

The vast multitude burst into sobbing as the fair form swung in the air, and Hugh McKail, at the age of twenty-six, had won the martyr's crown.

The promotion of Lauderdale, an ex-Covenanter, who had become a courtier, to the post of High Commissioner, brought a brief period of respite. Then efforts toward harmony were "interrupted by the shot of a pistol." It was fired at Sharp, by one Mitchell, a partially insane preacher, who attempted to assassinate the bishop as he entered a coach in Edinburgh. Mitchell escaped, but six years later was arrested. At his trial, after terrible torture, he was sent to the Bass Rock prison. He was, however, subsequently retried, "and sent to glorify God in the Grassmarket."

It was some years later that a company of men, twelve in number, had assembled on a lonely spot, on Magis Muir, near St. Andrew's. Their object was to waylay and chastise, perhaps kill, one Carmichael, an active tool of the prevalent tyranny. They learned that Sharp, the arch-fiend of the persecution, accompanied by his daughter, was travelling in his private carriage from Edinburgh to St. Andrew's. "It was a tragic scene—the servants palsied with terror, the old man and his daughter clinging to the carriage as to an ark of safety, the dark and vengeful faces of the

twelve men. Hackstoun a little apart, and Burley, with his sword bared and quivering with homicidal eagerness, the broad landscape, with distant St. Andrew's, and the smoke from his palace, visible in the bright May sunshine. Sharp prayed for mercy. "He would save their lives, give them money, even lay down his title of Bishop."

"They answered, 'We intend to take your life, not for hatred of your person, nor for prejudice you have done to us; but because you have been an avowed opposer of the Gospel and kingdom of Christ, and a murderer of his saints, whose blood you have shed like water. Thy money perish with thee! Mercy for thee who never didst show mercy to others!' The swords of Balfour and the others were buried in his bosom."

This dark and terrible deed was looked upon by many as a judgment from God upon the arch-persecutor, but it brought down even fiercer vengeance upon the Covenanters. It added a new test to the inquisitorial investigations, "Is Sharp's death murder or no?" Sharp was succeeded in the Council by the Bluidye MacKenzie, the Jeffries of Scotland; and shortly afterwards the notorious Claverhouse appeared on the scene. He was a merciless man, who in his excesses of cruelty surpassed even Dalziel.

"MY FATHER'S HOUSE."

The Father's house hath many rooms,
And each is fair;
And some are reached through gathered gloom,
By silent stair;
But He keeps house, and makes it home,
Whichever way the children come.
Plenty and peace are everywhere
His house within;
The rooms are eloquent with prayer,

The songs begin,
And dear hearts, filled with love, are glad,
Forgetting that they once were sad.

The Father's house is surely thine,
Therefore why wait?
His lights of love through darkness shine,
The hour grows late.
Push back the curtain of thy doubt,
And enter—none will cast thee out!
—Marianne Farningham.