acquired along the banks of the Forth, observing the military on their way to Callan-

der, and suspecting their intention, hastened to acquaint Rob Roy. In a few hours the whole country was warned of the approaching danger, and guards were placed at different stations to give notice of the movements of the soldiers. All the men within several miles were prepared to repel this invasion, in case it was to lay waste the country, which had often been done before ; but the military appearing to have no other orders than to seize Rob Roy, he considered it more prudent to take refuge in the hills, than openly to give them battle.

After a fruitless search for many days, the soldiers, unaccustomed to the fatigue of climbing the mountains, and scrambling over rocks, and through woods, took shelter at night in an empty house, which they furnished with heath for beds ; and the Macgregors, unwilling that they should leave their country without some lasting remembrance of them, set fire to the house, which speedily dislodged the soldiers. In the confusion, one man was killed by the accidental discharge of a musket, many of them were hurt, and a number lost their fire-arms. The military party being thus thrown into confusion, broken down by fatigue, and almost famished for want of provisions, withdrew from the country of the Macgregors, happy that they had escaped so well.

The tribute of black-mail, already noticed, extended under Rob Roy's system, principally to inferior proprietors, and to the tenantry ; the more powerful chieftains, though they at times considered him as an useful auxiliary, and though their property was often subjected to spoliation, would seldom consent to that compulsory regulation, as being too degrading to that consequence they were anxious to maintain. Rob Roy did certainly, as occasion required, exact what he conceived to be his due

in this way, with some severity ; but he often received the tax as a voluntary oblation. Of this last description was an annual payment made to him, for many years, by Campbell of Abruchil ; but this proprietor having at length omitted to pay him, he went to his castle with an armed party, to demand the arrears. Leaving his men at some distance, he knocked at the gate, and desired a conversation with the laird ; but he was told that several great men were at dinner with him, and that no stranger could be admitted. " Then tell him," said he, " that Rob Roy Macgregor is at his door, and must see him, if the king should be dining with him." The porter returned, and told him that his master said he knew nothing of such a fellow, and desired him to depart. Rob Roy immediately applied to his mouth a large horn that hung by his side, from which there issued a sound that appalled the castle-guard, rung through every corner of the building, and so astonished Abruchil and his guests, that they quickly left the dining-table. In an instant Rob Roy's men were by his side, whom he ordered to drive away all the cattle they found on the land : but the laird came hastily to the gate, apologized for the rudeness of the porter to his good friend, took him into the castle, paid him his demand, and they parted apparently good friends. About this time, a party of Macras again made their appearance in our hero's neighbourhood, and stole from the lands of Stirling of Craigharnet, a flock of sheep, to the number of two hundred. Such acts of depredation were not then styled theft, but " liftings," and Rob Roy, in his compacts of black-mail, was not bound to restore any stolen cattle if under seven. The above number, however, being considerable, the laird of Craigharnet immediately sent an account of his loss to Rob Roy, who without delay

took measures for discovering the thieves ; but it was several weeks before he could trace them to the hills of Kintail, in Ross-shire, from whence the spoil was brought back to Craighbarnet, with the loss of only one sheep.

Among other coercive measures, which from time to time were adopted to suppress the practices of the Macgregors, was that of planting a garrison in their country at Inversnaid, upon the spot from whence Rob Roy formerly took one of his titles, and this was done by the advice, and under the direction of Montrose.

The immoderate length to which the rigorous decrees of government had been carried, not only by its immediate instrument, the military, but also by the other clans who surrounded the Macgregors, still drove them to such desperation that they held the laws in contempt, as they were wholly excluded from their benefit, so that nothing appeared too hazardous nor too flagrant for them to perform. This fortress, though its erection was strenuously opposed by him, had been garrisoned some time before any sally from it had given annoyance to Macgregor ; and though the number of soldiers which it generally contained was no great obstruction, in his estimation, yet they were a sort of check upon those small parties which he sometimes sent forth. He therefore determined to intimidate the garrison, or to make the military abandon it. He had previously arranged his plan, and secured the connivance of a woman of his own clan who served in the fort. Having supplied her with a quantity of Highland whisky, of which the English soldiery were very fond, she contrived, on an appointed night, to intoxicate the sentinel ; and while he lay overcome by the potent dose, she opened the gate, when Rob Roy and his men, who were on the watch, rushed in loaded with combustibles, and set the

garrison on fire in different places, so that it was with difficulty the inmates escaped with their lives. Though Rob Roy was suspected as the incendiary, there was no immediate proof, and the damage was quietly repaired.

The various assaults which Rob Roy had made upon the duke of Athol and his numerous vassals, were not dictated by a wish for spoil, but intended as a chastisement for the treachery of that nobleman, who did not respect his bravery, although he had often seen and dreaded its effects. Having shown no inclination to desist from those practices, Athol resolved to correct him in person, as all former attempts to subdue him had failed, and with this bold intention he set forward to Balquhiddy. A large portion of that country then belonged to Athol in feu; and, when he arrived there, he summoned the attendance of his vassals, who very unwillingly accompanied him to Rob Roy's house, as many of them were Macgregors, but dared not refuse their laird. Rob Roy's mother having died in his house at this time, preparations were going forward for the funeral, which was to take place on the day that Athol appeared at his door; but at such a time, he could have dispensed with such unwelcome, and unlooked-for guests. He suspected that the purpose of their visit was to lay hold of him, and escape seemed impossible; but, with his wonted strength of mind and quickness of thought, he buckled on his sword, and went out to meet the duke. He saluted him very graciously, and said, "that he was much obliged to his Grace for having come unasked, to his mother's funeral, which was a piece of friendship he did not expect;" when Athol told him "he did not come for that purpose, but to desire his company to Perth." He, however, declined the honour, as he could not leave

his mother's funeral ; but after doing that last duty to his parent, he would go, if his lordship insisted upon it. Athol said, the funeral could take place without him, and would not delay. A long remonstrance ensued ; but the duke was inexorable, and Rob, apparently complying, went away amidst the cries and tears of his sisters and kindred. Their distress roused his soul to a pitch of irresistible desperation, and, breaking from the party, several of whom he threw down, he drew his sword. Athol, when he saw him retreat, and his party intimidated by such resolution, drew a holster pistol and fired at him. Rob Roy fell at the same instant, not by the ball, which never touched him, but by slipping his foot. One of his sisters, the lady of Glenfallach, a stout woman, seeing her brother fall, and believing he was killed, made a furious spring at Athol, seized him by the throat, and brought him from his horse to the ground. In a few minutes that nobleman would have been choked, as it defied the by-standers to unfix the lady's grasp, until Rob Roy went to his relief, when the duke was in the agonies of suffocation.

Several of our hero's friends, who observed the suspicious haste of Athol and his party towards his house, dreading some evil design, speedily armed, and, running to his assistance, arrived just as Athol's eyeballs were beginning to revert into their sockets. Rob Roy declared, that had the duke been so polite as allow him to wait his mother's burial, he would have then gone along with him ; but this being refused, he would now remain in spite of all his efforts ; and the lady's embrace having much astonished the duke, he was in no condition to enforce his orders, so that he and his men departed as quickly as they could. Had they staid till the clan assembled to the exequies of the old woman, it is doubtful if either the chief or his

companions would have ever returned to taste the *brose* indigenous to their country.

Rob Roy, who was in a great degree sanctioned to raise black-mail, openly demanded his dues, and always took strong measures to enforce the payment when it was resisted, and his attack on Garden castle was of that description. The owner was absent when he went to claim his right, which had long been withheld on pretence of not being lawful. He, however, took possession of the fortress; and, when the owner returned, he was refused admittance, until he would pay the reward of protection, which he imperiously refused; but Rob Roy having ascended the turrets with a child from the nursery in his arms, threatened to throw it over the walls, which speedily brought the laird, at the intercession of his lady, to an agreement, when our hero restored the keys of the castle, and took his leave.

In passing the place of Achtertyre, near Stirling, Rob Roy observed a young horse grazing in a park, with points that much pleased him, for he was a perfect jockey, and he went to the house to inquire if the animal was for sale. The proprietor was not within, but Macgregor was recognised by the servant, and ushered into a parlour where the landlady was sitting. He politely told her that he wished to purchase the pony he saw in the park, if the price could be agreed on; but she appeared offended, and said that "the horse would not be sold, having been broke for her use." Her husband having come in, sent for her to another room, and asked her, "if she knew the stranger, and what he wanted?" "Wants!" said she, "he wants to buy my pony, the impudent fellow!" "My good lady," replied her husband, "if he should want yourself, he must not be refused, for he is Rob Roy." The land-

lord immediately went to him, and agreed upon the price of the horse, which was instantly paid.

The lease of farms which Rob Roy had long occupied in Balquhidder, having expired, he was induced, from that and various other considerations, to leave that country, and settle on the lands of Brackley in Glenurchy, the proprietor of which, a relation of his own, and at that time with indisputable claims to the chieftainship of clan Gregor, had deserted his estate, in consequence of some disgrace brought upon him by the behaviour of his wife. Some time thereafter he removed from that place to a mountain farm belonging to the family of Argyll, who continued to foster him with considerable attention.

In this retreat he continued for several years, still accompanied by his faithful adherents, who paid frequent visits to the lands of Montrose and Athol, from which they abundantly supplied all their wants. But when Montrose understood that Rob Roy had an asylum so immediately under the protection of Argyll, he accused him, in presence of the privy council, of harbouring an outlaw, who ought to be given up to the offended laws. Argyll did not deny the charge, and excused himself by saying, "My lord, I only supply Rob Roy with wood and water, the common privileges of the deer; but you supply him with beef and meal; and withall, he is your factor, for he not long since took up your rents at Chapel-roch." These facts could not be denied; and it is believed that after this period Montrose relinquished all opposition to Rob Roy, who also became less severe in his retaliation on the estate and effects of that nobleman: indeed he often declared, that had Montrose treated him with discretion and lenity, he never would have disturbed him; but as matters had turned out, and were so prejudi-

cial to his family, though he ceased to annoy, he could not forgive the injuries he had sustained.

Exulting at times, in the recollection of some of his achievements, our hero used to relate the following incident, as one of the most agreeable occurrences of his life:—While he continued in Argyllshire he frequently traversed that interesting country, exploring its most un-frequented valleys and hidden recesses. One evening in autumn, as the declining sun had nearly sunk beneath the Atlantic wave, and the parting tinge played upon the towering pinnacles of the lofty Ben-Cruachan, he was travelling alone through these sequestered passes of Glenetive. An unusual stillness reigned over the face of nature, and nothing seemed to ruffle the tranquillity except the gentle murmuring of the tide, as it played over the pebbled shore of the lake, which increased the solemn placidity of the hour, and touched the mind with a full conviction of the inimitable grandeur of the scene that was now presented to the contemplation of Rob Roy.

He felt, with enthusiastic delight, the sublimity of the objects before him, and he sat down on the point of an elevated rock, that his soul might enjoy the perfect magnificence he beheld.

This arm of the sea stretches far to the north, surrounded by majestic mountains that rise, as it were, from the bosom of the water, in immense cones, and form one of the most delightful views to be met with in the Highlands.

Our hero was particularly struck with the beauty of the scene, and continued to gaze on the prospect till the dim outline could scarcely be traced betwixt him and the horizon, and the sombre shades of the mountains, dying away from the sight, were no longer reflected from the surface of the water.

From this musing mood he was aroused by the sound of voices at a distance, and the shrieks of a female, which now and then broke on the silence of the night. It was now dark, and he listened, and readily distinguished the direction from whence it came. He immediately determined to follow the noise, but all was silent. He had not, however, proceeded far, when he again heard, and hastened towards it, although this was attended with much difficulty and danger; for he had to scramble through hazle wood, over steep and rugged rocks, and ford streams which held an impetuous course through deep ravines, forming eddying pools and foaming cataracts. But nothing was too arduous with him in the cause of humanity or justice, and he doubted not that the cries he heard were those of some helpless woman who required his aid.

After much exertion, he came at length to an open field amidst the wood; but as the voices had ceased for some time, he was uncertain how to proceed, and he lay down on the grass. The moon had by this time risen high over the mountains, and showed in bright illumination the tops of the trees around this grassy spot; but it could not penetrate the deep foliage of the woods, within which all was dark and impenetrable to the eye. Rob Roy had not long reclined, when he observed two men emerge from the wood, but so distant, that he could neither discern their features, nor distinctly hear their conversation; although from their gesticulation he could perceive that they were much interested in it. He lay quiet among the long grass that grew around him, eagerly listening. As they approached, he heard one of them say,—“But what will her father think of our ingratitude?” “O!” said the other, “I care not what he thinks, since his daughter is under my control.” “Yet you do not mean to

treat her ill," replied the former: "she is too amiable to be harshly used." "Peace!" said the other, "though you have assisted, you are not to dictate to me." "My right to insist on honourable means, Sir Knight, is not inferior to yours; and I will maintain it," was the reply. "Well, well," returned the knight, "this is neither a time nor a place for dispute; let us leave this desert, and secure our prize in a more hospitable region. My trusty spy has returned, and assures me, that having despaired of success, the laird of * * * * has given up all search after us, and we may safely get away from these horrible wilds." Not so safe, perhaps, thought our hero, who was now satisfied that the cries he heard were those of a distressed female; and the unknown knight and his companion having again darted into the wood, Rob Roy immediately followed them, determined to know more of this affair.

Though the thickness of the trees rendered the passage rather difficult, Macgregor was better acquainted with such places than those he pursued, and he at first readily traced them, but at such a distance as to prevent his being seen.

Having followed them for some time, they suddenly disappeared; but supposing that they were hid from him by the obscurity of the wood, which now became more deep and impenetrable, he proceeded. Unable to discover them, he went first one way, then another, stopped, listened, gazed; but all was silent. Vexed that he had not made up to them, he stood still, leaning against an oak tree, to reason with himself on the possibility of their being elves of the wood; an absurd notion of the times, of which he was not wholly divested; as such supernatural beings were supposed to inhabit gelid cavities of the rocks, and gloomy retirements of the forests, often alluring men

to their destruction : but he was not long in suspense ; the screams of a female again dissipated his reflections, and he started forward, to ascertain from whence they came.

After some scarch, he reached a decayed mansion, placed on a rocky eminence, partly surrounded by a rapid stream, and wholly encompassed by stately trees. The building, on which the pale light of the moon shone partially through the wood, appeared semi-castellated, but unroofed and in ruin, with only one turret retaining any of its original shape. The walls were in a state of rapid decay, and the whole seemed to have been long deserted by human inhabitants, and only now occupied by owls and ravens, who croaked around the falling battlements. Rob Roy surveyed this fortress, which, at a remote period, had been the residence of a feudal baron, with emotions of reverence for its antiquity, and regret for its hastening desolation.

While thus deploring the fate of the mansion, a mournful cry issued from the castle. He looked around, but could perceive no window nor opening in the walls, save what was too high for access ; and went on till he came to what had been the great gate, but which was so obstructed with large fragments of the broken walls, as to prevent his approach. The voice, however, at times being still heard, he was convinced that it came from the ruins, and he went forward to discover some opening by which he could enter. Having walked partly round the rock on which the castle stood, he came to a thick bush of copsewood, growing close to the base of the rock, where the sounds were most loud. He examined the bush, and found that it concealed a vaulted passage, which appeared to lead to the interior ; and he had no doubt that it would also unravel the mystery of the sudden dis-

appearance of the men he had followed, as well as develop the meaning of their conversation which he had overheard.

With a full resolution to explore every part of the pile, he unsheathed his dirk, and entered the vault with cautious steps. He went on a considerable way through this confined and dreary entrance, till at last it seemed to terminate in a large space, where he now heard men in angry conversation. The place was dark and dismal ; but he was led by a faint ray of light to a door from which proceeded many piteous sighs, that appeared to be those of a person in distress.

He entered the apartment, and by the light of a wood fire that blazed in a corner, he beheld a female figure lying on a parcel of dried grass. "Alas!" said the lady, as she turned round to look at our hero, "what am I now doomed to suffer? Do you come, ruffian, to finish my life with your dagger?" "No, madam," said he, "I come to save your life, if it is in jeopardy. I heard your cries, and came to relieve you. Who are you, and what brought you to this miserable place?" "Say'st thou so, stranger! Heaven bless thee!" and raising herself upon her elbow to examine the person who thus accosted her, she shuddered at his appearance, and continued, "Ah, you deceive me!" "No, young lady," replied he, "I have no deceit in me; I am Rob Roy Macgregor, and will rescue you; but you must be brief. Who are you?" "I am," said she, "the daughter of the chief of * * * *; I have been decoyed, and forcibly carried away from my friends, by a base and cruel knight of England." "Well," said Rob Roy, "trust in me; but stir not from this, till I return. I go to wait upon the knight." And sheathing his dirk, he left her.

The dispute he heard on his entrance still continued, and had now become more vociferous. He stole gently to the door from whence the noise issued, and heard the two men in violent discourse. "You treat me ill," said one. "No, Sir James," returned the other; "I went to * * * * castle as your friend, and you have betrayed me into a scandalous act of discourtesy to a kind host, and inhumanity to his amiable daughter. Dare not to treat her indecorously, or we separate for ever." "So, Percy!" replied Sir James, "you will give up your friend, because he wishes to conquer the antipathies of a Highland girl." "Your conquest would be disgraceful," said Percy, "as your attempts have been mean and cowardly."

Our hero judging this a favourable moment, stepped boldly into the hall, where those who disputed, and other three men, were pacing along the floor. They were all armed, but were so much astonished at his unexpected appearance and stern deportment, that they shrunk back the instant he entered, believing him to be a spectre who inhabited the doleful caverns of the mansion: but they soon discovered that he was formed of more substantial materials than the fleeting vision of an aerial spirit, when he thus addressed them—"What brawl is here, at such an hour? Who are you that disturb the silence of this place? Know you, that here you have no right to revel, unless you are demons of the midnight hour, who glory in its darkness."

The singularity of this speech, so much in character with the countenance and costume of Rob Roy, and in unison with the melancholy desolation of the place, produced a silence of some seconds. At last Sir James having recovered some degree of resolution, said, in a

tremulous voice, "Pray Sir, who are you, and what brought you here? We have no money about us. We are only benighted travellers, that do nobody any harm." "None, perhaps, but the chief of * * * *," returned Rob Roy. "I am no robber, Sir," continued he, "but you and your companions must go back with me to the castle of * * * *, from which you came so hurriedly away, that the chief did not bestow upon you the usual Highland benison."

Sir James from this believed that Rob Roy had been sent in pursuit of him, but seeing him alone, he became more courageous, put his hand to his sword, and said, "that he would comply with no such order." They drew and fought; but in a moment, Sir James lay wounded on the floor. Percy stepped back, amazed at the sudden discomfiture of the knight, who was powerful and intrepid; but two of the other men with great fury rushed upon Rob Roy, who speedily killed them both.

Percy entreated that the life of Sir James might not be taken. "No, generous young man, it shall not," said Rob Roy, "I disdain a cowardly action; but, if he survives, he shall expiate his guilt in a more humiliating manner than to die by my sword. As for you, I have heard your sentiments, and they shall not be unrequited."

Mean time Sir James grew pale as death, for his wounds bled profusely; but Percy and the remaining servant having bound them up, he revived, and seemed heartily to repent the part he had acted.

Our hero having gone to the young lady, found her trembling with apprehension, and dreadfully alarmed at the noise she had heard. He, however, cheered her drooping spirits, by saying, "Be not afraid, young lady, Sir James has paid for his baseness, and you shall im-

mediately be escorted to your friends." The pleasing tidings were no sooner communicated, than instantly her lovely countenance beamed with joy, and a flood of tears gushed from her eyes, while she expressed her fervent thanks to her deliverer.

The morning was now far advanced, and Rob Roy having proposed to Percy to remain by the wounded knight, till he could procure a boat and men to transport them to the castle of * * * *, left the party for a little. Having soon obtained a boat, he returned to the ruin, and the party took leave of the gloomy recess which had concealed them for several days. Sir James, unable to walk, was carried to the shore, and placed in the bow along with his servant, and the young lady, with Percy, and Rob Roy, who managed the helm, took their seats in the stern of the boat.

Sir James and Percy were young men of family from England. They were visitors at the castle of * * * *, under particular recommendations to the chief. Both had become enamoured of his daughter; but their passions were not equally pure. One evening when walking along the shore, not far from her father's castle the lady was persuaded to go along with them into a boat to enjoy the sea breeze. The servants of Sir James, previously instructed, managed the boat, and left the shore at a considerable distance. Night came on; and she, becoming alarmed, remonstrated against their remaining longer on the water, urged the distress which her absence must occasion, and entreated her instant return. Sir James declared his passion, and his intention of carrying her to his own country to make her happy. Percy, till now ignorant of his friend's design, argued against the impropriety of his conduct, but in vain; and it being impossi-

ble for him to employ any other means at that time, he was constrained to silence, hoping that some fortunate incident would occur, when he might rescue the young lady. From this consideration, and the love which he himself had for her, he was induced to continue along with her to protect her from insult ; and Sir James, not aware of his feelings or intention, frequently urged his assistance to overcome the scruples of the lady, at which he constantly spurned.

Without any knowledge of the country, they had wandered for some days, from shore to shore, until accident led them to the concealment, where our hero as accidentally discovered them.

In returning to the castle of * * * *, the voyage was protracted by numerous conflicting tides, which render the navigation of the western seas intricate and hazardous. The young lady's mind had suffered such agitation, that her spirits were much depressed, and her frame greatly enervated ; and she was terrified at the foaming spray that dashed against the bounding prow of the vessel, but Rob Roy soothed her fears with assurances of safety.

As they proceeded, Sir James often requested to be put on shore, as he dreaded to encounter the vengeance of the injured chieftain ; but though this was refused, our hero promised to intercede for him, and soften the anger of the insulted * * * *.

The boat at last approached the destined harbour. It was descried from the lofty turrets of castle * * * *, long ere it reached the shore, and the whole inhabitants were assembled on the beach, anxious for its arrival. The joy of the chief of * * * *, cannot be described, when he embraced his daughter, who nearly fainted in his arms. " There, * * * *!" said Macgregor, " I restore your



child at the peril of my own life. Let not your clan again say, that Rob Roy Macgregor is incapable of generosity to them, though they have often wronged him." "Noble, brave Macgregor!" replied the chief, shaking him by the hand, "you have done me a service never to be forgotten. Ere long you shall be a free man. My interest is great, and it shall be exerted to recall the decree that hangs over you." Approaching the boat, he observed Sir James and Percy. He instantly drew his sword, and ran towards them, exclaiming, "Villains!"—but Rob Roy interposed, and said, "Stop, * * * *! your hospitality has been abused, and your anger is just; but I have pledged my honour that the life of Sir James shall be safe, and it must be so. As for Percy, he is your friend, and has been the means of preserving your daughter's honour. Treat him as such. Take neither the life of Sir James, nor further punish him, but do with him else what you see fit." The vassals of the chief who stood by, were with difficulty restrained from plunging their dirks to the heart of Sir James, who was conveyed to the dungeon keep of the castle.

The return of the chief's daughter was celebrated by many days of festivity and mirth, during which Rob Roy was distinguished by every mark of attention and respect from * * * * and his clan; and having received their hearty acknowledgments, he set sail, and arrived in safety at his own home. Soon after, Percy was married to the chief of * * * *'s daughter; and after a few weeks of salutary confinement, Sir James was allowed to depart, and he set off immediately for his own country.

Though our hero, during his residence in Argyllshire, was in some degree secure from his enemies, he was nevertheless in a situation that precluded him from other

advantages which he considered of importance to his family: and the chief of * * * * having kept his promise, Rob Roy received a letter from him containing a remission of the outlawry that had been proclaimed against him, so that he was now at liberty to go where he pleased, without any personal danger. He consequently relinquished his possessions in Argyll, and returned to Balquhiddy, the soil of his nativity; but he continued occasionally to revisit that country, as he had many friends, and several relations there, who showed him all manner of kindness and attention.

On one of these occasions, about the year 1713, while at the house of a powerful chieftain of that country, nearly related to himself, he was introduced to two French gentlemen who had arrived on the west coast, as emissaries from the house of Stuart; and being well acquainted with the state of the Highland districts, and those among them who were favourable to that family, he was requested to accompany them among the northern clans, that measures might be concerted for the restoration of the Stuarts.

Considering that family as his legitimate sovereigns, he did not hesitate to conduct their friends to Lochaber, and provide them with guides to escort them through the most unfrequented and devious paths to the Isle of Skye, where they had despatches for the chiefs of Macdonald and Macleod. Rob Roy's intercourse, however, with those foreigners, was made known to the officers of state at Edinburgh, and he was summoned to appear before them. He accordingly went there, and waited upon the commander-in-chief for Scotland, who acquainted him of the accusation brought against him; but he denied that he was guilty of any breach of loyalty to his king, and defied his lordship to produce evidence to that effect.

The examination of our hero was postponed till the following day, and this officer took his word of honour that he would attend at the appointed hour.

Mean time Rob Roy understood that Macdonald of Dalness was the evidence to be adduced against him. This Dalness was a hireling of government, employed to give information of disaffected persons in the Highlands ; but Macgregor devised a stratagem to get rid of him, being unwilling so soon again to come under the cognizance of the law.

One of the officers of the town-guard being a particular friend of Rob Roy's, he immediately waited upon him, and after the usual salutation, he asked the officer if he would give him a serjeant and twelve men for a couple of hours that evening ; at the same time assuring him that he would not employ them in any act of violence ; as he merely wished to frighten a man who had done him an injury. His friend, the officer, knowing how rigidly he adhered to his word, agreed to let him have the soldiers.

Having secured the aid of the town-guardsmen, he went by himself to Dalness' lodgings in the evening, to avoid discovery, and having seen the landlady, said to her in the dialect of her "guid toun :"—"Guidwife, am a Heelanman, a near frin' o' your lodger's, an gif he's no i' the house, ye maun tell him whan he comes hame, to tak' tent an' keep out o' the gate, for the toun guard's stacherin' about seeken for him, to wind him a pirn, an' transport him our the sea, or maybe to hang him. The mislear'd cheils will hae nae mercy on him, gin he be grippet. Now mind, an' dinna forget to tell him o' his danger." The woman was amazed, and trembled at the idea "o' sodgers ryphen her house," and said, "But wha'll I say was speerin' for the laird?" "Just tell him," replied Rob

Roy, "it was a Heelan cousin o' his ain, a black-a-vic'd man, an' he'll ken by that;" and took his leave. At the time mentioned, the guard appeared at his lodging, and Dalness, conscious in all likelihood, that his conduct was not correct towards the government he seemed to serve, instantly escaped by a back door, and made the best of his way to his wilds of his own property; and our hero, satisfied that Dalness had taken flight, dismissed the soldiers as he had promised.

On the following day, he was punctual to his appointment with the commander-in-chief. The witness Dalness was not to be found, and no other evidence being produced, Macgregor boldly demanded his passport, which being granted, he took his departure, not, however, without throwing out some reflections on the credulity of government, for the unnecessary trouble given to honest men like him, while the informers were themselves more guilty. Dalness, however, was the sufferer, for he was disgraced, and his allowance from government withdrawn, while Rob Roy returned home in triumph, exulting in the success of his scheme.

For a considerable period after the reformation, the establishment of presbyterian clergy was very difficult and precarious, particularly in the Highland districts, where the Romish persuasion long struggled for predominance.

The caprice, or mistaken zeal of the parishioners often resisted their settlement, and after they were fairly admitted to their charge, their stipends were ill paid, it being customary for the lairds to fix the payment of them on their tenantry, who were also made liable for any augmentation of stipend the incumbent might afterwards obtain. Soon after our hero's return from Argyll, a Mr Ferguson was appointed minister of the parish of Balqu-

hidder ; but his introduction was opposed by the whole body of the people, and he would not be admitted until he promised not to apply for an increase of salary. Finding, however, that he could not live on so small a sum, he was necessitated to take the usual legal steps for procuring an addition ; but Rob Roy put a speedy termination to the business. He got hold of the minister, forced him into a public house near his own church, made him drink profusely of whisky, told him he was not a man of his word, and caused him sign a paper renouncing every future claim of augmentation ; but he gave, at the same time, his own obligation, binding himself to send the minister every year, half a score of sheep and a fat cow, which during his life, was regularly done.

Though Rob Roy was conscious how little the personal virtues of the Stuart family entitled them to support, he yet considered their right to the crown as hereditary, and consequently indefeasible ; and from this conviction, he resolved that his exertions should be directed to their cause. When the clans, therefore, began to arm in favour of that house, in 1715, he also prepared the clan Gregor for the contest, in concert with his nephew, Gregor Macgregor of Glengyle.

A large body of Macgregors were about this time collected, and became very formidable. They marched into Monteith and Lennox, and disarmed all those whom they considered of opposite principles.

Having secured all the boats on Loch-Lomond, they took possession of an island in it, from whence they sent parties over the neighbouring countries to levy contributions, and extort such penalties as they judged proper. But more serious apprehensions were entertained of their disposition for mischief. Their depredations were so much



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dreaded at Dumbarton, that the inhabitants alarmed on account of their approach, removed their most valuable effects ; as reports were circulated that Rob Roy's men intended to descend in the night, murder the military, and set fire to the town. The ferment which this occasioned, was excessive. The friends of government determined to act on the offensive, and by speedy measures to overawe the children of the misty Ben-Lomond. Several armed boats from the men of war in the Clyde, made their way into Loch-Lomond, considerable numbers of militia, lairds and their tenants, assembled and united in a mass. This multitude secured the boats belonging to the Macgregors, who, being dislodged from the islands of the lake, joined a camp of Highlanders from other quarters in Strathfillan ; but not till after many struggles with the king's troops, different detachments of which they defeated.

The progress of the earl of Mar with his army of disaffected Highlanders, greatly alarmed the government, and immediate orders were transmitted to Edinburgh, to secure such suspected persons as were thought inimical to the king, and among others, Rob Roy Macgregor was specially named. He, however, conducted himself with some caution on this occasion ; and waited to observe the complexion of matters before he should proceed farther, as his friend Argyll had espoused the part of king George, a circumstance which greatly distressed him. In a state of considerable indecision, he proceeded to the Lowlands, and hovered about both armies prior to the battle of Sheriffmuir, without making any declaration or offer to join either ; and during that event he remained entirely inactive. This unexpected conduct arose from two motives, equally powerful,—a wish not to offend his patron, the

duke of Argyll, should he join the earl of Mar,—and that he might not act contrary to his conscience, by joining Argyll against his expatriated king.

His enemies, at all times anxious to place the motives of Rob Roy's conduct in the worst point of view, had propagated a report, that the duke of Argyll knowing that his principles led him to espouse the cause of the opposite party, had bribed him with the small sum of eighty guineas, not to join the earl of Mar ; but it is probable that to an independent mind like his, acting on the basis of conscious rectitude, the offer of a bribe would have been regarded as a marked insult : and the duke was too well acquainted with his temper, to try such an experiment. The motives, therefore, assigned for his inaction at Sheriffmuir, appear to be those which he himself afterwards declared, and which seemed to be the most consistent with the situation in which he stood. It has likewise been remarked by different authors, that had he joined either party in this contest, it would have terminated decisively.

There cannot, generally speaking, be a more genuine chronicle of events than local ballads, which depict particular incidents of the times in which they were written ; and there is perhaps, not a more correct account of the affair in question, than the first stanzas of two songs, on that subject.

“ There's some say that we wan,
 Some say that they wan,
 Some say that nane wan at a' man!
 But one thing I'm sure,
 That at Sheriff-muir,
 A battle there was, which I saw man :
 And we ran, and they ran, and they ran,
 and we ran, and we ran, and they ran awa' man.”

“—was you at the Sheriff-muir,
And did the battle see, man?
Pray tell whilk of the parties won?
For weel I wat I saw them run,
Both south and north, when they begun
To pell and mell, and snill and fell,
With muskets snell, and pistols' knell,
And some to hell did flee man.”

“ But Scotland has not much to say,
For such a sight as this is,
There baith did fight, baith ran away,
The devil take the miss is.
That every officer was not slain,
That ran that day, and was not ta'en,
Either flying from, or to Dumblain ;
When Whig and Tory, in their fury,
Strove for glory, to our sorrow
The sad story hush is.”

If the small force our hero had with him, could have turned the fortunes of either side on that day, it is but a sorry account of the opposing armies ; but those historians who say so, allow him more merit than was usually conceded to him, on that or any other occasion.

Though the undecided issue of this trial eventually brought about the dispersion of the Highland army, the Macgregors continued together ; but unwilling to return home without some substantial display of conquest, they marched to Falkland, and garrisoned the ancient palace of that place ; where, without ceremony, they exacted rigorous fines from the king's friends. Rob Roy considered this a venial offence by no means so odious as if he had fought either against Argyll or Mar ; and at that place he and his men remained till Argyll arrived at Perth, when they retired to their own country with the spoils they had acquired ; but they continued in arms for several years thereafter, in the pursuit of their usual

compulsory habits, to the no small disturbance of their neighbours.

Those daring practices seem to have been the reason why, in the subsequent indemnity, or free pardon, the Macgregors were excluded from mercy in these words :—
“ Excepting all persons of the name and clan of Macgregor, mentioned in an act of parliament made in Scotland in the first of the late king Charles I. intituled, anent the clan Macgregor, whatever name he or they may have, or do assume, or commonly pass under ;” and consequently our hero’s name appeared attained, as “ Robert Campbell, *alias* Macgregor, *commonly* called Robert Roy.”

The severities which followed this unquiet period, were peculiarly afflicting to Rob Roy. Reduced in his finances, and unable to pursue his usual occupation, his comforts were few, and he was forced to leave his farm and retire to a wild and distant part of the Highlands. But there, although he lived in obscurity, in a mean and solitary cottage, half hid with copsewood, and situated under the brow of a rugged and barren mountain, he was not permitted to live in peace.

While he occupied this sequestered abode, he was sitting early one morning by the side of the path which formed the chief road of the district, when an officer with thirty men suddenly appeared, making towards him. He was surprised at seeing military in such a place, and though he suspected their errand, he did not consider it safe to make his escape. He therefore remained where he was till they came up to him, when the officer saluted him, with “ Good morning.” “ Good morning to you, Sir, you are early on the road,” replied Rob Roy. “ Yes we are,” said the officer, “ we have marched all night, and are fatigued in this unhallowed

country of yours." "The country is indeed rough for gentlemen to travel in by night," replied our hero, "your business must be pressing."

From the tenour of their conversation the officer found he was sagacious and intelligent; and having asked him several questions, said—"Pray can you inform me where a noted brigand, a fellow called Rob Roy Macgregor or Campbell, is to be found hereabouts? I would give fifty guineas to lay hold of him." "I know him well," returned Rob Roy, "and for the money you offer, I shall produce him to you: but if you take my advice, do not go nearer his house, which is only a short way off, otherwise it is a chance if any of you will ever return, for his lads are numerous, and always so placed in ambush round his dwelling, that you will all be shot without seeing a man. He must be inveigled by stratagem, and if you follow my directions, I shall give you him by the hand in a short time, without firing a shot." "But how is that to be accomplished?" said the officer. "Only in one way," replied our hero; "you passed a public house not far distant, return to it, and wait for me. I shall go to the fellow's house, and tell him such a story as will bring him alone to the inn: but great caution must be used, for he is one of the most fierce and cunning men in the world, whom, in his rage, I would not face with all your men by my side."

The soldiers listened, and seemed happy when they were ordered to wheel about for the inn, where they soon arrived, while Rob Roy proceeded to his own house.

He directed his men to assemble all the people within reach, and place them on the side of the hill in battle array; and having buckled on his dirk, which he concealed under his plaid, he walked on to fulfil his engagement.

He now told the officer that he had seen Rob Roy, who promised to be with him immediately ; but that it would be necessary to conceal his soldiers and their firelocks ; for if Rob Roy should see any of them, he would not come near the house. The muskets were accordingly deposited in a press bed, while the men were put in an out-house.

Our hero endeavoured to amuse the officer by his conversation, to give his people time to collect ; but growing impatient, Rob Roy assured him he should not be disappointed ; and the moment he observed his men at their station, he said to him :—“ Now, Sir, give me the sum you promised.” “ I cannot do that, till you make good your promise,” rejoined the officer. “ It will then be too late,” was the reply, “ for Rob Roy will see that he is betrayed, and I would never after be able to hold up my head in the country ; the people would set fire to my house, and take away my cattle : and if I do not, as I said, give you Rob Roy by the hand, you and your men are surely able enough to take back the money from me.” The officer acquiesced in the justice of his remarks, and paid down the money, which having counted and put into his pocket, he shook hands with the officer, saying, “ Now, Sir, I keep my word, you have Rob Roy by the hand, detain him if you can ;” and bidding him good day, was instantly out of the house. The officer was so much astonished, that he stood motionless for some time, so that before he got out to order his men to arms, Rob Roy was far beyond their reach.

Whether Rob Roy had ever paid respect to religious duties, or what might have been the extent of his creed during the more prosperous part of his life, is not certain, though he was by birth a protestant ; or whether affected

by remorse for his past irregular life, or that he had seriously come to the persuasion that he might obtain forgiveness for all his errors through the interposition of catholic priests, from their declared power of absolving from all species of sin, has not been transmitted to us ; but he had taken the resolution of becoming a Roman catholic, and he accordingly left the lonely residence we have described, and returning to Perthshire, went to a Mr Alexander Drummond, an old priest of that faith, who resided at Drummond castle. What the nature of Rob's confessions were, or the penance which his offences required, has been concealed ; but if we may judge from the account he himself gave of his interview with this ecclesiastic,—“ that the old man frequently groaned, crossed himself, and exacted a heavy remuneration,” his crimes must have been of a sable dye, and of difficult expiation. “ It was a convenient religion, however,” he used to say, “ which, for a little money, could put asleep the conscience, and clear the soul from sin.”

But whatever amendment this apostacy from the tenets of his fathers might have effected in our hero's principles of morality, which, it is believed, were previously loose and unsettled, certain it is, that the restless and active temper of his mind did not long allow him to remain a quiet votary of his new faith ; and a desperate foray into the northern Highlands having been projected by his nephew, he was requested to take the command. Tired of inactive life, to which he had never been accustomed, and willing to do any thing to retrieve his decayed circumstances, he readily consented, and set out at the head of twenty men. It has been affirmed upon good authority, that these Macgregors, with other Highlanders, joined some Spaniards who landed on the north west

coast in 1719, and were with them at the battle of Glen-shiel; and that Rob Roy and his party plundered a Spanish ship, after it had been in possession of the English, which so enriched him, that he again returned to the braes of Balquhidder, and began farming.

While engaged in the cattle trade, Rob Roy had purchased a cow from a widow on Tay side, and on the following Sunday he chanced to be at Logierait as the clergyman was preaching to his congregation in the church-yard. Rob Roy stepped in to hear the discourse, the subject of which was a caution against fraud and roguery, and the preacher expatiated largely on their intricate ramifications; in the course of which, he threw out many hints evidently meant for our hero, who was observed by the minister, and was well known to all his hearers.

When the sermon was over, Rob Roy waited upon the clergyman, and told him that "he understood his discourse, but wished to know what he meant, and would be glad if he could point out any instance of his fraud or roguery. "For observe, reverend Sir," continued he, "that if you cannot do this, and have abused me before your parishioners, and me innocent, I shall make you recant your words in your own pulpit." "Macgregor," said the minister, "I will own that I alluded to you. Did you not buy a cow from a widow in this parish, at little more than half its value? She is a poor woman, and cannot afford this." "I was ignorant of her being so poor," answered Rob Roy; "she appeared glad to get the price." "True," replied the minister, "for her family are starving." "If that be the case," returned our hero, "she is welcome to keep the money I paid, and she shall also get back her cow;" which was actually done next day;

and on the following Sunday, the minister mentioned this act of charity from the pulpit, as worthy the imitation of the "hard-hearted gentry of his parish," as he termed them.

In his trade of dealing in cattle, Rob Roy often had occasion to travel to different parts of the Lowlands, and his last visit to Edinburgh was to recover a debt due him by a person who was reputed opulent, but who had taken refuge in the sanctuary of the Abbey. There he went and saw his debtor, but the sacredness of the place did not protect him; for although he was a strong man, Rob Roy laid hold of him, dragged him across the line of safety, and having some officers of the law in waiting, gave over his charge to them, by which means he got his money.

The numerous exploits of Rob Roy had rendered him so remarkable, that his name became familiar every where; and he was frequently the subject of conversation among the nobility at court. He was there spoken of as the acknowledged protegèe of Argyll, who often endeavoured to palliate his errors; but that nobleman was frequently rallied, particularly by the king, for his partiality to Macgregor. On several occasions his majesty had expressed a desire to see the hardy mountaineer: and Argyll, willing to gratify him, sent for Rob Roy, but concealed his being in London, lest the officers of state, aware of the king's hatred, might take measures to detain him. Argyll, however, took care that the king should see him without knowing who he was, and for this purpose made Rob Roy walk for some time in front of St James'. His majesty observed, and remarked that he had never seen a finer looking man in a Highland dress: and Argyll having soon after waited on the king, his majesty told him of his having noticed a handsome Scots Highlander, when Argyll replied, that it was Rob Roy Macgregor. His majesty

said he was disappointed that he did not know it sooner, and appeared not to relish the information, considering it as too serious a jest to be played upon his authority, and which seemed to make him, among others, a dupe to our hero's impudence.

Montrose did not yet hold the lands he had wrested from Rob Roy by the strict formality of law, but by that coercion which the same authority put into his hands; nor had any arrangement of their accounts hitherto taken place. While Rob Roy was in London, Argyll judged it a proper opportunity to bring about a reconciliation. He therefore made such a proposal to Montrose, who at first objected to it, as he dreaded personal injury from Macgregor; but Argyll pledging himself for our hero, a meeting took place. It was a singular one, for they had not seen each other for years; but mutual promises of forbearance were exchanged, and Rob Roy having got an account of the money he owed Montrose, also received an assurance that he should have possession of his estate, as soon as the sum for which it had been adjudged, was repaid; but this arrangement never took place; and it was not until twenty years after our hero's death, that the family of Montrose were regularly vested in the property of Craigcrostan.

Though Rob Roy was now considerably advanced in life, he yet bore an imposing and youthful appearance. On his way from London at this time, he was accidentally introduced into the company of some officers who were recruiting at Carlisle. Struck with his robust and manly stature, they considered him a fit person for the king's service, and wished to enlist him; but he would accept no less than treble the sum they offered, to which they agreed. He remained in the town

a few days, paying no regard to them, and when he was ready to continue his journey, he came away, the military being unable to prevent him; and the enlisting money paid his expenses home.

While in England, Lennox, the proprietor of Woodhead, in the vicinity of Campsie, having refused to pay his dues of black-mail, Rob Roy's wife equipped herself, went on horseback attended by twelve men, and so intimidated the gentleman, that he paid the stipulated sum, saying, that he could not refuse a lady, and would not attempt to oppose her.

The achievements of Rob Roy, so universally known, were every where extolled as the matchless deeds of unconquered Caledonia; and though his prowess could not be said at all times to have been displayed upon occasions strictly meritorious, yet the general tenour of his conduct was admired in his own country, as it accorded with an ancient *Gaelic* saying already noticed, which marked the well known character of the Highlander, that *he would not turn his back on a friend nor an enemy*: yet he neither boasted of his strength nor his courage, and did not look on his past exploits with the pride of a victor, but with the honest exultation of having supported the valour of his clan, and opposed the devouring tide of oppression. Steady in these principles, he never wantonly engaged in a quarrel; and from a consciousness of his own powers, he was unwilling to adopt personal contention; yet he was often challenged to single combat, and actually fought twenty-two battles of this description.

Macneill of Barra, who was considered an excellent swordsman, and possessed at the same time a chivalrous and romantic spirit, that would have done honour to the age of the crusades, having often heard of Rob Roy's re-

noun as unequalled in the use of the broad sword, was determined to ascertain the truth of the report. He arrived at Buchanan, and learned that Rob Roy had gone to a market at Killearn. Thither he proceeded, and when near the place, he met several gentlemen on horse-back, returning from the market. Barra accosted them, and asked if they knew whether Rob Roy Macgregor was at the market? and was answered, "he is here, what do you want with him?" "I want to see him," was the reply. The gentlemen who were along with our hero, immediately stopped, from motives of curiosity, while he went up to Barra, and said he was Rob Roy. "Macgregor," said Barra, "I never saw you before; but I have heard of you: I am the laird of Barra, and have come here to prove myself a better swordsman than you." The gentlemen who looked on were surprised at such an errand, and many of them burst into laughter. "Laird of Barra," replied Rob Roy, "I have no doubt of your being what you assert; but I have no wish to prove it, as I never fought any man without cause." "Then you are afraid," said Barra: "your valour is in words." Our hero, irritated at the expression, said, "Dismount then, Sir, and you shall have more than words;" and giving his horse to one of his friends, he drew his claymore, and continued, "as you are a stranger, you shall not go without your errand." They immediately set to; but Rob Roy soon gave his antagonist cause to repent his temerity, having nearly cut off his sword arm, which confined him in the village of Killearn for three months.

Rob Roy was never known to have refused a challenge, excepting upon one occasion, from a countryman named Donald Bane, because, he said, he never fought duels but with gentlemen.

The power which Macgregor possessed in his arms was very uncommon, and gave him a decided superiority over most men in the use of the broad-sword. It was scarcely possible to wrench any thing out of his hands, and he has been known to seize a deer by the horns, and hold him fast. His arms were long, almost to deformity, as when he stood erect, he could touch the garters under his knee with his fingers. Some of his neighbours might indeed say that he had long arms ; but they often gave him cause for stretching them.

Being now far advanced in years, he began to feel his vigour decline apace ; but his spirit remained unbroken. Having met with the laird of Boquhan on some merry occasion, they sat up a whole night drinking in a paltry inn at Arnprior, in Perthshire ; but towards morning they quarrelled, the influence of the indigenious beverage of their country having overpowered their reason. Boquhan had no sword with him, but he found an old rapier in a corner, and they fought. Macgregor from age and considerable inebriety, was then unfit for the combat, and dropping his sword, they made up the difference, and continued drinking together during the following day. On a future trial with Stewart of Ardsheal, he was also worsted, when he threw down his sword, and vowed that he would never take it up again, for by this time his sight was greatly impaired : his strength had suffered from the decrepitude of old age, and he felt the gradual decay of his faculties. Some characteristic lineaments, however, continued to illumine his spirit, even to the latest hour.

When nearly exhausted, and worn out by the laborious vicissitudes of a restless life, and confined to bed in a state of approaching dissolution, a person with whom in former times he had a disagreement, called upon him, and wished

to see him. "Raise me up," said he to his attendants, "dress me in my best clothes; tie on my arms; place me in the great chair. That fellow shall never see me on a death-bed." With this they complied, and he received his visitor with cold civility. When the stranger had taken his leave, Rob Roy exclaimed, "It is all over now; put me to bed. Call in the piper. Let him play '*Cha teill mi tuille*,'* as long as I breathe." He was faithfully obeyed, and calmly met his death, which took place at the farm of Inverlochlarigbeg, among the braes of Balquhider, in 1735. His relics repose in the church-yard of that parish, with no other escutcheon to mark his grave than a simple stone, on which some kindred spirit has carved a sword—the appropriate emblem of the man:—

"Clan-Alpine's omen and her aid."†

In surveying the character of Rob Roy Macgregor, many excellent traits appear, from which we cannot withhold our admiration, while other incidents of his life, perhaps, may deserve reprehension; but if it be considered that he lived during a period when the northern parts of the kingdom were torn by civil discord, and distracted politics; and when the government had neither wisdom nor energy to remedy those evils that arose from feudal manners and the discordant interests of chieftainship, we cannot be surprised at the liberties he took, and the deeds he performed.

Rob Roy was among the last remains of the genuine

* I will never return.

† The funeral of Rob Roy was attended by all ranks of people within several miles of his residence; and so much was he beloved, that universal regret seemed to pervade the whole company. An old man whom we have seen, although then young, attended the solemn occasion; and was present some time before, when Rob Roy fought Ardshiel.

Highlanders of the old stock, who wished to support the ancient privileges, and independence of the race. His clan had suffered great cruelties, which were attributed with much truth to their envious neighbours: and besides, when we consider the measures directed against Rob Roy as an individual, we cease to wonder at the opposition he gave to the families of Montrose and Athol; and although in his partial warfare he might not always have acted in conformity to nice principles of justice, yet it may be said, that the greater number of his errors were venial, and such as in his time, must have appeared no more than the fair and justifiable retaliation for injuries, which he himself, or others connected with him, had sustained.

Of his being a free-booter, and heading a band of desperate banditti, there is no proof. He was never known wantonly to have made an unprovoked attack, or to have broken a promise he had given. He was generous and humane to all who suffered from disease or poverty; and he cannot be denied the meed of respect for his bravery, which never was exerted against the unfortunate.

Rob Roy left several children; but our limits will only admit a short notice of those who became obnoxious to the state, and whose destiny was considered peculiarly severe. Though they had, in the life of their father, too forcible an example of misguided abilities, and pursued a course of outrageous practices, yet we must deplore their fate as melancholy instances of that feeble and apparently partial justice, which marked the party principles of those times, and led the elder to die in want in a foreign land, and the younger to close his life on a scaffold.

For some time prior to the death of their father, the elder sons had not only pursued the same compulsory

levying of black-mail, but were also accused of serious and terrible acts of violence on the properties of the lieges. The more perfectly to secure their rapine, and conduct their schemes of mischief, they associated themselves with a band of daring outlaws, and took possession of an old peninsulated castle at the eastern extremity of the lake of Balquhider, as a place of resort. But though the sons of Rob Roy were to be sharers of the booty collected by these banditti, they did not always accompany them on their excursions for depredation. They had a leader, Walter Buchanan of Machar, who had wholly abandoned himself to a dissolute life, and commanded the gang, chiefly composed of lawless ruffians from distant parts.

These plunderers were a source of great terror to the neighbourhood, and frequently to travellers who fell in their way, although they committed no personal cruelties on those who quietly submitted. The ruins they occupied were not far from the road, and had often, by the hospitality of those men, sheltered the traveller, when benighted or overtaken by the violent storms that suddenly visit those mountainous regions; and on such an occasion did the unfortunate Lady Grange and her escort find refuge there, when on her way to be confined in the distant isle of St Kilda.

By the death of their father, which happened soon after they had betaken themselves to those disorderly courses, they were deprived of that sage and prudent counsel which used to keep them free from many difficulties in which they were afterwards involved; but an incident occurred that speedily subjected them to the scrutiny of the law. A James Maclaren, the nephew of Rob Roy's wife, who appears to have been a person devoid of feeling, consider-

ing his aunt as a destitute and unprotected widow, purposed to turn her out of the farm she possessed, by offering a greater rent. Her youngest son Robert, then a boy little more than twelve years of age, feeling the injury intended to be done to his mother, and perhaps instigated to revenge by his relations, fired at Maclaren while he was holding his plough, and killed him. The boy immediately fled, and was conducted to the continent, where he remained till the commotions of 1745-6, brought him back to Scotland. Two of his brothers, James and Ronald, were tried at Perth as accessories to the murder of Maclaren; but though acquitted by the jury, the court, by a stretch of arbitrary power, obliged them to find bail for £200 each, to keep the peace for seven years, which they did. They afterwards sustained trials for theft and reset of theft, but no proof could be produced, so that the proceedings against them could only originate in malice and oppression.

After the return of young Robert in 1746, he joined the regiment of the last duke of Argyll, then general John Campbell, to serve king George, and remained in the country unmolested for many years; but from the rancorous spirit with which the Macgregors were still regarded, he was arraigned for the forcible abduction of a young widow, who had become his wife; and although she had always declared that she was happy with him, and that they had lived in peace together, he was taken at a market in his own country, by a party of soldiers from Inversnaid, carried to Edinburgh, where he was condemned, and executed in February, 1754, three years after the death of his wife.

His brother, James Macgregor, who occasionally took the name of James Drummond, was implicated for the part he was supposed to have taken in that enterprise,

which drew down upon him also the strong arm of the law, and he was taken up and put in confinement in the castle of Edinburgh. Previous to this affair, James evinced the military ardour of his clan, and along with his cousin, Macgregor of Glengyle, in 1745, took the fort of Inversnaid, and made eighty-nine prisoners, with only twelve men. He then joined prince Charles Stuart as major, at the head of six companies of Macgregors, in the fruitless contest which that young man had instituted for the recovery of the British throne. James Macgregor had his thigh bone broken in the battle of Prestonpans; and though from this accident he could not accompany the prince on his ill-concerted march into England, James again joined him in the concluding battle of Culloden, and with many more of his partizans, came under the consequent act of attainder, which spared neither rich nor poor, young nor old; and covered the country with a dreadful visitation of fire and sword, in base violation of those claims of humanity that are the sacred rights of the conquered.

While James Macgregor was a prisoner in Edinburgh castle, he received an indictment to stand his trial; and from a memorial in his own hand-writing, addressed to prince Charles Stuart, faithfully copied in a subsequent page, his doom was almost certain.

The address of his daughter in effecting his escape was admirable. Having previously concerted her plan, she, on the evening of 16th November, 1752, went to his prison, in the dress and character of a cobbler, carrying in her hand a pair of mended shoes. Her father immediately put on the disguise; and having held some angry conversation with the supposed cobbler, for making an overcharge, so as to deceive the sentinel, he hastily passed him undis-

covered, and got clear of the outer gate. A cloudy evening favoured his retreat, and taking the nearest way of leaving the city by the west-port, was beyond the reach of detection before his escape was known ; but the moment it was observed, the alarm was given, and all the gates of the city were shut.

After the first sensations which impelled his flight had subsided, he felt an almost irresistible inclination of directing his steps to his own country ; but as he supposed that he might there be pursued, he relinquished the wish of seeing his family, tender and pressing as it was, and took his way towards England. On his route he avoided passing through any town during the day, and assumed different disguises as circumstances required.

After a fatiguing journey, at the close of the fourth day, he was benighted on a lonely moor in Cumberland. Ignorant of the country, he did not know how to proceed ; but he kept a straight course, though the darkness of the night, and the rugged surface of the ground much retarded his progress. Having travelled some miles, he at length quitted the moor, and entered a wood, whose deep shade, added to the blackness of the night, rendered it impossible for him to go farther. He therefore sat down at the root of a tree, determined to remain till morning ; but he was not long there till he was roused by the sound of some voices at no great distance, hallowing in wild tones. He sprung to his feet and cocked his pistol, for his friends had supplied him with a pair of them, and a dirk, before he left his confinement. He stood for some time in this posture, in anxious expectation and considerable apprehension, fully resolved to die rather than again be taken, conceiving it more honourable to fall in defence of his liberty, than by the hands of an executioner. The voices

became more faint, but he still heard them talking violently, and a ray of light, gleaming among the trees, pointed out the direction from whence the sound came.

Wishing to ascertain who those nightly revellers were, he stole cautiously to the place, and saw an old woman holding a light to three men who were placing panniers on a horse's back, with which one of them rode off, and the others went into a hut close by. Macgregor at first took them for banditti, but in one of the men whom he saw, he thought he recognized the figure and countenance of old Billy Marshall, the tinker, whom he had often seen in the Highlands. Encouraged by this idea, he ventured forward to the hut, and knocked at the door, convinced that if Billy was actually there, he would not only be safe, but effectually sheltered and assisted in his escape; he was not mistaken, for Billy came to the door, and though Macgregor was still in the poor disguise his daughter had provided for him, Billy knew and welcomed him to the hut. He had heard of Macgregor's mishap, but rejoiced he had now given his enemies the slip. Billy apologized for the poverty of his present habitation, which he said was only temporary, until some ill-will which he had got in Galloway, for setting fire to a stack-yard, would blow over. In this hovel, secure in the honour of his host, was Macgregor sumptuously entertained for two days. Early in the morning of the third, he and Billy set out on horseback; and before the tinker took leave of him, he saw him embark in a fisherman's boat, near Whitehaven, with a fair wind, for the Isle of Man. From thence he went to Ireland, but no traces of him are to be had until his arrival in France, when we again hear of him by the following application to prince Charles Stuart, formerly referred to.

“ PARIS, 20th Sept. 1753.

“ SIR,

“ The violence of your Royal Highness' Enemies has at last got the better of the resolution I had taken after the unhappy battle of Culloden, never to leave the country, but stay at home, and be as useful to your cause as I possibly could. Even after they had got me into their hands, I continued firm in this resolution, they having no new treason, as they name it, to prove. Your Royal Highness' friends ordered my escaping from prison to shun certain death. This the advocate made no ceremony to own he had orders from Court to bring about at whatever rate or by whatever means. And the method he took of indicting me upon obsolete Acts of Parliament, and making up a jurie of the most envenomed Hanoverian Scots made my fate certain, if I had not saved myself by escaping. I was even unwilling to come abroad to be trouble-some either to your Royal Highness or your friends, but necessity now obliges me to beg your directions how or to whom to apply, I having try'd every way I could think of or was advised, without as yet having any hopes of success. This is not the only reason now of giving your Royal Highness this trouble, the route I took to get home by the Isle of Man and the coast of Ireland, put it in my way to learn what must be of the greatest consequence to the cause upon a proper occasion, but is put out of my power to be communicated save to your Royal Highness, the King your Father, and my Chief Balhadies, who wishes he had a method of informing your Royal Highness of what must be of so much use to your cause. I have in vain hitherto endeavoured to find out the means of laying myself at your Royal Highness' feet, which necessitates my now writing this, and that your Royal

Highness may be in no mistake about me, I am James Drummond Macgregor, Rob Roy Macgregor's son, who joyned no corps with his men at the battle of Prestonpans, and had his Thighbone broke in the action, which incapacitated me from following you into England, but upon your return joined the Army with Six Companeyes of Macgregors, which the Duke of Perth engaged me to add to his Regiment until my Chief Balhadies arrived from France, where I continued to serve as Major to the unhappy Culloden. I ever am, with the greatest Respect, Sir, your Royal Highness' most humble and faithful Servant.

“ JAS DRUMMOND MACGREGOR.”

About the same time, he also addressed a memoire “ A Monseigneur Le Marquis De Saint Contin, &c. Ministre et Secretaire D'Etat.” A copy of this in his own hand writing, and recently in the author's possession, appears to have been sent to his chief, as it is addressed “ To Macgregor of Macgregor, at Baivre.”

Every one, even slightly conversant with the juridical history of Scotland during the last century, will be acquainted with the trial of James Stewart; a foul transaction, which throws an indelible stain on the memory of those venal men who composed his jury. The story is briefly thus:—The Stewarts and Campbells had been on opposite sides in the recent contest of 1745-6, for the crown. A Campbell of Glenure was appointed factor over the estate of Ardsheal, which had been confiscated after that period; and being supposed partial, he removed some old tenants from the lands, to give place to others of his own choosing. This was resented by an assassin named Allan Breck Stewart, who waylaid Campbell, and

shot him, in May, 1752, and immediately fled to France. James Stewart was supposed to be accessory. He was taken up without legal warrant, carried to Inverary, and though no proof was adduced, he was condemned to death and to be hung in chains, by the duke of Argyll, as lord justice-general, and a jury of whom eleven were Campbells, and under the duke's authority. It would seem as if government, afterwards blushing for the cruelty of the deed, were desirous of bringing the actual murderer, Allan Stewart, to justice; and as it was known that he had taken refuge in France, proposals were made to James Macgregor, when he was discovered likewise to be in that country, that if he would seize this Allan Breck, and bring him to Britain, he should himself receive a pardon, and be allowed to return to his country and family. But as Macgregor's original letters, lately in the author's custody, will best declare his history after this period, the following are faithful transcriptions of them. They are addressed to the chief of the clan Gregor, who was himself a voluntary exile in the French dominions for the part he had taken in the cause of the Stuart family:—

“ DUNKIRK, *April 6th*, 1754.

“ DEAR CHIEF,

“ No doubt you'd be surprised to hear of my being openly in London, and that I did not acquaint you of my intention before I parted with you, I was not sure at that time whether I could go there or not, and besides there was a particular reason why I did not think you ought to know, or to be known to the project I intended then to put in execution as much on your own account, as mine, if not more so, otherwise you might imagine me to be the most ungrateful person on Earth, considering the parently

usage I had the honour to receive from you, and when I have the pleasure of seeing you, you will be fully satisfied on that head. I fell upon ways and means to procure a license from under George's own sign-manual, and after I appeared before the secretaries of state and delivered my case to be laid before the ministry, and had also delivered the enclosed case for my brother who suffered conform to his sentence, and the way and manner I represented my own case, as well as my brothers to the ministry, who seemed favourable, until the Duke of Argyll interposed, and also Grant advocate for Scotland. The duke has represented your clan in general the most disaffected in Scotland, and after a very odious manner he represented also that the whole clan was Popish. It is certain my brother's dying openly Roman catholic, hurt me much, and gave the ministry a very bad impression. I was at the time much indisposed of a fever otherwise would have had a better chance to save my brother and myself. Squire Carrol made me a party on your account and told that he thought it a favour done himself to serve any of your clan. After I had recovered my illness about fourteen days ago, I was sent for by the under Secretary who gave to understand by the earl of Holderness' orders, that with great difficulty, his lordship had now procured for me handsome bread in the government's service, and that I was to go off soon to Edin^r where a sham trial was to pass upon me, to satisfy the public. He then acquainted me with the employ I was to have, which I thought proper not to accept of, and I desired that he would acquaint the earl of Holderness, that I was born in character of a gentleman, that I never intended to accept of that which would be a disgrace to my family, as well as a scourge to my country; nor did I think when his lordship would

consider with more mature deliberation upon the offer made me but that he would forgive my refusing it; but if his lordship thought me a proper subject to serve in any station in which other gentlemen of honour served, that I was very well satisfied, and no otherwise. The same secretary sent for me next day, when he gave me to understand that it was the ministry's orders to me to retire out of his majesty's dominions within three days, upon which there was a messenger set over me for fear I would retire to Scotland. The messenger was ordered to see me landed on this side upon their own charges. I could not have time to wait on my friends as the messenger attended me so close, only saw Gregor Drummond who knew my whole transaction with them. Our friends who spoke much against me sometime, (fearing what brought me thither), began now to speak in the most favourable manner, they then knowing the treatment I had received from the ministry, and tho' the offer made me was very advantageous, as to the purse, as I stood to my resolution it was approved by every body, even of some of the other side. This job was very expensive upon me, yet had I had the luck to save my poor brother I would not grudge any thing. Before I went to London I received from Major Buchanan £103 and he still owes me £30, which is to be paid against martinmas next. All that I have saved of the whole I carried with me is about £40 and £16 I have sent my wife. I thought it my duty to let you know of this that you'd be so good and write next step you may think I ought to take. I am advised if I could carry on a small trade in this place and had some credit with the little money I have, that by taking care, I might make good bread, but would do nothing till I would hear from you. I would be glad to know if you had an answer to

the letter you drew the draught of sent from me to a certain great man, and also what method you think most proper to procure a gratification. I thought better to remain here as I am not yet well recovered, rather than go up to Paris, not knowing but you would approve of my settling here, which seems to me very feasible, yet as you are my head, I leave you to dispose of me as you shall seem fit and proper, and therefore shall wait your orders. If you please to desire by yours, an ample account of the project which procured the licence, and an account of that worthy employ offered me, you shall in full by my next. I beg pardon for this long letter, and that I have the honour of manifesting my gratitude, is the sincere wish of—Dear Chief,

“Your own to command

“JAS DRUMMOND.”

“DUNKIRK, *May 1st, 1754.*

“DEAR CHIEF,

“I had the honour of your’s some time ago, and would have made a return ere now, but that these eight days past I have been taken ill of an ague which continues. I make no doubt our friends the Stuarts will endeavour as much as possible to make a handle of my being in London, but I leave you to judge, if it was not reasonable for me to make an attempt tho’ never so hazardous, if I could expect to be of service or relief to my brother, or procure my own liberty to support my distressed wife and numerous family. The way and manner I procured the license to return to Great Britain, was this. Captain Duncan Campbell,* who is nephew to Glengyle, and my near relation, wrote me in June last about Allan Breck Stuart.

* This was the person from whom the earl of Perth escaped in 1745.

and begged therein, if there was any possibility of getting him delivered in any part of England, that if I could be of use in this matter, that I might expect my own pardon. I returned him answer after I was at Paris, that I would use my interest to endeavour to bring Stuart the Murderer to justice ; but that as I could not trust any with the secret, that I could not act alone, so well as if I had a Trustee to support me. After receipt of this, both Captain Duncan and the present Glenure* wrote in a most pressing manner (which letter I still retain,) and desired therein to acquaint them upon receipt of these letters, and if I desired that a Trustee, and money should be sent me to support the carrying on of the project. I wrote for this person to support me. After this gentleman came to Paris I waited upon him ; he showed me proper recommendation he had for the earl of Albemarle, upon whom he waited and disclosed the matter to his lordship, and told his lordship, at the same time, nothing could be done without me, nor could the murderer be brought to England unless his lordship would procure a licence to me for that purpose. His lordship frankly consented to send express to London for the licence, which being come, at the same time came David Stuart, Brother to Glenbuckie, who with little Duncan M'Gregor, whom you recommended to Lord Ogilvy, put Allan Breck the murderer so much upon his guard, that the very night I intended to have carried him off, made his escape from me, after stealing out of my Cloakbag several things of cloathes, linens, and four snuff boxes, one of which was G. Drummond's :—all this scene was acted in presence of your Shoemaker's wife and daughter. After the murderer made his escape, my friend went to Lord Albemarle, and acquainted him of what

* Son of him who was shot by Allan Stuart

happened. His lordship sent for me and I told his lordship the way and manner he made his escape ; his lordship told me had I been lucky enough to have succeeded, that were I guilty of never so much Treason, that I might shuredly expect my pardon. I acquainted his lordship that I was not guilty of Treason, for that I was not only freed by the act of indemnity, but that in the year 1747, I had received a pass from Andrew Fletcher, Lord Justice Clerk then for Scotland, and as his, your lordship, meaning Albemarle, commanded in Scotland at that time, your lordship gave consent to my having said pass, which I then produced, and his lordship remembered the affair very well. He then inquired into my case, which I laid open before his lordship, and the distress that my wife and family was in. This other Gentleman told his lordship that I had 14 children, great many of whom were very young,—this other Gentleman moved that now as there was a licence procured for me to return to Great Britain, that as I used my utmost endeavours to bring the murderer to justice, that I might be allowed by his lordship to go to London to represent both my own and my brother's case, and begged his lordship's recommendation for that purpose. To which his lordship answered, that he was afraid that though he would incline to do me service, and have it done for me, that all those of the Clan M'Gregor were too zealous Jacobites ; but that if he thought I could be trusted that he did not know, but something might be done for me, and my numerous family. Upon which his lordship wrote a letter to the Earl of Holderness in my favours, and allowed I should go to London, to know what could be done for me, upon which I parted and went to Ipres, to wait on Major Buchanan, and from thence to London. How soon I waited on the Earl of Holderness, his lordship

desired me to put my case in writing, and that he would lay it before the ministry ; but at the same time that I behoved to lodge in a messenger's house, where I would be entertained at the King's expence, that lodging there was not meant as any restraint upon me, but for some other reason ; neither should any restraint be put upon me, but have my liberty conform to my licence. Eight days after I was called to the Earl of Holderness's house, where I was examined in a most civil manner, but was so much sifted with questions, and cross questions, that I was like to be put into confusion ; but upon mustering up all my spirits, having nothing else for it, I endeavoured that they could not read through Stones, and at the same time, made such compliance answers as I thought suited best those subjects. I understood some time after, that Secretary Murray, to my knowledge, was both a liar, villain, and a very great coward, and that at the time he was mostly employed by the young Pretender, as I then called him, which I thought made an impression upon both the Chancellor and Holderness, none else being present. I was dismissed, and a few days after I contracted a fever and gravel, which continued till the middle of March, and what happened after that, I have acquainted you therewith in my last. This is the whole affair from the beginning, and considering Glenure's being so nearly related to me and my wife, and that the Stuarts had shown themselves on all occasions the cut throats of our people, no mortal needs be surprised, if I should endeavour to bring my friend's murderer to justice ; besides that very family of Barcaldine is the greatest support your Clan has in Scotland, I mean the parts I lived in formerly, and thereabouts. Now I leave you to Judge, whither I acted right or not in keeping my design secret from you ; my reason you may judge, but

when I parted with you I was not sure of going to England, now if you find my conduct amiss you may chastise me without control, as you may think proper, for as I am your own, it is no other person's business what you do with any of your Clan. I understand Stuart the murderer has openly declared, that if ever I returned to France, that he would murder me, I think when a proof of this is to be had, he ought to be put into close custody, of this I leave you to judge. As I never expect to get home any more, I now take my own name, And I hope you will believe me to be for ever—

“ Dr Chief yours to command

“ JAS MACGREGOR.”

“ DUNKIRK, 8th June, 1754.

“ Dear Chief,

“ According to your desire I gave you as genuine a confession of what I had done, as if I was before my father confessor, and if my behaviour is faulty, no doubt you are the only man that has a right to chastise me. I am afraid you disprove of what I have done as I had not the honour of hearing from you, but I hope when you consider, of both my past conduct and behaviour to my prince, and what baits and encouragement I had offered me from the contrary party which I had refused, that you will imagine I am not to be suspected, as I can prove that my fidelity was as much put to the trial as any whatever, and at the same time make appear that I never violated that trust that was reposed in me. And now in my greatest misery, and in a foreign country without friends, that I will be upbraided and supposed of mistrust, I think my fate very hard, especially when it is evidently known how much I have served my prince and what I suffered

in his service, besides the loss of all my effects, which was to me no small article : And now if by my going to England has lost me your countenance, it is hard. Pray dear Sir, would you have me to presume to tell you a lie, or was I not to let you know every thing, as I valued myself on your being my head, and my only support, and now if I am not to expect that friendship to whom can I apply, no doubt if I have lost your's, the world will say, (though unjustly,) that I have been guilty of some villainous thing, otherwise my Chief would never desert me, but let the case be as it will, I pray God an occasion worthy would offer which might show the deserts of man, and it is very possible, for all the misfortunes I have laboured under, that I would show, by my friends and followers, that a chief would have very good reason to have some value for me, Sir, forgive me to tell you that I have done a great deal of honour, once in my time, to you, and your clan, and I hope in God to do more or I die. If you be so good as favour me with a letter on receipt of this, that I may not labour under the doubts of your displeasure, otherwise I will not presume to give you further trouble till once time will satisfy you of the verity of what I have wrote you, and I ever am with grateful submission and due respect—

“ Dr Chief,—Your's to kill or cure

JAS MACGREGOR.”

“ PARIS, *Sept. 25th, 1754.*

“ Dr Chief,

“ I came here last night and thought it my duty to let you know that I was obliged to leave Dunkirk for my safety, for Lochgarry last week (as I was informed) had lodged an information against me to the Grand Baillie

letting him know I was sent on purpose from England to be a spy. I was advised by some friends to withdraw for fear I should be laid up upon suspicion as I had no friends there to report my innocence, and as the officers of the place had received orders to take me up, I was obliged to come off in such a hurry, that it confused me entirely, as I was obliged to come off with little Cash in my pocket, and tho' I had (had) full time I had not a great deal more, as I was put to so much charges by my illness and keeping company with the English gentleman I was with at St Omers, who would have made my fortune, had not Lochgarry come and given him the worst character of me which could be given. By all appearance I am born to suffer Crosses, and it seems y'r not at an End for such is my wretched Case at present that I do not know earthly where to go or what to do as I have no Subsistence to keep Soul and Body together. All that I have carried here is about 13 livres, and has taken a Room at my old quarters in Hotel St Pierre Rue de Cordier. I send you the bearer begging of you to let me know if you are to be in Town soon, that I may have (the) pleasure of seeing you, for I have none to make Application to but you alone, and all I want is if it was possible you could contrive where I could be employed, so as to keep me in Life without going to entire Beggary. This probably is a difficult point, yet unless it's attended with some difficulty you might think nothing of it, as your long head can bring about matters of much more Difficulty and Consequence than this. If you'd disclose this matter to your friend Mr Buttler it's possible he might have some Employ wherein I could be of use, as I pretend to know as much of breeding and riding of horses as any in France, besides that I am a good Hunter either on horseback or

by fowling. You may judge my Reduction as I propose the meanest things to serve a turn till better cast up. I am sorry that I am obliged to give you so much trouble, but I hope you are very well assured that I am grateful for what you have done for me and I leave you to judge of my present wretched case. I am and shall forever continue

“Dear Chief—Your own to command

“JAS MACGREGOR.”

“P.S. If you send your pipes by the Bearer and all the other little trinkims belonging to it, I would put them in order, and play some Melancholy tunes, which I may now with Safety, and in real truth. Forgive my not going directly to your house, for if I could shun seeing of yourself I could not choose to be seen by my Friends in my wretchedness nor by any of my Acquaintance.”

On the cover is the following note: “Letter from James Macgregor, on his arrival at Paris the week before he died, October, 1754.”

The above letters, while they exhibit a spirit of Highland independence, and evince that devotion with which a chieftain was regarded, must at the same time, claim our admiration of the man, who, suffering under all the horrors of exile,—want, and separation from his family, was bold enough to scorn an appointment, in itself lucrative, but which was to be a scourge to his country, and was derogatory to his character as a gentleman: and we must deplore the severity of those decrees that excluded such men from mercy, though, by a temporary misguidance of principle, they became amenable to the offended laws of their country.

James Macgregor died at Paris, eight days after he wrote the last letter above transcribed; and in him his clan lost one of its ablest and most enthusiastic supporters.

The only other branch of that name which we can at present notice was Gregor Macgregor of Glengyle, known by the appellation of *Ghlune Dhu*, from a black mark on one of his knees. He was the nephew of Rob Roy; and became no less eminent, as he followed the steps of his uncle, whom he wished to emulate, having often been his companion upon expeditions of danger. Gregor, like his uncle, had changed his name, and assumed that of James Graham, from the same proscriptive edict against his clan. During his juvenile years he had closely attended the precepts of his uncle, and looked up to him as his protector; yet, until his strength was matured, he did not head any foray of his clan. But his uncle having been wounded in an attack upon a party of military who opposed his carrying off some cattle from the vicinity of Dumbarton, Gregor was deputed to take the command along with his cousin James.

They made an irruption to Drymen, and summoned the attendance of the surrounding lairds and tenants to the church of that place, ²⁵⁷ to pay him their *black-mail*. They all complied but one person, whose cattle they drove away, which, however, gave their lads some trouble, from the ferocity of a bull, but which they contrived to tame before he reached the Trosachs.

The next of Gregor's exploits was that of taking the fort of Inversnaid in 1745, accompanied by his cousin James and twelve men. In the fort they only found nine soldiers, the rest of the garrison having been out working at roads; but they also secured the whole of them in name

of prince Charles Stewart, and marched them, eighty-nine in number, as prisoners, to the castle of Doune.

Two friends of Gregor's, suspected of treason about this time, were taken into custody by a military party of forty men. Gregor, with his twelve men, pursued and overtook them near Dunkeld, beat them off, and rescued his friends.

During the strict scrutiny and rigorous course of punishment, which followed the unhappy commotion of 1745 and 1746, Gregor, like many others, was forced to forsake his home, and take refuge among the woods and mountains of the Highlands. He was once observed lurking in the wilds of Glenlednick, and pursued across the hills to Loch Tay by a party of Campbells, one of whom he shot; and judging it unsafe to remain so near his own country, he and his only attendant, a clansman, travelled towards the braes of Athol, where they hoped to conceal themselves unmolested. Having traversed those wild and inhospitable regions for some days, they arrived at the lonely hut of a shepherd, immersed in a deep glen surrounded with wood. The shepherd and his wife gave them a hearty welcome; and upon hearing that they were out with the prince, their hosts agreed to shelter them for some time. This place was so far distant from any other habitation, that the wanderers believed themselves secure. Reports, however, reached the ears of the duke of Athol, that two suspicious men, one of them with a black mark on his knee, were concealed in this cottage; and he found means to instruct the hind, so that his lodgers might be secured by stratagem, as the desperate bravery of Macgregor had staggered the resolution of the Athol men, and they would not openly assail him, even with superior numbers. It was accordingly agreed that six men should be concealed in the house, who were to rush upon him unawares, make him a prisoner, or effect his destruction.

It chanced that Macgregor and his lad had one day gone to kill a deer in the neighbouring forest. The day rained so much that they were quite wet on their return. Macgregor sat down by the fire to dry himself; and as his hair was very long and wet, the landlady offered to comb and dry it. While in the act of doing so, she twisted her hand in it, and pulled him suddenly down upon his back to the ground. The concealed assassins and the false shepherd immediately rushed upon him. He called to his companion; their strength was herculean; and in a few minutes their assailants were all either dead or maimed. The treacherous woman, with the resolution of a fiend, having opposed their departure from her house with a drawn dagger, was seized and hanged on a joist. Gregor and his servant were both severely wounded, and having quitted this scene of blood, they returned to Glengyle; but from the fatigue he had undergone, and the wounds he received, Macgregor's servant only lived two days after his arrival.

When the eventful periods of Scottish history in which those heroes flourished had passed away, the policy of the mountains took a new and important turn. Various arts and improvements were introduced, which speedily effected the most beneficial changes, and convinced the natives that it was possible to live and be regarded for other qualities than those of war; while the removal of the long and ill-judged proscription of the clan Gregor, though unfeelingly opposed by a narrow-minded nobleman of their own country, turned their energies to better purposes, and rendered them no less respectable than other members of the state.

THE END





