Particulars relative to the Conduct of the great Marquis of Montrose after his Apprehension.

Communicated by James Maidment, Esq. Advocate, F. S. A. Scot. [Read 6th May 1831.]

The ensuing narrative, relative to the Marquis of Montrose after his apprehension, contains much new and interesting matter; of its authenticity there can be no reasonable doubt. The industrious Wodrow took it down from the mouth of Mr Patrick Simson, minister of Renfrew, who was present "at what passed 'twixt the Commission and the Marquise."

"What follows (he says) as to the late Marquise of Montrose, I wrote from Mr Simson's own mouth, and read it over to him, and he made some additions and amendments: and after reading it over a second time, being write, amongst the rest of thir short narratives, he desired me to transcribe it in mundo, and he would signe it, being the only person now living for many years present at what passed 'twixt the Commission and the Marquise. This I delayed a little, and then the papers where this account is, were mislaid till Mr Simson's death. I now transcribe this from the scroll I wrote, and [which], after reading, Mr Simson approved of.

Robert Wodrow."

Of his informant, Wodrow has preserved the following notice: "Mr Patrick Simson, minister of Renfrew, who was ordained minister there November 11, 1653; he was born at New Abbey, in the presbytery of Dumfries, on October 2, 1628, and he died at Renfrew October 4, 1715. He was a man of very good parts, and acute; he had a great insight and knowledge of the Scriptures; he would have prayed very well; he was really a godly man, and was a man well seen in the discipline of the Church; he had a peculiar talent for the exercise of discipline, so that he was once Moderator of the General Assembly since the Revolution 1688; and, before that he was Moderator of a General Assembly, I heard him say, that he was an eye-witness to six General Assemblies before he was a minister himself. He was bred up with his cousin german, the famous and renowned Mr George Gillespie, late minister of Edinburgh. He was grandchild to that excellent man of God Mr Patrick Simson, minister of Stirling; and that Mr Simson was the son of Mr Andrew Simson, who was at the beginning of the Reformation minister of Dunbar, and had been a schoolmaster at Perth before that, and was a Papist till one of the scholars brought to the school the story of David Lindsay; and Mr Andrew took that book out of his scholar's hand and read it, and it really turned him a Protestant. He brought the book back again to the child, and said, My child, take home that book, and let it not be too much seen, lest it bring your parents to suffer; for popery was then prevailing much in this land."

"Anno 1650 about May 29, being Munday, in the morning before the Marquise of Montrose had his sentence from the Parliament, some Ministers, Mr James Guthrie, Mr Robert Trail, Mr James Durham, and Mr Mungo Law, appointed by the Commission, went into the Tolbooth of Edinburgh, to the room where Montrose was kept by Lieutenant Colonel Wallace."

"Mr James Guthry begun, and told the Marquise there wer several things might marre his light in this affair, that he thought he would do well to lay to heart, and he would hint at them before he came to the main point; As, 1st, Somewhat of his naturall temper, which was aspiring and lofty, or to that purpose; 2dly, His personall vices, which wer too notoriouse (my relator told me this was meaned of his being too much given to woomen); 3dly, The taking a commission from the King to fight against his country, and raise warr within our bouells. His answer to this my informer has forgot. 4thly, His taking Irish and Popish rebels and cut throats by the hand to make use of against his own countrymen; 5thly, The spoil and ravage his men made throw the country; 6thly, The much blood shed by his cruel followers."

"He heard Mr Guthrie's discourse till he had done, patiently, and then resumed all the particulars, and discoursed prettily, as he could well do, and mixed in several Latine sentences (my informer adds, that he thought his way a little too airy for a nobleman). He granted God had made men of severall tempers and dispositions, some slow and dull, others more sprightfull and active; and if the Lord should withhold light on that account, he confessed he was one of those that loved to have praise from virtouse actions. As to his personall vices he did not deny but he had many, for which he desired to find mercy; but if God should withhold light on that account, it might reach unto the greatest of saints, who wanted not their faults and failings. Then one of the Ministers interrup-
ed him; and said, 'He was not to compare himself with the Scripture saints.' He said, 'I make no comparison of my self to them; I only speak as to the argument.' As to the taking of these men to be his followers that wer Irish Papists, &c. he said, 'It was no wonder the King should take any of his subjects who would help him, when those who should have been his best subjects desert ed and opposed him.' We see,' said he, 'what a company David took to defend him in the time of his strait.' There was some volation to and fro upon that practice of David, which my informer has forgot. As to his men's spoiling the country, he said, They knew that Goulders who wanted pay could not be restrained from spoiling, nor kept under discipline as other regular forces, but he did all that lay in him to keep them back from it: and for bloodshed, if it could have been prevented, he had rather it had come out of his own veins.

"Then falling upon the main business, they charged him with Breach of Covenant. To which he answered, 'The Covenant that I took, I own it, and adhere to it. Bishops I care not for them, I never intended to advance their interest: But when the King had granted you all your desires, and you were sitting every one under his vine and fig-tree, that then you should have taken g"n. 'The covenant which my informer has forgot. As to his men's spoil ing the country, he said, They knew that Goulders who wanted pay could not be restrained from spoiling, nor kept under discipline as other regular forces, but he did all that lay in him to keep them back from it: and for bloodshed, if it could have been prevented, he had rather it had come out of his own veins.

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"To which he replied, 'I am very sorry that any actions of mine have been offensive to the Church of Scotland, and I would with all my heart be reconciled with the same; but since I cannot obtain it upon any other terms unless..."
to attend on the morrow at the scaffold, at the time of his execution, that, from his censure of excommunication, did appoint Mr Mungo Law and me among us. They seeing that for the present he was not desiring relaxation of what he spoke to him was only concerning some of his personal sins in his conversation, but nothing concerning the things for which he was condemned. We returned to the Commission, and did show unto them what had passed among us. They seeing that for the present he was not desiring relaxation from his excommunication, did not desire to be relaxed from his excommunication, we should be allowed to give it unto him in the name of the Kirk, and to pray with him and for him, that what he spoke to him was only concerning some of his personal sins in his conversation, but nothing concerning the things for which he was condemned. We returned to the Commission, and did show unto them what had passed among us. They seeing that for the present he was not desiring relaxation from his excommunication, did not desire to be relaxed from his excommunication, we should be allowed to give it unto him in the name of the Kirk, and to pray with him and for him, that what he spoke to him was only concerning some of his personal sins in his conversation, but nothing concerning the things for which he was condemned.

Mr Baillie, at our going out of the Tolbooth, told us, that saying, 'I pray you, Gentlemen, let me die in peace.' It was answered to him, that our errand to him was 'That he might die in true peace, being reconciled to the Lord and to his Kirk.' He went aside to a corner of the chamber, and there spoke a little time with Mr Robert Baillie alone; and thereafter we left him. Mr Baillie, at our going out of the Tolbooth, told us, that what he spoke to him was only concerning some of his personal sins in his conversation, but nothing concerning the things for which he was condemned. We returned to the Commission, and did show unto them what had passed among us. They seeing that for the present he was not desiring relaxation from his censure of excommunication, did appoint Mr Mungo Law and me to attend on the morrow upon the scaffold, at the time of his execution, that, in case he should desire to be relaxed from his excommunication, we should be allowed to give it unto him in the name of the Kirk, and to pray with him and for him, that what he spoke to him was only concerning some of his personal sins in his conversation, but nothing concerning the things for which he was condemned. We returned to the Commission, and did show unto them what had passed among us. 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