

was punished capitally for sedition, by being gibbeted, according to the Roman law, which punished the first commission of that offense by whipping, the second by exile, or death *in furca*. . . . Do not be frightened from this inquiry by any fear of its consequences. If it ends in belief that there is no God, you will find incitements to virtue in the comfort and the pleasure you will find in its exercise, and the love of others which it will procure you. If you find reason to believe that there is a God, a consciousness that you are acting under his eye and he approves of you, will be a vast additional incitement; if that Jesus was also a God, you will be comforted by a belief of his aid and love. Your own reason is the only oracle given you by heaven. And you are answerable, not for the rightness, but the uprightness of the decision." Parton's Life of Jefferson, 335.

## CHAPTER V.

## THE COVENANTER AND THE CAVALIER—CONTINUED.

Love of Church and loyalty to King in Virginia—Love of liberty—Nathaniel Bacon—Mr. Burke on love of liberty in the South—Landed estates in Virginia—Tobacco used as money—Indentured servants—Splendid hospitality—Covenanter element introduced—Covenanters superior to Cavaliers—Patrick Calhoun on the Covenanters—Education among the Covenanters in the Colonies, in Ireland—In North Carolina, in South Carolina and in Georgia—Covenanters in New Hampshire—Roosevelt on early inhabitants of Tennessee and Kentucky—Covenanters on the Holston—Covenanters not paupers—Why education declined with Southern Covenanters—Covenanter influence in forming the institutions of the South—Little known of the Covenanters—The reason of this—Henry Watterson on the Covenanters—They made the Southern States—Their monuments—Great names among them—Their influence in making the West—Covenanter ideas and characteristics in Southern society—Preach the same faith their fathers did—Southern women—High moral and religious standard in the South.

Notwithstanding the paucity of great names in the history of Virginia previous to the appearance of the master minds of the Revolutionary epoch, there certainly arose then above the horizon splendid lights of marvelous brilliancy: Washington, Henry, Jefferson, Madison and others. How grand

in outline! How majestic in intellect! These were the products of the storm of the Revolution. They were the children of the new era in human progress. But for it, they would have died and been forgotten, as their ancestors had died and had passed forever from the memory of man. Great events make great men. They quicken the human intellect and stir its powers to unwonted intensity. The Revolution aroused the fires of genius from their slumbers, and they leaped forth with a splendor rarely paralleled in history. It gave the world the peerless Washington; it gave it Patrick Henry with his tongue of flame. The darkness which had overshadowed old Colonial Virginia was followed by a display of genius of surpassing brightness.

I would not underestimate the ante-Revolutionary people of Virginia. They were a brave, a noble and an honorable race of men, though haughty and imperious. The two dominating, all-controlling passions of their lives were love of the church and devotion to their king. They struggled long to save their church unshorn of its power. In none of the Colonies was loyalty so deeply rooted as in Virginia. All the sufferings of the early settlers were only evidences of their love for their king. Intense as this feeling was

in the days of Charles I, it lost none of its force in subsequent reigns. It cost the old aristocracy of Virginia many a bitter pang to give up their sovereign. It is almost impossible for this generation to realize the depth of devotion felt for the mother country. Its history, its traditions, its glory were a part of their own inherited possessions. Affectionate, even enthusiastic love of the royal house was a sentiment which had descended from father to son. It was interwoven with their very beings. To sever this bond of attachment and to break away from these hallowed recollections was indeed a severe trial.

The Cavaliers were a proud-spirited race. They were acutely sensitive and jealous of their privileges. They would submit to no wrong, either as private individuals or as citizens of the Commonwealth. Enthusiastically and warmly devoted to their rulers and to the mother land as they were, they loved liberty and their chartered rights just as much. They were far from being abject slaves. Nathaniel Bacon, the leader of the first rebellion in the Colony, was an educated gentleman, a man of wealth and high social distinction, a member of Governor Berkeley's council. Yet he drew his sword against kingly authority in defense of the

rights "accorded in the royal charter."\* The spirit of freemen still animated the minds of the Cavaliers. In the Revolution, in the supreme hour of peril, after years of remonstrance, petition and humble supplication, sad as was the alternative, many of them, perhaps a majority, turned away from the memories and the splendid records of the past and bore arms for their country. When the great conflict was at hand, and it became evident that a stand must be taken, they threw away their cherished and most sacred sentiments and nobly sustained the cause of independence.

Mr. Burke is quoted by Philip Alexander Bruce, in his recent history of Virginia in the seventeenth century, as attributing the ardent love of liberty during the Revolutionary era, in the Southern Colonies, to the institution of slavery. The fact is undeniable that no people in any country, or in any age of the world, have possessed the spirit of liberty in a higher degree than the people of the Southern States. Most of this was due, and especially so in the Revolutionary epoch, to the spirit of the Covenanters. There seems, how-

\* Address of Rev. Alexander White before Scotch-Irish Congress, Vol. IV, 122.

ever, to be much truth in Mr. Burke's conclusion. He said:

"There is a circumstance attending these Southern Colonies which makes the spirit of liberty still more high and haughty than in those to the northward. It is that in Virginia and the Carolinas, they have a vast multitude of slaves. Where this is the case, in any part of the world, those who are free are by far the most proud and jealous of their freedom. Freedom is to them, not only an enjoyment, but a kind of rank and privilege. Not seeing there that freedom, as in countries where it is a common blessing, and as broad and general as the air, may be united with much abject toil, with great misery, with all the exterior of servitude, liberty looks among them like something that is more noble and liberal. I do not mean to commend the superior morality of this sentiment, which has at least as much pride as virtue in it; but I can not alter the nature of man. The fact is so; and these people of the Southern Colonies are much more strongly, and with a higher and more stubborn spirit attached to liberty, than those to the northward. Such were all the ancient commonwealths; such were our Gothic ancestors; such, in our days, were the Poles, and such will be all masters of slaves who are not slaves

themselves. In such a people, the haughtiness of domination combines with the spirit of freedom, fortifies it, and renders it invincible."

The landed estates of the wealthy in Old Virginia, were of immense size. Recent investigations have shown that their average size was about five thousand acres. Some estates amounted to twenty-five thousand acres. The chief industry in those days, indeed almost the only one, was the cultivation of tobacco. This formed almost the sole article of export. This was exchanged in European markets for such articles of necessity or luxury as the planters needed. These included nearly every thing. There was no paper money and but little coin in the early days. The wealthiest men seldom had more than thirty shillings in coin. Tobacco was the medium of exchange. It passed at a fixed value per pound and was a legal tender for all debts. In it, at a price fixed by law, tithes, taxes and debts were paid.

These vast landed estates required large numbers of laborers. Free white labor could not be had, and probably was not desired. Large numbers of indentured, or indentured servants were used for this purpose, as well as African slaves. These indentured servants were white men, who were sold into slavery for a term of years, because of crimes, or

political offenses. For the time being they were as absolute slaves as the African negroes.

On these great estates reigned a splendid and generous hospitality, after the style of Old England. Exchanges of visits were constantly taking place between the wealthy planters. On every plantation the door of "the great house" stood wide open to all persons of "good conditions" who chose to enter. Feasting and the pleasures of entertaining formed a large part of the life of the old Virginian. It was in this school that the sons of the Cavalier Colony earned their reputation for the most profuse and elegant hospitality known on this continent, which distinction was still sustained by their descendants, as long as slavery lasted, with scarcely diminished honor.

But it must be kept in mind that with the inception of the revolutionary movement, the new and powerful Covenanter element, shown in the preceding chapter, was introduced into the councils of the Commonwealth of Virginia. To this a large part of the glory of the state must be attributed. How to apportion this glory between the two peoples with any thing approximating exactness and justice, it is impossible to determine. It is sufficient to say that many distinguished, and some great names, belong to each class.

Since the Revolution the old Cavalier stock of Virginia has borne a most honorable and conspicuous part in the history of this country. It were needless to attempt to enumerate their many noble qualities, or to set forth their achievements, in statesmanship and in arms, since they are known of all men. Virginia is no longer a Cavalier State, but a happy blending of the blood of both the Cavalier and the Covenanter—of the best qualities of both united in one.

But comparing the old races as they were prior to the Revolution, and counting also their faults and defects, I do not hesitate to say that, in the essentials that constitute a mighty people, of the two the Covenanters were decidedly the superior. This will be more manifest as I point out briefly some of the distinguishing characteristics of the Covenanters.

In courage, persistency, fortitude, firmness, natural capacity, purity of life, and in high moral and religious principle, no people ever surpassed them. Their industry and thrift were proverbial. In love of liberty, and in quickness to discern and resist every approach of oppression and wrong, an experience of centuries, had made them the foremost people in the world. Their long and bitter trials in struggling for freedom of conscience had given

them the true idea of religious toleration, as it exists to-day in every State in the Union, and as it is fixed in the constitution of every commonwealth. They required for themselves the fullest liberty in religious matters, and both in Ireland and in the Colonies generously conceded the same to all other sects. They did not demand that their church should be made *the* church, but that it should be equal with all others. They did not seek to impose restrictions on other religions, nor to gain peculiar privileges for their own. Though their fathers, at an early day, in Scotland, had persecuted men for opinion's sake,\* a century and a half of suffering, of trial, of development, had lifted them up to an elevation of larger vision and of more charitable thought. And except for the voice, the influence and the votes of the Covenanters in Virginia, it may be safely affirmed that Mr. Jefferson and his associates could not have removed the deeply-rooted and strongly-entrenched Cavalier restrictions on a free religion in that State.

On these points the remarks of Mr. Patrick Calhoun, in his address before the Scotch-Irish Congress, in Atlanta, in 1892, are so pertinent that I venture to quote a couple of paragraphs:

\* Lecky and other writers say that at an early day they were narrow and bitter.

“In what striking contrast was the advent of the hardy pioneers who had left home and fireside, for conscience sake, to seek liberty and freedom in the wilderness of America. They wrote their history with the rifle and the ax, the sword and the plow. There was no herald of their coming, save the splash of the pole as they pushed the rude ferry-boat across the upper waters of the Savannah, or the crack of the whip as they urged their tired beasts, drawing primitive wagons over rough mountain roads. The record of their coming was lost as the ripples of the river sunk back into its current, or the echoes of the mountain died away in its silence. We know neither the day, nor the month, nor the year when thousands came. But the fact that they had come was attested by the falling of the trees. Cabins rose and fruitful farms appeared where forests grew and Indians roamed. And not far off the church, the house at once of worship and education.” . . .

“From the time when the Scots left the north of Ireland to the period when the Ulster plantation was settled, in 1609, Scotland was one constant theater of war. The sterility of the country, the clannish life its people led, the constant dangers to which they were exposed, the frugal manner in which their surroundings compelled

them to live—all contributed to produce a brave and hardy race. Alone frequently in the mountains, forced to rely purely upon their own powers, there was developed in a marked degree not only physical courage, but that high moral courage and reliance which have so distinguished the race, and enabled it under all circumstances to stand so unswervingly for what it believed to be right, and made it ready to sacrifice home, family, hope of emolument, life itself, for the dictates of conscience. Love of individual liberty, devotion to home and family ties, the habit of reflection, promptness and decision in action, deep religious convictions, belief in self-government, and a readiness to resist the central power in the interest of the clan, were characteristics naturally growing out of the environment of the Scots. They were frequently overrun by stronger and more numerous forces, but they were never conquered. The sturdiness, endurance and persistency of the race enabled them to surmount every form of conquest and oppression. The moment the pressure of superior power was removed, the rebound occurred, and Scotland was again in arms fighting for her rights. The indomitable courage of the Scot was invincible. Their natural characteristics could not

be destroyed, even by merger with other races. The Dane, the Saxon and the Norman settled in Scotland, and their blood is liberally intermingled in the veins of the Scotch, but the virility of the Scotch blood has preserved its distinctive national traits. Not even centuries of union with England could destroy these. The Scots were stronger for their life in Scotland, better for the blood of the Pict, the Dane, the Saxon and the Norman. When they returned to the north of Ireland, they found nothing there to weaken or enervate, but much to temper and to strengthen. Transplanted to the wilderness of America, their environment was as well calculated to develop their courage, independence and sturdiness of character as the lives their ancestors had led in Scotland. They were the pioneers of civilization and stood for more than half a century as the guards and protection of the Colonists nearer the coast. To the hardship of the frontier and the wilderness was added the daily fear of Indian attacks. And then the war school of the Revolution! Is it a wonder that with the numbers the Scotch and Irish had contributed to the population of the Colonies—is it a wonder that with the character stamped by the action of centuries upon their lives, they should have played an important part in that great

historical drama? Is it a wonder that Froude gives to them the credit of having won independence for America, and goes so far as to suggest that even Bunker Hill was borrowed from Ireland? It was these people and their descendants who, pouring into Middle and Upper Georgia, gave direction to its civilization.\*

In education, the Covenanters were superior to any other people or sect which came to the Colonies. If they were equaled by any, it was only by the higher class of the first Puritan settlers. As a whole they were far better educated than the Puritans. "After the death of the first settlers," Campbell says, "there was a marked decline (among the Puritans), not only in education, but in all manifestations of a liberal spirit in every direction."† Prof. Jameson said: "Puritanism (had) gone to seed, grown narrow and harsh and petty."‡

At the time the Covenanters left Scotland for Ireland, the state of education was higher and more universal in that country than in England. The Covenanters did not deteriorate in Ireland in

\* *Proceedings Scotch-Irish Congress*, Vol. VI, 136.

† Campbell, Vol. II, 494.

‡ *The History of Historical Writing in America*, by J. Franklin Jameson, Ph.D., 21, quoted by Campbell.

this respect, but remained a more thoroughly educated people than the English who were planted there at the same time. When they reached the Colonies, as I have already shown, their first care and thought, next after their religion, were to provide for the education of the rising generation.

Douglas Campbell says of the Covenanters: "Nor were they children of ignorance. Although their schools had been closed by law, they had found means of private instruction in the common branches, while those desiring a higher education—and they were very numerous—had made their way to the Presbyterian Universities of Edinburgh and Glasgow. When they came to America these Scotch-Irishmen were not only among the most industrious and virtuous, but they were, as a whole, like the early settlers of New England, probably the best educated of the English speaking race."\*

Again, the same author says: "In the fields of education the debt of America to these immigrants" (Covenanters) "can hardly be exaggerated. Not only did they give life and character to Princeton College, and found the institution now known as the College of Washington and Lee,

\* Campbell, Vol. II, 479, 480.

in Virginia, but they gave her free school system to New Jersey and Kentucky, and for nearly a century before the Revolution they conducted most of the classical schools south of the province of New York. It was in these schools that the fathers of the Revolution in the South, almost without exception, received their education.\*

Along this same line, a recent writer says of the Covenanters of North Carolina:

"From the arrival of the immigrants" (the Scotch-Irish, in 1706) "dates the establishment of schools throughout the State. It is to the Presbyterian Church that North Carolina owes the establishment of her first classical schools, and during the second half of the eighteenth century the history of education in this State is inseparably connected with that of this denomination." . . . "Almost invariably," says Foote (History of North Carolina) "as soon as a neighborhood was settled preparations were made for the preaching of the gospel by a regular stated pastor, and wherever a pastor was located, in that congregation, there was a classical school, as in Sugar Creek, Poplar Tent, Centre, Bethany, Buffalo, Thyatira, Grove, Wilmington, and the churches

\* Campbell, Vol. II, 486.

occupied by Patillo in Orange and Granville Counties.\*

Again, the same author says: "To the Scotch-Irish Presbyterians occupying Central and Piedmont Carolina is due the lasting honor of having established the first academies in the province, and it is said that it was through their influence that the clause providing for a university" (and for common schools) "was inserted in the initial constitution of the State." †

Again, he says: "The pioneer promoters of advanced educational work in North Carolina were Presbyterians." †

The author enumerates by name fifteen classical and scientific schools, academies and colleges started by Covenanter ministers in that State in the eighteenth century, besides, doubtless, many more referred to in general terms. In fact, nearly the entire educational system in that State was in the hands of the Covenanters.

In South Carolina they were also active in the same cause. The celebrated school of Rev. Moses Waddell, at Willington, where so many great and distinguished men were educated, was the most

\* History of Education in North Carolina, by Charles Lee Smith. Bureau of Education, Washington, 23.

† Id. 52.

† Id. 109.

noted of all the Carolina schools. But there were others also. In Georgia they did a great work in the same cause, but not an exclusive one. In Virginia they spread education wherever they went. In Kentucky also at an early day they established schools and colleges. In Tennessee the first four colleges in the State were founded in the eighteenth century by Covenanters, or presided over by Covenanters.

In the historical society of New Hampshire there is an ancient parchment, dated 26th of March, "Anno Dom.," 1718, to which three hundred and nineteen names are appended. It is the petition of certain Covenanter, or Scotch-Irish, heads of families, "from Ulster, of the North of Ireland," addressed to Governor Shute, of Massachusetts, informing him of their desire "to transport ourselves" (themselves) "to his very excellent and renowned plantation," upon obtaining suitable encouragement. Of the three hundred and nineteen signers of this paper, all but thirteen, or ninety-six per cent, signed their own names in "fair and vigorous characters."\*

The learned professor to whom I have referred, says in reference to this document: "It may well

\* Prof. A. L. Perry's address before the Scotch-Irish Congress of 1890, Vol. II, of Proceedings, 107.

be questioned whether in any other part of the United Kingdom, at that time, one hundred and seventy-two years ago, in England or Wales, or Scotland, or Ireland, so large a proportion of promiscuous householders in the common walks of life, could have written their own names.”\*

On August 4, 1718, five ships came to anchor in Boston, having on board one hundred and twenty families of these adventurous Covenanters, numbering seven hundred and fifty persons, who had some months before sent that letter or parchment to Governor Shute, asking for permission to transport themselves to his “renowned plantation.” A part of these daring people, probably fifty large families, settled in Worcester, Massachusetts.†

Some of this noble band of heroes, namely, sixteen families, settled at Londonderry, New Hampshire, and others in the Kennebec country, in Maine. The descendants of these pioneers in the course of a few years spread all over New England, and especially over New Hampshire and Maine. Indeed, these two states became largely Covenanter in population, especially the former.

As previously pointed out, the first public meet-

\* Prof. A. L. Perry's address before the Scotch-Irish Congress of 1890, Vol. II, of Proceedings, 107.

† Id., 110, 111.

ing held in the Colonies, which set forth the precise essential principles of the Declaration of Independence, was held in the County of Worcester, Massachusetts, in 1773, where the fifty Covenanter families had settled more than a half-century before.\* From this little hive came Matthew Thornton, a signer of the Declaration of Independence, and the renowned botanist, Professor Asa Gray.†

It is singular how events, remote from each other, in point of space and time, sometimes seem to duplicate each other. Thus, in 1776, the members of the Watauga Association, in Eastern Tennessee, most of whom were of the Covenanter stock, sent a memorial to the legislature of North Carolina, signed by one hundred and four persons, all of whom except two subscribed it with their own names.‡

Again, Mr. Roosevelt, in speaking of the early inhabitants of the large region in the South, first occupied mainly, and indeed, almost entirely, by men of Covenanter blood, says:

“In examining numerous original drafts of petitions and the like, signed by hundreds of the original

\* Bryant's Popular History of the U. S., Vol. III, 472.

† Proceedings of Scotch-Irish Congress, Vol. II, 123.

‡ Ramsey's Annals of Tennessee, 137, 138.

settlers of Tennessee and Kentucky, I have been struck by the small proportion—not much over three or four per cent, at the outside—of men who made their mark, instead of signing.”\*

Fortunately we are not left in doubt either as to who these early settlers were, nor as to their moral standing and intellectual attainments. Mr. Roosevelt has resurrected a manuscript left by the Honorable David Campbell, a son of one of the Holston pioneer Covenanters, giving an account of the early settlers on the Holston in South-west Virginia. The settlers on the lower Holston, in Tennessee, were but an overflow of the people from the upper Holston. Campbell says:

“The first settlers on the Holston river were a remarkable race of men, for their intelligence, enterprise and hardy adventure, . . . were mostly descendants of Irish stock, and generally where they had any religious opinions were Presbyterians. A very large proportion were religious and many of them were members of the church.”†

Nor did the Covenanters who sought homes in the Colonies belong to the lower or pauper class. Perhaps no people who ever emigrated to the

\* “Winning of the West,” Vol. I, 180.

† Id. 167.

Colonies, or to the States, as a whole, equaled them, and certainly none ever surpassed them, in material condition and circumstances. The colonists from Scotland who settled Ulster, under the charter of James I, of May 16, 1605, were *picked* men. James had agents for this very purpose. None but persons above exception were received. In one of the letters of Arthur Chichester, deputy of James for Ireland, he says: “The Scottish men came in better *port* (*i. e.*, manifest character), they are better accompanied and attended, than even the English settlers.”\* For many years, perhaps nearly a hundred, before the great emigration to America commenced, they lived in comparative peace in Ireland, and were very prosperous. Many of those who settled in the Colonies were wealthy. Campbell says: “In the first place, it should be noticed that they were not socially poor peasants, such as Ireland has contributed to America in later days. Among them were wealthy yeomen, and in their ranks were the most intelligent of Irish manufacturers.”†

When the Covenanters landed in the Colonies they were comparatively independent in the mat-

\* Proceedings of Scotch-Irish Congress, Address of Rev. Dr. McIntosh, Vol. II, 93, 94; Froude, 393.

† Campbell, Vol. II, 479, 480.

ter of property. Many facts might be given to sustain this statement.\* Within my own observation, I know that the early settlers of Tennessee, who were largely of this stock, got hold of and title to nearly all the best lands of the country. After the early settlers had passed away, the richest families and the richest citizens were of this race. And to-day, nearly all the old families who have been distinguished either for talents or wealth are descended from the old Covenanter stock. And what is true of Tennessee is believed to be true of nearly all the Southern States.

Long after the Revolution the Covenanters from Ireland still continued to come into Eastern Tennessee. They were all Protestants (generally Presbyterians), well educated, and many of them comfortable in point of property. I never knew one who was not reasonably well educated. In the course of time they almost universally became possessed of considerable property—enough to make them independent.

It may be asked, if the early Covenanter set-

\* Haywood says that in 1768, 1769, 1770, all mercantile trade in North Carolina was in the hands of Scotch merchants, who lived in great style. The members of the Council were chiefly Scotch, and the members of the Assembly also. New edition, 50, 51.

tlers were generally so well educated, why so many of their descendants in the Southern States are to-day illiterate. Several answers can be given to this question.

1. Population in the Southern Colonies, before the Revolution, and in the States for a long time afterward, was so greatly scattered and diffused over that great territory, that a general system of common schools was well nigh impracticable. There was and there could be no concentration of effort and of means for this purpose. Unfortunately, as I suggest elsewhere, the township principle of local self-government, one of the main sources of the growth and glory of New England, was never introduced into the South. The result was that in the course of time, common education in remote districts was from necessity neglected, and the grandchildren of these educated Covenanters often grew up in comparative ignorance.

2. The Southern States, with inconsiderable exceptions in a few of them—those admitted into the Union since the adoption of the Federal Constitution—have derived no benefit from the provision made by Congress for the support of common schools, which set aside for this purpose every sixteenth section of the public lands, and by a later act gave an additional section. The reason

is obvious: When that law went into effect, there were no public lands in the older Southern States, and therefore the law had no force in them. These States had patriotically, but most unwisely and inconsiderately, for themselves, surrendered to the Nation, for the common good, all the territory belonging to them respectively, without reserving any part of it for the education of their own children. Virginia gave up a princely domain in the North-west, making no provision for the education of her own people. The result has been, the children of that State, from generation to generation, have grown up in ignorance, while in the North-western States a splendid system of education has been built up, founded on the land grant of Congress, originally the bounty of Virginia.

3. Slavery, if not positively unfriendly, never gave the cause of general education a cordial support. Perhaps this was because it was thought that a large educated, reading, thinking population of non-slaveholders was neither safe nor desirable in the midst of a slave population. Perhaps, also, the large slaveholders who had to pay for the education of their own children any way, generally having to send them away from home for that purpose, were unwilling to be taxed to

pay for the education of the children of the others who had nothing.

While the influence of the Cavalier has always been, and justly, too, very considerable in the South, owing to the prestige of a great name and splendid virtues, it is indisputable and undeniably evident that a much larger race, with equal natural capacity, with higher culture as a rule, and with greater enterprise and energy, scattered through all the Southern States, and with marked influence in most of them, could not have been overshadowed by the smaller one, confined mainly to one State. The mere statement of the proposition, without elaboration, is sufficient to demonstrate its correctness. The larger and the greater race has not been lost in the smaller one. Neither Cavalier ideas, nor thoughts, as has been generally assumed, have given form and shape and color to the institutions, the policies and the public opinion of the South. It has been the ideas and thoughts and the genius of that greater and more numerous people, the Covenanters, that have accomplished this. So quiet and earnest have they been in effecting this noble work and mission, that the world had almost forgotten until recently that there was such a people. Even their descendants, in very many cases educated persons, too, seem to have

been ignorant of their own origin. The Covenanters have a history, but no historian. To obtain any definite knowledge of this remarkable people, it has been necessary to put together fragments and scraps of history gathered from a multitude of sources.\*

The historians of the country have been almost silent concerning them. Bancroft in his first editions gave only partial information about them. Haywood and Ramsey, the early historians of Tennessee—though the latter was honorably descended from a distinguished Covenanter ancestry, and was proud of the fact, and though nearly all of our population were of this blood, and the

\* About 1878, I undertook the preparation of a lecture on the Scotch-Irish in East Tennessee, and, to my surprise, I could find in American histories only slight references to this people. There was no full, connected account of them to be found anywhere. While I was thus engaged, the little volume by the Rev. J. T. Craighead, D.D., entitled "Scotch and Irish Seeds in American Soil," made its appearance. Ten years later, the "Scotch-Irish Society of America" was organized in Tennessee, and it has published eight volumes of addresses from prominent men all over the country, containing valuable material for the future historian. Recently, too, Douglas Campbell, in his valuable book, "The Puritan in Holland, England, and America," has devoted one chapter to the Scotch-Irish in America. It is to be hoped that he will take up this subject in a separate work.

monuments of their deeds and of their courage could be seen every-where—are as silent about them as if no such people ever existed.

It is surprising, indeed amazing, how little credit the Covenanters have received for their great work in this country; how historians and public speakers alike have overlooked and ignored them, and how, until recently, they had passed out of the public mind, and were known only by tradition as a people that once existed, but which had been lost in the course of time. By many persons they have been confounded with the native Irishmen—a majority of whom were uneducated and of a totally different religious faith—who have poured in such numbers upon our shores during the last sixty or seventy years.

One reason, perhaps the main reason, why so little is known of the Covenanters, why they have received so little credit for their work, is that they were scattered over the whole country from Maine to Georgia. They settled no colony exclusively, and founded no State, as the Puritans and the Cavaliers did. They were in the absolute, the undisputed control of none. In each of the Colonies, if they were not in a minority, they could only work in co-operation with or in subor-

dination to the older people whom they found on their arrival. Thus environed, there was no opportunity for the manifestation of that individuality, for those high evidences of greatness which have distinguished this people in every part of the world. The nearest exception, perhaps, to the truth of the above statement is found in the later history of the Colonies of New Jersey and Pennsylvania, and in the States of Tennessee and Kentucky. And yet, neither of these was distinctively of Covenanter, as Massachusetts and Connecticut were of Puritan, and as Virginia was of Cavalier origin.

At the eighty-ninth annual dinner of the Pilgrim Fathers in New York, December 22, 1894, where as usual all the talk and all the eloquence were expended in praise of the Puritans and the Cavaliers, the gifted Henry Watterson (when his time to speak came), after speaking at some length of these races, said :

“Each was good enough and bad enough, in its way, while they lasted; each in its turn filled the English-speaking world with mourning; and each, if either could have resisted the infection of the soil and climate they found here, would be to-day striving at the sword’s point to square life by the

iron rule of theocracy, or to round it by the dizzy whirl of a petticoat.” . . .

“If you wish to get at the bottom facts, I do n’t mind telling you—in confidence—that it was we Scotch-Irish who vanquished both of you—some of us in peace, others of us in war—supplying the missing link of adaptability, the needed ingredient of common sense, the conservative principle of creed and action, to which this generation of Americans owes its intellectual and moral emancipation from frivolity and pharisaism, its rescue from the Scarlet Woman and the mailed hand, and its crystallization into a national character and polity, ruling by force of brains and not by force of arms.”

While Puritan Massachusetts was still overshadowed by the gloom of a narrow and cruel fanaticism, and Cavalier Virginia was still held in the iron grasp of an effete caste and lingering bigotry, the Covenanters were every-where from their pulpits and in their schools, quietly but effectively sowing the seed of toleration and of political and religious emancipation, and blazing out the pathway of the Revolution. They sounded the first notes of the war, and helped to fight its battles. When peace again came, they fixed the unfading impress of their advanced ideas and

strong characters on the institutions and on the life and the thought of the larger part of the country.

It was the people of Covenanter blood who made the Southern States. Whatever these States and the people of these States may be, whatever of good or evil there may be, in religion, in education, in science, in art, in invention, in literature, in thought, in oratory, in statesmanship, or political economy, whatever heroism and glory in war there may be, these are all mainly due to the Covenanters. I will not enter into a criticism of the political methods and political theories of these peoples, but it must be strikingly manifest to all candid minds that they have gloriously maintained their theories and opinions, both in the forum of debate and on the field of blood, with a skill, a daring, an ability and prowess never excelled. I would not withhold from the Cavalier just praise for the share he has had in molding the political and social institutions of the South, but must deny that he is entitled to the chief credit, or even to an equal credit with the Covenanter in what has been done.

Though history has not recorded the work of this people, the evidences of their deeds still remain. They have builded monuments, but put no

inscription thereon to tell who the builders were. They left monuments in the assertion and establishment of religious liberty; in first declaring for the Independence of the Colonies; for their share in the battles and the victories of the Revolution; in the large share they had in the framing of the Constitution of the United States, and in giving form to the national government; in organizing states and stamping the policies thereof with their own peculiar impress; in founding and building institutions of learning, and in maintaining every-where their lofty and pure principles of religion, morality, justice and honor, which constitute the true glory of any people.

If great names are the evidences of a great race, surely no people of modern times has surpassed the Covenanters, though too modest to write their own history. I name only a few: Alexander Hamilton, Patrick Henry, Thomas Jefferson, James Witherspoon, the Livingstons, the Clintons, James Monroe, Andrew Jackson, James K. Polk, John Bell, Hugh Lawson White, Sam Houston, the Rutledges, the Pickneys, John C. Calhoun, W. C. Preston, the Breckinridges, Zachary Taylor, James Buchanan, Stephen A. Douglas, Andrew Johnson, U. S. Grant, Chester A. Arthur, Rutherford B. Hayes, Gen-

erals Knox, Montgomery, Stark, Sullivan, Morgan, Howard, Sumter, Moultrie, Reed, Stuart, Martin, Wayne, Armstrong, Mercer, Marion, Rutherford, George Graham, Joseph Graham, Irwine, Davidson, Pickens, St. Clair, Lewis, Porter, Nash and George Rogers Clarke. Take six of these names, Hamilton, Jefferson, Henry, Calhoun, Jackson and Grant, and it would be impossible to find in our own annals, or in the annals of any other nation, in any one century of time, six grander names.

Wendell Phillips said: "Races are tried in two ways, first, by the great men they produce; secondly, by the average merit of the mass of the race."

Surely the race must be a remarkable one that could produce so many eminent men.

I have thus far been speaking chiefly of the Covenanters in the South. I have shown that it has been their ideas and their acts principally, and not those of the Cavaliers, which have dominated and controlled that region, and molded and given form to its institutions. Their influence, however, has not been limited to the South. Their sons and daughters have gone out to the North-west and have spread all over that vast region, even to the far-off shores of the Pacific. Whenever a new State or territory was opened to settlement among

the first to enter it have been the descendants of the Covenanters, vieing with the Puritans in the eager race of life and in planting civilization in the wilderness.

The Southern Covenanters formed only a part, though the larger part, of that people which came to the Colonies. Pennsylvania, Delaware, New Jersey, New York and New England, as we have seen, all had a share of the influx of the Covenanters in the eighteenth century. They spread westward with the great stream of settlers who filled that vast region. They, too, have had a part in the glory of the marvelous development and growth of the West. The Covenanter has not been lost there in the Puritan, nor absorbed by him. They have retained every-where their marked individuality. In every State and territory, they can be found to-day, the equals of the Puritan in all the essentials of manhood, and fully as advanced in culture and civilization, and in all the arts of peace and refinement.

In the entire framework of Southern society and Southern ideas, the characteristics of the Covenanters appear. Time and association and affiliation with other races, especially with Cavaliers and Huguenots, have modified to some extent his original traits. But there runs through South-

ern life a manifest undertone of Covenanter thought. The steadfastness of purpose, particularly in reference to all questions of religious faith and practice, is a remarkable illustration of the well-grounded character of this stock. This fact stands out as one of the marked distinguishing peculiarities of the Southern people. They believe and worship as their forefathers did. They preach the same faith that was preached one hundred years ago, only with less of the terrors of the law. I refer to those who are of the Calvinistic faith. Many have gone into other churches, and in the course of more than a century, the Covenanter blood has been largely intermingled with that of other sects. But the faith and the practice of those who still adhere to the grand old church remain substantially as in colonial days. The strictness of former ideas alone has yielded to greater liberality. On all the vital moral questions of the time, the lofty standard of the old Covenanters, slightly relaxed, is maintained to-day.

There is a high conservatism in religious thought in the South which is remarkable. It is found only in that quarter. No new theories, no new creeds, no new religions make any headway. They soon perish and die out. Infidelity, agnosticism, spiritualism, universalism, and the infinite

number of new theories prevalent in New England, find no home in the South. The extreme austerity of the early Covenanter may possibly still cast its gloom over their descendants: Be that as it may, they are unquestionably a thoughtful, serious, conscientious people. There is, as a general rule, but little of the light-hearted merriness, the sparkling gayety of the frolicsome Cavalier of Old Virginia, or of Old England about them. The men are earnest, ambitious of fame and power, fond of home, knightly toward women, and jealous of their honor.

The women are modest, graceful and lovely. They shrink from notoriety, and have no desire for the applause of the rostrum, or the lecture platform, or to mingle in the exciting scenes of a ward election, or to propagate new religions. They are content to be as their mothers were: virtuous, gentle, the guides of the family, the counselors of their husbands, the ornaments of society; adorning the home, and reigning supreme in it with queenly grace, filling the atmosphere around them with the sweet fragrance of love.

Nowhere in the world is public sentiment more exacting as to ethical and religious observances and practices. It demands propriety of conduct,

honorable deportment, and purity of life. Things sacred—home, religion, the Sabbath, and the church—must be treated with the most reverent respect. Herein appears the spirit of the pious old Covenanters. Some things are deemed too high even for the State to touch. They are placed beyond its reach, and are excepted out of the powers of government. The perfect freedom of religion from the first was guaranteed against all human power. This was largely the work of the Covenanter. While the legislature of Virginia, as already shown, was struggling with the old bigotry of the State, abolishing tithes and an established church, imposed upon the people by the early Cavaliers, the Covenanters both in that State and in New York, were demanding, and successfully, too, an absolute divorce of Church and State. This was the yoke which had galled them. This it was which caused them to quit their peaceful homes in Ireland, and to seek the wilderness, where they might found a free church. Never did men come with higher, purer, nobler purposes. And never did men consecrate themselves to their great work with more heroic or with sublimer courage. It sometimes seems to be forgotten that the Covenanters, quite as much as the Puritans

and the Pilgrims, fled to this land to escape persecution. And it is true of them, as it is not of the Puritans, however it may be of the Pilgrims, that

“They left unstained what there they found,  
Freedom to worship God.”