

trinites of cold without covering, without shelter, without fuel in the deepest of winter, and often without food and without light. A list of three-score and eighteen men, by name, has been published, who were massacred by the persecutors named above, and of whom some of those named here were a part; but the number who were thus hunted down and murdered by the highlanders and the dragoons, in the whole country, is not to be reckoned up, and is indeed incredible."

This outrage on the lives of the subjects was not committed by armed banditti on their own responsibility. It was committed by the regular military, by the license of the government of the country. The "brave warriors" who led on the troopers to these acts of murder and oppression, were such men as Claverhouse, Dalryell, Tag, Crighton, Bruce, and Douglas, with a host of others, who alike rejoiced in this work of wickedness, whose disposition and character seemed fitted for the work. The names and the atrocities of these men are as familiar to the peasantry of Scotland, as if they had lived and acted but yesterday.

The spoliation of property in those days of anarchy was enormous. Whole families in comfortable circumstances were utterly ruined, and thrown on the wide world as beggars. The persecutors were not tardy in finding out the secret of enriching themselves by the indiscriminate plunder of the nonconformists, and even occasionally of those who were conformists enough, if history speaks true. Gentlemen and farmers, and small proprietors, were the prey on which these vultures seized, and on which they fattened. The slightest suspicion was easily made to attach to this class of persons when they had the principle to refuse subjection to the dominant party. So justly was the rapacity of the rulers appreciated by the oppressed people, that some gentlemen, when brought to trial, resigned all right to their own property, and to them the prosecution was stayed. But not only was there plundering on a large scale: there was spoliation in the shape of pilfering, and of this meanness the magnanimous Claverhouse was often guilty. The households of the lower orders were unceremoniously invaded, and the little property which they possessed in money or in clothes was purloined.

But the quartering of the rapacious dragoons on the farms and lairdships of the middle classes was a severe infliction. In such cases the general custom was, that everything in the shape of victuals was devoured, and what was not consumed at the time was destroyed—the meal girdles were emptied, and their contents scattered on the ground or trodden in the dunghill—the beef and mutton which had been salted for the sustenance of the household during the winter, was drawn from the barrels and hacked to pieces with their swords, and then trampled under their feet—the ricks of corn and hay were set fire to—the cows were driven away or sold—the horses were seized for the use of the troopers, and in some cases this scandalous war was concluded by setting fire to the entire premises, which they left behind them in flames. Not unfrequently the families, or a portion of them on whom these hardships were inflicted, beheld at a distance, in the places where they had concealed themselves, these works of violence. The military commanders followed the instructions and example of their governors, and the common troopers followed the practices of their officers, and wrought havoc wherever they found occasion.

In connection with this, the system of fines, which was prosecuted to a great extent, was exceedingly oppressive, not only to individuals, but to whole counties. Wodrow mentions one case, as a sample, in which the various fines, imposed on persons throughout the country generally, amounted to no less a sum than "one million, seventeen thousand, three hundred and fifty-three pounds, six shillings and eight pennies, Scots money." It is obvious that such legalized robbery must have pressed very heavily on so poor a country as Scotland at that time was.

Great multitudes were thrown into prison, and kept in confinement for years in the most painful and distressing circumstances—the personal freedom of the subject was entirely taken away, and any person had it in his power, by a few suspicious hints, to procure the incarceration of the most peaceable and industrious of the people. Their houses were surrounded at the dead of night, or in the broad day, and they were dragged from their families and kindred, and immured in a jail, from which they were taken either to be banished or executed; and no remonstrance could in the least degree avail either on the part of the imprisoned themselves, or on the part of their friends. The hardships which were endured in confinement, were such as no tongue can utter, a specimen of which we have in the case of the unfortunate prisoners in Dunottar.

But while many were confined at home, numbers were banished into distant lands, where they were sold for slaves, and endured privations of the severest kind, and which some of them who were privileged to return to their native land narrated; so that there can be no doubt with regard to the truth of the facts stated. No person can read the account of the destitution and maltreatment of these poor sufferers for conscience sake, in foreign lands, without the feeling of an honest indignation at the baseness of those heartless men, by whose misrule they were driven into exile.

Garrisons were stationed all over the south and west, and supplied with a class of men, whose profligacy was so notorious as to impose on some of the places of their residence, the appropriate epithet of "Hell's-byke." The country by this means, as Wodrow remarks, had the appearance of a conquered province, of a land sacked and pillaged by an enemy, and wholly under the mastery of a reckless military. It is easy to see how great must have been the distress of the virtuous peasantry, under the general supervision of a licentious soldiery, whose work and whose delight it was to search out and to drag to punishment those who feared God in the land, and who, because they feared him, durst not comply

with the defections of the time, nor fall in with the prevailing party. Every house was open to the intrusion of these men, and every inmate liable to their abuse. A series of menacing questions were generally put by the troopers to the persons with whom they met, in order to explicate their sentiments in reference to the measures of the government—such as, Was the bishop's death murder? Was the rising at Bothwell Bridge rebellion? Do you own the Sangular declaration? Do you acknowledge the king's supremacy? Will you renounce the covenants? A string of such queries was put into the mouths of the ignorant soldiers; and just as the replies happened to please or displease them, or just as it suited their caprice, they treated the individuals whom they thus encountered. They might shoot them, they might take them prisoners, or they might exact a fine, or use any liberties or cruelties they chose. The dragoons were long after remembered with terror by the inhabitants, especially of the western counties; for they were grievous scourges, commissioned to afflict and harass with impunity the best portion of the nation in which they lived. The cruelties exercised by the soldiery, were equal to the tortures of the boots and thumbkins, employed by the council, for the purpose of extorting confession from the victims on whom they had seized. No age nor sex was spared by them; outrages the most revolting to humanity and common decency were practised by them; and even little children were made the sport of their vindictive dispositions, for they tied up their eyes and threatened to shoot them, and, by a refinement of cruelty, fired their muskets over their heads, till the poor little creatures were distracted with terror, and some even lost for a season the use of their reason.

By means of such procedure, the entire social system was thrown into confusion, and no fewer than two hundred thousand vagrants were found swarming over the land. Operatives were thrown out of employment, leaseholders were driven from their farms, servants were set free from their masters, merchants resigned their business, and all classes of society were driven from their moorings, and everywhere turned upside down. Reflecting men wondered what the end of these things would be, thousands mourned in secret, and all trembled at the ominous events that were daily thickening, and feared lest a more terrible cloud of calamity was about to burst over their heads. A whole nation thrown into a state of idleness through the misrule of its insatuated governors, could not be otherwise than in a most perilous condition; for it was ready to make a prey of itself, and to devour its own flesh; and had not God in mercy interposed, there is no saying to what absolute wretchedness Scotland might finally have been reduced.

But what was all this for?—what had the people done to merit this treatment? Were they disloyal? were they turbulent and factious? were they restless under constitutional restraint? were they a class of immoral persons who had adopted pestilential principles—principles subversive of all religion and all good order in the country? No! they were the very reverse of all this. Never did there exist a class of more pious, loyal, and patriotic men in any nation. Why, then, were they subjected to such intolerable abuse? The king wanted to remove the old Presbyterianism of Scotland, and to place in its room the Prelacy of the sister kingdom. To this the religious portion of the nation, who had sworn the covenants, and who clung to the Presbyterian form of Church government, as what they conceived to be the only form sanctioned by the word of God, and the form most conducive to the promotion of the interest of true religion in the land, objected. Charles, however, asserted his right of supremacy in the Church as well as in the State, and he was determined to brook no contradiction; and accordingly he formed the resolution to force his subjects to submit to whatever mode of Church government he thought fit. It was this insatuated determination which produced so lengthened a train of sufferings to Scotland, and which in the end led to the abdication of the throne. In the prosecution of his object, the king resorted to every means to coerce his subjects, whose high and unbending principles would not permit them to yield to the unreasonable wishes of a despot: and hence the fierce persecution which for so long a period raged over the breadth and length of the land. Life, property, and liberty were all placed at the disposal of an arrogant government, which unscrupulously availed itself of the lawless prerogative; for it was a supremacy in matters civil, as well as in matters ecclesiastical, that Charles claimed. It has been said that it was for trifles that our forefathers suffered; but if this was the case, what are we to think of that Government which could deliberately enter on a process of spoliation and murder, and all for trifles? Bad as the king was, he had still worse men for his counsellors—men who prompted him to measures to which he might otherwise have been averse. Sharp, and Middleton, and McKenzie, and Lauderdale, were men fit for anything. No scheme was too daring for them, and no act of atrocity too revolting.

If at any time the persecuted rose, either partially or more generally, it was simply in self-defence; and it is no small wonder that they endured so long and so patiently that oppression which makes even wise men mad. It is now well known that it was the design of their enemies to instigate them to rebellion, that they might have a fair pretext to wage war against them. It ill becomes those who now enjoy the hard-won fruits of their struggles, to sit in cool and calculating criticism on the management and behaviour of men who were driven almost to desperation by the incessant outrages which were committed on themselves and their friends. Would such persons act a better part were days of similar trial to come again? Not they. The patience with which the poor persecuted people endured their wrongs were more than human. It was the sustenance of divine