LOUIS BARBÉ

VISCOUNT DUNDEE

Louis Barbé
Viscount Dundee

http://www.litres.ru/pages/biblio_book/?art=24173500
Viscount Dundee:

Содержание

Viscount Dundee

I
FAMILY, BIRTH AND EARLY LIFE

The Grahams of Claverhouse were a younger branch of an old and illustrious family which, from the twelfth century onwards, bore an important part in Scottish affairs, and of which several members figured prominently in the history of the nation prior to the time when the fame of the house was raised to its highest point by the 'Great Marquis,' the ill-fated Montrose.

The Claverhouse offshoot was connected with the main stock through Sir Robert Graham of Strathcarron, son of Sir William Graham of Kincardine by his second wife, the Princess Mary, daughter of King Robert III. During the early years of the sixteenth century, John Graham of Balargus, third in descent from Sir William, acquired the lands of Claverhouse, in Forfarshire, a few miles north of Dundee. From these his son took the territorial title which, a few generations later, was to become so feared and so hated throughout covenanting Scotland, and which, even at the present day, after the lapse of more than two hundred years, is still a bye-word and a shaking of the head

to many.

John Graham, the 'Bloody Claverhouse' of Whig denunciators, and the 'Bonnie Dundee' of Jacobite apologists, was the son of William Graham of Claverhouse and Lady Magdalene Carnegie, fifth and youngest daughter of John, first Earl of Northesk. On the authority of Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe and of Mark Napier, successive writers have stated that the mother of the future Viscount was Lady Jean Carnegie. Sir William Fraser has pointed out, however, that Lady Jean was only his maternal aunt, and that she married, not a Claverhouse, but the Master of Spynie. This mistake as to the name of the mother of Viscount Dundee, adds the author of the 'History of the Carnegies,' is the more remarkable that she bore the same Christian name and surname as her cousin, Lady Magdalene Carnegie, first Marchioness of Montrose.

The precise date of Claverhouse's birth is not known. Biographers, accepting Napier's computation, almost unanimously assume that it took place about 1643. That is based on an erroneous deduction from a note to a decision of the Court of Session, quoted by Fountainhall under date of the 21st of July 1687. The matter under litigation was a claim put forward by Fotheringham of Powrie to levy fish from the boats passing by Broughty Castle. The Lords decided that his charter gave him sufficient right and title 'if so be he had possessed forty years by virtue of that title.' With special reference to one of the three defendants, it was added, 'as for Clavers, he was seventeen years

of these forty a minor, and so they must prove forty years before that.' Napier assuming the seventeen years of Claverhouse's minority to have been coincident with the first seventeen of the forty referred to, argued that, as a period of forty years prior to 1687 leads back to 1647, Claverhouse was not twenty-one years of age until seventeen years after 1647; in other words, that he was of age about the year 1664, and, consequently, born about 1643. The calculation is ingenious, and the result plausible; but the marriage contract of Claverhouse's parents proves the fallacy of the original assumption from which everything depends. That authoritative document, for the discovery of which we are indebted to Sir William Fraser, was subscribed in 1645; the objection which that raises to the date worked out by Napier is obviously insurmountable.

For the approximation thus shown to be erroneous, the 'Dictionary of National Biography' substitutes another which has the merit of being more in accord with the known dates of some of the events in Claverhouse's career. A memorandum preserved at Ethie and noted in the 'History of the Carnegies,' supplies the scrap of positive evidence upon which it is founded. It shows that, in 1653, Lady Claverhouse, as tutrix-testamentar to her son, signed a deed relating to a disposition which she was bound to make to two of her kinsmen. It is not improbable that this was done shortly after her husband's death. If such were the case, their eldest son, who, according to the note to the decision of the Court of Session, was a minor for the space of seventeen years,

would have been four years of age at the time, and must therefore have been born about the year 1649.

The only information now available concerning the future Viscount Dundee's early life, prior to his matriculation as a student, is supplied by the Roll of the Burgesses of Dundee, which sets forth that, on the 22nd of September 1660, 'John Graham of Claverhouse and David Graham, his brother, were admitted Burgesses and Brethren of the Guild of Dundee, by reason of their father's privilege.' The register of St Leonard's College establishes the fact that the two brothers went up together to the University of St Andrews towards the beginning of 1665.

This may be looked upon as a strong confirmation of the date which we have assigned as that of Claverhouse's birth. That he should begin his academic course in his twenty-second year and continue it up to the age of twenty-five, would have been quite contrary to the custom of a period when Scottish undergraduates, more particularly those belonging to the leading families of the country, were even more youthful than many of them are at the present day.

It has generally been assumed that Claverhouse remained at St Andrews for the full period of three years; but the University register supplies no evidence in support of this. On the contrary, the absence of John Graham's name from the list of those of his class-mates who graduated in due course, justifies the belief that his studies were brought to a premature close before 1668. To what extent he availed himself of the opportunities afforded him

during such stay as he may have made at St Andrews, is a matter with regard to which proof is wholly wanting and testimony only bare and vague.

Dr Monro, the Principal of the College of Edinburgh, in his answer to the charge brought against him on the ground of 'his rejoicing the day that the news of Claverhouse his victory came to the town,' admitted that he had not 'rejoiced at the fall of my Lord Dundee,' for whom he 'had an extraordinary value'; and he challenged any 'gentleman, soldier, scholar or civilized citizen' to find fault with him for holding the fallen leader's memory in respect. From this, the utterance of one well qualified by personal acquaintance to form a competent judgment, and unlikely, from his training and education to express it in inconsiderate terms of meaningless exaggeration, it has been argued that the subject of Monro's eulogy must have possessed the attainments upon which men of culture naturally set store. In support of this warrantable inference, there is the statement of a writer who, though not a contemporary, is undeniably a well-informed chronicler. The author of the Memoirs of Sir Ewan Cameron says that Claverhouse 'had ane education suitable to his birth and genius.' According to the same authority, he 'made a considerable progress in the mathematicks, especially in those parts of it that related to his military capacity; and there was no part of the Belles Lettres which he had not studyed with great care and exactness. He was much master in the epistolary way of writeing; for he not onely expressed himself with great ease and plaineness,

but argued well, and had a great art in giving his thoughts in few words.'

Burnet, who, though a connection of Claverhouse's, is very far from displaying any partiality for him, allows that he was 'a man of good parts.' Dalrymple records that 'Dundee had inflamed his mind from his earliest youth, by the perusal of antient poets, historians and orators, with the love of the great actions they praise and describe.' Finally, there is the testimony of the 'officer' who wrote the 'Memoirs of Dundee' published in 1714, and who makes direct reference to his 'liberal education in humanity and in mathematicks.'

The question of Claverhouse's scholarship is not one of special moment in itself; yet it acquires some interest from the animated controversy to which it has given rise, and which originated in a hasty comment made by Sir Walter Scott. The novelist, after referring to a newly published letter, casually added, 'Claverhouse, it may be observed, spells like a chambermaid.' Subsequent writers, interpreting this into a general estimate of Dundee's educational acquirements, repeated the petty and irrelevant charge, in season and out of season, almost as though the quality of his orthography constituted a test by which his whole character was to be estimated. That Claverhouse was erratic in his spelling cannot be denied. It may be questioned, on the other hand, whether, in this respect, he displayed greater disregard for orthography than the average gentleman of his day. If he wrote 'I hop' for 'I hope,' 'deuk' for 'Duke,' 'seased'

for 'seized,' 'fisik' for 'physic,' and 'childring' for 'children,' it does not require a very extensive acquaintance with the correspondence of the seventeenth century to know that dukes and earls, and even lawyers and divines, indulged in vagaries equally startling. But, if the arbitrary and occasionally whimsical spelling of his letters affords no proof of exceptional ignorance, the vigour, clearness, and directness of the style in which they are written give them a place rather above than below the epistolatory standard of the time.

After leaving St Andrews, Claverhouse, following the example set by so many generations of his countrymen, and notably by his illustrious kinsman, the Marquis of Montrose, repaired to the Continent, with the intention of devoting himself to a military career. According to his earliest biographer, 'an Officer of the Army,' he 'spent some time in the French service as a volunteer, with great reputation and applause.' This is repeated rather than confirmed by the author of the 'Memoirs of Sir Ewan Cameron of Lochiel,' with the addition, it is true, of the statement that it was 'under the famous Marishall Turenne' the young soldier received his first training. Dalrymple, without supplying precise information, records that Claverhouse 'entered the profession of arms with an opinion he ought to know the services of different nations, and the duties of different ranks,' that, 'with this view he went into several foreign services,' and that 'when he could not obtain a command,' he served as a volunteer.

The most trustworthy evidence in support of the statement that Claverhouse served and fought in the armies of France, is that of James Philip of Almerieclose, his standard-bearer at Killiecrankie, who, in later years, devoted a Latin epic to the memory and the praise of the gallant Graham. Referring to his hero, he says, 'The French camps on the Loire, where Orleans lifts her towers, and on the Seine, where her increased waters lave the city of Paris, have beheld him triumphant over the defeated enemy, stained with the blood-marks of relentless war.' The passage is, unfortunately, one in which the author has so obviously taken poetical liberty with historical facts, that his words cannot be taken literally. As the editor and translator of the poem points out, 'there could have been no fighting on the Seine or Loire.' Whether, on the other hand, it be probable that 'camps of instruction were there, from which young soldiers were sent to the front,' is a matter of little moment. Even without such explanation the passage is valuable as evidence. It may be accepted as definitively establishing the fact that it was in France Claverhouse first learnt the art of war.

It has been further conjectured that he may have belonged to the contingent of 6000 English and Scottish troops, which, under the leadership of Monmouth, joined Turenne's army in 1672. If such were the case, the duration of his service must have been brief. There is evidence to prove that, by the summer of 1674, he had transferred his allegiance to William of Orange, and that he was present at the battle of Seneff, fought in August of that

year; and there are grounds for believing that he was directly instrumental in rescuing the Prince from a perilous situation.

Macaulay, it is true, rejects the story as 'invented' by some Jacobite many years after both William and Dundee were dead. That, however, appears to have been hastily done, on the erroneous assumption that the account of the alleged incident went no further back than the Memoirs of 1714. They, indeed, do state of Claverhouse, that, 'at the battle of St Neff, 1674, when the Prince of Orange was dismounted, and in great danger of being taken, he rescued him, and brought him off upon his own horse.' But this does not constitute the sole authority. In addition to it, there is that of the Memoirs of Lochiel. It is the more valuable that the author bases his own narrative on the Latin epic to which, in the following passage, he refers as one of the sources of his compilation. 'Besides the assistance I have from the Earl of Balcarres his memoirs of the wars, and the several relations I have had of them from many who were eyewitnesses, I have before me a manuscript copy of an historical Latin poem called "The Grameis," written in imitation of Lucan's "Pharsalia," but unfinished, by Mr Philips of Amryclos, who had the office of standard-bearer during that famous expedition' in the Highlands. From Philips he not only draws the incident of Seneff, but also gives a rough translation in English verse, of the passage commemorating this 'vigorous exploit.' It runs thus: —

'When the feirce Gaule, thro' Belgian stanks yow fled,

Fainting, alone, and destitute of aid,
While the proud victor urg'd your doubtfull fate,
And your tir'd courser sunk beneath your weight,
Did I not mount you on my vigorous steed,
And save your person by his fatal speed?'

Until recently, Philips' poem existed in manuscript only. That circumstance consequently gives the value of distinct contemporary evidence to another effusion, of which the author cannot be suspected of having drawn from the 'Grameis' his allusion, unfortunately only a vague one, to the exploits of Claverhouse whilst serving under the Prince of Orange. Moreover, it was as early as January 1683, that is several years before the occurrence of the leading events celebrated in the 'Grameis,' that the anonymous rhymer published 'The Muse's New Year's Gift, and Hansell, to the right honoured Captain John Graham of Claverhouse.' In that poem the following lines are to be found: —

'I saw the man who at St Neff did see
His conduct, prowess, martial gallantry:
He wore a white plumach that day; not one
Of Belgians wore a white, but him alone;
And though that day was fatal, yet he fought,
And for his part fair triumphs with him brought.'

Once, at least, during the period of his military service

under the Dutch, Claverhouse returned to Scotland. He was in Edinburgh in March 1676. From there he wrote two letters to John Stewart, younger of Garntully, about the purchase of a horse and the gift of a 'setting dogue.' By the beginning of the following month he had again left the country; for, in a letter written by his directions after his hurried departure, and dated the 4th of April, the hope is expressed that 'this day hie is in Holland.' He was not to continue in the pay of the States-General much longer. The very next year he resigned his commission, and came home to solicit employment in the British Army. To account for this apparently sudden determination, the author of the Memoirs of Lochiel relates a highly dramatic incident, for which, it must be added, there is no authority but his own, and of which the details are not such as to command unhesitating belief. After having given his account of William's rescue by Claverhouse, at Seneff, the chronicler continues: —

'The Prince, in reward of this service, gave him a Captain's commission, and promised him the first regiment that should fall in the way; and some years thereafter, there happening a vacancy in one of the Scotch regiments, he stood candidate for it, not only upon the assurance of that promise, but also of the letters he procured from King Charles and the Duke of York, recommending him to the Prince, in very strong terms. But, notwithstanding of all this, the Prince preferred Mr Collier, a son of the Earl of Portmore, to the regiment. The Prince then resided at his Palace of the Loo; and Captain Grahame, who was absent

while this intrigue was carrying on, chanceing to meet Mr Collier in the Palace Court, expostulated the matter in very harsh terms, and gave him some blows with his cane.

'The Prince either saw or was soon informed of what passed, and ordering Captain Grahame, who had been seized by the officer of the guards, to be brought before him, he asked him how he dared to strick any person within the verge of his Palace? The Captain answered, that he was indeed in the wrong, since it was more his Highness his business to have resented that quarrel than his; because Mr Collier had less injured him in disappointing him of the regiment, than he had done his Highness in making him breck his word. Then replyed the Prince, in an angry tone, "I make yow full reparation, for I bestow on yow what is more valuable than a regiment, when I give yow your right arm!" The Captain subjoyned, that since his Highness had the goodness to give him his liberty, he resolved to employ himself elsewhere, for he would not serve a Prince longer that had brock his word.

'The Captain having thus thrown up his commission was preparing in haste for his voyage, when a messenger arrived from the Prince with two hundred guineas for the horse on which he had saved his life. The Captain sent the horse but ordered the gold to be distributed among the grooms of the Prince's stables. It is said, however, that his Highness had the generosity to wryte to the King and the Duke recommending him as a fine gentleman, and a brave officer, fitt for any office, civil or military.'

In the "Life of Lieutenant-General Hugh Mackay," the

account given is more summary: 'About this time,' it is said, 'the lieutenant-colonelcy of one of the regiments, forming the Scottish brigade, falling vacant, two candidates started for the appointment, both excellent officers, but men of characters widely different. These were Graham of Claverhouse, then an officer in the Prince's service, afterwards notorious for his unrelenting cruelties to the Covenanters in the West of Scotland, and Mackay, characterised by Bishop Burnet, as the most pious military man he ever knew. The Prince preferred Mackay, which gave such mortal offence to his rival, that he instantly quitted the service and returned to Scotland, burning with resentment against the authors of his disappointment.'

Neither of these two narratives is contemporary. But the more circumstantial embodies the Jacobite legend current in the early years of the eighteenth century, whilst the briefer is founded on the tradition preserved in the family of Claverhouse's Whig opponent. The one point on which they both agree may therefore be accepted with some confidence; and it seems plausible to ascribe Captain Graham's withdrawal from the Dutch service to the dissatisfaction which he felt at the inadequate recognition of his claims to promotion.

Claverhouse experienced no difficulty in obtaining employment under his own sovereign. Two letters bearing on the subject have been preserved. They are both written by his relative, the Marquis of Montrose; one of them is addressed to him, the other to the Laird of Monorgan, who was also a Graham.

The former is as follows: —

'For the Laird of Claverhouse

'Sir, – You cannot imagine how overjoyed I should be, to have any employment at my disposal that were worthy of your acceptance; nor how much I am ashamed to offer you anything so far below your merit as that of being my Lieutenant; though I be fully persuaded that it will be a step to a much more considerable employment, and will give you occasion to confirm the Duke in the just and good opinion which I do assure you he has of you; he being a person that judges not of people's worth by the rank they are in.

'I do not know, after all this, in what terms, nor with what confidence, I can express my desire to have you accept this mean and inconsiderable offer; whether by endeavouring to magnify it all I can, and telling you, that it is the first troop of the Duke of York's regiment; that I am to raise it in Scotland; and that I pretend that none but gentlemen should ride in it; or, by telling you that I am promised to be very quickly advanced, and that you shall either succeed to me, or share with me in my advancement. I can say no more, but that you will oblige me in it beyond expression.

'I do not expect any answer to this while I am here; for I do resolve to be in Edinburgh against the first or second day of the next month; where, if you be not already, I earnestly entreat

you would be pleased to meet me. – Sir, Your most affectionate cousin and servant,

'London, *February 19th* [1677-8]. 'Montrose.'

From this letter, it has been assumed that Claverhouse had previously made application to his kinsman and titular chief. There can, indeed, hardly be a doubt that it is a reply to a previous request. On the other hand, however, the second letter, written on the same day, does not altogether bear out this view. It was thus: —

'For the Laird of Monorgan

'Sir, – I hope now to be able, within a week or ten days, to give you an account, by word of mouth, of my resolutions, and the reasons I have for accepting a troop in the Duke of York's regiment of horse; so I shall forbear troubling you with a long letter; only I must tell you that I have all along met with a great deal of favour from his Royal Highness, and that he has assured me that this shall be but a step to a more considerable employment.

'He has a very good opinion of Claverhouse, and he bid me endeavour by all means to get him for my Lieutenant. Therefore, I most earnestly beg that you would be pleased to represent to him the advantages he may have by being near the Duke, and by making himself better known to him. And withal assure him

from me, that, if he will embrace this offer, he shall also share with me in my advancement and better fortune. I need not use many words to show you the disparity that is betwixt serving under me and anybody else, though of greater family, he being of my house, and descended of my family.

'You may say more to this purpose than is fit for me to do. I shall say no more but that by this you will infinitely oblige. – Sir, Your most affectionate cousin and servant,

'London, *February 19th* [1677-8]. 'Montrose.'

It is not necessary to look upon this, with Napier, as 'conclusive against the conjecture that Claverhouse had *applied* for this service,' and as affording proof that the commission was spontaneously offered him in recognition of his military abilities. It is more plausible in itself, and more in accordance with the purport of both letters, to believe that Claverhouse had solicited employment from the Duke of York, with whom a recommendation from the Prince of Orange, who had lately become his son-in-law, was likely to possess considerable influence; that James had referred the applicant to the young Marquis, who was then raising a troop for the Duke's regiment of horse-guards; and that he had, at the same time urged Montrose to secure the services of an officer so brave and so able as Claverhouse had already shown himself to be.

It is not clear whether Claverhouse was really called upon to do duty as a mere subaltern. If so, it was but for a few months. As

early as the 21st of November 1678, the Marquis of Montrose superseded the Marquis of Athole as commander of the Royal Horse Guards in Scotland; and the opportunity thus afforded of fulfilling the promise recently made to his kinsman was not neglected. Claverhouse was at once promoted to the vacant post, and thus began that part of his career which was to make him so prominent in the history of his country.

II
THE COVENANT AND THE COVENANTERS

On the 14th of May 1678, a letter addressed to the King by his Privy Council in Scotland, contained a suggestion of which the adoption was destined to exercise an important influence on Claverhouse's career. It was written in answer to a prior communication, which it sufficiently explains, and ran as follows: —

'We have of late had divers informations of numerous field-conventicles kept in several places of the kingdom, who, with armed men, have in many places resisted your authority, and which by your letter, we find has reached your ears, and seeing these insolences are daily iterated, and are still upon the growing hand, and that your Majesty is graciously pleased to ask our advice, for raising of more forces, – It's our humble opinion that, for the present exigent, there may be two company of dragoons, each consisting of one hundred, presently raised, whose constant employment may be for dissipating and interrupting those rendezvouses of rebellion; and therefore we have recommended to the Major-General, the speedy raising of them; and your Majesty may be pleased to give commissions to such qualified persons as the Major-General hath, at our desire, given in a list,

to command these two companies; or to what other persons your Majesty shall think fit.'

In accordance with the advice conveyed in this letter, measures were forthwith taken for raising two additional companies. When formed and officered they were sent to join the troop which Claverhouse already commanded. At the head of this body of some three hundred men he was entrusted with the difficult task of 'dissipating and interrupting' the conventicles in the western and south-western districts of Scotland.

To understand the principles, motives, and aims of those against whom Claverhouse was now called upon to take action, it is necessary to recall the circumstances which accompanied and some of the events which followed the signing in 1643, of the 'Solemn League and Covenant for Reformation and Defence of Religion, the Honour and Happiness of the King, and the Peace and Safety of the three kingdoms of Scotland, England and Ireland.'

In the month of August of that year, the respective committees of the General Assembly and of the Convention of Estates had submitted to those bodies a draft of the document, as it had been drawn up by them, after consultation and deliberation with the Committee of the English Parliament. It had been duly sanctioned, and adopted as the most powerful means, by the blessing of God, for settling and preserving the true Protestant religion, with a perfect peace in all his Majesty's dominions, and propagating the same to other nations, and for establishing his

Majesty's throne to all ages and generations.

Two months later – on the 11th of October – the commissioners of the General Assembly issued an ordinance for the solemn receiving, swearing, and subscribing of the League and Covenant. It contained special injunctions to the Presbyteries that they should take account of the performance thereof in their several bounds; that they should proceed with the censures of the Kirk against all such as should refuse or shift to swear and subscribe, as enemies to the preservation and propagation of religion; and that they should notify their names and make particular report of them to the Commission.

On the next day, the Commissioners of the Convention of Estates, in their turn issued a proclamation by which, supplementing the censures of the Church, they ordained as a penalty on those who should 'postpone or refuse,' that they should 'have their goods and rents confiscate for the use of the public,' and that they should not 'bruik nor enjoy any benefit, place nor office within this kingdom.'

The Covenant, which these ordinances thus required the people of Scotland to subscribe, consisted in an oath binding them to support the reformed religion in the Church of Scotland, in doctrine, worship, discipline and government, according to the Word of God, and the example of the best reformed Churches; to endeavour to bring the Churches of God in the three kingdoms to the nearest conjunction and uniformity in religion, confession of faith, form of Church government, directory for worship,

and catechising; to strive, without respect of persons, for the extirpation of popery, prelacy (that is, Church government by archbishops, bishops, their chancellors and commissaries, deans and chapters, archdeacons, and all other ecclesiastical officers depending on that hierarchy), superstition, heresy, schism, profaneness and whatsoever should be found to be contrary to sound doctrine and the power of godliness; to endeavour to preserve the rights and privileges of the Parliaments, and the liberties of the kingdoms, and to preserve and defend the King's person and authority, in the preservation and defence of the true religion and liberties of the kingdoms; to endeavour to discover all such as had been, or should be, incendiaries, malignants, or evil instruments, by hindering the reformation of religion, dividing the King from his people, or one of the kingdoms from another, or making any factions or parties amongst the people, contrary to the League and Covenant, that they might be brought to public trial, and receive condign punishment, as the degree of their offences should require or deserve, or the supreme judicatories of both kingdoms, respectively, or others having power from them for that effect, should judge convenient; and, finally, to assist and defend all those that entered into this League and Covenant, and not to suffer themselves, directly or indirectly by whatsoever combination, persuasion, or terror, to be withdrawn from this blessed union and conjunction, whether to make defection to the contrary part, or to give themselves to a detestable indifference, or neutrality.

If, at its origin, the Covenant of 1643 was practically a treaty between the heads of the Presbyterian party in Scotland and the leading Parliamentarians in England, it entered upon a new phase after the execution of Charles I. Notwithstanding the hostile attitude of the Presbyterians towards the King himself, they were strongly opposed to the subversion of the monarchical form of government. On the 5th of February, six days after the King's death, and one day earlier than the formal abolition of the monarchy by the English House of Commons, the Scottish Estates of Parliament passed an Act by which Prince Charles, then in Holland, was proclaimed King, in succession to his father. Following upon this, a deputation was sent to the Hague to invite Charles to come over and take possession of the throne of his ancestors. As a preliminary condition, however, it was required that he should give adhesion to the principles set forth in the Solemn Covenant. This he hesitated to do; and the commissioners returned, well pleased, indeed, with "the sweet and courteous disposition" of the Prince, but disappointed at the failure of their mission, owing to the pernicious influence of the "very evil generation, both of English and Scots," by whom he was surrounded.

A second deputation, sent shortly after this, to treat with the Prince at Breda, was more successful. Charles, seeing no other way open to him of regaining possession of the throne, gave his consent to the demands of the commissioners. In June 1650, he returned to Scotland. On the 1st of January 1651, he

was crowned at Scone. Before taking the oath of coronation, and after the full text of the Solemn League and Covenant had been distinctly read to him, kneeling and lifting up his right hand, he assured and declared, on his oath, in the presence of Almighty God, the searcher of hearts, his allowance and approbation of all it set forth, and faithfully obliged himself to prosecute the ends it had in view, in his station and calling. He bound himself in advance to consent and agree to all Acts of Parliament establishing Presbyterial government; to observe their provisions in his own practice and family; and never to make opposition to them or endeavour to make any change in them.

It was not till nearly ten years later that Charles II. was really restored to the throne. The event was hailed with joy by the Presbyterians, who looked upon it as the accession of a covenanting king, and who founded their hopes, not only on the promise made at Scone, but also on a letter which Charles had forwarded, through Sharp, to the Presbytery of Edinburgh, to be communicated to all the Presbyteries in Scotland, and in which he expressed his resolve to protect and preserve the government of the Church of Scotland, as settled by law, without violation.

But the law itself was to be modified in such a manner as to enable the King to violate the spirit of his promise whilst leaving him a verbal quibble with which to justify his breach of faith. On the 9th of February an Act was passed annulling the Parliament and Committees of 1649, that is, declaring those proceedings to be illegal, by which Presbyterianism had been established on its

firmest foundations. Less than three weeks later, two other Acts were passed with a view to preparing the way for a complete revolution in Church matters. The first of them, known as the Act Rescissory, had for its objects the annulling of the 'pretended Parliaments' of the years 1640, 1641, 1644, 1645, 1646, and 1648 – a measure which Principal Baillie described at the time as 'pulling down all our laws at once which concerned our Church since 1633.' The other, which purported to be 'concerning religion and Church government,' was substantially an assertion and recognition of the King's claim to be considered as head of the Church. It declared that it was his full and firm intention to maintain the true reformed Protestant religion in its purity of doctrine and worship, as it had been established within the kingdom during the reigns of his father and of his grandfather; to promote the power of godliness; to encourage the exercises of religion, both public and private; and to suppress all profaneness and disorderly walking; and that, for this end he would give all due countenance and protection to the ministers of the Gospel, 'they containing themselves within the bounds and limits of their ministerial calling and behaving themselves with that submission and obedience to his Majesty's authority and commands that is suitable to the allegiance and duty of good subjects.' A concluding clause provided that, notwithstanding the Rescissory Act, the 'present administration by sessions, presbyteries, and synods – they keeping within bounds and behaving themselves' – should, 'in the meantime' be 'allowed.'

The official toleration of Presbyterianism lasted till the 27th of May 1662. On that day an Act of Parliament, after declaring in its preamble that the ordering and disposal of the external government and policy of the Church properly belonged to the King, as an inherent right of the Crown, and by virtue of his royal prerogative and supremacy in causes ecclesiastical, proceeded to re-establish the ancient government of the Church by the sacred order of Bishops. A further step was taken on the 5th of September of the same year by the imposition of a test on all persons in public trust. Before entering upon the duties of any office under the Crown, they were called upon to subscribe a declaration setting forth that they judged it unlawful in subjects, under pretence of reformation, or for any motive, to enter into leagues and covenants; that they more especially considered the Solemn League and Covenant to have been contrary to the fundamental laws and liberties of the kingdom; and that they repudiated any obligation laid upon them by their former sworn recognition and acceptance of this bond.

As a sequel, an Act not of Parliament but of Council, ordained that the Covenant should be burnt by the hand of the common hangman. Prior to this, however, on the 11th of June 1662, an Act concerning such benefices and stipends as had been possessed without presentations from the lawful patrons deprived the Church of the right claimed by it of calling and choosing its own ministers. Under its provisions, no minister admitted subsequently to the year 1649 could possess any legal claim to

his stipend unless he obtained a new presentation, and collation from the bishop of the diocese.

The number of those that consented to make the required application was so small that it was thought necessary to have recourse to the Privy Council for the purpose of enforcing the new law. On the 1st of October, an order was issued which deprived the recusant ministers of their parishes, and required them, with their families, to remove beyond the bounds of their respective presbyteries before the first day of the following November. The Archbishop of Glasgow, at whose instance this coercive measure was adopted, had asserted that there would not be ten in his diocese who refused compliance, under dread of such a penalty. The result falsified his prediction. Nearly four hundred ministers throughout Scotland abandoned their benefices, and subjected themselves and their families to the hardships and privations of banishment rather than recognise the new modelling of the Church.

In many cases the ejection of the ministers and the loss of their stipends did not prevent them from continuing the duties of their office. Secret meetings, either in private houses or in secluded localities, replaced the ordinary services of the Church. For the purpose of checking this violation of the law, the Council, on the 13th of August 1663, again intervened with an Act. It commanded and charged all ministers appointed in, or since, the year 1649, who had not subsequently obtained presentations from the patrons, and yet continued to preach or to exercise

any duty proper to the functions of the ministry, either at the parish churches or in any other place, to remove themselves, their families and their goods, within twenty days, out of their respective parishes, and not to reside within twenty miles of them, nor within six miles of Edinburgh or any cathedral church, or three miles of any burgh within the kingdom.

In 1665, this Act was extended so as to include the older ministers, that is, those who had obtained their livings prior to the year 1649; and, on the same day, a proclamation against conventicles and meetings for religious exercises was published. It warned all such as should be present at these unlawful gatherings, that they would be looked upon as seditious persons, and should be punished by fining, confining and other corporal punishments, according to the judgment of the Privy Council, or any having the King's authority.

To replace the recusant clergy, a number of ministers, King's curates, as they were called, had been appointed by the bishops. They were so coldly received by the people that, to provide them with congregations, the Privy Council commanded all loyal subjects to frequent the ordinary meetings of public worship in their own parish churches; and required magistrates to treat those who kept away as though they were Sabbath breakers, and to punish them by the infliction of a fine of twenty shillings for each absence. These measures having proved ineffective, the pecuniary penalty was greatly increased by a subsequent Act of Parliament. For refusing to recognise the curates, each

nobleman, gentleman or heritor was to lose a fourth part of his yearly revenue; every yeoman, tenant or farmer was to forfeit such a proportion of his free moveables (after the payment of the rents due to the master and landlord) as the Privy Council should think fit, but not exceeding a fourth part of them; and every burgess was to be deprived of the privilege of merchandising and trading, and of all other 'liberties within burgh,' in addition to the confiscation of a fourth part of his moveable goods. Further, to prevent any evasion of the law against conventicles, proclamations issued at various times, prohibited all preaching and praying in families, if more than three persons, besides the members of the household, were present; and made landlords, magistrates and heads of families answerable for the default of those under their charge to conform to the episcopal government and ritual.

It was not the intention of those who had instigated this coercive and penal legislation that it should remain a dead letter. As a means of enforcing obedience to it and of levying the fines imposed upon those who would not yield dutiful submission, troops were sent into the discontented districts. The south-western counties, in which the Covenanters were most numerous and most determined, were entrusted to Sir James Turner. His orders were to punish recalcitrant families by quartering his men on them, and, if they remained obstinate, to distrain their goods and gear, and to sell them in discharge of the fines incurred. It was the carrying out of these instructions that first led to armed

resistance on the part of the Covenanters.

The immediate cause of the rising, however, is conflictingly stated by different writers. Kirkton's version of the occurrence, which has been reproduced almost literally by Wodrow, is to the effect that, on the 13th of November 1666, four of the men who had abandoned their homes on the appearance of the military, coming, in the course of their wanderings, towards the old clachan of Dalry, in Galloway, to seek refreshment after long fasting, providentially met, upon the highway, three or four soldiers driving before them a company of people, for the purpose of compelling them to thresh the corn of a poor old neighbour of theirs, who had also fled from his house, and from whom the church fines, as they were called, were to be exacted in this way. 'This,' says Kirkton, 'troubled the poor countrymen very much, yet they passed it in silence, till, coming to the house where they expected refreshment, they were informed the soldiers had seized the poor old man, and were about to bind him and set him bare upon a hot iron gird-iron, there to torment him in his own house. Upon this they ran to relieve the poor man, and coming to his house, desired the soldiers to let the poor man go, which the soldiers refused, and so they fell to words; whereupon two of the soldiers rushing out of the chamber with drawn swords, and making at the countrymen, had almost killed two of them behind their backs, and unawares; the countrymen having weapons, one of them discharged his pistol, and hurt one of the soldiers with the piece of a tobacco pipe with which he had

loaded his pistol instead of ball. This made the soldiers deliver their arms and prisoner.'

The accuracy of the account given by Kirkton has been denied. Burnet distinctly asserts that 'this was a story made only to beget compassion'; that after the insurrection was quashed, the Privy Council sent commissioners to examine into the violences that had been committed, particularly in the parish where this was alleged to have been done; that he himself read the report they made to the Council, and all the depositions taken by them from the people of the district, but that no such violence on the part of the military was mentioned in any one of them. The wounded soldier himself, one George Deanes, a corporal in Sir Alexander Thomson's company, from whose body ten pieces of tobacco pipe were subsequently extracted by the surgeon, told Sir James Turner that he was shot because he would not take the covenanting oath.

Whether premeditated and concerted, or merely 'an occasional tumult upon a sudden fray,' this attack on the military was the signal for a gathering of the discontented peasantry of the district. On the morrow, the four countrymen, one of whom was M'Lelland of Boscob, being joined by six or seven others, fell upon a second party of soldiers. One of these, having offered resistance was killed; his comrades, about a dozen in number, according to Kirkton, quietly gave up their arms. Within two days the insurgents had recruited about fourscore horse and two hundred foot. Proceeding to Dumfries, where Turner then lay

with only a few of his soldiers, the greater number of them being scattered about the country in small parties, for the purpose of levying the fines, they seized him, together with the papers and the money in his possession, and carried him off as a prisoner. After this, 'in their abundant loyalty,' as Wodrow characterises it, they went to the Cross and publicly drank to the health of the King and the prosperity of his Government.

In daily increasing numbers the insurgents marched towards Edinburgh. At Lanark, where all the contingents they could expect from the south and west had already joined them, and where 'this rolling snow-ball was at the biggest,' they were estimated at some three thousand. Here they renewed the Solemn League and Covenant. In spite of repeated warnings from men who, whilst fully sympathising with them, yet understood the hopeless nature of the enterprise in which they were engaged, the leaders determined to push on towards the capital. But the enthusiasm of many amongst their followers was beginning to wane; and by the time Colinton was reached, the ill-armed and undisciplined crowd had dwindled down again to a bare thousand. Then at length, even those who had previously rejected the well-meant advice of their more cautious friends, and had declared that, having been called by the Lord to this undertaking, they would not retire till he who bade them come should likewise command them to go, became conscious of their desperate plight, and consented to a retreat towards the west. Turning the eastern extremity of the Pentland hills, they directed their march

towards Biggar.

But it was too late. Dalziel, the governor of Edinburgh, who, at the head of a hastily mustered body of regulars, had been sent out to intercept them, came upon them at Rullion Green, on the evening of the 28th of November. A sharp engagement followed. Twice in the course of it success seemed to favour the insurgents; but in the end the military training and the superior weapons of their opponents prevailed, and the Covenanters were scattered in headlong flight. Of the soldiers, only five fell. On the other side there were about forty killed and a hundred and thirty taken. These prisoners were next day marched into Edinburgh. They might all have saved their lives if they had consented to renounce the Covenant; but their refusal to do so was severely punished. According to Burnet, who certainly does not exaggerate the number who suffered the death penalty, ten were hanged upon one gibbet in Edinburgh, and thirty-five more were sent to be hanged up before their own doors. Many were transported across the seas. The torture of the boot and of the thumbkins – the latter said to have been introduced by Dalziel, who had learnt their use in Russia, where he served for a time – was freely applied in the hope of wringing from the prisoners the admission that the rising was part of a concerted plot for the subversion of the existing government. They all strenuously denied it.

That shortly prior to this, a conspiracy had been formed for this object is a well established fact. A document discovered by Dr M'Crie in the Dutch archives and published by him in

his edition of the Memoirs of Veitch, shows that a plan was formed, in July 1666, for seizing on the principal forts in the kingdom, and that 'the persons embarked in this scheme had carried on a correspondence with the Government of the United Provinces then at war with Great Britain, and received promises of assistance from that quarter.' Another document referred to by the same writer asserts that the castles of Edinburgh, Stirling, and Dumbarton were amongst those to be taken possession of. Whether this Dutch plot and the Galloway insurrection were connected with each other, is a point with regard to which historians have maintained conflicting opinions in accordance with their own sympathies. The strongest evidence that Napier is able to adduce, on the one side, is the fact that a Mr Wallace is mentioned as one of those in correspondence with Holland, and that Colonel James Wallace was the leader of the insurgents whom Dalziel routed at Rullion Green. But, on the other hand, it is pointed out by Dr M'Crie that, as the other names are obviously fictitious, this coincidence affords no ground for supposing that the Colonel was the person referred to.

For many months after the Pentland rout, the harrying of the late insurgents continued; but, at length, the political changes which placed the administration of the country into the hands of Lauderdale, also marked the inauguration of a more lenient policy towards the Presbyterians. On the 15th of July 1669, a letter was communicated to the Council, in which the King signified his desire that it should authorise as many of the ejected

ministers as had lived peaceably in the places where they had resided, to return and preach, and exercise the other functions of their office in the parish churches which they formerly occupied, providing these were vacant. Ministers who took collation from the bishop of the diocese and kept presbyteries and synods, might be allowed to receive their stipends. The others were not to be permitted 'to meddle with the local stipend, but only to possess the manse and glebe.'

This concession proved of little effect. The few who availed themselves of the 'Indulgence' – two and forty in all, according to Wodrow – were looked upon as renegades by the irreconcilables, and found no more toleration at their hands than the curates had done. The moderate Presbyterians who accepted the 'indulged' clergy were denounced as traitors to the cause. The conventicles which it had been hoped the new measure would suppress, began to assume a more desperate character, as the gatherings of those who, in their unbending determination to abide by the very letter of the Covenant, declared themselves freed from their allegiance to a king whom they considered as perjured, and against whose agents, as malignant persecutors of the true religion, they believed themselves justified in adopting the most violent measures. It is of these extremists that the covenanting party now consisted.

It has been urged that these new developments were too natural, in the circumstances of the time, not to have been anticipated, by some, at least, of those who were responsible

for the government of the country. They have consequently been credited with the deliberate intention not only of causing a disruption in the ranks of the Presbyterians, but also of making the expected refusal of the indulgence a pretext for further and sterner measures of coercion. If such were the case, the machiavellian policy was successful. Within six months, the old system of penal legislation was again adopted. On the 3rd of February 1670, a proclamation prohibiting conventicles under heavy penalties was issued by the Council. It was followed in August by an Act of Parliament which made it illegal for outed ministers not licensed by the Council or for any other persons not authorised or tolerated by the bishop of the diocese, to preach, expound Scripture, or pray in any meeting, except in their own houses and to members of their own family. Such as should be convicted of disobedience to this law were to be imprisoned till they found security, to the amount of five thousand merks, for their future good behaviour. Persons attending meetings of this kind were to be heavily fined, according to their respective conditions, for each separate offence. Against outdoor meetings, or 'field conventicles,' the law was still more severe. Death was to be the penalty for preaching or praying at them, or even for convening them. A reward of five hundred merks was offered to any of his Majesty's subjects who should seize and secure the person of an active conventicler. As a further inducement, a subsequent proclamation made over to the captor the fine incurred by the offender he secured.

Amongst the many devices resorted to at this time, with a view to enforcing conformity, there is one which, because of its immediate consequences, is deserving of special mention. In October 1677, the Council addressed a letter to the Earls of Glencairn and Dundonald and to Lord Ross, requiring them to call together the heritors of the shires of Ayr and Renfrew, and to urge on them the necessity for taking effective measures to repress conventicles. The answer given to the three noblemen and forwarded by them to Edinburgh was practically a refusal though it took the form of a plea of inability on the part of those whose co-operation had thus been invoked. This alleged powerlessness was made an excuse for the next step taken by the Government, that of quartering a body of eight thousand Highlanders in the disaffected counties, on those who refused to subscribe a bond by which every heritor made himself answerable, not only for his wife, children, and servants, but also for his tenants.

The commission for raising the Highlanders authorised them to take free quarters, and, if need were, to seize on horses as well as on ammunition and provisions. They were indemnified against all pursuits, civil and criminal, which might at any time be intented against them or anything they should do, by killing, wounding, apprehending, or imprisoning such as should make opposition to the King's authority, or by arresting such as they might have reason to suspect. For two months the clansmen availed themselves to the full of the arbitrary powers with which the royal warrant invested them. At length the Duke of Hamilton

appealed directly to the King to put an end to the oppression exercised in his name by the Highland men; and an express was sent down from London, requiring the Council to disband them and to send them back to their homes. This brings events down to 1678, the year in which Claverhouse was appointed to the command of the dragoons who were to make another effort to disperse the conventicles against which so many Acts of Parliament and decrees of Council had been directed in vain, and which even the depredations of the Highland host had failed to check.

III
DISPERSING THE CONVENTICLERS

By the end of 1678 Claverhouse was at Moffat, expecting to be joined by one of the newly-levied troops of dragoons – that under Captain Inglis. From that town he forwarded to the Earl of Linlithgow, Commander-in-chief of the King's forces, the first of a series of despatches which contain a precise and detailed account of his movements at this time. As indicating the spirit in which he had undertaken the duties assigned to him, and the strict and literal obedience to orders that characterised his execution of them, the document is both interesting and valuable. It is dated the 28th of December, and runs as follows: —

'My Lord, – I came here last night with the troop, and am just going to march for Dumfries, where I resolve to quarter the whole troop. I have not heard anything of the dragoons, though it be now about nine o'clock, and they should have been here last night, according to your Lordship's orders. I suppose they must have taken some other route. I am informed, since I came, that this country has been very loose. On Tuesday was eight days, and Sunday, there were great field-conventicles just by here, with great contempt of the regular clergy, who complain extremely when I tell them I have no orders to apprehend anybody for past

misdemeanours. And besides that, all the particular orders I have being contained in that order of quartering, every place where we quarter must see them, which makes them fear the less. I am informed that the most convenient post for quartering the dragoons will be Moffat, Lochmaben and Annan; whereby the whole country may be kept in awe. Besides that, my Lord, they tell me that the end of the bridge of Dumfries is in Galloway; and that they may hold conventicles at our nose and we not dare to dissipate them, seeing our orders confine us to Dumfries and Annandale. Such an insult as that would not please me; and, on the other hand, I am unwilling to exceed orders, so that I expect from your Lordship orders how to carry in such cases. I send this with one of my troop, who is to attend orders till he be relieved. I will send one every Monday, and the dragoons one every Thursday, so that I will have the happiness to give your Lordship account of our affairs twice a week, and your Lordship occasion to send your commands for us as often. In the meantime, my Lord, I shall be doing, according to the instructions I have, what shall be found most advantageous for the King's service, and most agreeable to your Lordship. – I am, my Lord, your Lordship's most humble and obedient servant,

J. Grahame.'

'My Lord, if your Lordship give me any new orders, I will beg they may be kept as secret as possible; and sent to me so suddenly as the information some of the favourers of the fanatics are to send may be prevented, which will extremely facilitate the

executing of them.'

On the 6th of January 1679, Claverhouse, now at Dumfries, again addressed a despatch to the Commander. He appears to have, in the meantime, received an explanation of the Council's intention, and an intimation that his conscientious regard for the exact terms of his commission did not meet with unqualified approval. This may be gathered from the following paragraph in his letter: —

'My Lord, since I have seen the Act of Council, the scruple I had about undertaking anything without the bounds of these two shires, is indeed frivolous, but was not so before. For if there had been no such Act, it had not been safe for me to have done anything but what my order warranted; and since I knew it not, it was to me the same thing as if it had not been. And for my ignorance of it, I must acknowledge that till now, in any service I have been in, I never enquired farther in the laws, than the orders of my superior officers.'

In another passage, having to report various incidents of recent occurrence, with respect to some of which it was intended to make formal complaint, he again gives proof of his respect for discipline, and manifests his determination not only to enforce it, but also to compensate those upon whom injury might be inflicted by any breach of it on the part of the men under his command. At the same time, he does not hesitate to make it clearly understood that, whilst ready to answer for his own conduct, he repudiates responsibility for the actions of others.

His own words are as follows: —

'On Saturday night, when I came back here, the sergeant who commands the dragoons in the Castle came to see me; and while he was here, they came and told me there was a horse killed just by, upon the street, by a shot from the Castle. I went immediately and examined the guard, who denied point blank that there had been any shot from thence. I went and heard the Bailie take depositions of men that were looking on, who declared, upon oath, that they saw the shot from the guard-hall, and the horse immediately fall. I caused also search for the bullet in the horse's head, which was found to be of their calibre. After that I found it so clear, I caused seize upon him who was ordered by the sergeant in his absence to command the guard, and keep him prisoner till he find out the man, – which I suppose will be found himself. His name is James Ramsay, an Angusman, who has formerly been a lieutenant of horse, as I am informed. It is an ugly business, for, besides the wrong the poor man has got in losing his horse, it is extremely against military discipline to fire out of a guard. I have appointed the poor man to be here to-morrow, and bring with him some neighbours to declare the worth of the horse, and have assured him to satisfy him if the Captain, who is to be here to-morrow, refuse to do it. I am sorry to hear of another accident that has befallen the dragoons, which I believe your Lordship knows better than I, seeing they say that there is a complaint made of it to your Lordship or the Council; which is, that they have shot a man in the arm with small shot, and disenabled him

of it, who had come this length with a horse to carry baggage for some of my officers; but this being before they came to Moffat, does not concern me.

'The Stewart-Depute, before good company, told me that several people about Moffat were resolved to make a complaint to the Council against the dragoons for taking free quarters; that if they would but pay their horse-corn and their ale, they should have all the rest free; that there were some of the officers that had, at their own hand, appointed themselves locality above three miles from their quarter. I begged them to forbear till the Captain and I should come there, when they should be redressed in everything. Your Lordship will be pleased not to take any notice of this, till I have informed myself upon the place.

'This town is full of people that have resetted, and lodged constantly in their houses intercommuned persons and field preachers. There are some that absent themselves for fear; and Captain Inglis tells me there are Bailies have absented themselves there at Annan, and desired from me order to apprehend them; which I refused, for they are not included in all the Act of Council. Mr Cupar, who is here Bailie and Stewart for my Lord Stormont, offered to apprehend Bell that built the meeting-house, if I would concur. I said to him that it would be acceptable, but that the order from the Council did only bear the taking up the names of persons accessory to the building of it.'

The meeting-house referred to was situated in the neighbourhood of Castlemilk, and had been built at the expense

of the common purse of the disaffected. It is described as a good large house, about sixty feet in length and between twenty and thirty in breadth, with only one door and with two windows at each side, and one at either end. After its purpose had become known to the authorities, it was fitted up with stakes and with a 'hek' and manger, to make it pass for a byre. In spite of this, an order for its destruction was issued by the Privy Council, shortly before Claverhouse's arrival in the district.

The first duty he was called upon to perform was that of supplying the squad that was to serve as an escort to James Carruthers, the Stewart-Depute, who had been commissioned to carry out the order. The dragoons themselves took no part in the actual demolition; but their presence was necessary, not only to overawe resistance, but also to compel the 'four score of countrymen, all fanatics,' whom Carruthers brought with him, to pull down the building. 'The Stewart-Depute,' Claverhouse reported, 'performed his part punctually enough. The walls were thrown down, and timber burnt. So perished the charity of many ladies.'

In subsequent despatches Claverhouse gives the most minute particulars as to the manner in which he has carried out his orders for the apprehension of various persons; and does not spare his comments on the lack of adequate support in the discharge of his arduous and ungrateful duties. A point upon which he lays great stress is the insufficiency of the arrangements made for supplying his men with proper quarters and with forage for their

horses. He was obliged, he said, to let the dragoons quarter at large; and he was convinced that this was extremely improper at a time when the Council seemed resolved to proceed vigorously against the disaffected. He thought it strange, too, that they who had the honour to serve the King should have to pay more for hay and straw than would be asked from any stranger. He was determined for his part, that his troop should not suffer from the neglect or indifference of the commissioners appointed to treat with him. Though very unwilling to disoblige any gentleman, if his men ran short, he would go to any of the commissioners' lands that were near, and requisition what was required, offering the current rates in payment. This, he thought, was a step which he was justified in taking, and he was ready to defend his conduct if called upon to do so.

Another serious ground for complaint was the want of proper information. Good intelligence, he said, was the thing most wanted. The outlawed ministers, men like Welsh of Irongray, were preaching within twenty or thirty miles, yet nothing could be done for want of spies to bring timely and trustworthy information concerning their movements. On the other hand, the conventiclers received regular and speedy knowledge of any expedition intended against them. There was reason to suppose that their informants were sometimes the troopers entrusted with orders. Of the treachery of one of these, who did not deliver till the twentieth a despatch dated the fifteenth, he was so convinced that, had it not been for the man's influential patrons, he would

have turned him out of the troop with infamy, instead of merely putting him under arrest. The result of such insufficient and unsatisfactory service was well exemplified in the case of a number of persons whom he had been instructed to seize in Galloway. He had set out the very night he received his orders, and had covered forty miles of country. Of those for whom search was made, only two were apprehended, and that because they refused to take the same precautions as the rest for their safety. 'The other two Bailies were fled, and their wives lying above the clothes in the bed, and great candles lighted, waiting for the coming of the party, and told them they knew of their coming, and had as good intelligence as they themselves; and that if the other two were seized on, it was their own faults, that would not contribute for intelligence.'

Claverhouse's complaints produced but slight effect, though they were repeated until he grew weary of making them. Failing to obtain satisfaction, he bluntly declared that he would never solicit more, but that, if the King's service suffered in consequence, he would let the blame lie where it should.

About this time, however, an important measure, and one which brought down upon him the jealous displeasure of the Marquis of Queensberry, who resented it as an infringement of his rights, was adopted in Claverhouse's favour. Even if all the magistrates in the disaffected districts had been men of unimpeachable loyalty to the Government, the necessity for obtaining their co-operation would frequently have hampered

and delayed the military authorities. But many of them were soon discovered to be lukewarm partisans at best; whilst not a few, if they did not openly side with the conventiclers, aided and abetted them by a deliberate and studied inactivity. To remedy this, and to give Claverhouse freer hand, he was, in March 1679, appointed sheriff-depute of the shires of Dumfries and Wigtown, and also of the stewartries of Annandale and Kirkcudbright. Andrew Bruce of Earlshall, the lieutenant of his own troop of horse, was given him as a colleague. They were not, however, wholly to supersede the sheriffs previously in office, but only to sit with those judges or to supply them in their absence. Moreover, their powers were limited to putting the laws into execution only against withdrawers from the public ordinances, keepers of conventicles, and such as were guilty of disorderly baptisms and marriages, resetting and communing with fugitives, and intercommuned persons and vagrant preachers.

Claverhouse had not been long in the exercise of his twofold duties before he began to realise that his efforts were far from producing the desired results. Not only were conventicles as numerous as before, but there were also signs which convinced him that passive resistance was not all he would soon have to encounter. In a despatch which he wrote from Dumfries on the 21st of April 1679, he informed the Earl of Linlithgow that Mr Welsh was accustoming both ends of the country to face the King's force, and certainly intended to break out into an open rebellion. In view of this, he pointed out that the arms

of the militia in Dumfriesshire as well as in Wigtownshire and Annandale, were in the hands of the country people, though very disaffected; and that those taken from the stewartry were in the custody of the town of Kirkcudbright, the most irregular place in the kingdom. He consequently suggested that they should be entrusted to his keeping, and also that his own men should be provided with more suitable weapons, those which they had got from the Castle being worth nothing.

A few days later, Lord Ross, writing from Lanark, conveyed a similar warning. He could learn nothing, he said, but of an inclination to rise, although there were none yet actually in arms. This was on the 2nd of May. On the 5th he forwarded another despatch in which he had to report an encounter between a small party of troopers and some peasants of the district. The soldiers had been sent out to apprehend a man who was reported to have in his possession some of the 'new-fashioned arms,' that is, halberts which were provided with a cleek, or crooked knife, for the purpose of cutting the dragoons' bridles, and of which the manufacture was in itself an indication of what was intended. After seizing the young fellow, who did not deny that he had been enlisted as one of those who were to defend the conventicles in arms, the troopers, instead of returning with their prisoner stabled their horses and fell a-drinking. Some of the neighbours, availing themselves of the opportunity, attacked them with forks, and the like, and wounded one of them 'very desperately ill.'

The next day Claverhouse also forwarded his report from

Dumfries. It contained, in addition to an account of his own movements, the following comment on orders which he had just received, and which indicated that the Earl of Linlithgow was also alive to the dangers of the situation: —

'My Lord, I have received an order yesterday from your Lordship, which I do not know how to go about on a sudden, as your Lordship seems to expect. For I know not what hand to turn to, to find those parties that are in arms. I shall send out to all quarters, and establish spies; and shall endeavour to engage them Sunday next, if it be possible. And if I get them not here, I shall go and visit them in Teviotdale or Carrick; where they say, they dare look honest men in the face.'

On the 3rd of May, a few days before Lord Ross and Claverhouse drew up their respective reports, there had happened an event which was destined to bring matters to an immediate crisis, and which proved the signal for another, and a far more serious rising than that of 1666. James Sharp, Archbishop of St Andrews and Primate of Scotland, was murdered on Magus Muir, by a party of Covenanters.

Of this terrible tragedy, each side has its own account. On the one hand, there is that which is based on the narrative subsequently drawn up by Russell, one of the leading actors in it. According to this version, no premeditation existed on the part of the nine men concerned. They were in search of William Carmichael, the Sheriff-depute of Fifeshire, a man who had made himself obnoxious by the unrelenting

severity which he displayed in carrying out the laws against the Covenanters. Having missed him, they were about to separate, when information was brought them that Sharp's carriage was approaching. Interpreting this into 'a clear call from God to fall upon him,' they there and then resolved 'to execute the justice of God upon him for the innocent blood he had shed.'

But if the Archbishop's murder was not determined upon until the actual moment when circumstances cast him into the hands of his enemies, Russell's account shows that it had been discussed a short time prior to its perpetration. He states that, on the 11th of April, a meeting was held to consider what course should be taken with Carmichael to scare him from his cruel courses; that it was decided to fall upon him at St Andrews; and that when 'some objected, what if he should be in the prelate's house, what should be done in such a case, all present judged duty to hang both over the post, especially the Bishop, it being by many of the Lord's people and ministers judged a duty long since, not to suffer such a person to live, who had shed and was shedding so much of the blood of the saints, and knowing that other worthy Christians had used means to get him upon the road before.' He further represents himself as urging the murder of Sharp, in the course of the hurried consultation held as the primate's carriage was approaching, on the ground that 'he had before been at several meetings with several godly men in other places of the kingdom, who not only judged it their duty to take that wretch's life, and some others, but had essayed it twice before.'

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.