

tation of his people from Anwoth, who had travelled many miles to testify their sincere regard for their devoted pastor, who was now about to enjoy the exalted privilege of being "*the Lord's prisoner.*" "In the world ye *shall* have tribulation, but in me ye *shall* have peace."

At this period, Aberdeen was the stronghold of Episcopacy and Arminianism. The most influential men, both clerical and lay, were violently opposed to Presbyterianism; and in these circumstances, Mr. Rutherford could not be expected to feel much comfort or happiness in their society. Gradually, however, the inhabitants began to take an interest in him as a persecuted servant of God. Such, at length, was the attention and kindness shown him by many respectable citizens of the place, that he was permitted to conduct religious services in their families. Intelligence of this fact soon reached the ears of the professors of the University and the ministers of the city, who thought it necessary to take steps for the diminution, if possible, of his influence. For this purpose, they denounced, from the pulpit, Presbyterian principles, and challenged Mr. Rutherford to engage with them in public disputations. But all was unavailing; he became more popular and influential than ever, and his opinions spread among the people to an extent which, to his enemies, was quite alarming. In this dilemma, application was made to the legislature to have him either confined more strictly, or sent farther north than Aberdeen, or banished from the kingdom altogether. The last expedient was adopted by the king, who dispatched a warrant to Scotland for the banishment of Mr. Rutherford. With the greatest calmness and composure he looked forward to the prospect of banishment. "Whither I go," said he, "I know not: but I am ready at the Lord's call." The Lord, however, in his providence interposed, and, by a train of unexpected events, prevented the warrant from being ever carried into execution.

In the meantime, the gloomy state of

affairs in Scotland weighed heavily upon the spirits of Mr. Rutherford. But ever and anon his soul was refreshed with the hopes of brighter days, and he felt that he himself had been called to the high honor of being persecuted for righteousness' sake. Numerous were the letters of consolation and encouragement, and even warm congratulation on this subject which he was incessantly receiving; and besides the exalted communion which he enjoyed with God, he felt it a peculiar privilege to communicate his own feelings by letter to his Christian friends in different quarters of the country. These letters, which have since been published, are well known to the pious families among our Scottish peasantry. In England, also, they have been held in high estimation, and the Christian-minded Cecil speaks of them in terms of warm commendation. "Rutherford's Letters," says he, "is one of my classics. Were truth the beam, I have no doubt that if Homer, and Virgil, and Horace, and all that the world has agreed to idolize, were weighed against that book, they would be lighter than vanity."

While imprisoned in Aberdeen, Mr. Rutherford felt deeply for his attached flock at Anwoth. Bishop Sydserff had attempted to thrust in upon them a minister, who, being both an Episcopalian and an Arminian, was violently opposed by the people. They still regarded their former pastor as having been unjustly withdrawn from them, and they longed and prayed, therefore, for his return. This happy event, in the course of affairs, was at last accomplished. Charles I., by the advice of Archbishop Laud, directed his efforts towards the complete extirpation of every remnant of Presbyterianism in Scotland. With this view he promulgated a series of canons, the most arbitrary and unjust, demanding conformity in every point to the forms and ceremonies of Prelacy in its grossest aspect, evidently with an ulterior design to establish Popery. These canons, followed as they speedily were by a decree enforcing the use of the liturgy in the