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## CHAPTER II.

### FROM HIS BIRTH TO HIS LICENSURE, 1759-1784.

"My manner of life from my youth, which was at the first among mine own nation at Jerusalem, know all the Jews." Acts xxvi. 4.

THE Rev. James Macgregor was born at what was then a small hamlet called Portmore, just at the foot of Loeh Earne, in the parish of Comrie, and county of Perthshire, North Britain, in December 1759.\* The spot is now occupied by the village of St. Fillans, so called from a certain saint whose name tradition hands down as a resident of this neighbourhood, who in the days of his mortality filled the office of Prior of Pittenweem, and afterwards was the favourite saint of Robert Bruce, and a relic of whom was carried in a shrine by the Abbot of Inchaffray at the battle of Bannockburn. Here rising from a little rocky knoll, on which two indentations are pointed out as the marks of the knees of the saint at his devotions, is Saint Fillan's Spring, which was long believed to possess miraculous power over disease; and even yet it is viewed by the superstitious Highlanders as possessing saintly virtue.

"And magic virtues charmed St. Fillan's Spring." †

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\* After his death a paper containing the following in his hand writing was found in one of his books.

"James Macgregor, D.D., Born Dec. 1759.

Came here, July 20, 1786.

Was here, 1830."

As he died on the 3rd of March of the year last mentioned, it must have been written within two months of his death, when he was calmly waiting the arrival of the last messenger.

† To this spring Sir Walter Scott refers in the first stanza of Marmion,