

BIOGRAPHY.

THE LAST HOURS OF JAMES RENWICK.

James Renwick was the last of the Scottish martyrs who suffered under the bloody house of Stuart. When a youthful student in Edinburgh University, he stood at the foot of the scaffold from which old Donald Cargill passed away to glory. He marked the countenance of the dying martyr. He listened with wrapt attention to his exposition and vindication of the principles for which he suffered, and then and there the youthful listener dedicated himself to the same cause. Passing over into Holland, he was licensed and ordained by a Presbytery of the Dutch Church, to minister to the small remnant in Scotland, who still braved the fury of persecution, rather than desert the banner of truth. For five years he continued to preach on the mountains and in the glens, to the undaunted few who dared to listen to him. At length, his noble warfare came to an end. He was apprehended, brought before the Council, and condemned to be executed in the Grassmarket, Edinburgh; and from the same scaffold on which Donald Cargill died, he went to receive the martyr's crown. He was of stature somewhat low, and like the son of Jesse, of a ruddy and beautiful countenance. Even his murderers spoke well of him after he was dead, and expressed their conviction that he went to Heaven. He was distinguished for his uncompromising loyalty to truth, and his unshaken confidence in its ultimate triumph. One of the councillors, when speaking of him, said, "He was one of the stiffest maintainers of his principles that ever came before us. Others we used always to cause one time or other to waver, but him we could never move. Where we left him there we found him; we could never make him yield or vary in the least." The following brief account of his last hours is extracted from Dr. Houston's Introduction to *The Letters of the Rev. James Renwick*.

On the morning of his execution, he wrote his last letter to his most attached friend, Sir Robert Hamilton, who was then an exile in Holland, for the sacred cause for which Renwick suffered. Every part of this brief epistle is calm and thoughtful, and bespeaks the joyful serenity of the martyr's spirit. "This," he writes, "being my last day on earth, I thought it my duty to send you this, my last salutation. The Lord has been wonderfully gracious to me since I came to prison. He has assured me of his salvation, helped me to give a testimony for Him, and to say before his enemies all that I have taught, and strengthened me to resist and repel many temptations and assaults." He closes, with these simple, solemn, and affecting words—"But I must break off, I go to your God and my God. *Death is to me as a bed to the weary.*"

When the drums beat for his execution, he exclaimed, "Yonder is my welcome call to the marriage. The Bridegroom is coming. I am ready. On the scaffold, he sung the first part of the third Psalm, read the nineteenth chapter of Revelations, and prayed. When he was rudely interrupted, he said, "I shall soon be above these clouds." "Then shall I enjoy Thee and glorify Thee, O my Father, without intermission and interruption for ever." In the few sentences that he was permitted to