

LAYS OF THE COVENANTERS

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Lays of the Covenanters by James Dodds

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JAMES DODDS

**LAYS OF THE
COVENANTERS**

LAYS OF THE COVENANTERS.



Your very truly
James Dodder

LAYS

OF

BY

JAMES DODDS,

AUTHOR OF "THE FIFTY YEARS' STRUGGLE OF THE COVENANTERS;" AND
"THOMAS CHALMERS, A BIOGRAPHICAL STUDY," ETC.

WITH A MEMOIR OF THE AUTHOR,

BY THE

REV. JAMES DODDS,

DUNBAR.

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P R E F A C E.

THE length of the Memoir in this volume may seem disproportioned to the size of that part of it from which it derives its name. But the urgency of friends and the abundance of materials placed at my disposal have compelled me to lengthen out considerably what was originally intended to be a mere biographical sketch. Mr. Dodds's remarkable character and not uneventful life deserve a fuller portraiture than what is here presented; but I hope no great injustice has been done to either of them in the following Memoir, which, though concise, may yet be found sufficiently comprehensive.

The Poems in this volume, published in two different magazines more than thirty years ago, were at one time partially revised by their author for publication in a separate form. They were greatly admired by many competent judges when they first appeared, and it is believed they will stand the test of impartial criticism at the present day. Had the author lived to revise them now, they would probably have further benefited by the last touches of his critical hand. He was a writer who loved more to condense than to expand the productions of his pen; but few readers

Dodd's English Dept. JUN 30 1942

of his "Lays of the Covenanters," will wish that they had undergone any serious compression previous to their present appearance. While their poetical merits must be left to the judgment of the public, I may be permitted to say, with some confidence, that they breathe the very spirit of the Covenanting times, and do historic justice to a body of heroic men who, whatever faults may be imputed to them, were true to their conscience, and died in the cause of liberty.

Having undertaken to prepare the Memoir, and edit the Poems, at the request of Mr. Dodds's family, I have received much valuable assistance from Mrs. Bontor, his eldest daughter. My best thanks are also due to various friends who have favoured me with letters of Mr. Dodds, and other biographic materials; especially to Dr. Charles Rogers, who, besides sending me some interesting personal reminiscences, kindly gave me the use of a number of volumes which I have found to be of great service in giving completeness to my narrative.

I am responsible for the Illustrative Notes at the end of the volume, with the exception of those relating to "The Aged Covenanter," "The Christian Exile," and "The Dove and the Ruin." The Notes referring to these last were prefixed to them by the author when they first appeared.

J. D.

DUNDEE, *November*, 1879.

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