

THE PRESBYTERIAN

DECEMBER, 1873.

JOTTINGS FROM OLD SCOTIA. THE SOUTHWEST.

TO PENPONT, DUMFRIES AND ANWOTH.

We are going to spend a few days in a part of the country which, though out of the beaten track of travel and little frequented by tourists, cannot be called a *terra incognita*. It is the Land of Burns. It has memories for us too, of another kind; it is the Land of the Covenanters! The scenery through which we are carried by the Southwestern Railway is remarkable for its pastoral beauty, but its peculiar charm is in the associations which it recalls of by-gone days. In the one hundred and twenty miles, from Glasgow to Kircudbright there is scarcely a glen that has not been the scene of a Conventicle, and that has not afforded a hiding-place to some persecuted Presbyterian, or a hill-side on which you may not find a martyr's grave to-day. But hurrying along at the rate of forty miles an hour, it is easy to conceive how one is affected by just a glimpse of these hills and dales. We give the smaller places the go-by altogether, and halt but a moment at the principal towns. Here is what was, in the days of the Roman period, the village of Vanduara—the Paisley that now is, with portions of its Abbey Church still in good repair, after six and a half centuries of exposure to the battle and the breeze. The Paisley, noted for its shawls, perhaps even more so now-a-days for its thread, having the largest and most magnificent manufactory of that article in the world. The Paisley that has sent out more settlers to Canada than perhaps any other town of its size in Scotland. Ministers, Professors, Principals have come to us from Paisley. How much the literary world owes to it, Dr. Burns of Montreal tells us in the Life of his father, where we find that, to say nothing of himself, the

illustrious John Witherspoon, Dr. Robert Watt, the Poets Tannahill and Motherwell and the renowned Christopher North were all "Paisley bodies." From the same authority we observe the ancient motto of the town to be almost identical with that of the City of St. Mungo. "Let Paisley flourish by the preaching of *thy* word."

Kilmarnock is our next stopping place. We ought to be better "posted," but really the name suggests nothing classic—positively nothing but the peculiarly umbrageous blue bonnet topped with a scarlet tuft that everywhere marks its wearer, a Lowland Scot. Why didn't we stop at Auchinleck? Was it not in this parish, at Airmoss, that Richard Cameron, from whom the "Cameronians" take their name, and Donald Cargill, the outed minister of the Barony Church, Glasgow, at the head of a desperate band of hunted heroes fought for dear life, and the dearer Covenant, and where Cameron was killed in answer to his prayer—"Lord take the ripe and spare the green!" Though we cannot see that flat grave-stone on the moss, we can recall the pathetic lines of the Muirkirk shepherd:

"In a dream of the night I was wafted away
To the Moorland of mist where the Martyrs lay,
Where Cameron's sword and his Bible were seen
Engraved on the stone where the heather grows
green."

And to fly past *Sanquhar* thus, what a shame! Sanquhar, the birth-place of Dr. Andrew Thompson of St. George's, Edinburgh, and of Dr. Cook of Quebec, and his predecessor, Dr. Harkness, and of Dr. McMorine and other respected and familiar names; Sanquhar, the memorable! where some two hundred years ago, one and twenty Covenanters, armed with drawn swords, marched up to the market cross and posted the famous declaration in which they disowned their King,