

**PATRICK HAMILTON, THE FIRST PREACHER  
AND MARTYR OF THE SCOTTISH  
REFORMATION: AN HISTORICAL BIOGRAPHY,  
COLLECTED FROM ORIGINAL SOURCES,  
INCLUDING A VIEW OF HAMILTON'S  
INFLUENCE UPON THE REFORMATION DOWN  
TO THE TIME OF GEORGE WISHART**

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Patrick Hamilton, the first preacher and martyr of the Scottish Reformation: an historical biography, collected from original sources, including a view of Hamilton's influence upon the Reformation down to the time of George Wishart by Peter Lorimer

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**PETER LORIMER**

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# PATRICK HAMILTON,

THE

FIRST PREACHER AND MARTYR OF THE SCOTTISH REFORMATION.

In Historical Biography,

COLLECTED FROM ORIGINAL SOURCES;

INCLUDING

A VIEW OF HAMILTON'S INFLUENCE UPON THE REFORMATION DOWN TO THE  
TIME OF GEORGE WISHART,

WITH

AN APPENDIX OF ORIGINAL LETTERS

AND OTHER PAPERS.

BY

THE REV. PETER LORIMER,

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TO

HIS HONOURED COLLEAGUE,

THOMAS M'CRIE, D.D., LL.D.,

THE AUTHOR DEDICATES MOST HEARTILY THE FOLLOWING WORK,

AS A SLIGHT MEMORIAL OF THE IMPORTANT EVENT OF HIS RECENT ACCESSION

TO THE COLLEGE OF

*The Presbyterian Church in England,*

FROM WHICH THE AUTHOR ANTICIPATES THE BEST RESULTS TO THE CAUSE

OF EVANGELICAL TRUTH AND UNION, AS WELL AS A GREAT

ENHANCEMENT OF HIS OWN COMFORT AND

HAPPINESS IN THE DISCHARGE

OF ACADEMIC DUTY.

Sevit quidem CNOTICE verbi divini semen in Secula quam ferissime: sed solo jure ante  
eade nonnullorum martyrum solatio; inter quos primo locum tenet PATRICIUS HARTING.  
Bona. LONON.



## PREFACE.

NEARLY three years ago, when the author of the following work was collecting materials for a life of Alexander Alesius, the earliest and one of the most distinguished of the Scottish exiles who were driven out from their country for their attachment to the principles of the Reformation, he came unexpectedly upon the traces of a work in which Alesius had inserted some account of Patrick Hamilton. Following up these traces, he found that Rabus, a German author of the sixteenth century, had introduced a translation of that account into his *History of the Martyrs*; on perusing which, he discovered that Alesius had noticed several important particulars of Hamilton's character and life, and of his own connexion with him, which were perfectly new to history, as well as extremely interesting and valuable. The author then became anxious to see the original work, which was referred to as a Latin Commentary on the First Book of the Psalms; but no copy of it could be found in the library of the British Museum, the Bodleian, Sion College, or any of the other great libraries of this country to which he had access. It was not till he had travelled in quest of it as far as the old library of Wolfenbüttel in the Grand Duchy of Brunswick, that he got his first sight of a copy.

The amount of new light thrown by the statements of Alesius upon the biography of Hamilton was so very considerable, and these statements had so much value as coming from one who was the Martyr's own disciple and convert, and the eye-witness of his trial and martyrdom, that the author resolved to attempt to construct, by their help and with the aid of such additional facts as further research might bring to light, a complete *Life of the First Preacher and Martyr of the Scottish Reformation*.

Such a biography has remained till this day a desideratum. Scarcely anything, in fact, has been added to our knowledge of the first and most interesting of all our Scottish Protestant Martyrs, since the account of him inserted by Fox in his '*Acts and Monuments*.' Even Knox, the only original historian of the Scottish Reformation, was able to add very little to that account; while Spottiswood and Calderwood could only repeat the statements of the Martyrologist and the Reformer. It is indeed singular that such facts in the life of such a man, as the universities where he studied, and the influences under which his character and convictions were formed, and the length of time during which he had opportunity to disseminate his doctrines, and even his birth-place, his marriage, and several of the circumstances of his last days and martyrdom, should have remained so long unknown. But it is more singular still that a learned work, which supplied original and authentic information upon the most of these points, and written, too, by a man who was himself an honour both to his teacher and his country, should have remained for three hundred years unnoticed and unknown by Scottish authors, and should only at this time of day be accidentally brought to light.

In executing his design, the author found it necessary, in order to exhibit the various influences under which Hamilton's character and convictions were formed, to bring into view many facts belonging to the religious history of the times in which he lived, and to the annals of the numerous universities in which he studied. He con-

ceived that much of the interest of such a life lies in tracing the manifold discipline of institutions and events by which the workman is shaped and trained for his work, as well as in the exhibition of his work itself; and requiring to draw somewhat largely for that purpose both upon academic and general history, he has thought the designation of 'An Historical Biography' the most appropriate to describe the mixed contents of the volume. He has been able, however, in some instances to derive that history from fresh sources; and he refers, in evidence of this, to the original documents contained in the Appendix, which have never been printed before, and which will be found to possess considerable value in relation particularly to Scottish ecclesiastical affairs.

The season of active personal service permitted to Patrick Hamilton, as a preacher and reformer, was extremely brief, but his influence was propagated by his disciples and converts through many subsequent years. It is easy, in truth, to recognise his image and superscription in the doctrinal type which continued to mark the Scottish Reformation from its commencement in his preaching down to the date of George Wishart's return to Scotland in 1544—an interval of no less than seventeen years. That period the author has ventured to designate the Hamilton-period of the Reformation; and he has endeavoured to trace his influence throughout its whole length, and to indicate several distinct lines of radiation in which the light was diffused from the luminous centre of his brief but highly impressive ministry. His influence thus propagated was felt either directly or indirectly by a great number of individuals, whose names have been preserved to us by historians. In regard to some of these the author has not been able to add anything to the stock of our previous knowledge, but in a good many other cases—including the names of Sir James Hamilton of Kincavel, John M'Dowell, Robert Richardson, John M'Alpine, and, more than any other, Alexander Alesius—he has been more fortunate. It formed no part of his plan, however, to carry his notices of such of these early