

Church.* I approached the parish from the east. The day was warm and pleasant; the scenery through which I passed some of the finest in Scotland. The mountains rose on the right, in huge Titanic masses, that seemed to soften their purple and blue in the clear sunshine, to the delicate tone of the deep sky beyond; and I could see the yet unwasted snows of winter glittering, in little detached masses, along their summits. The hills of the middle region were feathered with wood; a forest of mingled oaks and larches, which still blended the tender softness of spring with the full foliage of summer, swept down to the path; the wide undulating plain below was laid out into fields, mottled with cottages, and waving with the yet unshot corn; and a noble arm of the sea winded along the lower edge for nearly twenty miles, losing itself to the west, among blue hills and jutting headlands, and opening in the east to the main ocean, through a magnificent gateway of rock. But the little groups which I encountered at every turning of the path, as they journeyed with all the sober, well-marked decency of a Scottish Sabbath morning, towards the church of a neighboring parish, interested me more than even the scenery. The clan which inhabited this part of the country had borne a well-marked character in Scottish story. Buchanan had described it as one of the most fearless and warlike in the north. It served under the Bruce of Bannockburn. It was the first to rise in arms to protect Queen Mary, on her visit to Inverness, from the intended violence of Huntly. It fought the battles of Protestantism in Germany, under Gustavus Adolphus. It covered the retreat of the English at Fontenoy; and presented an unbroken front to the enemy, after all the other allied troops had quitted the field. And it was the descendants of those very men who were now passing me on the road. The rugged, robust form, half bone, half muscle,—the springy firmness of the tread,—the grave, manly countenance,—all gave indication that the original characteristics survived in their full strength; and it was a strength that inspired confidence, not fear. There were gray-haired, patriarchal-looking men among the groupes, whose very air seemed impressed by a sense of the duties of the day; nor was there aught that did not agree with the object of the journey, in the appearance of even the youngest and least thoughtful.

“As I proceeded, I came up with a few people who were travelling in a contrary direction. A Secession meeting-house has lately sprung up in the parish, and these formed part of the congregation. A path, nearly obscured by grass and weeds, leads from the main road to the parish church. It was with difficulty I could trace it, and there were none to direct me, for I was now walking alone. The parish burying-ground, thickly sprinkled with graves and tombstones, surrounds the church. It is a quiet, solitary spot, of great beauty, lying beside the sea-shore; and as service had not yet commenced, I whiled away half an hour in sauntering among the stones, and deciphering the inscriptions. I could trace in the rude monuments of this retired little spot, a

* Thomas Hog of Kiltearn. See “Scots Worthies;” or the cheap-publication volumes of the Free Church for 1846.