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The faithful and pious ministers whom the people loved were driven from their pulpits, into which ungodly hirelings were intruded. They were forbidden to preach the Gospel in public buildings, or in the fields, or in private houses; and it was made a crime to wait upon their ministry,—a crime the commission of which was punished in various districts with relentless severity. How many of the holiest inhabitants of the land were ruined by fines, or immured in dungeons!—how many banished from their native shores, their kindred, and all that is commonly held dear!—how many hunted like partridges on the mountains, and compelled to make their homes in caves and concealed places!—how many had their flesh torn, and their limbs racked, by boot and thumbscrew!—how many stained the purple heather with their blood, or gave dignity to the gallows-tree! All these were examples of “a just man perishing in his righteousness.” For they might have escaped by an easy step,—a denial of what they believed to be truth,—an acquiescence in the prelatical worship established in the land: but conscience would not permit this, and they suffered, “not accepting deliverance.” On the other hand, the converse statement, “There is a wicked man that prolongeth his life in his wickedness,” did not want exemplifications in that eventful era; for not a few procured, not only exemption from suffering, but wealth even, and ease, and high station, and worldly honours, by betraying what was, and what they believed to be, the cause of God.

But let us take another illustration from our own times, and from what is daily occurring in business around us. Two merchants, A and B, start in life with equal capital, equal talents, and prospects of success every way alike. We shall suppose A to be a righteous, God-fearing man, and B to be the reverse. Pursue them in their career. B, uninfluenced by religious principles, adopts every species of deceit and fraud to further his ends, only taking