

**THE PERSECUTED FAMILY: A
NARRATIVE OF THE SUFFERINGS
OF THE COVENANTERS IN THE
REIGN OF CHARLES II**

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ROBERT POLLOK

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PERSECUTED FAMILY;
A NARRATIVE
OF THE
SUFFERINGS OF THE COVENANTERS
IN THE REIGN OF CHARLES II.

BY ROBERT POLLOK, A.M.,
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THE GLEN," ETC.

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PREFACE.

THE lives and memories of our Christian ancestors, who suffered so much for the blessings of that civil and religious liberty, which the inhabitants of Britain now enjoy, ought, one would think, to be peculiarly interesting and sacred to us their posterity. Yet so it happens, that while the warrior, who has drained his own country of its wealth, and emptied it of its bravest people, to carry devastation and ruin over other nations, attracts the historic pen minutely to record his deeds, and the genius of poetry, in lofty verse, to sing his praise,—those glorious sufferers, who exposed themselves to the fury of persecution, and like the true soldiers of Jesus Christ, patient, persevering, and zealous, fought in behalf of all that is dear to man, are wholly forgotten by many,—their characters ridiculed, and their actions misrepresented, by others,—and the courage with which they suffered for our good too little admired by all. The patriot, who takes the sword in his hand, and, at the head of his countrymen, makes extraordinary efforts to repel the invasion of an enemy, or to shake the guilty despot from the

strongholds of his tyranny, becomes, as he deserves, the subject of warmest eulogy; and there is not a passage in his history which the young and old of his country cannot relate. But if the patriot, who has saved his country from an enemy, or rid it of oppression, is worthy of his laurels, is he less worthy, who abandons the comforts of plenty, submits to every privation, and offers himself to every trial, that he may do his duty to God where he lives, and hand down religion in its purity to after generations? With more pomp, indeed, are the steps of the patriot soldier attended; but the sufferings of the persecuted Christian bring more glory to God, and more good to man. The one fights, that he may secure our possessions from plunder, and our bodies from slavery: the other suffers, that he may preserve for us an inheritance which fadeth not away,—a peace which passeth understanding,—a liberty which is spiritual,—and a life which is eternal. The one fights for the reputation of his country, and our rights as men: the other suffers for the glory of God, and our privileges as immortal beings. Every sigh, we know, of our persecuted ancestors is recorded in heaven; every tear which they shed is preserved in the bottle of God. Why, then, should their memories not be dear to us, for whom they bled, and for whom they died?

But it is not only that we may pay them our debt of gratitude that we ought to acquaint ourselves

with their lives: it is, that we may gather humility from their lowliness; faith from their trust in God; courage from their heaven-sustained fortitude; warmth from the flame of their devotion, and hope from their glorious success. In this age of peace to the church, the love of many hath waxed cold. Because God requires less hard service of us than he did of our forefathers, we seem to grudge the performance of it. To rekindle the dying embers of zeal, and warm the heart of coldness, we know nothing better than to peruse the lives of those who suffered so much, and with such willingness of heart, for those religious privileges which we now enjoy in peace and security.—Youth, especially, have need to make themselves well acquainted with their lives; for they can scarcely fail to meet with books in which heedless genius has held them forth to laughter; and if they are not taught to revere them, they will soon be taught to hold them in ridicule. Many of their lives, however, are either written in so antiquated and ungainly a phraseology, as to be nowise inviting to the youthful mind; or are blended with circumstances so extraordinary, as to discredit and destroy the effect of what is true. It is a belief of this which has induced me to lay before the public the following narrative, the different parts of which, although I do not pretend to say they happened in the very same relation which I have

given them, are all severally true, and such as require no credence in those miracles which have so hurt and discredited the character and actions of our persecuted ancestors.

THE
PERSECUTED FAMILY.

CHAPTER I.

There stands the Messenger of truth: there stands
The legate of the skies! His theme divine,
His office sacred, his credentials clear.
In doctrine uncorrupt; in language plain,
And plain in manner; decent, solemn, chaste
And natural in gesture; much impressed
Himself, as conscious of his awful charge,
And anxious mainly that the flock he feeds
May feel it too. Affectionate in look,
And tender in address, as well becomes
A messenger of grace to guilty men.

COWPER.

THE Reverend Mr. JAMES BRUCE, the head of that family whose lives we are briefly to record, was the youngest son of a very respectable gentleman in the upper district of Lanarkshire. In his boyhood he gave such indications of superior talent, and love of piety and learning, as induced his father to educate him for the ministry. During the

course of his studies in the University of Glasgow, James applied himself to the various branches of education which were then taught, with an assiduity and success, which proved that his father was noways wrong in the profession he had chosen for his son. In divine literature, to which the pious bent of his mind, as well as his future views, directed him chiefly, his progress was extremely rapid, and his acquirements solid and extensive. Of controversial theology he was by no means ignorant; although his mild and peaceful mind delighted itself especially in contemplating the plain truths of the Bible, and how they might be impressed with the happiest effects on the souls of men. The New Testament he read continually; and his heart was warmed with its love, and his soul fashioned to its precepts. As his judgment was sound, so his feelings were strong. The history of our Saviour's life, and sufferings, and death, made a most extraordinary impression on his mind; and while he read, and loved, and adored, his soul took on the likeness of the great Testator, in the holy simplicity of his character, in resignation to the will of God, in devotion to the duties of religion, and in love to mankind. To those acquirements, without which a minister is ill fitted for his office, he added a pretty extensive knowledge