

Hugh Ferguson, of Knockdow, in Carrick. He constrained him to stay all night. Mr. Peden replied—'Mr. Ferguson, it will be a dear night for both you and me, if I tarry with you.' 'We shall run the risk of that,' said Hugh, 'to have an honoured servant of God with us. Yours, then, be the responsibility,' replied the prophet. That night Major Cockburn, with a troop of dragoons, surrounded the house, took both Mr. Ferguson and Peden prisoners, and carried them to Edinburgh. For 'reset, harbour and converse' with an outlaw, Mr. Ferguson was fined a thousand marks, amounting to £200 sterling of our money. Mr. Peden was tried, and sent a prisoner to the Bass Rock, a barren insulated rock, situated at the mouth of the Firth of Forth, and long used as a strong fortification, on which were retained State prisoners.

While there, the following extraordinary circumstances are recorded as having occurred to Mr. Peden:—One Sabbath morning while he was engaged in the worship of God, a young girl about the age of fourteen, came to his chamber-door, and began to mock him, accompanying her jeers with loud laughter. 'Poor thing' said Mr. Peden to her, 'Thou laughest and mockest at the service of God, but ere long God shall write such a sudden and surprising judgment on thee as will stay the laughter of many.' Very shortly afterwards, as she was walking on the rock, a sudden gust of wind swept her off into the sea, where she was lost. This event, for a short time, produced among even the most wicked on the island a certain fear and dread, keeping them from molesting 'the prophet.'

The soldiers of the guard were frequently shifted from Edinburgh Castle and the fortification of the Bass. A fearfully ungodly race many of them were. Nothing seemed to give them more pleasure than to torment those good and holy men who were prisoners. Some time after the event above recorded, Mr. Peden was walking on the rock, when some soldiers passed by. One of them bent on annoyance, turning round and looking him full in the face, said to him, 'The devil take thee.' 'The prophet,' lifting up his hand and pointing it at him, with his eyes fixed upon him, said, 'Fie, fie, wretched man, thou knowest not what thou art saying, but thou shalt repent that.' The man stood still with astonishment, said no more, but returned to the guard-house, smitten to the heart, and called out for Mr. Peden to come to him, for, said he, 'the devil is coming to take me away.'

Mr. Peden went to him, spoke to him, prayed with him. His visits were frequent. Deep were his convictions and awful. In a short time however, the Spirit of the Lord brought him to the feet of the Saviour, and there he found 'peace in believing.' It was now his turn to mount guard, but he refused. At length he was summoned before the governor, and threatened with death by to-morrow morning at ten o'clock. Thrice over was he told this and thrice did he reply, 'Though you tear me to pieces, I shall never again lift arms against these good men, for this is to fight against the Lord Jesus Christ and His blessed cause.' At length the governor seeing him resolute, and speaking of him to his companions as if he had become insane, put him forth from the garrison and commanded him to be set ashore. He returned to his native village in East Lothian, where he had a wife and family, and where he lived a singularly devoted Christian life.

Again Mr. Peden was removed from the Bass to Edinburgh. With sixty others engaged in the same blessed cause, he was sentenced to banishment. They were appointed to be conveyed to America, then a penal settlement, so called, though numbers who were sent there were of 'the salt of the earth.' Among his companions at this period of trial, was Alexander Anderson, a youth of only fifteen years of age, of remarkable parts and piety. For some time he had been distinguished for his eminent godliness. Touched by the gentle words which he spake and the Christ like life which he led, many were brought by him to the cross. The enemies of the truth were not likely to overlook a servant of Jesus such as this. Tender years had no eloquence for them to touch their hard and ruthless hearts. He was dragged from the embrace of his beloved and pious parents to prison and banishment, without one murmur or complaint; but to the last he commended all to Christ, and rejoiced that they could see how God in his weakness could perfect strength.