**ed him to death as a heretic, and ordered him to be** burned in **effigy.**

The injurious treatment of John Knox did not in the leaſt obſtruct the progreſs of the reformation. Deſertions were made from Popery in every town and village; and even many members of the church, both ſecular and regular, were forward to embrace the new princi­ples, and to atone for their paſt miſtakes by the bittereſt railleries againſt the corruptions and the folly of the Romiſh faith. The prieſts were treated in all places with ridicule and contempt. The images, crucifixes, and relics, which ſerved to rouſe the decaying fervours of ſuperſtition, were ſtolen from the churches, and tram­pled under foot. The biſhops implored the aſſiſtance of the queen-regent. Citations were given to the preach­ers to appear in their defence. They obeyed; but with ſuch a formidable retinue, that it was with diffi­culty ſhe was permitted to apologiſe for her conduct. James Chalmers of Gaitgirth, preſſing forward from the crowd, addreſſed himſelf to her: “We vow to God, that the devices of the prelates ſhall not be carried into execution. We are oppreſſed to maintain them in their idleneſs. They ſeek to undo and murder our preachers and us; and we are determined to ſubmit no longer to this wickedneſs.” The multitude, applauding his ſpeech, put their hands to their daggers.

A truſty meſſenger was diſpatched to Geneva, invi­ting John Knox to return to his own country. But in the infancy of their connection, the Proteſtants being apprehenſive of one another, uncertain in their counſels, or being deſerted by perſens upon whom they had re­lied, it appeared to them that they had adopted this meaſure without a due preparation; and, by oppoſite diſpatches, Knox was requeſted to delay his journey for ſome time.

To this zealous reformer their unſteadineſs was a mat­ter of ſerious affliction; and in the anſwer he tranſmitted to their letters, he rebuked them with ſeverity: but amidſt this correction, he intreated them not to faint under their purpoſes, from apprehensions of danger, which, he ſaid, was to ſeparate themſelves from the fa­vour of God, and to provoke his vengeance. To par­ticular perſons he wrote other addreſſes; and to all of them the greateſt attention was paid. In 1557, a for­mal bond of agreement, which obtained the appellation of *the first covenant,* was entered into, and all the more eminent perſons who favoured the reformation were in­vited to ſubſcribe it. The earls of Argyle, Glencairn, and Morton, with the lord Lorn, and John Erſkine of Dun, led the way, by giving it the ſanction of their names. All the ſubſcribers to this deed, renouncing the ſuperſtitions and idolatry of the church of Rome, promiſed to apply continually their whole power and wealth, and even to give up their lives, to forward and eſtabliſh the word of God. They diſtinguiſhed the re­formed, by calling them the *Congregation of Christ;* and by the opprobrious title of the *Congregation of Satan,* they peculiarized the favourers of Popery.

After the leaders of the reformation had ſubſcribed the firſt covenant, they addreſſed letters to John Knox, urging in the ſtrongeſt terms his return to Scotland; and that their hopes of his aſſiſtance might not be diſappointed, they lent an addreſs to John Calvin, the ce­lebrated reformer, begging him to join his commands to their intreaties. The archbiſhop of St Andrew’s, who perceived the riſing ſtorm, was in a difficult ſituation. A powerful combination threatened ruin to the church; and he had ſeparated himſelf from the politics of the queen-regent. The zeal of the Roman Catholics point­ed out ſtrong meaſures to him; and his diſpoſitions were pacific. The clergy were offended with his remiſſneſs and neglect of duty. The reformers deteſted his looſeneſs of principles, and were ſhocked with the diſſolute depravity of his life and converſation. He reſolved to try the force of addreſs, and did not ſucceed. He then reſolved to be ſevere, and was ſtill more unſucceſsful.

The earl of Argyle was the moſt powerful of the re­formed leaders. To allure him from his party, the archbiſhop of St Andrew’s employed the agency of Sir David Hamilton. But the kindneſs he affected, and the advices he beſtowed, were no compliment to the underſtanding of this nobleman; and his threats were re­garded with ſcorn. The reformers, inſtead of loſing their courage, felt a ſentiment of exultation and tri­umph; and the earl of Argyle happening to die about this time, he not only maintained the new doctrines in his laſt moments, but intreated his ſon to ſeek for ho­nour in promoting the public preaching of the goſpel and Jeſus Chriſt, and in the utter ruin of ſuperſtition and idolatry.

It was determined by the archbiſhop and the prelates, that this diſappointment ſhould be ſucceeded by furious perſecution of the reformed. Walter Mill, a prieſt, had neglected to officiate at the altar; and having been long under the ſuſpicion of hereſy, was carried to St An­drew’s, committed to priſon, and accuſed before the archbiſhop and his ſuffragans. He was in an extreme old age; and he had ſtruggled all his life with poverty. He ſunk not, however, under the hardneſs of his fate. To the articles of his accuſation he replied with ſignal recollection and fortitude. The firmneſs of his mind, in the emaciated ſtate of his body, excited admiration. The inſultsr of his enemies, and their contempt, ſerved to diſcover his ſuperiority over them. When the cler­gy declared him a heretic, no temporal judge could be found to condemn him to the fire. He was reſpited to another day; and ſo great ſympathy prevailed for his misfortunes, that it was neceſſary to allure one of the archbiſhop’s domeſtics to ſupply the place of the civil power, and to pronounce the lenience of condemnation. When brought to the ſtake, the reſolution of this ſufferer did not forſake him. He praiſed God, that he had been called to ſeal up the truth with his life; and he conjured the people, as they would eſcape eternal death, not to be overcome by the errors and the arti­fices of monks and prieſts, abbots and biſhops.

The barbarity of this execution affected the refor­mers with inexpreſſible horror. Subſcriptions for mu­tual defence were taken. The leaders of the reforma­tion, diſperſing their emiſſaries to every quarter, encou­raged the vehemence of the multitude. The cove­nant to eſtabliſh a new form of religion extended far and wide. The ſharp point of the ſword, not the calm exertions of inquiry, was to decide the diſputes of theo­logy.

When the leaders of the reformation were appriſed of the ardent zeal of the people, and conſidered the great number of ſubſcriptions which had been collected in the different counties of the kingdom, they aſſembled