

THE LANARK SETTLEMENT

*Should fate command me to the farthest verge
Of the green earth, to distant barbarous climes,
Rivers unknown to song; where the first sun
Gilds Indian mountains, or his setting beam
Flames on the Atlantic isles, 'tis nought to me,
Since God is ever present, ever felt,
In the void waste, as in the city full;
And where He, vital, breathes, there must be joy.*

DURING the years from 1816 to 1820, there was, as pointed out in the last chapter, much depression in the motherland owing to commercial declension, and this caused a great deal of privation among certain classes of people in the south of Scotland whose means of living depended largely upon production and manufactures.

This class of people in the Scottish counties of Lanark and Renfrew had suffered a great deal from this depression, so that many of them, despairing of eking out an existence at home, began to look abroad with that hope eternal which inspires the human breast to dream of a new life in the more promising regions of the Western world.

Having this object in view, a considerable number of families in the two counties, during 1820,

The Scotsman in Canada

banded themselves together into societies for the purpose of petitioning the Government for the power and means of emigrating to Upper Canada and for grants of land in that province. The Colonial Secretary of the day was Lord Bathurst, and to him and his Majesty's other ministers the petitions of these societies were presented by several Members of Parliament, who were aware of the distress existing in Glasgow and the surrounding country, and of the difficulties affecting the petitioners. During the following winter much was done by philanthropists to relieve the suffering of the poor, and work was made by the magistrates of Glasgow to relieve the existing conditions.

Meanwhile the interests of the several emigrating societies were advanced by Lord Archibald Hamilton, Kirkman Findlay, Esq., and John Maxwell, Esq., Members of the Commons. The result was that grants of land were procured in Upper Canada for heads of families and individual petitioners, whose names were entered on lists sent into the Colonial Office. These grants were given on the understanding that the expense of their passage and sustenance as far as Quebec would be guaranteed by the societies.

Fully a thousand heads of families or individuals in the county of Lanark were, through local assistance, able to accept this offer; while a local subscription in Glasgow enabled those in that vicinity to do likewise. Each man received one pound, which was to be paid to the owners of the vessels as part payment of passage money. The ships

