

the extremities of hunger and cold in that inclement season. The number who perished in the snow; sank exhausted in the bogs; crept into caverns, and died for lack of food, was never ascertained. In a short time, some few stole back to their half-ruined cabins, and in after years the valley had again a population. Amongst those who returned to the scene of desolation was the bard of the tribe. "The bard sat alone upon a rock, and looking down, composed a long, dismal song."\*

In an age of publicity the extraordinary occurrences of the valley of Glencoe would have been known in a week in every corner of these realms. In an age when newspapers were uncommon, and gatherers of news by no means vigilant to minister to public curiosity, no Londoner knew of this tragedy, or, if he heard some rumour, heeded it not. After some weeks had elapsed, there was a report that a robber tribe had been engaged with Scotch troops, and that the chief and some of his clan had been killed. At Edinburgh, people in the coffee-houses began to talk. Glenlyon was conscious of the remarks upon him, and said that "he would do it again, if it were again to be done. He would stab any man in Scotland or England without asking why, if he were commanded so to do." Argyle's Highland regiment was quartered at Brentford, in June, 1692; and it was afterwards published that the soldiers talked about the massacre, and that one said, "Glencoe seems to hang about Glenlyon night and day; and you may see it in his face." Whilst public murmurings were faintly heard in Scotland—not "while public indignation was at the highest," as Scott says—Dalrymple wrote to Hamilton from the Hague, on the 30th of April, 1692, "For the people of Glencoe, when you do your duty in a thing so necessary to rid the country of thieving, you need not trouble yourself to take the pains to vindicate yourself, by showing all your orders, which are now put in the 'Paris Gazette.' When you do right you need fear nobody. All that can be said is, that, in the execution, it was neither so full nor so fair as might have been." Charles Leslie, the non-juring clergyman, obtained some particulars of the deliberate treachery and cold-blooded ferocity which made the Glencoe massacre so peculiarly atrocious; and he published the circumstances about the end of 1692. A pamphlet called "Gallienus Redivivus" followed up this attack. Burnet says that the transaction at Glencoe "raised a mighty outcry, and was published by the French in their Gazettes, and by

\* Mrs. Grant,

the Jacobites in their libels, to cast a reproach on the king's government as cruel and barbarous; though in all other instances it had appeared that his own inclinations were gentle and mild, rather to an excess."\* The affair would probably have rested with the French Gazettes and Jacobite libels, had not the Parliament of Scotland, after a recess of two years, met in 1695, when Glencoe was a subject which had roused the nation to demand inquiry; for the non-jurors and friends of king James had worked diligently in stirring up the popular feeling. Political hostility to the Master of Stair had something to do with the tardy indignation of the Scottish Estates. William had in 1693 authorized an investigation of the matter by the duke of Hamilton and others. The duke died, and the inquiry was left to die with him. The king was now advised to take a more decided course, anticipating the measures of the Scotch Parliament. He issued a Commission of Precognition to the marquis of Tweeddale, and other privy counsellors in Scotland. The inquiries were necessarily minute and complicated; but the document was at last produced. From that document, and the letters and oral evidence accompanying it, is an authentic narrative of the massacre to be collected.

The report of the Commission, with the depositions and letters, were read in the Scottish Parliament on the 24th of June, 1695, and the results is thus recorded:

"After hearing of the said Report, it was voted, *nemine contradicente*, that his Majesty's instructions of the 11th and 16th days of January, 1692, touching the Highland rebels who did not accept in due time of the benefit of his indemnity, did contain a warrant for mercy, to all, without exception, who should offer to take the oath of allegiance, and come in upon mercy, though the first day of January, 1692, prefixt by the Proclamation of Indemnity, was past, and that therefore, these instructions contained no warrant for the execution of the Glencoe men, made in February thereafter.

"Then the question stated and voted, if the execution and slaughter of the Glencoe men in February, 1692, as is represented, to the Parliament, be a murder or not, and carried in the affirmative."

It was then moved "that since the Parliament has found it a murder, that it may be inquired into, who were the occasion of it,

\* "Own Times," vol. iv. p. 155.

and the persons guilty and committers of it, and what way and manner they should be prosecute." \*

On the 10th of July, the Parliament agreed to an Address to the king, which contains the following material passages :

"We humbly beg that, considering that the Master of Stair's excess in his letters against the Glencoe men has been the original cause of this unhappy business, and hath given occasion in a great measure to so extraordinary an Execution by the warm directions he gives about doing it by way of surprise; And considering the high station and trust he is in, and that he is absent, We do therefore beg that your Majesty will give such orders about him for vindication of your Government as you in your royal wisdom shall think fit.

"And likewise considering that the Actors have barbarously killed men under trust, We humbly desire your Majesty would be pleased to send the Actors home, and to give orders to your Advocate to prosecute them according to Law, there remaining nothing else to be done for the full vindication of your Government of so foul and scandalous an aspersion as it has lain under upon this occasion." †

The Master of Stair was only dismissed from office by the king. The Parliament of Scotland did not accuse "the original cause of this unhappy business" as being participant in what they voted to be a murder. Whether the king ought to have placed the chief culprit on his trial for a great crime can scarcely be maintained without acknowledging that William had some excuse for his comparative lenity in the very mild recommendation of the Parliament "to give such orders about him, for vindication of your government, as you in your royal wisdom shall think fit." Most persons will nevertheless agree with the historian that "in return for many victims immolated by treachery, only one victim was demanded by justice; and it must ever be considered as a blemish on the fame of William that the demand was refused." ‡ The Scottish Parliament imputed no guilt to Livingstone or Hill; they somewhat doubted about Hamilton and Duncanson; but they were clear that captain Campbell and captain Drummond, lieutenant Lindsay, ensign Lundy, and serjeant Barbour were the actors in the slaughter, and ought to be prosecuted. The king did not cause these to be prosecuted. He knew perfectly well that they

\* "Acts of Parliament of Scotland," vol. ix. p. 377.

† Macaulay, "History," vol. iv. p. 580.

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 425.

had as sound a legal defence before a civil tribunal, as any of the privates who discharged their muskets under the orders of serjeant Barbour. Defoe affirms that "his Majesty often said, it was a moot-point in war, whether they had broken orders or no; and though I have the honour to know that his Majesty exceedingly resented the manner, yet it did not appear at all that they had laid themselves open to military justice in it." \*

There was one person connected with the Glencoe massacre, of whom we lose sight in the decisions of the Scottish Parliament as to "who were the occasion of it." That person is the earl of Breadalbane. But there is a further record in the Minutes of that Parliament which shows that the other great culprit besides Dalrymple had not been wholly overlooked: "July 1. A warrant granted to bring the earl of Breadalbane down to the Parliament House." † From the Parliament House he was committed to the castle of Edinburgh, on a charge of high treason. In the course of the Glencoe inquiries the Highland chief Glengarry, and others, deposed that in offering them money he alleged that he continued in the interest of king James, and pressed them to make a show of pacification, that they might be ready to serve him at some future time—the "outward compliance" which James had himself recommended. Breadalbane contrived that the inquiry should stand over from time to time, till the Session of Parliament came to an end. He had pleaded his pardon from the Crown; but the offences charged were subsequent to that pardon. Burnet says, "he pretended he had secret orders from the king, to say anything that would give him credit with them; which the king owned so far, that he ordered a new pardon to be passed for him." ‡ It is impossible to fathom the depths of the intrigues of the Scottish statesmen and great lords at this period. Burnet in his narrative of the Glencoe massacre, says of Breadalbane: that he might gratify his own revenge, and render the king odious to all the Highlanders, he proposed that orders should be sent for a military execution on those of Glencoe." § We believe in no such refinement of Breadalbane's cunning. He and Argyle were glad to sweep out the MacDonalds, who annoyed them. Dalrymple would have exterminated the whole Celtic population of Jacobites, Papists, and thieves—for the greater part were such in his mind—as his prede-

\* "History of the Union," p. 72.

† "Acts of the Parliaments of Scotland," vol. ix. p. 389.

‡ "Own Time," vol. iv. p. 274.

§ *Ibid.*, p. 153.

cessors in power had often hunted them down as wild beasts. Not three months before Dalrymple put the Order of January 16th before William to sign, he wrote to Breadalbane that no prince but William would have not been tempted to hearken to the earnest desires of all those he trusts in his government, "to have made the Highlanders examples of his justice, by extirpating them."\* William acceded to the one exception to his general clemency, urged upon him by Dalrymple, Argyle, and Breadalbane; for it was a measure justified to his mind by the "laws of war." It is one of the most lamentable evils of these laws, that in some cases a violation of the rights of humanity ceases to be regarded as a crime; and that in all cases implicit obedience to orders is the paramount duty of a soldier, however revolting to his moral sense.

Sir Walter Scott, recalling his early recollections, says, that "on the 5th of November, 1788, when a full century had elapsed after the Revolution, some friends to constitutional liberty proposed that the return of the day should be solemnized by an agreement to erect a monument to the memory of king William, and the services which he had rendered to the British Kingdoms." How was the proposal defeated? By an anonymous letter in one of the Edinburgh newspapers, "ironically applauding the undertaking, and proposing as two subjects of the entablature for the projected column, the massacre of Glencoe, and the distresses of the Scottish colonists at Darien." We have related the one story, with a scrupulous regard to facts. We shall have to tell the other distressing narrative, with the same scrupulosity. Sir Walter Scott impresses upon his grandson this lesson: "You may observe from this how cautious a monarch should be of committing wrong or injustice, however strongly recommended by what may seem political necessity." † The great novelist left his juvenile readers, and his confiding adult readers, to the full belief that king William was the principal person to be accused as the author of both calamities. There probably is not a more striking instance of the blindness of a morbid nationality, than in this mode of attributing "wrong or injustice" to a sovereign who, in the one case, was wholly under the guidance of his Scotch ministers, acting in the spirit of all Scotch Statesmen towards the Highland clans; and in the other case was wholly under the control of the English parliament, uttering the voice of the English nation in the commercial jealousies of the age. We have reached a period when all the false nationalities and party

\* Burton, Appendix, vol. i.

† "Tales of a Grandfather," chap. lix.

sympathies embodied in romance, and in histories more fictitious than fiction, have very nearly done their work; when we may look at kings and statesmen through that achromatic glass which shows them under no false colouring in their public characters. We may therefore doubt, with a Scottish historian who belongs to this more advanced age, whether, in a period when the Highland chief was acting after his kind in the indulgence of a fierce revenge—when the Scottish statesman was acting as Scottish statesmen had done for ages before him—it was likely that a "far-seeing and deeply judging prince" should desert his nature and habits so much as "to countenance, suggest, and urge on, the slaughter of those poor Highlanders."\* The anonymous libeller who would have inscribed "Glencoe" on the entablature of a column to William, if he had read the evidence, would have known perfectly well that this slaughter was devised by Scottish statesmen of the Lowlands, and carried through by Scottish captains of the Highlands. He would have known that the treachery of this military execution was the device, in the old crafty and ferocious spirit of clan hostility, of the native soldiers to whom the slaughter was entrusted. He probably knew that Glencoe was not the last of the Highland massacres, sanctioned by no intervention of king William, but by the old "letters of fire and sword" granted by the Privy Council of Scotland. These letters were not granted for any political object; but in the ancient spirit of revenge by which a favoured clan was authorized to destroy another less favoured. Six years after the Glencoe massacre, the laird of McIntosh obtained letters of fire and sword against MacDonald of Keppoch. McIntosh and his followers, with the assistance of the governor of Fort William, are authorized to hunt and take; if necessary to put to death; and if they retire to strongholds to "raise fire and use all force and warlike engines." This process, then a legal one, was not sent out against the king's rebels—for the pacification of the Jacobite clans had been accomplished—but to obtain restitution of lands alleged to be unjustly held by a clan that did not care for being "put to the horn." † It were well if those who repeat glibly "how cautious a monarch should be," &c., would lead their readers to some real knowledge of the condition and manners of the Highlanders of those days, and of the mode in which the authorities of Scotland had for generations been accustomed to treat them. They would perhaps then be inclined to assign to its proper cause—a hatred of the political

\* Burton, vol. i. p. 173.

† *Ibid.*, vol. i. p. 177, note.

and religious principles of the king of the Revolution—the imputation that to his “hard-heartedness” is to be ascribed “the massacre of Glencoe; an enormity which has left a stain on William’s memory that neither time, nor the services that he was providentially the instrument of rendering to these kingdoms, can ever efface.”\*

In narrating the circumstances which retarded the Union of the kingdoms of England and Scotland—a measure of which William observed, “I have done all I can in that affair, but I do not see a temper in either nation that looks like it”—Defoe says, “The affair of Glencoe was another step to national breaches.” To us, looking calmly upon this affair at the interval of a hundred and sixty-six years, it would appear the most extravagant of national delusions to set up this as “a ground of national animosity.” From the beginning to the end it was a Scottish affair. Not an English statesman was concerned in advising the proceeding. The character of the monarch who signed the order, as king of Scotland, is far more truly exemplified in one sentence of the Proclamation of Indemnity, which ought to have been the rule of conduct for those who urged on the massacre—“to interpret this indemnity in the most favourable and ample manner.”

\* “Annals of England,” vol. iii. p. 120.

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

Marlborough dismissed from office.—Parliamentary debates.—Independence of the Judges.—The king leaves for Holland.—Threatened invasion.—Declaration of James.—Battle of La Hogue.—Siege of Namur.—Grandval’s plot to assassinate William.—Battle of Steinkirk.—Parliament.—Crime and public distress.—Commencement of the National Debt.—The Licensing Act expires.—Place Bill.—Bill for Triennial Parliaments.—The King’s Veto.—Murder of Mountfort.—Trial of Lord Mohun.

“THE king was pleased, without assigning any reason, to remove my lord Marlborough from his employments.” Such is the brief notice of an important event by the wife of the great peer. Much fuller is her account of the circumstances which caused a serious disagreement between queen Mary and her sister, the princess Anne. The queen, three weeks after the dismissal of the earl, wrote to her sister that “it is very unfit lady Marlborough should stay with you, since that gives her husband so just a pretence of being where he ought not.” Mary said, I need not repeat the cause he has given the king to do what he has done, nor his unwillingness at all times to come to such extremities, though people do deserve it.” Anne refused to be separated from her beloved Mrs. Freeman; and Mrs. Freeman being commanded to leave the palace, Mrs. Morley left with her. Anne chose her abode at Sion House; and the nation was scandalised at a quarrel between the occupier of the throne and the sister who might one day be called to occupy it. It is easy to imagine that no circumstance in the lives of William and Mary produced more misery than this rupture. The dismissal of Marlborough occurred on the 10th of January, at the very time when, in the view of some candid persons, William was occupied in planning the slaughter of an obscure Highland clan. It was a period to the king of great political anxiety. Lady Marlborough says she could never learn “what cause the king had for his displeasure.” The popular feeling regarded the earl’s dismissal as a just punishment “for his excessive taking of bribes, covetousness, and extortion on all occasions from his inferior officers.”\* In another passage, Evelyn attributes Marlborough’s disgrace to his

\* Evelyn, “Diary,” January 24.