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WANDERINGS

IN THE

HIGHLANDS OF BANFF AND ABERDEEN

S H I R E S :

WITH TRIFLES IN VERSE.

BY J. G. PHILLIPS.

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“ Away, ye gay landscapes, ye gardens of roses,  
In you let the minions of luxury rove ;  
Restore me the rocks where the snowflake reposes,  
For still are they sacred to freedom and love.”

BYRON.

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## P R E F A C E .

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**T**HE Wanderings which form the greater part of this volume have all, with one exception, appeared at different periods during the past six years in the newspaper press. They were fairly well received by the public when read separately, which encourages the hope that they will be equally fortunate when presented in the present form. When first written, I had no idea whatever of forming a collection. The walks were undertaken for pleasure and recreation, and to make an acquaintance with the districts. I tried to describe their physical features, their modes of agriculture, and anything else that came under my observation, as faithfully as possible.

In this work I have strictly adhered to the original, only making an alteration or correction

where deemed necessary. Therefore, if it has no other merit, it may be relied upon as a guide. Taking the Braes of Glenlivet as a centre, all the surrounding districts have been personally visited, and by roads but little known to the outsider.

With regard to the Verses, I can say but little. They have all appeared in the newspapers at some time. I have chosen, from a good number of pieces, those that I considered the best. In this I do not know that I have been successful. It is not always the case that one is a good judge of one's own efforts.

In conclusion, I beg to offer my sincere thanks to all who have helped me in any way. To the Editors of the "Banffshire Journal" and the "Elgin Courant" those thanks are especially due, it being through their kindness that I have been allowed to reprint the papers. To my Subscribers I am also very grateful, and I fondly hope that the perusal of my Wanderings and Verses may give them pleasure, if not profit.

J. G. PHILLIPS.



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## Wanderings in the Highlands.

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### TOMINTOUL, INCHRORY, AND THE GRAMPIANS.



THE sun was glinting over the stormy Kyma, and the dews of night lay thick on the heather, as we ascended Glachcan on our way to Tomintoul. We had long wished to have a closer view of Scotland's Alps than could be obtained from the Braes of Glenlivet, but the weather prevented us. This morning, however, was calm and lovely. The fields were bright green, the hills dark brown, and the great dome of heaven a cloudless blue. Rapidly, and in the best of spirits, we moved along the shoulder of Glachcan, inclining downwards to dark Faemus-sach; passed between Blairwick and Inchnacape, and at length reached the high road that leads to the capital of the Banffshire Highlands. Another half-hour and we passed Auchriachan, where the waters of the Conglass rush past at headlong speed, anxious, as it were, to shake hands with the amber Aven. A few minutes more and we reached the first stage of our journey—Tomintoul.

It has been the pleasure of some writers lately to paint Tomintoul black, simply, we imagine, because some one else did it before them. It is true that Tomintoul cannot boast of marble palaces, smiling gardens, or brilliant equipages;

but it is likewise true that it is not cursed with houses of a less agreeable and romantic character. If the village of Tomintoul is not an Eden, it is within easy reach of some of the wildest and grandest scenes in Scotland. Where in the Northern Highlands can a sweeter or more romantic spot be found than Delnabo? Crossing the Aven about a mile from Tomintoul, you move along the beautiful haugh, and in a few minutes reach the sequestered nook where the houses of Delnabo lie nestled. Immediately behind the steading rises a great black hill, with but little on it to attract the eye; but, turning to the left, an abrupt knoll is seen with a narrow steep pathway winding round it. Ascend the pathway and you are among the crags of Alniack—crags famous for their height and wild sterility. The stream Alniack in the course of ages has cut a channel through the red rock of at least a hundred feet, and the gorge is so narrow and perpendicular that it makes the head giddy and the flesh creep to peer over the brink of the fearful abyss. Move on towards the Grampians, and the scene gets wilder and more terrific. Great masses of rock are seen standing alone, like sentinels guarding the approach, and warning the stranger back from scrutinising too closely the secrets of that wild scene. These fantastic peaks of rock are trappean, and belong to the metamorphic system. The crags of Alniack are, however, but one of the many interesting and romantic scenes near Tomintoul, and we would advise the keen-eyed writers who visit it to take a look of the surroundings of the village ere they give vent to their critical powers. The people of Tomintoul are quick and intelligent, and bear a strong love for their Highland home. There is one feeling among them, however, which we would like to see changed. It is that many of the young people are inclined to let the language of their forefathers sink into oblivion. We do not understand this feeling. There is much in the mountain tongue that merits cultivation. It is the language that Ossian sung in, and many other bards whose names are now lost in the mists of time. We do hope that this ancient language, which ought to be dear to every Scottish heart, will not be driven from its last stronghold in Banffshire.

After reaching Tomintoul, we joined four companions,

one of whom had a vehicle in waiting ready to start with us for Loch Builg. Seated in it, with a plentiful supply of provisions, we rolled swiftly away, and soon left Tomintoul behind us. Wheeling round a turn in the road, we came in sight of Delnabo, described above. Though close on the banks of the Aven, it belongs to the Seafield estates, and is tenanted by Major Smith, Minmore, who also possesses Lynchork, near by, and the adjoining grazings, extending in all to about 10,000 acres, of which he is also the shooting tenant. Quickly Delnabo fades from our view, and we are skimming along towards Delavorar. The road at this point is very dangerous for vehicles. It runs along a steep bank overlooking the Aven, and is very narrow. It has apparently been hewn out of the rock composing the breast of the hill. At one part, as we approach Delavorar, it makes a sudden wheel, turning nearly at right angles, when the slightest restiveness on the part of the horse would be attended with the most disastrous consequences. But our driver knew his work, and we were driven along the dangerous pathway in the most perfect confidence. The heights on the west side of the Aven are very beautiful. The natural birches, which give them a picturesque appearance, were in full plumage, if we may so speak, and from their recesses were piped forth the songs of the thrush and blackbird, while the weird-like notes of the cushat dove had the effect of making one feel that they were alone with nature.

Delavorar, lovely Delavorar, is without doubt the best situated farm on the upper reaches of the Aven. It stands on a level plain mid-way between the Aven and the birch-clad braes behind it. Nature has left nothing undone that could lend enchantment to this sweet spot. The cultivated land stretches along the west side of the Aven on either hand, and is as smooth and level as a bowling green, while the rich pasture lands, sheltered by the natural woods, combine to make it one of the most desirable farms that the heart of man could wish. We do not envy Mr Gordon for his beautiful retreat, for there is no one more capable of appreciating and enjoying the splendours of a Highland home, but we must say that we would have gladly crossed the fine suspension bridge which spans the Aven in front of the

house, and taken up our abode, disposed to live at peace with all men. But we could linger no longer. The whip was again applied, and we dashed on to witness new scenes in the course of this romantic river. We had nearly forgotten, however, to mention a fact which may be interesting to not a few. Delavorar, *i.e.*, Lordshaugh, was once a camping ground to the gallant and chivalrous James, Marquis of Montrose, in one of his rapid marches through the Highlands. We passed Auchnahyle on the right bank of the Aven, and another small farm whose name we did not learn. At Gaulrigg, on the opposite side of the Aven, lived for many years the far-famed warlock, Grigor Willox M'Grigor, who through the instrumentality of a stone obtained from a mermaid, and a bridle once the property of a water kelpie, was for long believed by the simple country people to possess wonderful powers in the cure of disease. Happily these delusions are now almost obsolete in this part of the country. The strath now began to get narrower and more gorge-like. The birches on the hills were getting more scattered and thin, and the hills themselves were becoming more rugged and barren. We passed Torbain, Delestie, and Delachael on the west bank, and were free from the trammels of civilization, with the exception of gamekeepers' houses with their patches of cultivation. There is something grand and spirit-inspiring in being alone amid the wild and rugged mountains of the north. There is a strange feeling of liberty and freedom in being far away from the din and bustle of the busy town, and alone with nature and nature's God. There is a feeling of awe which no man can describe in gazing on the giant mountains with their hoary precipices that have braved the blasts of ages, and we are forced to exclaim in admiration, "Wonderful are Thy works," &c. A short distance further on and we halted, leaving the pony to feed on a haugh near the Aven. We were a little cramped and stiff after our drive, but the fresh, strong breeze of the mountains soon dispelled the feeling and imparted new vigour to the limbs. Turning a corner, we came suddenly in sight of the Shooting Lodge of Inchroty. Here our attention was attracted by a large accumulation of marl. On examining it we were astonished to find some shells. Our curiosity was aroused, and we searched

for more, and soon filled one of our coat pockets. Our companions were equally successful, each having filled a pocket. These shells puzzled us not a little. We could not believe that they were *Lacustrine Flaviatile* or *Marine*. We therefore consulted an eminent geologist upon the subject, who kindly informed us that they were *Helix Memoralis Lunie*, a purely land shell, generally dispersed, but found more abundant in chalky or limestone districts, adding that there might be a specimen of *H. arbisstisum* among them.

Leaving the marl, we marched rapidly on to Inchroy, and soon had the pleasure of beholding what was once the home of the famous eccentric Shaw. His grandson, Donald Shaw, better known by his *nom de plume* of Glenmore, tells many laughable and interesting anecdotes concerning the old man in his "Highland Legends." It is now, however, transformed into a Shooting Lodge, and the flocks and herds that once browsed on the wild and beautiful banks of the Aven are now no more, but their place is filled by the red deer of the mountains, which are more at home in that wild region than domesticated animals. But this must not be understood as a case of eviction. No, it was private bargain between the parties, Shaw receiving a much larger and finer farm in Badenoch as compensation for leaving the farm before the lease was run. The Lodge of Inchroy is in itself a plain and unimposing building, but the situation is grand and beautiful. On the east of it a path strikes over a deep ravine in the hills to another Lodge named Laganal. Following this pathway for about two miles, we reach the head waters of the Don in Corgarff. Striking south-east, we follow the old drove road over the Ballochdearg, a very indistinct tract, which leads on to Braemar through the wildest district we ever saw. On the south-west, front mighty Clachvan raises his bold rock-crowned summit to the blast. This mountain is not included in the Grampian chain, but is removed about six miles north of Ben Macdhui. It is, however, an immense mountain, elevated, we would guess, about 3500 feet above sea level. Its crest is covered with great blocks of granite, which at a distance look like a group of giant castles. There is a strange legend connected with one of these boulders. It is that the wife of Fingal, a

mighty giantess, was once carrying it (the boulder) in her apron, and in passing over this mountain it fell at the spot where it is still to be seen. Ever afterwards, down almost to the present time, it was believed that the female who managed to reach the stone and sit upon it would never die in child-bed, and if a male succeeded in accomplishing the same feat he would have the power of conquering death. The curious reader who may desire further information on this head may do so by turning to "Shaw's Highland Legends."

Leaving Inchrory, we moved slowly onward, and soon reached the banks of the Builg, a rapid mountain stream that tosses its waters into the Aven near Inchrory. A little above this the Aven, which before had been flowing nearly due north, makes a rapid wheel, turning at right angles, and skirts the northern base of Clachvan. A little above where the wheel is made, we could catch a glimpse of the Lynn of Aven, which at one time had been a pretty considerable waterfall, but is now hacked like a staircase to allow the salmon to get up the water. We proposed going up to get a closer view of the fall, when one of our Celtic companions indignantly exclaimed, "You dare not; the Gael cannot now tread his native mountains but he runs the risk of being imprisoned by the Sassenach." It was no use grumbling, so we turned to the left and sauntered along the banks of the Builg. Just at that moment a golden eagle came floating over our heads. We stood gazing with admiration at the mighty bird of the mountains. It did not favour us with more than a single glance, but sailed slowly and majestically along the top of a perpendicular crag that was close beside us. When it had reached the extreme length of the crag, it turned and came slowly back, as if willing to show us its beauty and grace. Not a wing moved or a feather quivered; it floated without the least apparent exertion in the wings of air. Suddenly something seemed to tickle its breast. It bent its proud head, and the aquiline beak was seen fumbling among the downy feathers of its breast, and still the wings moved not. A thought seemed to strike it, and it darted with the speed of the wind away to the rocks of misty Clachvan, and was soon hid from our sight. In the crag

beside us, a number of years ago, was an eagle's eyrie, but a venturesome youth managed to scale the rock and steal the eggs for an English sportsman. Since then the eagle has never built its nest there.

Moving on again, we followed the track leading to Braemar, and a more difficult and wild road could not well be imagined. Abrupt, craggy knolls and gigantic boulders meet the eye in every direction. We crossed the roaring torrent several times on pieces of rock and huge stones. To do so may seem simple enough, but a good deal of care and coolness are requisite to avoid a ducking. In this disagreeable and fatiguing manner we at length hove in sight of the long looked for Loch Builg. On approaching it we were a little disappointed with its appearance. At first sight it looked so like a dark mossy tarn. But when we had come close up to it we found not a mossy tarn in the centre of the swamp, but a beautiful little lake, lone and solitary, guarded in the giant arms of the Grampian mountains. It had a beautifully pebbled beach, and the water was clear and amber-like. Loch Builg is in the Gordon estates, but is ever used by Farquharson of Invercauld, with the permission of the Duke of Richmond and Gordon. It extends to about three-quarters of a mile in length, with an average breadth of one quarter. Its depth is considerable, and its surface is ever in motion like a miniature sea. At the upper end of the loch is a small Shooting Lodge, where two little boats are kept for pleasure excursions on the loch. The trout in it are said to be large-sized and plentiful, but lean and soft, with a large, repulsive-looking head, and altogether unlike the clean, lithe trout of the pebbly Aven. After having taken a good look of everything worth seeing about Loch Builg, we seated ourselves by a spring that bubbled out of the hillside, and partook of a hearty luncheon. Then the declining sun warned us that the day was fast waning. We turned downwards, and again traversed what was truly the "rocky road" till we reached the foot of the crag where we had seen the eagle soaring. Here we halted and gazed long and wistfully up the Aven, while our thoughts were transported to the beautiful loch where the noble stream has its source—the loch that fired the muse of the poet who sung—

Loch Aven spreads her ample deep  
 To mirror cliffs that brush the wain,  
 Whose frigid eyes eternal weep  
 In summer suns and autumn rain.  
 There matin hymn was never sung,  
 Nor vesper save the plover's wail ;  
 But mountain eagles breed their young,  
 And aërial spirits ride the gale.

We mentally recited these beautiful lines, and on looking round found we were alone, our companions being a considerable distance ahead. A warning cry was sent back, and a hand pointed southward. We glanced in the direction indicated, and saw the rolling mist come sweeping over the top of Clachvan. We turned swiftly round and fled, knowing that in that tempest-swept land the mist descends with fearful rapidity. We soon passed Inchrory Lodge, tenanted by Lord Grosvenor, and reached the spot where our vehicle was. A sharp drive of an hour and a-half brought us to Tomintoul without mishap, save a slight wetting, it having begun to rain. After resting an hour in the village, we determined upon making an attempt to reach Glenlivet, though strongly advised to stay for the night where we were, and bitterly did we repent neglecting the advice. We had not left Tomintoul a quarter of a mile behind us when it began to rain very heavily, and the sky became overcast with black, inky looking clouds. We soon began to feel very uncomfortable. First the shoulders got wet through, then the knees, and, by and bye, the greater part of the body. Still the pitiless rain dashed against one's ears with relentless fury, as we splashed on through "mud and mire" and the long dripping heather; but an hour and a-half of this sort of walking brought us home, and we were soon in bed and enwrapped in the arms of Morpheus.

## STRATHAVEN AND FERGAN WELL.

THE parish of Kirkmichael, the most remote parish in Banffshire, has, like most districts in the north of Scotland, its interesting object of superstitious veneration, which in bygone days was deemed a blessing by the inhabitants of Strathaven—or, as it was at that time denominated, Strath-down—and the surrounding districts, viz. : a well-supposed to cure all diseases of the skin if visited before old Sol arose on the first Sunday of May. The visitant had of course to drink as much as possible of the water and wash the afflicted parts in the healing fluid. The name Fergan Well is probably derived from the fact of the well being situated in the face of a rather steep hill called Knock Fergan. We had often heard of the wonderful virtue of its water, and determined to pay it a visit, not that we were afflicted with any disorder and depended upon it for a cure, but simply to satisfy curiosity. We accordingly started with a solitary companion, one well acquainted with the country, and with a spirit of enquiry kindred to our own. May morning was beautiful, though somewhat cold. The everlasting hills slept calm and peaceful, their ancient tops enveloped in the grey mists of dawn. We crossed the wild heath known as the Carrachs, which separates the eastern portion of the Braes of Glenlivet from the western, soon passed the noble farm of Lettoch, tenanted by John Gordon, Esq., a member of the Parochial and School Boards of Inveraven, and a J.P. for Banffshire, ascended the Glachcan Hill, the boundary of the parishes of Kirkmichael and Glenlivet in this direction. After reaching the top, we began to descend, and soon left Glenlivet, and, we may say, civilization for a time behind us, and entered the far-famed moss of Faemussach, a gloomy wilderness of peat. Crossing the road from Ballindalloch to Tomintoul, we traversed a vast heath-clad moor. Looking

away southwards, we could see some of the highest peaks of the Grampians, on the north-east old familiar Benrinnes reared his scarred and rocky summit, before us lay the hills of Strathspey, conspicuous among them being that of Cromdale Hill, and behind the hills of Glenlivet. This was without doubt the most lonely part of the journey. We could see nothing of humanity and little of beauty, not even a tree on which our eye could rest a moment with pleasure, all, all was bleak and bare, solitary and silent. Quickening our pace as if to fly from the loneliness, half an hour's tramping brought us to the top of a little hill, from which we found ourselves descending into a deep and narrow glen. Having reached the bottom, we were a little surprised to find a fine farm steading and commodious dwelling-house right in front of us. This proved to be the farm of Glenconglass, occupied by Mr Grant, a native of Glenlivet, and one of the Road Trustees for the upper district of Banffshire. We understand he has brought large tracks of moorland under the dominion of the plough, and has made a splendid farm out of a heathery waste. The dwelling-house and offices are all new, on the most improved principle. The fitness of the name Glenconglass we were at a loss to appreciate, seeing that the stream Conglass is at least a mile distant from the steading, with a great black hill lying between them. The name might have been more appropriately Glen Chabet, since the Chabet gurgles close to the farm steading, wheeling away to the right and entering Glen Chabet a little beyond it. Chabet is an exceedingly romantic, deep, narrow ravine, with large hills surrounding it. The mist was twining itself into the most weird and fantastic shapes that morning, and hovering in light clouds over the farms of Ellick and Inverchor, which we could see but indistinctly down in the valley.

A little further on, and we reached the tract which branches from the county road about a mile east from Tomintoul. Our attention was here directed to the fine farm of Croughly. The Conglass makes a beautiful sweep along the foot of a birch-clad brae, and the farm-house and steading stand about half-way up the brae. They were built by the late General Gordon early in the present century, and were considered at that time to be the finest in Strathaven.

The present tenant is Mr John Grant, a member of the School Board of Kirkmichael, and an enterprising flock-master and arable farmer. A little to the south-west we observed the ruins of Croughly distillery, built by a son of General Gordon, who inherited a fortune of some £17,000. He built also another distillery at Delnabo, near Tomintoul, which was discontinued shortly after coming into the possession of the Messrs Smith, of the Glenlivet one. This lucky, or rather unlucky, youth is said to have wasted his fortune in an incredibly short space of time, and then emigrated to the United States of America, where, it is reported, he died in indigence. With a sad thought of such a fate we moved westward along a pretty good road, cut out of the side of a hill all but perpendicular, and at the foot of which the Conglass sweeps along through beautiful haughs like a huge serpent. A little further on, and we passed a large two-storied house in the middle of a well-cultivated field, the last house left standing on the once large farm of Tomachlaggan, now forming part of the fine farm of Ruthven, where of yore the noted Jock o' Ruthven, or "King o' the Drovers" lived, and of whose drinking bouts and pugilistic encounters with Christopher North, or the "King o' the Cairds," we find a very interesting account in a work entitled, "Highlands and Highlanders as they were and as they are," by the late W. G. Stuart, Esq., Glenurquhart, and a native of Strathaven. At Tomachlaggan is the Public School and Schoolhouse of Kirkmichael, both edifices seeming to have seen a good many winters, and they occupy a cold, bare height, exposed to the many fierce and bitter storms that blow there from all parts of the compass. The School is said to be, under its present teacher, in a very flourishing condition. Descending a steep brae on the county road, reminding us very forcibly of General Wade's style of road making, we pass near to the Manse of Kirkmichael, without doubt one of the most beautiful spots in the whole of Strathaven. The heart of man could wish for no finer or more romantic situation to live on than the little wooded height overlooking the Aven with its effective background. Belts of dark green pine enclosing a little park, on that May morning, was the only spot on which nature seemed to smile. While all around

was withered up by the bleak, scourging winds, this little Eden was quite green, with two or three black Polled cattle browsing contentedly upon it. Glancing at the Parish Church and ancient Churchyard,\* which stands a little further down the vale, and on the opposite side of the turnpike from that on which the Manse is, we press on to Fergan Well, crossing on a capital girder bridge of iron for foot passengers only.

The water o' A'en, which runs sae clear,  
'Twad beguile a man o' a hundred year.

The Aven is undoubtedly a clear river, coloured somewhat like amber. It runs rapidly, and has some pools in it of very great depth. One immediately below the bridge here seemed to be about 15 feet. Crossing the haugh beyond the bridge, we reached the foot of Knock Fergan. At Dalvreach, on a beautiful spot, stands the Free Church and Manse—Rev. Mr M'Queen's. Near this also are the Slate and Flagstone Quarries, where for a long period of years a large business has been carried on in the manufacture of these for the requirements of the surrounding districts.

Having entered upon a narrow pathway among the heather, we began to ascend, and in about a quarter of an hour reached the famed well, the well we had tramped so far to see. As we approached, we observed a young lad busily engaged drinking of the precious water. Not wishing to disturb him, we stayed at a little distance watching his movements. He leaned over the well and drank, he filled a cup and drank, then he leaned over the well again perhaps unable to drink more. Afraid the little fellow would injure himself by taking too much, we shouted at him to stop. He nimbly arose with a scared look, and spoke to us with a strong Gaelic accent. He had possessed himself of two bottles full of the water, which, on being interrogated anent, he assured us was not the "real Glenlivet."

\* Our time was so limited when we visited Strathaven that we were compelled to pass by this interesting object of antiquity. It has many fine headstones, some quaint and old. Many have a much greater interest than mere local. Many gallant and distinguished soldiers sleep calm and quiet in that sweet spot. The stranger visiting Strathaven should endeavour to pass an hour or two all alone in it.

On sitting down beside the well, we must confess our spirits somewhat drooped. Our expectations had been somewhat luminous, and the reality not coming up to the ideal, were doomed to disappointment. We had anticipated at least finding the well on a beautiful spot, but instead, it is simply a mountain spring in the midst of a waste of heather and bent, and surrounded by a cairn of rude undressed stones. How it ever came to be recognised as a healing spring was really more than we could guess at. Our companion suggested that it was possibly owing to a certain St Fergan or Fergus, who is said to have dwelt somewhere near by. Still it has been deemed a sacred spot from time immemorial by the surrounding Highlanders. The market now held at Tomintoul on the first of August was once held here, and it still retains the name of the Well Market. Our forefathers were not very particular at times as to where they transacted business, but to hold a market so far up the side of a steep hill that it would almost kill an aged person to reach, was truly a wild freak indeed. Though the well and the hill have little that is enticing about them apart from the legend, the view from them is grand. The mighty Grampians, clad in the snows of a thousand years, seemed to be within a few miles of us, though we knew them to be more than twenty distant. The greater part of Strathaven below Tomintoul lay spread out map-like at our feet. We could see and admire the fine river sweeping along through pleasant, well cultivated haughs and birch-clad braes, the Conglass leaping forth from a dark wooded ravine, running forward until it is within a few yards of the Aven, where it would seem to hesitate, wheels half round and runs alongside for a considerable distance, then wheels again before pouring its waters abruptly into the leading stream.

Our time was getting limited, the sun being far past the meridian, so we started down the hill, re-crossed the bridge, reached the road and pushed forward at a brisk tramp for Tomintoul. We crossed the Conglass by a wooden bridge, passed the beautiful farm of Ruthven already mentioned, said to be the largest one in Strathaven, tenanted by Mrs Gordon. A little beyond, we were agreeably surprised to find ourselves close upon Strathaven Lodge, tenanted by

Major Starkie. It is built upon a beautiful haugh, smooth and level as a bowling green, close by the Aven. The Bridge of Aven, built by General Wade when constructing his military road from Perth to Inverness, is an interesting object. It is one of those hump-backed erections so peculiar to the General, and is raised over a narrow part of the river, each end resting upon a rock, and has two spans, a narrow and a wide. This old bridge withstood the force of the flood of 1829, although the water rose almost to the keystone, as related by Sir Thomas Dick Landier in his "Moray Floods." Over this bridge, and winding up a steep brae to the right, is seen the road that leads past Durdow, and thence on to Grantown. Passing Craighulky with its vast accumulation of limestone, we soon reached Tomintoul, situated on a ridge "'tween twa waters running clear," and after an hour and a half's march, got back to the Braes of Glenlivet, a little footsore and weary, yet resolved to visit Strathaven again at no distant date.

## THE BRAES OF CONGLASS AND ITS AGRICULTURE.

WE had been invited by some friends to visit the Braes of Conglass, and availing ourselves of this invitation, we fixed on a day to start. Spring had just given birth to summer, and all nature rejoiced at the new born season. Phœbus began to show himself above the summit of the eastern hills, and his bright beams were frolicking with the masses of fleecy cloud that floated lazily northwards on the wings of the soft southern breeze. The feathery choristers chirruped and sang in the trees at Chapelton as we passed, and the bees were out on the scented clover as we entered the Moss of Vautuck. With considerable difficulty we picked our way through its intricacies, and arrived safely at Larachvarry, where we called on our friend John Sharp, one of those bookworms whom nature has dropped promiscuously in every land for the sole purpose, it would seem, of unlocking her secret wonders and presenting them to the gaze of mankind. He was, as usual, pouring over a musty volume, but laid it aside as we entered, and looked up with a bright, welcoming smile and a hearty "Good morning." After a chat, we took our leave and proceeded up Tomtrumper, a hill which bounds the south-west of the Braes of Glenlivet. When about half-way up, we sat down, kindled a pipe, and took a quiet look at our surroundings.

At our feet lay Vautuck, with its vast accumulation of peat, in some parts originally (that is, before it was cut for fuel) over thirty feet deep, its origin dating far back into the misty past, the first deposit probably from near the middle of the Post-Tertiary period. On our right is Scalan, with its old College, built by the Roman Catholics in more troublous times than the present. Nearer is the Tuin of Scalan, a small round hill composed altogether of the mountain limestone.

Further round on the right rises Conachreeck, composed wholly of a bynary granite, which must have been raised from its original resting place deep below by some tremendous Plutonic convulsion, and forced up through the stratified beds until it now rests side by side with the mountain limestone, and is the sole representative of the primary rocks in the Braes of Glenlivet. Again attacking the heights of Tomtrumper, we soon succeeded in reaching the top, and were winding along the feeble and indistinct tract which leads on to the Braes of Conglass. Half-an-hour's more walking, and we reached Lynavoir, tenanted by Mr L. Grant, the farm nearest Glenlivet, and which we had come to visit.

Staying for some time at the above-mentioned place, we started again with two companions to explore the Glen. Taking the nearest route for the top of the district, we struck across a little hill called Tomgarlet, and were soon moving along the heathery heights of the Braes of Conglass. Suddenly we came upon a small birch wood, hid away in a hollow of the hill. This is the only representative of the forest in that bleak region. Entering the wood, we found that its sole tenants were the beautiful blackcock and a few stray mountain birds. Quite a profusion of mountain daisies reared their modest petals under the shadow of the perfumed birches. Continuing our march upward for about a mile and a-half, we crossed the Conglass, and reached the road that traverses the glen near a mountain spring called the "Well of the Leicht." This beautiful spring and the road which passes it have an important and interesting history. Upwards of a hundred and twenty years ago the soldiers under General Wade were busy constructing this highway, the great central road for the Highlands. Through lone valleys, and over bleak and inhospitable mountains, this road pursues its course into the Capital of the Highlands. The Well is enclosed with masonry, and a large stone in front tells the passer-by that the Right Hon. Lord Charles Hay, Colonel, made the road from it to the river Spey. This was one of the few men whom Dr Johnson, the great lexicographer, admired. Near this are the Iron and Manganese Mines of the Leicht. They were wrought for a considerable

See page 36.

time, but were then too far from railway communication to pay. A report is current that the Company who wrought the mines proposed to run a tramway to the spot, but that the proprietor thought it better to close them for a time.

Turning backwards, we move down the narrow glen following the old military road. Here not a bird even could be seen, the murmuring of the stream alone, as it gurgled over its rough rocky bed, breaking the oppressive silence. On a little further, and we have in sight of a game-keeper's cottage and a shepherd's shealing. We met the shepherd, M'Grigor, who proffered hospitality, and shortly after, on turning a corner in the ravine, came in sight of the farm steading of Blair-na-marrow, a name which signifies field of the dead. As to the origin of this name nothing is to be learned, legend and tradition being equally silent on the subject. We hazard the opinion that a battle must at one time have been fought, perhaps the result of a clan feud, so unimportant, or so distant that the account of it hath died of age. For a long series of years a public house was kept here, where the weary wayfarer could obtain a glass of the "real Glenlivet," but it has long since been discontinued. The farm is tenanted by Mr P. Grant, an extensive sheep dealer. On a little further and we reached Badnavrae, or, as it is pronounced in the Gaelic, Badnavraeo, *i.e.*, Bush-roots. It is also tenanted by a Grant, likewise a very extensive sheepowner. He must be congratulated upon the magnificent new steading he has built, which would be deemed very fine in any district. A little further on and we reached Rhynamarst, tenanted by Mrs M'Pherson, where a pleasant hour was spent. Recrossing the Conglass, we moved along the banks of a tributary called Altnavoir, on the right bank of which is a farm called Casfuair, tenanted also by a Grant (the Grants here would seem to predominate), and soon completed our survey of a great portion of the Braes.

The Braes of Conglass form one of those deep, narrow ravines which are often met with among the mountains of Caledonia. How an attempt was ever made to cultivate this spot is more than can be discovered. Those who first tried the experiment could not have been deficient in courage.

It is a lone, secluded glen, enclosed by great masses of hills, and lying, we may say, at the very foot of the Grampian Mountains. A few hours' walk from any part of it would land the pedestrian at either Ben Aven, Cairngorm, or Ben Maedhui. As may readily be imagined, such a district is anything but favourable for the operations of the husbandman. If the Braes of Conglass farmer manages to grow as much corn as will make bread and seed he is thankful, and looks for no more. In this, however, he is seldom successful. The high altitude of the district, the lateness of the season as a rule before seed can be got into the earth, owing to the winter snows, and the liability of a snow storm coming on sometimes weeks earlier than in more favoured localities, combine to make the harvest very precarious indeed. To sheep stock, therefore, these farmers turn their attention, and in the management of these they have, and we trust will continue to be eminently successful. Some of them send as many as 2000 sheep to pasture in the Lowlands every winter. Few farmers in the lower parts of Moray, Banff, and Aberdeenshires, that have anything to do with sheep, but will know the Grants of Blairnamarrow, Badnafrave, and Lynavoir. Yet rearing sheep in districts like these, where they can only be kept for about half the year, is a very expensive business, and liable to many drawbacks. Of all animals it would seem that sheep require the greatest care and attention, and even when all care is exercised, disease will often break out amongst them, and affect the value of the flock. The cultivated parts of the district are managed in the most approved style. The five shift rotation is generally condemned in all upland districts, and the people in the Braes of Conglass are no exception to that rule. The amount of artificial manures required to be put into these light soils is another very serious matter. There can be no doubt but these compositions are sucking the blood, as it were, from the soil. It is natural to suppose that the land requires as much put into it as is taken from it, and if this is not done, there must be a gradual consumption of the land.

The people who inhabit the Braes of Conglass are eminently Celtic, and the Celtic tongue still lingers among

them. There is a sound in their accents that strikes one as breathing the spirit of the mountains. This is more particularly the case with the females, who do not come so much into contact with natives of the lower part of the country. The population are very fond of education, and the majority of them are well favoured in that respect.

In a scientific point of view, the district is unimportant. Archaeologically speaking, there is simply nothing at all to attract the attention. In our opinion, geology is about as poorly represented. A trap rock here and there lifts its hoary head above the heather. There is also the appearance of Plutonic action, but the general features of the hills are round and ridged, and do not indicate any very serious disturbance.

It was getting late when we left Lynavoir on our return journey. The wind was sweeping up the deep valleys with an eerie sough, and the sky was overcast with dark frowning clouds, sure indications of a coming storm, but we sped on with redoubled vigour, and soon reached Clash of Scalan, from which we made the best of our way home.

## GLENBUCKET, STRATHDON, AND GLENNOCHTY.

IT was a bright morning, that 11th of October, when we sallied forth from Chapelton, in company with a young English stranger, to have a look of Glenbucket and Strathdon. The clouds of mist, which at dawn had been sleeping on the hillsides, were scattering and rolling away southwards as the hazy autumn sun shone forth from the east. We passed Auchnascrew, over the northern shoulder of Tomvouan, and wended our way downward to Demickmore, crossed a small stream, and were soon among the swamps and bogs of the Moss of Ladderfoot. We then passed the farm of that name, and were now marching along the ravine between the mountains of Ben More and Cairnlechtrach. We passed the Well of Kilahaul, where fays of old delighted to dwell, peered into its depths, but there was no offering there to the good spirit that once dispensed cure for all diseases that ever afflicted humanity for simply leaving a pin in the well, or anything else that was handy—hence the name of the “Preen Wall,” in local phraseology. But these times are fled. The schoolmaster gave the death blow to superstition, and the Highlander can laugh now without fear at kelpies and fairies, hobgoblins, and every other creature that ever the imagination conjured up. Leaving the well, we crossed the corries of Aultnasacht, and were soon panting up the Ladder. A climb of half-an-hour, and we reached the top.

The view from the Ladder was not nearly so good as we have seen it. A dull haze obscured objects at a distance; yet the more prominent hills of Aberdeen, Banff, Moray, and Inverness were distinctly visible; while away in the north-western horizon the dim outline of the hills in Ross and Sutherland could be faintly traced. Bad though the view was, our English friend was delighted with the prospect, and exclaimed in ecstasy, “This is truly what your great countryman called

Land of brown heath and shaggy wood,  
Land of the mountain and the flood!”

Leaving the top of the Ladder, we turned to the left instead of following the tract that led to Glendochy. This path was altogether new to us, but we knew that it led to Glenbucket, and we followed it without the least hesitation. The long way over the Gilaharn was beguiled by our friend describing to us life in London. Thus talking, we entered the head of Glenbucket ere we were fully aware of it, and saw in the distance a smoking chimney. We pressed along towards it as rapidly as the rough nature of the ground would admit, pausing now and again to gather "blaeberries" and cranberries that grew thickly around. The place proved to be the farm-house of Baekans, tenanted by Mr Brodie, a gentleman with whom we had some acquaintance. We received a warm welcome and a cup of fragrant tea, which was very refreshing after our walk. We spent rather more time here than could well be spared; but this was so far made up for by Mr Brodie volunteering to accompany us down the Glen and show us the local places of interest.

The first object of interest that meets the eye in Glenbucket is the Shooting Lodge, tenanted by Mr Barnes. The Lodge is a fair sized, plain building, but the situation is very good. It stands on a level haugh on the left bank of the Bueket. Near it is a small plantation, with a large hill in the baekground. Moving down the Glen for a considerable distance, we reached a haugh of more than local celebrity—it having once been the battlefield of two chieftains. The tale runs thus:—The Earl of Mar, having had to fly from his home on Decside, was wandering among the wilds of Badenoch and Lochaber. One night, when famishing for want of food, he came upon a lonely hut, and craved shelter for the night. The kind-hearted Highlander at once admitted him, and, whether judging by his appearance or otherwise that his guest was no ordinary man, he killed the only cow that he had to make provision for him. By and bye the time came when the Earl could return home, and, not forgetting the kindness which he had received, he gave him an invitation to visit him at Mar Castle. Cameron did so, and as a recompense for his kindness, he was granted certain lands in Kildrummy, on the Don. As time rolled on, the Camerons began to wax powerful; but a quarrel with Mowat, a Dee-

side chief, put an end to the race at one fell swoop. A challenge was given, the conditions of it being that they should meet with a certain number of horsemen on each side. Both parties met at the appointed place, but Mowat took the liberty of placing two men on each horse, the consequence being that the Camerons were exterminated, with the exception of a young maiden, the daughter of the chief. This young lady, as she grew up to womanhood, attracted the eyes of all by her beauty and grace. Many of the young nobility offered marriage, but she steadfastly refused them all, unless they solemnly promised to avenge her father and kinsmen's death. Few cared about taking such a feat in hand, Mowat being known as one of the ablest warriors in the county. The second son of Lord Forbes, however, was so enamoured of the young lady that he resolved to win her or die. He, accordingly, challenged Mowat to meet him in Glenbucklet with all his force. Mowat came, and was met by young Forbes on the haugh mentioned above. Ere the battle began, a very sensible arrangement was made, viz.—that, instead of killing so many men, they should fight it out themselves, the followers of both looking on. The combat then began, and Forbes seemed to be getting the worst of it for a time, but, fired by desperation to live, he fought on, and eventually overcame his stubborn foe. The place where Mowat fell is marked by a grey stone, and the hill on the opposite side of the Bucket is still called Ladylea—the young heiress having watched the progress of the struggle from that eminence. This is a brief outline of the tragic tale, and in it is seen the style of match-making in vogue in the olden time.

Moving on a little further, and we reach Badenyon, a name no doubt familiar to many musical readers from the well known Strathspey, "John, or Jock o' Badenyon." But there is more about Badenyon of interest to the passer-by. On a little height, close by the door of the present dwelling-house, in bygone days, stood a rude stronghold. The site was pointed out to us by Mr Michie, a very intelligent man, and one seemingly well versed in the legendary lore of the district. He stated to us that its origin dated from 1590, but, from the description given, we are of opinion that it was of much older date. For example, the masonry was of

rough, undressed boulders. Now, in the sixteenth century, it is not likely that a building of any pretensions would be built in that way. Within a stone-throw of it stood another stronghold, but even the site of it is now cultivated land. Yet, with the help of Mr Michie, we could trace the foundation and the moat. A little above Badenyon is the spot where "Thrumny Cap," of superstitious celebrity, is said to have dwelt. But time was pressing—we had still a long way to walk, and, however reluctantly, we were forced to say good-bye to Mr Michie, and leave Badenyon and its legends behind us. Moving along here, the Glen was very uninteresting. The principal objects that attracted the eye were the large hill of Craiginseore and the utter failure of all kinds of crop. We could not do otherwise than sympathise with our Glenbucket friends, for bad as everything was looking in Gleulivet, it was, if possible, even worse in Glenbucket. But the Earl of Fife is a good landlord, and we doubt not but he will come to the rescue.

After passing the Public School, a tidy little building, Glenbucket began to show distinctive features. Before this it would be impossible to describe it otherwise than a ravine among the hills; but now it suddenly opened out, and the country presented to the eye the appearance of a basin, or, if you will, a *bucket* with a single outlet, formed by the stream that drains the Glen, and has its confluence with the Don a little further down. There cannot be the shadow of a doubt but that the basin has been scooped out by the action of water. But we dare not approach the scientific in this sketch; we only glance at the physical outlines of the district as they strike the eye. Here we saw two little hamlets slumbering in the side of the basin, as it were, named respectively Belnaboth and Belnaeraig; while down in the bottom of the basin stood the Free Church and Manse. Away further up we could also catch a sight of the Established Church and Manse, hid in a grove of trees. Close by, Ben Newe rears its somewhat conical summit, dividing Glenbucket from Strathdon. Near the foot of Ben Newe is the old Market Stance of Peterfair, now removed to Huntly, owing, it is said, to its being likely to prove a second Donnybrook, as far as free fighting is concerned. Following the course of

the Bucket a little further, the scene spread out before us, and, panoramic like, at once rose from the commonplace to the picturesque and lovely. We shall not soon forget how that scene struck us. Direct before us stood, on an eminence, the old castle of the Gordons of Glenbucket, which we will notice by and by; while a little further back the Don swept majestically down its hill-enclosed strath. Further back still, and the hills rose dark and sombre, relieved here and there by the stately pine woods, in which the last bright rays of the declining sun were fondly playing, bathing the landscape in a flood of yellow light, especially where the woods were showing the tints of autumn. These pine-clad hills that were so beautiful, stretched away in the direction of Glenkindy.

Leaving the highway here, we were conducted by Mr Brodie through a park to see two of the famous "cuppet stones." They are simply two huge boulders, lying close beside each other, and in the exposed surface are a number of the singular holes resembling a cup, and from which they doubtless take their name. Here we may mention that great quantities of boulders are scattered over the surface of Glenbucket. They belong no doubt to the time when our country was under an Arctic coating, these boulders being dropped in the march of icebergs. Another class of stones—in fact a class that met our eyes at every turn—struck us as extremely strange, especially when lying side by side with those of the boulder drift. We refer to schorl. We observed one dyke in which almost every stone had a large mixture of schorl in it. But a truce to this subject in the meantime. We must hasten on, else darkness will soon obscure everything from our view. Leaving the cuppet stones therefore to tell their own tale, we hurried away to the farm house of Tombreck, tenanted by Mr Forbes, auctioneer, a gentleman well known over a wide district of country. As a judge of cattle, Mr Forbes has few equals. We called while passing, but as usual he was away at a sale, therefore we could not see him. Moving on again, we came down to Milton, where we had the pleasure of an introduction to Mr Wattie, who is not only a newspaper correspondent, but also a poet. Leaving Milton, we crossed the Bucket and made the best of our way to the old Castle.

Whatever may be the opinions of men regarding the Rebellion of 1745, it is impossible to repress a sigh of pity for the gallant but unfortunate men who staked their all on its issue. Many of the more thoughtful among them, if not blinded by enthusiasm, must have foreseen the consequences of joining their fortunes with the chivalrous, if Quixotic, Charles Edward, and sharing in his brief but brilliant campaign. Of the ultimate good of that rising there can be no doubt. It settled for ever a dynastic struggle, broke the system of clanship and its concomitant evils; fixed the destinies of a great nation; and opened up the Scottish Highlands to milder and happier influences. Yet, it was with feelings of sorrow and pity that we approached the old Castle of Glenbucket. Though now a ruin, enough is left to tell the tale of former grandeur, when the foot of the kilted warrior trod its halls, or mixed in the giddy whirl of the dance. Yes; the imagination will picture such scenes in spite of the teachings of this prosaic age. The heart must be hard indeed that cannot feel a touch of pity when viewing the old Castle of Glenbucket for the first time. Among the many who followed the fortunes of "Bonnie Prince Charlie," there was none more gallant and true than Gordon of Glenbucket, the last of a powerful and brave race. The stately old trees that once adorned the park around the Castle, still stand there—mute sign-posts of other years. Of the Castle itself little can be said. In every particular it is the old baronial castle of the middle ages. The spiral staircase, the vaulted chambers, the narrow windows, the loopholes, and oaken doors, studded with ponderous nails, all point to ferdalism. The situation is very good. It commands a fine view of hill, and wood, and river, and in its hey-day it must have been a place of considerable strength. Close by the Castle is the Mains of Glenbucket, occupied by Mr Bremner, but we could scarcely spare time to glance at it, the sun having already set. There was still, notwithstanding, a considerable twilight left to us, and, bidding Mr Brodie good-bye, who had kindly acted as our guide thus far, we turned our faces southward, and moved rapidly up the Strath. Quickly we passed in succession hill, wood, and rock, all very lovely, no doubt, if we had only had more time to look at them. Soon we

came in sight of Castle Newe, the beautiful seat of Sir Chas. Forbes, Bart. We were very much disappointed that the light did not linger a little longer, so that our companion, Mr Smith, might view the beauties of this princely mansion, but it could not be. We could only dimly trace its outlines through the gathering gloom and the trees. Reluctantly, therefore, we turned our backs upon it, and continued our journey up Strathdon until we reached Belnaboddach, where we were to spend the night with Mr Farquharson.

Next morning dawned clear and bright, and we sallied forth, just as the sun had arisen above the eastern hills, to have a look at the surrounding country. Our first walk was along the southern side of the estate of Belnaboddach, where we noted some of the improvements Mr Farquharson had lately made, and marked the advancement of former ones since we last visited the district. Returning along the northern side of the estate, we talked of the present depressed state of agriculture, and the relative effect which it had on landlord and tenant. Such a theme could not be otherwise than interesting when we looked around and saw the lateness of every kind of crop. After breakfast, we ascended the highest hill in the neighbourhood, and had a beautiful view of Strathdon and the Deeside hills, conspicuous among which were Lochnagar and Morven, names which Byron has rendered immortal. Looking further westward, we could see the dark masses of the Grampians looming directly before us, capped with eternal snow, while at our feet lay the fine wooded hills of Strathdon, with patches of cultivation along the banks of the river. Further down, and the tall spire of the Parish Church divided attention with the more distant Castle Newe. Descending again to Belnaboddach, we dined, and started on our homeward march, Mr Farquharson accompanying us a considerable distance on our way, in fact, nearly half-way to Glenlivet, where, bidding him good-bye, we hurried forward, so as to pass the treacherous swamps of Monsack ere night would settle down. We at length reached the top of the Ladder, and were soon descending its steep breast into the Braes of Glenlivet.

## CORGARFF AND STRATHDON.

It was a beautiful morning in May, when we started on our journey to Corgarff and Strathdon. At Sealan we were joined by another, who was to act as guide through the mountainous region through which we had to pass before we could be blessed with a sight of the waters of the Don. He took the lead, therefore, and proceeded due south until we began to climb the Tom of Sealan, a small, green hill, a little to the west of the old College of Sealan. Reaching the top, we turned to take a look of the country around us, and, indeed, it was a lovely sight. There, beneath us, lay the Braes of Glenlivet, hushed in repose, surrounded by the rude and rugged hills of the North, their rough sides not yet altogether free from their winter covering—patches of white being scattered here and there like sheets of foam on a dark stream. Yet, this last mark of the Northern King added to the beauty and romance of all around. Directly to the north of us sat, enthroned in state, as it were, the gigantic Benrinnes, who seemed to look down with contempt upon the dwarfs beneath him. But feeling that we were losing time, which was precious to us, as it is to every one, we turned our faces to Cairn Dulack, a monster hill which lay right in our front, and which had to be climbed before we could say that we were clear of Glenlivet. We bent our energies to the task, and, after nearly half-an-hour's climbing, succeeded in crossing one of his bulky shoulders. Halting on the top for a moment to regain our breath and rub the sweat from our brows, we turned and took another rapid glance at the country that we were leaving behind, and then turned and plunged into the solitudes of nature. I say solitudes, for we had over seven miles before us of mighty hills, without a single human habitation, with the exception of a solitary shepherd's shealing. However, we marched on with

light heart and buoyant hopes, for we were all pretty well acquainted with hill-climbing.

About a mile from the top of Cairn Dulack we reached the Iron and Manganese Mines of the Leicht, now solitary and deserted. Iron was first discovered here upwards of a hundred years ago. At that time, it was carried over the hills to Nethy Bridge, where it was smelted with charred wood. Mr Burgess, schoolmaster, Tinnel, was, we believe, the first that discovered manganese ore here. He was guided by Donald Smith (better known as Donald Gow), of Tomintoul, through all the wilds of the Banffshire Highlands in search of minerals. Donald tells us that he made up packages of sand from every stream, from the Grampians downwards, and that he sometimes, without Mr Burgess knowing it, has left a parcel or two behind him, when they were getting too heavy to carry. Donald guided him to the Leicht, and the consequence of the visit was the opening of the mines on the 14th April 1841. They were wrought by the Duke of Richmond the first year, and went on rather languidly, only twelve men digging, and it was manganese alone that they dug; but the second year saw new life and vigour applied. The firm of Cookson, Newcastle, had bargained with the Duke, and they at once heaved up a mill for the purpose of grinding the manganese. Bothies were erected for the miners with such rapidity that they slept in them the third night, but the walls were composed altogether of turf. Before the machinery reached the Leicht, 15 boys ground the ore. After the mill started, of course, their work was at an end. There were two pairs of rollers or cylinders in the mill. The upper pair were rough for breaking the stone, and the under pair finer for mashing it. The outside wheel was a ponderous thing, being 25 feet in diameter. It was made by the firm of Abernethy, in Aberdeen, and was drawn all the way over the hills at an enormous expense. The inner, or spur wheel, was a ton in weight, and came from the same firm. It is related that they had great difficulty in taking it up the hill from Corgarff. The horses that were yoked into it could not keep their footing. The minister of Corgarff, however, gave them a bull which kept his ground, and thus they got it to the top.

Mining was carried on briskly for six years, and had reached a depth of 85 feet from the surface. The material was driven to Speymouth, a distance of about 45 miles. The price that the carters got for conveying it there was only £1 per ton, a sum which few would care about accepting now for such a distance. For about four years it gave £8 per ton at its destination, but after that it became a losing speculation, and came down from £8 to £3, the consequence being the closing of the mines. The same material could be imported from the Continent at less money. The greatest number of people ever employed was 63, but often there were less.

The hills around are full of iron and manganese. Donald Smith states that he has often split a block, the one-half manganese and the other iron ore, and the iron ore is of first-rate quality. Thirteen years ago, he dug 100 tons as a specimen, and it yielded from 72 to 75 per cent. iron. Four years ago, he dug 25 tons, but never learned how much it yielded. The mill is still standing, and a capital house; it is strongly built, with a good substantial roof. The machinery of course is all away, and all is silent around it, with the exception of the bleating of sheep, the sharp bark of the fox, or the wild scream of mountain birds. Yet it would not be difficult to imagine the time when these peaceful valleys shall resound to the snort of the iron horse, and the clank of the hammers of busy workmen, and Tomintoul—now a comparatively poor village, where no sort of manufactory is carried on—be the centre of a large mining district.

Leaving the mines, we proceeded along the ravine for about half-a-mile, when we stepped out on one of General Wade's roads, his central road through the Highlands. Close on the opposite side is a well of fine, cool, sparkling water, which the soldiers had discovered, and enclosed with masonry. There is a strong iron ladle attached to as strong a chain, with which the weary traveller may refresh himself. We observed the following inscription cut in a stone over the well, which we had some difficulty in deciphering, owing to a break in the stone, and the inroads of time upon it, which has nearly obliterated all the letters:—“A.D. 1754, 5th Company, H.E., 33rd Regiment. Right Hon. Lord Chas. Hay,

Colonel, made the road from here to Spey," which is a distance of about  $17\frac{1}{2}$  miles. The well is about a mile and a-half above Blairnamarrow, *i.e.*, field of the dead, the farthest up farm steading in Conglass-side. Leaving the well, we turned south-east at a brisk tramp. We had now the satisfaction of having a good road to walk upon, though in some parts it is somewhat out of repair, and it is not one of those hollow screeching roads that the degenerate engineers of the present day plan. No, no, General Wade has carefully avoided all hollows, and sought the heights. He runs his roads straight, no matter how many impediments are in his way, but I fancy it would have taxed his ingenuity a bit to have dragged half-a-dozen Woolwich Infants over some of these hills after him. About half-a-mile further on, and we reached Loch-an-kin Doan, *i.e.*, the Loch without a bottom. It is decidedly a strange looking pool, and in a strange place. It is situated close by the roadside, at the foot of a hill. How it is fed is more than I know, very probably it is by springs, yet the water does not look like spring water. It is simply a dark mossy tarn, about twenty yards in length, and at its greatest breadth almost ten, but a very bad sign of its having no bottom, is the fact that when we passed it, it was altogether covered with snow, with the exception of a small break at its northern extremity, where an immense quantity of frogs were leaping and moving about. I stood taking a thorough look at this strange pool, famous in many Highland Legends, some of which say that his Satanic Majesty has a peculiar fancy for the spot, and indeed I am half of that opinion myself, for a more lonely looking place could scarcely be found.

A short time longer, and we reached the summit of what is called the Leicht Hill, but the fact is that there are a combination of hills of that name. What a splendid view can be got from the top of this hill! What a grand and magnificent picture presents itself to our admiring gaze! Far as the eye could reach, nothing could be seen but hills in every direction, "peak o'er peak, and fell o'er fell." Looking backwards, we saw away to the north-east the lofty Benachie. A little nearer, the Tap o' Noth arose something like a huge stack of corn, tapering away to a point. Nearer still, the Buck o' the Cabrach, another conical-looking hill, appeared.

Then we swept our eyes away north and westward, and caught a sight of old Benrinnes again. Every hill of any importance, from Benachie to the Pap of Caithness, could be seen from our position. Turning again, and looking southwards, the vast chain of the snow-clad Grampians sat directly ahead of us. At sight of them our thoughts were elevated, our imaginations fired, and we felt very patriotic. We recollected that it was at the foot of this range of mountains that the Scotch made their first stand for freedom, and fought the legions of conquering Rome, the legions that broke the celebrated Grecian phalanx. We remembered also that Tacitus admits that they were very brave when they hurled themselves upon the disciplined and hardy columns of Rome. Yes, our hearts did swell within us when we gazed upon these mighty mountains. There to the east, arose in gloomy grandeur, the "Dark Lochnagar" of Byron. Further down the Dee could be seen his "Morven of Snow." Those who have read that immortal poet's works—and who have not—and who gaze on the scenes of his youthful days, "and behold the rude rocks where his infancy grew," will feel their bosoms glowing within them, and feel the magic influence of the Muses stealing over them, as they stole over me.

We lingered long on the lofty mountains on the upper reaches of the Dee, that may be called classic ground; but when we had drunk in all the peculiar features in that quarter, our gaze naturally turned further west, in search of something new, and we were not disappointed, for there the mighty Ben Macdhui lifted his head to the blast, clad in the snows of a thousand years; for although he is not so high as to be within the limits of perpetual congelation, yet, huge wreaths are blown to such a depth in the gullies and ravines, that are like so many wounds in his breast, by the wintry blasts which howl around him, that he was never known to be free from snow. His height above the sea is 4295 feet. Further west still our eyes wandered, and Ben Aven and Cairngorm reared their wild and rocky summits. Between these two mountains, lying slumbering at their feet, is the beautiful amber-coloured Loch, mother of the clear and beautiful Aven. Cairngorm is 4095 feet, and Ben Aven 3968 feet above the

sea. In the breast of the last-mentioned mountain is the far-famed "Shelter Stone," made immortal by Sir Thomas Dick Lauder in his "Wolf of Badenoch." But we must proceed downwards, else I am afraid that the Braes of Glenlivet will not see their wandering children to-night. Leaving the Leicht, therefore, we began to descend, and in about half-an-hour we entered the valley of a stream called the Milton Burn. We had now a change of scenery. The hills, which heretofore were entirely destitute of wood, began to show a different appearance—fine waving woods, principally of pine, growing to the very top. The hills around us were many, but not nearly so high as those which we had left behind us. Every step we were taking was bringing us nearer to civilization and the haunts of men, and, to confess the truth, we were not in the least sorry, for hills with rough chasms cut in their breasts by winter torrents, showing tremendous precipices, horrid gulfs, and yawning abysses, may be very romantic to read about, and very nice to the gaze of the poet or painter, but when it comes to climbing them for a few hours, far from the peaceful habitations of men, it is quite a different matter. It comes to physical exertion then, which means sweating, gasping, and swinging the arms backwards and forwards to their full stretch, in the vain attempt to drag the weary limbs a little sooner to the fancied top where you may rest; but how are we mortified on reaching it to find another hill before us, even steeper than the last one, and, perchance, another after that! By the time that one has climbed an hour in this fashion, romance begins to take wing, and we begin to long for a kindly cot or shepherd's shealing. When we tramp on another hour, and still no appearance of a "reekin' lunn," we are apt to exclaim with the poet—

Oh! solitude, where are the charms  
That sages have seen in thy face?  
Better dwell in midst of alarms  
Than reign in this horrible place.

But if such grumbling feelings e'er existed within us, they had now entirely disappeared. As we marched along on the soft green carpet that stretched away by the burnside,

and turning a corner, we beheld, a short distance ahead of us, a small farm steading. I once thought about giving a cheer, but did not, owing to the appearance of some females at a door, who seemed immensely taken with us, for they stared at us almost immediately after we were in sight, and for a considerable distance after we went past them. In a short time longer we reached the high road to Aberdeen, which traverses Corgarff to the very top. Before proceeding further, we halted to take a look around us.

Corgarff, like most Highland glens, is simply a hollow amongst the hills, yet every glen has its peculiarity to distinguish it from its neighbour. Corgarff's peculiarity is its extreme narrowness. I do not think that from the top to the bottom, which is a distance of nine miles, there is one part of it a mile in breadth. It is a long narrow strip of cultivation, in the valley of the Don, which rises about two miles above the glen. It is like an oasis in the desert. Cultivation appears to be conducted in the best and most approved way, but it is naturally a very late district, and all the arts of modern cultivation are not able to force up crops in anything like time. The Braes of Glenlivet are late, but Corgarff is even later. Any cattle which we chanced to see were good, being either shorthorned or polled. The horses are not so heavy as in the low country, yet they are more suitable for a Highland one. Proceeding slowly along the road, we passed on our left, a small inn, called Bridge-end, better known as "Cock Brig," a snug little house. Some distance further on, also on the left, is Allargue, nestling on a braeside, a small estate, which, by the way, was for sale when we passed it. The house is not large, nor is there anything about it that would indicate to the stranger that it is the mansion-house of an estate. It is simply like a good, plain, substantial farm house, yet it would be a nice summer residence for any one who wished to retire for a time from the din and bustle of the busy world. To such a one it has but one disadvantage, and that is its distance from a railway station, the nearest one being Alford, or Ballater on Deeside.

Looking across the Don, we beheld what seemed to be an old castle of the feudal times, but on observing it closer we found that it was not nearly so old. It is one of General

Wade's forts or stations, that he heaved up as a sort of barracks for his troops when constructing the roads. It is situated on a gentle height overlooking the Don, and is surrounded by one of those zig-zag walls, with, if we remember rightly, three loopholes for small arms in each angle. It is far from being a strong fort, either in its defences or its situation, and is capable only of resisting swordsmen. From the hill above it, ordinary modern marksmen could pick off the soldiers at the loopholes without much trouble; yet it was serviceable to Government much later than in General Wade's time. It was here that the soldiers were stationed 50 years ago, for the putting down of smuggling. We found on examining the building, that it was decaying fast, the stairs and flooring being dangerous to tread upon, and in a short time it will be roofless. It is inhabited at present by three individuals.\*

Leaving the Castle, we proceeded down the Don, passing on our way several capital cottages, one in particular—a shop. The new houses in Corgarff are very superior. An air of cosiness, and even elegance, hangs around them, not often to be met with in Highland glens. We passed here a milestone, which told us that we were 51 miles from Aberdeen, and, we would say, about seven from the top of the Glen. A little further on, and we came to the Churchyard of Corgarff, situated on a beautiful green haugh, about 150 yards from the Don, and surrounded by a modest wall of about four feet in height, with a substantial iron gate, in the centre of which is the following inscription:—“The people of Corgarff erected this Gate and Wall.” We entered the little field of the dead with solemn feelings, and in silence. A churchyard has a something about it which strikes us with an awe and a melancholy foreboding, which requires a change

\*At the time of the publication of the old “Statistical Account of Scotland,” the most ancient building still entire in the parish of Strathdon was the old Castle of Corgarff. It was supposed to have been built by some of the Earls of Mar for a hunting seat. During the feuds between the Forbeses and the Gordons, it was burned in 1751 by Adam Gordon of Auchindune, or some of his officers; and, as the “Account” states, “Alexander Forbes of Towie’s wife, then big with child, who was in it, together with her children and servants seven in number, were cruelly burned to death. Having been rebuilt, it was purchased by Government in 1746 from Mr Forbes of Skellater, and for several years after, 15 or 20 men were stationed in it. The garrison then sunk to two or three individuals.”

of scene before it can be shaken off. Yet, it gives a sort of sad pleasure to the living to see their deceased relations sleeping their long last sleep, beneath a trim and tidily-kept green sod, and we have seldom had the pleasure of seeing a country churchyard in such good order as the Corgarff one is. It forms a square, and has a nice gravelled walk running all round its inside. There are some very fair headstones in it, the best one being of Aberdeen granite. One in particular fixed our attention, in the centre of the Churchyard. It is in monument shape, the base being Aberdeen granite, the centre a square block, with the inscription in gold letters; on each side of the square is Peterhead granite, and the top is of Aberdeen granite, the whole being perhaps about 12 feet in height. Leaving the Churchyard, we continued our march down the Don, and soon came to the Church of Corgarff. In appearance, it is almost new, but the colour of the stone being limestone, probably gives it that appearance. The Church, calculating by the size of it, would be seated perhaps for about 500, and is situated on a bare piece of ground on the right bank of the Don. It is like the usual run of country churches, having a belfry on one of the gables. The Manse, a little to the south of it, is a beautiful retreat, hid away in a grove of fine trees. The Church would be much better if it also were surrounded by trees, which could be done with little trouble or expense.

We continued our march down the glen, and as we passed along we observed a small round hill, with what appeared to be a monument on the top of it. On inquiry, we were informed that it was erected by the Corgarff people, to the memory of John Forbes, an uncle of the present proprietor, who was much beloved by the tenantry on the Newe estates. It is called "John's Cairn," and will transmit his name to posterity, as long as Corgarff is inhabited. We turned off the main road here, to have a look at one of the two places of worship in Corgarff, a Roman Catholic Chapel. We crossed the Don by a wooden foot bridge, and continued in a southerly direction for about a mile, on a road leading to Glengairn, on Deeside, when we reached the chapel. It is situated at the mouth of a glen, and is a very small, unassuming building, seated perhaps for about 100. Service is

conducted in it once a month, by the priest of Glengairn; he has a walk of about seven miles. After taking a look at the hills around, we turned back, and soon reached the point where we struck off. The river at this point makes a sudden turn to the north, and sweeps along through pleasant haughs and well cultivated fields. The road we were traversing winds along in the same direction. Nothing peculiar in the scenery strikes the eye for a considerable distance down. The strath is narrow, and the hills almost bare, but they gradually assumed a different appearance as we advanced. Fine fir woods are nodding and waving on their breasts, and sometimes their ancient tops are crowned with them. Beautiful little cottages are peeping out here and there along the left side of the road. In fact, every sheltered nook has its cottage, and the inhabitants are all anxious to oblige strangers in any way, and are very hospitable. Onward another mile, and we passed a rather remarkable looking house. It had a sort of aristocratic air about it, and yet it seemed to be a farmer's house. Making inquiry, we learned that it was the mansion-house of Skellater, an old Lairdship, now belonging to the Newe family. Leaving Skellater, we proceeded slowly on for about a quarter of a mile, surveying the splendid scene that spread out before us. The road winds along the base of a beautifully wooded hill, and on the opposite side, another rises to about an equal height, while to make the scene complete, the Don sweeps majestically through the pass between them, wheeling away to the right. It was so beautiful here that we lingered long, gazing at the dark green woods, echoing with the mournful and weird-like notes of the cushat dove, that resounded from different quarters. Then we moved onwards, each individual occupied with his own thoughts and imaginations. These thoughts were lofty and pure, for who can look upon the face of nature in all her wild sublimity without feeling how poor and insignificant a creature man is, and without a feeling of awe and admiration for the Almighty One, who commanded countless worlds revolving in space to exist. Talk not to me of man's great achievements in science, in art, and in literature. I say that the meanest spring that rises from the bowels of the earth is beyond his comprehension and his power.

Talk of his art. Why, he cannot match the wild bee's nest; and his literature, that river rolling past could tell us more than all the volumes that have been written from Moses down to the present day. But I am digressing. Wheeling round the foot of the hill, we marched on at a good pace, for it was now about three o'clock, and we had nearly 20 miles to walk yet. We passed Lonach Hill on our left, with another cairn to John Forbes. A little further, and we reached Lonach Inn, or Lonach Lodge as it is called, a beautiful little house in the centre of a grove of firs. It must be free from the shouts of the bacchanal, for in it only porter and ales are sold. We entered, and turning to the left, immediately found ourselves in a capital room, the walls of which were tastefully hung with pictures. We could not help admiring the order and precision of every article in the room. It had an air of comfort and snugness about it, which few country inns can boast of. To add to our pleasure, the people were extremely kind and courteous. Leaving Lonach Inn, we once more started forward. We passed, on both sides of the road, several standing stones, popularly known as Druidical Stones. The antiquary, however, more properly calls them Monumental Stones, raised in pre-historic times, as a mark of affection, or as a memorial of some great deed. A little beyond this, and the turrets of Inverernan House began to show themselves through the trees.

Inverernan is the seat of General Forbes, who commands a portion of the East India Army. It is worthy of being the seat of a General. It is a handsome building, and comparatively modern looking. It is situated on the left of the high road to Aberdeen, fronting towards the Don. Between it and the highway is the tidy little park, with clumps of trees scattered through it. Some parts of it could be improved and beautified; but the gallant General's time is, doubtless, so much occupied in discharging the duties of his profession, in the service of his country, that he finds little time to think of such trifles. Away on a little height behind the mansion stand the offices and servants' houses, and immediately behind rises a fine wooded hill, stretching away westward, forming the boundary on one side of Glen Ernan, famous in the Forbes' march or gathering, "Ca' Glennochty

and gather Glen Ernan," are well known words in Strathdon. In early times, the lairds of Inverernan were among the most powerful chieftains in Strathdon. I believe a letter still exists from the Earl of Mar, immediately preceding the raising of the Standard of the Rebellion by that nobleman in 1715, addressed to his trusty friend the Baron Bailie of Strathdon, telling him to gather all the men of Strathdon, and march to Braemar by a certain appointed day. What a change since those troublous times! While standing here, we caught sight of another fine looking building, whose windows were glittering in the rays of the declining sun, and seemingly only a short distance removed from Inverernan, away to the north-east. It proved to be Edinglassie, belonging to Sir Chas. Forbes, and which gives him part of his title.

Leaving Inverernan, we proceeded down for a short distance, when we were surprised to find ourselves in the vicinity of another Castle. We struck off the road to the right, and soon found ourselves in front of one of the most beautiful buildings in the whole of Strathdon, which is studded with them, surpassed only by Newe. It is romantically situated amid clusters of trees, on a gentle eminence overlooking the Don. It is built in the cathedral style, with spires and turrets. The approach to it from the Newe direction is beautiful, and in perfect order. There are some marks of decay beginning to appear on the house, owing, perhaps, to its having no regular resident who is interested in its fate. The family who owned it sold it some time ago to Sir Charles Forbes for £30,000, and then went to America. The shootings of it bring about £700 a year. We left Candacraig by its lovely avenue, with a feeling akin to sorrow to think that such a beautiful house should go to decay. We soon reached Park Villa, a thriving hamlet, containing a merchant's shop, a blacksmith's, and a carpenter's. Across the Don from this point, Glen Corvie breaks through the chain of hills which divide Strathdon from Deeside, and runs away in a south-eastern direction towards the Dee. On a little further, and we reached the Bridge of Poldullie, whose large arch spans the Don immediately above the famous pool called the "Pot of Poldullie," which we were told measures 25 feet in depth,

a statement which we took the liberty of doubting. It is certainly an awful looking dungeon, seething and whirling, and as black as night. I shuddered, and felt a creeping sensation steal over me, as I gazed into its dark depths. A little beyond this is the ruins of the old Castle of Invernochty. It is called the "Doune of Invernochty." It is situated on the top of an artificial mound, rising abruptly from the plain to about the height of 60 feet. We climbed to the top, and examined the ruin, which we found to be very small indeed. Only a small part of the fort—for there can be little doubt but that it is an old Pictish stronghold—on the east side remains to tell that humanity once dwelt there in ages so remote that even fertile tradition fails to give us any information about it. The mound measures 208 paces round the top, and is surrounded by a moat. In byegone days it was said to be a favourite haunt of fairies (a race of beings that have now altogether disappeared), whose mischievous pranks often disturbed the peace of families in the neighbourhood. One is related of a poor man who had been at the Mill of Bellabeg for meal. When on his way home, in company with a neighbour, while passing the Doune, they heard the sound of music. The one with the meal, with foolhardy courage, ascended, and immediately found himself in the midst of a party of dancers, who induced him to join them. The poor man did so, and, as the story goes, had to dance there a whole twelvemonth, when the man who bore him company formerly chanced to pass on the same night, and again heard the sound of music, which by the way, was Hallowe'en, the night of all others which our simple and rude forefathers believed to be given up to those merry little gentry, who frisked through the air in company with less musically inclined customers, namely, witches, following in the train of the fairy queen, who had the privilege of riding a fine milk white pony, playing up all sorts of devilish games on any one who was unlucky enough to be outside. It was the temerity of that gentleman before-mentioned in venturing out on that dread night that cost him a year's dancing, and he might have been dancing still, had not his neighbour, with great dexterity and not a little nerve, seized him by the coat tail while whirling past with his meal pock on his back,

in company with a gay young fairy. Immediately when human hands touched him the spell was dissolved, and fairies and all disappeared from their sight, and the dancer was conveyed home to his sorrowing wife and family, who had mourned him as dead; but he would never believe that he had danced more than one reel, and even insisted, it is said, on having another. Many are the wondrous tales told about these old castles, and the above is one picked from a few that has connection with the "Doune of Invermocthy." We had to leave it, however, with its legends, and, while moving down, we caught sight of the Church of Strathdon, a stately structure with a handsome spire. Though our time was limited, we determined on having a nearer view of the Church. Stepping from the high road, therefore, we crossed the Don, and in a few minutes reached it. We found it a most handsome Presbyterian Church, dating from about 1850, and built in the form of a cross, with the fine tapering spire resting on one of the arms of the cross. On one side of the Church is the burying-ground, with the usual number of headstones—some of them newly erected, others quaint and old, the inscriptions on which it would have taken a considerable time to decipher. The interior of the Church is very handsome, and it was interesting to notice that within the walls is the burying-place of the family of Newe and Edinglassie.

Round the walls are inserted marble tablets to the memory of, among others, members of the families of Newe, Inverernan, Candacraig, and Allargue. The inscriptions number 24 in all; and one of them, erected by the Strathdon people, runs thus:—"In memory of Hugh Robert Meiklejohn, eldest son of the Rev. Robert Meiklejohn, minister of Strathdon, and Lieutenant H.E.I.C. Engineers, killed at Jhansi, Central India, 3rd April 1858, aged 22 years. Gallantly leading one attack of stormers, he was the first to scale the wall, and there fell dead, deeply lamented by all who knew him. Erected by the inhabitants of his native Strath, to testify their high admiration of his bravery and moral worth, their sincere sorrow for his premature death, and their heartfelt sympathy for his bereaved family."

Leaving the church and manse, we recrossed the Don,

and reached the point where we struck off. Here the stream Noehly, which drains the Glen of that name, tosses its turbulent waters into the Don. Crossing this stream, we reach Bellabeg, where there is a handsome little shop and bank. Mr Wattie, merchant, keeps a store of general goods, and a member of the same family is agent for the Aberdeen Town and County Bank. Near it, is the Mill of Bellabeg, connected with the foregoing legend. A little further down, and we reached Bellabeg House, now belonging to Sir Charles Forbes; it has nothing of the castle about it, but is a good old fashioned house. A little further from here, and we reached Forbestown, a beautiful and picturesque little hamlet, composed of nice little cottages, built in the English fashion, with projecting roofs. They are built on the left side, and are all new. Each cottage has its trim little garden, sloping gently down to the highway, rich with flowers and vegetables. Sir Charles must have the interest of his tenantry thoroughly at heart, for the fact of his having built all these beautiful cottages for the poor people, and granted many other privileges besides, places this beyond dispute, "for facts are ehiefs that winna' ding." The people appear to be happy and contented, and poverty seems to be an unknown guest among them. A little beyond Forbestown, is the Newe Arms Inn, a large and commodious house for a country inn, kept by Mr M'Grigor. Close by are the remains of the old Castle of Colquhonic. The walls are of prodigious thickness, and built of rough undressed boulders, now overgrown with grass. It has been of considerable size at one time, and, doubtless, its halls have echoed the clank of many a mailed warrior's tread, in the long forgotten past, and many a fairy form has lightly glided through the dance, or listened to the tales of other years, chanted by the hoary minstrel of the family. Often, perhaps, from that broken old window has the fair white hand waved adieu to the departing lover, whom she might see no more, but she knew that his thoughts would be of her, when he met in the shock of battle, or lay dying in the field of glory. But though these old walls may have witnessed all this, and much more, it is now a complete ruin, with the exception of a vault that is used as a wine cellar. In the immediate vicinity, is Lonach

Hall, which, when we passed it, was used as a female school, but a beautiful new one has now been built in the hamlet of Forbestown. On the haugh below the Inn, the celebrated Lonach Gathering is held. Leaving the Newe Arms Inn, we proceeded down for nearly a mile, when we turned to the left, and entered the approach to Newe. A splendid approach it is, and of considerable length. We traversed it rapidly, and soon found ourselves in front of Castle Newe, the seat of Sir Charles Forbes, one of the most superb edifices I ever saw. It is so simple in its structure, and yet so grand. It is a solid block building, built altogether of dressed freestone. Before, or rather on each side of the hall door, is a miniature cannon with the word "Lonach" marked upon them. We spent more time gazing at this princely residence of the chief of the Forbesees than we could well spare, for the sun had already gone down, and we had ten miles before us yet. Reluctantly therefore we turned our backs upon it, without seeing the gardens, which we were told are of the first quality. We retraced our steps, and soon reached the Mill of Newe, a large mill, almost new. On we went, as hard as we could walk, until we reached Bellabeg, where we turned up Glen Nocht on our way home. About a mile up the Glen, and we reached Belnabodach, an estate belonging to my friend Francis Farquharson, Esq. We called on Mr Farquharson, and were received with true Highland hospitality. During our conversation, Mr Farquharson favoured us with some account of the Clan Farquharson, and of the connection which his family had with that once powerful Highland sept. He is descended from the leading branch of the family of Invercauld, and his fathers settled in Strathdon about a century ago. They were a warlike race, as most Highlanders were, and loved the sound of the bugle better than the rush of their native river. That is the reason why so many of his relations have been soldiers, and the present proprietor of Belnabodach inherited a portion of his sires' enthusiasm, and also entered the army, but sold out after a time, and now occupies his spare hours in reading collections from his well-filled library.

Leaving the house of Belnabodach, we walked over the cultivated part of the estate, in company with Mr Farquhar-

son. It carries an admirable stock of cross cattle. The estate is of about 458 acres, half cultivated, and half in rich pasture. The situation is pleasant, on the south side of the Nocht. From the house a beautiful view of Strathdon is obtained. On the opposite side of the Nocht is Invernettie, now become the property of the Rev. Mr Watt, minister of Strathdon. Torrincroy, away on a height above Invernettie, also belongs to that gentleman, who bought it from the Earl of Fife a few years ago. Continuing our homeward march, we soon entered the avenue leading to Auchernack, one of the seats of Forbes, laird of Dunnottar. On reaching the Castle, we found that it bore a resemblance to Candacraig in beauty, and, I am sorry to add, also in decay. The house is a handsome modern mansion, built on the face of a brae, a situation rendered rather pretty by planting and other improvements. The principal feature of attraction at Auchernack to a stranger is the collection of armour, ancient and modern. There are steel helmets, used in the days of chivalry; a number of arrows, not very ancient apparently by their make, which have been done by very skilful hands; swords, and other implements of warfare belonging to different nations. The house was built by the late General Forbes, father of the present proprietor, who amassed an enormous fortune in India. He was a strange, eccentric old gentleman, and had a strong love for Auchernack and its surroundings, as the following anecdote will sufficiently testify:—The Earl of Fife's factor wrote to him in India, telling him that the Earl had bought up all the property near Auchernack, and that his little patch was now surrounded on every side, and he thought it was no use for him to keep it longer, for the Earl would give him a good price for it. The patriotic old General sent the following characteristic reply:—"Tell him that I would sooner part with the skin of my face." When living at Auchernack, he never attended church, but occupied his time on Sunday in going about with an old woman, pruning trees. The woman carried the prunings on her back. While engaged at this occupation one day, the old woman suddenly exclaimed, "Here's the minister, laird!" Quoth the laird, "I wonner fat he wants wi' me? I'm sure I dinna aften disturb him!"

Leaving Auchernack, we trudged onward, for the dim twilight was now giving place to the darker and deeper shades of night. We passed several small farm steadings before we reached Mrs Thane's, better known as "Lucky Thane," an old woman, over 90 years of age, who lives at the very top of Glennochty, a house well known in the days of smuggling, and many are the spirit-stirring tales which old Lucky can tell of the daring deeds and hairbreadth escapes of those hardy men. We could not wait to hear them, however, but once more started forward, and soon entered the heather. We had a long climb before us up the Ladder—not the best of roads in the dark—but the thought of the many who had trod that path before us, in, perhaps, worse circumstances, cheered us on. It is one of the steepest and highest hills in this quarter, rising to a height of about 2000 feet above the sea. It has been used as a highway to the south for hundreds of years. The natives of Lochaber and Badenoch crossed by this natural pathway when there was scarcely a road in the north of Scotland; and in the days of "shearin'," troops of them could be seen, male and female, picking their way among the loose stones, or winding by the wild corries of Aultnasacht, chanting their native songs, relieved at intervals by the bagpipes, whose shrill notes made the wild hills reverberate. The few travellers who now cross the Ladder are generally natives of Glenlivet or Strathdon, or occasionally some tourists. Thinking on these old times, we entered a huge snow wreath which covered the whole of dark, swampy Monsack, a very dangerous piece of mossy ground, which lies in a hollow of the hill. It was the scene of John Milne o' Livet Glen's rhyme, entitled "Nochty's Glens in the Mornin'," in which he depicts a fight between the smugglers of that glen and a body of preventives. The fight seems to have been a stiff one, if we are to credit John, who says that fire-arms were used by the smugglers, and that one fellow's coat was bored in several places by the bullets, though the preventives were ultimately driven off. John, zealous of the honour of the Braes of Glenlivet, means to say that the smugglers who thrashed the gaugers were Brae's men, though there was not a single one of them there. The wreath which we had entered taxed

our strength greatly, but at last we reached the top, and turned round and bade adieu to Strathdon and its kind-hearted inhabitants. We envied them not their lovely strath, for I am convinced that a better race could not inhabit it than now does. We began to descend, and soon reached Ladderfoot. Another half-hour, and we reached home, a little footsore and weary, after a walk of 36 miles; yet, the remembrance of that walk still gives me pleasure, for Strathdon and its inhabitants will ever hold a warm place in my breast.

## FROM GLENLIVET TO GLENSUIE, BLACK- WATER, AND LOWER CABRACH.

THE clock had just struck six, when we started on our tour to Cabrach. The morning was bright and beautiful. The mists of night were slowly dispersing before the rays of the glorious sun, whose advent was heralded by a golden glow in the east. Everything seemed to favour our purpose. Not a breath of wind disturbed the sleep of nature. The hills were so calm and peaceful to look upon, that one could imagine the fierce tempest would never more ruffle their repose. We traversed rapidly the Clashdhu, and soon found ourselves in the valley of the Bly. After crossing the stream, we were joined by another pilgrim, who was to act as guide through the wilds of Glensuie and Blackwater to Cabrach.

When we had crossed the Bly, we entered on the vast moor, known as the "Conven," and which lies between the Braes of Glenlivet and Glensuie. A rough mountain track traverses the moor, known under the cognomen of the "Timmer Road," famous in the local annals of Glenlivet as the scene of many smuggling raids in days bygone, when the rough mountaineers carried their contraband goods through the passes of the hills to the low country, where they could be quietly disposed of. The "Timmer Road" derives its name from the circumstance that, when many of the finest old houses in Huntly were building, the necessary wood required for them was drawn by horses all the way from Abernethy, and crossed the "Conven" Moor by this tract. Wages in those days were not very high. Fancy, only eighteenpence being given for a man and a horse to drag a tree from Abernethy all the way to Huntly. The journey generally took about three days. Hardships had to be endured, such as lying out all night, with perhaps nothing but a plaid, if sometimes even that, to shield them from the

blast and the damp dews of the night, crossing mountains and rivers without bridges, and often want of food from morning to night. What would the young farmers of the present time think, if subjected to such usage ?

After crossing the Conven, we entered Glensuie, a glen that is now deserted by all but a few paupers, a shepherd, and two gamekeepers, who guard the entrance to the fine deer forest of Glenfiddoch, belonging to his Grace the Duke of Richmond and Gordon. We rested on the top of the little green height, on which the gamekeepers' houses are situated, and glanced backward for a moment at the country which we were leaving behind us. The scene was lovely on that May morning, the sheep pasturing peacefully, and the lambs skipping about in highest glee in the near ground, while far away to the southward, sat, as in state, the mighty Grampians, with their snow-crowned summits, round which the hovering mists of heaven were wreathed in airy clouds. Following the track called the "Stapler," we wound away north-eastward between two hills, the Cairnta-Pruar and the Cook's Cairn. Tradition says that on the top of that hill the Marquis of Huntly's cook was killed, while proceeding with that nobleman to meet Argyle, who was advancing from the west. The meeting took place at Altochoulachan, on the 3rd October 1594, a short distance from where we were standing, when Argyle was defeated with the loss of 700 men. When near the top of the hill, we came upon a herd of deer, numbering about 50. They were a noble lot, with some fine stags amongst them. The antlered monarchs stood surveying the intruders into their wild domains for a little, and then darted away, disappearing in a hollow, and leaving us to pursue our way unmolested.

Leaving "Stapler," we soon found ourselves pursuing a bridle road leading down to Blackwater Lodge. The glen we were now passing through had nothing of beauty about it, and very little that was interesting. In fact, it is about the most bleak and barren-looking district that we have ever seen, with not even a bush to relieve the monotony of the scene. Nothing but hills, hills, hills, and hills, too, which are simply low, flat, squatty looking hillocks. There is no bold, rugged outline that makes a mountain grand ; no rocks,

no precipices, no yawning abysses to make one shrink with horror from the dreadful brink, no foaming and roaring cataracts to excite the imagination and kindle a love for the wild and beautiful, but only a barren desert, where no creature lives, save the red deer of the mountain, which may pay it a visit when they can do no better, and the sneaking, poisonous adder, the very idea of whose forked tongue and shiny sides makes the blood run cold. Passing through this wilderness, we longed to catch a sight of Blackwater Lodge, where, our guide said, the scene would change. While moving along, we caught a glimpse of a house far away up in a gap between two hills, and we wondered if any human being could exist in such a forlorn like spot. There, we were told, the gamekeeper of Cairnbrawlin lives, and the strange looking rocks which appeared on the top of a hill, not far from the house, are designated the Scores of the Blackwater.

Moving on a considerable distance further, and we came in sight of the long looked for Lodge of Blackwater, a plain, substantial-looking country house, built in the best situation that the whole Glen of Blackwater affords. The appearance of the Lodge is much improved by a small plantation of firs which rises at the back of the house, and in the centre of which are some weather-beaten looking rocks. Close by the house is a large vegetable garden, in remarkably good order, while at the other end the office-houses rise in plain neatness. Blackwater Lodge is truly an oasis in the wilderness, a thing of beauty in a world of waste. Plunging again into the solitudes of nature, the hills began to assume a more genial aspect. The rough heath was beginning to give place to green grass and rich pasture land; while here and there, when we reached a height, we could catch a glimpse of a farm standing in the distance. This we knew to be Lower Cabrach, and we pressed along with renewed vigour, eager to reach our journey's end. After most of an hour's tramping, we landed at Upper Ardwell, a fine arable and pastoral farm, standing on a height overlooking the Deveron, where we rested.

The district of country called Lower Cabrach and the people who inhabit it took us altogether by surprise. We

had been accustomed to hear that the Cabrach was synonymous with all that was rude and uncultivated. How different we found it. There the true spirit of the Scottish people is manifested without fuss or affectation. The people are canny, warm-hearted, industrious, and brave; but, above all, hospitable to a degree that makes strangers stare. Though the elevation is high, the Lower Cabrach has a rich soil, and, on the whole, is well adapted for cultivation. Some of the best farms in the upper part of Deveronside are situated in the Lower Cabrach. The Mains of Lesmurdie stands on the left bank of the river, and the heart of man could wish for no finer farm. Invercharroeh is a pleasant looking possession; and Shenval, on the opposite side of the Blackwater, is a beautiful farm, with a large tract of pasture land attached to it.

Standing at Upper Ardwell, we were on a capital point for obtaining a view of the district. Spread out in front of us was a picturesque country, drained by a rushing river. On the right hand lay Upper Cabrach, and on the left were the "Glacks o' Balloch," famous as the spot where Roy's wife cheated Johnnie, and the road through which leads on to Auchindune and Dufftown. Slumbering at our feet was a tidy little Church and Mause of the U.P. persuasion, the appearance of which would be much enhanced by the planting of a few trees. There is also a School near the Church. Our contemplation of the beauties of Cabrach were, however, interrupted by the voice of one of our companions shouting, "It is time we were retracing our steps to Glenlivet."

As we left Upper Ardwell, we met a traveller going to the Lodge of Blackwater, who volunteered to lead us a shorter route than that by which we had come. Taking the lead, therefore, we turned down the hill to a bend in the Blackwater, which we reached in a very short time. Imagine our astonishment when landing on the bank of the stream to find that there was no bridge, but, as a substitute, two or three pieces of rock, with the water rushing, seething, and whirling between them, and then plunging into a black abyss that foamed below. Seeing that we hesitated, our conductor sprung nimbly on to the nearest ledge of rock, thence to another, and then wheeled round and beckoned us

to come, for we could hear nothing but the rush of waters. Slowly, and with a fast beating heart, we hazarded the first leap, and then the second, but at the third, we suddenly found ourselves to the knees amongst the hissing waters, while clear above the din rose the merry laugh of our guide. Somewhat downcast at our misadventure, we strode sullenly on, and soon reached Blackwater Lodge, where we experienced a kindly reception from Mr and Miss M·Hardy. Leaving the Lodge, we reached home after a smart walk of two hours, a little footsore and weary, but withal well pleased with our tour to Lower Cabrach.

## HOLIDAYS IN UPPER CABRACH.

WE had been invited to spend some days in Upper Cabrach. Delighted with the prospect, we started one morning lately. The sky scowled grimly, and the mist hung in dark masses on the hills. The wind swept in gusts down the deep ravines of the mountains, and sighed drearily in the wild corries as we passed along. It seemed to be a struggle between the spirit of the storm and the bright-eyed nymph that rules the sunshine. Her smile conjured the angry kiug. The mist began to roll away backward and upward towards the Grampians, among whose rocky tops and deep glens it finds a wild home. We passed rapidly through Glensuie, took a glance at the wild rocks of the Kyma, skirted the base of Cairn-ta-pruar, where Hamish-an-duem—*i.e.*, James of the Hill—a noted freebooter of the seventeenth century, had one of his haunts, and soon found ourselves on the top of Craig Roy. Here we rested for a few minutes, gazing at the herds of deer that were roaming about, and then turned and plunged into the wild Glen of Blackwater. Passing musingly along the footpath leading to Blackwater Lodge, one of our feet slipped a little, and something came round upon our boot with considerable force. Glancing down, imagine our consternation and horror when we saw an adder writhing about our foot. Our heart gave a great leap, and we made a bound forward, letting the adder fall. It wriggled in amongst the heather and disappeared. The reptile had evidently come out to enjoy the sunshine, and had fallen asleep—a sleep that was unpleasantly disturbed when we unconsciously put our foot upon it. It had the effect of making us keep a lookout ahead during the remainder of the way to Cabrach. The brave man can die with a huzza upon his lips when fighting for his country, but no man can come suddenly in contact with a poisonous reptile, whose bite is

certain death, without feeling a nervous tremour and a shudder passing over his frame, which the frown of death could never do. We passed the Lodge of Blackwater, described in another page, and pressed along to Cabraeh, which we soon reached.

The Cabraeh, like most Highland glens, was now looking its very best. The heather on the hillsides was sending forth its purple bloom. The gentle uplands carried a mass of waving green, and the pasture lands were sending forth their clovery fragrance. We called at Upper Ardwell, inquiring the way, and met a kind reception. With the hospitality of their country, they pressed upon us to eat, and when we did not incline doing so, we received a flowing bowl of rich milk, which was relished very much. The road having been pointed out, we again started up the glen. The glen began to get narrower as we approached Upper Cabraeh, and soon came to be a ravine, through which the Deveron rolls along its rugged course, and finds its way to the Moray Firth. The road wends along the river side, through banks and braes of natural birch and hazel that filled the air with perfume. We lingered long here, admiring the sweet seclusion of the spot, and though it could not perhaps be called absolutely beautiful, it was, to say the least, a very pretty scene. We crossed two good, substantial looking bridges — one spanning a streamlet, and the other the Deveron. After we had crossed the latter, and proceeded on a little further, we struck off the main road and turned to the left, climbing a steep and narrow road leading to Bank, the farm where we were to spend our time in Cabraeh. We soon reached it, when we found that the inmates were expecting us. We had the pleasure of meeting Dr Gordon, an LL.D. from London, and a native of Cabraeh; Mr Gordon, the enterprising farmer of Bank, and the doctor's wife, Mrs Gordon, and his daughter, Miss Gordon.

When we had enjoyed a plentiful repast, and rested ourselves thoroughly, we started with Dr Gordon to view the remains of a tumulus, situated on the top of a little hill called the Drum, where the Doctor had found some remains of a cinerary urn. Being an enthusiastic archæologist, he spares no pains in trying to pierce the gloom, and read the

dark mist that envelopes the history of our fathers, the men that roamed through the primeval forest, and shot those flint arrowheads, which were the wonder of succeeding generations, down almost to our own time, and were superstitiously regarded as elf shot, the weapons of a sort of creature, now happily banished to the region of myths, who took a strong pleasure in tormenting mankind. As we passed along the valley, separating the farm of Bank from the hill of Drum, the Doctor talked of many things. Politics, science, and literature, formed the chief themes. His political opinions were most decided. They were formed after mature deliberation, and a lifetime's experience, their main object being the social and religious improvement of mankind. His talk on the sciences of geology and archaeology was very interesting and instructive. His knowledge of literature was vast, accumulated during his long lifetime. He talked of poets and poetry, and examined with a keen critical eye the works of our best modern poets, and compared them with the gems of Homer and Virgil. He recited with much pathos and feeling, Byron's "Isles of Greece." Thus talking, we reached the Drum, and having taken a spade with us, we at once began to dig. Having removed a considerable quantity of heather, and the Doctor having donned his spectacles, we went down on our knees, and were soon feeling amongst the soft earth for pre-historic remains. We were successful in finding some pieces of baked clay, which had once formed the rude cinerary urn, containing the ashes of, perhaps, some great chief, whose memory has long been buried in the mists of oblivion. Judging by the remains found, the urn had been rudely ornamented, and was formed of sun dried clay. The tumulus at some former period had been broken into, and its contents scattered to the winds, but enough still remains to make the spot interesting to the archaeologist. Proceeding along the ridge of the hill a little further, we came to another spot where Dr Gordon had been digging, and which he deemed to have been a manufactory for flint implements in those long forgotten ages, known as the stone period. He had discovered many flint chips, formed of a flint not found in the district, among which he found a scraper, and an imperfectly-formed arrowhead, which had evidently been under manu-

facture, but which had been thrown aside before being finished. After searching some time, we picked up a few chips, and then walked leisurely homewards. On reaching home, we were able to relish and enjoy the excellent tea prepared for us, after which, Miss Gordon delighted us with her performances on the piano. The shades of night soon began to fall, and darkness set in. All soon retired to rest, to enjoy the repose that sound health and moderate exercise give.

Sabbath morning dawned bright and beautiful. The rays of the rising sun found their way into our bed-room, and flickered on the pillow. We started up and dressed, and walked out to take a quiet view of Upper Cabrach. The Buck, as it is called, is the most prominent feature in the landscape. It is a huge, roundish shaped hill, rising, we would calculate, to over 2000 feet in height. Taking the Buck as a centre, its limbs, if we may so speak, encircle Upper Cabrach, giving it the appearance of a vast basin. We will not enter into the geology of Upper Cabrach. Suffice it to say that the physical features of the district, like some other Highland Glens, are remarkable, and will yet form a rich field for the geologist and mineralogist, and a source of national wealth. As an agricultural country, it is not good. The altitude is too high, and its basin shape with hills surrounding it, makes the soil naturally damp, requiring a good deal of drainage, and a large supply of artificial manures to heat it up, so that crops may come to maturity in something like time. This involves a great deal of expense and hard work, and the question naturally arises with the farmer—can I not invest my money in something more profitable than in making drains, and sowing artificial manures to rear crops which seldom, if ever, reach a proper state of maturity, and for which I would receive no adequate compensation, should I have occasion to leave my present farm? This question, and many others, make the Cabrach farmer anything but an improving one. It must not be imagined, however, that while every other district is improving that Cabrach alone is lagging behind; certainly not. I know some instances, one in particular, who has doubled the arable acreage on his farm, in less than 40 years, and all at

his own expense. But there are still vast tracts of waste land, that could easily be made corn growing land, but, unless a change of circumstances occur, it will remain waste land. The Cabrach farmer is therefore a pastoral farmer, and turns the waste land on his farm to some account. Some of them are very extensive and enterprising cattle dealers. Mr Gordon, the farmer at Bank, has about 220 cattle, a mixture of many breeds, comprising the Highland, the Short-horn, the Polled, and Crosses. We observed some very fine animals roaming about. One Polled bull especially fixed our attention. This quantity of cattle, as may be imagined, cannot be kept at home. Grass is taken for them in different parts of the country, and only a limited number are kept at home. Mr Gordon has also a stock of blackfaced sheep, numbering from 500 to 700. Large stocks like this entail a great deal of trouble and attention, taking farmers very often from home, the consequence being that the Cabrach farmer is very shrewd and intelligent.

While moving about, we received a call to breakfast, after which we started to Lower Cabrach to church. We entered the little building, and were surprised to find such a nice, tastefully got up church in a country parish. It belongs to the U.P. body, and was evidently almost new. It had all the modern improvements—a platform, a heating apparatus, and a beautiful clock, presented by the Messrs Sheed, two young men who had gone abroad, and brothers of Mr Sheed, farmer of Upper Ardwell. The clergyman was a stranger to us, but well known in Cabrach. He preached a very plain, practical sermon, illustrated with some anecdotes. If it had any fault, it was that it was too long. Over two hours of an address is more than one man can carry away comfortably, and make practical use of. The walk back from church was delightful, through the scented birches, alive with the song of birds. Many of our fellow-worshippers passed us, all wearing that grave, sedate expression which marks the Presbyterians of Scotland in the rural districts on the Sabbath day. The afternoon was spent with Dr Gordon. We walked about the fields, and talked of the power which the pulpit exercised over the people of Scotland in former times—a power which is now lost to a con-

siderable extent, and gained by another mighty engine—the press—an engine which excites and controls the passions of the people at will. The evening was spent pleasantly with the doctor, talking about some of the scenes which he had witnessed in Continental Europe. On Monday, we had to prepare for our return journey. The day was unusually threatening. All pressed upon us to wait another day, but we determined to make the attempt. Before taking farewell, however, of our kind entertainers, we promised to return in a short time and stay a little longer, so that we might be able to form a better idea of Upper Cabrach and its people. Started on the return journey, we had not gone far when the lowering clouds burst, and torrents of rain fell for a short time, and then ceased. It did not clear up, but scowled, threatened, and sputtered occasionally, until we had passed Blackwater Lodge, when the mist suddenly descended like a curtain, shutting out from our view hill and glen, rock and stream, earth and sky. All around was a dim, semi-darkness. We could hear the roar of the flooded mountain torrent, but could not see it; and we did not know the moment when we might lose the indistinct track and tumble headlong into its boiling surge. We went forward as rapidly as possible until we reached the top of Craigroy, when we were fain to sit down on a huge boulder to rest. Remembering the flask which the care and forethought of Mrs Gordon had supplied us with, we quaffed part of its contents, and soon felt the effect in the revival of spirits and the fresh energy it kindled within us. We wondered if Sir Wilfrid Lawson had ever been alone on a hill-top, far from a human habitation and from creatures of his own kind, where he could not see a yard before him for the mists of heaven, with his limbs exhausted and wet to the skin, if he had felt the influence of a wee drappie Glenlivet whisky. After resting for a short time, we started down Craigroy, and after half-an-hour's tramping, we got clear of the mist, and once again breathed freely the pure air of heaven. Another hour's smart walking brought us home, none the worse for our tramp among the mist.

Our second visit to Upper Cabrach took place a week afterwards. As we moved over the Clashdhu, we could not

help remarking the change which so short a time had made. Then all was green, now the fields carried a rich mass of waving yellow grain, and the hills had burst in their purple bloom. Sportsmen roamed over the heathery wilds, bringing down the heathcock from its mountain home, to be transported far away, to feed the millions of London. As we passed through Glensuie and Blackwater, the sportsmen were there hunting the red deer in its native haunts. Herds were roaming about sniffing the breeze, their instinct teaching them that man is their foe, and that their proud antlered heads is no match for the steel-barrelled gun of the "Sassenach." We called at Blackwater Lodge, and experienced the kind hospitality of the Misses M'Hardy, after which, Miss M'Hardy showed us through the Lodge. The house is plainly furnished. A few pictures adorn the walls. Several of them are by Landseer, representing scenes of the chase. A splendid portrait of the Duchess of Richmond and Gordon hangs in the drawing-room. A few sketches by Lord Mareh also hangs on the walls. If his lordship would cultivate a taste for painting, it is evident he has no mean talent. We also saw some sketches by Miss Lizzie M'Hardy, which do that young lady great credit. Leaving the Lodge, we soon reached Cabrach, and a short time after arrived at the farm of Bank, where a warm reception awaited us. The Doctor's talk, and the sweet influence of music soon chased our weariness away, and beguiled the remaining hours of the evening. When morning dawned, quite a change had come over the face of nature. The sun had set on the previous night in a glow of golden glory. No one could have predicted the tremendous hurricane that burst over the country early on Sunday morning. The rich fields of corn, that we admired so much while passing the day before, were now a mass of waving straw, and the golden seed that made the straw droop with its weight was now scattered on the earth to rot and die. The fiend of destruction had truly passed over the Cabrach. Tempestuous though the day was, we determined to visit the Parish Church, which was about a mile and a-half distant. We reached it after a hard struggle, and were glad to get seated inside. The Parish Church of Cabraeh, judging by its appearance, had been altered and

renovated. The box, or "pumphal seats," as they are called, so common in rural churches, have all been swept away, and the seats now look quite modern, with the pulpit at one end. Yet there is something depressing about it. The three rows of seats are quite drowned by the height of the ceiling, and the long narrow building makes it look like a great sepulchre. It must also be very hard on the preacher, shouting the whole length of the building. The minister of the parish is Mr Smart. On that day, he gave a good historical sermon, which we could appreciate. After reaching home, the afternoon was spent in reading and talking.

On Monday, though the weather was still very wild and tempestuous, we sallied forth with Dr Gordon to see a vein of plumbago that had been discovered in Upper Cabrach. We had not gone very far when the hurricane returned with all the violence of the preceding day, and we were glad to take shelter with Mr M'Intosh, merchant, for a time, by whom we were kindly received, and experienced his hospitality. After resting a little, we again renewed the battle with the tempest, and eventually reached our destination—a rock near the base of the Buck. We examined the plumbago carefully, and found the vein a rich one, though not extensive; but, the fact is, that no idea of its extent can be formed until the rocks by which it is enclosed are burst, and a little digging done. It might then be ascertained if the working would pay. The rock on one side of the seam is granite, and on the other side the stone has a mixture of iron in it. Taking some specimens with us, we turned down the stream, which takes the name of Deveron when it runs about two miles further down. In the upper districts it is called the Rooster, or Red Water. After moving down about half-a-mile, we came upon a great mass of serpentine, from which we extracted some specimens. We had been pretty well sheltered by the valley, but now, ascending a height, we felt the full force of the gale, and were glad to take shelter in a hut where an old woman lived alone. She eyed us suspiciously for a time, but at length bade us be seated, and then began to question us. "Ha'e ye come far?" "We have been up seeing the plumbago mine." "Ay, ay; but hae ye come far?" "No; not very far." "I's warrant ye'll be gaun

doonwith?" We proposed going, and thanking the old woman for the shelter of her roof, we made our escape from her curiosity. Her last words were—"Min' and come in fin ye come baek." We had not reached the height above her hut, when I suddenly clapped my hand on my head, but the hat was away. We watched it as it sped onwards, clearing valleys at a bound, when it suddenly came to a halt, about a mile distant, where we found it settling down among the soft mud of a pool. We were glad to reach Poineed, where Miss Bain soon prepared an excellent tea for us. Her cheese was the finest we have ever seen, and her home-made preserves, gathered on the neighbouring hills, were excellent. Those who visit Upper Cabrach ought to call at Poineed. Leaving our hospitable friends with many good wishes, we reached Bank safely, though nearly exhausted. After staying another day, we had at length to take our departure from Cabrach. We never spent holidays more pleasantly or profitably, and it was with regret that we had to bid our friends at Bank farewell. The kind-hearted old doctor came almost to Blackwater Lodge with us, and then giving us his benediction, we parted. As we passed the Lodge, we again experienced Miss M'Hardy's kindness, and then strode homewards. We arrived safely in about three hours after, a little wearied, but with bright memories of our visit to Cabrach.

## GLENRINNES, ITS ARCHÆOLOGY AND AGRICULTURE.

THE morning of the 21st February 1880 was gloomy and threatening, with occasional showers, but towards nine o'clock it cleared up sufficiently to warrant us in starting for Glenrinnnes, a walk that we had been looking forward to for some time, with pleasurable anticipations. We accordingly crossed the stream Cromlie, and skirted the Clashdhu, passed Betavochele, and soon reached Polawicht. A slight difficulty here impeded our progress for a short time. The Livet was considerably swollen with the recent rains, and had swept away the bridge. We thought that the only course left was to ford the stream, but Mr Grant, Polawicht, came down with a long ladder, by which we crossed the whirling torrent dry shod. Shouting back thanks, we rapidly pursued the path past Auchdregnie, keeping our eye fixed in the Cadhu. A short time longer, and we passed Cordregnie, and were soon climbing the heathery breast of the Cadhu. On reaching the top, we glanced back to see black inky-looking clouds gathering behind us, and the mist settling down in the hills, a pretty certain indication that rain would follow. Speeding down the back of the hill as quickly as possible, we crossed the burn of Cadhu, and in a short time was in the battle field of Altachulichan or Glenlivet.

The Battle of Altachulichan was fought on Thursday, 3rd October 1594. If we can put the slightest reliance on local tradition, it was a wild day. The mist capped the hills, and was creeping down their sides. The wind shrieked and howled down the wild ravine of Altachulichan, and the rain beat furiously in the faces of the conflicting foemen. It seemed as if nature had put forth her strength to ward off the desperate struggle. But she failed. What can stay the desperate impulses of headlong passions of savage men?

The Battle of Altachulichan was an event of very great importance, and tended to consolidate a rising power. The scene where it was fought is solemn and wild. The great black hills, torn and scarred by many a wintry blast, look down in frowning grandeur upon the purling stream, whose amber tint, tradition says, was discoloured for three days with Scottish blood. Away on that heathery height, the gallant chief of the M'Leans withstood the fiery charge of Gordon of Auchindune, and the more cautious Earl of Errol, while down a little further, on that swelling moor, the Highlanders of Argyll were flying before the guns of Capt. Gray, and the steady advance of Huntly. It was a grim struggle. Many a noble-hearted youth fell to rise no more, their well proportioned limbs and handsome features falling to the prowling fox, the mountain eagle, and the carrion crow.

Leaving the battlefield, we moved briskly up a little height, and had a look at Loch Clay, *i.e.*, Loch of the Sword, into which, tradition says, a number of swords were thrown. It is simply a small, dark, mossy tarn. A search was at one time made by some enthusiasts for swords, but the only thing found was an old smuggling pot. Leaving the Loch, we marched onward, and soon had the satisfaction of seeing Glenrinnnes spread out before us. The first farm reached was Bedach, where we called, enquiring the nearest way to the Manse. Somewhere near this is a spot where the three parishes of Inveraven, Mortlach, and Aberlour meet. At the same spot, the lands of the Duke of Richmond and Gordon, the laird of Ballindalloch, and the Earl of Fife meet. Crossing a small stream below Croftglass, we came upon a cairn of stones in the corner of a field, called Lord Auchindune's Cairn. Tradition tells that at this spot Auchindune is buried. There is inconsistency in the very face of this tale.\* Sir Patrick Gordon of Auchindune undoubtedly fell

\*In "Spottiswood's Miscellany," vol. I., page 257, if I remember rightly, it is stated that Auchindune's *dead body* was carried down to the place where the cairn now is, and was left there for some time, until Huntly's army proceeded back to Strathbogie next day, taking Auchindune's body with them, for the purpose of burying it at Strathbogie Castle. This is so much in support of local tradition, if it is not drawn from it, which I am inclined to think it is, from the fact that the body would have been as easy carried the first day as the second.

in his rash charge against M'Lean, but why he should have been taken to this lonely place and buried, or even left for a night (*see note*), is what we cannot understand. Had the followers of Huntly been defeated, and fled from the field, it is very likely that they would have left their dead unburied. But when they were left masters of the situation, and had carried Auchindunc thus far in the homeward march, it is inconceivable that the Earl of Huntly would have allowed his uncle to be buried or *left* within a few miles of his own castle. It is very likely that the cairn may commemorate the death of Auchindunc; we do not believe that his remains lie beneath it. But the cairn is there, and will transmit the memory of the gallant and good Auchindunc to posterity, while there is a man in Glenrinnnes to speak his name.\*

The clouds which were closing behind us in the Cadhu were now quite close, and a dull drizzling rain set in. Turning face down the glen, quickly we passed the two Auchmores, and reached a good road which traversed a great part of the glen in the Duke of Richmond and Gordon's side. After nearly an hour's tramp, we reached the Manse of Glenrinnnes, where we met with a warm and hospitable reception from Rev. Mr Bruce, whose animated and interesting conversation soon dispelled thought of weariness or fatigue. We walked out in company to view the church and churchyard. The church is a plain, unpretentious building, in the form of three-wing, commodious, and withal comfortable. The churchyard had been lately acquired, and was still in an unfinished state, the walks through it being formed, and it is surrounded by a strong substantial wall. From the manse we caught a sight of the school, away down behind the church, and it seemed from our standpoint a nice building, nearly new. The trees and shrubs that surround the Manse of Glenrinnnes make it in summer as beautiful a retreat as the heart of man could wish for, and when the fierce tempests of winter sweep down the glen, they form the natural protection that every house in the Highlands should

\*It is interesting to know that the great philosopher, Lord Bacon, who lived in Queen Elizabeth's reign, had something to do with the Battle of Glenlivet. See Lord Bacon's "Life and Letters," by James Spalding, vol. I., pages 212—226.

have. Moving along the walk, our eye lighted on a tree, which few would expect to find growing 1000 feet above the sea level—the beautiful, tapering, prickly *Auracaria* of the South American forest, transplanted from that land of the sun, to cold, bleak, sterile Caledonia, and yet it had reached the height of 25 feet. Another *Auracaria*, which Mr Bruce told us was planted at the same time, had only reached the height of five or six feet. They seemed strangely out of place among the hardy pines and birches, that twined their protecting arms round them, as if to shelter their slender, fragile forms from the blasts of that storm-swept land. In company with Mr Bruce, we visited some local places of interest, and discussed points in the early history of the district.

The history of Glenrinnnes, dating far back into the misty past, is partly written and unwritten. The flint arrow point and the stone celt have both been found in Glenrinnnes, not in such quantities, perhaps, as to indicate a thickly peopled district; but they show unmistakably that it was peopled in the stone age. A beautiful little stone celt was lately in the possession of Mr M'Kay, Bedach, but was given over to Dr Gordon, London. Another stone celt is in the possession of Mr Gordon, Rinatin, also, a fine preserved arrow point. As far as we could learn, nothing connected with the bronze period has been discovered in Glenrinnnes. This is by no means uncommon, and does not point to Glenrinnnes being uninhabited in that period. Bronze was a metal of great value, and would not be easily procured by the natives of such a district; and, if procured, it would undoubtedly be taken great care of. But we think that most archaeologists will be disposed to allow that the bronze age must have been very short in Glenrinnnes, and all similar districts, removed as they were from centres of population, where man had taken his first and great step in the march of civilization. In such centres it is probable that the bronze period may have been of vast length; but in Glenrinnnes, and all glens in the Scottish Highlands, the bronze period may have been only a step—a connecting link—between the great stone period and the age of iron. This, combined with the perishable nature of the metal, would

account for the scarcity of bronze in such districts. Of barrows there are none that we could discover, but agricultural operations often obliterate these. There is, indeed, one remarkable spot in the stackyard of the farm of Recltlich, which we visited in company with Mr Bruce. It consists of three ponderous stones, each about 10 feet in length, rough and unmarked. They lie quite close to each other, running north and south and parallel. They are called the King's Grave. With our knowledge of archæology, we could not give any decided opinion as to their origin. We certainly had ideas, but they were more theoretical than real. We, therefore, consulted the opinion of Canon Greenwell, M.A., F.S.A., the eminent and accomplished author of "British Barrows," a gentleman who has, perhaps, had more experience among barrows than any man living, and he, with all his experience, could not solve the mystery which envelopes them. Had it not been for the extraordinary size of the stones, he would have thought it probable that a stone cist might be beneath them; but, as it is, he is doubtful if it is a tumulus at all. If he could have seen them, however, he might have formed another opinion, as a description must, necessarily, be very imperfect.

Another object of interest to the antiquarian, near Glenrinnis, is the remains of a camp, on the top of a hill called Conval, *i.e.*, Bluc Hill. This camp is supposed first to have been Pictish, and latterly Danish. There is no reason to doubt this. The Danes were defeated in its immediate vicinity by Malcolm II., at the Battle of Mortlach. After this "king making victory," which secured the independence of the kingdom of Scotland for a time, it is probable that the camp in Conval Hill had been left to its fate. We thought it probable that if it had once been a Pictish fort, it would have been a vitrified one, but Mr Bruce assured us that he had examined the remains, and could find no signs of vitrification.

Coming within the pale of authentic history, we find that Glenrinnis was very early occupied by cadets of the powerful families of Comyn and Gordon. Of the former family, seven generations held sway at Lochterlandoch, descendants of the famous Comyn, whom Bruce, the heroic

King of Scotland, slew on the altar steps. The Gordons are of a later date, but they were in Glenrinnnes as early as 1670. They were allied to the great Gordon family, and fought under its banner, but space prevents us from going minutely into the genealogy of these separate families.

Walking down the glen, we found ourselves at Milltown of Laggan, tenanted by Mr Glass, who kindly showed us some of his "stirks." Mr Glass is a capital cattle rearer, and last year a stot bred by him, after distinguishing itself at various local shows, took the second prize at Smithfield. But this is nothing new to Glenrinnnes. It will be remembered by many that, ten or eleven years ago, a stot reared at Achlochrach, and afterwards bought by Mr Bruce, Burnside, carried the "blue ribbon" and 100 guinea cup, at Smithfield. The Glenrinnnes people, notwithstanding the many difficulties they have to contend with, are famous as cattle rearers and feeders, and can hold their own with the best districts in Banffshire. Leaving the Milltown of Laggan, we turned northward, and struck across to Reclletach, tenanted by Mr Grant, the farm where the King's grave is to be seen. Moving on again, we soon reached Lochterlandoch, where we called. Reluctantly bidding good-bye to Mr Bruce, and leaving Lochterlandoch, we soon reached the boundary of the farm of Rinatin, where we struck through the fields and soon reached the farm steading. During an hour spent with Mr Gordon, we had the opportunity of seeing his stock, and receiving particulars of his system of cattle feeding, and discussing agricultural practice in Glenrinnnes. Mr Gordon, who, as one of the most experienced farmers in the glen, lays it down that at the steading, the houses must be well ventilated and kept clean, and the cattle disturbed as seldom as possible. In the morning, the stock have straw at seven o'clock, at eight they get turnips, at twelve, oilcake or bruised corn, as an extra diet, not always given; again at three o'clock, turnips and straw, then straw at eight in the evening. The greatest punctuality is observed, the stock never being left ten or even five minutes past the regular time of feeding. With such system, Glenrinnnes farmers never sell their two-year olds under £24, and often as high as £30.

As an agricultural district, Glenrinnnes is not good. The

elevation and its peculiar physical features render the crops late, and, consequently, far from sure. Benrinnes, which rises in the north side of the glen, to the height of 2745 feet, and Corhabbie, in the south side, elevated 2558 feet above sea level, may give the reader, not acquainted with the district, some idea of it. These two mountains enclose the whole valley, forming a sort of focus, through which tempests sweep with irresistible force. Were it not the sheer force of farming, crops in Glenrinnes would be anything but profitable. But the people are thrifty, frugal, and persevering. Their bleak, storm-swept climate has the effect of drawing forth all the energies of their being. Thus we find them thriving, prosperous, and contented. In the geology of the district there is little peculiar. The greater part of the valley is composed of mountain limestone, a marine deposit, believed by many geologists to belong to the carboniferous age, and contemporaneous with the coal measures of the South. Benrinnes is crowned with immense granite blocks, forming a sort of crest, rising abruptly from its eastern face. There can be little doubt that Corhabbie is also mainly composed of granite.

Ere leaving Rinatin, Mr Gordon showed us a shell, picked up among limestone rock near his farm. We recognised the shell at once as a land shell, known as *Helex Memerelis Luni*. Quantities of these shells are found in various districts. But the evening was closing, and we were forced to bid our kind friends good-bye, and turning our face homewards, we soon entered the Glack of Bregach, a narrow pass between two hills, which separates Glenrinnes from the Morinsh district. It was now quite dark, but it had cleared up a little. We were not quite through the Glack when we encountered the farmer of Gowdenknowes, Morinsh, in whose company we journeyed for two or three miles. Thereafter, a walk of two hours brought us home, to cherish the liveliest recollections of Glenrinnes and its kind-hearted inhabitants.

## THE BRAES OF GLENLIVET SIXTY YEARS AGO.

### CHAPTER I.

SIXTY or seventy years ago the Braes of Glenlivet was a district little known to the outsider. Indeed, they are little known at the present day by many of the lowland natives of Aberdeen, Banff, and Moray, otherwise than by name; but, if once seen, it would not be easy to forget them. The physical features at once strike the eye of the beholder as uncommon and peculiar. It is a region isolated, if I may so speak, from the neighbouring glens by high, and in many parts, precipitous hills, whose rugged aspect gives a wild and barren appearance to the whole district. On the east side of the Braes more particularly this is the case. A high range of hills—a spur of the Grampians—runs along the whole length of the glen, separating the counties of Banff and Aberdeen, and separating the Braes of Glenlivet from Glenbucket and Strathdon. On the north, again, a chain of the Corhabbie range runs from east to west, separating the Braes from Glenrinnies and Mortlach; and on the east and south, a range throws its giant arms between the Braes and the Tomintoul district. Thus it will appear to the reader that the Braes of Glenlivet resemble, in many particulars, a loch; or, as some have said, a punch-bowl. Their average breadth are, perhaps, four or five miles, and their average length about the same distance. Although the district is called the Braes, it is, comparatively speaking, a level country, and but for its high altitude and close proximity to the lofty mountains that surround it, finely adapted for agricultural purposes. As a natural consequence of lying amongst the hills, the climate is very damp and cold, and in many parts the soil, which is naturally good, is very marshy.

When such is the case at the present day, with all the modern advantages of draining and superior cultivation, what must it have been sixty years ago? The Braes were then as wild a piece of country as any part of the Highlands of Scotland presented, and without even a tree on which the eye could rest a moment with pleasure, and inhabited by a race of people peculiar in many respects from their nearest neighbours—a race possessing many of the virtues and failings of the ancient Highlander, and in consequence of the advancement of civilization, possessing fewer than many others of those evils which were the disgrace of feudalism. Their nature presented all the features peculiar to the Celtic character. They were brave, rash, and impetuous, but kind and hospitable to strangers, if they came as friends. Combined with these, they cherished a thorough contempt and abhorrence of law, in whatsoever form it might be administered. Situated as they were within their mountain fastnesses, with no roads, and with little communication with the outside world, and bound together with the ties of friendship and blood, it was no easy matter, when an offence was committed, for the arm of the law to reach them.

This was seen fifty years ago, when the Government had determined to put an end to smuggling, which was then the staple occupation of the inhabitants of the Braes of Glenlivet. They went to it with a spirit and energy, which, had it been shown in the cultivation of the soil, or any other useful industry, the fruits of it would soon have been seen in the improvement of the country, and also of the manners and customs of the people, which, as may be supposed, were not at that time very highly polished. But where smuggling was carried on, they were even worse than elsewhere. It brought with it many evils and no good. It gave the people a lawless spirit, and by the exposure at all times, and at all seasons, which the successful carrying on of such an occupation necessarily involved, the constitutions of the people were undermined, and many of the fruits of that exposure, combined with a little dissipation, are to be seen in some of their descendants at the present day. Otherwise, they were a hardy race of men, men who would have shed the last drop of their blood in their country's

defence, and many of them did so in the Peninsular War, where the Highland Regiments so much distinguished themselves. The firm and determined opposition to the servants of the law, was strikingly shown some fifty years ago, when the preventives for the first time entered the Braes of Glenlivet. The people heretofore had smuggled quietly at home, but now things had come to such a pass that this could no longer be done. They therefore went to the hills with the determination to fight to the last for their "stills," and they knew that in the hills the preventives could not tell one man's bothy from another. In this state of matters, they felt themselves to be secure as long as they could keep the preventives' hands off them, and they likewise knew that the preventives were at a great disadvantage in not knowing the hills. They might search for days and not come upon a single bothy. Some will even hint that they did not wish to find them, that they were afraid to do so. Perhaps this might have been the case with some of the preventives, but as a rule, they did their duty manfully, some of them doubtless overdoing it, and earning the inveterate hatred of the smugglers.

Many are the tales told by men yet living, of the skirmishes which used to take place between the smugglers and the preventives, some of them not altogether free from bloodshed. It was related to me by an old smuggler, that he and several companions (most of whom are still alive), were chased one day among the hills by a superior force of preventives and gaugers with loaded weapons. The smugglers had only one gun and some powder but no lead. It was a very hard frost, and he, to procure a ball for the gun, in the shape of a small stone, knocked the toe from his brogue in the attempt. Fortunate it was perhaps for the whole of them that the attempt was unsuccessful.

This little anecdote, from a trustworthy and highly respectable old man, will show the spirit with which they were possessed, and that they were prepared to go any length in defence of what they considered to be their right. And with all their perseverance, it only brought them ruin and poverty, and it brought them under the lash of the law that fell upon them with crushing force. The well known John

Milne o' Livet Glen wrote a rhyme, and had it printed, in which he described a skirmish which took place in the neighbouring valley of Glencochy. These ballads were sold at 3d. each throughout the neighbouring glens, which so irritated the gaugers and preventives that they procured some copies and sent them to Edinburgh, with a long complaint. The consequence was that a body of soldiers made their appearance soon after, along with the preventives. These gentlemen, finding themselves supported by the red-coats, went to work with such a will that they soon reduced the smugglers to the last extremity. Yet the soldiers did not relish the duty imposed upon them, and some anecdotes are told of their disinclination to support the preventives. One day the preventives were marching up a hill, with the intention of capturing some smugglers who were situated on the brow of it. They commenced to hurl down stones upon the preventives, partly for amusement and partly to annoy them. The preventives, seeing this, shouted loudly to the soldiers to come on. They were taking it quite easy a good distance in the rear. They advanced, however, to the bottom of the hill. The smugglers, on seeing this, desisted, but the officer in command of the soldiers shouted in Gaelic to throw down more. The smugglers at once obeyed, and with such effect that the preventives beat a hasty retreat.

But this was the last of the smuggling on a large scale. The people saw that it would not do. They saw that the Government were in earnest. Some of their countrymen had lain for many a month in Perth jail, and when any of them went away with a cargo of whisky, it was sure to be seized, and many of those who were buying it from them were not paying them. They therefore resolved to stop it, and try something else. Many of the young men left their native glen to drive cattle to England. Others settled down quietly to till the soil, thinking that the severity of the Government had ruined them; but it proved to be the greatest blessing that could possibly have come over them.

## CHAPTER II.

IN these days of fast travelling, fast living, and fast everything, one finds some difficulty in extracting himself from the din and bustle around him, and when this is done, he can scarcely find time to pause and think, and to glance backwards at the doings of our grandfathers sixty years ago. Comparing the position which they held in the world, with the position which we occupy at the present day, and looking at the changes that have taken place since that time, changes certainly great throughout the North of Scotland, every one is willing to admit that the world is now very different from what it was, but the people in the Lowlands of Banff, Moray, and Aberdeen, do not often stop to think of the vast changes that have taken place in the Highlands of the same counties, since the old men amongst us were boys. And in no part of the Scottish Highlands have these changes been more apparent than in the Braes of Glenlivet. The appearance of the country is altered altogether. Nothing is the same, with the exception of the everlasting hills.

Sixty years ago, a stranger visiting the Braes of Glenlivet would have had some difficulty in finding them without a guide. There were no roads leading to them, nothing but a rough mountain track along the sides of hills, through bleak moorlands stretching far and wide, clad in the garment of the north, the tempest defying heather, with here and there a green patch scattered along the burnside, that partly relieved the monotony of the scene. In fact, there was no cultivation worthy of the name. There might have been about 1000 acres under cultivation at that time, with a population of perhaps about 800. At the present day, there are perhaps over 2000 acres cultivated, with a population of little more than half that number, or about 500. This was a strange state of matters. Still it is a fact. The people had no love for cultivation, and their implements were of the rudest and most primitive description. Fancy eight or ten strong oxen drawing a wooden plough, with scarcely so much iron about it as would form the beam of an ordinary plough of the present day, and requiring two men to work it, one to hold the plough, while the other (the gaudsman, as he was

called), guided the oxen. These oxen were of the Highland breed, shaggy brutes, with tremendous horns. Horses were seldom used, unless by the poorer class for ploughing, and these yoked a cow or two along with the horse. The horses were also of the Highland breed, a size larger than the Shetland pony of the present day. Everyone almost had a plough, though very many of them wanted the harness. It was told to me by an old gentleman, still living in the Braes, that there were seven families living in the farm which he occupies at present, and they all had ploughs, but he never saw them all yoked at one time. The one who chanced to be up earliest generally took the liberty of supplying himself with his neighbour's harness. Yet they got on very agreeably and very well.

But in those days, when there was no such thing as drainage, their ploughing and sowing were very often in vain, owing partly to the dampness of the climate, and partly to bad cultivation. Their crops were often late, and, as a natural consequence, frost came and nipped the grain before the grain was nearly ripe for cutting, which is too often the case still. And sometimes it was altogether buried by heavy falls of snow. This the old people ascribe to bad seasons. Perhaps they are right. Be that as it may, it is certain that the poor people were often put to very hard shifts to obtain the means of sustenance. Had it not been for the friendliness of the one to the other, they could not have existed at all. The more fortunate helped their neighbours—an example which their successors would do well to follow. That is one way of solving the mystery of how they lived. But there is another. They believed that a fish from the stream, a bird from the air, or a deer from the hills was the common right of every man, and they helped themselves in those days, almost without let or hindrance. Another mode of obtaining a living was the driving of fir, which they could dig in abundance from the numerous mosses. They drove loads of this to Huntly, a distance of between twenty and thirty miles, and even as far as Insh, and received about 3s. per load, with in addition, perchance, a "bicker o' brose" to the bargain. But some of them often received much less than this. When they got 3s., they considered they were

pretty well paid. Pause and think, reader, of digging fir out of moss several feet deep, drying it, splitting it, and driving it thirty miles for 3s. a load. I fancy that the working men of to-day will smile at this, and at the mention of a "bicker o' brose," turn up their nose besides. This was the principal use that they made of carts. They were scarcely used for work at home, such as driving peats or dung. O! dear no! They had a more ingenious plan for that. A Highland pony was furnished with two creels, called callochs. These were slung on to the pony's back, one on each side. They had slipping bottoms, and when emptying them, the driver had to be careful how he removed the bottoms. If he removed the one before the other, the full one would slip down and cause some trouble. A cord was attached to each of the creels. The two cords were pulled at one time, and the bottoms slipped at once. The dung fell out, and the bottoms slipped back again. They could drive nearly as much peats or manure in that way as they can do yet, if they were not far to drive.

They grew very few turnips in those days, and what they did grow were for man's use. The cattle did not require them. They were like their masters—hardy, and could do with very little feeding. They were simply driven to the hills in the morning with a herd, and taken home at night again. In winter they received an allowance of straw, depending greatly on the season's crop in amount. Clover was out of the question. I remember of an old man telling me that the first clover that came to the Braes, came to a farm where there were a few young maidens, who used to invite the young men down to see them, and get a smell of their clover. It was a wonder in those days. What would the model farmers of the present day think of this style of farming? What would a farmer from the fertile plains of the Lowlands, one who had been accustomed to see bright fields of yellow grain waving joyously in the summer breeze, what would he have thought on visiting this land of "mountain and of flood" sixty years ago, and finding the people living in turf hovels, without a chimney, and sometimes minus a window? It is a fact that there were not over five or six chimneys in the Braes of Glenlivet sixty years ago.

What would such a farmer, as I have mentioned, have thought in beholding a man following the plough without a stocking or shoe on his feet, and in asking him if his feet were cold, to receive the following reply—and such a reply was actually given—that they were “some caul till he got them into the last fur.” I fancy that that farmer would have had some difficulty in convincing himself that he was still in Auld Scotia, particularly so when the wild wailing of a Gaelic song would fall on his ear. Yet this was the case, and within thirty miles of his own trim farm steading.

The people living in the Highland Glens in those days had strange customs. One particularly strange, was the running after a funeral. After they had held the “likewauk,” and the appointed time for the funeral came, the whole of the people in the Braes almost could be seen wending their way round the base of the hills, some on foot, and some on horseback, to meet the procession. The places of interment were a long way from the Braes. Either Kirkmichael, Downan, or Inveraven. After the body had been consigned to its native earth, the race commenced, and never halted until they had reached home again. Their reason for so running is a mystery to me, but run they did, as if a host from the infernal regions had been pursuing at their heels. Probably it was a custom of heathen origin. But if so, the tradition for it, if ever there had been any, has been lost in the mists of time.

Another custom was that called cailley, that is, going to spend the long winter nights in some of the neighbouring houses. The lads and lasses would gather in about—the latter with their work, knitting and such like. Songs and stories would circle round the bright ingle, and wile the time away. A pot of red cabbages would be boiled, and each would receive a castock. On the whole, the people lived happy and contented in those days. No man in the Braes was superior to his neighbour. Therefore, no envy or jealousy caused bad feelings to exist. They would bring vividly before the mind’s eye the patriarchal times. They were splendid specimens of Highlandmen, mentally and physically. They were splendid specimens of the Scottish people—happy, contented, and free.

## THE PRESENT BRAES OF GLENLIVET.

IN the former two chapters I have been trying to give some idea of the Braes of Glenlivet sixty years ago. I now propose to draw a little nearer our own time, and try to depict some of the changes that have taken place in agriculture, in education, and in the manners and habits of the people. It would be tedious to describe minutely every change that has taken place within sixty years. I will content myself therefore with glancing at the more important of these changes.

After the suppression of the smuggling, the people began to look about them for some means of obtaining a livelihood, and as nothing presented itself more agreeable to their tastes than tilling the soil, they were forced to submit to a power which they could not resist, and work hard and earn their bread by the sweat of their brow. They had doubtless great difficulties to contend with. Their implements were rude and unwieldy. Their ploughs were scarcely strong enough to overturn a tough "lea rig." Then they were in a great measure shut up from the outer world, and their means of communication with more advanced districts were small. But even supposing that they had had every facility for communication, they, as a rule, had no money to spare, with which to buy implements of a better description than their own. This state of matters necessarily made the changes slower for a few years than they otherwise would have been, but step by step they advanced, until about thirty-five years ago, when I may say a new era in the history of the Braes of Glenlivet began. About that time the old leases were run out, and the late Duke of Richmond began to take a greater interest in the outlying portions of his estates than he had heretofore done. He came personally to Glenfiddoch, and re-set the farms, adding some new rules which were unknown

previously in this part of the country, among which was the stipulation as to farming in the five shift rotation, a system which an opinion will be given on below.

About the time of the set at Glenfiddoch, a young Roman Catholic clergyman arrived to take charge of the Braes' Mission, and he had no sooner seen the state of the country, and made himself at home in it, than he bent the energies of his powerful mind to one object, viz., the improvement of the Braes, and of the Braes' people; and, as a first step, he applied in the proper quarter to have a road constructed through the centre of the Braes. By dint of perseverance and representation he obtained his object, and a capital road was at length formed to Chapelton. This opened up the Braes, if I may so speak, to the civilized world, and was a powerful stimulus to the people. The effect was soon seen. They began to trade, and likewise to adopt the customs of the low country. They changed the breed of their horses and cattle; and best of all, through the influence of the clergyman before-mentioned, they began to educate their children, which was previously, with very few exceptions, altogether neglected. They were far from that glorious institution, the Parish School, an institution which for centuries held Scotland before the eyes of the world as a country where the poorest received a sound education. They were far from this institution; but a patriotic countryman, a Roman Catholic clergyman, Abbe M'Pherson, who died in Rome, had, some time previous to this, left the bulk of his fortune for the behoof of his native glen—to establish a Roman Catholic Chapel, and Schools for males and females, which he built and endowed. The schools proved to be of incalculable value when in the hands of a vigorous pastor, who obtained good teachers, and indeed, I may almost say compelled, the children to attend. The only chance of education which they previously had was availing themselves of the services of some stray teacher, who sometimes visited the country for a few months in the middle of winter, and converted some pretty central sheep cote into a school for the time being.

But all had changed. Education now began to spread her benign influence abroad, and everything began to advance

with rapid and gigantic strides in the march of progress. Moorlands clad with purple heath were now brought under the dominion of the plough, marshes were drained, and gentle swelling uplands could now be seen clad with the reward of the husbandman's labour, while towering in wild magnificence the mighty ramparts of freedom looked down from their vast heights and seemed to smile on the rich picture spread out at their feet, and at the efforts of their children to convert barren wildernesses into nodding corn fields, and fields of bright green alive with lowing herds. And is it not something to gladden the eye and cheer the heart of the patriot to see his country, the country that he loves, become the home of a steady, industrious, and persevering peasantry, reaping the reward of their arduous toil.

But to return to the subject. The Braes, which fifty or sixty years ago were twenty years behind the Lowlands, were now close at their heels, and in a few more years were alongside of them in the race of improvement. This brings us to the present day, when farmers in the Braes are endeavouring with all their skill to make the "twa ends meet," a task which in these high-lying districts is not so easily accomplished as some may imagine. In fact, owing to the high rate of wages, and to the insecurity of their corn crops, with the cost of artificial manures, farmers, as a rule, say that agriculture will not pay. Yet if it does not pay in the Braes of Glenlivet, I fail to see how it can pay in any other place. They have doubtless difficulties to contend with which Lowland farmers know very little about. The corn crop, as I said, cannot be depended upon, except on a few farms, but then their rents are small in comparison with those of the Lowland farmer. It must be said for them, however, that now-a-days when expenses are so heavy in wages, manures, and every thing the farmer requires, cheap rents are of less consequence than formerly. Rent is only a small item. The great thing is to get good returns, and make more of them in order to meet the increased outlay. In the Braes, with crops alone they could scarcely live. A most important privilege is that they are allowed to keep three sheep for every £1 rent. The hills are free pasture to them all, and one shepherd is engaged to keep them in the

hills, and prevent them from coming down and destroying the green crops.

I will place before the reader a small farm in the centre of the Braes, containing forty-five acres of arable land, the profits and the expenditure of the preceding year, and he can judge for himself. Last year, being a good year, he sold £30 worth of corn, and about £60 worth of cattle and sheep. He is unmarried, and is too old to work for himself, and he must needs engage servants. A man in a year will cost him £28 or £29; a servant girl, £12 or £13; a cattleman, a boy during the winter season, will cost £4; a herd in summer costs £3; he will be £4 for extra servants in the harvest season; he will pay £14 or £15 for artificial manures during the season; £5 for carpenter and blacksmith work; and £20 of rent; making a total of £93. This may be an extreme case, still it is an authentic one. If farmers in the Braes of Glenlivet did not work their farms in a great measure within themselves, some of them would lose by them instead of gain; and their present mode of working is bound, in a few years, to reduce the soil very materially. The five shift system will not do in the Braes of Glenlivet. The soil is naturally cold, and, in many parts, is of no great depth. For turnips, it requires about four cwt. of artificial manure, over and above the home manures. The artificial manures generally used are stimulants, and simply force up a crop, the natural consequence being that the soil is getting shallower every year. In some farms where, seven or eight years ago, the plough could run a hundred or two hundred yards without coming in contact with a single stone of any dimensions, and without any appearance of a bottom, it is now grating on the bottom, and coming into contact with earth-fast stones. What the soil requires is something to feed it, or parts of it left in grass for a few years, so that it could recover itself.

Another great grievance with which the Braes' farmers have to contend is game. A few years ago, whole clouds of grouse could be seen scattered over a single field, immediately after it was cut. And the farmers round the base of the hills have a still worse foe in the winter season, namely, stray deer, who have wandered from their herds in

the forests of Glenaven and Glenfiddoch. These wild denizens of the hills, tamed greatly by hunger, descend during the night, and play dreadful havoc in a field of turnips before morning.

These, with severe seasons, are the disadvantages which the Braes' farmers have to contend with; yet, on the whole, they are pretty comfortable. As a district, the Braes are well cultivated. Some farms will compare favourably with many of the farms in a better climate, and some of the farmers are very good rearers of cattle. But there are many improvements which could still be made. A stranger passing along the road through the Braes would be apt to exclaim, Where are all the gardens which can be seen even at the poorest cottages in the Lowlands? In the Braes there are not a great many "kail-yards." The people appear, as a rule, to have no love for the beauties of nature. As an excuse, some of them will say that "flowers winna grow in this caul place," but few of them try. They do not know whether they will grow or not. Or if they would look at a very few farms and other houses they would see that they will grow. The Braes' people, like too many others, will not beautify their dwellings, simply because they will not pay, and would cost some trouble. They do not believe in gazing on beauty being a pleasure. At least if they do, they will not put themselves to the trouble to beautify in order to gaze on it. They believe in more substantial pleasures than fading flowers. But we hope to see this evil remedied, for what is more beautiful than to see the trim little garden glowing with more beauty than the poet can describe? There are certainly some very beautiful little gardens in the Braes, but why may there not be more? If the people would employ themselves for an hour or two in the summer evenings at gardening, they would soon begin to take a pleasure and an interest in their little plot, and they would be more on a level with other districts.

THE OLD COLLEGE OF SCALAN,  
BRAES OF GLENLIVET.

It is with a strange mixture of feelings that we again turn the attention of the reader to the past. There is a something in the past life of every one that moves the feelings and touches the finest chords of the human heart; and there is in every parish, and in every district, a something to which we pay a certain amount of veneration. No matter what it is—whether it be the fairy knoll, where, of old, those lively gentry held their “merry-go-rounds,” or the grim old ruined tower, with its legends and traditions—the feelings are the same. There is an amount of melancholy, sadness, and curiosity mingled in these feelings. We try to pierce the gloom and the mystery which envelop them, and in doing so, the conviction forces itself upon the mind that everything is unstable—nothing can remain the same. It must either be moving forwards or backwards, and for ever changing. The changes may be imperceptible for a time, but they will soon show themselves. Wander back in imagination through the mist of ages, and behold yon mass of ruins in the height of its power and splendour, battling with and defying the tempest’s mightiest force, and hurling destruction from its embattled walls on the presumptuous assailants beneath; its halls the home of ladies fair and gallant men. Does not the heart yearn to know something more about them and their doings? Yet, if we could scan their hearts and thoughts, we would find that they were in a great measure like ourselves; that they also had a something which they venerated in the past; that they had their legends and traditions sung to them by their bards which fired their imagination, and perhaps roused the same feelings as are roused within us when contemplating all that remains of their glory and greatness.

Yes, reader, it has been the case, in all ages and in all countries, to glance backwards with mixed feelings to the past. And the Braes of Glenlivet has a something which the Braes' people venerate; and, indeed, a great many of the Catholics of Scotland turn their eyes with kindly interest to the parent of Catholic seminaries in Scotland, after the Reformation. When that great event had broken the power of the Church of Rome, and the Presbyterian form of worship had been consolidated, those who yet adhered to the ancient faith, openly, had to fly—for persecution has never been confined to one Church—to the remotest solitudes of the country, there to practise the only form of worship they believed in, and which they stuck to with that dogged determination peculiar to the Scottish people. But a diffused education began to break down the ramparts of bigotry and mistaken zeal, and the Catholics, seeing that they were not so hotly oppressed as formerly, began to entertain the idea of building a college, where a few students could be trained to act as missionaries in Scotland. Accordingly, about the year 1712, Bishop Gordon pitched upon the Scalán, as being a suitable place, and, indeed, one more suitable could scarcely have been selected—chosen, as it was, for concealment. It was at first situated on the western or left bank of the stream called the Crombie, at the southern extremity of the Braes, and about half-a-mile from the foot of the Ben Aven or Cairngorm range of mountains, which form the background. Great care had been taken to render it invisible to the eyes of strangers. Advantage had been taken so minutely of the rises in the ground that it could not be seen until you were quite close upon it.

It was a long, low building, formed mostly of turf, and had accommodation for perhaps about eight students. They enjoyed a sort of stormy tranquillity for some time after its foundation, but there were troubles in store for them. "About the year 1726," says Dr Gordon (who gives some account of Scalán College in his memoirs of Bishop Hay), "the seminary had a visit from armed soldiers, who dispersed the little community, and shut up the house, but," he says, "by the influence of the Duke of Gordon (who was a Catholic), it was re-opened the following year." He likewise

adds that "in 1728 the occupants were again twice dispersed within the short period of two months, but with little permanent damage to the establishment." From that time up to 1746, the students enjoyed peace and tranquillity, but it could not be thought that Cumberland, of Culloden notoriety, could pass calmly an institution of the kind without letting its inmates feel his power. After the defeat of Prince Charlie, one night a message from the lower part of the Braes dashed in upon the astonished students, with the alarming intelligence that a party of soldiers were in search of the building, and the poor students had barely time to escape to the hills, when the ruffians with loud shouts surrounded it, but found, doubtless to their chagrin, that the birds had flown. Though thus cheated of their prey, there was yet something to do, and the students saw with dismay (from their hiding place), in a short time their home enveloped in flames. The soldiers had first ransacked the building and taken out everything of value, including a great part of the library, which was a valuable one, and then set the place on fire. Thereafter, they left satisfied with the work which they had done, but they had not gone far, when they felt the books to be rather burthensome. After some consultation, they decided that the best way to get rid of them was to burn them, and with stupid ignorance, they at once set about it, building them in a pile and then setting them on fire. The spot can yet be pointed out where this took place. By some mistake, probably a willing one, one of the soldiers still retained a book of unusual dimensions. His comrades, however, forced him to give it up, and it would doubtless have shared the same fate as the rest, had not a poor old woman been standing at some distance watching the proceedings. They beckoned to her, and coming forward she received the book, which turned out to be about the most valuable work of which the seminary was possessed.

We can fancy the feelings of the poor students at this juncture, when the soldiers had taken their departure, descending from their hiding places to view only the smoking ruins of their once happy home. It had been for some time previous to this under the superintendence of a priest of the name of Duthie, a convert from Protestantism, and a man

of great natural abilities, indomitable courage, and determination. Had it not been for the efforts of this gentleman, the disaster we have just related would in all probability have put an end to the College at Scaln. He lurked about in the neighbourhood for some time after the departure of the soldiers in a state of inactivity, but finding that they did not return, he, with the assistance of the Braes people, constructed another turf building, which was to give place to a better one before long. A Mr John Geddes arrived from Rome about this time, and about two years later he was appointed to the charge of the Scaln Seminary, which was then in a very dilapidated condition. But a brighter day seemed to be dawning for Scaln. When Mr Geddes arrived, he at once saw the evil and the remedy. He contrived to obtain funds from abroad, and a site from the Duke of Gordon, and then he commenced his work, a work which few would have had the courage to attempt in the face of such difficulties. This was the building of a new and much larger college, on the opposite, or right bank of the stream Crombie, on a beautiful haugh, about sixty or seventy yards from the water. When once fairly commenced, the work proceeded with considerable rapidity. The building was soon finished, but the roofing was a different and a more arduous labour, as may be imagined, when the wood had to be dragged or carried on ponies' backs all the way from Abernethy, over rugged hills, through deep ravines, and foaming torrents. The work was at length finished, however, and the students were transferred from the old turf hovel to a new, and, at that time, spacious dwelling. After the building was made comfortable within, they deemed it advisable to do something for creature comforts, and, consequently, set about enclosing a piece of ground, which they accomplished with a good deal of labour and ingenuity. They enclosed about from fifteen to twenty acres with a wall composed of turf and stones, and afterwards planted it thickly on the top with juniper. This piece of ground was never altogether cultivated—they cultivated no more than served their necessities.

After everything was completed, Bishop Hay arrived to superintend the College, which was now in a very pro-

sperous condition. This was a gentleman of sterling Christian principle, and one that has left a name behind him surpassed by few in the Romish Church as an author. His works are all of a religious nature. They are written with considerable depth of thought, and a thorough insight into the nature of true Christianity. And they are written, too, in a highly cultivated and polished style. He was, moreover, famous as a physician, having served in the Rebellion of 1745-6, under Prince Charles Stuart, as such, and, in this capacity, his talents were of much service to a wide tract of country. His fame soon got abroad, and people flocked to him from all parts of the country. To hear related some of the cures effected by him is truly wonderful, such as casting out devils—which is still believed by some to have taken place—curing madness, and such like. Those who have a weakness for the marvellous will tell tales like these, with such effect, as to make the hair of the degenerate children of the present day stand on end. But, apart from this, doubtless his skill was of great value in such a country, especially to the poor. He never charged anything from any one, but to the poor he generally gave something.

It seemed, however, as if fate was against the Scalan. Its troubles were not yet over. The Bishop's fame was very likely the reason of this. Be that as it may, it was again attacked, and all were nearly captured. The students ran here and there, some one way, some another, and escaped. The Bishop escaped through a window, and made for the hills, leaving his mother the sole occupant of the building. She was an old and infirm woman, not able to shift for herself, and the others had had no time to save her. The soldiers, after searching every corner of the house in vain, at length lighted on the small room where the old woman was sitting, and which was the Bishop's bedroom. They interrogated her as to the whereabouts of her son, but receiving no satisfactory reply, they commenced stabbing the bed with their weapons, thinking, perhaps, that the Bishop might be concealed underneath it. Disappointed in this, they would have vented their rage on the poor old creature by stabbing her, had not the officer in command entered in time to save her, to his immortal honour. This officer seems all along to

have been averse to the duty imposed upon him. Had it not been for his ingenuity in retarding the progress of the men under him by excuses, the whole inmates must inevitably have fallen into their hands. By his commands they retraced their steps, without doing any damage to the College, further than frightening its inmates, and everything soon returned to its former routine.

This was the last attack which they had from the outside world. Yet it seems if they were to have none from the outside, they were to have troubles at home, for soon after this the whole building was accidentally set in flames, which soon reduced it nearly to a heap of ruins, in spite of all the efforts which were put forth to save it. However, they immediately set about repairing the injury as far as possible, and in doing so they added another storey to its height, making it now two storeys, with a garret above. This was effected principally through the exertions of Bishop Hay, who now had the students under him in a high state of advancement. There are some strange anecdotes told about this Bishop. I select one from a few. One day while sitting in his study, and finding the time to hang rather heavily on his hands, sent the servant girl out to see what time it was. The girl had very probably never before seen a sun-dial in her life, as the sequel will show. She went round and round it, and touched it several times, as she afterwards related, but still the thing, as she called it, gave no sign. Not knowing very well what to do, she seized it bodily in her arms and dragged it with all her strength into the room, and laid it down beside the Bishop, interrupting, doubtless, the right reverend gentleman in his studies.

But a brighter day was in store for the Catholics of Scotland. The penal laws which heretofore had been so hard against them were now slackening, and the students, inured to all the hardships of a Highland life at that time, were now to enjoy the same liberty and comfort as their fellow-countrymen. They wore the Highland dress. It would doubtless astonish both the clerical gentlemen and others of the present day, to see a Right Reverend Bishop stalking in a kilt and tartan hose, but such undoubtedly was the case. As I said, however, the laws against them were

now slackening, and were soon to be repealed altogether. This induced them to abandon the seminary at Scalán, for a more suitable one at Aquhorties, Aberdeenshire, and from thence to Blair's College on Deeside. Scalán was abandoned in 1799, yet possession was held until 1807, by a priest of the name of Sharp, better known as Professor Sharp. This gentleman tilled the soil, sowed the corn, and reaped it, but at length he left it to the mercy of the everlasting and changing winds, which soon made fearful inroads upon it. It resembles at the present day a farm house of the better class, but rather longer. It is now occupied by Mr M'Grigor, farmer, who has repaired it greatly outside, and made many improvements upon the interior of it. It gives Mr M'Grigor the greatest of pleasure to show the building to visitors, and to tell them all he knows concerning it.

I have just learned what may seem a thing of no importance to many, namely, that one of the shelves of the library now supports a hide or two of leather for a shoemaker. Doubtless you will be inclined to say that that is necessary, and so it is; but think for a little, and I imagine, reader, that you will agree with me. If we may venture to bring down the saying of "How are the mighty fallen," from persons to things, it would be applicable in this case. That shelf once supported the brain work of the greatest men that ever graced this world—statesmen, philosophers, poets, and sages of the once mighty empires of Greece and Rome. But such is the fate of men and nations, as well as of the most insignificant things—to-day great, to-morrow poor, and in a short time sinking into oblivion to give place to something new. All, all is changing, and all must pass away.

## INVERAVEN AND LOWER GLENLIVET.

IT was twenty minutes to ten a.m. in the end of April when I stepped into a carriage at Keith Station. I had scarcely seated myself when the whistle sounded, and the train glided away from the station. A few moments brought us to Earlsmill, where there was a short bustle, and then we moved rapidly up the valley of the Isla. We passed the fine modern Castle of Drummuir, and were soon whirling past Loch Park, where long-necked swans and speckled wild ducks were sporting in the sunlit waters. On went the snorting horse of iron, and soon the hoary walls of Balvenie's ancient stronghold frowned down upon us from amid the "evergreen pines" that shelter its shattered strength from the tempests that rage in our northern land. Halting for a short time at Dufftown, I gazed down at the new Castle of Balvenie, a plain, square block of building, that is going fast to decay. Rushing on again down the beautiful Vale of Fiddoch, we pass Kininvie, the ancestral seat of the Leslies. Soon we are among the rocks and deep ravines of Craigellachie. Changing carriages here, we are soon rushing along Strathspey. Gazing abroad as we speed onwards at the far-famed Strath, and contemplating its varied beauties, I caught a look of Craigellachie Bridge, a structure that was deemed when built a triumph of engineering skill. There is another Craigellachie, far up the Spey, which of old gave the Clan Grant its war-cry of "Stand fast, Craigellachie." Lower Craigellachie had also connection with the war-cry in this way. The whole of Strathspey between the two Craigellachies once belonged to the Grants, and does so still in a great measure. When danger was apprehended, a beacon fire was lit on the two Craigellachie rocks, hence the name "Rock of Alarm." The bearer of the fiery cross was at once despatched from both ends, and in a few hours the whole of the powerful clan would be astir. Gazing out at

the carriage window, I could picture the excited Highlander speeding along by height and hollow rousing his kinsman, when the dream was suddenly dispelled. The train entered a tunnel with a rushing noise—a female gave a loud shriek—and we were in darkness, but only for a minute. Daylight rapidly appeared, and in a short time we drew up at the beautiful little village of Aberlour. Near this is Aberlour House, the seat of Dr Proctor since the death of his relative, Miss M'Pherson Grant. Leaving Aberlour, with its dark woods and beautiful Parish Church, where Dr Sellar ministers to the people, we are again tearing along to Carron, where there is another mansion, inhabited by the Laird of Carron. On we went again to Blacksboat and Ballindalloch. When nearing the latter station, a fine view is got of the Parish Church and Manse of Inveraven, situated on a little height overlooking the Spey. The church outside has an ancient appearance, but the interior has been modernised and beautifully fitted up. Improvements have also been made in the churchyard. Mr M'Lauchlan is minister of Inveraven; an excellent preacher, and a favourite of the people. The train is moving slowly across the fine bridge that spans the Spey here, and in a short time stops at Ballindalloch. I step out, and hand my ticket to the clever-looking official who is waiting for it, exchange greetings with Mr Mackie, the popular station agent, then saunter away to have a look around.

Leaving the station by the road leading into the country, I observed a branch, or rather continuation, of the same road which leads into Cragganmore Distillery, a name that is familiar to many Scotchmen, not only on account of the excellent quality of the dew that is distilled there, but on account of Mr Smith, the enterprising proprietor. Mr Smith in early life had many difficulties to contend with, but through force of character and indomitable perseverance he surmounted them all, and now occupies a very influential position in Inveraven, and carries on an extensive trade. Moving on for more than half-a-mile the district is not very attractive, but by and bye the woods of Ballindalloch are seen on the left. Advancing, the scene gets more beautiful. The song of birds is heard, the slight breeze rustles among the

trees, and in a small opening the Castle of Ballindalloch, the seat of Sir George M'Pherson Grant, Bart., and M.P. for the combined Counties of Moray and Nairn, is seen peeping through. Soon the fine farm of Lagmore is reached, which Sir George farms himself. On a little further, and there is the remains of a circle of standing-stones. If there had ever been a mound in the centre, it is all away. A short distance further, and I pass a beautiful little female school which Lady M'Pherson Grant erected. A little way further, and the Post Office of Ballindalloch is reached, where there are a number of houses inhabited by interesting local men. Among them is Mr Ferguson, a man of varied talents, and a worshipper of the muses. Moving down a steep brae here, and I halt on the Bridge of Aven. It is a long, narrow bridge,\* shaded by large and graceful trees. Looking over the bridge, one feels a strange creeping steal over the frame as they gaze into the dark pool beneath. The great depth makes it dark, inky looking. The Aven is one of the clearest and brightest streams in Britain, or in the world. Crossing the bridge, we reach the porter's lodge, a turreted building, two storeys in height, built apparently to resist intruders. The gateway forms an arch. One side is founded on a rock. Above the arch is the Ballindalloch coat of arms quartered, consisting of a ship and shield, with stars repeated. These are guarded by two men almost nude, bearing the motto, "Touch not the Cat but a glove." Entering the archway, we proceed along the winding drive to the castle.

Ballindalloch Castle is a structure combining the past and the present—the castellated stronghold, and the modern mansion. It is said to be one of the best specimens of Scottish castellated architecture. Over the doorway is a Scriptural quotation, "Ye Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in." On one side is "Erected 1546," and on the other "Restored 1850." Within there are many fine paintings by eminent artists, including some by Juan de

\* This bridge was built by the late General Grant in the year 1800. One was erected two years before on the same site, but was carried away by a flood. The present one withstood the full force of the flood of 1829. There is a stone in it which states that the water rose to the height of nearly four feet above the arches.

Castillo and Sir H. Raeburn. In the lobby there is a collection of arms, ancient and modern, from many lands. It has, of course, like all buildings of the kind, its legend and supernatural visitor. At Ballindalloch this visitor assumes the form of a lady, dressed in green, hence the name of "the green room," that is applied to one of the rooms. Tradition does not state why this lady visits the castle, and the green room in particular; but it is inferred that when no "devilish cantraps" are played, she must be watching over the welfare of the inmates. The Ballindalloch family have from the earliest times been staunch patriots, loving their country, and sticking by the people when sovereigns of the "divine right" school threatened their liberties. This made the Marquis of Montrose pay Ballindalloch a visit not exceedingly friendly in its way, when it is understood that he was carrying out the Royal command to relieve him, and all others that cherished similar notions, of "goods, gear, and haill biggin." But those troublous times have fled, and the kilted Highlander, grizzled and grim, is a creature of the imagination. The woods of Ballindalloch near the castle alone point to the past as something tangible, something that the practical mind can comprehend, showing as they do that our fathers, though rude, had an eye for the beautiful, and at the same time an eye for the profitable, when they planted some of the fine trees about Ballindalloch.

The present proprietor, Sir George, is what is called a popular laird. A farmer himself, and a highly successful breeder of the celebrated Polled cattle, he has made himself known, not only to farmers in this country, but also to every eminent agriculturist in Europe and America. Encouraged by his example, many of the Inveraven farmers have also become rearers of cattle. Mr Robertson, Burnside, has been amongst the most successful.

Leaving Ballindalloch Castle, we struck into a footpath leading into the wood. Pursuing it for a considerable distance, the high road was at length gained immediately below Delnashaugh Inn. Entering this thriving establishment, we had some refreshment, ere proceeding up the country. While enjoying a quiet smoke, and taking a look of the beautiful valley of the Aven, near Delnashaugh, I was joined by another

pedestrian, who would accompany me almost to the Bracs of Glenlivet. This was indeed agreeable news, more especially when he was intelligent, and could crack a joke with zest. He was no other than Mr James Turner, Auchnarrow, a gentleman known by everybody between the Clash and the Craggan, and a great deal further. Our spirits rose at the prospect of a journey together, and bidding Mr Strathdee and his son, Alick, goodbye, we sallied forth from the inn as gay and light-hearted a couple as ever trod the heather. It was a long walk, but we pursued it rapidly, pausing now and then to gaze on some scene of beauty. Passing the Bridge of Tommore, we recalled an incident mentioned in the old "Statistical Account of Scotland" regarding the fate of the first bridge built over this burn. General Grant, proprietor of Ballindalloch, built a very fine bridge of two arches, from eight to twelve feet wide, for the convenience of the Morinsh tenantry. But in 1782, the burn, swelled to an enormous size by heavy rains, swept the bridge clean away, together with the meal mill of Tommore and all its implements. This disaster is now forgotten. The bridge now looks an old one, and seems likely to weather many a tempest; and the mills of Tommore are now thriving in the hands of the enterprising tenant, Mr Peter Grant. We soon passed Delherroch, tenanted by Mr Hay, Inspector of Poor in the Parish of Inveraven. Moving on, the scene spread out on the right surpasses description. Nature is predominant. Woods crown picturesque heights, with here and there a cultivated field, and in the background the bold, dark, heathery hills. It is a land of light and shadow. Juniper bushes, clumps of birch, and great grey boulders are strangely intermingled. On the opposite side of the Aven from where we were gazing stands Kilmachlie, on a little height, overlooking a level plain between it and the Aven. The situation is very pleasant. The Aven sweeps along through the alluvial haughs in front of the house, and a birch-clad hill rises behind it, guarding it from the tempest. Kilmachlie was at one time an estate, and was owned by a relation of the Ballindalloch family. The district of Morinsh was usually rented by the occupier of Kilmachlie from the laird of Ballindalloch. Near Kilmachlie, at a farm called

Chapelton, there was once a Roman Catholic chapel and burying ground, but all traces of them have long since been obliterated. We have been so much occupied in describing the scene on the right hand, that the one on the left was nearly forgotten. After leaving the Bridge of Tommore, the hill of Cairnokay, rugged and bare, and covered with gigantic boulders, runs along the whole way for a distance of four or five miles. General Grant, who built the unfortunate Bridge of Tommore, also constructed a road over this hill to Morinsh, to facilitate communication with the tenantry of that district. Moving on again, we soon reach the Free Church of Inveraven, situated at Craggan. It is a good, substantial looking building of moderate size. Near it is the manse, a plain, unpretentious building, with a neat little garden in front of the house. A little above this there are two large stones, whose history is closely connected with the church. One is marked Moderator's seat, April 1846, and the other "Clerk's Table." The reader will at once understand that these stones refer to the time of the Disruption in the Church of Scotland, 1843. The Free Church party in Inveraven, like many more of their brethren, had no suitable house wherein to conduct public worship, consequently they were forced to take the hillside, with the great dome of Heaven for a canopy. It was here where the Free Presbytery of Aberlour met in 1846, and a wooden church was erected soon after. These troublous times have passed away, but their consequences still remain, though softened to a considerable extent. Let us cherish the hope that the day is not far distant when the parts of a great Church, now separated, may be gathered together, united in mind and in strength. When that happy day comes, and it will come, Scotchmen will be able to look back to the Disruption in the National Church as a crisis that did a vast amount of good, and they will be able to look to the future with confidence.

Leaving the Free Church of Craggan, we began to climb a birch-clad height, nature's boundary between the districts of Glenlivet and Inveraven proper. Standing on this natural rampart, we gaze up the Strath, and the eye at once alights on Drumin, beautiful, smiling Drumin, the lovely residence of Mr Skinner, factor for the Duke of Richmond and Gordon.

Nearer our standpoint is the Dune of Delmore, a picturesque eminence, signifying mound. These dunes are pretty numerous in the Highlands, many of them being artificial, and crowned with ruins of vast antiquity. The Dune of Delmore has, if we mistake not, the remains of a circle of standing stones. Tradition states that there was once a burying ground on it. We do not doubt this. Standing stones are generally supposed by archaeologists to mark places of sepulchre, the fabulous Druidical circle, with all its interesting and romantic associations, being now unscrupulously banished as mythical. But we doubt very much if ever there had been a burying ground in the dune in the ages of Christianity. Still nearer our standpoint are the Haughs of Delmore, a beautiful piece of wavy land. Moving down from the height of Craggan, we traverse rapidly the intervening space between us and the road leading to Drumin. We strike off the main road here, and walk across to Drumin. We cross the Livet by a fine wooden bridge erected some years ago, when the piece of new road was made leading past Drumin away to Strathaven. Following this road a little way, we are soon in front of Drumin, where Mr Phimister, in the absence of Mr Skinner, received us with the greatest kindness and courtesy. After showing us the rich garden, and the new wing lately added to the mansion, we wandered away to have a look at the old Castle of Drumin.

The origin of the old Castle of Drumin is shrouded in mystery, and all our efforts to learn much of its early history have failed. The ruin, though considerable, is insufficient to give any adequate knowledge of its architecture; but if anything can be guessed from the style, we would say that it dates from about the end of the eleventh or beginning of the twelfth century. There is a legend connected with its origin which I have gathered, but it is simply a legend. It runs thus. Far away back in the misty past there lived in Strathaven or Glenlivet, I am not sure which, a powerful chief called Roderick. In all the neighbouring glens and straths there was no man could handle a bow or lead a foray like Roderick. All men looked up to him with reverential fear, and he was universally acknowledged as the lord of Strath-

aven and Glenlivet. He resolved to build a castle, and build it so strong that no foe in this world, or in the spirit land, should be able to wrest it from him. The castle was begun, and nearly finished, when one day the master mason, who had conceived a dislike for Roderick, and knowing his love for the bow, determined, if possible, to effect his ruin by his favourite weapon at the earliest opportunity. He had not to wait long. One day he espied a small bird perched on the top of a tree, at a distance which he thought it would be impossible to touch it. He proposed to Roderick that if he shot the bird, the building of the castle would cost him nothing, and if he missed the bird, the castle should become his. The reckless chief at once accepted the challenge, and drawing an arrow, he fitted it into the bow. Taking steady aim, he let go the string, and the arrow sped onward, and brought down the bird. Roderick glanced triumphantly at the mason, and shouted it is dead, though it were the king. The mason said nothing, but next morning he was nowhere to be found. Roderick cared not. He had won the wager, and he meant to stick by it, knowing well that the mason could not prevent him. Alas for Roderick's dream of security. One night, a few months after the disappearance of the mason, Roderick was holding high wassail, when a henchman rushed into the room, conveying the startling intelligence that the castle was surrounded by the King's forces, and that Roderick was charged with threatening the King's life. The mason had represented to the King that when Roderick shot the bird he shouted "I wish it were the King." Roderick had to escape by a secret passage, and flee to the hills. When the castle had been searched, and Roderick could not be found, the army returned, leaving Roderick's eldest son in possession of Drumin, after making him swear that he would never admit his father within the walls. When Roderick returned, his son would not allow him to enter, but hounded him away. He then went to Kilmachlie, where his second son lived, who received him with open arms, and gave him shelter. Roderick called him "Kin' Michaely," Michael being his name, and ever after this place was known as Kinmachlie. Such is the legend of Drumin Castle. As to the name Kilmachlie, I suspect it

has been got in another way. Scotch was not spoken in Glenlivet in those days. Gaelic was the only language spoken, and it is within the past sixty years that it has died in the upper part of the district. I am of opinion that Kil-machlie is a corruption of Kyle Michael, meaning in English Michael's wood.

What is left of the old Castle of Drumin is in an excellent state of preservation. It consists of one strong tower of solid masonry, and the ivy that is slowly creeping up the walls gives it a hoary appearance. The position is striking and beautiful, and the ruins of the grim old castle give an additional enchantment to the scene. It is a link between the past and the present; between the barbarous feudal times and the enlightened institutions of the nineteenth century. It points with stony finger to the days when might was right, and law was the broad claymore. It requires no stretch of imagination to picture the half naked Highlander, pushing through the tangled brake, or creeping stealthily along the bleak hillside, hunting the red deer or watching the fox. What a change from the Drumin of that day, and the Drumin of to-day! Then all was rude, and the beautiful haughs were uncultivated. Then the red deer, and the wild boar, and the bison bounded through field and forest, and bathed their panting sides in the clear, cool waters of the Aven or the Livet. Now Drumin is one of the finest farms in Banffshire. The land is cultivated in the best manner known, and the sleek-sided Polled cattle browse on the rich fields, and bathe in the flashing streams; and the song of birds, intermingled with the hoarse cry of the crow—of which Drumin is a favourite rendezvous—cheers the merry ploughman as he whistles over the lea. Such is the present Drumin. Mr Skinner is an enterprising farmer, and his herd of Polled cattle is rivalled by few in Britain. Cattle from Drumin and Ballindalloch have entered the lists in many lands, and conquered. This is so well known, and is so well described by abler authors, that it need not be repeated by me; but who could pass Drumin, and say nothing about its cattle? Drumin was also the residence of the famous Marshall, the composer of so many well-known strathspeys. It was also at Drumin where Argyle camped with

his army the night before he suffered the crushing defeat at Altachulichan, at the hands of Huntly. But the sun hath passed meridian, and we must hasten into other scenes of interest. Ere leaving, we gave another look at the grim old tower where "Dark Roderick of Drumlin" lived, and then turned away.

Re-crossing the Livet, we moved up the road as rapidly as possible, passing several houses on the left side, among which was a fine new cottage inhabited by Mr Phimister, and another by Mr Grant, forester. We soon reached Downan, where another road strikes across the Livet, away to Minmore, past the school of Croftness. We went and had a look at the bridge, which we were told had a narrow escape when it was all but finished, by the sudden rising of the stream. Immediately below the bridge is the Linn of Livet. The linn was destroyed by the Braes people many years ago, to allow salmon to get up the stream. We turned back to the main road. At this point is the ancient burying ground of Downan, one of the most beautiful and best situated burying grounds that it has been my fortune to see. It is a little sequestered nook close by the banks of the Livet, and is enclosed by a substantial stone wall. Inside the living shrubs weep over the graves of the dead, and the spectral looking headstones peep from among them, telling the stranger who rests beneath. In one corner within the enclosure can still be traced the last remnants of a Roman Catholic chapel, said to have been destroyed by the troops of Argyle when on the march to meet Huntly at the Battle of Glenlivet. It is probable that the little church was rebuilt after the defeat of Argyle, when the blood-stained Cumberland rested his gloating eyes upon its quiet, unpretentious beauty. Whether it was rebuilt or not, the ruffian soldiery demolished what was left of it. A legend still lingers in the district to the effect that when Sir John M'Lean, the gallant and powerful chief of the M'Leans, lay mortally wounded at the Battle of Glenlivet, he expressed a wish to those who stood near him that his body might be taken and buried at the chapel of Downan, where there would never be a word of English spoken above him. Poor M'Lean. He loved the Celtic race, and the language of his fathers, much more than

the men of Glenlivet. Three centuries have not elapsed since those words were supposed to have been uttered, and at the present day it is nearly as rare to hear a word of Gaelic—the mysterious and poetic tongue of the mountains—as it would have been then to hear a word of English. Leaving Downan, we moved on to Bridgend, where there are several houses. We called on Mr W. Dawson, clothier, and experienced his hospitality. Bridgend is one of the most beautiful spots in Glenlivet. The name is taken from an old hunch-backed bridge of two arches, that is said locally to have been built by Marshal Wade. This is a mistake. It might have served as a model for Wade, but I am doubtful if he built it. The old “Statistical Account” states rather vaguely that it was built by some of the Marquises of Huntly. Moving on again, we pass the large farm of Deskie, tenanted by Mr Bennet; and on the opposite side of the stream Tervie, is the farm of Tombreakachie, tenanted by Mr Stables. This fine farm was very much improved and enlarged by the late Captain Grant, Auchorachan. About three quarters of a mile further up the Tervie stands the meal mill of Tombreakachie, a place of considerable antiquity for a mill. After the Battle of Altachulichan, it is said that the mill stream ran red with blood for twenty-four hours, and some say for three days. Striking off the main road there, we crossed the Livet to have a look at Minmore, where the far-famed Glenlivet whisky is manufactured.

The Glenlivet Distillery was commenced shortly after the suppression of smuggling by the present proprietor's father, and has successfully maintained the prestige of the name which the smuggling gave it. The name of Glenlivet whisky is known wherever the English language is spoken, and is steadily making way in many lands. There is little use to attempt to eulogize the quality of Glenlivet whisky; its qualities are so well known, that such an attempt seems to me to be superfluous; but the spot where the whisky is made is perhaps not quite so well known. Situated on an incline, it commands a wide view of mountain, vale, and wood, a situation that is truly Highland. Under the enterprising management of the proprietor, Major Smith, it is ever being added to, and the business extended. The trade is something

enormous, the demand being at all times greater than can be supplied. Such an industrial work must necessarily affect the district. The number of labourers required to carry on the work makes the lower part of Glenlivet at least destitute of men out of employment. Consequently the influence of Major Smith is felt, not only in Glenlivet, but in the surrounding districts. In the work, Major Smith is most ably supported by Mr M'Conachie, the manager, a gentleman of great business capacity, and a universal favourite wherever he is known. To the distillery is attached one of the largest and finest farms in Glenlivet. I am not aware if Major Smith enters the list as a cattle breeder; but if he does not, the reason is not far to seek, when his mind is so much occupied otherwise. To rear a herd of cattle of any breed, if it is pure, requires, as most people know, a great deal of time and attention. Ere leaving Minmore, we had a look of an additional store that is being erected. We found it to be a store which I thought would be sufficient in itself to hold all the whisky which could be manufactured at the Glenlivet Distillery for a twelvemonth, being a hundred feet square. My opinion was received with a smile.

Leaving the far-famed Glenlivet Distillery, after having tasted its waters, we strode away to see the old Castle of Blairfindy, situated a few minutes' walk southward from Minmore. We found the old house rapidly going to decay. The situation is prominent enough, but unlike Drumin, is not attractive. It was probably built by some of the Marquises of Huntly as a shooting seat. One thing is certain, it has never been a strongly fortified tower, nor is it very ancient, as can be seen by a stone in the wall bearing the date 1565. The chief event in its history was the lodging for one night of the second Marquis of Huntly. He was captured at Delnabo, near Tomintoul, and was carried prisoner to the Tower of Blairfindy, for adherence to the cause of Charles I. From Blairfindy he was conveyed to Edinburgh, where he soon after suffered the same fate as his royal master. Leaving the shattered old ruin, we turned down, and recrossed the Livet, and after a short walk reached Auchbreck, where the Parish Church and Manse are situated. The church has lately been renovated and enlarged, and the ground around

it planted with trees and shrubs. In a few years these trees and shrubs will beautify and adorn a spot which, without them, would look cold and uninviting. It is evident that the church has been built more for convenience—that is to accommodate all the districts of the parish—than for beauty of situation. The object has been fairly well attained. Auchbreck is about the centre of the lower part of Glenlivet, and is by no means a great distance from the furthest outlying parts of Morinsh. Morinsh is a district lying between Glenrinnes and Glenlivet. As before mentioned, it belongs to the Ballindalloch estates. Morinsh has some very good farms, and the people are credited with being energetic. In the cattle trade Mr Smith, Mullochard, has given his native Morinsh a name among dealers. The high road from Duftown to Tomintoul traverses Glenrinnes and Morinsh, and joins the Ballindalloch road at Auchbreck. This road was first constructed by one of the Dukes of Gordon at his own expense. Near the junction is the Post Office, kept by Mr Grant. Mr Tindal is minister of Glenlivet. His name will be remembered long after he will have been gathered to his fathers for his connection with the improvements of the Parish Church. Internally it is said to be the handsomest church in the Presbytery. Leaving Auchbreck, we moved up the glen, passing Aucharachan on the left hand, a large and beautiful farm tenanted by Captain Grant, who is also agent for the North of Scotland Bank in Glenlivet. Capt. Grant has a fine herd of Polled cattle. On a little further and we passed Nevie, another magnificent farm, tenanted by Mr Gordon. Between Aucharachan and Nevie is a small stream called the Burn of Nevie. Many years ago, before the repeal of the penal statutes against Roman Catholics, there was a small chapel hid somewhere about this burn, called Chapel Christ, where mass was said at twelve o'clock at night. The site cannot now be discovered. Almost immediately below this, close by the Livet, is the picturesque haugh where the Glenlivet Games are held; while on the opposite side of the valley is the fine farm of Blairfindy, tenanted by Mr Grant. Moving on again, we soon reached Tomnavoulin, where a road strikes away from the main one leading up Livet side

to the Chapel of Tombea, and from thence, following the course of the stream, it enters the Braes of Glenlivet. This is the most beautiful road in upper Glenlivet. For more than two miles it is like an avenue, being lined on both sides with natural birches, whose branches in some parts almost kiss the flashing waters of the Livet. On a summer evening a walk on this road is delightful. The buzz of insects, the song of birds, the murmuring of the stream, and the perfume of the birches induce a feeling of calm tranquillity and repose. About half way between Tomnavoulin and the Braes is the R.C. Chapel and farm of Tombea. The situation of the chapel is pleasant, and is fitted up inside with great taste and elegance. It contains a very fine painting presented by the late Earl of Fife. A school is kept here, taught by a female, for training the Catholic youth in the lower part of Glenlivet. Close beside the chapel is the burying ground, enclosed by a substantial stone wall. It contains some good headstones. If an improvement might be suggested, I would say that a few shrubs would give additional enchantment to a spot that nature has done so much for. A little above the chapel is the farm of Tombea, tenanted by the clergyman, the Rev. Charles M'Donald. Mr M'Donald, though a clergyman, is an advanced agriculturist, and rears some of the best crops and some of the best cattle in Glenlivet. Near this the stream Crombie, which drains a large portion of the Braes, and is an excellent trout stream, falls into the Livet. About a mile above Tombea can still be traced part of the foundation of the old R.C. Chapel of Candakyle, which long served as a place of worship to all the Catholics in Glenlivet. Now, however, there are two, one in the Braes and another at Tombea.

Having mentioned the most interesting spots in this part of Glenlivet, we must now turn back to Tomnavoulin, and move up the Tomintoul road. Crossing a bridge which spans the Livet, we move up a steep brae and reach the farm of Tomnavoulin, tenanted by Mr Grant, an enterprising farmer. There is a legend connected with this farm which I may mention. Hamish-an-duem, *i.e.*, James of the Hill, a noted freebooter of the seventeenth century, had been captured and sent to Edinburgh jail. Gazing through the

bars of his prison window one day, he saw Grant of Tomnavoulin passing by. He shouted to Grant, "What news from Strathspey?" Grant replied rather curtly, "Nothing in particular; but we are all glad to be rid of you." Hamish replied, "Perhaps we may meet again." He kept his word. Having escaped by means of a rope which his wife sent him hid in a cask of butter, he soon found his way to his native hills. Calling at Tomnavoulin, he reminded Grant of their short conversation in Edinburgh. Grant affected to laugh at it, and invited Hamish to stay all night with him. Hamish declined, but proposed that Grant and his son should accompany him a little way. This they consented to do, and started. They had not gone far when the robber chief suddenly drew his claymore, and, with two sweeps of it, decapitated father and son. Lifting the gory heads, he wrapped them in his plaid and strode back to Tomnavoulin, and, with a fiendish laugh, tossed them into Mrs Grant's lap, and shouted, "I have my revenge," and left the house. Moving upwards from Tomnavoulin, we pass the Public School, on one side of the road, taught by Mr Hunter, and Mr Stuart's, clothier, on the other; then pass through a deep moss pursuing our way onward. The road here begins to rise, and the country assumes another aspect. Great masses of hills are seen rearing their storm-swept summits to the blast. On one side, cultivation almost ceases, and the country is devoid of trees. On the other side, the swelling fields of the farm of Croftbain, tenanted by Mr Grant, gives the country an agricultural aspect. Looking beyond the fields, a magnificent view is obtained of the Livet ere it reaches Tombea, twisting along between two great hills, whose birch-clad bases shelter the flashing stream, that seems like a huge serpent dropped from heaven, with the dark heather-clad hills rising beyond, makes the scene a beautiful one. Passing Croftbain, the country gets more rugged and wild. The road winds along the side of a hill, and below a steep, rugged brae reaches down to a small mountain stream that gurgles along its difficult course, finding its way to the Livet. Soon, however, the eye alights on the green fields of Auchnarrow. By-and-bye, we reach Knockandhu, a straggling hamlet composed mainly of crofts. In Knockandhu is

the Pole Inn, kept by Mr M'Hardy, where the traveller will find the "real Glenlivet," unpolluted by vicious drugs, or anything else that will harm the human system. In the same building is a shop kept by Mr M'Hardy's son. A few yards from the Inn, the road leading to the Braes of Glenlivet strikes away from the Tomintoul road. This being our road, we move along it. A hill is on one side, and the farms of Knockandhu and Auchnarrow on the other. The former is tenanted by Mr Gordon, and the latter by Mr Turner. Mr Turner has made himself famous as a rearer of Highland sheep. His tups have carried many prizes, and are eagerly sought after by judges of the breed. The farm is one of the largest in the upper district, and its broad and highly-cultivated fields are pleasant to the eye of the agriculturist. Auchnarrow produced some gallant soldiers, among whom was Major Grant, a soldier of great daring, who lost one of his legs in the Peninsular War. In Highland legend it is also famous, as being a favourite residence of the far-famed Highland witch, Meg Mulloch. Many weird tales are told of this remarkable woman, whose name has come down to posterity. I may just cite one, as showing the particular fancy which she had for the Grants of Auchnarrow. One day some unexpected visitors arrived at Auchnarrow. The goodwife busied herself in preparing refreshment for them. With Highland hospitality, she gave the best that the house afforded. She lamented to the servant girl that she had no cheese. No sooner had she said so than two large "kebboks" came rolling to her feet, and a voice sung out, "Anything more." The servant got frightened, but her mistress simply remarked that they came from her friend Maggie. Moving on, we passed in a short time the school of Auchnarrow, taught by Miss Cameron; and soon entered the Braes of Glenlivet—a vast amphitheatre, wherein live bonnie lasses and gallant men.

## THE MOSSES OF GLENLIVET.

Moss is a matter of the highest importance to most of the dwellers in Highland glens, for to them it is almost essential to their existence, and their rapid consumption will soon make them a matter of even greater importance than they now are. But mosses are a very interesting subject to more than the consumers of peat fuel. They afford a rich field for the study of such men as the botanist, the naturalist, the geologist, and the antiquarian; and through their researches a faint glimmer of light has been thrown on the unwritten history of our country in those periods when the inhabitants of these islands had not learned the art of writing.

Glance for a moment at that busy workman toiling away, with the sweat running down his furrowed and weather-beaten cheek. Suddenly his spade strikes against something, and on turning it out he finds it to be the remains of what had once been an immense flat horn. He looks at it curiously for a moment, then throws it aside. By and bye the antiquarian hears about it, and, with the aid of his friend the naturalist, he tells the astonished workman that that horn once ornamented the noble head of *Cervus Alces*, a species of deer now extinct in Great Britain; but which then bounded in security through the dark and silent avenues of the primeval forest.\* Yes, a light has been thrown on ages far beyond the time when the Roman eagles had stooped to conquer—a light which dashes to pieces some theories which, fifty years ago, it would have been deemed sacrilege to doubt.

But to the subject. When Britain was an archipelago of wintry islands, as Hugh Miller and others have it (that is

\* This is no fancy sketch. Such a horn was actually found in the moss of Vautuck, and is in the possession of Rev. J. Glennie, R.C. clergyman, Inverurie. It was identified by Canon Greenwell, Durham, who informs me that he only knows of another instance where a similar horn has been found in Scotland.

long before Moses was born), there certainly was no moss, and when the parts which are mossy (that is the hollows or flats), were sunk in the depths of ocean, there was no vegetation. Yet, I am of opinion that, when these islands formed part of the ocean's bed, a foundation was being laid for a soil on which in future ages the moss was to rest. The action of glaciers is well known to geologists; how they tear along, grinding rocks to powder in their crushing march. This powder settled down to the bottom of the sea, and was whirled by the action of the water into the hollows and on to the flats, forming the stiff boulder clay which underlies all the mosses in Glenlivet.

With regard to the formation of moss itself, all authorities are agreed that stagnant water forms its first beginning, either from some obstruction to the natural drainage of the country or otherwise. Stagnant water nourishes a species of aquatic plants called *Hyprum Flustans*, which float about without any basis of support. When these *Sphagna* come to maturity the lower parts decay, and the whole sink to the bottom, giving place to others, and so on, until what was once water becomes a sort of quaking bog, and in time consolidates into firm moss. I am of opinion that the low-lying mosses of Glenlivet took their origin in this way. At present, on the broad flats on the top of the high range of hills on the east side of the Braes, *Trichostomum Lanuginosum*, or the woolly fringe moss, is growing extensively. These opinions will help to show why mosses are generally found in hollows or on flats. Peat accumulating in the brow or slopes of hills, it will be found that the beginning has been washed from the flats above. Once a beginning is made, moss will grow readily.

Some low-lying mosses are of very great depth. One in the Braes of Glenlivet, Vautuck, was originally at least thirty feet deep, and in many parts more. It has been "casten" over three times already, taking from eight to ten feet each time. This of course cannot continue long, and the Braes people will find very soon that they will not get their fuel so easily. From the moss above-mentioned there are on an average 120,000 barrowfuls dug yearly. Many of these peats are mixed with sulphur, which when burning

send forth a bluish flame, the smell of which is anything but agreeable. It is observed that sulphur when found is generally near the foundation of the moss.

There is another very interesting subject about mosses which strikes the attention of all who come in contact with them: that is the buried trees. Mosses and trees are inseparable, for in many parts decayed trees form no inconsiderable portion of the peat; and to the Highlander in bygone days these forest remains afforded the only light that he was possessed of in the shape of a "fir can'le." This was before the introduction of oil or paraffin; and the pine torch was no mean light. The wood was so extremely rich that it would send forth an astonishing blaze. And there was food for the thoughtful in sitting beside a light that was growing beneath the sun that was shining a thousand years ago. Perhaps under the very tree that is burning in some labourer's cottage in our civilized days, the Druid priest may have offered up his bloody victim, or consulted that victim's interior, before his tribe went forth in their war paint to join the host of Gaigacus, who was defending his native forests inch by inch against the Roman invader. But these trees afforded more advantages to the Highlander than light and heat: they also gave him shelter. In the Glenlivet mosses, these buried trees were so innumerable and so easily taken out, that the natives roofed their houses with them. These roofs were primitive and simple, no doubt; but still they were roofs, and served the same purpose to the hardy Highlander as the elegant roofs of the present day. Some of the trees were of enormous size. One was dug up above Scalán (and it was only the centre of the tree), which, when split up, roofed a house altogether, or, in the language of the district, afforded "cabers" for the house. I have not been able to obtain the exact dimensions of this enormous trunk; but the fact above stated will help the reader to form an idea of it.

Some years ago, a tree was dug up in the Moss of Tomnavoulin, which measured 84 in length, and 3 feet in diameter at its smallest end. This tree was bought by a former priest of Tombea, to be a bridge over the Aven; but, after it was dug, the difficulty was to get it to the spot where the bridge

was to be. The following plan was tried. They lifted the body of a number of carts off their axles, and lashed them together. Having got the tree on to the axles, and a number of horses yoked, they started forward on the Tomintoul road, and got on pretty well for two or three miles, when, passing through the Faemussach, the wheels began to sink, and it was with great difficulty that they could make any progress. However, they were moving on slowly, when two or three of the axles broke, which at once put an end to the laborious journey. A sawpit was crected soon after, and this giant fir was sawed into several pieces; yet, one of the pieces served as a foot bridge over the Aven, which is by no means a small stream. The remains of one was dug up lately in Vautuck. It can be seen at any time. I measured it myself, and found its length to be 49 feet 9 inches, and its circumference at the small end 30 inches, the diameter at the thick end being 18 inches. This must have been a noble tree when growing, for, in reality, we see but a small portion of the tree. Think of a tree being uprooted by a tempest, and left lying till the fall of grass, leaves, and other matter would cover it up, and form solid moss above it! It would take at least an ordinary lifetime before this could be accomplished. The tree must have undergone a considerable amount of decay in that period. Of course, after it was altogether covered with consolidated moss it would decay very little, for moss is an excellent preserver.

These are some specimens of what our ancient forests were composed of. Of the trunks only I have spoken; the roots are even more remarkable. One root is at present to be seen in Vautuck, from which seven loads have already been taken, and it is not yet exhausted. Think of seven loads being taken out of the root of a tree! Few trees are growing at the present day in this quarter whose roots would afford so much wood. They must have been stately trees in those days. I have been informed that boys a hundred years ago, in the Braes of Glenlivet, would be amusing themselves springing from the top of one root to another. I cannot vouch for the truth of this, but there seems no great reason to doubt it, especially if we are to credit a legend prevalent in the Braes, that a cat could walk on the top of the trees

from the Clash to the Craggan, a distance of eleven or twelve miles. If that be the case, which is a little doubtful, there must have been two, if not three, distinct forest periods in Scotland. My opinion is in favour of this theory, for the roots that are being dug up at present are nearly on a level about seven feet from the bed of clay, and about twenty-three from the original surface. This is when the moss lies in hollows.

It is strange that, where the moss and the edge of the clay meet, the tree roots disappear. That is, when the tree roots are seven feet from the bed of clay in the centre of the hollow, the moss running from the centre gets shallower and shallower until both edges meet, and there the tree roots end. Some are found partly imbedded in the moss and partly in the clay, but I have not heard of any that were found imbedded in the clay alone.

It is a very difficult matter to get at the exact time when these trees were growing. I do not think that these roots are those of the Caledonian forest, which was found to extend over a great part of Scotland at the time of the Roman invasion. On the contrary, I think that they must have existed long before that date; but if they did exist before that date, the Braes of Glenlivet must have been clear of wood at that time, for, as I previously stated, there must have been at least two distinct periods of forest in the Glenlivet mosses. It has indeed been found sometimes that one root is placed immediately above another; but these cases are exceptional, and will not be found to interfere with either of the periods.

It is generally a very difficult matter to extract these roots from their native bed. It is not uncommon to see twenty or thirty men digging away at one root, and they will generally have to work a considerable time ere they succeed in laying bare all the limbs. But fifty years hence I fear there will be found few roots to dig at, for within the past seventy or eighty years the amount of moss that has been consumed is enormous. Whole acres have been laid bare and brought under cultivation, and many parts have been bared that are not fit to be cultivated. But what has been cultivated has told a remarkable tale. After twenty

or thirty feet of solid moss has been removed, and the sub-soil ploughed and eropped for a number of years, the ploughmen will often pick up those flint arrow-heads, which in these parts are the most numerous representatives of the stone period. This fact proves that man existed in Glenlivet long before moss had begun to grow, and as far as traces go ere a tree lifted its head above the bleak and barren waste. In short, that he roamed wild and free over as bare a track as the Braes present to the eye at the present day.

How he existed or was sheltered from the fierce blasts of winter will for ever remain a mystery to us, however anxious we may be to solve it. But, in imagination, we can see him clad in the skin of some wild animal, eagerly climbing the hills in pursuit of the deer, the wolf, or the wild ox. Alas! his chance of bringing these animals to the ground is small, for he only carries with him his bow, made of the rib-bone of an animal, and the string of the bow made from the sinews of the same beast. He has his few arrows with the flint heads, with, perchance, a stone celt slung on his back. Ready for action, see, he stands for a moment, and looking earnestly, as if measuring the distance, he raises the bow, and with brawny arm pulls the string. The arrow whistles through the air, and a moment after quivers in the breast of the victim. He has been successful, and a few meals have been supplied to his family. Or we can see the opposing tribes drawn up in order of battle, under their respective chiefs. Their looks are fierce, and huge stripes of paint deform their otherwise noble and interesting countenances. They raise the wild war shout and dash to the conflict. Soon many a gallant form is laid low, and many a dauntless heart beats no more, and the proud and manly blue eye that dared the frown of death is closed for ever. They were gallant fellows those savages. Peace to their ashes! They were the first inhabitants of our native land, and the same blood that impelled them to deeds of valour yet flows in our veins. In more peaceful and luxurious times may we never disgrace such noble fathers.

POETRY.



## LAND OF THE BRAVE.

SCOTLAND ! I love thee, thou land of the mountain,  
Land of the heather bell, rock, and deep cave,  
Land of the cataract, land of the fountain ;  
I love thee my country, thou land of the brave.

Your glens may be bleak when the wintry winds whistle,  
And dreary thy hills when the wild tempests rave ;  
But there's kind hearts and true in the land of the thistle,  
And arms to shield thee, thou land of the brave.

The voice of the tyrant ne'er ruled o'er thy valleys,  
Though Rome's conquering legions swept over the wave  
With bright shining eagles, and gold bedecked galleys  
They fought, but they fell, in the land of the brave.

And England's fierce Edward with all his proud power,  
Rushed over the border your sons to enslave ;  
But your valiant and strong made him rue the dark hour  
That e'er he set foot in the land of the brave.

And when Gaul's gloating eagle, with pinions all gory,  
Soared over Hispania and no one to save ;  
Not the last in the cause of bright freedom and glory  
Were the sons of Auld Scotia, the land of the brave.

Then who would not love thee, when each hill and corrie  
Are cradles of freedom, to tyrants a grave ;  
When your bright deeds of fame writ in legend and story,  
Hath sealed thy proud name as the land of the brave.

Then hey for the land of the mist and the blue bell,  
The land that ne'er crouched, nor for mercy would crave ;  
Land of the flashing stream, land of the flowery dell,  
Land of the strong and true, land of the brave.

## D R E A M I N G .

To M. J. G. L.

BLOW soft, rude winds of the north, blow soft,  
 A northern maid lies dreaming ;  
 And the monarch bird that soars aloft  
 Looks down with his proud eye beaming.

Sweetly she sleeps by the rippling stream ;  
 A smile parts her lips so fair ;  
 And the sun darts a ray of dazzling sheen,  
 And flits on her flowing hair.

The birds, the wind, and the brook sing on,  
 While she sleeps 'neath the pine tree hoar ;  
 Can it be that she dreams of bright days gone ?  
 Gone, fled, and for evermore !

Sleep on, too soon will thy young heart wake ;  
 Too soon will the vision fly ;  
 And the cherished hopes of thy love will break,  
 And the flower itself will die.

Ha ! I once loved with a heart like thine,  
 In days of the golden past—  
 Loved and prayed at a maiden's shrine,  
 And the prayer was heard at last ;

And the weeks rolled on, and we loved in trust  
 That the fates had willed it so,  
 Till slander's tongue, with a venomous thrust,  
 Laid the hopes of my fond heart low ;

And the deep wound bled, till it bled a cure,  
 And I laughed at the frowns of fate ;  
 And the love that once was so firm and sure,  
 In the end had turned to hate ;

And I laughed at your sex with a scornful heart,  
 And sneered at the love of men ;  
 Yet, seeing thee now, unadorned with art,  
 I almost could love again.

But I will not disturb thy deep, sweet sleep,  
 To ask thee to smile on me ;  
 I will live alone—alone—and weep,  
 But my heart shall dwell with thee.

The thought of thy bright angelic smile—  
 The thought of thy matchless form,  
 Will light my path, and my cares beguile,  
 As a ray through the gathering storm.

Send forth your perfume, flowers of the wild ;  
 Ye birds, pipe your sweetest song ;  
 And the woods, and the wind—wild nature's child—  
 Will join with the choral throng,

And soothe thy sleep 'neath the giant pine,  
 And cheer thy woes when waking,  
 And bid love again thy heart entwine,  
 To heal mine own that's breaking.

The laughing nymph of the brook will make  
 A wreath to twine around ye ;  
 The fairy queen will her halls forsake,  
 And the queen of beauty crown thee.

#### IN MEMORY OF BELLA.

WEARY, sad, and sorrowful the morning dawned on me,  
 Though bright the gorgeous sun arose in splendour o'er the sea,  
 And nature donned her fairest robes of flowers and living  
 green,  
 While all around was cheerfulness, no sorrow could be seen.

The little birdies warbled sweet among the leafy trees,  
 And, rich with perfume, o'er them swept the balmy southern  
     breeze ;  
 While high above the mighty arch of Heaven's boundless  
     blue  
 Shone clear and fair, without a speck to mar the gazer's view.

And soft the murmuring streamlet plied along its pebbled bed,  
 As through its ponds the sportive trout in tiny squadrons  
     fled ;  
 While on its banks the waving grass in rich luxuriance grew,  
 And far the Boebel's towering crest its shadows o'er them  
     threw.

All, all was decked in loveliness, as Nature's hand could  
     paint,  
 Nothing seemed sad or sorrowful, yet I was sick and faint,  
 The cherished idol of my heart was gone, and gone aye,  
 The fair, the bright, the beautiful, O ! beautiful as day.

The brightest star that ever shone far in the azure sky  
 Would pale before the matchless glance and beauty of her eye ;  
 No bold and wanton eye was hers, it meek and modest shone,  
 The mirror of her guileless soul, the seat of virtue's throne !

The graceful fawn that lightly skips along the grassy wold  
 Is clumsy, when compared to her light symmetry of mould ;  
 The mavis' song, so passing sweet, beneath the birchen tree,  
 Resembles, in its sweetest notes, the songs she sang to me.

Oh ! had I but the power of him who sang his Nannie's grace,  
 I'd paint, in colours ne'er to fade, the beauty of her face ;  
 The beauty of the tender flower bedecked with pearly dew,  
 All pure, to kiss the morning sun, no fairer was to view.

No wonder though my heart be sad, and filled with bitter  
     woe,  
 No wonder though my memory turn to scenes of long ago,  
 No wonder though I lonely mourn, when all around is gay,  
 The ever bright and beautiful is gone, and gone for aye !

## A R E T R O S P E C T.

In the silence of twilight I sat in the greenwood,  
 No creature was near me, I sat all alone,  
 While I silently mused on the days of my childhood,  
 On memories departed, and pleasures now gone.

Then the sun of my hopes rode high in his splendour,  
 No cloud marred his glory or hid him from view,  
 When I roved by yon cataract roaring in grandeur,  
 And pulled the wild daisies, O ! Willie, with you.

Ah ! sweet were those moments of innocent gladness,  
 When, with hearts light and buoyant, we roamed o'er the  
 lea ;  
 No cares to harass us, no sorrow, no sadness,  
 Our cheeks all aglow, and our step light and free.

But soon, soon, alas ! those bright moments faded,  
 And cares then unknown, round my pathway have grown,  
 And when lost in the labyrinth, no helping hand aided,  
 Now I mourn o'er those joys that for ever have flown.

Yet though darkness and tempest around me have gathered,  
 And friends keep aloof from my bark in the gale,  
 Yet my pulse will beat higher when the tempest is weathered,  
 Than if friends held the rudder, or had furled the sail.

If we knew of the trials that are lying before us,  
 When fighting a world as false as 'tis fair,  
 We'd fly for a shelter e'er the storm broke o'er us,  
 Or shrink from the conflict, and die in despair.

Yet one moment's sorrow makes the next moment sweeter ;  
 If the cup were not mixed we'd lose sight of the goal,  
 And drift down pleasure's current, while the moments fly fleeter,  
 That are hastening us on to the land of the soul.

Then stand by your colours through trials and sorrow,  
 Let hope be your watchword, let faith be your shield ;  
 And the clouds will disperse with the dawn of to-morrow,  
 Then you'll joy in the thought that you forced them to yield.

## T O A N N I E .

GENTLE maiden, budding fair,  
 In the spring time of thy bloom ;  
 Lightly falls thy flowing hair,  
 Clear thy eye from cloud and gloom.

Cast in nature's finest mould  
 Is thy lithe and graceful form ;  
 Unfit to battle with the bold,  
 Or brave life's fierce and withering storm.

Modest, unassuming, mild,  
 Untutored in the ways of art,  
 Lightsome as a mountain child,  
 Happy in thy guileless heart.

Is there none among the swains  
 That round thee bend obedient knee ;  
 Say is there none from lowland plains,  
 Whose sighs have ne'er affected thee.

Happy he whose ardent love  
 Finds response within thy breast,  
 And by a life's devotion prove  
 That loving thee hath made him blest.

Oh ! would to fate it were my lot  
 To win so rare and pure a gem ;  
 Content, I'd cherish in a cot,  
 My jewel from nature's diadem.

O ! smile again the sunny smile  
 That first threw light athwart my sky ;  
 It banishes my cares awhile  
 To bask beneath thy glorious eye.

And bid me hope ! Nay, do not frown,  
 A frown would fix my lonely doom ;  
 But smile content, and be my own,  
 My guiding star to gild the gloom.

## BLIGHTED HOPE.

I STOOD alone, and the wild wind sighed  
 A dirge o'er the snow clad lea ;  
 And a bursting wail from my heart replied,  
 In a chorus of misery—  
 Gone ! gone ! is that dream, and all so fast ;  
 Like a flash it came, like a shade went past.

Yes ! gone for aye, and a settled gloom  
 A cloud over my life hath cast ;  
 And the hope that burst in the richest bloom  
 Was killed by the wintry blast,  
 That swept so fierce o'er my shivering frame,  
 And it bloomed not again, though the summer came.

Though the summer came, and the sunbeams played,  
 (Yet winter remained with me) ;  
 Though the song birds sang in the birchen glade,  
 And the red deer bounded free ;  
 And the streamlets flashed with a crystal sheen,  
 And wild flowers grew on the meadows green.

But the weird wind sobs, and my lone heart sighs  
 In harmony sad and low ;  
 And the threat'ning lower of the gloomy skies  
 Makes me laugh in my bitterest woe ;  
 For my spirit lifts when in might dart forth  
 The lightnings red from the stormy north ;

And the thunders roll, and the houses shake,  
 And the timorous shrink with dread,  
 And the giant firs on the mountains break,  
 And the bolts fly fast o'erhead :  
 Then my bosom heaves with a pleasing glow,  
 And I feel as I felt in the long ago.

I once was happy, and I fondly dreamed  
 That my bliss would last for aye ;  
 But the star of hope, that so brightly beamed,  
 Grew dark in a single day : .

Then, blighted and lone, with a heart forlorn,  
I wandered away—far away to mourn.

And I'm mourning still, with no cheering beam  
To shine on my dreary path ;  
Yet fancy betimes, with a sudden gleam,  
Wafts me back to my native strath--  
To a strath that the mavis makes glad with its song,  
Where the waters of Isla flow gently along.

### F O R S A K E N .

**MAIDEN**, thy voice in my ear yet is sounding,  
Though faint be its tone as the echo of years ;  
And my heart yet unchanged at memory leaps bounding,  
As when first thy soft glance raised my hope and my fears.

Deep, deep in my bosom thy image engraved  
Shall live, though misfortune's worst frowns be in store ;  
Its frowns I despise, the worst will be braved,  
Though my best hopes have faded, and love is no more.

I tried to efface from my mind, when we parted,  
The last lingering look of thy soft azure eye ;  
And the sobs that I heaved, and the big tears that started,  
Were witnessed by all the bright stars in the sky.

And the last fond embrace—Ah ! how could I tear it  
From out of the record in my memory's page,  
When thy loving lips falteringly told me to bear it,  
And murmured that time would my sorrow assuage.

Ah ! little you fancied the depth of devotion  
That was living, though dormant, within my young breast—  
A love as enduring, and deep as the ocean,  
And pure as the dew on the laverock's soft crest.

But thy love—Ah ! Lucy, why did you deceive me,  
 When you knew the fond heart that was laid at thy feet ?  
 You said that you loved me, and whispered “ Believe me,  
 My heart ne’er shall change, till it ceases to beat.”

Thy love, it changed like the mist on the mountain,  
 When chased by the tempest careering in might ;  
 It was false as the sunbeam that flits o’er the fountain,  
 Or a dream that takes wing with the shadows of night.

But I heed not. An eye like a Venus in brightness  
 Still beams on me fondly, and banishes care—  
 An eye that’s aye sparkling in beauty and lightness,  
 O’erhung by a mantle of soft, sunny hair.

Then go, Lucy, go, and may fortune attend thee,  
 Your love I despise, it is false as the shade ;  
 A day is at hand when kind fate will send me  
 A fairer, and better, my own Highland maid.

### AN ODE TO NATURE.

I LOVE not the din of a city life,  
 Striving and jostling with the crowd,  
 Or dwelling ’mid scenes of brawling strife,  
 The nightly debauch and revel loud,  
 Where crime and vice their sceptres sway  
 O’er wretches in premature decay.

I love not to gaze on the image of God,  
 Pale and haggard, passing by,  
 Or hovering near the vile abode  
 With hollow cheek and sunken eye ;  
 No, no ! such scenes are not for me,  
 I love the heathery moorland free.

Free from the tint of polluted air,  
 Free as the warblers in the woods,  
 Free as the bounding mountain hare,  
 Far in the dusky solitudes,  
 There let my home be, there, O there !  
 To dwell in peace and free from care.

There nature teaches the pine to grow,  
 And teaches the linnet her song to sing ;  
 There, pure and white as the crystal snow,  
 The daisies bloom by the sparkling spring ;  
 All, all is fair where man's rough hand  
 Comes not to tear the smiling land.

Oh ! I love to stand on yon rocky steep  
 (In ancient time the eagle's home),  
 And gaze below on the whirling deep  
 Boiling itself to a sheet of foam,  
 Then beeking down with hasty speed,  
 When it finds itself from its prison freed.

And I love to hear the tempest loud  
 Howling around the rocks so hoar,  
 When bursts in wrath the thunder cloud,  
 With deafening crack and sullen roar,  
 And far and wide the lightnings gleam,  
 Then nature reigns and reigns supreme.

How tame, O man, are thy greatest deeds,  
 And tamer yet thy wordy skill,  
 Wrangling o'er knotty points of creed,  
 Far from the stream, the glen, the hill ;  
 I would go where stately forests nod,  
 And worship with Nature, Nature's God.

I would go to a land where the setting sun  
 Cradles himself in a fiery bed  
 At eve, when his brilliant course is run,  
 And night descends in her sable shade ;  
 I would go to a land o'er the western wave,  
 Where wild flowers bloom on the Indian's grave.

## AN ADDRESS TO THE WIND.

WHO, or what art thou, O wind  
     (Fit theme for rhythm),  
 That has moved since the birth of ages,  
     Unmarked by time ?

Art thou the breath of the great Supreme,  
     Whose mighty hand  
 Grasps and rules the universe, and lives  
     In every land ?

Or art thou a weapon in the hand of fiends,  
     To scourge the earth,  
 And hurl into ruin the works of men,  
     And scatter death !

Where is thy home, O king of elements,  
     On whose wings ride  
 The tempests that wage eternal war  
     With the heaving tide ?

Is it in the bright and sunny lands  
     Where summer reigns,  
 Where vine and orange groves bedeck  
     The swelling plains ?

Or is it in the cold and stormy North,  
     Where winter's lord,  
 Where barren earth will scarce its flocks  
     Sustenance afford ?

Answer, thou king of gods,  
     Imperial Jove,  
 Is it in the east, west, north, south,  
     Or up above ?

Where dwells the whirlwind,  
     Whose mighty wrath  
 Hurls gigantic trees, erags, and stones,  
     To strew its path ?

Still it heeds not my voice but shrieking along,  
 In the pride of its glory and might,  
 And gods in their cars ride past on its wings,  
 But their forms are hid from my sight.

Yet I fancy they ride on the breath of the gale,  
 Triumphant when elements war,  
 When thunders are pealing and lightnings are flashing,  
 Majestic in splendour afar.

But I know that One Hand grasps the whole in its might,  
 For oceans and seas own His sway,  
 And proud waving forests bow lowly their heads,  
 And acknowledge the God they obey.

## A D R E A M.

I SLEPT and I dreamed of a bright, bright land,  
 Far in the east away,  
 Where a cloudless sky met my raptured eye,  
 And the music of birds that sang on high,  
 Made me think it eternal day.

Methought as I lay on a bed of flowers  
 All wet with the scented dew,  
 That a goddess bright all robed in white,  
 And her hair as dark as the brow of night,  
 Then met my astonished view.

And a chain of gold hung around her neck,  
 That shone with a radiance rare,  
 And an emerald band clasped her snow-white hand  
 That gently was waving an airy wand,  
 And her eye what a light shone there?

She spoke, and her voice so silvery sweet,  
 Like music thrilled my soul ;  
 Stranger, said she, from whence come ye ?  
 Have you travelled by land or the rolling sea  
 To reach this happy goal ?

Fair Queen ! I replied, and I knelt as I spoke,  
 I come from a distant land,  
 Where tempests rave, and the men are brave,  
 And their home is girt by the bounding wave,  
 And there known as the ocean band.

And I soared aloft on the wings of the wind,  
 That thundered fierce and loud,  
 And I steered my flight through the realm of night,  
 And my guide was a star that twinkled bright  
 O'er the brim of a fleecy cloud.

Then she gracefully lifted her conjuring wand,  
 And thrice she waved it on high,  
 And a vision rare of maidens fair,  
 With rosy cheeks and golden hair,  
 Like sunshine pass me by.

And a zephyr sighed through the wild woods green,  
 And played with their flowing hair,  
 And a heavenly strain woke the dewy plain,  
 And the echo was caught by an angel train  
 That hovered in middle air.

But a dark cloud dropped, and the transient scene  
 Like a shadow passed away,  
 And a rustling sound swept o'er the ground—  
 I started up and I looked around,  
 And found it another day.

For the sun rode high on his heavenly course,  
 And he darted a glorious beam  
 O'er stream and tree, o'er hill and sea,  
 And dancing delighted it shone on me,  
 And roused me from my dream.

## LINES TO A LADY.

OH! could I love as I have loved,  
 When smiling youth first dawned on me,  
 If through my heart the goddess roved,  
 My love would fondly light on thee ;  
 Thou fairest of the human race  
 In mind, in figure, and in face.

I gaze into thine eyes and think  
 I yet could love, but for the blow  
 That drove me to destruction's brink,  
 And made thy kind my bitter foe ;  
 Still there's a something in me yet  
 I never, never can forget.

Forget ! ah no, there are some things  
 That memory loves to dwell upon,  
 Which soften sorrow's potent stings,  
 When softer feelings long have flown ;  
 There is a joy in glancing back  
 Along life's varied, rugged tract.

A something shining bright and fair  
 Amid the wastes of storm and cloud,  
 A well-spring in the desert bare,  
 By tempests tossed but not subdued ;  
 A something of a heavenly birth  
 Untouched, unstained by aught of earth.

'Tis love, first love, that tender flame  
 Which animates youth's generous heart,  
 'Tis modest virtue's diadem,  
 Free from pollution, free from art ;  
 A passion pure, whose living glow  
 Is felt but once on earth below.

'Tis not the madness of a day,  
 That raving coxcombs would call love,

When kindled once it lasts for aye,  
 A foretaste of the bliss above ;  
 This is the feeling rich and rare,  
 That fights and baffles dull despair.

In keenest pangs, it is a balm  
 To conjure up some long-lost form ;  
 'Tis like a momentary calm  
 Amid the battle's raging storm ;  
 It is a treasure vast, whose store  
 Supplies an unconsuming ore.

This is the love, sweet maid, whose power  
 Defies the turns of fortune's wheel,  
 And cheers the gloomiest, darkest hour,  
 A love which I for you would feel ;  
 And bid my weary being live,  
 If yet a heart I had to give.

Though few my years, yet I have known  
 The blackest frowns of adverse fate,  
 E'er manhood's bloom my cheek had shown,  
 I'd earned imperishable hate ;  
 Which made my life a flickering flame,  
 My strongest passion but a name.

Yet I admire thy sparkling eye,  
 And sun myself beneath its glow ;  
 When summer winds sigh softly by,  
 And breathe upon thy breast of snow.  
 And when thy voice my feelings move,  
 I fancy that I yet could love.

And if such love as this again,  
 Should burn within my breast anew,  
 Oh say, sweet maid, would it be vain  
 If it were centred all in you ;  
 Could heart like thine such love e'er spurn,  
 Would such a love meet no return ?

## M O U R N I N G .

(A tribute to the memory of JAMES GRANT, Esq., late Editor  
of the *Morning Advertiser*.)

THE lone wind sigheth low, so low,  
And the light from the stars hath fled,  
And the murmuring brook in its flow, deep flow,  
Sings a requiem for the dead ;  
For the loved, the revered, and the honoured one,  
Whose bright eye closed when his course was run.

But it closed in a blaze of fame, bright fame,  
And the nations weep for thee,  
And hang on the sound of thy name, loved name ;  
While thy spirit, pure and free,  
Hath soared far away o'er the starry dome,  
To the flowery land, its own loved home.

And the angels, clad in white, pure white,  
Rush on to the golden gate,  
Where Gabriel stands with a light, rare light,  
And seraph minstrels wait  
With glittering harps, poised on airy wings,  
Ready to strike, and the anthem sing.

They strike, and lo ! from the halls, arched halls,  
Fresh echoing bursts are given ;  
And see afar on the walls, high walls,  
That encircle the fields of heaven,  
Gay banners float in the laughing breeze  
That murmurs soft through the singing trees.

All, all above is glad, so glad  
That the spirit hath left the clay ;  
And all below is sad, so sad  
That the soul hath fled for aye ;  
That the manly voice that charmed of yore  
Is hushed and still, and for evermore.

And the lone mist weepeth wild, so wild,  
 As it wreathes its tortured form ;  
 And Scotia weeps for her child, dear child,  
 And her voice, like the rising storm,  
 Is heard afar, and the nations quake,  
 The forests nod, and the mountains shake.

And the oceans weep, and their roar, wild roar,  
 Is heard by the naiads deep  
 As the billows moan on the shore, loved shore,  
 Where the ashes of the wept-for sleep ;  
 And they too weep in their coral caves,  
 And mingle their voice with the sounding waves.

And the wild flowers weep on thy grave, lone grave,  
 And the birds sing notes of woe ;  
 And I, too, weep, yes, weep and rave,  
 For the friend of the long ago.  
 All weep in vain, you have passed away,  
 And reached your home in eternal day.

### A N A P P E A L .

AND is it so ? Can a form so fair  
 Conceal a heart of stone ?  
 Can a meek request no pardon share—  
 No words of mine atone ?  
 For the fault of an hour, an hour of woe,  
 An hour which the thoughtless ne'er can know.

Think well ; though bright be thy maiden eye,  
 It yet may shed a tear ;  
 Though the past may be fair as the summer sky,  
 And the present doubly dear,  
 The mists of the future conceal a dart  
 That may pierce thy breast, and reach thy heart.

It is summer now, and the wild birds sing,  
 And the daisies deck the lea ;  
 The green woods all with glad echoes ring,  
 And the busy, humming bee,  
 On glistening wing, sips the scented flower  
 To nourish its young in the gloomy hour.

All nature is glad, and the sunbeams kiss  
 The rippling wavelets' breast ;  
 And the lusty trout enjoys the bliss,  
 And suns itself to rest  
 In streams that ever onward roll  
 To the mighty deep, their boundless goal.

But the winter will come, with its snow and showers,  
 And blight the daisies' bloom ;  
 And the humming bee in its nest will cower  
 When the fire-flies lit the gloom,  
 And the song birds chirp 'mong the woodlands sere,  
 O'er the hoary rocks, and the moorlands drear.

And the flashing stream will be frozen o'er,  
 And the shivering trout will shrink  
 As the wind sweeps past with sullen roar,  
 And snow wreaths heap the brink.  
 Thus beauty lives like a fleeting ray  
 That is flashed from the eye of the golden day.

And thine will fade, and thy speaking eye  
 Will dim as time sweeps on ;  
 And thy graceful form, so stately high,  
 Will bend when the summer is gone ;  
 Then, then you will think of the merciless blow  
 That laid the young hopes of a true heart low.

And the wind and the rain, the frost and the snow  
 Will beat on thy withering cheek ;  
 And the sprightly step of the long ago  
 Will be changed for the slow and weak ;  
 Then, then will you think of the bard, and the hour  
 When depression grim ruled with tyrant power.

Then think, maiden, think, ere the dying day  
 Is lost, and for ever gone ;  
 Let thy proud eye flash one pitying ray  
 On the path of the weary and lone ;  
 'Tis the task of beauty to soothe and heal,  
 Then listen, O listen to a last appeal.

### TO THE RISING SUN.

GLORIOUS orb of the eastern sky,  
 Pouring thy rich and golden light  
 On fields, and meadows, and mountains high,  
 Chasing the dreary sullen night,  
 Waking the lark on the dewy lea,  
 Where, O where can thy bright home be ?

Darting thy rays through the dark recess,  
 Flashing along o'er the ocean vast,  
 Deeper dyeing the daisy's dress,  
 Kissing the brooklet wimpling past,  
 Dancing in beauty gay and free,  
 Where, O where can thy bright home be ?

Waking the life of the slumbering town,  
 Catching a smile from the maiden's eye,  
 Telling the hare on the lonely down  
 That the sportsman's dog is hovering nigh,  
 Chasing dark shadows from stream and sea,  
 Where, O where can thy bright home be ?

Calling glad songs from the speckled thrush,  
 While it mocks the tones of the passer by,  
 Halting the stag on his onward rush,  
 To gaze with his soft and dewy eye,  
 Rousing the hum of the labouring bee,  
 Where, O where can thy bright home be ?

Piercing the clouds with a fiery dart,  
 As they lazily sail through the summer sky,  
 And the spotted trout from the waters start  
 To catch the buzzing, glittering fly,  
 Gilding the top of the greenwood tree,  
 Where, O where can thy bright home be ?

All nature is glad with thy beaming smile,  
 And life starts fresh from thy magic hand,  
 How I long to stay with thee awhile,  
 Away, far away in thy happy land,  
 Where my cares may cease and my sorrows flee,  
 Then say, O say, can I dwell with thee.

Answers the lord of the golden day,  
 My home is fixed in the starry sky,  
 My yellow light is a borrowed ray  
 From One who reigns and rules on high  
 From One who bled and died for thee,  
 Now say, O say, will you dwell with me.

Go, O go where the bright flowers bloom,  
 Where the waters glide o'er the golden sand,  
 But first you must pass through the lonely tomb  
 Ere you reach that soft and smiling land,  
 Then turn, O turn away from me  
 To Him who longs and looks for thee.

## T W O M E E T I N G S.

TO J. G. C. G.

FIRST, where brilliant lamps are swinging,  
 And the sparkling jewels shine,  
 And the clash of music ringing  
 Through the clustering wreaths of pine ;  
 Where bright youth and maiden blushing,  
 Ply the dance with nimble feet,  
 And the breath from red lips gushing,  
 Fills the air with stifling heat.

There I saw her like a fairy  
 Dropped from out the starry sky,  
 Robed in white, so light and airy,  
 Like a sunbeam pass me by.  
 Transfixed I stood for full one minute,  
 Gazing, wondering, doubting when  
 The music ceased, and all was silent  
 Save the whispering of the men.

Then I watched her gliding lightly,  
 Like a bird with pinions spread,  
 And her dark eye flashing brightly  
 In her graceful, poised head.  
 Oft I thought on that fair vision,  
 Sometimes sleeping, oft awake ;  
 Though I had but little reason,  
 Yet I thought my heart would break.

I stood beside a castle hoary,  
 Sinking 'neath the weight of years,  
 Pondering o'er the ancient story,  
 Lo ! the vision there appears.  
 Like a flash of glory streaming  
 From the radiant summer sky,  
 Health and love and beauty beaming  
 In her dark and glorious eye.

And the sunbeams lightly kissed her ;  
 Laverocks carolled anthems sweet ;  
 Angels hovered near and blessed her ;  
 Gowans blossomed at her feet.  
 And the spirit of the mountains,  
 And the nymph among the trees,  
 And the naiad of the fountains,  
 Borne in the summer breeze.

Joined in one glad welcome greeting,  
 One glad song to nature's queen ;  
 This was all the second meeting  
 On the dewy castle green ;  
 Only that she smiled and bowing,  
 Said good morning passing by,  
 And I felt my bosom glowing  
 With a fire that cannot die.

I wondered oft that if, when parting  
 She observed my eager eye,  
 Or the tell-tale blood that starting,  
 Flushed my cheek as she passed by.  
 Yes, she saw it, but she never,  
 Never smiled on me again ;  
 And the fire that lives forever  
 Only lives to live in vain.

#### PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE.

DIM shadows, dark shadows are creeping  
 O'er mountain, o'er moorland, and tree,  
 Aye steadily, stealthily creeping  
 Away o'er the heaving sea,  
 Shutting out the gleam of the sunshine,  
 And the love of the past from me.

A light betimes of glimmering sheen  
 Glints through from the days of yore,  
 And throws a ray on the gulf between,  
 Where the mists lie evermore,  
 And with shaded eyes and stretched neck  
 I peer at the other shore,

And clutch ; but a spectre waves me back,  
 And points through the gloom below,  
 Tracing a shadowy twilight track,  
 As the mists wreath to and fro ;  
 Yet there's spots of white in that bloated track,  
 That were left long, long ago.

Ha ! laugh, false friends ! they were made by me  
 Ere that yawning gulf was crossed ;  
 But I met a demon worse than thee ;  
 'Twas then that the white was lost ;  
 And the sun, the moon, and the stars grew dark  
 When that fiend was loved the most.

Then mock me not. It was it, not I,  
 That blasted the budding flower.  
 It was it that glanced at the sunlit sky  
 When the clouds began to lower ;  
 And the past grew dim, and the shadows fell,  
 When I fell in the demon's power.

And the pangs. Oh ! the pang that wrung my heart,  
 As the darkness shrouded me ;  
 And I pulled in vain at the venom'd dart,  
 Then laughed with a maniac's glee ;  
 But the hour, the hour came all too soon,  
 And I wept that it set me free.

There is a joy in the wild, wide heath,  
 Though the sky be dark above,  
 When the smothered sigh and the balmy breath  
 Of those that we fondly love  
 Are breathed. Ah ! blessed angel hours  
 That the world knows not of.

But they're false, yes, false, and the heated brain  
 Grows weary at the sight ;  
 But the day will come when the truth again  
 In might will assert its right,  
 And the sun will burst through the gathering gloom  
 In a gleam of eternal light.

Then, then will the fame of the high-souled one  
 Sound loud o'er the floods of day ;  
 And the bard wild sing, when the false are gone,  
 That the true heart won the fray,  
 And that love and genius smiled on it,  
 A smile that will last for aye.

## T O L I Z Z I E .

LADY, I have often loved, and felt its tyrant sway ;  
 But when the magic chain had snapped, and all had passed  
     away,  
 I thought a gentle maiden's smile, with all its witching art,  
 Could never more disturb my peace, or agitate my heart.

How vain the thought ! I love again far deeper than before—  
 A love, dear maid, that burned itself into my bosom's core ;  
 I tried to quench the living spark ere yet it reached a flame,  
 Alas, these humble verses tell my efforts were in vain.

I love thee with a love, sweet one, no words could ere  
     express ;  
 My other loves fled like a dream, and left no deep impress ;  
 But thou art fairer, lovelier, far than all the rest combined,  
 The brightest flower on Livet's banks, the gem of womankind.

Thy dark and glorious eye, sweet Liz., that beams so soft and  
     bright,  
 I've often watched, unseen by you, with feelings of delight ;  
 In dreams thy ripe and dewy lips have oft by me been prest,  
 And, sighing, clasped thy lovely form with rapture to my  
     breast.

If I had lands or glittering gold, I'd lay them at thy shrine ;  
 But I have nothing but a heart—a heart that's wholly thine.  
 Say, could you love me, darling one ? Smile soft, and  
     answer yes,  
 And make the present happiness, the future shine with bliss.

My heart is throbbing like to burst—O ! do not say me nay.  
 I've often braved the frowns of fate in many a gloomy day ;  
 But, O ! I could not stand a frown shot from the hazel eye  
 That I love better than my life, or aught beneath the sky.

My nerv'less hand hath dropped the pen, and utterance now  
     hath fled,  
 One word alone escapes my lips, all other thoughts are dead ;

That word I'll sing, though I should roam o'er many a land  
 and sea,  
 And murmur with my latest breath, I love but thee, but  
 thee.

### THE FLOWER OF FIDDOCHSIDE.

AWAKE, awake, my slumbering muse,  
 Why would'st thou idly dream  
 When Maggie's charms remain unsung,  
 And love's the gentle theme ?

Awake, and sing one flowing verse,  
 And strike the chords with pride,  
 For Maggie was the brightest flower  
 E'er bloomed on Fiddochside.

The splendour of her matchless eye,  
 So lovely and divine,  
 Would dim the brightest star that shines,  
 Or diamond from the mine.

Her dewy lips, so ripe and red,  
 Oh ! could I press them now,  
 And clasp her gently to my breast,  
 And breathe again the vow

That last I whispered in yon glen,  
 Then sighed a sad farewell ;  
 And that that vow hath aye been kept  
 My aching heart can tell.

And though she's wandered far away,  
 And crossed the foaming tide ;  
 Yet still my heart for Maggie beats,  
 The flower of Fiddochside.

## A BATTLE FIELD.

HARK ! do you hear that dismal boom,  
 Like peals of distant thunder !  
 It comes with the speed of a lightning flash  
 When rocks are rent asunder.

Nearer it comes, and nearer still,  
 Hark, hark ! to the maddening cry ;  
 Now all is silent—again it bursts  
 In sounds that rend the sky.

See, see ! advancing across the plain  
 A dark red mass of men,  
 And look ! on the left, with the speed of the wind,  
 Comes the fleet artillery train.

But who are they on the distant heights,  
 Sullenly drawing back ?  
 'Tis the foreign foe that hath felt the force  
 Of the British rifle's crack.

But another sight meets the startled gaze ;  
 Look on the crimsoned ground  
 Where the mangled bodies of friends and foes  
 Are thickly strewn around,

Who, an hour before, were full of life,  
 And patriot's hopes were high,  
 With a deathless name on the page of fame,  
 Ne'er thinking death was nigh.

The tyrant grim, with his iron grasp,  
 Seized each one in his turn,  
 Leaving the fatherless child to weep,  
 The widowed mother to mourn.

And this is the pomp and pride of war,  
 This the reward of the brave,  
 Who have followed the fleeting phantom Fame,  
 To find in the end a grave.

## L I F E .

LIFE is a fitful fevered dream,  
 A bubble in time's mighty stream  
 That moves but for a day,  
 Then bursts and mingles with the waves,  
 And nought remains but silent graves,  
 Containing shapeless clay.

The mightiest minds e'er known to fame,  
 Where are they now ? there's but a name—  
 Last mark of all their pride—  
 That bubbles brighter than the rest,  
 Had skimmed awhile the ocean's breast,  
 Then sank beneath the tide.

The highest honours, wealth, and power,  
 Are but the pleasures of an hour,  
 And all the earth can give,  
 Like morning vapours melt away,  
 When rises bright the orb of day—  
 The soul can only live.

Men's titles, be they e'er so high,  
 Or yet the glance of beauty's eye,  
 Cannot avert the thrust ;  
 When the destroyer 'gins to ride  
 He strikes the mightiest in their pride,  
 And bids the heartstrings burst.

Then what is Life, if nought but this,  
 An hour of woe, an hour of bliss,  
 Then in oblivion rest ;  
 If higher hopes had ne'er been given,  
 Of vast eternity in heaven,  
 What thoughts would fill our breast ?

When all the empires of the past  
 Shall wake when thrills the trumpet's blast,  
 With trembling and with fear,

And through the air red meteors roll,  
That shake the earth from pole to pole—  
Then, then, man's doom is near.

And Time itself shall fade away,  
And yet the soul know no decay  
In happiness or woe ;  
The anthems of the just shall rise,  
And echo through the trembling skies  
When time hath ceased to flow.

Then gaze beyond this transient shade,  
Where happiness but blooms to fade,  
And pleasures ever fly,  
And fix upon the distant goal,  
The home of the immortal soul,  
And be prepared to die.

THE END.