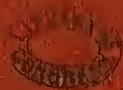


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THE
LIFE

AND
SURPRISING EXPLOITS
OF

Rob Roy Macgregor;

WITH AN
HISTORICAL SKETCH

Of the Celebrated

CLAN MACGREGOR.

BY D. STEWART, M. A.

'The Eagle he was lord above,
But Rob was lord below.'

Wordsworth.

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LIFE

OF

Rob Roy Macgregor.

THE celebrated ROBERT MACGREGOR, or ROY ROY, was the second son of Donald Macgregor, of the family of Glengyle, a lieutenant-colonel in the king's service. His mother was a daughter of Campbell of Duneaves, who had two daughters and two sons, John and Robert. Our hero 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; an ancient practice still retained in the Highlands, where names are bestowed from the most trifling incidents, or personal defects, qualities, or appearance.

Rob Roy's family were very respectable in his clan.— His father was the friend and ally of the earl of Moray, whom he assisted with 300 Macgregors, in an expedition to the north, to quell an insurrection of the Macphersours. For this service, the earl granted him a lease of a farm, which still remains in the possession of the family. During the minority of his chief, who was his nephew, he exercised all the rights and privileges of his superior, and was styled, 'Tutor of the Macgregor.'

The education which Rob Roy received, though not liberal, was deemed sufficient for the sphere of life which he was destined to occupy. In his early years, it would have required the penetration of a man of accurate judgment to discover those indications of sagacity and prudence which afterwards distinguished him. He, however, evinced strong natural parts, and soon excelled all his compeers in the rude, though essential, accomplishments of the age. He was active, bold, and possessed of great and uncommon bodily powers. In the use of the broad sword, few or none could equal him. This superiority did not merely result from superior skill, but is partly to be attributed to the astonishing power which he possessed in his arms. 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 his garters under his knee with his fingers.

But although his frame was so singularly robust and muscular, and his disposition most daring and resolute, yet

his manners were complacent and his address insinuating; His faculties were acute, his conclusions prompt, and his resolutions determined. Nothing, even during his youth, could divert him from his purpose; and when roused by opposition, he became fierce and uncontroulable.

In his youth, he studied the ancient history, and recited the impressive poetry of his country; for the Highlanders, from the remotest period, have been accustomed to recount the exploits of their progenitors in poems and other traditionary legends; and these were eminently calculated to inspire sentiments that cherished a warlike and enterprising spirit.

Rob Roy in his boyhood delighted in the reveries of a warm and romantic imagination; and it is said that he would spend whole days in contemplating the sublime and sullen grandeur of his native wilds. '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; and 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 imagination glowed with the fervour of youth, were never afterwards eradicated. They continued to bias his temper, and to give it 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, in the Highlands, the doctrines of the reformation had been received, not from a persuasion of their abstract excellence, but from motives merely political in the chiefs, and from habits of obedience in the people. *Rob Roy* was not therefore a strict presbyterian, but indulged a belief in the superstitions of his country. Indeed, it was scarcely possible that an ardent youth, deeply tinged with the melancholy which results from the sombre and gloomy aspect of Highland scenery, should be able to resist the influence of a corresponding religion.—Notwithstanding, therefore, *Rob Roy's* strength of mind, he was naturally led to credit the miracles, the witchcraft, and the second sight, which none of his countrymen doubted. Besides, the boldest of men are the most inclined, when their occupations are dangerous and uncertain, to

believe in supernatural agency, to consult omens, and to confide in charms, the certainty of prophecy, or the performance of superstitious rites.

Rob Roy being destined to follow the quiet avocations of a rural life, took a tract of grazing land at Balquhaddar, and for some years pursued a peaceable and inoffensive 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. In order to protect himself from the provoking and ruinous depredations of these marauders, he was constrained to maintain a party of select men; and to this cause may be partly attributed the warlike habits which he afterwards acquired.

The father of *Rob Roy* collected fees of protection from the people in his neighbourhood; and, upon the old man's demise, he pursued a similar course of life, augmented the number of his followers, and demanded the regular payment of black mail. But though he was rigorous in the enforcement of this ancient tax, he fulfilled his engagements with uncommon effect and determination; and it was in the pursuit and punishment of a daring gang of robbers that he first displayed his resolution and courage.

A considerable party of Macras, from the western coast of Ross, having committed an outrage on the property of Finlarig, and carried off fifteen head of cattle, an express informed *Rob Roy* of the circumstance. Being the first call of the kind he had received since he had become the acknowledged protector of the vicinity, he instantly summoned twelve of his men, and set off to overtake the plunderers. During two days and a night, he travelled without intermission before he obtained any other information as to their track, than at times seeing the impression of the cattles feet on the ground. On the second night, being somewhat fatigued, he and his men lay down on the heather, in a dreary glen situated near the confines of Badenoch. But they had not rested long, when one of them discovered a fire at a little distance, which had been hid by some thick coppice wood. This he communicated to his companions, and they went on to reconnoitre, when they found it was a band of jolly tinkers, who were carousing near their tent. Their mirth, however, was turned into terror when they beheld *Rob Roy* and his party, as they little expected such an intrusion in so secluded a place. But they soon recognised Macgregor, whose warlike and striking appearance

never failed to impress his features on the memory of every beholder.

The tinkers very readily 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 lofty, semi-circular rocks, where the Macgregors overtook them as they were setting out, and as the morning began to draw on the lofty pinnacles of the mountains. *Rob Roy*, with a loud and terrific 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 with such fury, that 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 ; but two being killed, and five more wounded, they gave up the contest. Four of *Rob Roy's* lads were severely 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, was driven back and restored to the rightful owner.

Rob Roy received great praise for this exploit ; and many now voluntarily offered to contribute their donation of black mail. This circumstance, no doubt, tended to arouse the latent activity and courage of his mind.

Dr Jamison thinks that this contribution, called *black mail*, may be derived from *mail*, signifying rent, and *black* he derives from its illegality. However, this tax had been long suffered to prevail in the Highlands ; and the custom of so many ages had confirmed the practice, so that it was considered neither unjust nor dishonourable to enforce it. The tax was usually paid by the inhabitants of the Lowland borders, under promise of protection from the depredations of marauding hordes, who attacked them from different quarters. These predatory forays were sometimes directed against hostile clans, but principally against the frontier inhabitants, who were considered a different race, and as such were held on the footing of enemies. The receiver of the tribute undertook to keep the subscriber 'skaitless of any loss to be sustained by the heritors, tenants, or inhabitants, through the stealing or taking away of cattle, horses, or sheep ; and either to return the cattle so stolen within six months, or pay their value.' The impost con-

sisted of money, meal or cattle, according to agreement.

The executive government not only sanctioned, but even enforced the exaction of black mail. A curious order of the justices of peace for the county of Stirling, dated 3d of February (1758-9,) is preserved in the statistical account of the parish of Strathblane, vol. XVIII. 582. By this, several heritors and tenants in different parishes, who had agreed to pay this contribution to captain Macgregor, for the protection of *their houses, goods, and gear*, are enjoined to make payment to him without delay; and all constables are commanded to see 'this order put into execution, as they shall answer to the contrair.'

Rob Roy's exaction of this tax was not therefore an unauthorised robbery, but sanctioned by custom and local institution. He was also 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 property of the people from distant plunderers. The independent companies of this corps, 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 now formed a matrimonial engagement with Mary a daughter of Macgregor of Comar, who is represented to have been a woman of an agreeable temper and domestic habits, and active and economical in the management of her family. But though active and steady, she took no part in the predatory concerns of her husband, except on one occasion afterwards to be mentioned. Here it may be proper to remark, that the fair sex among the Highlanders were highly respected, and passionately praised in their native melodies.

Rob Roy was not possessed of any patrimonial estate, but he became master of the estate of Craigerostan in the following manner:—'When Macgregor of Macgregor was driven from his possession in Glenurchy by the Campbells, he bought the lands of Inversnait and Craigerostan, 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 treatment, 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 more 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 Craicrostan, and was sometimes denominated *baron* of Inversnait, a term long applied to *puisne lajds*, all over Scotland.

It has been already mentioned that *Rob Roy* had dedicated himself to the avocation of grazier; and as Highland cattle about this time were in great request in England, he was in the habit of making frequent journies for carrying on this traffic.

When Macgregor was fairly settled, and tacitly confirmed as laird of Craicrostan, he was naturally elated with an acquisition that gave him some consequence in his country. His friendship, from the peculiar circumstances of the times, became valuable, and was solicited by several of his wealthy neighbours. The political variance between the great families of Montrose and Argyle had degenerated into personal enmity; which induced them to court the favour of *Rob Roy*, whose independent mind, personal prowess, and daring spirit, made him either a desirable auxiliary or a formidable enemy.

Montrose, in order to gain the confidence and secure the friendship of Macgregor, made a proposition to enter into a copartnership with him in the trade of cattle-dealing, a plan in which he readily acquiesced; and being considered a successful drover, the artful nobleman seemed to place great reliance on his abilities. He accordingly advanced *Rob Roy* 1000 marks (about 50*l.* sterling), who was also expected to lay out a similar sum, and the profits were to be divided.

The earl of Argyle also laboured to form an alliance with *Rob Roy*, hoping that, from his resolute bravery and local

situation, he would be a source of constant annoyance to his enemy Montrose. Perhaps, also, Argyle felt conscious of the cruelties and injustice his ancestors had exercised over the clars, and was inclined to befriend their descendant, who seemed determined to support the former consequence of his progenitors. Besides, he might suppose that Rob Roy had evinced a conciliatory disposition by assuming the name of Campbell, that of Macgregor being under proscription. His signature was 'Robert Campbell.' But though Rob Roy had chosen this name in compliment to his mother, and in compliance with the law, yet he was acknowledged in the country and by his clan under no other name than that of Macgregor; and being deeply embued with hereditary antipathies, the wrongs which his ancestors had sustained rankled in his bosom, and he spurned the overtures of Argyle with scorn and indignation.

Rob Roy, in his transactions with the marquis of Montrose, was the active manager. He had carried them on with various success for some time; but a Macdonald, an inferior partner, on one occasion was entrusted with a large sum of money, with which he absconded. This greatly deranged Rob Roy's affairs, and he was neither able to pay Montrose his money, nor to support his own credit. Montrose acted with uncommon severity and harshness: he dissolved the copartnery, and insisted that Rob Roy should transfer his property in satisfaction of the claims he preferred. This proposition was firmly rejected; nor could the threats and address of Montrose's factor, Graham of Killearn, alter his purpose. At length, a law-suit was entered against Rob Roy, and he was finally compelled to give up his lands in mortgage to Montrose, under condition that they should again revert to himself when he could pay the debt.

Rob Roy was extremely indignant at the ungenerous conduct of Montrose, who had made him responsible for the whole debts of the partnership, and was grieved to be compelled to deliver up a property which he had hoped would give respectability and stability to his family. However, his mind was too strong to be weakened by misfortune; he redoubled his exertions, and was soon able to tender the sum for which his estate was held. But now the meanness of Montrose's conduct was apparent. He refused to deliver up Rob Roy's property; pretending, that besides interest and other expenses, the amount had greatly increased, and that it would take time to make out the statement. In this

equivocal manner the marquis's factor endeavoured to evade the lawful claims of an injured man.

Just at this time the revolution took place, and produced great commotions in the Highlands, where the natives were well affected to the expelled house of Stewart; and many of the chieftains were arraying their followers to be in readiness for acting in their cause. Argyle 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, aware that Rob Roy, in the event of a war, would be a valuable auxiliary, he renewed his entreaties to him, and warmly solicited his assistance.

The suspicious Montrose soon discovered that a correspondence had commenced between Macgregor and Argyle; and, eager for the destruction of a family that rivalled him in greatness, he wrote a letter to Rob Roy, in which he promised, that if he would go to Edinborough, and give such information as would convict Argyle of treasonable practices, he would not only withdraw the mortgage upon his property, but in addition give him a large sum of money. Rob Roy received this infamous proposal with the lofty contempt and proud scorn of a Macgregor; and, without deigning to return an answer, forwarded it to Argyle, who soon took occasion to confront Montrose with a charge of malevolence. But Rob Roy suffered severely for this noble act, as Montrose in revenge procured an adjudication of his estate, and it was evicted for a sum very inadequate to its value.

During this transaction, Rob Roy was in England upon business, and the expulsion of his family was conducted by Graham of Killearn, under circumstances of the utmost indignity and barbarity. This man, in order to gratify the malice of his master, treated Mrs. Macgregor with the wantonness and cruelty of a savage. Well might the ingenious writer, who has lately drawn her character with such grandeur of aspect, make her exclaim to the commander of the King's troops, 'I am no stranger to your tender mercies. Ye have left me neither name nor fame; my mother's bones will shrank aside in their grave when mine are laid beside them. Ye have left me and mine neither house nor hold, blanket nor bedding, cattle to feed us, or flocks to clothe us. Ye have taken from us all—all—the very name of our ancestors have ye taken away, and now ye come for our lives.'

When Macgregor returned, and beheld his destitute and oppressed family, his soul was filled with rage, and he de-

terminated to take ample revenge on the authors of his misfortunes. His first act of hostility against Montrose was at a term when he knew the tenantry of that nobleman were to pay their rents; when he and his men called upon them, and obliged them to give him the money, for which, however, he granted them acknowledgments, 'that it was received 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 Chapellaroch 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 property, Rob Roy was resolved to punish him, and he had him im-

mediately 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, received a prudent admonition respecting his future conduct.

Rob Roy was always the friend and protector of the weak and oppressed. He had experienced the bitterness of fraud and tyranny ; he had long reflected upon the injustice and cruelties suffered by his kindred ; and his sword was readily drawn in the cause of humanity.

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, 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 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, where he had achieved a victory greater than a hundred of those gained over the weak and oppressed, he hurried home, lest the enraged military should overtake him; but when he arrived at his residence, he found his family gone, and all his flattering prospects in life ruined, as has been before detailed.

Rob Roy now devoted himself to military pursuits. He selected a body of men no less resolute than himself, and keen to enter on any exploit, however hazardous, that promised them redress. These bold and daring Macgregors formed a bond of union which no privation could tear asunder, nor contention overcome; while the masterly regulations and superior discipline of Rob Roy rendered them the terror of surrounding countries. The wrongs of their clan were mutually recited, and the determination of taking a proper revenge was renewed. Again, the warlike music of the pipes animated their spirits, and inspired them with a courage nearly irresistible.

The government at this period watched the motions of the Highland chieftains with a jealous eye, who were obliged to communicate their sentiments respecting the exiled house of Stewart in the most secret and clandestine manner. However, a great meeting of chieftains took place in Breadalbane, under pretence of hunting the deer, but in reality for the purpose of ascertaining the sentiments of each other, relative to the propriety of further operations after the unsuccessful attempt at Killicrankie. Opinions were unanimous, and a bond of faith and mutual support was signed. By the negligence of a chieftain to whom this bond was entrusted, it fell into the hands of captain William 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 at 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 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.

The spirit of clanship, the dignity assumed by great chieftains, and the profound submission of their vassals, often produced the most iniquitous actions, as the inferior and unprotected lairds were robbed of their property by their more powerful neighbours. The most 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 between him and Buchanan of Arnprior, and with the Campbells of Louchnell, Glenfalloch, 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, Drummond 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 he wanted no shew 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 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 sequestrated 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 300 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.

Sometimes the rich and powerful chieftain procured a mortgage bond upon the property of his needy neighbour; and this was very generally converted into an authority to seize their lands by force.

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 retrieving the bond. The period of redemption had only a few months to run; and under pretence that the bond could not 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 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 Argyleshire, 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 dispatched, 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.

It was the object of government to conciliate the power-

ful Highland barons, and to wink at their oppressions and robberies; and a knight belonging to the Argyle family was employed to examine the title by which inferior lairds held their lands, and if he judged them defective, to annex their property to some great favourite. Rob Roy considered this also as contrary to justice, and 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.

A contest having arisen between the houses of Perth and Athol, Rob Roy accepted an invitation to join the former; and having assembled sixty chosen men of his clan, he marched to Drummond castle, with seven pipers playing. The Atholmen were standing in proud array on the banks of the Earn, when the Macgregors and the Drummonds proceeded to attack them; but they no sooner recognised Rob Roy and his Macgregors, whom they regarded as irresistible demons, than they fled from the field, and after the loss of several men, were pursued to the precincts of their own country.

Rob Roy continued his depredations upon his cruel enemy, Montrose, and his dependents; but he always declined taking any personal revenge, though he had frequent opportunities of doing so. He, however, sometimes marched towards that nobleman's house, and drove the cattle from the surrounding parks; and as Rob Roy grew little corn, he usually supplied his wants from a meal store kept by Montrose at Moulin. Indeed, whenever he found a poor family in want, 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 the place where it was wanted.

At last the predatory incursions of our hero induced Montrose to apply to the privy council for protection; but dreading the enmity of Rob Roy, his name was intentionally kept out of the act, which 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 gain 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.

Rob Roy having thus defeated his enemies with one fifth of their number of men, grew, if possible, still more adventurous; while Montrose, as if in despair, ceased to obstruct him. At length, our hero made a descent into the plain, 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 Cadross castle, who would have overtaken him; but one of his men, Allister 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 daring misdemeanour seriously attracted the attention 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 Macgregors, who were within a few miles of them, to the number, as they heard, of 500; 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*l.* 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 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 horse 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, some-

what 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 regarded 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 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 spirit, 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.

Athol was excessively vain of the disgraceful conquest he had effected; and after placing our hero in safe custody, he dispatched an express to Edinburgh, to inform the court and his friends of the prowess he had displayed in laying hold of ‘the desperate outlaw and daring robber.’ Another messenger was at the same time sent to the secre-

tary of state at London, with a detail of his wonderful exploit; and the news spread rapidly throughout Scotland.

A strong party of military was sent by the commander in chief to escort Rob Roy to the capital. They halted at Kinross, where they were to receive him from another party sent by the governor of Perth. But Athol, desirous that no one should share the merit and profit of his exertions, dismissed the soldiery, being determined to escort the prisoner by his own vassals; and until they could be collected and equipped, our hero was detained at Logierait under a strong guard.

During these operations, Rob Roy was not idle. He appeared cheerful and resigned, and conciliated the good offices of his attendants, by profuse libations of whiskey; and as he was considered a very generous gentleman, he was allowed more than an 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, after all his bravadoes, at our hero's escape, was very great; and he determined, either by force or stratagem to take him and regain the character he had lost. The government also resolved to arrest his career, and for this purpose dispatched a body of horseman, who incessantly pursued him; but at length, despairing of success and ashamed of their vain opposition, they received orders to return.

Rob Roy, though relieved from the harrassing attempts of the military, 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. However, conformably to the boldness of his character, he hurled defiance at the duke, by ravaging the district of Athol, and carrying away cattle, while every man who attempted resistance was put to the sword.

But notwithstanding all the caution of our hero, he had

again nearly fallen into his enemies' hands; for the duke having sent a party of horse, they unexpectedly came upon him, and seized him in his own house of Monuchaltuarach in Balquhiddar. 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 dared 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 sound his horn, for he often carried one, Athol's men became alarmed, and speedily took their leave.

About this time Rob Roy's family lived at a farm near the head of Loch Ketturin; and on one occasion, his enemy, the factor of Montrose, hearing of his being at home, assembled a multitude of the tenantry, in order to take him by surprise. They accordingly proceeded, with Killearn 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.

At Balquhiddar the Maclarens occupied a farm to which Rob Roy's family claimed a right, and which he took possession of by force. The Maclarens being unable to cope with him, applied for assistance to their relations, the Stewarts of Appin, who assembled in great force to expel our hero. The parties came in sight of each other near the Kirkton of Balquiddar. 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.

At this time a debt, to a pretty large amount which our hero had long owed to a person in the Lowlands, could not 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 Balquhider, 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 shewn 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 was 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 gien 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 Balquhiddy.

These terrified people ran to Stirling, where 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 Callander, 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 various disgraceful failures which Athol sustained in his attempts to deliver Rob Roy up to the government, and the many vexatious assaults which he suffered from the bold outlaw, rankled in his breast; while the scoffs and laughter of his neighbours at his empty bravadoes drove him into a state of desperation, and at length he resolved to correct our hero in person. With this bold intention, he armed himself and set forward to Balquhiddy.

A large portion of that country then belonged to Athol in feu; and when he arrived there, he summoned the at-

tendance 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 such 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 to 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 obsequies of the old woman, it is doubtful if either the chief or his companions would have ever returned to taste his *brose* indigenous to their country.

The government, in order to repress the inroads of the Macgregors, planted a garrison in their country, at Invernaid. This measure was adopted at the instigation of Montrose, who, in conjunction with Athol and other powerful chieftains, endeavoured to annihilate the power and authority of Rob Roy. But these coercive measures were not calculated to intimidate such a man, who, having been driven to desperation, held those laws in contempt from whose benefit he was excluded. Though he despised the soldiers of this new fortress, yet he determined to intimidate them, and, if possible, to compel them to abandon a position which certainly was some check upon his operations. 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 whiskey, of which the English soldiery were very fond, she contrived, on an appointed night, to intoxicate the sentinels; 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.

In spite of all the efforts of his enemies, Rob Roy continued to levy his tribute of black mail. Those who refused what he conceived to be his right, were sometimes treated with severity; but many sent the tax as a voluntary present. Of this last description was an annual payment made to him, for many years, by Campbell of Abru-chil; 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 the 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 at his side, whom he ordered to drive away all the cattle they found on the land: but the laird came hastily to the gate, apologised 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 two hundred sheep. As the laird who was robbed, paid Rob Roy black mail, he pursued the banditti, whom he traced to the hills of Kintail in Rosshire, from whence the spoil was brought back to Craigharnet with the loss of only one sheep.

The owner of Garden castle having withheld Rob Roy's tribute, he went to claim his right; and finding the gentleman from home, he 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, 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.

Another anecdote is related, which shews the terror inspired by the very name of Rob Roy. In passing the place of Achertyre, near Stirling, he 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 the parlour where the landlady was sitting. He politely told her that he wished to purchase the poney 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 poney, 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 landlord immediately went to him, and agreed upon the price of the horse, which was instantly paid.

The lands of Brackley in Glenurchy being deserted by the possessor, a head of the clan Gregor, Rob Roy removed hither; but some time afterwards, he took a mountain farm belonging to the family of Argyle. When Montrose heard that he lived under Argyle's protection, he accused that nobleman, in the presence of the privy council, of harbouring an outlaw, who ought to be given up to the offended laws. Argyle 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 withal he is your factor, for he not long since took up your rents at Chapellaroch.' 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 prejudicial to his family, though he ceased to annoy, he could not forgive the injuries he had sustained.

Rob Roy continued in this retreat upon the mountains for several years, accompanied by his faithful adherents, who continued to pay frequent visits to the lands of Montrose and Athol. But although this residence was secure, it did not embrace many other important advantages. However, at length one of his powerful friends obtained a remission of the outlawry that had been proclaimed against him; and consequently he relinquished his possessions in Argyle, and returned to Balquhider, the soil of his nativity; but he continued occasionally to revisit that country, as he had many friends and several relations there, who shewed him all manner of kindness and attention.

About the year 1713, while Rob Roy was at the house of a powerful chieftain of the country of Argyle, nearly related to himself, he was introduced to two French gentlemen who had arrived on the west coast, as emissaries from the house of Stewart; 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 Stewarts.

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 dispatches for the chiefs of Macdonald and Macleod. Rob Roy's intercourse, however, with these 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 Dalnes 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 town,'—'Guidwife, am a Highlanman, 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 statcherin' about seeken for him, to wind him a pirl, an' transport him on the sea, or maybe to hang him. The mislear'd chieils 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 rypen her house,' and said, But wha'll I say was speerin' for the

aird?' 'Just tell him replied Rob Roy, 'it was a Highlan cousin o' his ain, a black-a-vic'd man, au' he'll ken by that; and took his leave. At the time mentioned, the guard appeared at his lodgings, 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 the 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.

When the clans began to arm in favour of the House of Stewart in 1715, Rob Roy, in conjunction with his nephew, Gregor Macgregor of Glengyle, also prepared the clan Gregor for the contest. He marched at the head of these bold mountaineers into Monteith and Lennox, and disarmed all the adherents of the Hanoverian family. He next secured all the boats on Loch Lomond, and took possession of an island in it, from whence they sent parties to levy contributions in the neighbouring counties; and so terrified were the inhabitants of Dumbarton of receiving a visit from Rob Roy, that they removed their most valuable effects.

The friends of government, in order to allay the existing ferment, and to overawe the children of the misty Ber Lomond, determined to act on the offensive. Several armed boats, from the men of war in the Clyde, made their way into Loch Lomond: and 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 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 se-

cure 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 Argyle 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 Sheriff-muir, 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 Argyle, should he join the earl of Mar,—and that he might not act contrary to his conscience, by joining Argyle against his expatriated king. It is allowed by several authors, that had he joined either party in this contest, it would have terminated decisively.

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; where, without much 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 Argyle or Mar; and at that place he and his men remained till Argyle 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* Magregor, *commonly* called Robert Roy.'

In consequence of the severe edicts of government, Rob Roy was now compelled to live in obscurity in a mean and solitary cottage, half hid with copse-wood, and situated under the brow of a rugged and barren mountain. Here,

however, he was not permitted to live in peace; for sitting early one morning by the side of the path which formed the chief road of the district, 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 attempt 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 reward you offer, I shall produce him to you. But 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 small 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; but 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: but if I do not, as I said, give you Rob Roy by the hand, you and your men are surely able enough to take it 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.

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 protegee of Argyle, 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 Argyle, 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. Argyle, 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 Argyle having soon after waited upon the king, his majesty told him of his having noticed a handsome Scots Highlander, when Argyle 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.

At this time, through Argyle's management, a meeting took place between Rob Roy and Montrose. 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.

In returning from London, the robust and manly form of our hero attracted the notice of a recruiting party at Carlisle, and, notwithstanding his advanced age, they wished to enlist him. Here he received a high bounty; but in a few days he continued his journey, nor did the military venture to oppose him.

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.

As Rob Roy was passing through Logierait, the minister was preaching in the church-yard. He stopped to hear his discourse, when the preacher threw out many severe hints, evidently intended for our hero. When the sermon was over, he therefore addressed the minister, saying he 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.

A Mr. Ferguson, who was appointed minister of Balquhidder, having applied for an increase of salary, which the lairds generally fixed upon the tenantry, Rob Roy forced him into a public house, and after treating him with whiskey, compelled him to 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 fat sheep and a fat cow, which during his life was regularly done.

At length, for what reasons we know not, Rob Roy took the resolution of becoming a Roman catholic. He accordingly confessed to an old priest of that faith, who resided at Drummond castle; and from the account which he 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 a 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.'

In the year 1719, Rob Roy went upon a desperate foray into the northern Highlands, when it was said he plundered a Spanish ship after it had been taken by the English. About this time, Macneil of Barra, who was an excellent swordsman, challenged him to a trial of skill; but this gallant gentleman had reason to repent his temerity, having had his sword arm nearly cut off. But our hero's vigour began now to decline, and his sight was greatly impaired; so that in another combat with Stewart of Ardsheal, he was worsted, when he threw down his sword, and vowed he would never take it up again.

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 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 arm-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*," (I will never return,) 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 Balquhidder, in 1735. His relics repose in the church-yard of that parish, with no other mark on his grave than a simple stone, on which some kindred spirit had carved a sword—the appropriate emblem of the man:—

'Clan-Alpine's omen and her aid.'

Rob Roy was a generous Highlander; and his free booting practices he considered as no more than a justifiable retaliation for the injuries that he and his clau had

sustained. He never broke his promise, nor turned his back upon a friend or an enemy. He was generous to the poor; he never oppressed the weak; nor did he ever view with indifference the oppression of the great.

END OF THE LIFE OF ROE ROY.



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