

LADIES OF THE COVENANT

MRS. WILLIAM VEITCH

This Notice of Mrs. Veitch is drawn up chiefly from her own Diary, and from the Memoirs of Mr. Veitch, written by himself.

MARION FAIRLIE, the subject of this sketch, “who,” as the editor of her Diary well observes, “endured an amount of domestic affliction and vexatious persecution, in many cases more trying than martyrdom itself,” was born in 1638, a year famous in the annals of the Presbyterian Church of Scotland. Her father was descended from the ancient family of the Fairlies, of the house of Braid, near Edinburgh, and was related to Lord Lee’s first lady, who was of that house and name. Both her parents, being eminent for piety, were careful to instruct her in her tender years in the principles of divine truth, and to impress upon her mind the importance of the one thing needful. By the divine blessing on these labours of parental love, together with the pastoral instructions of an evangelical and faithful minister, Mr. Robert Birnie of Lanark, she early acquired that deep sense of the things of God which she exemplified to the close of a long life. “It pleased God,” says she, “of his great goodness, early to incline my heart to seek him, and bless him that I was born in a land where the gospel was at that time purely and powerfully preached; as also, that I was born of godly parents and well educated. But above all things, I bless him that he made me see that nothing but the righteousness of Christ could save me from the wrath of God.” She adds, “One day having been at prayer, and coming into the room where one was reading a letter of Mr. Rutherford’s, (then only in manuscript,) directed to one John Gordon of Rosco, giving an account how far one might go, and yet prove a hypocrite and miss heaven, it occasioned great exercise to me. [See *Rutherford’s Letters*, p. 552, *Whyte and Kennedy’s Edition*.] Misbelief said, I should go to hell; but one day at prayer, the Lord was graciously pleased to set home upon my heart that word, ‘To whom, Lord, shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life,’ (John vi. 68.) And at another time, that word, ‘Those that seek me early shall find me,’ Prov. viii. 17.”

On the 23d of Nov., 1664, she was united in marriage to Mr. William Veitch, son of Mr. John Veitch, the non-conforming ejected minister of Roberton. Mr. Veitch had been for some time previous chaplain to Sir Hugh Campbell of Calder, in Morayshire, but was forced to leave that family about September that year; for, on the restoration of prelacy, none, according to an act of parliament, were permitted to be chaplains in families, to teach any public school, or to be tutors to the children of persons of quality, without the license of the bishop of the diocese; [*Wodrow’s History*, vol. i., p. 267.] and Mr. Murdoch M’Kenzie, bishop of Moray, having, upon making inquiry, found Mr. Veitch’s opinions hostile to prelacy, would not suffer him to remain in that situation. He accordingly came south, and, staying for some time with his father, who, since his ejection, had taken up his residence at Lanark, became acquainted with the godly families of that place, among which was the family of the young lady whom he married. Several of her friends endeavoured, but without effect, to dissuade her from the marriage, urging, among other reasons, the worldly straits to which, from the discouraging aspect of the times, she might be reduced. This at first occasioned her no inconsiderable anxiety of mind; but she resolved to trust in God’s promises for all needful temporal good things, as well as for spiritual blessings. “And,” says she, “these promises were remarkably made good to me in all the various places of my sojourning in diverse kingdoms, which I here mention to the commendation of His faithfulness. His word in this has been a tried word to me, worthy to be recorded, to encourage me to trust him for the future; who heretofore has not only provided well for me and mine, but made me in the places where my lot was cast useful to others, and made that word good, ‘As having nothing, and yet possessing all things,’ 2 Cor. vi. 10.”

Scarcely two years after her marriage, the storm of persecution burst upon her and Mr. Veitch, separating them from each other, and ultimately forcing them to seek refuge in England. Mr. Veitch, who was a bold and daring man, was prevailed upon by Mr. John Welsh, minister of Irongray, and others who came to his house at the

Westhills of Dunsyre, where he farmed a piece of land, to join with that party of the Covenanters, who, provoked by the brutal cruelties and robberies of Sir James Turner, rose in arms, and were defeated by the king's forces at Pentland Hills. [*The battle was fought on Wednesday the 28th of November, 1666.*] This was the origin of the multiplied dangers and troubles to which he and Mrs. Veitch were subjected, by the government and its agents, during a series of many years. She seems to have had no scruples of conscience as to the propriety of the appeal which the Covenanters, in this instance, made to arms: she at least wished them all success. On the night of the defeat, she was entertaining several of the officers who had fled to her house for shelter, and weeping lest her husband, of whose fate they could not inform her, should have been killed. On that same night, Mr. Veitch made his escape, and came to a herdsman's house in Dunsyre Common, within a mile of his own house, giving the herdsman his horse to take home to his own stable, and desiring him to inform Mrs. Veitch of his safety. He lurked several nights thereabout, and at last retired into England.

Two days after the battle, Mrs. Veitch was thrown into alarm by a party of Dalziel's troop, which that general, on learning where Mr. Veitch resided, had sent to the house to search for him; but to her great comfort he was not at home, and though in the immediate neighbourhood, escaped falling into their hands. It was also gratifying both to him and her, that the troopers did not get his fine horse, the man servant having led him out to the moor; for, as it belonged to Lord Loudon, from whom the insurgent Covenanters had taken it, on account of his sending his officer to warn all his tenants not to rise to their assistance, they were anxious to restore it to its rightful owner. On the following day, which was Saturday, Mr. Veitch having sent a man servant down to Tweeddale, to see whether it might be safe to travel through that part of the country, Mrs. Veitch rode behind the man servant upon Lord Loudon's horse to the house of Mr. Patrick Fleming minister of Stobo, a nonconformist, and sent Mr. Veitch word, according to his desire, by the man servant, who was to return, that he might, to all appearance, with perfect safety, join her at the house of their friend, as she had observed no parties searching in that direction. On Mr. Veitch's arrival at Mr. Fleming's house, which was about midnight, it was judged safest for him immediately to leave it, and seek shelter elsewhere; and Mrs. Veitch accompanied him on his journey, it being now the Sabbath morning, riding behind him on the same horse. They reached Glenvetches before day, and at night came to Torwoodlee, the residence of Mr. George Pringle, who, with his lady, a daughter of Brodie of Lethin, in the North of Scotland, were ardently attached to the religion and liberty of their country, and whose house was a sanctuary to many of the persecuted in those evil times. Leaving this hospitable mansion, they next proceeded to the house of Mr. Veitch's brother, Mr. John, minister of Westruther, in the shire of Berwick. Here having seen the printed proclamation for the apprehension of the leading whigs, in which his own name appeared, Mr. Veitch deemed it prudent to secure his safety by fleeing into England, leaving behind him his wife and Lord Loudon's horse. She rode on the horse to Edinburgh, where she delivered it to one of his lordship's friends, and then returned to her own family at the Westhills of Dunsyre. Meanwhile Mr. Veitch went to Newcastle.

After her return home, Mrs. Veitch was greatly molested with parties of troopers, who came to her house to search for her husband. On such occasions it was usual for a party of them to surround the house to prevent him, should he be within, from making his escape by the windows, or any concealed or back door, while another party went into the house and searched through every room and corner. Judging that there was more likelihood of his being at home during the night than during the day, they ordinarily paid their unwelcome visits in the night, when Mrs. Veitch and her children were in bed; and at whatever hour they came, they rudely commanded her to rise and open the doors, threatening, that unless she did so quickly, they would force an entrance by breaking them up. But though often engaged in making these searches, and so intent upon their object as to secure the aid of a malignant laird and lady in the neighbourhood, who promised to inform them when he came home, they never succeeded in finding him. Hearing of the harassing annoyances to which his wife was subjected, Mr. Veitch, dangerous as it was, came from Newcastle to see her and the children, and advised her to give up the farm and take up her residence in Edinburgh, where, he hoped, she might be suffered to remain in quiet. Removing to Edinburgh, in compliance with his desire, she continued to live with her children in the capital for several years; during which time she was free from the troublesome visitors, who

had rendered her so uncomfortable at the Westhills of Dunsyre.

At length, about the year 1672, she and the children went to England to live with Mr. Veitch, who, after travelling from place to place preaching the gospel to the English nonconformists, who had been deprived of their ministers by the act of uniformity, and by subsequent proceedings on the part of government, had been prevailed with by the people of Reedsdale, in Northumberland, to give them the benefit of his stated ministry, and to bring his family thither. Before leaving Scotland she had given birth to four children. There two of them, a daughter and a son, had died and were buried. The other two, who were sons, William and Samuel, she took with her to England. In those days, when neither railways nor stage coaches existed, it was the custom to convey children to a distance in creels upon horseback, and by this slow and inconvenient mode of travelling she brought her two boys by different stages from Edinburgh to the new place of their residence, which was a village called Falalies, within the parish of Rothbury, in Northumberland. Here Mr. Veitch, for the better support of his family; farmed a piece of ground, the salary he received as minister from the people, who were poor, being altogether inadequate for the maintenance of his family, and all that he had having been taken from him upon his forfeiture in life and fortune after the battle of Pentland Hills, except a little which was unknown to his persecutors. After recording in her Diary her removal from Scotland to England, Mrs. Veitch says, "Being deprived of what once I had in Scotland, I renewed my suit to God for me and mine, and that was that he would give us the tribe of Levi's inheritance, 'For the Lord God was their inheritance,' Josh. xiii. 33. When I entered into a strange land, I besought the Lord that he would give me food to eat and raiment to put on, and bring me back to set his glory in Scotland. This promise was exactly made out to me."

She did not remain long in that place, having gone with Mr. Veitch to reside five miles farther in the country, where, besides preaching in a hall at Harnam, he farmed a piece of ground, and got as a residence for his family Harnamhall, the mansion of Major Babington, the representative of the Babingtons, a family whose antiquity in Britain is traced as far back as the Conquest. After continuing here four years, being again under the necessity of removing, the house and ground having fallen into the hands of a new proprietor, who refused to continue Mr. Veitch as his tenant, she accompanied him to Stantonhall, in the parish of Longhorsly, in May, 1676 or 1677. That district, abounding with papists, and the incumbent of the parish, Mr. Thomas Bell, a Scotsman, being a violent persecutor, it was far from being a desirable place of residence for the family of a nonconforming Presbyterian minister. Here Mrs. Veitch experienced no small trouble from the repeated attempts made to apprehend Mr. Veitch. At one time, on the second Sabbath of August, 1678, about three o'clock in the afternoon, two justices of the peace, on the simple information of a single individual, seconded by the threatenings and persuasion of Mr. Bell, came with some men to apprehend him at a meeting in his own house. One of the justices, with his party, came to the front gates, while the other, with his party, appeared at the back gate. They rudely broke into the house and searched through it with pistols in their hands. Baffled in their attempts to find Mr. Veitch, who concealed himself within the lining of a large window, which had been made for that purpose, they at last went away, after having advised Mrs. Veitch to allow her husband to preach only to herself and her children, in which case they assured her she should not be troubled.

Another attempt, made some time after, to apprehend him, proving successful, became to her a source of greater trouble. On Sabbath, the 19th of January, 1679, Major Oglethorp, with a party of his dragoons from Morpeth, arrived at her house, which was three or four miles distant from Morpeth, about five o'clock in the morning, while the family were fast asleep. One Cleugh, a sheriff-bailiff, whom Oglethorp, who was a stranger in the country, had hired as his guide, on reaching the house, went to the window of the parlour where Mr. and Mrs. Veitch were sleeping, and rapping on the glass of the window, repeatedly called out the name of Mr. Veitch, who, awaking, asked who was there. On hearing him speak, Cleugh said to the major, who was standing beside him, "Now, yonder he is, I have no more to do." Oglethorp, thus understanding that the object of his search was in the house, instantly broke in pieces the glass window, in order to get in; but finding iron bars in his way, he demanded that the door should be immediately opened; and, impatient of delay, he and his dragoons broke in at the hall windows, and getting their candles lighted before the servant maid opened the inner

doors, they apprehended Mr. Veitch, and carried him to Morpeth jail, where he continued prisoner twelve days. During the time that this scene was enacting, Mrs. Veitch, though not free from alarm, yet persuaded that men could do nothing against her and her husband but what God permitted, conducted herself with a degree of composure which even surprised the rude and heartless military. In relating the scene, she says, "It bred some trouble and new fear to my spirit; but He was graciously pleased to set home that word, 'He does all things well,' Mark vii. 37; 'Trust in the Lord and fear not what man can do,' Ps. lvi. 11; which brought peace to me in such a measure, that I was made often to wonder; for all the time the officers were in the house He supported me, so that I was not in the least discouraged before them, which made Major Oglethorp say he wondered to see me. I told him I looked to a higher hand than his in this, and I knew he could not go one hair breadth beyond God's permission. He answered, that He permits his enemies to go a great length sometimes. They took him to prison, where he lay about twelve days."

During that period of Mr. Veitch's imprisonment Mrs. Veitch was deeply afflicted in spirit, for which she had indeed too much reason, her prospects being very dark and distressing. She had no ground to hope that he would be soon released. She had, on the contrary, much cause to fear that he would share the fate of those who had been put to death for the Pentland insurrection; for he was regarded by the government as a traitor of the deepest dye; sentence of death had been pronounced against him in his absence for high treason, [*On the 16th of August, 1667.*] and he was excluded by name from the king's pardon and indemnity: [*Dated October 1st, 1667.*] all which augured ill for his future safety. Besides, she had now six helpless children, entirely dependent upon herself, with no apparent means of providing for their temporal necessities. But though sunk in sorrow in such trying circumstances, she was not overwhelmed with despair. Retaking herself to the throne of grace, where the afflicted have so often found relief, and reposing in the gracious promises of God's word, she was enabled to acquiesce in the divine will, even though her husband should fall a sacrifice to the fury of persecution, and though she herself, with her fatherless children, should be cast destitute upon the world. All the twelve days of his imprisonment, she says, "I was under much exercise of spirit, which made me go to God many times on his behalf. He made that word often sweet to me, 'He performeth the things appointed for me, Job xxiii. 14; and that, 'He is of one mind, and who can turn him?' verse 13. Much means were used for his liberty, but all to no effect, which bred new errands to God for him and me. But misbelief coming in and telling many ill tales of God, was like to discourage me; to wit, that I was a stranger in a strange land, and had six small children, and little in the world to look to. But He comforted me with these words: -

'O why art thou cast down, my soul;
What should discourage thee?
And why with vexing thoughts art thou
Disquieted in me?

Still trust in God; for him to praise
Good cause I yet shall have:
He of my count'nance is the health,
My God, that doth me save.' - Ps. xliii. 5.

"At length He helped me to give him freely to Him, to do with him as He pleased; and if his blood should fill up the cup of the enemy, and bring about deliverance to His church, I would betake myself to His care and providence for me and my children." She adds, as if her faith had stayed the fury of the persecutor, and arrested his cruel purpose, "And while I was yet speaking to God in prayer, that word was wonderfully brought into my mind, 'Abraham, hold thy hand, for I have provided a sacrifice,' Gen. xxii. 11, 12, which comforted me concerning my husband; and that word, 'The meal in the barrel shall not waste, nor the oil in the cruise, until the Lord send rain on the earth,' 1 Kings xvii. 14, which brought much peace to my troubled spirit concerning my family. I thought I had now ground to believe he should not die; but misbelief soon got the upper hand, and told me it was not the language of faith, which put me to go to God, and pour out my spirit before Him. And He answered me with that word, 'They that walk in darkness, and have no light, let them trust in the Lord, and

stay themselves on their God!’ Isaiah 1.10, which refreshed me much, and gave me more ground to believe my husband should not die.”

While Mr. Veitch was lying in Morpeth jail, she received a letter from him, written on the evening of the 11th day of his imprisonment, informing her, that, an order having been despatched from the king and English council to transport him to Scotland, there to suffer for alleged misdemeanours, he was to be removed from Morpeth for Scotland on the morrow, and requesting her immediately to come and see him, “When I opened the letter,” she says, “he had that expression, ‘Deep calleth unto deep,’ &c. But He [God] was pleased to send home that word, ‘Good is the word of the Lord,’ which silenced much my misbelief.” On receiving the letter, she proceeded without delay to Morpeth, riding, along with a man servant, through a deep storm of snow, and arrived at an inn in Morpeth after midnight. Not being allowed access to her husband till the morning, she sat, during the remainder of the night, at the fire side; and when admitted to him, she could not speak to him but in the presence of a guard of soldiers, who were that night placed in the room to watch him, lest he should make his escape. Nor had she been long with him, when, the kettle-drums beating the troops presently to arms, he was separated from her, and being carried out to the streets, was set on horseback, in the midst of the soldiers, (the town’s people, from curiosity, running to gaze,) and brought to Alnwick, thence to Belford, thence to Berwick, and after being kept there for sometime, was carried to Edinburgh, where he was thrown into prison. “All these things,” says she, “were against me, and conspired to frighten me; but that word being set home, wonderfully supported me, ‘Fear thou not the fear of man, but let the Lord be your fear and your dread,’ Is. viii.12,13. I went after to a friend’s house in the town, and wept my fill, and some friends with me. He desired that a day might be kept, [for offering up prayers in his behalf,] which was done in several places of the country. I went home to my children, having one upon the breast. I was under much exercise about him, and it was my suit to Him who, I can say, is a present help in the time of trouble, that he might be kept from the evil of sin; which He was graciously pleased to answer.” The concluding sentence of this quotation, though very humbly and unostentatiously expressed, breathes a spirit of noble christian fortitude - the holy heroism of the martyr. So strong was her sense of the paramount claims of duty, that to witness her husband undergoing his present hardships, and even crueler treatment, however painful to natural affection, was less painful to her than would have been the sight of his doing, from motives of worldly ease, aught which God and conscience would condemn.

As a farther aggravation of the distressing circumstances into which she and her children were at this time reduced, it may be added that, being conducted to Edinburgh jail at his own expense, Mr. Veitch was under the necessity of selling his stock for money to bear his charges, and, “by so doing, to lay his farm lea, rendering it presently useless to his family, yea, so disabled, as the way-going crop was lost, in which sad posture he left them; the children young, insensible of the matter, and unfit to do for themselves, so that the whole burden was laid on the mother.”

To the extracts made from Mrs. Veitch’s Diary during this period of trial, we may add the interesting record left by Mr. Veitch, of her distressful feelings and her faith in God under it, which proves that she was, as he expresses it, “a meet helper for him indeed, in this very case.” “Trouble and anguish,” says he, “did now compass her about in this darkest hour of her twelve years’ night of affliction. Her soul melteth for heaviness and grief; she is now in deep waters in a foreign land, far from her relations, friends, and acquaintances; distress and desolation at home, and destruction and death abroad; the sad report whereof, with trembling, she expects every day; because of the fury of the oppressor. This puts her on a most serious exercise, and firm resolution to take God for all. He should be the husband, and he should be the farm; he should be the stock and the crop; he should be the provider, the food, and the raiment, the master of the family, and the father of the children; yea, she resolved to cleave faster unto this relation than Ruth did to Naomi, for that which parted them should bring her to the greatest nearness, most inseparable and comfortable communion with her God. Thus, while deep called unto deep, she held by her compass, and followed the precedents of the word. Her prayer was in this night to the God of her life, and, Jacob-like, she gave it not over till she got a new lease of her husband’s

life granted her; which, when she obtained, she wrote an encouraging letter to him at Berwick, (the weaning of her child Sarah not suffering her yet to visit him,) telling him that he should be like Isaac, with the knife at his throat, near to death; but the Lord would find a sacrifice, and the enemy should be restrained. She wished him also not to be anxious about his family, for the meal and the oil, little as it was, should not fail; not only till he returned, but also the kingdom to Israel. These instances, so clearly and convincingly borne in upon her, gave her good ground to say with the psalmist, 'Thy word is my comfort in all my afflictions;' her prayers and pleadings were turned to praises, and his statutes were her 'songs in the house of her pilgrimage,' and she was persuaded that her night would yet have a day succeeding it, wherein he would, as a special favour to her and her family, command his loving kindness."

Under all her sufferings, Mrs. Veitch uniformly speaks in a chastened and subdued tone of those by whom they were inflicted; nor did she yield to that bitterness and exultation of spirit which the human heart is so naturally inclined to cherish, at witnessing or hearing of the calamities or judgments which may light on an enemy. Within five days after Mr. Veitch's transportation from Morpeth to Edinburgh, one of the most virulent of his persecutors, Mr. Bell, formerly referred to, [*When Mr. Veitch was removed from Morpeth for Edinburgh, Bell said, "This night he will be at Edinburgh, and hanged tomorrow, according to his demerits; and how could such a rebel as he, who did so and so, expect to escape the just judgment of God?"*] met with his death in very appalling circumstances. On, returning home from Newcastle, he stopped at Pontiland, and continued drinking there with the curate till about ten o'clock at night, when he determined to go home. The curate urged him, as the night was dark and stormy, and the river Pont, which he had to cross, was much swollen, to remain till to-morrow; and, to detain him, took his watch from him, and locked up his horse in the stable. But, as if impelled by some unseen power to his fate, he would not be persuaded, and, getting his horse, proceeded on his journey. Two days after he was found standing dead up to the arm-pits in the river Pont, near the side, the violence of the frost having frozen him in. His hat and his gloves were on, and his boots and gloves were much worn from his struggles among the ice to get out. Mrs. Veitch's reflections on this awful visitation are christian and becoming: - "The whole country about was astonished at that dispensation, and often said to me there would none trouble my husband again: - for they all knew that he was an enemy to my husband. I told them they that would not take warning from the word of God, would never take warning from that. That Scripture was often borne in upon my spirit, 'Rejoice not at the fall of thine enemy, lest He see it and be displeased.'" She adds, "I bless the Lord I was not in the least lifted up with it; for his word was my counsellor: in all my doubts and fears it was as refreshing to me as ever meat and drink were. There are none that study to make the word of God the rule of their walk, and when grace is master of the house, but they will say, as David said when Shimei railed on him, 'Let him alone, God hath bidden him, who knows but he will requite blessings for cursings?' But when corrupt nature is master, it will say, 'Cut off the heel of the dog;' but I am much in grace's debt; that kept me back from being of Shimei's frame." In reference to another case of ill treatment received, she makes similar remarks, "I bless the Lord who kept me from being of a revengeful spirit. Whatever I met with from the creature, He helped me always to look to God. That was often upon my spirit which David said, 'Let him alone, God hath bidden him,' and that word in the Psalms, 'Fret not thyself, because of evil doers.'"

About the close of February, or the beginning of March, 1679, a month after Mr. Veitch was carried from Morpeth to Scotland, and when he was lying a prisoner in the Tolbooth of Edinburgh, she set out, with a heavy heart, for Edinburgh, through a great storm of snow, in compliance with a letter she received from him, leaving her children behind her. On reaching the capital, she was much relieved on finding that there was every prospect of his being set at liberty. But within a few days he was put in close prison, and an order came from the king to hand him over to the justiciary court, that intimation might be made to him of the sentence of death for high treason, which had been pronounced against him in his absence nearly twelve years before. This threw her into a state of great agitation of mind. Providence now seemed to contradict the assurance she thought she had received from God, that Mr. Veitch's life would be preserved. But by faith and prayer, her usual refuge in the hour of trial, her fears were gradually allayed, and she became settled in her previously cherished hope, that matters would be so ordered as to secure his personal safety. Nor were her hopes disap-

pointed. About the close of July, Mr. Veitch was liberated, by virtue of the king's pardon, indulgence, and indemnity. "When the news came to my ears," says she, "that word came in my mind, 'He hath both spoken it, and himself hath done it; I will walk softly in the bitterness of my spirit all my days,' Isa. xxxviii.15." She adds, "We came both came in peace to our children, where we lived at Stantonhall, three miles from Norpeth, in Northumberland, August, 1679." [*Memoirs of Mrs. Veitch, p. 6. She says 1680, by mistake.*] This sore trial had now come to an end, but it did not leave them in outward circumstances equally favourable with those in which it found them, having involved them in a heavy debt. Owing to the forfeiture of Mr. Veitch, and to their repeated removals from one place to another, occasioned by the prelates and their emissaries, they were unable to defray the expenses incurred in this business without borrowing considerable sums of money from their friends.

In addition to her other virtues, Mrs. Veitch was distinguished for kind-hearted hospitality. In those distressing times, when oppression compelled our Presbyterian ancestors to "wander in deserts and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth," her house, both during the period of her residence in Scotland and in England, "was a resting and refreshing place for the wandering and weather-beaten flock of Christ." The same womanly and Christian kindness, which prompted her cordially to receive into her house the officers of the Covenanters after their defeat at Pentland Hills, and to set meat and drink before them, led her cordially to welcome, and kindly to entertain, those friends and acquaintances who, when hunted like wild beasts by their persecutors, sought refreshment and a hiding place under her roof; and it was her observation "that things never came in so plentifully, nor went so far, as when they had most strangers." Among those who betook themselves for shelter to her hospitable dwelling was the Earl of Argyll, who suffered in 1685. At the close of December, 1681, that nobleman, having, on the 20th of that month, escaped from the castle of Edinburgh, where he lay imprisoned under a sentence of death, directed his course to Stantonhall, with the view of being conducted on his way to London by Mr. Veitch, whose intrepidity, shrewdness, and fidelity peculiarly recommended him for such a service. On Argyll's arrival, Mr. Veitch being from home, Mrs. Veitch sent some of her servants or friends about the country for two days in search of him; and on his return, she consented to allow him to do his best in conducting their respected noble friend in safety to London.

Some weeks after Mr. Veitch's arrival in the English capital, she received a letter from him, informing her that he had some thoughts of emigrating to Carolina, a scheme of planting a Scottish colony there having been formed by Sir John Cochrane and several others; that he had the prospect of good encouragement in a temporal respect, as well as of enjoying without disturbance that civil and religious freedom which was denied them in their native land; and that she might be making preparations for leaving Scotland. To this proposal she at first felt a strong disinclination. Driven though she was from place to place, and exposed to many annoyances and hardships, yet, to leave the land of her fathers at her advanced period of life - for she was now in the forty-fourth year of her age - and more especially to leave a land which, like Judea to the Jews, was endeared to her by the most sacred associations - which God had honoured by taking into covenant with himself, and to encounter the perils of the ocean and all the dangers and difficulties attending a new settlement in the forests of America, was a step to which she was averse from sentiments of patriotism as well as from natural feeling. But, submitting her will to the will of God, she at last became less disinclined, and stood prepared to go wherever He in his providence might call her. "I thought," says she, "in my old days I could have no heart for such a voyage, and leave these covenanted lands; but at length I got submission to my God and was content, if he had more service for me and mine in another land; for I had opened my mouth and given me and mine to him and his service when and where, and what way he pleased, and I could not go back; but if I went there, I would hang my harp upon the willows when I remembered Scotland." Obstacles were, however, thrown in the way of this plantation, so that it was never formed; and she had the pleasure of seeing Mr. Veitch return home, after an absence of about half a year.

But her troubles were not yet brought to a termination. A discovery of the Ryehouse plot, in which Mr. Veitch had been concerned when in London, having been made, [*It was discovered in June 1683.*] a justice of the peace

came to the house to apprehend him. He narrowly escaped, and, after hiding himself for some weeks, succeeded in getting over to Holland. At this time Mrs. Veitch fell sick, but was not long in recovering. To complete the education of her two eldest sons, she sent them over to their father in Holland. While at sea they encountered a severe storm, by which many lives were lost, but they got safe to land, though with much difficulty. Meanwhile she was deprived by death of her third son, a boy of twelve years of age. Her sorrow under this bereavement, though aggravated by the absence of his father, was mitigated from the striking evidence afforded by the dying child that he died in the Lord. Previously thoughtless, and without any appearance of religion, he seemed to her, even sometime after his illness commenced, not to be duly impressed with the awful importance of death and eternity. Anxious and trembling for the safety of his soul, she was earnest in prayer that God would wean his young and tender heart from the world, open his eyes to see the glories of heaven, and discover to him his interest in the Saviour. Her prayers were heard. One day, calling her to his bedside, he told her that the world to him had lost its attractions, and that he was resigned to die. She asked the reason of this, since he had formerly felt a desire to live. He answered that he had been praying, and giving himself to Christ; that Christ had assured him of the delight he took in his soul; and that this had comforted him. Afterwards he said, "Is it not a wonder that Jesus Christ should have died for sinners? Oh, this is a good tale, and we should think often on it!" He frequently repeated these words, "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee?" "which," says Mrs. Veitch, "refreshed me more than if he had been made heir of a great estate." When engaged in prayer a little before he died, he prayed for his absent father and brothers, pleaded that his brothers and sisters might be animated to serve God in their generation, and used these words, "Though we be far separated now, I hope we shall meet in glory." Also calling for his brother who was at home and his sisters, he blessed them all, and bade them farewell. On becoming unable to speak, he held up his hand while his mother spoke to him of death and heaven. At last he put up his own hand and closed his own eyes, "and so," says she, "we parted in hope of a glorious meeting."

The deep anxiety which Mrs. Veitch felt for the spiritual welfare of her children, is an interesting and instructive feature of her character. Nor was this anxiety limited to those seasons when sickness entered her dwelling, and threatened to remove by death the objects of her tenderest affection. As became a christian mother, the spiritual interests of her children were to her a source of constant solicitude. Before they were born she devoted them to God, and she renewed the dedication at their baptism. She early instructed them in the things of God, and often recommended them to him by prayer. It was her highest ambition to see them living the life of the righteous, and to engage them to such a life, she plied them with arguments addressed both to their hopes and their fears, to their understandings and their hearts. "When I was pouring out my spirit before Him in prayer," she says, in one part of her Diary, "He brought that word wonderfully to my mind, where the angel appeared to Cornelius, (Acts x.,) and bade him send for Peter, who would tell him words by which he and all his house should be saved. He opened mine eyes and let me see that which I had never seen before so clearly - that Christ's death and blood could reach a whole family. . . . This gave me new ground to plead the promise for me and mine, and that the sign I sought from him might be accomplished, that they might evidence by their practice they were his, and my eyes might see it." In another part of the same document, she farther says, "I charge all mine, as they shall answer to God at the great day, and as they would not have me to be a witness against them in that day, that ye covenant yourselves away to God and his service, and plead the good of this promise [*The promise she refers to is, "I will be your God, and the God of your seed," which she had been pleading with God, and which, by his grace, he had enabled her to embrace.*] in particular, every one of you for yourselves; for all I can do for you cannot merit heaven for you: for with the heart man believes, and every man is saved by his own faith. All my desire is, that He would glorify himself by redeeming me and mine from hell and wrath, and make us useful in our generation for his glory. I thought fit to write this for my own use and the good of mine; and, if the Lord should take me from them by death, I hope the words of a dying mother shall have some weight upon their spirits."

During the time of Mr. Veitch's stay in Holland, the entries in Mrs. Veitch's Diary relate chiefly to her anxiety about him, and to her distress of mind on account of the condition of the church in Scotland, whose sufferings

seem to have more deeply affected her heart than even her own personal afflictions. After relating some news she heard from Scotland, and her exercise thereupon, she adds, Within a little misbelief got the mastery of me, and it told me I need not expect to see good days. This was occasioned by the apostacy of some, and the persecutors being permitted to run all down before them, as it were. I could sleep little or none for several nights." When recording the death of Charles II she writes as follows: - "When I heard it, I thought Pharaoh was dead, and I would go to God and beg of him that he would spirit a Moses to lead forth the church from under her hard bondage;" and, after referring to some passages of scripture which were impressed upon her mind, she observes that she was thereby made to "hope that God would not leave these covenanted lands, especially Scotland."

Meanwhile, a considerable number of English and Scottish refugees in Holland, encouraged by friends both in England and Scotland, were forming a scheme for overthrowing by force the government of James VII, who was resolutely bent on establishing absolute power in the state and popery in the church. The Duke of Monmouth was to invade England, and the Earl of Argyll, Scotland. The scheme being matured, Mr. Veitch, who was one of the party, was sent from Holland to Northumberland and the Scottish borders, to give their friends information of their intentions; in doing which, the matter, through his activity in travelling from place to place, and through the zeal of numbers in many quarters to rise, was in danger of being divulged, so that he was forced to retire to the mountains, in the borders near Reedsdale-head, and hide himself, nor did he deem it safe to go to Newcastle, whither his wife had removed in 1684, till some time after the execution of the Earl of Argyll and the Duke of Monmouth. [*The Earl of Argyll was taken on the 17th of June, 1685, and executed on the 30th of that month. The Duke of Monmouth was taken on the 8th of July, 1685, and executed on the 15th of that month.*]

On the arrival of Argyll in Scotland, and of Monmouth in England, Mrs. Veitch hoped that, perhaps, the time had now come for the deliverance of the church, and that these noblemen might be the appointed and honoured instruments of effecting it; but, that ill conducted undertaking proving unsuccessful, these agreeable expectations were not realized, and, she felt in some measure dispirited. "It was my desire," she says, "that He would make good his word, on which he had caused me to hope in behalf of the church; for I thought possibly this might be the time of building his house. But his thoughts are not like mine; for it pleased Him who gives no account of his matters, to let both these great persons fall before the enemy, which put me to pour out my spirit before Him, and often to charge my soul to be silent, for my ill heart and misbelief were like to quarrel with him." The tendency to quarrel with God, which she expresses herself as feeling at the disastrous issue of this attempt, need occasion little surprise; for although the enlightened friend of freedom will not now regret that such was its issue, providence having, not long after, without struggle or bloodshed, brought about a more effectual and permanent deliverance than could have been expected by its success; yet, at that time, the defeat of the enterprise was in no small degree discouraging to many of the Covenanters, as it seemed to demonstrate the hopelessness of any efforts to throw off that oppressive yoke, under which their powers of endurance were well nigh exhausted, and even threatened to rivet the chains of slavery and popery more firmly on Britain than ever.

Still she never despaired of the deliverance of the church and nation, and even cherished the hope of living to see it accomplished. On one occasion after the fatal result of this insurrection, at a social meeting for prayer and conference held in her house at Newcastle, where, besides her husband, there were present some of his pious Scottish relations, and also some other good people of the town of Newcastle, after several had spoken in an almost despairing tone of the state of matters, she expressed her confident hope that good days were still awaiting Scotland. She said that the night was indeed dark, and that all things wore a dismal aspect, but that she was, notwithstanding, persuaded that God would not leave his own work, but from an unexpected quarter would raise up instruments to build his house, to restore the ark and the glory, and bring home his captives. She added, moreover, that she felt assured she would see Presbytery established, and her husband a settled minister in the Church of Scotland, before she died. "Though they loved the thing" says Mr. Veitch, "yet they little believed it in the time; but when it came to pass, they both thought and talked much of it." From the dan-

ger he was in of being apprehended, Mr. Veitch only visited her occasionally from the time he came from Holland, early in 1685, till his settlement as a minister at Beverley, near 100 miles south from Newcastle, after King James's Declaration for liberty of conscience in England, when, with her family, she removed to that part of the country.

When Mr. Veitch was called to Beverley, she felt some reluctance to settle in that place, from the strong desire she had to see the restoration of the Church to prosperity in the land of her birth, and that her husband might in some degree be instrumental in promoting it there; though, at last, she submitted her inclinations to the determinations of providence, if he could be more useful in that place than in another. But when, after having preached for six or seven months in Beverley, with much success, he received pressing invitations to return to Scotland, where King James's toleration had been accepted, she was extremely desirous that he should comply with these invitations, though the people of Beverley had sent for her, given her good offers, and used many arguments to persuade her and him to stay with them. "Her heart," says Mr. Veitch, "was for her native country, and she longed to see that in the performance which she had promised herself formerly in her duties and wrestling with God, and had expressed her assurance thereof." She, however, apprehended that the design in view, in the toleration extended to Scotland, as well as in that granted to England, was under the disguise of benefiting dissenters, to afford relief to papists, and ultimately to pave the way for the establishment of popery. "Considering it came from a popish king," she writes, "made me fear what the issue might be."

On the compliance of Mr. Veitch with a call he received. from the united parishes of Oxnam, Crailing, Eckford, Linton, Morebattle, and Hownam, to preach to them, under King James's third indulgence, at Whittonhall, which was almost the centre of these parishes, [*He entered on this charge in April, 1688.*] she returned with great joy to her native land. "But," says she, "His promise to me for His Church in Scotland, was not yet altogether performed. I was like Haman, (Esther v.13,) all availed me little so long as I saw popery owned by authority. I thought that then the ark was still in the house of Obedom; it was my desire He would spirit some to bring it to Jerusalem." She had not however, been much more than half a year in Scotland, when James VII was driven from his throne, and William, Prince of Orange was called to fill it, a revolution which, by more narrowly circumscribing and more exactly defining the prerogatives of the crown than had been done in any former period of the history of our country, conferred on the subjects a degree of liberty they never before had enjoyed, defeated the design of restoring popery, overthrew prelacy in Scotland, and brought to a termination the sufferings of the Presbyterians for conscience' sake. After the Revolution she resided first in Peebles, and next in Dumfries, in which places Mr. Veitch was successively minister. In the last of these towns she died in May, 1799, at the advanced age of eighty-four. Mr. Veitch died on the day after her death, having completed his eighty-second year. Mr. James Guthrie, minister of Irongray, in a letter to Mr. James Stirling, minister of Barony, Glasgow, dated May 9, 1722, says, "Your honest old friend, Mr. Veitch, is now gone to heaven, for he died yesterday morning, and his good wife departed this life on Friday last, so that they who lived long together on earth are now gone to glory, I may say, together also. . . Mr. Veitch, for some months before his death, wanted the use of his tongue, right arm and leg, and so lay almost as one dead long before he gave up the ghost." [*Letters to Wodrow, vol. x. 4to, no. 172, MSS. in Advocates' Library.*] This venerable pair had been married fifty-eight years, and they were both interred on the same day, in the old church of Dumfries.

We shall conclude this sketch with a few particulars relative to Mrs. Veitch's children. She had five sons and five daughters. Of these four died young.

Mary, her first child, was born on the 23d of September, 1665, at the Westhills of Dunsyre, died March 9, 1666, and was buried at Dunsyre kirk.

William, her second child, was born on the 2d of April, 1667, at the Westhills of Dunsyre. Samuel, her third son, was born on the 9th of December, 1668, at Edinburgh, and baptized on the 13th by Mr. John Blackadder. These two sons she had devoted to the christian ministry, and sent to Holland to prosecute their studies at the

university of Utrecht; but the young men expressed their decided preference for the military profession, and, when the Prince of Orange came over to England, in 1688, they held commissions under him. Both of them served in Flanders during the war with France, which broke out after the Revolution. William was a lieutenant in Angus's or the Cameronian regiment, and was wounded, in 1699, at the battle of Steinkirk. He was shot through the left cheek an inch below the eye, and the ball falling into his mouth, he spat it out. The two brothers afterwards went out as captains of the forces of the Scottish colony, which it was intended to settle at the Isthmus of Darien. But the settlement came to a disastrous termination. Captain William died at sea on returning home after the evacuation. Captain Samuel ultimately settled at New York, where he married a granddaughter of Mr. John Livingstone, minister of Ancrum, by whom he had a daughter called Aleda, who married an American gentleman of the name of Pinkrie, near Philadelphia.

James, her fourth child, was born at Edinburgh on the 9th of March, 1671, died at Arnistoun, on the 10th of April, 1672, and was buried in the church-yard of Temple on the 12th of that month.

John, her fifth child, was born at Falalies, in the parish of Rothbury, in Northumberland, on the 19th of July, 1672; died at Stantonhall about Martinmas, 1684, and was buried at Nether Wilton, four miles from Morpeth. This is the boy of whose death an account has previously been given.

Elizabeth, her sixth child, was born at Harnam, in the parish of Bolam, in Northumberland, on the 20th of May, 1674. She was married to David MacCulloch of Ardwell, on the 7th of June, 1710, at Dumfries.

Ebenezer, her seventh son, was born at Harnam, on the 16th of March, 1676. Devoting himself to the christian ministry, he studied divinity under the learned Mr. George Campbell, professor of theology in the college of Edinburgh. After being licensed, he was appointed Sabbath morning lecturer in the Tron church, upon Mr. M'Alla's mortification. This situation he left in May 1703, having received a call to be minister of Ayr, to which charge he was ordained on the 12th of that month. He soon after married Margaret, daughter of the venerable Mr. Patrick Warner, minister of Irvine, a young lady of great personal attractions. But he did not long survive. When at Edinburgh attending the commission, in December 1706, he was seized with a dangerous sickness, and died on the 13th of that month. He was a young man of uncommon piety, and, his death was triumphant. Calling his wife to his bedside, he told her he would give her the parting kiss, and recommended her to *his* God, "who," he said, "has been all in all to me;" and when she asked him whether he would not desire to live with her, and serve God some time longer in the church below, he answered in the negative. Then calling out to some of the ministers who were in the room with him, he said, "Ye passengers for glory, how near, think you, am I to the New Jerusalem?" One of them answered, "Not far, Sir!" He rejoined, "I'll wait and climb until I be up amongst that innumerable company of angels, and the spirits of just men made perfect." They removed his wife out of the room; but when he was just expiring, she rushed in to the bedside. Waving with his hand, he said, "No more converse with the creature, I never, never will look back again;" and immediately breathed out his spirit into the hands of his redeeming God. His mother, who gives this account in her Diary, adds, "It need not be a surprisal to me, for near a year before his death, he preached upon these words, 'Remember, Lord, how short my time is:' and when he was at home in his family in Ayr, in prayer he would be so transported with the joys of heaven, as if he would have flown away; and his young wife* would often say to him, It was a terror to her to hear him so much upon death; but he said it was none to him: so he lived desired, and died lamented."

* This lady was afterwards married to Mr. Robert Woodrow, minister of Eastwood, the indefatigable Historian of the Sufferings of the Church of Scotland. The marriage ring presented to her both by her first and second husband are still preserved as family relics. "How it has so happened," says a writer in the Edinburgh Christian Instructor, for December, 1825, "we shall not at present tell; but so it is, that we have, while writing this article, actually on our forefinger the identical ring which Mr. Ebenezer Veitch presented to his wife, previous to marriage. It is a plain gold one, with small ivory beads around its outer edge, and within is this Latin inscription, which we have some difficulty in translating intelligibly. We give it *verbatim et literatim* as we see it, and leave our readers to make what they can of it, '*Ebenezer, et Jehovah,*

Feitch. The sense which we conjecture is not very luminously conveyed, but it seems to savour of the eminent piety of its author. The ring presented to the same lady, by Mr. Wodrow, her second husband, is also now before us, and its *moral* is more intelligible. The device is a *flaming heart* in the centre, with a hand on the one side giving, and another on the other side receiving; and this plain English motto: *'I give you mine and grasp at yours.'* The writer adds, "From these specimens, we see that the clerical gentlemen of our olden times, while they were not destitute of learning, were not devoid of the tender affections."

Sarah, her eighth child, and third daughter, was born at Stantonhall, in the parish of Longhorsly in Northumberland, on the 7th of November, 1677. She became the wife of James Young, of Guiliehill, from whom, says Dr. M'Crie, writing in 1825, Samuel Denholm Young, Esq. of Guiliehill, is descended.

Agnes, her ninth child, and fourth daughter, was born at Stantonhall, on the 20th of January, 1680. She married Mr. John Somerville, minister of Caerlaverock; to whom she had six children, one son and five daughters. Mr. Charles Sheriff, the dumb miniature painter, was her grandson. She died of her 7th child, not brought to bed, on the 14th of August, 1712; and when medical assistance failed to do her any good, she said, "Now, I see God calls me to die and leave this world, and all my relations, which I am most willing to do." Then taking farewell, with the greatest composure and deliberation, of her parents, children, servants, and husband, leaving her blessing to every one present, and to all her friends who were absent, with her eyes lifted up to heaven, she cried, "O my beloved! be thou as a roe and as a young hart upon the mountains of divisions." Then she begged that her friends present would unite in praying that God would mitigate her sufferings in passing through the dark valley, and land her in her wished-for port. Before prayer was ended, her pain was abated, and closing her eyes, a little after, with her own hand, she died, with great tranquillity.

Janet, her tenth child, and fifth daughter, was born on the 30th of January, 1682, at Stantonhall, her father being then at London. She died on Sabbath, the 26th of March, 1693, near eight o'clock at night, at Peebles. Before her death, her father having been engaged in prayer, she said, "Now, I am content to leave you all, and inquired at her mother whether they should know one another in heaven? Her mother told her she thought they would, and asked her if she thought she would win there; to which she answered, "I hope I shall." She died without any pain; and with as much composure as if she had been going to see a friend, kissing her father, mother, and sisters, and bidding them all farewell.