

settlements in Britain, and distinct traces of their occupation remain to this day. It was famous for its monasteries at Dundrennan, St. Mary's Isle, Lincluden, Sweetheart and other places, of which the ruins are still to be seen. In the pre-Reformation times, Galloway was the seat of an important bishopric. The people in this part of the country were the first to embrace the new doctrines, and as they held them with singular tenacity, it was here that the fires of persecution raged the hottest. There is not a hill-side in all this district that does not recall memories of the Covenanters. Every churchyard has its "Martyr's grave." Many a lonely glen and bleak moor was the scene of a "Conventicle," as these places were called where the ministers who had left their churches and mansees, rather than accept Episcopacy, continued to meet with their people. They had no sabbath-bell to summon the worshippers, but from house to house the word went round that on such a day, in such a place, they should meet to listen to the message of salvation. Long before the hour appointed might be seen old men wearing their plaids and blue bonnets, and old women with their tartan shawls, and middle-aged men and women with infants in their arms, and young men and maidens, all reverently seeking the appointed place. And then, when all had come, and the warders had taken their posts on the heights, ready to give the signal in case of danger, and the minister, with his gray hair streaming in the wind, had ascended the highest available standpoint, the hum of voices was hushed at the words,—*"Let us worship God."* and the loud acclaim of praise went up to the blue vault of heaven. Now they listen to the burning words of the preacher, in which would be mingled with his gospel message pathetic allusions to the character of the times. Then parents would present their children for baptism, and the servant of God prayed that they might be baptized with the Holy Ghost, and that they might be spared to occupy the place of their fathers who might at any moment be called to seal their testimony with their blood. That truly was *"The Church in the Wilderness."*—

*"In cities the walls of salvation were sealed,
More brightly to burst on the moor and the field;
And the Spirit that fled from the dwellings of men,
Like a manna-cloud rained on the camp in the glen."*

Among the conventicle preachers were

John Blackadder, of Troqueer; John Welsh, of Irongray; Gabriel Sempill, of Carsphairn; Richard Cameron, of Hyndbottom; Donald Cargill, the outed minister of the Barony Church, Glasgow; Alexander Peden, of Glenluce; and James Renwick, of Glencairn. These and many others "hazarded their lives" for conscience sake. To them Presbyterianism the world over in large measure owes its existence to-day.

A week was spent in this neighbourhood visiting our old friends Dr. Snodgrass and Mr. Black, the ministers of Canonbie and Anwoth. Both are members of the Assembly's Colonial Committee, and since their return from Canada both have been serviceable in many ways to our Church. Their hospitality is unbounded, as many Canadians can testify. We roamed through woods and renewed acquaintance with *"The flowers of the forest"*—beautiful and fragrant many of them are. We ascended hill-tops and had views of surpassing loveliness; scrambled to the highest pinnacle of a ruined castle; waded a river knee-deep; inspected a silo, and, *mirabile dictu!* attended a funeral at which there was not a thimbleful of whiskey given to the mourners. It was discouraging to learn that throughout this fine region of country farming has ceased to be profitable, and that the population in the rural districts is decreasing. The same remark applies, indeed, in some degree, to the whole of Scotland. On the other hand, there is a change for the better in some respects. The Scott Act could not yet be carried in any constituency in Scotland, but the drinking customs of the country are diminishing. The old parish schools—the pride of Scotland for two hundred years—are left behind in the march of improvement. Handsome school-houses have been erected all over the country, and a system of government inspection established with beneficial results. The new School Act does not compel the use of the Bible in the public schools, but it permits it, and it is used almost invariably. The Board School of Canonbie seemed to me to be a model institution. In addition to the usual branches of a liberal education, instruction is given in vocal and instrumental music and drawing, and the girls are thoroughly drilled in domestic economy, including practical lessons in cookery in all its branches. The school is opened and closed with devotional exercises. *"How do you manage with Ro-*