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THE
HISTORY OF SCOTLAND

VOLUME TWO

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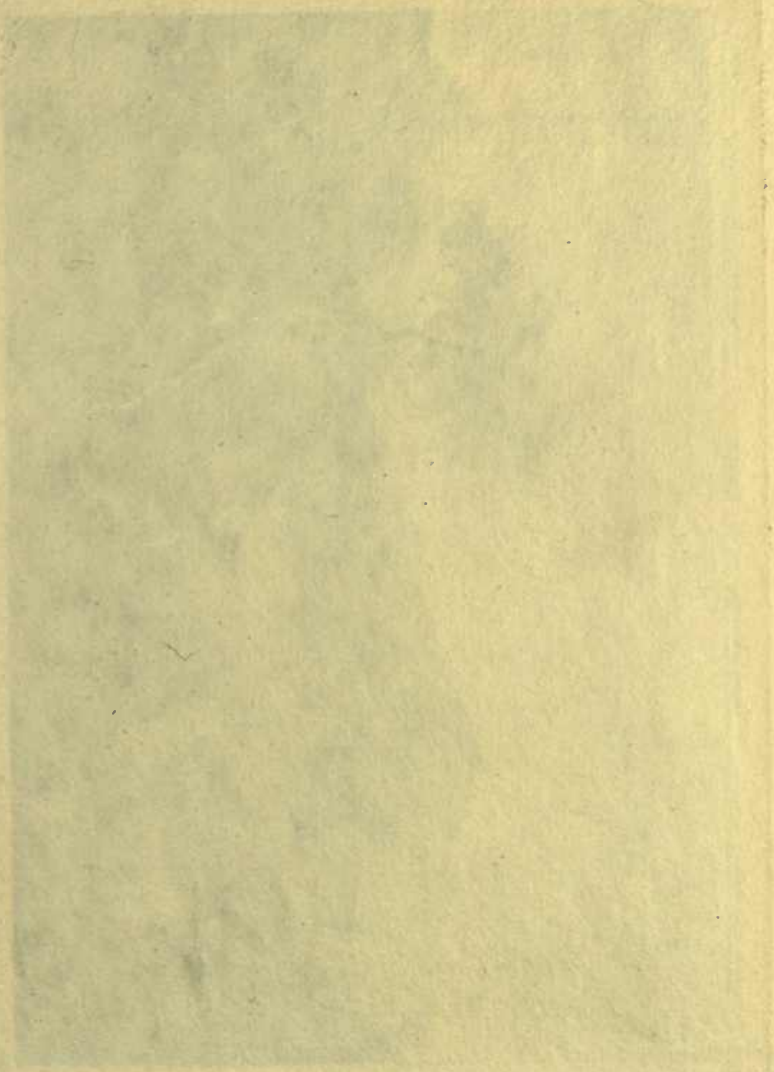

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The History of Scotland Its Highlands, Regiments and Clans

By

JAMES BROWNE, LL. D.

IN EIGHT VOLUMES
VOLUME II

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THE HISTORY OF SCOTLAND

VOLUME II

CHAPTER I

ACCESSION OF JAMES I

ON the return of James I from his captivity in England, he found Scotland, and particularly the Highlands, in a state of the most fearful insubordination. Rapine, robbery, and an utter contempt of the laws prevailed to an alarming extent, which required all the energy of a wise and prudent prince, like James, to repress. When these excesses were first reported to James, by one of his nobles, on entering the kingdom, he thus expressed himself: "Let God but grant me life, and there shall not be a spot in my dominions where the key shall not keep the castle, and the furze-bush the cow, though I myself should lead the life of a dog to accomplish it." The following correct and well-drawn sketch of the state of the Highlands, in the reign of James I, is thus given by Mr. Tytler: "At this period, the condition of the Highlands, so far as is discoverable from the few authentic documents which have reached our times, appears to have been in the highest degree rude and uncivilized. There existed a singular combination of Celtic and of feudal manners. Powerful chiefs, of Norman name and Norman blood, had penetrated into the remotest districts, and ruled over multitudes of vassals

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and serfs, whose strange and uncouth appellatives proclaim their difference of race in the most convincing manner. The tenure of lands by charter and seisin, the feudal services due by the vassal to his lord, the bands of friendship or of manrent which indissolubly united certain chiefs and nobles to each other, the baronial courts, and the complicated official pomp of feudal life, were all to be found in full strength and operation in the northern countries; but the dependence of the barons, who had taken up their residence in these wild districts, upon the king, and their allegiance and subordination to the laws, were less intimate and influential than in the Lowland divisions of the country; and as they experienced less protection, we have already seen that in great public emergencies, when the captivity of the sovereign, or the payment of his ransom, called for the imposition of a tax upon property throughout the kingdom, these great northern chiefs thought themselves at liberty to resist the collection within their mountainous principalities.

"Besides such Scoto-Norman barons, however, there were to be found in the Highlands and the Isles, those fierce aboriginal chiefs, who hated the Saxon and the Norman race, and offered a mortal opposition to the settlement of all intruders within a country which they considered their own. They exercised the same authority over the various clans or septs of which they were the chosen heads or leaders, which the baron possessed over his vassals and their military followers; and the dreadful disputes and collisions which perpetually occurred between these distinct ranks of potentates were accompanied by spoliations, ravages, imprisonments, and murders, which had at last become so frequent and so far extended, that the whole country beyond the Grampian range was likely to be cut off, by these abuses, from

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all regular communication with the more pacific parts of the kingdom."

Having, by a firm and salutary, but perhaps severe, course of policy, restored the empire of the laws in the Lowlands, and obtained the enactment of new statutes for the future welfare and prosperity of the kingdom, James next turned his attention to his Highland dominions, which, as we have seen, were in a deplorable state of insubordination, which made both property and life insecure. The king determined to visit in person the disturbed districts, and, by punishing the refractory chiefs, put an end to those tumults and enormities which had, during his minority, triumphed over the laws. The departure of James to his northern dominions was hastened by the intelligence of a disturbance in Caithness, into which Angus Dubh Mackay, or Black Angus, had entered, with all the forces he could collect in Strathnaver, and spoiled and laid waste that district. The inhabitants of Caithness met Mackay at Harpisdell, where a battle was fought, in which both sides suffered severely, but the result was not decisive, and Mackay continued his depredations. In the midst of these disorders, the king, in the year 1427, arrived at Inverness, attended by his parliament, and immediately summoned the principal chiefs there to appear before him. From whatever motives — whether from hopes of effecting a reconciliation by a ready compliance with the mandate of the king, or from a dread, in case of refusal, of the fate of the powerful barons of the south who had fallen victims to James' severity — the order of the king was obeyed, and the chiefs repaired to Inverness. No sooner, however, had they entered the hall where the parliament was sitting, than they were by order of the king arrested, ironed, and imprisoned in different apartments, and debarred all communication with each other, or with

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their followers. It has been supposed that these chiefs may have been entrapped by some fair promises on the part of James, and the joy which, according to Fordun, he manifested at seeing these turbulent and haughty spirits caught in the toils which he had prepared for them, favours this conjecture. The number of chiefs seized on this occasion are stated to have amounted to about forty; but the names of the principal ones only have been preserved. These were Alaster or Alexander Macdonald, Lord of the Isles; Angus Dubh, with his four sons, who could bring into the field four thousand fighting men; Kenneth More and his son-in-law, Angus of Moray, and Macmathan, who could muster two thousand men; Alexander Macreiny of Garmoran and John Macarthur, each of whom could bring into the field a thousand strong. Besides these were John Ross, James Campbell, and William Lesley. The Countess of Ross, the mother of Alexander, the Lord of the Isles, and heiress of Sir Walter Lesley, was also apprehended and imprisoned at the same time.

The king now determined to inflict summary vengeance upon his captives. Those who were most conspicuous for their crimes were immediately executed; among whom were James Campbell, who was tried, convicted, and hanged for the murder of John of the Isles; and Alexander Macreiny and John Macarthur, who were beheaded. Alexander of the Isles and Angus Dubh, after a short confinement, were both pardoned; but the latter was obliged to deliver up his son Neill as a hostage for his good behaviour, who was confined in the Bass, in the mouth of the Frith of Forth, and, from that circumstance, was afterward named Neill-Wasse-Mackay. Besides these, many others, who were kept in prison in different parts of the kingdom, were afterward condemned and executed.

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The royal clemency, which had been extended so graciously to the Lord of the Isles, met with an ungrateful return; for shortly after the king had returned to his Lowland dominions, Alexander collected a force of ten thousand men in Ross and the Isles, and with this formidable body laid waste the country; plundered and devastated the crown-lands, against which his vengeance was chiefly directed, and razed the royal burgh of Inverness to the ground. On hearing of these distressing events, James, with a rapidity rarely equalled, collected a force, the extent of which has not been ascertained, and marched with great speed into Lochaber, where he found the enemy, who, from the celerity of his movements, were taken almost by surprise. Alexander prepared for battle; but, before its commencement, he had the misfortune to witness the desertion of the Clan Chattan, and the Clan Cameron, who, to a man, went over to the royal standard. The king, thereupon, attacked Alexander's army, which he completely routed, and the latter sought his safety in flight. Being closely pursued, he sent a message to the king suing for peace; but James sternly refused to enter into any negotiation with a person who had rendered himself an outlaw; and giving strict orders for his apprehension, returned to his capital.

Reduced to the utmost distress, and seeing the impossibility of evading the active vigilance of his pursuers, who hunted him from place to place, this haughty lord, who considered himself on a par with kings, resolved to throw himself entirely on the mercy of the king, by an act of the most abject submission. Having arrived in Edinburgh, to which he had travelled in the most private manner, the humbled chief suddenly presented himself before the king, on Easter-Sunday, in the church of Holyrood, when he and his queen, sur-

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rounded by the nobles of the court, were employed in their devotions before the high altar. The extraordinary appearance of the fallen prince denoted the inward workings of his troubled mind. Without bonnet, arms, or ornament of any kind, his legs and arms quite bare, and his body only covered with a plaid, and holding a naked sword in his hand by the point, he fell down on his knees before the king, imploring mercy and forgiveness, and in token of his unreserved submission, offered the hilt of his sword to his Majesty. At the solicitation of the queen and nobles, James spared his life, but committed him immediately to Tantallan castle, under the charge of William, Earl of Angus, his nephew. This took place in the year 1429. The Countess of Ross was kept in close confinement in the ancient monastery of Inchcolm, on the small island of that name, in the Frith of Forth. The king, however, relented, and released the Lord of the Isles and his mother, after about a year's imprisonment.

During the confinement of the Lord of the Isles, the people of the isles and western Highlanders, incited by Donald Balloch, his kinsman, again revolted. He defeated the Earls of Mar and of Caithness, at Inverlochy, with great slaughter; but, on the approach of the king, Donald abandoned his army, and fled to Ireland, where he was afterward killed. His head was sent to the king at Stirling, in the year 1426. Many of Donald's followers were put to death by James' orders.

About this period happened another of those bloody frays, which destroyed the internal peace of the Highlands, and brought ruin and desolation upon many families. The circumstances which gave rise to the battle of Drum-na-Coub, were these. Thomas Macneill, son of Neill Mackay, who was engaged in the battle of Tuttum Turwigh, possessed the lands of Creigh, Span-

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iziedaill, and Palrossie in Sutherland. Having conceived some displeasure at Mowat, the laird of Freshwick, the latter, with his party, in order to avoid his vengeance, took refuge in the chapel of St. Duffus, near the town of Tain, as a sanctuary. Thither they were followed by Thomas, who not only slew Mowat and his people, but also burned the chapel to the ground. This outrage, upon religion and humanity, exasperated the king, who immediately ordered a proclamation to be issued, denouncing Thomas Macneill a rebel, and promising his lands and possessions as a reward to any one that would kill or apprehend him. Angus Murray, son of Alexander Murray of Cubin, immediately set about the apprehension of Thomas Macneill. To accomplish his purpose, he held a secret conference with Morgan and Neill Macneill, the brothers of Thomas, at which he offered, provided they would assist him in apprehending their brother, his two daughters in marriage, and promised to aid them in getting peaceable possession of such lands in Strathnaver as they claimed, which he showed them might be easily obtained, with little or no resistance, as Neill Mackay, son of Angus Dubh, from which the chief opposition might have been expected, was then a prisoner in the Bass, and Angus Dubh, the father, was unable, from age and infirmity, to defend his pretensions. Angus Murray also promised to request the assistance of the Earl of Sutherland. As these two brothers pretended a right to the possessions of Angus Dubh in Strathnaver, they were easily allured by these promises; they immediately apprehended their brother Thomas at Spaniziedaill in Sutherland, and delivered him up to Murray, by whom he was presented to the king. Macneill was immediately executed at Inverness, and Angus Murray obtained, in terms of the royal proclamation, a grant of the lands of Palrossie and Span-

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iziedaill from the king. The lands of Creigh fell into the hands of the Lord of the Isles, as superior, by the death and felony of Macneill.

In pursuance of his promise, Murray gave his daughters in marriage respectively to Neill and Morgan Macneill, and with the consent and approbation of Robert, Earl of Sutherland, he invaded Strathnaver with a party of Sutherland men, to take possession of the lands of Angus Dubh Mackay. Angus immediately collected his men, and gave the command of them to John Aberigh, his natural son, as he was unable to lead them in person. Both parties met about two miles from Toung, at a place called Drum-na-Coub; but, before they came to blows, Angus Dubh Mackay sent a message to Neill and Morgan, his cousins-german, offering to surrender them all his lands and possessions in Strathnaver, if they would allow him to retain Keantayle. This fair offer was, however, rejected, and an appeal was, therefore, immediately made to arms. A desperate conflict then took place, in which many were killed on both sides; among whom were Angus Murray and his two sons-in-law, Neill and Morgan Macneill. John Aberigh, though he gained the victory, was severely wounded, and lost one of his arms. After the battle, Angus Dubh Mackay was carried, at his own request, to the field to search for the bodies of his slain cousins, but he was killed by an arrow from a Sutherland man, who lay concealed in a bush hard by. Neill Macneill left three sons, Angus, John Bayn, and Paul; two of them, Angus and Paul, after the death of their father, fixed their quarters in Sutherland, and molested the inhabitants residing along the sea-coast thereof, and drove away some of their cattle to the Isle of Dolay in Breacht, where they took refuge; but being closely pursued, and judging that they were not sufficiently secure in the island, they retired,

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under cloud of night, to a hill close by, afterward called Knoc-Mhic-Neill, where they and their followers were slain, from which circumstance the hill was so named.

In consequence of this disaster at Drum-na-Coub, the Earl of Sutherland took up arms, and forced John Aberigh to seek safety in the isles. But he returned to Sutherland; and having entered Strathully, unawares, the night after Christmas, he slew three of the Sutherlands at Dinoboll. He again fled, but was so closely pursued by Robert, Earl of Sutherland, that he was forced to submit, after previously obtaining pardon. John then settled quietly in Strathnaver, where he continued till the reign of James I, when his brother Neill-Wasse-Mackay was relieved from his confinement in the Bass, and entered, with the full consent of John, into possession of his estates. To requite him, however, for his attention to his father, he gave him the lands of Lochnaver in liferent, which were long possessed by his posterity.

About this time, the state of the Highlands was lawless in the extreme. Property and life were equally insecure from the banditti who infested the country. James I made many salutary regulations for putting an end to the disorders consequent upon such a state of society, and the oppressed looked up to him for protection. The following remarkable case will give some idea of the extraordinary barbarity in which the spoliators indulged: A notorious thief, named Donald Ross, who had made himself rich with plunder, carried off two cows from a poor woman. This woman having expressed a determination not to wear shoes again till she had made a complaint to the king in person, the robber exclaimed, "It is false; I'll have you shod bebefore you reach the court;" and thereupon, with a

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brutality scarcely parallelled, the cruel monster took two horseshoes, and fixed them on her feet with nails driven into the flesh. The victim of this savage act, as soon as she was able to travel, went to the king, and related to him the whole circumstances of her case, which so exasperated him, that he immediately sent a warrant to the sheriff of the county, where Ross resided, for his immediate apprehension; which being effected, he was sent under an escort to Perth, where the court was then held. Ross was tried and condemned; and before his execution, a linen shirt, on which was painted a representation of his crime, was thrown over him, in which dress he was paraded through the streets of the town, afterward dragged at a horse's tail, and hanged on a gallows.[1]

The commotions in Strathnaver and other parts of the Highlands induced the king to make another expedition into that part of his dominions, previous to which, he summoned a Parliament at Perth, which was held on the fifteenth day of October, 1431, in which a land-tax, or "zelde," was laid upon the whole lands of the kingdom, to defray the expenses of the undertaking. No contemporary record of this expedition exists; but it is said that the king proceeded to Dunstaffnage castle, to punish those chiefs who had joined in Donald Balloch's insurrection; that on his arrival there, numbers of these came to him and made their submission, throwing the whole odium of the rebellion upon the leader, whose authority, they alleged, they were afraid to resist; and that, by their means, three hundred thieves and robbers were apprehended and put to death.

For several years after this expedition, the Highlands appear to have been tranquil; but, on the liberation of Neill Mackay from his confinement on the Bass, in the

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year 1437, fresh disturbances began. This restless chief had scarcely been released, when he entered Caithness, and spoiled the country. He was met at a place called Sandsett; but the people who came to oppose his progress were defeated, and many of them were slain. This conflict was called Ruaig Hanset; that is, the flight, or chase at Sandsett.

About the same time, a quarrel took place between the Keiths and some others of the inhabitants of Caithness. As the Keiths could not depend upon their own forces, they sought the aid of Angus Mackay, son of Neill last mentioned, who had recently died. Angus agreed to join the Keiths; and accordingly, accompanied by his brother, John Roy, and a chieftain named Iain-Mor-Mac-Iain-Riabhaich, with a company of men, he went into Caithness, and joining the Keiths, invaded that part of Caithness hostile to the Keiths. The people of Caithness lost not a moment in assembling together, and met the Strathnaver men and the Keiths at a place called Blare-Tannie. Here a sanguinary contest took place; but victory declared for the Keiths, whose success was chiefly owing to the prowess of Iain-Mor-Mac-Iain-Riabhaich, whose name was, in consequence, long famous in that and the adjoining country.

After the defeat of James, the ninth Earl of Douglas, who had renounced his allegiance to James II at Arkinholme, in 1445, he retired into Argleshire, where he was received by the Earl of Ross, with whom, and the Lord of the Isles, he entered into an alliance. The ocean prince, having a powerful fleet of five hundred galleys at his command, immediately assembled his vassals, to the amount of five thousand fighting men, and having embarked them in his navy, gave the command of the whole to Donald Balloch, Lord of Isla, his near kinsman, a chief who, besides his possessions in Scotland, had

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great power in the north of Ireland. This potent chief, whose hereditary antipathy against the Scottish throne was as keen as that of his relation, entered cheerfully into the views of Douglas. With the force under his command, he desolated the western coast of Scotland from Innerkip to Bute, the Cumrays, and the island of Arran; yet formidable as he was both in men and ships, the loss was not so considerable as might have been expected, from the prudent precautions taken by the king to repel the invaders. The summary of the damage sustained is thus related in a contemporary chronicle: "There was slain of good men, fifteen; of women, two or three; of children, three or four. The plunder included five or six hundred horse, ten thousand oxen and kine, and more than a thousand sheep and goats. At the same time they burned down several mansions in Innerkip around the church; harried all Arran; stormed and levelled with the ground the castle of Brodick; and wasted, with fire and sword, the islands of the Cumrays. They also levied tribute upon Bute; carrying away a hundred bolls of malt, a hundred marts, and a hundred marks of silver."

While Donald Balloch was engaged in this expedition, the Lord of the Isles, with his kinsmen and followers to the number of five or six hundred, made an incursion into Sutherland, and encamped before the castle of Skibo. What his object was has not been ascertained; but, as a measure of precaution, the Earl of Sutherland sent Neill Murray, son of Angus Murray, who was slain at Drum-na-Coub, to watch his motions. The Lord of the Isles immediately began to commit depredations, whereupon he was attacked by Murray, and compelled to retreat into Ross with the loss of one of his captains, named Donald Dubh-na-Soirn, and fifty of his men. Exasperated at this defeat, Macdonald sent another party

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of his islanders along with a company of men from Ross to Strathfleet in Sutherland to lay waste the country, and thus wipe off the disgrace of his late defeat. On hearing of this fresh invasion, the Earl of Sutherland despatched his brother Robert with a sufficient force to attack the Clan Donald. They met on the sands of Strathfleet, and, after a fierce and bloody struggle, the islanders and their allies were overthrown with great slaughter. The survivors fled with great precipitation, and were pursued as far as the Bonagh. Many perished in the course of their flight. This was the last hostile irruption of the Clan Donald into Sutherland, as all the disputes between the Lord of the Isles and the Sutherland family were afterward accommodated by a matrimonial alliance.

The vigorous administration of James II, which checked and controlled the haughty and turbulent spirit of his nobles, was also felt, as we have seen, in the Highlands, where his power, if not always acknowledged, was nevertheless dreaded; but upon the murder of that wise prince, and the accession of his infant son to the Crown, the princes of the north again abandoned themselves to their lawless courses. The first who showed the example was Allan of Lorn of the Wood, as he was called, a nephew of Donald Balloch by his sister. Coveting the estate of his elder brother, Ker of Lorn, Allan imprisoned him in a dungeon in the island of Kerera, with the view of starving him to death that he might the more easily acquire the unjust possession he desired; but Ker was liberated, and his property restored to him by the Earl of Argyle, to whom he was nearly related, who suddenly attacked Allan with a fleet of galleys, defeated him, burnt his fleet, and slew the greater part of his men. This act, so justifiable in itself, roused the revengeful passions of the island chiefs, who issued from

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their ocean retreats and committed the most dreadful excesses.

After the decisive battle of Touton, Henry VI and his queen retired to Scotland to watch the first favourable opportunity of seizing the sceptre from the house of York, and fixing it in the race of Lancaster. Edward IV anticipating the danger that might arise to his crown by an alliance between his rival, the exiled monarch, and the King of Scotland, determined to counteract the effects of such a connection by a stroke of policy. Aware of the disaffected disposition of some of the Scottish nobles, and northern and island chiefs, he immediately entered into a negotiation with John, Earl of Ross, and Donald Balloch, to detach them from their allegiance. On the nineteenth day of October, 1461, the Earl of Ross, Donald Balloch, and his son John de Isle, held a council of their vassals and dependents at Astornish, at which it was agreed to send ambassadors to England to treat with Edward. On the arrival of these ambassadors a negotiation was entered into between them and the Earl of Douglas, and John Douglas of Balveny, his brother, both of whom had been obliged to leave Scotland for their treasons in the previous reign. These two brothers, who were animated by a spirit of hatred and revenge against the family of their late sovereign, James II, warmly entered into the views of Edward, whose subjects they had become; and they concluded a treaty with the northern ambassadors which assumed as its basis nothing less than the entire conquest of Scotland. Among other conditions, it was stipulated, that, upon payment of a stipulated sum of money to himself, his son, and ally, the Lord of the Isles should become for ever the vassal of England, and should assist Edward and his successors in the wars in Ireland and elsewhere. And, in the event of the entire subju-

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gation of Scotland by the Earls of Ross and Douglas, the whole of the kingdom, on the north of the Frith of Forth, was to be divided equally between these earls and Donald Balloch, and the estates which formerly belonged to Douglas, between the Frith of Forth and the borders, were to be restored to him. This singular treaty is dated London, the eighteenth February, 1462.

Pending this negotiation, the Earl of Angus, at that time one of the most powerful of the Scottish nobles, having, by the promise of an English dukedom from the exiled Henry, engaged to assist in restoring him to his crown and dominions, the Earl of Ross, before the plan had been organized, in order to counteract the attempt, broke out into open rebellion, which was characterized by all those circumstances of barbarous cruelty which distinguished the inroads of the princes of the islands. He first seized the castle of Inverness at the head of a small party, being admitted unawares by the governor, who did not suspect his hostile intentions. He then collected a considerable army, and proclaimed himself king of the Hebrides. With his army he entered the country of Athole, — denounced the authority of the king, and commanded all taxes to be paid to him; and, after committing the most dreadful excesses, he stormed the castle of Blair, dragged the Earl and Countess of Athole from the chapel of St. Bridget, which he plundered, and carried them off to Isla as prisoners. It is related that the Earl of Ross thrice attempted to set fire to the holy pile, but in vain. He lost many of his war-galleys in a storm of thunder and lightning, in which the rich booty he had taken was consigned to the deep, a punishment which "was universally ascribed to the wrath of Heaven, which had armed the elements against the abettor of sacrilege and murder." Preparations were immediately made

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by the regents of the kingdom for punishing this rebellious chief; but these became unnecessary, for, touched with remorse, he collected the remains of his plunder, and stripped to his shirt and drawers, and barefooted, he, along with his principal followers, in the same forlorn and dejected condition, went to the chapel of St. Bridget which they had lately desecrated, and there performed a penance before the altar. The Earl and Countess of Athole were thereupon voluntarily released from confinement, and the Earl of Ross was afterward assassinated in the castle of Inverness by an Irish harper who bore him a grudge.

The successor of the Lord of the Isles not being disposed to tender the allegiance which his father had violated, the king, in the month of May, 1476, assembled a large army on the north of the Forth, and a fleet on the west coast, for the purpose of making a simultaneous attack upon him by sea and land. The Earl of Crawford was appointed admiral of the fleet, and the Earl of Athole generalissimo of the army. The latter was so quick in his movements as to come upon the Earl of Ross almost by surprise, and seeing no hopes of making effectual resistance against such a powerful force as that sent against him, he tendered his submission to the king on certain conditions, and resigned the earldom of Ross, and the lands of Kintyre and Knapdale, into his Majesty's hands. By this act he was restored to the king's favour, who forgave him all his offences, and infeft him of new in the lordship of the isles and the other lands which he did not renounce. The Earl of Athole was rewarded for this service by a grant of the lands and forest of Cluny.

After the Lord of the Isles had thus resigned the earldom of Ross into the king's hands, that province was perpetually molested by incursions from the islanders,

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who now considered it a fit theatre for the exercise of their predatory exploits. Gillespoc, cousin of the Lord of the Isles, at the head of a large body of the islanders, invaded the higher part of Ross, and committed great devastation. The inhabitants, or as many as the shortness of the time would permit, amongst whom the Clan Kenzie were chiefly distinguished, speedily assembled, and met the islanders on the banks of the Connan, where a sharp conflict took place. The Clan Kenzie fought with great valour, and pressed the enemy so hard, that Gillespoc Macdonald was overthrown, and the greater part of his men were slain or drowned in the river about two miles from Braile, thence called Blar-na-Pairc. The predecessor of the laird of Brodie, who happened to be with the chief of the Mackenzies at the time, fought with great courage. It is reported that, before the skirmish, the Clan Donald robbed and burned a chapel near the river Connan, not far from the place they fought, which, it was believed, was the cause of their disaster. Another contest took place afterward between the islanders and the Clan Donald and the Clan Kenzie, at a place called Drumchatt, when, after a sharp conflict, the islanders were routed and driven out of Ross.

For a considerable time the district of Sutherland had remained tranquil, but on the eleventh of July, 1487, it again became the scene of a bloody renconter between the Mackays and the Rosses. To revenge the death of a relation, or to wipe away the stigma of a defeat, were considered sacred and paramount duties by the Highlanders; and if, from the weakness of the clan, the minority of the chief, or any other cause, the day of deadly reckoning was delayed, the feeling which prompted revenge was never dormant, and the earliest opportunity was embraced of vindicating the honour of

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the clan. Angus Mackay, son of the famous Neill of the Bass, having been killed at Tarbet by a Ross, his son, John Riabhaich Mackay, applied to John, Earl of Sutherland, on whom he depended, to assist him in revenging his father's death. The earl promised his aid, and accordingly sent his uncle, Robert Sutherland, with a company of chosen men to assist John Mackay. With this force, and such men as John Mackay and his relation, Uilleam-Dubh-Mac-Iain-Abaraich, son of John Aberigh who fought at Drum-na-Coub, could collect, they invaded Strath-oy-kell, carrying fire and sword in their course, and laying waste many lands belonging to the Rosses. As soon as the laird of Balnagown, the chief of the Rosses, heard of this attack, he collected all his forces, and attacked Robert Sutherland and John Riabhaich Mackay, at a place called Aldy-charrish. A long and obstinate battle took place; on which side victory was to declare itself was a point which remained for a considerable time very dubious; but the death of Balnagown and seventeen of the principal landed gentlemen of Ross decided the combat, for the people of Ross, being deprived of their leader, were thrown into confusion, and utterly put to flight, with great slaughter. Among the principal gentlemen slain on the side of the Rosses were, Alexander Ross of Balnagown, Mr. William Ross, Alexander Terrall, Angus M'Culloch of Terrell, William Ross, John Wause, William Wasse, John Mitchell, Thomas Wause, and Hutcheon Wause.

The fruit of this victory was a large quantity of booty, which the victors divided the same day; but the avarice of the men of Assint induced them to instigate John Mackay to resolve to commit one of the most perfidious and diabolical acts ever perpetrated by men who had fought on the same side. The design of the Assint men was, to cut off Robert Sutherland and his whole party,

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and possess themselves of their share of the spoil, before the Earl of Sutherland could learn the result of the battle, that he might be led to suppose that his uncle and his men had all fallen in the action with the Rosses. When this plan was divulged to Uilleam-Dubh-Mac-Iain-Abaraich, he was horrified at it, and immediately sent notice to Robert Sutherland of it, that he might be upon his guard. Robert assembled his men upon receipt of this extraordinary intelligence, told them of the base intentions of John Mackay, and put them in order, to be prepared for the threatened attack; but on John Riabhaich Mackay perceiving that Robert and his party were prepared to meet him, he slunk off, like a perfidious villain, and went home to Strathnaver.

The lawless state of society in the Highlands, which followed as a consequence from the removal of the seat of government to the Lowlands, though it often engaged the attention of the Scottish sovereigns, never had proper remedies applied to it. At one time the aid of force was called in, and when that was found ineffectual, the vicious principle of dividing the chiefs, that they might the more effectually weaken and destroy one another, was adopted. Both plans, as might be supposed, proved abortive. If the government had, by conciliatory measures, and by a profusion of favours, suitable to the spirit of the times, secured the attachment of the heads of the clans, the supremacy of the laws might have been vindicated, and the sovereign might have calculated upon the support of powerful and trustworthy auxiliaries in his domestic struggles against the encroachments of the nobles. Such ideas appear never to have once entered the minds of the kings, but it was reserved for James IV to make the experiment. "To attach to his interest the principal chiefs of these provinces, to overawe and subdue the petty princes who

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affected independence, to carry into their territories, hitherto too exclusively governed by their own capricious or tyrannical institutions, the same system of a severe, but regular and rapid administration of civil and criminal justice, which had been established in his Lowland dominions, was the laudable object of the king; and for this purpose he succeeded, with that energy and activity which remarkably distinguished him, in opening up an intercourse with many of the leading men in the northern counties. With the captain of the Clan Chattan, Duncan Mackintosh; with Ewan, the son of Alan, captain of the Clan Cameron; with Campbell of Glenurqhay; the Macgilleouns of Duart and Lochbuy; Mackane of Ardnamurchan; the lairds of Mackenzie and Grant; and the Earl of Huntly, a baron of the most extensive power in those northern districts — he appears to have been in habits of constant and regular communication — rewarding them by presents, in the shape either of money or of grants of land, and securing their services in reducing to obedience such of their fellow chieftains as proved contumacious, or actually rose in rebellion."

But James carried his views farther. Rightly judging how much the personal presence of the sovereign would be valued by his distant subjects, and the good effects which would result therefrom, he resolved to visit different parts of his northern dominions. Accordingly, in the year 1490, accompanied by his court, he rode twice from Perth across the chain of mountains which extends across the country from the border of the Mearns to the head of Loch Rannoch, which chain is known by the name of the "Mount." Again, in 1493, he twice visited the Highlands, and went as far as Dunstaffnage and Mengarry, in Ardnamurchan. In the following year he visited the isles no less than three

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times. His first voyage to the islands, which took place in April and May, was conducted with great state. He was attended by a vast suite, many of whom fitted out vessels at their own expense. The grandeur which surrounded the king, impressed the islanders with a high idea of his wealth and power; and his condescension and familiarity with all classes of his subjects acquired for him a popularity which added strength to his throne. During these marine excursions, the youthful monarch indulged his passion for sailing and hunting, and thereby relieved the tediousness of business, by the recreation of agreeable and innocent pleasures.

The only opposition which James met with during these excursions was from the restless Lord of the Isles, who had the temerity to put the king at defiance, notwithstanding the repeated and signal marks of the royal favour he had experienced. But James was not to be trifled with, for he summoned the island prince to stand his trial for "treason in Kintire;" and in a parliament held in Edinburgh shortly after the king's return from the north, "Sir John of the Isles," as he is named in the treasurer's accounts, was stripped of his power, and his possessions were forfeited to the Crown.

One of those personal petty feuds which were so prevalent in the Highlands occurred about this time. Alexander Sutherland of Dilred, being unable or unwilling to repay a sum of money he had borrowed from Sir James Dunbar of Cumnock, the latter took legal measures to secure his debt by appraising part of Dilred's lands. This proceeding vexed the laird of Dilred exceedingly, and he took an umbrage at the Dunbars, who had recently settled in Sutherland, "grudgeing as it were" (says Sir R. Gordon) "that a stranger should brawe (brave) him at his owne doors." Happening

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to meet Alexander Dunbar, brother of Sir James, who had lately married Lady Margaret Baillie, Countess Dowager of Sutherland, high words passed between them, a combat ensued, and after a long contest Alexander Dunbar was killed. Sir James Dunbar thereupon went to Edinburgh, and laid the matter before King James the Fourth, who was so exasperated at the conduct of Alexander Sutherland, that he immediately proclaimed him a rebel, sent messengers everywhere in search of him, and promised his lands to any person that would apprehend him. After some search he was apprehended with ten of his followers by his uncle, Y-Roy-Mackay, brother of John Reawigh Mackay already mentioned, who sent him to the king. Dilred was tried, condemned, and executed, and his lands declared forfeited. For this service, Y-Roy-Mackay obtained from the king a grant of the lands of Armdall, Far, Golspietour, Kinnald, Kilcolmkill, and Dilred, which formerly belonged to Alexander Sutherland, as was noted in Mackay's infeftment, dated in 1449. "Avarice" (says Sir R. Gordon) "is a strange vyce, which respects neither blood nor freindship. This is the first infeftment that any of the familie of Macky had from the king, so far as I can perceave by the records of this kingdom; and they wer untill this tyme possessors onlie of ther lands in Strathnaver, not careing much for any charters or infeftments, as most pairts of the Highlanders have alwise done."

The grant of the king as to the lands over which Sir James Dunbar's security extended, was called in question by Sir James, who obtained a decree before the lords of council and session, in February, 1512, setting aside the right of Y-Roy-Mackay, and ordaining the Earl of Sutherland, as superior of the lands, to receive Sir James Dunbar as his vassal.

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A lamentable instance of the ferocity of these times is afforded in the case of one of the earls of Sutherland, who upon some provocation slew two of his nephews. This earl, who was named John, had a natural brother, Thomas Moir, who had two sons, Robert Sutherland and the Keith, so called on account of his being brought up by a person of that name. The young men had often annoyed the earl, and on one occasion they entered his castle of Dunrobin to brave him to his face, an act which so provoked the earl, that he instantly killed Robert in the house. The Keith, after receiving several wounds, made his escape, but he was overtaken and slain at the Clayside near Dunrobin, which from that circumstance was afterward called Ailein-Cheith, or the bush of the Keith.

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CHAPTER II

FEUDS AND QUARRELS

In the year 1516, Adam, Earl of Sutherland, in anticipation of threatened dangers in the north, entered into bonds of friendship and alliance with the Earl of Caithness for mutual protection and support. The better to secure the good-will and assistance of the Earl of Caithness, Earl Adam made a grant of some lands upon the east side of the water of Ully; but the Earl of Caithness, although he kept possession of the lands, joined the foes of his ally and friend. The Earl of Sutherland, however, would have found a more trustworthy supporter in the person of Y-Roy-Mackay, who had come under a written obligation to serve him, the same year; but Mackay died, and a civil war immediately ensued in Strathnaver, between John and Donald Mackay, his bastard sons, and Neill-Naverigh Mackay, brother of Y-Roy, to obtain possession of his lands. John took possession of all the lands belonging to his father in Strathnaver; but his uncle Neill laid claim to them, and applied to the Earl of Caithness for assistance to recover them. The earl, after many entreaties, put a force under the command of Neill and his two sons, with which they entered Strathnaver, and obtaining an accession of strength in that country, they dispossessed John Mackay, who immediately went to the Clan Chattan, and Clan Kenzie, to crave their aid and support, leaving his brother Donald Mackay to defend himself in Strathnaver as best he could. Donald, not having a sufficient

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force to meet his uncle and cousins in open combat, had recourse to a stratagem which succeeded entirely to his mind. With his little band he, under cloud of night, surprised his opponents at Delreavigh in Strathnaver, and slew both his cousins and the greater part of their men, and thus he utterly destroyed the issue of Neill. John Mackay, on hearing of this, immediately joined his brother, and drove out of Strathnaver all persons who had favoured the pretensions of his uncle Neill-Naverigh. This unfortunate old man, after being abandoned by the Earl of Caithness, threw himself upon the generosity of his nephews, requesting that they would merely allow him a small maintenance to keep him from poverty during the remainder of his life; but these unnatural nephews, regardless of mercy and the ties of blood, ordered Neill to be beheaded in their presence by the hands of Claff-na-Gep, his own foster-brother.

In the year 1517, advantage was taken by John Mackay, of the absence of the Earl of Sutherland, who had gone to Edinburgh to transact some business connected with his estates, to invade the province of Sutherland, and to burn and spoil everything which came in his way. He was assisted in this lawless enterprise by two races of people dwelling in Sutherland, called the Siol-Phaill, and the Siol-Thomais, and by Neil-Mac-Iain-Mac-Angus of Assint, and his brother John Mor-Mac-Iain, with some of their countrymen. As soon as the Countess of Sutherland, who had remained at home, heard of this invasion, she prevailed upon Alexander Sutherland, her bastard brother, to oppose Mackay. Assisted chiefly by John Murray of Aberscors, and Uilleam-Mac-Sheumais-Mhic-Chruner, chief of the Clan Gun in Sutherland, Alexander convened hastily the inhabitants of the country and went in search of the enemy. He met John Mackay and his brother Donald, at a place called Torran-Dubh or

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Cnocan-Dubh, near Rogart in Strathfleet. Mackay's force was prodigious, for he had assembled not only the whole strength of Strathnaver, Durines, Edderachilis, and Assint, with the Siol-Phaill and Siol-Thomais, but also all the disorderly and idle men of the whole diocess of Caithness, with all such as he could entice to join him from the west and northwest isles, to accompany him in his expedition, buoyed up with the hopes of plunder. But the people of Sutherland were nowise dismayed by the appearance of this formidable host, and made preparations for an attack. A desperate struggle commenced, and after a long contest Mackay's vanguard was driven back upon the position occupied by himself. Mackay having rallied the retreating party, selected a number of the best and ablest men he could find, and having placed the remainder of his army under the command of his brother, Donald, to act as a reserve in case of necessity, he made a furious attack upon the Sutherland men, who received the enemy with great coolness and intrepidity. The chiefs on both sides encouraged their men to fight for the honour of their clans, and in consequence the fight was severe and bloody; but in the end the Sutherland men, after great slaughter, and after prodigies of valour had been displayed by both parties, obtained the victory. Mackay's party was almost entirely cut off, and Mackay himself escaped with difficulty. The victors next turned their attention to the reserve under the command of Donald Mackay; but Donald dreading the fate of his brother, fled along with his party, who immediately dispersed themselves. They were, however, closely pursued by John Murray and Uilleam Mac-Sheumais, till the darkness of the night prevented the pursuit. In this battle, two hundred of the Strathnaver men, thirty-two of the Siol-Phaill, and fifteen of the Siol-Thomais, besides many

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of the Assint men, and their commander, Niall-Mac-Iain-Mac-Aonghais, a valiant chieftain, were slain. John Mor-Mac-Iain, the brother of this chief, escaped with his life after receiving many wounds. Of the Sutherland men, thirty-eight only were slain. Sir Robert Gordon says that this "was the greatest conflict that hitherto hes been foughtin between the inhabitants of these cuntreyes, or within the diocy of Catteynes, to our knowledge."

Shortly after the battle of Torran-Dubh, Uilleam Mac-Sheumais, called Cattigh, chief of the Clan Gun, killed George Keith of Aikregell with his son and twelve of their followers, at Drummoy, in Sutherland, as they were travelling from Inverugie to Caithness. This act was committed by Mac-Sheumais to revenge the slaughter of his grandfather (the Cruner), who had been slain by the Keiths, under the following circumstances. A long feud had existed between the Keiths and the Clan Gun, to reconcile which a meeting was appointed at the chapel of St. Tayr in Caithness, near Gernigs, of twelve horsemen on each side. The Cruner, then chief of the Clan Gun, with some of his sons and his principal kinsmen, to the number of twelve in whole, came to the chapel at the appointed time. As soon as they arrived, they entered the chapel, and prostrated themselves in prayer before the altar. While employed in this devotional act, the laird of Inverugie and Aikregell arrived with twelve horses, and two men on each horse. After dismounting, the whole of this party rushed into the chapel armed, and attacked the Cruner and his party unawares. The Clan Gun, however, defended themselves with great intrepidity, and although the whole twelve were slain, many of the Keiths were also killed. For nearly two centuries the blood of the slain was to be seen on the walls of the chapel

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which it had stained. James Gun, one of the sons of the Cruner, being absent, immediately on hearing of his father's death, retired with his family into Sutherland, where he settled, and where his son William Mac-Sheumais or Mac-James, otherwise William Cattigh, was born.

As John Mackay imputed his defeat at Torran-Dubh mainly to John Murray of Aberscors, he resolved to take the first convenient opportunity of revenging himself, and wiping off the disgrace of his discomfiture. He, therefore, not being in a condition himself to undertake an expedition, employed two brothers, William and Donald, his kinsmen, chieftains of the Sliochd-Iain-Abaraich, with a company of men to attack Murray. The latter having mustered his forces, the parties met at a place called Loch Salchie, not far from the Torran-Dubh, where a sharp skirmish took place, in which Murray proved victorious. The two Strathnaver chieftains and the greater part of their men were slain, and the remainder were put to flight. The principal person who fell on Murray's side was his brother John Roy, whose loss he deeply deplored.

Exasperated at this second disaster, John Mackay sent John Croy and Donald, two of his nephews, sons of Angus Mackay, who was killed at Morinsh in Ross, at the head of a number of chosen men to plunder and burn the town of Pitfour, in Strathfleet, which belonged to John Murray; but they were equally unsuccessful, for John Croy Mackay and some of his men were slain by the Murrays, and Donald was taken prisoner. In consequence of these repeated reverses, John Mackay submitted himself to the Earl of Sutherland, on his return from Edinburgh, and granted him his bond of service, in the year 1518. But notwithstanding of this submission, Mackay afterward tampered with Alexander

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Sutherland, the bastard, and having gained his favour by giving his sister to Sutherland in marriage, he prevailed upon him to raise the standard of insurrection against the Earl of Sutherland. All these commotions in the north happened during the minority of King James V, when, as Sir R. Gordon says, "everie man thought to escape unpunished, and chieflie these who were remotest from the seat of justice."

This Alexander Sutherland was son of John, the third of that name, Earl of Sutherland, and as he pretended that the earl and his mother had entered into a contract of marriage, he laid claim, on the death of the earl, to the title and estates, as a legitimate descendant of Earl John, his father. By the entreaties of Adam Gordon, Lord of Aboyne, who had married Lady Elizabeth, the sister and sole heiress of Earl John, Alexander Sutherland judicially renounced his claim in presence of the Sheriff of Inverness, on the twenty-fifth day of July, 1509. He now repented of what he had done, and being instigated by the Earl of Caithness and John Mackay, mortal foes to the house of Sutherland, he renewed his pretensions. Earl Adam, perceiving that he might incur some danger in making an appeal to arms, particularly as the clans and tribes of the country, with many of whom Alexander had become very popular, were broken into factions and much divided on the question betwixt him and Alexander Sutherland, endeavoured to win him over by offering him many favourable conditions, again to renounce his claims; but in vain. He maintained the legitimacy of his descent, and alleged that the renunciation he had granted at Inverness had been obtained from him contrary to his inclination, and against the advice of his best friends.

Having collected a considerable force, he, in absence of the earl, who was in Strathbogy, attacked Dunrobin

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castle, the chief strength of the earl, which he took. In this siege he was chiefly supported by Alexander Terrell of the Doill, who in consequence of taking arms against the earl, his superior, lost all his lands, and was afterward apprehended and executed. As soon as the earl heard of the insurrection, he despatched Alexander Lesley of Kinninuvy, with a body of men into Sutherland, to assist John Murray of Aberscors, who was already at the head of a force to support the earl. They immediately besieged Dunrobin, which surrendered. Alexander had retired to Strathnaver, but he again returned into Sutherland with a fresh body of men, and laid waste to the country. After putting to death several of his own kinsmen who had joined the earl, he descended farther into the country, towards the parishes of Loth and Clyne. Meeting with little or no opposition, the bastard grew careless, and being observed wandering along the Sutherland coast, flushed with success and regardless of danger, the earl formed the design of cutting him entirely off. With this view he directed Alexander Lesley of Kinninuvy, John Murray, and John Scorrigh-Mac-Finlay, one of the Siol-Thomais, to hover on Sutherland's outskirts, and to keep skirmishing with him till he, the earl, should collect a sufficient force, with which to attack him. Having collected a considerable body of resolute men, the earl attacked the bastard at a place called Ald-Quhillin, by East Clentredaill, near the seaside. A warm contest ensued, in which Alexander Sutherland was taken prisoner, and the most of his men were slain, including John Bane, one of his principal supporters, who fell by the hands of John Scorrigh-Mac-Finlay. After the battle Sutherland was immediately beheaded by Alexander Lesley on the spot, and his head sent to Dunrobin on a spear, which was placed upon the top of the great tower, " which shews us " (as Sir Robert

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Gordon, following the superstition of his times, curiously observes) " that whatsoever by fate is allotted, though sometymes forshewed, can never be avoyded. For the witches had told Alexander the bastard, that his head should be the highest that ever wes of the Southerlands; which he did foolishlye interpret that some day he should be earl of Southerland, and in honor above all his predicessors. Thus the divell and his ministers, the witches, deceaving still such as trust in them, will either find or frame predictions for everie action or event, which doeth ever fall out contrarie to ther expectations: a kynd of people to all men unfaithfull, to hopers deceatful, and in all cuntries allwise forbidden, allwise reteaned and manteaned."

The Earl of Sutherland being now far advanced in life, retired for the most part to Strathbogy and Aboyne to spend the remainder of his days amongst his friends, and entrusted the charge of the country to Alexander Gordon, his eldest son, a young man of great intrepidity and talent. The restless chief, John Mackay, still smarting under his misfortunes, and thirsting for revenge, thought the present a favourable opportunity for retrieving his losses. With a considerable force, therefore, he invaded Sutherland, and entered the parish of Creigh, which he intended to ravage, but the Master of Sutherland hastened thither, attacked Mackay, and forced him to retreat into Strathnaver with some loss. Mackay then assembled a large body of his countrymen and invaded the Breachat. He was again defeated by Alexander Gordon at the Grinds after a keen skirmish. Hitherto Mackay had been allowed to hold the lands of Grinds, and some other possessions in the west part of Sutherland, but the Master of Sutherland now dispossessed him of all these as a punishment for his recent conduct. Still dreading a renewal of Mackay's visits,

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the Master of Sutherland resolved to retaliate, by invading Strathnaver in return, and thereby showing Mackay what he might in future expect if he persevered in continuing his visits to Sutherland. Accordingly, he collected a body of stout and resolute men, and entered Strathnaver, which he pillaged and burned, and, having collected a large quantity of booty, returned into Sutherland. In entering Strathnaver, the Master of Sutherland had taken the road to Strathully, passing through Mackay's bounds in the hope of falling in with and apprehending him, but Mackay was absent on a Creach excursion into Sutherland. In returning, however, through the Diric Muir and the Breachat, Alexander Gordon received intelligence that Mackay with a company of men was in the town of Lairg, with a quantity of cattle he had collected in Sutherland, on his way home to Strathnaver. He lost no time in attacking Mackay, and such was the celerity of his motions, that his attack was as sudden as unexpected. Mackay made the best resistance he could, but was put to the rout, and many of his men were killed. He himself made his escape with great difficulty, and saved his life by swimming to the island of Eilean-Minric, near Lairg, where he lay concealed during the rest of the day. All the cattle which Mackay had carried away were rescued and carried back into Sutherland. The following day Mackay left the island, returned home to his country and again submitted himself to the Master and his father, the earl, to whom he a second time gave his bond of service and manrent in the year 1522.

As the Earl of Caithness had always taken a side against the Sutherland family in these different quarrels, the Earl of Sutherland brought an action before the Lords of Councils and Session against the Earl of Caithness to recover back from him the lands of Strathully,

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on the ground that the Earl of Caithness had not fulfilled the condition on which the lands were granted to him, viz., to assist the Earl of Sutherland against his enemies. There were other minor points of dispute between the earls, to get all which determined they both repaired to Edinburgh. Instead, however, of abiding the issue of a trial at law before the judges, both parties, by the advice of mutual friends, referred the decision of all the points in dispute on either side to Gavin Dunbar,[2] Bishop of Aberdeen, who pronounced his award, at Edinburgh, on the eleventh day of March, 1524, which put an end to all controversies, and made the earls live in peace with one another ever after.

The year 1526 was signalized by a great dissension among the Clan Chattan. The chief and head of that clan was Lauchlan Mackintosh of Dunnachtan, "a verrie honest and wyse gentleman" (says Bishop Lesley), "an barroun of gude rent, quha keipit hes hole ken, friendes and tennentis in honest and guid rewll;" and according to Sir Robert Gordon, "a man of great possessions, and of such excellencies of witt and judgement, that with great commendation he did conteyn all his followers within the limits of ther dueties." The strictness with which this worthy chief curbed the lawless and turbulent dispositions of his clan raised up many enemies, who, as Bishop Lesley says, were "impacient of vertuous living." At the head of this restless party was James Malcolmeson, a near kinsman of the chief, who, instigated by his worthless companions, and the temptation of ruling the clan, murdered the good chief. Afraid to face the better part of the clan, to whom the chief was beloved, Malcolmeson, along with his followers, took refuge in the island in the loch of Rothiemurcus; but the enraged clan followed them to their hiding-places and despatched them.

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As the son of the deceased chief was of tender age, and unable to govern the clan, with common consent they made choice of Hector Mackintosh, a bastard brother of the late chief, to act as captain till his nephew should arrive at manhood. In the meantime, the Earl of Moray, who was uncle to young Mackintosh, the former chief having been married to the earl's sister, took away his nephew and placed him under the care of his friends for the benefit of his education, and to bring him up virtuously. Hector Mackintosh was greatly incensed at the removal of the child, and used every effort to get possession of him; but meeting with a refusal he became outrageous, and laid so many plans for accomplishing his object, that his intentions became suspected, as it was thought he could not wish so ardently for the custody of the child without some bad design. Baffled in every attempt, Hector, assisted by his brother William, collected a body of their followers and invaded the Earl of Moray's lands. They overthrew the fort of Dykes and besieged the castle of Tarnoway, the country surrounding which they plundered, burnt the houses of the inhabitants, and slew a number of men, women, and children. Raising the siege of Tarnoway, Hector and his men then entered the country of the Ogilvies and laid siege to the castle of Pettens, which belonged to the laird of Durnens, one of the families of the Ogilvies, and which, after some resistance, surrendered. No less than twenty-four gentlemen of the name of Ogilvie were massacred on this occasion. After this event, the Mackintoshes and the party of banditti they had collected, roamed over the whole of the adjoining country, carrying terror and dismay into every bosom, and plundering, burning, and destroying everything within their reach. To repress disorders which called so loudly for redress, King James V, by the advice of his council,

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granted a commission to the Earl of Moray to take measures accordingly. Having a considerable force put under his command, the earl went in pursuit of Mackintosh and his party, and having surprised them, he took upwards of three hundred [3] of them and hanged them, along with William Mackintosh, the brother of Hector. William's head was fixed upon a pole at Dykes, and his body was quartered, the four quarters of which were sent to Elgin, Forres, Aberdeen, and Inverness, for public exposure to deter others from following his example. A singular instance of the fidelity of the Highlanders to their chiefs is afforded in the present case, where out of such a vast number as suffered, not one would reveal the secret of Hector Mackintosh's retreat, although promised their lives for the discovery. "Ther faith wes so true to ther captane, that they culd not be persuaded, either by fair meanes, or by any terror of death, to break the same or to betray their master."

Seeing no hopes of escaping the royal vengeance but by a ready submission, Hector Mackintosh, by advice of Alexander Dunbar, Dean of Moray, tendered his obedience to the king, which was accepted of, and he was received into the royal favour. He did not, however, long survive, for he was assassinated in St. Andrews by one James Spence, who was in consequence beheaded. After the death of Hector, the Clan Chattan remained tranquil during the remaining years of the minority of the young chief, who, according to Bishop Lesley, "wes sua well brocht up by the meenes of the erle of Murray and the laird of Phindlater in vertue, honestie, and civile policye, that after he had received the governement of his cuntrey, he was a mirrour of vertue to all the hieland captanis in Scotland." But the young chieftain's "honestie and civile policye" not suiting the ideas of those who had concurred in the murder of

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his father, a conspiracy was formed against him by some of his nearest kinsmen to deprive him of his life, which unfortunately took effect.

The Highlands now enjoyed repose for some years. John Mackay died in 1529, and was succeeded by his brother, Donald, who remained quiet during the life of Adam, Earl of Sutherland, to whom his brother had twice granted his bond of service. But, upon the death of that nobleman, he began to molest the inhabitants of Sutherland. In 1542, he attacked the village of Knockartol, which he burnt; and at the same time he plundered Strathbroray. To oppose his farther progress, Sir Hugh Kennedy collected as many of the inhabitants of Sutherland as the shortness of the time would permit; and, being accompanied by Gilbert Gordon of Gartay, John Murray of Aberscors, his son, Hutcheon Murray, and Mac-Mhic-Sheumais of Killierman, he attacked Mackay, quite unawares, near Alt-Na-Beth. Notwithstanding this unexpected attack, Mackay's men met their assailants with great firmness, but the Strathnaver men were ultimately obliged to retreat with the loss of their booty, and a great number of slain, amongst whom was John Mackean-Mac-Angus, chief of Sliochd-Mhic-Iain-Mhic-Hutcheon, in Edderachilis. Donald Mackay was closely pursued, but he retreated with great skill, and, in the course of his retreat, killed William Macwilliam, who pressed hard upon him, with his own hands. Though closely pressed by Gilbert Gordon and Hutcheon Murray, he made good his retreat into Strathnaver.

By no means disheartened at his defeat, and anxious to blot out the stain which it had thrown upon him, he soon returned into Sutherland with a fresh force, and encamped near Skibo. Hutcheon Murray collected some Sutherland men, and with them he attacked Mackay,

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and kept him in check till an additional force, which he expected, should arrive. As soon as Mackay saw this new body of men approaching, with which he was quite unable to contend, he retreated suddenly into his own country, leaving several of his men dead on the field. This affair was called the skirmish of Loch Buy. This mode of annoyance, which continued for some time, was put an end to by the apprehension of Donald Mackay, who being brought before the Earls of Huntly and Sutherland, was, by their command, committed a close prisoner to the castle of Foulis, where he remained a considerable time in captivity. At last, by means of Donald Mac-Iain-Mhoir, a Strathnaver man, he effected his escape, and, returning home, reconciled himself with the Earl of Sutherland, to whom he gave his bond of service and manrent, on the eighth day of April, 1549.

During the reign of James V, some respect was paid in the Highlands to the laws; but the divisions which fell out amongst the nobility, the unquiet state of the nation during the minority of the infant queen, and the wars with England, relaxed the springs of government, and the consequence was, that the usual scenes of turbulence and oppression soon displayed themselves in the Highlands, accompanied with all those circumstances of ferocity, which rendered them so revolting to humanity. The Clan Ranald was particularly active in these lawless proceedings. This clan bore great enmity to Hugh, Lord Lovat; and because Ranald, son of Donald Glass of Moidart, was sister's son of Lovat, they conceived a prejudice against him, dispossessed him of his lands, and put John Macranald, his cousin, in possession of the estate. Lovat took up the cause of his nephew, and restored him to the possession of his property; but the restless clan dispossessed Ranald again, and laid waste a part of Lovat's lands in Glenelg. These

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disorders did not escape the notice of the Earl of Arran, the governor of the kingdom, who, by advice of his council, granted an especial commission to the Earl of Huntly, making him lieutenant-general of all the Highlands, and of Orkney and Zetland. He also appointed the Earl of Argyle, lieutenant of Argyle and the Isles. The Earl of Huntly lost no time in raising a large army in the north, with which he marched, in May, 1544, attended by the Mackintoshes, Grants, and Frasers, against the Clan Cameron and the Clan Ranald, and the people of Moydart and Knoydart, whose principal captains were Ewen Allenson, Ronald M'Coneilglas, and John Moydart. These had wasted and plundered the whole country of Urquhart and Glenmorriston, belonging to the laird of Grant, and the country of Abertarf, Strathglas, and others, the property of Lord Lovat. They had also taken absolute possession of these different territories, as their own properties, which they intended to possess and enjoy in all time coming. But, by the mediation of the Earl of Argyle, they immediately dislodged themselves upon the Earl of Huntly's appearance, and retired to their own territories in the west. On restoring Ranald to his possession, and clearing the lands of Lord Lovat and the laird of Grant of the intruders, the earl returned to the low country with his army.

In returning to his own country, Lovat was accompanied by the Grants and Mackintoshes as far as Gloy, afterward called the Nine-Mile-Water, and they even offered to escort him home in case of danger; but, having no apprehensions, he declined, and they returned home by Badenoch. This was a fatal error on the part of Lovat, for as soon as he arrived at Letterfinlay, he was informed that the Clan Ranald were at hand, in full march, to intercept him. To secure an important pass

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he despatched Iain-Cleireach, one of his principal officers, with fifty men; but, from some cause or other, Iain-Cleireach did not accomplish his object; and as soon as Lovat came to the north end of Loch Lochy, he perceived the Clan Ranald descending the hill from the west, to the number of about five hundred, divided into seven companies. Lovat was thus placed in a position in which he could neither refuse nor avoid battle. The day (3d July), being extremely hot, Lovat's men, who amounted to about three hundred, stripped to the shirts, from which circumstance the battle was called Blar-Nan-Leine, *i. e.* the Field of Shirts. A sort of skirmishing warfare at first took place, first with bows and arrows, which lasted a considerable time, until both sides had expended their shafts. The combatants then drew their swords, and rushed on each other with fierce and deadly intent. The slaughter was tremendous, and few escaped on either side. Lord Lovat with three hundred of the surname of Fraser, and other followers, were left dead on the field. Lovat's eldest son, a youth of great accomplishments, who had received his education in France, from whence he had lately arrived, was mortally wounded, and taken prisoner. He died within three days. Great as was the loss on the side of the Frasers, that on the opposite side was comparatively still greater. According to a tradition handed down, only four of the Frasers, and ten of the Clan Ranald, remained alive. The darkness of the night alone put an end to the combat. This was an unfortunate blow to the Clan Fraser, which would have been almost entirely annihilated, but for the happy circumstance, as reported, that the wives of eighty of the Frasers, who were slain, were pregnant at the time, and were each of them afterward delivered of a male child.

As soon as intelligence of this disaster was brought

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to the Earl of Huntly, he again returned with an army, entered Lochaber, which he laid waste, and apprehended many of the leading men of the hostile tribes, whom he put to death. The two principal ringleaders, Ewen Allenson, or Ewin-Mac-Allan, and Ronald M'Coneil-glas, or Reynald-Mac-Donald-Glas, as they are respectively named by Bishop Lesley and Sir Robert Gordon, having concealed themselves, the earl compelled their people to give up these chieftains and other leading men of the tribes to him. These he carried with him to Perth, where, after being detained as prisoners a considerable time, they were brought to trial in presence of the principal nobles and barons of the north of Scotland, condemned and executed. The two chiefs were beheaded, and, as a terror to others, their heads were placed on the gates of the town. John Moidart, on hearing the fate of his lawless companions, fled into the isles, where he remained for some time.

In consequence of a charge made against Andrew Stuart, Bishop of Caithness, of having instigated the Clan Gun to the murder of the laird of Duffus in Thurso, the bishop retired from his charge, and afterward went into banishment in England. During the vacancy in the diocese, the Earl of Caithness and Donald Mackay, taking advantage of the civil dissensions of the state, took possession of the bishop's lands, and levied the rents for the behoof, as they pretended, of the expatriated bishop. Mackay took possession of the castle of Skibo, one of the bishop's palaces, which he fortified and placed under the charge of Neill-Mac-William. The Earl of Caithness, at the same time, possessed himself of the castle of Strabister, another residence of the bishop. But, upon the restoration of the bishop, both the earl and Mackay absolutely refused to surrender to him these or any other parts of his possessions, or to account

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to him for the rents they had received in his name. The Earls of Huntly and Sutherland, who were in Edinburgh at the time, hearing of this refusal, appointed Captain James Cullen, an experienced naval and military officer, to go before them into Sutherland, and ascertain the exact state of matters. The people of the country, who were favourable to the bishop's claims, immediately assembled on the arrival of Cullen at Dornoch, with a resolution to besiege the castle of Skibo. But the Strathnaver men, who kept possession, hearing of their approach, were afraid to stand a siege, and withdrew privately from the castle, and went home to Strathnaver; but, being closely pursued, some of them were cut off. On the return of the Earls of Huntly and Sutherland to the north, they summoned the Earl of Caithness and Mackay to appear before them at Helmsdale, to answer for their intromissions with the bishop's rents, and for the wrongs they had done. The Earl of Caithness immediately obeyed the call, and although the river of Helmsdale was greatly swollen by recent heavy rains, he, in order to show his ready submission, crossed it on foot, to the great danger of his life, as the water was as high as his breast. Having made a final and satisfactory arrangement, the earl returned into Caithness. Mackay was forced to appear with great unwillingness; and, although he was pardoned, the earls committed him a prisoner to the castle of Foulis.

The great power conferred on the Earl of Huntly, as lieutenant general in the north of Scotland, and the promptitude and severity with which he put down the insurrections of some of the chiefs alluded to, raised up many enemies against him. As he in company with the Earl of Sutherland was about to proceed to France for the purpose of conveying the queen regent to that country, in the year 1550, a conspiracy was formed

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against him, at the head of which was Mackintosh, chief of the Clan Chattan. This conspiracy being discovered to the earl, he ordered Mackintosh to be immediately apprehended and brought to Strathbogie, where he was beheaded in the month of August of that year. His lands were also forfeited at the same time. This summary proceeding excited the sympathy and roused the indignation of the friends of the deceased chief, particularly of the Earl of Cassillis. A commotion was about to ensue, but matters were adjusted, for a time, by the prudence of the queen regent, who recalled the act of forfeiture and restored Mackintosh's heir to all his father's lands. But the Clan Chattan was determined to avail themselves of the first favourable opportunity of being revenged upon the earl, which they, therefore, anxiously looked for. As Lauchlan Mackintosh, a near kinsman of the chief, was suspected of having betrayed his chief to the earl, the clan entered his castle of Pettie by stealth, slew him and banished all his dependents from the country of the clan.

About the same time the province of Sutherland again became the scene of some commotions. The earl, having occasion to leave home, entrusted the government of the country to Alexander Gordon, his brother, who ruled it with great justice and severity; but the people, disliking the restraints put upon them by Alexander, created a tumult, and placed John Sutherland, son of Alexander Sutherland, the bastard, at their head. Seizing the favourable opportunity, as it appeared to them, when Alexander Gordon was attending divine service in the church at Golspikirktoun, they proceeded to attack him, but receiving notice of their intentions, he collected the little company he had about him, and went out of church resolutely to meet them. Alarmed at seeing him and his party approach, the people im-

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mediately dispersed and returned every man to his own house. But William Murray, son of Caen Murray, one of the family of Pulrossie, indignant at the affront offered to Alexander Gordon, shortly afterward killed John Sutherland upon the Nether Green of Dunrobin at the west corner of the garden, in revenge for which murder William Murray was himself thereafter slain by the laird of Clyne.

The Mackays also took advantage of the Earl of Sutherland's absence, to plunder and lay waste the country. Y-Mackay, son of Donald, assembled the Strathnaver men and entered Sutherland, but Alexander Gordon forced him back into Strathnaver, and not content with acting on the defensive, he entered Mackay's country, which he wasted, and carried off a large booty in goods and cattle, in the year 1551. Mackay, in his turn, retaliated, and this system of mutual aggression and spoliation continued for several years.

During the absence of the Earl of Huntly in France, John of Moydart, chief of the Clan Ranald, returned from the isles and recommenced his usual course of rapine. The queen regent, on her return from France, being invested with full authority, sent the Earl of Huntly on an expedition to the north, for the purpose of apprehending Clan Ranald and putting an end to his outrages.

The earl having mustered a considerable force, chiefly Highlanders and of the Clan Chattan, passed into Moydart and Knoydart, but his operations were paralyzed by disputes in his camp. The chief and his men having abandoned their own country, the earl proposed to pursue them in their retreats among the fastnesses of the Highlands; but his principal officers, who were chiefly from the Lowlands, unaccustomed to such a mode of warfare in such a country, demurred; and as

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the earl was afraid to entrust himself with the Clan Chattan, who owed him a deep grudge on account of the execution of their last chief, he abandoned the enterprise and returned to the low country. Sir Robert Gordon says that the failure of the expedition was owing to a tumult raised in the earl's camp by the Clan Chattan, who returned home; but we are rather disposed to consider Bishop Lesley's account, which we have followed, as the most correct.

The failure of this expedition gave great offence to the queen, who, instigated it is supposed by Huntly's enemies, attributed it to negligence on his part. The consequence was, that the earl was committed a prisoner to the castle of Edinburgh in the month of October, where he remained till the month of March following. He was compelled to renounce the earldom of Moray and the lordship of Abernethy, with his tacks and possessions in Orkney and Zetland, and the tacks of the land of the earldom of Mar and of the lordship of Strathdie, of which he was bailie and steward, and he was moreover condemned to a banishment of five years in France. But as he was about to leave the kingdom, the queen, taking a more favourable view of his conduct, recalled the sentence of banishment, and restored him to the office of chancellor, of which he had been deprived; and to make this act of leniency somewhat palatable to the earl's enemies, the queen exacted a heavy pecuniary fine from the earl.

As the Highlands still continued in a state of misrule, principally owing to the conduct of John of Moidart, the queen sent the Earl of Athole to the Highlands, the following year, with a special commission to apprehend this turbulent chief; and he succeeded so well by negotiation as to prevail upon John, two of his sons, and some of his kinsmen, to submit themselves to the queen,

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who pardoned them, but ordered them to be detained prisoners in the castle of Methven where they were well treated. Disliking such restraint, they effected their escape into their own country privately, where they again began their usual restless course of life.

The great disorders which prevailed in the Highlands at this time induced the queen regent to undertake a journey thither in order to punish these breaches of the law, and to repress existing tumults. She accordingly arrived at Inverness in the month of July, 1555, where she was met by John, Earl of Sutherland, and George, Earl of Caithness. Although the latter nobleman was requested to bring his countrymen along with him to the court, he neglected or declined to do so, and he was therefore committed to prison at Inverness, Aberdeen, and Edinburgh, successively, and he was not restored to liberty till he paid a considerable sum of money. Y-Mackay of Far was also summoned to appear before the queen at Inverness, to answer for his spoliations committed in the country of Sutherland during the absence of Earl John in France; but he refused to appear. Whereupon the queen granted a commission to the Earl of Sutherland, to bring Mackay to justice. The earl accordingly entered Strathnaver with a great force, sacking and spoiling everything in his way, and possessing himself of all the principal positions to prevent Mackay's escape. Mackay, however, avoided the earl, and as he declined to fight, the earl laid siege to the castle of Borwe, the principal strength in Strathnaver, scarcely two miles distant from Far, which he took after a short siege, and hanged Ruaridh-Mac-Iain-Mhoir, the commander. This fort the earl completely demolished.

While the Earl of Sutherland was engaged in the siege, Mackay entered Sutherland secretly, and burnt the church of Loth. He thereafter went to the village

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of Knockartoll, where he met Mackenzie and his countrymen in Strathbroray. A slight skirmish took place between them; but Mackay and his men fled after he had lost Angus-Mackeanvoir, one of his commanders, and several of his followers. Mackenzie was thereupon appointed by the earl to protect Sutherland from the incursions of Mackay during his stay in Strathnaver. Having been defeated again by Mackenzie, and seeing no chance of escape, Mackay surrendered himself, and was carried south, and committed a prisoner to the castle of Edinburgh, in which he remained a considerable time. During the queen's stay in the north, many notorious delinquents were brought to trial, condemned and executed.

During Mackay's detention in Edinburgh, John Mor-Mackay, who took charge of his kinsman's estate, seizing the opportunity of the Earl of Sutherland's absence in the south of Scotland, entered Sutherland at the head of a determined body of Strathnaver men, and spoiled and wasted the east corner of that province, and burnt the chapel of St. Ninian. Mac-Mhic-Sheumais, chief of the Clan Gun, the laird of Clyne, the Terrell of the Doill, and James Mac-William having collected a body of Sutherland men, pursued the Strathnaver men, whom they overtook at the foot of the hill called Ben-Moir in Berridell. Here they laid an ambush for them, and having, by favour of a fog, passed their sentinels, they unexpectedly surprised Mackay's men, and attacked them with great fury. The Strathnaver men made an obstinate resistance, but were at length overpowered. Many of them were killed, and others drowned in the water of Garwary. Mackay himself escaped with great difficulty. This was one of the severest defeats the Strathnaver men ever experienced, except at the battle of Knoken-dow-Reywird.

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On the release of Mackay from his confinement in the castle of Edinburgh, he was employed in the wars upon the borders, against the English, in which he acquitted himself courageously; and on his return to Strathnaver he submitted himself to the Earl of Sutherland, with whom he lived in peace during the remainder of the earl's life. But Mackay incurred the just displeasure of the tribe of Slaight-ean-Voir by the committal of two crimes of the deepest dye. Having imbibed a violent affection for the wife of Tormaid-Mac-Iain-Mhoir, the chieftain of that tribe, he, in order to accomplish his object, slew the chief, after which he violated his wife, by whom he had a son called Donald Balloch Mackay. The insulted clan flew to arms; but they were defeated at Durines, by the murderer and adulterer, after a sharp skirmish. Three of the principal men of the tribe who had given themselves up, trusting to Mackay's clemency, were beheaded.

In the year 1561, several petty feuds occurred in Sutherland and Caithness. Hugh Murray, of Aberscors, killed Imhear-Mac-Iain-Mhic-Thomais, a gentleman of Siol-Thomais, for which act he incurred the displeasure of the Earl of Sutherland. Murray thereupon fled into Caithness, and sought the protection of the Earl of Caithness. Houcheon Murray, the father of Hugh, being suspected by the Earl of Sutherland as having been privy to the murder, was apprehended and imprisoned in Dunrobin castle; but after a slight confinement he was released as innocent, and by his mediation his son Hugh was restored to the favour of the earl. No reconciliation, however, took place between the Murrays and the Siol-Thomais, who continued for a long period at variance. About the same time, William and Angus Sutherland, and the other Sutherlands of Berridale, killed several of the Earl of Caithness' people,

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and wasted the lands of the Clynes in that country. For these acts they were banished by the earl from Caithness; but they again returned, and being assisted by Hugh Murray of Aberscors, they took the castle of Berridale, laid waste the country, and molested the people of Caithness with their incursions. By the mediation of the Earl of Sutherland, William and Angus Sutherland and their accomplices obtained a pardon from Queen Mary, which so exasperated the Earl of Caithness that he imbibed a mortal hatred, not only against the Earl of Sutherland, but also against the Murrays, and all the inhabitants of Sutherland.

Amongst the many acts which disgrace the memory of James, Earl of Moray, the bastard brother of Queen Mary, the murder of Alexander Gun, son of John Robson, chief of the Clan Gun, in the year 1565, must not be overlooked. The cause of the earl's antipathy was this: On one occasion, the Earls of Sutherland and Huntly happened to meet the Earl of Moray directly in the face on the high street of Aberdeen. Alexander Gun was then in the service of the Earl of Sutherland, and as he was walking in front of his master, he declined to give the Earl of Moray any part of the height of the street, and forced him and his company to give way. As he considered this to be a deadly affront put upon him, he resolved upon revenge, and seizing the opportunity of the Earl of Sutherland's absence in Flanders, he, by means of Andrew Monroe of Miltoun, entrapped Gun, and made him a prisoner at the Delvines, near the town of Nairn, from whence he was taken to Inverness, and after a mock-trial, was executed. Alexander Gun is reported to have been a very able and strong man, endowed with many good qualities.

George, Earl of Caithness, who had long borne a mortal hatred to John, Earl of Sutherland, now pro-

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jected a scheme for cutting him off, as well as his countess, who was big with child, and their only son, Alexander Gordon; the earl and countess were accordingly both poisoned at Helmsdale while at supper by Isobel Sinclair, wife of Gilbert Gordon of Gartay, and sister of William Sinclair of Dumbaith, instigated, it is said, by the earl; but their son, Alexander, made a very narrow escape, not having returned in time from a hunting excursion, to join his father and mother at supper. On Alexander's return the earl had become fully aware of the danger of his situation, and he was thus prevented by his father from participating in any part of the supper which remained, and after taking an affectionate and parting farewell, and recommending him to the protection of God and of his dearest friends, he sent him to Dunrobin the same night without his supper. The earl and his lady were carried next morning to Dunrobin, where they died within five days thereafter, in the month of July, 1567, and were buried in the cathedral church at Dornoch. Pretending to cover himself from the imputation of being concerned in this murder, the Earl of Caithness punished some of the earl's most faithful servants under the colour of avenging his death; but the deceased earl's friends being determined to obtain justice, apprehended Isobel Sinclair, and sent her to Edinburgh to stand her trial, where, after being tried and condemned, she died on the day appointed for her execution. During all the time of her illness she vented the most dreadful imprecations upon her cousin, the earl, who had seduced her to commit the horrid act. Had this woman succeeded in cutting off the earl's son, her own eldest son, John Gordon, but for the extraordinary circumstances of his death to be noticed, would have succeeded to the earldom, as he was the next male heir. This youth happening to be in

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the house when his mother had prepared the poison, became extremely thirsty, and called for a drink. One of his mother's servants, not aware of the preparation, presented to the youth a portion of the liquid into which the poison had been infused, which he drank. This occasioned his death within two days, a circumstance which, together with the appearances of the body after death, gave a clue to the discovery of his mother's guilt.

Taking advantage of the calamity which had befallen the house of Sutherland, and the minority of the young earl, now only fifteen years of age, Y-Mackay of Far, who had formed an alliance with the Earl of Caithness, invaded the country of Sutherland, wasted the barony of Skibo, entered the town of Dornoch, and, upon the pretence of a quarrel with the Murrays, by whom it was chiefly inhabited, set fire to it, in which outrage he was assisted by the laird of Duffus. This happened in the year 1567. These measures were only preliminary to a design which the Earl of Caithness had formed to get the Earl of Sutherland into his hands, but he had the cunning to conceal his intentions in the meantime, and to instigate Mackay to act as he wished without appearing to be in any way concerned.

In pursuance of his design upon Alexander, the young Earl of Sutherland, the Earl of Caithness prevailed upon Robert Stuart, Bishop of Caithness, to write a letter to the governor of the castle of Skibo, in which the Earl of Sutherland resided, to deliver up the castle to him; a request with which the governor complied. Having taken possession of the castle, the earl carried off the young man into Caithness, and although only fifteen years of age, he got him married to Lady Barbara Sinclair, his daughter, then aged thirty-two years. Y-Mackay was the paramour of this lady, and for continuing

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the connection with him she was afterward divorced by her husband.

After Y-Mackay had burned Dornoch, he made an attack upon Hugh Murray, son of Houcheon Murray of Aberscors, in the village of Pitfur in Strathfleet, took him prisoner, and killed his brother, Donald Roy-Murray, and a kinsman named Thomas Murray. A few of the inhabitants of Sutherland went in pursuit of Mackay, whom they overtook in the Breachat; but Houcheon Murray prevented them from attacking him, as he was afraid that his son, then a prisoner in Mackay's hands, would be killed by the Strathnaver men to prevent a rescue. With a few words of defiance, and some arrows discharged on either side, according to the ordinary custom of commencing skirmishes, the matter ended, and the Sutherland men returned to their homes. The interference of Houcheon Murray was certainly judicious, for Mackay delivered up his son after a short captivity. As the tribe of the Siol-Phaill had been the cause of the dissension between Mackay and the Murrays, a feud occurred on the release of Hugh between the Murrays and the Siol-Phaill, in which lives were sacrificed on both sides, and which continued till a reconciliation was effected by the Earl of Sutherland on coming of age.

The Earl of Caithness having succeeded in his wishes in obtaining possession of the Earl of Sutherland, entered the earl's country, and took possession of Dunrobin castle, in which he fixed his residence. He also brought the Earl of Sutherland along with him, but he treated him meanly, and he burnt all the papers belonging to the house of Sutherland he could lay his hands on. Cruel and avaricious, he, under the pretence of vindicating the law for imaginary crimes, expelled many of the ancient families in Sutherland from that country, put many of the inhabitants to death, disabled those

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he banished, in their persons, by new and unheard of modes of torture, and stripped them of all their wealth. To be suspected of favouring the house of Sutherland, and to be wealthy, were deemed capital crimes by this oppressor.

As the Earl of Sutherland did not live on friendly terms with his wife on account of her licentious connection with Mackay, and as there appeared no chance of any issue, the Earl of Caithness formed the base design of cutting off the Earl of Sutherland, and marrying William Sinclair, his second son, to Lady Margaret Gordon, the eldest sister of the Earl of Sutherland, whom he had also gotten into his hands, with the view of making William Earl of Sutherland. The better to conceal his intentions the Earl of Caithness made a journey south to Edinburgh, and gave the necessary instructions to those in his confidence to despatch the Earl of Sutherland; but some of his trusty friends having received private intelligence of the designs of the Earl of Caithness from some persons who were privy thereto, they instantly set about measures for defeating them by getting possession of the Earl of Sutherland's person. Accordingly, under cloud of night, they came quietly to the burn of Golspie, in the vicinity of Dunrobin, where, concealing themselves to prevent discovery, they sent Alexander Gordon of Sidderay to the castle, disguised as a peddler, for the purpose of warning the Earl of Sutherland of the danger of his situation, and devising means of escape. Being made acquainted with the design upon his life, and the plans of his friends for rescuing him, the earl, early the following morning, proposed to the residents in the castle, under whose charge he was, to accompany him on a small excursion in the neighbourhood. This proposal seemed so reasonable in itself, that, although he was perpetually watched

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by the Earl of Caithness' servants, and his liberty greatly restrained, they at once agreed; and, going out, the earl being aware of the ambush laid by his friends, led his keepers directly into the snare before they were aware of danger. The earl's friends thereupon rushed from their hiding-place, and seizing him, conveyed him safely out of the country of Sutherland to Strathbogie in the year 1569. As soon as the Earl of Caithness' retainers heard of the escape of Earl Alexander, they collected a party of men favourable to their interests, and went in hot pursuit of him as far as Port-ne-Coulter; but they found that the earl and his friends had just crossed the ferry. In the act of crossing they were overtaken by a great tempest which suddenly arose, and made a very narrow escape from drowning.

Shortly after this affair a quarrel ensued between the Monroes and the Clan Kenzie, two very powerful Rosshire clans which happened thus: Lesley, the celebrated Bishop of Ross, had made over to his cousin, the laird of Balquhain, the right and title of the castle of the Canonry of Ross, together with the castle lands. Notwithstanding of this grant, the Regent Murray had given the custody of this castle to Andrew Monroe of Milntown; and to make Lesley bear with the loss, the regent promised him some of the lands of the barony of Fintry in Buchan, but on condition that he should cede to Monroe the castle and castle lands of the Canonry; but the untimely and unexpected death of the regent interrupted this arrangement, and Andrew Monroe did not, of course, obtain the title to the castle and castle lands as he expected. Yet Monroe had the address to obtain permission from the Earl of Lennox during his regency, and afterward from the Earl of Mar, his successor in that office, to get possession of the castle. The Clan Kenzie grudging to see Monroe in possession, and

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being desirous to get hold of the castle themselves, they purchased Lesley's right, and, by virtue thereof, demanded delivery of the castle. Monroe refused to accede to this demand, on which the clan laid siege to the castle; but Monroe defended it for three years at the expense of many lives on both sides. It was then delivered up to the Clan Kenzie under the act of pacification.

No attempt was made by the Earl of Sutherland, during his minority, to recover his possessions from the Earl of Caithness. In the meantime the latter, disappointed and enraged at the escape of his destined prey, vexed and annoyed still further the partisans of the Sutherland family. In particular, he directed his vengeance against the Murrays, and made William Sutherland of Evelick, brother to the laird of Duffus, apprehend John Croy-Murray, under the pretence of bringing him to justice. This proceeding roused the indignation of Hugh Murray of Aberscors, who assembled his friends, and made several incursions upon the lands of Evelick, Pronsies, and Riercher. They also laid waste several villages belonging to the laird of Duffus, from which they carried off some booty, and apprehending a gentleman of the Sutherlands, they detained him as a hostage for the safety of John Croy-Murray. Upon this the laird of Duffus collected all his kinsmen and friends, together with the Siol-Phaill at Skibo, and proceeded to the town of Dornoch, with the intention of burning it. But the inhabitants, aided by the Murrays, went out to meet the enemy, whom they courageously attacked and overthrew, and pursued to the gates of Skibo. Besides killing several of Duffus' men they made some prisoners, whom they exchanged for John Croy-Murray. This affair was called the skirmish of Torran-Roy.

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The laird of Duffus, who was father-in-law to the Earl of Caithness, and supported him in all his plans, immediately sent notice of this disaster to the earl, who without delay sent his eldest son, John, Master of Caithness, with a large party of countrymen and friends, including Y-Mackay and his countrymen, to attack the Murrays in Dornoch. They besieged the town and castle, which were both manfully defended by the Murrays and their friends; but the Master of Caithness, favoured by the darkness of the night, set fire to the cathedral, the steeple of which, however, was preserved. After the town had been reduced, the Master of Caithness attacked the castle and the steeple of the church, into which a body of men had thrown themselves, both of which held out for the space of a week, and would probably have resisted much longer, but for the interference of mutual friends of the parties, by whose mediation the Murrays surrendered the castle and the steeple of the church; and as hostages for the due performance of other conditions, they delivered up Thomas Murray, son of Houcheon Murray of Aberscors, Houcheon Murray, son of Alexander Mac-Sir-Angus, and John Murray, son of Thomas Murray, the brother of John Murray of Aberscors. But the Earl of Caithness refused to ratify the treaty which his son had entered into with the Murrays, and afterward basely beheaded the three hostages. These occurrences took place in the year 1570.

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CHAPTER III

DISPUTES BETWEEN THE CLANS

THE Murrays and the other friends of the Sutherland family, no longer able to protect themselves from the vengeance of the Earl of Caithness, dispersed themselves into different countries, there to wait for more favourable times when they might return to their native soil without danger. The Murrays went to Strathbogie, where Earl Alexander then resided. Hugh Gordon of Drummoy retired to Orkney, where he married a lady named Ursla Tulloch; but he frequently visited his friends in Sutherland, in spite of many snares laid for him by the Earl of Caithness, while secretly going and returning through Caithness. Hugh Gordon's brothers took refuge with the Murrays at Strathbogie. John Gray of Skibo, and his son Gilbert, retired to St. Andrew's, where their friend Robert, Bishop of Caithness, then resided, and Mac-Mhic-Sheumais of Strathully went to Glengarry.

As the alliance of such a powerful and warlike chief as Mackay would have been of great importance to the Sutherland interest, an attempt was made to detach him from the Earl of Caithness. The plan appears to have originated with Hugh Murray of Aberscors, who made repeated visits to Strathbogie, to consult with the Earl of Sutherland and his friends on this subject, and afterward went into Strathnaver, and held a conference with Mackay, whom he prevailed upon to accompany him to Strathbogie. Mackay then entered into an en-

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gagement with the Earl of Huntly and the Earl of Sutherland, to assist the latter against the Earl of Caithness, in consideration of which, and on payment of £300 Scots, he obtained from the Earl of Huntly the heritable right and title of the lands of Strathnaver; but Mackay, influenced by Barbara Sinclair, the wife of the Earl of Sutherland, with whom he now publicly cohabited, broke his engagement, and continued to oppress the earl's followers and dependents.

About this time the tribe called the Siol-Phaill made an incursion into Strathfleet, and attacked Hugh Murray of Aberscors. In a skirmish which took place, the Siol-Phaill took three of the Murrays prisoners, whom they afterward delivered up to the Earl of Caithness, who put them to death. In revenge for this cruel act, Hugh Murray afterward killed two of the principal men of the tribe.

From some circumstances which have not transpired, the Earl of Caithness became suspicious of his son John, the master of Caithness, as having, in connection with Mackay, a design upon his life. To put an end to the earl's suspicion, Mackay advised John to go to Girnigo (castle Sinclair) and to submit himself to his father's pleasure, a request with which the master complied; but, after arriving at Girnigo, he was, while conversing with his father, arrested by a party of armed men, who, upon a secret signal being given by the earl, had rushed in at the chamber door. He was instantly fettered and thrust into prison within the castle, where, after a miserable captivity of seven years, he died, a prey to famine and vermin.

Mackay, who had accompanied the master to Girnigo, and who in all probability would have shared the same fate, escaped and returned home to Strathnaver, where he died, within four months thereafter, of grief and re-

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morse for the many bad actions of his life. During the minority of his son Houcheon, John Mor-Mackay, the cousin, and John Beg-Mackay, the bastard son of Y-Mackay, took charge of the estate; but John Mor-Mackay was speedily removed from his charge by the Earl of Caithness, who, considering him as a favourer of the Earl of Sutherland, caused him to be apprehended and carried into Caithness, where he was detained in prison till his death. During this time, John Robson, the chief of the Clan Gun, in Caithness and Strathnaver, became a dependent on the Earl of Sutherland, and acted as his factor in collecting the rents and duties of the bishop's lands within Caithness which belonged to the earl. This connection was exceedingly disagreeable to the Earl of Caithness, who in consequence took a grudge at John Robson, and to gratify his spleen, he instigated Houcheon Mackay to lay waste the lands of the Clan Gun, in the Brea-Moir, in Caithness, without the knowledge of John Beg-Mackay, his brother. As the Clan Gun had always been friendly to the family of Mackay, John Beg-Mackay was greatly exasperated at the conduct of the earl, in enticing the young chief to commit such an outrage; but he had it not in his power to make any reparation to the injured clan. John Robson the chief, however, assisted by Alexander, Earl of Sutherland, invaded Strathnaver and made ample retaliation. Meeting the Strathnaver men at a place called Creach-Drumi-Doun, he attacked and defeated them, killing several of them, and chiefly those who had accompanied Houcheon Mackay in his expedition to the Brea-Moir. He then carried off a large quantity of booty, which he divided among the Clan Gun of Strathully, who had suffered by Houcheon Mackay's invasion.

The Earl of Caithness having resolved to avenge him-

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self on John Beg-Mackay, for the displeasure shown by him at the conduct of Houcheon Mackay, and also on the Clan Gun, prevailed upon Neill-Mac-Iain-Mac-William, chief of the Sliochd-Iain-Abaraich, and James Mac-Rory, chief of the Sliochd-Iain-Mhoir, to attack them. Accordingly, in the month of September, 1579, these two chiefs, with their followers, entered Balnekill in Durines, during the night-time, and slew John Beg-Mackay, and William Mac-Iain-Mac-Rob, the brother of John Robson, and some of their people. The friends of the deceased were not in a condition to retaliate, but they kept up the spirit of revenge so customary in those times, and only waited a favourable opportunity to gratify it. This did not occur till several years thereafter. In the year 1587, James Mac-Rory, "a fyne gentleman and a good commander," according to Sir Robert Gordon, was assassinated by Donald Balloch-Mackay, the brother of John Beg-Mackay; and two years thereafter John Mackay, the son of John Beg, attacked Neill-Mac-Iain-Mac-William, whom he wounded severely, and cut off some of his followers. "This Neill" (says Sir R. Gordon) "heir mentioned, wes a good captain, bold, craftie, of a verie good witt, and quick resolution." Shortly after these events the Sliochd-Iain-Abaraich were attacked in Scyzer in Strathnaver by William Mackay, brother of John Beg, and the Sliochd-Iain-Roy, and many of them killed.

After the death of John Beg-Mackay and William Mac-Iain-Mac-Rob, a most deadly and inveterate feud followed, between the Clan Gun and the Sliochd-Iain-Abaraich, but no recital of the details has been handed down to us. "The long, the many, the horrible encounters" (observes Sir R. Gordon) "which happened between these two trybes, with the bloodshed, and infinit spoills committed in every pairt of the diocy of Catteynes

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by them and their associats, are of so disordered and troublesome memorie, that, what with their asperous names, together with the confusion of place, tymes, and persons, would yet be (no doubt) a warr to the reader to overlook them; and therefor, to favor myne oune paines, and his who should get little profite or delight thereby, I doe pass them over."

In the year 1585, a quarrel took place between Neill Houcheonson, and Donald Neilson, the laird of Assint, who had married Houcheon Mackay's sister. The cause of Donald Neilson was espoused by Houcheon Mackay, and the Clan Gun, who came with an army out of Caithness and Strathnaver, to besiege Neill Houcheonson in the isle of Assint. Neill, who was commander of Assint, and a follower of the Earl of Sutherland, sent immediate notice, to the earl, of Mackay's movements, on receiving which, the earl, assembling a body of men, despatched them to Assint to raise the siege; but Mackay did not wait for their coming and retreated into Strathnaver. As the Earl of Caithness had sent some of his people to assist Mackay, who was the Earl of Sutherland's vassal, the latter resolved to punish both, and accordingly made preparations for entering Strathnaver and Caithness, with an army. But some mutual friends of the parties interfered to prevent the effusion of blood, by prevailing on the two earls to meet at Elgin, in the presence of the Earl of Huntly and other friends, and get their differences adjusted. A meeting was accordingly held, at which the earls were reconciled. The whole blame of the troubles and commotions which had recently disturbed the peace of Sutherland and Caithness was thrown upon the Clan Gun, who were alleged to have been the chief instigators, and as their restless disposition might give rise to new disorders, it was agreed, at said meeting, to cut them off, and particularly

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that part of the tribe which dwelt in Caithness, which was chiefly dreaded, for which purpose the Earl of Caithness bound himself to deliver up, to the Earl of Sutherland, certain individuals of the clan living in Caithness. This condition was humiliating to the Earl of Caithness, who, along with Mackay, had taken the Clan Gun under his protection, and on his return he refused to implement it. On hearing of his refusal the Earl of Huntly took a journey into Sutherland, and sent messages to the Earl of Caithness and Mackay to meet him at Dunrobin castle. The earl complied; but Mackay declined, and was, therefore, denounced rebel for his disobedience. The Earl of Caithness being then called upon to fulfil his promise to deliver up some of the Clan Gun, gave his assurance to that effect, and to enable him to implement his engagement a resolution was entered into to send two companies of men against those of the Clan Gun who dwelt in Caithness and Strathnaver, and to surround them in such a way as to prevent escape. The Earl of Caithness, notwithstanding, sent private notice to the clan of the preparations making against them by Angus Sutherland of Mellary, in Berridale; but the clan were distrustful of the earl, as they had already received secret intelligence that he had assembled his people together for the purpose of attacking them.

As soon as the Earl of Sutherland could get his men collected he proceeded to march to the territories of the Clan Gun; but meeting by chance, on his way, with a party of Strathnaver men, under the command of William Mackay, brother of Houcheon Mackay, carrying off the cattle of James Mac-Rory, a vassal of his own, from Coireceann Loch in the Diri-Meanigh, he rescued and brought back his vassal's cattle. After this the earl's party pursued William Mackay and the Strath-

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naver men during the whole day, and killed one of the principal men of the Clan Gun in Strathnaver, called Angus-Roy, with several others of Mackay's company. This affair was called Latha-Tom-Fraoich, that is, the day of the heather bush. At the end of the pursuit, and toward evening, the pursued party found themselves on the borders of Caithness, where they found the Clan Gun assembled in consequence of the rising of the Caithness people who had taken away their cattle.

This accidental meeting of the Strathnaver men and the Clan Gun was the means, probably, of saving both from destruction. They immediately entered into an alliance to stand by one another, and to live or die together. Next morning they found themselves placed between two powerful bodies of their enemies. On the one side was the Earl of Sutherland's party at no great distance, reposing themselves from the fatigues of the preceding day, and on the other were seen advancing the Caithness men, conducted by Henry Sinclair, brother to the laird of Dun, and cousin to the Earl of Caithness. A council of war was immediately held to consult how to act in this emergency. William Mackay gave it as his opinion, that they should immediately attack the Sutherland men, who were wearied with the labour of the preceding day, before the Caithness men should arrive, and who might be thus easily defeated. But the Clan Gun objected to Mackay's plan, and proposed to attack the Caithness men first, as they were far inferior in numbers. This proposal having been acceded to, the Clan Gun and their allies, who had the advantage of the hill, attacked the Caithness men with great resolution. The latter foolishly expended their arrows while at a distance from their opponents; but the Clan Gun having husbanded their shot till they

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came in close contact with the enemy did great execution. The Caithness men were completely overthrown, after leaving 140 of their party, with their captain, Henry Sinclair, dead on the field of battle. Had not the darkness of the night favoured their flight, they would have all been destroyed. Henry Sinclair was Mackay's uncle, and not being aware that he had been in the engagement till he recognized his body among the slain, Mackay felt extremely grieved at the unexpected death of his relative. This skirmish took place at Aldgown, in the year 1586. The Sutherland men having lost sight of Mackay and his party among the hills immediately before the conflict, returned into their own country with the booty they had recovered, and were not aware of the defeat of the Caithness men till some time after that event.

The Earl of Caithness afterward confessed that he had no intention of attacking the Clan Gun at the time in question; but that his policy was to have allowed them to be closely pressed and pursued by the Sutherland men, and then to have relieved them from the imminent danger they would thereby be placed in, so that they might consider that it was to him they owed their safety, and thus lay them under fresh obligations to him. But the deceitful part he acted proved very disastrous to his people, and the result so exasperated him against the Clan Gun, that he hanged John-Mac-Iain-Mac-Rob, chieftain of the Clan Gun, in Caithness, whom he had kept captive for some time.

At the time the affair of Aldgown took place, Houcheon Mackay was on a visit to the Earl of Caithness, whose paternal aunt he had married. But when the inhabitants of Caithness understood that William Mackay, his brother, had been with the Clan Gun at Aldgown, they attempted to murder Houcheon, who was, in consequence

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of this attempt upon his life, obliged to flee privately into Strathnaver.

The result of all these proceedings was another meeting between the Earls of Sutherland and Caithness at the hill of Bingrime in Sutherland, which was brought about by the mediation of Sir Patrick Gordon of Auchindun, who was sent into the north by his nephew, the Earl of Huntly, for that purpose. Here again a new confederacy was formed against the Clan Gun in Caithness, who were now maintained and harboured by Mackay. The Earl of Sutherland, on account of the recent defeat of the Caithness men, undertook to attack the clan first. He accordingly directed two bodies to march with all haste against the clan, one of which was commanded by James Mac-Rory and Neill Mac-Iain-Mac-William, chief of the Sliochd-Iain-Abaraich, who were now under the protection of the Earl of Sutherland; and the other by William Sutherland Johnson, George Gordon in Marle, and William Murray in Kinnald, brother of Hugh Murray of Aberscors. Houcheon Mackay seeing no hopes of maintaining the Clan Gun any longer without danger to himself, discharged them from his country, whereupon they made preparations for seeking an asylum in the western isles. But, on their journey thither, they were met near Loch Broom, at a place called Leckmelme, by James Mac-Rory and Neill Mac-Iain-Mac-William, where, after a sharp skirmish, they were overthrown, and the greater part of them killed. Their commander, George Mac-Iain-Mac-Rob, brother of John Mac-Iain-Mac-Rob, who was hanged by the Earl of Caithness, was severely wounded, and was taken prisoner after an unsuccessful attempt to escape by swimming across a loch close by. After being carried to Dunrobin castle, and presented to the Earl of Sutherland, George Gun was sent by him to the Earl of Caith-

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ness, who, though extremely grieved at the misfortune which had happened to the Clan Gun, dissembled his vexation, and received the prisoner as if he approved of the Earl of Sutherland's proceedings against him and his unfortunate people. After a short confinement, George Gun was released from his captivity by the Earl of Caithness, at the entreaty of the Earl of Sutherland, not from any favour to the prisoner himself, or to the earl, whom the Earl of Caithness hated mortally, but with the design of making Gun an instrument of annoyance to some of the Earl of Caithness' neighbours. But the Earl of Caithness was disappointed in his object, for George Gun, after his enlargement from prison, always remained faithful to the Earl of Sutherland.

About this time a violent feud arose in the western isles between Angus Macdonald of Kintyre, and Sir Lauchlan Maclean of Duart, in Mull, whose sister Angus had married, which ended almost in the total destruction of the Clan Donald and Clan Lean. The circumstances which led to this unfortunate dissension were these: —

Donald Gorm Macdonald of Slate, when going on a visit from Slate to his cousin, Angus Macdonald of Kintyre, was forced by contrary winds to land with his party in the island of Jura, which belonged, partly to Sir Lauchlan Maclean, and partly to Angus Macdonald. The part of the island where Macdonald of Slate landed belonged to Sir Lauchlan Maclean. No sooner had Macdonald and his company landed, than by an unlucky coincidence, Macdonald Terreagh and Houcheon Macgillespoc, two of the Clan Donald, who had lately quarrelled with Donald Gorm, arrived at the same time with a party of men; and, understanding that Donald Gorm was in the island, they secretly took away, by night, a number of cattle belonging to the Clan Lean, and immediately put to sea. Their object in doing so

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was to make the Clan Lean believe that Donald Gorm and his party had carried off the cattle in the hope that the Macleans would attack Donald Gorm, and they were not disappointed. As soon as the lifting of the cattle had been discovered, Sir Lauchlan Maclean assembled his whole forces, and, under the impression that Donald Gorm and his party had committed the spoliation, he attacked them suddenly and unawares, during the night, at a place in the island called Inverchuockwrick, and slew about sixty of the Clan Donald. Donald Gorm, having previously gone on board his vessel to pass the night, fortunately escaped.

When Angus Macdonald heard of this "untoward event," he visited Donald Gorm in Skye for the purpose of consulting with him on the means of obtaining reparation for the loss of his men. On his return homeward to Kintyre, he landed in the isle of Mull, and, contrary to the advice of Coll Mac-James and Reginald Mac-James, his two brothers, and of Reginald Mac-Coll, his cousin, who wished him to send a messenger to announce the result of his meeting with Donald Gorm, went to the castle of Duart, the principal residence of Sir Lauchlan Maclean in Mull. His two brothers refused to accompany him, and they acted rightly; for, the day after Angus arrived at Duart, he and all his party were perfidiously arrested by Sir Lauchlan Maclean. Reginald Mac-Coll, the cousin of Angus, alone escaped. The Rhinns of Islay at this time belonged to the Clan Donald, but they had given the possession of them to the Clan Lean for personal services. Sir Lauchlan, thinking the present a favourable opportunity for acquiring an absolute right to this property, offered to release Angus Macdonald, provided he would renounce his right and title to the Rhinns; and, in case of refusal, he threatened to make him end his days in captivity. Angus, being

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thus in some degree compelled, agreed to the proposed terms; but before obtaining his liberty, he was forced to give James Macdonald, his eldest son, and Reginald Mac-James, his brother, as hostages, until the deed of conveyance should be delivered to Sir Lauchlan.

It was not, however, the intention of Angus Macdonald to implement this engagement, if he could accomplish the liberation of his son and brother. His cousin had suffered a grievous injury at the hands of Sir Lauchlan Maclean without any just cause of offence, and he himself had, when on a friendly mission, been detained most unjustly as a prisoner, and compelled to promise to surrender into Sir Lauchlan's hands, by a regular deed, a part of his property. Under these circumstances, his resolution to break the unfair engagement he had come under is not to be wondered at. To accomplish his object he had recourse to a stratagem in which he succeeded, as will be shown in the sequel.

After Maclean had obtained delivery of the two hostages, he made a voyage to Islay to get the engagement completed. He left behind, in the castle of Duart, Reginald Mac-James, one of the hostages, whom he put in fetters, and took the other to accompany him on his voyage. Having arrived in the isle of Islay, he encamped at Eilean-Gorm, a ruinous castle upon the Rhinns of Islay, which castle had been lately in the possession of the Clan Lean. Angus Macdonald was residing at the time at the house of Mulindry or Mullindhrea, a comfortable and well-furnished residence belonging to him on the island, and to which he invited Sir Lauchlan, under the pretence of affording him better accommodation, and providing him with better provisions than he could obtain in his camp; but Sir Lauchlan, having his suspicions, declined to accept the invitation. "There wes" (says Sir Robert Gordon)

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"so little trust on either syd, that they did not now meit in friendship or amitie, bot vpon ther owne guard, or rather by messingers, one from another. And true it is (sayeth John Colwin, in his manuscript) that the islanders are, of nature, verie suspicious; full of invention against ther nighbours, by whatsoever way they may get them destroyed. Besyds this, they are bent and eager in taking revenge, that neither have they regaird to persone, tyme, aige, nor cause; and ar generallie so addicted that way (as lykwise are the most pairt of all Highlanders) that therein they surpasse all other people whatsoever."

The refusal of Sir Lauchlan to take up his residence at Mulindry did not prevent Macdonald from renewing his offer, which he pressed very warmly, saying, that he would make him as welcome as far as he was able, that they should make merry together as long as the provisions at Mulindry lasted, and that when these were exhausted, he would go to Sir Lauchlan's camp and enjoy such fare as he could afford. But Maclean told the bearer of the message frankly, that he was distrustful of Macdonald's intentions, and would not, therefore, come. Angus replied, by means of his messenger, that Maclean's suspicions were unfounded; that he meant to show him nothing but brotherly love and affection; and that as he held his son and brother as pledges, he could run no risk whatever in taking up his residence at Mulindry. Sir Lauchlan was now thrown off his guard by these fair promises, and agreed to pay Macdonald a visit, and accordingly proceeded to Mulindry, accompanied by James Macdonald, his own nephew, and the son of Angus, and eighty-six of his kinsmen and servants. Maclean and his party, on their arrival, were received by Macdonald with much apparent kindness, and were sumptuously entertained

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during the whole day. In the meantime, Macdonald sent notice to all his friends and well-wishers in the island to come to his house at nine o'clock at night, his design being to seize Maclean and his party. At the usual hour for going to repose, Maclean and his people were lodged in a long-house, which stood by itself, at some distance from the other houses. During the whole day, Maclean had always kept James Macdonald, the hostage, within his reach as a sort of protection to him in case of an attack, and at going to bed he took him along with him. About an hour after Maclean and his people had retired, Angus assembled his men to the number of three or four hundred, and made them surround the house in which Maclean and his company lay. Then going himself to the door, he called upon Maclean, and told him that he had come to give him his reposing drink, which he had forgotten to offer him before going to bed. Maclean answered that he did not wish to drink at that time; but Macdonald insisted that he should rise and receive the drink, it being, he said, his will that he should do so. The peremptory tone of Macdonald made Maclean at once apprehensive of the danger of his situation, and immediately getting up and placing the boy between his shoulders, prepared to preserve his life as long as he could with the boy, or to sell it as dearly as possible. As soon as the door was forced open, James Macdonald, seeing his father with a naked sword in his hand, and a number of his men armed in the same manner, cried aloud for mercy to Maclean, his uncle, which being granted, Sir Lauchlan was immediately removed to a secret chamber, where he remained till next morning. After Maclean had surrendered, Angus Macdonald announced to those within the house, that if they would come without, their lives would be spared; but he excepted Macdonald Terreagh

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and another individual whom he named. The whole, with the exception of these two, having complied, the house was immediately set on fire, and consumed along with Macdonald Terreagh and his companion. The former was one of the Clan Donald of the Western Islands, and not only had assisted the Clan Lean against his own tribe, but was also the originator, as we have seen, of all these disturbances; and the latter was a near kinsman to Maclean, one of the oldest of the clan, and celebrated both for his wisdom and prowess. This affair took place in the month of July, 1586.

When the intelligence of the seizure of Sir Lauchlan Maclean reached the isle of Mull, Allan Maclean, who was the nearest kinsman to Maclean, whose children were then very young, bethought himself of an expedient to obtain the possessions of Sir Lauchlan. In conjunction with his friends, Allan caused a false report to be spread in the island of Islay, that the friends of Maclean had killed Reginald Mac-James, the remaining hostage at Duart in Mull, by means of which he hoped that Angus Macdonald would be moved to kill Sir Lauchlan, and thereby enable him (Allan) to supply his place. But although this device did not succeed, it proved very disastrous to Sir Lauchlan's friends and followers, who were beheaded in pairs by Coll Mac-James, the brother of Angus Macdonald.

The friends of Sir Lauchlan seeing no hopes of his release, applied to the Earl of Argyle to assist them in a contemplated attempt to rescue him out of the hands of Angus Macdonald; but the earl, perceiving the utter hopelessness of such an attempt with such forces as he and they could command, advised them to complain to King James VI against Angus Macdonald, for the seizure and detention of their chief. The king immediately directed that Macdonald should be summoned

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by a herald-at-arms to deliver up Sir Lauchlan into the hands of the Earl of Argyle; but the herald was interrupted in the performance of his duty, not being able to procure shipping for Islay, and was obliged to return home. The Earl of Argyle had then recourse to negotiation with Macdonald, and after considerable trouble he prevailed on him to release Sir Lauchlan on certain strict conditions, but not until Reginald Mac-James, the brother of Angus, had been delivered up, and the earl, for performance of conditions agreed upon, had given his own son, and the son of Macleod of Harris, as hostages. But Maclean, quite regardless of the safety of the hostages, and in open violation of the engagements he had come under, on hearing that Angus Macdonald had gone to Ireland on a visit to the Clan Donald of the glens in Ireland, invaded Ila, which he laid waste, and pursued those who had assisted in his capture.

On his return from Ireland, Angus Macdonald made great preparations for inflicting a just chastisement upon Maclean. Collecting a large body of men, and much shipping, he invaded Mull and Tiree, carrying havoc and destruction along with him, and destroying every human being and every domestic animal of whatever kind. While Macdonald was committing these ravages in Mull and Tiree, Maclean, instead of opposing him, invaded Kintyre, where he took ample retaliation by wasting and burning a great part of that country. In this manner did these hostile clans continue, for a considerable period, mutually to vex and destroy one another till they were almost exterminated root and branch.

In order to strengthen his own power and to weaken that of his antagonist, Sir Lauchlan Maclean attempted to detach John Mac-Iain, of Ardnamurchan, from Angus

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Macdonald and his party. Mac-Iain had formerly been an unsuccessful suitor for the hand of Maclean's mother, and Sir Hector now gave him an invitation to visit him in Mull, promising, at the same time, to give him his mother in marriage. Mac-Iain accepted the invitation, and on his arrival in Mull, Maclean prevailed on his mother to marry Mac-Iain, and the nuptials were accordingly celebrated at Torloisk in Mull. Maclean thought, that by gratifying Mac-Iain in his long-wished-for object, he would easily succeed in obtaining his assistance against Macdonald; but he was disappointed in his expectations, for no persuasion could induce Mac-Iain to join against his own tribe, towards which, notwithstanding his matrimonial alliance, he entertained the strongest affection. Chagrined at the unexpected refusal of Mac-Iain, Sir Lauchlan resolved to punish his refractory guest by one of those gross infringements of the laws of hospitality which so often marked the hostility of rival clans. During the dead hour of the night he caused the door of Mac-Iain's bedchamber to be forced open, dragged him from his bed, and from the arms of his wife, and put him in close confinement, after killing eighteen of his followers. After suffering a year's captivity, he was released and exchanged for Maclean's son, and the other hostages in Macdonald's possession.

The dissensions between these two tribes having attracted the attention of government, the rival chiefs were induced, partly by command of the king, and partly by persuasions and fair promises, to come to Edinburgh in the year 1591, for the purpose of having their differences reconciled. On their arrival they were committed prisoners within the castle of Edinburgh, but were soon released and allowed to return home on payment of a small pecuniary fine, "and a shamfull

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remission" (says Sir Robert Gordon) "granted to either of them."

In the year 1587, the flames of civil discord, which had lain dormant for a short time, burst forth between the rival houses of Sutherland and Caithness, the immediate cause of which was this: In the year 1583, Alexander, Earl of Sutherland, obtained from the Earl of Huntly a grant of the superiority of Strathnaver, and of the heritable sheriffship of Sutherland and Strathnaver, which last was granted in lieu of the lordship of Aboyne. This grant was confirmed by his Majesty in a charter under the great seal, by which Sutherland and Strathnaver were disjoined and dismembered from the sheriffdom of Inverness. The success which had attended the arms of the Earl of Sutherland against the Clan Gun and the kinsmen and dependants of the Earl of Caithness excited the envy and indignation of the latter, who became more desirous than ever to cripple the power of the Earl of Sutherland. And as the strength and influence of the Earl of Sutherland were greatly increased by the power and authority with which the superiority of Strathnaver invested him, the Earl of Caithness used the most urgent entreaties with the Earl of Huntly, who was his brother-in-law, to recall the gift of the superiority which he granted to the Earl of Sutherland, and confer the same on him. The Earl of Huntly gave no decided answer to this application, although he seemed rather to listen with a favourable ear to his brother-in-law's request. The Earl of Sutherland having been made aware of his rival's pretensions, and of the reception which he had met with from the Earl of Huntly, immediately notified to Huntly that he would never restore the superiority either to him or to the Earl of Caithness, as the bargain he had made with him had been long finally concluded. The

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Earl of Huntly was much offended at this notice, but he and the Earl of Sutherland were soon reconciled through the mediation of Sir Patrick Gordon of Auchindun.

Disappointed in his views of obtaining the superiority in question, the Earl of Caithness seized the first opportunity, which presented itself, of quarrelling with the Earl of Sutherland, and he now thought that a suitable occasion had occurred. George Gordon, a bastard son of Gilbert Gordon of Gartay, having offered many indignities to the Earl of Caithness, the earl, instead of complaining to the Earl of Sutherland, in whose service this George Gordon was, craved satisfaction and redress from the Earl of Huntly. Huntly very properly desired the Earl of Caithness to lay his complaint before the Earl of Sutherland; but this he declined to do, disdaining to seek redress from Earl Alexander. Encouraged, probably, by the refusal of the Earl of Huntly to interfere, and the stubbornness of the Earl of Caithness to ask redress from his master, George Gordon, who resided in the town of Marle in Strathully, on the borders of Caithness, not satisfied with the indignities which he had formerly shown to the Earl of Caithness, cut off the tails of the earl's horses as they were passing the river Helmsdale under the care of his servants, on their journey from Caithness to Edinburgh, and in derision desired the earl's servants to show him what he had done.

This George Gordon, it would appear, led a very irregular and wicked course of life, and shortly after the occurrence we have just related, a circumstance happened which induced the Earl of Caithness to take redress at his own hands. George Gordon had incurred the displeasure of the Earl of Sutherland by an incestuous connection with his wife's sister, and as he had no hopes of regaining the earl's favour but by renouncing

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this impure intercourse, he sent Patrick Gordon, his brother, to the Earl of Caithness to endeavour to effect a reconciliation with him, as he could no longer rely upon the protection of his master, the Earl of Sutherland. The Earl of Caithness, who felt an inward satisfaction at hearing of the displeasure of the Earl of Sutherland at George Gordon, dissembled his feelings, and pretended to listen with great favour to the request of Patrick Gordon, in order to throw George Gordon off his guard, while he was in reality meditating his destruction. The ruse succeeded so effectually, that although Gordon received timeous notice, from some friends, of the intentions of the earl to attack him, he reposed in false security upon the promises held out to him, and made no provision for his personal safety. But he was soon undeceived by the appearance of the earl and a body of men, who, entering Marle under the silence of the night, surrounded his house and required him to surrender. He, however, refused to comply, and, when attacked, defended the house with great bravery, and killed a gentleman of the name of Sutherland, one of the principal officers of the earl; but being sorely pressed, he made a desperate effort to escape by cutting his way through his enemies and throwing himself into the river of Helmsdale, which he attempted to swim across, but, in his endeavours to reach the opposite bank, was slain by a shower of arrows. This occurrence took place in the month of February, 1587. The earl detained Patrick Gordon, the brother of George, prisoner, but he soon escaped and returned into Sutherland.

The Earl of Sutherland, though he disliked the conduct of George Gordon, was highly incensed at his death, and made great preparations to punish the Earl of Caithness for his attack upon Gordon. The Earl of

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Caithness in his turn assembled his whole forces, and being joined by Mackay and the Strathnaver men, together with John, the master of Orkney, and the Earl of Carrick, brother of Patrick, Earl of Orkney, and some of his countrymen, marched to Helmsdale to meet the Earl of Sutherland. As soon as the latter heard of the advance of the Earl of Caithness, he also proceeded towards Helmsdale, accompanied by Mackintosh, Roderick Mackenzie of Redcastle, Hector Monroe of Contaligh, and Neill Houcheonson, with the men of Assint. On his arrival at the river of Helmsdale, the Earl of Sutherland found the enemy encamped on the opposite side. Neither party seemed inclined to come to a general engagement, but contented themselves with daily skirmishes by annoying each other with guns and arrows from the opposite banks of the river, which, in some instances, proved fatal. The Sutherland men, who were very expert archers, annoyed the Caithness men so much as to force them to break up their camp on the river side and to remove among the rocks above the village of Easter Helmsdale. Mackay and his countrymen were encamped on the river of Marle, and in order to detach him from the Earl of Caithness, Mackintosh crossed that river and had a private conference with him. After reminding him of the friendship which had so long subsisted between his ancestors and the Sutherland family, Mackintosh endeavoured to impress upon his mind the danger he incurred by taking up arms against his own superior, the Earl of Sutherland, and entreated him, for his own sake, to join the earl; but Mackay remained inflexible.

By the mediation of mutual friends, the two earls agreed to a temporary truce on the ninth of March, 1587, and thus the effusion of human blood was stopped for a short time. As Mackay was the vassal of the Earl

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of Sutherland, the latter refused to comprehend him in the truce, and insisted upon an unconditional submission, but Mackay obstinately refused to do so, and returned home to his own country, highly chagrined that the Earl of Caithness, for whom he had put his life and estate in jeopardy, should have acceded to the Earl of Sutherland's request, to exclude him from the benefit of the truce. Before the two earls separated, they came to a mutual understanding to reduce Mackay to obedience; and that he might not suspect their design, they agreed to meet at Edinburgh for the purpose of concerting the necessary measures together. Accordingly, they held a meeting at the appointed place in the year 1588, and came to the resolution to attack Mackay; and to prevent Mackay from receiving any intelligence of their design, both parties swore to keep the same secret; but the Earl of Caithness, regardless of his oath, immediately sent notice to Mackay of the intended attack, for the purpose of enabling him to meet it. Instead, however, of following the Earl of Caithness' advice, Mackay, justly dreading his hollow friendship, made haste, by the advice of Mackintosh and the laird of Foulis, to reconcile himself to the Earl of Sutherland, his superior, by an immediate submission. For this purpose, he and the earl first met at Inverness, and after conferring together they made another appointment to meet at Elgin, where a perfect and final reconciliation took place in the month of November 1, 1588.

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CHAPTER IV

BATTLES AND TUMULTS

THE truce between the two earls having now expired, the Earl of Sutherland, emboldened by the submission of Mackay, demanded redress from the Earl of Caithness for the slaughter of George Gordon, and required that the principal actors in that affair should be punished. The Earl of Caithness having refused reparation, the Earl of Sutherland sent two hundred men into Caithness under the command of John Gordon of Golspietour, afterward of Embo, and of John Gordon of Kilcalmekill, his brother, to reconnoitre and ascertain the strength of the enemy before invading the country himself. The Gordons and their party entered the parishes of Dumbaith and Lathron, and after wasting the country and killing John James-son, one of the principal gentlemen in Caithness, and some others, they returned with an immense booty in cattle, which they divided among themselves. This division was long known by the name of Creach-lairn, that is, the harship of Lathron.

Immediately on the return of this party, the Earl of Sutherland, accompanied by Mackay, Mackintosh, the laird of Foulis, the laird of Assint, and Gille-Calum, laird of Rasay, entered Caithness with all his forces. In taking this step he was warranted by a commission which he had obtained at court through the influence of Chancellor Maitland, against the Earl of Caithness for killing George Gordon. The people of Caithness,

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alarmed at the great force of the earl, fled in all directions on his approach, and he never halted till he reached the strong fort of Girnigo, where he pitched his camp for twelve days. He then penetrated as far as Duncansby, killing several of the country people in his route, and collecting an immense quantity of cattle and goods, so large, indeed, as to exceed all that had been seen together in that country for many years, all of which was divided among the army, agreeably to the custom in such cases. This invasion had such an effect upon the people of Caithness, that every race, clan, tribe, and family there vied with one another in offering pledges to the Earl of Sutherland to keep the peace in all time coming. This affair took place in the month of February, 1588, and was called La-na-Creach-Moir, that is, the time of the great slaughter or spoil. The town of Wick was also pillaged and burnt, but the church was preserved. In the church was found the heart of the Earl of Caithness' father in a case of lead, which was opened by John Mac-Gille-Calum Rasay, and the ashes of the heart were thrown by him to the winds.

During the time when these depredations were committing, the Earl of Caithness shut himself up in the castle of Girnigo; but on learning the disasters which had befallen his country, he desired a cessation of hostilities and a conference with the Earl of Sutherland. As the castle of Girnigo was strongly fortified, and as the Earl of Caithness had made preparations for enduring a long siege, the Earl of Sutherland complied with his request. Both earls ultimately agreed to refer all their differences and disputes to the arbitrament of friends, and the Earl of Huntly was chosen by mutual consent to act as umpire or oversman, in the event of a difference of opinion. A second truce was in this way entered into

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until the decision of the arbiters, when all differences were to cease.

Notwithstanding this engagement, however, the Earl of Caithness soon gave fresh provocation, for before the truce had expired he sent a party of his men to Diri-Chatt in Sutherland, under the command of Kenneth Buy, and his brother, Farquhar Buy, chieftains of the Siol-Mhic-Imheair in Caithness, and chief advisers of the Earl of Caithness in his bad actions, and his instruments in oppressing the poor people of Caithness. These men, after killing Donald-Mac-Iain-Moir, a herdsman of the Earl of Sutherland, carried off some booty out of Baddenligh. The Earl of Sutherland lost no time in revenging himself. At Whitsunday, in the year 1589, he sent three hundred men into Caithness with Alexander Gordon of Kilcalmekill at their head. They penetrated as far as Girnigo, laying the country waste everywhere around them, and striking terror into the hearts of the inhabitants, many of whom, including some of the Siol-Mhic-Imheair, they killed. After spending their fury the party returned to Sutherland with a large booty, and without the loss of a single man. This affair was called the Creach-na-Camchic.

To retaliate upon the Earl of Sutherland for this inroad, James Sinclair of Markle, brother of the Earl of Caithness, collected an army of three thousand men, with which he marched into Strathully, in the month of June, 1589. As the Earl of Sutherland had been apprehensive of an attack, he had placed a range of sentinels along the borders of Sutherland, to give notice of the approach of the enemy. Of these, four were stationed in the village of Liribell, which the Caithness men entered in the middle of the day unknown to the sentinels, who, instead of keeping an outlook, were at the time carelessly enjoying themselves within the watch-house. On per-

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ceiving the Caithness men about entering the house, they shut themselves up within it; but the house being set on fire, three of them perished, and the fourth, rushing through the flames, escaped with great difficulty, and announced to his countrymen the arrival of the enemy.

From Strathully, Sinclair passed forward with his army to a place called Crissalligh, on the height of Strathbroray, and began to drive away some cattle towards Caithness. As the Earl of Sutherland had not yet had sufficient time to collect a sufficient force to oppose Sinclair, he sent in the meantime Houcheon Mackay, who happened to be at Dunrobin, with five or six hundred men, to keep Sinclair in check until a greater force should be assembled. With this body, which was hastily drawn together on the spur of the occasion, Mackay advanced with amazing celerity, and such was the rapidity of his movements, that he most unexpectedly came up with Sinclair, not far from Crissalligh, when his army was ranging about without order, or military discipline. On coming up, Mackay found John Gordon of Kilcalmekill at the head of a small party skirmishing with the Caithness men, a circumstance which made him instantly resolve, though so far inferior in numbers, to attack Sinclair. Crossing therefore the water, which was between him and the enemy, Mackay and his men rushed upon the army of Sinclair, which they defeated after a long and warm contest. The Caithness men retreated with the loss of their booty and part of their baggage, and were closely pursued by a body of men, commanded by John Murray, nicknamed the merchant, to a distance of sixteen miles.

This defeat, however, did not satisfy the Earl of Sutherland, who, having now assembled an army, entered Caithness with the intention of laying it waste.

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The earl advanced as far as Corrichoigh, and the Earl of Caithness convened his forces at Spittle, where he lay waiting the arrival of his enemy. The Earl of Huntly, having been made acquainted with the warlike preparations of the two hostile earls, sent, without delay, his uncle, Sir Patrick Gordon of Auchindun, to mediate between them, and he luckily arrived at the Earl of Sutherland's headquarters at the very instant his army was on its march to meet the Earl of Caithness. By the friendly interference of Sir Patrick, the parties were prevailed upon to desist from their hostile intentions, and to agree to hold an amicable meeting at Elgin, in presence of the Earl of Huntly, to whom they also agreed to refer all their differences. A meeting accordingly took place in the month of November, 1589, at which all disputes were settled, and in order that the reconciliation might be lasting, and that no recourse might again be had to arms, the two earls subscribed a deed, by which they appointed Huntly and his successors hereditary judges, and arbitrators of all disputes, or differences, that might from thenceforth arise between these two families and houses.

This reconciliation, however, as it did not obliterate the rancour which existed between the people of these different countries, was but of short duration. The frequent depredations committed by the vassals and retainers of the earls upon the property of one another led to an exchange of letters and messages between them, about the means to be used for repressing these disorders. During this correspondence the Earl of Sutherland became unwell, and, being confined to his bed, the Earl of Caithness, in October, 1589, wrote him a kind letter which he had scarcely despatched when he most unaccountably entered Sutherland with a hostile force; but he only remained one night in that country, in con-

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sequence of receiving intelligence of a meditated attack upon his camp, by John Gordon of Kilcalmekill, and Neill Mac-Iain-Mac-William. A considerable number of the Sutherlands having collected together, they resolved to pursue the Caithness men, who had carried off a large quantity of cattle; but on coming nearly up with them, an unfortunate difference arose between the Murrays and the Gordons, each contending for the command of the vanguard. The Murrays rested their claim upon their former good services to the house of Sutherland; but the Gordons refusing to admit it, all the Murrays, with the exception of William Murray, brother of the laird of Palrossie, and John Murray, the merchant, withdrew, and took a station on a hill hard by to witness the combat. This unexpected event seemed to paralyze the Gordons at first; but seeing the Caithness men driving the cattle away before them, and thinking that if they did not attack them they would be accused of cowardice, Patrick Gordon of Gartay, John Gordon of Embo, and John Gordon of Kilcalmekill, after some consultation, resolved to attack the retiring foe without loss of time, and without waiting for the coming up of the Strathnaver men, who were hourly expected. This was a bold and desperate attempt, as the Gordons were only as one to twelve in point of numbers, but they could not brook the idea of being branded as cowards. With such numerical inferiority, and with the sun and wind in their faces to boot, the Sutherland men advanced upon and resolutely attacked the Caithness men near Clyne. In the van of the Caithness army were placed about fifteen hundred archers, a considerable number of whom were from the Western Isles, under the command of Donald Balloch Mackay of Skowrie, who poured a thick shower of arrows upon the men of Sutherland as they advanced, and who, in return, gave their oppo-

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nents a similar reception. The combat raged with great fury for a considerable time between these two parties; thrice were the Caithness archers driven back upon their rear, which was in consequence thrown into great disorder, and thrice did they return to the conflict cheered on and encouraged by their leader; but, though superior in numbers, they could not withstand the firmness and intrepidity of the Sutherland men, who forced them to retire from the field of battle on the approach of night, and to abandon the cattle which had been carried off. The loss in killed and wounded was about equal on both sides, but with the exception of Nicolas Sutherland, brother of the laird of Forse, and Angus Mac-Angus-Termat, both belonging to the Caithness party, and John Murray, the merchant, on the Sutherland side, there were no principal persons killed. This Angus-Mac-Angus was the ablest and most active man in Caithness, and for his extraordinary swiftness was called Birlig. Among the wounded was John Gordon of Kilcalmekill, and William Murray before mentioned. This affair took place in the month of October, 1590. The obstinacy with which the Caithness men fought was owing principally to Donald Balloch Mackay, who at the time in question had been banished from Sutherland and Strathnaver for the murder of James Macrory, and other crimes, and had placed himself under the protection of the Earl of Caithness. Being afterward apprehended and imprisoned in Dunrobin castle, he was, on the entreaty of his brother, Houcheon Mackay, released by the Earl of Sutherland, and ever after remained faithful to the earl.

Houcheon Mackay, taking advantage of the temporary absence of the Caithness men in their late excursion into Sutherland, entered into Caithness, laying waste everything in his course, even to the gates of Thurso,

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and carried off a large quantity of booty without opposition, which he divided among his countrymen according to custom. He had previously sent the greater part of his men under the direction of his brother William to assist the Sutherland men; but he was too late in joining them, a circumstance which raised a suspicion that William favoured privately the views of the Earl of Caithness.

Vain as the efforts of the mutual friends of the two rival earls had hitherto been to reconcile them effectually, the Earl of Huntly and others once more attempted an arrangement, and having prevailed upon the parties to meet at Strathbogie, a final agreement was entered into in the month of March, in the year 1591, by which they agreed to bury all bygone differences in oblivion, and to live on terms of amity in all time thereafter.

This fresh reconciliation of the two earls was the means of restoring quiet in their districts for a considerable time, which was partially interrupted in the year 1594 by a quarrel between the Clan Gun and some of the other petty tribes. Donald Mac-William-Mac-Henric, Alister Mac-Iain-Mac-Rorie, and others of the Clan Gun entered Caithness and attacked Farquhar Buy, one of the captains of the tribe of Siol-Mhic-Imheair, and William Sutherland, alias William Abaraich, the chief favourite of the Earl of Caithness, and the principal plotter against the life of George Gordon, whose death has been already noticed. After a warm skirmish, Farquhar Buy, and William Abaraich, and some of their followers, were slain. To revenge this outrage, the Earl of Caithness sent the same year his brother, James Sinclair of Murkle, with a party of men against the Clan Gun in Strathie, in Strathnaver, who killed seven of that tribe. George Mac-Iain-Mac-Rob, the chief, and Donald Mac-William-Mac-Henric, narrowly escaped with their lives.

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For the sake of continuity, we have deferred noticing those transactions in the north in which George Gordon, Earl of Huntly, was more immediately concerned, and which led to several bloody conflicts.

The earl, who was a favourite at court, and personally liked by James the Sixth, finding himself in danger from the prevailing faction, retired to his possessions in the north, for the purpose of improving his estates and enjoying domestic quiet. One of his first measures was to erect a castle at Ruthven, in Badenoch, in the neighbourhood of his hunting forests. This gave great offence to Mackintosh, the chief of the Clan Chattan, and his people, as they considered that the object of its erection was to overawe the clan. Being the earl's vassals and tenants they were bound to certain services, among which the furnishing of materials for the building formed a chief part; but instead of assisting the earl's people, they, at first indirectly and in an underhand manner, endeavoured to prevent the workmen from going on with their operations, and afterward positively refused to furnish the necessaries required for the building. This act of disobedience, followed by a quarrel in the year 1590, between the Gordons and the Grants, was the cause of much trouble, the occasion of which was this. John Grant, the tutor of Ballendalloch, having withheld the rents due to the widow, and endeavoured otherwise to injure her, James Gordon, her nephew, eldest son of Alexander Gordon of Lismore, along with some of his friends, went to Ballendalloch to obtain justice for her. On their arrival, differences were accommodated so far that the tutor paid up all arrears due to the lady, except a trifle, which he insisted, on some ground or other, on retaining. This led to some altercation, in which the servants of both parties took a share, and latterly came to blows; but they were separated,

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and James Gordon returned home. Judging from what had taken place, that his aunt's interests would in future be better attended to if under the protection of a husband, he persuaded the brother of Sir Thomas Gordon of Cluny to marry her, which he did. This act so incensed the tutor of Ballendalloch, that he at once showed his displeasure by killing, at the instigation of the laird of Grant, one of John Gordon's servants. For this the tutor and such of the Grants as should harbour or assist him, were declared outlaws and rebels, and a commission was granted to the Earl of Huntly to apprehend and bring them to justice, in virtue of which, he besieged the house of Ballendalloch, which he took by force, on the second day of November, 1590; but the tutor effected his escape. Sir John Campbell of Cadell, a despicable tool of the Chancellor Maitland, who had plotted the destruction of the earl and the laird of Grant, now joined in the conspiracy against him, and stirred up the Clan Chattan, and Mackintosh their chief, to aid the Grants. They also persuaded the Earls of Atholl and Moray to assist them against the Earl of Huntly.

As soon as Huntly ascertained that the Grants and Clan Chattan, who were his own vassals, had put themselves under the command of these earls, he assembled his followers, and, entering Badenoch, summoned his vassals to appear before him, and deliver up the tutor and his abettors, but none of them came. He then proclaimed and denounced them rebels, and obtained a royal commission to invade and apprehend them. To consult on the best means of defending themselves, the Earls of Moray and Atholl, the Dunbars, the Clan Chattan, the Grants, and the laird of Cadell, and others of their party met at Forres. Two contrary opinions were given at this meeting. On the one hand

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Mackintosh, Grant, and Cadell advised the earls, who were pretty well supported by a large party in the north, immediately to collect their forces and oppose Huntly; but the Dunbars, on the other hand, were opposed to this advice, and endeavoured to convince the earls that they were not in a fit condition at that time to make a successful stand against their formidable antagonist. In the midst of these deliberations Huntly, who had received early intelligence of the meeting, and had, in consequence, assembled his forces, unexpectedly made his appearance in the neighbourhood of Forres. This sudden advance of Huntly struck terror into the minds of the persons assembled, and the meeting instantly broke up in great confusion. The whole party, with the exception of the Earl of Moray, left the town in great haste, and fled to Tarnoway. The Earl of Moray had provided all things necessary for his defence in case he should be attacked; but the Earl of Huntly, not aware that he had remained behind, marched directly to Tarnoway in pursuit of the fugitives. On arriving within sight of the castle into which the flying party had thrown themselves, the earl sent John Gordon, brother of Sir Thomas Gordon of Cluny, with a small body of men to reconnoitre; but approaching too near without due caution, he was shot by one of the Earl of Moray's servants. As Huntly found the castle well fortified, and as the rebels evacuated it and fled to the mountains, leaving a sufficient force to protect it, he disbanded his men on the twenty-fourth day of November, 1590, and returned home, from whence he proceeded to Edinburgh.

Shortly after his arrival the Earl of Bothwell, who had a design upon the life of Chancellor Maitland, made an attack upon the palace of Holyroodhouse under cloud of night, with the view of seizing Maitland; but, having failed in his object, he was forced to flee to the north

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to avoid the vengeance of the king. The Earl of Huntly, who had been lately reconciled to Maitland, and the Duke of Lennox were sent in pursuit of Bothwell, but he escaped their hands. Understanding afterward that he was harboured by the Earl of Moray at Dunibristle, the chancellor, having procured a commission against him from the king in favour of Huntly, again sent him to the north, accompanied by forty gentlemen to attack the Earl of Moray. When the party had arrived near Dunibristle, the Earl of Huntly sent Captain John Gordon, brother of Gordon of Gight, with a summons to the Earl of Moray, requiring him to surrender himself prisoner; but instead of complying, one of the earl's servants levelled a piece at the bearer of the despatch, and wounded him mortally. Huntly, therefore, after giving orders to take the Earl of Moray alive if possible, forcibly entered the house; but Sir Thomas Gordon, recollecting the fate of his brother at Tarnoway, and Gordon of Gight, who saw his brother lying mortally wounded before his eyes, entirely disregarded the injunction, and, following the earl, who had fled among the rocks on the adjoining seashore, slew him.

The Earl of Huntly immediately despatched John Gordon of Buckie to Edinburgh to lay a statement of the affair before the king and the chancellor. The death of the Earl of Moray would have passed quietly over, as an event of ordinary occurrence in those troublesome times, but as he was one of the heads of the Protestant party, the Presbyterian ministers gave the matter a religious turn by denouncing the Catholic Earl of Huntly as a murderer, who wished to advance the interest of his church by imbruing his hands in the blood of his Protestant countrymen. The effect of the ministers' denunciations was a tumult among the people in Edinburgh, and other parts of the kingdom, which

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obliged the king to cancel the commission he had granted to the Earl of Huntly. The spirit of discontent became so violent that Captain John Gordon, who had been left at Innerkeithing for the recovery of his wounds, but who had been afterward taken prisoner by the Earl of Moray's friends and carried to Edinburgh, was tried before a jury, and contrary to law and justice condemned and executed, for having assisted the Earl of Huntly acting under a royal commission. The recklessness and severity of this act were still more atrocious, as Captain Gordon's wounds were incurable, and he was fast hastening to his grave. John Gordon of Buckie, who was master of the king's household, was obliged to flee from Edinburgh, and made a narrow escape with his life.

As for the Earl of Huntly, he was summoned at the instance of the lord of St. Colme, brother of the deceased Earl of Moray, to stand trial. He accordingly appeared at Edinburgh and offered to abide the result of a trial by his peers, and in the meantime was committed a prisoner to the castle of Blackness on the twelfth day of March, 1591, till the peers should assemble to try him. On giving sufficient surety, however, that he would appear and stand trial on receiving six days' notice to that effect, he was released by the king on the twentieth day of the same month.

The Clan Chattan, who had never submitted without reluctance to the Earl of Huntly, considered the present aspect of affairs as peculiarly favourable to the design they entertained of shaking off the yoke altogether, and being countenanced and assisted by the Grants, and other friends of the Earl of Moray, made no secret of their intentions. At first the earl sent Allen Macdonald-Duibh, the chief of the Clan Cameron, with his tribe to attack the Clan Chattan in Badenoch, and

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to keep them in due order and subjection. The Camerons, though warmly opposed, succeeded in defeating the Clan Chattan, who lost fifty of their men after a sharp skirmish. The earl next despatched Mackronald with some of the Lochaber men against the Grants in Strathspey, whom he attacked, killed eighteen of them and laid waste the lands of Ballendalloch. After the Clan Chattan had recovered from their defeat, they invaded Strathdee and Glenmuck, under the command of Angus Donald Williamson, and killed Henry Gordon of the Knock, Alexander Gordon of Teldow, Thomas Gordon of Blaircharrish, and the old Baron of Breghly, also a Gordon. The baron was much addicted to hospitality, and unsuspicious of any bad design against him he entertained the hostile party in his best manner, but they afterward basely murdered him. This occurrence took place on the first day of November, 1592. To punish this aggression the Earl of Huntly collected his forces and entered Pettie, then in possession of the Clan Chattan, as a fief from the earls of Moray, and laid waste all the lands of the Clan Chattan there, killed many of them, and carried off a large quantity of cattle which he divided among his army. But in returning from Pettie after disbanding his army, he received the unwelcome intelligence that William Mackintosh, son of Lauchlan Mackintosh, the chief, with eight hundred of the Clan Chattan, had invaded the lands of Auchindun and Cabberogh. The earl, after desiring the small party which remained with him to follow him as speedily as possible, immediately set off at full speed, accompanied by Sir Patrick Gordon of Auchindun, and thirty-six horsemen, in quest of Mackintosh and his party. Overtaking them before they had left the bounds of Cabberogh upon the top of a hill called Stapliegate, he attacked them

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with his small party, and after a warm skirmish defeated them, killing about sixty of their men and wounding William Mackintosh and others.

After this event the Earl of Huntly undertook a second expedition into Pettie. He gave orders to Alexander Gordon of Abergeldie, his bailie in Badenoch, to bring his forces in Lochaber and Badenoch to Inverness, and on his way thither he was desired to send a party under the command of Mackronald to lay waste the lands of the laird of Grant in Strathspey, and those of Mackintosh in Badenoch, which he accordingly did. In this new expedition the Earl of Huntly did great damage to the lands of the rebels, killed several of them, and returned home with a large booty.

The Earl of Huntly, after thus subduing his enemies in the north, now found himself placed at the ban of the government on account of an alleged conspiracy between him and the Earls of Angus and Errol and the crown of Spain, to overturn the state and the church. The king and his councillors seemed to be satisfied of the innocence of the earls, but the ministers, who considered the reformed religion in Scotland in danger while these Catholic peers were protected and favoured, importuned his Majesty to punish them. The king, yielding to necessity and to the intrigues of Queen Elizabeth, forfeited their titles, intending to restore them when a proper opportunity occurred, and to silence the clamours of the ministers, convoked a parliament, which was held in the end of the month of May, 1594. As few of the peers attended, the ministers, having the commissioners of the burghs on their side, carried everything their own way, and the consequence was, that the three earls were attainted without trial and their arms were torn in presence of the parliament, according to the custom in such cases.

Having so far succeeded, the ministers, instigated by

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the Queen of England, now entreated the king to send the Earl of Argyle, a youth of nineteen years of age, in the pay of Queen Elizabeth, with an army against the Catholic earls. The king, still yielding to necessity, complied, and Argyle having collected a force of about twelve thousand men, entered Badenoch and laid siege to the castle of Ruthven, on the twenty-seventh day of September, 1594. He was accompanied in this expedition by the Earl of Athol, Sir Lauchlan Maclean with some of his islanders, the chief of the Mackintoshes, the laird of Grant, the Clan Gregor, Macneil of Barra with all their friends and dependents, together with the whole of the Campbells, and a variety of others whom a thirst for plunder or malice towards the Gordons had induced to join the Earl of Argyle's standard. The castle of Ruthven was so well defended by the Clan Pherson, who were the Earl of Huntly's vassals, that Argyle was obliged to give up the siege. He then marched through Strathspey, and encamped at Drummin, upon the River Avon, on the second day of October, from whence he issued orders to Lord Forbes, the Frasers, the Dunbars, the Clan Kenzie, the Irvings, the Ogilvies, the Leslies, and other tribes and clans in the north, to join his standard with all convenient speed.

The earls, against whom this expedition was directed, were by no means dismayed. They knew that although the king was constrained by popular clamour to levy war upon them, he was in secret friendly to them; and they were, moreover, aware that the army of Argyle, who was a youth of no military experience, was a raw and undisciplined militia, and composed, in a great measure, of Catholics, who could not be expected to feel very warmly for the Protestant interest, to support which the expedition was professedly undertaken. The seeds of disaffection, besides, had been already

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sown in Argyle's camp by the corruption of the Grants and Campbell of Lochnell.

On hearing of Argyle's approach, the Earl of Errol immediately collected a select body of about one hundred horsemen, being gentlemen, on whose courage and fidelity he could rely, and with these he joined the Earl of Huntly at Strathbogie. The forces of Huntly, after this junction, amounted, it is said, to nearly fifteen hundred men, almost altogether horsemen, and with this body he advanced to Carnborrow, where the two earls and their chief followers made a solemn vow to conquer, or to die. Marching from thence, Huntly's army arrived at Auchindun the same day that Argyle's army reached Drummin. At Auchindun, Huntly received intelligence that Argyle was on the eve of descending from the mountains to the Lowlands, which induced him, on the following day, to send Captain Thomas Carr and a party of horsemen to reconnoitre the enemy, while he himself advanced with his main army. The reconnoitring party soon fell in, accidentally, with Argyle's scouts, whom they chased, and some of whom they killed. This occurrence, which was looked upon as a prognostic of victory, so encouraged Huntly and his men, that he resolved to attack the army of Argyle before he should be joined by Lord Forbes, and the forces which were waiting for his appearance in the Lowlands. Argyle had now passed Glenlivet, and had reached the banks of a small brook named Altchonlachan.

On the other hand, the Earl of Argyle had no idea that the Earls of Huntly and Errol would attack him with such an inferior force; and he was, therefore, astonished at seeing them approach so near him as they did. Apprehensive that his numerical superiority in foot would be counterbalanced by Huntly's cavalry, he held a council of war to deliberate whether he should at once

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engage the enemy, or retreat to the mountains, which were inaccessible to Huntly's horsemen, till his Lowland forces, which were chiefly cavalry, should come up. The council advised Argyle to wait till the king, who had promised to appear with a force, should arrive, or, at all events, till he should be joined by the Frasers and Mackenzies from the north, and the Irvings, Forbeses, and Leslies from the Lowlands with their horse. This opinion, which was considered judicious by the most experienced of Argyle's army, was however disregarded by him, and he determined to wait the attack of the enemy; and to encourage his men he pointed out to them the small number of those they had to combat with, and the spoils they might expect after victory. He disposed his army on the declivity of a hill, betwixt Glenlivet and Glenrinnes in two parallel divisions. The right wing consisting of the Macleans and Mackintoshes was commanded by Sir Lauchlan Maclean and Mackintosh; the left, composed of the Grants, Macneills, and Macgregors, by Grant of Gartinbeg; and the centre, consisting of the Campbells, etc., was commanded by Campbell of Auchinbreck. This vanguard consisted of four thousand men, one half of whom carried muskets. The rear of the army, consisting of about six thousand men, was commanded by Argyle himself. The Earl of Huntly's vanguard was composed of three hundred gentlemen, led by the Earl of Errol, Sir Patrick Gordon of Auchindun, the laird of Gight, the laird of Bonnitoun, and Captain, afterward Sir Thomas Carr. The earl himself followed with the remainder of his forces, having the laird of Cluny upon his right hand and the laird of Abergeldy upon his left. Three pieces of field ordnance under the direction of Captain Andrew Gray, afterward colonel of the English and Scots, who served in Bohemia, were placed in front of the vanguard. Before ad-

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vancing, the Earl of Huntly harangued his little army to encourage them to fight manfully; he told them that they had no alternative before them but victory or death — that they were now to combat, not for their own lives only, but also for the very existence of their families, which would be utterly extinguished if they fell a prey to their enemies.

The position which Argyle occupied on the declivity of the hill gave him a decided advantage over his assailants, who, from the nature of their force, were greatly hampered by the mossiness of the ground at the foot of the hill, which was interspersed by pits from which turf had been dug. But, notwithstanding these obstacles, Huntly advanced up the hill with a slow and steady pace. It had been arranged between him and Campbell of Lochnell, who had promised to go over to Huntly as soon as the battle had commenced, that, before charging Argyle with his cavalry, Huntly should fire his artillery at the yellow standard. Campbell bore a mortal enmity at Argyle, as he had murdered his brother, Campbell of Calder, in the year 1592; and as he was Argyle's nearest heir, he probably had directed the firing at the yellow standard in the hope of cutting off the earl. Unfortunately for himself, however, Campbell was shot dead at the first fire of the cannon, and upon his fall all his men fled from the field. Macneill of Barra was also slain at the same time. The Highlanders, who had never before seen field-pieces, were thrown into disorder by the cannonade, which being perceived by Huntly he charged the enemy, and rushing in among them with his horsemen increased the confusion. The Earl of Errol was directed to attack the right wing of Argyle's army commanded by Maclean, but as it occupied a very steep part of the hill, and as Errol was greatly annoyed by thick volleys of shot from above, he was

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compelled to make a détour, leaving the enemy on his left. But Gordon of Auchindun, disdaining such a prudent course, galloped up the hill with a party of his own followers, and charged Maclean with great impetuosity; but Auchindun's rashness cost him his life. The fall of Auchindun so exasperated his followers that they set no bounds to their fury; but Maclean received their repeated assaults with firmness, and manœuvred his troops so well as to succeed in cutting off the Earl of Errol and placing him between his own body and that of Argyle, by whose joint forces he was completely surrounded. At this important crisis, when no hopes of retreat remained, and when Errol and his men were in danger of being cut to pieces, the Earl of Huntly, very fortunately, came up to his assistance and relieved him from his embarrassment. The battle was now renewed and continued for two hours, during which both parties fought with great bravery, the one, says Sir Robert Gordon, "for glorie, the other for necessitie." In the heat of the action the Earl of Huntly had a horse shot under him, and was in imminent danger of his life; but another horse was immediately procured for him. After a hard contest the main body of Argyle's army began to give way, and retreated toward the rivulet of Altchonlachan; but Maclean still kept the field and continued to support the falling fortune of the day. At length, finding the contest hopeless, and after losing many of his men, he retired in good order with the small company that still remained about him. Huntly pursued the retiring foe beyond the water of Altchonlachan when he was prevented from following them farther by the steepness of the hills so unfavourable to the operations of cavalry. The success of Huntly was mainly owing to the treachery of Lochnell and of John Grant of Gartinbeg, one of Huntly's vassals,

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who, in terms of a concerted plan, retreated with his men as soon as the action began, by which act the centre and the left wing of Argyle's army was completely broken. On the side of Argyle five hundred men were killed besides Macneill of Barra, and Lochnell, and Auchinbreck, the two cousins of Argyle. The Earl of Huntly's loss was comparatively trifling. About fourteen gentlemen were slain, including Sir Patrick Gordon of Auchindun and the laird of Gight; and the Earl of Errol and a considerable number of persons were wounded. At the conclusion of the battle the conquerors returned thanks to God on the field for the victory they had achieved. This battle is called by some writers the battle of Glenlivet, and by others the battle of Altchonlachan. Among the trophies found on the field was the ensign belonging to the Earl of Argyle, which was carried with other spoils to Strathbogie, and placed upon the top of the great tower. So certain had Argyle been of success in his enterprise, that he had made out a paper apportioning the lands of the Gordons, the Hays, and all who were suspected to favour them, among the chief officers of his army. This document was found among the baggage which he left behind him on the field of battle.

When Lord Forbes, Lesley of Balquhain, and Irving of Drum, who had assembled all their forces and followers for the purpose of joining Argyle, heard of his defeat, they resolved to unite themselves with the Dunbars and the other forces which were marching from the provinces of Ross and Moray to assist Argyle, and to make an attack upon the Gordons on their return homewards to revenge old quarrels. For this purpose, and to conceal their plans, the whole of the Forbeses, and the greater part of the Leslies and Irvings, met under cloud of night at Druminor and proceeded on their

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journey; but a singular occurrence took place which created such confusion and amazement in their minds as to induce them to return home. They had not gone far when a gentleman of the name of Irving, while riding alongside of Lord Forbes, was most unexpectedly shot dead by an unknown hand, and strange to tell, although all the firearms carried by the party were immediately searched for the purpose of ascertaining the individual who had committed the deed, every one was found to be loaded. This affair raised suspicions among the party, and becoming distrustful of one another, they dissolved their companies and returned home. The tribes and clans of the north who were to have joined Argyle were prevented from doing so by the policy of John Dunbar of Muyness, who was a partisan of the Earl of Huntly. Thus the Gordons escaped the snare which had been laid for them.

Although Argyle certainly calculated upon being joined by the king, it seems doubtful if James ever entertained such an intention, for he stopped at Dundee, from whence he did not stir till he heard the result of the battle of Glenlivet. Instigated by the ministers and other enemies of the Earl of Huntly, who became now more exasperated than ever at the unexpected failure of Argyle's expedition, the king proceeded north to Strathbogie, and in his route he permitted, most unwillingly, the house of Craig in Angus, belonging to Sir John Ogilvie, son of Lord Ogilvie, that of Bagaes in Angus, the property of Sir Walter Lindsay, the house of Culsamond in Garioch, appertaining to the laird of Newton-Gordon, the house of Slaines in Buchan, belonging to the Earl of Errol, and the castle of Strathbogie, to be razed to the ground, under the pretext that priests and Jesuits had been harboured in them. In the meantime the Earl of Huntly and his friends retired into

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Sutherland, where they remained six weeks with Earl Alexander; and on the king's departure from Strathbogie, Huntly returned thither, leaving his eldest son George, Lord Gordon, in Sutherland with his aunt till the return of more peaceable times.

The king left the Duke of Lennox to act as his lieutenant in the north, with whom the two earls held a meeting at Aberdeen, and as their temporary absence from the kingdom might allay the spirit of violence and discontent, which was particularly annoying to his Majesty, they agreed to leave the kingdom during the king's pleasure. After spending sixteen months in travelling through Germany and Flanders, Huntly was recalled, and on his return, he, as well as the Earls of Angus and Errol, were restored to their former honours and estates by the Parliament, held at Edinburgh in the month of November, 1597, and in testimony of his regard for Huntly, the king, two years thereafter, created him a marquis. This signal mark of the royal favour had such an influence upon the Clan Chattan, the Clan Kenzie, the Grants, Forbeses, Leslies, and the other hostile clans and tribes, that they at once submitted themselves to the marquis.

The warlike operations in the north seem, for a time, to have drawn off the attention of the clans from their own feuds; but in the year 1597, a tumult occurred at Loggiewreid in Ross, which had almost put that province and the adjoining country into a flame. The quarrel began between John Mac-Gille-Calum, brother of Gille-Calum, laird of Rasay, and Alexander Bane, brother of Duncan Bane of Tulloch, in Ross. The Monroes took the side of the Banes, and the Mackenzies aided John Mac-Gille-Calum. In this tumult John Mac-Gille-Calum and John Mac-Murthow-Mac-William, a gentleman of the Clan Kenzie, and three persons of that surname,

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were killed on the one side, and on the other side were slain John Monroe of Culcraigie, his brother Houcheon Monroe, and John Monroe Robertson. This occurrence renewed the ancient animosity between the Clan Kenzie and the Monroes, and both parties began to assemble their friends for the purpose of attacking one another; but their differences were, in some measure, happily reconciled by the mediation of mutual friends.

In the following year the ambition and avarice of Sir Lauchlan Maclean, of whom notice has been already taken, brought him to an untimely end, having been slain in Islay by Sir James Macdonald, his nephew, eldest son of Angus Macdonald of Kintyre. Sir Lauchlan had long had an eye upon the possessions of the Clan Ronald in Islay; but having failed in extorting a conveyance thereof from Angus Macdonald in the way before alluded to, he endeavoured by his credit at court and by bribery or other means, to obtain a grant from the Crown, in 1595, of these lands. At this period Angus Macdonald had become infirm from age, and his son, Sir James Macdonald, was too young to make any effectual resistance to the newly acquired claims of his covetous uncle. After obtaining the gift, Sir Lauchlan collected his people and friends and invaded Islay, for the purpose of taking possession of the lands which belonged to the Clan Donald. Sir James Macdonald, on hearing of his uncle's landing, collected his friends and landed in Islay to dispossess Sir Lauchlan of the property. To prevent the effusion of blood, some mutual friends of the parties interposed, and endeavoured to bring about an adjustment of their differences. They prevailed upon Sir James to agree to resign the half of the island to his uncle during the life of the latter, provided he would acknowledge that he held the same for personal service to the Clan Donald in the same

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manner as Maclean's progenitors had always held the Rhinns of Islay; and he moreover offered to submit the question to any impartial friends Maclean might choose, under this reasonable condition, that in case they should not agree, his Majesty should decide. But Maclean, contrary to the advice of his best friends, would listen to no proposals short of an absolute surrender of the whole of the island. Sir James, therefore, resolved to vindicate his right by an appeal to arms, though his force was far inferior to that of Sir Lauchlan. Taking possession of a hill at the head of Loch Groynard, which the Macleans had ineffectually endeavoured to secure, Sir James attacked their advanced guard, which he forced to fall back upon their main body. A desperate struggle then took place, in which great valour was displayed on both sides. Sir Lauchlan was killed fighting at the head of his men, who were at length compelled to retreat to their boats and vessels. Besides their chief, the Macleans left eighty of their principal men, and two hundred common soldiers, dead on the field of battle. Lauchlan Barroch-Maclean, son of Sir Lauchlan, was dangerously wounded, but escaped. Sir James Macdonald was also so severely wounded that he never fully recovered from his wounds. About thirty of the Clan Donald were killed and about sixty wounded. Sir Lauchlan, according to Sir Robert Gordon, had consulted a witch before he undertook this journey into Islay, who advised him, in the first place, not to land upon the island on a Thursday; secondly, that he should not drink of the water of a well near Groynard; and lastly, she told him that one Maclean should be slain at Groynard. "The first he transgressed unwillingly" (says Sir Robert), "being driven into the island of Ila by a tempest upon a Thursday; the second he transgressed negligentlie, haveing drank of that water befor

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he wes awair; and so he wes killed ther at Groinard, as wes foretold him, bot doubtfullie. Thus endeth all these that doe trust in such kynd of responces, or doe hunt after them!"

On hearing of Maclean's death and the defeat of his men, the king became so highly incensed against the Clan Donald, that, finding he had a right to dispose of their possessions both in Kintyre and Islay, he made a grant of them to the Earl of Argyle and the Campbells. This gave rise to a number of bloody conflicts between the Campbells and the Clan Donald in the years 1614, 1615, and 1616, which ended in the ruin of the latter.

The rival houses of Sutherland and Caithness had now lived on friendly terms for some years. After spending about eighteen months at court, and attending a convention of the estates at Edinburgh, in July, 1598, John, sixth Earl of Sutherland, went to the continent, where he remained till the month of September, 1600. The Earl of Caithness, deeming the absence of the Earl of Sutherland a fit opportunity for carrying into effect some designs against him, caused William Mackay to obtain leave from his brother Houcheon Mackay to hunt in the policy of Durines belonging to the Earl of Sutherland. The Earl of Caithness thereupon assembled all his vassals and dependents, and, under the pretence of hunting, made demonstrations for entering Sutherland or Strathnaver. As soon as Mackay was informed of his intentions he sent a message to the Earl of Caithness, intimating to him that he would not permit him to enter either of these countries, or to cross the marches. The Earl of Caithness returned a haughty answer; but he did not carry his threat of invasion into execution on account of the arrival of the Earl of Sutherland from the continent. As the Earl of Caithness still continued to threaten an invasion, the Earl of

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Sutherland collected his forces, in the month of July, 1601, to oppose him. Mackay, with his countrymen, soon joined the Earl of Sutherland at Lagan-Gaincamhd in Dirichat, where he was soon also joined by the Monroes under Robert Monroe of Contaligh, and the laird of Assint with his countrymen.

While the Earl of Sutherland's force was thus assembling, the Earl of Caithness advanced towards Sutherland with his army. The two armies encamped at the distance of about three miles asunder, near the hill of Bengrime. In expectation of a battle the morning after their encampment, the Sutherland men took up a position in a plain which lay between the two armies, called Leathad Reidh, than which a more convenient station could not have been selected. But the commodiousness of the plain was not the only reason for making the selection. There had been long a prophetic tradition in these countries that a battle was to be fought on this ground between the inhabitants of Sutherland, assisted by the Strathnaver men, and the men of Caithness; that although the Sutherland men were to be victorious their loss would be great, and that the loss of the Strathnaver men should be even greater, but that the Caithness men should be so completely overthrown that they should not be able, for a considerable length of time, to recover the blow which they were to receive. This superstitious idea made such an impression upon the minds of the men of Sutherland that it was with great difficulty they could be restrained from immediately attacking their enemies.

The Earl of Caithness, daunted by this circumstance, and being diffident of the fidelity of some of his people, whom he had used with great cruelty, sent messengers to the Earl of Sutherland expressing his regret at what had happened, stating that he was provoked to his

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present measures by the insolence of Mackay, who had repeatedly dared him to the attack, and that, if the Earl of Sutherland would pass over the affair, he would permit him and his army to advance twice as far into Caithness as he had marched into Sutherland. The Earl of Sutherland, on receipt of this offer, called a council of his friends to deliberate upon it. Mackay and some others advised the earl to decline the proposal, and attack the Earl of Caithness; they represented to him that as he had collected an excellent and resolute army, and as this was his first enterprise, he should give to the world a specimen of his prowess; that if he let the present occasion for humbling his enemies escape, that they would again grow bold and insolent, and, presuming upon his weakness, might attempt new aggressions. Others, however, of the earl's advisers were of a contrary opinion, and thought it neither fit nor reasonable to risk so many lives when such ample satisfaction was offered. A sort of middle course was, therefore, adopted by giving the Earl of Caithness an opportunity to escape if he inclined. The messengers were accordingly sent back with this answer, that if the Earl of Caithness and his army would remain where they lay till sunrise next morning they might be assured of an attack.

When this answer was delivered in the Earl of Caithness' camp, his men got so alarmed that the earl, with great difficulty, prevented them from running away immediately. He remained on the field all night watching them in person, encouraging them to remain, and making great promises if they stood firm. But his entreaties were quite unavailing, for as soon as the morning dawned, on perceiving the approach of the Earl of Sutherland's army, they fled from the field in the utmost confusion, jostling and overthrowing one another in their flight, and leaving their whole baggage behind

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them. The advanced guard of the Earl of Sutherland was commanded by Patrick Gordon of Gartay and Donald Balloch Mackay. The right wing of the main body, consisting of the Strathnaver men, was led by Mackay; the Monroes and the men of Assint formed the left wing, and the Earl of Sutherland commanded the centre, composed of the Sutherland men. A body of the Gordons, under the direction of William Gun-Mac-Mhic-Sheumais of Killeirnan, was despatched, by a circuitous route, for the purpose of attacking the Caithness men in their rear; but, on arriving at the place appointed for them, they found that the Earl of Caithness' army had disappeared. They, therefore, waited for the coming up of the main body, which was at some distance. The Earl of Sutherland resolved to pursue the flying enemy; but, before proceeding on the pursuit, his army collected a quantity of stones which they accumulated into a heap to commemorate the flight of the Caithness men, which heap was called Carn-Teiche, that is, the Flight Cairn.

Not wishing to encounter the Earl of Sutherland under the adverse circumstances which had occurred, the Earl of Caithness, after entering his own territories, sent a message to this effect to his pursuer, that having complied with his request in withdrawing his army, he hoped hostile proceedings would cease, and that if the Earl of Sutherland should advance with his army into Caithness, Earl George would not hinder him; but he suggested to him the propriety of appointing some gentlemen on both sides to see the respective armies dissolved. The Earl of Sutherland acceded to this proposal, and sent George Gray of Cuttle, eldest son of Gilbert Gray of Sordell, with a company of resolute men into Caithness to see the army of the Earl of Caithness broken up, who accordingly witnessed the disbanding of the Caith-

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ness men, who returned joyfully to their homes, having, as they conceived, made a narrow escape with their lives. The Earl of Caithness, in his turn, despatched Alexander Bane, chief of the Caithness Banes, who witnessed the dismissal of the Earl of Sutherland's army.

About the period in question, great commotions took place in the northwest isles, in consequence of a quarrel between Donald Gorm Macdonald of Slate, and Sir Roderick Macleod of Harris, which arose out of the following circumstances. Donald Gorm Macdonald, who had married the sister of Sir Roderick, instigated by jealousy, had conceived displeasure at her and put her away. Having complained to her brother of the treatment thus received, Sir Roderick sent a message to Macdonald requiring him to take back his wife. Instead of complying with this request, Macdonald brought an action of divorce against her, and having obtained decree therein, he, thereupon, married the sister of Kenneth Mackenzie, lord of Kintail. Sir Roderick, who considered himself disgraced and his family dishonoured by such proceedings, now determined to wipe away the stain, as he thought, by avenging himself upon his brother-in-law. Assembling, therefore, all his countrymen and his tribe, the Siol-Thormaid, without delay, he invaded with fire and sword the lands of Macdonald in the isle of Skye, to which he laid claim as his own. Macdonald retaliated this aggression by landing in Harris with his forces, which he laid waste, and after killing some of the inhabitants, retired with a large booty in cattle. To make amends for this loss, Sir Roderick invaded Uist, which belonged to Macdonald, and despatched his cousin, Donald Glas Macleod, with forty men into the interior, to lay the island waste, and to carry off a quantity of goods and cattle which the inhabitants had placed within the precincts of the church of

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Kiltrynard as within a sanctuary. This exploit turned out to be very serious, as Donald Macleod and his party were most unexpectedly attacked in the act of carrying off their prey by John Mac-Iain-Mhic-Sheumais, a kinsman of Macdonald, at the head of a body of twelve men who had remained in the island, by whom Donald Macleod and the greater part of his men were cut to pieces, and the booty rescued. Sir Roderick thinking that the force which had attacked his cousin was much greater than it was, retired from the island, intending to return on a future day with a greater force to revenge his loss.

This odious system of warfare continued till the hostile parties had almost exterminated one another; and to such extremities were they reduced by the ruin and desolation which followed their footsteps, that they were compelled to eat horses, dogs, and cats, and other filthy animals, to preserve a miserable existence. To put an end, if possible, at once to this destructive contest, Macdonald collected all his remaining forces, with the determination of striking a decisive blow at his opponent; and accordingly, in the year 1601, he entered Sir Roderick's territories with the design of bringing him to battle. Sir Roderick was then in Argyle soliciting aid and advice from the Earl of Argyle against the Clan Donald; but on hearing of the approach of Macdonald, Alexander Macleod, brother of Sir Roderick, resolved to try the result of a battle. Assembling, therefore, all the inhabitants of his brother's lands, together with the whole tribe of the Siol-Thormaid and some of the Siol-Thorcuill, he encamped close by the hill of Benquhillin, in Skye, resolved to give battle to the Clan Donald next morning, who were equally prepared for the combat. Accordingly, on the arrival of morning, an obstinate and deadly fight took place, which lasted the whole day, each side contending with the utmost valour

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for victory; but at length the Clan Donald overthrew their opponents. Alexander Macleod was wounded and taken prisoner, along with Neill-Mac-Alastair-Ruaidh, and thirty others of the choicest men of the Siol-Thormaid. Iain-Mac-Thormaid and Thormaid-Mac-Thormaid, two near kinsmen of Sir Roderick, and several others, were slain.

After this affair, a reconciliation took place between Macdonald and Sir Roderick, at the solicitation of old Angus Macdonald of Kintyre, the laird of Coll, and other friends, when Macdonald delivered up to Sir Roderick the prisoners he had taken at Benquhillin; but although these parties never again showed any open hostility, they brought several actions at law against each other, the one claiming from the other, respectively, certain parts of their possessions. When the bloody strife between these two rivals was over, Macdonald paid a visit to the Earl of Sutherland, and renewed the ancient league of friendship and alliance, which had been contracted between their predecessors.

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CHAPTER V

QUARRELS AND COMMOTIONS

In the early part of the year 1602, the west of Scotland was thrown into a state of combustion, in consequence of the renewal of some old quarrels between Colquhoun of Luss, the chief of that surname, and Alexander Macgregor, chief of the Clan Gregor. Aggressions had formerly been committed on both sides; first by Luss and his party against some of the Macgregors, and then by John Macgregor, the brother of Alexander, against the laird of Luss and his dependents and tenants. To put an end to these dissensions, Alexander Macgregor left Rannoch, accompanied by about two hundred of his kinsmen and friends, entered Lennox, and took up his quarters on the confines of Luss's territory, where he expected, by the mediation of his friends, to bring matters to an amicable adjustment. As the laird of Luss was suspicious of Macgregor's real intentions, he assembled all his vassals, with the Buchanans and others, to the number of 300 horse, and 500 foot, with the design, if the result of the meeting should not turn out to his expectations and wishes, to cut off Macgregor and his party. But Macgregor, anticipating his intention, was upon his guard, and, by his precautions, defeated the design upon him. A conference was held for the purpose of terminating all differences, but the meeting broke up without any adjustment; Macgregor then proceeded homewards. The laird of Luss, in pursuance of his plan, immediately followed

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Macgregor with great haste through Glenfreon, in the expectation of coming upon him unawares, and defeating him; but Macgregor, who was on the alert, observed, in due time, the approach of his pursuers, and made his dispositions accordingly. He divided his company into two parts, the largest of which he kept under his own command, and placed the other part under the command of John Macgregor, his brother, whom he despatched by a circuitous route, for the purpose of attacking Luss's party in the rear, when they should least expect to be assailed. This stratagem succeeded, and the result was that, after a keen contest, Luss's party was completely overthrown, with the loss of two hundred men, besides several gentlemen and burgesses of the town of Dumbarton. It is remarkable that of the Macgregors, John, the brother of Alexander, and another person alone, were killed, though some of the party were wounded

The laird of Luss and his friends sent early notice of their disaster to the king, and they succeeded so effectually by misrepresenting the whole affair to him, and exhibiting to his Majesty eleven score bloody shirts belonging to those of their party who were slain, that the king grew exceedingly incensed at the Clan Gregor, who had no person about the king to plead their cause, proclaimed them rebels and interdicted all the lieges from harbouring or having any communication with them. The Earl of Argyle with the Campbells was afterward sent against the proscribed clan, who hunted them through the country. About sixty of the clan made a brave stand at Bentoik against a party of two hundred chosen men belonging to the Clan Cameron, Clan Nab, and Clan Ronald, under the command of Robert Campbell, son of the laird of Glenorchy, when Duncan Aberigh, one of the chieftains of the Clan

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Gregor, and his son Duncan, and seven gentlemen of Campbell's party were killed. But although they made a brave resistance, and killed many of their pursuers, the Macgregors, after many skirmishes and great losses, were at last overcome. Commissions were thereafter sent through the kingdom, for fining those who had harboured any of the clan, and for punishing all persons who had kept up any communication with them, and the fines so levied were given by the king to the Earl of Argyle, who converted the same to his own use as a recompense for his services against the unfortunate Macgregors.

Alexander Macgregor, the chief, after suffering many vicissitudes of fortune, and many privations, at last surrendered himself to the Earl of Argyle, on condition that he should grant him a safe conduct into England to King James, that he might lay before his Majesty a true state of the whole affair from the commencement, and crave the royal mercy; and as a security for his return to Scotland, he delivered up to Argyle thirty of his choicest men, and of the best reputation among the clan as hostages to remain in Argyle in custody, till his return from England. But no sooner had Macgregor arrived in Berwick on his way to London, than he was basely arrested, and brought back by the earl to Edinburgh, and, by his influence, executed along with the thirty hostages. Argyle hoped, by these means, ultimately to annihilate the whole clan; but in this cruel design he was quite disappointed, for the clan speedily increased, and became almost as powerful as before.

While the Highland borders were thus disturbed by the warfare between the Macgregors and the Colquhouns, a commotion happened in the interior of the Highlands, in consequence of a quarrel between the Clan Kenzie and the laird of Glengarry, who, according to Sir Robert

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Gordon, was "unexpert and unskilfull in the lawes of the realme." From his want of knowledge of the law, the Clan Kenzie are said by the same writer to have "easalie intrapped him within the compas thereof," certainly by no means a difficult matter in those lawless times; and having thus made him commit himself, they procured a warrant for citing him to appear before the justiciary court at Edinburgh, which they took good care should not be served upon him personally. Either not knowing of these legal proceedings, or neglecting the summons, Glengarry did not appear at Edinburgh on the day appointed, but went about revenging the slaughter of two of his kinsmen, whom the Clan Kenzie had killed after the summons for Glengarry's appearance had been issued. The consequence was that Glengarry and some of his followers were outlawed. Through the interest of the Earl of Dunfermline, lord chancellor of Scotland, Kenneth Mackenzie, afterward created Lord Kintail, obtained a commission against Glengarry and his people, which occasioned great slaughter and trouble. Being assisted by many followers from the neighbouring country, Mackenzie, by virtue of his commission, invaded Glengarry's territories, which he wasted and destroyed with fire and sword without control. On his return, Mackenzie besieged the castle of Strome, which ultimately surrendered to him. To assist Mackenzie in this expedition, the Earl of Sutherland, in token of the ancient friendship which had subsisted between his family and the Mackenzies, sent 240 well-equipped and able men, under the command of John Gordon of Embo. Mackenzie again returned into Glengarry, where he had a skirmish with a party commanded by Glengarry's eldest son, in which the latter and sixty of his followers were killed. The Mackenzies also suffered some loss on this occasion. At last, after much trouble

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and bloodshed on both sides, an agreement was entered into, by which Glengarry renounced in favour of Kenneth Mackenzie the castle of Strome and the adjacent lands.

In the year 1605, the peace of the northern Highlands was about being disturbed by one of those atrocious occurrences, so common at that time. The chief of the Mackays had a servant named Alastair-Mac-Uilleam-Mhoir. This man, having some business to transact in Caithness, went there without the least apprehension of danger, as the Earls of Sutherland and Caithness had settled all their differences. No sooner, however, did the latter hear of Mac-Uilleam-Mhoir's arrival in Caithness, than he sent Henry Sinclair, his bastard brother, with a party of men to kill him. Mac-Uilleam-Mhoir, being a bold and resolute man, was not openly attacked by Sinclair; but on entering the house where Mac-Uilleam-Mhoir had taken up his residence, he and his party pretended that they had come on a friendly visit to him to enjoy themselves in his company. Not suspecting their hostile intentions, he invited them to sit down and drink with him, but scarcely had they taken their seats when they seized Mac-Uilleam-Mhoir, and carried him off prisoner to the Earl of Caithness, who caused him to be beheaded, in his own presence, the following day. The fidelity of this unfortunate man to Mackay, his master, during the disputes between the Earls of Sutherland and Caithness, was the cause for which he suffered. Mackay, resolved upon getting the earl punished, entered a legal prosecution against him at Edinburgh, but by the mediation of the Marquis of Huntly the suit was quashed.

In July, 1605, a murder was committed in Strathnaver, by Robert Gray of Hopsdale or Ospisdell, upon the body of Angus-Mac-Kenneth-Mac-Alister, one of

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the Siol-Mhurchaidh-Rhaibhaich, under the following circumstances. John Gray of Skibo held the lands of Ardinsh under John, the fifth of that name, Earl of Sutherland, as superior, which lands the grandfather of Angus Mac-Kenneth had in possession from John Mackay, son of Y-Roy-Mackay, who, before the time of this Earl John, possessed some lands in Breachat. When John Gray obtained the grant of Ardinsh from John the fifth, he allowed Kenneth Mac-Alister, the father of Angus Mac-Kenneth, to retain possession thereof, which he continued to do till about the year 1573. About this period a variance arose between John Gray and Hugh Murray of Aberscors, in consequence of some law-suits which they carried on against one another; but they were reconciled by Alexander, Earl of Sutherland, who became bound to pay a sum of money to John Gray, for Hugh Murray, who was in the meantime to get possession of the lands of Ardinsh in security. As John Gray still retained the property and kept Kenneth Mac-Alister in the possession thereof at the old rent, the Murrays took umbrage at him, and prevailed upon the Earl of Sutherland to grant a conveyance of the wadset or mortgage over Ardinsh in favour of Angus Murray, formerly bailie of Dornoch. In the meantime, Kenneth Mac-Alister died, leaving his son, Angus Mac-Kenneth, in possession. Angus Mur ay having acquired the mortgage, now endeavoured to raise the rent of Ardinsh, but Angus Mac-Kenneth refusing to pay more than his father had paid, was dispossessed, and the lands were let to William Mac-Iain-Mac-Kenneth, cousin of Angus Mac-Kenneth. This proceeding so exasperated Angus that he murdered his cousin William Mac-Kenneth, his wife, and two sons, under cloud of night, and so determined was he that no other person should possess the lands but himself, that

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he killed no less than nine other persons, who had successively endeavoured to occupy them. No more tenants being disposed to occupy Ardinsh at the risk of their lives, and Angus Murray getting wearied of his possession, resigned his right to Gilbert Gray of Skibo on the death of John Gray, his father. Gilbert, thereafter, conveyed the property to Robert Gray of Ospisdell, his second son; but Robert, being disinclined to allow Angus Mac-Kenneth, who had again obtained possession, to continue tenant, he dispossessed him and let the land to one Finlay Logan, but this new tenant was murdered by Mac-Kenneth in the year 1604. Mac-Kenneth then fled into Strathnaver with a party composed of persons of desperate and reckless passions like himself, with the intention of annoying Robert Gray by their incursions. Gray having ascertained that they were in the parish of Creich, he immediately attacked them and killed Murdo Mac-Kenneth, the brother of Angus, who made a narrow escape, and again retired into Strathnaver. He again returned into Sutherland on the first of May, 1605, and, in the absence of Robert Gray, burnt his stable with some of his cattle at Ospisdell. Gray then obtained a warrant against Mac-Kenneth, and having procured the assistance of a body of men from John, Earl of Sutherland, he entered Strathnaver and attacked Mac-Kenneth at the Cruffs of Hoip and slew him.

The Earl of Caithness, disliking the unquiet state in which he had for some time been forced to remain, made another attempt in the month of July, 1607, to hunt in Bengrime, without asking permission from the Earl of Sutherland; but he was prevented from accomplishing his purpose by the sudden appearance in Strathully of the Earl of Sutherland, attended by his friend Mackay, and a considerable body of their countrymen.

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Almost the whole of the inhabitants of Dornoch turned out on this occasion, and went to Strathully. During their absence a quarrel ensued in the town between one John Macphaill, and three brothers of the name of Pope, in which one of the latter was killed, the circumstances leading to and attending which were these: In the year 1585, William Pope, a native of Ross, settled in Sutherland, and, being a man of good education, was appointed schoolmaster in Dornoch, and afterward became its resident minister. He also received another clerical appointment in Caithness, by means of which and of his other living he became, in course of time, wealthy. This good success induced two younger brothers, Charles and Thomas, to leave their native country and settle in Sutherland. Thomas was soon made chancellor of Caithness, and minister of Rogart. Charles became a notary public and a messenger-at-arms, and having by his good conduct and agreeable conversation ingratiated himself with the Earl of Sutherland, he was appointed to the office of sheriff-clerk of Sutherland. Charles and Thomas, being, like their brother, of very provident dispositions, soon acquired considerable wealth, which they laid out, in conjunction with their brother William, in the purchase of houses in the town of Dornoch, where they chiefly resided. Having acquired a very considerable property in this way, many of the inhabitants of the town envied their acquisitions, and took every occasion to insult them as intruders, who had a design, as they supposed, to drive the ancient inhabitants of the place from their possessions. On the occasion in question, William and Thomas Pope, along with other ministers, had held a meeting at Dornoch on church affairs, on dissolving which, they went to breakfast at an inn. While at breakfast, John Macphaill entered the house, and demanded some

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liquor from the mistress of the inn, but she refused to give him any, as she knew him to be a troublesome and quarrelsome person. Macphaill, irritated at the refusal, spoke harshly to the woman, and the ministers having made some excuse for her, Macphaill vented his abuse upon them. Being threatened by Thomas Pope, for his insolence, he pushed an arrow with a barbed head, which he held in his hand, into one of Pope's arms. The parties then separated, but the two Popes being observed walking in the churchyard, in the evening, with their swords girt about them, by Macphaill, who looked upon their so arming themselves as a threat, he immediately made the circumstance known to Houcheon Macphaill, his nephew, and one William Murray, all of whom entered the churchyard and assailed the two brothers with the most vituperative abuse. Charles Pope, who had been absent from town the whole day, learning, on his return, the danger his brothers were in, immediately hastened to the spot, where he found the two parties engaged. Charles attacked Murray, whom he wounded in the face, whereupon Murray instantly killed him. William and Thomas were grievously wounded by Macphaill and his nephew, and left for dead, but they ultimately recovered. As there were at that time no persons in the town friendly to the Popes, almost the whole population having gone to Strathully, the murderers escaped. Macphaill and his nephew fled to Holland, where they ended their days. After this occurrence, the surviving brothers left Sutherland and went back into their own country.

By the mediation of the Marquis of Huntly, the Earls of Caithness and Sutherland again met at Elgin with their mutual friends, and once more adjusted their differences. On this occasion, the Earl of Sutherland was accompanied by large parties of the Gordons, the

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Frasers, the Dunbars, the Clan Kenzie, the Monroes, the Clan Chattan, and other friends, which so displeased the Earl of Caithness, who was grieved to see his rival so honourably attended, that he could never afterward be induced to meet again with the Earl of Sutherland or any of his family.

In the following year, viz., 1608, the Earl of Caithness embroiled himself with the notorious Patrick Stewart, Earl of Orkney. Some servants of the latter being forced, by stress of weather, to land in Caithness, the Earl of Caithness apprehended them, and, after forcing them to swallow a quantity of spirits, which completely intoxicated them, he ordered one side of their heads and beards to be shaved, which being done, he compelled them to go to sea although the storm had not abated. Having with some difficulty reached Orkney, they laid their case before their master, who immediately complained to the king and council. His Majesty directed his council to take steps for bringing the case to trial, but the two earls having arrived in Edinburgh for the purpose of mutual recrimination, they were induced, by their friends, to adjust their private quarrels between themselves, a proposal to which they wisely acceded, for assuredly neither could gain by a contrary proceeding, and both might, by exposing one another's crimes, have suffered greatly.

During the year last mentioned, a quarrel occurred in Sutherland between Iver Mac-Donald-Mac-Alister, one of the Siol Thomais, and Alexander Murray in Auchindough. Iver, and his eldest son John, meeting one day with Alexander Murray, and his son Thomas, an altercation took place on some questions in dispute. From words they proceeded to blows, and the result was that John, the son of Iver, and Alexander Murray, were killed. Iver then fled into Strathnaver, whither

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he was followed by Thomas Murray, accompanied by a party of twenty-four men, to revenge the death of his father. Iver, however, avoided them, and having assembled some friends, he attacked Murray, unawares, at the hill of Binchlibrig, and compelled him to flee, after taking five of his men prisoners, whom he released after a captivity of five days. As the chief of the Mackays protected Iver, George Murray of Pulrossie took up the quarrel, and annoyed Iver and his party; but the matter was compromised by Mackay, who paid a sum of money to Pulrossie and Thomas Murray, as a reparation for divers losses they had sustained at Iver's hands during his outlawry. This compromise was the more readily entered into by Pulrossie, as the Earl of Sutherland was rather favourable to Iver, and was by no means displeased at him for the injuries he did to Pulrossie, who had not acted dutifully toward him. Besides having lost his own son in the quarrel, who was killed by Thomas Murray, Iver was unjustly dealt with in being made the sole object of persecution.

A civil dissension occurred about this time in Moray, among the Dunbars, which nearly proved fatal to that family. To understand the origin of this dispute, it is necessary to state the circumstances which led to it, and to go back to the period when Patrick Dunbar, sheriff of Moray, and tutor and uncle of Alexander Dunbar of Westfield, was killed, along with the Earl of Moray at Dunibristle. Alexander Dunbar did not enjoy his inheritance long, having died at Dunkeld, shortly after the death of his uncle, under circumstances which led to a suspicion that he had been poisoned. As he died without issue he was succeeded by Alexander Dunbar, son of Patrick, slain at Dunibristle, by a sister of Robert Dunbar of Burgy. This Alexander was a young man of great promise, and was directed in all

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his proceedings by his uncle Robert Dunbar of Burgy. Patrick Dunbar of Blery and Kilbuyack and his family, imagining that Robert Dunbar, to whom they bore a grudge, was giving advice to his nephew, to their prejudice, conceived a deadly enmity at both, and seized every occasion to annoy the sheriff of Moray and his uncle. An accidental meeting having taken place between Robert Dunbar, brother of Alexander, and William Dunbar, son of Blery, high words were exchanged, and a scuffle ensued, in which William Dunbar received considerable injury in his person. Patrick Dunbar and his sons were so incensed at this occurrence, that they took up arms and attacked their chief, Alexander Dunbar, sheriff of Moray, in the town of Forres, where he was shot dead by Robert Dunbar, son of Blery. John Dunbar, sheriff of Moray, who succeeded his brother Alexander, and his brother Robert Dunbar of Burgy, endeavoured to bring the murderers of his brother to justice; but they failed in consequence of Alexander Dunbar being, at the time of his death, a rebel to the king, having been denounced at the horn for a civil cause. The absurdity of a man being declared an outlaw whom any person might slay with impunity, merely because he had not fulfilled a civil contract, became now so apparent, that the king procured an act to be passed in the ensuing parliament declaring that any man who killed one of the king's subjects should be liable to the penalties of the law, unless the person killed should at the time of his death have stood denounced for a criminal cause. But although John Dunbar and his brother did not succeed in their prosecution, Blery was obliged to pay a sum of money to John Dunbar in satisfaction of his brother's slaughter, and he was compelled to remit his claim upon Robert Dunbar for the bodily injury which his son had received. Robert Dunbar,

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son of Blery, consented to go into voluntary banishment into Ireland; and thus this deadly feud was stayed, and a sort of reconciliation effected by the friendly mediation of the Earl of Dunfermline, then lord chancellor of Scotland, who fixed the terms of the arrangement above mentioned.

In the year 1610 the Earl of Caithness and Houcheon Mackay, chief of the Mackays, had a difference in consequence of the protection given by the latter to a gentleman named John Sutherland, the son of Mackay's sister. Sutherland lived in Berridale under the Earl of Caithness, but he was so molested by the earl that he lost all patience, and went about avenging the injuries he had sustained. The earl, therefore, cited him to appear at Edinburgh to answer to certain charges made against him; but not obeying the summons, he was denounced and proclaimed a rebel to the king. Reduced, in consequence, to great extremities, and seeing no remedy by which he could retrieve himself, he became an outlaw, wasted and destroyed the earl's country, and carried off herds of cattle, which he transported into Strathnaver, the country of his kinsman. The earl thereupon sent a party of the Siol-Mhic-Imheair to attack him, and, after a long search, they found him encamped near the water of Shin in Sutherland. He, however, was aware of their approach before they perceived him, and, taking advantage of this circumstance, he attacked them in the act of crossing said water before they were acquainted with his movements. They were in consequence defeated and pursued, leaving several of their party dead on the field.

This disaster exasperated the earl, who resolved to prosecute Mackay and his son, Donald Mackay, for giving succour and protection within their country to John Sutherland, an outlaw. Accordingly, he served both of

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them with a notice to appear before the Privy Council to answer to the charges he had preferred against them. Mackay at once obeyed the summons, and went to Edinburgh, where he met Sir Robert Gordon, who had come from England for the express purpose of assisting Mackay on the present occasion. The earl, who had grown tired of the troubles which John Sutherland had occasioned in his country, was induced, by the entreaties of friends, to settle matters on the following conditions: that he should forgive John Sutherland all past injuries, and restore him to his former possessions; that John Sutherland and his brother Donald should be delivered, the one after the other, into the hands of the earl to be kept prisoners for a certain time; and that Donald Mac-Thomais-Mhoir, one of the Sliochd-Iain-Agaraich, and a follower of John Sutherland, in his depredations, should be also delivered up to the earl to be dealt with as to him should seem meet, all of which stipulations were complied with. The earl hanged Donald Mac-Thomais as soon as he was delivered up. John Sutherland was kept a prisoner at Girnigo about twelve months, during which time Donald Mackay made several visits to Earl George, for the purpose of getting John Sutherland released, in which he at last succeeded; besides procuring a discharge to Donald Sutherland, who, in turn, should have surrendered himself a prisoner on the release of his brother John; but upon the condition that he and his father Houcheon Mackay should pass the next following Christmas with the earl at Girnigo. Mackay and his brother William, accordingly, spent their Christmas at Girnigo, but Donald Mackay was prevented by business from attending. The design of the Earl of Caithness in thus favouring Mackay was to separate him from the interests of the Earl of Sutherland, but he was unsuccessful.

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Some years before the events we have just related, a commotion took place in the Lewis, occasioned by the pretensions of Torcuill Connaldagh of the Cogigh to the possessions of Roderick Macleod of the Lewis, his reputed father. Roderick had first married Barbara Stuart, daughter of Lord Methven, by whom he had a son named Torcuill-Ire, who, on arriving at manhood, gave proofs of a warlike disposition. Upon the death of Barbara Stuart, Macleod married a daughter of Mackenzie, lord of Kintail, whom he afterward divorced for adultery with the Breive of the Lewis, a sort of judge among the islanders, to whose authority they submitted themselves when he determined any debatable point between them. Macleod next married a daughter of Maclean, by whom he had two sons, Torcuill Dubh and Tormaid.

In sailing from the Lewis to Skye, Torcuill-Ire, eldest son of Macleod, and two hundred men, perished in a great tempest. Torcuill Connaldagh, above mentioned, was the fruit of the adulterous connection between Macleod's second wife and the Breive, at least Macleod would never acknowledge him as his son. This Torcuill being now of age, and having married a sister of Glengarry, he took up arms against Macleod, his reputed father, to vindicate his supposed rights as Macleod's son, being assisted by Tormaid, Ougigh, and Murthow, three of the bastard sons of Macleod. The old man was apprehended and detained four years in captivity, when he was released on the condition that he should acknowledge Torcuill Connaldagh as his lawful son. Tormaid Ougigh having been slain by Donald Macleod, his brother, another natural son of old Macleod, Torcuill Connaldagh, assisted by Murthow Macleod, his reputed bastard brother, took Donald prisoner and carried him to Cogigh, but he escaped from thence and fled to his

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father in the Lewis, who was highly offended at Torcuill for seizing his son Donald. Macleod then caused Donald to apprehend Murthow, and having delivered him to his father, he was imprisoned by him in the castle of Stornoway. As soon as Torcuill heard of this occurrence, he went to Stornoway and attacked the fort, which he took, after a short siege, and released Murthow. He then apprehended Roderick Macleod, killed a number of his men, and carried off all the charters and other title-deeds of the Lewis, which he gave in custody to the Mackenzies. Torcuill had a son named John Macleod, who was in the service of the Marquis of Huntly; he now sent for him, and on his arrival committed the charge of the Castle of Stornoway to him, into which old Macleod was imprisoned. John Macleod being now master of the Lewis, and acknowledged superior thereof, he proceeded to expel Rorie-Og and Donald, two of Roderick Macleod's bastard sons, from the island; but Rorie-Og attacked him in Stornoway, and after killing him, released Roderick Macleod, his father, who possessed the island in peace during the remainder of his life. Torcuill Connaldagh, by the assistance of the Clan Kenzie, got Donald Macleod into his possession and executed him at Dingwall.

Upon the death of Roderick Macleod, his son Torcuill Dubh succeeded him in the Lewis and married a sister of Sir Roderick Macleod of Harris. Taking a grudge at Rorie-Og, his brother, he apprehended him and sent him to Maclean to be detained by him in prison; but he escaped out of Maclean's hands, and afterward perished in a snow-storm. As Torcuill Dubh excluded Torcuill Connaldagh from the succession of the Lewis, as a bastard, the Clan Kenzie formed a design to purchase and conquer the Lewis, which they calculated on accomplishing from the simplicity of Torcuill Connaldagh,

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who had now no friend to advise with, and from the dissensions which unfortunately existed among the race of the Siol-Thorcuill. This scheme, moreover, received the aid of a matrimonial alliance between Torcuill Connaldagh and the clan, by a marriage between his eldest daughter and Roderick Mackenzie, the lord of Kintail's brother. The clan did not avow their design openly, but they advanced their enterprise under the pretence of assisting Torcuill Connaldagh, who was a descendant of the Kintail family, and they ultimately succeeded in destroying the family of Macleod of Lewis, together with his tribe, the Siol-Thorcuill, and by the ruin of that family and some neighbouring clans, this ambitious clan became very powerful and made themselves complete masters of Lewis and other places. As Torcuill Dubh was the chief obstacle in their way, they formed a conspiracy against his life, preparatory to which a private meeting was held, which was attended by Kenneth Mackenzie, afterward Lord Kintail, Torcuill Connaldagh, Macleod, Breive of Lewis, and Murthow Macleod, the bastard brother of Torcuill Dubh. At this meeting Kenneth Mackenzie delivered an opinion, that in order to advance Torcuill Connaldagh to the possession of the Lewis, it was absolutely necessary to put Torcuill Dubh out of the way, a proposition which was unanimously adopted; but a difficulty occurred in getting a person willing to undertake such a barbarous task. At last the Breive was persuaded by the earnest entreaties of the other three, and on being promised a great reward, to agree to assassinate Torcuill Dubh, after which the meeting broke up. Thereafter the Breive, accompanied by the greater part of his tribe, the Clann-Mhic-Ghille-Moir, went in a galley toward the isle of Rasay, and in his course fell in with a Dutch ship partly laden with wine, which he compelled to

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follow him into the Lewis. Having arrived there, he invited Torcuill Dubh and a party of his people to a banquet on board the Dutch vessel; but they had scarcely seated themselves, in the expectation of being regaled with wine, when they were all apprehended, tied with cords and carried to the country of the Clan Kenzie, into the presence of the lord of Kintail, who ordered Torcuill Dubh and his company to be beheaded, which they accordingly were in the month of July, 1597. At the time of their execution an earthquake happened, which struck terror into the minds of the executioners.

The Mackenzies had now gained a great step in the advancement of their avaricious plans, but they nevertheless hated the Breive and the tribe for their perfidy towards their master. These, repenting of what they had done, and seeing themselves detested by all men, returned into Lewis, and dreading an attack, strengthened themselves within a fort in the island called Neisse. But they were soon driven from this stronghold by Neill Macleod, the bastard brother of Torcuill Dubh, with the loss of several men.

Some of the barons and gentlemen of Fife, hearing of these disturbances in Lewis, were enticed, by the encouragement held out by persons who had visited the island, and by the reputed fertility of the soil, to attempt to take possession of the island. The professed object of these adventurers was to civilize the inhabitants, but their real design was, by means of a colony, to supplant the ancient inhabitants, and to drive them from the island; but the speculation proved ruinous to many of them, who, in consequence of the losses they sustained, lost their estates, and were, in the end, obliged to abandon the island. In pursuance of their plan, they obtained from the king, in the year 1599, a gift of the Lewis, which was then alleged to be at his

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gratuitous disposal. Having assembled in Fife, these adventurers collected a body of soldiers and artificers of all sorts, whom they sent, along with everything necessary for a plantation, into the Lewis, where, immediately on their arrival, they began to erect houses in a convenient part of the island, and soon completed a small but handsome town, in which they took up their quarters. The new settlers were however much annoyed in their operations by Neill and Murthow Macleod, the only sons of Roderick Macleod who remained in the island. Murthow Macleod succeeded in apprehending the laird of Balcolmy, and, having taken his ship, killed all his men. After detaining Balcolmy six months in captivity, he was released upon promising a ransom; but he died on his return to Fife, and Murthow in consequence was disappointed of the promised sum.

In the meantime, Neill Macleod quarrelled with his brother Murthow, for harbouring and maintaining the Breive, and such of his tribes as were still alive, who had been the chief instruments in the murder of Torcuill Dubh. Neill thereupon apprehended his brother, and some of the Clan-Mhic-Ghille-Mhoir, all of whom he killed, reserving his brother only alive. When the Fife speculators were informed that Neill had taken Murthow, his brother, prisoner, they sent him a message offering to give him a share of the island and to assist him in revenging the death of Torcuill Dubh, provided he would deliver Murthow into their hands. Neill agreed to this proposal, and having gone thereafter to Edinburgh, he received a pardon from the king for all his past offences.

These proceedings frustrated for a time the designs of the Mackenzies upon the island, and the lord of Kintail almost despaired of obtaining possession by any means. As the new settlers now stood in his way, he

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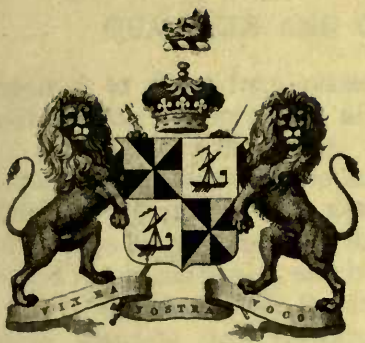
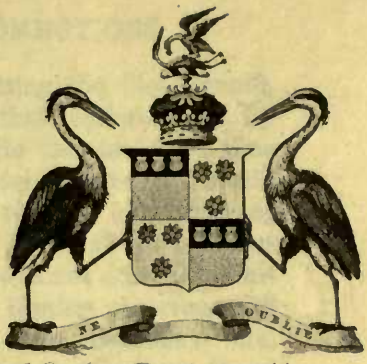


Campbell Duke of Argyle



Graham Duke of Montrose

Sinclair Earl of Caithness

Forbes Lord Forbes

Mackay Lord Reay

Fraser of Lovat

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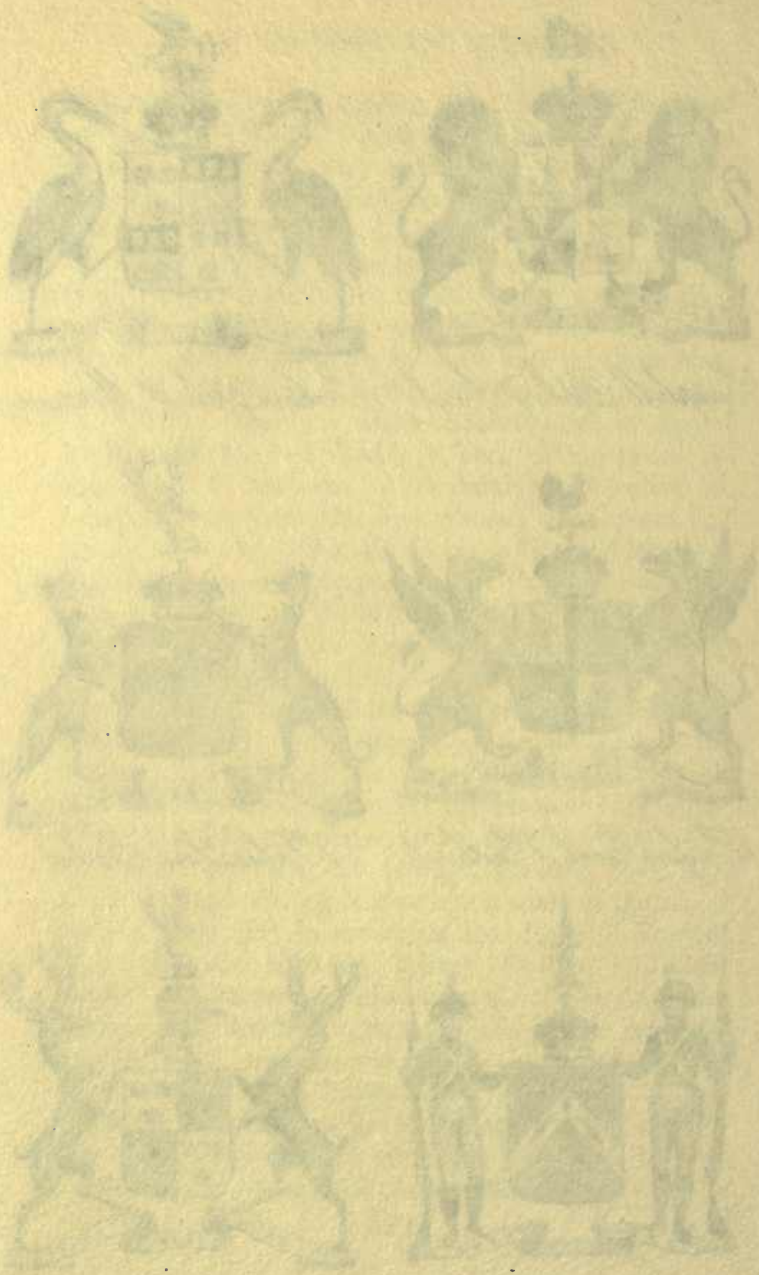

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resolved to desist from persecuting the Siol-Torcuill, and to cross the former in all their undertakings, by all the means in his power. He had for some time kept Tormaid Macleod, the lawful brother of Torcuill Dubh, a prisoner; but he now released him, thinking that, upon his appearance in the Lewis, all the islanders would rise in his favour, and he was not deceived in his expectations, for, as Sir Robert Gordon observes, "all these islanders (and lykwayes the Hielanders) are, by nature, most bent and prone to adventure themselves, their lyffs, and all they have, for their masters and lords, yea beyond all other people." In the meantime, Murthow Macleod was carried to St. Andrews, and there executed. Having at his execution revealed the designs of the lord of Kintail, the latter was committed by the order of the king to the castle of Edinburgh, from which, however, he contrived to escape without trial, by means, as is supposed, of the then lord chancellor of Scotland.

On receiving pardon Neill Macleod returned into the Lewis with the Fife adventurers; but he had not been long in the island when he quarrelled with them on account of an injury he had received from Sir James Spence of Wormistoun. He, therefore, abandoned them, and watched a favourable opportunity for attacking them. They then attempted to apprehend him by a stratagem. In the middle of a very dark night Sir James Spence sent a party to apprehend Neill and Donald Dubh-MacRory, a gentleman of the island, who had assisted Neill against them; but Neill, contrary to Sir James's expectations, was completely on his guard, and as soon as he became aware of the approach of the party, he attacked them furiously, killed sixty of them, and pursued the remainder till daylight next morning, when they took refuge in their camp. When

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the lord of Kintail heard of this disaster, he thought the time was now suitable for him to stir, and accordingly he sent Tormaid Macleod into the Lewis, as he had intended, promising him all the assistance in his power if he would attack the Fife settlers.

As soon as Tormaid arrived in the island, his brother Neill, and all the natives, assembled and acknowledged him as their lord and master. He immediately attacked the camp of the adventurers, which he forced, burnt the fort, killed the greater part of their men, took the commanders prisoners, whom he released, after a captivity of eight months, on their solemn promise not to return again to the island, and on their giving a pledge that they should obtain a pardon from the king for Tormaid and his followers for all past offences. After Tormaid had thus obtained possession of the island, John Mac-Donald-Mac-Houcheon apprehended Torcuill Connaldagh, and carried him into Lewis to his brother, Tormaid Macleod. Tormaid inflicted no punishment upon Connaldagh, but merely required from him delivery of the title-deeds of the Lewis, and the other papers which he had carried off when he apprehended his father Roderick Macleod. Connaldagh informed him that he had it not in his power to give them up, as he had delivered them to the Clan Kenzie, in whose possession they still were. Knowing this to be the fact, Tormaid released Torcuill Connaldagh, and allowed him to leave the island contrary to the advice of all his followers and friends, who were for inflicting the punishment of death upon Torcuill, as he had been the occasion of all the miseries and troubles which had befallen them.

The Breive of Lewis soon met with a just punishment for the crime he had committed in betraying and murdering his master, Torcuill Dubh Macleod. The Breive

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and some of his relations had taken refuge in the country of Assint. John Mac-Donald-Mac-Houcheon, accompanied by four persons, having accidentally entered the house where the Breive and six of his kindred lodged, found themselves unexpectedly in the same room with them. Being of opposite factions, the consequence was that a battle immediately ensued, in the course of which the Breive and his party fled out of the house, but they were pursued by John and his men, and the Breive and five of his friends killed. To revenge the death of the Breive, Gille-Calum-Mhoir-Mac-Iain, who became chief of the Clan-Mhic-Ghille-Mhoir after the death of the Breive, searched for John Mac-Donald-Mac-Houcheon to kill him. Meeting one day by chance, in the Cogigh, Gille-Calum-Mhoir was defeated by John, the greater part of his men killed, and he himself was taken prisoner, and being carried into the Lewis to Tormaid Macleod, was there beheaded.

Although the Fife settlers had engaged not to return again into the Lewis, they nevertheless made preparations for invading it, having obtained the king's commission against Tormaid Macleod and his tribe, the Siol-Thorcuill. They were aided in this expedition by forces from all the neighbouring countries. The Earl of Sutherland, in particular, sent a party of men under the command of William Mac-Mhic-Sheumais, chief of the Clan Gun in Sutherland, to assist the gentlemen of Fife in subduing Tormaid Macleod. As soon as they had effected a landing in the island with all their forces, they sent a message to Macleod, acquainting him that if he would surrender himself to them, in name of the king, they would transport him safely to London where his Majesty then was; and that, upon his arrival there, they would not only obtain his pardon, but also allow him to deal with the king in behalf of his friends, and

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for the means of supporting himself. Macleod, afraid to risk his fortune against the numerous forces brought against him, agreed to the terms proposed, contrary to the advice of his brother Neill, who refused to yield. Tormaid was thereupon sent to London, where he took care to make the king to be rightly informed of all the circumstances of his case; he showed his Majesty that Lewis was his just inheritance, and that his Majesty had been deceived by the Fife adventurers in making him believe that the island was at his disposal, which act of deception had occasioned much trouble and a great loss of blood. He concluded by imploring his Majesty to do him justice, by restoring him to his rights. Understanding that Macleod's representations were favourably received by his Majesty, the adventurers used all their influence at court to thwart him; and as some of them were the king's own domestic servants, they at last succeeded so far as to get him to be sent home to Scotland a prisoner. He remained a captive at Edinburgh till the month of March, 1615, when the king granted him permission to pass into Holland, to Maurice, Prince of Orange, where he ended his days. The settlers soon grew wearied of their new possession. Some of them had spent their all in the undertaking, and had no longer the means to supply the wants of the colony; some had died; others had business elsewhere to attend to; and as all of them had declined in their circumstances in this luckless speculation, and as they were continually annoyed by Neill Macleod, they finally abandoned the island, and returned to Fife to bewail their loss.

The death of Tormaid Macleod, and the abandonment of the island by the Fife settlers, were fortunate circumstances for Lord Kintail, who, no longer disguising his intentions, obtained, through the means of the

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lord chancellor, a gift of the Lewis, under the great seal, for his own use, in virtue of the old right which Torcuill Connaldagh had long before resigned in his favour. Some of the adventurers having complained to the king of this proceeding, his Majesty became highly displeased at the lord of Kintail, and made him resign his right into his Majesty's hands by means of Lord Balmerino, then secretary of Scotland, and lord president of the session; which right his Majesty now vested in the persons of Lord Balmerino, Sir George Hay, afterward chancellor of Scotland, and Sir James Spence of Wormistoun, who undertook the colonization of the Lewis. Sir George Hay and Sir James Spence accordingly made great preparations for accomplishing their purpose; and, being assisted by most of the neighbouring countries, invaded the Lewis for the double object of planting a colony, and of subduing and apprehending Neill Macleod, who now alone defended the island.

On this occasion Lord Kintail played a deep and deceitful part, for while he sent Roderick Mackenzie, his brother, with a party of men openly to assist the new colonists who acted under the king's commission, promising them at the same time his friendship, and sending them a vessel from Ross with a supply of provisions; he privately sent notice to Neill Macleod to intercept the vessel on her way; so that the settlers being disappointed in the provisions to which they trusted, might abandon the island for want. The case turned out exactly as Lord Kintail anticipated, for the vessel being taken by Neill Macleod, and Sir George Hay and Sir James Spence having failed in apprehending Neill, and having no provisions for the support of their army, they abandoned the island, leaving a party of men behind to keep the fort, and disbanded their forces. Sir George Hay and Sir James Spence, on their return into Fife,

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intended to have sent a fresh supply of men, with provisions, into the island; but Neill Macleod having, with the assistance of his nephew, Malcolm Macleod, son of Roderick Og, and some others of the Lewis men, burnt the fort, and apprehended the men who were left behind in the island, from whence he sent them safely into Fife, they abandoned every idea of again taking possession of the island; and, along with their co-proprietor, sold their right to Lord Kintail for a sum of money, who thus at length obtained what he had so long and anxiously desired.

Lord Kintail lost no time in taking possession of the island, and all the inhabitants, shortly after his landing, with the exception of Neill Macleod and a few others, submitted to him. Neill, along with his nephews, Malcolm, William, and Roderick, the three sons of Roderick Og, the four sons of Torcuill Blair, and thirty others, retired to an impregnable rock in the sea called Berrissay, into which Neill had been accustomed, for some years, to send provisions and other necessary articles to serve him, in case of necessity. Neill lived on this rock for three years, during which period Lord Kintail died, which occurrence took place in the year 1611. In the following year, Neill and his company left Berrissay, and landed on the Lewis for the purpose of refreshing themselves upon the land, when they were attacked by some of the Clan Kenzie, and part of the inhabitants; but they all escaped, and again took refuge on the rock of Berrissay. As Macleod could not be attacked in his impregnable position, and as the nearness of his presence was a source of annoyance, the Clan Kenzie fell on the following expedient to get quit of him. They gathered together the wives and children of those that were in Berrissay, and also all persons in the island related to them by consanguinity or affinity, and having

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placed them on a rock in the sea, so near Berrissay that they could be heard and seen by Neill and his party, the Clan Kenzie vowed that they would suffer the sea to overwhelm them, on the return of the flood-tide, if Neill did not instantly surrender the fort. This appalling spectacle had such an effect upon Macleod and his companions, that they immediately yielded up the rock, and left the Lewis.

Neill Macleod then retired into Harris, where he remained concealed for a time; but not being able to avoid discovery any longer, he gave himself up to Sir Robert Macleod of Harris, and entreated him to carry him into England to the king, a request with which Sir Roderick promised to comply. In proceeding on his journey, however, along with Macleod, he was charged at Glasgow, under pain of treason, to deliver up Neill Macleod to the Privy Council. Sir Roderick obeyed the charge, and Neill, with his eldest son Donald, were presented to the Privy Council at Edinburgh, where Neill was executed in April, 1613. His son Donald was banished from the kingdom of Scotland, and immediately went to England, where he remained three years with Sir Robert Gordon, tutor of Sutherland, and from England he afterward went to Holland, where he died.

While Neill Macleod was on the rock of Berrissay, Peter Love, an English pirate, arrived in the Lewis with a ship laden with a valuable cargo which he had taken. The pirate and Neill being both outlaws became very friendly and familiar, and they even proposed, by uniting their forces, to make themselves masters of Lewis both by sea and land. But after the pirate had remained some time in the island, he and all his men were taken prisoners by Torcuill Blair and his sons, and were sent, along with the ship, by Neill Macleod to Edin-

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burgh to the Privy Council, by doing which he hoped not only to obtain his own pardon, but also the release of his brother, Tormaid Macleod, from prison. He was, however, disappointed in this expectation. The pirate and his crew were hanged at Leith.

After the death of Neill Macleod, Roderick and William, the sons of Roderick Og, were apprehended by Roderick Mackenzie, tutor of Kintail, and executed. Malcolm Macleod, his third son, who was kept a prisoner by Roderick Mackenzie, escaped, and having associated himself with the Clan Donald in Islay and Kintyre during their quarrel with the Campbells in 1615 and 1616, he annoyed the Clan Kenzie with frequent incursions. Malcolm, thereafter, went to Flanders and Spain, where he remained with Sir James Macdonald. Before going to Spain, he returned from Flanders into the Lewis, in 1616, where he killed two gentlemen of the Clan Kenzie.

The foregoing is a brief sketch of the history of the decay of the family of Macleod of the Lewis and of his tribe, and the causes which led to it; a just punishment for the cruelties which they exercised upon one another during their intestine broils.

From the occurrences in Lewis, we now direct the attention of our readers to some proceedings in the isle of Rasay, which, as usual, ended in bloodshed. The quarrel lay between Gille-Calum, laird of the island, and Murdo Mackenzie of Gairloch, the occasion of which was this: The lands of Gairloch originally belonged to the Clann-Mhic-Ghille-Chalum, the predecessors of the laird of Rasay; and when the Mackenzies began to prosper and to rise, one of them obtained the third part of these lands in mortgage or wadset from the Clann-Mhic-Ghille-Chalum. In process of time the Clan Kenzie, by some means or other, unknown to the

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proprietor of Gairloch, obtained a right to the whole of these lands, but they did not claim possession of the whole till the death of Torcuill Dubh Macleod of the Lewis, whom the laird of Rasay and his tribe followed as their superior. But upon the death of Torcuill Dubh, the laird of Gairloch took possession of the whole of the lands of Gairloch in virtue of his pretended right, and chased the Clann-Mhic-Ghille-Chalum from the lands with fire and sword. The clan retaliated in their turn by invading the laird of Gairloch, plundering his lands and committing slaughters. In a skirmish which took place in the year 1610, in which lives were lost on both sides, the laird of Gairloch apprehended John Mac-Alain-Mac-Rory, one of the principal men of the clan; but being desirous to get hold also of John Holmoch-Mac-Rory, another of the chiefs, he sent his son Murdo the following year along with Alexander Bane, the son and heir of Bane of Tulloch in Ross, and some others, to search for and pursue John Holmoch; and as he understood that John Holmoch was in Skye, he hired a ship to carry his son and party thither; but instead of going to Skye, they unfortunately, from some unknown cause, landed in Rasay.

On their arrival in Rasay, Gille-Calum, laird of Rasay, with twelve of his followers, went on board with the intention of purchasing some wine. When Murdo Mackenzie saw them approaching, he and his party, that they might not be seen, concealed themselves in the lower part of the vessel, leaving the mariners only on deck. On coming on board, the laird of Rasay, after some conversation with the sailors, left the vessel, intending to return immediately. When Murdo Mackenzie understood that Rasay and his party had gone on shore, he came upon deck, and on perceiving Rasay return, he resolved to conceal himself no longer. When

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Rasay returned first from the vessel, he had desired his brother, Murdo Mac-Ghille-Chalum, to accompany him to the ship with another galley to carry the wine, which he said he had bought from the sailors. On returning to the ship he unexpectedly found Murdo Mackenzie on board. After consulting with his men, he resolved to take Mackenzie prisoner, in security for his cousin, John Mac-Alain-Mac-Rory, whom the laird of Gairloch detained in captivity. The party then attempted to seize Mackenzie, but he and his party resisting, a keen conflict took place on board, which continued a considerable time. At last, Murdo Mackenzie, Alexander Bane, and the whole of their party, with the exception of three only, were slain. These three fought manfully, and succeeded in killing the laird of Rasay and the whole men who accompanied him on board, and they wounded several persons that remained in the two boats. Finding themselves seriously wounded, they took advantage of a favourable wind which offered, and sailed away from the island, but the whole three expired on the voyage homewards. The laird of Gairloch, after this event, obtained peaceable possession of these lands.

About the time this occurrence took place, the peace of the north was almost again disturbed in consequence of the conduct of William Mac-Angus-Roy, one of the Clan Gun, who, though born in Strathnaver, had become a servant to the Earl of Caithness. This man had done many injuries to the people of Caithness by command of the earl; and the mere displeasure of Earl George at any of his people was considered by William Mac-Angus as sufficient authority for him to steal and take away their goods and cattle. William got so accustomed to this kind of service, that he began also to steal the cattle and horses of the earl, his master, and, after

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collecting a large booty in this way, he took his leave. The earl was extremely enraged at his quondam servant for so acting; but, as William Mac-Angus was in possession of a warrant in writing under the earl's own hand, authorizing him to act as he had done toward the people of Caithness, the earl was afraid to adopt any proceedings against him, or against those who protected and harboured him, before the Privy Council, lest he might produce the warrant which he held from the earl. The confidence which the earl had reposed in him served, however, still more to excite the earl's indignation.

As William Mac-Angus continued his depredations in other quarters, he was apprehended in the town of Tain, on a charge of cattle-stealing; but he was released by the Monroes, who gave security to the magistrates of the town for his appearance when required, upon due notice being given that he was wanted for trial. The Monroes granted this favour out of respect to the chief of the Mackays, whose countryman William Mac-Angus was; but, as a measure of precaution, they detained Mac-Angus in the castle of Foulis until they should receive Mackay's instructions how to act. Impatient of confinement, and thinking that his friends in Strathnaver were either careless about him in not sending back an answer to the notice sent by the Monroes, or, considering his life in danger, William determined to attempt an escape by jumping from the height of the tower of the castle of Foulis, but he injured one of his legs so much in the fall, that he could not proceed. The laird of Foulis again took him into custody, and, being offended at him for his attempt, he delivered him back again to the provost and bailies of Tain, from whence he was sent into Caithness by Sir William Sinclair of May, sheriff of Tain. The Earl of Caithness thereupon put him in fetters, and imprisoned him within Castle Sinclair.

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His confinement in Castle Sinclair was, however, of short duration; for, disengaging himself from his fetters, he jumped from the castle into the sea which washed its walls, swam safely to the shore, and, after lurking two days among the rocks and mountains in the neighbourhood, effected his escape into Strathnaver in the year 1612. The Earl of Caithness sent his son, William, Lord Berridale, in pursuit of him; and, understanding that he was in the town of Gall-waill in Strathnaver, he hastened there with a party of men, but missing the fugitive, he, in revenge, apprehended a servant of Mackay, called Angus Henriach, without any authority from his Majesty, and carried him to Castle Sinclair, where he was put into fetters and closely imprisoned on the pretence that he had assisted William Mac-Angus in effecting his escape from Gall-waill. When this occurrence took place, Donald Mackay, son of Houcheon Mackay, the chief, was at Dunrobin castle, who, on hearing of the apprehension and imprisonment of his father's servant, could scarcely be made to believe the fact on account of the recent friendship which had been contracted between his father and the earl the preceding Christmas. But being made sensible thereof, and of the cruel usage which the servant had received, he prevailed with his father to summon the earl and his son to answer to the charge of having apprehended and imprisoned Angus Henriach, a free subject of the king, without a commission. The earl was also charged to present his prisoner before the Privy Council at Edinburgh in the month of June next following, which he accordingly did; and Angus being tried before the lords and declared innocent, was delivered over to Sir Robert Gordon, who then acted for Mackay.

During the same year (1612) another event occurred in the north, which created considerable uproar and dis-

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cord in the northern Highlands. A person of the name of Arthur Smith, who resided in Banff, had counterfeited the coin of the realm, in consequence of which he, and a man who had assisted him, fled from Banff into Sutherland, where, being apprehended in the year 1599, they were sent by the Countess of Sutherland to the king, who ordered them to be imprisoned in Edinburgh for trial. They were both accordingly tried and condemned, and having confessed to crimes even of a deeper dye, Smith's accomplice was burned at the place of execution. Smith himself was reserved for further trial. During his imprisonment he contrived to get possession of instruments belonging to his trade, and made a lock of such ingenious device and beautiful workmanship, that it could nowhere be matched. The lock was presented to the king as a rare and curious piece of work, who was so pleased with it that he ordered Smith's execution to be delayed. Lord Elphinston, the Lord Treasurer of Scotland, regretting that such an ingenious workman should be deprived of life, obtained a fresh respite for him, and afterward got him liberated from jail. Smith then went to Caithness, and entered into the service of George, Earl of Caithness, in whose employment he continued for seven or eight years. His workshop was under the rock of Castle Sinclair, in a quiet retired place called the Gote, and to which there was a secret passage from the earl's bedchamber. No person was admitted to Smith's workshop but the earl; and the circumstance of his being often heard working during the night raised suspicions that some secret work was going on which could not bear the light of day. The mystery was at last disclosed by an inundation of counterfeit coin in Caithness, Orkney, Sutherland, and Ross, which was first detected by Sir Robert Gordon, brother of the Earl of Sutherland, when in

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Scotland, in the year 1611, and who, on his return to England, made the king acquainted therewith. His Majesty thereupon addressed a letter to the lords of the Privy Council of Scotland, authorizing them to grant a commission to Sir Robert to apprehend Smith, and bring him to Edinburgh. Sir Robert returned to Scotland the following year, but was so much occupied with other concerns that he could not get the commission executed himself; but before his departure to England, he entrusted the commission to Donald Mackay, his nephew, and to John Gordon, younger of Embo, whose name was jointly inserted in the commission along with that of Sir Robert. Accordingly, Mackay and Gordon, accompanied by Adam Gordon Georgeson, John Gordon in Broray, and some other Sutherland men, went to Strathnaver, and assembling some of the inhabitants, they marched into Caithness next morning, and entered the town of Thurso, where Smith then resided.

After remaining about three hours in the town, the party went to Smith's house and apprehended him. On searching his house they found a quantity of fictitious gold and silver coin. Donald Mackay caused Smith to be put on horseback, and then rode off with him out of the town. To prevent any tumult among the inhabitants, Gordon remained behind in the town with some of his men to show them, if necessary, his Majesty's commission for apprehending Smith. Scarcely, however, had Mackay left the town, when the town-bell was rung and all the inhabitants assembled. There were present in Thurso, at the time, John Sinclair of Stirkage, son of the Earl of Caithness's brother, James Sinclair, brother of the laird of Dun, James Sinclair of Dyrren, and other friends, on a visit to Lady Berridale. When information was brought them of the apprehension of

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Smith, Sinclair of Stirkage, transported with rage, swore that he would not allow any man, no matter whose commission he held, to carry away his uncle's servant in his uncle's absence. Lady Berridale and the rest of the company remonstrated with him on the impropriety of such a rash resolution, and advised him to submit to the king's authority; but he contemned the advice given him, and upbraiding his party, ran hastily out of the house. His friends followed him quickly, and overtook him just as the inhabitants of the town were collecting. There was no time for deliberation, and seeing Sinclair and the people resolute, they joined him in attacking John Gordon and his party. A furious onset was made upon Gordon, but his men withstood it bravely, and after a warm contest, the inhabitants were defeated with some loss, and obliged to retire to the centre of the town. Donald Mackay, hearing of the tumult, returned to the town to aid Gordon, but the affair was over before he arrived. Sinclair of Stirkage was killed on this occasion, and James Sinclair, brother of the laird of Dun, was left for dead, and would probably have died but for the kind attentions of John Gordon in Broray, and Adam Gordon Georgeson, his kinsmen. James Sinclair of Dyrren saved himself by flight, but was so closely pursued, that he received several blows on his back while running away. Some of the Sutherland men were wounded, including John Gordon in Broray, Adam Gordon Georgeson, and John Baillie in Killen. To prevent the possibility of the escape or rescue of Smith, he was killed by the Strathnaver men as soon as they heard of the tumult in the town. This affair happened in the month of May, 1612.

Sir Robert Gordon being at this time in Edinburgh, his brother, Sir Alexander Gordon, immediately made him acquainted with all that had taken place under the

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commission; and Sir John Sinclair of Greenland sent a gentleman, at the same time, to Edinburgh to inform his brother, the Earl of Caithness, of the occurrences in the town of Thurso. The earl was exceedingly grieved at the death of his nephew, for whom he entertained a great affection, and he was extremely vexed to think that an affair, so disgraceful, as he thought, to himself, personally, should have occurred in the heart of his own country, and in his chief town. The earl, therefore, resolved to prosecute Donald Mackay, John Gordon, younger of Embo, with their followers, for the slaughter of Sinclair of Stirkage, and the mutilation of James Sinclair, brother of the laird of Dun, and summoned them, accordingly, to appear at Edinburgh. On the other hand, Sir Robert Gordon and Donald Mackay prosecuted the Earl of Caithness and his son, Lord Berridale, with several other of their countrymen, for resisting the king's commission, attacking the commissioners, and apprehending Angus Henriach, without a commission, which was declared treason by the laws. The Earl of Caithness endeavoured to make the Privy Council believe that the affair at Thurso arose out of a premeditated design against him, and that Sir Robert Gordon's intention in obtaining a commission against Arthur Smith was, under the cloak of its authority, to find means to slay him and his brethren; and that in pursuance of his plan, Sir Robert had, a little before the skirmish in Thurso, caused the earl to be denounced and proclaimed a rebel to the king, and had lain in wait to kill him; but Sir Robert showed the utter groundlessness of these charges to the lords of the council, and although it was quite true that he had caused the earl to be denounced rebel, yet he made it evident, from various circumstances, that his reason for this was very different from that assigned by the earl.

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On the day appointed for appearance, the parties met at Edinburgh, attended by their respective friends. The Earl of Caithness and his son, Lord Berridale, were accompanied by the Lord Gray, the laird of Roslin, the laird of Cowdenknowes, a son of the sister of the Earl of Caithness, and the lairds of Murkle and Greenland, brothers of the earl, along with a large retinue of subordinate attendants. Sir Robert Gordon and Donald Mackay were attended by the Earl of Winton and his brother, the Earl of Eglintoun, with all their followers, the Earl of Linlithgow, with the Livingstones, the Lord Elphinston, with his friends, the Lord Forbes, with his friends, the Drummonds, Sir John Stewart, captain of Dunbarton, and bastard son of the Duke of Lennox; the Lord Balfour, the laird of Lairg Mackay in Galloway; the laird of Foulis, with the Monroes, the laird of Duffus, some of the Gordons, as Sir Alexander Gordon, brother of the Earl of Sutherland, Cluny, Lesmoir, Buckie, Knokespock, with other gentlemen of respectability. The absence of the Earl of Sutherland and Houcheon Mackay mortified the Earl of Caithness, who could not conceal his displeasure at being so much overmatched in the respectability and number of attendants by seconds and children, as he was pleased to call his adversaries.

According to the usual practice on such occasions, the parties were accompanied by their respective friends, from their lodgings, to the house where the council was sitting; but few were admitted within. The council spent three days in hearing the parties and deliberating upon the matters brought before them, but they came to no conclusion, and adjourned their proceedings till the king's pleasure should be known. In the meantime, the parties, at the entreaty of the lords of the council, entered into recognizances to keep the peace, in time

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coming, toward each other, which extended not only to their kinsmen but also to their friends and dependents. Lord Elphinston became surety for the Earl of Sutherland, and his friends and the laird of Cowdenknowes engaged for the other party. As soon as this arrangement had been entered into, the Earl of Caithness despatched one of his friends to England to lay a favourable statement of his case before the king; but Sir Robert Gordon being made acquainted with the earl's design, and afraid that he might, by his statement, prejudice his Majesty, he posted in haste to England, and arrived at Eltham Park, where the court was then held, before the earl's messenger reached his destination. Having made the king acquainted with the real state of the facts, Sir Robert returned to Edinburgh.

The king, after fully considering the state of affairs between the rival parties, and judging that if the law was allowed to take its course, the peace of the northern countries might be disturbed by the earls and their numerous followers, proposed to the lords of the Privy Council to endeavour to prevail upon them to submit their differences to the arbitration of mutual friends. Accordingly, after a good deal of entreaty and reasoning, the parties were persuaded to agree to the proposed measure. A deed of submission was then subscribed by the Earl of Caithness and William, Lord Berridale, on the one part, and by Sir Robert Gordon and Donald Mackay on the other part, taking burden on them for the Earl of Sutherland and Mackay. The arbiters appointed by Sir Robert Gordon were the Earl of Kinghorn, the master of Elphinston, the Earl of Haddington, afterward Lord Privy Seal of Scotland, and Sir Alexander Drummond of Meidhop. And the Archbishop of Glasgow, Sir John Preston, Lord President of the Council,

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Lord Blantyre, and Sir William Oliphant, Lord Advocate, were named by the Earl of Caithness. The Earl of Dunfermlie, Lord Chancellor of Scotland, was chosen oversman and umpire by both parties. As the arbiters had then no time to hear the parties, or to enter upon the consideration of the matters submitted to them, they appointed them to return to Edinburgh in the month of May, 1613.

At the appointed time, the Earl of Caithness and his brother, Sir John Sinclair of Greenland, came to Edinburgh, where Sir Robert Gordon also arrived, at the same time, from England. Sir Alexander Gordon, brother of Sir Robert, likewise went to Edinburgh to give him his advice and assistance. The arbiters, however, who were all members of the Privy Council, being much occupied with state affairs, and finding the matters submitted to them to be of too tedious and intricate a nature to take up at that time, resolved to adopt the following course. They made the parties subscribe a new deed of submission, under which they gave authority to the Marquis of Huntly, by whose friendly offices the differences between the two houses had formerly been so often adjusted, to act in the matter by endeavouring to bring about a fresh reconciliation. As the marquis was the cousin-german of the Earl of Sutherland, and brother-in-law of the Earl of Caithness, who had married his sister, the council thought him the most likely person to be entrusted with such an important negotiation. Besides the authority of the council, the marquis had sufficient powers conferred on him, many years before, to decide all questions which might arise between the earls under a bond subscribed by Alexander, Earl of Sutherland, and the Earl of Caithness. The marquis entered upon the performance of the task assigned him, but finding the parties obstinate

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and determined not to yield a single point of their respective claims and pretensions, he declined to act farther in the matter, and remitted the whole affair back to the Privy Council.

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CHAPTER VI

RELIGIOUS PERSECUTION

DURING the years 1612 and 1613, the peace of Lochaber was disturbed by the Clan Cameron, who put the whole of that country into an uproar. George, Lord Gordon, eldest son of the Marquis of Huntly, raised a force to put them down, and wrote to Sir Robert Gordon and Donald Mackay to meet him at Inverness, for the purpose of accompanying him into Lochaber. Having collected a body of three hundred men, well armed and appointed, they went to Inverness at the time appointed; but on arriving there, in the month of August, they were informed that the proposed expedition had, in the meantime, been postponed. In the course of the following year, however, the enterprise was entered upon, and the Earl of Sutherland, who had just returned from his travels, sent Donald Mackay and John Gordon, younger of Embo, with three hundred able and resolute men, and one hundred and forty servants, to assist Lord Gordon in his expedition. Immediately on their arrival in Lochaber, the Sutherland men accidentally fell in with Alain-Mac-Dhonnil-Duibh, captain of the Clan Cameron, and his party, whom they proposed immediately to attack; but they were dissuaded from engaging by some of Lord Gordon's men, who assured them that a truce, for two days, had been entered into between the clan and his lordship. Lord Gordon having pursued these disturbers of the peace, and restored Lochaber to quiet in the meantime, re-

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turned home; but he was soon again despatched thither by the Privy Council, in consequence of fresh disturbances on the part of Alain-Mac-Dhonnil-Duibh, who had killed thirteen of his clan whom he suspected of treachery. Order was again restored, for a time, by the submission of Alain-Mac-Dhonnil-Duibh, who surrendered himself to Lord Gordon in the latter end of 1614. Alain was imprisoned at Inverness, but was released from confinement on giving sufficient surety to keep the king's peace in time coming.

As the Privy Council showed no inclination to decide the questions submitted to them by the Earl of Caithness and his adversaries, the earl sent his brother, Sir John Sinclair of Greenland, to Edinburgh, to complain of the delay which had taken place, and desired him to throw out hints, that if the earl did not obtain satisfaction for his supposed injuries, he would take redress at his own hands. The earl thought that he would succeed by such a threat in concussing the council to decide in his favour, for he was well aware that he was unable to carry it into execution. To give some appearance of an intention to enforce it, he, in the month of October, 1613, while the Earl of Sutherland, his brothers and nephews, were absent from the country, made a demonstration of invading Sutherland or Strathnaver, by collecting his forces at a particular point, and bringing thither some pieces of ordnance from Castle Sinclair. The Earl of Sutherland, having arrived in Sutherland while the Earl of Caithness was thus employed, immediately assembled some of his countrymen, and along with his brother, Sir Alexander, went to the marches between Sutherland and Caithness, near the height of Strathully, where they waited the approach of the Earl of Caithness. Here they were joined by Mackay, who had given notice of the Earl of Caithness's move-

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ments to the lairds of Foulis, Balnagown, and Assint, and the sheriff of Cromarty, and the tutor of Kintail, all of whom prepared themselves to assist the Earl of Sutherland on receiving notice that their services were wanted.

While matters stood thus, Sir John Sinclair returned from Edinburgh, who, along with the laird of Murkle, went to his brother's camp, reported what he had done, and advised him not to hazard an appeal to arms, but wait the pleasure of the council, who would undoubtedly give him satisfaction. Earl George, very wisely, took his brother's advice, and returned home with his men, who made a narrow escape from drowning, in consequence of being overtaken in their journey home by a tremendous tempest of wind and rain. The Earl of Sutherland sent his brother, Sir Alexander, Donald Mackay, and Gordon, younger of Embo, with a party of men, after the Earl of Caithness, to watch his movements, who remained in Caithness three days, and having witnessed the dissolution of his force, returned to Sutherland.

To prevent the Earl of Caithness from attempting any further interference with the Privy Council, either in the way of intrigue or intimidation, Sir Robert Gordon obtained a remission and pardon from the king, in the month of December, 1613, to his nephew, Donald Mackay, John Gordon, younger of Embo, John Gordon in Broray, Adam Gordon Georgeson, and their accomplices, for the slaughter of John Sinclair of Stirkage at Thurso. An impediment was thrown in the way of its passing the seals by Sir Gideon Murray, the deputy treasurer of Scotland, in consequence of a private warrant from his Majesty, directed to Sir Gideon to pass the signature of the remission gratis; but this impediment was removed by a second warrant from the king to Sir

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Gideon, who passed the remission through the seals, in the beginning of the year 1616.

The Earl of Caithness, being thus baffled in his designs against the Earl of Sutherland and his friends, fell upon a device which never failed to succeed in times of religious intolerance and persecution. Unfortunately for mankind and for the interests of Christianity, the principles of religious toleration, involving the inalienable right of every man to worship God according to the dictates of his conscience, have been, till of late, but little understood, and at the period in question, and for upwards of one hundred and sixty years thereafter, the statute book of Scotland was disgraced by penal enactments against the Catholics, almost unparalleled for their sanguinary atrocity. By an act of the first parliament of James VI any Catholic who assisted at the offices of his religion was, "for the first fault," that is, for following the dictates of his conscience, to suffer confiscation of all his goods, movable and immovable, personal and real; for the second, banishment; and death for the third fault! But the law was not confined to overt acts only — the mere suspicion of being a Catholic placed the suspected person out of the pale and protection of the law, for if, on being warned by the bishops and ministers, he did not recant and give confession of his faith according to the approved form, he was excommunicated and declared infamous and incapable to sit or stand in judgment, pursue or bear office.

Under this last mentioned law, the Earl of Caithness now sought to gratify his vengeance against the Earl of Sutherland. Having represented to the archbishop of St. Andrews and the clergy of Scotland, that the Earl of Sutherland was a Catholic in private, he prevailed upon the bishops, with little difficulty, it is supposed, to

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acquaint the king thereof. His Majesty, thereupon, issued a warrant against the Earl of Sutherland, who was, in consequence, apprehended and imprisoned at St. Andrews. The earl applied to the bishops for a month's delay, namely, till the fifteenth day of February, 1614, promising that, before that time, he would either give the church satisfaction, or surrender himself; but his application was refused by the High Commission of Scotland. Sir Alexander Gordon, the brother of the earl, being then in Edinburgh, immediately gave notice to his brother, Sir Robert Gordon, who was at the time in London, of the proceedings against their brother, the earl. Sir Robert having applied to his Majesty for the release of the earl for a time, that he might make up his mind on the subject of religion, and look after his affairs in the north, his Majesty granted a warrant for his liberation till the month of August following. On the expiration of the time, he returned to his confinement at St. Andrews, from whence he was removed, on his own application, to the abbey of Holyrood house, where he remained till the month of March, 1615, when he obtained leave to go home, "having," says Sir Robert Gordon, "in some measure satisfied the church concerning his religion."

The Earl of Caithness, thus again defeated in his views, tried, as a dernier resort, to disjoin the families of Sutherland and Mackay. Sometimes he attempted to prevail upon the Marquis of Huntly to persuade the Earl of Sutherland and his brothers to come to an arrangement altogether independent of Mackay; and at other times he endeavoured to persuade Mackay, by holding out certain inducements to him, to compromise their differences without including the Earl of Sutherland in the arrangement; but he completely failed in these attempts.

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Ever since the death of John Sinclair at Thurso, the Earl of Caithness used every means in his power to induce such of his countrymen, individually, as were daring enough, to show their prowess and dexterity to make incursions into Sutherland or Strathnaver, for the purpose of annoying the vassals and dependents of the Earl of Sutherland and his ally, Mackay. Amongst others he often communicated on this subject with William Kenneth-son, whose father, Kenneth Buidhe, had always been the principal instrument in the hands of Earl George in oppressing the people of his own country, and for the furtherance of his plans he at last prevailed upon William, who already stood rebel to the king in a criminal cause, to go into voluntary banishment into Strathnaver, and put himself under the protection of Mackay, to whom he was to pretend that he had left Caithness to avoid any solicitations from the Earl of Caithness to injure the inhabitants of Strathnaver. To cover their designs they caused a report to be spread that William Mac-Kenneth was to leave Caithness because he would not obey the orders of the earl to execute some designs against Sir Robert Gordon, the tutor of Sutherland, and Mackay, and when this false rumour had been sufficiently spread, Mac-Kenneth and his brother John, and their dependents, fled into Strathnaver and solicited the favour and protection of Mackay. The latter received them kindly; but as William and his party had been long addicted to robbery and theft, he strongly advised them to abstain from such practices in all time coming; and that they might not afterward plead necessity as an excuse for continuing their depredations, he allotted them some lands to dwell on. After staying a month or two in Strathnaver, during which time they stole some cattle and horses out of Caithness, William received a private

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visit, by night, from Kenneth Buidhe, his father, who had been sent by the Earl of Caithness for the purpose of executing a contemplated depredation in Sutherland. Mackay was then in Sutherland on a visit to his uncle, Sir Robert Gordon, which being known to William Mac-Kenneth, he resolved to enter Sutherland with his party, and carry off into Caithness all the booty they could collect. Being observed in the Glen of Loth, by some of the Clan Gun, collecting cattle and horses, they were immediately apprehended, with the exception of Iain-Garbh-Mac-Chonald-Mac-Mhurchidh-Mhoir, who, being a very resolute man, refused to surrender, and was, in consequence, killed. The prisoners were presented to Sir Robert Gordon at Dornoch, who committed William and his brother, John, to the castle of Dornoch for trial. In the meantime, two of the principal men of Mac-Kenneth's party were tried, convicted, and executed, and the remainder were allowed to return home on giving surety to keep the peace. This occurrence took place in the month of January, 1616.

The Earl of Caithness, whose restless disposition and lawless proceedings have been already so fully noticed, now finished his career of iniquity by the perpetration of a crime, which, though trivial in its consequences, was of so highly a penal nature in itself as to bring his own life into jeopardy. As the circumstances which led to the burning of the corn of William Innes, a servant of Lord Forbes at Sanset in Caithness, and the discovery of the Earl of Caithness as the instigator, are somewhat curious, it is thought that a recital of them may not be here out of place.

Among other persons who had suffered at the hands of the earl was his own kinsman, William Sinclair of Dumbaith. After annoying him in a variety of ways, the earl instigated his bastard brother, Henry Sinclair,

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and Kenneth Buidhe, to destroy and lay waste part of Dumbaith's lands, who, unable to resist, and being in dread of personal risk, locked himself up in his house at Dunray, which they besieged. William Sinclair immediately applied to John, Earl of Sutherland, for assistance, who sent his friend Mackay, with a party to rescue Sinclair from his perilous situation. Mackay succeeded and carried Sinclair along with him into Sutherland, where he remained for a time, but he afterward went to reside in Moray where he died. Although thus cruelly persecuted and forced to become an exile from his country, by the Earl of Caithness, no entreaties could induce him to apply for redress, choosing rather to suffer himself than to see his relative punished. William Sinclair was succeeded by his grandson, George Sinclair, who married a sister of Lord Forbes. By the persuasion of his wife, who was a mere tool in the hands of the Earl of Caithness, George Sinclair was induced to execute a deed of entail, by which, failing of heirs male of his own body, he left the whole of his lands to the earl. When the earl had obtained this deed, he began to devise means to make away with Sinclair, and he actually persuaded Sinclair's wife to assist him in this nefarious design. Having obtained notice of this conspiracy against his life, Sinclair left Caithness and took up his residence with his brother-in-law, Lord Forbes, who received him with great kindness and hospitality, and reprobated very strongly the wicked conduct of his sister. Sinclair now recalled the entail in favour of the Earl of Caithness, and made a new deed by which he conveyed his whole estate to Lord Forbes. George Sinclair died soon after the execution of the deed, and having left no issue, Lord Forbes took possession of his lands of Dunray and Dumbaith.

Disappointed in his plans to acquire Sinclair's prop-

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erty, the Earl of Caithness seized every opportunity of annoying Lord Forbes in his possessions, by oppressing his tenants and servants, in every possible way, under the pretence of discharging his duty as sheriff, to which office he had been appointed by the Earl of Huntly on occasion of his marriage with Huntly's sister. Complaints were made from time to time against the earl, on account of these proceedings, to the Privy Council of Scotland, who, in some measure, afforded redress; but to protect his tenants more effectually, Lord Forbes took up a temporary residence in Caithness, relying upon the aid of the house of Sutherland in case of need.

As the earl was aware that any direct attack on Lord Forbes would be properly resented, and as any enterprise undertaken by his own people would be laid to his charge, however cautious he might be in dealing with them, the earl fixed on the Clan Gun as the fittest instruments for effecting his designs against Lord Forbes. Besides being the most resolute men in Caithness, always ready to undertake any desperate action, they depended more upon the Earl of Sutherland and Mackay, from whom they held some lands, than upon the Earl of Caithness, a circumstance which the earl supposed, should the contemplated outrages of the Clan Gun ever become matter of inquiry, might throw the suspicion upon the Earl of Sutherland and Mackay as the silent instigators. Accordingly, the earl opened a negotiation with John Gun, chief of the Clan Gun in Caithness, and with his brother, Alexander Gun, whose father he had hanged in the year 1586. In consequence of an invitation, the two brothers, along with Alexander Gun, their cousin-german, repaired to Castle Sinclair, where they met the earl. The earl did not at first divulge his plans to all the party; but taking Alexander Gun, the cousin, aside, he pointed out to him the injury he alleged

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he had sustained, in consequence of Lord Forbes having obtained a footing in Caithness, — that he could no longer submit to the indignity shown him by a stranger, — that he had made choice of him (Gun) to undertake a piece of service for him, on performing which, he would reward him most amply; and to secure compliance, the earl desired him to remember the many favours he had already received from him, and how well he had treated him, promising at same time, to show him even greater kindness in time coming. Alexander, thereupon, promised to serve the earl, though at the hazard of his life; but upon being interrogated by the earl whether he would undertake to burn the corn of Sanset, belonging to William Innes, a servant of Lord Forbes, Gun, who had never imagined that he was to be employed in such an ignoble affair, expressed the greatest astonishment at the proposal, and refused, in the most peremptory and indignant manner, to undertake its execution; yet, to satisfy the earl, he told him that he would, at his command, undertake to assassinate William Innes, an action which he considered less criminal and dishonourable, and more becoming a gentleman, than burning a quantity of corn! Finding him obdurate, the earl enjoined him to secrecy.

The earl next applied to the two brothers, John and Alexander, with whom he did not find it so difficult to treat. They, at first, hesitated with some firmness in undertaking the business on which the earl was so intent; and they pleaded an excuse, by saying, that as justice was then more strictly executed in Scotland than formerly, they could not expect to escape, as they had no place of safety to retreat to after the crime was committed; as a proof of which, they instanced the cases of the Clan Donald and Clan Gregor, two races of people much more powerful than the Clan Gun, who had been

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brought to the brink of ruin, and almost annihilated, under the authority of the laws. The earl replied that as soon as they should perform the service for him, he would send them to the Western Isles, to some of his acquaintances and friends, with whom they might remain until Lord Forbes and he were reconciled, when he would obtain their pardon, — that in the meantime he would profess, in public, to be their enemy, but that he would be their friend secretly, and permit them to frequent Caithness without danger. Alexander Gun, overcome at last by the entreaties of the earl, reluctantly consented to his request, and going into Sanset, in the dead of night, with two accomplices, he set fire to all the corn stacks which were in the barn-yard, belonging to William Innes, and which were in consequence consumed. This affair occurred in the month of November, 1615. The Earl of Caithness immediately spread a report through the whole country that Mackay's tenants had committed this outrage; but the deception was of short duration.

Sir Robert Gordon, tutor of Sutherland, having arrived in the north of Scotland from England, in the month of December following this occurrence, resolved to probe the matter to the bottom, not merely on account of his nephew, Mackay, whose men were suspected, but to satisfy Lord Forbes, who was now on friendly terms with the house of Sutherland; but the discovery of the perpetrators soon became an easy task, in consequence of a quarrel among the Clan Gun themselves, who upbraided one another as the authors of the fire-raising. Alexander Gun, the cousin of Alexander Gun, the real criminal, thereupon fled from Caithness, and sent some of his friends to Sir Robert Gordon and Donald Mackay with these proposals, — that if they would receive him into favour, and secure him from danger, he would

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confess the whole circumstances, and reveal the authors of the conflagration, and that he would declare the whole before the Privy Council, if required. On receiving this proposal, Sir Robert Gordon appointed Alexander Gun to meet them privately at Helmsdale, in the house of Sir Alexander Gordon, brother of Sir Robert. A meeting was accordingly held at the place appointed, at which Sir Robert and his friends agreed to do everything in their power to preserve Gun's life; and Mackay promised, moreover, to give him a possession in Strathie, where his father had formerly lived.

When the Earl of Caithness heard of Alexander Gun's flight into Sutherland, he became greatly alarmed, lest Alexander should reveal the affair of Sanset; and anticipating such a result, the earl gave out everywhere, that Sir Robert Gordon, Mackay, and Sir Alexander Gordon had hired some of the Clan Gun to accuse him of having burned William Innes' corn. But this artifice was of no avail, for as soon as Lord Forbes received notice from Sir Robert Gordon of the circumstances related by Alexander Gun, he immediately cited John Gun, and his brother Alexander, and their accomplices, to appear for trial at Edinburgh, on the second day of April, 1616, to answer to the charge of burning the corn at Sanset; and he also summoned the Earl of Caithness, as sheriff of that county, to deliver them up for trial. John Gun, thinking that the best course he could pursue, under present circumstances, was to follow the example of his cousin, Alexander, sent a message to Sir Alexander Gordon, desiring an interview with him; which being granted, they met at Navidale. John Gun then offered to confess and reveal everything he knew concerning the fire, on condition that his life should be spared; but Sir Alexander observed, that he could come under no engagement, as he was uncertain how the king and the

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council might view such a proceeding; but he promised, that as John had not been an actor in the business, but a witness only to the arrangement between his brother and the Earl of Caithness, he would do what he could to save him, if he went to Edinburgh in compliance with the summons.

In this state of matters, the Earl of Caithness wrote to the Marquis of Huntly, accusing Sir Robert Gordon and Mackay of a design to bring him within the reach of the law of treason, and to injure the honour of his house by slandering him with the burning of the corn at Sanset, — that, in the year 1612, they had insinuated to the king and council that he was privy to Arthur Smith's doings, — that his brother's son had lost his life in consequence, and that not satisfied therewith, they were now accusing him of new treasonable practices. He, therefore, requested the marquis, as a mutual friend, to persuade them to desist from pursuing this business, and he offered, on his own part, to submit to the marquis any controversy between them. Sir Robert Gordon and Mackay having occasion to meet the marquis at the Bog-a-Gight on other business, they were made acquainted by him of the earl's communication. They observed, in answer, that they had never at any time insinuated anything against the Earl of Caithness; but that if his own conscience did accuse him of anything, they were not to be blamed on that account, — that they could not refuse to assist Lord Forbes in finding out the persons who had burned the corn at Sanset, but that they had never imagined that the earl would have acted so base a part as to become an accomplice in such a criminal act; and further, that as Mackay's men were challenged with the deed, they certainly were entitled at least to clear Mackay's people from the charge, by endeavouring to find out the male-

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factors, — in all which they considered they had done the earl no wrong. And as to John Sinclair's death, the same had been occasioned by his own act in opposing his Majesty's warrant, on which account the king had pardoned the parties concerned, by a remission under the great seal. The Marquis of Huntly did not fail to write the Earl of Caithness the answer he had received from Sir Robert Gordon and Mackay, which grieved him exceedingly, as he was too well aware of the consequences which would follow if the prosecution of the Guns was persevered in.

At the time appointed for the trial of the Guns, Sir Robert Gordon, Mackay, and Lord Forbes, with all his friends, went to Edinburgh, and upon their arrival they entreated the council to prevent a remission in favour of the Earl of Caithness being passed the signet until the affair in hand was tried; a request with which the council complied. The Earl of Caithness did not appear; but he sent his son, Lord Berridale, to Edinburgh, along with John Gun and all those persons who had been summoned by Lord Forbes, with the exception of Alexander Gun and his two accomplices. He alleged as his reason for not sending them that they were not his men, being Mackay's own tenants, and dwelling in Dilred, the property of Mackay, which was held by him of the Earl of Sutherland, who, he alleged, was bound to present the three persons alluded to. But the lords of the council would not admit of this excuse, and again required Lord Berridale and his father to present the three culprits before the court on the tenth day of June following, because, although they had possessions in Dilred, they had also lands from the Earl of Caithness on which they usually resided. Besides, the deed was committed in Caithness, of which the earl was sheriff, on which account also he was bound to apprehend them.

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Lord Berridale, whose character was quite the reverse of that of his father, apprehensive of the consequences of a trial, now offered satisfaction in his father's name to Lord Forbes, if he would stop the prosecution; but his lordship refused to do anything without the previous advice and consent of Sir Robert Gordon and Mackay, who, upon being consulted, made articles of agreement to be drawn up, which were presented to Lord Berridale by neutral persons for his acceptance, but considering the conditions sought to be imposed upon his father too hard, he rejected them.

In consequence of the refusal of Lord Berridale to accede to the terms proposed, John Gun was apprehended by one of the magistrates of Edinburgh, on the application of Lord Forbes, and committed a prisoner to the jail of that city. Gun thereupon requested to see Sir Robert Gordon and Mackay, whom he entreated to use their influence to procure him his liberty, promising to declare everything he knew of the business for which he was prosecuted before the lords of the council. Sir Robert and Mackay then deliberated with Lord Forbes and Lord Elphinston on the subject, and they all four promised faithfully to Gun to do everything in their power to save him, and that they would from thenceforth maintain and defend him and his cousin, Alexander Gun, against the Earl of Caithness or any person, as long as they had reason and equity on their side; besides which, Mackay promised him a life-rent lease of the lands of Strathie to compensate for his possessions in Caithness, of which he would, of course, be deprived by the earl for revealing the earl's connection with the fire-raising at Sanset. John Gun was accordingly examined the following day by the lords of the council, when he confessed that the Earl of Caithness made his brother, Alexander Gun, burn the corn of

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Sanset, and that the affair had been proposed and discussed in his presence. Alexander Gun, the cousin, was examined also at the same time, and stated the same circumstances precisely as John Gun had done. After examination, John and Alexander were again committed to prison.

As neither the Earl of Caithness nor his son, Lord Berridale, complied with the commands of the council to deliver up Alexander Gun and his accomplices in the month of June, they were both outlawed and denounced rebels; and were summoned and charged by Lord Forbes to appear personally at Edinburgh in the month of July immediately following, to answer to the charge of causing the corn of Sanset to be burnt. This fixed determination on the part of Lord Forbes to bring the earl and his son to trial had the effect of altering their tone, and they now earnestly entreated him and Mackay to agree to a reconciliation on any terms; but they declined to enter into any arrangement until they had consulted Sir Robert Gordon. After obtaining Sir Robert's consent, and a written statement of the conditions which he required, from the Earl of Caithness in behalf of his nephew, the Earl of Sutherland, the parties entered into a final agreement, in the month of July, 1616. The principal heads of the contract, which was afterward recorded in the books of council and session, were as follow: That all civil actions between the parties should be settled by the mediation of mutual friends; that the Earl of Caithness and his son should pay to Lord Forbes and Mackay the sum of 20,000 merks Scots money; that all quarrels and criminal actions should be mutually forgiven, and particularly, that the Earl of Caithness and all his friends should forgive and remit the slaughter and mutilation at Thurso; that the Earl of Caithness and his son should renounce for

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themselves and their heirs all jurisdiction, criminal or civil, within Sutherland and Strathnaver, and any other jurisdiction which they should thereafter happen to acquire over any lands lying within the diocese of Caithness then pertaining, or which should afterward belong, to the Earl of Sutherland or his heirs; that the Earl of Caithness should deliver Alexander Gun and his accomplices to Lord Forbes; that the earl, his son, and their heirs, should never from thenceforth contend with the Earl of Sutherland for precedency in Parliament or priority of place; that the Earl of Caithness and his son, their friends and tenants, should keep the peace in time coming, under the penalty of great sums of money, and should never molest nor trouble the tenants of the Earl of Sutherland and Lord Forbes; that the Earl of Caithness, his son, or their friends, should not receive nor harbour any fugitives from Sutherland or Strathnaver; and that there should be good friendship and amity kept amongst them in all time to come.

In consequence of this agreement, the two sons of Kenneth Buy, William and John before-mentioned, were delivered to Lord Berridale, who gave security for their keeping the peace; and John Gun and Alexander, his cousin, were released and delivered to Lord Forbes and Mackay, who gave surety to the lords of the council to present them for trial whenever required; and as the Earl of Caithness had deprived them of their possessions in Caithness on account of the discovery they had made, Mackay, who had lately been knighted by the king, gave them lands in Strathnaver as he had promised. Matters being thus settled, Lord Berridale presented himself before the court at Edinburgh to abide his trial; but no person of course appearing against him, the trial was postponed. The Earl of Caithness, however, failing to appear, the diet against him was

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continued till the twenty-eighth day of August following.

Although the king was well pleased, on account of the quiet which such an adjustment would produce in his northern dominions, with the agreement which had been entered into, and the proceedings which followed thereon, all of which were made known to him by the Privy Council; yet, as the passing over such a flagrant act of wilful fire-raising, without punishment, might prove pernicious, he wrote a letter to the Privy Council of Scotland, commanding them to prosecute, with all severity, those who were guilty of or accessory to the crime. Lord Berridale was thereupon apprehended on suspicion, and committed a prisoner to the castle of Edinburgh; and his father, perceiving the determination of the king to prosecute the authors of the fire, again declined to appear for trial on the appointed day, on which account he was again outlawed, and declared a rebel as the guilty author.

In this extremity Lord Berridale had recourse to Sir Robert Gordon, then resident at court, for his aid. He wrote him a letter, entreating him that, as all controversies were now settled, he would, in place of an enemy, become a faithful friend; that for his own part, he, Lord Berridale, had been always innocent of all the jars and dissensions which had happened between the two families; that he was also innocent of the crime with which he was charged; and that he wished his Majesty to be informed by Sir Robert of these circumstances, hoping that he would order him to be released from confinement. Sir Robert's answer was to this effect, — that he had long desired a perfect agreement between the houses of Sutherland and Caithness, which he would endeavour to maintain during his administration in Sutherland; that he would intercede with the king, in behalf of his

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lordship, to the utmost of his power; that all disputes being now at an end, he would be his faithful friend; that he had a very different opinion of his disposition, from that he entertained of his father, the earl; and he concluded by entreating him to be careful to preserve the friendship which had been now commenced between them.

As the king understood that Lord Berridale was supposed to be innocent of the crime with which he and his father stood charged, and as he could not, without a verdict against Berridale, proceed against the family of Caithness by forfeiture, in consequence of his lordship having been infeft many years before in his father's estate; his Majesty, on the earnest entreaty of the then Bishop of Ross, Sir Robert Gordon, and Sir James Spence of Wormistoun, was pleased to remit and forgive the crime on the following conditions: 1st. That the Earl of Caithness and his son should give satisfaction to their creditors, who were constantly annoying his Majesty with clamours against the earl, and craving justice at his hands. 2d. That the Earl of Caithness, with consent of Lord Berridale, should freely renounce and resign perpetually, into the hands of his Majesty, the heritable sheriffship and justiciary of Caithness. 3d. That the Earl of Caithness should deliver the three criminals who had burnt the corn, that public justice might be satisfied upon them, as a terror and example to others. 4th. That the Earl of Caithness, with consent of Lord Berridale, should give and resign *in perpetuum* to the Bishop of Caithness, the house of Strabister, with as many of the feu lands of that bishopric as should amount to the yearly value of 2,000 merks Scots money, for the purpose of augmenting the income of the bishop, which was at that time small in consequence of the greater part of his lands being in the hands of the earl. Commissioners

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were sent down from London to Caithness, in October, 1616, to see that these conditions were complied with. The second condition as well as the last was immediately implemented; and as the earl and his son promised to give satisfaction to their creditors, and to do everything in their power to apprehend the burners of the corn, the latter was released from the castle of Edinburgh, and directions were given for drawing up a remission and pardon to the Earl of Caithness. Lord Berridale, however, had scarcely been released from the castle, when he was again imprisoned within the jail of Edinburgh, at the instance of Sir James Home of Cowdenknowes, his cousin-german, who had become surety for him and his father to their creditors for large sums of money. The earl himself narrowly escaped the fate of his son and retired to Caithness, but his creditors had sufficient interest to prevent his remission from passing till they should be satisfied. With consent of the creditors the council of Scotland gave him a personal protection, from time to time, to enable him to come to Edinburgh for the purpose of settling with them, but he made no arrangement and returned privately into Caithness before the expiration of the supersedure which had been granted him, leaving his son to suffer all the miseries of a prison. After enduring a captivity of five years Lord Berridale was released from prison by the good offices of the Earl of Enzie, and put, for behoof of himself, and his own and his father's creditors, in possession of the family estates from which his father was driven by Sir Robert Gordon acting under a royal warrant, a just punishment for the many enormities of a long and misspent life.

Desperate as the fortunes of the Earl of Caithness were even previous to the disposal of his estates, he most unexpectedly found an ally in Sir Donald Mackay, who

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had taken offence at Sir Robert Gordon, and who, being a man of quick resolution and of an inconstant disposition, determined to forsake the house of Sutherland, and to ingratiate himself with his mortal enemy, the Earl of Caithness. The pretended cause of Mackay's discontent was, that Sir Robert Gordon had excluded him from all share in the government of Sutherland, in which he had participated jointly with John, the last Earl of Sutherland, and that Sir Robert had dispossessed him of all the property he had purchased or intended to purchase in that country; that he had taken from him by a decree-arbitral a part of the Diriemoor which John, the last earl, had given him, and that Sir Robert, instead of countenancing, was rather an enemy to such as depended upon him in Sutherland; in one word, that all the favours he had received from the earl were now withdrawn from him by his uncles, Sir Robert and Sir Alexander. Besides these reasons, Mackay was influenced by pecuniary considerations; for having, as he alleged, burdened his estate with debts incurred for some years past in following the house of Sutherland, he thought that, in time coming, he might, by procuring the favour of the Earl of Caithness, turn the same to his own advantage and that of his countrymen; and as he had been induced to his own prejudice to grant certain life-rent tacks of the lands of Strathie and Dilred to John and Alexander Gun, and others of the Clan Gun for revealing the affair of Sanset, he thought that by joining the Earl of Caithness, these Clan Gun might be destroyed, by which means he would get back his lands which he meant to convey to his brother, John Mackay, as a portion; and he, moreover, expected that the earl would give him and his countrymen some possessions in Caithness. But the chief ground of discontent on the part of Sir Donald Mackay was an action brought

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against him and Lord Forbes before the court of session, to recover a contract entered into between the last Earl of Sutherland and Mackay, in the year 1613, relative to their marches and other matters of controversy, which being considered by Mackay as prejudicial to him, he had endeavoured to get destroyed through the agency of some persons about Lord Forbes, into whose keeping the deed had been entrusted.

After brooding over these subjects of discontent for some years, Mackay, in the year 1618, suddenly resolved to break with the house of Sutherland, and to form an alliance with the Earl of Caithness, who had long borne a mortal enmity at that family. Accordingly, Mackay sent John Sutherland, his cousin-german, into Caithness to request a private conference with the earl in any part of Caithness he might appoint. This offer was too tempting to be rejected by the earl, who expected, by a reconciliation with Sir Donald Mackay, to turn the same to his own personal gratification and advantage. In the first place, he hoped to revenge himself upon the Clan Gun, who were his principal enemies, and upon Sir Donald himself, by detaching him from his superior, the Earl of Sutherland, and from the friendship of his uncles, who had always supported him in all his difficulties. In the second place, he expected that, by alienating Mackay from the duty and affection he owed the house of Sutherland, he would weaken its power and influence. And lastly, he trusted that Mackay would not only be prevailed upon to discharge his own part, but would also persuade Lord Forbes to discharge his share of the sum of 20,000 merks Scots, which he and his son, Lord Berridale, had become bound to pay them, on account of the burning at Sanset.

The Earl of Caithness having at once agreed to Mackay's proposal, a meeting was held by appointment

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in the neighbourhood of Dunray, in the parish of Reay, in Caithness. The parties met in the night-time, accompanied each by three men only. After much discussion, and various conferences, which were continued for two or three days, they resolved to destroy the Clan Gun, and particularly John Gun, and Alexander, his cousin. To please the earl, Mackay undertook to despatch these last, as they were obnoxious to him, on account of the part they had taken against him, in revealing the burning at Sanset. They persuaded themselves that the house of Sutherland would defend the clan, as they were bound to do by their promise, and that that house would be thus drawn into some snare. And to confirm their friendship, the earl and Mackay arranged that John Mackay, the only brother of Sir Donald, should marry a niece of the earl, a daughter of James Sinclair of Murkle, who was a mortal enemy of all the Clan Gun. Having thus planned the line of conduct they were to follow, they parted, after swearing to continue in perpetual friendship.

Notwithstanding of the private way in which the meeting was held, accounts of it immediately spread through the kingdom; and every person wondered at the motives which could induce Sir Donald Mackay to take such a step so unadvisedly, without the knowledge of his uncles, Sirs Robert and Alexander Gordon, or of Lord Forbes. The Clan Gun, receiving secret intelligence of the design upon them, from different friendly quarters, retired into Sutherland. The clan were astonished at Mackay's conduct, as he had promised at Edinburgh, in presence of Lords Forbes and Elphinston and Sir Robert Gordon, in the year 1616, to be a perpetual friend to them, and chiefly to John Gun and to his cousin, Alexander.

After Mackay returned from Caithness, he sent his

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cousin-german, Angus Mackay of Bighouse, to Sutherland, to acquaint his uncles, who had received notice of the meeting, that his object in meeting the Earl of Caithness was for his own personal benefit, and that nothing had been done to their prejudice. Angus Mackay met Sir Robert Gordon at Dunrobin, to whom he delivered his kinsman's message, which, he said, he hoped Sir Robert would take in good part, adding that Sir Donald would show, in presence of both his uncles, that the Clan Gun had failed in duty and fidelity to him and the house of Sutherland, since they had revealed the burning; and, therefore, that if his uncles would not forsake John Gun, and some others of the clan, he would adhere to them no longer. Sir Robert Gordon returned a verbal answer, by Angus Mackay, that, when Sir Donald came in person to Dunrobin to clear himself, as in duty he was bound to do, he would then accept of his excuse, and not till then. And he, at the same time, wrote a letter to Sir Donald, to this effect: That for his own (Sir Robert's) part, he did not much regard Mackay's secret journey to Caithness, and his reconciliation with Earl George, without his knowledge or the advice of Lord Forbes; and that, however unfavourable the world might construe it, he would endeavour to colour it in the best way he could, for Mackay's own credit. He desired Mackay to consider that a man's reputation was exceedingly tender, and that if it were once blemished, though wrongfully, there would still some blot remain, because the greater part of the world would always incline to speak the worst; that whatever had been arranged in that journey, between him and the Earl of Caithness, beneficial to Mackay, and not prejudicial to the house of Sutherland, he should be always ready to assist him therein, although concluded without his consent; and, as to the Clan Gun, he could not with

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honesty or credit abandon them, and particularly John and his cousin, Alexander, until tried and found guilty, as he had promised faithfully to be their friend, for revealing the affair of Sanset; that he had made them this promise at the earnest desire and entreaty of Sir Donald himself; that the house of Sutherland did always esteem their truth and constancy to be their greatest jewel; and seeing that he and his brother, Sir Alexander, were almost the only branches of it then of age or man's estate, they would endeavour to prove true and constant, wheresoever they did possess friendship; and that neither the house of Sutherland, nor any greater house whereof they had the honour to be descended, should have the least occasion to be ashamed of them in that respect; that if Sir Donald had quarrelled or challenged the Clan Gun, before going into Caithness and his arrangement with Earl George, the clan might have been suspected; but he saw no reason to forsake them until they were found guilty of some great offence. Such was the substance of Sir Robert Gordon's letter to Sir Donald Mackay, who was displeased that his uncles should hesitate for a moment in forsaking John Gun and his clan, at his desire.

Sir Robert Gordon, therefore, acting as tutor for his nephew, took the Clan Gun under his immediate protection, with the exception of Alexander Gun, the burner of the corn, and his accomplices. John Gun thereupon demanded a trial before his friends, that they might hear what Sir Donald had to lay to his charge. A meeting was accordingly held at Dornoch, at which the parties met, in presence of Sir Robert and his brother, Sir Alexander Gordon, before whom the whole matter was debated; but nothing was laid to the charge of the Clan Gun but mere imputations, which were suggested by the Earl of Caithness, who alleged that they had suggested

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to him a plot against Sir Donald's life. This charge being unsupported by any evidence, John Gun and his kinsmen were acquitted, and declared innocent of any offence, either against the house of Sutherland or Mackay, since the fact of the burning.

Sir Donald Mackay, dissatisfied with this result, went to Edinburgh, for the purpose of obtaining a commission against the Clan Gun from the council, for old crimes, committed by them before his Majesty had left Scotland for England; but he was successfully opposed in this, by Sir Robert Gordon, who wrote a letter to the lord chancellor and to the Earl of Melrose, afterward Earl of Haddington and lord privy seal, showing that the object of Sir Donald, in asking such a commission, was to break the king's peace, and to breed fresh troubles in Caithness. Disappointed in this attempt, Sir Donald returned home to Strathnaver, and, in the month of April, 1618, he went to Braill, in Caithness, where he met the earl, with whom he continued three nights. On this occasion, they agreed to despatch Alexander Gun, the burner of the corn, lest Lord Forbes should request the earl to deliver him up; and they hoped that, in consequence of such an occurrence, the tribe might be drawn into some snare. Before parting, the earl delivered to Mackay some old writs of certain lands in Strathnaver, and other places within the diocese of Caithness, which belonged to Sir Donald's predecessors; by means of which the earl thought he would put Sir Donald by the ears with his uncles, who, he expected, would bring an action against the Earl of Sutherland, for the warrandice of Strathnaver, and thus free himself from the superiority of the Earl of Sutherland.

Shortly after this meeting was held, Sir Donald entered Sutherland, privately, for the purpose of capturing

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John Gun; but, after lurking two nights in Golspie, watching Gun, without effect, he was discovered by Adam Gordon of Kilcalmekill, a trusty dependent of the house of Sutherland, and thereupon returned to his country. In the meantime, the Earl of Caithness, who sought every opportunity to quarrel with the house of Sutherland, disputed with Sir Alexander Gordon of Navidale, about the marches between Torrish, in Strathully, and the lands of Berridale. The earl, alleging that Sir Alexander's servants had built their summer sheilings beyond their old accustomed limits, sent some men to pull them down; and he, moreover, sent a letter to Sir Alexander Gordon, complaining that he had passed the old marches of Torrish, and desiring him, out of courtesy and kindness, to confine himself within his own bounds. Sir Alexander received this letter, and the intelligence that the sheilings had been cast down, at one and the same time, when he returned for answer, that he did not expect such treatment from him; but, as the earl had thought to begin matters in such a way, Sir Alexander assured him, that, on a certain day during the ensuing week, he would repair these sheilings again, whatever opposition the earl might show to the measure. When Sir Donald Mackay heard of this dispute, and the threat of Sir Alexander Gordon, he sent a message to the Earl of Caithness, desiring to know whether he had any intention of meeting Sir Alexander and the Sutherland men on the day appointed, as he intended to be present also, if the earl meant to attend. The earl, however, neither returned an answer nor met Sir Alexander, who was consequently allowed to rebuild his sheilings without molestation.

When Sir Robert Gordon heard of these occurrences in the north, he returned home from Edinburgh, where he had been for some time; and, on his return, he visited

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the Marquis of Huntly at Strathbogie, who advised him to be on his guard, as he had received notice from the Earl of Caithness that Sir Donald meant to create some disturbances in Sutherland. The object the earl had in view, in acquainting the Marquis of Mackay's intentions, was to screen himself from any imputation of being concerned in Mackay's plans, although he favoured them in secret. As soon as Sir Robert Gordon was informed of Mackay's intentions, he hastened to Sutherland; but, before his arrival there, Sir Donald had entered Strathully with a body of men, in quest of Alexander Gun, the burner, against whom he had obtained letters of caption. He expected that if he could find Gun in Strathully, where the clan of that name chiefly dwelt, they, and particularly John Gun, would protect Alexander, and that in consequence he would ensnare John Gun and his tribe, and bring them within the reach of the law, for having resisted the king's authority; but Mackay was disappointed in his expectations, for Alexander Gun escaped, and none of the Clan Gun made the least movement, not knowing how Sir Robert Gordon stood affected towards Alexander Gun. In entering Strathully, without acquainting his uncles of his intention, Sir Donald had acted improperly, and contrary to his duty, as the vassal of the house of Sutherland; but, not satisfied with this trespass, he went to Badinloch, and there apprehended William M'Corkill, one of the Clan Gun, and carried him along with him towards Strathnaver, on the ground that he had favoured the escape of Alexander Gun; but M'Corkill escaped, while his keepers were asleep, and went to Dunrobin, where he met Sir Alexander Gordon, to whom he related the circumstance.

Hearing that Sir Robert Gordon was upon his journey to Sutherland, Mackay left Badinloch in haste and

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went privately to the parish of Culmaly, and took up his residence in Golspietour with John Gordon, younger of Embo, till he should learn in what manner Sir Robert would act towards him. Mackay perceiving that his presence in Golspietour was likely to lead to a tumult among the people, he sent his men home to Strathnaver, and went himself, the following day, taking only one man along with him, to Dunrobin castle, where he met Sir Robert Gordon, who received him kindly according to his usual manner; and after Sir Robert had opened his mind very freely to him on the bad course he was pursuing, he began to talk to him about a reconciliation with John Gun; but Sir Donald would not hear of any accommodation, and, after staying a few days at Dunrobin, returned home to his own country.

A dispute having occurred on the subject of the eastern marches between Sutherland and Strathnaver, it was agreed by the parties interested that some mutual friends should meet at Rimbisdale for the purpose of fixing them. The time fixed had now arrived, and, accordingly, Sir Alexander Gordon, John Mackay, and John Monroe of Leamlair, who were appointed to adjust the marches, met at the time and place appointed. To save trouble, it was agreed that they should meet with only twenty-four men on each side; but the inhabitants of Caithness having flocked to the place of meeting to await the issue, the people of Strathnaver also generally attended, a circumstance which induced Sir Robert Gordon to send five hundred men, without delay, to attend his brother, Sir Alexander, for protecting him in case of necessity, while Sir Robert himself was prepared to join him with the rest of the inhabitants of Sutherland. The affair of the marches was, however, so effectually settled by Monroe of Leamlair, that all the parties returned quietly to their respective homes.

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Sir Donald Mackay perceiving the danger in which he had placed himself, and seeing that he could place no reliance on the hollow and inconstant friendship of the Earl of Caithness, became desirous of a reconciliation with his uncles by submitting himself to the house of Sutherland, and with this view he offered to refer all matters in dispute to the arbitrament of friends, and to make such satisfaction for his offences as they might enjoin. As Sir Robert Gordon still had a kindly feeling toward Mackay, and as the state in which the affairs of the house of Sutherland stood during the minority of his nephew, the earl, could not conveniently admit of following out hostile measures against Mackay, Sir Robert embraced Mackay's offer. The parties, therefore, met at Tain, and matters being discussed in presence of Sir Alexander Gordon of Navidale, George Monroe of Milntoun, and John Monroe of Leamlair, they adjudged that Sir Donald should send Angus Mackay of Bighouse, and three gentlemen of the Slaight-ean-Aberigh, to Dunrobin, there to remain prisoners during Sir Robert's pleasure, as a punishment for apprehending William M'Corkill at Badinloch. After settling some other matters of little moment, the parties agreed to hold another meeting for adjusting all remaining questions, at Elgin, in the month of June of the following year, 1619, and subscribed a submission to that effect. Sir Donald wished to include Gordon of Embo and others of his friends, in Sutherland, in this arrangement, but as they were vassals of the house of Sutherland, Sir Robert would not allow Mackay to treat for them.

In the month of November, 1618, the peace of the Highlands was in danger of being disturbed in consequence of a quarrel between George, Lord Gordon, Earl of Enzie, and Sir Lauchlan Mackintosh, chief of the Clan Chattan, which arose out of the following circum-

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stances: When the earl went into Lochaber, in the year 1613, in pursuit of the Clan Cameron, he requested Mackintosh to accompany him, both on account of his being the vassal of the Marquis of Huntly, the earl's father, and also on account of the ancient enmity which had always existed between the Clan Chattan and Clan Cameron, in consequence of the latter keeping forcible possession of certain lands belonging to the former in Lochaber. To induce Mackintosh to join him, the earl promised to dispossess the Clan Cameron of the lands belonging to Mackintosh, and to restore him to the possession of them; but, by advice of the laird of Grant, his father-in-law, who was an enemy of the house of Huntly, he declined to accompany the earl in his expedition. The earl was greatly displeased at Mackintosh's refusal, which, afterward, led to some disputes between them. A few years after the date of this expedition, in which the earl subdued the Clan Cameron and took their chief prisoner, whom he imprisoned at Inverness, in the year 1614, Mackintosh obtained a commission against Mackronald, younger of Moydart, and his brother, Donald Glas, for laying waste his lands in Lochaber; and, having collected all his friends, he entered Lochaber for the purpose of apprehending them, but, being unsuccessful in his attempt to capture them, he returned home. As Mackintosh conceived that he had a right to the services of all his clan, some of whom were tenants and dependents of the Marquis of Huntly, he ordered the latter to follow him, and compelled such of them as were refractory to accompany him into Lochaber. This proceeding gave offence to the Earl of Enzie, who summoned Mackintosh before the lords of the Privy Council for having, as he asserted, exceeded his commission. He, moreover, got Mackintosh's commission recalled, and obtained a new commission in his own

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favour from the lords of the council, under which he invaded Lochaber, and expelled Mackronald and his brother, Donald, from that country.

As Mackintosh held certain lands from the earl and his father for services to be done, which the earl alleged had not been performed by Mackintosh, agreeably to the tenor of his titles, the earl brought an action against Mackintosh in the year 1618, for evicting these lands, on the ground of his not having implemented the conditions on which he held them. And, as the earl had right to the tithes of Culloden, which belonged to Mackintosh, he served him, at same time, with an inhibition, prohibiting him to dispose of these tithes. As the time for tithing drew near, Mackintosh, by advice of the Clan Kenzie and the Grants, circulated a report that he intended to oppose the earl in any attempt he might make to take possession of the tithes of Culloden in kind, because such a practice had never before been in use, and that he would try the issue of an action of spulzie, if brought against him. Although the earl was much incensed at such a threat on the part of his own vassal, yet, being a privy councillor, and desirous of showing a good example in keeping the peace, he abstained from enforcing his right; but, having formerly obtained a decree against Mackintosh for the value of the tithes of the preceding years, he sent two messengers-at-arms to poind and distrain the corns upon the ground under that warrant. The messengers were, however, resisted by Mackintosh's servants, and forced to desist in the execution of their duty. The earl, in consequence, pursued Mackintosh and his servants before the Privy Council, and got them denounced and proclaimed rebels to the king. He, thereupon, collected a number of his particular friends with the design of carrying his decree into execution, by distraining the crop at Culloden and

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carrying it to Inverness. Mackintosh prepared himself to resist, by fortifying the house of Culloden and laying in a large quantity of ammunition, and having collected all the corn within shot of the castle and committed the charge of it to his two uncles, Duncan and Lauchlan, he waited for the approach of the earl. As the earl was fully aware of Mackintosh's preparations, and that the Clan Chattan, the Grants, and the Clan Kenzie, had promised to assist Mackintosh in opposing the execution of his warrant, he wrote to Sir Robert Gordon, tutor of Sutherland, to meet him at Culloden on the fifth day of November, 1618, being the day fixed by him for enforcing his decree. On receipt of this letter, Sir Robert Gordon left Sutherland for Bog-a-Gight, where the Marquis of Huntly and his son then were, and on his way paid a visit to Mackintosh with the view of bringing about a compromise; but Mackintosh, who was a young man of a headstrong disposition, refused to listen to any proposals, and rode posthaste to Edinburgh, from whence he went privately into England.

In the meantime, the Earl of Enzie having collected his friends, to the number of eleven hundred horsemen well appointed and armed, and six hundred Highlanders on foot, came to Inverness with this force on the day appointed, and, after consulting his principal officers, marched forwards toward Culloden. When he arrived within view of the castle the earl sent Sir Robert Gordon to Duncan Mackintosh, who, with his brother, commanded the house, to inform him, that, in consequence of his nephew's extraordinary boasting, he had come thither to put his Majesty's laws in execution, and to carry off the corn which of right belonged to him. To this message Duncan made this reply, — that he did not mean to prevent the earl from taking away what belonged to him, but that, in case of attack, he would

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defend the castle which had been committed to his charge. Sir Robert, on his return, begged the earl to send Lord Lovat, who had some influence with Duncan Mackintosh, to endeavour to prevail on him to surrender the castle. At the desire of the earl, Lord Lovat accordingly went to the house of Culloden, accompanied by Sir Robert Gordon and George Monroe of Milntoun, and, after some entreaty, Mackintosh agreed to surrender at discretion; a party thereupon took possession of the house, and sent the keys to the earl. He was, however, so well pleased with the conduct of Mackintosh, that he sent back the keys to him, and as neither the Clan Chattan, the Grants, nor the Clan Kenzie, appeared to oppose him, he disbanded his party and returned home to Bog-a-Gight. He did not even carry off the corn, but gave it to Mackintosh's grandmother, who enjoyed the life-rent of the lands of Culloden as her jointure.

As the Earl of Enzie had other claims against Sir Lauchlan Mackintosh, he cited him before the lords of council and session, but failing to appear, he was again denounced rebel, and outlawed for his disobedience. Sir Lauchlan, who was then in England at court, informed the king of the earl's proceedings, which he described as harsh and illegal, and, to counteract the effect which such a statement might have upon the mind of his Majesty, the earl posted to London and laid before him a true statement of matters. The consequence was, that Sir Lauchlan was sent home to Scotland and committed to the castle of Edinburgh, until he should give the earl full satisfaction. This step appears to have brought him to reason, and induced him to apply, through the mediation of some friends, for a reconciliation with the earl, which took place accordingly, at Edinburgh, in the year 1619. Sir Lauchlan, however,

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became bound to pay a large sum of money to the earl, part of which he afterward remitted. The laird of Grant, by whose advice Mackintosh had acted in opposing the earl, also submitted to the earl; but the reconciliation was more nominal than real, for the earl was afterward obliged to protect the chief of the Clan Cameron against them, and this circumstance gave rise to many dissensions between them and the earl, which ended only with the lives of Mackintosh and the laird of Grant, who both died in the year 1622, when the ward of part of Mackintosh's lands fell to the earl, as his superior, during the minority of his son. The Earl of Seaforth and his clan, who had also favoured the designs of Mackintosh, were in like manner reconciled, at the same time, to the Earl of Enzie, at Aberdeen, through the mediation of the Earl of Dunfermline, the chancellor of Scotland, whose daughter the Earl of Seaforth had married.

In no part of the Highlands did the spirit of faction operate so powerfully, or reign with greater virulence, than in Sutherland and Caithness, and the adjacent country. The jealousies and strifes which existed for such a length of time between the two great rival families of Sutherland and Caithness, and the warfare which these occasioned, sowed the seeds of a deep-rooted hostility, which extended its baneful influence among all their followers, dependents, and friends, and retarded the advancement of the social system. The most trivial offences were often magnified into the greatest crimes, and bodies of men, animated by the deadliest hatred, were instantly congregated to avenge imaginary wrongs. It would be almost an endless task to relate the many disputes and differences which occurred during the seventeenth century in these distracted districts; but as a short account, or an abridged narrative of the principal

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events is necessary in a work of this nature, we again proceed agreeably to our plan.

During the year 1621, a dispute arose between Sutherland of Duffus and John Gordon, younger of Embo, respecting the marches between Embo and the lands of Cuttle, which belonged to the former. Duffus, accompanied by his brother, James Sutherland, and seven other persons, visited the marches one evening, when he sent for young Embo to come and speak with him respecting them. Though late in the evening, Embo went unaccompanied by any person and met Duffus and his party, and after exchanging some words, they attacked Gordon and wounded him before he had time to draw his sword. As soon as this attack became known, the Gordons and the Grays, with some of the Earl of Sutherland's tenants, came to Embo, and proceeded from thence to the castle of Skelbo, where Duffus then resided, with the design of attacking him. They did not enter the house, but rode round about it, defying him and daring him to come out. Sir Alexander Gordon, sheriff of Sutherland, hearing of the meeting, immediately hastened to the spot to prevent mischief; and being assisted by John Gray, dean of Caithness, he took all the parties bound to keep the peace till the arrival of Sir Robert Gordon, who, it was expected, would adopt measures of pacification. Sir Robert afterward prevailed upon the parties to hold a friendly meeting, at which they agreed to refer their disputes to arbitration.

The resignation which the Earl of Caithness was compelled to make of part of the feu lands of the bishopric of Caithness, into the hands of the bishop, as before related, was a measure which preyed upon his mind, naturally restless and vindictive, and, in consequence, he continually annoyed the bishop's servants

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and tenants. His hatred was more especially directed against Robert Monroe of Aldie, commissary of Caithness, who always acted as chamberlain to the bishop, and factor in the diocese, whom he took every opportunity to molest. The earl had a domestic servant, James Sinclair of Dyren, who had possessed part of the lands which he had been compelled to resign, and which were now tenanted by Thomas Lindsay, brother-uterine of Robert Monroe, the commissary. This James Sinclair, at the instigation of the earl, quarrelled with Thomas Lindsay, who was passing at the time near the earl's house in Thurso, and, after exchanging some hard words, Sinclair inflicted a deadly wound upon him, of which he shortly thereafter died. Sinclair immediately fled to Edinburgh, and from thence to London, to meet Sir Andrew Sinclair, who was then transacting some business for the King of Denmark there, that he might intercede with the king for a pardon; but his Majesty refused to grant it, and Sinclair, for better security, went to Denmark along with Sir Andrew.

As Robert Monroe did not consider his person safe in Caithness under such circumstances, he retired into Sutherland for a time. He then pursued James Sinclair and his master, the Earl of Caithness, for the slaughter of his brother, Thomas Lindsay; but, not appearing for trial on the day appointed, they were both outlawed, and denounced rebels. Hearing that Sinclair was in London, Monroe hastened thither, and in his own name and that of the Bishop of Caithness, laid a complaint before his Majesty against the earl and his servant. Amongst other grievances of which he complained, was the slaughter of his brother, which he satisfied the king, had been brought about by the earl; that he himself had narrowly escaped with his

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life, and, as the earl had been outlawed for the crime, he begged his Majesty to issue such order against him, as he should judge expedient. His Majesty thereupon wrote to the lords of the Privy Council of Scotland, desiring them to adopt the most speedy and rigorous measures to suppress the oppressions of the earl, that his subjects in the north, who were well affected, might live in safety and peace; and to enable them the more effectually to punish the earl, his Majesty ordered them to keep back the remission which had been granted the earl for the affair of Sanset, which had not yet been delivered to him. His Majesty also directed the Privy Council, with all secrecy and speed, to give a commission to Sir Robert Gordon to apprehend the earl, or force him to leave the kingdom, and to take possession of all his castles for his Majesty's behoof; that he should also compel the landed proprietors of Caithness to find surety not only for keeping the king's peace in time coming, but also for their personal appearance at Edinburgh twice every year, as the West Islanders were bound to do, to answer to such complaints as might be made against them. The letter containing these instructions is dated from Windsor, twenty-fifth of May, 1621.

The Privy Council, on receipt of this letter, communicated the same to Sir Robert Gordon, who was then in Edinburgh; but he excused himself from accepting the commission offered him, lest his acceptance might be construed as proceeding from spleen and malice against the Earl of Caithness. This answer, however, did not satisfy the Privy Council, who insisted that he should accept the commission, which he, therefore, did, but on condition that the council should furnish him with shipping, and the munitions of war and all other necessaries to force the earl to yield, in

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case he should fortify either Castle Sinclair or Acrigell, and withstand a siege.

While the Privy Council were deliberating on this matter, Sir Robert Gordon took occasion to speak to Lord Berridale, who was still a prisoner for debt in the jail of Edinburgh, respecting the contemplated measures against the earl, his father, and as Sir Robert was still very unwilling to enter upon such an enterprise, he advised his lordship to undertake the business, by engaging in which he might not only get himself relieved of the claims against him, save his country from the dangers which threatened it, but also keep possession of his castles, and that as his father had treated him in the most unnatural manner, by suffering him to remain so long in prison without taking any steps to obtain his liberation, he would be justified, in the eyes of the world, in accepting the offer now made. Being encouraged by the Lord Gordon, Earl of Enzie, to whom Sir Robert Gordon's proposal had been communicated, to embrace the offer, Lord Berridale notified to the lords of the council the danger which might arise to the peace of the north country, on account of the ancient and long-standing enmity which existed between the inhabitants of Sutherland and Caithness, if Sir Robert Gordon or any other person belonging to the house of Sutherland were employed in the proposed service, as his father would stand out more against Sir Robert than against any other commissioner not connected with the house of Sutherland. He then offered to undertake the service without any charge to his Majesty, and that he would, before being liberated, give security to his creditors either to return to prison after he had executed the commission, or satisfy them for their claims against him. The Privy Council embraced at once Lord Berridale's proposal, but, although the Earl of Enzie offered him-

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self as surety for his lordship's return to prison after the service was over, the creditors refused to consent to his liberation, and thus the matter dropped. Sir Robert Gordon was again urged by the council to accept the commission, and to make the matter more palatable to him, they granted the commission to him and the Earl of Enzie jointly, both of whom accepted it. As the council, however, had no command from the king to supply the commissioners with shipping and warlike stores, they delayed proceedings till they should receive instructions from his Majesty touching that point.

When the Earl of Caithness was informed of the proceedings contemplated against him, and that Sir Robert Gordon had been employed by a commission from his Majesty to act in the matter, he wrote to the lords of the Privy Council, asserting that he was innocent of the death of Thomas Lindsay; that his reason for not appearing at Edinburgh to abide his trial for that crime was not that he had been in any shape privy to the slaughter, but for fear of his creditors, who, he was afraid, would apprehend and imprison him; and promising, that if his Majesty would grant him a protection and safe conduct, he would find security to abide trial for the slaughter of Thomas Lindsay. On receipt of this letter, the lords of the council promised him a protection, and in the month of August, his brother, James Sinclair of Murkle, and Sir John Sinclair of Greenland, became sureties for his appearance at Edinburgh, at the time prescribed for his appearance to stand trial. Thus the execution of the commission was in the meantime delayed.

Notwithstanding the refusal of Lord Berridale's creditors to consent to his liberation, Lord Gordon afterward did all in his power to accomplish it, and ultimately succeeded in obtaining this consent, by giving

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his own personal security either to satisfy the creditors, or deliver up Lord Berridale into their hands. His lordship was accordingly released from prison, and returned to Caithness in the year 1621, after a confinement of five years. As his final enlargement from jail depended upon his obtaining the means of paying his creditors, and as his father, the earl, stayed at home consuming the rents of his estates, in rioting and licentiousness, without paying any part either of the principal or interest of his debts, and without feeling the least uneasiness at his son's confinement, Lord Berridale, immediately on his return, assisted by his friends, attempted to apprehend his father, so as to get the family estates into his own possession; but without success.

In the meantime the earl's creditors, wearied out with the delay which had taken place in liquidating their debts, grew exceedingly clamorous, and some of them took a journey to Caithness in the month of April, 1622, to endeavour to effect a settlement with the earl personally. All, however, that they obtained were fair words, and a promise from the earl that he would speedily follow them to Edinburgh, and satisfy them of all demands; but he failed to perform his promise. About this time, a sort of reconciliation appears to have taken place between the earl and his son, Lord Berridale; but it was of short duration. On this new disagreement breaking out, the earl lost the favour and friendship not only of his brothers, James and Sir John, but also that of his best friends in Caithness. Lord Berridale, thereupon, left Caithness and took up his residence with the Lord Gordon, who wrote to his friends at court to obtain a new commission against the earl. As the king was daily troubled with complaints against the earl by his creditors, he readily consented to such a

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request, and he accordingly wrote a letter to the lords of the Privy Council of Scotland, in the month of December, 1622, desiring them to issue a commission to the Lord Gordon to proceed against the earl. Lord Gordon, thinking the present a favourable opportunity to bring matters to an amicable accommodation between the father and the son, which would have superseded the execution of the commission, entered into a negotiation with them for that purpose, but to no effect, and he, therefore, resolved to proceed against the earl by force. The execution of the commission was, however, postponed in consequence of a message to the Lord Gordon to attend the court and proceed to France on some affairs of state, where he accordingly went in the year 1623. On the departure of his lordship, the earl made an application to the lords of the council for a new protection, promising to appear at Edinburgh on the tenth day of August, 1623, and to satisfy his creditors, — this was a mere pretence to obtain delay, for although the council granted the protection, as required, upon the most urgent solicitations, the earl failed to appear on the day appointed. This breach of his engagement incensed his Majesty and the council the more against him, and made them more determined than ever to reduce him to obedience. He was again denounced and proclaimed rebel, and a new commission was granted to Sir Robert Gordon to proceed against him and his abettors with fire and sword. In this commission there were conjoined with Sir Robert, his brother, Sir Alexander Gordon, Sir Donald Mackay, his nephew, and James Sinclair of Murkle, but on this condition, that Sir Robert should act as chief commissioner, and that nothing should be done by the other commissioners in the service they were employed in without his advice and consent.

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The Earl of Caithness, seeing now no longer any chance of evading the authority of the laws, prepared to meet the gathering storm by fortifying his castles and strongholds. Proclamations were issued interdicting all persons from having any communication with the earl, and letters of concurrence were given to Sir Robert in name of his Majesty, charging and commanding the inhabitants of Ross, Sutherland, Strathnaver, Caithness, and Orkney, to assist him in the execution of his Majesty's commission; a ship well furnished with the munitions of war was sent to the coast of Caithness to prevent the earl's escape by sea, and to furnish Sir Robert with ordnance for battering the earl's castles in case he should withstand a siege.

Sir Robert Gordon, having arrived in Sutherland in the month of August, 1623, was immediately joined by Lord Berridale for the purpose of consulting on the plan of operations to be adopted; but, before fixing on any particular plan, it was concerted that Lord Berridale should first proceed to Caithness to learn what resolution his father had come to, and to ascertain how the inhabitants of that country stood affected toward the earl. He was also to notify to Sir Robert the arrival of the ship of war on the coast. A day was, at the same time, fixed for the inhabitants of the adjoining provinces, to meet Sir Robert Gordon in Strathully, upon the borders between Sutherland and Caithness. Lord Berridale was not long in Caithness when he sent notice to Sir Robert acquainting him that his father, the earl, had resolved to stand out to the last extremity, and that he had fortified the strong castle of Acrigell, which he had supplied with men, ammunition, and provisions, and upon holding out which he placed his last and only hope. He advised Sir Robert to bring with him into Caithness as many men as he could muster, as many

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of the inhabitants stood still well affected to the earl.

The Earl of Caithness, in the meantime, justly apprehensive of the consequences which might ensue if unsuccessful in his opposition, despatched a messenger to Sir Robert Gordon, proposing that some gentlemen should be authorized to negotiate between them for the purpose of bringing matters to an amicable accommodation. He enforced his request by desiring Sir Robert to recollect that he was a nobleman, a peer of the realm, who had once been a commissioner himself in his Majesty's service; that nothing of a criminal nature could be laid to his charge; that his creditors were alone concerned; that he was the first nobleman ever proclaimed a rebel, or challenged as a traitor for debt, without any criminal cause judicially proved against him; on all which grounds he entreated Sir Robert that such offers as he might make might be again sent to the Privy Council. Sir Robert, who perceived the drift of this message, which was solely to obtain delay, returned for answer that he was exceedingly sorry that the earl had refused the benefit of his last protection for clearing away the imputations laid to his charge; that although some of the charges against him were civil offences, yet, by his disobedience in failing to appear before the lords of the council to make his answer, he had changed their nature, and made them criminal; that, besides these civil actions, he had been charged with several criminal offences, which, by absenting himself from trial, he must be held to have acknowledged; that the Privy Council had already seen how futile all his promises were; that he, Sir Robert, clearly perceived, that the earl's object in proposing a negotiation was solely to waste time and to weary out the commissioners and army by delays,

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which he, for his own part, would not submit to, because the harvest was nearly at hand, and the king's ship could not be detained upon the coast idle. Unless, therefore, the earl would at once submit himself unconditionally to the king's mercy, that he would proceed against him and his supporters immediately. The earl had been hitherto so successful in his different schemes to avoid the ends of justice, that such an answer was by no means expected, and the firmness displayed in it served greatly to shake the earl's courage.

Upon receipt of the intelligence from Lord Berridale, Sir Robert Gordon made preparations for entering Caithness without delay; and, as a precautionary measure, he took pledges from such of the tribes and families in Caithness as he suspected were favourable to the earl. Before all his forces had time to assemble, Sir Robert received notice that the war ship had arrived upon the Caithness coast, and that the earl was meditating an escape beyond seas. Unwilling to withdraw men from the adjoining provinces during the harvest season, and considering the Sutherland forces quite sufficient for his purpose, he sent couriers into Ross, Strathnaver, Assynt, and Orkney, desiring the people who had been engaged to accompany the expedition to remain at home till further notice, and, having assembled all the inhabitants of Sutherland, he picked out the most active and resolute men among them, whom he caused to be well supplied with warlike weapons and other necessaries, for the expedition. Having thus equipped his army, Sir Robert, accompanied by his brother, Sir Alexander Gordon, and the principal gentlemen of Sutherland, marched on the third day of September, 1623, from Dunrobin to Killiernan in Strathully, the place of rendezvous previously appointed. Here Sir Robert divided his forces into companies, over each

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of which he placed a commander. The following morning he passed the river of Helmsdale and arranged his army in the following order: Half a mile in advance of the main body, he placed a company of the Clan Gun, whose duty it was to search the fields as they advanced for the purpose of discovering any ambuscades which might be laid in their way, and to clear away any obstruction to the regular advance of the main body. The right wing of the army was led by John Murray of Aberscors, Hugh Gordon of Ballellon, and Adam Gordon of Kilcalmekill. The left wing was commanded by John Gordon, younger of Embo, Robert Gray of Ospisdale, and Alexander Sutherland of Kilphidder. And Sir Robert Gordon himself, his brother Sir Alexander, the laird of Pulrossie, and William Mac-Mhic-Sheumais of Killiernan, led the centre. The two wings were always kept a short distance in advance from the centre, from which they were to receive support when required. In this manner the army advanced toward Berridale, and they observed the same order of marching during all the time they remained in Caithness.

As soon as Lord Berridale heard of Sir Robert Gordon's advance, he and James Sinclair of Murkle, one of the commissioners, and some other gentlemen, went forward in haste to meet him. The parties accordingly met among the mountains above Cayen about three miles from Berridale. Sir Robert continued his march till he arrived at Brea-Na-Henglish in Berridale, where at night he encamped. Here they were informed that the ship of war, after casting anchor before Castle Sinclair, had gone from thence to Strabister road, and that the Earl of Caithness had abandoned the country, and had sailed by night into one of the Orkney islands with the intention of going from thence into Norway or Denmark. From Brea-Na-Henglish the army advanced to Lathron,

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where they encamped. Here James Sinclair of Murkle, sheriff of Caithness, Sir William Sinclair of May, the laird of Ratter, the laird of Forse, and several other gentlemen of Caithness, waited upon Sir Robert Gordon and tendered their submission and obedience to his Majesty, offering, at the same time, every assistance they could afford in forwarding the objects of the expedition. Sir Robert received them kindly, and promised to acquaint his Majesty with their submission; but he distrusted some of them, and he gave orders that none of the Caithness people should be allowed to enter his camp after sunset. At Lathron, Sir Robert was joined by about three hundred of the Caithness men, consisting of the Cadels and others who had favoured Lord Berridale. These men were commanded by James Sinclair, fiar of Murkle, and were kept always a mile or two in advance of the army till they reached Castle Sinclair.

No sooner did Sir Robert arrive before Castle Sinclair, which was a very strong place, and the principal residence of the Earl of Caithness, than it surrendered, the keys of which were delivered up to him in name of his Majesty. The army encamped before the castle two nights, during which time the officers took up their quarters within the castle, which was guarded by Sutherland men.

From Castle Sinclair Sir Robert marched to the castle of Acrigell, another strong place, which also surrendered on the first summons, and the keys of which were delivered in like manner to him. The army next marched in battle array to the castle of Kease, the last residence of the earl, which was also given up without resistance. The Countess of Caithness had previously removed to another residence not far distant, where she was visited by Sir Robert Gordon, who was her cousin german. The countess entreated him, with great earnestness, to get

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her husband again restored to favour, seeing he had made no resistance to him. Sir Robert promised to do what he could if the earl would follow his advice; but he did not expect that matters could be accommodated so speedily as she expected from the peculiar situation in which the earl then stood.

From Kease Sir Robert Gordon returned with his army to Castle Sinclair, where, according to the directions he had received from the Privy Council, he delivered the keys of all these castles and forts to Lord Berridale to be kept by him for his Majesty's use, for which he should be answerable to the lords of the council until the further pleasure of his Majesty should be known.

The army then returned to Wick in the same marching order which they had observed since their first entry into Caithness, at which place the commissioners consulted together, and framed a set of instructions to Lord Berridale for governing Caithness peaceably in time coming conformably to the laws of the kingdom, and for preventing the Earl of Caithness from again disturbing the country should he venture to return after the departure of the army. At Wick Sir Robert Gordon was joined by Sir Donald Mackay, who had collected together the choicest men of Strathnaver; but, as the object of the expedition had been obtained, Sir Donald, after receiving Sir Robert's thanks, returned the same day to Strathnaver. Sir Robert having brought this expedition to a successful termination, led back his men into Sutherland, and, after a stay of three months, went to England, carrying with him a letter from the Privy Council of Scotland to the king, giving an account of the expedition, and of its happy result.

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CHAPTER VII

DISPUTES AND DEPREDATIONS

THE troubles in Sutherland and Caithness had been scarcely allayed, when a formidable insurrection broke out on the part of the Clan Chattan against the Earl of Moray, which occasioned considerable uproar and confusion in the Highlands. The Clan Chattan had for a very long period been the faithful friends and followers of the earls of Moray, who, in consequence, had allotted them many valuable lands and possessions in recompense for their services in Pettie and Strathern. The clan, in particular, had been very active in revenging the death of James, Earl of Moray, who was killed at Dunibristle, upon the Marquis of Huntly; but his son and successor being reconciled to the family of Huntly, and needing no longer, as he thought, the aid of the clan, he dispossessed them of the lands which his predecessors had bestowed upon them. This harsh proceeding occasioned great irritation, and, upon the death of Sir Lauchlan, their chief, who died a short time before Whitsunday, 1624, they resolved either to recover the possessions of which they had been deprived, or to lay them waste. While Sir Lauchlan lived the clan were awed by his authority and prevented from such an attempt, but no such impediment now standing in their way, and as their chief, who was a mere child, could run no risk by the enterprise, they considered the present a favourable opportunity for carrying their plan into execution.

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Accordingly, a gathering of the clan to the number of about two hundred gentlemen and three hundred servants took place about Whitsunday, 1624. This party was commanded by three uncles of the late chief.[4] "They keeped the feilds (says Spalding), in their Highland weid upon foot with swords, bowes, arrowes, targets, hagbuttis, pistollis, and other Highland armour; and first began to rob and spoulzie the earle's tennents, who laboured their possessions, of their haill goods, geir, insight, plenishing, horse, nolt, sheep, corns, and cattell, and left them nothing that they could gett within their bounds; syne fell in sorning throw out Murray, Strathawick, Urquhart, Ross, Sutherland, Brae of Marr, and diverse other parts, takeing their meat and food per force wher they could not gett it willingly, frae freinds alseweill as frae their faes; yet still keeped themselves from shedeing of innocent blood. Thus they lived as outlawes, oppressing the countrie (besydes the casting of the earle's lands waist), and openly avowed they had tane this course to gett thir own possessions again, or then hold the country walking."

When this rising took place, the Earl of Moray obtained from Monteith and Balquhidder about three hundred armed men, and placing himself at their head he marched through Moray to Inverness. The earl took up his residence in the castle with the Earl of Enzie, his brother-in-law, and after the party had passed one night at Inverness, he despatched them in quest of the Clan Chattan, but whether from fear of meeting them or because they could not find them, certain it is that the Monteith and Balquhidder men returned without effecting anything after putting the earl to great expenses. The earl, therefore, sent them back to their respective countries, and went himself to Elgin, where he raised another body of men to suppress the

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Clan Chattan, but who were equally unsuccessful in finding them out, although they pretended that they had searched for them through the country.

These ineffectual attempts against the clan served to make them more bold and daring in their outrages; and as the earl now saw that no force which he could himself bring into the field was sufficient to overawe these marauders, he went to London and laid a statement of the case before King James, who, at his earnest solicitation, granted him a commission, appointing him his lieutenant in the Highlands, and giving him authority to proceed capitally against the offenders. On his return, the earl proclaimed the commission he had obtained from his Majesty, and issued letters of intercommuning against the Clan Chattan, at the head burghs of several shires, prohibiting all persons from harbouring, supplying, or entertaining them, in any manner of way, under certain severe pains and penalties. Although the Marquis of Huntly was the earl's father-in-law, he felt somewhat indignant at the appointment, as he conceived that he or his son had the best title to be appointed to the lieutenancy of the north; but he concealed his displeasure.

After the Earl of Moray had issued the notices, prohibiting all persons from communicating with, or assisting, the Clan Chattan, their kindred and friends, who had privately promised them aid, before they broke out, began to grow cold, and declined to assist them, as they were apprehensive for their estates, many of them being wealthy. The earl, perceiving this, opened a communication with some of the principal persons of the clan, to induce them to submit to his authority, who, seeing no hopes of making any longer an effectual resistance, readily acquiesced, and, by the intercession of friends, made their peace with the earl, on condition

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that they should inform him of the names of such persons as had given them protection, after the publication of his letters of interdiction. Having thus quelled this formidable insurrection, without bloodshed, the earl, by virtue of his commission, held justice courts at Elgin, where "some slight louns, followers of the Clan Chattan," were tried and executed, but all the principals concerned were pardoned. The court was formed in the earl's own name, and in the names of the laird of Innes, the laird of Brodie, Samuel Falconer of Knockorth, and John Hay, commissary of Moray, his depute, and before whom were summoned all such persons as had held any communication with the clan, or harboured or supplied them, every one of whom, it would appear, attended, to avoid the penalty of contumacy, or being put to the horn, a proceeding by which the person refusing to attend was declared a rebel to the king, and his property forfeited for his Majesty's use.

As the account which Spalding gives of the appearance of the accused, and of the base conduct of the principal men of the Clan Chattan, in informing against their friends and benefactors, is both curious and graphic, it is here inserted: "Then presently was brought in befor the barr; and in the honest men's faces, the Clan Chattan who had gotten supply, verified what they had gotten, and the honest men confounded and dasht, knew not what to answer, was forced to come in the earle's will, whilk was not for their weill: others compeared and willingly confessed, trusting to gett more favour at the earle's hands, but they came little speid: and lastly, some stood out and denyed all, who was reserved to the tryall of an assyse. The principall malefactors stood up in judgment, and declared what they had gotten, whether meat, money, cloathing, gun, ball,

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powder, lead, sword, dirk, and the like commodities, and alse instructed the assyse in ilk particular, what they had gotten frae the persons pannalled; an uncouth form of probation, wher the principall malefactor proves against the receiptor for his own pardon, and honest men, perhaps neither of the Clan Chattan's kyne nor blood, punished for their good will, ignorant of the laws, and rather receipting them more for their evil nor their good. Nevertheless thir innocent men, under collour of justice, part and part as they came in, were soundly fyned in great soumes as their estates might bear, and some above their estate was fyned, and every one warded within the tolbuith of Elgine, while the least myte was payed of such as was persued in anno 1624."

Some idea of the iniquity of the administration of the laws at this time may be formed, when it is considered that the enormous fines imposed in the present instance went into the pockets of the chief judge, the Earl of Moray himself, as similar mulcts had previously gone into those of the Earl of Argyle, in his crusade against the unfortunate Clan Gregor! This legal robbery, however, does not appear to have enriched the houses of Argyle and Moray, for Sir Robert Gordon observes, that "these fynes did not much advantage either of these two earles." The Earl of Moray, no doubt, thinking such a mode of raising money an easy and profitable speculation, afterward obtained an enlargement of his commission from Charles the First, not only against the Clan Chattan, but also against all other offenders within several adjacent shires; but the commission was afterward annulled by his Majesty, not so much on account of the abuses and injustice which might have been perpetrated under it, but because, as Sir Robert Gordon observes, "it grieved divers of his Majesty's best affected subjects, and chieflie the

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Marquis of Huntlie, unto whose predicessors onlie the office of livetennendrie in the north of Scotland had bein granted by former kings, for these many ages."

There seems reason, however, for supposing that the recall of the commission was hastened by complaints to the king, on the part of the oppressed; for the earl had no sooner obtained its renewal, than he held a court against the burgh of Inverness, John Grant of Glenmoriston, and others who had refused to acknowledge their connection with the Clan Chattan, or to pay him the heavy fines which he had imposed upon them. The town of Inverness endeavoured to get quit of the earl's extortions, on the ground that the inhabitants were innocent of the crimes laid to their charge; but the earl frustrated their application to the Privy Council. The provost, Duncan Forbes, was then sent to the king, and Grant of Glenmoriston took a journey to London, at the same time, on his own account; but their endeavours with the king proved ineffectual, and they had no alternative but to submit to the earl's exactions.[5]

The quarrel between the laird of Duffus and John Gordon younger of Embo, which had lain dormant for some time burst forth again, in the year 1625, and proved nearly fatal to both parties. Gordon had long watched an opportunity for revenging the wrong which he conceived had been done to him by the laird of Duffus and his brother, James, but he could never fall in with either of them, as they remained in Moray, and, when they appeared in Sutherland they were always accompanied by some friends, so that Gordon was prevented from attacking them. Frequent disappointments in this way only whetted his appetite for revenge; and meeting, when on horseback, one day, between Sidderay and Skibo, with John Sutherland of Clyne, third brother of the laird of Duffus, who was also

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on horseback, he determined to make the laird of Clyne suffer for the delinquencies of his elder brother. Raising, therefore, a cudgel which he held in his hand, he inflicted several blows upon John Sutherland, who, as soon as he recovered himself from the surprise and confusion into which such an unexpected attack had thrown him, drew his sword. Gordon, in his turn, unsheathed his, and a warm combat ensued, between the parties and two friends who accompanied them. After they had fought awhile, Gordon wounded Sutherland in the head and in one of his hands, and otherwise injured him, but he spared his life, although completely in his power.

The laird of Duffus, and all his friends and retainers, looked upon this attack as highly contemptuous, not so much on account of the personal injury which John Sutherland had sustained, but of the cudgelling which he had received. Duffus immediately cited John Gordon to appear before the Privy Council, to answer for this breach of the peace, and, at the same time, summoned before the council some of the Earl of Sutherland's friends and dependents, for an alleged conspiracy against himself and his friends. Duffus, with his two brothers and Gordon, came to Edinburgh on the day appointed, and, the parties being heard before the council, Gordon was declared guilty of a riot, and was thereupon committed to prison. This result gave great satisfaction to Duffus and his brothers, who now calculated on nothing less than the utter ruin of Gordon; as they had, by means of Sir Donald Mackay, obtained a Strathnaver man, named William Mack-Allen (one of the Siol Thomais), who had been a servant of Gordon's, to become a witness against him, and to prove everything that Duffus was pleased to allege against Gordon.

In this situation of matters, Sir Robert Gordon re-

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turned from London to Edinburgh, where he found Duffus in high spirits, exulting at his success, and young Embo in prison. Sir Robert applied to Duffus, hoping to bring about a reconciliation by the intervention of friends, which he thought would be readily acceded to by Duffus, who was the original cause of the discord; and he trusted, at all events, that Duffus would stop his proceedings against the Earl of Sutherland's friends and followers. But Duffus refused to hear of any arrangement; and the more reasonable the conditions were, which Sir Robert proposed, the more unreasonable and obstinate did he become; his object being to get payment of great sums of money awarded to him against Gordon by the lords, in satisfaction for the wrong done his brother.

Disappointed in his endeavours to bring about a reconciliation, Sir Robert applied himself, with all the diligence in his power, to get the fine imposed upon Gordon mitigated, and finally succeeded, by the assistance of the Earl of Enzie, who was then at Edinburgh, in getting the prosecution against the Earl of Sutherland's friends quashed, in obtaining the liberation of John Gordon, and in getting his fine mitigated to £100 Scots, payable to the king only; reserving, however, civil action to John Sutherland of Clyne against Gordon, before the lords of session.

Sir Donald Mackay, always restless, and desirous of gratifying his enmity at the house of Sutherland, endeavoured to embroil it with the laird of Duffus in the following way. Having formed a resolution to leave the kingdom, Sir Donald applied for, and obtained, a license from the king to raise a regiment in the north, to assist Count Mansfield in his campaign in Germany. He, accordingly, collected, in a few months, about three thousand men from different parts of Scotland, the

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greater part of whom he embarked at Cromarty in the month of October, 1626; but, on account of bad health, he was obliged to delay his own departure till the following year, when he joined the King of Sweden with his regiment, in consequence of a peace having been concluded between the King of Denmark and the Emperor of Germany.[6] Among others whom Mackay had engaged to accompany him to Germany, was a person named Angus Roy Gun, against whom, a short time previously to his enlistment, Mackay and his brother, John Mackay of Dirlet, had obtained a commission from the lords of the Privy Council for the purpose of apprehending him and bringing him before the council for some supposed crimes. Mackay could have easily apprehended Angus Roy Gun on different occasions, but having become one of his regiment, he allowed the commission, as far as he was concerned, to remain a dead letter.

Sometime after his enlistment, Angus Roy Gun made a journey into Sutherland, a circumstance which afforded Mackay an opportunity of putting into execution the scheme he had formed, and which showed that he was no mean adept in the arts of cunning and dissimulation. His plan was this: He wrote, in the first place, private letters to the laird of Duffus, and to his brother, John Sutherland of Clyne, to apprehend Angus Roy Gun under the commission he had obtained; and at the same time, sent the commission itself to the laird of Duffus as his authority for so doing. He next wrote a letter to Alexander Gordon, the Earl of Sutherland's uncle, who, in the absence of his brother, Sir Robert, governed Sutherland, entreating him, as Angus Roy Gun was then in Sutherland, to send him to him to Cromarty, as he was his hired soldier. Ignorant of Mackay's design, and desirous of serving him, Sir

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Alexander sent two of his men to bring Gun to Sir Alexander; but on their return they were met by John Sutherland of Clyne and a party of sixteen men who seized Gun; and to prevent a rescue, the laird of Duffus sent his brother, James Sutherland, Alexander Murray, heir-apparent of Aberscors, and William Neill-son, chief of the Sliochd-Iain-Abaraich, with three hundred men to protect his brother, John. And as he anticipated an attack from Sir Alexander Gordon, he sent messengers to his supporters in Ross, Strathnaver, Caithness, and other places for assistance.

When Sir Alexander Gordon heard of the assembling of such a body of the Earl of Sutherland's vassals without his knowledge, he made inquiry to ascertain the cause of such a proceeding; and being informed of Gun's capture, he collected eighteen men who were near at hand, and hastened with them from Dunrobin toward Clyne. On arriving at the bridge of Broray, he found James Sutherland, and his brother, John, and their whole party drawn up in battle array at the east end of the bridge. He, thereupon, sent a person to the Sutherlands to know the cause of such an assemblage, and the reason why they had taken Gun from his servants. The bearer of the message was also instructed to say, that if they pretended to act under a commission, he, Sir Alexander, would, on their producing it, not only desist from all proceedings against them, but would assist them in fulfilling the commission; but, that if they held no such commission, he would not allow any man to be apprehended in Sutherland, and particularly by the Earl of Sutherland's vassals, without his permission, — and that failing production of any commission, he would insist upon their immediately delivering up Gun into his hands. As the Sutherlands refused to exhibit their authority, Sir Alexander made

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demonstrations for passing the bridge, but he was met by a shower of shot and arrows which wounded two of his men. After exchanging shots for some time, Sir Alexander was joined by a considerable body of his countrymen, by whose aid, notwithstanding the resistance he met with, he was enabled to cross the bridge. The Sutherlands were forced to retreat, and as they saw no chance of opposing, with success, the power of the house of Sutherland, they, after some hours' consultation, delivered up Angus Roy Gun to Sir Alexander Sutherland, who sent him immediately to Mackay then at Cromarty.

As such an example of insubordination among the Earl of Sutherland's vassals might, if overlooked, lead others to follow a similar course, Sir Alexander caused the laird of Duffus and his brother of Clyne, with their accomplices, to be cited to appear at Edinburgh on the sixteenth day of November following, to answer before the Privy Council for their misdemeanours. The laird of Duffus, however, died in the month of October, but the laird of Clyne appeared at Edinburgh at the time appointed, and produced before the Privy Council the letter he had received from Mackay as his authority for acting as he had done. Sir Alexander Gordon also produced the letter sent to him by Sir Donald, who was thereby convicted of having been the intentional originator of the difference; but as the lords of the council thought that the laird of Clyne had exceeded the bounds of his commission, he was imprisoned in the jail of Edinburgh, wherein he was ordered to remain until he should give satisfaction to the other party, and present some of his men who had failed to appear though summoned. By the mediation, however, of James Sutherland, tutor of Duffus, a reconciliation was effected between Sir Robert and Sir Alexander Gordon, and the laird of

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Clyne, who was, in consequence, soon thereafter liberated from prison.

The year 1628 was distinguished by the breaking out of an old and deadly feud among the Grants, which had been transmitted from father to son for several generations, in consequence of the murder of John Grant of Balindalloch, about the middle of the sixteenth century, by John Roy Grant of Carron, the natural son of John Grant of Glenmoriston, at the instigation of the laird of Grant, the chief of the tribe, who had conceived a grudge against his kinsman. Some years before the period first mentioned, James Grant, one of the Carron family, happening to be at a fair in the town of Elgin, observed one of the Grants of the Balindalloch family eagerly pursuing his brother, Thomas Grant, whom he knocked down in the street and wounded openly before his eyes. The assailant was, in his turn, attacked by James Grant, who killed him upon the spot and thereupon decamped. Balindalloch then cited James Grant to stand trial for the slaughter of his kinsman, but, as he did not appear on the day appointed, he was outlawed. The laird of Grant made many attempts to reconcile the parties, but in vain, as Balindalloch was obstinate and would listen to no proposals. An offer was made that James Grant should go into banishment, and that compensation should be made in money and goods according to the usual practice, but nothing less than the blood of James Grant would satisfy Balindalloch.

This resolution on the part of Balindalloch almost drove James Grant to despair, and seeing his life every moment in jeopardy, and deprived of any hope of effecting a compromise, he put himself at the head of a party of brigands, whom he collected from all parts of the Highlands. These freebooters made do distinction be-

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Loch Voel

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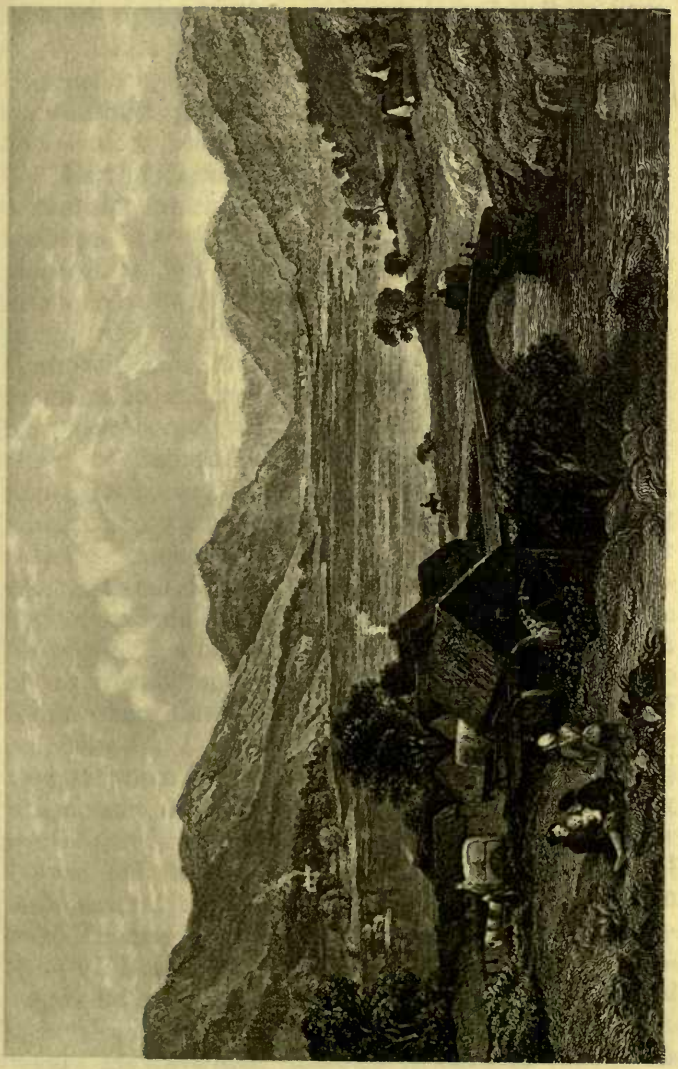

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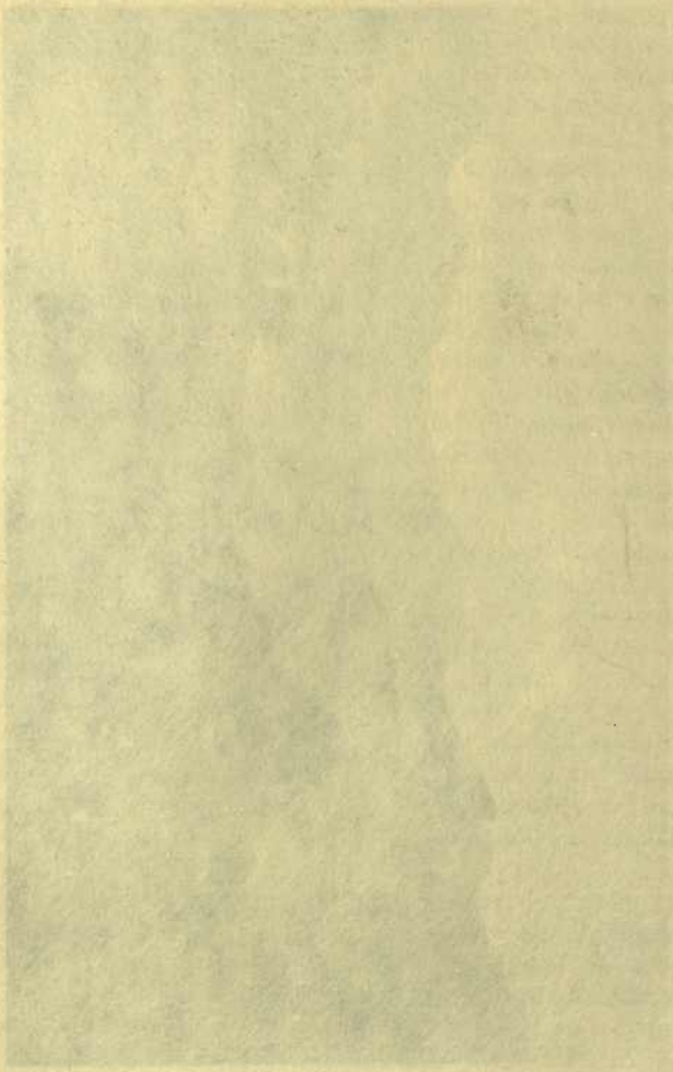

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tween friends and foes, but attacked all persons of whatever description, and wasted and despoiled their property. James Grant of Dalnebo, one of the family of Balindalloch, fell a victim to their fury, and many of the kinsmen of that family suffered greatly from the depredations committed by Grant and his associates. The Earl of Moray, under the renewed and extended commission which he had obtained from King Charles, made various attempts to put an end to these lawless proceedings, but to no purpose; the failure of these attempts served only to harden James Grant and his party, who continued their depredations. As John Grant of Carron, nephew of James Grant, was supposed to maintain and assist his uncle secretly, a suspicion for which there seems to have been no foundation, John Grant of Balindalloch sought for an opportunity of revenging himself upon Carron, who was a promising young man. Carron having one day left his house along with one Alexander Grant and seven or eight other persons to cut down some timber in the woods of Abernethie, Balindalloch, thinking the occasion favourable for putting his design into execution, collected sixteen of his friends, and having armed them, went to the forest where Carron was, and, under the pretence of searching for James Grant and some of his associates against whom he had a commission, attacked Carron, who fought manfully in defence of his life, but being overpowered, he was killed by Balindalloch. Before Carron fell, however, he and Alexander Grant had slain several of Balindalloch's friends, among whom were Thomas Grant of Davey and Lauchlan Mackintosh of Rockinoyr. Alexander Grant afterward annoyed Balindalloch and killed several of his men, and assisted James Grant to lay waste Balindalloch's lands. "Give me leave heir" (says Sir R. Gordon) "to remark

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the providence and secrait judgement of the Almightie God, who now hath mett Carron with the same measure that his forefather, John Roy Grant of Carron, did serve the ancestour of Ballendallogh; for upon the same day of the moneth that John Roy Grant did kill the great grandfather of Ballendalloch (being the eleventh day of September), the verie same day of this month wes Carron slain by this John Grant of Ballendallogh many yeirs thereafter. And, besides, as that John Roy Grant of Carron was left-handed, so is this John Grant of Ballendallogh left-handed also; and moreover, it is to be observed that Ballendallogh, at the killing of this Carron, had upon him the same coat-of-armour, or maillie-coat, which John Roy Grant had upon him at the slaughter of the great-grandfather of this Ballendallogh, which maillie-coat Ballendallogh had, a little befor this tyme, taken from James Grant, in a skirmish that passed betwixt them. Thus wee doe sie that the judgements of God are inscrutable, and that, in his own tyme, he punisheth blood by blood."

The Earl of Moray when he heard of this occurrence, instead of taking measures against Balindalloch for this outrage against the laws, which he was fully entitled to do by virtue of the commission he held, took part with Balindalloch against the friends of Carron. He not only represented Balindalloch's case favourably at court, but also obtained an indemnity for him for some years, that he might not be molested. The countenance thus given by his Majesty's lieutenant to the murderer of their kinsmen exasperated James and Alexander Grant in the highest degree against Balindalloch and his suporters, whom they continually annoyed with their incursions, laying waste their lands and possessions, and cutting off their people. To such an extent was this system of lawless warfare carried,

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that Balindalloch was forced to flee from the north of Scotland, and to live for the most part in Edinburgh to avoid the dangers with which he was surrounded. But James Grant's desperate career was checked by a party of the Clan Chattan, who unexpectedly attacked him at Auchnachyle in Strathdoun, under cloud of night, in the latter end of the month of December, 1630, when he was taken prisoner after receiving eleven wounds, and after four of his party were killed. He was sent by his captors to Edinburgh for trial before the lords of the council, and was imprisoned in the castle of Edinburgh, from which he escaped in the manner to be noticed in the sequel.

About the time that James Grant was desolating the district of the Highlands, to which his operations were confined, another part of the country was convulsed by a dispute which occurred between James Crichton of Frendret, or Frendraught, and William Gordon of Rothiemay, which ended in tragical consequences. These two gentlemen were near neighbours, and their lands lay adjacent to each other. Part of Gordon's lands, which marched with those of Crichton, were purchased by the latter; but a dispute having occurred about the right to the salmon fishings belonging to these lands, an irreconcilable difference arose between them, which no interference of friends could reconcile, although the matter in dispute was of little moment. The parties having had recourse to the law to settle their respective claims, Crichton prevailed, and succeeded in getting Gordon denounced rebel. He had previously treated Rothiemay very harshly, who, stung by the severity of his opponent, and by the victory he had obtained over him, would listen to no proposals of peace, nor follow the advice of his best friends. Determined to set the law at defiance, he collected a number

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of loose and disorderly characters, and annoyed Frendraught, who, in consequence, applied for, and obtained a commission from the Privy Council for apprehending Rothiemay and his associates. In the execution of this task, he was assisted by Sir George Ogilvy of Banff, George Gordon, brother-german of Sir James Gordon, of Lesmoir, and the uncle of Frendraught, James Leslie, second son of Leslie of Pitcaple, John Meldrum of Reidhill, and others. Accompanied by these gentlemen, Crichton left his house of Frendraught on the first day of January, 1630, for the house of Rothiemay, with a resolution either to apprehend Gordon, his antagonist, or to set him at defiance by affronting him. He was incited the more to follow this course, as young Rothiemay, at the head of a party, had come a short time before to the very doors of Frendraught, and had braved him to his face. When Rothiemay heard of the advance of Frendraught, he left his house, accompanied by his eldest son, John Gordon, and about eight men on horseback armed with guns and lances, and a party of men on foot with muskets, and crossing the river Deveron, he went forward to meet Frendraught and his party. A sharp conflict immediately took place, in which Rothiemay's horse was killed under him, who being unprovided with another, fought manfully, for some time, on foot, until the whole of his party with the exception of his son, were forced to retire. The son, notwithstanding, continued to support his father against fearful odds, but was, at last, obliged to save himself by flight, leaving his father lying on the field covered with wounds, and supposed to be dead. He, however, was found still alive after the conflict was over, and being carried home to his house, died within three days thereafter. George Gordon, brother of Gordon of Lesmoir, received a shot in the thigh, and died in consequence, ten days after

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the skirmish. These were the only deaths which occurred, although several of the combatants, on both sides, were wounded. John Meldrum, who fought on Frendraught's side, was the only person severely wounded.

The Marquis of Huntly was highly displeased at Frendraught, for having, in such a trifling matter, proceeded to extremities against his kinsman, a chief baron of his surname, whose life had been thus sacrificed in a petty quarrel. The displeasure of the marquis was still further heightened, when he was informed that Frendraught had joined the Earl of Moray, and had craved his protection and assistance; but the marquis was obliged to repress his indignation. John Gordon of Rothiemay, eldest son of the deceased laird, resolved to avenge the death of his father, and having collected a party of men, he associated himself with James Grant and other freebooters, for the purpose of laying waste Frendraught's lands, and oppressing him in every possible way. Frendraught, who was in the south of Scotland when this combination against him was formed, no sooner heard of it than he posted to England, and, having laid a statement of the case before the king, his Majesty remitted the matter to the Privy Council of Scotland, desiring them to use their best endeavours for settling the peace of the northern parts of the kingdom. A commission was thereupon granted by the lords of the council to Frendraught and others, for the purpose of apprehending John Gordon and his associates; but, as the commissioners were not able to execute the task imposed upon them, the lords of the council sent Sir Robert Gordon, tutor of Sutherland, who had just returned from England, and Sir William Seaton of Killesmuir to the north, with a new commission against the rebels, and, as it seemed to be entirely out of the

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power of the Earl of Moray to quell the disturbances in the north, they gave the two commissioners particular instructions to attempt, with the aid of the Marquis of Huntly, to get matters settled amicably, and the opposing parties reconciled. The lords of the council, at the same time, wrote a letter to the Marquis of Huntly to the same effect. Sir Robert Gordon and Sir William Seaton accordingly left Edinburgh on their way north, in the beginning of May, 1630. The latter stopped at Aberdeen for the purpose of consulting with some gentlemen of that shire, as to the best mode of proceeding against the rebels; and the former went to Strathbogie to advise with the Marquis of Huntly.

On Sir Robert's arrival at Strathbogie, he found that the marquis had gone to Aberdeen to attend the funeral of the laird of Drum. By a singular coincidence, James Grant and Alexander Grant descended the very day of Sir Robert's arrival at Strathbogie from the mountains, at the head of a party of two hundred Highlanders well armed, with a resolution to burn and lay waste Frendraught's lands. As soon as Sir Robert became aware of this circumstance, he went in great haste to Rothiemay-house, where he found John Gordon and his associates in arms ready to set out to join the Grants. By persuasion and entreaties, Sir Robert, assisted by his nephew, the Earl of Sutherland, and his brother, Sir Alexander Gordon, who were then at Frendraught, on a visit to the lady of that place, who was a sister of the earl, prevailed not only upon John Gordon and his friends to desist, but also upon James Grant and his companions-in-arms, to disperse.

On the return of the Marquis of Huntly to Strathbogie, Rothiemay and Frendraught were both induced to meet them in presence of the marquis, Sir Robert Gordon and Sir William Seaton, who, after much

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entreaty, prevailed upon them to reconcile their differences, and submit all matters in dispute to their arbitrament. A decree arbitral was accordingly pronounced, by which the arbiters adjudged that the laird of Rothiemay, and the children of George Gordon, should mutually remit their father's slaughter, and, in satisfaction thereof, they decerned that the laird of Frendraught should pay a certain sum of money to the laird of Rothiemay, for relief of the debts which he contracted during the disturbances between the two families,[7] and that he should pay some money to the children of George Gordon. Frendraught fulfilled these conditions most willingly, and the parties shook hands together in the orchard of Strathbogie, in token of a hearty and sincere reconciliation.

The laird of Frendraught had scarcely reconciled himself with Rothiemay, when he got into another dispute with the laird of Pitcaple, the occasion of which was as follows: John Meldrum of Reidhill had assisted Frendraught in his quarrel with old Rothiemay, and had received a wound in the skirmish, in which the latter lost his life, for which injury Frendraught had allowed him some compensation; but, conceiving that his services had not been fairly requited, he began to abuse Frendraught, and threatened to compel him to give him a greater recompense than he had yet received. As Frendraught refused to comply with his demands, Meldrum entered the park of Frendraught privately in the night-time, and carried away two horses belonging to his pretended debtor. Frendraught, thereupon, prosecuted Meldrum for theft, but he declined to appear in court, and was consequently declared rebel. Frendraught then obtained a commission, from the lords of the Privy Council, to apprehend Meldrum, who took refuge with John Leslie of Pitcaple, whose sister he had

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married. Under the commission which he had procured, Frendraught went in quest of Meldrum, on the twenty-seventh day of September, 1630. He proceeded to Pitcaple's lands, on which he knew Meldrum then lived, where he met James Leslie, second son of the laird of Pitcaple, who had been with him at the skirmish of Rothiemay. Leslie then began to expostulate with him in behalf of Meldrum, his brother-in-law, who, on account of the aid he had given him in his dispute with Rothiemay, took Leslie's remonstrances in good part; but Robert Crichton of Couland, a kinsman of Frendraught, grew so warm at Leslie's freedom, that from high words they proceeded to blows. Couland then drawing a pistol from his belt, shot at and wounded Leslie in the arm, who was, thereupon, carried home apparently in a dying state.

This affair was the signal for a confederacy among the Leslies, the greater part of whom took up arms against Frendraught, who, a few days after the occurrence, viz., on the fifth of October, first went to the Marquis of Huntly, and afterward to the Earl of Moray, to express the regret he felt at what had taken place, and to beg their kindly interference to bring matters to an amicable accommodation. The Earl of Moray, for some reason or other, declined to interfere; but the marquis undertook to mediate between the parties. Accordingly, he sent for the laird of Pitcaple to come to the Bog of Gight to confer with him; but, before setting out, he mounted and equipped about thirty horsemen, in consequence of information he had received that Frendraught was at the Bog. At the meeting with the marquis, Pitcaple complained heavily of the injury his son had sustained, and avowed, rather rashly, that he would revenge himself before he returned home, and that, at all events, he would listen to no proposals for

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a reconciliation till it should be ascertained whether his son would survive the wound he had received. The marquis insisted that Frendraught had done him no wrong, and endeavoured to dissuade him from putting his threat into execution; but Pitcaple was so displeased at the marquis for thus expressing himself, that he suddenly mounted his horse and set off, leaving Frendraught behind him. The marquis, afraid of the consequences, detained Frendraught two days with him in the Bog of Gight, and, hearing that the Leslies had assembled, and lay in wait for Frendraught, watching his return home, the marquis sent his son John, Viscount of Aboyne, and the laird of Rothiemay along with him, to protect and defend him if necessary. They arrived at Frendraught without interruption, and being solicited to remain all night, they yielded, and, after partaking of a hearty supper, went to bed in the apartments provided for them.

The sleeping apartment of the viscount was in the old tower of Frendraught, leading off from the hall. Immediately below this apartment was a vault, in the bottom of which was a round hole of considerable depth. Robert Gordon, a servant of the viscount, and his page, English Will, as he was called, also slept in the same chamber. The laird of Rothiemay, with some servants, were put into an upper chamber immediately above that in which the viscount slept; and in another apartment, directly over the latter, were laid George Chalmer of Noth, Captain Rollock, one of Frendraught's party, and George Gordon, another of the viscount's servants. About midnight the whole of the tower almost instantaneously took fire, and so suddenly and furiously did the flames consume the edifice, that the viscount, the laird of Rothiemay, English Will, Colonel Ivat, one of Aboyne's friends, and two other persons, perished in the

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flames. Robert Gordon, called Sutherland Gordon, from having been born in that country, who lay in the viscount's chamber, escaped from the flames, as did George Chalmer and Captain Rollock, who were in the third floor; and it is said that Lord Aboyne might have saved himself also, had he not, instead of going out of doors, which he refused to do, run suddenly up-stairs to Rothiemay's chamber for the purpose of awakening him. While so engaged, the staircase and ceiling of Rothiemay's apartment hastily took fire, and, being prevented from descending by the flames, which filled the staircase, they ran from window to window of the apartment piteously and unavailingly exclaiming for help.

The news of this calamitous event spread speedily throughout the kingdom, and the fate of the unfortunate sufferers was deeply deplored. Many conjectures were formed as to the cause of the conflagration. Some persons laid the blame on Frendraught without the least reason; for, besides the improbability of the thing, Frendraught himself was a considerable loser, having lost not only a large quantity of silver plate and coin, but also the title-deeds of his property and other necessary papers, which were all consumed. Others ascribed the fire to some accidental cause; but the greater number suspected the Leslies and their adherents, who were then so enraged at Frendraught that they threatened to burn the house of Frendraught, and had even entered into a negotiation to that effect with James Grant, the rebel, who was Pitcaple's cousin-german, for his assistance, as was proved before the lords of the Privy Council, against John Meldrum and Alexander Leslie, Pitcaple's brother, by two of James Grant's men, who were apprehended at Inverness and sent to the lords of the council, by Sir Robert Gordon, sheriff of Sutherland.

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The Marquis of Huntly, who suspected Frendraught to be the author of the fire, afterward went to Edinburgh and laid a statement of the case before the Privy Council, who, thereupon, issued a commission to the bishops of Aberdeen and Moray, Lord Carnegie, and Crowner Bruce, to investigate the circumstances which led to the catastrophe. The commissioners accordingly went to Frendraught on the thirteenth day of April, 1631, where they were met by the Lords Gordon, Ogilvie, and Deskford, and several barons and gentlemen, along with whom they examined the burned tower and vaults below, with the adjoining premises, to ascertain, if possible, how the fire had originated. After a minute inspection, they came to the deliberate opinion, which they communicated in writing to the council, that the fire could not have been accidental, and that it must either have been occasioned by some engine from without, which was highly improbable, or raised intentionally within the vaults or chambers of the tower.

During James Grant's confinement within the castle of Edinburgh the north was comparatively quiet. On the night of the fifteenth of October, 1632, he, however, effected his escape from the castle by descending on the west side by means of ropes furnished to him by his wife or son, and fled to Ireland. Proclamations were immediately posted throughout the whole kingdom, offering large sums for his apprehension either dead or alive, but to no purpose. His wife was taken into custody by order of the Marquis of Huntly, while drinking in his gardener's house in the Bog, on suspicion of having aided her husband in effecting his escape; and by desire of the Privy Council, who were made acquainted by the marquis of her arrest, she was sent to Aberdeen to be there tried by the bishops of Aberdeen and Brechin, as the council had appointed. After

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undergoing an examination, in which she admitted nothing which could in the least degree criminate her, she was set at liberty.

James Grant did not remain long in Ireland, and returned again to the north, where he concealed himself for some time, only occasionally skulking here and there in such a private manner, that his enemies were not aware of his presence. By degrees he grew bolder, and at last appeared openly in Strathdoun and on Speyside. His wife, who was far advanced in pregnancy, had taken a small house in Carron, belonging to the heirs of her husband's nephew, in which she meant to reside till her accouchement, and in which she was occasionally visited by her husband. Balindalloch, hearing of this, hired a person named Patrick Macgregor, an outlaw, to apprehend James Grant. This employment was considered by Macgregor and his party a piece of acceptable service, as they expected, in the event of Grant's apprehension, to obtain pardon for their offences from the lords of the council. Macgregor, therefore, at the head of a party of men, lay in wait for James Grant near Carron, and, on observing him enter his wife's house along with his bastard son and another man, at night, they immediately surrounded the house and attempted to force an entry. Grant, perceiving the danger he was in, acted with great coolness and determination. Having fastened the door as firmly as he could, he and his two companions went to two windows, from which they discharged a volley of arrows upon their assailants, who all shrunk back, and none would venture near the door, except Macgregor himself, who came boldly forward and endeavoured to force it; but he paid dearly for his rashness, for Grant, immediately laying hold of a musket, shot him through both his thighs, when he instantly fell to the ground and soon thereafter expired.

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In the confusion which this occurrence occasioned among Macgregor's party, Grant and his two associates escaped.

Shortly after this event, James Grant apprehended his cousin, John Grant of Balindalloch, by the following stratagem: On the night of Sunday, the seventeenth of December, 1630, while Balindalloch was at supper in his own house, Elspet Innes, wife of James Grant, entered the house, and whispered a few words in Balindalloch's ear. After supper was over he rose from table, and, putting his wife's plaid about him, he left the house with his sword and target in his hand, and forbade any person to follow him. His wife, however, went out after him, along with James Grant's wife, to the mill of Petchass, the place of assignation. On arriving there, James Grant, on a watchword being given by his wife, came out of the mill, shook hands with Balindalloch, and saluted his wife in a friendly manner; but this greeting was scarcely over, when a party of twelve men, whom James Grant had concealed, rushed out of the mill, and, seizing Balindalloch and his wife, carried them to Culquholy, three miles from Petchass. After remaining a short time there, they released Balindalloch's wife, who returned home with a sorrowful heart; and after muffling Balindalloch's face and chaining him to one of the party, they crossed and recrossed different rivulets, that he might not have any idea of the place of their retreat, or whither they were conducting him. At last they arrived at Thomas Grant's house at Dandeis, about three miles from Elgin, on the high road between that town and the Spey, where they took up their lodging and unloosed the shackles from Balindalloch's arm. James Grant ordered him to be watched strictly, whether sleeping or waking, by two strong men on each side of him. Balindalloch com-

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plained of foul play, but James Grant excused himself for acting as he had done for two reasons; first, because Balindalloch had failed to perform a promise he had made to obtain a remission for him before the preceding Lammas; and, secondly, that he had entered into a treaty with the Clan Gregor to deprive him of his life.

Balindalloch was kept in durance vile for twenty days in a kiln near Thomas Grant's house, suffering the greatest privations, without fire, light, or bedclothes, in the dead of winter, and without knowing where he was. He was closely watched night and day by Leonard Leslie, son-in-law of Robert Grant, brother of James Grant, and a strong athletic man, named M'Grimmon, who would not allow him to leave the kiln for a moment even to perform the necessities of nature. On Christmas, James Grant, and his party, having gone on some excursion, leaving Leslie and M'Grimmon behind them, Balindalloch, worn out by fatigue, and almost perishing from cold and hunger, addressed Leslie in a low tone of voice, lamenting his miserable situation, and imploring him to aid him in effecting his escape, and promising, in the event of success, to reward him handsomely. Leslie, tempted by the offer, acceded to Balindalloch's request, and made him acquainted with the place of his confinement. It was then arranged that Balindalloch, under the pretence of stretching his arms, should disengage the arm which Leslie held, and that having so disentangled that arm, he should, by another attempt, get his other arm out of M'Grimmon's grasp. The morning of Sunday, the twenty-eighth day of December, was fixed upon for putting the stratagem into execution. The plan succeeded, and as soon as Balindalloch found his arms at liberty, he suddenly sprung to his feet and made for the door of the kiln. Leslie

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immediately followed him, pretending to catch him, and as M'Grimmon was hard upon his heels, Leslie purposely stumbled in his way and brought M'Grimmon down to the ground. This stratagem enabled Balindalloch to gain ahead of his pursuers, and although M'Grimmon sounded the alarm and the pursuit was continued by Robert Grant and a party of James Grant's followers, Balindalloch succeeded in reaching the village of Urquhart in safety, accompanied by Leonard Leslie.

Sometime after his escape, Balindalloch applied for and obtained a warrant for the apprehension of Thomas Grant, and others, for harbouring James Grant. Thomas Grant, and some of his accomplices, were accordingly seized and sent to Edinburgh, where they were tried and convicted. Grant was hanged, and the others were banished from Scotland for life.

After Balindalloch's escape, James Grant kept remarkably quiet, as many persons lay in wait for him; but hearing that Thomas Grant, brother of Patrick Grant of Culquhoche, and a friend of Balindalloch, had received a sum of money from the Earl of Moray, as an encouragement to seek out and slay James Grant, the latter resolved to murder Thomas Grant and thus relieve himself of one enemy at least. He therefore went to Thomas's house, but not finding him at home, he killed sixteen of his cattle; and afterward learning that Thomas Grant was sleeping at the house of a friend hard by, he entered that house and found Thomas Grant, and a bastard brother of his, both in bed. Having forced them out of bed, he took them outside of the house and put them immediately to death. A few days after the commission of this crime, Grant and four of his associates went to the lands of Strathbogie, and entered the house of the common executioner, craving some food, without being aware of the profession

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of the host whose hospitality they solicited. The executioner, disliking the appearance of Grant and his companions, went to James Gordon, the bailie of Strathbogie, and informed him that there were some suspicious looking persons in his house. Judging that these could be none other but Grant and his comrades, Gordon immediately collected some well-armed horsemen and foot, and surrounded the house in which Grant was; but he successfully resisted all their attempts to enter the house, and killed a servant of the Marquis of Huntly, named Adam Rhind, and another of the name of Anderson. After keeping them at bay for a considerable time, Grant and his brother, Robert, effected their escape from the house, but a bastard son of James Grant, John Forbes, an intimate associate, and another person, were taken prisoners and carried to Edinburgh, where they were executed, along with a notorious thief, named Gille-Roy-MacGregor. This occurrence took place in the year 1636. The laird of Grant had, during the previous year, been ordained by the council to apprehend James Grant, or to make him leave the kingdom; and they had obliged him to find caution and surety, in terms of the general bond appointed by law to be taken from all the heads of clans, and from all governors of provinces in the kingdom, but chiefly in the west and north of Scotland; but the laird could neither perform the one nor the other.

Amongst the freebooters who about this period infested Lochaber was a party of the Clan Lauchlan, who carried on a system of depredation and plunder which extended even to the Lowlands. In the year 1633, Alexander Gordon of Dunkyntie, nephew of the Marquis of Huntly, and his eldest son, while hunting with a small party, at the head of Strathdoun, fell in with some of these outlaws driving away some cattle

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which they had stolen. They endeavoured to rescue the prey, but Dunkyntie and his son were both killed in the attempt. Some of the clan were, however, afterward apprehended, and suffered the last penalty of the law for this aggression. The clan continued their spoliations notwithstanding, and during the following year they descended into the Lowlands as far as the lands of the laird of Eggell, at the head of the Mearns, whence, after killing some of his servants, they carried off some cattle, which they drove away to the Braes of Mar. On perceiving their approach, the Farquharsons of Braemar collected together and attacked them; but after a short skirmish, in which some lives were lost on both sides, the Farquharsons, owing to the comparative inferiority of their numbers, were forced to desist, and to allow the Clan Lauchlan to carry off their booty. As soon as the lords of the council received notice of these lawless proceedings, they summoned Alain Mac-Dhonuill-Dubh, chief of the Clan Cameron in Lochaber, to appear at Edinburgh, to answer for not preventing them. Alan obeyed the summons, and both he and his eldest son were imprisoned until the Clan Lauchlan should be brought to justice; but they were afterward released on giving surety to preserve the peace in Lochaber.

By the judicious management of the affairs of the house of Sutherland by Sir Robert Gordon, his nephew, the earl, on entering upon the management of his own affairs, found the hostility of the enemy of his family either neutralized, or rendered no longer dangerous; but, in the year 1633, he found himself involved in a quarrel with Lord Lorn, eldest son of the Earl of Argyle, who had managed the affairs of his family during his father's banishment from Scotland. This dispute arose out of the following circumstances: —

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In consequence of a quarrel between Lord Berridale, who now acted as sole administrator of his father's estates, and William Mac-Iver, chieftain of the Siol-Mhic-Imheair, in Caithness, the former removed the latter from the lands and possessions he held of him in Caithness. Mac-Iver thereupon retired into Argyle, and assuming the surname of Campbell, as being originally an Argyle man, sought the favour and protection of Lord Lorn. His claim to be considered a Campbell weighed powerfully with his lordship, who wrote several letters to Lord Berridale in his favour, as well as to Lord Gordon, the Earl of Sutherland, and Sir Robert Gordon, to intercede for Mac-Iver with Lord Berridale. They, accordingly, applied to Lord Berridale, but without success, as his lordship was as inflexible as Mac-Iver was unreasonable in his demands. Seeing no hopes of an accommodation, Mac-Iver collected a party of rebels and outlaws, to the number of about twenty, and made an incursion into Caithness, where, during the space of four or five years, he did great injury in Caithness, carrying off considerable spoils, which he conveyed through the heights of Strathnaver and Sutherland.

To put an end to Mac-Iver's depredations, Lord Berridale at first brought a legal prosecution against him, and having got him denounced rebel, sent out different parties of his countrymen to ensnare him; but he escaped for a long time, and always retired in safety with his booty, either into the isles, or into Argyle. Lord Lorn publicly disowned Mac-Iver's proceedings; but the inhabitants of Sutherland encouraged him by giving him a free passage through their country, as they were rather pleased to see the Siol-Mhic-Imheair and their chief, who were the chief instruments of the Earl of Caithness's outrages against themselves, at such deadly variance with Lord Berridale. In his

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incursions, Mac-Iver was powerfully assisted by an islander, of the name of Gille-Calum-Mac-Shomhairle, who had married his daughter, and who was well-acquainted with all the passes leading into Caithness.

At last Mac-Iver and his son were both apprehended by Lord Berridale, and hanged, and the race of the Siol-Mhic-Imheair was almost extinguished; but Gille-Calum-Mac-Shomhairle, having associated with himself several of the Isles and Argyle men, and some outlaws of the Clann-Mhic-Iain-Dhuinn, who were dependents of Lord Lorn, continued his incursions into Caithness. Having, on one occasion, when retreating from Caithness, taken some cattle out of Sutherland, the Earl of Sutherland sent a party of men in pursuit of them, who apprehended some of them, and upon being brought to the earl, they were executed. Gille-Calum, however, returned next summer with a more powerful company, which he divided into two parties. One of these, at the head of which was Gille-Calum himself, went to the higher parts of Ross and Sutherland, there to remain till joined by their companions. The other party went through the lowlands of Ross, under the pretence of going to the Lammas fair, then held at Tain, and thence proceeded to Sutherland to meet the rest of their associates, under the pretence of visiting certain kinsmen they pretended to have in Strathully and Strathnaver. This last-mentioned body consisted of sixteen or twenty persons, most of whom were of the Clann-Mhic-Iain-Dhuinn. They were under the command of one Ewen Aird; and as they passed the town of Tain, on their way to Sutherland, they stole some horses, which they sold in Sutherland, without being in the least suspected of the theft.

The owners of the stolen horses soon came into Sutherland in quest of them, and claimed them from the

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persons to whom they had been sold. The Earl of Sutherland, on proof being given of the property, restored the horses to the true owners, and sent some men in quest of Ewen Aird, who was still in Strathully. Ewen was apprehended and brought to Dunrobin, and upon being questioned about the horses, he affirmed that they were his property, and had not been stolen. The Earl of Sutherland, notwithstanding, ordained him to repay to his countrymen the moneys which Ewen and his companions had received from them for the horses, the only punishment, he said, he would inflict on them, because they were strangers. Ewen assented to the earl's request, and he remained as an hostage at Dunrobin, until his companions should send money to relieve him; but as soon as his associates heard of his detention, they, instead of sending money for his release, fled to Gille-Calum-Mac-Shomhairle and his party, leaving their captain a prisoner at Dunrobin. In their retreat, they destroyed some houses in the high parts of Sutherland, and, on entering Ross, they laid waste some lands belonging to Hutcheon Ross of Auchincloigh. These outrages occasioned an immediate assemblage of the inhabitants of that part of the country, who pursued these marauders and took them prisoners. The remainder escaped either into the isles, or into Lorn. The ten prisoners were brought to Auchincloigh, where Sir Robert Gordon was at the time deciding a dispute about the marches between Auchincloigh and Neamore. After some consultation about what was to be done with the prisoners, it was resolved that they should be sent to the Earl of Sutherland, who then happened to be in pursuit of them. On the prisoners being sent to him, the earl assembled the principal gentlemen of Ross and Sutherland at Dornoch, where Ewen Aird and his accomplices were tried before a jury, convicted and executed at

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Dornoch, with the exception of two young boys, who were dismissed.

The Privy Council not only approved of what the Earl of Sutherland had done, but they also sent a commission to him and the Earl of Seaforth, and to Hutcheon Ross, and some other gentlemen in Ross and Sutherland, against the Clann-Mhic-Iain-Dhuinn, in case they should again make any fresh incursion into Ross and Sutherland.

Lord Lorn being at this time justiciary of the isles, had obtained an act of the Privy Council in his favour, by which it was decreed that any malefactor, being an islander, upon being apprehended in any part of the kingdom, should be sent to Lord Lorn, or to his deputies, to be judged; and that to this effect he should have deputies in every part of the kingdom. As soon as his lordship heard of the trial and execution of the men at Dornoch, who were of the Clann-Mhic-Iain-Dhuinn, and his dependents and followers, he took the matter highly amiss, and repaired to Edinburgh, where he made a complaint to the lords of the council against the Earl of Sutherland, for having, as he maintained, apprehended the king's free subjects without a commission, and for causing them to be executed, although they had not been apprehended within his own jurisdiction. After hearing this complaint, Lord Lorn obtained letters to charge the Earl of Sutherland and Hutcheon Ross to answer to the complaint at Edinburgh before the lords of the Privy Council, and he, moreover, obtained a suspension of the earl's commission against the Clann-Mhic-Iain-Dhuinn, on becoming bound, in the meantime, as surety for their obedience to the laws.

Sir Robert Gordon happening to arrive at Edinburgh from England, shortly after Lord Lorn's visit to Edinburgh, in the year 1634, learned the object of his mis-

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sion, and the success which had attended it. He, therefore, being an eye-witness of everything which had taken place at Dornoch respecting the trial, condemnation, and execution of Lord Lorn's dependents, informed the lords of the council of all the proceedings, which proceeding on his part had the effect of preventing Lord Lorn from going on with his prosecution against the Earl of Sutherland. He, however, proceeded to summon Hutcheon Ross; but the earl not being disposed to abandon Ross, he, at the suggestion of Sir Robert Gordon, Lord Reay, and all the gentlemen who were present at the trial at Dornoch, signed and sent a letter to the lords of the council, giving a detail of the whole circumstances of the case, and along with this letter he sent a copy of the proceedings, attested by the sheriff clerk of Sutherland, to be laid before the council on the day appointed for Ross's appearance. After the matter had been fully debated in council, the conduct of the Earl of Sutherland and Hutcheon Ross was approved of, and the commission to the Earl of Sutherland again renewed, and Lord Lorn was taken bound, that, in time coming, the counties of Sutherland and Ross should be kept harmless from the Clann-Mhic-Iain-Dhuinn. The council moreover decided, that, in respect the Earl of Sutherland had the rights of regality and sheriffship within himself, and as he was appointed to administer justice within his own bounds; that he was not obliged to send criminals, though islanders, to Lord Lorn or to his deputies. This decision had the effect of relieving Sutherland and Ross from further incursions on the part of Lord Lorn's followers.

The disaster at Frendraught had made an impression upon the mind of the Marquis of Huntly, which nothing could efface, and he could never be persuaded but that the fire had originated with the proprietor of the man-

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sion himself. He made many unsuccessful attempts to discover the incendiaries, and on the arrival of King Charles at Edinburgh, in the year 1633, the marquis made preparations for paying a personal visit to the king, for the purpose of imploring him to order an investigation into all the circumstances attending the fire, so as to lead to a discovery of the criminals; but falling sick on his journey, and unable to proceed to Edinburgh, he sent forward his marchioness, who was accompanied by Lady Aboyne and other females of rank, all clothed in deep mourning, to lay a statement of the case before his Majesty, and to solicit the royal interference. The king received the marchioness and her attendants most graciously; comforted them as far as words could, and promised to see justice done.

After the king's departure from Scotland, the marchioness and Lady Aboyne, both of whom still remained in Edinburgh, determined to see his Majesty's promise implemented, prevailed upon the Privy Council to bring John Meldrum of Reidhill, who had been long in confinement, on a charge of being concerned in the fire, before them; but although strictly examined three successive days, he utterly denied all knowledge of the matter. He was, notwithstanding, brought to trial, and it having been proved by the evidence of Sir George Ogilvy, laird of Banff, and George Baird, bailie of Banff, who were endeavouring to bring about a reconciliation between him and Frendraught, that, on the evening before the fire took place, he had remarked that unless such a reconciliation took place immediately, it would never happen, as Frendraught would be burnt before the next morning, he was condemned to be hanged and quartered at the cross of Edinburgh. At the place of execution he persisted in his innocence, although he fully admitted the conversation between him, Sir George

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Ogilvy, and George Baird. A domestic servant of Frendraught named Tosh, who was suspected of being a party concerned in the fire, was afterward put to the torture, for the purpose of extorting a confession of guilt from him; but confessed nothing. The marchioness, thereafter, insisted on bringing him to trial before a jury; but Tosh's counsel resisted this, as being contrary to the law, which did not admit of a person who had been tortured without confessing any guilt, of being brought to trial. The objection being sustained, Tosh was instantly liberated from prison.

The condemnation and execution of Meldrum, in place of abating, appear to have increased the odium of Frendraught's enemies. The Highlanders of his neighbourhood considering his property to be fair game, made frequent incursions upon his lands, and carried off cattle and goods, and the Gordons were equally annoying. In the year 1633, Adam Gordon in Strathdoun and his two sons headed a party from the Caberoch, and wasted Frendraught's lands, and carried off a considerable quantity of goods; but Frendraught having pursued them, he recovered the property, and having taken three of the party prisoners, hanged them at Frendraught. The Marquis of Huntly, to show that he was not in any way implicated in this proceeding, apprehended Adam Gordon, and imprisoned him at Auchendun; but, being watched very negligently, he escaped. About the end of the following year, he again, at the head of a party of outlaws, made another incursion upon Frendraught's lands; but he was again frustrated in another attempt to carry off a number of cattle belonging to Frendraught's tenants, who, at the head of a party of his tenants and servants, overtook them in Glenfeddigh, rescued and brought back the cattle which they were driving away.

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On another occasion, about six hundred Highlanders, belonging to the Clan Gregor, Clan Cameron, and other tribes, appeared near Frendraught, and openly declared that they had come to join Adam Gordon of Park, John Gordon of Invermarkie, and the other friends of the late Gordon of Rothiemay, for the purpose of revenging his death. When Frendraught heard of the irruption of this body, he immediately collected about two hundred foot, and one hundred and forty horsemen, and went in quest of these intruders; but being scattered through the country, they could make no resistance, and every man provided for his own safety by flight.

To put an end to these annoyances, Frendraught got these marauders declared outlaws, and the lords of the Privy Council wrote to the Marquis of Huntly, desiring him to repress the disorders of those of his surname, and failing his doing so, that they would consider him the author of them. The marquis returned an answer to this communication, stating, that as the aggressors were neither his tenants nor servants, he could in no shape be answerable for them, — that he had neither countenanced nor incited them, and that he had no warrant to pursue or prosecute them.

The refusal of the marquis to obey the orders of the Privy Council emboldened the denounced party to renew their acts of spoliation and robbery. They no longer confined their depredations to Frendraught and his tenants, but extended them to the property of the ministers who lived upon Frendraught's lands. In this course of life, they were joined by some of the young men of the principal families of the Gordons in Strathbogie, to the number of forty horsemen, and sixty foot, and to encourage them in their designs against Frendraught, the lady of Rothiemay gave them the castle

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of Rothiemay, which they fortified, and from which they made daily sallies upon Frendraught's possessions; burned his corn, laid waste his lands, and killed some of his people. Frendraught opposed them for some time; but being satisfied that such proceedings, taking place almost under the very eyes of the Marquis of Huntly, must necessarily be done with his concurrence, he went to Edinburgh, and entered a complaint against the marquis to the Privy Council. During Frendraught's absence, his tenants were expelled by these Gordons from their possessions, without opposition.

When the king heard of these lawless proceedings, and of the refusal of the marquis to interfere, he wrote to the lords of the Privy Council to adopt measures for suppressing them; preparatory to which, they cited the marquis, in the beginning of the following year, to appear before them, to answer for these oppressions. He accordingly went to Edinburgh in the month of February, 1635, where he was commanded to remain till the matter should be investigated. The heads of the families, whose sons had joined the outlaws, also appeared, and, after examination, Letterfourie, Park, Tilliangus, Terrisoule, Invermarkie, Tulloch, Ardlogy, and several other persons of the surname of Gordon, were committed to prison, until their sons, who had engaged in the combination against Frendraught, should be presented before the council. The prisoners, who denied being accessory thereto, then petitioned to be set at liberty, a request which was complied with, on condition that they should either produce the rebels, as the pillagers were called, or make them leave the kingdom. The marquis, although nothing could be proved against him, was obliged to find caution for all persons of the surname of Gordon within his bounds, that they should keep the peace, and that he should

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be answerable, in all time coming, for any damage which should befall the laird of Frendraught, or his lands, by whatever violent means; and also that he should present the rebels at Edinburgh, that justice might be satisfied, or make them leave the kingdom.

The Marquis of Huntly, thereupon, returned to the north, and the rebels hearing of the obligation he had come under, immediately dispersed themselves. The greater part of them fled into Flanders, and about twelve of them were apprehended by the marquis, and sent by him to Edinburgh. John Gordon, who lived at Woodhead of Rothiemay, and another, were executed. Of the remaining two, James Gordon, son of George Gordon in Achterles, and William Ross, son of John Ross of Ballivet, the former was acquitted by the jury, and the latter was imprisoned in the jail of Edinburgh for future trial, having been a chief ringleader of the party. In apprehending these twelve persons, James Gordon, son of Adam Gordon of Strathdoun, was killed, and to show the Privy Council how diligent the marquis had been in fulfilling his obligation, his head was sent to Edinburgh along with the prisoners.

The activity with which the marquis pursued the oppressors of Frendraught, brought him afterward into some trouble. Adam Gordon, one of the principal ringleaders of the confederacy, and second son of Sir Adam Gordon, of the Park, seeing no place of retreat left for him, nor any means of escape from the zeal of his pursuers, resolved to throw himself on the king's mercy. For this purpose, he made a private communication to the archbishop of St. Andrews, then chancellor of Scotland, in which he offered to submit himself to the king's pleasure, and promising, that if his Majesty would grant him a pardon, he would reveal the author of the rebellion. The archbishop, eager, it would

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appear, to fulfil the ends of justice, readily entered into Gordon's views, and sent an especial messenger to London to the king, who, at once, granted Adam a pardon, which he forthwith transmitted to Scotland. On receiving the pardon, Gordon accused the Marquis of Huntly as the author of the conspiracy against Frendraught, and with having instigated him and his associates to commit all the depredations which had taken place. The king, thereupon, sent a commission to Scotland, appointing a select number of the lords of the Privy Council to examine into the affair.

As Adam Gordon had charged James Gordon of Letterfourie with having employed him and his associates, in name of the marquis, against the laird of Frendraught, Letterfourie was cited to appear at Edinburgh for trial. On being confronted with Adam Gordon, he denied everything laid to his charge, but, notwithstanding of this denial, he was committed a close prisoner to the jail of Edinburgh. The marquis himself, who had also appeared at Edinburgh on the appointed day, viz., fifteenth of January, 1636, was likewise confronted with Adam Gordon before the committee of the Privy Council; but although he denied Adam's accusation, and "cleared himself with great dexteritie, beyond admiration," as Gordon of Sallagh observes, he was, "upon presumption," committed a close prisoner to the castle of Edinburgh.

When his Majesty was made acquainted with these circumstances by the commissioners, and that there was no proof against the marquis to establish the charge against him, both the marquis and Gordon of Letterfourie were released by his command, on giving security for indemnifying the laird of Frendraught in time coming for any damage he might sustain from the Gordons and their accomplices. Having so far succeeded

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in annoying the marquis, Adam Gordon, after collecting a body of men, by leave of the Privy Council, went along with them to Germany, where he became a captain in the regiment of Colonel George Leslie. To terminate the unhappy differences between the marquis and Frendraught, the king enjoined Sir Robert Gordon, who was related to both, the marquis being his cousin-german, and chief of that family, and Frendraught the husband of his niece, to endeavour to bring about a reconciliation between them. Sir Robert, accordingly, on his return to Scotland, prevailed upon the parties to enter into a submission, by which they agreed to refer all questions and differences between them to the arbitrament of friends; but before the submission was brought to a final conclusion, the marquis expired at Dundee upon the thirteenth day of June, 1636, at the age of seventy-four, while returning to the north from Edinburgh. He was interred in the family vault at Elgin, on the thirtieth day of August following, "having," says Spalding, "above his chist a rich mort-cloath of black velvet, wherein was wrought two whyte crosses. He had torch-lights in great number carried be friends and gentlemen; the marques' son, called Adam, was at his head, the earle of Murray on the right spaik, the earle of Seaforth on the left spaik, the earl of Sutherland on the third spaik, and Sir Robert Gordon on the fourthe spaik. Besyds thir nobles, many barrons and gentlemen was there, haveing above three hundred lighted torches at the lifting. He is carried to the east port, doun the wynd to the south kirk stile of the colledge kirk, in at the south kirk door, and buried in his own isle with much murning and lamentation. The like forme of burriall, with torch light, was not sein heir thir many dayes befor."

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The marquis was a remarkable man for the age in which he lived, and there are no characters in that eventful period of Scottish history, so well-entitled to veneration and esteem. A lover of justice, he never attempted to aggrandize his vast possessions at the expense of his less powerful neighbours; a kind and humane superior and landlord, he exercised a lenient sway over his numerous vassals and tenants, who repaid his kindness by sincere attachment to his person and family. Endowed with great strength of mind, invincible courage, and consummate prudence, he surmounted the numerous difficulties with which he was surrounded, and lived to see the many factions, which had conspired against him, discomfited and dissolved. While his constant and undeviating attachment to the religion of his forefathers, raised up many enemies against him among the professors of the reformed doctrines, by whose cabals he was at one time obliged to leave the kingdom, his great power and influence were assailed by another formidable class of opponents among the turbulent nobility, who were grieved to see a man who had not imitated their venality and rapacity, not only retain his predominance in the north, but also receive especial marks of his sovereign's regard. But skilful and intriguing as they were in all the dark and sinister ways of an age distinguished for its base and wicked practices, their machinations were frustrated by the discernment and honesty of George Gordon, the first Marquis of Huntly.

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CHAPTER VIII

MILITARY ACHIEVEMENTS

HITHERTO the history of the Highlands has been confined chiefly to the feuds and conflicts of the clans, the details of which, though interesting to their descendants, cannot be supposed to afford the same gratification to readers at large, who require more inciting events to engage their attention than the disputes of rival families and petty chieftains. We now enter upon a more important era, when, for the first time, the Highlanders may be said to have appeared on the theatre of our national history, and to have given a foretaste of that military prowess, for which they, afterward, became so highly distinguished.

In entering upon the details of the military achievements of the Highlanders, during the period of the civil wars, and the campaigns of Montrose, it seems to be quite unnecessary and foreign to our purpose, to trouble the reader with a history of the rash, unconstitutional, and ill-fated attempt of Charles I, to introduce English Episcopacy into Scotland; nor, for the same reason, is it requisite to detail minutely the proceedings of the authors of the Covenant. Suffice it to say, that in consequence of the inflexible determination of Charles to force the forms of the English church service upon the people of Scotland, the great majority of the nation declared their determination " by the great name of the Lord their God," to defend their religion against what they considered to be errors and corruptions. Notwith-

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standing, however, of the most positive demonstrations on the part of the people to resist, Charles, acting by the advice of a Privy Council of Scotsmen established in England, exclusively devoted to the affairs of Scotland, resolved to suppress the Covenant by open force, and in order to gain time for the necessary preparations, he sent the Marquis of Hamilton, as his commissioner, to Scotland, who was instructed to promise "that the practice of the liturgy and the canons should never be pressed in any other than a fair and legal way, and that the high commission should be so rectified as never to impugn the laws, or to be a just grievance to loyal subjects," and that the king would pardon those who had lately taken an illegal covenant, on their immediately renouncing it, and giving up the bond to the commissioners.

When the Covenanters heard of Hamilton's approach, they appointed a national fast to be held, to beg the blessing of God upon the kirk, and on the tenth of June, 1638, the marquis was received at Leith, and conducted to the capital by about sixty thousand Covenanters, and five hundred ministers. The spirit and temper of such a vast assemblage overawed the marquis, and he, therefore, concealed his instructions. After making two successive journeys to London to communicate the alarming state of affairs, and to receive fresh instructions, he, on his second return, issued a proclamation, discharging "the service book, the book of canons, and the high commission court, dispensing with the five articles of Perth, dispensing the entrants into the ministry from taking the oath of supremacy and of canonical obedience, commanding all persons to lay aside the new covenant, and take that which had been published by the king's father in 1589, and summoning a free assembly of the kirk to meet, in the month of

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November, and a parliament in the month of May, the following year." Matters had, however, proceeded too far for submission to the conditions of the proclamation, and the covenanting leaders answered it by a formal protest in which they gave sixteen reasons, showing, that to comply with the demands of the king would be to betray the cause of God, and to act against the dictates of conscience.

In consequence of the opposition made to the proclamation, it was generally expected that the king would have recalled the order for the meeting of the assembly at Glasgow; but no prohibition having been issued, that assembly, which consisted, besides the clergy, of one lay-elder, and four lay-assessors, from every presbytery, met at the time appointed; viz., in the month of November, 1638. After spending a week in violent debates, the commissioner, in terms of his instructions, declared the assembly dissolved; but encouraged by the accession of the Earl of Argyle, who placed himself at the head of the Covenanters, the members declined to disperse at the mere mandate of the sovereign, and passed a resolution, that, in spiritual matters, the kirk was independent of the civil power, and that the dissolution by the commissioner was illegal and void. After spending three weeks in revising the ecclesiastical regulations introduced into Scotland since the accession of James to the crown of England, the assembly condemned the liturgy, ordinal, book of canons, and court of high commission, and assuming all powers of legislation, abolished Episcopacy, and excommunicated the bishops themselves, and the ministers who supported them. Charles declared their proceedings null by proclamation; but the people received them with great joy, and testified their approbation by a national thanksgiving.

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Both parties had for some time been preparing for war, and they now hastened on their plans. In consequence of an order from the supreme committee of the Covenanters in Edinburgh, every man capable of bearing arms was called out and trained. Experienced Scotch officers, who had spent the greater part of their lives in military service in Sweden and Germany, returned to Scotland to place themselves at the head of their countrymen, and the Scottish merchants in Holland supplied them with arms and ammunition. The king advanced as far as York with an army, the Scottish bishops making him believe that the news of his approach would induce the Covenanters to submit themselves to his pleasure; but he was disappointed in this vain idea, for instead of submitting themselves, they were the first to commence hostilities. On Friday, the ninth of March, 1639, General Leslie, the covenanting general, at the head of one thousand men, surprised the castle of Edinburgh, and on the following day the Earl of Traquair surrendered Dalkeith house, and on the Sunday during the observance of a solemn fast, the Covenanters obtained possession of the castle of Dumbarton. The king, on arriving at Durham, despatched the Marquis of Hamilton with a fleet of forty ships, having on board six thousand troops, to the Firth of Forth; but as both sides of the Firth were well fortified at different points, and covered with troops, he was unable to effect a landing.

In the meantime the Marquis of Huntly raised the royal standard in the north, and as the Earl of Sutherland, accompanied by Lord Reay and John, master of Berridale and others, had been very busy in Inverness and Elgin, persuading the inhabitants to subscribe the Covenant, the marquis wrote him confidentially, blaming him for his past conduct, and advising him to declare

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for the king; but the earl informed him in reply, that it was against the bishops and their innovations, and not against the king, that he had so acted. The earl then, in his turn, advised the marquis to join the Covenanters, by doing which he said he would not only confer honour on himself, but much good on his native country; that in any private question in which Huntly was personally interested he would assist, but that in the present affair he would not aid him. The earl thereupon joined the Earl of Seaforth, the master of Berridale, the Lord Lovat, the Lord Reay, the laird of Balnagown, the Rosses, the Monroes, the laird of Grant, Mackintosh, the laird of Innes, the sheriff of Moray, the Baron of Kilravok, the laird of Altire, the tutor of Duffus and the other Covenanters on the north of the River Spey.

The Marquis of Huntly assembled his forces first at Turriff, and afterward at Kintore, whence he marched upon Aberdeen, which he took possession of in name of the king. The marquis being informed, shortly after his arrival in Aberdeen, that a meeting of Covenanters, who resided within his district, was to be held at Turriff on the fourteenth day of February, he resolved to disperse them. He therefore wrote letters to his chief dependants, requiring them to meet him at Turriff the same day, and bring with them their usual arms. One of these letters fell into the hands of the Earl of Montrose, who determined at all hazards to protect the meeting of his friends, the Covenanters. In pursuance of this resolution, he collected, with great alacrity, some of his best friends in Angus, and with his own and their dependants, to the number of about eight hundred men, he crossed the range of hills called the Grangebean, and took possession of Turriff on the morning of the fourteenth of February. When Huntley's party arrived during the course of the day, they were surprised at

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seeing the little churchyard of the village filled with armed men; and they were still more surprised to observe them levelling their hagbuts at them across the walls of the churchyard. Not knowing how to act in the absence of the marquis, they retired to a place called the Broad Ford of Towie, about two miles south from the village, when they were soon joined by Huntly and his suite. After some consultation, the marquis, after parading his men in order of battle along the northwest side of the village, in sight of Montrose, dispersed his party, which amounted to two thousand men, without offering to attack Montrose, on the pretence that his commission of lieutenancy only authorized him to act on the defensive. This act of pusillanimity weakened the confidence of his friends.

Montrose had, about this time, received a commission from the Tables, as the boards of representatives, chosen respectively by the nobility, county gentry, clergy, and inhabitants of the burghs, were called, to raise a body of troops for the service of the Covenanters, and he now proceeded to embody them with extraordinary promptitude. Within one month, he collected a force of about three thousand horse and foot, from the counties of Fife, Forfar, and Perth, and put them into a complete state of military discipline. Being joined by the forces under General Leslie, he marched upon Aberdeen, which he entered, without opposition, on the thirtieth of March, the Marquis of Huntly having abandoned the town on his approach. Some idea of the well-appointed state of this army may be formed from the curious description of Spalding, who says, that "upon the morne, being Saturday, they came in order of battell, weill armed, both on horse and foot, ilk horseman having five shot at the least, with ane carabine in his hand, two pistols by his sydes, and other two at

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his saddell toir; the pikemen in their ranks, with pike and sword; the musketiers in their ranks, with musket, musket-staffe, bandelier, sword, powder, ball, and match; ilk company, both on horse and foot, had their captains, lieutenants, ensignes, serjeants, and other officers and commanders, all for the most part in buff coats, and in goodly order. They had five colours or ensignes; whereof the earl of Montrose had one, haveing this motto, 'For Religion, the Covenant, and the Countrie;' the earle of Marischall had one, the earle of Kinghorne had one, and the town of Dundie had two. They had trumpeters to ilk company of horsemen, and drummers to ilk company of footmen; they had their meat, drink, and other provision, bag and baggage, carryed with them, all done be advyse of his excellence Felt Marschall Leslie, whose councell Generall Montrose followed in this busieness. Now, in seemly order, and good array, this army came forward, and entered the burgh of Aberdein, about ten hours in the morning, at the Over Kirkgate Port, syne came doun throw the Broadgate, throw the Castlegate, out at the Justice Port to the Queen's Links directly. Here it is to be notted, that few or none of this haill army wanted ane blew ribbin hung about his craig, doun under his left arme, which they called the Covenanters' Ribbin. But the Lord Gordon, and some other of the marquess' bairnes and familie, had ane ribbin, when he was dwelling in the toun, of ane reid flesh cullor, which they wore in their hatts, and called it The Royall Ribbin, as a signe of their love and loyalltie to the king. In despyte and derision thereof this blew ribbin was worne, and called the Covenanters' Ribbin, be the haill souldiers of the army, and would not hear of the royall ribbin; such was their pryde and malice."

At Aberdeen, Montrose was joined the same day by

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Lord Fraser, the master of Forbes, the laird of Dalgettie, the tutor of Pitsligo, the Earl Marshall's men in Buchan, with several other gentlemen and their tenants, dependants and servants, to the number of two thousand, an addition which augmented Montrose's army to nine thousand men. Leaving the Earl of Kintore, with fifteen hundred men, to keep possession of Aberdeen, Montrose marched the same day towards Kintore, where he encamped that night. Halting all Sunday, he proceeded, on the Monday, to Inverury, where he again pitched his camp. The Marquis of Huntly grew alarmed at this sudden and unexpected movement, and thought it now full time to treat with such a formidable foe, for his personal safety. He, therefore, despatched Robert Gordon of Straloch and Doctor Gordon, an Aberdeen physician, to Montrose's camp, to request an interview. The marquis proposed to meet him on a moor near Blackhall, about two miles from the camp, with eleven attendants each, with no arms but a single sword at their side. After consulting with Field-Marshal Leslie, and the other officers, Montrose agreed to meet the marquis, on Thursday, the fourth of April, at the place mentioned. The parties accordingly met. Among the eleven who attended the marquis were his son James, Lord Aboyne, and the Lord Oliphant. The Lords Elcho and Cowper were of the party who attended Montrose. After the usual salutation, they both alighted, and entered into conversation, but, coming to no understanding, they adjourned the conference till the following morning, when the marquis signed a writing substantially the same as the Covenant, and obliged himself to make his friends, tenants, and servants to subscribe the Covenant. The marquis, after this arrangement, went to Strathbogie, and Montrose returned with his army to Aberdeen, the following day.

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The marquis had not been many days at Strathbogie, when he received a notice from Montrose to repair to Aberdeen with his two sons, the Lord Gordon and Viscount Aboyne. The reason for such a step does not sufficiently appear; but it seems highly probable that Montrose had been actuated by a distrust of the sincerity of the marquis' promises, and that as he was meditating a journey to the south, he might consider it a wise and prudent course to secure the person of the marquis, and thus prevent a rising in the north.

Some writers have attributed, and not without reason, the arrest of the marquis to the intrigues of the Frasers and the Forbeses, who bore a mortal antipathy to the house of Huntly, and who were desirous to see the "Cock of the North," as the powerful head of that house was popularly called, humbled. But, be these conjectures as they may, on the morning after the marquis' arrival at Aberdeen, viz., on the eleventh of April, a council of the principal officers of Montrose's army was held, at which it was determined to arrest the marquis and Lord Gordon, his eldest son, and carry them to Edinburgh. It was not, however, judged advisable to act upon this resolution immediately, and to do away with any appearance of treachery, Montrose and his friends invited the marquis and his two sons to supper the following evening. During the entertainment, the most friendly civilities were passed on both sides, and, after the party had become somewhat merry, Montrose and his friends hinted to the marquis the expediency, in the present posture of affairs, of resigning his commission of lieutenancy, and returning the same to the king. They also proposed that he should write a letter to the king along with the resignation of his commission, in favour of the Covenanters, as good and loyal subjects; and that he should despatch the laird of Cluny, the following morning, with a letter

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and resignation. The marquis, seeing that his commission was altogether unavailable, immediately wrote out, in presence of the meeting, a resignation of his commission, and a letter of recommendation as proposed, and, in their presence, delivered the same to the laird of Cluny, who was to set off the following morning with them to the king. It would appear that Montrose was not sincere in making this demand upon the marquis, and that his object was, by calculating on a refusal, to make that the ground for arresting him; for the marquis had scarcely returned to his lodgings to pass the night, when an armed guard was placed round the house, to prevent him from returning home, as he intended to do, the following morning.

When the marquis rose, next morning, he was surprised at receiving a message from the covenanting general, by two noblemen, desiring his attendance at the house of the earl marshal; and he was still further surprised, when, on going out, along with his two sons, to the appointed place of meeting, he found his lodging beset with sentinels. The marquis was received by Montrose with the usual morning salutation, after which he proceeded to demand from him a contribution for liquidating a loan of 200,000 merks, which the Covenanters had borrowed from Sir William Dick, a rich merchant of Edinburgh. To this unexpected demand the marquis replied, that he was not obliged to pay any part thereof, not having been concerned in the borrowing, and of course declined to comply. Montrose then requested him to take steps to apprehend James Grant and John Dugar, and their accomplices, who had given considerable annoyance to the Covenanters in the Highlands. Huntly objected, that, having now no commission, he could not act, and that, although he had, James Grant had already obtained a remission

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from the king, and as for John Dugar, he would concur, if required, with the other neighbouring proprietors in an attempt to apprehend him. The earl, finally, as the Covenant, he said, admitted of no standing hatred or feud, required the marquis to reconcile himself to Crichton, the laird of Frendraught, and take him by the hand, but this the marquis positively refused to do. What Montrose's design was, in making these proposals, is not easy to conjecture. That he anticipated a refusal to all of them seems very problematical; and yet it can scarcely be supposed that the marquis' compliance with any one of these demands would have saved him from the snare which had been laid for him. Finding the marquis quite resolute in his determination to resist these demands, the earl suddenly changed his tone, and thus addressed the marquis, apparently in the most friendly terms, "My lord, seeing we are all now friends, will you go south to Edinburgh with us?" Huntly answered that he would not — that he was not prepared for such a journey, and that he was just going to set off for Strathbogie. "Your lordship" (rejoined Montrose) "will do well to go with us." The marquis, now perceiving Montrose's design, accosted him thus, "My lord, I came here to this town upon assurance that I should come and go at my own pleasure, without molestation or inquietude; and now I see why my lodging was guarded, and that ye mean to take me to Edinburgh, whether I will or not. This conduct on your part seems to me to be neither fair nor honourable." He added, "My lord, give me back the bond which I gave you at Inverury, and you shall have an answer." Montrose thereupon delivered the bond to the marquis. Huntly then inquired of the earl, "whether he would take him to the south as a captive, or willingly of his own mind." "Make your choice," said Montrose. "Then," observed

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the marquis, " I will not go as a captive, but as a volunteer." The marquis thereupon immediately returned to his lodging, and despatched a messenger after the laird of Cluny, to stop him on his journey.

It was the intention of Montrose to take both the marquis and his sons to Edinburgh, but Viscount Aboyne, at the desire of some of his friends, was released, and allowed to return to Strathbogie. On arriving at Edinburgh, the marquis and his son, Lord Gordon, were committed close prisoners to the castle of Edinburgh, and the Tables " appointed five guardians to attend upon him and his son night and day, upon his own expenses, that none should come in nor out but by their sight."

Some time after the departure of Montrose's army to the south, the Covenanters of the north appointed a committee meeting to be held at Turriff, upon Wednesday, the twenty-fourth of April, consisting of the Earls Marshal and Seaforth, the Lord Fraser, the master of Forbes, and some of their kindred and friends. All persons within the diocese, who had not subscribed the Covenant, were required to attend this meeting for the purpose of signing it, and failing compliance, their property was to be given up to indiscriminate plunder. As neither Lord Aboyne, the laird of Banff, nor any of their friends and kinsmen, had subscribed the Covenant, nor meant to do so, they resolved to protect themselves from the threatened attack. A preliminary meeting of the heads of the northern Covenanters was held on the twenty-second day of April, at Monymusk, where they learned of the rising of Lord Aboyne and his friends. This intelligence induced them to postpone the meeting at Turriff till the twenty-sixth of April, by which day they expected to be joined by several gentlemen from Caithness, Sutherland, Ross, Moray, and other quarters.

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At another meeting, held by the same parties at Kintore, on the twenty-fourth of April, they postponed the proposed meeting at Turriff, *sine die*, and adjourned to Aberdeen; but as no notice had been sent of the postponement to the different covenanting districts in the north, about 1,500 men assembled at the place of meeting on the twenty-sixth of April, and were quite astonished to find that the chiefs were absent. Upon an explanation taking place, the meeting was adjourned till the twentieth of May.

Lord Aboyne had not been idle during this interval, having collected about two thousand horse and foot from the Highlands and Lowlands, with which force he had narrowly watched the movements of the Covenanters. Hearing, however, of the adjournment of the Turriff meeting, his lordship, at the entreaty of his friends, broke up his army, and went by sea to England to meet the king, to inform him of the precarious state of his affairs in the north. Many of his followers, such as the lairds of Gight, Haddo, Udney, Newton, Pitmedden, Foveran, Tippertie, Harthill, and others, who had subscribed the Covenant, regretted his departure; but as they had gone too far to recede, they resolved to continue their forces in the field, and held a meeting on the seventh of May at Auchterless, to concert a plan of operations.

A body of the Covenanters, to the number of about two thousand, having assembled at Turriff as early as the thirteenth of May, the Gordons resolved instantly to attack them, before they should be joined by other forces, which were expected to arrive before the twentieth. Taking along with them four brass field-pieces from Strathbogie, the Gordons, to the number of about eight hundred horse and foot, commenced their march on the thirteenth of May, at ten o'clock at night, and

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reached Turriff next morning by daybreak, by a road unknown to the sentinels of the covenanting army. As soon as they approached the town, the commanders of the Gordons ordered the trumpets to be sounded and the drums to be beat, the noise of which was the first indication the Covenanters had of their arrival. Being thus surprised, the latter had no time to make any preparations for defending themselves. They made, indeed, a short resistance, but they were soon dispersed by the fire from the field-pieces, leaving behind them the lairds of Echt and Skene, and a few others, who were taken prisoners. The loss on either side, in killed and wounded, was very trifling. This skirmish is called by the writers of the period, "The Trott of Turray,"[8] and is distinguished as the place where blood was first shed in the civil wars.[9]

The successful issue of this trifling affair had a powerful effect on the minds of the victors, who forthwith marched on Aberdeen, which they entered on the fifteenth of May. They expelled the Covenanters from the town, and were there joined by a body of men from the Braes of Mar under the command of Donald Farquharson of Tulliegarmouth, and the laird of Abergeldie, and by another party headed by James Grant, so long an outlaw, to the number of about five hundred men, These men quartered themselves very freely upon the inhabitants, particularly on those who had declared for the Covenant, and they plundered many gentlemen's houses in the neighbourhood. The house of Durris, belonging to John Forbes of Lesslie, a great Covenanter, received a visit from them. "There was" (says Spalding) "little plenishing left unconvoyed away before their comeing. They gott good bear and ale, broke up girnells, and buke bannocks at good fyres, and drank merrily upon the laird's best drink: syne carried away with them

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alse meikle victual as they could beir, which they could not gett eaten and destroyed; and syne removed from that to Echt, Skene, Monymusk, and other houses pertaining to the name of Forbes, all great Covenanters."

Two days after their arrival at Aberdeen, the Gordons sent John Leith of Harthill, and William Lumsden, advocate in Aberdeen, to Dunnotter, for the purpose of ascertaining the sentiments of the earl marshal, in relation to their proceedings, and whether they might reckon on his friendship. The earl, however, intimated that he could say nothing in relation to the affair, and that he would require eight days to advise with his friends. This answer was considered quite unsatisfactory, and the chiefs of the army were at a loss how to act. While deliberating on the subject, Robert Gordon of Straloch, and James Burnet of Craigmylle, a brother of the laird of Leys, who were both peaceably inclined, apprehensive of the dangers which might ensue, if the Gordons kept the field any longer, earnestly begged of them to dissolve the army. They proposed to enter into a negotiation with the earl marshal, but Sir George Ogilvy of Banff would not listen to such a proceeding, and, addressing Straloch, he said: "Go, if you will go; but pr'ythee, let it be as quarter-master, to inform the earl that we are coming." Straloch, however, went not in the character of a quarter-master, but as a mediator in behalf of his chief; and having, in conjunction with Burnet, had an interview with the earl marshal, he returned with this answer, that the earl had no intention to take up arms, without an order from the Tables; that, if the Gordons would disperse, he would give them early notice to re-assemble, if necessary, for their own defence, but that if they should attack him, he would certainly defend himself.

This answer of the earl marshal had the desired effect;

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but although the Gordons agreed to disband their army, the Highlanders, who had come to the Lowlands in quest of plunder, could not be induced to recross the mountains till they should collect a sufficient quantity of spoil. The army was accordingly disbanded on the twenty-first of May, and the barons went to Aberdeen, there to spend a few days. The depredations of the Highlanders upon the properties of the Covenanters were thereafter carried on to such an extent, that they complained to the earl marshal, who immediately assembled a body of men out of Angus and the Mearns, with which he entered Aberdeen on the twenty-third of May. The barons thereupon made a precipitate retreat. Two days thereafter, the earl was joined by Montrose, at the head of four thousand men, an addition which, with other accessions, made the whole force assembled at Aberdeen exceed six thousand.

Meanwhile a large body of northern Covenanters, under the command of the Earl of Seaforth, was approaching from the countries beyond the Spey; but the Gordons having crossed the Spey, for the purpose of opposing their advance, an agreement was entered into, between both parties, that, on the Gordons retiring across the Spey, Seaforth and his men should also retire homewards.

After spending five days in Aberdeen, Montrose marched his army to Udney, from thence to Kellie, the seat of the laird of Haddo, and afterward to Gight, the residence of Sir Robert Gordon, to which he laid siege. But intelligence of the arrival of Viscount Aboyne, in the Bay of Aberdeen, deranged his plans. Being quite uncertain of Aboyne's strength, and fearing that his retreat might be cut off, Montrose quickly raised the siege, and returned to Aberdeen. Although Lord Aboyne still remained on board his vessel, and

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could easily have been prevented from landing, Montrose most unaccountably abandoned the town, and retired into the Mearns.

Viscount Aboyne had been most graciously received by the king, and had ingratiated himself so much with the monarch as to obtain the commission of lieutenancy which his father held. The king appears to have entertained good hopes, from his endeavours to support the royal cause in the north of Scotland, and before taking leave, he gave the viscount a letter addressed to the Marquis of Hamilton, requesting him to afford his lordship all the assistance in his power. From whatever cause, all the aid afforded by the marquis was limited to a few officers and four field-pieces: "The king," says Gordon of Sallagh, "coming to Berwick, and business growing to a height, the armies of England and Scotland lying near one another, his Majesty sent the Viscount of Aboyne and Colonel Gun (who was then returned out of Germany) to the Marquis of Hamilton, to receive some forces from him, and with these forces to go to Aberdeen, to possess and recover that town. The Marquis of Hamilton, lying at anchor in Forth, gave them no supply of men, but sent them five ships to Aberdeen, and the marquis himself retired with his fleet and men to the Holy Island, hard by Berwick, to reinforce the king's army there against the Scots at Dunslaw." On his voyage to Aberdeen, Aboyne's ships fell in with two vessels, one of which contained the lairds of Banff, Foveran, Newton, Crummie, and others, who had fled on the approach of Montrose to Gight; and the other had on board some citizens of Aberdeen, and several ministers, among whom were Thomas Thoirs, minister of Udney; John Paterson, minister of Foveran; David Leitch, minister of Ellon; John Gregory, minister of Drumoack; Francis Thomson,

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minister of Pitticulter; John Kemp, preacher; and others, who had refused to sign the Covenant, all of whom the viscount persuaded to return home along with him.

On the sixth of June, Lord Aboyne, accompanied by the Earls of Glencairn and Tullibardine, the lairds of Drum, Banff, Fedderet, Foveran, and Newton, and their followers, with Colonel Gun and several English officers, landed in Aberdeen, without opposition. Immediately on coming on shore, he issued a proclamation which was read at the cross of Aberdeen, prohibiting all his Majesty's loyal subjects from paying any rents, duties, or other debts to the Covenanters, and requiring them to pay one-half of such sums to the king, and to retain the other for themselves. Those persons who had been forced to subscribe the Covenant against their will, were, on repentance, to be forgiven, and every person was required to take an oath of allegiance to his Majesty.

This bold step inspired the Royalists with confidence, and in a short space of time a considerable force rallied round the royal standard. Lewis Gordon, third son of the Marquis of Huntly, a youth of extraordinary courage, on hearing of his brother's arrival, collected his father's friends and tenants, to the number of about one thousand horse and foot, and with these he entered Aberdeen, on the seventh of June. These were succeeded by a hundred horse sent in by the laird of Drum, and by considerable forces led by James Grant and Donald Farquharson. Many of the Covenanters also joined the viscount, so that his force ultimately amounted to several thousand men.

On the tenth of June, the viscount left Aberdeen, and advanced upon Kintore with an army of about two thousand horse and foot, to which he received daily

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accessions. The inhabitants of the latter place were compelled by him to subscribe the oath of allegiance, and notwithstanding their compliance, "the troops," says Spalding, "plundered meat and drink, and made good fires; and, where they wanted peats, broke down beds and boards in honest men's houses to be fires, and fed their horses with corn and straw that day and night." Next morning the army moved upon Hall Forrest, a seat of the earl marshal, which surrendered on their approach. Although the house was filled with property of different kinds, which had been placed there by the people of the neighbourhood for the sake of security, no part thereof was touched, and the troops contented themselves with carrying off all the arms and provisions they could find. From Hall Forest, they proceeded to the house of Muchells, belonging to Lord Fraser; but Aboyne, hearing of a rising in the south, gave up a resolution he had formed of besieging it, and returned to Aberdeen.

As delay would be dangerous to his cause in the present conjuncture, he crossed the Dee, on the fourteenth of June, with the intention of occupying Stonehaven, and of issuing afresh the king's proclamation at the market cross of that burgh. He proceeded as far as Muchollis, the seat of Sir Thomas Barnet of Leyes, where he encamped that night. On hearing of his approach, the earl marshal posted himself very commodiously with twelve hundred men, and some pieces of ordnance which he had drawn from Dunotter castle, on the direct road which Aboyne had to pass, and waited his approach.

Although Aboyne was quite aware of the position of the earl marshal, instead of endeavouring to outflank him by making a détour to the right, he crossed the Meagre hill next morning, directly in the face of his opponent, who lay with his forces at the bottom of the

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hill. As Aboyne descended the hill, the earl marshal opened a heavy fire upon him, which threw his men into complete disorder. The Highlanders, unaccustomed to the fire of cannon, were the first to retreat, and in a short time the whole army gave way. Aboyne, thereupon, returned to Aberdeen with some horsemen, leaving the rest of the army to follow him; but the Highlanders took a homeward course, carrying along with them a large quantity of booty which they gathered on their retreat. The disastrous issue of "the Raid of Stonehaven," as this affair has been called, has been attributed to treachery on the part of Colonel Gun, to whom, on account of his great experience, Aboyne had entrusted the command of the army; but although he certainly committed a fatal blunder in sending the cannon belonging to the army by sea, by which step Aboyne's army was deprived of the use of them, there does not appear sufficient evidence for supporting such a charge.

On his arrival at Aberdeen, Aboyne held a council of war, at which it was determined to send some persons into the Mearns to collect the scattered remains of his army, for, with the exception of nine-score horsemen and a few foot soldiers, the whole of the fine army which he had led from Aberdeen had disappeared; but although the army again mustered at Leggetsden to the number of four thousand, they were prevented from recrossing the Dee and joining his lordship by the marshal and Montrose, who advanced towards the bridge of Dee with all their forces. Aboyne, hearing of their approach, resolved to dispute with them the passage of the Dee, and as a precautionary measure, he blocked up the entrance to the bridge of Dee from the south by a thick wall of turf, besides which he placed a hundred musketeers upon the bridge under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Johnstone, to annoy the assailants from the

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small turrets on its sides. The viscount was warmly seconded in his views by the citizens of Aberdeen, whose dread of another hostile visit from the Covenanters induced them to afford him every assistance in their power, and it is recorded that the women and children even occupied themselves in carrying provisions to the army during the contest.

The army of Montrose consisted of about two thousand foot, and three hundred horse, and a large train of artillery. The forces, which Lord Aboyne had suddenly collected on the spur of the occasion, were not numerous, but he was superior in cavalry. His ordnance consisted only of four pieces of brass cannon. Montrose arrived at the bridge of Dee on the eighteenth of June, and without a moment's delay commenced a furious cannonade upon the works, which had been thrown up at the south end, and which he kept up during the whole day without producing any material effect. Lieutenant-Colonel Johnstone defended the bridge with determined bravery, and his musketeers kept up a galling and well-directed fire upon their assailants, Both parties reposed during the short twilight, and as soon as morning dawned, Montrose renewed his attack upon the bridge, with an ardour which seemed to have received a fresh impulse from the unavailing efforts of the preceding day; but all his attempts were vain. Seeing no hopes of carrying the bridge in the teeth of the force opposed to him, he had recourse to a stratagem, by which he succeeded in withdrawing a part of Aboyne's forces from the defence of the bridge. That force had indeed been considerably impaired before the renewal of the attack, in consequence of a party of fifty musketeers having gone to Aberdeen to escort thither the body of a citizen named John Forbes, who had been killed the preceding day; to which circumstance Spald-

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ing attributes the loss of the bridge; but whether the absence of this party had such an effect upon the fortune of the day is by no means clear. The covenanting general, after battering unsuccessfully the defences of the bridge, ordered a party of horsemen to proceed up the river to some distance, and to make a demonstration as if they intended to cross the river. Aboyne was completely deceived by this manœuvre, and sent the whole of his horsemen from the bridge to dispute the passage of the river with those of Montrose, leaving Lieutenant-Colonel Johnstone and his fifty musketeers alone to protect the bridge. Montrose having thus drawn his opponent into the snare set for him, immediately sent back the greater part of his horse under the command of Captain Middleton, with instructions to renew the attack upon the bridge with redoubled energy. This officer lost no time in obeying these orders, and Lieutenant-Colonel Johnstone, having been wounded in the outset by a stone torn from the bridge by a shot, was forced to abandon its defence, and he and his party retired precipitately to Aberdeen.

When Aboyne saw the colours of the Covenanters flying on the bridge of Dee, he fled with great haste toward Strathbogie after releasing the lairds of Purie Ogilvy, and Purie Fodderinghame, whom he had taken prisoners, and carried with him from Aberdeen. The loss on either side, during the conflict on the bridge, was trifling. The only person of note who fell on Aboyne's side, was Seaton of Pitmedden, a brave Cavalier, who was killed by a cannon shot while riding along the river side with Lord Aboyne. On that of the Covenanters was slain another valiant gentleman, a brother of Ramsay of Balmain. About fourteen persons of inferior note were killed on each side, including some burgesses of Aberdeen, and several were wounded.

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Montrose, reaching the north bank of the Dee, proceeded immediately to Aberdeen, which he entered without opposition. So exasperated were Montrose's followers at the repeated instances of devotedness shown by the inhabitants to the royal cause, that they proposed to raze the town and set it on fire; but they were hindered from carrying their design into execution by the firmness of Montrose. The Covenanters, however, treated the inhabitants very harshly, and imprisoned many who were suspected of having been concerned in opposing their passage across the Dee; but an end was put to these proceedings in consequence of intelligence being brought on the following day; viz., on the twentieth of June, of the treaty of pacification which had been entered into between the king and his subjects at Berwick, upon the eighteenth of that month. On receipt of this news, Montrose sent a despatch to the Earl of Seaforth, who was stationed with his army on the Spey, intimating the pacification, and desiring him to disband his army, with which order he instantly complied.

The articles of pacification were preceded by a declaration on the part of the king, in which he stated, that although he could not condescend to ratify and approve the acts of the "pretended general assembly at Glasgow for many grave and weighty considerations," yet, notwithstanding of the many disorders which had of late been committed, he not only confirmed and made good whatsoever his commissioner had granted and promised, but he also declared that all matters ecclesiastical should be determined by the assemblies of the kirk, and matters civil by the Parliament and other inferior judicatories, established by law. To settle, therefore, "the general distractions" of the kingdom, his Majesty ordered that a free general assembly should be held

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at Edinburgh on the sixth of August next following, at which he declared his intention, "God willing, to be personally present," and he, moreover, ordered a Parliament to meet at Edinburgh on the twentieth of August, for ratifying the proceedings of the General Assembly, and settling such other matters as might conduce to the peace and good of the kingdom of Scotland. By the articles of pacification, it was, *inter alia*, provided that the forces in Scotland should be disbanded and dissolved within forty-eight hours after the publication of the declaration, and that all the royal castles, forts, and warlike stores of every description should be delivered up to his Majesty after the said publication, as soon as he should send to receive them. Under the seventh and last article of the treaty, the Marquis of Huntly and his son, Lord Gordon, and some others who had been detained prisoners in the castle of Edinburgh by the Covenanters, were set at liberty.

It has been generally supposed that neither of the parties were sincere in their intentions to observe the conditions of the treaty. Certain it is, that the ink with which it was written was scarcely dry before its violation was contemplated. On the one hand, the king, before removing his army from the neighbourhood of Berwick, required the heads of the Covenanters to attend him at Berwick, obviously with the object of gaining them over to his side; but, with the exception of three commoners and three lords, Montrose, Loudon, and Lothian, they refused to obey. It was at this conference that Charles, who was exceedingly insinuating and persuasive, made a convert of Montrose, who, from that time, determined to desert his associates in arms, and to place himself under the royal standard. The immediate strengthening of the forts of Berwick

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and Carlisle, and the provisioning the castle of Edinburgh, were probably the suggestions of Montrose, who would, of course, be entrusted with the secret of his Majesty's designs. The Covenanters on the other hand, although making a show of disbanding their army at Dunse, in reality kept a considerable force on foot, which they quartered in different parts of the country, to be in readiness for the field on a short notice. The suspicious conduct of the king certainly justified this precaution.

The General Assembly met on the day fixed upon, but instead of attending in person as he proposed, Charles appointed the Earl of Traquair to act as his commissioner. After abolishing the Articles of Perth, the Book of Canons, the Liturgy, the High Commission and Episcopacy, and ratifying and approving of the late Covenant, the assembly was dissolved on the thirtieth of August, and another General Assembly was appointed to be held at Aberdeen on the twenty-eighth day of July of the following year, 1640. The Parliament met next day, viz., on the last day of August, but they were prevented, for a time, from proceeding to business, in consequence of a difficulty which arose, owing to the absence of the bishops, who formed the third estate, and who had been forced to leave Scotland in consequence of the turbulence of the times. The Covenanters themselves did not, however, think the presence of the bishops by any means necessary; but they were afraid that the king might afterward seize upon their absence as a good ground for questioning the legality of the acts of this Parliament. To get rid of this dilemma, the clumsy device of electing fourteen persons to supply the places of the bishops was proposed; but no sooner was this agreed to than another question arose: Whether the king, by virtue of his royal prerogative, or the two

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estates, should nominate these pseudo-representatives. A vote being taken, it was decided, by a plurality of votes, that the other two estates should elect the fourteen persons to represent the third estate. Why they did not steer a middle course, by dividing the nomination with the king, appears strange; but the violence of faction knows no medium. His Majesty's commissioner protested against the vote and against further proceedings till the king's mind should be known, and the commissioner immediately sent off a letter apprising him of the occurrence. Without waiting for the king's answer, the two estates passed an act substituting the lesser barons for the third estate, and they were proceeding with a variety of bills for securing the liberty of the subject and restraining the royal prerogative, when they were unexpectedly and suddenly prorogued by an order from the king till the second day of June in the following year.

If Charles had not already made up his mind for war with his Scottish subjects, the conduct of the Parliament which he had just prorogated determined him again to have recourse to arms in vindication of his prerogative. He endeavoured, at first, to enlist the sympathies of the bulk of the English nation in his cause, but without effect; and his repeated appeals to his English people, setting forth the rectitude of his intentions and the justice of his cause, being answered by men who questioned the one and denied the other, rather injured than served him. The people of England were not then in a mood to embark in a crusade against the civil and religious liberties of the north; and they had too much experience of the arbitrary spirit of the king to imagine that their own liberties would be better secured by extinguishing the flame which burned in the breasts of the sturdy and enthusiastic Covenanters.

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But, notwithstanding the many discouraging circumstances which surrounded him, Charles displayed a firmness of resolution to coerce the rebellious Scots by every means within his reach. The spring and part of the summer of 1640 were spent by both parties in military preparations. Field-Marshal Leslie, an old and experienced officer who had been in foreign service, was appointed generalissimo of the Scots army by the war committee. When mustered by the general at Choicelee, it amounted to about twenty-two thousand foot and twenty-five hundred horse. A council of war was held at Dunse, at which it was determined to invade England. Montrose, to whose command a division of the army, consisting of two thousand foot and five hundred horse, was entrusted, was absent when this meeting was held; but, although his sentiments had, by this time, undergone a complete change, seeing on his return no chance of preventing the resolution of the council, he dissembled his feelings and openly approved of the plan. There seems to be no doubt that in following this course he intended, on the first favourable opportunity, to declare for the king, and carry off such part of the army as should be inclined to follow him, which he reckoned as a third of the whole.

On the twentieth of August, General Leslie crossed the Tweed with his army, the van of which was led by Montrose on foot. This task, though performed with readiness and with every appearance of good-will, was not voluntarily undertaken, but had been devolved upon Montrose by lot, none of the principal officers daring to take the lead of their own accord in such a dangerous enterprise. There can be no doubt that Montrose was insincere in his professions, and that those who suspected him were right in thinking "that in his heart he was turned Royalist," a supposition which his correspond-

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ence with the king and his subsequent conduct fully justify.

Although the proper time had not arrived for throwing off the mask, Montrose immediately on his return to Scotland, after the close of this campaign, began to concert measures for counteracting the designs of the Covenanters; but his plans were embarrassed by some of his associates disclosing to the Covenanters the existence of an association which Montrose had formed at Cumbernauld for supporting the royal authority. A great outcry was raised against Montrose in consequence, but his influence was so great that the heads of the Covenanters were afraid to show any severity towards him. On subsequently discovering, however, that the king had written him letters which were intercepted and forcibly taken from the messenger, a servant of the Earl of Traquair, they apprehended him, along with Lord Napier of Merchiston, and Sir George Stirling of Keir, his relatives and intimate friends, and imprisoned them in the castle of Edinburgh. On the meeting of the Parliament at Edinburgh in July, 1641, which was attended by the king in person, Montrose demanded to be tried before them, but his application was rejected by the Covenanters, who obtained an order from the Parliament prohibiting him from going into the king's presence. After the king had returned to England, Montrose and his fellow-prisoners were liberated, and he, thereupon, went to his own castle, where he remained for some time, ruminating on the course he should pursue for the relief of the king.

Although Charles complied with the demands of his Scottish subjects, and heaped many favours and distinctions upon the heads of the leading Covenanters, they were by no means satisfied, and they entered fully into the hostile views of their brethren in the south, with

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whom they made common cause. Having resolved to send an army into England to join the parliamentary forces, who had come to an open rupture with the sovereign, they attempted to gain over Montrose to their side by offering him the post of lieutenant-general of their army, and promising to accede to any demands he might make; but he rejected all their offers; and, as an important crisis was at hand, he hastened to England in the early part of the year 1643, in company with the Lord Ogilvy, to lay the state of affairs before the king, and to offer him his advice and service in such an emergency. Charles, however, either from a want of confidence in the judgment of Montrose, who, to the rashness and impetuosity of youth, added, as he was led to believe, a desire of gratifying his personal feelings and vanity, or overcome by the calculating but fatal policy of the Marquis of Hamilton, who deprecated a fresh war between the king and his Scottish subjects, declined to follow the advice of Montrose, who had offered to raise an army immediately in Scotland to support him.

A convention of estates called by the Covenanters, without any authority from the king, met at Edinburgh on the twenty-second of June, 1643, and he soon perceived from the character and proceedings of this assembly, the great majority of which was Covenanters, the mistake he had committed in rejecting the advice of Montrose, and he now resolved, thenceforth, to be guided in his plans for subduing Scotland to his authority by the opininion of that nobleman. Accordingly, at a meeting held at Oxford, between the king and Montrose, in the month of December, 1643, when the Scots army was about entering England, it was agreed that the Earl of Antrim, an Irish nobleman of great power and influence, who then lived at Oxford, should be sent to Ireland to raise auxiliaries with whom he should make a

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descent in the west parts of Scotland in the month of April following; that the Marquis of Newcastle, who commanded the royal forces in the north of England, should furnish Montrose with a party of horse, with which he should enter the south of Scotland; that an application should be made to the King of Denmark for some troops of German horse; and that a quantity of arms should be transported into Scotland from abroad.

Instructions having been given to the Earl of Antrim, to raise the Irish levy, and Sir James Cochran having been despatched to the continent as ambassador for the king, to procure foreign aid, Montrose left Oxford on his way to Scotland, taking York and Durham in his route. Near the latter city, he had an interview with the Marquis of Newcastle for the purpose of obtaining a sufficient party of horse to escort him into Scotland, but all he could procure was about one hundred horse, badly appointed, with two small brass field-pieces. The marquis sent orders to the king's officers and to the captains of the militia in Cumberland and Westmoreland to afford Montrose such assistance as they could, and he was, in consequence, joined on his way to Carlisle by eight hundred foot and three troops of horse, of Cumberland and Northumberland militia. With this small force, and about two hundred horse, consisting of noblemen and gentlemen who had served as officers in Germany, France, or England, Montrose entered Scotland on the thirteenth of April, 1644. He had not however, proceeded far, when a revolt broke out among the English soldiers, who immediately returned to England. In spite of this discouragement, Montrose proceeded on with his small party of horse towards Dumfries, which surrendered to him without opposition. After waiting there a few days in expectation of hearing some tidings respecting the Earl of Antrim's movements,

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without receiving any, he retired to Carlisle, to avoid being surprised by the Covenanters, large bodies of whom were hovering about in all directions.

To aid the views of Montrose, the king had appointed the Marquis of Huntly, on whose fidelity he could rely, his lieutenant-general in the north of Scotland, who, on hearing of the capture of Dumfries by Montrose, immediately collected a considerable body of horse and foot, consisting of Highlanders and Lowlanders, at Kincardine-O'Neil, with the intention of crossing the Cairn-a-Mount; but being disappointed in not being joined by some forces from Perthshire, Angus, and the Mearns, which he expected, he altered his steps, and proceeded towards Aberdeen, which he took. From thence he despatched parties of his troops through the shires of Aberdeen and Banff, who brought in quantities of horses and arms for the use of his army. Another party, consisting of 120 horse and three hundred foot, commanded by the young laird of Drum and his brother, young Gicht, Colonel Nathaniel Gordon and Colonel Donald Farquharson and others, proceeded, contrary to the opinion of the marquis, to the town of Montrose, which they took, killed one of the bailies, made the provost prisoner, and threw some cannon into the sea, as they could not carry them away. But, on hearing that the Earl of Kinghorn was advancing upon them with the forces of Angus, they made a speedy retreat, leaving thirty of their foot behind them prisoners. To protect themselves against the army of the Marquis of Huntly, the inhabitants of Moray on the north of the Spey raised a regiment of foot and three companies of horse, which were quartered in the town of Elgin.

When the convention heard of the Marquis of Huntly's movements, they appointed the Marquis of Argyle to raise an army to quell this insurrection. He, accord-

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ingly, assembled at Perth, a force of five thousand foot and eight hundred horse out of Fife, Angus, Mearns Argyle, and the shire of Perth, with which he advanced on Aberdeen. Huntly, hearing of his approach, fled from Aberdeen, and retired to the town of Banff, where, on the day of his arrival, he disbanded his army. The marquis himself thereafter retired to Strathnaver, and took up his residence with the master of Reay. Argyle, after taking possession of Aberdeen, proceeded northward and took the castles of Gicht and Kellie, made the lairds of Gicht and Haddo prisoners and sent them to Edinburgh, the latter of whom, along with one Captain Logan, was afterward beheaded.

We now return to Montrose, who, after an ineffectual attempt to obtain an accession of force from the army of Prince Rupert, Count Palatine of the Rhine, determined on again entering Scotland with his little band. But being desirous to learn the exact situation of affairs there, before putting this resolution into effect, he sent Lord Ogilvy and Sir William Rollock into Scotland, in disguise, for that purpose. They returned in about fourteen days, and brought a spiritless and melancholy account of the state of matters in the north, where they found the whole passes, towns, and forts in possession of the Covenanters, and where no man dared to speak in favour of the king. This intelligence was received with dismay by Montrose's followers, who now began to think of the best means of securing their own safety. In this unpleasant conjuncture of affairs, Montrose called them together to consult them on the line of conduct they should pursue. Some advised him to return to Oxford and inform his Majesty of the hopeless state of his affairs in Scotland, while others gave an opinion that he should resign his commission, and go abroad till a more favourable opportunity should occur of serving the

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king; but the chivalrous and undaunted spirit of Montrose disdained to follow either of these courses, and he resolved upon the desperate expedient of venturing into the very heart of Scotland, with only one or two companions, in the hope of being able to rally round his person a force sufficient to support the declining interests of his sovereign.

Having communicated this intention privately to Lord Ogilvy, he put under his charge the few gentlemen who had remained faithful to him, that he might conduct them to the king; and, having accompanied them to a distance, he withdrew from them clandestinely, leaving his servants, horses, and baggage behind him, and returned to Carlisle. Having prepared himself for his journey, he selected Sir William Rollock, a gentleman of tried honour, and one Sibbald, to accompany him. Disguised as a groom, and riding upon a lean, worn-out horse, and leading another in his hand, Montrose passed for Sibbald's servant, in which condition and capacity he proceeded to the borders. The party had not proceeded far when an occurrence took place, which considerably disconcerted them. Meeting with a Scottish soldier, who had served under the Marquis of Newcastle in England, he, after passing Rollock and Sibbald, went up to the marquis, and accosted him by his name. Montrose told him that he was quite mistaken; but the soldier being positive, and judging that the marquis was concerned in some important affair, replied, with a countenance which betokened a kind heart: "Do not I know my Lord Marquis of Montrose well enough? But go your way, and God be with you." When Montrose saw that he could not preserve an incognito from the penetrating eye of the soldier, he gave him some money and dismissed him.

This occurrence excited alarm in the mind of Montrose,

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and made him accelerate his journey. Within four days he arrived at the house of Tullibelton, among the hills near the Tay, which belonged to Patrick Graham of Inchbrakie, his cousin, and a Royalist. No situation was better fitted for concocting his plans, and for communicating with those clans and the gentry of the adjoining Lowlands who stood well affected to the king. It formed, in fact, a centre, or *point d'appui* to the Royalists of the Highlands and the adjoining Lowlands, from which a pretty regular communication could be kept up, without any of those dangers which would have arisen in the Lowlands.

For some days Montrose did not venture to appear among the people in the neighbourhood, nor did he consider himself safe even in Tullibelton house, but passed the night in an obscure cottage, and in the daytime wandered alone among the neighbouring mountains, ruminating over the strange peculiarity of his situation, and waiting the return of his fellow-travellers, whom he had despatched to collect intelligence on the state of the kingdom. These messengers came back to him after some days' absence, bringing with them the most cheerless accounts of the situation of the country, and of the persecutions which the Royalists suffered at the hands of the Covenanters. Among other distressing pieces of intelligence they communicated to Montrose the premature and unsuccessful attempt of the Marquis of Huntly in favour of the royal cause, and of his retreat to Strathnaver to avoid the fury of his enemies. These accounts greatly affected Montrose, who was grieved to find that the Gordons, who were stern Royalists, should be exposed, by the abandonment of their chief, to the revenge of their enemies; but he consoled himself with the reflection, that as soon as he should be enabled to unfurl the royal standard the tide of fortune would turn.

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While cogitating on the course he should pursue in this conjuncture, a report reached him from some shepherds on the hills, that a body of Irish troops had landed in the West, and was advancing through the Highlands. Montrose at once concluded that these were the auxiliaries whom the Earl of Antrim had undertaken to send him four months before, and such they proved to be. This force, which amounted to fifteen hundred men, was under the command of Alexander Macdonald, son of a gentleman of Iona, named Coll Mac-Gillespic Macdonald, who had been greatly persecuted by the Earl of Argyle. Macdonald had arrived early in July, 1644, among the Hebrides, and had landed and taken the castles of Meigray and Kinloch Alan. He had then disembarked his forces in Knoydart, where he expected to be joined by the Marquis of Huntly and the Earl of Seaforth. As he advanced into the interior he despatched the fiery cross for the purpose of summoning the clans to his standard; but, although the cross was carried through a large extent of country, even to Aberdeen, he was only joined at first by the Clan Donald, under the captain of Clan Ronald, and the laird of Glengary. The Marquis of Argyle collected an army to oppose the progress of Macdonald; and to cut off his retreat to Ireland, he sent some ships of war to Loch Eishord, where Macdonald's fleet lay, which captured or destroyed them. This loss, while it frustrated an intention Macdonald entertained of returning to Ireland, in consequence of the disappointment he had met with in not being joined by the clans, stimulated him to further exertions in continuing his march, in the hope of meeting Montrose.

As Macdonald was perfectly ignorant of Montrose's movements, and thought it likely that he might be still at Carlisle, waiting till he should hear of Macdonald's

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arrival, he sent letters to him by the hands of a confidential friend, who resided in the neighbourhood of Inchbrakie's house. This gentleman, who knew nothing of Montrose's return to Scotland, having luckily communicated to Mr. Graham the secret of being entrusted with letters to his kinsman, Montrose, Graham offered to see them safely delivered to Montrose, though he should ride to Carlisle himself. The gentleman in question then delivered the letters to Graham, and Montrose having received them, wrote an answer as if from Carlisle, in which he requested Macdonald to keep up his spirits, that he would soon be joined by a seasonable reinforcement and a general at their head, and he ordered him with all expedition to march down into Athole. In fixing on Athole as the place of his rendezvous, Montrose is said to have been actuated by an implicit reliance on the fidelity and loyalty of the Athole men, and by a high opinion of their courage. They lay, besides, under many obligations to himself, and he calculated that he had only to appear among them to command their services in the cause of their sovereign.

When Macdonald received these instructions, he marched towards Athole; but in passing through Badenoch he was threatened with an attack by the Earls of Sutherland and Seaforth, at the head of some of their people, and by the Frazers, Grants, Rosses, and Munroes, and other inhabitants of Moray, who had assembled at the top of Strathspey; but Macdonald very cautiously avoided them, and hastened into Athole. On arriving in Athole Macdonald was coldly received by the people of that as well as the surrounding country, who doubted whether he had any authority from the king; and besides they hesitated to place themselves under the command of a person of neither noble nor ancient lineage, and whom they considered an upstart. This

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indecision might have proved fatal to Macdonald, who was closely pressed in his rear by the army of Argyle, had not these untoward deliverations been instantly put an end to by the arrival of Montrose at Blair where Macdonald had fixed his headquarters. Montrose had travelled seventy miles on foot, in a Highland dress, accompanied by Patrick Graham, his cousin, as his guide. His appearance was hailed by his countrymen with every demonstration of joy, and they immediately made him a spontaneous offer of their services.

Accordingly, on the following day, the Athole men to the number of about eight hundred, consisting chiefly of the Stewarts and Robertsons, put themselves under arms and flocked to the standard of Montrose. Thus, in little more than twenty-four hours, Montrose saw himself at the head of a force upwards of two thousand men, animated by an enthusiastic attachment to his person and to the cause which he had espoused. The extraordinary contrast between his present commanding position, and the situation in which he was placed a few days before, as a forlorn wanderer among the mountains, produced a powerful effect upon the daring and chivalrous spirit of Montrose, who looked forward to the success of his enterprise with the eagerness of a man who considered the destinies of his sovereign as altogether depending upon his individual exertions. Impressed with the necessity of acting with promptitude, he did not hesitate long as to the course he should pursue. He might have immediately gone in quest of Argyle, who had followed the army of Macdonald, with slow and cautious steps, and by one of those sudden movements which no man knew better how to execute with advantage, surprised and defeated his adversary, — but such a plan did not accord with the designs of Montrose, who resolved to open the campaign at once in the

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Lowlands, and thus give confidence to the friends and supporters of the king.

In pursuance of this determination, he put his small army in motion the same day towards Stratherne, in passing through which he expected to be joined by some of the inhabitants of that and the adjoining country. At the same time he sent forward a messenger with a friendly notice to the Menzieses, of his intention to pass through their country, but instead of taking this in good part, they maltreated the messenger and harassed the rear of his army. This unprovoked attack so exasperated Montrose, that he ordered his men, when passing by Weem castle, which belonged to the Clan Menzies, to plunder and lay waste their lands and to burn their houses, an order which was literally obeyed. He expected that this example of summary vengeance would serve as a useful lesson to deter others who might be disposed to imitate the conduct of the Menzieses from following a similar course. Notwithstanding the time spent in making these reprisals, Montrose passed the Tay with a part of his forces the same evening, and the remainder followed very early next morning. He had, at the special request of the Athole men themselves, placed them under the command of his kinsman, Patrick Graham of Inchbrakie, and he now sent him forward with a select party to reconnoitre. Inchbrakie soon returned with information that he had observed a party of armed men stationed upon the hill of Buchanty. On inquiry, Montrose ascertained that this body was commanded by Lord Kilpont, eldest son of the Earl of Menteith, and by Sir John Drummond, son of the Earl of Perth, both of whom were his relations. The force in question, which consisted of about five hundred men, was on its way to Perth to join the other covenanting troops who were stationed there. Mont-

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rose immediately marched up to this body, with the intention, if he could not prevail on them to join him, of attacking them, but before he had approached sufficiently near, Lord Kilpont, who had ascertained that Montrose commanded, sent some of his principal officers to him to ascertain what his object was in thus advancing. Montrose, having explained his views and stated that he acted by the king's authority, and having entreated them to return to their allegiance, they and the whole of their party immediately joined him. This new accession augmented Montrose's army to about three thousand men.

Montrose now learned from his new allies, that the Covenanters had assembled their forces in great numbers at Perth, and that they lay there waiting for his approach. The covenanting army, in fact, was more than double that of Montrose, amounting to about six thousand foot and seven hundred horse, to which were attached four pieces of artillery. Montrose, on the other hand, had not a single horseman, and but three horses, two of which were for his own use, and the other for that of Sir William Rollock, and besides he had no artillery. Yet with such a decided disparity, Montrose resolved to march directly to Perth and attack the enemy. He appears to have been influenced in this resolution by the consideration of the near proximity of Argyle with his army, and the danger in which he would be placed by being hemmed in by two hostile armies, and he could only expect to avoid such an embarrassment by risking an immediate engagement.

As the day was too far advanced to proceed to Perth, Montrose ordered his men to bivouac during the night about three miles from Buchanty, and began his march by dawn of day. As soon as Lord Elcho, the commander of the covenanting army, heard of Montrose's

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approach, he left Perth and drew up his army on Tippermuir, a pretty extensive plain between four and five miles west from the town. Reserving to himself the command of the right wing, he committed the charge of the left to Sir James Scot, an able and skilful officer, who had served with great honour in the Venetian army; and to the Earl of Tulbardine, he entrusted the command of the centre. The horse were divided and placed on each wing with the view of surrounding the army of Montrose, should he venture to attack them in their position. As soon as Montrose perceived the enemy thus drawn up in battle array, he made the necessary dispositions for attacking them. To counteract as much as possible the danger arising to such a small body of men, unprotected by cavalry, from the extended line of the Covenanters, Montrose endeavoured to make his line as extensive as possible with safety, by limiting his files to three men deep. As the Irish had neither swords nor pikes to oppose the cavalry, they were stationed in the centre of the line, and the Highlanders, who were provided with swords and Lochaber axes, were placed on the wings, as better fitted to resist the attacks of the cavalry. Some of the Highlanders were, however, quite destitute of arms of every description, and it is related on the authority of an eye-witness, that Montrose, seeing their helpless condition, thus quaintly addressed them: "It is true you have no arms; your enemies, however, have plenty. My advice, therefore, is, that as there happens to be a great abundance of stones upon this moor, every man should provide himself, in the first place, with as stout a stone as he can well manage, rush up to the first Covenanter he meets, beat out his brains, take his sword, and then, I believe, he will be at no loss how to proceed." This advice, as will be seen, was really acted upon. As Montrose was almost

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destitute of powder, he ordered the Irish forces to husband their fire till they should come close to the enemy, and after a simultaneous discharge from the three ranks (the front rank kneeling) to assail the enemy thereafter as they best could. To oppose the left wing of the Covenanters, commanded by Sir James Scot, Montrose took upon himself the command of his own right, placing Lord Kilpont at the head of the left, and Macdonald, his major-general, over the centre.

During the progress of these arrangements, Montrose, anxious to spare the effusion of blood, despatched an accomplished young nobleman, named Drummond, eldest son of Lord Madarty, "with a message to the chiefs of the Covenanters' army, importing that he, as well as his royal master, by whose commission he acted, had the utmost abhorrence to shed the blood of his countrymen, and that it was their first and most earnest wish to obtain a victory without bloodshed; and this might be compassed by both armies at the same time, if, without trying the doubtful chance of a battle, they would lay down their arms and return to their duty and obedience to the sovereign. He assured them that, for his own part, he aimed at neither the places nor honours, estates nor lives, of any of his fellow subjects, for whom, on the contrary, he entertained the greatest affection; all that he desired of them, and he obtested it most earnestly in the name of God, was to consult their own safety, and hearken to his advice; nor any longer obstinately refuse to trust to the clemency, faith and protection of so good a king, who, as he had hitherto fully complied with the demands of his Scots subjects as to matters both civil and religious, though to the very great detriment of his prerogative, so he was still ready like a most indulgent parent, though provoked by repeated injuries, to embrace them with open arms,

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when convinced of their error, and become submissive. But if they should still continue obstinate in their rebellion, he called God to witness, that he was forced by their own stubbornness into the present encounter, for the consequences of which they alone were to be answerable." Instead, however, of returning any answer to this message, they seized the messenger, and sent him to Perth under an escort, with an intimation that, on obtaining a victory over his master, they would execute him. Indeed, the probability of a defeat seems never, for a moment, to have entered into the imaginations of the Covenanters, and they had been assured by Frederick Carmichael, a minister who had preached to them the same day, being Sunday, the first of September, " that if ever God spoke truth out of his mouth, he promised them, in the name of God, a certain victory that day."

All hopes, therefore, of an accommodation being put an end to, both armies, after advancing towards each other, remained motionless for a short time as if unwilling to begin the attack; but this state of matters was speedily put an end to by the advance of a select skirmishing party under the command of Lord Drummond, sent out from the main body of the covenanting army, for the double purpose of distracting the attention of Montrose, and inducing his troops to leave their ranks, and thus create confusion among them; but Montrose kept his men in check, and contented himself with sending out a few of his men to oppose them. Lord Drummond and his party were routed at the first onset, and fled back upon the main body in great disorder. This trivial affair decided the fate of the day, for the Covenanters, many of whom were undisciplined, seeing the unexpected defeat of Lord Drummond's party, became quite dispirited, and began to show symptoms which indicated a disposition for immediate flight. The confusion into

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which the main body had been thrown by the retreat of the advanced party, and the indecision which seemed now to prevail in the Covenanters' army in consequence of that reverse, were observed by the watchful eye of Montrose, who saw that the favourable moment for striking a decisive blow had arrived. He, therefore, gave orders to his men to advance, who, immediately setting up a loud shout, rushed forward at a quick pace towards the enemy. They were met by a random discharge from some cannon which the Covenanters had placed in front of their army, but which did little or no execution. When sufficiently near, Montrose's musketeers halted, and, as ordered, poured a volley into the main rank of the Covenanters, which immediately gave way. The cavalry of the Covenanters, thereupon, issued from their stations and attacked the Royalists, who, in their turn, defended themselves with singular intrepidity. While the armed Highlanders made ample use of their Lochaber axes and swords, the Irish steadily opposed the attacks of the horse with the butt-ends of their muskets; but the most effective annoyance, which the cavalry met with, appears to have proceeded from the unarmed Highlanders, who, having supplied themselves with a quantity of stones, as suggested by Montrose, discharged them with well-directed aim at the horses and their riders. The result was that, after a short struggle, the cavalry were obliged to make a precipitate retreat. While this contest was going on, another part of Montrose's army was engaged with the right wing of the covenanting army, under Sir James Scot, but although this body made a longer and more determined resistance, and galled the party opposed to them by an incessant fire of musketry, they were at last overpowered by the Athole men, who rushed upon them with their broad swords, and cut down and wounded a considerable number.

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The route of the Covenanters now became general. The horsemen saved themselves by the fleetness of their horses, but during the pursuit, which was kept up to a distance of six or seven miles, many hundreds of foot were killed, and a considerable number made prisoners,[10] some of whom afterward served in Montrose's army. The loss on the side of Montrose appears to have been very trifling, but we cannot suppose, with some writers, that none of his men were killed. By this victory, and the subsequent capture of Perth, which he entered the same day, Montrose was enabled to equip his army with all those warlike necessaries of which it had been so remarkably destitute in the morning, and of which the Covenanters left him an abundant supply.

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CHAPTER IX

MARCHING AND RETREATING

MONTROSE now entertained confident expectations that many of the Royalists of the surrounding country, who had hiterto kept aloof, would join him; but after remaining three days at Perth, to give them an opportunity of rallying about his standard, he had the mortification to find that, with the exception of the Lords Dupplin and Spynie, and a few gentlemen from the Carse of Gowrie, who came to him, his anticipations were not to be realized. The spirits of the Royalists had been too much subdued by the severities of the Covenanters for them all at once to risk their lives and fortunes on the issue of what they had long considered a hopeless cause; and although Montrose had succeeded in dispersing one army with a greatly inferior force, yet it was well known that that army was composed of a raw and undisciplined militia, and that the Covenanters had still large bodies of well-trained troops in the field.

Thus disappointed in his hopes, and understanding that the Earl of Argyle was fast approaching with a large army, Montrose crossed the Tay on the fourth of September, directing his course towards Cupar Angus, and encamped at night in the open fields near Collace. His object in proceeding northward was to endeavour to raise some of the loyal clans, and thus to put himself in a sufficiently strong condition to meet Argyle. Montrose had given orders to the army to march early next morning, but by break of day, and before the drums

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had beat, he was alarmed by an uproar in the whole camp. Perceiving his men running to their arms in a state of fury and rage, Montrose, apprehensive that the Highlanders and Irish had quarrelled, immediately rushed in among the thickest of the crowd to pacify them, but to his great grief and dismay, he ascertained that the confusion had arisen from the assassination of his valued friend Lord Kilpont, who now lay before him weltering in his blood. He had fallen a victim to the blind fury of one of his own vassals, James Stuart of Ardvoirlich, with whom he had slept the same night, and who had long enjoyed his confidence and friendship. Lord Kilpont's father, the Earl of Airth, had frequently warned him against continuing his intimacy with this man, whom he always suspected, but he disregarded his father's injunctions, and put himself entirely under the guidance of this perfidious person. It is asserted that it was by his advice that Lord Kilpont joined Montrose, and that wishing to ingratiate himself with the Covenanters, he formed a design to assassinate Montrose or his major-general, Macdonald; but as he thought that he could not carry his plan into execution without the assistance of his too-confiding friend, Lord Kilpont, he endeavoured to entice him to concur in his wicked project. He, therefore, on the night in question, slept with his lordship, and having prevailed upon him to rise and take a walk in the fields before daylight, on the pretence of refreshing themselves, he there disclosed his horrid purpose, and entreated his lordship to concur therein. Lord Kilpont rejected the base proposal with horror and a virtuous indignation, which so alarmed Stuart, that, afraid lest his lordship might discover the matter, he suddenly drew his dirk and wounded his lordship mortally in several places. Stuart, thereupon, fled, and killed, in passing, a sentinel who stood in his

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way. A pursuit followed, but, owing to the darkness of the morning, which prevented his pursuers from seeing beyond the length of their pikes, he made his escape, and thereafter joined the Earl of Argyle, who gave him a commission in his army in reward for what in those times, and by one class of persons, was considered, if not a meritorious, at least far from a condemnatory action.

Having taken farewell of the body of his amiable friend, which he embraced with transports of grief, and consigned it to the care of the deceased's friends for interment, Montrose marched down upon Dundee, which he summoned; but the inhabitants, confident in their own strength, refused to surrender. Not wishing, however, to waste his time upon the hazardous issue of a siege with a hostile army in his rear, Montrose proceeded through Angus and the Mearns, and in the course of his route was joined by the Earl of Airly, his two sons, Sir Thomas and Sir David Ogilvy, and a considerable number of their friends and vassals, and some gentlemen from the Mearns and Aberdeenshire. This was a seasonable addition to Montrose's force, which had been greatly weakened by the absence of some of the Highlanders who had gone home to deposit the spoils they had collected after the battle of Tippermuir, agreeably to their usual custom, and by the departure of Lord Kilpont's retainers, who had gone to Monteith with his corpse.

After the battle of Tippermuir, Lord Elcho had retired, with his regiment and some fugitives, to Aberdeen, where Lord Burleigh and other commissioners from the convention of estates were. As soon as they heard of the approach of Montrose, Burleigh, who acted as chief commissioner, immediately assembled the Forbeses, the Frazers, and the other friends of the covenanting interest, and he did everything in his power to gain over

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to his side as many persons as he could from those districts where Montrose expected assistance. In this way, Burleigh increased his force to twenty-five hundred foot and five hundred horse, but some of these, consisting of Gordons, and others who were obliged to take up arms, could not be relied upon.

When Montrose heard of these preparations, he resolved, notwithstanding the disparity of force, his own army now amounting only to fifteen hundred foot and forty-four horse, to hasten his march and attack them before Argyle should come up. On arriving near the bridge of Dee, he found it strongly fortified and guarded by a considerable force. He did not attempt to force a passage, but, directing his course to the west, along the river, crossed it at a ford at the Mills of Drum, and encamped at Crathas that night. This took place on Wednesday, the eleventh day of September. The Covenanters, the same day, drew up their army at the Two Mile Cross, a short distance from Aberdeen, where they remained till Thursday night, when they retired into the town. On the same night, Montrose marched down Dee side and took possession of the ground which the Covenanters had just left.

On the following morning, viz., Friday, the thirteenth of September, about eleven o'clock, the Covenanters marched out of Aberdeen to meet Montrose, who, on their approach, despatched a drummer to beat a parley, and sent a commissioner along with him, bearing a letter from Montrose to the provosts and bailies of Aberdeen, commanding and charging them to surrender "the town to him, lieutenant to his Majesty, and in the king's name, whereby he might receive peaceable entrance to use his Majesty's proclamations and such others as he thought fitting, promising assurance that no more harm nor prejudice should be done to the town,

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but to take their entertainment for that night; otherwise, if they would disobey, that then he desired them to remove old aged men, women, and children out of the way, and to stand to their own peril." Immediately on receipt of this letter, the provost called a meeting of the council which was attended by Lord Burleigh, and, after a short consultation, an answer was sent along with the commissioner declining to surrender the town. On their return, the drummer was killed by the Covenanters, at a place called Justice Mills, which violation of the law of nations so exasperated Montrose, that he gave orders to his men not to spare any of the enemy who might fall into their hands. His anger at this occurrence is strongly depicted by Spalding, who says that "he grew mad, and became furious and impatient."

As soon as Montrose received notice of the refusal of the magistrates to surrender the town, he made the necessary dispositions for attacking the enemy. From his paucity of cavalry, he was obliged to extend his line, as he had done at Tippermuir, to prevent the enemy from surrounding or outflanking him with their horse, and on each of his wings he posted his small body of horsemen along with select parties of musketeers and archers. To James Hay, and Sir Nathaniel Gordon, he gave the command of the right wing, and he committed the charge of the left to Sir William Rollock, all men of tried bravery and experience.

The Covenanters began the battle by a cannonade from their field-pieces, and, from their commanding position, gave considerable annoyance to the royal forces, who were very deficient in artillery. After the firing had been kept up for some time, Lord Lewis Gordon, third son of the Marquis of Huntly, a young man of a very ardent disposition, and of a violent and changeable temper, who commanded the left wing of the Cove-

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nanters, having obtained possession of some level ground where his horse could act, made a demonstration to attack Montrose's right wing; which, being observed by Montrose, he immediately ordered Sir William Rollock, with his party of horse, from the left wing to the assistance of the right. These united wings, which consisted of only forty-four horse, not only repulsed the attack of a body of three hundred, but threw them into complete disorder and forced them to retreat upon the main body, leaving many dead and wounded on the field. Montrose restrained these brave cavaliers from pursuing the body they had routed, anticipating that their services might soon be required at the other wing, and he was not mistaken, for no sooner did the Covenanting general perceive the retreat of Lord Lewis Gordon than he ordered an attack to be made upon the left wing of Montrose's army; but Montrose, with a celerity almost unexampled, moved his whole cavalry from the right to the left wing, who, falling upon the flank of their assailants, sword in hand, forced them to fly, with great slaughter. In this affair, Montrose's horse took Forbes of Craigievar and Forbes of Boyndlie, prisoners.

The unsuccessful attacks on the wings of Montrose's army had, in no shape, affected the future fortune of the day, as both armies kept their ground, and were equally animated with hopes of ultimate success. Vexed, but by no means intimidated by their second defeat, the gentlemen who composed Burleigh's horse consulted together as to the best mode of renewing the attack, and, being of opinion that the success of Montrose's cavalry was owing chiefly to the expert musketeers, with whom they were interlined, they resolved to imitate the same plan, by mixing among them a select body of foot, and renewing the charge a third time, with redoubled en-

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ergy. But this scheme, which might have proved fatal to Montrose, if tried, was frustrated by a resolution he came to, of making an instant and simultaneous attack upon the enemy. Perceiving their horse still in great confusion, and a considerable way apart from their main body, he determined upon attacking them with his foot before they should get time to rally; and, galloping up to his men, who had been greatly galled by the enemies' cannon, he told them that there was no good to be expected by the two armies keeping at such a distance; that in this way there was no means of distinguishing the strong from the weak, nor the coward from the brave man, but that if they would once make a home charge upon these timorous and effeminate striplings, as he called Burleigh's horse, they would never stand their attack. "Come on, then," said he, "my brave fellow-soldiers, fall down upon them with your swords and muskets, drive them before you, and make them suffer the punishment due to their perfidy and rebellion." These words were no sooner uttered, than, on the word of command being given, Montrose's men rushed forward at a quick pace and fell upon the enemy, sword in hand. The Covenanters were paralyzed by the suddenness and impetuosity of the attack, and, turning their backs, they fled in the utmost trepidation and confusion towards Aberdeen. The slaughter was tremendous, as the victors spared no man. The road leading from the field of battle to Aberdeen was strewed with the dead and the dying; the streets of Aberdeen were covered with the bodies, and stained with the blood of its inhabitants. "There was," says Spalding, "little slaughter in the fight, but horrible was the slaughter in the flight, fleeing back to the town, which was our townsmen's destruction; whereas, if they had fled, and not came near the town, they might have been in better security; but,

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being commanded by Patrick Leslie, the provost, to take the town, they were undone; yet, himself and the prime Covenanters being on horseback, wan safely themselves away. The lieutenant follows the chace into Aberdeen, his men hewing and cutting down all manner of men they could overtake, within the town, upon the streets, or in their houses, and round about the town, as our men were fleeing, with broad swords, but (without) mercy or remeid. Their cruel Irish, seeing a man well clad, would first tyr (strip) him, and save his clothes unspoiled, syne kill the man." In fine, according to this writer, who was an eye-witness, the town of Aberdeen, which, but a few years before, had suffered for its loyalty, was now, by the same general who had then oppressed it, delivered up by him to be indiscriminately plundered by his Irish forces, for having espoused the same cause which he himself had supported. For four days did these men indulge in the most dreadful excesses, "and nothing," continues Spalding, was "heard but pitiful howling, crying, weeping, mourning, through all the streets." Yet Guthrie says that Montrose "showed great mercy, both pardoning the people and protecting their goods."

It is singular that, although the battle continued for four hours without any determinate result, Montrose lost very few men, a circumstance the more extraordinary, as the cannon of the Covenanters were placed upon advantageous ground, whilst those of Montrose were rendered quite ineffective by being situated in a position from which they could not be brought to bear upon the enemy. An anecdote, characteristic of the bravery of the Irish, and of their coolness in enduring the privations of war, has been preserved. During the cannonade on the side of the Covenanters, an Irishman had his leg shot away by a cannon ball, but which kept

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still attached to the stump by means of a small bit of skin, or flesh. His comrades-in-arms being affected with his disaster, this brave man, without betraying any symptoms of pain, thus cheerfully addressed them: "This, my companions, is the fate of war, and what none of us ought to grudge; go on, and behave as becomes you; and, as for me, I am certain my lord, the marquis, will make me a trooper, as I am now disabled for the foot service." Then, taking a knife from his pocket, he deliberately opened it, and cut asunder the skin which retained the leg, without betraying the least emotion, and delivered it to one of his companions for interment. As soon as this courageous man was able to mount a horse, his wish to become a trooper was complied with, in which capacity he afterward distinguished himself.

Hoping that the news of the victory he had obtained would create a strong feeling in his favour among the Gordons, some of whom had actually fought against him, under the command of Lord Lewis Gordon, Montrose sent a part of his army toward Kintore and Inverury, the following day, to encourage the people of the surrounding country to declare for him; but he was sadly disappointed in his expectations. The fact is, that ever since the appointment of Montrose as lieutenant-general of the kingdom, — an appointment which trenched upon the authority of the Marquis of Huntly as lieutenant of the north, the latter had become quite lukewarm in the cause of his sovereign; and, although he was aware of the intentions of his son, Lord Lewis, to join the Covenanters, he quietly allowed him to do so without remonstrance. But, besides being thus, in some measure, superseded by Montrose, the marquis was actuated by personal hostility to him, on account of the treatment he had formerly received from him; and he resolved to

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gratify his spleen by remaining a passive observer of a struggle which involved the very existence of the monarchy itself. These were certainly the reasons which influenced the Marquis of Huntly to withhold his support from Montrose, although Gordon of Sallagh says he cannot determine what they were; because, as he oddly observes, "great men's reasons are best known to themselves." But, whatever may have been Huntly's reasons, his apathy and indifference had a deadening influence upon his numerous retainers, who had no idea of taking the field but at the command of their chief.

As Montrose saw no possibility of opposing the powerful and well-appointed army of Argyle, which was advancing upon him with slow and cautious steps, disappointed as he had been of the aid which he had calculated upon, he resolved to march into the Highlands, and there collect such of the clans as were favourably disposed to the royal cause. Leaving, therefore, Aberdeen on the sixteenth of September, with the remainder of his forces, he joined the camp at Kintore, whence he despatched Sir William Rollock to Oxford to inform the king of the events of the campaign, and of his present situation, and to solicit him to send supplies.

We must now advert to the progress of Argyle's army, the slow movements of which form an unfavourable contrast when compared with the rapid marches of Montrose's army; but it seems hardly fair at this period to ascribe the tardy progress which Argyle made towards the north to cowardice on his part. He might, no doubt, have dreaded a collision with his distinguished adversary, but we are forced, in candour, to attribute his apparent inactivity rather to the delays consequent upon the transportation of heavy artillery and a large

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quantity of baggage, than to any disposition of avoiding a hostile meeting.

On the fourth of September, four days after the battle of Tippermuir, Argyle, who had been pursuing the Irish forces under Macdonald, had arrived with his Highlanders at Stirling, where, on the following day, he was joined by the Earl of Lothian and his regiment, which had shortly before been brought over from Ireland. After raising some men in Stirlingshire, he marched to Perth upon the tenth, where he was joined by some Fife men, and Lord Bargenny's and Sir Frederick Hamilton's regiments of horse, which had been recalled from Newcastle for that purpose. With this increased force, which now consisted of about three thousand foot and two regular cavalry regiments, besides ten troops of horse, Argyle left Perth on the fourteenth of September for the north, and, in his route, was joined by the earl marshal, the Lords Gordon, Fraser, and Crichton, and other Covenanters. He arrived at Aberdeen upon the nineteenth of September, where he issued a proclamation, declaring the Marquis of Montrose and his followers traitors to religion and to their king and country, and offering a reward of £20,000 Scots, to any person who should bring in Montrose dead or alive. Spalding laments with great pathos and feeling the severe hardships to which the citizens of Aberdeen had been subjected by these frequent visitations of hostile armies, and alluding to the present occupancy of the town by Argyle, he observes, that "this multitude of people lived upon free quarters, a new grief to both towns, whereof there was quartered on poor old Aberdeen Argyle's own three regiments. The soldiers had their baggage carried, and craved nothing but house-room and fire. But ilk captain, with twelve gentlemen, had free quarters (so long as the town had meat and drink)

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for two ordinaries, but the third ordinary they furnished themselves out of their own baggage and provisions, having store of meal, nolt, and sheep, carried with them. But, the first night, they drank out all the stale ale in Aberdeen, and lived upon wort thereafter."

Argyle was now within half a day's march of Montrose, but strange to tell, he made no preparations to follow him, and spent two or three days in Aberdeen doing absolutely nothing. This extraordinary inactivity did not escape the observation of Spalding, who sneeringly remarks upon it in the following strain: "It is said the Marquis of Argyle had followed thir Irishes who fled out of his country about ten weeks time, but could never win (reach) within two and a half days' journey towards them. But now his foot army lying in Aberdeen, was within half a day's journey towards them lying about Inverury, and in the Garioch; and so Argyle himself, with his troopers lying now at Drum, was within like distance to them: but little following was there now, ilk (each) party harrying and destroying the country wherever they came in their bestial nolt, sheep, kine, victuals and other goods, and finding their horses, troopers, and baggage horses, with corns, about both Aberdeens, felt the smart. Marvellous to see Argyle with his horse troopers and foot army so near his enemy, and to lye still without pursuing of them so long time!"

After spending three days in inglorious supineness, Argyle put his army in motion in the direction of Kintore. Montrose, on hearing of his approach, concealed his cannon in a bog, and leaving behind him some of his heavy baggage, made towards the Spey with the intention of crossing it. On arriving at the river, he encamped near the old castle of Rothiemurcus; but finding that the boats used in passing the river had been removed to the north side of the river, and that a large

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armed force from the country on the north of the Spey had assembled on the opposite bank to oppose his passage, Montrose marched his army into the forest of Abernethy. Argyle only proceeded at first as far as Strathbogie, but instead of pursuing Montrose, he allowed his troops to waste their time in plundering the properties and laying waste the lands of the Gordons in Strathbogie, and the Enzie, under the very eyes of Lord Gordon and Lord Lewis Gordon, neither of whom appear to have endeavoured to avert such a calamity. Spalding says that it was "a wonderful unnaturalitie in the Lord Gordon to suffer his father's lands and friends in his own sight to be thus wreckt and destroyed in his father's absence;" but Lord Gordon likely had it not in his power to stay these proceedings, which, if not done at the instigation, may have received the approbation of his violent and headstrong younger brother, who had joined the Covenanters' standard. On the twenty-seventh of September, Argyle mustered his forces at the Bog of Gicht, which were found to amount to about four thousand men, but although the army of Montrose did not amount to much more than a third of that number, and was within twenty miles distance, he did not venture to attack him. After remaining a few days in Abernethy forest, Montrose passed through the forest of Rothiemurcus, and, following the course of the Spey, marched through Badenoch.

When Argyle heard of the departure of Montrose from the forest of Abernethy, he made a feint of following him. He, accordingly, set his army in motion along Spey-side, and, crossing the river himself with some horse, he marched up some distance along the north bank, and re-crossed, when he ordered his troops to halt. He then proceeded to Forres to attend a committee meeting of Covenanters to concert a plan of opera-

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tions in the north, at which the Earl of Sutherland, Lord Lovat, the sheriff of Moray, the lairds of Balnagown, Innes, and Pluscarden, and many others were present. From Forres Argyle went to Inverness, and after giving some instructions to Sir Mungo Campbell of Lawers, and the laird of Buchanan, the commanders of the regiments stationed there, he returned to his army, which he marched through Badenoch in pursuit of Montrose. It was the intention of the latter to have proceeded instantly into Athole, but he was prevented from moving for a few days by a severe illness. When the Covenanters heard of this intelligence they could not restrain their joy, and as people will readily believe any occurrence they long for, reports of his death were speedily circulated and believed with avidity. Even the ministers could not restrain the satisfaction they felt on the occasion, and they asserted with confidence that the Lord of Hosts himself had slain Montrose. The speedy recovery of Montrose, and his sudden appearance in Athole,[11] however, soon put an end to these rejoicings. From Athole he sent Macdonald with a party of five hundred men to the Western Highlands to invite the laird of Maclean, the captain of Clan Ranald, and others to join him. Marching down to Runkeld, Montrose proceeded rapidly through Angus toward Brechin and Montrose.

The delay occasioned in Montrose's movements by the indisposition with which he was seized, was fully compensated for by the tardy motions of Argyle, who, on entering Badenoch, found that his vigilant antagonist was several days' march ahead of him. This intelligence, however, did not induce him in the least to accelerate his march. Hearing, when passing through Badenoch, that Montrose had been joined by some of the inhabitants of that country, Argyle, according

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to Spalding, "left nothing of that country undestroyed, no not one four footed beast;" and Athole shared a similar fate.

At the time Montrose entered Angus, a committee of the estates, consisting of the earl marshal and other barons, was sitting in Aberdeen, who, on hearing of his approach, issued, on the tenth of October, a printed order, to which the earl marshal's name was attached, ordaining all persons of whatever age, sex, or condition, having horses of the value of £40 Scots or upwards, to send them to the bridge of Dee, which was appointed as the place of rendezvous, on the fourteenth of October, by ten o'clock, A. M., with riders fully equipped and armed; with certification, in case of failure, that each landed proprietor should be fined in the sum of £1,000; every gentleman not a landed proprietor, in £500 Scots, and each husbandman in one hundred merks, besides confiscation of their horses. Copies of this proclamation were sent to the moderators of the adjoining Presbyteries, who were directed to instruct the ministers of the parishes to notify the same to every man within their parishes, and to read it from their pulpits upon Sunday. With the exception of the Lord Gordon, who brought three troops of horse, and Captain Alexander Keith, brother of the earl marshal, who appeared with one troop at the appointed place, no attention was paid to the order of the committee by the people, who had not yet recovered from their fears, and their recent sufferings were still too fresh in their minds to induce them again to expose themselves to the vengeance of Montrose and his Irish troops. "Many men and women," says Spalding, "with their young children, carried on women's backs, fled the town of Aberdeen (there having fallen, the same Sunday, a storm of snow) howling, lamenting, and crying, not

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knowing where to go for safety of their lives, which was pitiful to behold; but their fear was more nor needed, for they all returned back to their houses shortly, for that Montrose came not to Aberdeen." Disappointed and chagrined at the disobedience of the country people, Ramsay, who had been appointed by the committee major-general of these expected horse, destroyed the grain crops of the farmers.

After refreshing his army a few days in Angus, Montrose prepared to cross the Grampians, and to march to Strathbogie to make another attempt to raise the Gordons; but, before setting out on his march, he released Forbes of Craigievar and Forbes of Boyndlie, on their parole, upon condition that Craigievar should procure the liberation of the young laird of Drum and his brother, from the jail of Edinburgh, failing which, Craigievar and Boyndlie were both to deliver themselves up to him as prisoners, before the first of November. This act of generosity, on the part of Montrose, was greatly admired, more particularly as Craigievar was one of the heads of the Covenanters, and had great influence among them. In pursuance of his design, Montrose marched through the Mearns, and upon Thursday, the seventeenth of October, crossed the Dee at the Mills of Drum, with his whole army. In his progress north, contrary to his former forbearing policy, he laid waste the lands of some of the leading Covenanters, burned their houses, and plundered their effects. He arrived at Strathbogie on the nineteenth of October, where he remained till the twenty-seventh, without being able to induce any considerable number of the Gordons to join him. It was not from want of inclination that they refused to do so, but they were unwilling to incur the displeasure of their chief, who they knew was personally opposed to Montrose, and who felt indignant

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at seeing a man who had formerly espoused the cause of the Covenanters preferred before him. In order to avoid the personal solicitations of Montrose, and the pain of refusing his request, many of the leading men of the clan concealed or absented themselves. Had Montrose been accompanied by any of the Marquis of Huntly's sons, they might have had influence enough to have induced some of the Gordons to declare for him, but the situation of the marquis's three sons was at this time very peculiar. The eldest son, Lord Gordon, a young man "of singular worth and accomplishments," was with Argyle, his uncle by the mother's side; the Earl of Aboyne, the second son, was shut up in the castle of Carlisle, then in a state of siege; and Lord Lewis Gordon, the third son, had, as we have seen, joined the Covenanters, and fought in their ranks.

In this situation of matters, Montrose left Strathbogie on the day last mentioned, and took up a position in the forest of Fyvie, where he despatched some of his troops, who took possession of the castles of Fyvie and Tollie Barclay, in which he found a good supply of provisions, which was of great service to his army. During his stay at Strathbogie, Montrose kept a strict outlook for the enemy, and scarcely passed a night without scouring the neighbouring country to the distance of several miles, with parties of light foot, who attacked straggling parties of the Covenanters, and brought in prisoners from time to time, without sustaining any loss. These petty enterprises, while they alarmed their enemies, gave an extraordinary degree of confidence to Montrose's men, who were ready to undertake any service, however difficult or dangerous, if he only commanded them to perform it.

When Montrose crossed the Dee, Argyle was several days' march behind him. The latter, however, reached

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Aberdeen on the twenty-fourth of October, and proceeded the following morning toward Kintore, which he reached the same night. On the following morning, he marched forward to Inverury, where he halted at night. Here he was joined by the Earl of Lothian's regiment, which increased his force to about twenty-five hundred foot and twelve hundred horse. In his progress through the shires of Angus, Kincardine, Aberdeen, and Banff, he received no accession of strength, from the dread which the name and actions of Montrose had infused into the minds of the inhabitants of these counties.

The sudden movements of Argyle from Aberdeen to Kintore, and from Kintore to Inverury, form a remarkable contrast with the slowness of his former motions. He had followed Montrose through a long and circuitous route, the greater part of which still bore recent traces of his footsteps, and instead of showing any disposition to overtake his flying foe, seemed rather inclined to keep that respectful distance from him, so congenial to the mind of one who, "willing to wound," is "yet still afraid to strike." But although this questionable policy of Argyle was by no means calculated to raise his military fame, it had the effect of throwing Montrose in the present case off his guard, and had well-nigh proved fatal to him. The rapid march of Argyle on Kintore and Inverury, in fact, was effected without Montrose's knowledge, for the spies he had employed concealed the matter from him, and while he imagined that Argyle was still on the other side of the Grampians, he suddenly appeared within a very few miles of Montrose's camp upon the twenty-eighth day of October.

The unexpected arrival of Argyle's army did not disconcert Montrose. His foot, which amounted to fifteen hundred men, were little more than the half

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of those under Argyle, while he had only about fifty horse to oppose to twelve hundred. Yet, with this immense disparity, he resolved to await the attack of the enemy, judging it inexpedient, from the want of cavalry, to become the assailant by descending into the plain where Argyle's army was encamped. He might have thrown a large body of his troops into the castle of Fyvie and stood a siege, but as such a mode of defence did not suit his views, and was considered by him inconsistent with his own military reputation and the splendour of his victories, he disdained to adopt such a course. His plan was this: On a rugged eminence behind the castle of Fyvie, on the uneven sides of which several ditches had been cut and dikes built to serve as farm fences, Montrose drew up his little but intrepid host; but before he had marked out the positions to be occupied by his divisions, he had the misfortune to witness the desertion of a small body of the Gordons, who had joined him at Strathbogie. They, however, did not join Argyle, but contented themselves with withdrawing altogether from the scene of ensuing action. It is probable, that they came to the determination of retiring, not from cowardice, but from disinclination to appear in the field against Lord Lewis Gordon, who held a high command in Argyle's army.

The secession of the Gordons, though in reality a circumstance of trifling importance in itself (for had they remained, they would have fought unwillingly, and consequently might not have had sufficient resolution to maintain the position which would have been assigned them), had a disheartening influence upon the spirits of Montrose's men, and accordingly they found themselves unable to resist the first shock of Argyle's numerous forces, who, charging them with great impetuosity, drove them up the eminence, of a considerable part of

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which Argyle's army got possession. In this critical conjuncture, when terror and despair seemed about to obtain the mastery over hearts to which fear had hiterto been a stranger, Montrose displayed a coolness and presence of mind equal to the dangers which surrounded him. Animating them by his presence, and by the example which he showed, in risking his person in the hottest of the fight, he roused their courage by putting them further in mind of the victories they had achieved, and how greatly superior they were in bravery to the enemy opposed to them. After this emphatic appeal to their feelings, Montrose turned to Colonel O'Kean, a young Irish gentleman, highly respected by Montrose for his bravery, and desired him, with an air of the most perfect sang-froid, to go down with such men as were readiest, and to drive these fellows (meaning Argyle's men) out of the ditches, that they might be no more troubled with them. O'Kean quickly obeyed the mandate, and though the party in the ditches was greatly superior to the body he led, and was, moreover, supported by some horse, he drove them away, and captured several bags of powder which they left behind them in their hurry to escape. This was a valuable acquisition, as Montrose's men had spent already almost the whole of their ammunition. A curious observation made by one of O'Kean's men upon getting hold of the bags of powder has been related. Finding that the enemy had left no ball, he exclaimed: "What! have they left no ball? but we must take them afterward from these niggardly rascals."

While O'Kean was executing this brilliant affair, Montrose observed five troops of horse, under the Earl of Lothian, preparing to attack his fifty horse, who were posted a little way up to the eminence, with a small wood in their rear. He, therefore, without a moment's

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delay, ordered a party of musketeers to their aid, who, having interlined themselves with the fifty horse, kept up such a galling fire upon Lothian's troops, that before they had advanced half-way across a field which lay between them and Montrose's horse, they were obliged to wheel about and gallop off.

Montrose's men became so elated with their success that they could scarcely be restrained from leaving their ground and making a general attack upon the whole of Argyle's army; but although Montrose did not approve of this design, he disguised his opinion and seemed rather to concur in the views of his men, telling them, however, to be so far mindful of their duty as to wait till he should see the fit moment for ordering the attack. Argyle remained till the evening without attempting any thing further, and then retired to a distance of about three miles across the Spey; his men passed the night under arms. The only person of note killed in these skirmishes, was Captain Keith, brother of the earl marshal.

Next day Argyle resolved to attack Montrose with the view of driving him from his position. He was induced to come to this determination from a report which had reached him that Montrose's army was almost destitute of ammunition, a report, by the bye, too well founded; but, on arriving at the bottom of the hill, he changed his resolution, not judging it safe, from the experience of the preceding day, to hazard an attack. Montrose, on the other hand, agreeably to his original plan, kept his ground, as he did not deem it advisable to expose his men to the enemy's cavalry by descending from the eminence. With the exception of some trifling skirmishes between the advanced posts, the main body of both armies remained quiescent during the whole day. To supply his want of shot, Montrose melted down all the pewter dishes he could collect, including a certain

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utensil, in reference to which, one of his men, after discharging his musket, jocularly said, " I have certainly broke one traitor's face with a ch—— p—."

Argyle again retired in the evening to the ground he had occupied the preceding night, whence he returned the following day, part of which was spent in the same manner as the former; but long before the day had expired, he led off his army, " upon fair daylight," says Spalding, " to a considerable distance, leaving Montrose to effect his escape unmolested." A more remarkable instance of utter imbecility, or rather pusillanimity, than that exhibited in the conduct of Argyle on the present occasion, it is scarcely possible to conceive; and it seems surprising that, after thus incurring " disgrace among his friends, and contempt from his enemies," he should have still been allowed to retain a command for which he was evidently altogether unfitted.

Montrose, thus left to follow any course he pleased, marched off after nightfall towards Strathbogie, plundering Turriff and Rothiemay house in his route. He selected Strathbogie as the place of his retreat, on account of the ruggedness of the country and of the numerous dikes with which it was intersected, which would prevent the operations of Argyle's cavalry, and where he intended to remain till joined by Macdonald, whom he daily expected from the Highlands with a reinforcement. When Argyle heard of Montrose's departure on the following morning, being the last day of October, he, forthwith, proceeded after him with his army, thinking to bring him to action in the open country, and encamped at Tullochbeg on the second of November, where he drew out his army in battle array. He endeavoured to bring Montrose to a general engagement, and in order to draw him from a favourable position he was preparing to occupy, Argyle sent out a

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skirmishing party of his Highlanders; but they were soon repulsed, and Montrose took possession of the ground he had selected.

Baffled in all his attempts to overcome Montrose by force of arms, Argyle, whose talents were more fitted for the intrigues of the cabinet than the tactics of the field, had now recourse to negotiation, with the view of effecting the ruin of his antagonist. For this purpose he proposed a cessation of arms, and that he and Montrose should hold a conference previous to which arrangements should be entered into for their mutual security. Montrose knew Argyle too well to place any reliance upon his word, and as he had no doubt that Argyle would take advantage, during the proposed cessation, to tamper with his men, and endeavour to withdraw them from their allegiance, he called a council of war, and proposed to retire without delay to the Highlands. The council at once approved of this suggestion, whereupon Montrose resolved to march next night as far as Badenoch; and that his army might be able to accomplish such a long journey within the time fixed, he immediately sent off all his heavy baggage under a guard, and ordered his men to keep themselves prepared as if to fight a battle the next day. Scarcely, however, had the carriages and heavy baggage been despatched, when an event took place which greatly disconcerted Montrose. This was nothing less than the desertion of his friend, Colonel Sibbald, and some of his officers, who went over to the enemy. They were accompanied by Sir William Forbes of Craigievar, who, having been unable to fulfil the condition on which he was to obtain his ultimate liberation, had returned two or three days before to Montrose's camp. This distressing occurrence induced Montrose to postpone his march for a time, as he was quite certain that the

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deserters would communicate his plans to Argyle. Ordering, therefore, back the baggage he had sent off, he resumed his former position, in which he remained four days, as if he there intended to take up his winter quarters.

In the meantime Montrose had the mortification to witness the defection of almost the whole of his officers, who were very numerous, for, with the exception of the Irish and Highlanders, they outnumbered the privates from the Lowlands. The bad example which had been set by Sibbald, the intimate friend of Montrose, and the insidious promises of preferment held out to them by Argyle, induced some, whose loyalty was questionable, to adopt this course; but the idea of the privations to which they would be exposed in traversing, during winter, among frost and snow, the dreary and dangerous regions of the Highlands, shook the constancy of others, who, in different circumstances, would have willingly exposed their lives for their sovereign. Bad health, inability to undergo the fatigue of long and constant marches — these and other excuses were made to Montrose as the reasons for craving a discharge from a service which had now become more hazardous than ever. Montrose made no remonstrance, but with looks of high disdain which betrayed the inward workings of a proud and unsubdued mind, indignant at being thus abandoned at such a dangerous crisis, readily complied with the request of every man who asked permission to retire. The Earl of Airly, now sixty years of age and in precarious health, and his two sons, Sir Thomas, and Sir David, out of all the Lowlanders, alone remained faithful to Montrose, and could on no account be prevailed upon to abandon him. Among others who left Montrose on this occasion was Sir Nathaniel Gordon, who, it is said, went over to

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Argyle's camp in consequence of a concerted plan between him and Montrose, for the purpose of detaching Lord Lewis Gordon from the cause of the Covenanters, a conjecture which seems to have originated in the subsequent conduct of Sir Nathaniel and Lord Lewis, who joined Montrose the following year.

Montrose, now abandoned by all his Lowland friends, prepared for his march, preparatory to which, he sent off his baggage as formerly; and after lighting some fires for the purpose of deceiving the enemy, took his departure on the evening of the sixth of November, and arrived about break of day at Balveny. After remaining a few days there to refresh his men, he proceeded through Badenoch, and descended by rapid marches into Athole, where he was joined by Macdonald and John Muidartach, the captain of the Clan Ranald, the latter of whom brought five hundred of his men along with them. He was also reinforced by some small parties from the neighbouring Highlands, whom Macdonald had induced to follow him.

In the meantime Argyle, after giving orders to his Highlanders to return home, went himself to Edinburgh, where he "got but small thanks for his service against Montrose." Although the Committee of Estates, out of deference, approved of his conduct, which some of his flatterers considered deserving of praise because he "had shed no blood;" yet all impartial persons had formed a very different estimate of his character, during a campaign which had been as inglorious to himself as humiliating to the cause which he had endeavoured to support. Confident of success, the heads of the Covenanters looked upon the first efforts of Montrose in the light of a desperate and forlorn attempt, rashly and inconsiderately undertaken, and which they expected would be speedily put down; but the results of

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the battles of Tippermuir, Aberdeen, and Fyvie, gave a new direction to their thoughts, and the Royalists, hitherto contemned, began now to be dreaded and respected. In allusion to the present "posture of affairs," it is observed by Guthry, that "many who had formerly been violent, began to talk moderately of business, and what was most taken notice of, was the lukewarmness of many amongst the ministry, who now in their preaching had began to abate much of their former zeal." The early success of Montrose had indeed caused some misgivings in the minds of the Covenanters; but as they all hoped that Argyle would change the tide of war, they showed no disposition to relax in their severities towards those who were suspected of favouring the cause of the king. The signal failure, however, of Argyle's expedition, and his return to the capital, quite changed, as we have seen, the aspect of affairs, and many of those who had been most sanguine in their calculations regarding the result of the struggle, began now to waver and to doubt.

While Argyle was passing his time in Edinburgh, Montrose was meditating a terrible blow at Argyle himself to revenge the cruelties he had exercised upon the Royalists, and to give confidence to the clans in Argyle's neighbourhood, who had been hitherto prevented from joining Montrose's standard from a dread of Argyle, who, having always a body of five or six thousand Highlanders at command, had kept them in such complete subjection that they dared not, without the risk of absolute ruin, espouse the cause of their sovereign. It is said that Montrose intended at first to have transferred the seat of war at once to the Lowlands, where he expected to be better able to support his troops during winter, but that he was induced to give up this plan by Macdonald and the captain of Clan Ranald, who, having a strong

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dislike to Argyle, advised him to invade the territory of their common enemy. Nothing could be more gratifying to Montrose's followers than his resolution to carry the war into Argyle's country, as they would thus have an ample opportunity of retaliating upon him and his retainers the injuries which, for a course of years, they had inflicted upon the supporters of royalty in the adjoining countries, many of whom had been ruined by Argyle. The idea of curbing the power of a haughty and domineering chief whose very word was a law to the inhabitants of an extensive district, ready to obey his cruel mandates at all times, and the spirit of revenge, the predominating characteristic of the clans, smoothed the difficulties which presented themselves in invading a country made almost inaccessible by nature, and rendered still more unapproachable by the severities of winter. The determination of Montrose having thus met with a willing response in the breasts of his men, he lost no time in putting them in motion. Dividing his army into two parts, he himself marched with the main body, consisting of the Irish and the Athole men, to Loch Tay, whence he proceeded through Breadalbane. The other body, composed of the Clan Donald and other Highlanders, he despatched by a different route, with instructions to meet him at an assigned spot on the borders of Argyle. The country through which both divisions passed, being chiefly in possession of Argyle's kinsmen or dependents, was laid waste by them, and particularly the lands of Campbell of Glenorchy.

When Argyle heard of the ravages committed by Montrose's army on the lands of his kinsmen, he hastened home from Edinburgh to his castle at Inverary, and gave orders for the assembling of his clan, either to repel any attack that might be made on his own country, or to protect his friends from future aggression. It is by no

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means certain that he anticipated an invasion from Montrose, particularly at such a season of the year, and he seemed to imagine himself so secure from attack, owing to the intricacy of the passes leading into Argyle, that although a mere handful of men could have effectually opposed an army much larger than that of Montrose, he took no precautions to guard them. So important indeed did he himself consider these passes to be, that he had frequently declared that he would rather forfeit a hundred thousand crowns, than that an enemy should know the passes by which an armed force could penetrate into Argyle.

While thus reposing in fancied security in his impregnable stronghold, and issuing his mandates for levying his forces, some shepherds arrived in great terror from the hills, and brought him the alarming intelligence, that the enemy, whom he imagined were about a hundred miles distant, were within two miles of his own dwelling. Terrified at the unexpected appearance of Montrose, whose vengeance he justly dreaded, he had barely self-possession left to concert measures for his own personal safety by taking refuge on board a fishing boat in Loch Fyne, in which he sought his way to the Lowlands, leaving his people and country exposed to the merciless will of an enemy thirsting for revenge. The inhabitants of Argyle, being thus basely abandoned by their chief, made no attempt to oppose Montrose, who, the more effectually to carry his plan for pillaging and ravaging the country into execution, divided his army into three parties, each under the respective orders of the captain of Clan Ranald, Macdonald, and himself. For upwards of six weeks, viz., from the thirteenth of December, 1644, till nearly the end of January following, these different bodies traversed the whole country without molestation, burning, wasting, and destroying every-

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thing which came within their reach; villages and cottages, furniture, grain, and effects of every description were made a prey to the devouring element of fire. The cattle which they did not succeed in driving off were either mutilated or slaughtered, and the whole of Argyle as well as the district of Lorn soon became a dreary waste. Nor were the people themselves spared, for although it is mentioned by one writer, that Montrose "shed no blood in regard that all the people (following their lord's laudable example) delivered themselves by flight also," it is evident from several contemporary authors that the slaughter must have been immense. One of these says, that Montrose spared none that were able to bear arms, and that he put to death all the men who were going to the rendezvous appointed by Argyle. Probably the 895 persons mentioned by the author of the "Red Book of Clan Ranald," as having been killed by the party of Clan Ranald without opposition, may be those alluded to by Wishart. In fact, before the end of January, the face of a single male inhabitant was not to be seen throughout the whole extent of Argyle and Lorn, the whole population having been either driven out of these districts, or taken refuge in dens and caves known only to themselves.

Having thus retaliated upon Argyle and his people in a tenfold degree the miseries which he had occasioned in Lochaber and the adjoining countries, Montrose left Argyle and Lorn, passing through Glencoe and Lochaber on his way to Lochness. On his march eastwards he was joined by the laird of Abergeldie, the Farquharsons of the Braes of Mar, and by a party of the Gordons. The object of Montrose, by this movement, was to seize Inverness, which was then only protected by two regiments, in the expectation that its capture would operate as a stimulus to the northern clans, who had not yet

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declared themselves. This resolution was by no means altered on reaching the head of Lochness, where he learned that the Earl of Seaforth was advancing to meet him with an army of five thousand horse and foot, collected from Moray, Ross, Sutherland, and Caithness, including the veteran garrison of Inverness, and the clan of the Frasers. Although Montrose had only at this time about fifteen hundred men, in consequence of the temporary absence of the Highlanders, who, according to custom, were occupied in securing at home the booty which they had acquired in Argyle, he resolved to encounter Seaforth's army, which, with the exception of the two regular regiments, was composed of raw and undisciplined levies.

While proceeding, however, through Abertarf, a person arrived in great haste at Kilcummin, the present Fort Augustus, who brought him the surprising intelligence that Argyle had entered Lochaber with an army of three thousand men; that he was burning and laying waste the country, and that his headquarters were at the old castle of Inverlochy. After Argyle had effected his escape from Inverary, he had gone to Dumbarton, where he remained till Montrose's departure from his territory. While there, a body of covenanting troops, who had served in England, arrived under the command of Major-General Baillie, for the purpose of assisting Argyle in expelling Montrose from his bounds; but on learning that Montrose had left Argyle, and was marching through Glencoe and Lochaber, General Baillie, instead of proceeding into Argyle for the purpose of following Montrose, determined to lead his army in an easterly direction through the Lowlands, with the intention of intercepting Montrose, should he attempt a descent. At the same time it was arranged between Baillie and Argyle, that the latter, who had now recovered from his

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panic, in consequence of Montrose's departure, should return to Argyle and collect his men from their hiding-places and retreats; but as it was not improbable that Montrose might renew his visit, the Committee of Estates allowed Baillie to place eleven hundred of his men at the disposal of Argyle, who, as soon as he was able to muster his men, was to follow Montrose's rear, yet so as to avoid an engagement, till Baillie, who, on hearing of Argyle's advance into Lochaber, was to march suddenly across the Grampians, should attack Montrose in front. To assist him in levying and organizing his clan, Argyle called over Campbell of Auchinbreck, his kinsman, from Ireland, who had considerable reputation as a military commander. In terms of his instructions, therefore, Argyle had entered Lochaber, and had advanced as far as Inverlochy, when, as we have seen, the news of his arrival was brought to Montrose.

Montrose was at first almost disinclined to believe, from the well-known character of Argyle, the truth of this intelligence, but being fully assured of its correctness from the apparent sincerity of his informer, he lost not a moment in making up his mind as to the course he should pursue. He might have instantly marched back upon Argyle by the route he had just followed; but as Argyle would thus get due notice of his approach, and prepare himself for the danger which threatened him, Montrose resolved upon a different plan. The design he conceived could only have originated in the mind of such a daring and enterprising commander as Montrose, before whose towering genius difficulties, hitherto deemed insurmountable, at once disappeared. The idea of carrying an army over dangerous and precipitous mountains, whose wild and frowning aspect seemed to forbid the approach of human footsteps, and in the middle of winter too, when the formidable

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perils of the journey were greatly increased by the snow which had obliterated the faint tracks of the wild deer and adventurous hunter, and filled up many a dangerous chasm, however chimerical it might have seemed to other men, appeared quite practicable to Montrose, whose sanguine anticipations of the advantages to be derived from such an extraordinary exploit, more than counterbalanced in his mind the risks to be encountered.

The distance between the place where Montrose received the news of Argyle's arrival, and Inverlochy, is about thirty miles; but this distance was considerably increased by the devious track which Montrose followed. Marching along the small River Tarf in a southerly direction, he crossed the hills of Lairie Thierard, passed through Glenroy, and after traversing the range of mountains between the Glen and Ben Nevis, he arrived in Glennevis before Argyle had the least notice of his approach. Before setting out on his march, Montrose had taken the wise precaution of placing guards upon the common road leading to Inverlochy, to prevent intelligence of his movements being carried to Argyle, and he had killed such of Argyle's scouts as he had fallen in with in the course of his march. This fatiguing and unexampled journey had been performed in little more than a night and a day, and when, in the course of the evening, Montrose's men arrived in Glennevis, they found themselves so weary and exhausted that they could not venture to attack the enemy. They therefore lay under arms all night, and refreshed themselves, as they best could, till next morning. As the night was uncommonly clear and enlightened by the moon, the advanced posts of both armies kept up a small fire of musketry during the night, which led to no result.

In the meantime Argyle, after committing his army to the charge of his cousin, Campbell of Auchinbreck, had

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the dastardliness to abandon his men, by going, during the night, on board a boat in the loch, accompanied by Sir John Wauchope of Niddry, Sir James Rollock of Duncrub, Archibald Sydserf, one of the bailies of Edinburgh, and Mungo Law, a minister of the same city. Argyle excused himself for this pusillanimous act, by alleging his incapacity to enter the field of battle, in consequence of some contusions he had received by a fall, two or three weeks before; but his enemies averred, that cowardice was the real motive which induced him to take refuge in his galley, from which he witnessed the defeat and destruction of his army.

It would appear that it was not until the morning of the battle that Argyle's men were aware that it was the army of Montrose that was present, as they considered it quite impossible that he should have been able to bring his forces across the mountains, and they imagined that the body before them consisted of some of the inhabitants of the country, who had collected to defend their property. But they were undeceived, when, in the dawn of the morning, the warlike sound of Montrose's trumpets, resounding through the glen where they lay, and reverberating from the adjoining hills, broke upon their ears. This served as the signal to both armies to prepare for battle. Montrose drew out his army in an extended line. The right wing consisted of a regiment of Irish, under the command of Macdonald, his major-general; the centre was composed of the Athole men, the Stuarts of Appin, and the Macdonalds of Glencoe, and other Highlanders, severally under the command of Clan Ranald, M'Lean, and Glengary; and the left wing consisted of some Irish, at the head of whom was the brave Colonel O'Kean. A body of Irish was placed behind the main body as a reserve, under the command of Colonel James M'Donald, alias O'Neill. The

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general of Argyle's army formed it in a similar manner. The Lowland forces were equally divided, and formed the wings, between which the Highlanders were placed. Upon a rising ground, behind this line, General Campbell drew up a reserve of Highlanders, and placed a field-piece. Within the house of Inverlochy, which was only about a pistol-shot from the place where the army was formed, he planted a body of forty or fifty men to protect the place, and to annoy Montrose's men with discharges of musketry. The account given by Gordon of Sallagh that Argyle had transported the half of his army over the water at Inverlochy, under the command of Auchinbreck, and that Montrose defeated this division, while Argyle was prevented from relieving it with the other division, from the intervention of "an arm of the sea, that was interjected betwixt them and him," is certainly erroneous, for the circumstance is not mentioned by any other writer of the period, and it is well known that Argyle abandoned his army, and witnessed its destruction from his galley, — circumstances which Gordon altogether overlooks.

It was at sunrise, on Sunday, the second day of February, in the year 1645, that Montrose, after having formed his army in battle array, gave orders to his men to advance upon the enemy. The left wing of Montrose's army, under the command of O'Kean, was the first to commence the attack, by charging the enemy's right. This was immediately followed by a furious assault upon the centre and left wing of Argyle's army, by Montrose's right wing and centre. Argyle's right wing, not being able to resist the attack of Montrose's left, turned about and fled, which circumstance had such a discouraging effect on the remainder of Argyle's troops, that after discharging their muskets, the whole of them, including the reserve, took to their heels. The rout

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now became general. An attempt was made by a body of about two hundred of the fugitives to throw themselves into the castle of Inverlochy, but a party of Montrose's horse prevented them. Some of the flying enemy directed their course along the side of Loch Eil, but all these were either killed or drowned in the pursuit. The greater part, however, fled towards the hills in the direction of Argyle, and were pursued by Montrose's men, to the distance of about eight miles. As no resistance was made by the defeated party in their flight, the carnage was very great, being reckoned at fifteen hundred men, or about the half of Argyle's army. Many more would have been cut off had it not been for the humanity of Montrose, who did everything in his power to save the unresisting enemy from the fury of his men, who were not disposed to give quarter to the unfortunate Campbells. Having taken the castle, Montrose not only treated the officers, who were from the Lowlands, with kindness, but gave them their liberty on parole.

Among the principal persons who fell on Argyle's side were the commander, Campbell of Auchinbreck, Campbell of Lochnell, the eldest son of Lochnell, and his brother, Colin; M'Dougall of Rara and his eldest son; Major Menzies, brother to the laird (or prior as he was called) of Achattens Parbreck; and the provost of the church of Kilmun. The chief prisoners were the lairds of Parbreck, Silvercraig, Innerea, Lamont, St. M'Donald in Kintyre, the young laird of Glensaddel, the goodman of Pynmoir, the son of the captain of Dunstaffnage, Lieutenant-Colonels Roche and Cockburn, Captains Stewart, Murray, Hume, and Stirling, Robert Cleland, alias Clydson, and MacDougall, a preacher. The loss on the side of Montrose was extremely trifling. The number of wounded is indeed not stated, but he had only three privates killed. He sustained, however, a severe

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loss in Sir Thomas Ogilvie, son of the Earl of Airly, who died a few days after the battle, of a wound he received in the thigh. Montrose regretted the death of this steadfast friend and worthy man, with feelings of real sorrow, and caused his body to be interred in Athole with due solemnity. Montrose immediately after the battle sent a messenger to the king with a letter, giving an account of it, at the conclusion of which he exultingly says to Charles, " give me leave, after I have reduced this country, and conquered from Dan to Beersheba, to say to your Majesty, as David's general to his master, come thou thyself, lest this country be called by my name." When the king received this letter, the Royal and parliamentary commissioners were sitting at Uxbridge negotiating the terms of a peace; but Charles was induced by this imprudent letter to break off the negotiation, a circumstance which led to his ruin.

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CHAPTER X

MOVEMENTS OF MONTROSE

When the disastrous news of the battle of Inverlochy reached Edinburgh, the estates were thrown into a state of great alarm. They had, no doubt, begun to fear, before that event, and, of course, to respect the prowess of Montrose, but they never could have been made to believe that, within the space of a few days, a well-appointed army, composed in part of veteran troops, would have been utterly defeated by a force so vastly inferior in point of numbers, and beset with difficulties and dangers to which the army of Argyle was not exposed. Nor were the fears of the estates much allayed by the appearance of Argyle, who arrived at Edinburgh to give them an account of the affair, "having his left arm tied up in a scarf, as if he had been at bones-breaking." It is true that Lord Balmerinoch made a speech before the Assembly of the Estates, in which he affirmed that the great loss reported to be sustained at Inverlochy "was but the invention of the malignants, who spake as they wished," and that "upon his honour, not more than thirty of Argyle's men had been killed;" but, as the disaster was well known, this device only misled the weak and ignorant. Had Montrose at this juncture descended into the Lowlands, it is not improbable that his presence might have given a favourable turn to the state of matters in the south, where the king's affairs were in the most precarious situation; and it is also likely, that many persons who, from timidity or

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want of opportunity to join him, had hitherto not declared themselves, would have rallied round his standard; but such a design does not seem to have accorded with his views of prolonging the contest in the Highlands, which were more suitable than the Lowlands to his plan of operations, and to the nature of his forces.

Accordingly, after allowing his men to refresh themselves a few days at Inverlochy, Montrose returned across the mountains of Lochaber into Badenoch, "with displayed banner." Marching down the south side of the Spey, he crossed that river at Balchastel, and entered Moray without opposition. He proceeded by rapid strides towards the town of Inverness, which he intended to take possession of; but on arriving in the neighbourhood, he found it garrisoned by the laird of Lawers's and Buchanan's regiments. As he did not wish to consume his time in a siege, he immediately altered his course and marched in the direction of Elgin, issuing, as he went along, a proclamation, in the king's name, calling upon all males, from sixteen to sixty years of age, to join him immediately, armed as they best could, on foot or on horse, and that under pain of fire and sword, as rebels to the king. In consequence of this threat, Montrose was joined by some of the Moray men, including the laird of Grant, and two hundred of his followers; and, to show an example of severity, he plundered the houses and laid waste the estates of Grangehill, Brodie, Culbin, and Innes, belonging respectively to Ninian Dunbar, the laird of Brodie, ——— Kinnaird, and the laird of Innes. The houses of Pitchash, Foyness, and Ballindalloch, and the lands of Ballindalloch, all belonging to the laird of Ballindalloch, shared a similar fate. He also plundered the lands of Duffus, Burgie, and Lethin, and the village of Garmouth or Garmach; but he did not burn any of the houses and their contents, as he had

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done in the other cases. Besides plundering and destroying the properties, Montrose's army carried off a large quantity of cattle and effects, and destroyed the boats and nets which they fell in with on the Spey.

Whilst Montrose was thus laying waste part of Moray, a committee of the estates, consisting of the Earl of Seaforth, the laird of Innes, Sir Robert Gordon, the laird of Pluscarden, and others, was sitting at Elgin, who, on hearing of his proceedings, sent notice through the town by beat of drum, on the seventeenth of February, prohibiting the holding of the fair, which was kept there annually on Fasten's eve, and to which many merchants and others in the north resorted, lest the property brought there for sale might fall a prey to Montrose's army. They, at the same time, sent Sir Robert Gordon, Mackenzie of Pluscarden, and Innes of Luthers, to treat with Montrose, in name of the gentry of Moray, most of whom were then assembled in Elgin; but he refused to enter into any negotiation, and gave this answer, that he would accept of the services of such as would join him and obey him as the king's lieutenant. Before this answer had been communicated to the gentry at Elgin, they had all fled from the town in consequence of hearing that Montrose was advancing upon them with rapidity. The laird of Innes, along with some of his friends, retired to the castle of Spynie, possessed by his eldest son, which was well fortified and provided with every necessary for undergoing a siege. The laird of Duffus went into Sutherland. As soon as the inhabitants of the town saw the committee preparing to leave it, most of them also resolved to depart, which they did, carrying along with them their principal effects. Some went to Inverness, and others into Ross, but the greater part went to the castle of Spynie, where they sought and obtained refuge.

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Apprehensive that Montrose might follow up the dreadful example he had shown, by burning the town, a proposal was made to, and accepted by him, to pay him four thousand merks to save the town from destruction; but, on entering it, which he did on the nineteenth of February, his men, and particularly the laird of Grant's party, were so disappointed in their hopes of plunder, in consequence of the inhabitants having carried away the best of their effects, that they broke and destroyed every article of furniture which was left.

Montrose was joined, on his arrival at Elgin, by Lord Gordon, the eldest son of the Marquis of Huntly, with some of his friends and vassals. This young nobleman had been long kept in a state of durance by Argyle, his uncle, contrary to his own wishes, and now, when an opportunity had, for the first time, occurred, he showed the bent of his inclination, by declaring for the king. It is curious that two contemporaneous writers, who seem to have had access to the best sources of information, were quite at a loss to account for Lord Gordon's motives in taking this step. The one says: "At this time, the Lord Gordon, with most part of his friends, came in to Montrose, upon what grounds I know not; whether the State has disobliged him in some particulars betwixt him and his neighbours, the Crightons and the Forbeses, or had not performed to him such things as they had promised, or such much as he did expect and deserve; or whether that most of his friends, by warrant of his father, had resolved to follow his younger brother, Lord Lewis, I cannot determine." The other observes: "The Lord Gordon being in the Bog, leaped quickly on horse, having Nathaniel Gordon, with some few others, in his company, and that same night came to Elgin, saluted Montrose, who made him

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heartily welcome, and soups joyfully together. Many marvelled at the Lord Gordon's going in after such manner, being upon the country's service, and colonel to a foot regiment and to a horse regiment. Some alleged that the estates oversaw him in divers points touching his honour, which he could not digest. Others said that he was likely to lose his father, for allowing the country cause, if he should continue, and the country happen to be borne down. Others, again, said that it was a plot betwixt Montrose and Nathaniel Gordon, when he was with him, and when he came from him, with Craigievar, as ye have before; and, albeit, for his coming away, he was esteemed traitorous and disloyal to Montrose, yet he proved the politician, and his faithful servant in this business. This was the opinion of some. Howsoever it was, in he went; but how, or upon what reason, I cannot tell."

On taking possession of Elgin, Montrose gave orders to bring all the ferry-boats on the Spey to the north side of the river, and he stationed sentinels at all the fords up and down to watch any movements which might be made by the enemies' forces in the south.

Montrose, thereupon, held a council of war, at which it was determined to cross the Spey, and march into the shires of Banff and Aberdeen, and, by the aid of Lord Gordon, to raise the friends and retainers of the Marquis of Huntly, and from thence to proceed into the Mearns, where another accession of forces was expected. Accordingly, Montrose left Elgin on the fourth of March, with the main body of his army, towards the Bog of Gicht, accompanied by the Earl of Seaforth, Sir Robert Gordon, the lairds of Grant, Pluscarden, Findrassie, and several other gentlemen who " had come in to him " at Elgin. To punish the Earl of Finlater, who had refused to join him, Montrose sent the Farquharsons of Braemar before

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him across the Spey, who plundered, without mercy, the town of Cullen, belonging to the earl.

After crossing the Spey, Montrose, either apprehensive that depredations would be committed upon the properties of his Moray friends, who accompanied him, by the two regiments which garrisoned Inverness and the Covenanters of that district, or having received notice to that effect, he allowed the Earl of Seaforth, the laird of Grant, and the other Moray gentlemen, to return home to defend their estates; but before allowing them to depart, he made them take a solemn oath of allegiance to the king, and promise that they should never, henceforth, take up arms against his Majesty or his loyal subjects. At same time, he made them come under an engagement to join him with all their forces, as soon as they could do so. The Earl of Seaforth obtained an infamous notoriety by again joining the ranks of the Covenanters. In a letter which he wrote to the Committee of Estates, at Aberdeen, he stated that he had yielded to Montrose through fear only, and he avowed that he would abide by " the good cause to his death."

As anticipated by Montrose, detachments from the garrison of Inverness had been sent into the country to take vengeance upon those gentlemen who had joined him; and accordingly they plundered the house of Elchies, belonging to the laird of Grant, carrying off his lady's wearing-apparel, trinkets, and jewels, of which, says Spalding, " she had store." They laid waste the lands of Cukstoun, the goodman of which had followed Lord Gordon when he joined Montrose; and they entered Elgin, where they took the laird of Pluscarden and his brother, Loslyn, prisoners, and carried them to Inverness; but they were released at the entreaty of their brother, the Earl of Seaforth, who, notwithstanding, was suspected of having connived at their arrest.

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On Montrose's arrival at Strathbogie, or Gordon castle, Lord Graham, his eldest son, a youth of sixteen, and of the most promising expectations, became unwell, and died after a few days' illness. The loss of a son, who had followed him in his campaigns, and shared with him the dangers of the field, was a subject of deep regret to Montrose. While Montrose was occupied at the death-bed of his son, Lord Gordon was busily employed among the Gordons, out of whom he speedily raised a force of about five hundred foot, and 160 horse.

With this accession to his forces, Montrose left Strathbogie and marched towards Banff, on his route to the south. In passing by the house of Cullen, in Boyne, the seat of the Earl of Finlater, who had fled to Edinburgh, and left the charge of the house to the countess, a party of Montrose's men entered the house, which they plundered of all its valuable contents. They then proceeded to set the house on fire, but the countess, having entreated Montrose to order his men to desist, and promised that if her husband did not come to Montrose and give him satisfaction within fifteen days, she would pay him twenty thousand merks, of which sum she instantly paid down five thousand, Montrose complied with her request, and also spared the lands, although the earl was "a great Covenanter." Montrose's men next laid waste the lands in the Boyne, burned the houses, and plundered the minister of the place of all his goods and effects, including his books. The laird of Boyne shut himself up in his stronghold, the Crag, where he was out of danger; but he had the misfortune to see his lands laid waste and destroyed. Montrose then went to Banff, which he gave up to indiscriminate plunder. His troops did not leave a vestige of movable property in the town, and they even stripped, to the skin, every man they met with in the streets. They also burned two or

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three houses of little value, but not a drop of blood was spilled, a circumstance which speaks highly in favour of the humanity of Montrose.

From Banff, Montrose proceeded to Turriff, where a deputation from the town council of Aberdeen waited upon him, consisting of Thomas Gray, George Morison, George Cullen, and John Alexander, advocate, "four discreet, well-set burgesses," says Spalding. These commissioners humbly represented to Montrose the many miseries which the town of Aberdeen had suffered from its frequent occupation by hostile armies since the first outbreaking of the unfortunate troubles which molested the kingdom, — miseries well-known to himself, and which were such as no other burgh had been doomed to suffer; they further represented, that such was the terror of the inhabitants at the idea of another visit from his Irish troops, that all the men and women, on hearing of his approach, had made preparations for abandoning the town, and that they would certainly leave it if they did not get an assurance from the marquis of safety and protection. The deputation therefore begged Montrose to give them this assurance, and that, upon receiving it, they would return to Aberdeen and prevail upon the inhabitants to remain in town. Montrose heard the commissioners patiently, expressed his regret at the calamities which had befallen their town, and bade them not be afraid, as he would take care that none of his foot, or Irish soldiers, should come within eight miles of Aberdeen; and that if he himself should enter the town, he would support himself at his own expense. Returning many thanks for the favourable answer they had received, the commissioners returned to Aberdeen, where they arrived on the tenth of March, and related the successful issue of their journey, to the great joy of all the inhabitants.

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Whilst Montrose lay at Turriff, Sir Nathaniel Gordon, with some troopers, went to Aberdeen, which he entered on Sunday, the ninth of March, on which day there had been "no sermon in either of the Aberdeens," as the ministers had fled the town. The keys of the churches, gates, and jail were delivered to him by the magistrates. The following morning, Sir Nathaniel was joined by a hundred Irish dragoons. After releasing some prisoners, he went to Torry, and took, after a slight resistance, eighteen hundred muskets, pikes, and other arms, which had been left in charge of a troop of horse. Besides receiving orders to watch the town, Sir Nathaniel was instructed to send out scouts as far as Cowie to watch the enemy, who were daily expected from the south. When reconnoitring, a skirmish took place at the bridge of Dee, in which Captain Keith's troop was routed. Finding the country quite clear, and no appearance of the covenanting forces, Gordon returned back to the army, which had advanced to Frendraught. No attempt was made upon the house of Frendraught, which was kept by the young viscount in absence of his father, who was then at Muchallis with his godson, Lord Fraser; but Montrose destroyed sixty ploughs of land belonging to Frendraught within the parishes of Forgue, Inverkeithnie, and Drumblade, and the house of the minister of Forgue, with all the other houses and buildings, and their contents. Nothing, in fact, was spared. The whole cattle, horses, sheep, and other domestic animals were carried off, and the whole of Frendraught's lands were left a dreary and uninhabitable waste.

From Pennyburn, Montrose despatched, on the tenth of March, a letter to the authorities of Aberdeen, commanding them to intimate, by tuck of drum, an order, that all men, of whatever description, between the age of sixteen and sixty, should meet him equipped in their

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best arms, and such of them as had horses, mounted on the best of them, on the fifteenth of March, at his camp at Inverury, under the pain of fire and sword. In consequence of this mandate, he was joined by a considerable number of horse and foot. On the twelfth of March, Montrose arrived at Kintore, and took up his own quarters in the house of John Cheyne, the minister of the place, whence he issued an order commanding each parish within the presbytery of Aberdeen (with the exception of the town of Aberdeen) to send to him two commissioners, who were required to bring along with them a complete roll of the whole heritors, feuars, and life-renters of each parish. His object, in requiring such a list, was to ascertain the number of men capable of serving, and also the names of those who should refuse to join him. Commissioners were accordingly sent from the parishes, and the consequence was, that Montrose was joined daily by many men, who would not otherwise have assisted him, but who were now alarmed for the safety of their properties. While at Kintore, an occurrence took place which vexed Montrose exceedingly.

To reconnoitre and watch the motions of the enemy, Montrose had, on the twelfth of March, sent Sir Nathaniel Gordon along with Donald Farquharson, Captain Mortimer, and other well-mounted cavaliers, to the number of about eighty, to Aberdeen. This party, perceiving no enemy in the neighbourhood of Aberdeen, utterly neglected to place any sentinels at the gates of the town, and spent their time at their lodgings in entertainments and amusements. This careless conduct did not pass unobserved by some of the Covenanters in the town, who, it is said, sent notice thereof to Major-General Hurry, the second in command under General Baillie, who was then lying at the North Water Bridge with Lord Balcarrass's and other foot regiments. On receiving

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this intelligence, Hurry put himself at the head of 160 horse and foot, taken from the regular regiments, and some troopers and musketeers, and rode off to Aberdeen in great haste, where he arrived on the fifteenth of March at eight o'clock in the evening. Having posted sentinels at the gates to prevent any of Montrose's party from escaping, he entered the town at an hour when they were all dispersed through the town, carelessly enjoying themselves in their lodgings, quite unapprehensive of such a visit. The noise in the streets, occasioned by the tramping of the horses, was the first indication they had of the presence of the enemy, but it was then too late for them to defend themselves. Donald Farquharson was killed in the street opposite the guard-house, "a brave gentleman," says Spalding, "and one of the noblest captains amongst all the Highlanders of Scotland, and the king's man for life and death." The enemy stripped him of a rich dress he had put on the same day, and left his body lying naked in the street. A few other gentlemen were also killed, and some taken prisoners, but the greater part escaped. The prisoners were sent to Edinburgh, and put in irons within the tolbooth there. Hurry left the town next day, and, on his return to Baillie's camp, he entered the town of Montrose, and carried off Lord Graham, Montrose's second son, a boy of fourteen years of age, then at school, who, along with his teacher, was sent to Edinburgh, and committed to the castle.

The gentlemen who had escaped from Aberdeen "returned," says Spalding, "back to Montrose, part on horse and part on foot, ashamed of this accident." Montrose was greatly offended at them for their carelessness, but the same writer adds, that "the gentlemen were sorry, and could not mend it." The magistrates of Aberdeen, alarmed lest Montrose should inflict sum-

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mary vengeance upon the town, as being implicated in the attack upon the cavaliers, sent two commissioners to Kintore to assure him that they were in no way concerned in that affair. Although he heard them with great patience, he gave them no satisfaction as to his intentions, and they returned to Aberdeen without being able to obtain any promise from him to spare the town. The magistrates, however, acted wisely in sending the deputation to Montrose, for had they taken no notice of the affair, he might have inferred either that the inhabitants were privy to it, or were by no means displeased at the result. Montrose might have availed himself of this opportunity, to have inflicted a heavy chastisement upon the town, but he was contented to make the merchants furnish him with cloth, and gold and silver lace, to the amount of £10,000 Scots for the use of his army, which he took the magistrates bound to pay, by a tax upon the inhabitants. "Thus," says Spalding, "cross upon cross upon Aberdeen."

When Sir Nathaniel Gordon and the remainder of his party returned to Kintore, Montrose despatched, on the same day, viz., sixteenth March, a body of one thousand horse and foot, the latter consisting of Irish, to Aberdeen, under the command of Macdonald, his major-general, where they arrived at four o'clock in the afternoon. Many of the inhabitants, alarmed at the approach of this party, and still having the fear of the Irish before their eyes, were preparing to leave the town; but Macdonald relieved their apprehensions by assuring them that the Irish, who amounted to seven hundred, should not enter the town, and he accordingly stationed them at the bridge of Dee and the Two Mile Cross, he and his troopers alone entering the town. And to secure the town from annoyance, he stationed strong parties at the gates to prevent any straggling parties of the

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Irish from entering. With the exception of the houses of one or two "remarkable Covenanters," which were plundered, Macdonald showed the utmost respect for private property, a circumstance which obtained for him the esteem of the inhabitants, who had seldom experienced such kind treatment before.

Having discharged the last duties to the brave Farquharson and his companions, on Sunday, the seventeenth of March, Macdonald left Aberdeen the following day to join Montrose at Durris; but he had not proceeded far when complaints were brought to him that some of his Irish troops, who had lagged behind, had entered the town, and were plundering it. "They were," says Spalding, "abusing and fearing the town's people, taking their cloaks, plaids, and purses from them on the high streets." Macdonald, therefore, returned immediately to the town, and drove, says the same writer, "all these rascals with sore skins out of the town before him."

Before leaving Kintore, the Earl of Airly was attacked by a fever, in consequence of which, Montrose sent him to Lethintie, the residence of the earl's son-in-law, under a guard of three hundred men; but he was afterward removed to Strathbogie for greater security. On arriving at Durris, in Kincardineshire, where he was joined by Macdonald, Montrose burnt the house to the ground, and all the offices and grain, and swept away the whole cattle, horses, and sheep. He also wasted such of the lands of Fintry as belonged to Forbes of Craigievar, to punish him for the breach of his parole, and he set fire to the house, and burned the grain belonging to Abercrombie, the minister of Fintry, who was "a main Covenanter." These proceedings took place on the seventeenth of March. On the nineteenth, Montrose entered Stonehaven, and took up his residence in the

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house of James Clerk, the provost of the town. Here learning that the Covenanters in the north were troubling Lord Gordon's lands, he despatched five hundred of Gordon's foot to defend Strathbogie and his other possessions, but he still retained Lord Gordon himself with his troopers.

On the day after his arrival at Stonehaven, Montrose wrote a letter to the earl marshal, who, along with sixteen ministers, and some other persons of distinction, had shut himself up in his castle of Dunottar. The bearer of the letter was not, however, suffered to enter within the gate, and was allowed to depart without an answer. It is said that the marshal's lady and the ministers, particularly the celebrated Andrew Cant, were his advisers on this occasion. This disdainful silence, on the part of the earl marshal, highly incensed Montrose; but probably suspecting that he was tutored by the persons who surrounded him, he desired Lord Gordon to write a letter to George Keith, the earl's brother, who, in consequence, had an interview with Montrose at Stonehaven. Montrose then told him that all that he wanted from his brother was, that he should serve the king, his master, against his rebellious subjects, a service to which he was bound in duty and honour from the high situation he held; and that if he failed to comply, he would do so at his own peril. But the earl declined to comply with Montrose's request, as he said "he would not be against the country."

In consequence of the refusal of the earl marshal to declare for the king, Montrose resolved to inflict summary vengeance upon him, by burning and laying waste his lands and those of his retainers in the neighbourhood. Acting upon this determination, he, on the twenty-first of March, set fire to the houses adjoining the castle of Dunottar, and burnt the grain which was stacked in the

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barn-yards. Even the house of the minister did not escape. He next set fire to the town of Stonehaven, sparing only the house of the provost, in which he resided; plundered a ship which lay in the harbour, and then set her on fire, along with all the fishing-boats. The lands and houses of Cowie shared the same hard fate. Whilst the work of destruction was going on, it is said that the inhabitants appeared before the castle of Dunottar, and, setting up cries of pity, implored the earl to save them from ruin, but they received no answer to their supplications, and the earl witnessed from his stronghold the total destruction of the properties of his tenants and dependants without making any effort to stop it. After he had effected the destruction of the barony of Dunottar, Montrose set fire to the lands of Fetteresso, one fourth part of which was burnt up, together with the whole corn in the yards. A beautiful deer park was also burnt and its alarmed inmates were all taken and killed, as well as all the cattle in the barony. Montrose next proceeded to Drumlaithie and Urie, belonging to John Forbes of Leslie, a leading Covenanter, where he committed similar depredations.

Montrose advanced to Fettercairn, the following day, where he quartered his foot soldiers, but he sent out quartermasters through the country and about the town of Montrose to provide quarters for some troopers; but, as these troopers were proceeding on their journey, they were alarmed by the sudden appearance of some of Major-General Hurry's troops, who had concealed themselves within the plantation of Halkerton. This party, suddenly issuing from the wood, set up a loud shout, on hearing which the troopers immediately turned to the right about and went back to the camp. This party turned out to be a body of six hundred horse, under the command of Hurry himself, who had left the headquar-

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ters of General Baillie, at Brechin, for the purpose of reconnoitring Montrose's movements. In order to deceive Hurry, who kept advancing with his six hundred horse, Montrose placed his horse, which amounted only to two hundred, and which he took care to line with some expert musketeers, in a prominent situation, and concealed his foot in an adjoining valley. This ruse had the desired effect, for Hurry imagining that there were no other forces at hand, immediately attacked the small body of horse opposed to him; but he was soon undeceived by the sudden appearance of the foot, and forced to retreat with precipitation. Though his men were greatly alarmed, Hurry, who was a brave officer, having placed himself in the rear, managed his retreat across the North Esk with very little loss.

After this affair, Montrose allowed his men to refresh themselves for a few days, and, on the twenty-fifth of March, he put his army in motion in the direction of Brechin. On hearing of his approach, the inhabitants of the town concealed their effects in the castle and in the steeples of the churches, and fled. Montrose's troops, although they found out the secreted goods, were so enraged at the conduct of the inhabitants that they plundered the town, and burnt about sixty houses.

From Brechin, Montrose proceeded through Angus, with the intention either of fighting Baillie, or of marching onwards to the south. His whole force, at this time, did not exceed three thousand men, and, on reaching Kirriemuir, his cavalry was greatly diminished by his having been obliged to send away about 160 horsemen to Strathbogie, under Lord Gordon and his brother, Lewis, to defend their father's possessions against the Covenanters. Montrose proceeded, with his army, along the foot of the Grampians, in the direction of Dunkeld, where he intended to cross the Tay in the sight

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of General Baillie, who commanded an army greatly superior in numbers; but, although Montrose frequently offered him battle, Baillie, contrary, it is said, to the advice of Hurry, as often declined it. On arriving at the water of Isla, the two armies, separated by that stream, remained motionless for several days, as if undetermined how to act. At length Montrose sent a trumpeter to Baillie offering him battle; and, as the water could not be safely passed by his army, if opposed, Montrose proposed to allow Baillie to pass it unmolested, on condition that he would give him his word of honour that he would fight without delay; but Baillie returned this answer, that he would attend to his own business himself, and that he would fight when he himself thought proper. The conduct of Baillie throughout seems altogether extraordinary, but it is alleged that he could do nothing himself, being subject to the directions of a council of war, composed of the Earls of Crawford and Cassillis, the Lords Balmerinoch, Kirkcudbright, and others.

As Montrose could not attempt to cross the water of Isla without cavalry, in opposition to a force so greatly superior, he led his army off in the direction of the Grampians, and marched upon Dunkeld, which he took possession of. Baillie, being fully aware of his intention to cross the Tay, immediately withdrew to Perth for the purpose of opposing Montrose's passage; but, if Montrose really entertained such an intention after he had sent away the Gordon troopers, he abandoned it after reaching Dunkeld, and resolved to retrace his steps northwards. Being anxious, however, to signalize himself by some important achievement before he returned to the north, and to give confidence to the Royalists, he determined to surprise Dundee, a town which had rendered itself particularly obnoxious to him

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for the resistance made by the inhabitants after the battle of Tippermuir. Having sent off the weaker part of his troops, and those who were lightly armed, with his heavy baggage, along the bottom of the hills, with instructions to meet him at Brechin, Montrose himself, at the head of about 150 horse and six hundred expert musketeers,[12] left Dunkeld on third April, about midnight, and marched with such extraordinary expedition that he arrived at Dundee Law at ten o'clock in the morning, where he encamped. Montrose then sent a trumpeter into the town with a summons, requiring a surrender, and promising that, in the event of compliance, he would protect the lives and properties of the inhabitants, but threatening, in case of refusal, to set fire to the town and to put the inhabitants to the sword. Instead of returning an answer to this demand, the town's people put the messenger into prison. This insult was keenly felt by Montrose, who immediately gave orders to his troops to storm the town in three different places at once, and to fulfil the threat which he had held out in case of resistance. The inhabitants, in the meantime, made such preparations for defence as the shortness of the time allowed, but, although they fought bravely, they could not resist the impetuosity of Montrose's troops, who, impelled by a spirit of revenge, and a thirst for plunder, which Dundee, then one of the largest and most opulent towns in Scotland, offered them considerable temptations of gratifying, forced the inhabitants from the stations they occupied, and turned the cannon, which they had planted in the streets, against themselves. The contest, however, continued in different quarters of the town for several hours, during which the town was set on fire in different places. The whole of that quarter of the town called the Bonnet Hill fell a prey to the flames, and the entire town would

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have certainly shared the same fate had not Montrose's men chiefly occupied themselves in plundering the houses and filling themselves with the contents of the wine-cellars. The sack of the town continued till the evening, and the inhabitants were subjected to every excess which an infuriated and victorious soldiery, maddened by intoxication, could inflict.

This melancholy state of things was, however, fortunately put an end to by intelligence having been brought to Montrose, who had viewed the storming of the town from the neighbouring height of Dundee Law, that General Baillie was marching in great haste down the Carse of Gowrie, towards Dundee, with three thousand foot and eight hundred horse. On receiving this news from his scouts, Montrose gave immediate orders to his troops to evacuate Dundee, but so intent were they upon their booty, that it was with the utmost difficulty they could be prevailed upon to leave the town, and, before the last of them could be induced to retire, some of the enemy's troops were within gunshot of them. The sudden appearance of Baillie's army was quite unlooked for, as Montrose had been made to believe, from the reports of his scouts, that it had crossed the Tay, and was proceeding to the Forth, when, in fact, only a very small part, which had been mistaken by the scouts for the entire army of Baillie, had passed.

In this critical conjuncture, Montrose held a council of war, to consult how to act under the perilous circumstances in which he was now placed. The council was divided between two opinions. Some of them advised Montrose to consult his own personal safety, by riding off to the north with his horse, leaving the foot to their fate, as they considered it utterly impossible for him to carry them off in their present state, fatigued, and worn out as they were by a march of twenty-four miles during

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the preceding night, and rendered almost incapable of resisting the enemy, from the debauch they had indulged in during the day. Besides, they would require to march twenty or even thirty miles, before they could reckon themselves secure from the attacks of their pursuers, a journey which was deemed impossible of performance, without being previously allowed some hours' repose. The members of the council, who took this view of matters, urged upon Montrose the absolute necessity of following it, judging it much better to allow these men to shift for themselves, than to risk his own person and the safety of those who could secure an escape, in a hopeless attempt to carry off men who were almost disabled from walking. That in this way, and in no other, could he expect to retrieve matters, as he could, by his presence among his friends in the north, raise new forces; but that, if he himself was cut off, the king's affairs would be utterly ruined. The other part of the council gave quite an opposite opinion by declaring that, as the cause for which they had fought so gloriously was now irretrievably lost, they should remain in their position, and await the issue of an attack, judging it more honourable to die fighting in defence of their king, than to seek safety in an ignominious flight, which would be rendered still more disgraceful by abandoning their unfortunate fellow-warriors to the mercy of a revengeful foe.

Montrose, however, stated his disapprobation of both these plans. He considered the first as unbecoming the generosity of men who had fought so often side by side; and the second he thought extremely rash and imprudent. He, therefore, resolved to steer a middle course, and, refusing to abandon his brave companions in arms in the hour of danger, gave orders for an immediate retreat, in the direction of Arbroath. This

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route was, however, a mere manœuvre to deceive the enemy, as Montrose intended, after nightfall, to march towards the Grampians. In order to make his retreat more secure, Montrose despatched first four hundred of his foot, and gave them orders to march as quickly as possible, without breaking their ranks. These were followed by two hundred of his most expert musketeers, and Montrose himself closed the rear with his horse, in open rank, so as to admit the musketeers to interline them, in case of an attack. It was about six o'clock in the evening, when Montrose began his retreat, at which hour the last of Baillie's foot had reached Dundee.

Scarcely had Montrose begun to move, when intelligence was received by Baillie, from some prisoners he had taken, of Montrose's intentions, which was now confirmed by ocular proof. A proposal, it is said, was then made by Hurry, to follow Montrose with the whole army, and attack him, but Baillie rejected it, and the better, as he thought, to secure Montrose, and prevent his escape, he divided his army into two parts, one of which he sent off in the direction of the Grampians, to prevent Montrose from entering the Highlands, and to interpose between him and his intended place of retreat; and the other followed directly in the rear of Montrose. He thus expected to be able to cut off Montrose entirely, and to encourage his men to the pursuit, he offered a reward of twenty thousand crowns to any one who should bring him Montrose's head. Baillie's cavalry soon came up with Montrose's rear, but they were so well received by the musketeers, who brought down some of them, that they became very cautious in their approaches. The darkness of the night soon put an end to the pursuit, and Montrose continued his march unmolested during the night, to Arbroath, in the neighbourhood of which he arrived about midnight. His troops had now marched

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upwards of forty miles, seventeen of which they had performed in a few hours, in the face of a large army, and had passed two nights and a day without sleep; but as their safety might be endangered by allowing them to repose till daylight, Montrose entreated them to proceed on their march. Though almost exhausted with incessant fatigue, and overpowered with drowsiness, they readily obeyed the orders of their general, and, after a short halt, proceeded on their route in a north-westerly direction. They arrived at the South Esk early in the morning, which they crossed, at sunrise, near Carriston Castle.

Montrose now sent notice to the party which he had despatched from Dunkeld to Brechin, with his baggage, to join him, but they had, on hearing of his retreat, already taken refuge among the neighbouring hills. Baillie, who had passed the night at Forfar, now considered that he had Montrose completely in his power; for little did he imagine that Montrose had passed close by him during the night, and eluded his grasp; but, to his utter amazement, not a trace of Montrose was to be seen next morning. Chagrined at this unexpected disappointment, Baillie, without waiting for his foot, galloped off at full speed to overtake Montrose, and, with such celerity did he travel, that he was close upon Montrose before the latter received notice of his approach. The whole of Montrose's men, with the exception of a few sentinels, were now stretched upon the ground, in a state of profound repose, and, so firmly did sleep hold their exhausted frames in its grasp, that it was with the utmost difficulty that they could be aroused from their slumbers, or made sensible of their danger. The sentinels, it is said, had even to prick some of them with their swords, before they could be awakened, and, when they at length succeeded in rousing

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the sleepers, they effected a retreat, after some skirmishing, to the foot of the Grampians, about three miles distant from their camp, and retired, thereafter, through Glenesk into the interior without further molestation.

This memorable retreat is certainly one of the most extraordinary events which occurred during the whole of Montrose's campaigns. Had his men been quite fresh when they left Dundee Law, their escape, under such an expert commander as Montrose, would have been in no way singular; but to see a handful of men who had not enjoyed a moment's repose for two days, who had performed a tedious march of twenty miles during the night, and taken one of the most considerable towns in the kingdom, after a short struggle, and had, thereafter, given themselves up to intoxication, retire in good order before a large and well-appointed army at their very heels, and perform another march of about sixty miles, without resting, is truly wonderful. It is not therefore surprising, that some of the most experienced officers in Britain, and in France and Germany, considered this retreat of Montrose as the most splendid of all his achievements.

Being now secure from all danger in the fastnesses of the Grampians, Montrose allowed his men to refresh themselves for some days. Whilst enjoying this necessary relaxation from the fatigues of the field, intelligence was brought to Montrose that a division of the covenanting army, under Hurry, was in full march on Aberdeen, with an intention of proceeding into Moray. Judging that an attack upon the possessions of the Gordons would be one of Hurry's objects, Montrose despatched Lord Gordon with his horse to the north, for the purpose of assisting his friends in case of attack.

It was not in the nature of Montrose to remain inactive for any length of time, and an occurrence,

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which he had received notice, had lately taken place, which determined him to return a second time to Dunkeld. This was the escape of Viscount Aboyne and some other noblemen and gentlemen from Carlisle, and who, he was informed, were on their way north to join him. Apprehensive that they might be interrupted by Baillie's troops, he resolved to make a diversion in their favour, and, by drawing off the attention of Baillie, enable them the more effectually to elude observation. Leaving, therefore, Macdonald, with about two hundred men, to beat up the enemy in the neighbourhood of Cupar Angus, Montrose proceeded, with the remainder of his forces, consisting only of five hundred foot and fifty horse, to Dunkeld, whence he marched to Crieff, which is about seventeen miles west from Perth. It was not until he had arrived at the latter town, that Baillie, who, after his pursuit of Montrose, had returned to Perth with his army, heard of this movement. As Baillie was sufficiently aware of the weakness of Montrose's force, and as he was sure that, with such a great disparity, Montrose would not risk a general engagement, he endeavoured to surprise him, in the hope, either of cutting him off entirely, or crippling him so effectually, as to prevent him from again taking the field. He therefore left Perth during the night of the seventh of April, with his whole army, consisting of two thousand foot and five hundred horse, with the intention of falling upon Montrose by break of day, before he should be aware of his presence; but Montrose's experience had taught him the necessity of being always upon his guard, when so near an enemy's camp and, accordingly, he had drawn up his army, in anticipation of Baillie's advance, in such order as would enable him either to give battle or retreat.

As soon as he heard of Baillie's approach, Montrose

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advanced with his horse to reconnoitre the enemy, and having ascertained their strength and numbers, which were too formidable to be encountered with his little band, brave as they were, he gave immediate orders to his foot to retreat with speed up Stratherne, and to retire into the adjoining passes. To prevent them from being harassed in their retreat by the enemy's cavalry, Montrose covered their rear with his small body of horse, with which he sustained a very severe attack, which he warmly repulsed, and having killed several of the assailants, the rest were forced to retire in disorder. After a march of about eight miles, Montrose's troops arrived at the pass of Stratherne, of which they took immediate possession, and Baillie, thinking it useless to follow them into their retreat, discontinued the pursuit, and retired back with his army toward Perth. Montrose passed the night on the banks of Loch Erne, and marched next morning through Balquidder, where he was joined, at the ford of Cardross, by the Viscount Aboyne, the master of Napier, Hay of Dalgetty, and Stirling of Keir, who, along with the Earl of Nithsdale, Lord Herries, and others, had escaped from Carlisle, as before stated.

No sooner had Baillie returned from the pursuit of Montrose than intelligence was brought to him that Macdonald, with the two hundred men which Montrose had left with him, had burnt the town of Cupar Angus; that he had wasted the lands of Lord Balmerinoch; killed Patrick Lindsay, the minister of Cupar; and, finally, after routing some troopers of Lord Balcarras, killing some of them, and carrying off their horses and arms, had fled to the hills. This occurrence, while it withdrew the attention of Baillie from Montrose's future movements, enabled the latter to proceed to the north without opposition.

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Montrose had advanced as far as Loch Katrine, when a messenger brought him intelligence that General Hurry was in the Enzie with a considerable force, that he had been joined by some of the Moray men, and, after plundering and laying waste the country, was preparing to attack Lord Gordon, who had not a sufficient force to oppose him. On receiving this information, Montrose resolved to proceed immediately to the north to save the Gordons from the destruction which appeared to hang over them, hoping that with such accessions of force as he might obtain in his march, united with that under Lord Gordon, he would succeed in defeating Hurry before Baillie should be aware of his movements.

He, therefore, returned through Balquidder, and marched with rapid strides along the side of Loch Tay, and through Athole and Angus, and crossing the Grampian hills, proceeded down the Strath of Glenmuck. In his march, Montrose was joined by the Athole men and the other Highlanders who had obtained, or rather taken, leave of absence after the battle of Inverlochy, and also by Macdonald and his party. On arriving in the neighbourhood of Auchindoun, he was met by Lord Gordon at the head of a thousand foot and two hundred horse. He crossed the Dee on the first of May at the mill of Cruthie, and sent Lord Aboyne, the same day, down Dee side with eighty horse to Aberdeen in quest of powder, of which his army stood in great want. His lordship had the good fortune to find no less than twenty barrels of powder in the ships which lay in the harbour, which he immediately carried off with him to the army, which he joined the same night at Skene, where Montrose had pitched his camp.

Thus reinforced and well provided with ammunition, Montrose continued his march toward the Spey, and before Hurry was even aware that he had crossed the

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Grampians, he found Montrose within six miles of his camp. The sudden appearance of Montrose with such a superior force, — for Hurry had only at this time about a thousand foot and two hundred horse, — greatly alarmed him, and raising his camp, he crossed the Spey in great haste, with the intention of marching to Inverness, where he would be joined by the troops of the garrison, and receive large reinforcements from the neighbouring countries. Montrose immediately pursued him, and followed close upon his heels successively through Elgin and Forres, and for fourteen miles beyond the latter, when, favoured by the darkness of the night, Hurry effected his escape, with little loss, and arrived at Inverness.

The panic into which Hurry had been thrown soon gave way to a very different feeling, as he found the Earls of Seaforth and Sutherland with their retainers, and the Clan Fraser, and others from Moray and Caithness, all assembled at Inverness, as he had directed. This accession of force increased his army to thirty-five hundred foot and four hundred horse. He, therefore, resolved to act on the offensive by giving battle to Montrose immediately.

Montrose had taken up a position at the village of Auldearn, between three and four miles from Nairn, on the morning after the pursuit. In the course of the day, Hurry advanced with all his forces, including the garrison of Inverness, toward Nairn, and, on approaching Auldearn, formed his army in order of battle. Montrose's force, which had been greatly weakened by the return of the Athole men and other Highlanders to defend their country from the depredations of Baillie's army, now consisted of only 1,500 foot and 250 horse. It was not, therefore, without great reluctance, that he resolved to risk a battle with an enemy more than double

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in point of numbers, and composed in great part of veteran troops; but, pressed as he was by Hurry, and in danger of being attacked in his rear by Baillie, who was advancing by forced marches to the north, he had no alternative but to hazard a general engagement. He, therefore, instantly looked about him for an advantageous position.

The village of Auldearn stands upon a height, behind which, or on the east, is a valley, which is overlooked by a ridge of little eminences, running in a northerly direction, and which almost conceals the valley from view. In this hollow Montrose arranged his forces in order of battle. Having formed them into two divisions, he posted the right wing on the north of the village, at a place where there was a considerable number of dikes and ditches. This body, which consisted of four hundred men, chiefly Irish, was placed under the command of Macdonald. On taking their stations, Montrose gave them strict injunctions not to leave their position on any account, as they were effectually protected by the walls around them, not only from the attacks of cavalry but of foot, and could, without much danger to themselves, keep up a galling and destructive fire upon their assailants. In order to attract the best troops of the enemy to this difficult spot where they could not act, and to make them believe that Montrose commanded this wing, he gave the royal standard to Macdonald, intending, when they should get entangled among the bushes and dikes, with which the ground to the right was covered, to attack them himself with his left wing. And to enable him to do so the more effectually, he placed the whole of his horse and the remainder of the foot on the left wing to the south of the village. The former he committed to the charge of Lord Gordon, reserving the command of the latter to himself. After

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placing a few chosen foot with some cannon in front of the village, under cover of some dikes, Montrose firmly awaited the attack of the enemy.

The arrangements of Hurry were these. He divided his foot and his horse into two divisions each. On the right wing of the main body of the foot, which was commanded by Campbell of Lawers, Hurry placed the regular cavalry which he had brought from the south, and on the left the horse of Moray, and the north under the charge of Captain Drummond. The other division of foot was placed behind as a reserve and commanded by Hurry himself.

When Hurry observed the singular position which Montrose had taken up, he was utterly at a loss to guess his designs, and though it appeared to him, skilful as he was in the art of war, a most extraordinary and novel sight, yet, from the well-known character of Montrose, he was satisfied that Montrose's arrangements were the result of a deep-laid scheme. But what especially excited the surprise of Hurry was the appearance of the large yellow banner or royal standard in the midst of a small body of foot stationed among hedges and dikes and stones, almost isolated from the horse and the main body of the foot. To attack this party, at the head of which he naturally supposed Montrose was, was his first object. This was precisely what Montrose had wished by committing the royal standard to the charge of Macdonald, and the snare proved successful. With the design of overwhelming at once the right wing, Hurry despatched toward it the best of his horse and all his veteran troops, who made a furious attack upon Macdonald's party, who defended themselves bravely behind the dikes and bushes. The contest continued for sometime on the right with varied success, and Hurry, who had plenty of men to spare, relieved those

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who were engaged by fresh troops. Montrose, who kept a steady eye upon the motions of the enemy, and watched a favourable opportunity for making a grand attack upon them with the left wing, was just preparing to carry his design into execution, when a confidential person suddenly rode up to him and whispered in his ear that the right wing had been put to flight.

This intelligence was not, however, quite correct. It seems that Macdonald, who, says Wishart, "was a brave enough man, but rather a better soldier than a general, extremely violent, and daring even to rashness," had been so provoked with the taunts and insults of the enemy, that in spite of the express orders he had received from Montrose on no account to leave his position, he had unwisely advanced beyond it to attack the enemy, and though he had been several times repulsed, he returned to the charge. But he was at last borne down by the great numerical superiority of the enemy's horse and foot, consisting of veteran troops, and forced to retire in great disorder into an adjoining enclosure. Nothing, however, could exceed the admirable manner in which he managed this retreat and the courage he displayed while leading off his men. Defending his body with a large target, he resisted, single-handed, the assaults of the enemy, and was the last man to leave the field. So closely indeed was he pressed by Hurry's spearmen, that some of them actually came so near him as to fix their spears in his target, which he cut off by threes or fours at a time with his broadsword.

It was during this retreat that Montrose received the intelligence of the flight of the right wing; but he preserved his usual presence of mind, and to encourage his men, who might get alarmed at hearing such news, he thus addressed Lord Gordon, loud enough to be heard by his troops: "What are we doing, my lord? Our

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friend Macdonald has routed the enemy on the right and is carrying all before him. Shall we look on, and let him carry off the whole honour of the day?" A crisis had arrived, and not a moment was to be lost. Scarcely, therefore, were the words out of Montrose's mouth, when he ordered his men to charge the enemy. When his men were advancing to the charge, Captain or Major Drummond, who commanded Hurry's horse, made an awkward movement by wheeling about his men, and his horse coming in contact with the foot, broke their ranks and occasioned considerable confusion. Lord Gordon, seeing this, immediately rushed in upon Drummond's horse with his party and put them to flight. Montrose followed hard with the foot, and attacked the main body of Hurry's army, which he routed after a powerful resistance. The veterans in Hurry's army, who had served in Ireland, fought manfully, and chose rather to be cut down standing in their ranks than retreat; but the new levies from Moray, Ross, Sutherland, and Caithness fled in great consternation. They were pursued for several miles, and might have been all killed or captured if Lord Aboyne had not, by an unnecessary display of ensigns and standards, which he had taken from the enemy, attracted the notice of the pursuers, who halted for sometime under the impression that a fresh party of the enemy was coming up to attack them. In this way, Hurry and some of his troops who were the last to leave the field of battle, as well as the other fugitives, escaped from the impending danger, and arrived at Inverness the following morning. As the loss of this battle was mainly owing to Captain Drummond, he was tried by a court-martial at Inverness and condemned to be shot, a sentence which was carried into immediate execution. He was accused of having betrayed the army, and it

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is said that he admitted that after the battle had commenced he had spoken with the enemy.

The number of killed on both sides has been variously stated. That on the side of the Covenanters has been reckoned by one writer at one thousand, by another at two thousand, and by a third at three thousand men. Montrose, on the other hand, is said by the first of these authors to have lost about two hundred men, while the second says, that he had only "some twenty-four gentlemen hurt, and some few Irish killed," and Wishart informs us that Montrose only missed one private man on the left, and that the right wing, commanded by Macdonald, "lost only fourteen private men." This trifling loss, on the part of Montrose, will appear almost incredible, and makes us incline to think that it must have been greatly underrated, for it is impossible to conceive that the right wing could have maintained the arduous struggle it did without a large sacrifice of life. The clans who had joined Hurry suffered considerably, particularly the Frazers, who, besides unmarried men, are said to have left dead on the field no less than eighty-seven married men. Among the principal covenanting officers who were slain were Colonel Campbell of Lawers, and Sirs John and Gideon Murray, and Colonel James Campbell, with several other officers of inferior note. The laird of Lawers's brother, Archibald Campbell, and a few other officers were taken prisoners. Captain Macdonald and William Macpherson of Invereschie were the only persons of any note killed on Montrose's side. Montrose took several prisoners, whom, with the wounded, he treated with great kindness. Such of the former as expressed their sorrow for having joined the ranks of the Covenanters he released; others who were disposed to join him he received into his army, but such as remained obstinate he imprisoned.

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Besides taking sixteen standards from the enemy, Montrose got possession of the whole of their baggage, provisions, and ammunition, and a considerable quantity of money and valuable effects. The battle of Auldearn was fought on the fourth of May, according to some writers, and on the ninth, according to others, in the year 1645.

The immense disproportion between the numbers of the slain, on the side of the Covenanters, and that of the prisoners, taken by Montrose, evidently shows that very little quarter had been given, the cause of which is said to have been the murder of James Gordon, younger of Rhiny, who was killed by a party from the garrison of Spynie, and by some of the inhabitants of Elgin at Struders, near Forres, where he had been left in consequence of a severe wound he had received in a skirmish during Hurry's first retreat to Inverness. But Montrose carried his revenge still farther, for, after burning the lands and houses of Campbell of Calder, and plundering all his effects, as well as those of the Earl of Moray, who was then in England, he proceeded to Elgin, where, on the twelfth of May, he burnt the houses of Walter Smith, John Mill, John Douglas of Morristoun, and Alexander Douglas, some of whom, with some of their sons, were concerned in James Gordon's murder. The houses of Robert Gibson, George Donaldson, and George Sutherland, and other inhabitants of Elgin, from their proximity to those put on fire, were seized upon by the flames and consumed. The houses of Hay, the provost, and Gawin Douglas were also selected for destruction, but their safety was secured by the payment of a sum of money. The property, called the Friars of Elgin, was plundered, but, "being church building," says Spalding, was preserved from fire. The house belonging to the laird of Plus-

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carden, in Elgin, was also plundered. From Elgin, Montrose sent out a party to the town of Garmouth, belonging to the laird of Innes, which they burnt, and another party burnt the Bishop's Mill and Milltoun, life-rented by the wife of Major Sutherland, who had been also concerned in James Gordon's death.

While these proceedings were going on, Montrose sent his whole baggage, booty, and warlike stores across the Spey, which he himself crossed upon the fourteenth of May, after which he proceeded to the Bog of Gicht, where he did not remain long, but went to Birkenbog, the seat of "a great Covenanter," where he took up his headquarters. He quartered his men in the neighbourhood, and, during a short stay at Birkenbog, he sent out different parties of his troops to scour the country, who burnt the town of Cullen, and such of the lands belonging to Lord Frendraught as had formerly escaped their ravages. A party of men, under the command of Leith of Harthill, also burnt the town and lands of Thombeg, belonging to the laird of Monymusk, and occupied by William Forbes, his tenant, because Forbes had robbed Leith's servant of his baggage horse and some money.

When General Baillie first heard of the defeat of his colleague, Hurry, at Auldearn, he was lying at Cromar with his army. He had, in the beginning of May, after Montrose's departure to the north, entered Athole, which he had wasted with fire and sword, and had made an attempt upon the strong castle of Blair, into which many of the prisoners taken at the battle of Inverlochy were confined; but, not succeeding in his enterprise, he had, after collecting an immense booty, marched through Athole, and, passing by Kirriemuir and Fettercairn, had encamped on the Birse on the tenth of May. His force at this time amounted

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to about two thousand foot and 120 troopers. On the following day, he had marched to Cromar, where he encamped between the Kirks of Coull and Tarlan till he should be joined by Lord Balcarras's horse regiment. While lying at Cromar, he laid waste the estates of the Royalists in the neighbourhood, and burnt the house of Terpersie, belonging to a gentleman of the name of Gordon. In a short time, he was joined not only by Balcarras's regiment but by two foot regiments. The ministers endeavoured to induce the country people also to join Baillie, by "thundering out of pulpits;" but "they lay still," says Spalding, "and would not follow him."

As soon as Baillie heard of the defeat of Hurry, he raised his camp at Cromar, upon the nineteenth of May, and hurried north. He arrived at the wood of Cochlarachie, within two miles of Strathbogie, before Montrose was aware of his approach. Here he was joined by Hurry, who, with some horse from Inverness, had passed themselves off as belonging to Lord Gordon's party, and had thus been permitted to go through Montrose's lines without opposition.

It was on the nineteenth of May, when lying at Birkenbog, that Montrose received the intelligence of Baillie's arrival in the neighbourhood of Strathbogie. Although Montrose's men had not yet wholly recovered from the fatigues of their late extraordinary march and subsequent labours, and although their numbers had been reduced since the battle of Auldearn by the departure of some of the Highlanders with the booty they had acquired, they felt no disinclination to engage the enemy, but, on the contrary, were desirous of coming to immediate action. But Montrose himself thought differently, for although he had the utmost confidence in the often-tried courage of his troops, he judged it

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more expedient to avoid an engagement at present, and to retire, in the meantime, into his fastnesses to recruit his exhausted strength, than risk another battle with a fresh force, greatly superior to his own. In order to deceive the enemy as to his intentions, he advanced, the same day, upon Strathbogie, and, within view of their camp, began to make entrenchments and raise fortifications, as if preparing to defend himself. But as soon as the darkness of the night prevented Baillie from discovering his motions, Montrose marched rapidly up the south side of the Spey with his foot, leaving his horse behind him, to whom he gave instructions to follow him as soon as daylight began to appear, which instructions were punctually obeyed.

Baillie had passed the night in the confident expectation of a battle next day; but he was surprised to learn the following morning that not a vestige of Montrose's army was to be seen. Montrose had taken the route to Balveny, which having been ascertained by Baillie, he immediately prepared to follow him. He, accordingly, crossed the Spey, and, after a rapid march, almost overtook the retiring foe in Glenlivet; but Montrose, having outdistanced his pursuers by several miles before night came on, he got the start of them so completely, that they were quite at a loss next morning to ascertain the route he had taken, and could only guess at it by observing the traces of his footsteps on the grass and the heather over which he had passed. Following, therefore, the course thus pointed out, Baillie came again in sight of Montrose; but he found that he had taken up a position, which, whilst it almost defied approach from its rocky and woody situation, commanded the entrance into Badenoch, from which country Montrose could, without molestation, draw supplies of both men and provisions. To attack Montrose in his stronghold was out of the

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question; but, in the hope of withdrawing him from it, Baillie encamped his army hard by. Montrose lay quite secure in his well-chosen position, from which he sent out parties who, skirmishing by day, and beating up the quarters of the enemy during the night, so harassed and frightened them, that they were obliged to retreat to Inverness, after a stay of a few days, a measure which was rendered still more necessary from the want of provisions and of provender for the horses. Leaving Inverness, Baillie crossed the Spey, and proceeded to Aberdeenshire, and arrived on the third of June at Newton, in the Garioch, "where he encamped, destroying the country, and cutting the green-growing crops to the very clod." So bold had the Gordons and other Royalists lately become, in consequence of Montrose's success, that, in passing through Strathbogie on this occasion, Baillie was considerably annoyed by small parties who hung upon and harassed his rear; but he did not retaliate as he might have done.

Having got quit of the presence of Baillie's army, Montrose resolved to make a descent into Angus, and attack the Earl of Crawford, who lay at the castle of Newtyle with an army of reserve to support Baillie, and to prevent Montrose from crossing the Forth, and carrying the war into the south. This nobleman, who stood next to Argyle, as head of the Covenanters, had often complained to the Estates against Argyle, whose rival he was, for his inactivity and pusillanimity; and having insinuated that he would have acted a very different part had the command of such an army, as Argyle had, been entrusted to him, he had the address to obtain the command of the army now under him, which had been newly raised; but the earl was without military experience, and quite unfit to cope for a moment with Montrose.

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Proceeding through Badenoch, Montrose crossed the Grampians, and arrived by rapid marches on the banks of the River Airly, within seven miles of Crawford's camp, before the latter was aware of his approch. He would have assuredly annihilated Crawford's army, which he was preparing to attack, but an unexpected occurrence put an end to his design. This was the desertion of the Gordons and their friends, who almost all returned to their country. Intelligence, it would appear, had been received by them that Baillie was laying waste their lands, to protect which, they appear to have adopted the resolution of returning home to defend their possessions; but Lord Gordon was very indignant at their conduct, and it is said that he would have punished with death such of his own retainers as left the army, had not Montrose prevented him.

The desertion of this part of his forces forced Montrose to abandon the idea of attacking Crawford; but the disappointment, instead of limiting his operations, only served to incite him to follow out more extended views. He now formed the resolution to attack Baillie himself, but before he could venture on such a bold step, he saw that there was an absolute necessity of making some additions to his force. With this view he sent Sir Nathaniel Gordon, an influential Cavalier, into the north before him, to raise the Gordons and the other Royalists; and, on his march north through Glenshee and the Braes of Mar, Montrose despatched Macdonald into the remoter Highlands with a party to bring him, as speedily as possible, all the forces he could. Judging that the influence and authority of Lord Gordon might greatly assist Sir Nathaniel, he sent him after him, and Montrose himself encamped in the country of Cromar, waiting for the expected reinforcements.

In the meantime, Baillie lay in camp on Dee side

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in the lower Mar, where he was joined by Crawford, but he showed no disposition to attack Montrose, who, from the inferiority, in point of number, of his forces, retired to the old castle of Kargarf. Crawford did not, however, remain long with Baillié; but, exchanging a thousand of his raw recruits for a similar number of Baillie's veterans, he returned with these, and the remainder of his army, through the Mearns into Angus, as if he intended some mighty exploit; he, thereafter, entered Athole, and, in imitation of Argyle, plundered and burnt the country.

Raising his camp, Baillie marched toward Strathbogie to lay siege to the Marquis of Huntly's castle, the Bog of Gicht, now Gordon castle; but although Montrose had not yet received any reinforcements, he resolved to follow Baillie and prevent him from proceeding in his intended attack upon the castle. But Montrose had marched scarcely three miles when he was observed by Baillie's scouts. Being desirous to know his strength and the position he occupied, Montrose sent out some men acquainted with the country to examine the enemy's force at a distance. These speedily returned with information that Baillie's foot were drawn up on a rising ground above Keith, about two miles off, and that their horse were in possession of a very narrow pass, about half way between the two armies. Montrose thereupon sent off a body of horse, along with some light musketeers, to support them. Some slight skirmishing took place, after which, Baillie's horse retired through the pass, but as it was well-guarded by musketeers, Montrose's horse did not venture to follow them. He, therefore, ordered forward his foot to drive them from their position, but, night coming on, they were prevented from proceeding. Next morning Montrose, not considering it advisable to attack Baillie in the strong posi-

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tion he occupied, sent a trumpeter to him offering to engage him on open ground, but Baillie answered the hostile message by saying, that he would not receive orders for fighting from his enemy.

In this situation of matters, Montrose had recourse to strategy to draw Baillie from his stronghold. By retiring across the River Don near the castle of Druminnor, belonging to Lord Forbes, the covenanting general was led to believe that Montrose intended to march to the south, and he was, therefore, advised by a Committee of the Estates which always accompanied him, and in whose hands he appears to have been a mere passive instrument, to pursue Montrose. Leaving therefore the ground from which Montrose could not dislodge him by force, he followed Montrose, and was thus led into the very snare which had been laid for him by his expert adversary. As soon as Montrose's scouts brought intelligence that Baillie was advancing, he set off by break of day to the village of Alford on the River Don, where he intended to await the enemy. When Baillie was informed of this movement, he imagined that Montrose was in full retreat before him, a supposition which encouraged him so to hasten his march, that he came up with Montrose at noon at the distance of a few miles from Alford. Montrose, thereupon, drew up his army in order of battle on an advantageous rising ground and waited for the enemy; but instead of attacking him, Baillie made a détour to the left with the intention of getting into Montrose's rear and cutting off his retreat. Montrose then continued his march to Alford, where he passed the night.

On the following morning, being the second day of July, 1645, the two armies were only the distance of about four miles from each other. Montrose drew up his troops on a little hill behind the village of Alford.

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In his rear was a marsh full of ditches and pits, which would protect him from the inroads of Baillie's cavalry should they attempt to assail his rear, and in his front stood a steep hill, which prevented the enemy from observing his motions. He gave the command of the right wing to Lord Gordon and Sir Nathaniel; the left he committed to Viscount Aboyne and Sir William Rollock; and the main body was put under the charge of Angus Macvichalaster, chief of the Macdonnells of Glengarry, Drummond younger of Balloch, and Quartermaster George Graham, a skilful officer. To Napier, his nephew, Montrose entrusted a body of reserve, which was concealed behind the hill.

After thus choosing his ground and making his dispositions, Montrose himself, at the head of a troop of horse, rode off to watch the movements of the enemy, and while examining the fords of the Don, intelligence was brought to him that the whole of the enemy's forces were in rapid motion up the river to possess themselves of a ford about a mile above Alford, at which they meant to cross with the view of cutting off his retreat, as they still supposed that he was flying before them. Leaving therefore some of the horse to notice the motions of the enemy, Montrose returned to his army to give the necessary orders for battle.

Scarcely, however, had Montrose completed his arrangements, when the troop of horse he had left near the ford returned in full gallop with intelligence that the enemy had crossed the Don, and was moving in the direction of Alford. This was a fatal step on the part of Baillie, who, it is said, was forced into battle by the rashness of Lord Balcarras, who unnecessarily placed himself and his regiment in a position of such danger that they could not be rescued without exposing the whole of the covenanting army.

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When Baillie arrived in the valley adjoining the hill on which Montrose had taken up his position, both armies remained motionless for some time, viewing each other, as if unwilling to begin the combat. Owing to the commanding position which Montrose occupied, the Covenanters could not expect to gain anything by attacking him even with superior forces; but now, for the first time, the number of the respective armies was about equal, and Montrose had this advantage over his adversary, that while Baillie's army consisted in part of the raw and undisciplined levies which the Earl of Crawford had exchanged for some of his veteran troops, the greater part of Montrose's men had been long accustomed to service. These circumstances determined Baillie not to attempt the ascent of the hill, but to remain in the valley, where, in the event of a descent by Montrose, his superiority in cavalry would give him the advantage.

This state of inaction was, however, soon put an end to by Lord Gordon, who observing a party of Baillie's troops driving away before them a large quantity of cattle which they had collected in Strathbogie and the Enzie, and being desirous of recovering the property of his countrymen, selected a body of horse, with which he attempted a rescue. The assailed party was protected by some dikes and enclosures, from behind which they fired a volley upon the Gordons, of whom the horse led by Lord Gordon was composed, which did considerable execution amongst them. Such a cool and determined reception, attended with a result so disastrous and unexpected, might have been attended by dangerous consequences, had not Montrose, on observing the party of Lord Gordon giving indications as if undetermined how to act, resolved immediately to commence a general attack upon the enemy with his whole army.

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But as Baillie's foot had entrenched themselves amongst the dikes and fences which covered the ground at the bottom of the hill, and could not be attacked in that position with success, Montrose immediately ordered the horse, who were engaged with the enemy, to retreat to their former position, in the expectation that Baillie's troops would leave their ground and follow them. And in this hope he was not disappointed, for the Covenanters, thinking that this movement of the horse was merely the prelude to a retreat, advanced from their secure position and followed the supposed fugitives with their whole horse and foot in regular order.

Both armies now came to close quarters, and fought face to face and man to man with great obstinacy for some time, without either party receding from the ground they occupied. At length Sir Nathaniel Gordon, growing impatient at such a protracted resistance, resolved to cut his way through the enemy's left wing, consisting of Lord Balcarras's regiment of horse; and calling to the light musketeers who lined his horse, he ordered them to throw aside their muskets, which were now unnecessary, and to attack the enemy's horse with their drawn swords. This order was immediately obeyed, and in a short time they cut a passage through the ranks of the enemy, whom they hewed down with great slaughter. When the horse which composed Baillie's right wing, and which had been kept in check by Lord Aboyne, perceived that their left had given way, they also retreated. An attempt was made by the covenanting general to rally his left wing by bringing up the right, after it had retired, to its support, but they were so alarmed at the spectacle of *mêlée* which they had just witnessed on the left, where their comrades had been cut down by the broadswords of Montrose's

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musketeers, that they could not be induced to take the place of their retiring friends.

Thus abandoned by the horse, Baillie's foot were attacked on all sides by Montrose's forces. They fought with uncommon bravery, and although they were cut down in great numbers, the survivors exhibited a perseverance and determination to resist to the last extremity. An accident now occurred, which, whilst it threw a melancholy gloom over the fortunes of the day, and the spirits of Montrose's men, served to hasten the work of carnage and death. This was the fall of Lord Gordon, who, having incautiously rushed in amongst the thickest of the enemy, was unfortunately shot dead when in the act of pulling Baillie, the covenanting general, from his horse, having, it is said, in a moment of exultation, promised to his men, to drag Baillie out of the ranks and present him before them. The Gordons, on perceiving their young chief fall, set no bounds to their fury, and, falling upon the enemy with renewed vigour, hewed them down without mercy; yet these brave men still showed no disposition to flee, and it was not until the appearance of the reserve under the master of Napier, which had hitherto been kept out of the view of the enemy at the back of the hill, that their courage began to fail them. But when this body began to descend the hill, accompanied by what appeared to them a fresh reinforcement of cavalry, but which consisted merely of the camp or livery boys, who had mounted the sumpter-horses to make a display for the purpose of alarming the enemy, the entire remaining body of the covenanting foot fled with precipitation. A hot pursuit took place, and so great was the slaughter that very few of them escaped. The covenanting general and his principal officers were saved by the fleetness of their horses, and the Marquis of Argyle, who had accompan-

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ied Baillie as a member of the Committee, and who was closely pursued by Glengarry and some of his Highlanders, made a narrow escape by repeatedly changing horses.

Thus ended one of the best contested battles which Montrose had yet fought, yet strange as the fact may appear, his loss was, as usual, extremely trifling. Besides Lord Gordon were killed Mowat of Balwholly, Ogilvy of Milton, and one Dickson, an Irish captain, and a few privates. A considerable number, however, of Montrose's men were wounded, particularly the Gordons, who, for a long time, sustained the attacks of Balcarras's horse, amongst whom were Sir Nathaniel and Gordon, younger of Gicht. The loss on the side of the Covenanters was immense; by far the greater part of their foot, and a considerable number of their cavalry having been slain. Some prisoners were taken from them, but their number was small, owing to their obstinacy in refusing quarter. These were sent to Strathbogie under an escort.

The victory, brilliant as it was, was, however, clouded by the death of Lord Gordon, "a very hopeful young gentleman, able of mind and body, about the age of twenty-eight years." Wishart gives an affecting description of the feelings of Montrose's army when this amiable young nobleman was killed. "There was," he says, "a general lamentation for the loss of the Lord Gordon, whose death seemed to eclipse all the glory of the victory. As the report spread among the soldiers, everyone appeared to be struck dumb with the melancholy news, and a universal silence prevailed for some time through the army. However, their grief soon burst through all restraint, venting itself in the voice of lamentation and sorrow. When the first transports were over, the soldiers exclaimed against

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heaven and earth for bereaving the king, the kingdom, and themselves of such an excellent young nobleman; and, unmindful of the victory or of the plunder, they thronged about the body of their dead captain, some weeping over his wounds and kissing his lifeless limbs; while others praised his comely appearance even in death, and extolled his noble mind, which was enriched with every valuable qualification that could adorn his high birth or ample fortune. They even cursed the victory bought at so dear a rate. Nothing could have supported the army under this immense sorrow but the presence of Montrose, whose safety gave them joy, and not a little revived their drooping spirits. In the meantime he could not command his grief, but mourned bitterly over the melancholy fate of his only and dearest friend, grievously complaining, that one who was the honour of his nation, the ornament of the Scots nobility, and the boldest asserter of the royal authority in the north, had fallen in the flower of his youth."

END OF VOLUME II.

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NOTES

1. Sir Robert Gordon says, that "Mackdonald Rosse being brought out of prisson with tuelve of his associats, the king commanded that they should be likewise shod with iron shoes, in the same sort as they had befor served the woman, and afterwards, that they should be careid, thrie severall dayes, through the streets of Edenburgh, for a spectacle to the people. All which being performed, the said Mackdonald Ross wes beheaded, and his twelve companions hanged on the high wayes. A notable paterne of justice, which may be an example to the negligent and sluggish justiciars of our tyme, who suffer the poore and weak to be oppressed by strong and idle wagabounds."

2. It was this excellent bishop who built, at his own expense, the beautiful bridge of seven arches on the Dee, near Aberdeen. The Episcopal arms cut on some of the stones are almost as entire as when chiselled by the hands of the sculptor.

3. This is the number given by Bishop Lesley, whose account must be preferred to that of Sir R. Gordon, who states it at upwards of two hundred, as the bishop lived about a century before Sir Robert.

4. Spalding says, that the party were commanded by Lauchlan Mackintosh *alias* Lauchlan Og, uncle of the young chief, and Lauchlan Mackintosh or Lauchlan Angus-son, eldest son of Angus Mackintosh, *alias* Angus William, son of Auld Tirlie. Hist. of the Troubles and memorable Transactions in England and Scotland. Edin. 1829.

5. *Vide* the petition of Provost Forbes to the king, "in the name of the inhabitants" of Inverness; printed among the Culloden Papers, No. 5, p. 4.

6. A considerable number of gentlemen, chiefly from Ross, Sutherland, and Caithness, joined Mackay, some of whom rose to high rank in the army of Gustavus Adolphus. Among these were Robert Monroe of Foulis, and his brother, Hector; Thomas Mackenzie, brother of the Earl of Seaforth; John Monroe of Obisdell, and his brother Robert; John Monroe of Assynt, and others of that surname; Hugh Ross of Priesthill; David Ross and Nicolas Ross,

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sons of Alexander Ross of Invercharron; Hugh Gordon, son of Adam Gordon of Culkour; John Gordon, son of John Gordon of Garty; Adam Gordon and John Gordon, sons of Adam Gordon George-son; Ive Mackay, William, son of Donald Mackay of Skowry; William Gun, son of John Gun Rob-son; John Sinclair, bastard son of the Earl of Caithness; Francis Sinclair, son of James Sinclair of Murkle; John Innes, son of William Innes of Sanset; John Gun, son of William Gun in Golspie-Kirktown; and George Gun, son of Alexander Gun Rob-son.

7. Spalding says that Frendraught was "ordained to pay to the lady, relict of Rothiemay, and the bairns, fiftie thousand merks, in composition of the slaughter."

8. *Turray* is the old name of Turriff.

9. Gordon of Sallagh.

10. There is a great discrepancy between contemporary writers as to the number killed. Wishart states it at two thousand; Spalding at thirteen hundred, and eight hundred prisoners, though he says that some reckoned the number at fifteen hundred killed. Gordon of Sallagh mentions only three hundred.

11. October 4, 1644.

12. This is Wishart's account, but Spalding says there were two hundred horse and eight hundred foot.

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