

own author, this was regarded as a direct personal insult to the Lord of the Manor—because his Lordship was so much engrossed in politics and his other affairs, that he had, for some time, ceased entirely to go to church. These little incidents were aggravated by the perfidy of the parson of the parish within which Mr. Douglas' chapel was situated. That gentleman had formed a scheme for transferring his residence from the ancient manse, in a remote part of the parish, to the more populous and flourishing village or hamlet of Bellerstown—intending to officiate in the chapel, (receiving, of course, an additional accommodation applicable to his cure,) and consigning the care of the parish in the parish church to the schoolmaster—a preacher whom he satisfied with a bonus of £10 or 13 a year. And for the accomplishment of this object, it was no difficult thing, as matters stood, to ingratiate himself into the patron's favour, and to accomplish his own personal objects, by whispering into the Earl's greedy ear every remark that would suit his purpose made by Mr. Douglas, in the most unbounded confidence of private intercourse and seeming friendship.

When the wrath which had accumulated in the heart of the Earl was fanned to its height, he issued his orders to the factor in the following decree:—‘Rackrent—*Us*’—(a grammatical singularity which his Lordship always used, surpassing even the royal or imperial majesty, indicative of the first person plural)—‘*Us* is determined to root out that rebellious fellow Douglas, and to banish him from our grounds. Rackrent, order the scribe, instantly to serve the fellow with a summons of removing from Stationers; and, do you hear, go to Bellerstown, lock and nail up the chapel door, and tell the fellow that he shall never preach against us. Tell him to go to the devil, as us will not suffer rebels against our lord.’

This mandate was instantly obeyed. Mr. Douglas received the intimation from Rackrent with surprise, but undismayed; and, his courage swelling as the danger swells, he accepted the intimation as a testimony of his liberty, and pitied the tyrant who had thus abused his power. The Earl had the unconquerable power—there was no appeal from his

heartless decree. Rackrent speedily promulgated in the burgh the purport of his mission and ostentatiously performed his task of shutting up the chapel—putting the key in his pocket. Consternation, and sympathy with their ‘sain guil’ minister and his wife and bairns,’ spread from house to house; and it was not till the shadow of night afforded shelter from observation, that even a few true friends mustered courage to venture into the house of a proscribed man, and to cheer him with their condolence.

Mr. Douglas had an instinctive courage which prompted him to bear Rackrent's message without a quiver on his countenance, save perhaps a momentary expression of scorn on his lip, and a sparkle of indignation in his keen blue eye. But, after the minion of power had retired, and he felt himself alone, a cold and chilling emotion gathered round his heart. He went immediately to the nursery, where his wife was busied in tending and amusing her children; and having, desired Grace Grant (our attached and only servant, who never was in any other service) to look after her matters in the kitchen, he communicated to his dear Isobel, that she and her little ones were thrown destitute. I was too young (being only four or five years of age at the time) to understand the import of what he said. But my mother and the elder children knew it well; and I need not describe the scene. The tears which a brave man sheds are only those of tenderness and affection—but these are, indeed, tears of bitterness. Such scenes of love and agony are too sacred to be disclosed to an unfeeling world; and all I remember of the one now alluded to, was, that my heart was like to break when I saw those around me embracing and embraced, in tears, and in silence, save the sound of sobs which burst from every bosom.

It was a day of sorrow. Even the youngsters forgot, for a time, that they required their wonted frugal dinner; and it was not until twilight succeeded the last blaze of the setting sun, that Grace Grant called her mistress from the nursery, (having heard from a neighbour the adversity which had befallen) to remind her that tea was ready. My mother was now much composed, and invited the minister to go to the parlour. It was a silent procession. My eldest brother carried me in his arms; and my father led his wife