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Title: Gairloch in North-West Ross-Shire

Author: John H. Dixon

Release date: October 29, 2012 [EBook #41227]

Language: English

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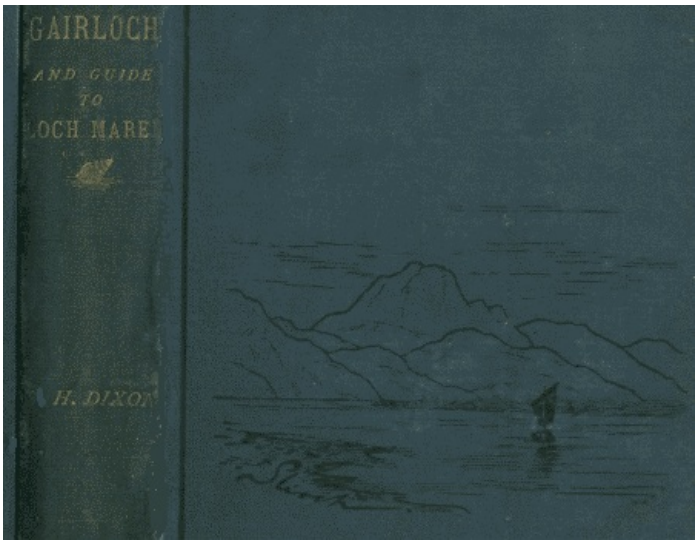

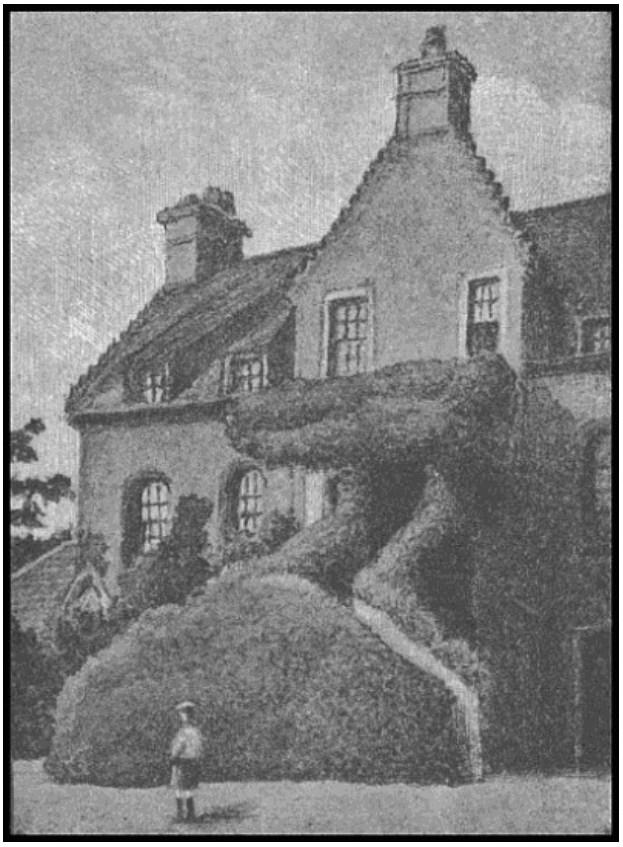

FLOWERDALE HOUSE, GAIRLOCH, WEST COAST
RESIDENCE OF THE BARONETS OF GAIRLOCH.

GAIRLOCH
IN NORTH-WEST ROSS-SHIRE

ITS RECORDS, TRADITIONS, INHABITANTS, AND NATURAL HISTORY

WITH A

Guide to Gairloch and Loch Maree

AND A MAP AND ILLUSTRATIONS

By JOHN H. DIXON, F.S.A. Scot.

INCLUDING CHAPTERS BY

WILLIAM JOLLY, F.G.S., F.R.S.E.; THE REV. JOHN M^{C}MURTRIE, M.A.; AND PROFESSOR W. IVISON MACADAM, F.C.S., F.I.C., M.M.S., &c., EDINBURGH

EDINBURGH
CO-OPERATIVE PRINTING COMPANY LIMITED
1886
[*Entered at Stationers' Hall.*]

EDINBURGH
CO-OPERATIVE PRINTING COMPANY LIMITED,
BRISTO PLACE.

TO

SIR KENNETH S. MACKENZIE,

SIXTH BARONET AND THIRTEENTH LAIRD OF GAIRLOCH,

AND

HER MAJESTY'S LIEUTENANT OF ROSS-SHIRE,

Is Dedicated

THIS ACCOUNT OF THE ROMANTIC HIGHLAND PARISH

WITH WHICH, DURING FOUR CENTURIES,

HE AND HIS ANCESTORS HAVE BEEN SO INTIMATELY ASSOCIATED.

PREFACE.

THE preparation of the following account of Gairloch has been prompted by regard—almost affection—for this beautiful and interesting Highland parish. It is published in the hope that it may not only assist the tourist, but also be found to constitute a volume worthy of a nook in the great library of local history. Here and there some few general remarks on the subjects dealt with have necessarily been introduced by way of explanation or illustration, but in the main this book relates solely to Gairloch. I have tried to make short chapters, and to dispense with footnotes.

Without much assistance the work could not have been satisfactorily completed. The necessary help has been given with the greatest freedom and kindness. Sir Kenneth S. Mackenzie, Bart. of Gairloch, has himself furnished much valuable and accurate information, and Lady Mackenzie of Gairloch has kindly assisted. From Mr Osgood H. Mackenzie of Inverewe, youngest son of the late Sir Francis Mackenzie, Bart. of Gairloch, I have received a large amount of personal aid. Much of the information about the Mackenzies has been culled from the works of Mr Alexander Mackenzie (a native of Gairloch) with his consent. He is the able author of a copious history of the Mackenzies and other important books, and the editor of the *Celtic Magazine*, from which last the memoir of John Mackenzie of the "Beauties" and several of the traditions have been mainly taken. From the MS. "Odd and End Stories" of Dr Mackenzie, Eileanach, only surviving son of Sir Hector Mackenzie, Bart., eleventh laird of Gairloch, numerous quotations will be found. These extracts are published with the consent of Dr Mackenzie, as well as of Mr O. H. Mackenzie to whom he has given his MS. volumes. With one exception, wherever Dr Mackenzie is quoted the extract is taken from his "Odd and End Stories." The Dowager Lady Mackenzie of Gairloch has [viii] been so good as to prepare a short statement, from which extracts are made. Dr Arthur Mitchell, C.B., Senior Commissioner in Lunacy for Scotland, has permitted the use of his paper on the Isle Maree superstitions. Mr Jolly has contributed three valuable chapters, and the Rev. J. M'Murtrie and Professor W. Ivison Macadam have each given a chapter. To Mr William Mackay of Craigmonie, Inverness, I am indebted for full notes on ecclesiastical matters, and for extracts from the old records of the Presbytery of Dingwall. The Rev. Alexander Matheson, minister of Glenshiel, has supplied extracts from the records of the Presbytery of Lochcarron. I have to thank Messrs Maclachlan & Stewart, of Edinburgh, who in 1882 brought out a sumptuous edition of the

"Beauties of Gaelic Poetry," by the late John Mackenzie, a Gairloch man, for permission to use the accounts of John Mackay (the blind piper), William Ross, William Mackenzie, and Malcolm Maclean, contained in the "Beauties." James Mackenzie, of Kirkton (brother of John Mackenzie of the "Beauties"), has furnished a large chapter of Gairloch stories, besides a number of facts, traditions, and anecdotes; wherever the name of James Mackenzie occurs in these pages, it is this worthy Highlander who is referred to. Other Gairloch traditions, stories, and information have been furnished by Kenneth Fraser, Leac nan Saighead (through the medium of the *Celtic Magazine*); Alexander Maclennan, Mossbank; Roderick Mackenzie (Ruaridh an Torra), Lonmor; George and Kenneth Maclennan, Tollie Croft; John Maclean (Iain Buidhe Taillear), Strath; Simon Chisholm, Flowerdale; Roderick Campbell, Tollie; Donald Ross, Kenlochewe; Alexander Mackenzie (Ali' Iain Ghlass), piper, Poolewe; George Maclennan, Londubh; and Alexander Maclennan (Alie Uistean), Inveran, who especially has given me considerable assistance. The legend of Ewan Mac Gabhar is mainly in the form given in the works of James Hogg, the Ettrick Shepherd, supported to some extent by several of the old people now living in Gairloch. That enthusiastic friend of the Highlander, Professor Blackie, has kindly contributed two English versions of Gaelic songs; and Mr William Clements Good, of Aberdeen, has given similar aid. Professor W. Ivison Macadam has communicated the results of his analyses of ores and slags, and [ix] has assisted in examining the remains of the old ironworks. Mr D. William Kemp, of Trinity, Edinburgh, has generously done a very great deal to unravel the history of the ironworks, and in other ways. Lieutenant Lamont, of Achtercairn, has procured the traditions given on the authority of Ruaridh an Torra. Mr Mackintosh, postmaster, Poolewe, has supplied some anecdotes and facts. The Glossary has been prepared with the aid of Mr O. H. Mackenzie; the Rev. Ronald Dingwall, Free Church minister, Aultbea; Mr Alexander Cameron, the Tournaig bard; and Mr Alexander Maclennan, Inveran. The names of some others who have rendered valuable help are stated where their information is utilised. To all these ungrudging helpers, and to many others not mentioned by name, I beg to offer my sincere thanks.

To render the natural history of Gairloch complete, lists are still needed of the insects, sea-anemones, grasses, mosses, lichens, fungi, sea-weeds, and fresh-water weeds. Any information on these and other branches of natural history will be heartily welcomed, with a view to insertion in a possible future edition.

The process of zincography, by which nearly all the illustrations have been reproduced, has not in many cases realised my expectations, but it has been thought best to issue the book at once rather than wait until the illustrations could be rendered in a superior manner.

The profits, if any, from the sale of this book will be applied in aid of the Poolewe Public Hall.

JOHN H. DIXON.

Inveran, Gairloch, *1st September 1886*.

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LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

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From Drawings by Finlay Mackinnon. The numbers correspond with those given on pp. 103, 104.

Notes.—The portraits of Sir George Hay, the Ironfounder of Loch Maree, are lithographed reproductions from photographs of pictures in Dupplin Castle, taken by permission of the present Earl of Kinnoull.

All the illustrations are original, except No. 12 of the Antiquities, which is reduced from that in Mr Jolly's paper on "Bronze Weapons and other Remains found near Poolewe."

The sketches for the illustrations of Flowerdale House and the Natural Arch at Cove are after photographs by Mr Fraser of Reilig. In no case have published photographs been used in the preparation of illustrations.

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Glossary of Gaelic Names and Words.

The pronunciation is given approximately in parentheses. In many cases no combination of letters pronounced in English fashion can accurately represent the Gaelic pronunciation.

The pronunciation of *ch* is almost the same in Gaelic as in German. Sometimes the *ch* is best rendered as an aspirate only, the *c* being treated as if silent.

The letter *c*, unless followed by *h*, is always pronounced in Gaelic like the English *k*, a letter not found in Gaelic.

The Gaelic pronunciation of the letters *b*, *d*, and *g* is soft, and they are often sounded more as if they were *p*, *t*, and *k*.

In Ross-shire Gaelic *sr* is pronounced as if it were *str*, and *rt* as if it were *rst*.

The consonant *d* before the vowels *e* and *i*, whether followed by another vowel or not, is pronounced as if it were *j*.

The consonant *s* before the vowels *i* or *e* is sounded as *sh*.

The consonant *l* has a liquid double sound, unlike anything in English; it may be approximated by lisping the vowel *u* before and the letter *y* after the ordinary sound of the letter *l*.

The letter *h* after the consonants *d*, *f*, *g*, *t*, and *s*, in Ross-shire Gaelic, renders those consonants silent; *bh* and *mh* are usually pronounced like *v*, a letter not found in the Gaelic alphabet. Sometimes *adh* seems to be pronounced very like *ag*.

The possessive case is frequently formed in Gaelic by the insertion of the letter *h* after the initial consonant, and of the letter *i* after the vowel in the first or second syllable.

The aspirate *h* is often inserted between the definite article and a noun beginning with a vowel. Sometimes the letter *t* is similarly inserted before a noun commencing with a consonant. These, and some other changes, are made for the sake of euphony.

The vowel sounds can only be defined with difficulty. The attempts made in this glossary are but imperfect. It may be stated that *ach* is generally pronounced *och*; *ao* and *u*, as *oo*; *ea*, as *a* in "bake"; *a*, *e*, and *i*, usually as in French; *ei*, sometimes as *a* in "bake," and sometimes as *i* in "bin"; and *ai* is sometimes almost like *u* in "dull," and sometimes like *a* in "tan."

Anyone desiring to pronounce a Gaelic name or word correctly, should ask a native to render it, and try to imitate him; even then, in some cases, it will be impossible to be exactly right.

A cheardach ruadh (ar charstock rooer), The red smithy. *Ceardach*, a smithy; *ruadh*, red.

A Mhaighdean (ar veytchen), The maiden. See *Maighdean*.

Achagarbh, properly spelt *Achadhgarbh* (ach a garrav), Rough field. *Ach*, a field; *garbh*, rough.

Achagarve. See *Achagarbh*.

Achdistall, or *Achdiestal* (achjestel), Field of Diestal. *Ach*, a field; *Diestal*, a Norse word, probably the name of a rock.

Achnasheen (achnasheen), Field of storms. *Ach*, or *achadh*, a field; *sian* (shee-on), means wind and rain combined, *i.e.*, a rainstorm. *Sian dubh* (black storm) is so-called in contradistinction to a snowstorm, which is designated *cur is cathadh*. An old Kintail priest long ago prophesied that this country would be brought to nought by *Sian dubh*, and that the people would have to go away to islands at the other side of the world.

Achtercairn, properly *Achadhacharn* (achterkairn), Field of the cairn. *Ach*, or achadh, a field; *carn*, a heap of stones.

Aigeascaig (aigaskaik). Name of place, meaning unknown. Colonel Robertson says *Aigeas* is a corruption of *aiguisg*, by reason of the water. The termination *aig* signifies a small bay; it was originally Danish.

Aird (aird), a height, a promontory or headland.

Aird na h'eigheamh (art na heyhugh), eight of calling. *Aird*, a height; *eigh*, to call. [xxviii]

Airdheslaig (artishlak). Supposed to be a Norse name. *Aird*, a height; *heslaig* may be for *h'aslaich*, *aslaich*, to entreat; *aslachadh*, entreaty.

Alastair Breac (allaster brake), Alexander the spotted. *Alastair*, Alexander; *breac*, spotted, or more correctly pock-marked. See *Breac*.

Alastair Buidhe Mackay, properly MacAoidh (allaster boo-ie mackai), Yellow Alexander Mackay. *MacAoidh* is pronounced Macooie.

Alastair Buidhe MacIamhair (allaster boo-ie makeemver), Yellow-haired Alexander MacIver; pronounced MakEever.

Alastair Liath (allaster leear), Grey-headed Alexander. *Liath*, grey, grey-headed. It means light blue when not applied to a human being.

Alastair MacIain Mhic Earchair (allaster makeeanvic erraquhar), Alexander, son of John, son of Farquhar. *Earchair* is incorrectly written for *Fhearchair*, the possessive of *Farquhar*; *Fhearchair* is pronounced Erraquhar or Earchair.

Alastair Mor an t' Sealgair (allaster more ant shollager), Big Alexander the hunter. *Sealgair*, a hunter, a stalker, literally a sneaker.

Ali' Iain Ghlais (alian loss), Alexander [son] of Pale John. From *Alie* (short for *Alastair*), Alexander; *Iain*, John; and *glas*, pale or sallow. *Glas* means grey when not applied to human beings.

Alie Uistean (ally ooshtan), Alick Hugh. *Alie*, short for Alexander. See *Uistean*.

Allt a Choire Dhuibh Mhoir (arlta corrie oo-ie vore), The burn of the great black corrie. *Allt*, a burn; *choire*, possessive of *coire*, a corry; *dhuibh*, possessive of *dubh*, black; *mhoir*, possessive of *mor*, great.

Altgreshan, properly *Alltgrisean* (alt-grishan), Roan or grizzly burn. *Allt*, a burn; *grisfhionn* (grishan), grizzly.

Am port Leathach (am porsht layoch), The port at half [tide]. *Leath* is half.

An Amilt, or *An Amhuilt* (ann amvilt). Name of a place; means the stratagem.

An Fhridh dhorch (an ree dorroch), the dark forest. *Fridh*, forest; *dorch*, dark.

An Groban. See *Groban*.

An t' Eirthire Donn. See *Eirthire Donn*.

Angus. See *Aonghas*.

Aonghas (unnus), Angus, or Æneas, which last is nearer in sound to the Gaelic.

Applecross. English name as now used. Colonel Robertson says it is for the Gaelic *Abercroisean*, or *Abhircroisean*, from *aber*, mouth, or confluence of; *croisean*, of troubles; or perhaps *croisean* was the name of the little river.

Ardlair (ardlair), The mare's height or headland. *Aird*, a height; *lair*, a mare.

Ath nan ceann (arnankown), Ford of the heads. *Ath*, a ford; *ceann*, heads. Often written *Anagown*.

Aultbea, should be spelt *Alltbeithe* (arltbay), Burn of birches. *Allt*, a burn; *beath*, or *beith*, a birch.

Bac an Leth-choin (bark an lechun), Shelf of the crossbred dog. *Leth-choin*, a crossbred dog, a lurcher. *Bac* is a shelf or flat on the side or top of a hill; in this case the name is popularly applied to the whole hill.

Bac Dubh (bark dhoo), Black shelf. *Bac*, a shelf or flat place among rocks or on a hill; *dubh*, black.

Bad (bat), a clump, a grove.

Bad a Chrotha (badachro). Full Gaelic spelling of Badachro, which see.

Bad a mhanaich (bat er vannich), Grove of the monk. See *Bad*. *Mhanaich*, possessive of *manach*, a monk.

Bad an t' Sluig (bat ant slook), Grove of the miry puddle. *Bad*, a grove; *sluig*, possessive of *slug*, a miry puddle.

Badachro (badachro), Grove of the cruive. *Bad*, a grove; *chro*, possessive of *cro*, a cruive, a fank.

Badfearn, should be *Badfearna* (batfern), Alder grove. *Fearn*, the alder tree. See *Bad*. The place has still a clump of alders.

Badluachrach (bat loocharar), Rushy clump. *Luachair*, rushes.

Baile na h'eaglais (bally-na-herkless), Town of the church, or Kirkton. *Baile*, a town; *eaglais*, a church. Compare *Ecclesia*.

Ballymeon (bally-mey-on), properly spelt *Baile-meadhon*, pronounced exactly the same. *Baile*, a town; *meadhon*, middle. *Anglicè*, Middleton.

Bard Mor an t' Slaggan (bart more ant slaggan), The great or big bard of Slaggan, which see.

Bard Sasunnach (bart Sassenach), English bard. *Sasunnach*, English, i.e. not a Gaelic speaker.

Bathais Bheinn (boorsh ven), Forehead mountain (very descriptive). From *Beinn*, mountain, and *bathais*, forehead; or perhaps it should be called *Baoisg Bheinn* (boiskivin), the mountain of gleaming, because it catches the first rays of the rising sun. This is also true of this mountain. [xxix]

Beag (bek), little. It seems to appear as *bach* in some English names.

Beallach Glasleathaid (baaloch glass laid), Pass of the gray slope. *Beallach*, a pass; *glas*, pale; *leathaid*, possessive of *leathad*, a slope.

Beallach nan Brog (baaloch nam progue), Pass of the shoes. *Brog*, a shoe.

Beallach a Chomhla (baaloch a korvla), Pass of the door. *Comhladh*, a door.

Beinn Alligin (bin allikin), Jewel mountain. Properly *Ailleagan*, a jewel, or darling, anything precious.

Beinn a Chaisgean (bin a harshkin), Mountain of casgean; which may be a corruption of *caisg*, Easter.

Beinn Aridh Charr (bin arry har), The mountain of the rough shieling. *Beinn*, a mountain; *aridh*, a shieling; *charr*, a corruption of *garbh*, rough.

Beinn a Chearcaill (bin a herkill). Mountain of the hoop. *Cearcall*, a hoop. Descriptive of bands or lines of stratification encircling this hill.

Beinn a Mhuinidh (bin ar voonie), Mountain of the "Pisvache."

Beinn an Eoin (bin-in-eeōn), The mountain of the bird. *Beinn*, a mountain; *eoin*, possessive of *eun*, a bird. The bird in this case is the ptarmigan.

Beinn Bheag (bin vek), Little mountain. *Beag*, little.

Beinn Bhreac (bin y vraick), Spotted mountain. *Breac*, spotted.

Beinn Damph, properly *Beinn Damh* (bin damff), Mountain of the stag. *Damh*, a stag.

Beinn Dearg (bin jarrak), Red mountain. *Beinn*; and *Dearg*, red.

Beinn Eighe (bin ay), File mountain. *Eighe*, a file. The topmost ridge is jagged or serrated like a file.

Beinn Lair (bin lar), Mountain of the mare. *Lair*, a mare.

Beinn Liathgach (bin learoch). This mountain should not be called *Beinn Liathgach*, but *Liathgach*, which see.

Beinn na h' Eaglais (binnaherkless), Mountain of the church. *Beinn*, mountain; *eaglais*, church.

Beinn nan Ramh (bin an rahv), Mountain of the oar. *Ramh*, an oar.

Beinn Slioch or *Sleugach* (bin sleoch). Should be *Slioch* without *Beinn*. See *Slioch*.

Beinn Tarsuinn (bin tarsing), Mountain across.

Beinn Tarsuinn Chaol (bin tarsing chool), Narrow Beinn Tarsuinn. *Caol*, narrow or slender.

Bhantighearna Ruadh (vancherna rooar), Red lady. *Bhantighearna*, literally she-lord.

Bho Iutharn, or *Bho Iuthrna* (vo ewern), From hell. *Bho*, from; *Iuthrna*, hell.

Bidean clann Raonaild (peetyan clan ruynuld), Clan Ranald's peak. *Bidean*, a peak.

Blar na Fala (blar ner falla), Plain of the blood. *Blar*, a plain or bog, or flat place; *fala*, possessive of *fuil*, blood.

Blar na Pairc (blar ner park), Battle of the park. *Pairc*, possessive of *parc*, a park or field.

Bonaid donn (boanat down), Brown bonnet. *Bonaid*, a bonnet, a cap; *donn*, brown.

Boor (bore). Either from *buradh*, a bursting forth of blood; or from a word containing the root *boor*, meaning "roaring," because stags used to roar here.

Bothie (bothy, *othie* pronounced as in frothy), a little hut or hovel. *Both*, a hut. Compare English *booth*. The *ie* is an old Gaelic diminutive, often written *idh*.

Braemore, properly *Braighmor* (bray more), Great summit or hill. *Mor*, great; *braigh*, summit.

Breac (brake), spotted, marked with smallpox (when applied to human beings), a trout.

Breacan an Fheilidh (brayken an aylie), the belted or kilted plaid. *Breacan*, a tartan plaid; *fheilidh*, possessive of *feileadh*, a kilt.

Bruachaig (brooachak). Perhaps from *Bruach*, and *achadh*, a field; *bruach*, a bank, border, edge, steep; *aig*, means a small bay in old Danish.

Buaile na luib (pool na loop), Fold of the bend. From *buaile*, a fold; and *luib*, a bend or loop.

Buidhe (boo-ie), yellow-haired, yellow.

Cabar Feidh (kapper fay), deer's antler. *Cabar*, antler, or a stick; *feiah*, possessive of *fiagh*, deer.

Cabar Lar (kapper law), Turf parer. *Cabar*, a stick; *lar*, a floor, the ground.

Cadha Beag (kaar pek), Little pass in the rock. *Beag*, little; *cadha*, a pass in a rock. [xxx]

Cailleach a Mhuillear (kaillyoch a vuillyear), The miller's wife. *Cailleach*, an old woman; *muillear*, miller.

Cailleach Liath Rasaidh (kaillyoch leear raasa), Grey old woman of Raasay. *Cailleach*, an old woman; *liath*, grey (light blue when not applied to a human being).

Callum a Ghlinne (kallum a glinnie), Malcolm of the glen. *Callum*, Malcolm.

Carn a Ghlinne (karn a glinnie), Cairn of the glen. *Carn*, a cairn or heap of stones; *ghlinne*, possessive of *gleann*, a glen.

Carn Anthony (karn anthony), Cairn of Anthony. *Carn*, a heap of stones.

Carn Dearg (karn jarrak). Red cairn. *Carn*, a heap of stones. See *Dearg*.

Carn Liath (karn leear), Light blue cairn. *Carn*, a heap of stones; *liath*, light blue.

Cas chrom (kas-rhoum), foot plough; literally crooked foot, from *cas*, a foot; and *crom*, crooked.

Cathair mhor (kaar more). Big seat, *i.e.* Fairies' seat. See *Kerrysdale*.

Ceann a Chro (kayoun-a-chroe), End or head of the cruive. *Ceann*, end or head; *cro*, a cruive, or fank.

Ceann a chruinn (kayoun a chreinie), mast head, or tree head or end. *Ceann*, a head, end; *cruinn*, possessive of *crann*, a tree or mast.

Ceann an t' sail (kayoun an tarl), end or head of the salt water. *Ceann*, end or head; *sail*, salt water. Corrupted further south into Kintail.

Ceann loch iu (kayoun loch ew), head of Loch Ewe. *Ceann*, a head.

Ceardach ruadh (karstoch roo-er), Red smiddy. See *A cheardach ruadh*.

Ceilidh (kayley), social meetings. From *ceilidh*, to visit.

Ceistear crubach (kaister crupboch), lame catechist. *Ceistear*, a catechist; *crubach*, lame.

Cibear Mor (keeipber more), big shepherd. *Cibear*, a shepherd; *mor*, great or big.

Clach (klarch), a stone. Possessive, *Cloiche*. Compare *clough*, found in some English names.

Clach a Mhail (klarch ar varl), Stone of rent. *Clach*, a stone; *Mal*, rent, tribute.

Clach an t' Shagart (klarch an taggart), Stone of the priest. *Clach*, a stone; *shagart*, possessive of *sagart*, a priest.

Clach nam Brog (klarch nam progue), Shoe stone. *Clach*, a stone; *brog*, a shoe.

Clachan garbh (klachan garrav), Rough village. *Clachan*, a village; literally stones; supposed to have originally been a Druidical term. See *Garbh*.

Cladh nan Sasunnach (klug nan sarsenach), Burial-place of the English. *Cladh*, a burial-place; *Sasunnach*, English, Saxon, not a Gaelic speaker.

Claidheamh mor (klymore), a broadsword, a claymore. *Claidheamh*, a sword; *mor*, great, here broad.

Clais na leac (klarsh na lyck), Hollow of the flat stones or flags. *Clais*, a furrow, a hollow between ridges or hills; *leac*, a flag.

Claonadh (kluanar), slopes. Compare *inclining*.

Clann Eachainn (klan erchen), offspring of Hector. *Clann*, offspring or descendants. See *Eachainn*.

Claymore. See *Claidheamh mor*.

Cleireach (klearoch), literally clerk. Priests often called so from their scholarship. The Priest island off the Greenstone Point is called *Cleireach* in Gaelic. Compare *Clericus*.

Cliabh moine (kleea moanyer), peat creel. *Cliabh*, creel; *moine*, peats.

Cliff, or *Clive* (Gaelic Clu). See *Meall na Cluibha*.

Clu (kloo), a local name; now treated as synonymous with English *cliff*. See *Meall na Cluibha*.

Cnoc a chrochadair (kroka chrochater), Hangman's hill. *Cnoc*, a hill, a hillock; *chrochadair*, possessive of *crochadair*, a hangman.

Cnoc a croiche (krok a chroich), Gallows hill. *Croich*, a gallows.

Cnoc na mi-chomhairle (krok na mee ho-airlie), Hillock of evil counsel. *Cnoc*, a hillock; *mi* (like *mis-*), evil, *comhairle*, counsel. *Mi* is also a negative prefix like *un-*.

Coigeach (ko-yoch), probably the "fifth portion" [of a davach]. *Coig*, five.

Coille Aigeascaig (kul yaikaskaik); Wood of Aigeascaig. *Coille*, a wood; see *Aigeascaig*.

Coinneach (kuinyoch), Kenneth. The progenitor of the Mackenzies.

Coinneach Mac Sheumais (kuinyoch mak eearmis), Kenneth the son of James. *Coinneach*, Kenneth; *Seumas*, James.

Coinneachadh Beag (koonyochor bek), Little meeting-place. *Coinneachadh*, meeting-place; *beag*, little. [xxxi]

Coire an Easain (corrie an easan), Corrie of the little waterfall. *Easan*, a little waterfall.

Coire Cheud Cnoc (corrie hehud crok), Corrie of a hundred hillocks. *Coire*, a corrie; *ceud*, hundred; *cnoc*, a hillock.

Coire Cheud Creagh (corrie hehud krayar), Corrie of a hundred spoils. *Coire*, corrie; *ceud*, a hundred; *creagh*, spoils. Name erroneously given by some to the Corrie of a hundred hillocks. See last name.

Coire Dubh Mor (corrie dhoo more), Great black corrie (or dell).

Coire Mhic Cromail (corrie vic krommle), The corrie of the son of Cromail. *Mhic*, of the son of; *Cromail*, an old name, meaning unknown.

Coire nan Cuilean (corrie nan coollin), Corrie of the cubs. *Cuilean*, a cub, a pup.

Coppachy, properly *Copachaidh* (koppachie), Foam field. *Cop*, foam; *achadh*, a field.

Corcur (korker), red, crimson.

Cota gearr (koita gaerr), short coat. *Cota*, a coat; *gearr*, short.

Co-thional (ko-yearnal), gathering together. *Comh*, or *co*, fellowship (compare *company*); *tional*, gathering.

Cove. English name altered from cave. The Gaelic name of the place is really *An Uamhaidh* (nouahvie), or the place of caves, from *uamh*, a cave. But it is more properly called *An Uamh Mhor*, or the great cave, a name descriptive of the cave still used as a place of worship.

Cradh Gheadh (crargeear), Shieldrake. *Geag*, a goose.

Craig (kraik), a crag or rock; properly spelt *creig*, or *creag*.

Craig a Chait (kraig a hart), Rock of the cat. *Chait*, possessive of *cat*, which is the same in Gaelic as in English, but was originally applied only to the wild cat.

Craig an Dubh Loch (kraigan dhoo-loch), Rock of the black loch.

Craig an Fhithich (kraig an eech), Crag of the raven. *Fhithich*, possessive of *fitheach*, a raven.

Craig an Fhithich Mhor (kraig an eech vore), Big crag of the raven.

Craig an t' Shabhail (kraig an towl), Rock of the barn. *Sabhal*, a barn.

Craig Bhadain an Aisc (kraik vatn an ashk), Rock of the clumps or groves of burial. *Badan*, clumps or groves; *aisc*, obsolete word, meaning burial or interment, or preparation for burial.

Craig Bhan (kraig varn), White crag. *Ban*, white; and see *Craig*.

Craig Roy. Properly *Craig Ruadh*, which see.

Craig Ruadh (kraik roo-er), Red crag. See *Craig* and *Ruadh*.

Craig Thairbh (kraik-harve), Bull rock. *Tarbh*, a bull.

Craig Tollie (kraig tollie), properly *Creag Thollie* (kraig holly), Rock of Tollie. See *Tollie*.

Crannag (crannog). A crannog, or insulated fortress, usually constructed on piles in a loch; the same word as *crannag*, a pulpit.

Crasg (krask). Meaning uncertain, possibly something that lies across. *Crasg* is the top of a spade, or cross piece of a crutch. *Crasgach* is something that goes contrary.

Creagan an Inver (kraigan an innyr), Little rock of the mouth of the river. *Inver*, mouth of a river.

Cromasaig, properly spelt *Crom Fhasadh* (krommasak), Crooked hollow. *Crom*, crooked; *fhasadh*, possessive of *fasadh*, a hollow.

Crubach (kruboch), lame of a leg. Compare *cripple*.

Cruitear, or *Cruitire* (kroo-iter), a musician, a harper.

Cuairtear nan Gleann (kooairter nan gleyoun), Pilgrim of the glens. *Cuairtear*, a pilgrim; *gleann*, glens.

Cu-dubh (koo dhoo), black dog. *Cu*, a dog.

Cuil an Scardain (kool an scarten), Corner of the screes. *Cuil*, a corner, a nook; *sgardan*, screes. The name is very descriptive.

Cuilchonich (kulhoanie), Mossy corner. *Coinneach*, green moss; *cuil*, a corner.

Culinellan, properly *Cul an eilean* (koolineylen), Back of the island. *Cul*, back of; *eilean*, an island.

Cumha Thighearna Ghearrloch (koovtcheerna yairloch), Lament of or for the laird of Gairloch. *Cumha*, lament. See *Tighearna*.

Dal Cruaidh (dal crewie), hard field or flat. *Dal*, a flat field; *cruaidh*, hard.

Darach (darroch), an oak.

Dearg (jarrak), red, like a rose.

Diabaig (teapik). Norse name, meaning unknown; possibly connected with *Dia*, God; *aig*, a small bay, so that it may mean the small bay of God. Perhaps this has reference to religious rites imported from the neighbouring monastery of Applecross. *Diabaig* is spelt *Typack* on the map of 1662. [xxxii]

Doire (derry), a grove.

Domhnull Dubh (donnullul dhoo), Black Donald. *Domhnull*, Donald; *dubh*, black.

Domhnull Gorm (donnullul gorrum), Blue Donald. *Gorm*, blue.

Domhnull Greannach (donnullul gruonnoch), Sour or savage-looking Donald. *Greannach* also means irascible.

Domhnull M'Eaine Roy Vic Choinnich, should be *Domhnull Mac Iain Ruadh Mhic Choinnich* (donald mak eean ruar vick kuinyoch), Donald son of John Roy (red John) son of Kenneth. *Mac*, son of; *Mhic* (or *Vic*), possessive of *Mac*.

Domhnull Mor (donnullul more), Big Donald. *Domhnull*, Donald; *mor*, big.

Domhnull Odhar MacIain Leith (donnullul our mak yan lay), Sallow or dun Donald son of Iain Liath or grey-haired John. *Odhar* also means drab. *Leith*, possessive of *Liath*, grey.

Donald. See *Domhnull Dubh*, *&c.* Donald is often written in these pages instead of its Gaelic spelling.

Donn (down), brown, bay, or sable. Compare *dun*.

Donnachadh Mor na Tuaighe (donnochar mor na tew-ay), Big Duncan of the axe. *Donnachadh*, Duncan; *mor*, big; *tuagh*, an axe.

Donnachadh na Fadach (dunochar na fardoch), Duncan Fadach. *Donnachadh*, Duncan; *Fadach*, name of the farm he had in Kintail before he came to Inveran.

Druim a Chait (dream a-hart), Ridge of the cat. *Druim*, a ridge; *chait*, possessive of cat.

Druim Carn Neill (dream karneyal), Ridge of the cairn of Neil. *Druim*, or *droim*, a ridge or keel.

Drumchork, properly *Druim a choirc* (drum-a-hawk), Ridge of corn, or oats. *Druim*, a ridge; *coirce*, oats, corn.

Dubh (dhoo), black.

Dubh Loch (dhoo-loch), Black loch.

Dun (doon), a castle; *Dunan* (doonan), a small castle.

Dun Naast (doonarst), Castle of Naast. See *Naast*.

Eachainn (erchen), Hector. Hector is considered the English equivalent, though it is not a translation of this Gaelic name.

Eachainn Geal (erchen gayal), White Hector. See *Eachainn* and *Geal*.

Eachainn Ruadh (erchen roo-er), Hector Roy. Hector is considered the English equivalent for *Eachainn*; and see *Ruadh*.

Eilean (eylan), an island, isle.

Eileanach (eylanoch), Island of the field. *Eilean*, isle; *ach*, or *achadh*, or *achaidh*, a field. Perhaps it would be more accurately translated The place of islands.

Eileandonain (eylan donnan), Island Donain. *Donain*, name of a saint, probably short for *Donnachadh*, or Duncan.

Eilean a Mhor Righ (eylan a vor ree), Island of the great king. An erroneous suggestion

of the origin of the name Maree.

Eilean Dubh na Sroine (eylan dhoo na stronyer), Black island of the nose or promontory. *Dubh*, black; *sron* (stron), a nose or promontory.

Eilean Grudidh (eylan gruydgie), Island Grudie. See *Eilean* and *Grudidh*.

Eilean Horisdale (eylan horrisdel), properly *Eilean Thorisdal*, the island of Thorsdale, a Norse name, which see.

Eilean Maree (eylan maree), Isle Maree. See *St Maelrubha*.

Eilean na h' Iolaire (eylan nar hewlar-yer), Island of the eagle. *Iolaire*, an eagle.

Eilean Ruaridh Beag (eylan rooarie vek), Little island of Rorie or Roderick. *Beag*, little.

Eilean Ruaridh Mor (eylan ruorie mor), Big island of Rorie. *Mor*, big.

Eilean Suainne (eylan soo-in), Everlasting isle. *Suainne*, everlasting.

Eirthire Donn (erriyer down), Brown shore. *Eirthira*, shore; *donn*, brown.

Erradale (erradale). Norse; probably from *earr*, a boundary, the edge of.

Ewan McGabhar, properly *Eoghan Mac Gabhar* (ewen mak gower), Ewan son of the goat. *Gabhar*, a she-goat.

Ewe (ew). May be a corruption from *uisge* (usque), water. Compare similar Welsh root *gwy*, water, as in Wye.

Faidhir Mor (fire more), Great market. *Faidhir*, a fair or market; *mor*, great or big. [xxxiii]

Failte Uilleam Dhuibh (falt yllyam oo-ey), Black William's salute. *Failte*, a salute; *Uilleam*, William; *dhuibh*, possessive of *dubh*, black.

Fannich, properly *Fanaich* (fannich). Meaning unknown.

Faoileag (fewlak), a sea-gull, name for a dog.

Farquhar (properly *Fearchar*) *Buidhe* (farkar boo-ie), Yellow-haired Farquhar. See *Buidhe*.

Fasagh (fassoch). From *Fasadh* (pronounced fassoch), meaning a hollow.

Fe Leoid, properly *Feith Leoid* (fay lee-oade), The bog of Leod (Loud). *Feith*, a bog; *Leoid*, possessive of *Leod*, a Norse Christian name.

Feachaisgean, properly *Feith Chaisgean* (fay harshkin), Bog of Casgean. See *Beinn a Chaisgean*.

Feadag-chuirn (fettak hee-oorn), Cairn plover. Gaelic name of the dotteril. *Feadag*, a plover; *chuirn*, possessive of *carn*, a cairn.

Fear, *Feur*, *Feir*, or *Fiar loch* (fear loch), sedgy loch. *Feur*, possessive *feoir* (feyoar), sedge, reedy grass.

Fear Shieldaig (fear shieldak), The goodman of Shieldaig. *Fear* means a man, a goodman.

Fedan Mor (fettan more), Big gullie. *Fead* (fet), a whistle; *feadan*, a little whistle or whistling thing (applied to a gully because the wind whistles through it). *Feadag*, the feminine diminutive of *fead*, is the name given to the golden plover on account of its piping.

Feileadh-beag (faylabek), philabeg, or kilt; literally little kilt, *i.e.* the kilt made up separately as distinguished from the *Breacan an Fheilidh*, the belted or kilted plaid.

Feill Iudha (fail you-her), Ewe market. *Feill*, a market; *Iudha*, possessive of *Iu*, Ewe.

Feir loch. See *Fear loch*.

Feith an Leothaid. Same as *Fe-Leoid*, which see. This is the more correct spelling.

Feith Mhic Iain Dhuibh (fay vik an ooie), The bog of Black John's son. *Feith*, a bog. See *Mac Iain Dhuibh*.

Feithean Mor, properly *Na feithean mor* (fain more), The great morasses. *Feith* (pl. *feithean*), a morass, a bog.

Feur loch. See *Fear loch*.

Fiaclachan (feearclochon), little toothed things. Diminutive of *fiaclach*, toothed or jagged, *i.e.* the little jagged rock; very descriptive.

Fiar loch. See *Fear loch*.

Fionn Loch (fee-un-loch), Fingal's loch, or The white loch. It is called Loch Finn on the

map of 1662. *Fionn* means white, pale, or wan. It is said the Fingalians were called the white men in contradistinction to the Dugals or black men.

Fionnla Dubh MacGillechriosd (feeounla dhoo mak gillie chree-est), Black Finlay, son of the servant of Christ. See *MacGillechriosd*.

Fionnla Dubh na Saighead (feeounla dhoo na side), Black Finlay of the arrow. *Saighead*, an arrow.

Fionnla Liath (feeounla leear), Grey Finlay. *Liath*, grey.

Firemore. See *Faidhir mor*.

Foura (foora), an island at the mouth of Loch Ewe. The name includes the Norwegian suffix "a," meaning an island. *Fuar* (four) is Gaelic for cold.

Fraoch-eilean (frooch-eylan), Heather isle. *Fraoch*, heather.

Fuirneis (furniss), Furnace. This name was most likely originated here by iron-workers from Furness in Lancashire. Furness, according to Rev. Isaac Taylor, may be Fireness, the "fire isle," or "Fore-ness." Ness is Norse for a nose or headland.

Gael (gale), properly *Gaidheal* (gai-al), a Highlander, a Gael.

Gaelic (gallik), properly *Gaidhealach* (gai-alloch), Highland.

Gairloch (garloch), Short loch. Originally, and more correctly, spelt *Gearrloch* or *Gerloch*. *Gearr*, short. It is always spelt *Gearrloch* in Gaelic.

Garadh Iaruinn (gaarogh eerun), Iron dyke. *Garradh*, a dyke, a fence wall; *iaruinn*, iron.

Garavaig, properly *Garbhaig* (garavaik), name of a small river or burn. The termination "aig" is said to be old Danish, and means a small bay, but the prefix is probably from *garbh*, rough.

Garbh (garav, or garve), rough.

Garbh Choire (garav chorrie), Rough corrie.

Garbh eilean (garaveylan), Rough island. *Garbh*, rough.

Geal (gayal), white, bright.

Gille (gillie), a lad, a young man, a gillie, a servant. [xxxiv]

Gille Buidhe (gillie boo-ie), Yellow, or yellow-haired gillie. See *Gille*.

Gille Cailean Mor (gilly callain more), The lad big Colin. See separate words.

Gille Dubh (gillie dhoo), Black, or black-haired lad.

Gille Riabhach (gillie ree-oach), Brindled lad. *Riabhach*, brindled.

Gillean (gillyon), lads. Plural of *Gille*, which see.

Gillean an t' Sealgair (gillyon ant shallager), the hunter's lads. *Gillean*, lads, or young men; *sealgair*, a hunter.

Gillespic (gill-yespik), servant of the bishop. *Gille*, servant; *easbuig* (espik), bishop. Compare *Episcopus*.

Glac Mhic Iain Dhuibh (glark vik an oo-ie), Hollow or dell of the son of Black John. *Glac*, a hollow or dell; *Mhic*, possessive of *Mac*, the son of; *dhuibh*, possessive of *dubh*, black.

Glac na Sguithar (glark nar skither), Hollow of Sguithar. An old name; meaning now lost.

Glas (glosh), grey. When applied to a man it means that he is pale or sallow, never grey-haired.

Glas eilean (glosh-eylan), Grey island. *Glas*, grey; *eilean*, an island.

Glas Leitire (glosh laytcher), Grey slope. See *Glas* and *Leitir*.

Glen, properly *Gleann* (glen or gloun), a valley, a dale.

Glen a Bianasdail (gloun ar beeanarstle), Glen of skin field or dale, or *thal*. *Bian*, a wild animal's skin.

Glen Cruaidh Choillie (glen or gloun cruchollie). May perhaps be the hardwood glen. *Cruid*, hard; *coille*, wood.

Glen Dochartie, properly *Gleann Dochartidh* (gloun dochartie). *Dochart*, or *Dochartie*, is believed to have been the name of a man.

Glen na Muic (gloun na mook). *Muic*, possessive of *muc*, a pig.

Gobha dubh an uisge (gow dhoo an uisk), Blacksmith of the water. *Gobha*, a smith; *dubh*, black; *uisge*, water.

Gorm (gorrum), blue.

Groban (groben). Probably a grooved rock, from *grobadh*, to groove.

Grudidh, more correctly *Gruididh* (gruydyie). Possibly from *gruid*, dregs; because the dregs and sediment of several burns drain into the Grudidh river.

Gruinard, in Gaelic *Gruinaird* (grinyard). Meaning unknown; may be from *grian*, the sun, and *aird*, a height. It used to be sometimes spelt *Greinord*; may be Norse.

Hector Roy. English rendering of *Eachainn Ruadh*, which see. No Gaelic word begins with *H*.

Heglis Gherloch, for *Eaglais Ghearrloch* (erkless yairloch), Church of Gairloch. *Eaglais*, a church.

Heglis Loch Ew, for *Eaglais Loch Iu* (erkless loch ew), Church of Loch Ewe.

Horisdale. See *Eilean Horisdale*.

Iain Buidhe (eean boo-ie), Yellow, or yellow-haired John. *Iain*, John. See *Buidhe*.

Iain Buidhe Taillear (eean boo-ie tyler), Yellow-haired John the tailor. *Taillear*, a tailor.

Iain Caol (eean cool), Slender John. *Caol*, slender.

Iain Dall (eean toul), Blind John. *Dall*, blind.

Iain Dubh Mac Ruaridh (eean dhoo mak rooarie), Black John, son of Rorie or Roderick. See separate words.

Iain Geal Donn (eean gel town), Whitey-brown John. *Geal*, white; *Donn*, brown.

Iain Gearr (eean garr), Short John. *Gearr*, short.

Iain Gearr Mac Mhurchaidh Mhic Iain (eean garr mak muroochie vic yan), Short John, son of Murdo, son of John.

Iain Glassich (eean glassoch), John of [Strath] Glass.

Iain Liath (eean leear), Grey John. *Liath*, grey.

Iain MacAllan Mhic Ruaridh (eean mak allan vik rooarie), John, son of Allan, son of Rorie. See separate words.

Iain Mac Coinnich Mhic Eachainn (eean mak kunyich vik erchen), John, son of Kenneth, son of Hector.

Iain Mac Eachainn Chaoil (eean mak erchen chooil), John, son of slender Hector. *Chaoil*, possessive of *caol*, slender.

Iain Mac Ghille Challum (eean mak illie challum), John, son of the lad Malcolm. See *Mac Ghille Challum*.

Iain Mac Iain Uidhir (eean mak an eer), John, the son of dun John. *Uidhir* is the possessive of *odhar*, dun.

Iain Mor am Post (eean more am post, pronounced like cost), Big John the post. [xxxv]

Iain Odhar Mac Iain Leith (eean our mak an lay), Dun John, son of Grey John. *Odhar*, dun; *liath*, grey.

Iain Ruadh (eean ruor, or ruag), John Roy, or Red John.

Innis a Bhaird (ish y vard), Oasis (or "clearing") of the bard. *Innis*, an island, or green oasis in a brown heathery region; *bhaird*, possessive of *bard*.

Innis Ghlas (inch gloss), The grey oasis. See *Innis a Bhaird*. *Glas*, grey.

Inveran, in Gaelic *Inbhiran* (in youren). *Inbhiran* is the diminutive of *Inbhir* (inver), an estuary, or mouth of. Inveran therefore means the little estuary. It takes this name from the small estuary formed where the little river from Kernsary enters Loch Maree.

Inverasdale, should be spelt *Inbhirasdal* (in-ur-astle), Mouth of the river Asdaile. Called *Ashfidill*, *Aspedell*, or *Absdill* in old documents.

Inverewe, Anglicé for *Inbhiriu* (in yer ew), The mouth of the Ewe. *Inver* (Gallice *Inbhir*), mouth of a river.

Judha. See *Feill Iudha*. There is no word beginning with *J* in Gaelic.

Kenlochewe (kinloch ew). See *Ceann loch iu*. The letter *k* does not occur in true Gaelic.

Kenneth. English form of *Coinneach*, which see.

Kernsary, spelt in Gaelic *Cearnsair*. A corruption, probably from *carn*, a cairn; *aridh*, a shieling.

Kerry, properly spelt *Cearridh*. Meaning unknown; may be connected with *cearr*, left, or wrong.

Kerrysdale. A modern English name; in Gaelic it is called *Cathair Bheag*, or the little seat or green knoll on which the fairies used to sit. Compare similar word in Welsh, as in *Cader Idris*. *Bheag* is possessive of *beag*, little.

Kintail. See *Ceann an t' sail*.

Laide (laide), a slope. From *leathad* (pronounced *laid*), a slope. The place is called in Gaelic *Leathad Udrigil*, or The slope of Udrigil.

Lasan (larsan), a slight passion, wrath, anger.

Leabaidh na Ba Bàine (lyeppy na papann), Bed of the white cow. *Leabaidh*, a bed; *ba*, possessive of *bo*, a cow; *bàine*, possessive of *ban*, white.

Leabhar na Feinne (leeoar na fainyie), Book of the Fingalians.

Leac nan Saighead (lake nen side), Flag or flat rock of the arrow. *Leac*, a flat rock, a flag; *saighead*, an arrow.

Leacaidh (lyechy), Place of flags, or flat rocks.

Leitir (laychter, letter), slope on a hill side, declivity.

Leth chreag (laychrig), Half rock. *Leth*, half; *chreag*, possessive of *creag*, a rock. This name is applied to several rocky hills in Gairloch; it seems to imply that one-half of the rock has fallen away.

Letterewe (letter ew), Slope of Ewe. See *Leitir*. This name is properly *Leitir Iu*.

Leum an Doill (layum an toul), Blind man's leap.

Lews (looze). From *Leogheas* (leoas), *i.e.*, the lands of Leod, the progenitor of the MacLeods of the Lews.

Liathgach (leeroch), The light-blue mountain. *Liath*, light blue. This name should not have *Beinn* before it.

Loch (loch), a lake, an arm of the sea. *Lochan*, a small lake, a tarn.

Loch a Bhaid Luachraich (loch a vat loocharar), Loch of the clump of rushes. *Bad*, a clump; *luachair*, rushes.

Loch a Bheallaich (loch a veealoch), Loch of the pass. *Beallach*, a pass.

Loch a Chroisg (loch ach roshk). Anglicé *Loch Rosque*. *Chroisg*, possessive of *Crosg*, name of a place. Meaning unknown; possibly connected with *Crasg*, which see. Another suggestion is that *Crosg* may mean the Cross, and that the name was given by ecclesiastics who unquestionably lived here.

Loch a Druing (loch a tring), Loch of Druing. *Druing* is probably a Norse word. It occurs as *Druingag* in *Tobar Druingag*, The well of Druingag, which is at the south end of Loch a Druing.

Loch an Iasgair (loch an ee-esker), Loch of the fisherman. *Iasgair*, a fisherman; but in this case it refers to the nesting here of the osprey or fishing eagle.

Loch Bad na Sgalaig (loch bat na skallak), Loch of the servant's grove. [*Bad*, a grove (or clump); *sgalag*, a servant. [xxxvi]

Loch Bad na h' Achlais (loch pat 'n achlass), Loch of the grove of the hollow. *Achlais*, a hollow, the armpit.

Loch Bharanaichd (loch varranocht), Loch of the barony. *Baranachd*, a barony.

Loch Broom (loch broom). An English imitation of the Gaelic name, which is *Loch Bhraoin* (loch vruin). *Braon* means a light shower, drops of rain, drizzle.

Loch Clair, properly *Clar* (loch clar). Means anything flat, as the head of a barrel, leaf of a table, the front or plain piece of a kilt. The stone tables of the law are called *clar* in the Gaelic bible.

Loch Coulin (loch koalin). Coulin (or Connlin) is from *Connlach*, a Fingalian hero, who was buried on a promontory in the loch. The site of his grave is still pointed out.

Loch Fada (loch fatter), Long loch. *Fada*, long.

Loch Fear, *Feur*, *Feir*, or *Fiar*. See *Fear loch*.

Loch Gharbhaig (loch garravaik), Loch of the Garavaig, which see.

Loch Maree. See *St Maelrubha*.

Loch Mhic 'ille Rhiabhaich (loch vik illie reeoach), Loch of MacGille Riabhach, whom see.

Loch na Beiste (loch na peyest), Loch of the beast. *Beist*, a beast, a brute.

Loch na h' Oidhche (loch na hayich), Loch of night. *Oidhche*, night.

Loch nan Dailthean (loch nan dullann), Loch of the meadows. *Dail*, a field, a meadow.

Loch Rosque. See *Loch a Chroisg*.

Loch Torr na h' Eiginn (loch torr na haykin), Loch of the mound of violence. *Torr*, a mound; *eiginn*, violence.

Lochan a' Neigh. Should be *Lochan an Fheidh*, which see.

Lochan an Fheidh (lochan a neay), Loch of the deer. *Fheidh*, possessive of *fiadh*, deer.

Lochan Cul na Cathrach (lochan cool na karroch), Tarn of [or at] the back of the fairies' seat. *Cul*, back of; *cathrach*, possessive of *cathair*, a seat, a word usually applied to the fairies' seats.

Lochan nan Airm (lochan nan arram), Loch of the arms. *Airm*, possessive of *aram* (or *armachd*), arms.

Lochan nan Breac, or *Lochan nan Breac Adhair* (lochanan brake aar), Lochan of the trout from the sky. *Adhar*, the sky. When trout are found in a loch without inlet or outlet, they are supposed to have fallen from the sky.

Lochend (Dog Gaelic), End of the loch.

Londubh (lonedhoo), Black bog. *Lon*, a bog; *dubh*, black.

Longa (longer). Norse name; the termination *a* is an old Norse suffix meaning an isle. *Long* may be Norse equivalent to the English *long*, or it may possibly be the Gaelic *long*, a ship. In old maps it is called *Lunga*.

Lonmor (lone more), Big bog. *Lon* (lone), a bog; *mor*, big.

Luibmhor (loopmore), Great bend [or loop]. *Luib*, a bend.

Lungard (lungard). An old name; meaning unknown.

Mac (mak), Son of. Possessive *mhic* (vik), of the son of.

Mac a Ghille Riabhaich (mak illie ree-oach), Son of Gille Riabhach. See *Gille Riabhach*.

Mac Callum (makallum), Son of Malcolm.

Mac Coinnich (mak kunnich), Son of Kenneth. *Mac*, son of; *Coinnich*, possessive of *Coinneach*, which see.

Mac Ghille Challum (mak illie Challum), The son of the lad Malcolm. *Ghille*, possessive of *Gille*; *Challum*, possessive of *Callum*, Malcolm.

Mac Gilleandreis (mak gilloundris), Son of the servant of [St] Andrew. *Gille*, a servant; *Aindrea*, or *Andreis*, Andrew.

Mac Gillechriosd (mak gillie chree-est), Son of the servant of Christ. *Chriosd*, Christ. See *Gille*.

Mac Iain Dhuibh (mak an ooie), Son of Black John. *Mac*, son of; *dhuibh*, possessive of *dubh*, black.

MacLean (mak laine). In Gaelic this name is *Mac'ill'ean*, possibly for *Mac Ghille Iain*, meaning the son of the servant of John, or St John.

MacLennan (maklennan). In Gaelic the name is *Mac a Leinnan*, from *leine*, a shirt, referring to the first MacLennan having been the armour bearer who carried his "shirt" of mail for Mackenzie, lord of Kintail.

Mac Leod (makloud), the Son of Leod, progenitor of all the MacLeods.

Mac Mhic Cordaigh (mak vik orday), Son of the son of Cordaigh.

Mac Olamh Mhor (mak olar vor), Son of Olaf the Great. *Olaf*, a Norse name.

Macdonald, The son of Donald. It is not used in this form in Gaelic. The proper Gaelic equivalent is *Domhnullach* (donnulloch); it also means, the son of Donald. *Mac Dhomhnuill* is, however, frequently used. [xxxvii]

MacRae (mak ray), Son of fortune. *Mac*, son of; *rath*, fortune.

Maighdean (maidchen), Maiden.

Maighstir Sgoil (maishter skol), Schoolmaster. *Maighstir*, a master; *sgoil*, a school.

Mali chruinn donn (mallie cruntown), Round brown Molly. *Mali*, Molly; *cruinn*, round; *donn*, brown.

Maolmuire (melmur), Tonsured one of Mary. *Maol*, a cropped head; *muire*, the virgin [Mary].

Marbhrann (marvran), an elegy. *Marbh*, dead; *rann*, verse.

McKenzie or *Mackenzie*. Corrupted from *Mac Coinnich*, which see.

Meall (meoul), a hill; literally a lump, usually applied to a lump of a hill. *Meallan*, a little hill.

Meall a Deas, (mella teyess), Hill of the south. *Deas*, south.

Meall a Ghuibhais (meyoul a huish), Hill of the fir. *Guibhas*, a fir.

Meall an Doire (meyoul an derry), Hill of the grove.

Meall Aridh Mhic Craidh (meyoul arry vik creear), Hill of the shieling of Criadh. *Aridh*, a shieling; *Criadh*, name of a man, meaning unknown.

Meall Aundrairidh (meyoul aurndrarey). Possibly meant for hill of Andrew, or of Andrew's shieling; if the latter, the termination would be from *aridh*, a shieling.

Meall Lochan a Chleirich (meyoul lochan a chlearich), Hill of the loch of the priest. *Cleireach*, a clerk. The priests were sometimes called *cleireach*, from their scholarship.

Meall na Cluibha (meyoul na clua), Hill of Clu (*Anglicè* Cliff hill). *Clu* may be connected with *cluain*, good pastures.

Meall na Glaice Daraich (meyoul na glarker darroch), Hill of the oak dell. *Glac*, a dell; *darach*, oak.

Meall nam Meallan (meyoul namellan), Hill of the hills. *Meallan*, plural of *Meall*, hills.

Meall Mheannidh, or *Meadhonach*, more correctly the latter (meyoul vahanny, or meyharnoch), The middle hill. *Meall*, hill; *meadhonach*, intermediate.

Meallan Chuaich (mellan chuaich), Little hill of the cup, or quaich. Compare *quaff*.

Meallan na Ghamhna (mellan a gowna), Stirk hill. *Meallan*, a little hill, *gamhainn*, a stirk.

Meallan Thearlaich (mellan harelich), Little hill of Charles. *Tearlach*, Charles; *meallan*, diminutive of *meall*. *Anglicè*, Mellon Charles.

Mellon Charles. See *Meallan Thearlaich*.

Mellon Udrigil (mellon oodrigil), Hill of Udrigil, which see.

Melvaig (melvik). Probably Norse; or may be from *meal* and *beag*, making *Mealbheag* (meyoul vek), the little hill. In Gaelic it is spelt *Mealabhaig*, which favours the Norse origin. *Aig*, old Danish for a little bay. *Melvaig* used to be spelt *Malefage*, *Mailfog*, *Melvag*.

Midton, for Middletown. An English word. See *Ballymeon*.

Mioll. Corruption of *Meall*.

Moladh Mairi (molloch marrie), Praise of Mary. *Moladh*, praise; *Mairi*, Mary.

Mor (more, or mohr), great, or big.

Mor Ban (moore barn), Fair Sarah. *Mor*, Sarah; *ban*, white, fair.

Mullach Coire Mhic Fhearchair (mulloch corrie vik erraquhar), Summit of the corrie of Farquhar's son. *Mulloch*, summit; *coire*, corrie; *Mhic*, of the son of; *Fhearchair*, possessive of Farquhar.

Murchadh Mac Mhurchaidh (muroochuch mak muroochie), Murdo, son of Murdo. *Murchadh*, Murdo; possessive *Murchaidh*.

Murchadh Riabhach na cuirce (muroochuch reeoach na kurke), Brindled Murdo of the bowieknife. *Murchadh*, Murdo; *riabhach*, brindled; *cuirce*, possessive of *corc*, a knife like a bowieknife (a knife that does not shut).

Murdo Mc Conill varchue vic Conill vic Allister. Old (almost phonetic) way of writing the Gaelic for "Murdo the son of Donald Murdo, the son of Donald, the son of Alastair." *Conill* seems to represent *Dhomhnuill* (the initial "c" belongs to the preceding word), and *varchue* is for *Mhurchaidh*, the possessive cases respectively of *Domhnuill* and *Murchadh*. *Vic*, of course, is for *Mhic*, of the son of.

Naast, or *Naust* (narst). A Norse word. Fäste is Norse for a fortress; its Gaelic form

with the article would be Näste. There is here a knowe by the sea called *Dun Naast*, apparently including the Gaelic *Dun*, a castle.

Ob Choir' I (ope corree), Bay of the island of the corrie, or Island Corrie Bay. *Ob*, a bay; *choire*, possessive of *coire*, a corrie; *i*, old Gaelic for an island. Iona is still called "*I*" in Gaelic. [xxxviii]

Oban (open, or oben), a little bay.

Og (ogue, pronounced as in rogue), young.

Oighrig (eyrig). Woman's name; Euphemia is considered to be the English equivalent.

Openham. Corrupted from *Opinan*, which see.

Opinan (opinen), Little bays. Corrupted from *Obanan*, plural of *Oban*, which see.

Oran na Feannaige (oran na feounak), Song of the hoodie crow. *Oran*, song; *feannag*, a hoodie crow, *i.e.* the Royston or grey crow.

Ormiscaig (ormscaik). A Norse name; its termination means a small bay. The word may include *Ormr*, Norse for a serpent. (See Rev. Isaac Taylor on Orme's Head.)

Padruig Caogach (partrik kuogoch), Skew-eyed Peter. *Caogach*, skew-eyed; *Padruig*, Peter, or Patrick.

Philabeg. See *Feileadh Beag*. *Philabeg* is a lowland form of the name of the kilt.

Piobaire Ban (peepier ban), The fair piper. *Piobaire*, a piper; *ban*, fair, white.

Piobaire Dall (peepi-er toul), Blind piper. *Piobaire*, a piper; *dall*, blind.

Piobaireachd (peebyrocht), Pipe music. Usually applied to a set piece in the form now commonly called a pibroch.

Ploc (plok), a round mass.

Ploc (plok) of Torridon. See *Ploc*.

Ploc-ard (plokart), Height of the round mass. See *Ploc* and *Aird*.

Poll a Chuillin (poll a choolin), Pool of the hollies. *Poll*, a pool; *cuilionn*, hollies.

Poolewe (pool-ew). This name means the pool of the Ewe; in Gaelic it is *Poll-iu*. *Poll*, a pool; *iu*, ewe.

Port Henderson. A modern name. The colloquial Gaelic name of the place is *Portigill* (porstigil). May be from *Port a geal*, the white port.

Port na h' Eille (port na hail), Port of the thong. *Iall*, a thong, a leather strap; possessive *eille*.

Port na Heile (port na hail). See *Port na h' Eille*.

Pronadh na Mial (prone-a na meoul), Crushing the louse. *Pronadh*, crushing; *mial*, louse.

Raasay, properly *Rasaidh* (raaser). Norse name. May perhaps include *rath*, an obsolete word for a round fort.

Rathad Mor (rart more), High (great) road. *Rathad*, road; *mor*, great.

Regoilachy (regoalachie). From *fhrith* (*ree*), a forest, and *gobhlach*, forked. The termination is probably for euphony, but may represent *achadh*, a field.

Rob Donn (rob doun), Brown or dun Robert; the soubriquet of the great Reay bard. *Rob*, Robert; *donn*, brown, or dun.

Rob Roy, for *Rob Ruadh* (rob rooer), Red Robert.

Rona (rowna). Norse; probably seal island. *Ron* is Gaelic for a seal; *a* is a Norse suffix meaning an island.

Roy. See *Ruadh*.

Ru, or *Rudha* (roo, or rooah), a point, a promontory.

Ru Nohar. Should be *Rudha 'n Fhomhair*, which see.

Ruadh (ru-er, or rooag), red, or auburn. Anglicé, *roy*.

Ruadh Stac (rooer stak), Red stack, or steep rock. *Stac*, a steep rock.

Ruaridh an Torra (roo-arie-an-tor), Rorie of the tor, or round smooth hill.

Ruaridh Breac (roo-arie brake), Spotted (or pock-pitted) Rorie, or Roderick. See *Breac*.

Ruaridh Ceard (roo-arie kard), Rorie the tinker. *Ceard*, a tinker.

Ruaridh Donn (roo-arie doun), Brown or dun Rorie.

Ruaridh Mac Allan M'Leod (roo-arie mak allan mak loud), Rorie, son of Allan M'Leod.

Rudha aird an anail (roo-arten annall), High point of breathing. *Anail*, breathing; *aird*, high.

Rudha Chailleach (roo chyleoch), Point of the old woman. *Rudha*, a point; *cailleach*, an old woman.

Rudha Mac Gille Aindreas (roo mak ill andres), Point of the servant of [St] Andrew. See *Mac Gilleandreis*.

Rudha mhadaidh ruaidh (roo vatter roo-ie), Fox point, or point of the red dog. *Rudha*, a point; *madadh*, a dog; *ruadh*, red.

Rudha 'n Fhomhair, or *Fhamhair* (roo noher), The point of the giant. *Fomhair*, a giant.

Rudha na Cloiche uaine (roo na clor-choo-ownyer), Greenstone point. *Cloiche*, possessive of *clach*, a stone; *uaine*, green.

Rudha Reidh (roo ray), Smooth point or headland. *Rudha*, a point; *reidh*, level. The name is very descriptive of the appearance of the headland as seen from the sea. [xxxix]

Runrig. A south Scotch or English word. In Gaelic it is called *Mag maseach* (mark mer sharch). *Mag*, a rig; *maseach*, alternate.

Ruymakilvandrich. See *Rudha Mac Ghille Aindreas*.

Sabhal Geal (sowl gayal), White barn. See separate words.

Sail Mor (sal more, or sowl more), The great heel. *Sail*, a heel. Descriptive of the shape of this spur of *Beinn Eighe*.

Saint Maelrubha (saint malruie). Maree is a corruption from this saint's name.

Sand (sand, or saunda). Name of a place by a sandy beach; evidently Norse. The full name of the place called Big Sand is *Sanda a chorran*, meaning "the sand of the shingly spit."

Sasunnach (sarsenach), Saxon, English, not a Gaelic speaker. *Sasunnach mor*, the big Englishman.

Scardroy. See *Sgaird ruadh*.

Scuir, or *Sgorr* (skoor), a peak or cliff.

Scuir a Laocainn (scoor a lyooakin), Peak of the calf's skin. *Laodh*, a calf; *gin*, abbreviation for *craiceann* (crakin), a skin.

Scuir a Mhuilin (skoor a voollin), Peak of the mill. *Mhuilin*, possessive of *muileann*, a mill.

Scuir na Feart (scoor na hairsht). Name of a peak; meaning unknown.

Seann Rudha (shoun roo), Old promontory. *Seann*, old; *rudha*, promontory.

Seann Seoc (shoun shok), Old Jock. *Seann*, old; *seoc*, Jock or Jack.

Seann Tighearna (shoun tcheerna), Old laird. *Seann*, old; *tighearna*, laird, proprietor.

Seannachaidh (shennachie), Reciter of old tales, recorder, remembrancer.

Seonaid Chrubach (shounat chruboch), Lame Jessie. *Seonaid*, Jessie; *crubach*, lame.

Sgaird ruadh (scart rooer), Red scree. *Sgaird*, a scree, shingly slope.

Sgalag (skallak), a servant, farm servant.

Sgeir, or *Skeir* (skeer), a rock surrounded by the sea.

Sgeir a Bhuic (skeir a vook), Island rock of the buck. From *sgeir*, a rock surrounded by the sea, and *bhuic*, possessive of *boc*, a buck.

Sgeir an Fharaig (skeir an harrik), Island rock of the surf. From *fairge*, surf, sea.

Sgeir Bhoora (skeir voora), Island rock of Boor. From *sgeir*, a rock surrounded by the sea, and *Bhoora*, possessive of *Boor*.

Sgorr, or *Sgurr* (skor, or skoor), a peak. It is often written here as elsewhere *Scuir*, but the former words are more correct.

Sgorr Dubh (scorr dhoo), Black peak.

Sgurr Ban (skoor barn), White peak. *Sgurr*, a peak; *ban*, white.

Shieldaig (shieldak). Probably a Norse name; meaning unknown. *Aig* is an old Danish

suffix meaning a small bay. *Shieldaig* was formerly spelt *Syldage*, *Sildag*, and *Shilkag*.

Sian, or *Seun* (shee-un), a spell, charm, incantation.

Siol Mhic Ghille Challum (sheeol vik illie challum), Seed of Mac Gille Challum, whom see.

Siol Tormod (sheeol tormot), Seed of Tormod.

Siol Torquil (sheeol torquil), Seed of Torquil.

Sitheanan Dubha (sheean-an dhooar), Black knowes, fairies' hills. *Sithean*, a knowe; *dubh*, black.

Skar (scar), a screen. Obsolete.

Slaggan, properly *Slagan* (slagan). Diminutive of slag, or lag, a hollow. This place is for identification called in Gaelic *An slagan odhar* (an slagan our), or The little dun hollow.

Slatadale (slay ter dle). Norse; or it might possibly be connected with *slaitan*, fishing rods. In the old map of 1662 it is spelt *Slotadull*.

Slioch, or *Sleugach* (slee-och), resembling a spear. *Sleagh*, a spear. The mountain from some points of view is like a broad spear head. The name should not have *Beinn* before it.

Slogan (sloggan), a war cry. Obsolete now.

Smiorsair (smearesar). Name of a hamlet; probably from *smior*, the marrow, the best; *aridh*, a shieling.

Spidean Moirich (speetan moi-or-ich), Peak of Martha. *Spidean*, a peak; *Moirich*, possessive of *Moireach*, Martha.

Sporan (sporran), a purse.

Srondubh (strondhoo), Black nose or promontory. *Sron* (stron), a nose or promontory.

Sron a Choite (strunyer hote), Nose (or promontory) of the coble. *Sron* (stron), a nose or promontory; *choite*, possessive of *coite*, a coble. [xl]

Stac Buidhe (stack boo-ie), Yellow stack, *i.e.* steep rock. *Stac*, a stack, *buidhe*, yellow.

Stank house. An English name; but *stank* is from the Gaelic *staing*, a ditch.

Steall a Mhunidh (shteyole a vonie), Splash of the Pisvache. A fine waterfall, resembling the *Pisvache* of European celebrity.

Strath, properly *Srath* (strah), a broad valley.

Strath Chromple (strath roumpil), Valley of the curved opening. *Crom*, curved; *beul*, mouth or opening.

Suarachan (shore-achen). Soubriquet of Big Duncan of the Axe, being the diminutive of *Suarach*, insignificant; referring to his not having been thought worthy of being armed for the battle of Park.

Suidheachan Fhinn (seeachan een), Fingal's seat. *Suidheachan*, a turf seat; *Fhinn*, possessive of *Fionn*, Fingal.

Tagan (tahkan). Possibly Norse; may be from *tathaich*, a resort.

Talladale (tallardle). Probably Norse; may be from *talla*, a hall, and the Norse *dahl* or *dal*. In old documents it is spelt *Alydyll*, *Allawdill*, and *Telledill*. The two former spellings suggest that the name was formerly spelt with "th," pronounced as a soft aspirate.

Thorisdal, Dale of the Norse god Thor. See *Eilean Horisdale*.

Tigh Dige (ty dgeegie), House of the ditch. *Tigh*, a house; *dig*, a ditch.

Tigh mo Sheanair (ty mer henner), House of my grandfather. *Tigh*, a house; *mo*, my; *sheanair*, possessive of *seanair*, grandfather.

Tighearna Crubach (tcheerna krupboch), Lame laird.

Tighearna Ruadh (tcheerna roer), Red or auburn-haired laird or proprietor. *Tighearna*, laird; *ruadh*, red.

Tighearna Storach (tcheerna storroch), Buck-toothed laird.

Tighnafaolinn (ty na fualin). The sea-mews' home. *Tigh*, a house, home; *faoileann*, a sea-gull.

Tobar Mhoire (toppervorie) Well of the Virgin Mary, or of Mourie. *Tobar*, a well; *Mhoire*, possessive of *Moire*, Mary.

Tobar nan ceann (topper nan keyoun), Fountain or well of the heads. *Tobar*, a fountain, a well; *ceann*, a head.

Tollie, properly *Tollidh* (tolly), diminutive of *Toll*, a hole. All the *Tollies* are in hollows. *Idh* is a rare diminutive, but is sometimes used even in the present day.

Torasgian. See *Tor-sgian*.

Torr (torr), a mound or lump; generally applied to a round hill. The name is common in Gairloch and the neighbourhood, and seems specially applicable to the hummocks or domes of gneiss, noted as so frequent in this locality by Professor Geikie. The name *Cnoc* (krock), a knoll, has a somewhat similar meaning.

Torran nan Eun (torranan eeon), Mounds of the birds. *Torran*, mounds; *eun*, a bird.

Torran nan tighearnan (torran nan tchee-ernan), Mounds of the chieftains. *Torr*, a mound; *tighearn*, a chief, literally superior of land.

Torridon (torriden). Old name; perhaps Norse. Can it possibly be connected with *torran*, mounds, or lumps, which would be very descriptive? It is spelt *Torvedene* in the Sheriff's protocol of 1494.

Tor-sgian (toroshkin), peat cutter. *Tor*, a lump; *sgian*, a knife.

Tournaig, Gallice *Turnaig* (toornak). A Norse name. The suffix *aig* means a small bay in old Danish.

Truibhais (trewish), trews, a sort of trousers.

Tulachan (toolachen), a sham calf. Compare Gaelic *tulg*, to rock, or toss. The sham calf was moved to and fro to make the cow think it was sucking.

Tulchan. See *Tulachan*.

Tulloch Ard (tullochart), High knoll. *Tulloch* from *tulach*, a knoll; *ard*, high.

Uamh (oo-av), a cave.

Uamh a' Mhail (oo-av a varl), Cave of rent or tribute. *Mhail*, possessive of *Mal*, rent or tribute.

Uamh nam Freiceadain (ooie nam rekatan), Cave of the guard. *Freiceadan*, a guard, watching.

Uamh an Oir (ooav an or), Cave of gold. *Oir*, possessive of *or*, gold.

Uamh gu do roghiann (ooie gat der ooun), Cave for your choice. *Gu*, to, or for; *do*, your; *roghiann*, choice.

Uamh Mhic 'ille Rhiabhaich (ooie vick illie reeoach), The cave of the son of the brindled gillie or lad. *Mhic* (vik), possessive of *Mac*, son of; *'ille*, for *ghille*, possessive of *gille*. See *Mac Gille Riabhaich*. [xli]

Udrigil (oodrigil). Probably a Norse name; meaning unknown.

Ullapool (oo-la-pull). An old name; probably from *uile*, all, and *poll*, a pool; signifying that it is a pool large enough for all.

Uistean (ooshtan). A Gaelic Christian name; Hugh is considered the English equivalent.

Vic. Popular spelling of *Mhic*, the possessive of *Mac*, son of. There is no *v* or *w* in Gaelic.

INTRODUCTION.

Rathad mor a Ceann-loch-iu,
Rathad ur a Ghearloch;
Gabhaidh sinn an rathad mor
Olc na math le cach e.—*Gaelic Song.*

The high road to Kenlochewe,
The new road to Gairloch;
Storm or sunshine, take with me
The high road to Gairloch.—*Free rendering.*

GAIRLOCH is a typical Highland parish on the west coast of Ross-shire. Its length, from Loch Rosque to Rudha Reidh, is thirty miles, and its width is fifteen miles, so that it is one of the

most extensive parishes in Great Britain.

The name "Gairloch" is composed of two Gaelic words, *gearr* and *loch*. *Gearr* means "short"; and the sea-loch which gives its name to the parish is appropriately called short, as compared with Loch Broom, Loch Ewe, and other more deeply indented arms of the sea. The native spelling and pronunciation of the name prove the derivation beyond all question.

There is a curious muddle in the old and new Statistical Accounts about the origin of the name Gairloch. In the former (Appendix C) it is said to have been taken from "a very small loch near the church and the house of Flowerdale, and so close by the shore that the sea at high tides covers it." In the New Statistical Account (Appendix E) "a hollow spot of ground" is spoken of as "the Gairloch," and the writer states that the natives allege that the parish takes its name from it. The explanation is supplied by the story of Hector Roy and the three M'Leods given in Part I., chap. ix. The place referred to as "a very small loch" and "a hollow spot of ground," is now represented [xliv] by a well, still called "the Gairloch" from the reason given in that story, but it did not originate the name of the parish.

The name Gairloch is used in four different senses both in the following pages and among the inhabitants. It means,—

1. The sea-loch or bay of Gairloch.
2. The whole parish.
3. The place at the head of the sea-loch where the hotel, &c., stand, more properly called Achdistall.
4. The original estate of the Mackenzie lairds of Gairloch.

These various meanings are a little confusing, but the context generally makes clear what is intended.

Considerations of health, followed by growing appreciation of the charms of Gairloch, have caused me to make my Highland home in this out-of-the-world parish. Its romantic scenery and health-giving climate are its most obvious attractions; but add to these its wonderful legends and traditions, the eventful history of its dominant family, the story of its old ironworks, the interesting peculiarities of its Highland inhabitants, the distinction conferred upon it by the visit of Her Majesty Queen Victoria, the great geological controversy about its rocks, the sport its waters afford to the angler, the varied subjects it displays to the artist, and the pregnant fields of research it yields to the scientist, and you have a list of allurements it would be difficult to beat elsewhere. Though its boundary line extends to within five miles of the railway, Gairloch still preserves many of the characteristics of old days, and these not only possess a peculiar fascination for most people, but are also well fitted to arouse and nourish a spirit of investigation.

The famous Loch Maree (with the small but romantic islet known as Isle Maree) is surrounded by the finest scenery in the parish. Their attractions bring annually some three thousand visitors to Gairloch. One might have fancied that such an influx of people would have led to the accumulation of a large and increasing stock of knowledge of this Highland parish, but as a rule the visitors are here to-day and gone to-morrow, and take no thorough interest in the country or [xlv] its inhabitants.

Some years ago I happened to travel by the railway from Inverness to Achnasheen in the company of a pleasant party, comprising a gentleman and three ladies, who were making a tour in the Highlands. They boasted that, though their time had been limited to a very few days, they would have seen the greater part of the Highlands before they returned home. On the day I fell in with them their object was to see Loch Maree. To accomplish this they had arranged by telegraph for a carriage and pair to await the arrival of the train at Achnasheen. The day proved wet and misty, and I saw them leave the railway station in a close carriage. I followed soon after on the mail-car. A short delay took place at Kenlochewe whilst the horses were changed. There I found my fellow-travellers enjoying their lunch in the hotel. They told me that although the day was too wet for them to drive down to the shore of the loch, and too misty to admit of its being fully seen from a distance, yet they were quite able to say that they had seen Loch Maree, for at one point they had put their heads out of the windows of their carriage during a brief cessation of the rain and had distinctly seen the water of the loch! They were returning to Achnasheen as soon as they had swallowed their lunch, to catch the train back to Inverness the same afternoon.

These tourists, who thus professed to have "seen Loch Maree," were a fair type of too many of those who rush through Gairloch, as if their sole object were to cover the most ground in the shortest possible time, and who thus fail to obtain any true perception of the belongings of the country, even of the scenery.

There are first-rate hotels within the parish, and lodgings may frequently be hired, or a furnished house taken. The hotels offer the inducement of lower terms to those whose visits exceed the usually brief period.

Impressions of scenery are fixed by repetition; insight into nature is deepened by observation; and knowledge of a country is vastly more valuable if it include some acquaintance with the population, their characters, condition, and means of livelihood. Too many visitors overlook their opportunities in these directions.

[xlvi] Some remarks are necessary with regard to the traditions of Gairloch, contained mostly in Part I. In recent times there has been a tendency to discredit all such traditions, and to treat them as symbolic or didactic legends, or as localisations (with extra colouring) of myths common to the heroic period of every country. The principal features of one or two of the Gairloch traditions are certainly to be found in stories of other parts of the Highlands, and occasionally, but rarely, a resemblance may even be traced to the plot of some ancient European myth. On the other hand, it is to be noted that the Highland bards, down to the present time, have regularly transmitted their stories in precisely the same language from one trained memory to another, so that even the very words put into the mouths of the *dramatis personæ* have been insisted upon in every transmission. Another point to be noticed is, that except in two instances the Gairloch traditions do not date further back than four centuries. In the older legends referred to, visible evidences, such as the tombstones in Isle Maree and the cave at Ardlair, may perhaps be considered confirmatory. For my own part, I am disposed to accept all the traditions as generally worthy of credence. Much interest in the locality is gained by doing this, and certainly nothing is lost!

A difficulty the visitor to Gairloch always experiences is due to the Gaelic names. The Glossary should help to overcome this obstacle. Not only does it include the meanings of the Gaelic words, but it attempts to indicate their pronunciations. I am bound to warn the reader that the pronunciations stated are only approximate. There are sounds in the Gaelic language which cannot be expressed by English tongues or to English ears by any combinations of letters. Yet most of the pronunciations stated are sufficiently near the truth to answer ordinary purposes. I recommend the reader to refer to the Glossary at the occurrence of each Gaelic name in the book, and those names and their import will soon become familiar. The Gaelic sound of *ch* is about the same as that of the German *ch*; it does not occur in the English language, but unless you can master it there is no use in your trying to speak even the two leading names in this parish,—viz., Gairloch, and Loch Maree. Whatever you do, pray avoid pronouncing *loch* as if it were *lock*. This is the most egregious error made by many southerners in trying to speak the commonest Highland names.

[xlvii] In communicating to the public the information about Gairloch contained in the following pages, I claim the right to offer a word or two of counsel and entreaty.

I would submit that it is unfair, as well as discourteous, to interfere with the rights of those who take deer forests or rent sheep farms. Rambles on upland moors and mountain ascents are almost certain to injure the sport or privileges of others. I am aware there is a strong feeling that every one ought to have access to mountains. Whether this be legalised by Parliament or not, I would appeal to the visitor here to refrain from the illiberality and discourtesy of spoiling other people's hardly-earned and well-paid-for privileges. There is plenty of room for all. Why should unpleasant feelings be stirred up, and tourists as a class be blamed for the intolerance of a few? All the mountains and hills of Gairloch are haunts of the red deer or feeding-grounds of sheep, and no ascents ought to be undertaken unless by due arrangement, which cannot be expected in the deer-stalking season, and which, when obtainable, should be made with the head-keeper of the ground.

There are some drawbacks to mountain ascents that may help the visitor more willingly to forego them. How often the view from a summit is entirely blotted out by clouds or mist, or marred by the distance being lost in haze! How often the fine morning that induced the expedition is followed by a stormy afternoon! To these must be added the frequent injury to health caused by the unusual strain on the systems of persons unaccustomed to mountaineering, and the possible risk of being lost in mist. It is hoped that tourists will be content with the shorter climbs recommended in Part IV. Artists tell us that landscapes seen from lower elevations are more thoroughly picturesque than the bird's-eye views from mountain tops.

Again, I entreat botanists and others looking for wild flowers and plants to abstain from rooting up the rare or beautiful things they may find, and from trespassing in places where their presence is obviously not required. The mania for removing every fragment of an uncommon plant has grown much of late years,—witness the extermination of the edelweiss from some of its best known habitats on the Swiss Alps. Who does not remember places whence our own rare [xlviii] holly-fern has within the past few years been eradicated? A few years ago that comparatively scarce fern the sea-spleenwort (*asplenium marinum*) was abundant within three hundred yards of the Gairloch Hotel; now it is unknown there. A gentleman fond of botany planted some uncommon ferns not natives of Ross-shire in a wood in Gairloch parish; they were soon discovered by tourists staying at a neighbouring hotel, who ruthlessly removed the whole. Instances of this kind have brought the British tourist into disrepute in many parts of the world.

It is in the spirit of these remarks that I beg to introduce the reader to the charms of Gairloch and Loch Maree.

[1]

PART I.

Records and Traditions of Gairloch.

[2]

[3]

GAIRLOCH

Chapter I.

Early History.

The blessedness attributed to the nation without a history cannot be assigned to the parish of Gairloch. Although her ancient history has never been written, it is to be feared her inhabitants were far from wholly blessed in the far off days of yore. The earlier annals of Gairloch are indeed veiled in mists, almost as impenetrable as those that often shroud her mountains. Amid the gloom there are faint glimpses to be had of the wild natives of the district, of fierce warriors from other lands, and of saintly Christian pioneers; but complete pictures of the doings of those old times can be found only in the galleries of the imagination. The same everlasting hills still tower over the same straths, glens, and lochs; but the actors are changed, the play has another plot, with incidents of a very different kind. In a region so innocent of letters, so inaccessible to the scholar, it is easy to account for the total absence of ancient records. The narratives of the seannachies, or bards, handed down by oral tradition from generation to generation, might have been expected to fill in the blank, yet it is only in the stories of some few salient adventures that these traditions have been preserved beyond the past four centuries.

Even imagination fails to carry us further back than the Picts or Celts or Gaels, who are supposed to have been the aborigines of all the British Isles. They were a wild warlike race,—wild from their rough struggling state of existence, warlike in their constant attitude of self-defence. Some have supposed that there were giants among them in those days, and that these were the originals of the colossal heroes of the Fingalian legends. The name of the Giant's Point (Ru Nohar) on Loch Maree, and the discoveries in the neighbourhood of what are alleged to be enormous graves, give some colour to the supposition. There are slight traces of Fingalian legends still current in the parish. Thus the hollow near the Gairloch Established Church, in which the Free Church communion services are held, is said to have been scooped out by Fingal for a bed where his white cow might calve. It is still called Leabaidh na Ba Bàine, or the bed of the white cow. Then the large stones in Loch Maree, in a line between the base of the Fox Point and the nearest part of the opposite shore, are said to have been placed there by Fingal for stepping-stones, to keep his feet dry when going this way to court Malvina, who lived in the

direction of Torridon. Only an enormous giant could have stepped from stone to stone; they are to this day called the sweetheart's stepping-stones. Again, there is a mound in a depression near the summit of Beinn Tarsuinn, called Suidheachan Fhinn, or Fingal's seat, where they say he used to sit and spy when hunting on the mountains. These fragments are all we are told of Fingal's doings in Gairloch. [4]

Though we know nothing of their history, we can infer much regarding the condition of the original Pictish inhabitants of Gairloch. That they were numerous, we may judge from the several remains of Pictish brochs or round houses to be seen in the parish. These are doubtless but samples of numbers of others, still buried beneath moss and heather, or long since obliterated by agricultural operations. Each broch was the abode of several families, huddled together beneath its roof of skins. Most of the primitive weapons or implements to be enumerated in the chapter on the antiquities of Gairloch belonged to the Pictish natives of the parish. Our eyes may see, our hands may grasp, the very implements these Gairloch men formed and used possibly before the Christian era; and as we look upon them we may readily conceive how straitened were their owners' circumstances. Amongst the antiquities some alleged Druidical remains will be mentioned. Whether these were really Druidical or no, it is certain that the religion of this district before Christianity took root was that of the Druids. The sacrifices of bulls on Isle Maree, practised, as we shall see, so lately as 1678, were unquestionably relics of the rites celebrated by the Druidical priests, though they themselves had vanished a thousand years before.

When Agricola invaded Scotland in A.D. 81, the tribe of Picts who inhabited Ross-shire was called the Cantæ. A punster might be excused for remarking (and that truly), that in Gairloch at least the race is still "canty," *i.e.* knowing. It is not probable that the Romans ever reached this part of Ross-shire; the nearest evidence of their invasion is some trace of their roads in Strathspey, a hundred miles from Gairloch. It is very likely that Gairloch men helped their fellow Celts in the battles with the Romans. Tacitus relates how the Highlanders at that period made sacrifices before going to battle, and fought with broadsword and targe. The country was then almost destitute of agriculture, being mostly vast forests and morasses, teeming with wolves and other wild beasts; the possessions of the people were herds of cattle.

When the Romans abandoned Britain, about A.D. 446, the Picts were under the sway of a king called Drust, the son of Erp, who is said to have lived a hundred years, and to have fought a hundred battles. The Pictish monarchy continued until A.D. 843, when Kenneth II. took Camelon, the capital of the Picts; on this the kings of Scotland, and subsequently of Great Britain, became at least the nominal rulers of the Highlands.

The introduction of Christianity brought a refining and civilising element to the rough people of the North, but it was many centuries before its influence became general. St Columba began his mission in A.D. 563, and the ecclesiastical establishment at Iona was the result. Local tradition [5] says the little chapel at Sand of Udrigil, in Gairloch parish, was built by St Columba, or one of his immediate followers. But it was St Maelrubha who was the apostle of Gairloch and of the adjoining parish of Applecross; he founded the church of Applecross A.D. 673, and died there on 21st April A.D. 722. He appears to have made his Gairloch home on Isle Maree, a site that suggests the necessity, at least at first, of the Christian missionary having recourse to the protection afforded by an insular position. The new teaching soon displaced the Paganism of the Druids, though, in accordance with the policy of the early Christian church, the sacrifices of bulls were permitted, as we have seen, for a thousand years afterwards. The first church of Gairloch was dedicated to St Maelrubha; it was probably not erected until many years after his death. Tradition says that his cell on Isle Maree was occupied for some generations by the successors of this holy man; one of them is mentioned in the legend of the island given in the next chapter.

During the rule of the Pictish kings the Norwegian Vikings made continual raids upon the Highlands, at first as independent pirates, but later on as vassals of Harold Harfager, the first king of all Norway. About the end of the ninth century the Norwegians became so powerful as to be able to establish a separate and independent kingdom in Orkney and the Western Isles. Parts of Ross-shire were frequently ravaged, and often held, by them. In Gairloch they have left a number of footprints in the names of places. Thus the Islands Longa and Foura exhibit the Norwegian suffix *a*, meaning an island. The Vikings used to retire during the winter months to small islands off the coast, where they laid up their vessels. The names of these two Gairloch islands, according to the Rev. Isaac Taylor, bear curious evidence to their having been the winter quarters of Vikings. The tragic legend of Isle Maree, given in the next chapter, is an episode in the career of one of these piratical princes. A large Gairloch island is named Thorisdale, after the Norse god Thor. Among other Norwegian names in Gairloch is "Sgeir," *i.e.* a detached rock; it occurs in Sgeir Bhoora, Sgeir an Fharaig, &c. So also the suffix *dale* or *dal* is Norwegian; it occurs in Thorisdale, Talladale, Slatadale, Erradale, Inverasdale, &c. Naast is believed to be a Norwegian name. Other Norse names are given in the Glossary.

It has been supposed that the Danes did not invade the west coast, but an examination of Gairloch names shews that they were most likely here. Some of the Vikings were Danes. Mr Taylor says that the termination *aig* signifies a small bay, and is Danish; it occurs in a number of Gairloch names (*see the Glossary*). The Danes were driven out of Scotland in 1040.

There can be no doubt that both Norwegians and Danes intermarried with the people of Gairloch, and thus the native Pictish breed became a mixed race. One can almost identify Norwegian and Danish types of face in Gairloch to this day.

The dominion of the Norwegian monarchs over the Hebrides and some parts of the mainland was

broken by the defeat of Haco the aged king of Norway, at the battle of Largs, on 3d October 1263. His successor Magnus, in 1266, ceded the whole of the Scottish territory held by Norway (except Orkney and Shetland) to the king of Scotland. An Icelandic saga states that Ross-shire was part of the dominion of the earls of Orkney under Norway, whilst another authority regards it as part of Scotland. In all probability the wild Highlanders of Ross had never entirely submitted to either king. Though the king of Norway at this time abandoned all claim to Ross-shire, yet some tribes of Norwegian descent long afterwards held Gairloch; they were the MacBeaths and M'Leods, of whom more shortly. [6]

The earls of Ross followed the Norwegians in the rule of the Northern Highlands. They were of the ancient Celtic family of the O'Beolans, and had been the Pictish maormors of Ross before the title of earl (*comes*) took the place of the older Pictish designation. Gairloch, as a part of North Argyle, was included by name in the Sheriffdom of Skye, erected in 1292 by King John Balliol. This is believed to be the first mention of Gairloch in existing records. King Robert Bruce confirmed the possession of Gairloch to the earls of Ross between 1306 and 1329. In 1366 Earl William granted "to Paul M'Tyre and to his heirs by Mary of Grahame, with remainder to the lawful heirs of Paul, the lands of Gerloch within the parts of Argyle, for yearly payment of a penny of silver in name of blench ferme in lieu of every other service except the forinse service of the king when required." In 1372 King Robert II. confirmed the grant. Paul M'Tyre is stated to have been a cousin of Earl William; we hear no more of him.

Earl William left only a daughter, who married Walter Leslie. They had a son, Alexander, who became Earl of Ross, and also a daughter, who married Donald, Lord of the Isles. Earl Alexander married a daughter of the Regent, Robert Duke of Albany. Their only child Euphemia died young in 1406, after she had resigned her title to the son of the regent. Donald, Lord of the Isles, by virtue of his marriage with the daughter of Walter Leslie, laid claim to the earldom of Ross, in opposition to the regent's son. After a prolonged strife the earldom of Ross was forfeited, and annexed to the crown in 1476. During the unsettled period which began with Donald's ambitious claim, Gairloch seems to have been in a state of anarchy. Not only the MacBeaths and M'Leods struggled for its possession, but the Macdonalds, as clansmen of the Lord of the Isles, appear to have overrun the district.

Meanwhile the Mackenzies of Kintail had grown to be a great power in Ross-shire, and being of the same original stock as the O'Beolan earls of Ross, they had a better right to Gairloch than the other claimants, all of whom in turn gave way to the victorious Mackenzies.

The legends and narratives which follow are placed as nearly as may be in chronological order. They all belong to the period of the Mackenzies, except that of the tragedy of Isle Maree, which forms our next chapter; it occurred long before.

Chapter II. [7]

The Tragedy of Isle Maree.

Isle Maree was as sweet a spot at the end of the ninth century as it is now. A thick grove of tall trees crowded round its circular Druidical enclosure. There were noble specimens of the indigenous oak, so mysteriously connected with the Druidical worship; there was a dense thicket of the smooth-leaved holly, the sacred tree brought here by St Maelrubha himself, who, it would seem, intended it to become (as it did) a Christian rival to the Pagan oak. Then, as now, the undergrowth of ferns and flowers, and a large kind of grass, attained almost tropical proportions beneath the benign influence of the warm shade.

The scene of our story is laid in this beautiful and hallowed island. St Maelrubha had been long gathered to his fathers, and the sacred college of Iona had appointed a successor to his hermitage on Isle Maree, who in turn had made room for another. The occupant of the cell at the date of our story is an aged saint of peculiar sagacity and piety. Long known to the wild people of Gairloch for his bold denunciations and shrewd penetration, he had acquired by his stern eloquence and ascetic life an extraordinary influence over them. The Christian festivals brought successive offerings to the sainted hermit, and the island oft resounded with the psalms of David chaunted by the throng of faithful pilgrims.

But not only the common people resorted to the cell of the holy man; the Norse Vikings, who held the district in partial subjugation, frequently came to him for the ministrations of religion and for the benefit of his sage counsel. To one and all, to young and old, to Celt and Norwegian, he was alike accessible.

A young Norwegian prince was chief among the Vikings who then dominated this part of the west coast. Prince Olaf was of the blood royal of Norway, and on this account alone would have been willingly adopted by his fellows as their leader, had not his personal bravery and reckless daring secured to him the post of honour. He had a grievous failing,—a restless and ungovernable temper. Naturally high-spirited, he had been as a boy the spoilt darling of his fellows, and had grown up a creature of impulse, subject to paroxysms of fearful passion. Whenever he was

thwarted in his plans, or roused to anger by foe or friend, the evil spirit came upon him, and he lost all command of himself.

The prince lived with his fighting men in his great war galley, except during the winter, when they encamped on one or other of the islands of Loch Ewe. Often would Olaf repair to the hermitage of Isle Maree, and receive from the saint kindly advice and priestly absolution.

It was natural that one so impulsive should early fall under the influence of the tender passion. We need not try to imagine the story of Olaf's love; it was no common attachment; the flame burned in his breast with an intensity becoming his fiery spirit.

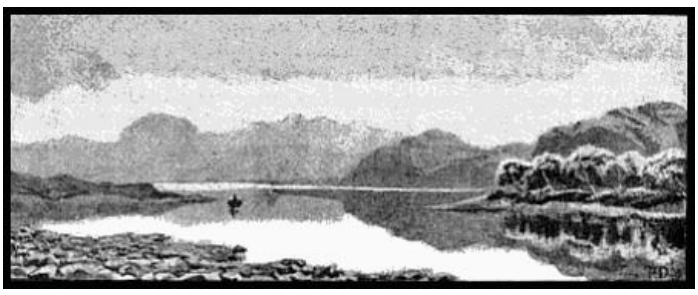
But a difficulty arose. He was unwilling, at least at first, to ask his bride to exchange the [8] comparative quietude of her father's home for the restless life of a ship of war. In dire perplexity he sought the advice of his friend the saint of Isle Maree. The wise old man proposed that another and a larger dwelling should be erected in the form of a tower to the west of the enclosure in the centre of which stood his own humble cell. To this tower Olaf might bring his bride and there they might take up their abode, within easy reach of the prince's galley on Loch Ewe.

To hasten on. The prince eagerly adopted this plan, and in a short time the tower was built, and Olaf brought his bonny bride to the island. Here they were married by the aged hermit, amid the rejoicings of their followers. The princess and her maidens were delighted with the romantic and secure retreat. Olaf's attendants pitched their tents around, and the leafy grove grew gay with joyful laughter and with genial song.

For a while all went smoothly. The life of the young lovers was a continual delight; their passion for one another only increased as months rolled on. In vain his comrades sent message after message entreating the presence of the prince on board his ship. He could not tear himself away from his darling, and she in turn was more than unwilling that he should leave her. At length there came word that a long-planned expedition, in which other leaders were to take part, was ready to start, and Olaf was expected to assume the command. He dared no longer remain in retirement. With aching heart he told the princess of his approaching departure. Her tears were unavailing; on the morrow he must leave. Meanwhile strange forebodings of evil filled the minds of both. What if he should be slain in battle! What if some unknown danger should cause her death in his absence! A scheme was concocted for shortening the final moments of suspense. It was agreed that when the prince should return, a white flag would be displayed from his barge on Loch Maree if all were well; if otherwise, a black flag would be shewn. The maidens prepared these flags, and the prince took them with him. The princess was to leave the island in her barge whenever her lord's boat should come in sight, and she in like manner was to display a white or black flag to denote her safety or the reverse.

The morning came, and they parted. The prince arrived at Poolewe, was received by his men with wild enthusiasm, and set sail at once. It is not necessary that we should follow him through the perilous campaign. Enough that all ended well, and the victorious prince returned safely to Poolewe. In hot haste, and half crazy with excitement, he sought his boat on Loch Maree, raised with his own hand the snow-white banner of success, and mustered the faithful attendants who were to row him to Isle Maree.

During his absence the princess had passed through several phases of anxiety. At first despair took possession of her heart, and it was long ere the good old saint and her own maidens were able to soothe her with words of hope. As she became calmer, a new misgiving occurred to her. Did Olaf prefer the excitement of warfare to the peaceful society of his bride? Had she lost the [9] devotion of his heart? Did he really love her? Then horrible jealousy became her absorbing feeling. Was the faithless prince to treat her as an insignificant plaything, to be caressed one day and deserted the next? It was all in vain that her companions strove to check this new folly; she declared continually that her husband had never truly loved her. Under the influence of this crushing doubt, she devised a scheme whereby she resolved to test the reality of his vaunted affection, if indeed he should ever return.



LOCH MAREE FROM INVERAN.

At last the lookout announced that he saw the prince's barge, bearing the white flag, emerge from the river Ewe into the open loch. And now what emotions filled the breast of the lovely princess! What conflicting sentiments, love and doubt, joy and fear! All had been arranged to

carry out her strange scheme. The large barge was ready; from its stern the black flag was raised aloft; a bier was placed in the centre of the barge on which the princess herself—now pallid with anxiety—reclined as if sleeping the sleep of death; a white shroud covered her recumbent form; around were grouped her maidens, gloomy with well-simulated grief; and the sad and silent rowers moved the barge slowly onwards toward the lower end of Loch Maree.

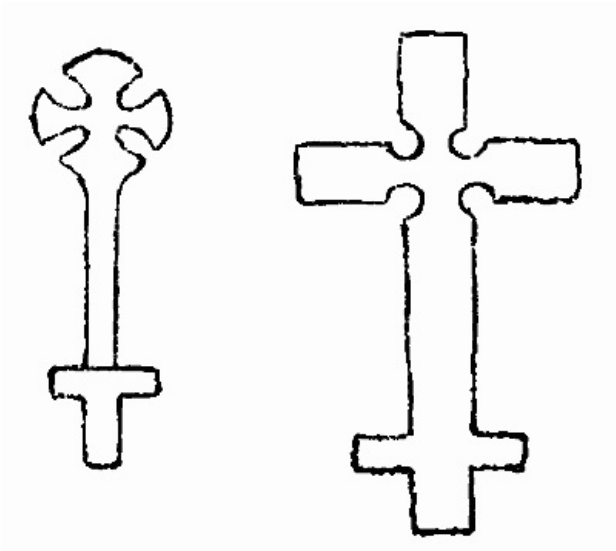
Meanwhile Olaf gazed earnestly in the direction of the island (which was kept in sight all the way), urging anon his willing crew to put forth their utmost speed. Soon, in the distance, he discovered the barge of the princess. Could he be mistaken? Was that the black flag of death which waved above it? He made all his men in turn scrutinize the approaching barge, and each reluctantly confirmed what Olaf's own eyes had testified. Gradually the prince grew frantic with awful despair. Was he to be thus foiled by evil fate in the very hour of his triumph? Had death snatched his darling from his fond embrace? Were they never to meet again? Yes, he would follow her to that heavenly home the holy father had often told them of! His agony increased each moment; he cursed; he raved; his manly face became like a maniac's; his words and gestures [10] were those of a man possessed. The crew were horror-struck; none dared speak; they pulled the oars with what seemed superhuman strength, but the wind was against them, and some time elapsed before the barges were alongside. The dreadful interval served only to increase the prince's frenzy; his wild ravings became unintelligible.

Before the vessels touched, the madman leapt into the other barge. He saw the shroud; he raised it; he gazed a moment on the still, pale face of his bride; he gave one agonized cry; then he plunged his dirk in his own breast, and in a moment that storm-tossed heart ceased to beat!

And now the miserable princess sprang from the bier, convinced too late of her husband's passionate love; there he lay dead, she alone the cause; with a wild shriek of remorse, she drew the dirk from Olaf's heart and plunged it in her own. Her death was not so instantaneous as his, and life had not quite fled when the barge, with its terrible freight, arrived at Isle Maree. The holy father raised the crucifix before the lady's closing eyes, and uttered words of earnest prayer; then her spirit passed away, and all was over.

The bodies of the unhappy pair were buried within the enclosure on the island, beneath the shade of the sacred hollies; they were laid with their feet towards each other, and smooth stones with outlines of mediæval crosses (*see illustration*) were placed over the graves, and there remain to this day. A few stones still indicate the site of the hermit's cell, and a considerable mound marks where the tower stood.

Such, with some little filling-in of detail, is the story as commonly told in Gairloch of the sad tragedy which casts a halo of romance around the beautiful Isle Maree. There are, as might be expected, some slightly different versions of the legend, but this is the most usual one. Its variations in form only go to prove its general truthfulness, and there is no reason to doubt that the tragedy really occurred substantially as here related; the tombstones, with their ancient crosses, are still to be seen, and there is no other account of them proposed.



CROSSES ON THE GRAVES OF THE PRINCE AND PRINCESS ON ISLE MAREE.

Chapter III. [11]

The Mackenzies of Kintail.

Two origins of the great house of Mackenzie, lords of Kintail, and afterwards earls of Seaforth, of whom the Gairloch family are a branch, have been propounded, and have given rise to considerable discussion.

By one pedigree they have been made to spring from Colin Fitzgerald, descendant of Otho who came to England with William the Conqueror, fought with him at the battle of Hastings in 1066, and was created Castellan and Baron of Windsor. Otho married a Welsh princess; their grandson Maurice distinguished himself in the subjugation of Ireland, was appointed to the joint government of that country, and was created Baron of Wicklow and Naas Offelim in 1172. Others say this Maurice was of the ancient Tuscan family of Gherardini, who date as far back as A.D. 800. Gerald, a son of Maurice, was created Lord Offally. A grandson of Gerald married the granddaughter and representative of the last of the ancient line of the kings of Desmond. Colin Fitzgerald was their eldest son. He came to Scotland, and assisted Alexander III. at the battle of Largs. It is said that Colin was afterwards settled by Alexander III. in Eileandonain Castle, in Kintail; that he received a grant of the lands of Kintail from that king; that he married the daughter of MacMhathain, heritor of the half of Kintail; and that their only son Kenneth became the progenitor of the clan MacKenneth, or Mackenzie.

The use of the Cabar Feidh, or deers' horns, as the crest of the Mackenzies, is supposed to have originated in a brave deed done by Colin Fitzgerald. He was hunting with Alexander III. in the forest of Mar in 1265 when an infuriated stag, closely pursued by the hounds, charged the king. Colin interposed, and shot the stag in the head with an arrow. The grateful monarch granted to Colin a stag's head puissant as his armorial bearing.

The other genealogy of the Mackenzies asserts that the first Kenneth from whom the family sprang was of a native Gaelic stock, almost as ancient as the ancestry of Fitzgerald. This descent is argued by Mr Alexander Mackenzie, in his History of the Mackenzies. Relying on an old MS. dated 1450, he shows that Kenneth was of the seed of Gilleon Og, or Colin the younger, son of Gilleon na h'Airde, who lived in the tenth century, and was also the ancestor of the O'Beolan earls of Ross. It seems that Angus MacMhathain, constable of Eileandonain, was descended from Gilleon Og, and was a near relative of the O'Beolan earls of Ross, who were the superior lords of Kintail. Kenneth, the only son of Angus, was a nephew of William, third Earl of Ross, and succeeded his father in the government of Kintail. This Kenneth, we may assume, was the founder of the Mackenzie family.

The question really seems to be whether Kenneth was a MacMhathain on his father's side or on his mother's side. In either case he had the blood of the earls of Ross flowing in his veins.

Kenneth, who died about 1304, set his relative, the Earl of Ross, at defiance, and established himself in an independent position as lord of Kintail, but his descendants were harassed by the earls of Ross, who endeavoured to regain their power in the district. [12]

John Mackenzie, the second lord of Kintail, and only son of Kenneth, sheltered Robert Bruce when he was in hiding, and afterwards assisted him to gain the throne of Scotland. John Mackenzie led five hundred of his clansmen—some of them possibly Gairloch men—to the victorious field of Bannockburn on 24th June 1314, and by his loyalty and valour rendered more secure his possessions in Kintail.

Kenneth Mackenzie, called Kenneth of the Nose, only son of John, became third chief of Kintail; he was a weak man, and in his time the Earl of Ross regained a considerable hold over the district.

Kenlochewe, which is part of Gairloch in the present day, was attached to the lordship of Kintail and shared its troubles. It was about 1350 that some of the followers of the Earl of Ross made a raid into Kenlochewe, and carried off a great spoil. Kenneth Mackenzie, third lord of Kintail, pursued them, slew many of the invaders, and recovered much of the spoil. The Earl of Ross after this succeeded in apprehending Mackenzie, and had him executed at Inverness. The Earl then granted the lands of Kenlochewe to his follower Leod Mac Gilleandreis.

The fourth lord of Kintail was Black Murdo of the Cave, only lawful son of Kenneth of the Nose. Murdo received this *soubriquet* because, being a wild youth, he preferred, rather than attend the ward school where the heirs of those who held their lands from the king were sent, to take up his abode in some one or other of the caves about Torridon and Kenlochewe, hoping to get a chance of slaying Leod Mac Gilleandreis. The latter hearing of Murdo's resort, and fearing mischief, endeavoured to apprehend him, so that Murdo had to flee the country. He went to his uncle, M'Leod of the Lews, and there met one Gille Riabhach, who had come to Stornoway with twelve men about the same time as himself. After so long a time had elapsed that Mac Gilleandreis supposed Murdo was dead, his uncle gave to Murdo one of his great galleys or birlinns, with as many men as he desired. Murdo embarked at Stornoway, accompanied also by Gille Riabhach and his twelve men, and with a favourable wind they soon arrived at Sanachan in Kishorn. Thence they marched straight to Kenlochewe, and concealed themselves in a thick wood near the house of Mac Gilleandreis. Mackenzie left his followers there, whilst he went to look for his old nurse, who lived thereabouts. He found her engaged in making up a bundle of sticks to carry to Leod's house. Murdo inquired her name, for he did not remember her face at first. She gave her name, and inquired in return who he was. He told her, on which she replied, "Let me see your back, and I will know if you are that man." She remembered that he had a black spot on his back. He took off his clothes, and she saw the black spot, and so she knew him. She was overjoyed at his return, having long grieved for his supposed death. He asked her to procure him information

of Leod's doings, and to let him know that night. He made up the bundle of sticks for her, and she went to Leod's house, and duly returned with the news that Leod had fixed a hunt for the next day, and was to meet the people at Kenlochewe in the morning. She said Leod might be known by the red jacket he wore. Murdo determined to take advantage of this occasion, and was early on the ground, accompanied by his followers. As the people arrived he slew all he did not recognise; the natives he knew were dismissed to their homes. When Leod, in his red jacket, came on the ground with his sons and attendants, Murdo and his band attacked them with their swords, and after a slight resistance Mac Gilleandreis and his followers fled, but were soon overtaken at a place ever since called Fe Leoid, where they were all slain except one of Leod's sons, named Paul, who was taken prisoner, but afterwards released on his promising never again to molest Mackenzie. Murdo gave the widow of Leod Mac Gilleandreis to Gille Riabhach to wife, and their posterity were long known at Kenlochewe. The heads of the people who were slain in Kenlochewe were cut off and thrown into the river there; the stream carried the heads down to a ford, where they massed together, and this place has ever since been called Ath-nan-ceann, or the "ford of the heads." The name is now corrupted into Athnagown or Anagown. It is shewn on the maps. The place where Leod Mac Gilleandreis and his followers were slain is about three miles from Kenlochewe, on the hill to the east of the Torridon road. The name Fe Leoid, more correctly written Feith Leoid, means the bog of Leod; it is also shewn on all the maps. [13]

Black Murdo of the Cave, after dispossessing Leod Mac Gilleandreis, went to Kintail, where he was received with open arms by all the people of the country. He married the only daughter of his friend Macaulay, who had defended Eileandonain Castle during his long absence, and through her Mackenzie succeeded to the lands of Loch Broom (including probably the parts of Gairloch lying to the north of Loch Maree and Loch Ewe), granted to Macaulay's predecessor by Alexander II. In 1357, when David II., king of Scotland, returned from England, Murdo laid before his majesty a complaint against the Earl of Ross for the murder of his father, but could obtain no redress; however the king confirmed him in his possession of Kintail by charter dated 1362. Murdo died in 1375.

Murdo of the Bridge, only son of Black Murdo of the Cave, became the fifth lord of Kintail. He was one of the Highland chiefs who accompanied the Earl of Douglas to England and defeated the renowned Hotspur at the battle of Otterburn, or Chevy Chase, on 10th August 1388. Murdo refused to join Donald, the great Lord of the Isles, in his insurrection which culminated in the battle of Harlaw. The history of the Highlands shows that this was a period of extreme disorder and violence, and Gairloch itself was not exempt from the terrors of anarchy. Murdo does not appear to have troubled his head about his rights in Gairloch, and, as other parts of our history will shew, it was overrun by several tribes. Possibly neither this Murdo nor his father pressed their claim to Gairloch, being sufficiently occupied in keeping possession of Kintail. Ten years after King Robert II. had confirmed Kintail to Black Murdo of the Cave, the same king confirmed the grant of Gairloch made by the Earl of Ross to Paul M'Tyre (Part I., chap. i.). But we hear no more of Paul M'Tyre; and, as an old writer has well said of this time, "during this turbulent age securities and writs, as well as laws, were little regarded; each man's protection lay in his own strength." [14]

Murdo of the Bridge, who died about 1416, married Finguala, daughter of Malcolm M'Leod of Harris by his wife Martha, daughter of Donald Earl of Mar, a nephew of King Robert Bruce. Their only son, Alexander the Upright, so called "for his righteousness," became the sixth laird of Kintail. He died in 1488, about ninety years of age. By his first wife, Anna Macdougall of Dunolly, he had two sons, Kenneth and Duncan. By his second marriage he had one son, known among Highlanders as Eachainn Ruadh, or Hector Roy, destined to become the famous founder of the Gairloch family. There was also a daughter by the second marriage, who became the wife of Allan M'Leod, laird of Gairloch.

In the year 1452, during the rule of Alexander the Upright, the desperate skirmish of Beallach nan Brog occurred, in which the Earl of Ross, to punish the western tribes for seizing his son, attacked and slaughtered his foes, including Mackenzie's Kenlochewe men, who are said to have been almost exterminated.

It is not within the scope of this narrative to pursue further the history of the great house of Kintail. The next chapter will relate a Gairloch legend treating of events which occurred during the time of one of the earlier Kintail Mackenzies.

It may be convenient to explain, that long before 1609, when Kenneth, twelfth laird of Kintail, was created Lord Mackenzie of Kintail, these great lairds were commonly called Lords of Kintail. Colin, son of this Kenneth, was created Earl of Seaforth and Viscount Fortrose in 1623. Some time prior to this date the possessions of the Kintail family had increased to the dimensions of a province, and Eileandonain Castle had ceased to be their headquarters, the castle of Chanonry in the Black Isle, formerly the bishop's palace, being preferred. The first Lord Seaforth added to Chanonry Castle, and built Brahan Castle, which continued the residence of the Seaforth family to a recent date. The family became extinct in the male line on the death of the last Lord Seaforth in 1815. Long before the erection of Brahan Castle the lairds of Kintail frequently resided at a mains or farm they possessed at Brahan.

Chapter IV.

Ewan Mac Gabhar, the Son of the Goat.

On the north-eastern shore of Loch Maree, about three miles above the place where the river Ewe leaves the loch, is situated Ardlair, than which no lovelier spot can be found in all the range of Highland scenery. There are groves of different kinds of trees, and a belt of them skirts [15] the shingly shore of the loch; smooth grassy glades are interspersed among the woods, behind which rise a series of marvellous precipices, unclimbable, except in two or three places, save by sure-footed deer or goats. Below the steep background lie here and there great masses of rock, which ages ago have fallen from the cliffs above. About a quarter of a mile to the south-east of the present Ardlair House, and rather nearer to the house than a small tarn nestling there beneath the cliffs, is a large cairn or assemblage of enormous rocks, heaped and piled upon each other in fantastic confusion. Ash trees and wild roses, heather and ferns, grow in tangled medley among the *débris*, and, concealing the interstices, render access extremely difficult. But the persevering searcher will discover a roomy cave, formed by a mighty block of rock lying slantways over other fallen blocks. The entrance to the cave is well concealed, and can only be got at by climbing on to a ledge that forms a narrow platform in front of it. After groping two or three yards along a low narrow passage a dark chamber is reached in which one can stand upright. The floor is level, and perfectly dry. The cairn is about a hundred and fifty yards from the shore of Loch Maree. This cave is called by old Gairloch people now living "The cave of the king's son," a name that it owes to the following story, the opening scene of which is laid here. No date can be assigned to the events narrated, but they cannot have occurred later than in the thirteenth or fourteenth century.

AT ARDLAIR.

A worthy old woman named Oighrig (Euphemia) lived near Letterewe with her only son Kenneth. They had a pet goat called Earba (*i.e.* a roe). The goat failing to yield the usual supply of milk was watched by Kenneth, who with much trouble and difficulty traced her at length to "the cave of [16] the king's son," about three miles distant from their home. Here the goat held possession of the small platform in front of the entrance, and would not allow Kenneth to climb to it. He went for a rope, and throwing it over the goat's horns secured the animal. A beautiful little boy now appeared on the scene, and uttering sympathetic cries hugged the struggling goat. At first Kenneth thought that the child was a fairy, but he soon discovered his mistake. A young lady of great beauty came forth from the cave on hearing the cries of the little boy. It now appeared that the couple had taken refuge in this cave, where they would have perished from hunger had they not enticed the friendly Earba to supply them with her milk. Kenneth reported all the circumstances to his mother, who seeing that the helpless couple in the cave must ultimately die of want and cold if they remained there, went and persuaded them to come and live at the humble cottage near Letterewe. The young lady's name was Flora, and she told them that the boy's Christian name was Eoghan, or Ewan, but she would not reveal either of their surnames, so the boy was called Eoghan Mac Gabhar, *i.e.* Ewan the son of the goat, to his dying day. They all lived happily together. Earba brought them kids of her own, which the little Ewan herded and fed. Flora grew more lovely than ever, and Kenneth astonished even his own mother by his success in hunting and fishing for the maintenance of the increased family. Kenneth naturally fell in love with the beautiful Flora, though his mother strongly dissuaded him from his suit, pointing out that Flora was doubtless of royal lineage, being probably, though much older, the sister of Ewan, who from the sword and mantle that Flora with much care preserved for him, was probably the son of a king. The mantle was a robe of state of scarlet velvet bound and fringed with pure gold, and the sword had a hilt of gold and ivory, and some mystic characters engraved upon it. As young Ewan grew, his lordly disposition and commanding presence confirmed the belief that he was of royal birth.

Matters continued thus until one day the great lord of Kintail came from Eileandonain Castle to

hunt the mountains of Letterewe. He came unexpectedly to Oighrig's cottage, and entering without ceremony jocosely blamed Kenneth, who was one of his foresters, for not being at the hunt. Then seeing Flora and Ewan he began to inquire who they were. Evasive answers were returned, and Kenneth and Flora pretended they were man and wife. The lord of Kintail on hearing the name Ewan Mac Gabhar exhibited surprise and even alarm, for he recalled a well-known prophecy about "the son of the goat," which had been erroneously interpreted as unfavourable to the destinies of the house of Kintail. Failing in persuading Flora to go away with him, his lordship left his kinsman Hector Dubh to watch the family. Flora and Ewan growing anxious under such circumstances soon afterwards resumed their concealment in the cave. On this Hector, suspecting that he was duped, hastened home with the news to Kintail. Fearing Lord [17] Mackenzie's sleuth-hounds, the whole family decamped and went down to Poolewe, and Earba followed with her two kids. Next evening a vessel came to Poolewe and sent a boat ashore. Kenneth and Flora went down hand in hand to ask for a passage to the islands. As the boat approached they saw by their tartan that the crew were from Eileandonain Castle. They fled like deer, but the ground was rough for Flora, and they were soon overtaken, captured, and carried off in the vessel.

Oighrig and Ewan remained disconsolate, protected by friends near Poolewe; their store comprised the three goats, three baskets, and a small locked chest containing Ewan's sword and mantle and a few jewels. The captain of a vessel, which shortly came in to Poolewe, promised to take them to Eileandonain, where Oighrig wished to go in search of her son; but, whether by chance or design, the hapless pair were conveyed instead to the country of a great chief named Colin Mor Gillespie.

Oighrig and Ewan were there taken ashore. The captain searched their baggage, and found the mantle of state and the royal sword. Oighrig told him all the tale, and he repeated it to Colin Mor, who placed Oighrig in a hut beside his castle, provided well for her goats, and gave her a cow. He took Ewan to his castle, and brought him up with his own sons as a warrior and a gentleman. Meanwhile Kenneth, after gaining the favour of the lord of Kintail by his prowess in warfare, had found means to escape from Eileandonain with Flora; they married, and ultimately discovered Oighrig, who lived with them to a good old age.

As for Ewan Mac Gabhar, he grew up a strong brave man, and none could match him in warlike exercises. Orders came from the Scottish king for the prosecution of a great war against a realm which included the island of Mull, and was then under the rule of the queen widow of Olamh Mor, who had been the renowned monarch of that land. Colin Mor was joined by the lord of Kintail in this great enterprise, and with their allies they mustered an army of twenty thousand men. Ewan Mac Gabhar was all fire and eagerness for the glorious war, and was entrusted with the command of a thousand men. During the bustle of preparation a Highlander came and proffered his services to Ewan as page. Ewan at first rejected the offer, on the ground of the slender form and small stature of the man; but every day the page was in waiting, and proved so handy, that Ewan at last engaged him and entrusted him with his baggage.

The invading army succeeded in taking possession of the whole of the large island of Mull, which they plundered and burned. They then proceeded to the mainland in a vast fleet of vessels, and anchored in a long arm of the sea that extended twenty miles into the country, apparently Loch Sunart. Here they anchored, and the soldiery immediately began to burn and plunder without opposition.

At night the chiefs and some of their followers returned to the fleet as a safe and comfortable retreat. The main body of the army encamped at a considerable distance, having seen no appearance of a foe. But before daybreak the forces of the queen, who had quietly entered the [18] loch in the night, surrounded the fleet of the invaders, and boarding the vessels, made prisoners of all the chiefs and of such of their followers as were with them, except a small number who were slain in a fruitless attempt at resistance. Colin Mor was taken, with two of his sons and Ewan Mac Gabhar. The lord of Kintail and three of his brothers, with sixty other gentlemen, were also made prisoners. The army on shore was surprised at the same time, and routed with great slaughter.

The nobles and chiefs were taken before the gallant and ruthless queen, who made a vehement speech charging them with being the slaves of a tyrant and with having persecuted and destroyed her royal race. She declared for vengeance, and in accordance with the savage usages of the times, ordered that next morning at nine o'clock the whole of the prisoners should be brought into her presence and hanged by sevens at a time, beginning with the youngest, so that the fathers might behold the dying throes of their sons.

The hour arrived, and the seven youngest prisoners were led forth to make their obeisance to the queen before their execution. When the queen saw them she began to shew signs of emotion, her colour went and came, her lips quivered, and she shrieked out, "O God! what do I see? Stop the execution! stop!" and then she fell down in a swoon. Her maids came to her assistance, and now a hundred shouts rent the air, "Mac Olamh Mhor! Mac Olamh Mhor!" (the son of Olaf the Great); and instantly all the queen's chiefs and kinsmen were kneeling round one of the condemned prisoners. He was a tall and goodly youth, clothed in his father's royal robe and with his father's ancient sword of state girded by his side. The reader will have guessed the name of the young king; he was none other than Ewan Mac Gabhar! Soon the enthusiastic shouts of the people seemed to rend the rocks, and Ewan was borne aloft on the shoulders of his kinsmen and seated on his father's throne. When the queen recovered, she began to doubt the sentiments of her own

heart, and required proof that Ewan was indeed her beloved child who had long ago, as she believed, been foully murdered in his bed, along with her own sister, by the conspirators who had planned the destruction of her royal seed. The evidence was soon forthcoming. Ewan's page was none other than Flora, who was herself the youngest sister of the queen. She had, unrecognised, accompanied Ewan to the war, and, having charge of the mantle and the sword, had that morning arrayed him as his father was wont to be, certain of the effect. She explained how at the time of the conspiracy she had given up her bed to the wife and child of one of the conspirators who had intended to slay her and the infant Ewan, but who in the darkness had murdered the others instead; and how she had then escaped with her precious charge to "the cave of the king's son" at Ardlair on Loch Maree.

Thus Ewan Mac Gabhar was established in his kingdom. His first act of authority was to release all his condemned associates, whose joy and astonishment may well be conceived. He entertained them gallantly at his castle for many days, and a friendly league was formed that long preserved [19] the peace and tranquillity of those realms. Ewan was greatly assisted in his kingdom by Kenneth, who had become a renowned warrior, and who with his beloved Flora came and resided at Ewan's castle. Ewan married Mary, youngest daughter of Mackenzie lord of Kintail, and by his friendship helped to increase the dominions of that great house, so that the old prophecy about the son of the goat (already referred to) was literally fulfilled:—

> "The son of the goat shall triumphantly bear
> The mountain on flame and the horns of the deer,—
> From forest of Loyne to the hill of Ben Croshen,
> From mountain to vale, and from ocean to ocean."

Chapter V.

The MacRaes of Kintail and Gairloch.

It is a singular fact that the first six lairds of Kintail (counting with them Angus Mac Mhathain) had each but one lawful son, so that the family of Mackenzie, now so numerous, increased at first but slowly. Murdo of the Bridge, fifth laird of Kintail, being thus without kindred of his own blood, invited one MacRae to join him in Kintail. This MacRae was from the same original stock as the Mackenzies. His father had come from Clunes, and settled at Brahan. MacRae, the son, accepted the invitation of Murdo, and went with him to Kintail, where his descendants became a numerous tribe, always owning the Mackenzies as their chiefs. Murdo hoped for faithful service from MacRae, and it was willingly given from generation to generation. The MacRaes were ever foremost in battle for their lairds, and became known as "Mackenzie's shirt of mail." This term "shirt of mail" was generally applied to the chosen bodyguard who attended a chief in war and fought around him. Hence it would appear that the bodyguard of the Mackenzie chiefs was composed of MacRaes.

The name MacRae was originally MacRath, signifying "the son of fortune." If it be true that "fortune favours the brave," these valiant warriors were rightly named, for bravery was ever their bright distinction, as our narrative will sufficiently shew. Not only were the MacRaes devoted to the Kintail family, but after Hector Roy Mackenzie went to Gairloch they assisted him and his descendants in conquering their possessions. Some of them settled in Gairloch, where their offspring are to this day.

In the following pages Iain MacIain Uidhir, Donald Mor, and Alastair Liath, who took part in the attack on MacBeath in the island of Loch Tollie; Donnachadh Mor na Tuaighe, or Big Duncan of the Axe, commonly called Suarachan, and Dugal his son; Iain Liath, who accompanied John Roy Mackenzie to Gairloch; and Donald Odhar, Iain Odhar, and Fionnla dubh na Saighead, who all three took leading parts in ousting the M'Leods from Gairloch,—were MacRaes from Kintail, and [20] were all warriors of renown.

The Rev. Farquhar MacRae (Appendix A), ordained vicar of Gairloch in 1608 and afterwards constable of Eileandonain, was of the same tribe, but his fighting was confined to the church militant.

The effigy of the renowned Donald Odhar is one of the supporters in the coat-of-arms of the Gairloch Mackenzies sculptured on the old barn of Flowerdale, called the Sabhal Geal, erected by Sir Alexander Mackenzie, Bart. of Gairloch, in 1730.

Several of these MacRaes were wonderful archers. The arrow fired at the serving-man on the Loch Tollie island by Alastair Liath, must have killed its victim at a distance of fully five hundred yards. Donald Odhar and Iain Odhar, the heroes of Leac na Saighead, slew many M'Leods with their arrows nearly four hundred yards away. Fionnladh dubh na Saighead is said to have shot Neil M'Leod at a still greater distance. Lest any reader should doubt the authenticity of these performances, on account of the marvellous ranges attained, some instances of wonderful shots made by Turks may here be mentioned. In 1794 Mahmood Effendi, the Turkish Ambassador's

secretary, in a field adjoining Bedford House, shot an arrow with a Turkish bow four hundred and fifteen yards against the wind, and four hundred and eighty-two yards with the wind. The secretary said the then Sultan of Turkey had shot five hundred yards, which was the greatest performance of the modern Turks up to that time; but he said that pillars stood on a plain near Constantinople marking distances anciently attained by bow-shot up to eight hundred yards. In 1798 the Sultan of Turkey surpassed all these achievements, by shooting an arrow nine hundred and seventy-two yards, in the presence of Sir Robert Ainslie, British Ambassador to the Sublime Porte.

It was always the privilege of the MacRaes of Kintail to bear the dead bodies of their chiefs to burial. At the funeral in 1862 of the Hon. Mrs Stewart Mackenzie, daughter and representative of the last Lord Seaforth, the coffin was borne by MacRaes of Kintail only. It was the last time! At the funeral of her son Colonel Keith Stewart Mackenzie, on 25th June 1881, there was not a sufficient number of MacRaes to bear the coffin from Brahan Castle. The few who were present claimed their privilege, and essayed to carry the dead. Some slight disputation occurred, but the vacant places had to be supplied from the Brahan tenantry. The following curious statement, referring to this incident, appeared in an Inverness newspaper soon afterwards:—"This seems to have had a most depressing effect upon the few handsome MacRaes, who hitherto were the most picturesque frequenters of the Inverness wool market, for on the last occasion not a single MacRae was seen dressed in the garb of the race. They have now nearly all been driven from the lands of their ancestors, and they have apparently thrown aside the kilt and donned the lowlanders' garb in disgust."

Chapter VI.

[21]

The MacBeaths.

Before the M'Leods got possession of Gairloch a tribe of MacBeaths were the most powerful sept in the district. They originally came (presumably in the thirteenth century) from Assynt, in the country of the Mackays in Sutherlandshire, and were of Norwegian descent. There are still some families of MacBeaths in Melvaig in Gairloch who are of the old breed. The chiefs of the MacBeaths had at least three strongholds in Gairloch, viz., Eilean Grudidh on Loch Maree, the island on Loch Tollie, and the Dun or Castle of Gairloch, all to be described in our chapter on the antiquities. Seven generations of MacBeaths occupied Eilean Grudidh, which seems to have been the last they held of these fortalices. The M'Leods, after a long struggle, subdued the MacBeaths, and expelled most of them from Gairloch. Those who were driven out fled to Applecross, where their descendants are to this day.

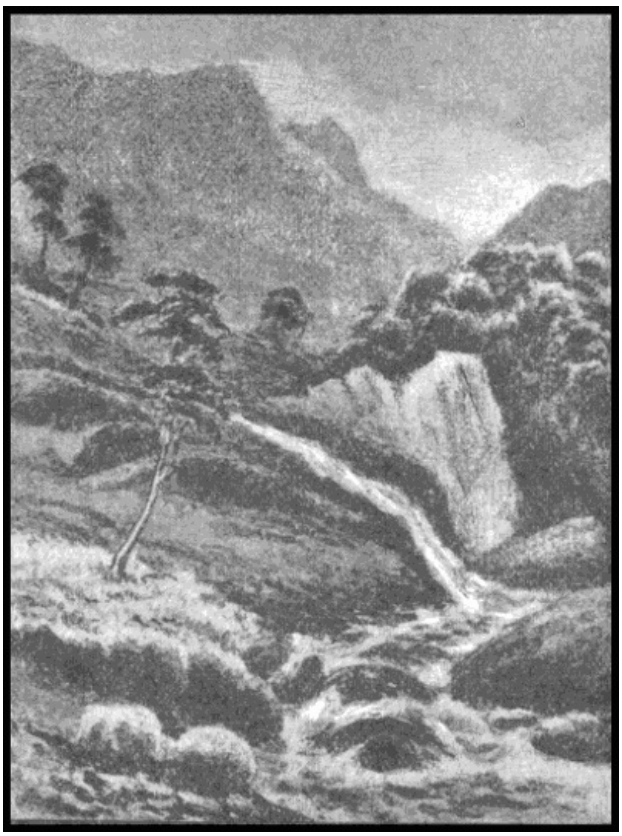
The earls of Ross must have had many a conflict with the MacBeaths, but no traditions on the subject are extant, nor have any accounts been preserved telling how the M'Leods ousted the MacBeaths. It is possible, however, that a fight which is said to have taken place near a very small loch or pond called Lochan nan Airm, to the right of the road as you go from Gairloch to Poolewe, may have been an engagement in which the MacBeaths were concerned. Lochan nan Airm, or "the tarn of the arms," is about two hundred yards from the road, and half a mile beyond the top of Achtercairn Brae. Those who were vanquished in this fight threw their arms into the loch (whence its name), partly to lighten themselves for flight, and partly to prevent the weapons from falling into the hands of the victors. It is said that the formation of a drain, intended to empty the loch so as to discover the arms, was once commenced, but was stopped by the then laird of Gairloch, whose permission had not been asked. The beginning of the drain is still apparent; it would be interesting to complete it.

The following story relates an attempt on the part of some of the lord of Kintail's men to slay one of the leaders of the MacBeaths, possibly the chief of the tribe. It evidently took place in the latter part of the career of the MacBeaths in Gairloch.

Once upon a time there lived a powerful man—Iain Mac Iain Uidhir—in the Carr of Kintail, and when he heard such aliens (the MacBeaths) resided in the island of Loch Tollie, he thought within himself, on New Years' night, that it was a pity that such mischievous strangers should be in the place, raising rents on the land which did not of right belong to them, while some of the offspring of gentlemen of the clan Mackenzie, although a few of them possessed lands, were without possessions.

Some little time after this, when the snow was melting off the mountains, he lifted his arrow bladder on his back, sent word for Big Donald, son of the son of Ranald MacRae from Inverinate, [22] and they walked as one together across Kilaolainn. Old Alastair Liath of Carr accompanied them. They walked through the mountains of Loch-carron. They came in by the mountains of Kenlochewe. They came at a late hour in sight of Loch Tollie, and they took notice of MacBeath's castle in the island, and of a place whence it would be easy for them to send their arrows to the castle. There was a rowan-tree alongside the castle, which was in their way, but when the darkening of night came they moved down to the shore in such a way that the heroes got near the bank of the loch, so that they might in the breaking of the sky be opposite MacBeath when he

came out.



ON CRAIG TOLLIE.

When MacBeath came out in the morning, the other man said to Donald Mor, "Try how true your hand is now, if it is not tremulous after the night; try if you can hit the seed of the beast, the hare, so that you make a carcase of him where he is, inasmuch as he has no right to be there." Donald shot his arrow by chance, but it only became flattened against one of the kind of windows in the kind of castle that was in it. [23]

When the man from Carr saw what happened to the arrow of the man from Inverinate, he thought that his companion's arrow was only a useless one. The man from Carr got a glimpse of one of the servants of MacBeath, carrying with him a stoup of water to boil a goat buck, which he had taken from Craig Tollie the night before; but, poor fellow! it was not he who consumed the goat buck. Old Alastair Liath of Carr threw the arrow, and it went through the kidneys of him of the water-stoup.

MacBeath suspected that a kind of something was behind him which he did not know about. He thought within himself not to wait to eat the goat buck; that it would be as well for him to go ashore—life or death to him—as long as he had the chance to cross. He lifted every arrangement he had, and he made the shore of it. Those who would not follow him he left behind him; he walked as fast as was in his joints, but fast as MacBeath was, the arrow of the son of Big Donald fixed in him in the thickest of his flesh. He ran with the arrow fixed, and his left hand fixed in the arrow, hoping always that he would pull it out. He ran down the brae to a place which is called Boora to this day; and the reason of that name is, that when MacBeath pulled the arrow out, a buradh, or bursting forth of blood, came after it.

When the Kintail men saw that the superior of the kind of fortress had flown, they walked round the head of Loch Tollie sprawling, tired as they were; and the very ferry-boat which took MacBeath ashore took the MacRaes to the island. They used part of the goat buck which MacBeath was to have had to his meal. They looked at the man of whom they had made a corpse, while the cook went to the preparation for the morning meal. Difficulty nor distress were not apparent on the Kintail men. The fearless heroes put past the night in the castle. They feared not MacBeath; but MacBeath was frightened enough that what he did not get he would soon get.

Although the pursuit of the aliens from Mackay's country was in the minds of the Kintail men, they thought they would go and see how the lands of Gairloch lay. They went away in the morning of the next day, after making cuaranan (untanned shoes) of the skin of the goat buck by putting thongs through it, as they had worn out their own on the way coming from Kintail. They came through Gairloch; they took notice of everything as they desired. They walked step by step, as they could do, without fear or bodily dismay. They reached Brahan; they saluted Mackenzie. They said boldly, if he had more sons that they would find more land for him. Mackenzie invited them in, and took their news. They told him about the land of Gairloch, the way in which they saw MacBeath, and the way in which they made him flee, and the time which they lived on the flesh of the goat buck. "And Kenneth," says Donald (addressing the chief), "I shall remember the day of

the foot of the goat buck as long as Donald is [my name] on me."

Chapter VII.

[24]

The M'Leods of Gairloch.

It is difficult to tell how the M'Leods came to Gairloch. It is not impossible that their claim to it may have dated back to the times of the Norse Vikings, from one of whom, tradition says, the M'Leods were descended. There were two clans of M'Leod,—the Siol Torquil, and the Siol Tormod,—perfectly distinct and independent of each other, though said to have sprung from one common progenitor named Leod. It was a branch of the Siol Torquil who took possession of Gairloch.

Donald, Lord of the Isles, who about 1410 laid claim to the earldom of Ross in right of his wife (Part I., chap. i.), was the son of John Macdonald of Islay, first lord of the Isles. John claimed the islands of Skye and the Lews under a grant by Edward Balliol. When John made his peace with King David in 1344 he retained the Lews. From this time the Siol Torquil held the Lews as vassals of the house of Islay. It seems highly probable that Gairloch, Loch Broom, Coigeach, and Assynt, being the adjacent parts of the mainland, were at first similarly held by the Siol Torquil, a branch of whom called the Siol Mhic Ghille Challum also acquired the island of Raasay. In this case their original claim to Gairloch would be derived either from the first lord of the Isles, or his son Donald, Lord of the Isles and Earl of Ross. On no other theory can the sway of the M'Leods in Gairloch be accounted for consistently with the history of the times, unless indeed it was purely the result of "vaulting ambition."

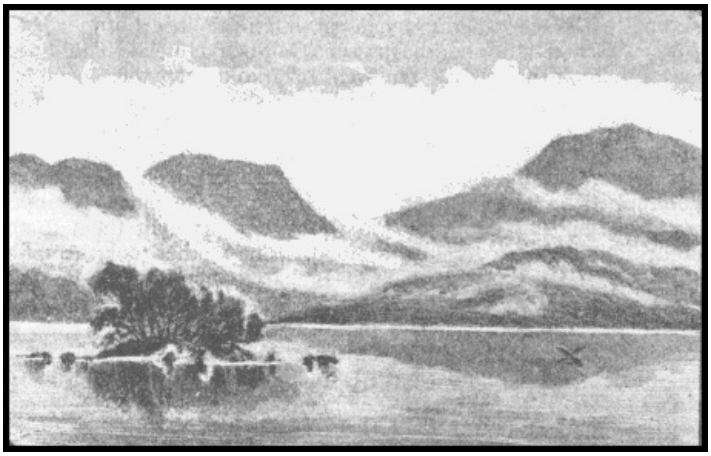
However this may have been, a branch of the Siol Mhic Ghille Challum soon made good an independent claim to Gairloch. Oddly enough a family feud was the commencement, as another was the ending fifty years later, of their legal title to Gairloch. In 1430 King James I. granted "to Nele Nelesoun, for his homage and service in the capture of his deceased brother Thomas Nelesoun, a rebel, the lands of Gerloch and others in the earldoms of Ross and Sutherland and sheriffdom of Innernys."

On this grant Neil, the son of Neil M'Leod, no doubt took steps to enforce his claim to Gairloch, and to subdue the MacBeaths, most of whom he drove from the country. He is said to have captured their three strongholds,—Eilean Grudidh, the Loch Tollie island, and the Gairloch Dun. It is in the time of the M'Leods that we first hear of the Tigh Dige (ditch house), situated in a field below where Flowerdale House now stands. It was a "black house," built of turf, roofed with divots (large thin turfs), and surrounded by a moat or ditch.

The M'Leods also had another stronghold in Gairloch, between Port Henderson and Opinan, the site of which is still called Uamh nam Freiceadain, and which was the last fortress they held in Gairloch.

Eilean Ruaridh Beag, in Loch Maree, was held by one Roderick (Ruaridh) M'Leod, after whom it [25] was named. A fierce struggle, the details of which are now lost, took place before the M'Leods were ejected from this island, which afterwards became the residence of John Roy Mackenzie, the fourth laird of Gairloch.

About 1480 Allan M'Leod, son of Roderick M'Leod, was laird of Gairloch. His wife was daughter of Alexander the Upright, sixth laird of Kintail, and sister of Hector Roy Mackenzie. They had two sons, who were then little boys. The family lived on the island in Loch Tollie,—the same fortalice formerly occupied by the MacBeaths. It was considered a safe retreat in those unsettled times. Allan M'Leod was a peaceful man, and occupied himself to a great extent with the sport the country afforded. But an evil day was coming. His two brothers, who resided with their people in the Lews, were unwilling that Mackenzie blood should run in the veins of the heir of Gairloch. They determined to slay their brother and his two boys, so that the inheritance might fall to themselves. With this evil purpose they came over to Gairloch, and took up their abode at the Tigh Dige, where they made every preparation for the carrying out of their wicked scheme.



ISLAND OR CRANNOG ON LOCH TOLLIE.

On the morning of the fatal day Allan M'Leod left the Loch Tollie Island in his boat, and having landed at the east end of the loch, went down Croftbrae to fish the river Ewe. At midday, as it was hot, and the fish were not taking, he lay down on the green hill at Croft, where the house of [26] Kenneth Urquhart (called Kennie Rob) now stands. The hill is named to this day Cnoc na mi-Chomhairle, or the "Hill of evil counsel." There Allan fell fast asleep. His two brothers came over from Gairloch to carry out their murderous intention. When they came to Loch Tollie they saw the boat ashore at the east end of the loch, and therefore rightly concluded that their brother had gone down to fish the river. They followed, and finding him asleep, killed him where he lay. They cut off his head, and threw it into the mill-lead or race, between the green hill and the spot where the Widows' house, originally built for a distillery, and therefore known as "The still," now stands, and the head was washed down into the river. The brothers then returned to Loch Tollie, and taking the boat reached the island. There they told their brother's widow how they had slain him, and then they tore her little boys from her trembling grasp. They carried them away with them, and when they came to a spot above and to the north of the place now called "The glen" the ruffians killed the boys, and buried them there at a rock still called Craig Bhadan an Aisc, or the "rock of the place of interment." It is shewn on the six-inch ordnance map. They stripped the blood-stained shirts from the bodies as proofs that the boys were dead, and took them with them to the Tigh Dige. At that time the dress of a boy consisted only of a stout shirt or tunic, with a belt round the waist, until such time as he was old enough for the belted plaid. The bereaved mother came ashore as soon as she could, and followed the murderers. She came in the evening to a place called Clachan garbh, on the little burn half way between Achtercairn and the present Gairloch Hotel. There were houses there at that time. She went to an old man there, who had been a faithful retainer of her husband; she told him her terrible story. He bade her wait until he went to the Tigh Dige to see if her brothers-in-law had really killed the two boys. When it became dark he went to the Tigh Dige, and through an opening he saw by the firelight the boys' little shirts hanging up. He managed unperceived to get possession of the shirts, and brought them to the mother; they were covered with blood. The mother took the shirts, and went off straight with them to Brahan to her father, Alexander the Upright, who did not credit his daughter's terrible tale until she shewed him the blood-stained shirts. Alexander, who was then an infirm old man, sent his son Hector Roy Mackenzie to Edinburgh to the king, and he produced the shirts to satisfy the king that the triple murder had really been committed. The king gave Hector Roy a commission of fire and sword for the destruction of the M'Leods, and in 1494 he received a grant of Gairloch by charter from the crown.

The proceedings which ensued, and the circumstances attending the expulsion of the M'Leods long afterwards from Gairloch, will be narrated later on. Meanwhile the reader will be glad to learn that the two murderers were afterwards routed in a skirmish on the south side of Gairloch by one of the MacRae heroes, who pursued them to a spot between South Erradale and Point, where he slew them both, and they were buried in a hollow there, which is pointed out to this day.

Although the crown charter of 1494 granted the whole of Gairloch to Hector Roy Mackenzie, the [27] M'Leods, as we shall see, retained for another century one-third part of Gairloch. The terrible murder committed about 1569 by Ruaridh Mac Allan M'Leod of Gairloch (Part I., chap. xii.) is curiously analogous to that recorded above. The murder of 1569 was the immediate cause of the warfare which resulted in the final expulsion of the M'Leods from Gairloch, just as that of 1480 had led to their being ousted from a great part of their territory there.

Family feuds and jealousies were the causes of the ultimate dismemberment of the Siol Torquil, and of the alienation of the whole of their vast possessions. Anyone who cares to trace their history, as given in Donald Gregory's and other works, will learn how all this happened; it does not concern us further here.

Chapter VIII.

The Macdonalds in Gairloch.

It will be remembered that Donald, Lord of the Isles, laid claim to and took possession of the earldom of Ross. This was about the beginning of the fifteenth century. It was probably from him, or from his father John Macdonald of Islay, first lord of the Isles, that the MacLeods of the Lews (the Siol Torquil) first obtained a title to Gairloch, as pointed out in the last chapter. To some extent Donald succeeded in subjugating Ross-shire, though several chiefs, including Mackenzie of Kintail, maintained their independence. It is easy to understand that Gairloch and other places adjacent to Skye would be overrun by the Macdonalds of Skye, the clansmen of the lord of the Isles. Some of them settled in Gairloch, and their offspring are still there. A charter of 1584 shews that Torridon, on the southern border of Gairloch, then belonged to Macdonald of Glengarry, a descendant of the lord of the Isles, and nineteen families of Macdonalds still dwell in Alligin on Loch Torridon.

One of the Macdonalds who came to Gairloch was named Mac Gille Riabhaich. Possibly he was a descendant of Gille Riabhach, who assisted Murdo Mackenzie, fourth lord of Kintail, to overcome Leod Mac Gilleandreis (Part I., chap. iii.). He took up his abode in a cave called Uamh Mhic 'ille Rhiabhaich, or the "cave of Mac Gille Riabhaich." It is close to a picturesque loch bearing the same name, on which are two small islands, one of which seems to have been a crannog or island fortalice, probably a refuge of Mac Gille Riabhaich in times of danger. The cave and loch are among the hills, two miles due east from Tournaig, in the parish of Gairloch.

Mac Gille Riabhaich was a notorious freebooter, as well as a warrior of renown. He was at the battle of Flodden Field in 1513. He became a well-known "lifter" of other people's cattle, and is said to have been outlawed. A story is related of him, which is given here not only because it [28] illustrates the reckless lawlessness of the old Highlanders, but because its hero was an inhabitant of Gairloch.

A party of Macdonalds invaded one of the Outer Hebrides, and Mac Gille Riabhaich accompanied them. At that time he was a powerful youth, and always carried a stout oak cudgel. The invaders having exhausted their provisions, landed on an island in a state of hunger. Proceeding to reconnoitre, they soon came unperceived upon a party of the natives gathered round a fire in the open air, over which hung, from three sticks joined at the top, a large pot, in which meat was being stewed. Mac Gille Riabhaich, longing for something to allay the appetites of himself and his hungry comrades, suddenly rushed on the natives, and plied his oak staff with such effect that they fled in all directions. He then seized the pot, and by placing the oak stick through the suspender, swung it over his shoulder, and carried it away with its reeking contents to his companions, regardless of the risk of its burning him. For this daring exploit Mac Gille Riabhaich received the *soubriquet* of Darach or Darroch, which is Gaelic for an oak.

From him are descended the numerous families of the Darrochs in Jura and Kintyre, of whom is Mr Duncan Darroch, the present proprietor of Torridon. They still wear the Macdonald tartan. An ancestor of the laird of Torridon, also named Duncan Darroch, was the son of a tacksman whose grandfather had come from the north and settled in Jura. The story of Mac Gille Riabhaich is confirmed by the fact, that when this last-named Duncan Darroch, having made a fortune in Jamaica, went to the Heralds Office to matriculate family arms and to prove his right to assume those of Macdonald, the Lyon King at Arms remarked, "We must not lose the memory of the old oak stick and its exploit;" whereupon the arms, still borne by the family, in which the oak is prominent, were granted to "Duncan Darroch, Esquire of Gourock, chief of that ancient name, the patronymic of which is M'Iliriach."

Donald Dubh Mac Gillechriosd Mhic Gille Riabhaich is said to have been a relative of our hero of the oak stick, if indeed he were not the same individual. He lived at Kenlochewe about the same period. When Hector Roy Mackenzie was attacked and brought to terms by his nephew John of Killin, ninth lord of Kintail, the latter surrounded and set fire to Hector Roy's house at Fairburn. John of Killin called on his uncle to surrender and come forth, assuring him of his life. Hector was about to comply, when Donald Dubh, who was one of John of Killin's followers, made for the door with his two-edged sword drawn. Hector Roy, seeing Donald Dubh, called out to his nephew that he would rather be burned in the house than slaughtered by Donald Dubh. John called Donald away and Hector rushed out of the burning pile, whereupon he and his nephew became reconciled. It was agreed that Hector Roy should manage the Kintail estates as tutor to his nephew until the latter came of age. Next day Hector set about arranging the lands of Kenlochewe, which, it will be remembered, had long been part of the Kintail estates. Donald Dubh applied for a set of land. Hector Roy said, "I wonder, Donald, how you can ask land this day [29] that was so forward to kill me yesterday." Donald, in reply, justified his hostility by a reference to the murder of Kenneth Og, eighth laird of Kintail (elder brother of John of Killin), to which Donald Dubh incorrectly supposed Hector Roy had been accessory. Donald had been foster brother of Kenneth Og, and bitterly resented the murder, for which in reality the laird of Buchanan was solely to blame. Hector Roy answered, "Well, Donald, I doubt not, if you had such fosterage to me as you had to that man, you would act the like for me, so you shall have your choice of all the land;" and Donald got it. From this time he was at peace with Hector Roy, and was among the clansmen who accompanied him and John of Killin to the fatal field of Flodden in 1513. Here it was that Donald Dubh at length avenged the death of his foster brother Kenneth Og, the late

chief of Kintail. In the retreat of the Scottish army he heard some one near him exclaiming, "Alas, laird! thou hast fallen!" On inquiry he was told it was the laird of Buchanan, who had sunk from loss of blood. The faithful Highlander drew his sword, and saying, "If he has not fallen, he shall fall," made straight to Buchanan, whom he killed on the spot.

Chapter IX.

Hector Roy Mackenzie, First Laird of Gairloch.

Many years ago there lived at Craig of Gairloch an old man named Alastair Mac Iain Mhic Earchair. He was a man of great piety and respectability, and was one of those who devote much of their time to religious exercises, and are called "the men." He is remembered by old people now living. It was in the first quarter of the nineteenth century that early one morning Alastair went out for a load of bog fir for firewood. When he came to the peat moss where the wood was to be found, there suddenly appeared before him a tall fair-haired man attired in the Breacan an fheilidh, or belted plaid; with him were twelve other men similarly dressed; their plaids were all of Mackenzie tartan, and their kilts were formed of part of the plaid pleated and belted round the waist as was the manner in the old days. The fair-haired one, who from his noble bearing was manifestly a chief, inquired, "How fare the Gairloch family?" Alastair replied, "They are well." Then they departed. When they were leaving him, Alastair heard not the sound of their tread nor saw them make a step, but they passed away as if a gust of wind were bending down the tall grass on the hillside. Alastair, to his dying day, declared and believed that he had had a vision of the great chief Hector Roy with his bodyguard of twelve chosen heroes.

This account not only illustrates the reverential pride and affection with which the memory of the famous Hector Roy is regarded by the elder natives of Gairloch, but it also supplies a slight yet [30] graphic sketch of the traditional appearance of the great chief.

We have already learnt (Part I., chap. iii.) that Hector was the son of Alexander Mackenzie (known as "the Upright"), sixth lord of Kintail by his second wife. She was the daughter of Macdonald of Clanranald, and Hector Roy himself married a daughter of Ronald MacRanald, the laird of Moidart. Hector was born about 1440, but the date cannot be positively fixed. He was called Ruadh or Roy, from the auburn colour of his hair; he was a tall powerful man, of marvellous physique, a fearless hero, and a redoubtable warrior,—in a word, a typical Highland chieftain.

Many of the old traditions of the Gairloch seannachies have centred in Hector Roy and the deeds of his followers, but in the present generation they are passing out of mind, so that our account of the famous warrior cannot be so complete as it might have been made fifty years ago.

In Part I., chap. vii., we have seen the circumstances under which the king gave Hector Roy a commission of fire and sword for the destruction of the M'Leods who were in Gairloch. Hector Roy soon set about the work of extermination, but he was so much occupied in other warfare that it was long before he made much way in Gairloch. Ultimately he received a charter from the crown in 1494, and later a new charter under the great seal dated 8th April 1513, of Gairloch, together with Glasleitire and Coire nan Cuilean in Kintail, in feu and heritage for ever. Notwithstanding these charters, he never himself succeeded in completely ousting the M'Leods from Gairloch.

Hector Roy resided with his father at Kinnellan or Brahan, and afterwards at Fairburn. When in Gairloch he seems to have fortified himself in the Tigh Dige mentioned in Part I., chap. vii., but the M'Leods still held the Dun or Castle of Gairloch not far away.

At that time a rock stood at the edge of the shore near the head of the bay of Ceann an t' Sail, or bay of Charlestown as it is now often called; it is the bay where Flowerdale House and the present Gairloch post-office and pier are situated. This rock then projected so far on the shore that the road round it was covered by the sea at high water. When the present road was made, a great part of the rock was removed and the road banked up above the reach of the tide. Before this the projecting rock contained several large recesses. Hector Roy went out one day unattended to reconnoitre the Dun, still occupied by his enemies the M'Leods, possibly thinking to devise a scheme for its capture. The M'Leods observed him, and three of them slipped out of the castle hoping to seize him. Hector, unwilling alone to face three of his foes, ran quickly towards the Tigh Dige. When he came to the rock with its recesses, he threw himself into one of them, with his dirk drawn. As the first pursuer rushed round the rock, Hector slew him with one slash of his dirk, and in an instant threw him into another recess just before the second pursuer came round the rock to meet the same fate, as did the third also, leaving Hector free from a [31] rather awkward position. There is now at this place a small well by the roadside; it was formerly within one of the recesses. This recess was always called "the Gairloch," because it was the means of saving the life of the great chief of Gairloch, and since it has been removed the little well has borne the same title. Many persons in the neighbourhood can point out "the Gairloch," but few are now-a-days acquainted with the story. It was a favourite pastime of the sons of the

late Sir Hector Mackenzie, Bart. of Gairloch, when they were boys, about 1815, to re-enact this episode, an iris or "flag" being used to represent the destroying dirk of their renowned ancestor.

During the later years of Alexander the Upright, his eldest son Kenneth Mackenzie, who was known as "Kenneth of the Battle," led the clan in the many contests in which it was engaged. Hector Roy usually assisted his brother Kenneth in warfare. He took a leading part in the celebrated battle of Park, which gave Kenneth his appellation.

It seems that Kenneth of the Battle had married Margaret, daughter of John Macdonald of Islay, who laid claim not only to the lordship of the Isles, but also to the earldom of Ross. One Christmas eve Kenneth imagined himself, with some reason, to have been insulted by Alexander Macdonald, nephew and heir of John of Islay. In revenge for the insult Kenneth sent his wife (whom he did not love) back to Alexander, who was her cousin. The lady was blind of an eye, and she was sent away mounted on a one-eyed pony, accompanied by a one-eyed servant and followed by a one-eyed dog. The result was that John Macdonald of Islay determined on a great expedition to punish the Mackenzies. He mustered his followers in the Isles, and his relatives of Moidart and Ardnamurchan, to the number of three thousand warriors. Kenneth called out the clan Mackenzie, and strongly garrisoned Eileandonain Castle. Macdonald and his nephew Alexander marched to Inverness, reduced the castle there, left a garrison in it, and then plundered the lands of the sheriff of Cromarty. They next marched to Strathconan, ravaged the lands of the Mackenzies, put some of the inhabitants to the sword, and burned Contin church one Sunday morning, together with the aged people, women and children, and the old priest, who were worshipping in the church at the time. Kenneth Mackenzie sent his aged father, Alexander the Upright, from Kinellan, where he was residing, to the Raven's Rock above Strathpeffer, and himself led his men, numbering only six hundred, to the moor still known as Blar na Pairc. The Macdonalds came to the moor to meet him. Between the two forces lay a peat moss, full of deep pits and deceitful bogs. Kenneth had his own brother Duncan, and his half-brother Hector Roy, with him. By the nature of the ground Kenneth perceived that Macdonald could not bring all his forces to the attack at once. He directed his brother Duncan with a body of archers to lie in ambush, whilst he himself advanced across the moss, being able from his knowledge of the place to avoid its dangers. The van of the enemy's army charged furiously, and Kenneth, according to his pre-arranged plan, at once retreated, so that the assailants following him became entangled [32]
in the moss. Duncan Mackenzie then opened fire from his ambush on the foe both in flank and rear, slaughtering most of those who had entered the bog. Kenneth now charged with his main body, and Macdonald's forces, thrown into confusion by the stratagem, were after a desperate battle completely routed. Kenneth was attacked by Gillespie, one of Macdonald's lieutenants, and slew him in single combat. Hector Roy, who commanded a division, fought like a lion, and most of the Macdonalds were slain. Those who fled before the victorious Mackenzies rallied on the following morning, to the number of three hundred, but Kenneth pursued them, and they were all killed or taken prisoners. Both Macdonald himself and his heir Alexander were taken prisoners, but Mackenzie released them within six months, on their promising that they would not molest him again, and that they would abandon all claim to the earldom of Ross.

During the battle a great raw ploughboy from Kintail was noticed by Hector Roy going about in an aimless stupid manner. The youth was Donnachadh Mor na Tuaighe, or Big Duncan of the Axe, commonly called Suarachan. He was one of the MacRaes of Kintail; you would have called him in English Duncan MacRae. He received the name of Big Duncan of the Axe because, not having been thought worthy—much to his annoyance—of being properly armed that morning for the battle, his only weapon was a rusty old battleaxe he had picked up. Hector Roy called upon Duncan to take part in the fight. In his chagrin at the contempt with which he had been treated, he replied, "Unless I get a man's esteem, I shall not do a man's work." Hector answered, "Do a man's work, and you will get a man's share." Big Duncan rushed into the battle, quickly killed a man, drew the body aside, and coolly sat upon it. Hector Roy noticed this extraordinary proceeding, and asked him why he was not engaged with his comrades. Big Duncan answered, "If I only get one man's due, I shall only do one man's work; I have killed my man." Hector told him to do two men's work and he would get two men's reward. Big Duncan went again into the fight, killed another man, pulled the body away, placed it on the top of the first, and sat upon the two. Hector Roy saw him again, and said, "Duncan, how is this; you idle, and I in sore distress?" Big Duncan replied, "You promised me two men's share, and I killed two men." Hector quickly answered, "I would not be reckoning with you." On this Big Duncan instantly arose with his great battleaxe, and shouted, "The man that would not be reckoning with me, I would not be reckoning with him." He rushed into the thickest of the battle, where he mowed down the enemy like grass, so that that mighty chief Maclean of Lochbuy determined to check his murderous career. The heroes met in deadly strife; for some time Maclean, being a very powerful man clad in mail, escaped the terrible axe, but at last Duncan, with one fell swoop, severed his enemy's head from his body. Big Duncan accompanied his chief in the pursuit of the fugitives next day. That night when the triumphant chief, Kenneth of the Battle, sat at supper he missed Big Duncan, and said [33]
to the company, "I am more vexed for want of my great sgalag (ploughman) this night than any satisfaction I had of the day." One of the others said, "I thought I saw him following some men [of the enemy] that ran up a burn." He had scarcely finished speaking when Big Duncan entered, with four heads bound in a woodie (a sort of rope made of twisted twigs and bark of birch trees), and threw them before the chief; "Tell me now," says he, "if I have not earned my supper."

In 1488, as his father Alexander the Upright lay on his deathbed, Hector Roy led five hundred of his clan in the battle of Sauchieburn, near Stirling, in support of King James III. Later on Hector submitted to King James IV., who is said to have granted Gairloch to him, and to have given him

Glasleitire in Kintail and other estates. This may have been prior to the crown charter of Gairloch already mentioned as dated 1494.

Alexander the Upright died in 1488, and Kenneth of the Battle only survived his father three years. On his death Kenneth Og, his eldest and only son by his first wife, became entitled to the lordship of Kintail, but was murdered in 1497 through the treachery of the laird of Buchanan, avenged long after by Donald Dubh, as related in the last chapter. The next heir was John Mackenzie, commonly called John of Killin, who was the eldest son of Kenneth of the Battle, by his second wife, a daughter of Lord Lovat. It was a question whether this marriage was regular; but in 1491 the pope legitimised the marriage. On the death of Kenneth Og, Hector Roy, notwithstanding the pope's decree, declared his nephew John of Killin to be illegitimate, and took possession of the Kintail estates for himself, the whole clan, with whom he was a great favourite, willingly submitting to his rule. During this period occurred the battle of Druim a chait, in which Hector Roy, with only one hundred and forty men, completely routed seven hundred of the Munros, Dingwalls, and Maccullochs, under Sir William Munro of Fowlis, at a place on the south side of the hill called Knock-farrel, between Dingwall and Strathpeffer. Sir William was lieutenant of James Stewart, second son of King James III., who had been created Duke of Ross. Munro, instigated by Lord Lovat, grandfather of John of Killin, determined to punish Hector Roy for his contumacy in holding Kintail. Hector having only time to gather seven score men, resolved to make up for his numerical inferiority by a stratagem. He lay in ambush on Knock-farrel, and as Munro returned in the gloaming from plundering Hector's house at Kinellan, Hector Roy and his men suddenly attacked the triumphant foe. Munro's seven hundred men were not expecting any danger, as they believed Hector Roy had fled the country, hence they were marching carelessly and out of order. Hector's sudden onslaught in the dusk threw them into confusion, and the rout became so general that the Mackenzies slew all the Dingwalls and Maccullochs, and most of the Munros. Hector Roy's men were armed with axes and two edged-swords. The slaughter, on the [34] first charge, was terrific; no fewer than nineteen heads rolled into the well, still called Tobar nan Ceann, or "the fountain of the heads." Our old friend Big Duncan of the Axe was there, and, by the side of his fierce chief Hector Roy, performed prodigies of valour. Duncan pursued one of the enemy to the church of Dingwall; as he was entering the door Big Duncan caught him by the arm, when the man exclaimed, "My sanctuary saves me!" "Aye," replied Duncan, "but what a man puts in the sanctuary against his will he can take out again." So he pushed him back from the door and slew him. It would seem as if Big Duncan had joined Hector Roy that day unexpectedly, for tradition says that when, after the fight, Hector and his men sat down to take food, they only had one bannock for each man, and there was none for Big Duncan; but every man gave him a mouthful, and in that way he got the largest share,—seven score mouthfuls, from which circumstance we gather that Hector Roy lost not a single man in this sanguinary affray, though hundreds of the foe were slain.

In 1499 a royal warrant was issued to the Mackintosh to put down and punish Hector Roy, who had become obnoxious to the government, as a disturber of the public peace. He was outlawed; a reward was offered for his capture, and MacCailean, Earl of Argyle, was appointed to receive his rents and account for them to the crown. A period of anarchy and disorder ensued. Hector, with his faithful bodyguard, took refuge in the hills, and MacCailean came down to gather the rents. The Caithness men, who at that time made frequent raids on Ross-shire, determined to destroy MacCailean and his force. When MacCailean looked out one morning the Caithness men were gathering above him, but he said to his followers, "I am seeing a big man above the Caithness men, and twelve men with him, and he makes me more afraid than the Caithness men all together." MacCailean and his men determined to cut through the Caithness men. When the combat began, Hector Roy and his twelve warriors came down and also attacked the Caithness men; few of them escaped. After the battle, Hector Roy and MacCailean went to speak to each other. MacCailean asked what he could do for Hector, who replied, "It's yourself that knows best." On this MacCailean bade him go to Edinburgh at such a time, and said he would meet him there. Hector Roy went to Edinburgh and saw MacCailean, who told him to be in a certain place on such a day, and, when he should see MacCailean and the king walking together, to approach them and kneel before the king. MacCailean said the king would then lay hold of him by the hand to take him up, and Hector was to make the king remember that he had laid hold of him. Before this MacCailean and the king were talking together about Hector Roy; the king said Hector was a wild brave man, and it was impossible to lay hold of him. MacCailean replied, "If you will grant my request, I will give you hold of his hand." To this the king agreed. On the day fixed Hector Roy came to where the king and MacCailean were walking together, and kneeled before the king. The king took his hand to raise him up, when Hector Roy gave him such a grasp that the blood came [35] out at the points of the king's fingers. "Why did you not keep him?" said MacCailean, as Hector Roy turned away. "There is no man in the kingdom would hold that man," replied the king. Said MacCailean, "That is Hector Roy, and I must now get my request." "What is it?" asked the king. "That Hector Roy should be pardoned." The king granted the pardon, and took a great liking to Hector Roy for his strength and bravery.

In our last chapter is a reference to the attack made on Hector Roy by his nephew John of Killin, ninth lord of Kintail, and to Hector's surrender to the latter. John of Killin, who had now grown up a fine strong young man, had determined to compel his uncle to recognise his rights as the legitimate heir of Kintail. By a stratagem he put Hector Roy off his guard, and then surrounded and set fire to the house at Fairburn where he was stopping. Hector was compelled to capitulate. He was allowed to continue the management of the Kintail possessions during the remainder of his nephew's minority, and he himself retained Gairloch and Glasleitire in Kintail, besides other estates, as his own property. This was about 1507.

GAIRLOCH FROM STRATH.

Hector Roy now again set about the work of driving the M'Leods from Gairloch, and a long struggle ensued. He was greatly assisted by Big Duncan of the Axe, who had become the father of a son of like valour named Dugal. They, with ten other MacRaes of Kintail, were ready to attend upon Hector whenever he desired their aid; these twelve MacRaes seem to have acted as Hector Roy's bodyguard; most likely they all settled in Gairloch. The greatest defeat Hector ever gave to the M'Leods was at Beallach Glasleathaid, near Kintail, where most of them were taken or killed. Big Duncan of course took part in this victory, and on being told that four men were at [36] once attacking his son Dugal, he answered, "If he be my son, there is no risk in that." Dugal MacRae killed those four M'Leods, and came off himself without serious wounds.

After the fight at Beallach Glasleathaid, and several other skirmishes, the M'Leods were content to allow Hector Roy two-thirds of Gairloch, retaining the other third, which included the parts to the east and south-east of the Crasg, a hill to the west of the old churchyard of Gairloch, and between the present Free and Established churches. Thus the only strongholds left to the M'Leods in Gairloch were the Dun or Castle of Gairloch, and the Uamh nam Freiceadain, mentioned in Part I., chap. vii.

In 1513 Hector Roy, in response to a summons from King James IV., gathered his Gairloch warriors, and with them joined his nephew John of Killin, and the main body of the clan Mackenzie, in the war with England. They fought on the disastrous field of Flodden, and many of the clan perished with their king. The two chiefs of the Mackenzies were not among the slain; John of Killin was made prisoner, but escaped; Hector also made his way home in safety.

In 1517 John Duke of Albany, Regent, appointed "Colin, Earl of Ergile," lieutenant of the Isles and other lands, including Gairloch, for three years or more at the Regent's pleasure, for the purpose of establishing peace among the inhabitants. From this commission it may be inferred how troublous the Highlands then were.

Hector Roy had four sons and three daughters by his marriage with Anne Macdonald. He had also a son called Iain Beg, who, according to some authorities, was illegitimate.

The great warrior chief of Gairloch died in 1528, and some say was buried in the churchyard of Gairloch. If he was born as seems likely about 1440, he must have attained nearly ninety years of age. A large number of families trace their ancestry to him; they are known as Clan Eachainn, a name that signifies that they are the seed of Hector Roy.

Chapter X.

John Glassich Mackenzie and his Sons.

There is little but trouble and misfortune to be recorded as regards the immediate successors of the great Hector Roy. His eldest son, Iain Glassich, was a minor at the time of his father's death, having been born about 1513. As a boy he was brought up in the house of Chisholm of Strathglass, whence his name of Glassich. On coming of age, he was served heir to his father of the lands of Gairloch, and the grazings of Glasleitire and Coire nan Cuilean in Kintail. We know nothing of his personal appearance.

Soon after John Glassich Mackenzie came of age, he endeavoured to upset the arrangement his [37] father Hector Roy had made with John of Killin, ninth lord of Kintail, and a desperate feud ensued. In 1544 he was compelled to enter into a bond undertaking to keep the peace, and promising obedience to his cousin Kenneth, the tenth lord of Kintail. Notwithstanding this bond, he seems to have still persevered in his claims, which, as some say, extended to the whole of the Kintail estates.

In 1547 John Glassich refused to join the royal standard, and upon this his estates were forfeited

to the crown; but though this forfeiture was never reversed, it does not appear to have affected the succession. The escheat was granted to the earl of Sutherland, but it is not likely that he was able to act upon the grant in such a wild inaccessible country as Gairloch then was.

In 1550 Kenneth, lord of Kintail, still suspicious of the intentions of John Glassich, sent for him to Brahan, where he came with only one attendant, Iain Gearr, probably one of the MacRaes who had settled in Gairloch. Kenneth, after charging John Glassich with designs against him, caused him to be apprehended. Seeing this, Iain Gearr drew his two-handed sword and made a fierce stroke at the lord of Kintail, who sat at the head of the table, and whose skull would have been cloven asunder had he not ducked his head under the table. Iain Gearr was instantly seized by Mackenzie's men, who threatened to slay him on the spot, but the chief, admiring his fidelity, strictly charged them not to touch him. When Iain Gearr was asked why he had struck at the lord himself, instead of at those who had seized his master, he boldly replied, "I see no one else whose life is worth that of my own chief." The sword made a deep gash in the table, and the mark remained until Colin, first earl of Seaforth, had the piece cut out, saying that he "loved no such remembrance of the quarrels of his relations."

John Glassich was removed to Eileandonain Castle, where they say his death was occasioned by poison administered to him in a mess of milk soup, prepared by the wife of MacCalman, a clergyman, and deputy-constable of the fort. His body was sent to the people of Strathglass, who buried him in Beauly priory, where the Gairloch baronets are interred in the present day.

It was in the days of John Glassich that Donald Gorm of Sleat, in Skye, made an expedition against Kintail, taking advantage of the absence of Mackenzie of Kintail. The latter had opposed the pretensions of Donald Gorm to the earldom of Ross. In the month of May 1539 Donald Gorm crossed over to the mainland. He first came to Kenlochewe, which, though part of Gairloch in the present day, still belonged at that time to the lord of Kintail. Here the Macdonalds destroyed all before them, and killed Miles, or Maolmuire, son of Fionnla Dubh MacGillechriosd MacRae, at that time governor of Eileandonain Castle. The remains of a monument erected on the spot where Maolmuire MacRae was killed were to be seen in 1704. Donald Gorm was himself killed soon afterwards, when attacking Eileandonain Castle, by a barbed arrow fired at him by a nephew of Maolmuire MacRae.

During the feeble rule of John Glassich the M'Leods strove to regain Gairloch, but were kept in check by the clansmen, including some of the valiant MacRaes. [38]

John Glassich married Agnes, daughter of James Fraser of Foyness, and had three sons, viz., Hector, Alexander, and John, known as John Roy Mackenzie.

Hector, the eldest son of John Glassich, succeeded his father. During his minority the estates were given in ward to John, fourth of the Stewart earls of Athole. Hector came of age in 1563. His death occurred, probably by violence, in September 1566.

His brother Alexander, called Alastair Roy, second son of John Glassich, then succeeded to Gairloch, but as he did not make up his title he is not reckoned as one of the lairds of Gairloch. He and his brother Hector are said to have lived in Eilean Suainne, on Loch Maree. His death (without issue) took place within a few weeks of his brother's decease, and probably from the same cause. Some say that these two young men were slain at the instigation of their relatives of Kintail; but it seems quite as probable that their deaths were due to the M'Leods, who still held one-third of Gairloch. Alastair Roy married a daughter of John MacGillechallum M'Leod, laird of Raasay, by his marriage with Janet, daughter of Mackenzie of Kintail.

The Gairloch family have thus been under a cloud since the death of the great Hector Roy; but John Roy, the youngest son of John Glassich, saw brighter days. The story of his long and prosperous life will form the subject of our next chapter.

Chapter XI.

John Roy Mackenzie.

Iain Ruadh Macchoinnich, or John Roy Mackenzie, third son of John Glassich, and grandson of the great Hector Roy, was a minor when his brothers died in 1566, and his lands were in 1567 given in ward by Queen Mary to John Banerman of Cardenye.

John Roy became one of the most renowned of the old chiefs of Gairloch; he was in fact second only in fame to his celebrated grandfather, whom he closely resembled in appearance and physique. He is one of the most prominent figures in the old traditions of Gairloch, though there are no stories extant of his personal prowess in warfare.

He was born in 1548, but two years before his father was poisoned at Eileandonain. On this event his mother, Agnes Fraser, fled with John Roy to her own relatives, and she concealed him as best she could, putting him, it is said, every night under a brewing kettle. His mother afterwards became the wife of the laird of Mackay in Sutherlandshire, and John Roy then spent some time in

hiding on his patrimonial estate of Glasleitire in Kintail, under the faithful guardianship of Iain Liath, one of the MacRae heroes. It is said he was afterwards concealed by the lairds of Moidart and of Farr. [39]

John Roy grew up a tall, brave, and handsome young Highlander. When he could carry arms and wear the belted plaid, he went to the Mackay country to visit his mother. None but his mother knew him, and neither she nor he made known who he was. In those days any stranger who came to a house was not asked who he was until he had been there a year and a day. John Roy lived in the servants' end of the house, and slept and fed with them. Mackay had two rare dogs, called Cu-dubh and Faoileag, and they became greatly attached to John Roy, so that they would follow no one else. Near the end of the year Mackay told his wife that he suspected the stranger was a gentleman's son. Her tears revealed the truth. John Roy was then kindly received at the table of the laird, who asked him what he could do for him. John Roy begged that Mackay would give him a bodyguard consisting of the twelve of his men whom he might choose, and the two dogs Cu-dubh and Faoileag. He got these, and they went away to Glas Leitire in Kintail, taking with them an anker of whisky. Arriving there John Roy placed his twelve men in concealment, and went himself to the house of Iain Liath Macrae. It was the early morning, and the old wife was spinning on the distaff. She looked out, and saw a man there. She called to Iain Liath, who was still lying down, "There is a man out yonder sitting on a creel, and I never saw two knees in my life more like John Roy's two knees." Iain Liath got up, went to the door, and called out "Is that you John?" John Roy answered that it was. "Have you any with you?" "Yes, I have twelve men." "Fetch them," said Iain Liath. He killed the second bull, and feasted them all. Then he told John Roy that Mackenzie of Kintail was coming that very day to hunt on the Glas Leitire hills of his (John Roy's) fathers. John Roy, with his twelve men and Iain Liath, went to the hill, taking the whisky with them. Mackenzie arrived to hunt the deer, and when he saw John Roy and his men, he sent a fair-haired lad to inquire who they were. John Roy bade the boy sit down, and gave him whisky. Whenever he rose to go, more whisky was offered, and he was nothing loath to take it. Mackenzie, thinking the lad was long in returning, sent another boy, who was treated in the same way. Mackenzie then saw that John Roy had returned, so he went back with his followers to Brahan, and John Roy was not further molested by the lords of Kintail.

John Roy came back with Iain Liath to his house, when the latter told him that he had Hector Roy's chest with the title-deeds of Gairloch, and that John Roy must claim the estate. Iain Liath took all his belongings, and accompanied John Roy and his twelve men to Gairloch. They came to Beallach a Chomhla, at the side of Bathais [*Bus*] Bheinn. Coming down the mountain they found a good well, and there they rested and left the women and the cattle. The well is called to this day "Iain Liath's well." They met people who informed them that Iain Dubh Mac Ruaridh M'Leod, or Black John the son of Rorie M'Leod, who was governor of the old castle of the Dun, was [40] accustomed to walk every day across the big sand and to lie on the top of the Crasg to spy the country. The party went to the Crasg, and Iain Liath told Iain Dubh Mac Ruaridh M'Leod, whom they met there, that unless he left the castle before that night he would lose his head. M'Leod took the hint, and sailed away in his birlinn with all his valuables, except one chest containing old title-deeds, which came into John Roy's possession along with the castle.

It is said that after this John Roy had the resolution to wait on Colin Cam Mackenzie, lord of Kintail, who established him in all his lands. John Roy came of age about 1569, but it was not until 1606 that he received a charter erecting Gairloch into a free barony.

How John Roy came to revenge the assassination at the hands of Ruaridh MacAllan M'Leod of Gairloch, of the sons of Mac Ghille Challum of Raasay, and how this led to John Roy obtaining possession of the third part of Gairloch, which had been retained by the M'Leods since Hector Roy's time, will be related in our next chapter. John Roy had a long feud with the M'Leods, and it seems to have been nearly the end of the sixteenth century before they were finally expelled from Gairloch. In the latter part of this struggle John Roy was much assisted by his twelve valiant sons, several of whom, as will be seen, also figured in struggles with the M'Leods after they had abandoned Gairloch.

John Roy was twice married. By his first wife, Elizabeth, daughter of Angus Macdonald of Glengarry, he had eleven children. By his second wife, Isabel, daughter of Murdo Mackenzie of Fairburn, he had five children. Besides these he had several illegitimate children. The recorded pedigrees give the names of only eleven sons; but tradition says that, as John Roy's family grew up, his bodyguard of twelve chosen warriors was composed solely of his own sons.

The northern lairds, like the nobility further south, profited by the alienation of church property which followed the Reformation. The rectory and vicarage of Gairloch was vacant for some years, and in 1584 we find John Roy dealing with the tiends or tithes. Disputes ensued, and ultimately John Roy seems to have abandoned his claim.

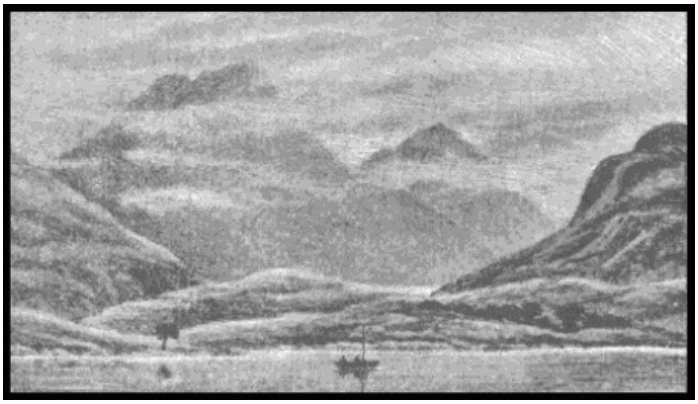
The ironworks at Letterewe were commenced about 1607 by Sir George Hay; they were on the property of Lord Mackenzie of Kintail. The iron-smelting furnace at Talladale was most likely established by Sir George Hay about the same time. No doubt woods on John Roy's Gairloch estate were cut down to provide charcoal for smelting, and if so John Roy must have derived pecuniary benefit from the Talladale ironworks, but there is no record to confirm this conjecture.

John Roy resided in Eilean Ruaridh, on Loch Maree. There are two islands of the name, distinguished as big and little; they almost adjoin. It was in the little island that John Roy dwelt, in the house where formerly Ruaridh M'Leod had lived. John Roy enlarged and improved the house, and made it his Gairloch home. Some remains of the house and adjoining garden are still [41]

to be seen.

It was early in 1609 that John Roy paid a visit to the laird of Mackay in Sutherlandshire. On his return journey the laird of Mackay escorted him as far as the Meikle Ferry, on the Kyle of Sutherland. When the party arrived at the ferry, the groom of a gentleman, who was also about to cross, endeavoured to keep possession of the boat. Amongst the attendants of the laird of Mackay was his youthful piper, named Roderick Mackay, a fine lad of seventeen summers. The groom placed his hand on the boat to hold it until his master should come up. The hot-headed young piper drew his dirk and cut off the groom's hand. The laird of Mackay said, "Rorie, I cannot keep you longer; you must leave the country." John Roy Mackenzie said to the piper, "Will you come with me, Rorie?" The piper lad was only too glad to accept this invitation, and his master, who had a great liking for the handsome and talented boy, was quite willing that he should go with John Roy, who sent Hugh Mackenzie of Gairloch, his gamekeeper, to the laird of Mackay in exchange for the piper. The descendants of Hugh Mackenzie still dwell in Sutherlandshire, where it is remembered how their ancestor came from Gairloch. Donald Mor Mackay, an elder brother of Rorie the piper, spent a number of years in Gairloch, and assisted his brother in the office of piper.

In the following winter—probably early in 1610—Kenneth, Lord Mackenzie of Kintail (son of Colin Cam), who had lately obtained a charter to the Lews, and had been raised to the peerage, returning from his new possessions, landed at Torridon on his way home to Brahan. His lordship sent a messenger to John Roy Mackenzie, desiring him to meet him at Torridon. John Roy's growing power had revived the old jealousy of the Kintail family, and Lord Mackenzie had determined to slay him. John Roy's sons strongly dissuaded their father from going to Torridon, fearing that he might share the fate of his father, but he determined to go, and to go alone. He requested his sons to follow him, and to keep watch, but to do nothing until the morning of the following day. Towards evening John Roy arrived at Torridon, and was hospitably received by Lord Mackenzie. He and his men were drinking and making merry far into the long winter night. At last they resolved to retire to sleep. It was in a barn where their couches of heather were prepared. John Roy would not lie down except on the same bed as Lord Mackenzie. He lay quite still as if asleep. After a while a man came in, with his dirk drawn, and asked Lord Mackenzie if he should stab John Roy. Lord Mackenzie replied, "No, you shall not befoul my bed; let be until daylight." At daybreak a man came hurriedly into the barn, and told his lordship that there were twelve big men and a piper on the Ploc of Torridon, putting the stone and playing other Highland games, and that one who seemed to be the chief of them was so tall that he had the head above the whole of them. Lord Mackenzie got up and went out in some alarm. No one knew who the men were, until Lord Mackenzie asked John Roy. John Roy said, "They are only my boys come to [42] see if I got safe over the hill." It was a hard winter, and the snow was deep on the mountains. Lord Mackenzie then told John Roy that he had been thinking to do him harm. John Roy said, "If you had had the supper you intended, you would have had a dirty breakfast." When the young men saw their father they told the piper to play; they came up to where their father was and took him away with them. They went over the shoulder of Liathgach, and the piper played all the way to the top of the hill without a halt. Then they made their way homewards, and reached their house in Eilean Ruaridh without mishap. The man who was a head taller than any of the others was Alastair Breac, second son of John Roy, and his successor in Gairloch. The piper was Donald Mor Mackay, brother of John Roy's piper Rorie.



GLEN GRUDIDH FROM LOCH MAREE.

The terrible feud between the Glengarry Macdonalds and the Mackenzies of Kintail came to a head during John Roy's life. He was not involved in the warfare, and it is unnecessary to give any account of it in these pages. During its blood-stained progress Alexander MacGorrie and Ranald MacRory, allies of Glengarry, made an incursion to the district of Kenlochewe, and there meeting some women and children who had fled from Lochcarron with their cattle, attacked them unexpectedly, killed many of the defenceless women and all the male children, and killed and took away many of the cattle, houghing all they were unable to carry along with them. At this time Kenlochewe seems to have still formed part of the Kintail possessions.

Later on we find that the lord of Kintail was staying on a visit with John Roy at his house in Eilean

Ruaridh in Loch Maree. There is some confusion or obscurity in the dates, but it seems certain that this visit was after the incident at Torridon; it shows that the enmity between the Kintail and [43] Gairloch Mackenzies was now at an end, and we hear no more of it.

When the M'Leods were finally expelled from Gairloch, and all the fights to be recorded in our next chapter were over, John Roy applied to the crown for a "remission" for himself and his sons for their lawless conduct during the struggle, and this was granted by King James VI. on 2d April 1614, in a document now in the Gairloch charter-chest, which gives John Roy and his sons credit for "much and good benefit to His Majesty's distressed subjects."

John Roy acquired some properties in the part of Ross-shire, towards the east coast, partly in right of his mother and partly by purchase. He built the first three storeys of the tower of Kinkell, and no doubt himself resided there at times. He was a shrewd and prudent chief, frank and hospitable, and (notwithstanding his necessarily imperfect education) a good man of business. He greatly furthered the interests of his people and of his own large family.

He died at Talladale in 1628, in his eightieth year, and was buried in the chapel his son Alastair Breac had erected in the old churchyard of Gairloch.

Chapter XII.

Expulsion of the M'Leods from Gairloch.

The stories of the various contests, extending over more than a century, during which the M'Leods were gradually expelled from Gairloch, fill a large page in the traditional history of the parish.

We have seen how Allan M'Leod, laird of Gairloch, was assassinated (along with his two little boys) by his jealous brothers, and how this led to the commission of fire and sword being granted by the king about the year 1480, directing Hector Roy Mackenzie to exterminate the Gairloch M'Leods. It must have been in Hector Roy's time that Ruaridh M'Leod was driven from the island in Loch Maree which bears his name, for we find that before Hector Roy's death, and after the fight at Beallach Glasleathaid and other skirmishes, the M'Leods were restricted to one-third of Gairloch, being the parts to the east and south-east of the hill called the Crasg, so that they must from that time have only retained the two strongholds known as the Dun of Gairloch and the Uamh nam Freiceadain (Part I., chaps. vii. and ix.).

The following incident seems to have occurred during the struggles in which Hector Roy took part, and before the M'Leods had been ousted from the islands of Loch Maree.

At this time a Mackenzie, known as Murchadh Riabhach na Chuirce, or Brindled Murdo of the Bowie-knife, lived at Letterewe. The M'Leods still held the fortalice or crannog called Eilean Grudidh, in Loch Maree, about a mile distant from Letterewe. One of these M'Leods, named MacIain Dhuibh, or Black John's son, crossed over one day in his boat to the house of Brindled Murdo at Letterewe, when the latter was away on an expedition among the hills. Only the women [44] had stayed at home, and M'Leod is charged with a foul deed. He remained at Letterewe over night. Next day Brindled Murdo returned home, and finding what had happened, attacked M'Leod, who, becoming disabled, fled up the hills behind Letterewe. Seeing that Murdo was outrunning him, and knowing that his end had come, M'Leod stopped, and, as his pursuer approached, entreated that he might die in sight of his beloved Loch Maree. Brindled Murdo of the Bowie-knife refused his petition, and slew him where he stood, and there they buried him. The place is called to this day Feith Mhic Iain Dhuibh, *i.e.* "the bog of Black John's son." On the six-inch ordnance map it is called Glac Mhic Iain Dhuibh, or "the dell of Black John's son."

During the time of John Glassich Mackenzie and his two elder sons, there are no records of the warfare with the M'Leods. It seems possible that both Hector and Alastair Roy, sons of John Glassich, were slain by M'Leods of Gairloch, though some suppose that their deaths were the result of the continued hostility of their relatives of Kintail.

About the time that John Roy Mackenzie, youngest son of John Glassich, came to Gairloch, Ruaridh MacAllan M'Leod, head of the M'Leods of Gairloch, who had the *soubriquet* of Nimhneach, or "venomous," committed a fearful crime. It will be remembered that John Roy's deceased brother, Alastair Roy, had married the daughter of Iain MacGhille Challum M'Leod, laird of Raasay (called Iain na Tuaighe, or John of the Axe), by his marriage with Janet, daughter of John Mackenzie, lord of Kintail. Iain MacGhille Challum had given great offence to his clan, the Siol Mhic Ghille Challum, by marrying his daughter to a Gairloch Mackenzie. After the death of Janet Mackenzie, his first wife, Iain MacGhille Challum had married a sister of his relative, the before-named Ruaridh MacAllan M'Leod. There were sons by both marriages. Ruaridh MacAllan, taking advantage of the discontent of the Siol Mhic Ghille Challum, plotted the destruction of MacGhille Challum and his sons by his first marriage, hoping that his own nephew, the eldest son of MacGhille Challum's second marriage, would then inherit Raasay. Ruaridh MacAllan induced MacGhille Challum, and his sons by the first marriage, to meet him at the island of Isay, in

Waternish, on the pretence that he desired to consult them on matters of importance. After entertaining them at a feast he retired to another room, and then caused them to be summoned singly to his presence. As each came forward he was assassinated. The eldest son of the second marriage, then a young boy, who was in an inner apartment, hearing the dying screams of one of his half-brothers, called out in an agony, "That's my brother's cry!" "Never mind," said the ruthless Ruaridh MacAllan, "his screams will make you laird of Raasay." Donald Gregory, in his history, says that the Mackenzies of Gairloch pursued Ruaridh Mac Allan, in revenge for the murder of Iain Mac Ghille Challum's sons, whose mother had been Janet Mackenzie, and whose sister had been the wife of John Roy's brother. At this time there was a great feud between [45] Ruaridh M'Leod of the Lews, assisted by Neil Angusson M'Leod of Assynt and by the blood-stained Ruaridh Mac Allan of Gairloch on the one hand, and Colin Mackenzie, lord of Kintail (assisted by other chiefs), fighting on behalf of his cousin Torquil Connanach M'Leod, on the other hand. It is unnecessary in these pages to state the origin and course of this dispute. Donald Gregory tells us that John Roy Mackenzie, impelled no doubt by the motive of revenge already mentioned, was most active on the side of his relative of Kintail. In June 1569 the Regent Murray and his council sat at Inverness, and put a stop for the time being to the feud so far as the leaders were concerned, but their intervention did not make an end of John Roy's vengeful proceedings against Ruaridh Mac Allan M'Leod of Gairloch. The warfare between these chieftains is said to have been long and fierce. Ultimately Ruaridh Mac Allan was slain—probably shot—by the great MacRae archer, Domhnull Odhar Mac Iain Leith, of whom more anon. It seems to have been nearly the end of the sixteenth century before John Roy finally expelled the M'Leods from Gairloch. They had long since abandoned the Dun of Gairloch, and were now driven from the Uamh nam Freiceadain, their last stronghold in the parish.

The savage nature of this prolonged struggle is illustrated by the tradition, that a number of M'Leods were hung on gallows erected on a hillock a little to the north of the Free Church at Kenlochewe. The hillock is called to this day Cnoc a Chrochadair, or "the hangman's hillock." They say that Domhnull Odhar took part in the capture of the M'Leods who were executed here.

It was after the expulsion of the M'Leods that the affair of Leac nan Saighead occurred. Many of the M'Leods who had been driven from Gairloch had settled in Skye. A number of young men of the clan were invited by their chief to pass Hogmanay night in his castle at Dunvegan. There was a large gathering. In the kitchen there was an old woman, who was always occupied in carding wool. She was known as Mor Ban, or Fair Sarah, and was supposed to be a witch. After dinner was over at night the men began to drink, and when they had passed some time thus they sent into the kitchen for the Mor Ban. She came, and sat down in the hall with the men. She drank one or two glasses, and then she said it was a poor thing for the M'Leods to be deprived of their own lands in Gairloch and to live in comparative poverty in Skye. "But," says she, addressing the whole party, "prepare yourselves and start to-morrow for Gairloch, sail in the black birlinn, and you shall regain Gairloch. I shall be a witness of your success when you return." The men being young, and not over-burdened with wisdom, believed her, because they thought she had the power of divination. They set sail in the morning for Gairloch, and the black galley was full of the M'Leods. It was evening when they came into the loch, and they dare not risk landing on the mainland, for they remembered that the descendants of Domhnull Greannach (a great Macrae) were still there, and they knew their prowess only too well. They therefore turned to the south side of the loch, and fastened their birlinn to Fraoch Eilean, in the shelter opposite Leac-nan- [46] Saighead, between Shieldaig and Badachro. They decided to wait there till morning, then disembark and walk round the head of the loch. But all the movements of the M'Leods had been well watched. Domhnull Odhar MacIain Leith and his brother Iain Odhar MacIain Leith, the celebrated Macrae archers (sons of Iain Liath, mentioned in Part I., chap. xi.) knew the birlinn of the M'Leods, and they determined to oppose their landing. They walked round by Shieldaig and posted themselves before daylight at the back of the Leac, a protecting rock overlooking Fraoch Eilean. The steps on which they stood at the back of the rock are still pointed out. Donald Odhar, being a short man, took the higher of the two steps, and Iain the other. Standing on these steps they crouched down in the shelter of the rock, whence they commanded a full view of the island on which the M'Leods were lying here and there, while the Macrae heroes were invisible from the island. They were both celebrated shots, and had their bows and arrows with them. As soon as the day dawned they opened fire on the M'Leods; a number of them were killed before their comrades were even aware of the direction whence the fatal arrows came. The M'Leods endeavoured to answer the fire, but not being able to see their foes, their arrows took no effect. In the heat of the fight one of the M'Leods climbed the mast of the birlinn, for a better sight of the position of the foe. Iain Odhar took his deadly aim at him when near the top of the mast. The shaft pierced his body and pinned him to the mast. "Oh," says Donald, "you have sent a pin through his broth." So the slaughter continued, and the remnant of the M'Leods hurried into the birlinn. They cut the rope and turned her head seawards, and by this time only two of them were left alive. So great was their hurry to escape that they left all the bodies of their slain companions on the island. The rumour of the arrival of the M'Leods had spread during the night, and other warriors, such as Fionnla Dubh na Saighead and Fear Shieldaig, were soon at the scene of action, but all they had to do was to assist in the burial of the dead M'Leods. Pits were dug, into each of which a number of the dead bodies were thrown, and mounds were raised over them, which remain to this day as any one may see. The name Leac-nan-Saighead means "the flat stone of the arrows."

Donald Odhar is credited with a similar feat to that performed by his brother Iain at Leac-nan-Saighead. It was probably before the affair at that place that a birlinn, manned by M'Leods, came in to the bay, now called the Bay of Charlestown, to reconnoitre Gairloch. Donald Odhar was on

the hill behind Flowerdale, called Craig a Chait, and as usual carried his bow and arrows. He saw the Macleods enter the bay; one of them climbed the mast of the vessel for a better view, when Donald Odhar, taking advantage of the comparatively distinct mark thus presented, let fly an arrow with unerring aim, and pinned the unfortunate M'Leod to the mast. The distance traversed by the arrow cannot have been less than half a mile.

[47] Fionnla Dubh na Saighead was a relative of Donald Odhar and Iain Odhar, and was also of the Macraes of Kintail. Finlay usually lived at Melvaig. As a marksman he was on a par with Donald Odhar. In his day young M'Leod, laird of Assynt, came to Gairloch in his birlinn to ask for a daughter of John Roy in marriage. He was refused, and set off northwards on his return voyage in his birlinn, which was manned with sixteen oars. They rowed quite close to the land round Rudha Reidh, the furthest out headland of the North point; Rudha Reidh was then known as Seann Rudha, a name which is still sometimes given to it. Fionnla Dubh na Saighead sat on a rock as the birlinn passed. He called out, "Whence came the heroes?" They replied, "We came from Gairloch." "What were you doing there?" said Finlay. "We were asking in marriage the daughter of Mackenzie of Gairloch for this young gentleman." "Did you get her?" said Finlay. They replied, "Oh, no." Finlay dismissed them with a contemptuous gesture and an insulting expression. They passed on their way without molesting him, because they had no arms with them. Young M'Leod brooded over the insult he had received from Finlay Macrae, who was well known to him by repute. He soon returned with his sixteen-oared birlinn, manned by the choicest warriors of Assynt, to take vengeance on Finlay, who noticed the galley and guessed who were its occupants. He called for one Chisholm, his brother-in-arms, and the two of them proceeded to a leac, or flat stone, close to the edge of the low cliff about a mile north of Melvaig; the leac is still pointed out. They reached this place before the Macleods could effect a landing. On the way the Chisholm said to Finlay, "You must leave all the speaking to me." As the birlinn drew near Chisholm called out, "What do you want?" "We want Fionnla Dubh na Saighead." "You won't get him, or thanks," said Chisholm; "go away in peace." The M'Leods began to threaten them. "If that is the way," said Chisholm, "let every man look out for himself." The contest (*cath*) began. Finlay and Chisholm were well sheltered at the back of the leac. A number of the M'Leods were killed by the arrows of the two heroes on shore, whilst they themselves remained uninjured. The M'Leods, finding their losses so severe, soon thought that discretion was the better part of valour, and, turning their birlinn northwards, departed for their own country. They never again molested Finlay.

There is an elevated place on the north point of Gairloch, called Bac an Leth-choin, or "the hillock of the cross-bred dog." About mile to the east, and much lower, is a ridge called Druim Carn Neill, or the "ridge of the cairn of Neil." Fionnla Dubh na Saighead one day spied a man named Neil M'Leod near his own house at Melvaig, at the south-west corner of the North Point. Finlay fired an arrow at the man and wounded him. Neil, who was a swift runner, fled eastwards over the high ground. Finlay gave chase, accompanied by a cross-bred dog, a sort of lurcher, which followed on the track of Neil. When Finlay reached the Bac an Leth-choin he caught sight of Neil, and shot him dead at the Druim Carn Neill. Neil was buried where he fell, and a cairn was raised over his grave. Both the Bac an Leth-choin and the Druim Carn Neill are shown to the north of [48] Inverasdale on the six-inch ordnance map. Some remains of Neil's cairn are still pointed out.

It would seem that the Gairloch M'Leods did not soon give up all hope of regaining their former territory, for we find that in 1610 a severe engagement took place between Mackenzies and M'Leods at Lochan an Fheidh (sometimes wrongly spelt Lochan a' Neigh), on the west side of Scoor Dubh, above Glen Torridon, just past the southern corner of Gairloch. The Mackenzies, under the leadership of Alastair Breac, John Roy's second son, and assisted by Donald Odhar and other MacRaes, completely routed the M'Leods, who were commanded by Iain MacAllan Mhic Ruaridh (now the representative of Allan M'Leod, formerly laird of Gairloch), accompanied by his uncle John Tolmach M'Leod. Iain MacAllan was taken prisoner; many of his followers were killed, seventeen or eighteen taken prisoners, and the few who escaped with John Tolmach were pursued out of the district. The slain M'Leods were buried on the field of battle, where their graves are still pointed out; nettles are growing about them to-day.

In August 1611 Murdo Mackenzie, third son of John Roy, with a party of Gairloch men, set sail for the Isle of Skye in a vessel well stocked with wine and provisions, with the object of carrying off the daughter of Donald Dubh MacRuaridh, a cousin of Iain MacAllan. A marriage between John Roy's son and Donald Dubh's daughter would have vested the ancient rights of the Gairloch M'Leods in the Mackenzies. Some say that Murdo's intention was also to seize John Tolmach M'Leod, who had escaped from Lochan an Fheidh. The ship was driven by a storm into a sheltered bay off Kirkton of Raasay, where young M'Leod, the laird of Raasay, at that time resided. Here Murdo Mackenzie cast anchor. Young Raasay hearing that Murdo was on board, resolved to attempt to secure him by stratagem, in order to get him exchanged for his relative Iain MacAllan Mhic Ruaridh, still a prisoner in Gairloch. Raasay, with Gille-challum Mor and twelve men, started for the ship, leaving orders for all the men in Raasay to be in readiness to go out to their assistance in small boats as soon as the alarm should be given. Murdo Mackenzie received his visitors in the most unsuspecting manner, and hospitably entertained them with as much wine and other viands as they could consume, sitting down with them himself. All his men joined in the revelry, except four heroes, who, feeling a little suspicious, abstained from drinking. Ultimately most of the party became so drunk that they retired to sleep below deck. Murdo Mackenzie remained sitting between Raasay and Gillie-challum Mor, when Raasay suddenly started up and told him he must become his prisoner. Murdo in a violent passion threw Raasay down, exclaiming, "I would scorn to be your prisoner." In the struggle which ensued one of Raasay's men drew his dirk and stabbed Murdo Mackenzie through the body, and he fell

overboard. Being a good swimmer, he was making for Sconser on the opposite shore of Skye, when the Raasay men, who had heard the row, coming out in their small boats, pelted Murdo [49] with stones and drowned him. The four heroes who had abstained from drink now fought nobly for their lives. The other members of Mackenzie's party were all slain, but not a soul of the Raasay men ultimately escaped alive from the dirks of the four abstaining Mackenzies. The small boats surrounded the vessel, and the Raasay men attempted to board her, but were thrown back, and slain without mercy by her four gallant defenders, one of whom, Hector MacKenneth, was however killed by a chance shot or arrow from one of the boats. The other three managed to cut their anchor cable, hoist their canvas, and sail away before a fresh breeze, with their horrible cargo of dead bodies lying about the deck. As soon as they were out of danger they threw the bodies of Raasay and his men overboard. It is said that none of the bodies were ever found except that of Gille-challum Mor, which came ashore on Raasay. The bodies of the dead Mackenzies, and of Bayne of Tulloch who had accompanied them, were taken to Lochcarron and buried there. The three heroes who survived were Iain MacEachainn Chaoil, Iain MacCoinnich Mhic Eachainn, and Coinneach MacSheumais; the first named lived for thirty years after, dying in 1641, the second died in 1662, and the third in 1663—all very old men. This seems to have been the last conflict between Mackenzies and M'Leods, and the Mackenzies have ever since held undisputed possession of Gairloch.

Chapter XIII.

Alastair Breac, and his Son and Grandson.

Alexander, second son of John Roy Mackenzie, succeeded his father in 1628 as chief of Gairloch, his elder brother having died without male issue during the father's lifetime. Alexander was known as Alastair Breac; the *soubriquet* "breac" means "pock-pitted," and had reference to traces of smallpox, then a terrible scourge in the Highlands. He was fifty years of age when he succeeded his father. He was a very tall man, being as we saw in Part I., chap. xi., a head above all his brothers, who were themselves fine men. Not only was he mighty in stature, but he was also a renowned warrior. It was he who led the Mackenzies in the battle at Lochan an Fheidh in Glen Torridon, described in our last chapter, when the M'Leods were completely routed; and he is said to have been his father's principal assistant and agent in finally expelling the M'Leods from Gairloch. He is described as having been "a valiant worthy gentleman."

He was twice married, and had twelve children. He added by purchase or arrangement to the family estates. He seems to have mostly resided on Eilean Suainne in Loch Maree, where he died; his father's house and garden on Eilean Ruaridh were still in existence in his days, and he certainly used at times the old Temple house at Flowerdale.

In the days of Alastair Breac, Gairloch was still subject to raids, especially by cattle-lifters from [50] Lochaber. The Loch Broom men used often to assist the people of Gairloch in repelling invaders. The trysting-place of the Gairloch and Lochaber men was at the spring or well just below the present road at the head of Glen Dochartie. The present road has buried the well, but the water is still there.

There lived a man in Lochaber in those days called Donald, the son of Black Donald. He was a cross man, and a choice thief. He had a brother known as Iain Geal Donn, or White-brown John, and there was only one other man in all Scotland who was a better "lifter" of cattle than these two. Donald sent word to Alastair Breac, laird of Gairloch, that he would "take spoil of him, and no thanks to him." On a previous occasion Donald had been foiled in an attempt to rob Gairloch. Alastair Breac sent for Alastair Buidhe Mackay, from Strath Oykell in Sutherlandshire, who was the strongest and most valiant man he could hear of in the three counties, and him he appointed captain of his guard. Iain Geal Donn came with his men to An Amilt, in Easter Ross, and there they "lifted" eleven cows and a bull. They came with their spoil through Strath Vaich and Strath Conan to a place called Sgaird-ruadh, or Scardroy, where they stayed the night. It was they who gave this name to the place, because they had pushed the beasts so hard that blood came from them there in the night. Alastair Buidhe Mackay had a Lochaber lad for his servant, and it was this lad who told him for certain that the thieves were stopping that night at a shieling bothie at Scardroy. Mackay and his servant hurried away to Scardroy. There he put the muzzle of his gun to the lad's body, and made him swear to be faithful to him. They moved on to the bothie, and there Mackay again made the lad swear to be true to him, and not to let any of the thieves come out alive. The Lochaber thieves were in the bothie quite unsuspicious, roasting a portion of the bull. Mackay posted his servant at the door, whilst he himself climbed on the other end of the bothie. He quietly lifted the lower edge of a divot on the roof, and peeped in to see what was going on. He saw Iain Geal Donn looking very jolly, and warming the backs of the calves of his legs at the fire. Iain suddenly turned round, and said to his men who were about the fire roasting the meat, "Look out! I am getting the smell of powder." Before he could say another word, the charge from Mackay's gun was lodged in the small of his back. The instant he had fired the shot, Mackay rushed to the door to assist his servant, and the two of them slew all the Lochaber men as they came to the door, except one who got off by a fluke, and he had the heel cut off one foot!

They followed him a little way, but were too tired to catch him. They returned to the dead bodies at the bothie, and ate their fill of the meat that was roasting. They sewed up the body of Iain Geal Donn in the bull's hide, and put the roasting spit across his mouth. Then they went away, leaving the dead in the bothie. Alastair Buidhe Mackay returned west to Gairloch, and told the laird what he had done. Alastair Breac was so pleased with the account, that he sent a running gillie at once [51] to Brahan with a letter to tell Lord Mackenzie of Kintail what had occurred. Who should happen to be dining with Lord Mackenzie but Cameron of Lochiel! When his lordship had read the letter, he threw it over to Lochiel, saying, "There is blood on you over there, you thieves." Lochiel was so stung that he left the dinner untouched, and went straight home to Lochaber. He sent gillies to Scardroy, and they brought away the body of Iain Geal Donn. They buried him in Corpach in Lochaber, where his memorial cairn stands to this day. Soon after this, Lochiel meditated a raid on Gairloch; he thought he would make it hard for Alastair Breac, in revenge for the slaughter of the Lochaber men. When Alastair Breac heard of this, he collected four score men to keep back the Lochaber invaders. They were with the laird all night in the old house called the Temple, now the head-gardener's house at Flowerdale. They were a ragged crew, but they were strong and they were brave. In the morning they went away, and soon reached the Great Black Corrie of Liathgach. There were shieling bothies at the foot of the glen, and the Gairloch men thought their Lochaber foes might be lying in ambush in the bothies. Alastair Ross from Lonmor volunteered to go and see if the Lochaber men were in the bothies, which were not in use at that time of the year; he was not much in his clothing, but he did not lack pluck. He went to the bothies, and in a loud voice challenged the Lochaber men to come out. But he got no answer. The Lochaber men, fortunately for themselves, had not come forward, having heard of Alastair Breac's preparations to resist them. The Gairloch men got the news of the retreat of the Lochaber men from the people of Coire Mhic Cromail in Torridon, who at the same time assured them they would have assisted them against the invader had they come. Our ragged rabble, without pride or fear, returned to Gairloch, and spent the night with Alastair Breac in the Temple house, with music, drinking, and revelry. It was on their tramp homewards that they met at Kenlochewe Ruaridh Breac, son of Fair Duncan, the old bard who lived at Cromasaig, and he composed the celebrated song to the "Guard of the Black Corrie."

The story of the watch at Glac na Sguithar belongs to the same period. The dell bearing that name is to the east of the head of Glen Dochartie. Then almost all the proprietors in the Highlands paid blackmail to Colla Ban; consequently he made no raids upon their territories; and if others made raids upon them, Colla made good the loss. The laird of Gairloch refused to pay blackmail to Colla, and he sent him word that he had many brave men in Gairloch, therefore he would give blackmail to no one. Colla replied, "He would soon make a raid upon Gairloch, and before driving away the spoil he would sleep a night in the laird of Gairloch's bed." Upon hearing this Mackenzie called out the bravest and strongest of the Gairloch men, and he sent them to keep guard in the passes through which the Lochaber men were most likely to advance northward. There were thirty picked men in the Coire Dubh, and an equal member in Glac na Sguithar. In each guard Mackenzie had his own near relations and kinsmen. At this time there [52] was an inn at Luib, at the Gairloch end of Loch Rosque; it was on the green at the head of the loch, below where the present Luibmhor inn stands; the innkeeper was called Iain Caol. While the guard of Glac na Sguithar were on duty, late on a Saturday night, four of the Lochaber men, who had been sent on in advance to spy the land, took up their quarters in Iain Caol's hostelry. On Sabbath morning they sat round the fire in the one public room in the house, and Iain himself went out for a walk. He was not long away, but soon returned to the Cameron spies from Lochaber. Addressing them he said, "I see four of the Gairloch men from the watch at Glac na Sguithar coming this way. I am sure they will call in for their 'morning.' Go to the other end, where you slept last night, and remain there quietly for a little. They will soon be off again." This request displeased the Camerons, for they answered rather tartly, "Where did we ever see four from whose face we would turn away?" "Be that as it may," said Iain, "take my advice just now. You can see and hear all that may go on; and, when you do so, if you think it prudent to go among them, you can join them before they leave the house." They took his advice and retired. The four came in, each of them a scion of the Gairloch family, except one who was a Chisholm. Big Murdo, son of the good man of Shieldaig, sat at the far end of the bench next the partition; beside him Iain Gearr Mac Mhurchaidh Mhic Iain took up his position. The third was Murdo Roy; and Chisholm occupied the other end of the bench. Big Murdo of Shieldaig called for a bottle of whisky; they drank it. Iain Gearr called for another bottle, and they drank it. Murdo Roy called for a third bottle; they got it also, and drank it. Then Chisholm called for a bottle. "You have enough," said Iain Caol. "Is it because I am not one of the gentry that you refuse me?" said Chisholm, with rising ire: "Give me my bottle of your own good will, or I will have it against your will." They got the fourth bottle, and while they were discussing it Murdo of Shieldaig said to Iain Caol, "Do you ever see any of those braggarts from Lochaber who are troubling us, keeping us on guard away from home? I wish a few of them came, till we would have some sport with them." "Not a man of them ventures this way," said Iain Caol. The Gairloch men went away, and Iain accompanied them over the hill. Here they sat and drank Iain's bottle, which he had concealed under his arm. Then Iain returned, and found the Lochaber men sitting again at the fire. "Have I here the heroes who never saw men from whom they would retreat?" said Iain Caol to them. One of them replied, "We saw only two of them, but we never saw such men before. If one of them caught any of us, he could easily crush every bone of the body in his hand." So the Lochaber spies quietly returned home. The Camerons never again attempted to make a raid upon Gairloch, and Alastair Breac heard no more of their menaces.

Alastair Breac died 4th January 1638, aged sixty, and was buried in the chapel he had erected in

the Gairloch churchyard.

He was succeeded by his eldest son Kenneth, sixth laird of Gairloch, who was a strong royalist during the wars of Montrose and the Covenanters, and commanded a body of Highlanders at Balvenny, under Thomas Mackenzie of Pluscardine, and his own brother-in-law the Earl of Huntly, but when the royalist army was surprised and disarmed he managed to escape. As a malignant he was fined by the Committee of Estates for his adherence to the king (see Appendix F). [53]

Kenneth added to the family property. He was three times married, and had eleven children. He built the Stankhouse, or "moat-house," on the site of the old Tigh Dige, and made his Gairloch home there. He died in 1669, and was buried in Beauly Priory, where his great-grandfather, John Glassich Mackenzie, had been interred.

Alexander, eldest son of Kenneth, became the seventh laird of Gairloch. He also added to the family estates. He was thrice married, and had six children. He seems to have lived a quiet life; he died in 1694, aged forty-two, and was buried in the burial-place in the Gairloch churchyard.

Chapter XIV.

The Baronets of Gairloch, and some other Gairloch Mackenzies.

Sir Kenneth Mackenzie, eldest son of Alexander, seventh laird of Gairloch, was created a baronet of Nova Scotia by Queen Anne on 2d February 1703. These baronetcies were frequently conferred upon proprietors who assisted in peopling Nova Scotia, then an object of great solicitude with the crown, so that it is possible the first baronet of Gairloch, or his father, may have promoted emigration among the Gairloch people. He was educated at Oxford, and represented Ross-shire in the Scottish Parliament, where he strongly opposed the Union. When in Gairloch he lived at the Stankhouse. He had six children. He died in December 1703, aged only thirty-two, and was buried in Gairloch in the old chapel within the churchyard, which was the burial-place of the family. This old chapel was roofed in 1704. The sum of thirty merks was then expended in "harling, pinning, and thatching Gairloch's burial place." At his death Sir Kenneth was deeply involved in debt.

Sir Alexander, eldest son of the first baronet, became the ninth laird of Gairloch when only three years of age. For want of means he and his sister Anne had to be brought up in tenants' houses. During his long minority some of the debts were paid off. In 1712 he was sent to the school at Chanonry, and after six years there he went to Edinburgh to complete his education. He afterwards made a foreign tour, and on his return in 1730 married his cousin Janet of Scatwell, by whom he had nine children. He was called by his people Seann Tighearna, and seems to have resided mostly in Gairloch, for latterly his lady lived alone at Kinkell. In 1738 he pulled down the Stankhouse, which stood in a low marshy situation on the site of the old Tigh Dige, and built the present Flowerdale House on a raised plateau surrounded by charming woods and rugged hills, and with a southern aspect. The glen here was a perfect jungle of wild flowers before the introduction, long after this time, of sheep farming, and so Sir Alexander appropriately gave the name of Flowerdale to his new chateau. [54]

The attempt of the unfortunate Prince Charlie to regain the throne of his ancestors occurred in the time of Sir Alexander. This prudent cautious baronet kept out of the "Forty-five," though some of his people fought with their fellow Highlanders at the fatal battle of Culloden.

It was shortly after that battle, when Prince Charlie was hiding on the west coast, that two vessels came to Sgeir Bhoora, the small island rock near Poolewe at the head of Loch Ewe, and remained there a short time waiting for a messenger, who was expected to bring gold sent by the court of France for Prince Charlie's use. Whether afraid of being caught in a corner by an English man-of-war, or impatient of the delay in the arrival of the messenger, the two vessels sailed away a few days before the occurrence of the incident about to be related.

BEINN LAIR FROM FIONN LOCH.

There were at this time three brothers of the name of Cross, who were sons of one of the last of the Loch Maree ironworkers. One of them was a bard, who built a house at Kernsary, still called Innis a bhaird, or "the oasis of the bard." One of the bard's brothers, named Hector, who had become a crofter at Letterewe, was at a shieling at the Claonadh (or Slopes), at the back of Beinn Lair, above Letterewe, where he and other crofters grazed their cattle in summer. One day after the battle of Culloden a stranger, a young Highlander, with yellow hair and clad in tartan, came [55] to Hector's bothie and asked for shelter and refreshment. When the girl gave him a bowl of cream, he drank it off, and returned it to her with a gold piece in it. The news quickly spread among the shieling bothies that the stranger had gold about him. Soon after his departure from Hector's hospitable roof next morning, a shot was heard, and on a search being made the dead body of the young man was found, robbed of all valuables. The murder and robbery were ascribed to a crofter, whose name is well remembered, and whose descendants are still at Letterewe, for from that time the family had money. It is almost superfluous to add that no steps were taken to bring the murderer to justice; the unsettled state of the Highlands at the time would alone account for the immunity of the offender. It afterwards transpired that the murdered stranger had been a valet or personal servant to Prince Charlie, and that he had gone by the name of the "Gille Buidhe," or "yellow-haired lad." He was conveying the gold to his master, which had been sent from France, and it was to meet him that the two vessels had come to Sgeir Bhoora, near Poolewe. It seems he carried the gold in one end of his plaid, which had been formed into a temporary bag, an expedient still often resorted to in the Highlands. A portion of the Gille Buidhe's plaid formed the lining of a coat belonging to an old man at Letterewe in the nineteenth century. Kenneth Mackenzie, an old man living at Cliff (now dead), told me he had seen it.

The Gille Buidhe was not the only one to whom gold sent from France was entrusted in order that it might be taken to Prince Charlie. Duncan M'Rae, of Isle Ewe, who had been with the prince in his victorious days in Edinburgh, and had there composed a song entitled "Oran na Feannaige," received a small keg or cask of gold pieces for the use of the prince. It was soon after the date of the murder of the Gille Buidhe, that Duncan M'Rae and two other men brought the keg of gold across Loch Ewe from Mellon Charles to Cove, and then hid it in the Fedan Mor above Loch a Druing, where Duncan M'Rae, by means of the "sian," caused the cask to become invisible. In Part II., chap, xiv., the superstition illustrated by this incident will be described. They say the cask of gold still remains hidden in the Fedan Mor. Duncan M'Rae was one of the faithful Highlanders who did all that could be done to secure the prince's safety and serve his interests. It seems the incident must have occurred after the prince had fled to Skye.

About the same time as the murder of the Gille Buidhe, one of the men-of-war cruising in search of the prince came into the bay at Flowerdale, and the captain sent word to Sir Alexander Mackenzie to come on board. The latter thought he was quite as well ashore among his people, so he sent his compliments to the captain, regretting he could not accept his invitation, as he had friends to dine with him on the top of Craig a chait (the high rocky hill behind Flowerdale House), where he hoped the captain would join them. The reply was a broadside against the house as the ship sailed off. One of the cannon balls, "apparently about an 18 lb. shot," was sticking half out of [56] the house gable next to the sea in the youth of Dr Mackenzie (a great-grandson, still living, of Sir Alexander's), who adds, that "had the cannon ball hit but a few feet lower, it might have broken into a recess in the thickness of the gable, the admittance to which was by raising the floor at a wall press in the room above, although this had been forgotten, till masons, cutting an opening for a gable door to the kitchen, broke into the recess, where were many swords and guns. Then it was recollected that Fraser of Foyers was long concealed by our ancestor, and, of course, in this black hole."

Sir Alexander consolidated the family estates, and was a shrewd man of business. He was a kind landlord, and very popular with his people, though the conditions in the leases he granted would probably be considered oppressive in the present day. John Mackay, the celebrated "blind piper" (son of Rorie, who had been piper to John Roy Mackenzie and to his successors to the third generation), was piper and bard to Sir Alexander, who seems to have loved a quiet home life. He died in 1766, aged sixty-five, and was buried with his ancestors in the little chapel in the Gairloch churchyard.

He was succeeded by his eldest son Sir Alexander, tenth laird, who was called in Gairloch "An Tighearna Ruadh," or Alastair Roy, from the colour of his hair. He had also another *soubriquet*, viz., "An Tighearna Crubach," which had reference to a physical defect. Like his father, he travelled on the continent as a young man. Angus Mackay (son of the "blind piper") was his piper, and Sir Alexander left Angus in Edinburgh for tuition whilst he himself went abroad. This Sir Alexander built Conan House, about 1758, during his father's lifetime, and it still continues the principal residence of the baronets of Gairloch. He was twice married, and had six children.

His second son John raised a company, almost entirely in Gairloch, of the 78th regiment of Ross-shire Highlanders, when first embodied. He obtained the captaincy, and was rapidly promoted, becoming colonel of the regiment in 1795. He attained the rank of major-general in the army in 1813, and full general in 1837. He served with distinction, and without cessation, for thirty-five years, viz., from 1779 to 1814. From his personal daring and valour he became known as "Fighting Jack," and was adored by his men. He often said that it gave him greater pleasure to see a dog from Gairloch than a gentleman from anywhere else. He died, the father of the British army, on 14th June 1860, at the advanced age of ninety-six.

Sir Alexander (tenth laird) left his estates burdened with debt. He died on 15th April 1770 from the effects of a fall from his horse, and was buried with his forefathers at Gairloch.

Sir Hector Mackenzie, eldest son of the tenth laird, became the fourth baronet and eleventh laird of Gairloch. He was known among his people as "An Tighearna Storach," or the buck-toothed laird. He succeeded to the estates when a minor only twelve years of age. During the minority some of the debts were paid off, and in 1789 Sir Hector sold several properties (not in Gairloch) to pay off the balance of the debts. He lived at home, and managed his estates himself; and [57] though he kept open house throughout the year at Conan and Gairloch, he was able to leave or pay a considerable fortune to each of his sons. In 1815 he was appointed lord-lieutenant of Ross-shire. He only visited London once in his life, and appears to have divided his time nearly equally between Flowerdale House and Conan, which he enlarged. He was adored by his people, to whom he acted as father and friend. His character was distinguished by kindness, urbanity, and frankness, and he was considered the most sagacious and intelligent man in the county.

Though not tall, he was very strong, almost rivalling in this respect his famous ancestor Hector Roy. (See the reference to his powerful grasp in the account of Alexander Grant, the big bard of Slaggan.) Sir Hector was a great angler. (See Appendix E.) A curious anecdote, shewing how Sir Hector befriended his hereditary foe, Macleod of Raasay, will be given in Part II., chap. xxv.

John Mackay (son of Angus), the last of the hereditary pipers of the Gairloch family, was piper to Sir Hector, and Alexander Campbell was his bard, in whose life (Part II., chap xx.) will be found an anecdote illustrating Sir Hector's kindly disposition.

Sir Hector gave a great impetus to the Gairloch cod-fishing, which he continued to encourage as long as he lived. Christian Lady Mackenzie (Sir Hector's wife), who was called in Gairloch "A Bhantighearna Ruadh," seems to have been as much beloved as her husband. Sir Hector's fourth son, Dr John Mackenzie of Eileanach, still survives, and is well known as a thorough Highlander. A number of extracts from his MS. "Odd and End Stories" are included in these pages. Sir Hector died on 26th April 1826, aged sixty-nine, and was buried in Beauly Priory.

Sir Francis Alexander was the fifth baronet and twelfth laird of Gairloch. He followed the example of his father Sir Hector in his kindly treatment of his tenantry, for whose benefit he published in 1838 the book quoted further on, entitled "Hints for the Use of Highland Tenants and Cottagers, by a Proprietor." Sir Alexander was a great sportsman and practical farmer, and spent a considerable part of each year at Flowerdale House.

By his first wife Sir Francis had two sons, viz., Kenneth Smith, the present baronet; and Mr Francis Harford Mackenzie. By his second wife he had one son, Mr Osgood Hanbury Mackenzie of Inverewe, who has largely assisted in the preparation of this book. Sir Francis died on 2d June 1843, aged forty-four. His widow, the Dowager Lady Mackenzie of Gairloch, now resides at Tournaig, in the parish of Gairloch.

Sir Kenneth S. Mackenzie, the sixth baronet and thirteenth laird of Gairloch, succeeded to the estates when a minor. Following the example of his immediate ancestors, he takes the lead in all local and county matters. Like his grandfather he is lord-lieutenant of his native county. He deals personally with his tenantry. His principal residence is Conan House, but he spends a portion of every year at Flowerdale in Gairloch. He was a member of the Royal Commission appointed 22d March 1883 to inquire into the condition of the crofters and cottars in the Highlands and Islands [58] of Scotland. This is not the place to offer any encomium on the present baronet of Gairloch, but it may be mentioned that the historian of the Mackenzies, himself a native of the parish, states that Sir Kenneth is "universally admitted to be one of the best landlords in the Highlands." Sir Kenneth married, in 1860, Eila Frederica, daughter of the late Walter Frederick Campbell of Islay.

There have been several collateral families of Mackenzies in Gairloch, to whom some reference must be made.

The Mackenzies of Letterewe were descended from Charles, the eldest son of Kenneth Mackenzie, sixth laird of Gairloch, by his third wife. By his father's marriage-contract Charles Mackenzie got Logie Wester, which in 1696 he exchanged with his half-brother Alexander, the seventh laird of Gairloch, for the lands of Letterewe. Letterewe continued in this family until

Hector Mackenzie, in 1835, sold the estate to the late Mr Meyrick Bankes of Winstanley Hall, Lancashire. The present representative of the Letterewe family is Mr Charles Mackenzie, a lawyer in the United States of America; their representative in this country is Mr John Munro Mackenzie, of Morinish and Calgary. The present Letterewe House is an enlargement of the older residence of this family.

The Mackenzies of Lochend, or Kinloch (now Inverewe), sprang from John Mackenzie of Lochend, third son of Alexander, the seventh laird of Gairloch, by his second wife. They were tacksmen of Lochend, which belonged to the Coul Mackenzies, by whom it was ultimately sold to Mr Osgood H. Mackenzie in 1863. The old Lochend House stood where the walled garden of the present Inverewe House is.

The Mackenzies of Gruinard sprang from John Mackenzie, a natural son of George, second earl of Seaforth and fourteenth laird of Kintail, who, with Captain Hector Mackenzie, conveyed the news of the defeat of the Royalists by Oliver Cromwell at the battle of Worcester, in 1651, to his father in Holland, where the latter was at that time living in exile. This family produced several distinguished soldiers, especially Alexander, a colonel in the army, who served with the 36th Regiment throughout the Peninsular War. John Mackenzie, the fifth laird of Gruinard, who was a captain in the 73d Regiment, sold the property, which included Little Gruinard, Udrigil, and Sand, all in the parish of Gairloch, to the late Henry Davidson of Tulloch, who resold it to Mr Meyrick Bankes. William Mackenzie, the sixth head of this family, was a captain in the 72d Regiment, and is said to have been the handsomest man in his day in the Highlands. The Gruinard family increased rapidly. The first laird had eight sons and eight daughters, who all married. George, the second laird of Gruinard, was twice married; by his first wife he had fourteen sons and nine daughters, and by his second wife four sons and six daughters,—making the extraordinary total of thirty-three children, nineteen of whom at least are known to have married, and most of them into the best families of the north. The Gruinard family resided at Udrigil House, and subsequently at Aird House, both of which they built.

There was a family of Mackenzies settled at Kernsary who were descended from Murdo [59]
Mackenzie, fifth son of Colin Cam, the eleventh lord of Kintail. Murdo had a son and daughter. The son was killed in 1645 at the battle of Auldearn, where he commanded the Lews Mackenzie regiment.

In the seventeenth century the Rev. Kenneth Mackenzie, from Bute, purchased the Kernsary estate from the Mackenzies of Coul, to whom it then belonged. He was an Episcopalian clergyman, and held services in the little Inverewe church at the place now called Londubh, on the Kernsary estate, close to which he lived in the house now occupied by James Mackenzie. He married a daughter of Mackenzie of Letterewe. They had a son Roderick, who succeeded to the Kernsary property; so did his son Roderick. This second Roderick married Mary, sister of Mackenzie of Ballone; she was a beauty, and was known as Mali Chruinn Donn. Their son Alexander sold Kernsary to the Seaforth family some fifty years ago; his son, the Rev. Hector Mackenzie, was minister of Moy, and died a few years back.

In bringing to a close this account of the Mackenzies of Gairloch, their history and present position may be summarised thus:—A strong offshoot of the family of the earls of Ross separated from the parent stock, and having taken root in Kintail, developed into the illustrious family of the Kintail or Seaforth Mackenzies. Again, a vigorous branch of the Kintail Mackenzies took root in Gairloch, and culminated in the present series of the baronets of Gairloch. The earls of Ross disappeared centuries ago, and the family of Seaforth has become extinct in the direct male line, whilst their estates have melted away. The Gairloch family remain, and their fine property has increased in value. Although the present baronet does not claim the chieftainship of the whole clan, which is believed to belong to a more remote offshoot of the Kintail family, that dignity is now but a name, and Sir Kenneth Mackenzie of Gairloch is to-day the most influential and distinguished of the great Mackenzie race.

The crest of the Gairloch Mackenzies is the figure of Donald Odhar, though some lairds of Gairloch have used the general crest of the Mackenzies, viz., the Cabar Feidh, or stag's head and horns. The badge of the Mackenzies is the deer grass, or stag's horn moss. Their war-cry or slogan is "Tulloch-ard," the name of a mountain in Kintail. This mountain has sometimes been used as a crest with the "warning flame" on its summit, representing the beacon whence the clan was apprised of danger.

Of pipe music the following tunes have been stated to be specially appropriated to the Mackenzies:—

Marches: Cabar Feidh and Gabhaidh sinn an rathad mor, usually called, "The high road to Gairloch."

Salute: Failte Uilleam Dhuibh (Black William's salute).

Gathering: Co-thional (Mackenzie's gathering).

Lament: Cumha Thighearna Ghearrloch (Laird of Gairloch's lament).

A list of the Mackenzie lairds of Gairloch is given in Table V.

Chapter XV.

[60]

Gairloch Estates, and Old Names of Places.

An account must be given here of the ways in which the different parts of the parish of Gairloch came into the hands of the present proprietors. It shall be brief. Some notes on old names of places are included.

Hector Roy Mackenzie is said, in an old MS., to have possessed, among other properties, "Kenlochewe, a district adjoining to Gairloch on the east." But after his time it belonged to the lords of Kintail, and subsequently to the Mackenzies of Coul, from whom Sir Alexander Mackenzie, ninth laird of Gairloch, purchased it in 1743, with the proceeds of the sale of Glas Leitire, in Kintail. Kenlochewe has belonged to the Gairloch baronets since that date. It extends from the west end of Loch Rosque to the water flowing from Glen Torridon past the village of Kenlochewe into the head of Loch Maree, and to a burn running down Slioch on the north-east side of that loch; it also extends six miles on the road from Kenlochewe village to Torridon.

Gairloch itself became the property of Hector Roy under charters from the crown, and has ever since remained the possession of the Gairloch Mackenzies. In the earliest document of title extant, a protocol from John de Vaux, sheriff of Inverness, dated 10th December 1494, "the landis of Gerloch," granted to Hector, and of which the sheriff gave him possession by that protocol, are described as "lyande betwix the watteris callyde Innerew and Torvedene, within the Shireffdome of Innerness." The boundaries thus stated for Gairloch are the waters of Ewe, *i.e.* Loch Maree, the river Ewe, and Loch Ewe on the north, and Torridon on the south. The sheriff's protocol was sealed at "Alydyll"—no doubt Talladale—"in Garloch," and that place has always formed part of Gairloch, as have also the islands of Loch Maree.

The retour, in 1566, of Alexander, second son of John Glassich Mackenzie, specifies "the lands of Garloch" as including "Garloch, Kirktoun, Syldage, Hamgildail, Malefage, Innerasfidill, Sandecorran, Cryf, Baddichro, Bein-Sanderis, Meall, Allawdill." Kirktoun seems to have been the designation of the place now called Charlestown, near Flowerdale, being near the old Gairloch church; Syldage represents Shieldaig; Malefage, Melvaig; Innerasfidill, Inverasdale; Sandecorran, Big Sand (of Gairloch); Cryf, Cliff (Poolewe); Baddichro, Badachro; Meall, Miole or Strath; and Allawdill must be Talladale. Hamgildail no longer exists.

In 1638 "Kenneth McKeinzie of Garloch was served heir male to his father, Alexander McKeinzie of Garloche, in the lands and barony of Garloche, including Kirktoun, with the manor place and gardens of the same, Sildag [Shieldaig], the two Oyngadellis [same as Hamgildail, in the retour of 1566], Mailfog [Melvaig], Debak [Diabaig], Inneraspedell [Inverasdale], Sandacarrane [Sandacarran, or Big Sand], Badichro [Badachro], the two Sandis [north side of Loch Gairloch], [61]
Erredell [Erradale], Telledill [Talladale], Clive [Cliff, Poolewe], Tollie [same as now], and the two Nastis [Naast]; the lands of Ellenow [Isle of Ewe], Auldgressan [Altgreshan], with the waters and salmon fishings of Kerrie and Badechro, the half of the water of Ew, and the salmon fishings of the same, Achetcairne [Achtercairn], Meoll [Miole, or Strath], with the mill, Udroll, the loch of Loch Maroy [Loch Maree], with the islands of the same, and the manor place and gardens in the island of Ilinroy [Eilean Ruaridh], the loch of Garloch with the fishings of the same, with other lands in Ross, all united into the barony of Garloche and the town of Clive [Poolewe], with the harbour and shore of the same being part of the same barony of Garloch erected into a burgh of barony." This must have been a list of the inhabited places on the Gairloch estate two hundred and fifty years ago.

In a Dutch map of Ross-shire, by the famous geographer Blaeu, engraved by Pont, and dated 1662, kindly lent me by Mr D. William Kemp, some of the old Gairloch names are given with curious spellings. This map of Ross-shire purports to have been made by "R. Gordonius a Strath-loch." The map shows Telladull, Slotadull, Tawy, Yl Ew, Ruymakilvandrich, Dunast, Inner-Absdill, Melvag, Sanda, Erdull, Viroill, Meall, Achagacharn, Heglis Gherloch, Knokintoull, Ingadill, Shilkag, Padechry, Erradill, Typack (Diabaig), Ardetisag. Rudha Reidh is called Rowna Ra; the island of Longa is called Yl Lunga; the sea-loch of Gairloch is called Gher Loch; Loch Maree is called Loch Ew, which name is also given to the present Loch Ew, and the Garavaig river is called Alt Finnag. This last name seems to be for Allt Feannaige, or "the burn of the hoodie crow," a bird which still frequents the locality. These are all the names given on what was the original Gairloch estate. Of other names within the parish of Gairloch there are Inner Ew, Turnag, Drumnachoirk, Badfern, Oudergill, Sanda, Inoran, Ardlarich, Achabuy, Letyr Ew, Fowlis, Smirsary, Pinesdale, Achanaloisk, Glenmuik, Lecachy, Glen-dochart, Glas-Letyr, Heglis-loch-ew (apparently where Culinellan now is), and Groudy. The only mountain named is Bin Cherkyr. A large island on Loch Maree has the name Sow, probably intended for Suainne, which island had then previously been a residence of Alastair Breac, laird of Gairloch. Lochs Finn [Fionn loch], Dow [Dubh loch], Garavad [east of Letterewe], Fadd, and Clair, are the only lochs with names. It is curious that such places as Kenlochewe and Clive [Poolewe] are not named on this old map. The names that are given are very instructive when compared with the names in the old records just quoted. Ruymakilvandrich is not found elsewhere; it seems to be intended for Rudha Mac Gille Aindreas, or "the point of the son of Gillanders," *i.e.* of the servant of Andrew, and is applied to a small headland near Boor; it doubtless had reference to some incident long ago forgotten. Dunast [Dun Naast] is still the name of a rock close to Naast; from this name being given instead of Naast, it may be inferred that in the seventeenth century there was some part of the dun that stood there

still remaining The names Heglis Gherloch, Heglis-loch-ew, Knokintoull, and Achanaloisk, do not occur elsewhere, either in old descriptions or modern nomenclature. Viroill seems to be the same as Udroll in the description of 1638. The map shows it where Lonmor now is. The other names are easily identified. The place called Ingadill on this old map, Hamgildail in the retour of 1566, and Oyngadellis in 1638, has now entirely disappeared; it seems to have been at the mouth of the river Kerry. The map gives only two churches in Gairloch parish, viz., Heglis Gherloch, near where the present Gairloch church now stands, and Heglis-loch-ew, at the head of Loch Maree. The names of places given on the map most likely indicate the most populous localities at that date. Some of the names are spelt phonetically; thus Bin is the Gaelic pronunciation of Beinn, and Finn is still the pronunciation by the natives of the name of Fionn loch. [62]

Alexander Mackenzie, seventh laird of Gairloch, bought the second half of the water of Ewe and Mellon Charles in 1671. The precise extent of this purchase does not appear. Mellon Charles still belongs to the Gairloch Mackenzies, as well as Isle Ewe, and the whole right to the salmon fishings of Loch Ewe, the River Ewe, and Loch Maree. To finish with the Gairloch estate of Sir Kenneth Mackenzie, the present baronet, it may be mentioned that the Kernsary estate was purchased from the Seaforth family in 1844, very early in Sir Kenneth's minority, and was resold by his trustees to his half-brother Mr Osgood H. Mackenzie, in 1862, with the exception of the strip of territory extending from Inveran to Londubh on the north-east bank of the river Ewe, which, with Gairloch proper, Kenlochewe, Mellon Charles, and the Isle of Ewe, completes Sir Kenneth's possessions in the parish of Gairloch. They form a noble estate, which comprises more than three-fourths of the whole parish.

Letterewe unquestionably belonged to the Kintail or Seaforth family up to and including the early part of the seventeenth century. It was either acquired by Kenneth, sixth laird of Gairloch, at the time (about 1648) when he became cautioner for the Earl of Seaforth in a bond for five thousand merks, or else later on (in 1671) by his son Alexander as part of his acquisition of the second half of the water of Ewe. In 1696 this Alexander gave up Letterewe to his brother Charles in exchange for Wester Logie. Charles became the progenitor of the family of Mackenzie of Letterewe, who possessed the property until 1835, when it was sold to the late Mr Meyrick Bankes, whose daughter Mrs Liot Bankes is the present liferenter of it. It extends from Slioch, along the shore of Loch Maree, to a burn between Ardlair and Inveran, and back to Fionn loch. With Letterewe is held the old Gruinard estate; it includes all the lands on the promontory called the Greenstone Point, except Mellon Charles. The older annals of this property are complex, and need not be fully narrated here. It came into the possession of the Gruinard Mackenzies before 1655, and continued in the same family until 1795, when it was sold to Henry Davidson of Tulloch, who again sold it to the late Mr Bankes, about 1835, along with the other parts of the Gruinard estate [63] to the south of the Meikle Gruinard river. Mrs Liot Bankes is also liferenter of this property: it forms, with Letterewe, a fine estate, which covers just one-sixth of the parish of Gairloch.

The remaining property in Gairloch parish is that of Mr Osgood H. Mackenzie. It includes Kernsary (except the strip on the north-east side of the Ewe, which, as before stated, is Sir Kenneth's), Lochend or Inverewe, and Tournaig. Kernsary, as we have seen, was, after belonging to more than one family, purchased by Sir Kenneth's trustees in 1844, and sold by them to Mr Osgood H. Mackenzie in 1862. It was bought from the Seaforth family, who had acquired it as providing a port at Londubh, from which the island of the Lews, then their estate, was accessible. The Lochend and Tournaig properties were in 1863 purchased by Mr Osgood H. Mackenzie from Sir William Mackenzie of Coul, to whom they had come after having had a succession of proprietors. These and Kernsary now constitute Mr Osgood H. Mackenzie's charming estate of Inverewe, about one-sixteenth of the whole parish of Gairloch.

Chapter XVI.

Ecclesiastical History of Gairloch.

The chronological order of events, otherwise pretty closely adhered to in Part I., will be necessarily broken in this and the following chapters.

When we first hear of a church in Gairloch it was dedicated, as we should naturally expect, to St Maelrubha. It was a common kirk of the canons of Ross, and stood in what is still called the churchyard of Gairloch. The priests probably lived in the Temple house, as it was long called, which is now the dwelling of the head-gardener at Flowerdale. Possibly the little churches of Inverewe (now Londubh) and of Sand of Udrigil existed in pre-Reformation times, but they are not named in the Dutch map of 1662. There is a church shewn on that map called "Heglis Loch Ew," *i.e.* the church of Lochewe; it is at the head of Loch Maree, and was probably at Culinellan, near Kenlochewe. The map does not of course prove that this church existed before the Reformation, but it adds to the probability that it did so. It would be convenient of access for the monastics of Applecross. Little is known of the church history of Gairloch before the Reformation, which was consummated in Scotland about 1560.

Sir John Broik was rector of Gairloch at the time of the Reformation, and continued so until his

death in 1583.

In 1560 Presbyterianism was established in Scotland, but it does not appear to have materially differed from the Episcopalianism it displaced, or rather absorbed, for it had superintendents whose office closely resembled that of bishops.

In 1572 the titles of archbishop and bishop were introduced, and a form of Episcopacy [64] established. The bishops, however, enjoyed but a small portion of the benefices, and were known as "Tulchan bishops." The origin of this epithet "tulchan," is curious:—When a calf died and the cow thereupon refused to give her milk, the skin of the calf was stretched on a wickerwork frame and moved about to make the cow believe it was sucking, whilst the maid was really taking the milk; the sham calf was called "Tulachan."

In 1592 Presbyterianism was restored by Parliament; and in 1598 Episcopacy was reintroduced.

In 1641 King Charles I. sanctioned Presbyterianism; and in 1643 the Westminster Assembly met, and the Solemn League and Covenant was signed.

In 1649 King Charles I. was beheaded, and James Grahame, Lord Montrose, began his struggle in behalf of the king and the cause of Episcopacy.

In 1651 Charles II. was crowned at Scone, and signed the Covenant. On the Restoration in 1660 Episcopacy was re-established.

In 1689, immediately after the Revolution, Presbyterianism was finally established.

These changes from Episcopacy to Presbyterianism, and *vice versâ*, had very little effect in the Highlands, where the clergy and people long clung to Episcopacy; only one or two keen Covenanters on the east coast maintained Presbyterianism. The change in the government of the church was so slight, that in the days of Episcopacy the bishop, when present, presided as moderator over the Presbytery, which then consisted, as now, of the ministers and elders within the bounds. It was not until well into the eighteenth century that Presbyterianism became popular in Gairloch, and even then it does not appear to have introduced any great changes in the church, or in the form of worship. The principal Christian festivals were observed in Gairloch until the nineteenth century.

A list of all the ministers of Gairloch, with the dates of their presentation, will be found in Table IV. There are a few facts and anecdotes about several of them, which are worth recording here.

The Rev. Alexander Mackenzie was in 1583 presented to the parsonage and vicarage of Gairloch, vacant by the decease of Sir John Broik. Mr Mackenzie was vicar of Gairloch in 1590. He was the first vicar of Gairloch appointed after the Reformation.

In 1608 the Rev. Farquhar MacRae was appointed vicar of Gairloch by Bishop Leslie of Ross. He is referred to in our account of the old ironworks of Loch Maree, and some passages of his life are given in Appendix A. He was one of the Macraes of Kintail. In 1610 he was sent by Lord Mackenzie of Kintail on a mission to the Lews, with the most beneficial results. Though he continued his ministerial work in Gairloch until 1618, and though in his biography he is said to have been minister of Gairloch for ten years, yet his official position as such seems to have terminated sooner, for we find that some time before 1614 the Rev. Farquhar Mackenzie, who had "laureated" at the University of Edinburgh on 31st July 1606, was admitted minister of Gairloch. Probably Mr MacRae restricted his ministrations to those parts of Gairloch to the north [65] of Loch Maree and Loch Ewe, which were then generally considered as in Loch Broom parish.

In 1649 the Rev. Roderick Mackenzie, third son of Roderick Mackenzie of Knock-backster, was admitted minister of Gairloch, and continued so until his death in March 1710, after an incumbency of sixty-one years. He seems to have been a man of quiet easy-going temperament. When he came to Gairloch Presbyterianism ruled; when Episcopacy was established in 1660, he conformed; and when the Revolution put an end to Episcopacy, he became a Presbyterian again. "Whatsoever king may reign, still I'll be vicar of Bray, sir!" The extracts from the presbytery records of the period, given in the first section of Appendix F, shew how careless this worthy minister was to obey the mandates of the presbytery. He married a sister of the laird of Knockbain, and had a son, Kenneth, born about 1703.

Some time during the seventeenth century the Rev. Kenneth Mackenzie, an Episcopalian clergyman, came from Bute, and bought the Kernsary estate. He resided in the proprietor's house at Kirkton, still standing close to the present Inverewe churchyard in Londubh, and officiated in the old church there, some remains of which are still to be seen. His great-great-grandson, the late Rev. Hector Mackenzie, minister of Moy, stated, some few years ago, that he remembered his grandmother Mrs Mackenzie of Kernsary (called Mali Chruinn Donn) shewing him an old prayer-book in an oak chest at the house at Kirkton, and that she said the chest and prayer-book had belonged to his ancestor who bought Kernsary. A loose stone may be seen in the part of the ruined church which was used as the burial-place of the Kernsary family; it is inscribed "K M K 1678," and is believed to have recorded the date when the Rev. Kenneth Mackenzie built or restored the little church. Possibly this clergyman chose Gairloch as a comparatively safe refuge for an Episcopalian in the covenanting times, and his services were most likely purely voluntary, and not intended to compete with those of the minister of the parish; or he may have voluntarily taken the place of Mr Farquhar MacRae as minister for those parts of Gairloch which were considered to be in Loch Broom parish.

The Rev. John Morrison became minister of Gairloch 1st March 1711. Although Presbyterianism had now been established for more than twenty years, it appears that some of Mr Morrison's parishioners still clung to Episcopacy, and in consequence the poor man had a bad time of it.

At the first meeting of the presbytery after his admission, Mr Morrison presented a petition, stating "that after two days sojourn, in going to preach, he was interrupted at Kenlochewe by the tenants of Sir John Mackenzie of Coul, who had laid violent hands on him and his servant, rent his clothes, made prisoners of them, and kept them three days under guard in a cottage full of cattle and dung, without meat or bedding the first two days, the tenants relieving one another in turn by a fresh supply every day. On the third day a short supply was allowed, but they were yet [66] kept prisoners in the same place without other accommodation. When the fifth day came Mr John was carried to Sir John's house, who declared no Presbyterian should be settled in any place where his influence extended, unless Her Majesty's forces did it by the strong hand."

Another example of the persecution of Mr Morrison is traditional in Gairloch. He was travelling on the east side of Loch Maree, and when at Letterewe was attacked by the inhabitants, who seized him, and having stripped him naked, bound him to a tree, where they left him. This would be about September 1711, and the midges were in full force. The sufferings of poor Mr Morrison are said to have been dreadful. Towards evening a woman of the place took pity on him and released him from his miserable position. Thus set free he escaped, and it was some time before he again visited his parish. It is a saying in Gairloch, that there has never been a really pious holy man in Letterewe since this outrage on a minister of the gospel was committed there!

Having thus no access to his parish, Mr Morrison, and a neighbouring clergyman who was in a similar plight, fled to Sutherland on 7th November 1711. On the petition of George Mackenzie of Gruinard, who "had built a little church at Udrigil at his own expense," Mr Morrison agreed (8th April 1713) to preach there once a year at least.

On 23d October 1716 Mr Morrison represented his grievances to the presbytery, and solicited an "act of transportation," or, in other words, prayed to be transferred to some other parish. On 12th November 1716 he stated that, "having no glebe, manse, or legal maintenance, he was obliged to take a tack of land, and that for three or four years successively his crops were destroyed by cattle. In the time of the rebellion the best of his cattle were taken away by the rebels, and very lately his house plundered of all provision to the value of four hundred merks." His solicitation was granted 14th November 1716, and he was transferred to Urray. It is said that the "tack of land" Mr Morrison took was in Tollie bay, and that he built a humble dwelling for himself close to the shore of Loch Maree. This was in the latter days of his short incumbency, after his return from Sutherlandshire. He conducted services in a turf-built church which stood by the shingly beach in Tollie bay. Old people now living say that they remember seeing the remains of the turf walls of Mr Morrison's church. Here is a curious story of this period:—It was nearly Christmas, probably in 1715, and whisky was required for the hospitality of the season. No whisky was made in Gairloch until long after this, but in Ferintosh, on the other side of Ross-shire, there was plenty of whisky distilled. Mr Morrison had a brother Rorie, who was also a minister. Rorie is said to have been the minister of Urray. If so, he must either have died about 1716, or have resigned to make room for his brother on the sudden transfer of the latter from Gairloch to Urray in that year. Early one morning the Rev. John Morrison sent off a man from Tollie with a horse to his brother at Urray for two casks of whisky. The man reached the brother's house the same night. [67] Rorie determined to play a trick on his brother, so when his brother's man was out of the way he made his own servants fill the two casks with water-gruel instead of whisky. Next day the man returned to Tollie, believing the casks to be full of whisky. It was Christmas eve when he reached Tollie, and a party was assembled to celebrate the festivities of the season. But when the casks were opened there was no whisky,—only water-gruel!

The Rev. James Smith, after an interregnum of five years caused by the difficulty of finding a clergyman willing to undertake the charge of this wild parish, succeeded Mr Morrison in 1721. In his day the Presbytery of Gairloch was erected. A sum of £1000 was allowed him by the Assembly, and the heritors or proprietors of the parish provided a manse with garden and glebe, and erected churchyard dykes. Mr Smith was a man of energy, and effected much in the way of reforming the morals of his people and spreading religion among them. In 1725 he had a missionary catechist at work, and he established a presbyterial library. In 1724 a school was established in Gairloch by the Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge, but was removed to Strathglass in 1728 for want of encouragement by the people. However, the first parochial school in Gairloch was in operation before Mr Smith's removal.

Though under Mr Smith Presbyterianism appears to have made way in Gairloch, it was otherwise in the contiguous parish of Lochcarron. The hero of the following incident is said to have been the Rev. Mr Sage, first Presbyterian minister of Lochcarron. He was settled in Lochcarron in 1727, and in 1731 prayed the presbytery for "an act of transportability." Mr Sage, who was a very powerful man, was travelling on foot to Gairloch *viâ* Glen Torridon, accompanied by his servant, a mere boy, who carried the "bonnet" which held the provisions for the way. Two of Mr Sage's parishioners had conspired to put an end to his life. They followed him, and after a time joined company, beguiling the way with conversation, until a fit place should be reached for the carrying out of the projected murder. When they came to the burn of the Black Corrie the minister announced that the luncheon hour had arrived, and asked his parishioners to join him. He took the "bonnet" from the boy, and began to dispense the viands. The would-be assassins seated themselves quite close to the minister, one on either side, and the leader now at last mustered pluck enough to inform Mr Sage that he had been condemned to die, and that his hour

had come. The powerful minister instantly threw an arm round the neck of each of the villains, and squeezed their heads downwards against each other and upon his own thighs with paralysing force, holding them thus until they were on the verge of suffocation, when, in response to their abject screams for mercy and promises of safety for himself, he released them from his strong pressure, and they went away both better and wiser, let us hope, for this display of the good minister's muscular Christianity.

The Rev. Æneas M'Aulay was minister of Gairloch from 1732 to 1758. He had bad health, and was often absent from his parish. He employed a catechist. [68]

The Rev. John Dounie was minister of Gairloch from 1758 to 1773. In his time Mr Thomas Pennant visited Poolewe (Appendix B). He heard Mr Dounie preach in the church at Tollie Croft, or Cruive End, and stayed the night with him in the manse at Cliff, Poolewe. Pennant, in the preface to his "Tour," speaks in high terms of Mr Dounie.

The Rev. Daniel Mackintosh, who succeeded Mr Dounie, seems to have been in smooth waters, and religion flourished in his time. His incumbency extended from 1773 to his death in 1802. He wrote the paper on Gairloch in the Old Statistical Account (Appendix C), from which we learn that there was no division or dissent in the parish. He was greatly assisted in his labours by the support of the generous and enlightened baronet of Gairloch, Sir Hector Mackenzie, and his wife the beloved lady of Gairloch.

The Rev. James Russell was minister of Gairloch from 1802 to 1844. Some objection was made to his appointment on account of his imperfect Gaelic; but he was found to be advancing in his knowledge of the language. Notwithstanding his progress, some amusing stories are still told in Gairloch of the ludicrous mistakes he used to make in his Gaelic sermons. For instance, intending to mention the two she-bears that came out of the wood and tare the children who mocked Elisha, he used Gaelic words which made the animals to be she roebucks! Up to and during Mr. Russell's time the education of children in Gairloch, and the correction of adults for offences against morals, were in the hands of the presbytery. In 1825 the presbytery, having instructed Mr. Russell to deal with one of his parishioners charged with immorality, found that he was too remiss in so dealing, and suspended him from the office of the ministry. He appealed to the General Assembly, who reinstated him, and warned the presbytery to act with greater caution in future towards its members in such cases. The separate ecclesiastical (or "quoad sacra") parish of Poolewe was formed during Mr Russell's incumbency. The Rev. Donald MacRae was presented to the new church of Poolewe in 1830, though the separate parish was not declared to be such until an Act of Assembly on 25th May 1833, and was not erected by the Court of Teinds until 3d December 1851.

The Rev. Donald MacRae wrote the paper on Gairloch in the New Statistical Account (Appendix E).

In 1843 the secession from the Established Church of Scotland, usually termed the "Disruption," occurred, and the Free Church was formed. Mr MacRae seceded to the Free Church.

Mr Russell died in 1844, having been forty-two years minister of Gairloch. On the departure of his successor from Gairloch, the Rev. D. S. Mackenzie, the present minister of Gairloch, was appointed in 1850.

On the establishment of Presbyterianism, Gairloch was in the Presbytery of Dingwall. Several minutes show the difficulties in the way of the ministers of Gairloch attending the meetings of presbytery, and of members of presbytery visiting Gairloch. Minutes of the presbyteries relating to these and other matters in Gairloch are extracted in Appendix F. [69]

Sometime between July 1668 and June 1672 there seems to have been nominally a Presbytery of Kenlochewe, but it does not appear that this presbytery ever met, and there are no records of it extant. In 1672 Gairloch was reannexed to the Presbytery of Dingwall by the bishop and synod.

On 4th September 1683 the "Highland churches," including Gairloch, were annexed to the Presbytery of Chanonry. This step appears to have been intended as a punishment to the ministers of the Highland parishes for their non-attendance at meetings of the Presbytery of Dingwall. Thus for a time Gairloch was no doubt in the Presbytery of Chanonry, but there is no other reference to the fact in the ecclesiastical history of the period. This was during the long incumbency of the Rev. Roderick Mackenzie, whose isolated position in Gairloch seems to have rendered him indifferent to the action of the presbytery.

On 19th May 1724 the Presbytery of Gairloch was erected by the General Assembly. This presbytery was composed of the same parishes as now constitute the Presbytery of Lochcarron. The meetings of presbytery were held at different places,—Kenlochewe, Gairloch, and Poolewe are mentioned.

In 1773 an Act of the General Assembly ordained that the Presbytery of Gairloch should be called in all time coming the Presbytery of Lochcarron, and Gairloch and Poolewe remain to this day in that presbytery.

The old parish church of Gairloch, dedicated to St Maelrubha, stood, as we have seen, in the churchyard of Gairloch, which is now used as the parish burial-ground. There was a church in existence here before 1628, for we find from an old document that Alastair Breac, fifth laird of Gairloch, had caused a chapel to be built "near the church" of Gairloch, during his father's

lifetime, where he and his wife, and no doubt also his father John Roy Mackenzie, were buried. According to the Rev. Daniel Mackintosh, in the Old Statistical Account, the Gairloch church of his day had existed for "more than a century," so that it must have been erected in the middle or latter part of the seventeenth century,—possibly by John Roy or Alastair Breac; it stood most likely on the same site as the original church. In 1727 Mr Smith, minister of Gairloch, got the heritors of the parish to erect churchyard dykes. In 1751 the Rev. Æneas M'Aulay is said to have got a new church built. It must have been a frail structure, for in 1791 it had fallen into a ruinous condition; it was a thatched building. James Mackenzie says, that about 1788, when his mother was attending the parish school at Strath of Gairloch, under the tuition of William Ross, the Gairloch bard, she and other girls went one day during the dinner hour to the old church. The children opened the church door, when, from some cause or other—very likely only a puff of wind —the door closed in their faces with a bang, and they got a great fright!

The present Gairloch church was erected in 1791, and repaired in 1834. [70]

The little church at Sand of Udrigil, which we may call the chapel of Sand, is commonly believed to have been originally erected by St Columba himself. In 1713 George Mackenzie of Gruinard, who is said to have built a little church at Udrigil, prayed Mr Morrison, the refugee minister of Gairloch, to preach there. Whether this was the same church we cannot be sure; tradition says George Mackenzie only thatched and repaired the ancient church. After this time the ministers of Gairloch periodically preached at this little church until at least the end of the eighteenth century.

There was an old church at Culinellan near Kenlochewe; the date of its erection is uncertain. The Rev. Daniel Mackintosh, in his paper in the Old Statistical Account, refers to this place of worship as existing in 1792.

CHAPEL OF SAND OF UDRIGIL.

The church at Tollie Croft, now called Cruive End, is not likely to have been of any antiquity. In 1733 the kirk-session of Gairloch petitioned the presbytery to enlarge the "chapel at Pollew," and the presbytery agreed to do so. This was probably the place of worship at Tollie Croft close to Poolewe. It was no doubt the church where Mr Thomas Pennant heard the Rev. John Dounie preach in 1772, for it was close to the place where he would land from his boat on Loch Maree (see Appendix B); the Rev. D. Mackintosh mentioned it in 1792. Old people now living remember the Rev. James Russell preaching in this little church as lately as 1826. At that time Duncan Mackenzie, the innkeeper at Poolewe, previously butler to Sir Hector Mackenzie at Flowerdale House, used to read the Scriptures to the people in the Cruive End church pending Mr Russell's [71] arrival from Gairloch. This church would be very convenient for the minister of Gairloch when he had his manse only a mile away at Cliff, Poolewe, as was the case between 1759 and 1803.

The turf-built church in Tollie bay, where the Rev. J. Morrison used to hold his humble services, was only a temporary expedient during his short and troublous incumbency.

The old chapel of Inverewe, on the east side of the river Ewe, close to the former mansion-house of the Kernsary estate, seems to belong to the seventeenth century, judging from the appearance its ruins now present, but there is no record whatever of its history. The Rev. Kenneth Mackenzie, proprietor of Kernsary, preached there, as we have seen, during some part of the seventeenth century.

The present church of Poolewe was completed in 1828.

If there was a rectory, parsonage, or manse in Gairloch before the Reformation, it must have then ceased to be church property. The Rev. Farquhar MacRae, who became vicar of Gairloch about 1608, lived at Ardlair, on the north-eastern shore of Loch Maree. Ardlair is near Letterewe, where dwelt the ironworkers for whose special behoof Mr MacRae was sent to Gairloch by Lord Mackenzie of Kintail; and it may have been part of the arrangement under which Sir George Hay acquired the woods of Letterewe from Lord Mackenzie for the ironworks, that his lordship should allow Mr MacRae the use of a house at Ardlair, which was also on his property.

Poor Mr Morrison, in 1711-16, had no glebe, manse, or legal maintenance, and his hut in Tollie bay was on land leased by himself.

In 1728 a manse and glebe were provided by the heritors for the minister of Gairloch at Achdistall, near where the Gairloch hotel now stands.

In 1759 the presbytery exchanged the glebe at Achdistall for other land at Clive, or Cliff, close to Poolewe, and a manse was shortly after erected on the new glebe.

In 1803 the old glebe of Clive was exchanged by the presbytery for a portion of the lands of Miole at Strath of Gairloch, and a new manse was erected at once. This is the present manse of Gairloch; it was added to in 1823, when Hugh Miller, then a mason, took part in the work. His experience in Gairloch at that time is recorded in "My Schools and Schoolmasters."

The present manse of Poolewe was built in 1828.

The old Free church at Gairloch, and the Free manse there, were erected shortly after the Disruption in 1843. The church having become unsafe was pulled down in 1880, and the present handsome building erected on the same site.

The Free church and manse at Aultbea were also erected soon after the Disruption. The Free Church has also mission churches or meeting-houses at Poolewe, Opinan, and Kenlochewe in Gairloch parish. The first minister of the Gairloch Free church was the Rev. Duncan Matheson, who was succeeded by the Rev. John Baillie, the present minister. The first minister of the [72]
Aultbea Free church was the Rev. James Noble; to him succeeded the Rev. William Rose; after whose death the Rev. Ronald Dingwall, the present minister, was appointed.

Chapter XVII.

Ancient Gairloch Ironworks.

Many visitors to Gairloch, and not a few of the inhabitants, will learn with astonishment that the manufacture of iron was carried on in the parish from remote times, and that there are still abundant remains to testify to the magnitude and importance of the industry. There are many places in this wild and picturesque Highland district where are to be seen to this day large heaps of slag and dross, and remains of blast-furnaces or bloomeries; whilst many acres of arable ground, as well as of uncultivated moorland, are still thickly strewn with fragments of charcoal and of several kinds of iron ore.

The remains of ironworks examined in Gairloch may be roughly divided into two classes, viz:—(1) The ancient ironworks, of which there are no historical records extant; and (2) The historic ironworks of Loch Maree.

The ancient ironworks or bloomeries are the subject of our present chapter. Some of them appear, as we should expect, to belong to a later period than others, but nothing can be said with precision about the date of any of them. They will be described in Part I., chap. xx.

There are some interesting notes on the subject of ancient Highland ironworks in the curious book entitled "Remarks on Dr Samuel Johnson's Journey to the Hebrides, by the Rev. Donald M'Nicol, A.M.," published in 1779, and extracted in Appendix G. Mr M'Nicol does not give his authorities, but there is ample ocular demonstration of the truth of his statement, that "the smelting and working of iron was well understood and constantly practised over all the Highlands and Islands for time immemorial." Other writers have expressed the opinion, that iron was made throughout Great Britain long before the Roman invasion.

Perhaps a coin now in my possession, which was found some years ago in a field on the bank of the river Went in Yorkshire, near large quantities of ancient heavy iron slag, may be taken as giving some clue to the date of the older ironworks. It is an ancient British coin of the type of the quarter stater of Philip II. of Macedon. The British coinage is supposed to have been in existence at least as far back as 150 B.C., and this is one of the early types.

The querns frequently found in all parts of the Highlands shew that the ancient inhabitants grew some corn,—that they had some acquaintance with "the staff of life." It seems a reasonable inference, that they used iron implements for tilling their lands and securing their crops. It is [73]
certain that some iron weapons, tools, and implements, besides those employed in agriculture, were in use in the Highlands in those old days. An iron axe-head, of the shape of the bronze celt figured among our illustrations, and with the aperture for the handle similarly in a line with its axis instead of at right angles to it, was found in 1885 in the garden at Inveran; its remains are much eaten by rust, but there is enough to shew that this iron axe is of an old type. It may be objected, that if iron implements for peace or war were extensively used in ancient days there would be more relics of them. The obvious reply to such an objection is, that iron is so liable to oxidation that most of the smaller iron articles of ancient times must have perished from that cause. Many of the small masses of rust-cemented gravel and earth, found everywhere, may have

originally had for their nucleus an ancient iron implement, or a fragment of one. If it be allowed that the Picts or other early inhabitants of the north used iron tools and weapons, the question at once arises,—Where and how did they procure them? The remains of the ancient class of ironworks supply the answer. Those so-called savages well knew where to procure iron, and how to fabricate from it the articles they required,—another proof that the Picts were by no means the uncivilised barbarians that some people suppose.

The ancient ironworks of Gairloch were probably not more numerous than those of some other parts of the Highlands and Islands. There is little doubt but that many of the remains, both in Gairloch and elsewhere, have been obliterated by the husbandman, or concealed by overgrowth of heather and other plants. In many places throughout Sutherlandshire, Ross-shire, and Inverness-shire, as well as in other Scottish counties, there are large quantities of iron slag. The Inverness Scientific Society have examined remains of ancient iron-smelting near Alness in Easter Ross. The Rev. Dr Joass, of Golspie, and Mr D. William Kemp, of Trinity, have to a certain extent investigated some Sutherlandshire remains. There are also quantities of slag on the Braemore estate, on the shores of Loch Rosque between Achnasheen and the eastern boundary of Gairloch parish (Part IV., chap, iii.), and in many other parts of Wester Ross, as well as in the island of Soa off the west coast of Skye, and many other places.

At the iron-smelting works near Alness a native hematite iron ore was used, as well as what is termed bog iron. Bog iron is also believed to have been used at a bloomery near Golspie, Sutherlandshire. This bog iron appears to have been commonly employed by the ancient ironworkers; it was extracted by the action of water from ferruginous rocks and strata, and was accumulated at the bases of peat bogs. In process of time granular masses of oxides of iron were thus formed, sometimes covering a considerable area. Within the parish of Gairloch there are still quantities of bog iron to be seen, apparently formed exactly in the manner described. The localities will be stated in Part I., chap. xix. No bog iron has been found in proximity to any of the remains of ironworks; probably the iron-smelters consumed all that was conveniently near the [74] scenes of their operations. In the neighbourhood of all the remains of ironworks in Gairloch are found ferruginous rocks and shales, or rust-coloured earths. The best samples of these rocks have on analysis yielded but eight per cent. of metallic iron, and the rust-coloured earths are by no means rich in the metal. But there can be no doubt that bog iron was formerly present in the vicinity of these rocks, shales, and earths; and the analyses of the ancient iron slags prove to demonstration that such bog iron was the ore used at the ancient bloomeries.

Mr W. Ivison Macadam, analytical chemist of Edinburgh, is hopeful that the analyses he has undertaken may in course of time throw more light on the methods and productions of the ancient ironworkers. It is not probable that we shall ever know much of their history. According to the Rev. Donald M'Nicol they made iron "in the blomary way, that is by laying it under the hammers in order to make it malleable, with the same heat that melted it in the furnace." In the present day the processes of smelting iron and of producing malleable iron are separate and distinct; these ancient artisans probably combined the two. The slags produced at their furnaces contained a large proportion of metallic iron. Mr Macadam has found fully fifty per cent. of iron in most of the samples of ancient Gairloch slags he has analysed, and at some modern ironworks quantities of ancient slag have actually been found worth resmelting. The wasteful richness of the old slags can be easily accounted for; the ancient methods of smelting were comparatively imperfect, labour was cheap, the iron used cost nothing, and the forests whence was derived the charcoal for smelting it were apparently inexhaustible, whilst the business was no doubt carried on more for the supply of local and immediate wants than as a branch of commerce. If the ironworkers could obtain by their primitive processes enough iron to supply their own requirements, they would naturally be careless of the amount of metal wasted.

The fuel universally used for iron-smelting, until far into the eighteenth century, was wood-charcoal, and even to the middle of the nineteenth century it was still employed at two blast-furnaces in Scotland. Every part of the Highlands, not excepting the parish of Gairloch, was clothed with dense forests of fine timber. Far up the mountain slopes, and down to the rocky shores of the sea, the fir, oak, and birch flourished in wonderful and beautiful profusion. There is no poetic license, no picturesque exaggeration in this statement. Everywhere the relics of trees are to be seen to this day, and much of the timber used by Gairloch crofters in roofing their dwellings and for other purposes consists of branches found underground. The disappearance of the great Caledonian forest has been accounted for in several ways; some have conjectured that a vast conflagration or series of conflagrations destroyed it; others think that its destruction was more gradual, and resulted from the labours of the charcoal burners and similar doings. In Gairloch there are charred stumps still to be seen preserved in peat bogs, that support the conflagration theory; but there is also widespread evidence of extensive charcoal burnings, so that there must be some truth in both these modes of accounting for the destruction of the woods. Some localities of charcoal burnings will be mentioned in Part I., chap. xx.

M^{C}LAGAN & CUMMING, LITH, EDIN^{R}

**SIR GEORGE HAY OF MEGGINISH, KNIGHT,
THE IRONFOUNDER OF LOCH MAREE,
FROM A PORTRAIT BY FERDINAND,
IN DUPPLIN CASTLE.**

All the ancient Gairloch ironworks are in the vicinity of burns. This fact raises a strong inference that the older ironworkers, like their historic successors, utilised the water-power afforded by adjoining streams for the purpose of working machinery. The Rev. D. M'Nicol's statement, already quoted, that hammers were used to produce malleable iron confirms the inference; and the remains of dams or weirs, and other expedients for augmenting the water-power, convert the conjecture into an established fact. It appears certain, then, that heavy hammers worked by machinery, with water for the motive power, were used in remote times,—another testimony to the ingenuity and mechanical skill of the ancient inhabitants of the Highlands. The tuyere for a furnace-blast found at Fasagh (*see illustration*) is another evidence of that skill. [75]

The reader must please remember that the ancient ironworks referred to in this chapter are quite distinct from the historic series to which our next is devoted.

Chapter XVIII.

The Historic Ironworks of Loch Maree.

To the lonely and romantic shores of the queen of Highland lochs belongs the curiously incongruous distinction of having been the scene where the new departure in iron-smelting processes, which commenced the present series of Scottish ironworks, was inaugurated. How wonderful it seems, that the great iron industry of Scotland, which to this day enriches so many families and employs so many thousands of workmen, should have sprung from this sequestered region! The claim to the distinction is based on the facts, that up to the present time no records of any earlier manufacture of iron have been discovered, and that the iron industry established here early in the seventeenth century became, as we shall shew, of such national importance as to call for special legislation. It appears to have been in 1607 that Sir George Hay commenced ironworks at Letterewe, on Loch Maree, which were continued for at least sixty years. It is true that in 1612 a license previously granted by the king to "Archibald Prymroise, clerk of his maiesties mynis, his airis and assignais quhatsomeuir ffor making of yrne within the boundis of the schirefdome of perth," was ratified by Parliament, but the date of the license is not given, and we hear no more of these Perthshire ironworks.

It was not until the eighteenth century that the seed sown by Sir George germinated, and the iron industry began to spread in Scotland.

The iron furnaces in Glengarry, referred to by Captain Burt, are said to have been established by a Liverpool company, who bought the Glengarry woods about 1730. [76]

The iron-smelting works at Abernethy, Strathspey, were commenced in 1732 by the York Buildings Company. This company was formed in 1675 to erect waterworks on the grounds of York House in the Strand, London, and was incorporated in 1691 as "The Governor and Company of Undertakers for raising the Thames water in York Buildings." The operations of the company have been described by Mr David Murray, M.A., F.S.A. Scot., in an able pamphlet entitled "The York Buildings Company: A Chapter in Scotch History." The company raised at the time of its incorporation the then immense capital of £1,259,575, and conducted not only the original waterworks, but also enormous speculations in forfeited estates in Scotland; the company also carried on coal, lead, and iron mines, the manufacture of iron and glass, and extensive dealings in timber from the Strathspey forests. Their agents and workmen in Strathspey are described in the Old Statistical Account as "the most profuse and profligate set that were ever heard of in this country. Their extravagances of every kind ruined themselves and corrupted others." Their ironworks were abandoned at the end of two years, *i.e.* in 1734, or, according to the Old Statistical Account, in 1737. They made "Glengarry" and "Strathdoun" pigs, and had four furnaces for making bar iron. The corporation of the York Buildings Company was dissolved in 1829.

The Loch Etive side, or Bonawe, ironworks, were commenced by an Irish company about 1730. They rented the woods of Glenkinglass, and made charcoal, with which they smelted imported iron ore. That company existed till about 1750. In 1753 an English company, consisting of three Lancashire men and one Westmoreland man, took leases, which ran for one hundred and ten years, and these were renewed in 1863 to the then manager of the company for twenty-one years, expiring as lately as 1884. By the courtesy of Mr Hosack, of Oban, I have seen duplicates of the leases under which the undertaking was carried on. The works comprised extensive charcoal burnings and the blast-furnace at Bonawe; they were discontinued before 1884.

Other important works of a similar character were afterwards established by the Argyle Furnace Company, and by the Lorn Company, at Inverary.

In a work on "The Manufacture of Iron in Great Britain," by Mr George Wilkie, Assoc. Inst. C.E., published in 1857, it is stated that the Carron works were established in 1760 by Dr Roebuck of Sheffield and other gentlemen; that in 1779 two brothers of the name of Wilson, merchants in London, established the Wilsonton ironworks in Lanarkshire; that in 1788 the Clyde ironworks were established in the neighbourhood of Glasgow, and that in that year there were only eight pig-iron furnaces in Scotland, of which four were at Carron, two at Wilsonton, one at "Bunawe in Lorn," and one at "Goatfield in Arran," the two latter being worked with wood charcoal for fuel. [77] The furnace at Bunawe is that already noticed as on Loch Etive side. Of the alleged furnace at "Goatfield in Arran" there are no records or remains to be found in Arran to-day. Probably Goatfield was in Argyleshire.

But we need not here further trace the wonderful growth of the still existing series of Scottish ironworks. To establish our claim to precedence, it will suffice to shew that the furnaces on Loch Maree were commenced by Sir George Hay more than a century earlier than any of those just named.

Pennant, in his tour of 1772 (Appendix B), mentions the time of the Queen Regent as the period when Sir George Hay was head of a company who carried on an iron furnace near Poolewe; this statement is given on the authority of the Rev. John Dounie, minister of Gairloch. The regency of Mary of Guise extended from 1542 to 1560; so that the historical commencement of the ironworks on Loch Maree might date as far back as the middle of the sixteenth century. But Sir George Hay lived at a later date, and Mr Dounie must have been inaccurate in this respect.

From Donald Gregory's history of the Western Highlands, Alexander Mackenzie's history of the Mackenzies, and several old MSS., including the genealogy of the MacRaes (Appendix A), we glean the following facts:—

In 1598 a party of gentlemen, known as the "Fife Adventurers," obtained a grant from the crown of the island of the Lews, and took steps to plant a colony there. Mackenzie of Kintail and the M'Leods of the Lews, ceasing for the time their own feuds, combined to oust the Fife Adventurers. In 1607 the king granted the Lews to Lord Balmerino (Secretary of Scotland and Lord-President of the Session), Sir George Hay, and Sir James Spens of Wormistoun (one of the original "Fife Adventurers"), who in 1608 renewed the attempt to colonize the Lews, but without success. In 1609 Lord Balmerino was convicted of high treason and executed, thus forfeiting his share. Sir George Hay and Sir James Spens about that time sent an expedition to the Lews, but Neil M'Leod, secretly backed by Mackenzie of Kintail, opposed the intending colonists, who were driven from the island. Mackenzie was raised to the peerage in the same year with the title of Lord Mackenzie of Kintail, after he had induced Sir George Hay and Sir James Spens to give up their scheme and transfer their rights in the Lews to himself. Lord Mackenzie, in part payment, gave them the woods of Letterewe for iron-smelting; the arrangement was concluded in 1610, and Lord Mackenzie then obtained a fresh grant to himself from the crown.

But we can carry back the history of the Letterewe ironworks to a slightly earlier date still.

The Rev. Farquhar MacRae was appointed vicar or minister of Gairloch by Bishop Leslie of Ross in 1608, in order that he might "serve the colony of English which Sir George Hay kept at

Letterewe." Mr MacRae continued his work in Gairloch parish till 1618, and his son informs us, in the "Genealogical Account" (Appendix A), that on his death in 1662 Mr MacRae "had lived fifty-four years in the ministry, ten of which at Gairloch." Thus it is evident that he was ordained vicar [78] of Gairloch in 1608. This was two years before Sir George Hay acquired the woods of Letterewe from Lord Mackenzie, but the later date of his acquisition of those woods does not preclude the possibility of Sir George having already commenced the manufacture of iron there, perhaps in a tentative manner. It will be noticed that the Genealogical Account of the MacRaes speaks of Sir George Hay's undertaking at Letterewe as a going concern when Mr MacRae was sent in 1608 to minister to the ironworkers. It seems almost certain, therefore, that it had begun in 1607, for we cannot but assume that the appointment of Mr MacRae to Gairloch was made to supply a want that must have taken at least a year to develop. The conclusion that Sir George Hay began the Letterewe ironworks in 1607, receives some confirmation from the fact that the grant of the Lews to him and his colleagues took place in the same year. The two matters were very probably connected. Either Sir George was led to enter into the Lews adventure from his being located at Letterewe, so near to Poolewe, the port for the Lews, or—which is more probable—the advantages of Letterewe attracted his attention when at Poolewe planning the subjugation of the Lews. The date (27th January 1609) of the act forbidding the making of iron with wood (Appendix G) is not inconsistent with the commencement of the ironworks in 1607. Assuming that the prohibition was (as seems likely) aimed at the Letterewe ironworks, it is reasonable enough to suppose that they must have been begun in 1607, so as to have attained sufficient importance to excite the alarm of the legislature in January 1609. News from the Highlands took a long time to travel so far as Edinburgh in those days.

We hear nothing more of Sir James Spens in connection with the ironworks.

Sir George Hay's history is remarkable. He was the second son of Peter Hay of Melginche, and was born in 1572. He completed his education at the Scots College at Douay in France. He was introduced at court about 1596, and seems at once to have attracted the attention of James VI., who appointed him one of the gentlemen of the bedchamber, and in 1598 gave him the Carthusian priory or charter-house at Perth and the ecclesiastical lands of Errol, with a seat in Parliament as a peer. But he declined the peerage, was knighted instead, and subsequently adopted the profession of the law, in which he attained to great distinction. He seems to have been a favourite with the king, whom he defended when in 1600 the Earl of Gowrie was killed in his treasonable attempt on his majesty's life. Assisted by the favour of the crown, Sir George acquired large territories both in the Highlands and Lowlands. (See extract from "Douglas's Peerage," Appendix G.) But some think that at the time he settled at Letterewe he was under a cloud. Political troubles had arisen; one of his partners, Lord Balmerino, had been convicted of high treason and executed; so that the statement that Sir George had chosen the remote Letterewe "for the sake of quiet in those turbulent times" appears reasonable enough. The fact [79] that he occupied the leisure of his enforced retirement in establishing and improving iron-smelting, is a standing testimony to the energy of this remarkable man. He is said to have resided some years at Letterewe, or at least to have made his headquarters there. No doubt Lord Mackenzie would provide the best habitation he could for the learned and enterprising lessee of his woods. Probably Sir George lived in an old house on the site of the present Letterewe House.

The only Gairloch iron-furnaces which we can be sure were carried on by Sir George Hay were those at Letterewe, Talladale, and the Red Smiddy near Poolewe. (They will be described in Part I., chap. xx.). The vast woods of Letterewe were undoubtedly the prime motive that led Sir George to start the ironworks there. They must have been very extensive, for it is the opinion of those who should know, that each furnace would annually use as carbonised fuel the product of one hundred and twenty acres of wood. The works Sir George conducted seem to have combined two classes of industry,—(1) The manufacture of wrought-iron, the ore being smelted with charcoal into a mass of metal called a bloom, which was hammered whilst yet hot into bars of wrought iron, or into various articles used in the arts of peace or war; (2) The manufacture of pig-iron and articles of cast-iron, the metal being poured into moulds.

The Letterfearn MS. says, that at Letterewe "Sir George Hay kept a colony and manufactory of Englishmen making iron and casting great guns, untill the wood of it was spent and the lease of it expired."

The Genealogical Account of the MacRaes tells of "the colony of English which Sir George Hay of Airdry kept at Letterewe, making iron and casting cannon."

The Bennetsfield MS. mentions the grant of the "lease of the woods of Letterewe, where there was an iron mine, which they wrought by English miners, casting guns and other implements, till the fuel was exhausted and their lease expired."

Pennant notes in his Tour (Appendix B), that the Rev. John Dounie had seen the back of a grate marked "S. G. Hay," or Sir George Hay. Those acquainted with old inscriptions tell us that the initial S was a usual abbreviation for the title "Sir."

It appears, then, that Sir George not only produced articles used in warfare, but also such goods as we are accustomed to procure at the ironmonger's.

It is certain that improved processes of iron-smelting were introduced at Furnace, Letterewe, and perfected at the Red Smiddy, Poolewe, so that the results obtained at the latter place were almost on a par with those of the newest methods of the present day. The credit of these improvements must be given to Sir George Hay. In resuscitating the ancient manufacture of iron,

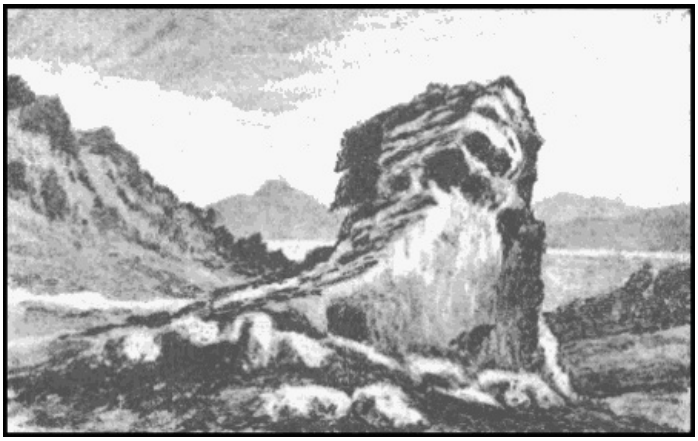
he brought the intelligence of his cultivated mind to bear on the subject in a practical and successful way.

The "new industry" thus commenced on the shores of Loch Maree soon attracted the attention of [80] the government. Reference has already been made to the act of 27th January 1609, prohibiting the making of iron with the natural woods of the Highlands. The act is printed verbatim in Appendix G. There seems little doubt, as previously remarked, that it was intended to injure Sir George Hay. It was probably passed on the instigation of a political foe.

But Sir George must have still possessed considerable influence at court, and the importance of his new industry must have produced a strong impression, for on the 24th of December 1610, at Whitehall, the king gave him what appears to have been a monopoly of the manufacture of iron and glass throughout the whole of Scotland, for thirty-one years from that date, and this gift was ratified by Act of Parliament, dated 23d October 1612. The delay of two years in its ratification seems a little strange, and perhaps indicates that whilst Sir George continued such a favourite with his king as to receive from him so valuable a "Christmas box," he still had enemies in the Privy Council or the Parliament of Scotland. The ratification will be found in Appendix G; it recites the license. It would appear from a Scots Act passed 16th November 1641, that several noblemen and gentlemen had obtained monopolies of other manufactures,—probably about the same time. That act brought these monopolies to an end in the same year (1641) that Sir George Hay's monopoly of the manufacture of iron expired. Whether Sir George carried on ironworks elsewhere than on Loch Maree we know not, but it is most likely that they were his principal, if not his only, undertakings of the kind.

In 1613 a proclamation was made by the Privy Council restraining the export of iron ore out of the country, so that the enterprise of the new industry should not be hindered or disappointed (Appendix G). If the act of 1609 prohibiting the making of iron with wood had been obtained by an enemy of Sir George Hay's, the adverse influence of the foe was now at an end. Possibly Sir George had by this time returned from the Highlands, for we find that in 1616 he was appointed Clerk-Register. If so, his personal influence may have over-ridden that of his former political enemies. Under this proclamation Sir George became able to procure the clayband ironstone almost at his own price. He used it extensively both at Furnace (Letterewe) and at the Red Smiddy, as well as at Talladale.

There is another record relating to Sir George Hay's iron manufacture; it is the curious license anent selling of his iron, granted to him by a Scots Act, dated 4th August 1621, and printed in Appendix G. It purports to be a license to Sir George to carry his iron to any port or harbour of the free burghs royal, and to dispose of the same to any person notwithstanding the privileges and liberties of the burghs. This license, granted fourteen years after the commencement of the Letterewe ironworks, testifies to the vigour with which the enterprise had been pushed. It would seem that the quantity of iron produced now only required a free market. The monopoly granted to Sir George, the proclamation restraining the export of iron ore, and the special license he now obtained for selling his iron in royal burghs, were exceptional provisions, which would now-a- [81] days be considered antagonistic to cherished political principles. To what extent Sir George profited from the advantages granted to him we cannot tell. That he became a rich man there seems no doubt, and the ironworks on Loch Maree may have added to his wealth.



THE MINISTER'S STONE, ARDLAIR.

John Roy Mackenzie was the prudent, business-like, and hospitable laird of Gairloch during the residence at Letterewe of Sir George Hay, who appears to have had a furnace at Talladale on John Roy's Gairloch estate. Doubtless some intercourse took place between them, but as John Roy had been previously engaged in warfare, and could not, so far as we can judge from the story of his youth, have been a man of much culture, it is unlikely that he and Sir George became very intimate. But Sir George, the learned lawyer and man of science, had a thoroughly congenial friend in the great Latin scholar the Rev. Farquhar MacRae, vicar of Gairloch, whose house at Ardlair was but a three miles' walk or row from Letterewe House. The account given in Appendix A proves that the friendship of this accomplished and genial clergyman was much appreciated by

Sir George, who endeavoured to induce Mr MacRae to accompany him when he himself returned to the south. A remarkable rock or stone at Ardlair, called "The minister's stone" (*see illustration*), is still pointed out as the place where Mr MacRae used to preach in English and Gaelic. No doubt he also preached at Letterewe; and we are told that he "did not only please the country people, but also the strangers, especially George Hay." The interesting memoir of Mr MacRae, in Appendix A, is well worth perusal; he married in 1611, and brought his bride to the parsonage at Ardlair, where several of his children were born. Unquestionably the refined life of [82] the vicar and his family at their beautiful and retired home, would be more enjoyable to Sir George than the rougher habits of the natives of the country, nay, even than the society of the fighting laird of Gairloch himself.

The date when Sir George left Letterewe is not certain; the reason of his departure is plain,—he had superior calls on his presence in the south. After he left his Highland retreat his career was one of unbroken success and distinction. In 1616 he was appointed Clerk-Register, and on 16th July 1622 he was constituted High Chancellor of Scotland. He was raised to the Peerage by the title of Viscount Duplin and Lord Hay of Kinfauns in 1627, and was created Earl of Kinnoull by patent dated at York 25th May 1633. As chancellor he won "the approbation of the whole kingdom, and the applause of all good men, for his justice, integrity, sound judgment, and eminent sufficiency." He died in London in 1634, aged sixty-two. Some account of the statue of his lordship, of the epitaph on his monument, and of the portraits of him still extant (*see illustrations*), will be found in Appendix G. If we may trust the expressions contained in the epitaph, it would almost appear that the iron-founder of Loch Maree became, under his king, the ruler of fair Scotland, for he is termed "the great and grave dictator of our clime."

But the departure of Sir George from Letterewe did not stop the progress of his ironworks on Loch Maree. The concession or monopoly granted by the crown had still many years to run, and the works were unquestionably continued for a long further period under a manager or factor. The last manager is said to have been called John Hay, a name which obviously suggests that he was a relative of Sir George.

In the Gairloch churchyard is a picturesque tombstone, evidently of considerable age. It has a well carved skull and cross bones, and underneath them a shield (originally faced with a brass), with a design below it resembling an inverted fleur-de-lis. At either side of the shield are the letters I and H, of large size. The inscription round the border of the stone is only partly legible. It runs as follows:—

* * R · LYIS · IOHNE · HAY · SON * * HAY · OF · KIRKLAND · WHO ·
DIED · AT · LOCH * * * * * *

It is said that this stone was sent to the port or wharf at Port na Heile, in Gairloch (the present Gairloch pier), some years after the death of John Hay, to be placed over his grave; that he was the last manager of the Letterewe ironworks; that he died, and was probably buried, at or near Letterewe; that the stone lay at the port for many years; and that, ultimately, when the situation of John Hay's grave had been forgotten, Sir Alexander Mackenzie, the second baronet and ninth laird of Gairloch (who succeeded 1703, came of age 1721, and died 1766), authorised one William Fraser to place the stone in the burial-place of his (Fraser's) family, where it now lies. It is added that "Sir Alexander received a stone from William Fraser for it."

M^cLAGAN & CUMMING, LITH, EDIN^R

**SIR GEORGE HAY, 1ST EARL OF KINNOULL,
HIGH CHANCELLOR OF SCOTLAND,
THE IRONFOUNDER OF LOCH MAREE,
FROM A PORTRAIT IN DUPPLIN CASTLE,
ATTRIBUTED TO GEORGE JAMESONE, THE
SCOTTISH VANDYCK.**

These statements about the Hay tombstone are from the mouth of James Mackenzie, who says that William Fraser and his own grandfather were first cousins, and that the facts about the gravestone were told him on their authority when he was young. He is corroborated by other old Gairloch men. [83]

Although this John Hay, whose father appears from the tombstone to have been Mr Hay of Kirkland, was probably a relation of Sir George Hay, it is impossible to fix the degree of relationship. Sir George Hay's father had three sons, Patrick, George, and Peter. This Peter was designated as of Kirkland of Megginch. He had a son called Francis, whose great-grandson Thomas succeeded to the earldom of Kinnoull, on the direct line of Sir George Hay, the first earl, becoming extinct in the person of William, the fifth earl, in 1709. Possibly Peter Hay had a son known as James Hay of Kirkland, or else some collateral relation of the family bore that designation, for we gather from a short account of the parish of St Martins, Perthshire, contained in a footnote to the account of that parish in the Old Statistical Account, that a James Hay acquired Kirkland by an exchange with Mr John Strachan, minister of St Martins. The son, Thomas, of this minister, "after his return from his travels, when he had waited on the earl of Kinnowel his son as his governour for the space of three years, became conjunct with his father, and died minister there in the year 1671." Kirkland was a "good manor house;" it was built of old by the abbot of Halyrood-house, and was afterwards the minister's manse. It is possible that this Kirkland may not have been the same as Kirkland of Megginch. In all probability, however, John Hay, the last manager of the Loch Maree ironworks, was a son of James Hay, and the latter was a relative of the great Sir George. It was indeed natural that Sir George should prefer to entrust his ironworks to a relative rather than to a stranger.

After the death of the Earl of Kinnoull, his ironworks appear to have fallen into a languishing condition, possibly from the timber being exhausted. In Knox's Tour it is stated that Mr Alexander Mackenzie of Lochend, in 1786, told the author (Mr Knox) that cannon were still made at Poolewe in 1668. Mr Mackenzie said his grandfather had "lent ten thousand marks to the person or persons who carried on the works, for which he got in return the back of an old grate and some hammers." It is curious that these relics are the only remains known to have existed (except the breech of a cannon and some small pigs of iron) of the productions of the Loch Maree ironworks. The "back of an old grate" was no doubt the same as that which Mr Dounie told Pennant of, and the hammers, or at least one of them, must have been the same as existed in living memory. (See Part I., chap. xx.)

So far as we can judge, the ironworks were discontinued soon after the date of the loan mentioned by Mr Mackenzie of Lochend. Thus the undertaking was carried on for a period of at least sixty years. Local tradition affirms that the industry was prolonged into the eighteenth century, but there is nothing to confirm the tradition except the story of the Gille Buidhe (Part I., chap. xiv.); it speaks of men living in 1746 as being sons of one of the last of the Letterewe ironworkers. [84]

The artisans employed by Sir George Hay are said by some to have been from Fife, by others to have been Welsh, and by all to have been "English." But this last term only means that the ironworkers spoke English, for as truly remarked by the Rev. Donald MacRae, minister of Poolewe (Appendix E), "Highlanders look upon all who do not speak the Gaelic language as Sasganaich [*Sasunnach*] or Englishmen."

The names Cross, Bethune or Beaton, and Kemp, are still known in Gairloch parish as belonging to descendants of the ironworkers. Cross is a common Lancashire name. Mr D. William Kemp, of Trinity, who has read a valuable paper on old ironworks in Sutherlandshire to the Scottish Society of Arts, says that the name Kemp is very uncommon in Wales, but is a north of England name, and was common in Cumberland after the fourteenth century, artisans of that surname having settled in that county in the reign of Edward III.

It is probable that Sir George Hay's artisans were mostly from Fife; they were very likely some of the men who had been taken by the "Fife Adventurers" to the Lews, with the object (frustrated as we have seen) of establishing a colony there. To these Fifeshire men were no doubt added a few (including a Cross and a Kemp) who had come with iron ore from Lancashire or Cumberland. Of course all of them were ignorant of Gaelic.

These ironworkers remained in Gairloch for several generations; some of them became permanently settled in the parish. It is said that at one time an epidemic of smallpox carried off a number of them. Narrators of Gairloch traditions differ as to where the ironworkers buried their dead. Some believe it was at the burial-place on flat ground near the head of Loch Maree, which is accordingly called to this day Cladh nan Sasunnach, or "the Englishman's churchyard," but others say, with more probability, that the beautiful burial-ground on Isle Maree was their place

of sepulture. This last view is in accord with the information obtained by Dr Arthur Mitchell (Part II., chap. xi.), and appears to be the better opinion.

I do not think the Cladh nan Sasunnach was used for interment so recently as the time of Sir George Hay's undertaking. I examined this strange place on 12th May 1884. There are indications of twenty-four graves, all with the feet pointed towards the east, and all covered more or less with large unwrought stones. There are head and foot stones more or less distinct to all the graves, which, from their dimensions, might well be called the graves of giants. I opened two of the graves in different parts of the group to the depth of four or five feet, in fact as far as the ground was workable with ordinary pick and spade. In the first grave opened, a cavity, filled with water, eighteen inches deep and much wider than the grave, was reached at a depth of between two and three feet, and below that the stratum was nearly as hard as concrete. There were no indications whatever of organic remains. In the case of the second grave opened, which was the largest and most marked of the group, no water was reached and no remains were found. To the [85] depth of about four feet the gravel was comparatively loose, as if it had been wrought at some time. Below that it was so hard that evidently it had never been moved by man. Now, had there been interments here in the seventeenth century, there must surely have been some traces of them. My own opinion is, that these graves date back some centuries earlier than the ironworks, in fact to the period when tradition says it was usual to bury the dead in shallow graves scraped out of hard gravel, and then to cover the graves with large stones, the hardness of the gravel and the weight of the superincumbent stones being intended to hinder wolves from exhuming the bodies.

We should like to know more about the ironworks, and particularly about the men who were employed at the furnaces, and their families and circumstances. The struggles that had engaged the MacBeaths, Macdonalds, M'Leods, and Mackenzies for two centuries, and had rendered Gairloch a veritable battlefield, were at an end in Sir George Hay's time. With the exception of occasional raids on Gairloch by Lochaber and other cattle-lifters, there was now peace throughout the parish. The Scots Act of 27th January 1609 (Appendix G) speaks of the "present generall obedience" of the Highlands, as contrasted with the previous "savagness of the inhabitantis." Letterewe was then, as now, a peculiarly retired spot; there is still no access to it for wheeled vehicles; Sir George Hay's choice of it as a retreat from political troubles confirms the view that it was safe and secluded; the mountains behind Letterewe had long been a favourite hunting-ground of the lords of Kintail (Part I., chap. iv.); and we may well believe that Sir George and his men were able not only to carry on their business without interruption, but also to enjoy in peace the sport afforded by the district. At the same time, it must be remembered that the natives were still in a half savage condition, miserably fed, clothed, and housed, and entirely destitute of education. Very loose notions of morality were prevalent; and to a great extent the old principle that "might is right" still ruled the daily life of the people. They say that some of the ironworkers, severed from home ties, and finding themselves far away from the executive of the law, became reprobates. One of the latest of the ironworkers, or a son of one of them, was known as the Sasunnach Mor, or "Big Englishman"; he is said to have been a wild character. A crofter and carter now living at Londubh is a great-grandson of the Sasunnach Mor; the last Mackenzie of Kernsary testified, in the presence of persons now living, to the descent of this Londubh crofter from the Sasunnach Mor. But whatever were the idiosyncrasies, either of the early or of the latest ironworkers, there can be no doubt that they all led rough and almost lawless lives in their wild Highland homes.

Chapter XIX. [86]

The Iron Ores used in Gairloch.

The first question that most people ask, when they hear of the ironworks in the parish of Gairloch, is,—Where did the iron that was smelted come from? The answer can only be supplied by an examination of the remains of the ironworks now to be met with, and of their neighbourhood. Of records bearing on the subject there are none. There are but two incidental notices that help to throw light on the question; both are comparatively modern.

The Bennetsfield MS. speaks of "the woods of Letterewe, where there was an iron mine which they wrought by English miners."

The New Statistical Account (Appendix E), in the account of Gairloch written by the Rev. Donald MacRae in 1836, says, "Sir James Kay [Sir George Hay] sent several people to work at veins of iron ore on the estate of Letterewe."

Let us discuss the questions of the ores used at the ancient bloomeries and at the historic ironworks under separate heads.

I.—At the Ancient Bloomeries.

It has been already stated (Part I., chap. xvii.) that bog iron was the source whence the ancient

ironworkers of Gairloch obtained their metal, so that the terms "iron mine" and "veins of iron ore" quoted above must be considered as referring—unwittingly perhaps—to it. The ingredients of ancient Gairloch iron slags, as ascertained by Professor Ivison Macadam, shew that they have unquestionably resulted from the smelting of bog iron. His analyses and conclusions will in due time be made public; they will prove that the iron ore used at the ancient ironworks in the parish of Gairloch was undoubtedly bog iron.

Mention has been made of ferruginous rocks, shales, and earths existing in the vicinity of the old ironworks. Local tradition affirms that these were the sources of the iron used in the old days. It appears certain that bog iron was found in the vicinity of these ferruginous strata,—probably derived from them,—but they cannot have been the subjects of the ancient iron-smelting. Mr Macadam finds that the richest samples of them do not yield more than 8 per cent. of metallic iron, and that the sulphur they contain does not occur in the slags produced at the furnaces, as would have been the case had they been used.

The most abundant and apparent of these rocks is the large band of ferruginous stone that runs from Letterewe, in a south-easterly direction, along the shores of Loch Maree to the further end of the base of Slioch. It is so extensive, and so rusty in colour, that it can be easily discerned from the county road on the opposite side of the loch. Similar ferruginous rock appears in several [87] other places, as far at least as to the head of Glen Dochartie, but not so abundantly, and therefore not so conspicuously. It also occurs in other parts of Gairloch parish. Gairloch people point out several places where they say this ferruginous rock was quarried, viz.: (1) on the south side of the Furnace burn at Letterewe, nearly a quarter of a mile above the site of the iron furnace; (2) on the face of the ridge immediately behind and above the cultivated land at Innis Ghlas; (3) at Coppachy; and (4) in a gully, called Clais na Leac, at the north-west end of the cultivated land at Smiorsair. At each of these places there are exposed scaurs or escarpments of the ferruginous rock, which are said to have been the results of quarrying, but which are much more like natural fractures. We may therefore dismiss the tradition that iron ore was obtained directly from these supposed quarries as not only unreliable but impossible.

The absence of bog iron in the neighbourhoods of the Gairloch iron furnaces or bloomeries is quite intelligible; it was no doubt all consumed by the ironworkers. Considerable quantities of bog iron are still to be seen in other parts of Gairloch, and their frequent occurrence throughout the parish confirms the contention that this description of ore formerly existed near the bloomeries, and was used at them. Most bog iron is rich in the useful metal. Mr Macadam has analysed a sample from Golspie, submitted by Dr Joass, and has found it to contain 54½ per cent. of metallic iron. Some Gairloch samples are nearly as rich, as will be seen from the results of Mr Macadam's analyses stated below.

The deposits of bog iron are locally called by the descriptive name of "pans." The following is a list of places where these deposits occur within the parish of Gairloch, as so far noticed by Mr Macadam and myself:—

1. In the churchyard at Sand of Udrigil.

2. At the highest point on the road between Aultbea and Laide.

3. In the village of Cove; masses of bog iron are built into fence walls.

4. Near Meallan na Ghamhna.

5. Near the Inverasdale Board School, where there are three "pans."

6. In the township of Strath of Gairloch; the "pans" have been broken up; they say there were several of them.

7. At the north-west end of the township of Lonmor; here too the "pans" have been broken up, and lumps of bog iron are to be seen in walls or dykes. Mr Macadam has found 51¼ per cent. of metallic iron in a heavy sample from this place.

8. Among the sand hills at the easternmost corner of the farm of Little Sand; one "pan" is entire; another is partly broken up. Mr Macadam's analysis shews 51½ per cent. of metallic iron in a sample from this place.

9. At North Erradale; "pans" broken up. Mr Macadam states that a heavy sample of bog iron from this place yields 49 per cent., and a sandy portion 38¾ per cent. of metallic iron.

10. At South Erradale. There is a fence wall, locally called Garadh Iaruinn, or the [88] "iron dyke," entirely composed (for fifty yards of its length) of masses of bog iron, varying from 3 to 13 inches in thickness, and some of them nearly a yard in length. The dyke was erected in 1845, when the present system of crofts was being established in Gairloch. Quantities of bog iron are also to be seen in other dykes, and the soil of probably about two acres of the adjacent cultivated land mainly consists of comminuted bog iron. There must have been large deposits of it at this place; one or two unbroken masses still remain *in situ*. Mr Macadam finds that the heavier kind yields, on analysis, 50 per cent. of metallic iron, whilst a sandy portion contains 46½ per cent.

11. On the farm of Point, Gairloch, near the house of Mr MacClymont, farmer. The

heavy bog iron analysed by Mr Macadam yields 50 per cent. of metallic iron, and some red sand from the same place contains 15 per cent.

II.—At the Historic Ironworks.

Mr Macadam is of opinion that bog iron was not only used at the ancient bloomeries, but also at some of the historic furnaces in Gairloch parish, particularly at Letterewe and Talladale. He gathers this from the general character and composition of some of the slags found at these places. It was in the early stage of Sir George Hay's career as a manufacturer of iron that he used the native bog iron ore; later on he began to import iron ores of a different kind from other parts of the kingdom,—at first in order to mix them with the local bog iron, and afterwards, perhaps, for separate use. The introduction of these imported ores may have been primarily due to the failure of the supply of the bog iron; it undoubtedly led to a vast improvement in the results obtained at Sir George Hay's furnaces.

The evidence that Sir George imported what we may term foreign ores is not far to seek.

At the Letterewe ironworks there are to be seen fragments of two kinds of imported iron ore, scattered in the soil of the field adjoining the furnace, or built into fence walls; they are red hematite ore, and clayband ironstone.

Mr J. E. Marr, F.G.S., has described these foreign ores as follows:—"Red hematite exactly the same as that in the Furness and Whitehaven districts in England. Large masses of a brown clay ironstone; one of these masses being a septarian nodule, with radiating crystals along the cracks; the other being bedded, and containing numerous plant and fish remains, but no shells; these fossils shew them to belong to the carboniferous system."

Some small fragments of similar clay ironstone have been found on the traditional site of the Talladale iron furnace.

On the bank above the ironworks on the river Ewe, called the Red Smiddy, are fragments of clayband ironstone, which Mr Marr has described as follows:—"Clay ironstone nodules, mostly blue inside, and weathering red and yellow on the outside. Many of these were septarian; and [89] when fossils occurred they were of shells, and there were no traces of plants or of fish remains. This ore, in fact, is entirely different from either of the two kinds found at the Letterewe furnace. At the same time, the fossils shew that it also belongs to the carboniferous system."

On the west bank of the pool at Poolewe, the landing-place both for Letterewe and the Red Smiddy, is a considerable heap of red hematite exactly similar to that found at Furnace, Letterewe. At the same place are many masses of clay ironstone, which include all the varieties found at Letterewe and the Red Smiddy. In the soil in the bank below Poolewe church, where a jetty and storehouse were erected in 1885, there are also large quantities of clayband ironstone, which were not seen by Mr Marr.

Mr Macadam has examined and analysed samples of all these foreign ores. He is unable to draw the same distinction as Mr Marr between the apparent varieties of clayband ironstone, and thinks that they were in all probability from the same place, and that most likely the south of Scotland. He finds that the samples of hematite ore contain metallic iron varying in quantity from 30 to 60 per cent. The samples of clayband ironstone he finds to yield from 6 to 38 per cent. of metallic iron; they also contain a considerable quantity of lime.

Mr Marr thinks that these foreign or imported ores were mixed with local ore. The lime in the clayband ironstone would render it a useful ingredient from its quality of acting as a flux. Mr Marr adds, "The theory of intermixture of local and imported ores receives support from a similar case in Wales which has come under my observation, where somewhat impure ore containing quantities of phosphorus, occurring among the old slaty rocks of North Wales, is carried to South Wales to mix with the carboniferous ores."

For convenience of reference in our next chapter, the several sources from whence iron was obtained for the smelting-furnaces on Loch Maree, and in other parts of Gairloch, may be classed as follows:—

1. Bog iron obtained locally.

2. Red hematite. Same as found in Lancashire and Cumberland, and unquestionably imported thence.

3. Clayband ironstone, possibly in two varieties. This was also imported either from the south of Scotland or elsewhere.

Chapter XX.

[90]

Remains of Ironworks in the Parish of Gairloch.

The following descriptions will include all the remains of ironworks so far noticed within the parish of Gairloch, whether belonging to what we have called the ancient class, or to the more modern historic set.

The slags found in and about the various remains are broadly divided by Mr Macadam into two classes, which he describes as follows:—

> (1.) A dark black slag, compact and heavy, in some cases slightly porous; the percentage of iron in this slag is high; in many samples more than half is iron.
>
> (2.) A gray light porous mass, resembling the slags formed in blast furnaces at the present day; this slag contains a large proportion of lime, and a comparatively small proportion of iron.

The descriptions of iron ores found at the different places are indicated by numbers referring to the list of ores at the end of the last chapter.

It appears certain that there were ironworks in the following different places in Gairloch parish, —

1. Glen Dochartie; three places.
2. Fasagh.
3. Furnace, Letterewe.
4. Talladale.
5. Garavaig, on Slatadale farm.
6. Red Smiddy, near Poolewe.

1. Glen Dochartie.

The traveller proceeding from Loch Maree to Achnasheen may notice, to the right of the road, about four hundred yards before the head of Glen Dochartie is gained, and on the seven hundred feet contour line of the ordnance survey, a scattered heap of small pieces of the slag No. 1. The burn runs past not many yards below. No site of a furnace can be identified. On the other side of the road, about three hundred yards up the hill, on the thousand feet contour, are more extensive similar remains, with the same kind of slag. Mr Macadam finds that this slag contains 66 per cent. of metallic iron, and no lime as silicate. There is red earth in the neighbourhood resembling what is found with "pans" of bog iron. The burn runs past, but is now in a deep gully. At the foot of the glen, more than a mile nearer Kenlochewe, and a little to the west of the bridge over the burn, are fragments of similar slag, and traces of charcoal burnings. The place is on the ancient [91] beach, about twenty feet above the level of the road. No doubt all these remains are of considerable antiquity; they may perhaps have been parts of the same undertaking.

2. Fasagh.

The most extensive remains of ironworks on Loch Maree are on the south side of the Fasagh burn, close to where it runs into the loch. This burn comes from Loch Fada, a considerable sheet of water to the north of Slioch. There are remains of a sluice or dam where the burn leaves Loch Fada, evidently used long ago to regulate the water supply. The burn flows into Loch Maree at its south-east corner, close to the head of the loch. There are indications of a large artificial bank, probably the remains of a dam, formed at right angles to the burn, near the site of the ironworks; but the burn has of late years been subject to great floods, that have to some extent varied its course, and altered the surrounding features.

There are two places which seem to have been the sites of furnaces or bloomeries; at each of these spots, which are near each other, and have a small watercourse (now dry) running alongside, there is a mass of slaggy material surrounding a root or stump of a tree. In the same part is a quantity of blackish material, weathering red and splitting on exposure like quicklime, and on all sides are heaps and scattered masses of dark heavy slag No. 1. The tuyere (*see illustration*) of a furnace was in 1882 removed from a cottage close by, where it had been for a long time; it is now in the possession of Mr Macadam, and is to be placed in the Museum of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland. I have obtained from an old man at Kenlochewe, an ancestor of whose brought it from the Fasagh ironworks, a curious article (*see illustration*); it is of cast-iron, and seems to have formed part of the apparatus for working a large forge-hammer. In examining the furnaces with Mr Macadam in April 1886, we found a portion of a thin bar, which appeared to be of iron. They say that a massive hammer head brought from Fasagh was long at Culinellan, and that an anvil at the Kenlochewe smithy was formed from part of it. Not far from the sites of the furnaces is a mound of rust-coloured earth like that found with bog iron (ore No. 1). There are evidences of extensive charcoal burnings on the other side of the burn, to the west of the ironworks.

Mr Macadam has supplied the following results of his analyses of samples of substances obtained at Fasagh:—The slaggy material from tree roots contains 66 per cent., the blackish material 73 per cent., and the dark slag 68 per cent. of metallic iron; the slag also contains 11 per cent. of silica; the bar of iron contains 63 per cent. of metallic iron, and a large quantity of carbon.

About half a mile to the east of the Fasagh works, at the foot of the crag called Bonaid Donn, is a small circular pond, or rather a large hole in the middle of a circular marsh. It is called Lochan

Cul na Cathrach. There is a perpetual flow of spring water from this hole, and the surrounding marsh prevents close approach to it. It is the common tradition, accepted with the fullest [92] credence, that into this hole the last ironworkers at Fasagh threw all their implements when the furnaces were discontinued. Possibly a drag might bring something to light, or the hole might be drained. The tradition is so firmly believed, that it produces on one's mind a strong impulse to search the hole, and try to find something bearing on the nature and history of the Fasagh ironworks.

From the character of the slags, the comparatively complete state of the remains, and from the tuyere and other things having been discovered, it seems probable that the Fasagh works, whilst belonging to the ancient class of ironworks, were amongst the most recent of that class; and Mr Macadam thinks it possible that Sir George Hay may have commenced his operations at this place in continuation, no doubt, of older ironworks.

3. Furnace, Letterewe.

The remains of the ironworks at the hamlet of Furnace, a mile south-east of Letterewe, are perhaps the most generally interesting in Gairloch, as being especially identified with Sir George Hay. The furnace which gives its name to the hamlet is on the north-west bank of the "Furnace burn," about one hundred yards from its confluence with Loch Maree. The remains of the furnace are tolerably complete, and a hole in its lower part looks as if it had been the aperture for the blast. On the banks of the burn are masses of sandstone, which formed part of the furnace. Some fragments of vitrified bricks are also to be seen. In the soil of the adjoining field, and in its fence walls, are quantities of the ores 2 and 3. In places the soil is quite red with fragments of hematite. In other places it is stained black with charcoal burnings, and many fragments of charcoal are to be found. No doubt the water-power of the burn was utilised, and Loch Maree afforded an easy means of transport of imported ores from Poolewe, where they were landed.

The slags found about this furnace are of both classes. May we not conclude from this fact, that Sir George Hay commenced the manufacture of iron on the old methods anciently in vogue, and that it was at Letterewe that he began the improved processes which were afterwards carried to still greater perfection at the Red Smiddy? This furnace belongs of course to the historic class.

4. Talladale.

A strong local tradition places the Talladale furnace on the bank of a small burn about one hundred and fifty yards south-east of the Talladale river; it stood in the corner of the field nearest to, and to the west of, the road. They say that when this field was reclaimed and trenched, large quantities of slag were turned up, and were buried in the land and in drains. The few specimens of slag found on the surface in 1883 are of both kinds. Some small fragments of ore discovered [93] are No. 3. It seems pretty certain, therefore, that the Talladale furnace was carried on by Sir George Hay, and that it belongs to the historic class of ironworks.

5. Garavaig, on Slatadale Farm.

The Garavaig furnace stood in a slight hollow in the east corner of what is now the easternmost field of the Slatadale farm, close to where the Garavaig burn (on which are the Victoria Falls) runs into Loch Maree. They say the water-power of the burn was anciently increased by artificial means. When I first examined the field where the furnace stood it was newly ploughed, and part of it was stained black with fragments of charcoal, indicating extensive burnings. The farmer stated that he had buried immense quantities of slag in the drains and soil of this recently reclaimed field. There are still numerous fragments of No. 1 slag on the surface, so that the furnace belonged to the ancient class. The farmer said that he had noticed indications of there having been a furnace in the slight hollow already mentioned, and the fragments of slag are thickest there. The agricultural operations have reduced the place almost to a dead level. No kind of iron ore is found, but the locality is just the place where one would have expected "pans" of bog iron might have occurred.

6. Red Smiddy, Near Poolewe.

The remains of the iron furnace on the river Ewe are still called A Cheardach Ruadh, or "the Red Smiddy." They are more perfect, and therefore to some extent more attractive to one studying the subject, than any of the others. Unquestionably they are also more recent. That the Red Smiddy was part of Sir George Hay's undertaking appears certain; but it was very likely under his manager or factor that it was established, and probably a number of years later than the Letterewe furnace. The slags are exclusively of class No. 2, and closely resemble those formed in blast-furnaces at the present day, thus demonstrating the progress Sir George made in the art of the manufacture of iron after his commencement at Letterewe. Mr Macadam finds that this light slag is completely soluble in acids, and that it contains 16 per cent. of oxide of calcium, and only 23 per cent. of metallic iron. The ore found on the bank above the Red Smiddy and elsewhere near its remains are of the No. 3 class. Many of the fragments of ore have been roasted. This process does not seem to have been adopted at any of the other furnaces. It is another indication of the more recent date of the Red Smiddy, and of the improvements in the methods pursued there. The Letterewe and Talladale furnaces appear to have been originally established solely for

the smelting of bog iron (No. 1). Gradually the paucity of that ore, the advantage of mixing imported ores with it, and their superior quality, led to the introduction of the latter; and then the [94] convenience of having a furnace near the place where these imported ores were landed, led to the establishment of the Red Smiddy. No doubt timber for charcoal burning was at first obtainable in every direction, and afterwards, if there were not a sufficient quantity standing near the Red Smiddy, it could easily be floated down to it from Letterewe or other places on Loch Maree.

The Red Smiddy is on the north-east bank of the river Ewe, immediately below the termination of its navigable part, which also bears the name of the "Narrows of Loch Maree," so that this furnace may properly be said to stand at the foot, as the Fasagh works stand at the head, of the loch. The furnace is about half a mile from Poolewe, and is said to have been approached from the other side of the river by means of a weir or dam, which was long afterwards converted into a cruive dyke. This weir served also to maintain the water-power used for working the hammers. It spanned the river in a transverse direction from east to west, and the line of the old road is still visible leading down to its west end. Leaving the navigable part of the Ewe at the east end of the weir was a race or cut, more or less artificial, the channel of which still runs past the furnace which it formerly insulated. It was not till some time prior to 1830 that the old weir was restored, and used for salmon cruives. They were removed about 1852 in order to lower the level of the water above, and so drain land at the head of Loch Maree.

The furnace is still tolerably complete. It is about six feet square, and stands on a mound red with its remains. It is built of sandstone. The chimney stalk was standing to the height of eight or ten feet at the time the cruives were removed. Several men in the neighbourhood speak to this fact, and identify numerous pieces of sandstone lying about as having formed portions of it. They are all vitrified along the cracks. Some bricks or pieces of brick are also found; they are formed of rough clay. Mr Marr thought they contained rushes, that had been mixed with the clay to bind it. There is a large heap of the slag No. 2 near the furnace. A flat space to the north of the furnace appears to have been artificially formed for the purpose of moulding the iron; here I have found two small masses or pigs of cast iron. Mr Macadam has found that one of these masses contains 98·8 per cent. of metallic iron, very little carbon, and only ·8 per cent. of silicon. A pig of iron which Dr Arthur Mitchell found here in 1859, and deposited in the museum of Scottish Antiquities at Edinburgh, is of cast iron. Besides these pigs of iron several other iron articles have at different times been taken from the Red Smiddy. Pennant was told by the Rev. Mr Dounie in 1772, that he (Mr Dounie) had seen the back of a grate marked S. G. Hay. Mr Alexander Mackenzie of Lochend informed Mr Knox in 1786, that his grandfather had got from these works "an old grate and some hammers." Sir G. S. Mackenzie of Coul mentions in his "General Survey," in 1810, "the breech of a cannon he had found among the rubbish, which appeared to have been spoiled in casting." Old men state that they remember to have seen, about 1840, in front of the inn at Aultbea, a large iron hammer head which had been brought from the Red Smiddy; it [95] required two men to lift it, and to raise it from the ground was a common test of strength; it was removed from Aultbea by Donald Macdonald, fishcurer at Lochinver. It may have been one of the hammers mentioned by Mackenzie of Lochend.

There are evidences of extensive charcoal burnings on several flat places along the east bank of the Narrows of Loch Maree for a space of nearly half a mile above the Red Smiddy, and much of the bank immediately above it is black with charcoal and the remains of fires where ore was roasted.

There is a tradition that Sir George Hay or his manager projected a canal, to connect the navigable part of the Ewe with the sea at a place called Cuil an Scardain, at the south-west corner of Loch Ewe. Two large circular holes at this place, now nearly filled up with stones cleared from the adjoining arable land, are said to have been borings made to test the feasibility of the project. They give some probability to the tradition.

In chronological order the Glen Dochartie and Garavaig bloomeries were probably the earliest of the Gairloch ironworks. The Fasagh works seem to have been intermediate between those and the historic series, which includes Furnace (Letterewe), Talladale, and the Red Smiddy. These last belong, as we have seen, to the seventeenth century.

Old inhabitants have a tradition that there was a bloomery in Tollie bay on Loch Maree. They say that after it was discontinued the business of tar boiling was carried on at the same place. If this were so, it must have been long ago, for no vestiges of old fir trees are now to be seen in the neighbourhood. Some small fragments of slag are found among the shingle in Tollie bay. Mr Macadam has analysed a sample of this slag, and is of opinion that it is lime-kiln slag; it contains 33 per cent. of carbonate of lime, and 64 per cent. of insoluble silicates, which include only 13 per cent. of metallic iron.

There are a few masses of slag near the entrance to the Gairloch churchyard. Owing to the crowded state of the graves within, some interments have recently taken place outside the churchyard, and this slag has been dug up. Mr Macadam finds that it contains 29½ per cent. of metallic iron, and 8¼ per cent. of insoluble silicates. He does not think this slag has been the result of iron-smelting.

Two notices not already quoted referring to iron mines or the manufacture of iron in the neighbourhood of Loch Maree or Loch Ewe ought to be mentioned before concluding this part of our subject.

The following is an extract from the letterpress (written in 1660) on the back of Blaeu's map of the north of Scotland—the old Dutch map previously referred to in these pages. It seems to speak of an outer and inner Loch Ewe, the latter (Loch Maree) surrounded by thick woods where in past years there had been iron mines (*ysermijnen*).

After describing Kintail, and then Lochcarron, it goes on to say (proceeding northwards):—"Dus voort-tredende komt men aen eenige onbekende zeeboesems, en den volght de zeeboesem Ew, en duysent schreden daer boven de binnenzee Ew, van alle zijden met dichte bosschen beslotten, daer in de voorgaende jaren ysermijnen gevonden zijn, en ick weet niet of men noch heden daer aen arbeyt." [96]

The other notice occurs in the "Present State of Great Britain and Ireland," printed by J. Brotherton, London, 1742, where we read that "further on the same coast lies Loch Ewe with thick woods on all sides, where a great deal of iron was formerly made."

This brings to a close my remarks on the old ironworks of Gairloch. The dense forests of timber that yielded the charcoal used by the iron-smelters of old have disappeared, and coal, which is not found in Gairloch, is now the usual fuel for smelting. The local bog iron does not occur in such quantities as would be required for profitable working in the present day. It is therefore unlikely that the iron industry will again find a footing in Gairloch; but it must ever be interesting to recall what we know of the ironworks, both those commenced by the illustrious Earl of Kinnoull, and the others of more ancient date.

ON THE EWE.

The existing remains almost go to prove that the parish of Gairloch has been in bygone days the "Black Country" of the west coast. Whilst admiring the energy and skill of the former ironworkers, may we not be allowed to express the hope that charcoal burnings and iron furnaces may never again—at least in our time—be set agoing to mar with their smoke and refuse the beautiful shores of Loch Maree and the river Ewe?

Chapter XXI.

[97]

ANTIQUITIES.

In this chapter I shall attempt little more than to catalogue the objects of archæological interest in Gairloch parish, and to suggest some subjects for the investigation of archæologists.

Gairloch is very deficient in remains of old buildings. In ancient times the mason's art was unknown in the district, and the erections of those days were formed of uncemented and unchiselled stones, so that no architectural features are to be found among the slight remains of ancient buildings.

Of Druidical, or supposed Druidical, remains there are very few in Gairloch, and even these are of doubtful origin. The only place connected by local tradition with the Druids is a circular enclosure in Tollie wood. It is formed of a rough wall enclosing a regular circle. The stones composing the wall are of comparatively small size, and are much scattered. There are several heaps of stones and remains of detached pieces of wall near the circle. This part of Tollie wood

consists mostly of indigenous oaks, which are said to be descended from the oaks of the Druids. By some the traditional Druidical origin of these remains is discredited, and the circle and other buildings are supposed to have been fanks or folds for cattle or sheep. The tradition is however generally current in Gairloch, and at least deserves consideration.

The circular enclosure on Isle Maree, which has for many centuries been used as a burial-ground, was supposed by Thomas Pennant (Appendix B) to be Druidical, and Dr Arthur Mitchell inclines to the same opinion. The sacrifices of bulls, and other pagan practices, connected with this island, render this view highly probable.

The circular island in the paddock below Flowerdale House, which was until recent times the place where justice was administered in Gairloch, is probably Druidical. It is to-day scarcely an island, the moat or ditch which formerly insulated it being now filled up, or nearly so. It formed no part of the Tigh Dige, or its garden or outbuildings, which were all in the field on the seaward side of the paddock. A full account of the manner in which the administration of justice was conducted at this island will be given in Part II., chap. iii. The curious way in which the laird and his assessors or jurymen were stationed at trees favours the Druidical origin; the criminal and his accusers were also stationed at ancient trees.

Of other prehistoric remains the Pictish brochs or round houses are perhaps the most notable. One occurs on Craig Bhan, on the north-east side of the river Ewe, half-way between Poolewe and Inveran, within two hundred yards of the road. Another round house, with unusually high and perfect walls, stands on a grassy eminence to the east of the road between Poolewe and Tournaig. Three others were exposed to view in trenching new land on the shores of Loch nan [98]
Dailthean at Tournaig several years ago. Some steatite whorls, stone troughs (*see illustrations*), ashes, and other remains, were found in them. Other round houses occur near Kernsary, and in other places. No doubt the remains of many are now concealed by an overgrowth of heather and other plants, and many more have been destroyed by agricultural operations.

The only vitrified fort in Gairloch stood on the rocky eminence near the volunteer targets at the south-west end of the largest sandy beach at Gairloch. Slight traces of the vitrification are said to be still found.

There are remains of a number of ancient strongholds or fortalices in Gairloch. Some were duns or castles, others were crannags or crannogs, *i.e.* fortified islands, more or less artificial.

The one most frequently mentioned in the traditions of the country is the Dun or Castle of Gairloch. It occupied the same site as the vitrified fort just referred to. Probably it was more of a fortification than a castle. Some of the low banks or lines of stones on the rocky eminence are said to be the ruins of the castle walls. This dun is said to have been a stronghold of the MacBeaths, and subsequently of the M'Leods.

The remains on Eilean Grudidh are more perfect. The natural rocky bank of the island appears to have been completed and heightened into a fortification by rude masonry cemented with clay. This fortification surrounded the island; the interior formed a tolerably level plateau, now much overgrown; on this plateau are slight remains of buildings, which in the present day are little more than mounds. At one place there is a deep hole with a circular wall round it; tradition says this was a dungeon. The area of Eilean Grudidh is barely half an acre. Like the Dun of Gairloch, it is said to have been held by the MacBeaths and afterwards by the M'Leods.

Of the stronghold, or rather crannog, on Loch Tollie, there only remain the loose stones scattered on the little island (now overgrown by bushes) and in the water around it. This small island (*see illustration*) is to-day the nesting-place of two or three pairs of the common gull, and no one would suppose that it was once a fortalice of the MacBeaths, and subsequently of the M'Leods.

Another stronghold, or dun, said to have been the last held in Gairloch by the M'Leods, is now only known by a large mound, apparently natural, with traces of a long straight bank on its top, and by the name Uamh nam Freiceadain. It is situated on the headland between Port Henderson and Opinan; its position is marked on the six-inch ordnance map. The name Uamh is said to be derived from a recess on the face of the hill towards the sea.

There were also duns at Tournaig and Naast. The site of the former is still called Dunan, or the "little dun"; it is only evidenced to-day by the large stepping-stones that give dry access to it at the highest spring-tides. There are no remains of the castle of Naast, said to have been a fortalice of Vikings. The rock on which it was situated still bears the name of Dun Naast.

There are crannogs, or artificial islands, on Lochs Kernsary and Mhic 'ille Rhiabhaich; nothing is [99]
known of their history. It is interesting to recall that, in the instructions given by the Privy Council of Scotland to the commissioners appointed in 1608 to treat with the Highland chiefs, "crannaks" were specially referred to. They must have caused much difficulty in dealing with the Highlanders, who found in them secure refuges against attacks by government agents.

There were six churches, or places of worship, in old days in Gairloch, mentioned in the traditions still current among the people, and referred to in chapter xvi. of this Part:—

1. The church of Gairloch was originally dedicated to St Maelrubha, and perhaps erected by him in the seventh century; it stood near the centre of the burial-ground at Gairloch. There are no remains whatever of it. In the Dutch map of 1662 the place is called Heglis Ghearrloch, *i.e.* the church of Gairloch.

2. The church at Culinellan, near Kenlochewe, was mentioned in the Old Statistical Account (Appendix C) as a place of worship at Kenlochewe; no traces of it remain. It is probably the church referred to in the map of 1662 as Heglis Loch Ew.

3. The turf-built place of worship near the beach in Tollie bay was but a temporary expedient; some remains of it (since obliterated by farming operations) existed in the memory of old men now living.

4. A little church or meeting-house stood at Cruive End or Tollie Croft. Here Pennant heard the Rev. John Dounie preach in 1772, and here some old people still living attended public worship up to 1826, when it fell into disuse upon the erection of the present church at Poolewe. It was a thatched house, and agricultural works have destroyed all traces of it.

5. The church or chapel of Inverewe stood in what is still called the Inverewe churchyard. This place is perhaps more generally known as the Londubh burial-ground. The old name of Londubh is Baile na h' Eaglais, which means the town of the church. The burial-ground is a hundred yards to the east of the road leading from Poolewe towards Aultbea, a short distance beyond Pool House. The house where James Mackenzie lives is close to the churchyard; this house used to be the residence of the proprietors of Kernsary; the place is now called Kirkton, a literal translation of Baile na h' Eaglais. What is left of this old church of Inverewe is supposed by some to be the remains of the oldest church in Gairloch parish. It seems to have been forty feet long and eighteen feet wide; it was not placed due east and west. The original wall forming the north-east side of the church is still standing, overgrown with a large mass of ivy. The Rev. Kenneth Mackenzie, from Bute, founder of the Kernsary family (Part I., chap, xiv.), purchased the Kernsary estate, including this churchyard, some time during the seventeenth century. He was an Episcopalian clergyman, and held services in the church of Inverewe, probably with much acceptance among his neighbours, who clung to the old form of worship long after Presbyterianism had been established by law. It seems likely he built this little church; some say he only restored an older church; in either case this may have been the site of an ancient pre-Reformation church, and even [100] of a monastic institution, for there are many traces of buildings in the neighbourhood. On the death of Mr Mackenzie there was no one to conduct services here; and on the final establishment of Presbyterianism in Scotland in 1689, or within a few years thereafter, the church was partly pulled down, and the two present roofless apartments or chapels were constructed out of its remains for family burial-places; they have since been used as such. The Inverewe church does not seem to have possessed any architectural features; a moulding round the door of one of the burial-places is Jacobean. A loose stone in one of the burial-places is inscribed "K M K 1678," and very likely records the date when the Rev. Kenneth Mackenzie built or restored the church. On the lintel of the door of the principal burial-place are initials and a date, now nearly eradicated by decay; the date looks as if it had been the same as that on the loose stone. The stone basin of the font lies loose in the burial-ground near; a stone now placed over a grave is moulded along one edge, and may possibly have formed part of the altar.

6. The chapel of Sand of Udrigil (*see illustration*), situated in a churchyard crowded with graves, close to the village of Laide, is stated in Dr Scott's Fasti Ecclesiæ Scoticanæ, Part V., to have been built (about 1713) by George Mackenzie of Gruinard, at his own expense, as a Presbyterian place of worship; but the universal tradition in Gairloch is, that the little church was erected by St Columba, the apostle of Scotland, or one of his followers, in the seventh century, and that the chapel was only thatched by George Mackenzie of Gruinard, if indeed his place of worship were not an altogether different edifice. I incline to the opinion that the chapel dates further back than the eighteenth century. It seems to have been an Episcopal church, for (1) it is placed nearly east and west; and (2) when I first knew the little ruin, its single window showed what appeared to be the remains of a mullion and tracery, which I would not have expected in a Presbyterian church of the eighteenth century. If then the church be older than the time of George Mackenzie of Gruinard, who can say that the local tradition may not be authentic? The walls of the church are cemented with lime made by burning shells, or possibly shell sand from the island of Tanera, some twelve miles away. I am bound to say that several houses in the locality, known not to date further back than the eighteenth century, were cemented with similar lime, notably the old house of Ardlair, demolished about 1883. The strength of such lime was shown at Ardlair, where blasting-powder had to be resorted to for the destruction of the old house. The little church of Sand is very picturesquely placed near the seashore.

Of old burial-places worth examination there are several in Gairloch:—

1. The Cladh nan Sasunnach, or English burial-ground, near the head of Loch Maree. It contains twenty-four graves. Some have supposed that it was the cemetery of the ironworkers, but I incline to the opinion that the graves are far older than the period of the historic ironworks (Part I., chap. xviii.). I recommend [101]

this burial-ground to the investigation of antiquaries.

2. The burial-place in Isle Maree so thoroughly described by Dr Arthur Mitchell (Part II., chap. xi.). Its most interesting gravestones are those beneath which the unfortunate Norwegian prince and his bride are sleeping.

3. The mounds to be seen on Fraoch Eilean, in Gairloch, mark the graves of the M'Leods slain by the heroes of Leac nan Saighead (Part I., chap. xii.).

4. The Gairloch churchyard is now overcrowded with graves. In it are the chapel or burial-place where lie some of the older lairds of Gairloch, and the tombstone of John Hay, described in Part I., chap. xviii. There are two unroofed chapels or burial-places. The northern one is that of the lairds of Gairloch; it contains two flat tombstones, one not inscribed, the other bearing an illegible inscription. Outside this chapel is a raised tomb covered with a flat bevelled stone, on which are the Cabar feidh, the initials K M K and I M K, and the date 1730. In the other burial-place are several graves, but no monuments or inscriptions; outside it, on the east wall, are monuments to the Chisholm family. Into the wall facing south is built a handsomely sculptured stone, with the text "Timor domini est initium sapientiæ" carved upon it in relief; below is what looks like a representation of the Cabar feidh, with the letter A on one side and M K on the other side. The date 1633 is cut into the stone, in a different character and evidently by a different hand to that of the original sculptor. If the date were 1638 the stone would unquestionably be a monument to Alexander (Alastair Breac), fifth laird of Gairloch; perhaps it may have been in memory of one of his family. Many of the leading celebrities among the natives of Gairloch in the days that are gone repose in the churchyard. None of the older gravestones bear inscriptions. Of modern ones, the monument to William Ross, the Gairloch bard, is most noticeable.

5. The Inverewe churchyard, where stands the ruined old chapel already described. A few shapeless stones are the only antiquities beyond those connected with the little church.

6. The churchyard or burial-place at Culinellan, near Kenlochewe, to which the same remark applies.

7. The churchyard at Sand of Udrigil already referred to. It contains nothing except the ruins of the old chapel which can interest the archæologist.

I am told an ancient burial-place was discovered some years ago at Bruachaig, near Kenlochewe, where the bodies had been buried in a doubled-up position, the well-known custom in remote times. I have visited another spot, in a glen among the mountains, traditionally described as a burial-place of giants; it may have been so, but the stones (which indeed are mostly flat) look more as if they had been deposited naturally than by human agency.

Of remains of old buildings, besides those already described, there are few of any antiquarian interest in Gairloch:—

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1. Perhaps the oldest remains of these other buildings are the few stones and the mound on Isle Maree, supposed to represent the cell of St Maelrubha and the tower to which the Norwegian prince brought his bride (Part I., chap. ii.).

2. On Eilean Ruaridh Beag are the remains of the residence of John Roy Mackenzie, fourth laird of Gairloch, who lived here in the latter part of the sixteenth century and the beginning of the seventeenth. It is said that long before that time Ruaridh M'Leod, who gave his name to the island, resided here, possibly in the same house, or in one on the same site. This small island almost adjoins Eilean Ruaridh Mhor on its south side. The buildings present no architectural features, and only ruinous dry-stone walls remain; there are also some half-wild garden fruit-trees on the island. I remember about the year 1868 seeing a small cannon ball sticking in one of the walls, and I am told that bullets have often been found in the moss on this island. Perhaps the cannon ball and the bullets had been there since the fight when Ruaridh M'Leod was driven from the island. The remains of John Roy's house confirm Captain Burt's accounts of the "huts" in which the Highland lairds of his day (early in the eighteenth century) resided; the chiefs seem to have been generally little better lodged than their clansmen.

3. On Eilean Suainne were the houses or huts where the sons of John Glassich Mackenzie, the second laird of Gairloch, dwelt in the sixteenth century, and where Alastair Breac, the fifth laird of Gairloch, resided from about 1628 to 1638. There are very slight, if any, remains of these dwellings.

4. The old Tigh Dige and its gardens and outbuildings stood in the field below Flowerdale House. The Tigh Dige itself was, as its name implies, a house in a ditch or moat. Its remains still existed up to the time of the late Sir Francis Mackenzie, Bart. of Gairloch, in the centre of this field, but agricultural operations have now entirely obliterated them. Simon Chisholm, at Flowerdale, remembers them well. The lines of the garden walls can still be traced in the part of the field lying to the

east. This was the Gairloch home of Hector Roy Mackenzie, the founder of the family in the latter part of the fifteenth century. The Tigh Dige is said to have been originally a turf hut, with a roof made of sticks and divots. Kenneth Mackenzie, the sixth laird of Gairloch, erected on the same site, within the same moat, about the middle of the seventeenth century, a more substantial building, which was called the Stank House or Moat House, and continued to be the west coast home of the Gairloch family until 1738, when Sir Alexander Mackenzie, Bart., the ninth laird of Gairloch, erected the present west coast residence of the family, which he named Flowerdale House. Sir Alexander also built there the old barn called Sabhal Geal (still in use) in 1730. On the south side of the barn the arms of the Gairloch Mackenzies are carved in stone, with the date 1730 below. The figure of Donald Odhar, in tartan trews, appears as one of the supporters of the shield. There are two Latin mottoes, viz., "Fidelitatis præmium" and "Non sine periculo;" the former (above the coat-of-arms) refers to the faithfulness of Donald Odhar; the latter is the usual motto of the Mackenzies. The old Temple House at Flowerdale, where [103]
Alastair Breac seems to have sometimes lived, is now occupied by Simon Chisholm above named, who is Sir Kenneth's present forester and head-gardener. It is a modernised dwelling. No doubt a great part of the wall is ancient. Simon Chisholm says the style of the windows and entrance when he first remembers the house, gave probability to the tradition that it was originally, as its name implies, a church or temple of worship. It may have been the residence of the priest or priests of Gairloch church before the Reformation.

5. The old house of Kirkton, close to the Inverewe or Londubh churchyard, is probably the house erected as his residence by the Rev. Kenneth Mackenzie, in the seventeenth century. It is a good example of a laird's dwelling of that period. It is said that Mr. Mackenzie, who came from Bute, had a smack load of Bute earth brought to Kirkton. Part of it was put into the Inverewe church, so that when he was buried there he might lie beneath Bute soil; the overplus was deposited in the garden of Kirkton house, where the heap is still preserved.

**ANTIQUITY NO. 1.—
BRONZE RING FOUND AT
LONDUBH.
SCALE—HALF TRUE SIZE.**

6. The houses of Udrigil and Aird were old residences of the Mackenzies of Gruinard, but possess no architectural features, and are not of great antiquity. The same remark applies to Letterewe House, which was the residence of the Letterewe Mackenzies. Cliff House, Poolewe, was formerly the manse of Gairloch, and was erected about 1760. In the old house of Udrigil are curious large cupboards or closets in the very thick walls; they are said to have been used for the purpose of detaining recruits captured by the pressgangs.

Most of the bronze weapons and other remains found near Poolewe have been described by Mr William Jolly, F.G.S., F.R.S.E., in a paper he wrote on the subject. Representations of the most perfect of the bronze and stone weapons or implements so far discovered are included in our illustrations. The following is a list of them:—

No. 1. Bronze ring, T-shaped section.
2. Hollow bronze ring.
3. Bronze spearhead, small.
4. Bronze spearhead.
5. Bronze celt.
6. Stone celt.
7. Bronze spear.
8. Bronze celt.
9. Stone implement. [104]
10. Quern or trough.
11. Fragment of trough.
12. Penanular ring.

All these except Nos. 3 and 9 to 12 are in the possession of Sir Kenneth Mackenzie; Nos. 3, 9, 10, and 11 are in the possession of Mr O. H. Mackenzie. Nos. 1, 2, 4, and 8 were found by Hector Maciver whilst cutting peats at Londubh. No. 3 was found near Inverewe House, about three feet below the surface in a peat cutting; a stag's horn was found at the same place in the following year. No. 5 was found at Slatadale; it is considerably worn. No. 6 was found at Cove; it is of some variety of trap well polished. No. 7 was found by two sons of Kenneth Urquhart (Kennie Rob) in a peat cutting near Croft, not far from the place where the Feill Iudha was formerly held. No. 9 was found in 1844 in a peat cutting between Inveran and Kernsary; it is of a sandstone uncommon in this country; it may have been used in flaying cattle and deer. Nos. 10 and 11 were found in brochs or Pictish round houses on the shores of Loch nan Dailthean, when land was newly trenched there in 1879. No. 12 is a penanular ring of bronze with expanded ends; being of a type rare in Scotland, Sir Kenneth Mackenzie deposited it in the museum of antiquities at Edinburgh. Hector Maciver found another bronze ring at Londubh, similar to Nos. 1 and 2, at the same spot where he discovered the above-named. There is a stone quern, resembling No. 10, lying near Drumchork House.

ANTIQUITY NO. 2.
HOLLOW BRONZE RING
FOUND AT LONDUBH.
SCALE—HALF TRUE SIZE.

ANTIQUITY NO. 3.—
BRONZE SPEAR HEAD
FOUND, ALONG WITH A STAG'S HORN,
NEAR INVEREWE HOUSE.
SCALE—HALF TRUE SIZE.

On the flat peat moss behind Poolewe, and to the west, a large market was held for generations, known as the Feill Iudha, or "ewe market." It was frequented by the Lews men, as well as by the people of the district. The last of these markets was held about 1720, when many of the Lews men who had attended the market were lost in a violent storm in the Minch, while returning home in their open boats. Traces of this old market have frequently turned up while cutting peats, in the form of bundles of cabars or sticks tied up with withes, as brought from the woods ready for exportation; moulds of [105] some fatty substance, either butter or tallow; and a rounded block of wood, fourteen inches in diameter, found ten or twelve years ago, probably prepared for being converted into the wooden bickers or plates formerly common in the Highlands.

The remains of the ironworks described in the last chapter are of considerable archæological interest. Two of the iron articles found near the Fasagh furnaces are represented among our illustrations; they are Nos. 13 and 14 in the list of antiquities illustrated; they are to be deposited in the museum at Edinburgh.

Among our illustrations are outlines of the crosses on the tombstones of the prince and princess who were buried on Isle Maree. The tragic story connected with them is told in Part I., chap. ii.

The caves at Cove and Sand of Udrigil are said to be meeting-places of great antiquity; they are still used for public worship. I have explored for some little distance the cave on the seashore at North Erradale, but have discovered nothing of interest beyond some apparently recent evidences of distillation of whisky.

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PART II.

Inhabitants of Gairloch.

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Chapter I.

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Ancestry and Names.

No traveller can claim even a moderate acquaintance with the parish of Gairloch unless he has acquired some knowledge of her Highland population. This part of our book is designed to help the reader in obtaining that knowledge; nevertheless it is not intended to supersede personal inquiry and observation.

To the casual observer the people here differ very little from the inhabitants of other parts of Great Britain; a closer examination reveals peculiarities in their race, language, manners and customs, superstitions, religious observances, and other characteristics, well worthy the examination of all who resort to this romantic country.

There is a common misconception on the part of English tourists who pay flying visits to the Highlands. Many of them suppose that the natives are of the same blood, and speak the same dialect, as the lowland Scot. Nothing could be further from the fact. To speak of a Highlander "as a Scotsman only," is, as Captain Burt says, "as indefinite as barely to call a Frenchman an European." The Highlander, though inhabiting a part of Scotland, is essentially different from the typical Scotchman. The apprehension of this truth, which will be illustrated in the following pages, is the first step towards the knowledge of the Gairloch Highlanders.

ANTIQUITY NO. 4. BRONZE SPEAR HEAD FOUND AT LONDUBH. SCALE—HALF TRUE SIZE.

In Part I., chap. i., we have seen how the original Pictish tribe of the Caledonians called the Cantæ, who inhabited Ross-shire, became intermixed with two foreign, yet probably cognate breeds, the Norwegians and the Danes. Further admixture of blood took place by the settlement in Gairloch of Highlanders of other septs, particularly the MacBeaths, M'Leods, MacRaes, and Macdonalds. The ironworkers left their mark on the breed, in such names as Cross, Kemp, and Bethune or Beaton. In more recent times sheep-farming brought lowland blood, identified by the names of Watson, Reid, Stewart, MacClymont, Lawrie, Boa, &c. Again, it is said, no doubt with truth, that some few English or even foreign sailors have at different times settled in Gairloch, owing to shipwrecks or other causes. A Spanish ship, possibly connected with the Armada, is said to have been wrecked on the Greenstone Point, and one or two persons used to be pointed out who, though bearing native names, were believed from their dark wavy hair to have Spanish blood in their veins. So the Taylors of Badachro are descended from a lowland sailor lad. Lastly, the minor admixtures of blood from the immigration of attendants who came with brides of the Gairloch lairds (of whom are the Campbells or M'Ivers, Grants, Chisholms, &c.), and of some other individuals mentioned in these pages, such as Rorie Mackay, the piper, have, in a less degree, leavened the Gairloch breed. On the whole, however, it must be considered as mainly sprung from the original Pictish stock, herein differing *ab initio* from the lowland race.

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The surname Mackenzie greatly predominates in Gairloch, and there are a number of distinct families of that name; many of them have an unbroken lineage from one or other of the lords of Kintail, or of the lairds of Gairloch, whose ancient origin has already been given. In the present day pedigrees are less thought of than in the time of the old seannachies, who were the genealogists of their clans, but many people now living in humble circumstances could, if they pleased, trace their ancestry a thousand years in an unbroken line through the original Kenneth, the progenitor of the family. The blood of kings and nobles flows in their veins, and accounts no doubt for the innate courtesy and gentle manner often noticeable among the humblest of the Gairloch Highlanders.

Surnames were little used in Gairloch in old times, and it is supposed that many persons of different races who settled in the Mackenzie country were after a time reckoned to be Mackenzies. Possibly the clan name was originally adopted only as a means of connecting the follower with his chief, whose tartan of course he wore for identification.

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To the present day surnames are little used in Gairloch when Gaelic is being spoken, and even in English a number of men are often called by the equivalents of their Gaelic names. These Gaelic names are formed by the addition to the Christian name of a *soubriquet* or byname, often hereditary, or else of the father's, grandfather's, and even the great-grandfather's Christian names or some or one of them. Thus in the minutes of the Presbytery of Dingwall, referring to sacrifices of bulls (Appendix F), we find the names of Donald M'Eaine Roy vic Choinnich and Murdo M'Conill varchu vic Conill vic Allister, which in English are respectively "Donald the son of John Roy the son of Kenneth" and "Murdo the son of Donald Murdo the son of Donald the son of Alexander." "Roy," properly "Ruadh," happens to be the only *soubriquet* in these two compound names. Take some examples from names of men now living:—Alexander Mackenzie, the senior piper of the Gairloch volunteers, is the son of John Mackenzie of Moss Bank; the father is known as Iain Glas, *i.e.* Pale John; the son is always called in Gaelic Ali' Iain Ghlais, *i.e.* Alexander [son] of Pale John. This name also illustrates the custom of continuing a *soubriquet*, whether appropriate or not, from one generation to another; Iain Glas is so called, not because he has a

pale face, but because the byname had belonged to an uncle of his. So we find John M'Lean, the industrious crofter on the east side of the Ewe, called Iain Buidhe, or Yellow-haired John, not because he has yellow hair, but because an ancestor of his was dubbed with that byname.

Among very numerous instances of the application of bynames to men now living, the following may be given:—Donald Og, Alie Ruadh, Uilleam Ruadh, Alie Beag, Iain Dubh, Eachainn Geal, Seann Seoc, and Alie Uistean, meaning respectively Young Donald, Red-haired Alexander, Red-haired William, Little Alexander, Black John, White Hector, Old Jock, and Alexander Hugh. Young Donald is an elderly man; Little Alexander a tall man; Old Jock acquired the name as a boy because he had then an old head on young shoulders; and Alexander Hugh is so called because he had an ancestor named Hugh, though he himself was baptized Alexander only. In each of these cases the individual is either a Mackenzie, Urquhart, or Maclennan, but is never so called by his neighbours. The same system of nomenclature is similarly applied to the other sex.

It is worth notice that several Gaelic names are not translatable into English; thus Eachainn is not really Gaelic for Hector, any more than Uistean is for Hugh, but these English names have long been adopted as reasonably good equivalents for the Gaelic.

Some female names in Gairloch sound strange to lowland ears, *i.e.* those formed by adding *ina* to a man's name not usually associated with that termination in the south,—for example, Simonina, Donaldina, Murdina, Seumasina (or Jamesina), Angusina, Hectorina, &c.

ANTIQUITY NO. 5. BRONZE CELT FOUND AT SLATADALE. SCALE—HALF TRUE SIZE.

Chapter II.

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Warfare and Weapons.

Up to the middle of the seventeenth century Gairloch seems to have been a continual battlefield. As to Kenlochewe, it was so often ravaged, and its population so frequently decimated, that one is surprised to find anything left of it!

Among the MacBeaths, M'Leods, Macdonalds, and Mackenzies (assisted by MacRaes), Gairloch was a veritable bone of contention; and for some time after the fierce struggles among the warriors of these clans or tribes had ceased it was still a prey to the raids of the Lochaber cattle-lifters.

What wonder that the Highlander had actually to sleep in his war-paint!

Several weapons of warfare have been mentioned incidentally in Part I., viz., the dirk of Hector Roy, the battle-axe of Big Duncan, the bows and arrows of several of the MacRae archers, and the shotgun of Alastair Buidhe Mackay. The broadsword and targe of the Highlanders were mentioned by Tacitus, and continued to be their arms when in battle array until the eighteenth century. The broadsword is often called the claymore or big sword; it was two-edged. The targe was a round shield of wood covered with leather. Bows and arrows were used against enemies at a distance, and the battle-axe was a favourite and deadly weapon at close quarters. The dirk was mostly used in personal encounters, or when heavier weapons were not at hand. All these weapons were common among Gairloch warriors, except the gun, which was rare here, and in most parts of the Highlands. Bows were made, it is said, of ash; and the present ash trees at Ardlair, and other places hereabouts, are supposed to have sprung from old trees grown long ago on purpose to supply bows.

After the "Forty-five" the clan system faded away, and it is not likely, indeed not possible, that we shall ever again see the able-bodied men of a clan gathered under their chief in battle array.

The immediate substitute for the old system was the raising by several Highland chiefs of regiments of their clansmen as part of the regular army of Great Britain. Lord Seaforth raised the regiment known as the 78th Highlanders in 1793; and, as we have seen, John, second son of Sir Alexander Mackenzie, tenth laird of Gairloch, gathered from Gairloch a company for that regiment, of which he became captain.

All the same, enlisting in the army was never popular in Gairloch; and, as a rule, recruits could be procured only by the detestable means of the pressgang, which was also used for obtaining sailors for the navy.

Dr Mackenzie, writing of the days of his father, Sir Hector Mackenzie, says:—"One of my father's amphibious crofters disappeared, leaving his wife and family to the care of Providence, without a clue to his being dead or alive, for some five years. One day my father, superintending some job near the bay, noticed a man coming towards him with a true sailor-like roll. Intimate with the cut [113]

of every man on the estate, says he, 'Surely that is dead Donald M'Lean's walk;' and, on coming near, it certainly was Donald himself, in naval attire. 'Halloa, Donald!' says he, 'where on earth are you from?' speaking, as he always did to his people, in Gaelic. Donald pulled up, and saluting, replied in two words, also in Gaelic, 'Bho Iutharn,' the English of which is simply 'From hell.' The service on board a man-of-war was then really infernal, though Donald, who had been grabbed by a press-gang, had survived five years of it, and found his widow and children glad to see him again."

For other stories connected with the press-gang system see Part II., chap. xxv. Very few recruits are in the present day forthcoming from Gairloch for the army, navy, or militia.

The Volunteer corps, which is the "I" Company of the Ross Highland Rifle Volunteers, is well supported, and is generally over its authorised strength. It has three pipers, and the rank and file comprise a number of fine men.

Though perhaps not exactly within the subject of this chapter, the following account given by James Mackenzie of almost the first guns brought to Gairloch may be added:—

ANTIQUITY NO. 6.
STONE CELT FOUND AT COVE.
SCALE—HALF TRUE SIZE.

It was about 1823 that a large ship was destroyed by fire at Ullapool. Part of her cargo was saved. Besides some casks of fish-hooks, a number of guns were taken out of the burning ship. There was a man then living at Mellon Udrigil in Gairloch named Finlay Fraser; he had come as a foxhunter from Beauly; he got seven of the guns out of the ship. It is said that one of these guns of more than sixty years ago was recently to be seen preserved as a curiosity in the farmhouse of Tollie. Finlay carried on illicit distillation of whisky in a large cave on the Greenstone point. He used to steep barley in whisky, and spread it on the ground in front of a sort of screen, called in Gaelic "skar," behind which he lay in wait with one of his guns until wild geese and other birds came to eat the barley, which soon rendered them "drunk and incapable," when Finlay got easy pot-shots at them. Though the guns obtained from this ship were the first in general use in Gairloch, it is certain that guns had occasionally been brought into the parish long before.

Chapter III.

[114]

Polity and Customs.

Notwithstanding the introduction of Christianity in the seventh century, the revival of religion at the time of the Reformation, and later on the militant piety of the stern Covenanters, the people of Gairloch did not make much progress until their previously continuous state of warfare came to an end after the "Forty-five." The abandonment of the clan system, the disarming of the Highlanders, and the proscription of their distinctive dress, entirely changed the condition of the people, and nearly assimilated them to their lowland neighbours as regarded many of the outer circumstances of daily life. The lover of romance may pardonably raise sentimental objections to the change, but it unquestionably heralded a vast improvement in the general condition of the Highland population.

The report in the Old Statistical Account (Appendix C) on the state of Gairloch in 1792 contrasts very favourably with what is known of its condition prior to the "Forty-five." The first parochial school appears to have been established in Gairloch about 1730, and in 1792 there was still only the one school; it was well into the nineteenth century before the number of schools was increased. During the minority of the present baronet the number grew, mostly at his expense, to sixteen. As elsewhere education was formerly in the hands of the ecclesiastics, but it was as a rule only to the higher classes that they imparted instruction in the old days. Even the parochial school was up to the passing of the present Education Act (1872) visited and examined by the presbytery.

Few of the people could read or write until quite recently. On 6th March 1811 the Rev. James Russell, minister of Gairloch, reported "the number of persons capable of reading English in the parish to be three hundred and twenty-four; capable of reading Gaelic alone, seventy-two; and unable to read either English or Gaelic, two thousand five hundred and forty-nine." In the present day, under the School Board system, established in 1873, education has reached a high pitch. The teachers in the ten and a half schools of the parish pass at the annual examinations by Her Majesty's inspectors about eighty per cent. of their scholars, and it would surprise a stranger to witness the general intelligence and acquirements of the school children. There are still a number of elderly people in the parish who can neither read nor write, but the rising generation are well educated.

Under the old clan system there was no organized method of relieving the poor; indeed it is certain that the mass of the population was then in miserable plight. With the progress of the church a system of relieving paupers sprang up. Under the ministry of the Rev. D. Mackintosh, the poor, to the number of eighty-four, had the annual collections made in the church, with the interest of £20, distributed among them. The collections averaged £6, 7s. This mode of assisting [115] the poor continued until the introduction of the present poor-law system, which is very thoroughly applied to the parish. Only one remark need here be made about it. It is, that though begging is almost unknown, and though the people have a large measure of Highland pride, they are as a rule callous to the humiliation of receiving relief from the poor-rates; nay rather, some few even appear to think that they have a positive right to draw parish pay, irrespective of the state of their purses.

The very few beggars seen in Gairloch are generally lowland tramps of the drinking class. The travelling tinkers rarely beg; they pitch their rude tents in sheltered places, and repair the tin pans of the neighbourhood. Some few tinkers are well known, and are considered respectable; others are not to be trusted. Gipsies are scarcely ever seen so far north. There is a strange old man often to be noticed wandering about Gairloch. He is a native of the parish, but is now homeless and in his dotage. He goes about seeking, as he says, the road to America. It seems that many a year ago he emigrated with his wife and family to the United States. They all became more or less insane, and all died except the father, this poor old man. He returned to Scotland, and now divides his time among those who are kind to him,—and they are not a few. Barring his absorbing anxiety he does not appear to be unhappy. He always wears a tall hat, and is respectably dressed. Her Majesty Queen Victoria mentions this old man in "More leaves from the Journal of a Life in the Highlands." Describing the excursion to Torridon, Her Majesty writes, "An old man, very tottery, passed where I was sketching, and I asked the Duchess of Roxburghe to speak to him; he seemed strange, said he had come from America, and was going to England, and thought Torridon very ugly."

Among old customs still remaining in Gairloch are those connected with marriages and funerals, and the New Year, which is the only festival observed in the parish.

The marriage customs are a relic of the remote past. They consist of the washing of the feet of the bride and bridegroom at their respective homes on the evening before the wedding, and the putting to bed of the married couple on the night of the ceremony. Captain Burt notices these customs in 1730. Some of the younger people shirk these proceedings, especially in the more accessible parts of the parish, but as a rule they are strictly observed to the present day.

Funerals are not now accompanied by such striking peculiarities. Until the last few years, when a death occurred all the people of the township ceased working until after the funeral, which was attended by every adult male. Of course drinking was much in vogue, and the well known Irish wakes were closely imitated. Now, only those invited to a funeral are expected to attend, and the whisky is confined to the serving of a dram all round (preceded by a prayer) before the funeral procession starts, with additional "nips" whenever a halt is made for rest on the way to the place of burial, and these halts are not infrequent. Until quite lately it was customary for each man accompanying the funeral to throw a stone on the spot where the coffin was placed when a halt [116] was made, thus forming a considerable heap; sometimes the number of stones thrown was the same as the years of age of the deceased. This custom has been generally discontinued in Gairloch since the roads were made, though it is still in vogue in the wilder parts of the adjoining parishes of Applecross and Lochbroom. The use of whisky at funerals is not now universal in the parish of Gairloch; some ministers wisely discourage it, partly on account of its generally evil tendency, and partly because the providing of it is a serious burden on the family of the deceased, already weighted by other expenses in connection with the death or previous sickness.

New Year's eve and New Year's day are kept according to the old style, on the 12th and 13th of January, and both days are general holidays. There is always a keen contest for the "first-footing" at midnight on New Year's eve; the one who succeeds in first entering a neighbour's house claims the inevitable dram. Occasionally a shinty or "clubbing" match takes place on New Year's day.

Some old weights and measures are still adhered to; milk is sold by the pint, which is half a gallon.

The administration of justice in Gairloch is in the present day conducted as in other parts of the country, by the sheriff and justices of the peace; but until the time of Sir Hector Mackenzie, the eleventh laird of Gairloch, they say justice was administered by the chief in a rough and ready fashion. In the paddock below Flowerdale House, immediately adjoining on the east the field in which the Tigh Dige formerly stood, is a small round plantation on a circular plot of land, which deserves its title—the island—as it is surrounded by a wet ditch; it is shown on the six-inch ordnance map. It was formerly quite an island, and was approached by a plank or small foot-bridge. Simon Chisholm, the present forester and head-gardener at Flowerdale, remembers when there were the large stumps of five forest trees on this little island, one in the centre and the other four around it. In the line of the hedge which divides this paddock from the field to the west were several other large trees, some of the stumps of which remain to this day. When a trial was to take place the laird of Gairloch stood at the large tree in the centre of the "Island of justice," and one of the principal clansmen at each of the other four trees. These four men acted as jurymen or assessors, whilst the laird himself performed the functions of judge. The accused person was placed at a large tree immediately facing the island, and within forty yards of it, whilst the accuser or pursuer and the witnesses stood at other trees. When the accused was

found guilty of a capital crime, the sentence of death was executed at the place still called Cnoc a croiche, or "Gallows hill," about half a mile distant from the island of justice. The Gallows hill is a small knowe close below the high road, on the south side of the ridge called the Crasg, between the present Gairloch Free church and the old Gairloch churchyard, and it overlooks the latter. A few stones still shew that there used to be a wall which formed a small platform on which the gallows stood; they say this wall was more complete within living memory than it now is. The [117] ravine or fissure immediately below the platform provided an effectual "drop." When the body was cut down it would fall to the sea-shore below, and perhaps at high tide into the sea itself. The face of the sloping rock, immediately below the platform where the gallows stood, looks almost as if it had been worn smooth by the number of bodies of executed criminals dashed against it in their fall. This old manner of trial is said to have continued until the eighteenth century. But it must not be supposed that Sir Hector Mackenzie, who regularly dispensed justice among his Gairloch people from 1770 to 1826, adhered to the primitive form.

Folk-lore is little thought of now-a-days in Gairloch. Among the old men who still love it, and from whom many of the traditions and stories given in this book have been derived, are James Mackenzie of Kirkton, Kenneth Fraser of Leac-nan-Saighead, Roderick Mackenzie of Lonmor (Ruaridh-an-Torra), George Maclennan of Londubh, Alexander Maclennan of Poolewe, John M'Lean of Strath, Kenneth and George Maclennan of Tollie Croft, Donald Ross of Kenlochewe, and Simon Chisholm of Flowerdale. Some of them can speak English fluently.

ANTIQUITY NO. 7.—BRONZE SPEAR FOUND AT CROFT.
SCALE—HALF TRUE SIZE.

Chapter IV.

Religion and Religious Observances.

The progress of religion among the people of Gairloch cannot readily be traced beyond the incumbency of the Rev. Daniel Mackintosh, minister of the parish from 1773 to 1802. Superstition of the grossest kind usurped the place of religion in ancient days. The Rev. James Smith, minister of Gairloch from 1721 to 1732, appears to have been the first Presbyterian clergyman who made a general impression on the people; in the time of Mr Mackintosh they had become, as he tells us in the Old Statistical Account (1792), sober, regular, industrious, and pious.

We have no records of the comparatively elaborate observances and ritual which undoubtedly [118] attended the ministrations of the Church in Gairloch, with its fasts, festivals, and saints' days, before the Reformation. Some of the natives long clung to Episcopalianism, but the bald simplicity of Presbyterian worship was gradually adopted by the parish, and is the only form now known, except indeed an occasional Episcopal service for visitors at the Gairloch Hotel.

The present observances of the Presbyterian churches in the parish appear to have undergone little or no modification since the commencement of the nineteenth century, except by the secession of the Free Church in 1843, and that did not alter the articles of faith or the manner of worship.

As a rule the Sunday services are held at twelve o'clock, and are mostly in Gaelic. A short English service follows at two, and in some cases there is also a meeting at six.

Both the Established and Free churches hold to the doctrines laid down in the Confession of Faith and the Shorter Catechism of the Westminster Divines.

The sacrament of baptism is generally administered at the close of a Sunday service; the father is required to declare his adherence to the doctrines of the Christian faith before the congregation; there are of course no other sponsors.

The sacrament of the Lord's supper is "dispensed" at the Gairloch and Aultbea Free churches twice a year, and these are great occasions in the parish. There are three days of preparation before the Sacrament Sunday, and one day of thanksgiving after it. The first day is called the

"Fast-day," and is observed as a Sunday.

Dr Mackenzie, who is an earnest Free Churchman, gives the following graphic and interesting account of the church attendance and religious observances in Gairloch prior to the "Disruption," in fact about 1820. The mode he describes of holding the communion services in the Leabaidh na Ba Bàine, or "Bed of the white cow," is nearly the same now as it was in the days he writes of sixty or seventy years ago, with one exception of importance, viz., that the sort of "Aunt Sally" game he mentions is now quite unknown. He says:—

"Our people then thought nothing of a ten mile walk to and from church. Many came by boat from the coast townships, and in fine weather the well dressed and mutched people filling the boats scattered over the bay *en route* to the different townships gave things quite a regatta-like look, that we shall never see again owing to the roads now everywhere. One of our largest tenants took his son to church for the first time, a mite of a man, who on being asked in the hand-shaking crowd after church, 'Well, Johnnie, what saw you in church?' replied, 'I saw a man bawling bawling in a box, and no man would let him oot.' Mr Russell made up for want of matter in his sermons by needless vigour in his manner. The said Johnnie is now risen to be a large wise landed proprietor in his old age in the Western Islands.

"Between difficult access for helpers to our pastor at communion times, and other causes, that [119] ordinance used when I was young to be celebrated only about every third year in our Elysium of the west. Perhaps consequently the whole western world seemed to us to congregate to the occasion, from all parts of the country, over roadless 'muirs and mosses many O.' I doubt if the reasons [why they came] of the vast majority would sound well at the confessional, or look well in religious print; and it seems singular that only in the Scotch Presbyterian Church are Christians ever invited to devote five days to the communion services, while in every other church the Sabbath day alone is considered sufficient for the ordinance. Many earnest Christians think, that while on some particular and unlooked for occasion it may be right to hold religious services on week days, as a rule Christians are expected to work six days weekly, which they cannot do if they belong to the Scotch Presbyterian Church. It would appear as if an idea prevailed, that it required many clergymen to assemble at communion seasons, or else that there could be no anxious inquirers about eternity, so many accept invitations to attend; and probably on this account, instead of there being only one communion table at which there can be no difficulty in all meeting and partaking together, there are always (except in one church where I helped to improve matters) many tables, each one generally having its own clergyman in charge; the services being thus greatly protracted, probably in hopes of this causing a 'revival,' as it is termed.

"So in our west parish (Gairloch), with the communion only every third year, the crowd that attended was probably nearer four than three thousand, of whom perhaps two hundred might be communicants. Of the rest who seemed so devoted to religion (though of course very many did not pretend to such anxiety), the reply, when asked why they were not communicants, would in almost every case be, 'They were not yet worthy.' So they generally remain—refusing to obey their Saviour's dying request—unworthy, till they die,—not yet sinless! I once received as a reason for an excellent man's shrinking from the communion table, that 'his father and mother also shrank from it;' and this given by a man of good education, the secretary to a bank! But till the Presbyterian *clergy* grow wiser, the same sad disobeying our Redeemer's dying command will remain.

"But anent our western communion, every hole and corner within reach of our church was cleared out where straw or heather or ferns could offer a night's quarters to the crowd of communion visitors, for about a week; and such a bad time as every living eatable animal had then preparing for the visitors, who took 'neither scrip nor purse' with them on such occasions, was wonderful; and such baking, boiling, roasting, and stores of cold food, as made our kitchen a mere meat manufactory for the sacrament week; and on the Sabbath there was such a spread of cold food in the house, to which the clergymen, at a lull in their duty, and all the upper crust of the parish, were invited to attend, as was quite a marvel, involving such labour to every servant [120] all day long as quite rendered their attending church at this holy fair absurd to be thought of!

"Close beside our parish church was a most wonderful hollow (the Leabaidh na Ba Bàine) in the sandy-soiled prairie. It was naturally formed, beyond memory of man, and, as we knew well, by Fingal, for a bed where his white cow was to calve. It had a complete coat of beautiful inch-long benty grass, and a thousand spades could not have formed a more perfectly egg-shaped cup, in the bottom of which was placed the wooden preaching box, and in front of it long narrow tables and benches for the communion. A few 'shuparior pershons' sent before them stools, &c., on which to sit, see, and listen, but ninety-nine of the hundred of us sat on the nicely sloping banks all around the 'bed,' till they overflowed on to the level of the equally grassed ground outside. The 'bed' was estimated to hold two thousand persons seated, and perhaps three thousand were often gathered in all to the services, packed tight to one another, as was the popular fashion at these times. A more orderly and seriously conducted congregation than that in Fingal's white cow's bed I am sure has never been seen anywhere, or more polite young men towards the women, who, often thirsty from the shadeless situation and the crush, &c., I have often seen kindly supplied with a *shoefull* of water from the well close to the burial ground! We often hear of grand public rooms of bad quality for hearing the speaker, but the faintest word from the bottom of Fingal's bed was heard as clearly as if in a closet. And I should be very much surprised if any one who once heard an old Gaelic psalm floating in the air, from the thousands of worshippers in the 'bed,' could forget it in a hundred years. The finest organ ever made was trash to that solemn

sound.

"On the plea that so many people far from home might starve, a sort of commissariat regiment used to attend on the shore of the bay with booths for bread, cheese, and gingerbread, goodies, &c.; and I fear the report that the feeders, rather than carry away uneaten stock at nights, used to have, say, a loaf set on a stick for a shy at it with another from a set distance for a small sum, hit or lose, that same is owre true a tale, though of course it must have been the ungodly of the crowd who attended that holy fair!

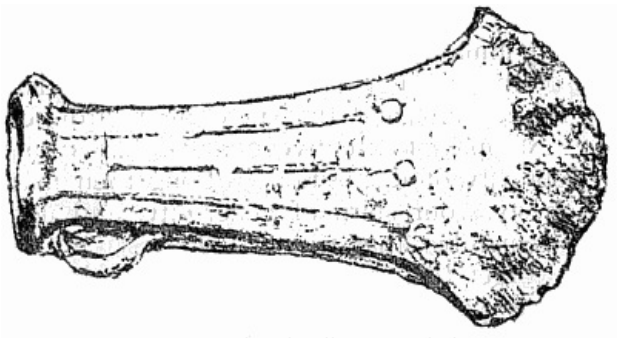
"Ah! dear, dear! Who could approve of such wild arrangements at a communion season, compared with every clergyman having the communion in his own church for his own people, monthly or quarterly or so, quietly and solemnly, without a crowd of ministers and people from neighbouring parishes to injure and confuse every solemn thought with the fuss and bustle of a crowd. May God send us more wisdom than Scotland can at present shew on these occasions!"

Every visitor to Gairloch should see and hear one of the out-door communion services in the Leabaidh na Ba Bàine, if he have the opportunity.

The Gairloch people are still a church-going race, though not so regular to-day as even ten years ago. Nearly the whole population adheres to the Free Church. Some characteristics of the Free [121]
Church services may be noted. Children are generally conspicuous by their absence. The people take no part whatever, except in the very primitive singing; and some few appear to compose themselves deliberately to sleep. The Christian festivals are entirely ignored; and the sermons, usually extempore, are on some occasions bare statements of doctrine. The Free Church organisation watches closely the religious conduct of the people. It is said there is not a crofter's house in the parish of Gairloch where family worship is not conducted every day; and the Sabbath is very strictly observed.

There is an air of settled gloom on the faces of many of the people,—intensified on the Sabbath day. It seems to partake of a religious character. The ministers, catechists, and elders nearly all oppose dancing, and every kind of music. Surely they are short-sighted! A sort of fatalism is the most apparent result of the religion of the natives of Gairloch. It has a depressing effect when illness comes.

If anything here stated is calculated to convey the idea that the religious thought and religious observances of the Gairloch Highlanders are unreal or perverted, let me correct it by adding, that as a rule their piety is genuine and practical.



**ANTIQUITY NO. 8.—BRONZE CELT FOUND AT LONDUBH.
SCALE—HALF TRUE SIZE.**

Chapter V.

Character and Characteristics.

It is an invidious task to criticise the general characters of one's neighbours. "Charity thinketh no evil," but it cannot be blind to obvious faults. Sentimental predilections ought not to be allowed to warp the judgment, any more than prejudices based on first impressions or partial knowledge should be permitted to mature into dogged dislike. What a Scylla and Charybdis to steer through!

Highlanders have been over-praised by some, and unreasonably condemned by others: the truth is, they are like other races; there is of course an admixture of good and bad among them. But are the black sheep more numerous than the white ones? So far as the parish of Gairloch is [122]
concerned, I am of opinion, speaking from personal experience, that the black sheep are in a decided minority. Taking the people as a whole, they are unquestionably more disposed to honesty and morality than are the bulk of our urban populations.

In the old clan days all Highlanders were remarkable for fidelity to their chief and to their fellow-

clansmen. Circumstances have abolished these ties to a great extent, though some remnants of the clan feeling still linger among the older people.

Courtesy and hospitality continue to be leading good qualities among all ranks of Highlanders, and the Gairloch folk are no exception to the rule.

That shrewd writer Sir George Steuart Mackenzie, after pointing out the faults of indolence and carelessness, adds, "With all their defects the people have numerous good qualities, which, under proper management and judicious direction, might become the source of comfort and wealth to themselves and to their superiors. In honesty and sobriety the people of the west coast are far superior to their inland neighbours."

Sir Francis Mackenzie, in his "Hints," pays the following tribute to the character of his Gairloch Highlanders:—"I can produce, I rejoice to say, from my own people individuals, totally unlettered, who shall in every amiable quality of which humanity can boast far outshine some of the common specimens of our students, either at Oxford or at Edinburgh; and this arises more from early training, and the good example of attentive parents, than from the natural goodness or depravity of dispositions. Long then may you retain your native honesty, your spirit of generosity, and noble courtesy. Long may you remember that true politeness is not servility; and may you never forget that rudeness is not only degrading, but unchristian; and may you ever prove to surrounding countries, that a spirit of courtesy naturally springs from the freedom and independence which, as Highlanders, have ever been your inheritance."

Love of country, or perhaps more accurately attachment to home, is a salient feature in the character of the Highlander; it has always been so, and there is no sign of any diminution of the sentiment. I have received letters from absent Gairloch men speaking in the fondest terms of affection of their homes, and avowing constant and loving recollection of the wild surroundings amid which they were brought up. Is this to be wondered at? To the dweller in Gairloch the hill pasture, the rocky shore, the rough peat moss, the mountain path, the expanse of the sea loch, with the background of lordly summits, are all his own; others may have proprietary rights, the real enjoyment is his. Pining home-sickness is the immediate result of emigration, and it is often long before the practical business of life overcomes it. No blame attaches to this natural and irresistible passion for home; on the other hand, it is evidence of a valuable depth of character and an ennobling simplicity of heart; it is in fact the sentiment which is the basis of all true patriotism.

A less admirable characteristic of the Gairloch people is their cautious, "canny" disposition; it is, however, by no means confined to them. Modern curtailment of their privileges, the advent of tourists and other strangers, and a constant need for strict economy, have tended to the growth of this trait. It is evinced in a strong disinclination to reveal their views and intentions, and a grasping keenness in driving bargains. Here is an example from my personal experience:—A crofter had made known his desire to sell a heifer; a gentleman, wanting to purchase one, came some distance to see the animal; the crofter at first denied flatly that he had anything to sell; on the gentleman turning to leave, he said he would shew him a heifer; at length he named an exorbitant price; then finding the possible customer was a judge of cattle, he reduced the figure but still held out for too high a sum; no bargain was concluded that day. [123]

Captain Burt, in his racy "Letters" (about 1730), charges Highlanders with a want of cleanliness. A similar charge, supported by evidence of the same nasty kind, is even in the present day made against some Highlanders. Here in Gairloch the charge is not generally applicable; nay, it may truly be said that the people are in their persons even more cleanly than their neighbours in our large centres of population. True the odour of stale peat "reek," and the stains it leaves on articles of dress, sometimes convey an impression of dirtiness, but there is no real filth in this, and the presence of parasites is now-a-days very rare. Let the visitor enter one of the public schools of the parish and see the clean neatly-dressed children, and the charge will at once be disposed of.

In former days, and even to the beginning of the nineteenth century, the morals of the people were far from perfect; this is shown by the minutes of the presbytery. Happily, whether from fear of the kirk-session, or from the general improvement of recent times, offences against morals are to-day less common in Gairloch than in some parts of the lowlands.

It is singular that among Highlanders, at least in Gairloch, there is a total absence of anything like jealousy between married people; this fact by itself speaks volumes.

The principal fault of the Gairloch and other Highlanders has been variously designated indolence, lethargy, carelessness, sloth, idleness, and laziness,—all meaning much the same thing. It is often said "time is no object on the west coast," and so it would appear; nearly all meetings (except Sunday services) are from half-an-hour to an hour later in commencing than the time named; an eternal current of talk, talk, talk, accompanies every transaction, and not seldom interrupts or delays the most pressing work. It is only the male sex who are chargeable with this indolence, and amongst them it is fast giving way to greater activity; sometimes it is due to a love of dram-drinking, for which it forms an excuse; indeed it is often rightly laid at the door of whisky. All writers on the Highlands have remarked upon it, and some quotations will be given in connection with agriculture which will illustrate it. More continuous occupation is the remedy required. It is remarkable that the Highlander never displays indolence when he emigrates, and it is principally in his agricultural attempts that it is manifested. There is every reason to believe that it is gradually disappearing. [124]

The Gairloch population cling with marvellous tenacity to old ways of doing things, and thus general improvement is slow. On the whole they are a worthy religious people. "Man made the town: God made the country," is a saying that means more than the literal meaning of the words conveys. In the pure air and unpolluted water of the Highlands, there is less that is akin to sin and moral impurity than in the filthy crowded manufacturing town. The general sobriety, honesty, and piety of these Gairloch people, seem to me to outweigh their shortcomings.

It is a pity that some of the younger people affect a certain contempt for the old Highland characteristics, and seem determined to resemble their lowland neighbours as closely as possible. The Highland dress has for several generations been laid aside, and other distinctive ways and peculiarities, some of them ennobling and good, have fallen into disuse. Surely the people would best support their demand for a national recognition of the peculiar position they claim, by maintaining the old Highland *esprit*, rather than by disowning the nobler characteristics that have so long distinguished the inhabitants of the "land of the hills and the glens and the heroes."

In concluding this chapter I beg leave to propose what must prove a beneficial stimulus to the people of Gairloch, if it were efficiently carried out. It is the establishment of an annual prize meeting for competitions in—

> Home-spun cloth, plaids, and carpets produced within the parish; Gairloch hose; Vegetables, fruit, and flowers grown by Gairloch people; Highland games and athletic sports; Pipe music by local pipers; Gaelic songs by Gairloch bards.

Perhaps boat races might be added to the list. Substantial prizes for merit in these competitions would unquestionably tend to encourage industry and develop excellence. If sufficient funds were forthcoming, a competent committee could readily be got together to work out the details. I earnestly invite the assistance of all who visit this romantic country towards a proposal designed to promote the advancement of its Highland inhabitants.

ANTIQUITY NO. 9.—
STONE IMPLEMENT FOUND IN PEAT-CUTTING
BETWEEN INVERAN AND KERNSARY.
SCALE—HALF TRUE SIZE.

Chapter VI.

[125]

Language and Dress.

Distinctions between different races, which depend on varieties of character, customs, or means of livelihood, require discriminating study for their apprehension. But a different language and an unusual dress are marks which present themselves to all observers—the one to the ear and the other to the eye—even on the briefest scrutiny. The inhabitants of Gairloch have still a language entirely different to that of the lowland Scotch, and they used not long ago to wear a dress only known in the Highlands.

To this day the Gaelic language is universal among the people of Gairloch, and they cling to it with the utmost affection. In it are embalmed all the traditions and stories of the days that are gone, and the songs and poems of the bards both past and present.

Gaelic, which in the old books is called "Erse" or "Irish," has many dialects. The language of the natives of the west coast of Ireland is not materially different from that of the Scottish Highlanders. The Gaelic of Gairloch is considered tolerably pure, though William Ross, the Gairloch bard, who studied the subject closely, thought the Gaelic of the Lews *par excellence* the purest form of the language.

In the Old Statistical Account the Rev. Daniel Mackintosh stated that Gaelic was in his time the prevailing language in Gairloch.

Sir George Steuart Mackenzie, in his "General Survey," expressed the opinion that Gaelic was dying out; but the Rev. Donald M'Rae, minister of Poolewe, in his paper on the parish of Gairloch in the New Statistical Account, stated that the language then (1836) generally spoken was the Gaelic, and added, "I am not aware that it has lost ground within the last forty years." Mr M'Rae's remarks on the admixture by young men of English or Scotch words with their Gaelic, and on the purity in other respects of the language as spoken in Gairloch, will be found in Appendix E.

The Gaelic language is as prevalent in Gairloch to-day as it was when Mr M'Rae wrote his paper nearly fifty years ago, notwithstanding the near approach of the railway (within five miles of the parish boundary), and the greatly increased communication by steamers, which has taken place during the interval. The religious services of the people are conducted in Gaelic (though short English services are often added); there are scarcely any houses where English is spoken round the table or by the fire-side, though comparatively few are able to read Gaelic. At the same time the knowledge of the English language is undoubtedly on the increase, and the schools are taught in that language. Nevertheless even children fresh from school seldom speak English when playing together.

Some ten years ago there was a great agitation for the restoration of Gaelic teaching in the Highland schools, and the movement has recently been revived, with the result that the Government are about to sanction instruction in Gaelic as part of the curriculum, or at least as an [126] "extra subject." It was stated during the early stage of this agitation that in many places Highland children learnt English only as a parrot would, and did not understand its meaning. I took the trouble to see how this was in Gairloch schools, and I can only say that the imputation did not apply to the children I examined, for not only did many of them read English remarkably well, but searching cross-examination proved that they thoroughly understood the meaning of what they read.

There are still many of the older people who are unable to speak English fluently, and some who do not understand it at all. The English spoken by the young people as well as by most of the older natives who speak it is a particularly pure form, untarnished by provincialism or Scottish brogue. The smattering of Scotch occasionally to be met with is confined to those who come in contact with persons from the Lowlands. Occasionally a curious phrase occurs, the result of a literal translation of some Gaelic expression. For instance, wondering whether a grouse which flew behind a hill was the worse of a shot that had been fired at it, I asked a stout young gillie, whose position enabled him to see further round the hill, whether the bird had come down. He replied, "When she went out of my sight she had no word of settling."

Gaelic literature has been well represented in Gairloch. John Mackenzie, the author of the "Beauties of Gaelic Poetry," and many other works in Gaelic (Part II., chap. xxii.), was a native of Gairloch; and Mr Alexander Mackenzie, the editor of the *Celtic Magazine*, and the author of many valuable works (some containing Gaelic pieces), is also a Gairloch man. The Gaelic books especially pertaining to Gairloch are the poems of William Ross, the Gairloch bard, edited by the late John Mackenzie, and the poems of Duncan Mackenzie, the Kenlochewe bard, edited by Mr Alexander Mackenzie.

There has been much diversity of opinion upon the question whether it would not be better that the Gaelic language should be discouraged and be assisted to die out. I believe some few of the Highlanders themselves have adopted this unpatriotic view, but the contrary opinion, so ably advocated by Professor Blackie, now appears to be gaining ground. It seems quite possible that the Highlander may not only have a thorough command of English, but may also retain his own expressive language with its ennobling traditions. No doubt a knowledge of the language which is the medium through which most of the business of the kingdom is conducted has its importance; but surely the retention of their own tongue by Highlanders must tend in great measure to foster a patriotic feeling, which should lead them to do credit in their lives and conduct to their native glens.

There is no separate record of the dress anciently worn by the natives of Gairloch, but it was unquestionably the same as that of all the other inhabitants of the Highlands of Scotland, viz., the Breacan an Fheilidh, or belted or kilted plaid. In the *Celtic Magazine*, Vol. VIII., is a treatise on the "Antiquity of the Kilt," by Mr J. G. Mackay. One curious fact he mentions is, that the [127] Norwegian king Magnus, in his expedition to the Western Isles of Scotland in 1093, adopted the costume then in use in the western lands, which no doubt included the parish of Gairloch; so that we may if we please picture our prince of the Isle Maree tragedy as wearing the Highland dress. From this notice of King Magnus, and more particularly from the account given by John Taylor (Part IV., chap. xx.) of the deer hunting at Braemar, we learn that the Highlanders in old days expected all who came among them to adopt their peculiar garb.

Sometimes the belted plaid was worn along with the "triubhais," or "truis," or trews, a prolongation upwards of the tartan hose, fitting tightly to the skin and fastened below the knees with buckles. These trews were very different in appearance and make from the tartan trousers worn by some Highland regiments in the present day. Oddly enough the only representation extant of a Gairloch man of the old days, viz., Donald Odhar, exhibits him in the tartan trews. This representation is in the Mackenzie coat-of-arms on the Sabhal Geal at Flowerdale. It was doubtless executed by a southern sculptor, long after Donald Odhar lived and fought. But unquestionably the most usual—almost universal—form of the Highland dress was the tartan plaid gathered into pleats round the waist, where a belt kept it in position (thus forming the kilt), the rest of the plaid being brought over the shoulder. The name of the dress thus formed (Breacan an Fheilidh) means the plaid of the kilt.

The present form of the Highland dress, in which the kilt—sometimes called "philabeg"—is made up as a separate garment, has given rise to much controversy. The strife is said to have originated in a letter in the *Scots Magazine* in 1798; it was stated that about 1728 one Parkinson, an Englishman, who was superintendent of works in Lochaber, finding his Highland labourers encumbered with their belted plaids, taught them to separate the plaid from the kilt and sew the

kilt in its present form. Others say that the inventor of the kilt was Thomas Rawlinson, of the Glengarry ironworks, who about the same date and for the same reason introduced the supposed new dress.

Mr J. G. Mackay, in the treatise already referred to, proves incontestably that the separate form of the kilt is very ancient, and cannot have been the subject of a comparatively modern invention. The truth seems to be that, whilst the belted plaid was most generally worn, as requiring no tailoring, the separate kilt is of equal or greater antiquity, and was at all times occasionally used on account of its superior convenience, especially in those localities where the tailor's art was practised. An incidental corroboration of Mr Mackay's view is to be seen in a plan of Aberdeen, dated 1661, preserved in the municipal buildings of that city. In a corner of the plan three figures are represented, two of them in the lowland costume of the seventeenth century, and the third, a young man, dressed in a kilt and short coat without plaid, being exactly the form of the Highland dress as now generally worn. The Highland figure was probably introduced to record the then semi-Highland character of Aberdeen.

In order to repress the Highland *esprit*, an act (20th George II., cap. 51) was passed after the [128]
battle of Culloden, which rendered it illegal for any man or boy after 1st August 1747 to wear the Highland dress. The effect of this law was various. In some parts it was rigidly enforced, and the kilt was generally abandoned, whilst those few who persisted in wearing it were severely punished. In other places evasions of the act were winked at by the authorities; men who procured the legal breeches would hang them over their shoulders during journeys; others used the artifice of sewing up the centre of the kilt between the legs; whilst others again substituted for the tartan kilt a piece of blue, green, or red cloth wrapped round the waist, and hanging down to the knees, but not pleated.

In the Old Statistical Account (1792) there are many references to the Highland dress and to the effect of the passing of this act. In the account of the parish of Petty, Inverness-shire, we read, "The Highland dress is still retained in a great measure. The plaid is almost totally laid aside; but the small blue bonnet, the short coat, the tartan kilt and hose, and the Highland brogue, are still the ordinary dress of the men. The women in like manner retain the Highland dress of their sex, but have adopted more of that of their low country neighbours than the men."

The Old Statistical Account tells us nothing of the dress of the inhabitants of Gairloch; but in the notice given of the neighbouring parish of Kincardine, in the same county, is the following:—"The act 1746, discharging the Highland dress, had the worst of consequences. Prior to that period the Highland women were remarked for their skill and success in spinning and dying wool, and clothing themselves and their households, each according to her fancy, in tartans, fine, beautiful, and durable. Deprived of the pleasure of seeing their husbands, sons, and favourites in that elegant drapery, emulation died, and they became contented with manufacturing their wool in the coarsest and clumsiest manner, perhaps thinking that since they *must* appear like the neighbouring lowlanders, the less they shone in the ornaments of the lowland dress they would be the more in character. Their favourite employment thus failing them, rather than allow their girls to be idle they made them take to the spinning of linen yarn, in which few are yet so improved as to earn threepence per diem, and much, if not the most of the small earnings of these spinners, is laid out upon flimsy articles of dress; whilst that conscious pride, which formerly aspired at distinction from merit and industry, is converted into the most ridiculous and pernicious vanity."

The act forbidding the kilt was repealed in 1772. It had in many parts done its work, and though its repeal was in some places hailed with joy and celebrated by the bards, the Highland garb does not appear to have generally regained its former position as the ordinary dress of the people.

In the early part of the nineteenth century, as James Mackenzie and others inform me, the kilt was still the dress of many men in Gairloch, who never put on the trews until old age came, and in some cases not even then. As an instance, he says he remembers seeing Hugh M'Phail, a [129]
Gairloch man then living at the head of Loch Broom, measuring out herrings from his boat on a cold day in a hard winter, with four inches of snow on the ground and thick ice. Hugh wore only his shirt and kilt; he had put off his jacket for the work. He and his two brothers always wore the kilt; they were all fine men, and two of them were elders of the church of Loch Broom, under the Rev. Dr Ross. Other incidental references to the Highland dress of Gairloch men will be found in James Mackenzie's stories in Part II., chap. xxv.

Up to the present generation the kilt was still occasionally worn in Gairloch, especially at festive gatherings. That it had become infrequent, yet was not altogether abandoned, may be inferred from the following advice given upon dress in his "Hints" by the late Sir Francis Mackenzie, Bart.: —"The nature of this must depend upon your local situation, since it is evident that what is fitted for our mountains would be ill suited to the wants of the fisherman. As an inland labourer or shepherd, the ancient costume of the country, the kilt, hose, plaid, and bonnet, with a warm stout cloth short jacket, will be found the most serviceable, since it admits of a pliancy in the limbs admirably adapted either for labour or climbing our bare and heathery hills. No danger can possibly arise from exposing the limbs to the wet and cold, whilst the loins and back are protected by the thick folds of a kilt and plaid from severity of weather. I may too, without being liable to the charge of national vanity, say, that however much the dress of our ancestors has been lately laid aside, it gives a manly and graceful appearance at all times to the wearer. I have witnessed its attractions amongst the sons and daughters of peace in every country of Europe, and it has marked our bravery in battle wherever a plaid has appeared. It has the sanction of

antiquity in its favour; it is associated with the virtues and triumphs of Roman citizens; and I should regret its being laid aside, because I am decidedly of opinion that national dress is everywhere a strong incentive to the wearer not to disgrace the region which he proudly claims as the country of his birth."

The Highland dress is now only worn in Gairloch by a few gentlemen, pipers, keepers, and some of the better-to-do schoolboys. Its disappearance from among a people who cling so tenaciously to the Highland tongue is passing strange. By some it has been attributed to the inferior hardiness of the modern Highlander, a reason which is perhaps suggested by the following remark in the "General Survey" of Sir George Steuart Mackenzie (1810):—"The first indications of the introduction of luxury appeared not many years ago, in the young men relinquishing the philabeg and bonnet, which are now almost rarities."

The Gairloch company of rifle volunteers originally wore the kilt, but about the year 1878, in common with the majority of the battalion to which they are attached, they agreed to substitute Mackenzie tartan trousers. The change was made partly on the ground of economy. After the review of the Scottish volunteers at Edinburgh on 25th August 1881, which was attended by the Ross-shire battalion, including the Gairloch company, a general wish was expressed that the [130] example of the volunteer battalions of the adjoining counties should be followed, and the kilt resumed. The Gairloch company unanimously petitioned their gallant colonel to restore the kilt.

The ordinary dress of most Gairloch men is now the same as in the lowlands, except that some of those engaged as shepherds, keepers, and gillies wear knickerbockers, which display the hose; some men still carry plaids and don the blue bonnet.

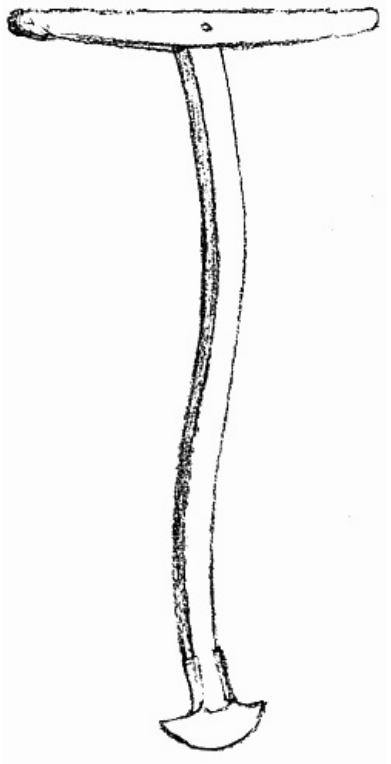
Gairloch is justly celebrated for its hose, which are knitted in immense variety of pattern and colour, some being in imitation of old forms of tartan. In the old days the hose worn with the Highland costume were cut from the same web as the tartan of which other parts of the dress were made, but now all hose are knitted. The "diced" patterns are relics of the old tartans.

A MUTCH.

The Dowager Lady Mackenzie of Gairloch writes as follows regarding the Gairloch hose:—"At my first visit to Gairloch, in 1837, I employed a lady from Skye who was staying at Kerrysdale to instruct twelve young women in knitting nice stockings with dice and other fancy patterns. When I came to act as trustee, and to live constantly at Flowerdale, I started the manufacture of the Gairloch stockings in earnest, having spinners, dyers, and knitters, all taught and superintended during the ten years I resided there; on my leaving and going abroad, Sir Kenneth gave the concern into the hands of the head gamekeeper, Mr George Ross. Now, dozens of pairs are brought by the women to the hotels and steamers, and large quantities go to Inverness, Edinburgh, and London; £100 worth has been sold in one shop."

The dress of the women of Gairloch scarcely varies from that of the country women in any other part of the kingdom. The principal distinction is to be seen in the retention by some women of the mutch, or mob-cap (*see illustration*), which they still wear, and make up with considerable taste.

Maidens until the last few years never wore caps, bonnets, or other headgear, only a ribbon or snood to keep the hair in place. Any other headdress was considered a disgrace. Even yet a few girls go to church without bonnets; and within the last dozen years this was almost universal. Now, however, the majority of the young women try even to surpass their sisters in towns in following the fashions of the day; some girls appear on Sundays with almost a flower-garden on their heads. The Rev. Donald M'Rae truly remarked, in his statement in the New Statistical Account fifty years ago (and it is still true), that "when a girl dresses in her best attire, her very habiliments, in some instances, would be sufficient to purchase a better dwelling-house than that from which she has just issued."



[131]

Dr Mackenzie writes on this point as follows:—"In my early days about six or eight bonnets would be the number on Sunday in our west coast (Gairloch) church in a five or six hundred congregation, and these only worn by the wives of the upper-crust tenantry. The other wives wore beautiful white 'mutches,' *i.e.* caps, the insides of which were made up with broad pretty ribbons, which shewed themselves through the outside muslin. Oh! what a descent from them to modern bonnets! The unmarried women always had their hair dressed as if going to court, and were quite a sight, charming to see, compared with their present abominable hats and gumflowers. But when a visitor at Tigh Dige (Flowerdale) expressed wonder how they contrived to have such beautiful glossy heads of hair, set up as by a hairdresser, every Sunday, my father would say, 'No thanks,

the jades stealing the bark of my young elms!' It seems a decoction of elm bark cleans and polishes hair marvellously; which accounted for many a young elm of my father's planting having a strip of bark, a foot long by say six inches wide, removed from the least visible side of the tree, as an always welcome present from a 'jade's' sweetheart on a Saturday. I don't believe they ever used oil or grease on their shining heads. So universally were mutches worn by all in the north of the working classes who were married, that when we settled in Edinburgh in 1827, my widowed nurse was drawn there by a well-doing son to keep house for him, and my mother having given her a very quiet bonnet to prevent her being stared at in Princes Street when wearing her mutch and visiting us, on her first appearance in a bonnet the dear old soul declared she nearly dropped in the street, for everybody was just staring at her for her pride in wearing a bonnet as if she was a lady!"

CABAR LAR, OR TURF PARER.
SCALE—ONE INCH TO A FOOT.

Chapter VII.

[132]

Ways and Means.

The principal sources of livelihood of the Gairloch people are their crofts and stock and their fisheries, both treated of in separate chapters. Of course a number of men have regular engagements, as farm or other servants and gamekeepers; whilst a few carry on trades, as tailors, shoemakers, weavers, boatbuilders, thatchers, dykers, sawyers, carpenters, and masons.

Some young men of the parish go south, and obtain situations either for the winter season or all the year round, and they often contribute towards home expenses.

The women of Gairloch, like all other Highland women, are noticeable for their industry. It is they who carry home heavy creels of peats for the household fire,—peats in the treatment of which they had taken an active share the previous summer; they herd the cow, and manage the house. But, more than all, it is the women who are mainly instrumental in producing the only manufactures of the parish, and very excellent manufactures too they are. They card and dye and spin the wool, they knit the Gairloch hose, and they prepare the various coloured worsteds which the weaver converts into tweeds of different patterns. Large numbers of the stockings are sent to Inverness, Edinburgh, and London (see last chapter). Some of the tweeds are worn in the parish, and some are sold to strangers.

It will be remembered that the early Pictish inhabitants of Gairloch dwelt in the brochs or round houses of what may almost be called the pre-historic period. These were succeeded by turf-built huts, the roofs of which, rudely framed with boughs, were covered with divots or turfs. The last turf house in the parish is said to have been at Moss Bank, Poolewe, and was occupied by an uncle of John Mackenzie (Iain Glas), whose improved dwelling stands on the same site. There are, however, two modern turf-built dwellings still to be seen at South Erradale. The turf house was gradually replaced by the style of dwelling which now prevails in the parish. The present cottages have their walls of stone, the better ones cemented with lime; the roofs of timber, thatched with heather, rushes, or straw; divots are also still frequently used in roofing. Some few superior crofters' houses have slated roofs, and modern grates with flues and regular chimneys. But many of the crofters still have their byres under the same roof; still have no chimney in the living room, whence the smoke from the peat fire escapes only by a hole in the roof; and still have the heap of ashes, slops, manure, and refuse just outside the door. Sir Francis Mackenzie, in his "Hints" (1838), has some suggestive remarks on the subject of these dwellings. He writes:—"I must at once protest against human beings and cattle entering together in your present fashion at the same doorway.... I will not raise a laugh at your expense by describing your present smoky dens, and the hole in the roof with sometimes an old creel stuck on it in imitation of a chimney. The smoke you now live in not only dirties and destroys your clothes and furniture, but soon reduces [133] the prettiest rosy faces in the world to premature wrinkles and deformities.... Let there be no apology for want of time for carrying away ashes, sweepings, or dirty water, and adding them to your dunghill, instead of sweeping all into a corner till you have more time, and emptying the dirty water at your door because you are too lazy to go a few yards farther."

The houses of the crofters are certainly undergoing gradual improvement, but the majority cling tenaciously to the type of dwelling their fathers occupied before them. Perhaps the villages of Strath, Poolewe, and Port-Henderson contain the most improved houses in the parish. Very few of the crofters have gardens worthy of the name, so that, of course, they lose the advantage of green vegetables and fresh fruits. Still more rare is it to see trees planted about their dwellings, though pleasant shade and shelter might thus be had, and though, it is understood, saplings might be obtained for the asking from the proprietors.

As a natural consequence of the proximity of middens to dwelling-houses, and other unhealthy arrangements, cases of fever occasionally occur. In the Old Statistical Account, 1792 (Appendix C), the writer, speaking of Gairloch, says that fevers were frequent, and an infectious putrid fever early in the preceding winter had proved fatal to many. Pennant had previously noticed how spring fever used to decimate the west coast. Such outbreaks have happily become rare since the

potato famine of 1847 led the people to depend more on imported meal for their sustenance in spring.

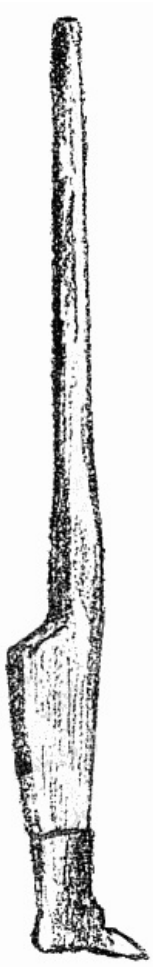
Few of the crofters' houses are floored, so that the inmates stand on the natural ground, or put their feet on a loose plank. In wet weather the ground often becomes damp. From this and other local causes pulmonary consumption is common among the crofter class. It is only right to add that this fatal disease often appears among some of the young people who go to work in southern towns, and come home to die.

Smallpox is said to have been fatal in Gairloch in the eighteenth century, at the time when it ravaged the adjoining parish of Applecross. The *soubriquet* "breac" (*i.e.* pock-pitted), so often met with in the history of Gairloch, is an evidence of the former frequency of this epidemic. Thanks to vaccination, it is now almost unknown.

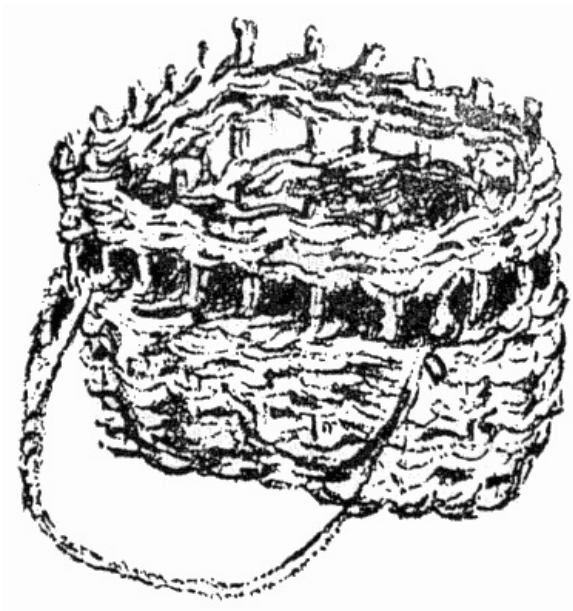
The chief articles of diet of the crofter population are fish, either fresh or cured, oatmeal, potatoes, and milk, with a little butcher meat occasionally. Eggs are not much eaten, but are exported to Glasgow in considerable quantities. None of the crofters keep pigs, which they consider to be unclean beasts; it is singular they should entirely neglect a source of food and profit so universal among their Irish congeners. Captain Burt, in his day, noticed the absence of swine among the mountains; he said, "those people have no offal wherewith to feed them; and were they to give them other food, one single sow would devour all the provisions of a family." [134]

The principal intoxicating beverage in Gairloch is whisky. Very little beer is consumed by the natives. Whisky became known in the Highlands during the sixteenth century, and soon found its way to Gairloch; but it is said that the mania for illicit distillation did not reach the parish until the year 1800. The first whisky was distilled in Gairloch by the grandfather of Alexander Cameron, the Tournaig bard, in Bruachaig, on the way up to the heights of Kenlochewe. The mother of George Maclennan, of Londubh, was at that time servant at the Kenlochewe inn, and long afterwards told her son how the innkeeper bought the whisky and the plant as well.

James Mackenzie says that it was in his father's house at Mellon Charles, in the same year (1800), that the first Gairloch whisky was made by a stranger, who had craved and obtained his father's hospitality. Probably both accounts are correct, but it is impossible at this distance of time to determine to whom the questionable honour of having commenced the illicit distillation of whisky ought to be assigned. The mania for smuggled whisky spread very rapidly throughout the parish, and is not yet extinct. The larger islands of Loch Maree were the scenes of illicit distillation in the early part of the nineteenth century. They say a regular periodical market for the sale of whisky made on the islands, used to be held at the large square stone on the shore of Loch Maree between Ardlair and Rudha Cailleach, called Clach a Mhail (*see* illustration).



TOR-SGIAN, OR PEAT KNIFE. SCALE—ONE INCH TO A FOOT.



CLIABH MOINE, OR PEAT CREEL. SCALE—ONE SIXTEENTH TRUE SIZE.

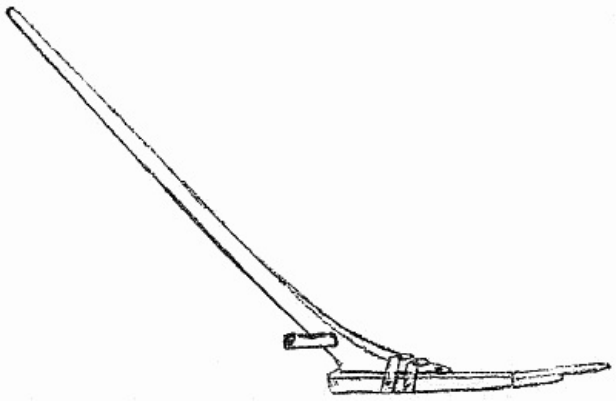
Peats are the only fuel used by the crofter population; they are cut from the peat-mosses by means of an instrument admirably adapted for the purpose, called the "torasgian," or peat knife (*see* illustration). Before the cutting is commenced, a spit of turf is removed from the surface of the ground by another implement called the "cabar lar," or turf-parer (*see* illustration). Each tenant has a portion of a convenient peat-moss allotted to him. The peats are cut when the spring work is over,—in April, May, or June,—if the weather permit. After being cut the peats are reared on end to dry, and when thoroughly dried are stacked for use. The stacks are ingeniously constructed, with the outside peats sloping downwards, so as to throw off rain-water. Some twenty years ago there was a season of such continuous wet weather that the peats never dried, and the people were put to great straits to keep themselves warm during the succeeding winter.

The peat creel (*see* illustration), called in Gaelic "cliabh moine," is used for bringing home supplies of peat as needed. Creels are made by the people of willow and birch twigs. [135]

There are very few carts among the crofters, and they have no other vehicles.

Dr Mackenzie gives the following account of the curious sledges which were used in Gairloch

instead of wheeled carts in the beginning of the nineteenth century:—"There being no need of wheels in a roadless country, although we had a six-mile road to the big loch [Loch Maree] and another six miles to its exit at the sea [at Poolewe], we had only sledges (in place of wheeled carts), all made by our farm-bailiff or grieve. He took two birch trees of the most suitable bends, and of them made the two shafts, with ironwork to suit the harness of back belts and collar-straps. The ends of the shafts were sliced away with an adze at the proper angle to slide easily and smoothly on the ground. Two planks, one behind the horse and the other about a foot from the shaft-ends, were securely nailed to the shaft, and bored with many augur-holes to receive many four-feet long hazel rungs to form front and back of the cart to keep in the goods, a similar plank atop of the rungs, making the front and rear of the cart surprisingly stiff and upright. The floor was made of planks, and these sledge-carts did all that was needed in moving crop of most kinds. I think moveable boxes, planted on the sledge-floor between the front and rear hazel rod palings, served to carry up fish from the shore, lime, and manure, &c. And it was long ere my father [Sir Hector Mackenzie of Gairloch] paid a penny a year to a cartwright."



HIGHLAND HAND-PLOUGH, CALLED CAS-CHROM, OR CROOKED FOOT.
SCALE—ONE FOURTEENTH TRUE SIZE.

Chapter VIII.

[136]

Agriculture and Stock.

In the time of the Roman occupation of Great Britain the Highlands were almost destitute of agriculture. That some corn was grown is manifest, from the ancient querns or hand-mills found everywhere. The possessions of the Highlanders then principally consisted of herds of cattle. Tradition says that cheese and butter supplied the place of bread and butter, and that a sort of pudding was made of blood taken from living cattle and mixed with a little meal. These, with meat and milk, formed the diet of the people. When the Highlands became more settled, agriculture increased, more corn was grown, and oatmeal, in some form or other, became a leading article of food.

The cattle of the Highlanders were mostly of the small black kind. Now-a-days there is a mixture of other breeds amongst the crofters' stock, and since the introduction of the black-faced sheep the cattle have become less numerous. The practice of drawing blood from living cattle was universal in the Highlands, even in 1730, when Captain Burt wrote his "Letters," and Pennant noticed the same usage in 1772. In Gairloch the practice continued to the beginning of the nineteenth century, if we may trust the evidence of the old inhabitants. At the east end of "the glen" (the narrow pass about half way between Gairloch and Poolewe), there is a flat moss called to this day Blar na Fala, or "the bog of the blood," because this was a usual place for the inhabitants to assemble their cattle and take blood from them. At Tournaig also a place is still pointed out where the natives used to bleed the cattle landed here from the Lews. This barbarous mode of obtaining blood as an article of food, affords striking evidence of the miserable poverty of the old days.

There was a pernicious practice much in vogue amongst the small farmers here up to the beginning of the nineteenth century; they let their cows for the season to a person called a "bowman," who engaged to produce for every two cows, one calf, two stones of butter weighing 24 lbs. English, and four stones of cheese. The calf was generally starved, and during winter the cattle got food sufficient only to keep them alive.

Before the great sheep-farms were established, the Gairloch people always took their black cattle to the shielings on the hills to feed on the upland pastures. It was generally the younger people who accompanied the cattle; they went up to the shielings when the spring work of the crofts was finished, about the end of May, and remained to the end of August, when they brought the cattle

home again. There is an air of romance about the life at the shielings. Miss Harriet Martineau, in her "Feats of the Fiord," draws a charming picture of the similar life in Norway. But in Gairloch it cannot have been very desirable; the shieling bothies, of which many remains are left, were [137] indeed miserable dwellings. Dr Mackenzie says:—"Well do I remember the dreadful shieling bothies, and I can hardly yet believe that heaps of strong healthy people actually lived and throve in them."

Sir George Steuart Mackenzie, writing in 1810, tells us that the present system of sheep-farming was introduced into Ross-shire by Sir John Lockhart Ross of Balnagown about 1775. Many evictions of smaller tenants took place, and much resistance was aroused. The first sheep-farm in Gairloch was started about 1810 at Letterewe, under the management of Mr John M'Intyre, who was much praised by Sir G. S. Mackenzie for his activity and good management, as well as his successful cultivation of the land about his place of residence,—"in every department of inclosing, draining, and management, he evinced judgment and knowledge of the best principles of agriculture."

The commencement of sheep-farming in Gairloch does not seem to have been accompanied by any noticeable friction. If one or two small townships were abolished to make way for the sheep-farmer, the inhabitants had other more desirable quarters provided for them. The population of Gairloch steadily increased from the date when sheep-farming began.

Recently several sheep-farms have been forested for deer, *i.e.* the sheep have been removed, and to-day the only large sheep-farm is that of Bruachaig above Kenlochewe; but there is a considerable extent of ground the pasturage of which is held by the crofters and by some smaller farmers, all of whom, both crofters and farmers, possess a number of sheep.

Sheep, unlike cattle, cause a rapid deterioration in the quality of the pasturage, so that the number of sheep any particular ground will maintain in health is said to diminish annually, *i.e.* if it be stocked to its full extent. In Gairloch it generally requires ten acres of hill pasture to support one sheep.

It is certain there were sheep in Gairloch centuries before the black-faced sheep were introduced. The original sheep were of small size, and had pink noses and brownish faces; their coat varied in colour; they were kept in houses at night for protection from wolves, and later on from foxes. This original native breed of sheep is now unknown in Gairloch; some of them are still to be seen in St Kilda. The late laird of Dundonell gave me a description of the St Kilda sheep, which exactly agreed with my own observations. He said they were "of every size, shape, and colour, from a hare to a jackass." In the present day the sheep in Gairloch are of the black-faced and cheviot breeds (with some crosses), probably in almost equal proportions.

There are twenty-seven farms entered in the County Valuation Roll as at present existing in Gairloch. There are sheep on all of them except one, viz., that attached to the Kenlochewe Hotel, which is a purely dairy farm; all of them have some arable land; several are club farms.

Most of the arable land, however, is cultivated by the crofters. Strictly speaking the present [138] system of crofts in Gairloch dates back only to 1845. Prior to that time the "run-rig" system of cultivation prevailed throughout Gairloch. The small tenants, instead of having crofts as now, held the arable land in common; in many cases an oversman was responsible to the proprietor for the whole rent. The arable land was divided into "rigs," and these were cultivated by the tenantry in rotation, sometimes decided by lot. In Appendix XCIX. to the Report (1885) of the Royal Commission on the Crofters and Cottars, is an interesting description of three varieties of "run-rig," communicated by Mr Alexander Carmichael.

The new system of crofts was established in Gairloch in 1845 and 1846. The Dowager Lady Mackenzie of Gairloch writes:—"Each tenant had a lot or croft of about four acres assigned to him; houses (of which there had before been usually five or six together) were now placed separately on the new lots; and fevers and epidemics, which formerly had spread so fast, ceased to do so. Money was borrowed from government, and a great deal of draining and trenching was done. The surveying, measuring, planning, and mapping near five hundred crofters' lots was very expensive to the proprietor, Sir Kenneth Mackenzie, and the trouble of having this change effected was very great; but it has proved of great benefit to the crofters themselves." There are still several small townships where the houses remain in close juxtaposition as under the old run-rig system. "First Coast" and "Second Coast," on the late Mr Bankes's estate, are examples.

The crops raised by the crofters are almost exclusively oats and potatoes; a little barley and some turnips are also grown. Besides their arable land the crofters have the right of grazing cattle and sheep on specified areas of moorland, or "hill" as it is called. The average stock of each crofter in Gairloch is two or three cows, one stirk, and five to ten sheep; a few horses or ponies are also kept. There are now four hundred and forty-two crofters on the Gairloch estate of Sir Kenneth Mackenzie, who pay an average rent, including common pasture, of £3 15s 5d, and have on an average three and a quarter acres of arable land. On the estates of the late Mr Bankes there are one hundred and one crofters, paying an average rent of £5 2s 2d for four and a quarter acres of arable land and the hill pasture. Of course each crofter has a dwelling-house, besides byre and barn, mostly very humble structures. The average number of persons residing on each croft is five. The crofters live in communities called townships, and the "hill" is occupied in common by each township; a herd boy is usually employed by the township to herd the cattle and sheep.

Few of the crofters have ploughs; they work their crofts by means of the "cas-chrom" (*see*

illustration). A southerner might well be pardoned for disbelieving that such a primitive and ancient instrument should still exist and be used in Great Britain; nevertheless hundreds of cas-chroms may be seen in use within the parish of Gairloch every April and May. The cas-chrom is generally, but not universally, condemned; no doubt it is a slow process to turn over a plot with this simple and ungainly-looking implement, but some argue that if properly used it is effective in [139] getting at the sub-soil.

The following extracts from Sir G. S. Mackenzie's "General Survey," and Sir Francis Mackenzie's "Hints," bear on our present subject:—

Sir G. S. Mackenzie says:—"There are no sources of information from which a precise knowledge of the state of agriculture in the northern counties, previous to the rebellion in 1745, can be derived; but from what it has been since that time, it may safely be concluded that agricultural knowledge was neither sought for nor desired. The mode of management which has been practised in this county (Ross-shire) and in other parts of the Highlands, and which has been handed down from father to son for many generations, is still to be found in the midst of the most improved districts. We still see the arable land divided into small crofts, and many of the hills occupied as commons. On the west coast particularly, the ground is seen covered with heaps of stones, and large quantities are collected on the divisions between the fields, so that a considerable portion of the land capable of cultivation is thus rendered useless by the indulgence of the most unpardonable sloth. The management of the native farmers is most destructive. The soil of one field is dug away to be laid upon another; and crop succeeds crop until the land refuses to yield anything. It is then allowed to rest for a season, and the weeds get time to multiply. Such, we must suppose, was the system of farming before the rebellion; we cannot imagine it to have been worse."

Coming to the nineteenth century, Sir G. S. Mackenzie writes as follows of the parish of Gairloch:—"The business of farming is but ill understood; and it certainly is surprising that proprietors, and the holders of long leases though of old date, should have their land in very bad order, and stock of a quality inferior to that which their ancestors possessed fifty years ago. There are a few exceptions no doubt; but the attachment to ancient customs is nowhere more strongly fixed than in this district. The time, however, has at length arrived when the people must shortly change their habits, or quit the country. The labour which is required for small farms occupies but a small portion of the time of the tenants; but they are so perversely indolent and careless that, while they see people from Inverness and Argyleshire, who in their own counties pay much higher rents, employed in fishing, making kelp, &c., and receiving high wages, none of them can be engaged for such labour. This is the case in general; and although, from my connection with this part of the country, I may have remarked the habits of the people more particularly than elsewhere, yet, from the various testimonies I have received, I can safely assert that the censure of indolence is not applicable to the inhabitants of this district only."

In another part of his "Survey" Sir George gives the following account of the Highland husbandman of his day:—"Though a singular one, it is a fact, that every one of the Highlanders, except those who have some connection with the soil, is active and enterprising. If he cannot find [140] employment at home, he travels hundreds of miles to seek it. There are not more handy labourers in the world than Highlanders at piece-work. They are not in general neat-handed, but they very soon acquire expertness in any kind of work they engage in. But look attentively to the proceedings of a Highland farmer, and a very different description will be found necessary for his habits. Until he gets his seed sown, he is as active as a man can be. When that business is over, he goes to sleep, until roused by the recollection that he must have some means of keeping himself warm during winter. He then spends a few days in the peat moss, where the women and children are the chief operators. He cuts the peats, and leaves them to be dried and piled up by his family. Whenever the peats have been brought home, another interval presents itself for repose until the corn is ripe. During the winter, unless a good opportunity for smuggling occurs, a Highland farmer has nothing to do but to keep himself warm. He never thinks of labouring his fields during mild weather, or of collecting manure during frost; nothing rouses him but the genial warmth of spring. I cannot reckon how often I have seen Highland farmers basking in the sun on a fine summer day, in all the comforts of idleness. I have asked them, when I found them in such a situation, why they were not busy hoeing their potatoes. "O! the women and bairns do that," was the answer. I would then ask why they did not remove the heaps of stones which I saw on their fields, or conduct away the water which rested on them. They would answer, that they did not know where to put them; or, that they did no harm; or, that they had been there so long that it was not worth while to stir them; and that water gave sap to the land; with many other answers equally absurd, and dictated by nothing but what must be considered constitutional sloth. During his leisure hours a Highland farmer will do nothing for himself; but hire him to work, and he will become as brisk as a bee. He will never go to seek work; it must be brought to him. There are many, however, who will absolutely refuse to work at all."

The ensuing quotations from the "Hints" of Sir Francis Mackenzie, published in 1838, shew that the Gairloch people had not progressed much in the quarter of a century which had elapsed since Sir G. S. Mackenzie had written. Sir Francis states, "that hardly one field in your parish has ever had a mattock applied to it for the purpose of giving a little greater depth of soil, although you are constantly grumbling about its poverty and thinness; nor, till within the last five years, has any tenant in Gairloch ever trenched a single rood of land properly; whilst even at this day there are not half-a-dozen who have performed this Herculean task, which just occupies a good labourer in any other country from eight to ten hours, even where this operation is most

difficult."

Under the head of manures, Sir Francis writes:—"Though so much depends both on the quantity and quality of your manure, nothing can be worse than your present system. Your dung-hill is generally placed immediately in front of your house door, raised like a mound, so that all the sap [141] and moisture flows away; while filth of every kind may be seen wasted around, which, if thrown together, would materially enlarge and enrich the heap. Instead of little daily attentions to increase the manure by every means in your power, you delay everything till the spring, when all is hurry and confusion, contending for sea-ware, and waiting for low tides, at the very time when your dung should be ready on the spot and your seed committed to the ground."

Referring to the "cas-chrom," Sir Francis remarks:—"The present mode of scratching your soil with the cas-chrom ought totally to be abolished; for though you may shovel over a greater surface with it than with the spade, it does not go to such a depth in the soil as to loosen it sufficiently and allow the roots of the various crops to seek for nourishment. By turning the soil over to one side only, it raises the ridges unequally; and whilst one half has a greater depth than necessary, the other is robbed till it becomes almost unproductive. I repeat, that your antique instrument is totally inadequate for cultivating your lands properly; its very name, 'crooked foot,' implies deformity; and it should only be retained as an object of curiosity for posterity, since it is a relic of that barbarism which, I rejoice to think, is fast vanishing."

Sir Francis strongly urges the advantage of industry, which he seems to have considered to be the principal want of the people. Sir Francis says:—"I had an admirable opportunity of illustrating this lately when walking with a small tenant, who, with both hands in his pockets, vehemently complained of the limited extent of his arable land, the poverty of the unreclaimed part, the barrenness of his cattle; in short, he found fault with everything. We were at that moment passing some land which he himself and his forefathers once possessed, but which had lately been given to a clergyman, who was anxious to set a moral as well as a spiritual example to his flock, and who was rapidly and successfully reclaiming the waste and improving the hitherto ill cultivated lands. 'Donald,' I asked, 'look at the improvement your parson is making on that land. Why not imitate his exertions?' 'Ah,' was the reply, 'well may he do all that, since the *fine subject* is sure to repay him!' 'And why,' I said, 'did not you or your forefathers discover this, and do something during the last century it was in their possession,—all which time it remained a barren moor? Would it not have repaid your father fifty years ago, or yourself last year, as well as it promises to remunerate the minister this season?' Donald scratched his head, but could not reply; he was for once convinced of his indolence, though I fear it is hardly yet cured. I fear that Donald still prefers a lounge on the banks of the Ewe, or a saunter in the direction of the inn in hopes of the friendly offer of a dram, to taking up his spade and opening a passage between his lazy beds for the water to escape, or gathering only a few barrowfuls of gravel from his immediate neighbourhood to throw upon his moss, or doing any little thing to make his home neat, his house clean, and himself happy and comfortable. His new farm is now what the glebe [142] was under his reign and that of his forefathers. Thus it is with those who are naturally indolent."

Sir Francis strongly recommends gardens. He says:—"Half a century ago no more than two or three gardens, I believe, existed in your whole parish, one of the most extensive in Britain; and even now, when civilization has been making rapid strides elsewhere, the number of spots where fruits are raised and flowers cultivated has not increased to perhaps a dozen." There are still, as previously remarked, few gardens attached to the crofters' dwellings in Gairloch, and vegetables, other than potatoes, are but little grown. The potato is said not to have become common in Gairloch until the end of the eighteenth century; there is no account of its introduction into the parish. It is stated by the old folk, that when first grown the tubers were hung in nets from the rafters of the roofs to be kept dry, exactly as is often done with onions. The potato disease was unknown in Gairloch until 1846. Now it frequently appears, and causes great loss; but in some seasons there is little of it, and years have been known when potatoes were pretty largely exported.

ANTIQUITY NO. 10.

QUERN, OR TROUGH, FOUND IN A
BROCH OR PICTISH ROUND HOUSE AT
TOURNAIG.
SCALE—ONE INCH TO A FOOT.

Chapter IX.

[143]

Fisheries.

The majority of the men of Gairloch are fishermen. The two sea-lochs of the parish, viz., the Gairloch and Loch Ewe, teem with the finny tribe, which are largely taken by the people, and are either exported or afford an important and healthful article of diet. The most considerable fishery of Gairloch is the cod, saythe, and ling fishery, which will be described further on. Besides the large number of cod, saythe, and ling taken during the regular annual fishery, under the auspices of the firms who have their depots at Badachro, a moderate quantity of these fish is taken in Gairloch and Loch Ewe by other inhabitants. Good takes of haddock are frequently obtained, but there is no organized haddock fishery. Whiting, flounders, and sea-bream are also taken in Gairloch waters. Haddock, whiting, flounders, &c., are captured by means of long lines as well as hand lines. The haddock are particularly good. I have known whiting taken up to two and a half pounds weight. Hand-line fishing is treated of in Part IV., chap. xiv.

Herrings are taken in Gairloch and Loch Ewe; in some years considerable numbers are cured at and exported from Badachro. Ordinary herring-nets are employed.

Many of the able-bodied men of Gairloch take part in the herring fisheries of the Long Island and of the east coast of Scotland. Some have boats of their own; these are the joint property of several fishermen, who divide the annual profits among them. Others hire themselves out to assist east coast fishermen. The Long Island fishing usually occupies the fishermen from 12th May to 20th June, and the east coast fishing keeps them from home between the end of June and the beginning of September. The produce of the fishings is uncertain, and varies greatly from year to year. I understand that the Gairloch men who go to the east coast herring fishings bring home on an average £18 to £20 each; the amount is affected not only by the success or non-success of the fishery, but by losses of nets and even of boats.

Lobsters and crabs are exported from Gairloch; but this fishery is not so successful as formerly, owing to the decline in the number of lobsters. It is prosecuted at several of the villages on the coasts of Gairloch and Loch Ewe, and the produce is sent in boxes to the English markets.

Oysters were formerly tolerably abundant on the scalps about the heads of Gairloch and Loch Ewe, and up to 1875 were exported. At that time a London firm leased some oyster-beds, which have however ceased to be remunerative.

The cod fishery of Gairloch may almost be said to be historical. We can at least find some account of it as far back as a century and a half ago.

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The historian of the Mackenzies records, that the tenants of Sir Alexander Mackenzie, ninth laird of Gairloch (who ruled Gairloch from his coming of age in 1721 to his death in 1766), "were bound to deliver to him at current prices all the cod and ling caught by them, and in some cases were bound to keep one or more boats, with a sufficient number of men as sub-tenants, for the prosecution of the cod and ling fishings. He kept his own curer, cured the fish, and sold it at 12s. 6d. per cwt., delivered in June at Gairloch with credit until the following Martinmas, to a Mr Dunbar, merchant, with whom he made a contract, binding himself for several years to deliver at the price named all the cod caught in Gairloch."

In Pennant's "Tour" (Appendix B) we have some interesting particulars about the Gairloch cod fishery. He states the average annual capture as varying from five to twenty-seven thousand; the price as 2¼d a piece, and the minimum size as eighteen inches. The fish in his day (1772) were sent to Bilboa, but he says the Spaniards rejected the ling.

The Rev. Daniel M'Intosh, in the Old Statistical Account, 1792 (Appendix C), says, "Gairloch has been for many years famous for the cod fishing. Sir Hector M'Kenzie of Gairloch, the present proprietor, sends to market annually, upon an average, betwixt thirty and forty thousand cod, exclusive of the number with which the country people serve themselves."

Sir George S. Mackenzie, in his "Survey," published in 1810, has the following interesting account of the Gairloch cod fishery as it was carried on in the time of Sir Hector M'Kenzie:—

"This fishery has, from time immemorial, been the most constant and regularly productive of any on the coasts of Scotland. This is probably owing to there being in this quarter the most considerable extent of clean sandy ground, in the neighbourhood of the numerous banks in the Minch, where the fish find the best bottom and shelter for spawning, and abundance of food, consisting of small crabs, sand eels, star fish, mussels, cockles, &c., which are always found in their stomachs.

"The fish are in full roe, and best condition, in January, when the fishing usually begins; and they regularly become poorer till fully spawned, which happens about the end of April, when the fishing ends. The size of the fish is small, but they are rich. They weigh on an average five pounds each, when cleaned for salting. They have usually been sent pickled, and also dried, to Ireland, Liverpool, and London, and were formerly sent dried to Spain. The natives of the neighbouring shores are in general exclusively occupied in this fishing; but from the difficulty of procuring bait, only about twenty boats, each having about four hundred hooks, are employed. The average annual produce of this fishing, for fifteen years, has exceeded twenty thousand cod; but were the fishermen to take but half the trouble some others do to procure bait, they might certainly double the produce.

"Messrs J. Nicol & Young are the fishcurers. They are obliged to receive the fish taken while they continue to be good. The fishermen are a class of people inhabiting the shores on the bay of Gairloch, paying from £1 sterling to £2, 2s. of rent for land. They receive for each codfish, [145] measuring eighteen inches from the shoulder fins to the tail, 3¼d.; and for every ling, measuring thirty inches as above, 5d. Sir Hector Mackenzie, the proprietor, gives the fishermen a bounty of twenty guineas, which is divided among the crews of the best-fished boats, pointed out by a jury of the fishermen themselves. He gives wood for boats and houses, and receives no other remuneration than ¼d. per fish. But more than this, Sir Hector takes upon himself to make good to the fishers the payment due to them from the fishcurers, and takes the risk of not recovering it upon himself. By this he has lost many hundreds of pounds. What an example this is. Here we see a proprietor, not only encouraging industry by every ordinary means, but absolutely risking, and losing, large sums of money, in the most laudable and noble exertions to maintain and support a trade most valuable for the country and the people engaged in it. Such conduct is beyond all praise."

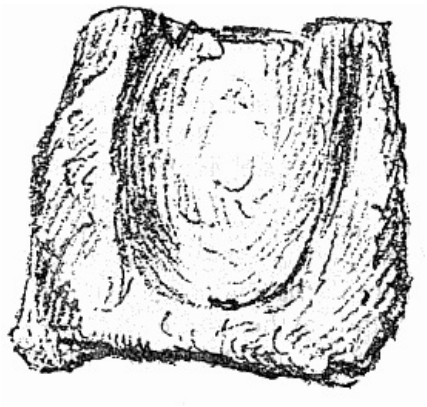
The cod fishing was carried on until quite recently (about 1877) by means of long lines with baited hooks, the bait being mostly mussels. Since 1877 nets have to a great extent displaced the baited lines. The lines were entirely made by the people themselves, of horse-hair and hemp, until the early part of the present century. The hooks were also home-made, for Gairloch used to be self-contained. The hooks were made out of knitting needles, cut into proper lengths and then bent to the right shape, to effect which one end was fixed in a door key. The point was then sharpened on a stone, and the barb was raised by means of a knife. Ruaridh Ceard, the blacksmith at Second Coast (he was a tinker), used to make fish-hooks from backs of pocket-knives and odd bits of steel. At that time everybody in Gairloch grew a small plot of hemp. The women spun the flax with the distaff, and herring-nets and fishing-lines were made from it. Fish-hooks and lines, as well as herring-nets, were precious articles in those days.

It was about the year 1823 that a large ship put into Ullapool and was there destroyed by fire. Among her cargo, which was partially saved, were casks of hooks, and these were the first manufactured hooks known in this district.

The Gairloch cod fishery is now carried on by two firms, who have curing-houses or stations at Badachro, one on the Dry Island and the other on Eilean (or Isle) Horisdale. The fishery seems to be more productive now than even in the days of Sir Hector Mackenzie. It yields an average of about forty thousand cod per annum. The year 1884 was extraordinarily good. The number of cod cured and sent away fresh was about eighty thousand, besides about forty-four thousand saythe. These figures were about double the average. A few ling are also taken, but they are the same price as cod, and are counted among them. In 1884 about a third part of the fish were dried; the remainder were sent fresh to Glasgow and the English markets by steamer. The price paid to the fishermen in 1884 was 11d. for each cod and 4d. for each saythe. The number of boats employed was forty. Each boat had as a rule four men, so that there were in all one hundred and sixty [146] fishermen employed besides about thirty workmen and ten women who worked at the stations. The cod were larger than in Pennant's day.

The season of 1885 was not so productive, and the prices were lower, viz., 7d. for each cod and 3d. for each saythe; a few boats had 8d. for each cod. Some lines with baited hooks are still used instead of nets. Mr John Mackenzie, the manager of the Dry Island station, who has furnished much of this information about the fishery, is of opinion that the lines are far better than nets, and he says this was proved in 1885. Of course the use of the lines necessitates a certain loss of time in collecting bait.

The only remaining fishery of Gairloch is the salmon fishery, noticed by Pennant. This belongs to Sir Kenneth Mackenzie, Bart., under an old charter from the crown, and is leased by Mr A. P. Hogarth of Aberdeen, who sends a manager each spring to the principal station at Poolewe. The fishing is conducted principally by means of bag-nets, and all the fish are brought to Poolewe. In the early part of the season the salmon are boiled and packed in vinegar in kegs, each keg containing about thirty-two pounds weight of fish. In summer, when the salmon are most plentiful, Mr Hogarth employs fast sailing smacks or cutters, which come twice a week from Aberdeen to Poolewe and take away the fish packed in ice. From Aberdeen they are sent to the London market as fresh salmon. A few bull trout and sea trout are also taken. The station at Poolewe is usually termed the "Boiler-house," and its obliging manager, Mr Alexander Mutch, is always proud of displaying his beautiful salmon to callers. For obvious reasons the number of fish taken each year is kept secret. Mr Hogarth told me that the year 1883 was the best season he had ever known except one, and that not only in Gairloch but in other parts of Scotland, where he rents fishings. On the whole, however, the stock of salmon is believed to be gradually diminishing.



ANTIQUITY NO. 11.
FRAGMENT OF TROUGH FOUND IN A BROCH OR PICTISH ROUND HOUSE NEAR TOURNAIG.
SCALE—ONE INCH TO A FOOT.

Chapter X.

[147]

Posts and Road-making.

It is impossible to fix the exact date when a post was established to Gairloch; it was probably some time in the latter half of the eighteenth century. In 1730 letters from Inverness to Edinburgh were carried by a foot-post, as we learn from Captain Burt, so that it is not to be wondered at that our remote parish of Gairloch did not have any post until even a later period. Originally one post-"runner" was employed on the service. He seems for a long time to have come regularly only when the laird of Gairloch was in residence at Flowerdale in summer and autumn. The post-runner came from Dingwall by Strath Braan and Glen Dochartie to the head of Loch Maree, then along the east side of the loch *viâ* Letterewe to Poolewe, and thence, if necessary, forward to Flowerdale. Sometimes, during the residence of the laird at Flowerdale, the post-runner seems to have gone by the west side of Loch Maree to Slatadale, and thence over the pass, by the falls of the Kerry, to Flowerdale. During the winter months the post was suspended; even in summer he originally came to Gairloch only once a week. When a second runner was employed the post bags were brought twice a week. After the construction of the present roads the mail came by horse and trap three times a week, and in 1883 the Post Office authorities granted a daily mail, *i.e.* every day except Sundays.

Dr Mackenzie, writing of the ten years commencing with 1808, describes the Gairloch post as follows:—"Then the mail north of the Highland metropolis (Inverness) went on horseback; and when we squatted on the west coast (Gairloch) our nearest post-office was sixty miles away in our county town (Dingwall), and our only letter-carrier was one of my father's (Sir Hector's) attachés, little Duncan, a bit of kilted india-rubber, who, with a sheepskin knapsack on his back to keep his despatches dry (for Mackintosh waterproof had not been dreamed of then), left the west on Monday, got the sixty miles done on Wednesday, and returning on Thursday delivered up his mail to my father on the Saturday, and was ready to trip off east next Monday; and so all the five months of our western stay, doing his one hundred and twenty miles every week! I never heard of his being a day off work in many a year. And what a lot of news was extracted from him ere he got away to his home on Saturday evening! When we retired to the east the natives left behind us got their postal delivery the best way they could."

James Mackenzie states, that before 1820 there were two Gairloch post-runners, viz., Donald Mackenzie, always called Donald Charles, grandfather of the present John Mackenzie (Iain Glas) of Mossbank, Poolewe, and Roderick M'Lennan of Kirkton, father of George M'Lennan of Londubh, who is at present foreman to Mr O. H. Mackenzie. James Mackenzie thinks that Dr Mackenzie is mistaken in giving the name Duncan to the post-runner he mentions, and that it was [148] Donald Charles (who was the last single post-runner) that Dr Mackenzie knew in his youth. This opinion agrees with the fact that Donald Charles always wore the kilt, then falling into disuse among the common people of Gairloch. The kilt seems, however, to have been generally in favour with the post-runners, who doubtless found it suitable for their long walks; both Rorie (Roderick M'Lennan) and William Cross (a subsequent post-runner, descended from one of the ironworkers) always wore the kilt. Donald Charles and Rorie alternately brought the post from Dingwall. They came to Poolewe on Wednesdays and Saturdays, walking "through the rock," *i.e. viâ* Letterewe, the Bull Rock, and the east side of Loch Maree. When the laird was staying at Flowerdale the post-runners went there first.

Another post-runner—one M'Leay, from Poolewe—was found dead about a mile from the inn at Achnasheen. In his hand were a piece of bread and a bit of mutton, which his sister, who was a

servant at the inn, had given him just before he left. He was a young man. A brother of his was found dead at the back of the park at Tournaig. He had been sent by Mr Mackenzie of Lochend to Aultbea to fetch whisky. His face was "spoilt," and his mouth full of earth. His death was thought to be the work of a spirit! A memorial cairn was thrown up on the spot where the body was found, and is there to this day.

John Mackenzie, son of Donald Charles, was the last running post to Gairloch. He was called Iain Mor am Post, and was a remarkably strong and courageous Highlander. When the mail-car began to run he emigrated to Australia.

There were no roads in Gairloch until the military road was made, which took nearly the same course as the present county road; it can still be traced in most places. It was part of the system of military roads constructed under the supervision of General Wade in the first half of the eighteenth century. It is usually called General Wade's road, though it is possible he never saw it. In the beginning of the nineteenth century this old road had become impassable by wheeled vehicles.

There was a bridge at Grudidh on General Wade's road; when the new road was made there it was doubled in width. The bridge at Kenlochewe was built in 1843; that near Flowerdale (widened about 1880) long before. The bridge at Poolewe was built about 1844; that at Little Gruinard, on the northern boundary of the parish, a little later.

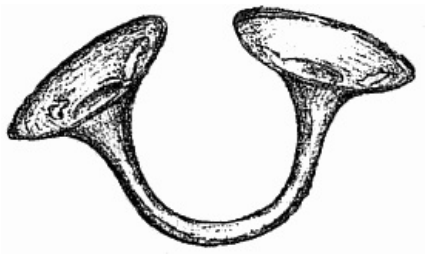
The road from Gairloch to Poolewe was made by Sir Hector Mackenzie in 1825. It was set out by Duncan Mackenzie, the innkeeper at Poolewe, who had been butler to Sir Hector.

The Dowager Lady Mackenzie of Gairloch, widow of the late Sir Francis Mackenzie, has communicated the following statement with regard to other roads in Gairloch:—"I came to reside permanently at Flowerdale in June 1844. For ten years from June 1843 I was trustee for the Gairloch property with Mr Mackenzie of Ord. There was no road then between Rudha 'n Fhomhair, at the upper end of Loch Maree and Slatadale. The potato disease commenced in [149] August 1846, and this road was begun the following spring. When the government steamers called in at Gairloch, inquiring as to the distress and poverty caused by the potato disease, I did not advocate the sending of supplies of meal, &c., but urged continually, in speaking and by letters, both to the Destitution Committee and to the Home Secretary (Sir George Grey), and to Lord John Russell, that money might be granted to make the road from Rudha 'n Fhomhair to Slatadale, and thus to open up the country, I, on my part, as trustee, guaranteeing to support the people who could not work on the road. The Edinburgh Destitution Committee was not willing to agree to my request without the sanction of the government; and the government said, however much they approved of my plan, and however desirous of assisting me they felt, they could not grant the request of one individual, without incurring the risk of many more applications; but after some delay and consideration, they said they would send me Captain Webb of the Engineers and a corporal and two privates (who had been employed in Shetland) to line out the road and map it, ready for a contractor's offer. This was done. Captain Webb was my guest at Flowerdale for six weeks during the winter; and early in the following spring, the maps and plans arrived from Woolwich, and the road was begun, my son (Mr O. H. Mackenzie) cutting the first turf. Though mentioning my own name throughout this transaction, I could not have done anything without the indefatigable assistance of Captain (now Admiral) Russell Elliott of Appleby Castle; he was at the head of the Destitution Committee, a sort of generalissimo of the whole concern; also I was much indebted to Sir Charles Trevelyan, at that time Secretary to the Home Secretary. By the aid of such good and able friends, the Destitution Committee was induced to advance in all two or three thousand pounds, the district road trustees undertaking to advance equal to what was advanced on the Loch Maree road; and money was afterwards received from the Destitution Fund to carry on the road to Badachro, now the large fishing station, where curers purchase the herring, cod, ling, &c., from the people. Lord John Russell sent me £100 out of a fund he had from the receipts of a ball or concert for the destitute Highlanders, and I had several large sums sent me by strangers, besides some from my own relations. Money also was granted from Edinburgh to assist in making the road from Poolewe to Inverasdale. After I received money from the Destitution Committee several other proprietors applied for assistance in the same way. Mr Bankes of Letterewe, and Mr Hugh Mackenzie of Dundonnell, both received grants on the same terms. The road from Poolewe to Aultbea was thus made, and also I think the road from Dundonnell, by Feithean, to the Ullapool road."

Mr Mackenzie, Dundonnell, took a leading part in obtaining Destitution money for road-making. Nearly £2000 from that and similar sources was spent on the Loch Maree road; it cost £3403, the balance being raised by the district road trustees, who also gave £1000 towards the Aultbea road, the Destitution Committee giving £370. That Committee also assisted the making of the [150] roads on the north and south sides of Gairloch, and on the west side of Loch Ewe.

There is no account to be had of the making of the road from Poolewe to Inveran, but it seems to have been formed some time before the road from Gairloch to Poolewe was made.

Mr Osgood H. Mackenzie completed the road from Kernsary to Fionn Loch in 1875. The road connecting Kernsary with Inveran was made about 1870.



**ANTIQUITY NO. 12.—
BRONZE PENANNULAR RING FOUND
AT LONDUBH.
SCALE—HALF TRUE SIZE.**

Chapter XI.

Superstitions of Isle Maree.

Isle Maree, or Innis, or Inch, or Eilean Maree, is, as it were, the eye of Loch Maree. From either end of the loch it arrests the gaze of the spectator, and seems almost to look him in the face. Though one of the smallest of the islands, it is without doubt the most interesting. Not only does the story of the unfortunate prince and princess (Part I., chap, ii.) centre in it, but so also do the quaint superstitions connected with the wishing-tree, the little well resorted to for the cure of insanity, and the now discontinued sacrifices of bulls.

Her most gracious Majesty Queen Victoria visited Isle Maree on the 16th September 1877. It was the Sabbath day, and Her Majesty graciously read a short sermon to her Gairloch gillies. She then fixed her offering in the wishing-tree, a pleasantry which most visitors to the island repeat, it being common report that a wish silently formed when any metal article is attached to the tree will certainly be realized. It is said that if any one removes an offering that has been fixed in the tree, some misfortune, probably the taking fire of the house of the desecrator, is sure to follow. The tree is now nearly dead. This modern fancy of the wishing-tree is very different from its original superstition, as will appear shortly.

It seems certain that St Maelrubha, who brought Christianity into the district in the seventh century, permitted the Druidical sacrifices of bulls to be continued, and endeavoured to give them a Christian aspect. These sacrifices continued to as late a date as 1678. Latterly the sacrifices appear to have been connected with the resort to the island for the cure of insanity. Originally neither the legend of the prince and princess (Part I., chap. ii.), nor the sacrifices of bulls, had any connection with the cure of insanity. Later on versions of the traditional legend were promulgated, in which either the prince or the princess were made out to have become lunatic, evidently with the idea of connecting the story in some way, however remote, with the cure of insanity. The sacrifice of a bull became in the seventeenth century a preliminary to the proceedings for the cure of a lunatic, although in older days such a sacrifice had been entirely independent of anything of the sort. [151]

Probably the resort to the island for the miraculous cure of insanity, although, as has been remarked, unconnected with the legend or the sacrifices, dates back to the time of St Maelrubha. The practice was for the party to row several times round the island, the attendants jerking the lunatic thrice into the water; then they landed on the island, where the patient knelt before the altar, was brought to the little well, drank some of the holy water, and finally attached an offering to the tree. This process was repeated every day for some weeks. In modern times there is no altar, and the lunatic is brought only on one occasion to the island.

The resort to Isle Maree for the cure of lunacy was continued until a very recent date, though no longer prefaced by the sacrifice of a bull. There was an instance in 1856, when a young woman was brought to the island from Easter Ross; she was afterwards placed in the Inverness Asylum. A prior case was reported in the *Inverness Courier* of 4th November 1852. I am assured on good authority that lunatics are still taken to the island to be cured, but these expeditions are now kept strictly secret.

Our next chapter will be devoted to a discussion of these superstitions, mostly from the pen of Dr Arthur Mitchell, chairman of the Lunacy Commission of Scotland. His full description of Isle Maree will give the reader a good idea of the subject generally.

Her Majesty the Queen has herself written an excellent account of the island in "More leaves from the Journal of a Life in the Highlands," to which the reader is referred.

The following is Dr Mitchell's description, extracted from his valuable paper "On various Superstitions in the north-west Highlands and Islands of Scotland, especially in relation to Lunacy," printed in Vol. IV. of the proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland. Dr Mitchell, it will be seen, clears up in a most satisfactory manner the question of the derivation of

the name Maree:—

"Eilean Maree, or Innis Maree, is a small low island, with clean gravelly shores, half-way down the loch, not more than a quarter of a mile in its greatest diameter.

"On its highest part there is an enclosure, whose outline is an irregular oval (ninety by one hundred and twenty feet). The wall, which is not more than two feet high, is now covered with earth and moss. Pennant, however, describes it as a 'stone dyke, with a regular narrow entrance.' [152] In the centre of this enclosure there are the remains of a small chapel; but so complete is the ruin, that it is not possible to determine the style of architecture. Round about the chapel are fifty or sixty graves, generally covered by a flat undressed stone, with rude blocks at the head and feet. Many of these graves are recent. One, indeed, is quite fresh,—the burial having taken place but a week before my visit. Several of the older ones are said to contain the bodies of the Sasunnach artizans who, in the seventeenth century, worked at the iron furnaces of Poolewe. With two exceptions there are no cuttings, carvings, or inscriptions of any kind on any of the tombstones. These two have distinct and well-formed incised crosses on them (*see illustration*). The stones on which these occur have never been dressed or even squared. They are flat, and lie beside each other, nearly end to end, and about east and west.

"The celebrated well, whose waters are of such magic power, is near the shore. We found it dry, and full of last year's leaves. It is a built well, and the flat stone which serves for a cover we found lying on the bank.

"Near it stands an oak tree, which is studded with nails. To each of these was originally attached a piece of the clothing of some patient who had visited the spot. There are hundreds of nails, and one has still fastened to it a faded ribbon. Two bone buttons and two buckles we also found nailed to the tree. Countless pennies and halfpennies are driven edgeways into the wood,—over many the bark is closing, over many it has already closed. All the trees about the well are covered with initials. A rude M, with an anchor below it, tells of the seaman's noted credulity and superstitious character. Two sets of initials with a date between, and below a heart pierced by an arrow, probably record the visit of a love-sick couple, seeking here a cure of their folly. The solitary interview would probably counteract the working of the waters.

"The sacred holly grows everywhere on the island. We found it loaded with fruit. The oak, the larch, the alder, the beech, the mountain-ash, the sycamore, the willow, the prickly holly, the dog-rose, the juniper, the honeysuckle, and the heather all abound, and form a most charming grove."

After giving a version of the legend of the prince and princess, Dr Mitchell proceeds to remark:—

"Since the same tale is told with many variations, it is probable that something of this kind did really happen; but that the virtues of the well have any connection with the story is improbable, as I shall shortly show.

"Anderson, Fullarton, the new and old Statistical Accounts, as well as the people of the place, derive the name from a dedication to St Mary. This remarkable error is first clearly pointed out in the 'Origines Parochiales,' though Pennant evidently had the right view when he speaks of it as the favoured isle of the saint (St Maree), the patron of all the coast from Applecross to Lochbroom, and tells us that he, the saint, is held in high esteem, and that the oath of the country [153] is by his name.

"It appears that Maelrubha came from Ireland to Scotland, and founded the church of Aporcrossan in 673. After his death he became the patron saint of the district. His name is variously known as Malrubius, Malrube, Mulray, Murie, Mourie, and as the last corruption, Maree. That the island and loch bear the name of this saint there can be no doubt. Even the mode of pronouncing the word by the Gaelic-speaking population shews that it is not derived from Mary; while Pennant's remark proves that the mistake is not yet a century old. Names are monuments—pages of history—inscribed stones; yet thus do we find them broken, blotted, and defaced. Mourie died at Applecross, on the 21st April 722. There is some doubt as to where he was buried, and I have nothing to make it probable that it was in Inch Maree. It is certain, or all but certain, however, that this *vir dei* led a hermit's life, and wrought miracles there; and that, like St Goderick, St Fillan, and a host of others, he continued to do so after his death.

"Whether the saint, on his arrival in Scotland, found a pagan temple on this little island, or whether he himself first consecrated the spot, is a question of interest. Pennant says, 'I suspect the dike to have been originally Druidical, and that the ancient superstition of paganism was taken up by the saint as the readiest method of making a conquest over the minds of the inhabitants.' This opinion I am inclined to adopt. The people of the place speak often of the god Mourie, instead of St Mourie, which may have resulted from his having supplanted the old god. Tradition also points to it as a place of worship before the Christian epoch; and the curious record I have obtained of the sacrifice of bulls there, strongly confirms this belief, and furnishes fresh proof of the liberal engrafting upon Christianity of all forms of paganism in the early history of the Church."

Chapter XII.

THE principal source of the knowledge we possess of the superstitious sacrifices of bulls and attempted cures of insanity at Isle Maree, are the minutes extracted from the records of the Presbytery of Dingwall, which will be found in Appendix F.

Dr Mitchell has the following instructive remarks on these subjects in his paper written in 1860: —

"Fuller wittily observes that, as careful mothers and nurses on condition they can get their children to part with knives are contented to let them play with rattles, so the early Christian teachers permitted ignorant people to retain some of their former foolish customs, that they might remove from them the most dangerous. Fuller is here writing of protesting times; but if we go back to the first introduction of Christianity into our country, we shall find that many pagan [154] ceremonies were connived at and engrafted on the new religion, which we now-a-days should feel inclined rather to class with edged tools than rattles. Instead of breaking the monuments of idolatry, our early teachers gave them a Christian baptism, by cutting on them the symbols of their own religion; and with the rites and ceremonies of paganism they dealt in like manner.

"The places of Druidical worship, which Maelrubha found on his arrival in Applecross, in all probability became afterwards places of Christian worship; and such of them as were believed to possess special virtues continued to enjoy their special reputation, with this difference, however, that what the god, or demon, or *genius loci* did before, the saint took upon himself, tolerating as much of the old ceremony as the elastic conscience of the age permitted. 'Une religion chargée de beaucoup de pratiques,' says Montesquieu, 'attache plus à elle qu'une autre, qui l'est moins;' and this principle was freely acted on,—the more freely, perhaps, that the early Christian teachers came among a people peculiarly given to ceremony, if we may trust the remark of Pliny, 'The Britons are so stupendly superstitious in their ceremonies, that they go even beyond the Persians.' I am inclined to think, with Pennant and the writer in the old Statistical Account, that Inch Maree was such a locality. The sacrifice of the bull, and the speaking of the saint as 'the god,' made this probable, while the belief expressed by some old writers that such was the fact, and existing oral traditions, render it still more so.

"I have no earlier allusion to the well on this island than 1656. It was then the resort of the lunatic, and, as I have said, it may possibly have been so from the date of Mourie's arrival, or even before that time. One shrine in Belgium is known to have had a special reputation of this kind for more than twelve hundred years. I refer to that of St Dympna in Gheel. Our own St Fillan's, too, has been resorted to for the 'blessed purpose of conferring health on the distressed' since the year 700. Further back still, Orpheus, who is said to have written the hymn to Mercury, speaks of Mercury's grot, where remedy was to be had for lunatics and lepers.

"The most interesting feature of these [presbytery] extracts, however, is the finding so complete and formal a sacrificial ceremony commonly practised in our country at so late a period as within two hundred years of our own day. The people point to Inverasdale as the last place where the sacrifice was offered. For the cure of the murrain in cattle, one of the herd is still sacrificed for the good of the whole. This is done by burying it alive. I am assured that within the last ten years such a barbarism occurred in the county of Moray. It is, however, happily, and beyond all doubt, very rare. The sacrifice of a cock, however, in the same fashion, for the cure of epilepsy, is still not unfrequently practised; but in neither of these cases is the sacrifice offered on the shrine of a saint, or to a named god, though, of course, in both there is the silent acknowledgment of some power thus to be propitiated.

"I only know one other recorded instance of the formal sacrifice of a bull in Scotland, to a saint [155] on his feast-day. A writer of the twelfth century, Reginald of Durham, sometimes also called Reginald of Coldingham, takes occasion, in his lively 'Book of the Miracles of St Cuthbert,' to relate certain incidents which befell the famous St Aelred of Rievaux in the year 1164, during a journey into Pictland,—that is Galloway it would seem, or perhaps, more generally, the provinces of Scotland lying to the south of the Forth and Clyde. The saintly abbot happened to be at 'Cuthbrichtis Kirche,' or Kirkcudbright, as it is now called, on the feast-day of its great patron. A bull, the marvel of the parish for its strength and ferocity, was dragged to the church, bound with cords, to be offered as an alms and oblation to St Cuthbert.

"It is curious to find, in the inaccessible districts both of the north and south of Scotland, traces of a similar Christianised paganism. Whether these ceremonies are remains of the vague Druidical, or of the Helioarkite, or of the Mithraic worship, I am not able to say. As regards the last, which was set up in opposition to Christianity, and which used many of its ceremonies, it is known that the sacrifice of a bull was one of its rites. The study of this form of worship has not yet received from Scottish antiquaries the attention which it probably deserves.

"It would seem that to some saints the sacrifice of a bull was not confined to the day of honour, but was a thing of frequent occurrence. This appears from a letter on the superstitions of Caernarvonshire of the sixteenth century, in which the writer tells us that he visited the locality where bullocks were said to be offered to St Beyno, and that he witnessed such an offering in 1589. This Beyno is described as 'the saint of the parish of Clynnog, and the chiefest of all saints;' but we are told that the people did not dare to cut down the trees that grew in the saint's ground, 'lest Beyno should kill them, or do them some one harm or another.' Though so saintly, therefore, as to be deemed the chiefest of all saints, he was evidently not worshipped solely as a beneficent

being, and sacrifices were offered to avert his anger as well as to secure his favour; thus bringing out his successorship as saint of the place to the *demon loci* of pure paganism. 'They called Barnabas, Jupiter; and Paul, Mercurius,' and *vice versâ*.

"In our own day, belief in the healing virtues of the well on Inch Maree is general over all Ross-shire, but more especially over the western district. The lunatic is taken there without consideration of consent. As he nears the island, he is suddenly jerked out of the boat into the loch; a rope having been made fast to him, by this he is drawn into the boat again, to be a second, third, or fourth time unexpectedly thrown overboard during the boat's course round the island. He is then landed, made to drink of the waters, and an offering is attached to the tree. Sometimes a second and third circumnavigation of the island is thought necessary, with a repetition of the immersions, and of the visit to the well.

"The writer of the 'New Statistical Account,' in 1836, says that the poor victim of this superstitious cruelty was towed round the island after the boat by his tender-hearted friends. [156] Macculloch, writing in 1824, says: 'Here also there was a sacred well, in which, as in St Fillan's, lunatics were dipped, with the usual offerings of money; but the well remains, and the practice has passed away.' He makes two mistakes here. Lunatics are not, and cannot be, dipped into the well, which is not larger than a bucket, and both practice and well still exist. Pennant describes the ceremony in 1772, as having a greater show of religion in the rites, and less barbarity in the form of immersion. According to him, the patient was taken to the 'Sacred Island, made to kneel before the altar, where his attendants left an offering in money; he was then brought to the well, sipped some of the holy water, and a second offering was made; that done, he was thrice dipped in the lake, and the same operation was repeated every day for some weeks.'

"I could not learn that any form of words is at present in use, nor do any of the writers referred to make mention of such a thing; nor does it appear that the feast-day of the saint (25th August) is now regarded as more favourable than any other.

"There is an unwillingness to tell a stranger of the particular cases in which this superstitious practice had been tried, but several came to my knowledge. About seven years ago a furious madman was brought to the island from a neighbouring parish. A rope was passed round his waist, and, with a couple of men at one end in advance and a couple at the other behind, like a furious bull to the slaughter-house he was marched to the loch side, and placed in a boat, which was pulled once round the island, the patient being jerked into the water at intervals. He was then landed, drank of the water, attached his offering to the tree, and, as I was told, in a state of happy tranquillity went home. 'In matters of superstition among the ignorant, one shadow of success prevails against a hundred manifest contradictions.'

"The last case of which I heard came from a parish in the east of Ross, and was less happy in its issue. It was that of a young woman, who is now in one of our asylums. This happened about three years ago.

"Another case was reported in the *Inverness Courier* of 4th November 1852, and is quoted at length by Dr Reeves, in his paper on Saint Maelrubha, already referred to (see Proc. Soc. Ant. Scot., vol. iii., p. 288).

"'Every superstition,' says Archbishop Whately, 'in order to be rightly understood, should be read backward.' In this manner I have endeavoured to treat that which is attached to the little-known Inch Maree. We have seen it as it exists to-day, with its ceremonies of cruelty, barbarism, and ignorance; we have seen it, differing little from its present form, a century ago; we have seen it in 1656 and 1678, associated with an abominable and heathenish sacrifice; we have connected it with the saintly founder of the monastery of Applecross; and we have adduced some reasons for believing that its real paternity goes back to strictly pagan times."

In several notes to his paper Dr Mitchell, besides stating his authorities, points out that St Ruffus [157] and St Maelrubha appear to have been regarded as identical, and that Inch Maree itself was in 1678 spoken of as the "Island of St Ruffus." Also, that an old man in the district told him that the name of the island was originally Eilean-Mo-Righ (the island of my king), or Eilean-a-Mhor-Righ (the island of the great king), and that this king was long ago worshipped as a god in the district. Dr Mitchell also mentions that, some fifteen or twenty years before, a farmer from Letterewe is said to have brought a mad dog to the well on the island. It drank of the waters, and was cured; but the desecrating act is said to have driven virtue for a time from the well. I have a detailed account of this last incident from James Mackenzie of Kirkton, which differs from Dr Mitchell's information. James Mackenzie says he well remembers that it was about 1830 that John Macmillan, who was the first shepherd the late Mr Bankes had at Letterewe, and who was the son of Donald Macmillan who had been shepherd at Letterewe when Macintyre was manager there, had a sheep-dog that went mad. John took the dog to Isle Maree, and put him headlong in the well; the dog died next day, and John Macmillan died a week after that!

Dr Mitchell, in a foot-note referring to the account of the sacrifice of a bull in 1164 witnessed by St Aelred of Rievaux at Cuthbrichtis Kirche, remarks that, "it is interesting to find that the clerks of the church, the Scolofthes, who must have been the best informed and most learned, opposed the ceremony, and attempted to throw it into ridicule by proposing to bait the bull, probably an indication that opinion was then beginning to change."

Dr Mitchell also remarks, in another foot-note, that "it would appear probable, that as Romish paganism after a time began to acknowledge and worship covertly and openly the divinities of the

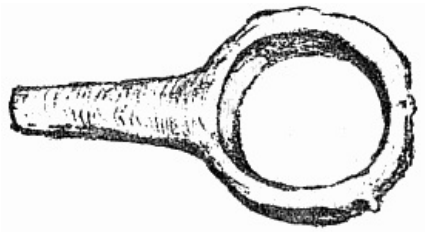
Druids, so Christianity did not escape a similar pollution, but, after a time, tolerated and even adopted not a few of the ceremonies and sacrifices of that modified Druidism with which it had to deal. And since Druidism existed in force to a later period in the north of Scotland than elsewhere, it may be reasonably expected that we shall there find the strongest and most enduring evidence of the infusion of paganism into Christianity."

In connection with this interesting point, the following note respecting the Kirkcudbright bull, which occurs at page 9 to the preface to vol. ii. of "The Sculptured Stones of Scotland," published by the Spalding Club, is instructive:—

"The memorable advice given by Pope Gregory to the Abbot Melitus prescribes a course of action which we cannot doubt was adopted by the early missionaries in dealing with the superstitions of the heathens:—'Et quia boves solent in sacrificio dæmonum multos accidere, debet eis etiam hac de re aliqua sollemnitas immutari; ut die dedicationis vel natalitii sanctorum martyrum quorum illic reliquiæ ponuntur, tabernacula sibi circa easdem ecclesias quæ ex fanis commutatæ sunt de ramis arborum faciant, et religiosis conviviis sollemnitatem celebrent; nec diabolo jam animalia immolent, sed ad laudem Dei in esu suo animalia occidant, et donatori omnium de satietate sua [158] gratias referant; ut dum eis aliqua exterius gaudia reservantur, ad interiora gaudia consentire facilius valeant. Nam duris mentibus simul omnia abscidere impossibile esse non dubium est; quia et is qui summum locum ascendere nititur, gradibus vel passibus non autem saltibus elevatur' (Bede Hist. Ecc., 1, 30).

"It is probable that the permission to adopt for a time a heathen rite, with the view of giving it a new character, was taken advantage of, by acting on it after the cause of the concession was gone.

"Reginald, the monk of Durham, has preserved a notice of the offering of a bull to St Cuthbert, at his church on the Solway, on the festival kept on the day of the dedication of the church in the year 1164 (Libellus de Admir B. Cuthbert virtut, page 185, Surtees Soc.)."



ANTIQUITY NO. 13.
CAST-IRON APPLIANCE, PROBABLY PART OF MACHINERY FROM THE FASAGH IRONWORKS.
SCALE—ONE INCH TO A FOOT.

Chapter XIII.

Superstitions Generally.

In the hill country of every land superstition and credulity are met with. Here in Gairloch the supernatural is suggested on all sides. Weird mountain forms often veiled in murky mists, frantic ocean waves thundering in gloomy caverns, hoarse rumblings of rushing waters, startling echoes from terrific precipices, curiously gnarled and twisted trees, tangled jungles in green islands, black peat mosses, wild moorlands, bubbling springs, dark caves, deep lochs, moaning winds, lonely paths, long winter nights,—such are the surroundings of man in this wild country. Can we wonder that the Gairloch Highlander has always been superstitious and credulous?

Superstition is still rife here, but with the march of education it is gradually decaying, and, partly from this cause, and partly from the disinclination of the superstitious to tell strangers about their doings and fancies, it is difficult to obtain descriptions of present instances, so that the notices which follow will often relate to circumstances of the past, though not indeed of the remote past. They are all local cases.

Amongst the older superstitions of Gairloch were the sacrifices of bulls at Isle Maree, the resort [159] to the oracular stone with the hole, and the rites for the care of insanity mentioned in the presbytery records (Appendix F, section iv.), and more particularly described in the two last chapters.

Some other notions of a superstitious kind are hinted at in other parts of this book. In the old presbytery records there are notices of marches round "monuments," charmings, libations, and midsummer or Beltane fires in the neighbouring parishes, and no doubt there were similar

practices in Gairloch but most of these are forgotten now.

There was a superstitious belief, scarcely yet dead, that a draught of the waters of Loch Maree was a certain cure for any disease,—a notion akin to that which prompted the friends of the insane to take them to Isle Maree. The modern advocates of hydropathy might have thought this belief in Loch Maree water was far from being superstitious, had it not been for the established fact that the water drinker used always to cast his offering of small money into the loch at the time he imbibed its waters. The Fox point was the usual—perhaps the only—place where the Loch Maree water-cure was practised. They say that when the loch was very low, coins used often to be found among the pebbles in the water surrounding this point. I have been told that a man found five coins here not many years ago, but I have been unable to get a sight of them. In connection with this superstition it may be mentioned, that within recent years invalids have had bottles of Loch Maree water sent to them, with a firm belief in its curative qualities.

Local names are often evidences of superstition. In Gairloch we have Cathair Mhor and Cathair Bheag,—names applied to several places,—and the Sitheanan Dubha on Isle Ewe and on the North Point. There is Cathair Mhor at the head of Loch Maree, and Cathair Beag (the Gaelic name of the place) at Kerrysdale. These names mean respectively the big and little seats of the fairies. There are no stories told now-a-days of these fairy seats, but their names testify to the belief in fairies which was universal not long ago.

The name Sitheanan Dubha signifies the black knowes or hillocks of the fairies. It is applied to two places in Gairloch, viz., to the highest hill tops at the north end of Isle Ewe, and to a low hill and small round loch a full mile due north of Carn Dearg house; both are shown on the six-inch ordnance map.

There is a tradition of a Gairloch woman having spent a year with the fairies; a tale founded on this story is given in the *Celtic Magazine*, vol. iv., page 15. About midsummer 1878 I went in an open boat from Poolewe to the Shiant Isles, to observe the birds which breed in such numbers there. It was after 11 P.M. when I landed on the largest island of the group. About a mile distant was a shepherd's house, the only human habitation in these islands. I thought of going to the shepherd's to beg shelter for the night, but my servant, a Gairloch lad, dissuaded me. On my pressing him for a reason, he told me there was a fairy in the house, as he had been informed by [160] a Gairloch fisherman, who had spent a night there not long before. This fairy was said to be a mischievous boy, "one of the family," who, when the rest were asleep, appeared in the rafters of the roof and disturbed the sleepers by bouncing on them. The night (it was but two hours' twilight) was so fine, and the way to the shepherd's house looked so rough, that I decided to sleep in a plaid on the beach, and so I missed the only opportunity that ever presented itself to me of observing the peculiarities of a fairy imp.

Hugh Miller, in "My Schools and Schoolmasters," mentions that, when he was voyaging down Loch Maree in 1823, the boatmen told his companion in Gaelic, "Yon other island (Eilean Suainne) is famous as the place in which the good people [fairies] meet every year to make submission to their queen. There is a little loch in the island, and another little island in the loch; and it is under a tree in that inner island that the queen sits and gathers kain [tribute] for the evil one." "They tell me," said Hugh Miller's companion, "that for certain the fairies have not left this part of the country yet."

It was as recently as 1883 that several boys got a great fright when they actually saw (as they narrated) the fairies at the Sitheanan Dubha, at the north end of Isle Ewe. The people at Mellon Charles, on the mainland opposite that end of the island, still assert, with all the earnestness of conviction, that they often see lights and hear music at the Sitheanan Dubha of Isle Ewe, which they believe can only be accounted for by the supposition that they proceed from the fairies. I give these statements on the authority of Mr William Reid, J.P., the lessee of Isle Ewe.

The township of Ormiscaig lies to the east of Mellon Charles, in the heart of this fairy-haunted district. It was at Ormiscaig that William Maclean, a celebrated performer on the bagpipes, was born and brought up. As a boy he was employed in herding cattle on the hill. One evening he returned home with a bagpipe chanter, on which (though he had not previously tried the bagpipes) he could play to perfection. He said he had received the chanter and the power to play it from the fairies. He emigrated some years ago to America, and is now living at Chicago. He has won many prizes for pipe music at competitions in America. His nephews, the three young Macleans, now at Ormiscaig, are all excellent pipers, and are included in the list of living pipers given further on. Similar incidents are related in other parts of the north-west Highlands, where pipers have attributed their talents to the powers conferred upon them by fairies, and in every case a chanter was given along with the faculty of performing on it.

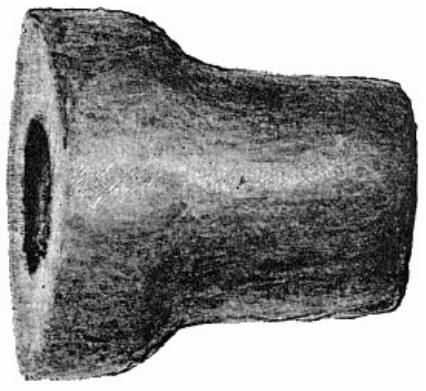
The best known Gairloch fairy of modern times went by the name of the Gille Dubh of Loch a Druing. His haunts were in the extensive woods that still cluster round the southern end of that loch and extend far up the side of the high ridge to the west of it. There are grassy glades, dense thickets, and rocky fastnesses in these woods, that look just the places for fairies. Loch a Druing is on the North Point, about two miles from Rudha Reidh. The Gille Dubh was so named from the [161] black colour of his hair; his dress, if dress it can be called, was of leaves of trees and green moss. He was seen by many people on many occasions during a period of more than forty years in the latter half of the eighteenth century; he was, in fact, well-known to the people, and was generally regarded as a beneficent fairy. He never spoke to any one except to a little girl named Jessie MacRae, whose home was at Loch a Druing. She was lost in the woods one summer night; the Gille Dubh came to her, treated her with great kindness, and took her safely home again next

morning. When Jessie grew up she became the wife of John Mackenzie, tenant of the Loch a Druing farm, and grandfather of James Mackenzie of Kirkton. It was after this that Sir Hector Mackenzie of Gairloch invited Sir George S. Mackenzie of Coul, Mr Mackenzie of Dundonnell, Mr Mackenzie of Letterewe, and Mr Mackenzie of Kernsary, to join him in an expedition to repress the Gille Dubh. These five chieftains together repaired to Loch a Druing, armed with guns, with which they hoped to shoot the unoffending fairy. They wore of course their usual Highland dress, and each had his dirk at his side. They were hospitably entertained by John Mackenzie. An ample supper was served in the house; it included both beef and mutton, and each of the chieftains used the knife and fork from the sheath of his own dirk. Knives and forks were not common in Gairloch in those days. They spent the night at Loch a Druing, and slept in John Mackenzie's barn, where couches of heather were prepared for them. They went through all the woods, but they saw nothing of the Gille Dubh.

There are a large number of notions or fancies common in Gairloch that are plainly tinged with a superstitious character, such as that unaccountable noises and moving lights predict a death; that trees and shrubs planted when the moon is waning must die, whereas if the moon be "growing" at the time of the removal they will live and thrive; that there are several classes of undertakings that will succeed if commenced when the moon is growing, but will be failures if it be waning; that a walking-stick cut from the bird-cherry prevents the bearer of it being lost in the mist; that whales attack new boats or boats newly tarred; that the bite of a dog is rendered innocuous if the saliva (literally, "water from the teeth") of the dog be immediately applied; that a pledge to give something to a soft person or an idiot, will enable any one to discover a lost article, or will bring good luck; and that if a stocking be accidentally put on wrong side out it must not be altered, or bad luck will follow. And surely the idea illustrated in some of the stories in Part II., chap. xxv., and which is still current in Gairloch, that Sabbath-breaking brings immediate retribution smacks strongly of superstition.

The existence of water-kelpies in Gairloch, if perhaps not universally credited in the present generation, was accepted as undoubted in the last. The story of the celebrated water-kelpie of the Greenstone Point is very well known in Gairloch. The proceedings for the extermination of this wonderful creature formed a welcome topic for *Punch* of the period. The creature is spoken of by the natives as the "Beast." He lives, or did live, in the depths of a loch called after him Loch na [162] Beiste, or "the loch of the beast," which is about half way between Udrigil House and the village of Mellon Udrigil. About 1840 Mr Bankes, the then proprietor of the estate on which this loch is situated, was pressed by his tenants to take measures to put an end to the Beast. At first he was deaf to the entreaties of the people, but at length he was prevailed upon to take action. Sandy M'Leod, an elder of the Free Church, was returning to Mellon Udrigil from the Aultbea Church one Sunday in company with two other persons, one of whom was a sister (still living at Mellon Udrigil) of James Mackenzie, when they actually saw the Beast itself. It resembled in appearance a good-sized boat with the keel turned up. Kenneth Cameron, also an elder of the Free Church, saw the same sight another day. A niece of Kenneth Cameron's (some time housemaid at Inveran) told me she had often heard her mother speak of having seen the Beast. It was the positive testimony of the two elders that induced Mr Bankes to take measures for the destruction of the Beast. The proceedings have been much exaggerated; James Mackenzie states that the following is the correct version of them:—Mr Bankes had a yacht or vessel named the *Iris*; James Mackenzie was a sailor in the *Iris*, along with another sailor named Allan Mackenzie. For a long time they and others worked a large pump with two horses with the object of emptying the loch. The pump was placed on the burn which runs from the loch into the not far distant sea; a cut or drain was formed to enable the pump to be worked, and a number of pipes were provided for the purpose of conducting the water away. The pipes are now lying in a house or shed at Laide. James Mackenzie often attended the pump. He and others were employed parts of two years in the attempt to empty the loch, or as James Mackenzie puts it, "to ebb it up." It was after this that the *Iris* was sent to Broadford in Skye to procure lime. James Mackenzie went with her. They brought from Broadford fourteen barrels of "raw lime." They came with the lime to Udrigil, and it was taken up to the "loch of the beast," and the small boat or dingy of the *Iris* was also taken up. The ground-officers would not go in the boat on the loch for fear of the Beast, so Mr Bankes sent to the *Iris* for James and Allan Mackenzie, and they went in the boat over every part of the loch, which had been reduced only by six or seven inches after all the labour that had been spent on it. They plumbed the loch with the oars of the boat; in no part did it exceed a fathom in depth, except in one hole, which at the deepest was but two and a half fathoms. Into this hole they put the fourteen barrels of lime. It is needless to state that the Beast was not discovered, nor has he been further disturbed up to the present time. The loch contained a few good trout above the average size when I fished it in 1873. There are rumours that the Beast was seen in 1884 in or near another loch on the Greenstone Point.

Here is a story of a mermaid; they say it is quite true:—Roderick Mackenzie, the elderly and much respected boatbuilder at Port Henderson, when a young man, went one day to a rocky part of the shore there. Whilst gathering bait he suddenly spied a mermaid asleep among the rocks. [163] Rorie "went for" that mermaid, and succeeded in seizing her by the hair. The poor creature, in great embarrassment, cried out that if Rorie would let go she would grant him whatever boon he might ask. He requested a pledge that no one should ever be drowned from any boat he might build. On his releasing her, the mermaid promised that this should be so. The promise has been kept throughout Rorie's long business career; his boats still defy the stormy winds and waves. I am the happy possessor of an admirable example of Rorie's craft. The most ingenious framers of trade advertisements might well take a hint from this veracious anecdote.



**ANTIQUITY NO. 14.—
TUYERE, FROM THE FASAGH
IRONWORKS.
SCALE—ONE-FOURTH TRUE SIZE.**

Chapter XIV.

Witchcraft and Magic.

The name of Rudha Chailleach, the long blue point jutting into Loch Maree to the south of Ardlair, suggests the ancient belief in witchcraft, but there are no stories of witches connected with it now extant. Yet the belief in witchcraft is by no means dead in Gairloch, and to the stranger the very appearance of some withered old women almost proves them to be witches.

Jessie the cripple, an example of whose second-sight is given in the next chapter, was a reputed witch; the story of her being ducked will be found there.

Witchcraft and magic are still said to be exercised by a number of people in Gairloch. Cases actually occurred in 1885 where persons were charged with the practice of these arts in [164] connection with poultry. It seems better not to give details of them here, especially as it is said the poor folk are yet under suspicion.

The following are examples of the use of the arts of witchcraft and magic in Gairloch:—

There is a curious superstition that the substance, or staple or "fruit," of milk can be taken away by witchcraft, or by the employment of magical arts. In the records of the Presbytery of Lochcarron are minutes relating to a case which occurred at Kenlochewe. On 23d November 1791 the presbytery had examined a candidate for the appointment of catechist for the district of "Ceanlochew," and had been satisfied as to his knowledge, but "in consequence of stories rather detrimental to his private character," had arranged for an inquiry whether such stories had any foundation. On 3d April 1792 a petition on the subject was laid before the presbytery. One of the petitioners, Mr Murdo M'Kenzie, yr. of Letterewe, declared, "that he thought he had heard the candidate use such words as that he wished the devil had the soul of Mr Mackintosh, the parish minister; that he was in the habit of taking back the substance of milk by magical arts, for he himself (the declarant) and his brother were present when the candidate had recourse to certain herbs and an iron key, which were thrown into the declarant's milk in order to restore the fruit of it. Roderick M'Lennan, smith at Ceannlochew, stated that he knew the candidate from his infancy, * * * that he was much addicted to swearing in common conversation, and that he had heard him say that he had restored the substance of deponent's milk by means of certain arts. The candidate being present, and questioned, admitted that he did actually restore the substance of the milk as stated by Mr M'Kenzie, yr. of Letterewe; all which being considered by the presbytery, they deemed him totally disqualified for the office of catechist, and declined to recommend him for such office to the Committee of the Royal Bounty."

Our next example of this strange superstition belongs to a more recent date. In the time of the late Sir Francis Mackenzie the parish schoolmaster of Gairloch was one Kenneth Mackenzie, who was a notorious master of witchcraft. He was always called the "maighstair sgoil." In his youth he had been taught many magical arts, and people who had been bewitched resorted to him from far and wide to obtain relief and advice. He lived in the present schoolmaster's house at Achtercairn, and kept several cows. On one occasion he himself was a sufferer from witchcraft. The milk of his cows was destroyed; if they gave any at all it was fruitless and useless. By his own skill in magic he discovered the woman who had done him this mischief; she lived at or near Strath, and was reputed to have some knowledge of witchcraft. This is how he punished her. There is a little burn runs by the side of the road at Achtercairn, just in front of the present police-station. One Sunday morning as the people from Strath, including this woman, were going to church, she was obliged, by the occult power of the maighstair sgoil, to remain behind; and as soon as the others were out of sight she tucked up her dress above her knees and fastened it so, then she commenced [165]

jumping violently backwards and forwards across this little burn, unwillingly enough, as we may well suppose, and she was compelled by the unseen maighstair sgoil to continue the severe exercise until the people came out of church. After the woman had suffered her well-merited punishment, the fruit returned to the milk of the maighstair sgoil's cows. *Moral*:—You should not meddle with one who possesses magical powers!

Here is a case of injury to milk which occurred within the last ten years. For obvious reasons I suppress the names of the persons concerned, who are all known to me and are now living. The erection of a house was undertaken, and the builders took up their abode in a temporary hut or barrack. Requiring milk to take with their porridge, they applied to a neighbouring farmer, but he was unable at the time to supply them. They fancied that the farmer withheld the milk from some spite he had to them, and they told him he would suffer for it; one of the builders is commonly believed to have some knowledge of witchcraft. What next occurred is kept secret, but the milk of the farmer's cows immediately afterwards lost its fruit; nothing but a viscous fluid, mingled with a little blood, came from the teats when the cows were milked. The farmer called to his aid the services of a woman living in the northern part of the parish known to be skilled in such matters, and she soon restored the substance to the milk. A still more recent case has come under my notice in the spring of 1886. A cow died at a farm with which I am well acquainted; its death was firmly believed to be the result of witchcraft, exercised by an adversary. Soon afterwards a cow at the same farm lost the substance of its milk; as in the case last described, only blood and water came from the cow; this also was believed to be the consequence of witchcraft. A man from Aultbea was sent for, and by his magical arts soon effected a cure. These latter cases are different from the old Kenlochewe case in one respect, viz., in the older case the substance of the milk was influenced after it had been taken from the cow, whilst in the subsequent cases the "fruit" of the milk was destroyed in the cows.

There are plenty of people in Gairloch in the present day who believe in the magical power of the charm or spell called the "sian" or "seun." By means of an incantation, sometimes coupled with the use of some visible medium, any object which it was desired to conceal could be rendered invisible, either for the time being only or for all time, subject in the latter case to brief periods of visibility recurring either at the end of each year, or more commonly at the end of each succeeding term of seven years. The medium, if any, employed along with the incantation, was usually a piece of vellum or stout skin of some sort, which in process of time became as hard and tough as wrought iron. James Mackenzie says he has seen a specimen preserved as a curiosity at Glamis Castle.

Duncan M'Rae lived in Isle Ewe and had the gift of the sian. We have seen, in Part I., chap. xiv., Duncan's fidelity to the unfortunate Prince Charlie. He accompanied the prince to Edinburgh, [166] and there composed a well-known Gaelic song called Oran na Feannaige, *i.e.* "the song of the hoodie-crow;" it related an imaginary dialogue between himself and the crow, suggested by his seeing one of those birds in the busy capital. After the fatal field of Culloden, Duncan M'Rae assisted in covering the prince's escape; he hovered around the prince, and used every means in his power to baffle the pursuers. Funds were sent from France to be conveyed by the faithful Highlanders to their beloved Prince Charlie, as circumstances might admit. A small cask or keg filled with gold pieces was entrusted to the charge of Duncan M'Rae, to be concealed until a chance should occur of delivering it to the prince. Duncan M'Rae and two other men brought the keg of gold in a boat across Loch Ewe from Mellon Charles to Cove. From Cove they carried the cask up to the Fedan Mor, the large deep corrie or hollow on the hill above Loch a Druing; there they put the cask of gold into the ground, and it is the universal belief in Gairloch that it remains there to this day. Duncan M'Rae made use of the sian to render the cask invisible; he laid his amulet upon the head of the cask while he pronounced the magic words he knew; upon this the cask became invisible for all time, with this exception, that at the end of each period of seven years the effect of the spell is suspended during a very brief interval on one day only, when for a few moments the cask of gold becomes again visible to mortal eyes.

It was about 1826, the year that Sir Hector Mackenzie died, that the wife of Rorie Mackenzie, shepherd at Loch a Druing, called the Cibear Mor, or "big shepherd," was herding the cows in the Fedan Mor. She was spinning worsted, when suddenly she saw the head of the cask of gold close to where she sat. She stuck the distaff into it to mark the spot, and then ran down to Loch a Druing for help to remove the long-lost treasure. When the people came to the Fedan Mor to fetch the cask of gold, neither it nor the distaff could after the most diligent search be discovered.

A sian of a similar nature, and with similar effect, is said to have been used many years ago by some persons who hid a large quantity of arms and weapons of all kinds in a cave at Meallan na Ghamhna. Both the cave and the weapons became invisible, but once in every seven years they may again be seen if any one be lucky enough to be on the spot at the right moment. It is not many years since the wife of Murdo Cameron of Inverasdale, and some other women, were gathering lichens from the rocks at Meallan na Ghamhna, when they suddenly saw the cave and weapons. They ran to tell others, and soon returned with several helpers, intending to remove the arms; but it was too late, no trace could be found of either weapons or cave. They say an exactly similar case of weapons being hid in a cave, or rather rocky fissure, by means of the sian, occurred on the shores of Loch Maree. The spot is at the edge of the loch below the county road on the south-west side of the loch just opposite to Letterewe. In this case also the weapons are visible once in every seven years.

There was a man living in Gairloch named Alastair Mor an 't Sealgair, or "big Alexander of [the [167]

race of] the hunter." He had the magic power of the sian. He died since 1850, and his grandsons were lately living at Charleston, and were called Gillean an t' Sealgair, or "the hunter's lads." One of them is still living at Charleston. Alastair was a dealer in illicit whisky, and was constantly employed in running cargoes of it from Gairloch to Skye and the Long Island. He is still remembered in those islands. At that time Captain Oliver was sent by the government to put down this smuggling. In his schooner he cruised up and down the Minch, keeping a sharp look-out; he had a tender, a smaller vessel, of which Robert Clark was master, and which was employed in the sea-lochs, so that Gairloch might well be said to be blockaded. Alastair continually ran the blockade by the use of the sian. Whenever a government vessel hove in sight, he pronounced the magic words and applied his unfailing amulet, and his boat became at once invisible under the mysterious spell. One day he had brought several casks of whisky in a boat down Loch Maree. When in the Narrows near the place where Tollie burn falls into the river Ewe, he landed and hid the casks in the wood on the Tollie side of the Narrows. He made some passes over them with his hands, and the casks became invisible; the next day he sent over from Gairloch the men who had seen him hide the casks, to bring them away, but they could not be found, and it was not until Alastair went himself that the casks became visible. This was a usual form of the sian, but Alastair had another spell or magical process which was a variation of its ordinary application. Sometimes when a revenue vessel appeared upon the scene he would take a thole-pin from the boat and whittle it with his knife, when each of the chips as it fell into the water would appear to the crew of the preventive vessel to be a fully-manned boat. This wonderful magician was well-known to many people now living, including Mr O. H. Mackenzie. There are many other stories current in Gairloch, showing that Alastair could render his boat, or indeed anything else, invisible, even without the use of any special formula. There were three fishermen, named respectively Macpherson, Watson, and Fraser, all living on the south side of Gairloch, who were partners in a large decked fishing-boat. At that time Glen Dubh, to the north of Stoir Head in Sutherlandshire, was an important herring fishing-station. The "south side" men were there fishing. Alastair was also at Glen Dubh, selling whisky amongst the fishermen. His boat was an open undecked craft, and the Gairloch south side men had him to spend the Sabbath in their larger vessel. On Sunday morning Alastair proposed to fill some bottles with whisky out of a small cask that he carried for offering drams to friends. As he and Macpherson were beginning to draw the whisky from the cask, Alastair asked his companion if he saw the revenue cutter. Macpherson said her boat was just coming round a headland near them. Alastair said, "They don't see us." He proceeded with the business on hand; they were on deck. As the cutter's boat approached, Macpherson wished to put the whisky cask out of sight. Alastair said, "Never fear; they cannot see us." The revenue boat then passed close to them, and apparently did not see [168] them. Had the preventive men seen Alastair before he saw them, he would have been unable to render the boat invisible. At another time, the same "south side" men had a good take of flounders in the sound between the Island of Longa and Big Sand. They had occasion to take their fish ashore at Big Sand, and having piled them in a heap left them for a short time; on returning they could not see their fish anywhere. Alastair was there, and they concluded he had played a trick upon them. After keeping up the joke some time, Alastair admitted that he had concealed the fish. He drew a ring on the sand with his stick, and said, "The fish are within this circle." The fishermen could not find them, until Alastair withdrew the spell and the fish became visible.

His father, Ruaridh an t' Sealgair, also had the magical power of the sian. Both Rorie and Alastair were—like their ancestor whose *soubriquet* they bore—great hunters and poachers. When they wanted venison they would go to the mountains. As soon as they saw a deer they would, by the exercise of magic, cause the animal to stand or to go where they pleased, so that they could easily get within range. If the deer saw the magician first, the spell failed; it was necessary that the hunter should spy his quarry before he was himself observed. Instances of Alastair's exercise of this power are said to have occurred during the time of the late Sir Francis Mackenzie, Bart. of Gairloch. They say too that Alastair, when sitting at the roadside, could by the sian render himself invisible to persons who passed close to him.

Our next and last example is of a different application of magic. Every detail of the case is firmly believed by many natives of Gairloch now living to be absolutely true. In the chapter of James Mackenzie's "Gairloch Stories," given further on, is an account of the death by drowning at the head of Loch Maree of John M'Ryrie. His grandfather was the hero of the following adventure. At the time of its occurrence he had a large open boat, in which he used to carry the mails between Poolewe and Stornoway. He lived at Poolewe. One Donald M'Lean helped to work the boat. It was before the smack was put on this service. On one occasion M'Ryrie was kept several days at Stornoway by a contrary wind. He was going about the place two or three days grumbling at the delay. He met a man in the street, who advised him to go to a certain woman and she would make the wind favourable for him. In the morning he went to her, and paid her some money. She gave him a piece of string with three knots on it. She told him to undo the first of the knots, and he would get the wind in his favour; if the wind were not strong enough for him, he was to undo the second knot, but not until he would be near the mainland; the third knot, she said, he must not untie for his life. The wind changed whilst he was talking to her; and he set sail that same morning. He undid the first knot on the voyage, and the breeze continued fair; the second knot he untied when he was near the mouth of Loch Ewe, and the breeze came fresh and strong. When he got to Ploc-ard, at the head of Loch Ewe, he said to M'Lean that no great harm could happen to [169] them if he were to untie the third knot, as they were so near the shore. So he untied the third knot. Instantly there was such a hurricane that most of the houses in Poolewe and Londubh were stripped of their thatch. The boat was cast high and dry on the beach at Dal Cruaidh, just below the house of Kirkton; her crew escaped uninjured. It is said that at that time there were several

women about Stornoway who had power by their arts to make the wind favourable.

Chapter XV.

Visions and Second-Sight.

Perhaps the most common class of superstitions in Gairloch comprises those represented by or connected with "visions" or the gift of "second-sight." It is often difficult to discriminate between the two; but as a general rule "visions" maybe considered as recalling the past, whilst "second-sight" brings the immediate but unseen present or the near or sometimes the more remote future within the ken of its possessor. The following stories seem to be examples of one or other of these superstitions.

The appearance to Alastair Mac Iain Mhic Earchair, early in the nineteenth century, of the great chief of Gairloch, Hector Roy Mackenzie, with his bodyguard of twelve chosen heroes all wearing kilted plaids of Mackenzie tartan, and their noiseless departure, is narrated in Part I., chap. ix. In addition to the details there given, old Alastair told Ruaridh an Torra, the present repository of the tale, that before the spectral heroes disappeared he handed his snuff-mull to them, and they each in turn helped themselves to its contents. Alastair always expressed his astonishment that they should have been able to enjoy the snuff as they apparently did.

In 1884 I heard of a young man having seen a spirit. He was very reserved on the subject, but when closely questioned he said it was on a pretty dark night in the previous year that the form of a man passed him on the road. He spoke to the figure, but there was no reply; and this he considered proof positive of the ghostly nature of the appearance!

Two men, of the utmost credibility and respectability, declare that they saw on separate occasions, by daylight, the figure of a woman dressed in brown sitting or walking within a considerable house in Gairloch parish. On each occasion the woman mysteriously disappeared, and no trace of her could be discovered. The appearances were supposed to be prophetic of some incident that has since occurred, or will shortly occur, at the house in question.

Seers of visions and possessors of second-sight are always reticent, and every one has a delicacy in speaking of cases that have occurred among persons now living. Thus it is difficult to procure accounts of recent cases, and I have thought it best not to press inquiry in this direction. Here, [170] however, is an instance which came under my own notice within the parish of Gairloch. A shooting party was invited, and a number of beaters engaged for the occasion. Several of those who had been similarly employed before declined to attend, because it had been rumoured that the figure of a strange man dressed in dark blue clothes had been seen walking in the coverts the evening before, and it was thought that the appearance of the supposed spectre portended the death of some one at the shoot. Happily the day passed off without casualty.

Second-sight may be (1) a faculty frequently exercised by the individual possessing it, who becomes known as a seer; or (2) it may be manifested on one occasion only, under exceptional circumstances, by some one not otherwise credited with this supernatural power. Our next story tells of a woman whose second-sight was of the first of these descriptions.

Simon Chisholm, who has long been forester and gardener at Flowerdale to Sir Kenneth Mackenzie, Bart. of Gairloch, remembers a woman named Seonaid Chrubach, or Jessie the cripple, who was reputed to be a witch, and to have the faculty of second-sight. She lived near Flowerdale, and was a queer bad woman. She wore a short tight-fitting jacket like a man, and a short petticoat resembling a man's kilt. She used to afford much amusement to sailors, singing ribald songs to them, and would visit various ports as far north as Ullapool for the purpose. When Simon Chisholm was a young boy a number of lads one day caught Jessie, and, believing in her witchcraft, tied her to the middle of a long piece of rope. They took her to the moat or ditch then remaining below Flowerdale House, in the midst of which the old Tigh Dige had formerly stood, and dragged her many times backwards and forwards through the water of the moat. Jessie survived this ill-treatment many years. It would be about 1835 that Jessie came one day to the house of Simon Chisholm's father at Flowerdale. His family have been there for several generations; they say his ancestor came to Gairloch as attendant to a lady who became the wife of one of the lairds of Gairloch. Simon was still a boy, and was at home when Jessie came to the house. Jessie looked very pale and haggard; she said she felt faint and ill. After resting a while, she told them that on her way she had met a shepherd with his dog, driving a flock of sheep; she minutely described the shepherd and the dog and sheep, and even stated the colour of the dog. At that time there were no sheep at Flowerdale, only black cattle; Sir Francis Mackenzie, the then baronet of Gairloch, had a celebrated strain of them, and bred them in considerable numbers. The following year, at the same time of the year as that at which Jessie had seen the vision, Sir Francis substituted sheep for the black cattle, and the shepherd, the dog, and the sheep exactly corresponded with Jessie's description.

Our next narrative is an illustration of the other class of manifestations of second-sight. At the date of this story the blacksmith at Poolewe had his house and smithy where the Pool-house

stable now stands. It was close by the east side of Poolewe bridge, from which the spectator can look down into the deep gloomy pool in which the River Ewe joins the brackish waters of Loch Ewe. The smith had a son, a boy, almost a young man; he was in sickly health at the time, and died shortly afterwards. The late Rev. William Rose, Free Church minister of Aultbea and Poolewe, who died in April 1876, told me that one day the smith's son had walked over to Gairloch, and returning somewhat exhausted, came into his father's house (the door being open), and instantly sat down on the nearest chair. No sooner was he seated than he fell from the chair in a fainting fit. He presently came round, and on recovering consciousness the first thing he said to his family was, "What are all these people on the bridge for?" They pointed out to him that there was no one on the bridge. He then told them, that as he had approached the bridge he had seen it crowded with people, that he had had to push his way through them, and that he had felt very much frightened. Those members of the smith's household who were at home had seen no one on the bridge; the doors and windows of the house faced the bridge, and were not thirty yards from it, so that no individuals, much less a crowd, could have been on the bridge without the family having noticed them. The following day, the 3d October 1860, was a day that will never be forgotten by those who witnessed its terrible events. A number of open boats with their crews were at the head of Loch Ewe near Boor, Cliff House, and Poolewe, setting nets for herrings, when a storm suddenly came on, far exceeding in violence any other storm before or since, so far as those now living remember. A hurricane sprang up from the west-north-west, of such extraordinary force as actually to lift boats and their crews from the water, and in one or two cases to overturn the boats. Happily most of the men clung to their boats, and were soon washed ashore. One boat was carried rapidly past the point called Ploc-ard, by Inverewe House. As she was passing close to some big stones one of her crew jumped out on to a rock, but was washed off and drowned. In another boat, opposite Cliff House, there were four men; the boat was capsized and three of the men were drowned; the fourth had tied himself to the boat, which came ashore by Cliff House; he was taken to the house, and restoratives being applied soon recovered. About a score of the boats ran into the pool under Poolewe bridge. And thus the vision of the smith's son was fulfilled, for at the very hour at which he had crossed the bridge on the preceding day, a multitude of the fishermen's friends and relations, breathless with agonising anxiety, crowded the bridge and its approaches watching the arrival of the boats. The tide on this awful evening rose one hundred and fifty yards further up the shore and adjoining lands than on any other occasion remembered in the district. The bodies of the drowned men were recovered, and were buried in the Inverewe churchyard, where the date of this memorable storm is recorded on a gravestone over the remains of two of the men named William Urquhart and Donald Urquhart. [171]

James Mackenzie narrates, that when he was fourteen years of age (about 1822) he lived with his parents at Mellon Charles, but went to the school at Mellon Udrigil. This school was attended by about sixty scholars. He went home to Mellon Charles every Saturday night, and returned to Mellon Udrigil each Monday morning. At the time of the following extraordinary occurrence the Rev. Dr Ross was holding sacramental services at Loch Broom, and many of the people had gone from Mellon Udrigil to this sacrament; most of the women had remained at home. It must have been about midsummer; that was always the time of the Loch Broom sacrament. When James Mackenzie returned to Mellon Udrigil on the Monday morning he learned that all the people who were at home on the preceding day had seen a strange sight. The whole sea between the Black island and Priest island, and the mouth of Little Loch Broom had appeared to be filled with ships innumerable; to use James Mackenzie's precise words, "the sea was choke full of great ships, men-of-war. It was a great sight." Whilst the people were watching, vast numbers of boats were sent out from the ships filled with soldiers with scarlet coats. Many of the boats rowed direct for Mellon Udrigil, and the red-coats landed from them on the rocks on the shore. They seemed so near that the people could make out the individual soldiers. Mrs Morrison, the wife of Rorie Morrison of Tanera, who then lived at Mellon Udrigil House, buried the boxes containing her valuables in the sand lest the red-coats should carry them off to the ships. The girls at the shielings on the hills on the Greenstone Point retreated to the highest tops, so that they might have time to escape if the soldiers should appear to be coming near. But no soldiers came, and the whole thing was a vision. [172]

More than fifty years ago Donnachadh na Fadach (Duncan Macrae) was living at Inveran. He employed Donald Maclean, who was stopping at Londubh at the time, to work in the garden at Inveran, and Donald walked to and from Inveran every day. He told James Mackenzie, Duncan Macrae, and other persons, that he often saw companies of soldiers in red uniforms marching to and fro along the tops of Craig Ruadh, Craig Bhan, and the hills behind and beyond Inveran. These visions of Donald Maclean's are said to have impressed his own mind very deeply at the time, and his earnest accounts of them are well remembered by the older people. It is an actual fact that the visions are now generally understood at Poolewe and Londubh to have been prophetic of the visits to me at Inveran of the Poolewe section of the Gairloch volunteers, who wear scarlet Highland doublets, and have several times come to Inveran in uniform.

The appearance of the great fleet seen from Mellon Udrigil with the boats filled with red-coats, and the visions of the red-coats near Inveran, are closely analogous to the strange appearances of troops seen by numbers of people on Saddleback in Cumberland on the midsummer eves of 1735, 1743, and 1745, and to the similar appearances elsewhere referred to in the account given of the Saddleback visions in Miss Harriet Martineau's "Guide to the English Lakes," such as the spectral march of troops seen in Leicestershire in 1707, and the tradition of the tramp of armies over Helvellyn on the eve of the battle of Marston Moor. Hugh Miller, in his "Scenes and Legends of the North of Scotland" (page 485), refers to visions of troops near Inverness at the time of the [173]

commencement of the war with France. There were similar appearances in England reported in the newspapers when I was a young man, which were supposed to have been mirage-like reflections of the gatherings of troops going to take part in the Crimean war. One theory is, that all the visions of this character have been of the nature of mirages, or reflections on transparent vapour similar to the "Fata Morgana." This is certainly a suggestion that ought to be taken into account, but, as Miss Harriet Martineau says in her book, it "is not much in the way of explanation."

Whatever the visions or appearances at Mellon Udrigil and near Inveran may have been, the evidence is very strong that they really were seen as stated.

Chapter XVI.

Bards and Pipers.

The Celtic inhabitants of the north-west Highlands have always been enthusiastic votaries of poetry and music; indeed in time past they perhaps paid more attention to these than to the less sentimental arts of everyday life. Their bards and musicians, encouraged by the sympathy and appreciation of chiefs and clansmen alike, became an illustrious, as they ever were a privileged class.

The bards date back to the days of the Druids; among them was Ossian, the Homer of the Fingalian heroes. There is no specific connection between the Ossianic poems and the parish of Gairloch, but these poems are still reverenced in Gairloch, and some traces of poetic Fingalian legends are still to be met with (Part I., chap. i.).

The great contest which has so long raged over Macpherson's "Ossian" does not concern us here. The unwritten poems of Ossian have been handed down by the bards through many generations. Possibly Macpherson's were partly fictitious; they do not correspond to the actual traditional forms of the poems, as published by Mr John F. Campbell of Islay (brother of the present Lady Mackenzie of Gairloch), who has passed to his rest whilst I write; he took down the poems from the mouths of the old men who had become the receptacles of them, and collected them in a book entitled "Leabhar na Feinne," perhaps the most valuable contribution to the Ossianic controversy.

The bard of old was called the "seannachie," properly "seannachaidh,"—almost synonymous with "antiquarian" or "historian,"—a name appropriately signifying that he was the repository and remembrancer of the history, achievements, and genealogy of his clan or sept. It was the bard's office to sing or recite the valorous deeds of the chiefs and heroes, and to cheer on his kinsmen in battle by inspiring songs or war cries, chaunted, shouted, or sung. [174]

Later on, when clan contests became less frequent, some of the bards found congenial berths as family retainers of the great chiefs and proprietors, who generously rewarded their poetic talents. These family bards recited or sang in the halls of their patrons songs of their own or others' composition, and frequently repeated some of the poems of Ossian. They were also the poets-laureate of the great families, composing poems to celebrate their chief events and personages.

Captain Burt gives a list of the officers who in his day (1730) attended every chief when he went a journey or paid a formal visit. Among them are the bard, the piper, and the piper's gillie. The last bard of the Gairloch family was Alexander Campbell, who died in the first half of the present century. A short memoir of him is given further on.

Other bards and poets were found in the more private walks of life, and they are even now to be met with, still the receptacles of the treasured traditions and legends of their ancestors and country, still the composers of Gaelic songs and poems, and still the reciters or singers of their own compositions or of those of other bards, ancient or modern. Family traditions and genealogies possess more historical value in the Highlands than in other parts of Britain, from their having been preserved and handed down by means of the trained memories of the bards. In most cases, every word put in the mouths of the traditional heroes is accurately repeated on each occasion of the story being told.

Meetings, called "ceilidh," used to be frequently held during the long winter nights of this northern region, when the people gathered in each others' houses to be entertained by songs, poems, traditions, legends, and tales of all kinds. At the "ceilidh" the bards, in their character of "seannachaidhean," were in much request, and we can well imagine how the popular applause fostered the spirit of the bards and helped to preserve the old traditions of the Highlands. They say these "ceilidh" are not yet altogether given up in Gairloch parish.

Pipe music dates back at least as far as the fourteenth century, and probably much farther. Mr Robertson Macdonald of Kinloch-moidart wrote to the *Scotsman* a few years ago, stating that he had the chanter and blowpipe of bagpipes which he believed to be older than a bagpipe reported at a meeting of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland to bear the date of 1409. Mr Macdonald's

relics were given in the end of last century to his maternal uncle, Donald Macdonald of Kinloch-moidart, by the Macintyres, who were the hereditary pipers to the Clanranald branch of the Macdonalds, as they were on the point of emigrating to America; they said the Macdonalds had followed the inspiring strains of these bagpipes into the battle of Bannockburn, 24th June 1314.

The vocation of the pipers, who had gradually displaced the more ancient harpers, corresponded very closely with that of the bards. Like the bards, they accompanied their clansmen to battle. On [175] all social occasions they played their stately pibrochs, or thrilling marches, or lively reels and jigs; weddings and funerals were always attended by pipers, who moved the assembled companies with their stirring strains. Most of the chiefs had their family pipers, and the office was often hereditary. The Mackays were the hereditary pipers of the lairds of Gairloch (see next chapter) during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and were well rewarded by their patrons. The MacCrimmons of Dunvegan, Skye, were the great teachers of pipe music in the north up to a recent period; they held their lands from Macleod of Macleod, in return for their attendance on his person and family.

In these modern days pipers are still numerous in Gairloch, and still enliven many a wedding party with their music. The Gairloch volunteers have their efficient pipers, who in tartan array play many a lively air as their comrades move in column, and who accompany the march-past on review days to the favourite tune of "Highland Laddie." Highlanders march with lighter tread, more spirited step, and more accurate time, to the music of the bagpipes than to any other.

The strains of the great Highland bagpipes, when played indoors, often sound harsh and shrill to the unaccustomed ear, but they never do to the Highlander, who to this day prefers the pipes to all other music. Their effect on the Highland soldier, in the presence of the foe, is too well known to need description here.

The love of pipe music, and of songs in their native tongue, is as powerful to-day with the Highlanders of Gairloch as it can ever have been. At a dinner of the Gairloch volunteers, on 8th May 1884, the thrilling music of the pipers, and the Gaelic songs exquisitely rendered by Mr Alexander Macpherson of Opinan, one of the volunteer sergeants, seemed to arouse the enthusiasm and stir the feelings of all present to an extent it would have been difficult, if not impossible, to effect by any other means.

Some of the bards and pipers of Gairloch attained great eminence. Amongst the memoirs of them which follow is a short account of John Mackenzie, the author of the "Beauties of Gaelic Poetry," who was himself somewhat of a poet, and an excellent piper.

There were many less eminent bards and pipers in Gairloch. Three of the old bards are mentioned in Part I. of this book, viz., Ruaridh Breac, "the English bard," and Duncan M'Rae.

Ruaridh Breac, son of fair Duncan, lived at Cromasaig, near Kenlochewe, in the first half of the seventeenth century. He composed a celebrated song to the "Guard of the Black Corrie."

The English bard called in Gaelic "Am Bard Sasunnach," was a Cross, son or descendant of one of the Letterewe ironworkers. He was living at the time of the "Forty-five" at a house he had built at Kernsary, called to this day Innis a Bhaird, or the "place of the bard."

Duncan M'Rae, of Isle Ewe, mentioned in Part II., chap. xiv., as the composer of "Oran na Feannaige," was also a bard.

Of past Gairloch pipers, other than the Mackays, I have no account, except of three who belong to recent times.

Roderick Campbell, a celebrated piper and fiddler, lived at Cuilchonich, above Aird House, near [176] Aultbea, in the latter part of the eighteenth century. Ruaridh Mac Iamhair, as he was called in Gaelic, was descended from the Campbells of Leckmelm, on Lochbroom. His father was Norman Campbell; he had four sons, viz., Kenneth, Donald, Roderick (the piper), and John. Donald was also a great fiddler. John Mackenzie (Iain or John Glas) of Mossbank, Poolewe, is a grandson of Kenneth. John, the youngest brother of Roderick, emigrated to America. Roderick was a pupil of Angus Mackay (one of the Gairloch hereditary pipers), and it is said that Roderick made such progress, that when his term of apprenticeship to Angus had but half expired he had learned all that his accomplished master could impart. Roderick attained great fame as a piper, and was much respected through the country for his talents and agreeable manners. He lived in a day when the young men laid themselves out to amuse and interest others. While still young he was drowned in the Old Cruive Pool, on the River Ewe, when attempting to cross the river by means of the Cruive dyke, there being no bridge at Poolewe till long after. The musical reputation of the family is sustained by Alexander Mackenzie, the present senior piper of the Gairloch volunteers, who is the son of John Glas above-named.

Iain Mac Coinnich (John Mackenzie), known as Piobaire Bhan, or the "fair piper," was a first-rate performer during the present century. He lived at Leac nan Saighead, and was blind. He died about 1870, an old man.

William Maclean, formerly of Ormiscaig, must be reckoned as a past piper of Gairloch; the excellent music he discoursed is still remembered; the origin of his talents is related in Part II., chap. xii.

The following is an alphabetical list (probably imperfect) of Gairloch pipers now living:—

Murdo Bain,	Charleston.
William Boa,	Inveran; one of the pipers to the volunteer corps.
Duncan Fraser,	Talladale.
Kenneth Fraser,	Leac nan Saighead.
Alexander Gunn,	Isle Ewe.
Alexander Mackenzie,	Poolewe; senior Piper to the volunteer corps.
Angus Mackenzie,	Strath.
Malcolm Mackenzie,	Big Sand.
Murdo Mackenzie,	Peterburn.
Kenneth M'Leay,	Londubh.
Alexander Maclean,	Mellon Udrigil.
Donald Maclean, Alexander Maclean, Hector Maclean,	Ormiscaig; brothers, young and excellent pipers; nephews of William Maclean (Part II., chap. xxiii.).
Alexander Maclennan,	Inveran.
Angus Maclennan,	Cove.
John Maclennan,	Mellon Charles.
William Maclennan,	Poolewe; one of the pipers to the volunteer corps.
John MacRae,	North Erradale.
John MacRae,	Altgrishan.
Murdo MacRae,	Melvaig.
William Morrison,	Ardlair.
James Watson,	Badachro.

Chapter XVII.

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Hereditary Pipers of the Gairloch Family.

That Hector Roy Mackenzie, the great founder of the Gairloch family, and his son John Glassich Mackenzie, had pipers among their followers is certain; but nothing is recorded of them. The famous hereditary pipers of the Gairloch family were Mackays from Sutherlandshire. There were but four of them, viz., Rorie, John the blind piper, Angus, and John.

Rorie or Ruaridh Mackay was born in the Reay country about 1592. Having early manifested an extraordinary talent for pipe music, he was appointed whilst little more than a boy to be piper to the laird of Mackay. We have seen (Part I., chap. xi.) how Rorie cut off a groom's hand with his dirk at the Meikle Ferry on the Kyle of Sutherland, and then became piper to John Roy Mackenzie, fourth laird of Gairloch, about 1609. From this time Rorie was a Gairloch man, yet the connection with the Reay country was maintained, as we shall see, by his descendants. Little is remembered of Rorie beyond the story of how he came to Gairloch. It was his elder brother Donald Mor Mackay who was in attendance on the twelve sons of John Roy Mackenzie when the incident at Torridon, recorded in Part I., chap. xi., took place. Donald was a great piper, and assisted his brother Rorie during his youth. Donald spent a number of years in Gairloch, but returned to the Reay country before his death. Rorie was piper in succession to four of the chiefs of Gairloch, viz., John Roy, Alastair Breac, Kenneth the sixth laird, and his son Alexander. Rorie lived at Talladale during the lives of John Roy and Alastair Breac, who resided on Eilean Ruaridh and Eilean Suainne, islands in Loch Maree, not far from Talladale. The two last chiefs to whom he was piper resided at the Stank house at Flowerdale, and accordingly we find that Rorie lived in his later years near Flowerdale. Rorie was over sixty years of age when he married; he had but one child, who became the celebrated "blind piper." Rorie died at his home near Flowerdale about 1689, in extreme old age, being, like his son, almost a centenarian; he was buried in the Gairloch churchyard. Rorie is said to have been a remarkably handsome and powerful Highlander; he literally *played* an important part in the many fights which took place in Gairloch during the earlier part of his career.

John Mackay, the only son of Rorie, was born at Talladale in 1656. He was not born blind, as has been erroneously stated, but was deprived of his sight by smallpox when about seven years old. With the exception of a slight cloudiness on his eyes, it was difficult to the most acute observer to perceive that he had not his sight. He was known as "Iain Dall" (blind John), or "Piobaire Dall" (the blind piper). After mastering the first principles of pipe music under his father's tuition, he was sent to the celebrated MacCrimmon in Skye to finish his musical education. He remained seven years with MacCrimmon, and then returned to his native parish, where he assisted his [178] father in his office of piper to the laird of Gairloch. After his father's death he became piper to Sir Kenneth Mackenzie, the first baronet of Gairloch; and after Sir Kenneth's death to his son Sir Alexander, the second baronet and ninth laird of Gairloch. He combined the office of bard with that of piper. Iain Dall retired when in advanced years, and Sir Alexander allowed him a sufficient

pension. Like his father he married late in life; he had but two children, Angus, who succeeded him, and a daughter. After he was superannuated he passed his remaining years in visiting gentlemen's houses, where he was always a welcome guest. Like his father he lived to a great age; he died in 1754, aged ninety-eight, and was buried in the same grave as his father in the Gairloch churchyard. He composed twenty-four pibrochs, besides numberless strathspeys, reels, and jigs, the most celebrated of which are called "Cailleach a Mhuillear," and "Cailleach Liath Rasaidh."

When he was with MacCrimmon there were no fewer than eleven other apprentices studying with the master piper, but Iain Dall outstripped them all, and thus gained for himself the envy and ill-will of the others. On one occasion as Iain and another apprentice were playing the same tune alternately, MacCrimmon asked the other lad why he did not play like Iain Dall. The lad replied, "By Mary, I'd do so if my fingers had not been after the skate," alluding to the sticky state of his fingers after having touched some of that fish at dinner; and this has become a proverbial taunt which northern pipers to this day hurl at their inferior brethren from the south.

Iain Dall's first pibroch, called "Pronadh na Mial," had reference to certain small insects that disturbed his slumbers during the earlier period of his apprenticeship.

One of the MacCrimmons, known by the byname of "Padruig Caogach," composed the first part of a tune called "Am port Leathach," but was unable to finish it. The imperfect tune became very popular, and being at the end of two years still unfinished Iain Dall set to work and completed it. He called it "Lasan Phadruig Chaogaich," or "the wrath of Padruig Caogach;" thus, whilst disowning any share in the merit of the composition, anticipating the result which would follow. Patrick was furiously incensed, and bribed the other apprentices, who were doubtless themselves also inflamed by jealousy, to put an end to Iain Dall's life. This they attempted while walking with him at Dun-Bhorraraig, where they threw the young blind piper over a precipice. Iain Dall fell eight yards, but alighted on the soles of his feet, and suffered no material injury. The place is still called "Leum an Doill." The completion of MacCrimmon's tune brought great fame to Iain Dall, and gave rise to a well-known Gaelic proverb, which being translated says, "the apprentice outwits the master."

Iain Dall made a number of celebrated Gaelic songs and poems. One of them, called "Coire an Easain," was composed on the death of Mackay Lord Reay. It is said not to be surpassed in the Gaelic language. Another fine poem of his was in praise of Lady Janet Mackenzie of Scatwell, on [179] her becoming the wife of Sir Alexander the ninth laird of Gairloch. His fame as a bard and poet seems to have almost equalled his reputation as a piper. A number of his songs and poems appear in the "Beauties of Gaelic Poetry."

Angus, the only son of "Iain Dall," succeeded his illustrious father as piper to the lairds of Gairloch. He was born about 1725. He was piper to Sir Alexander Mackenzie, tenth laird of Gairloch. When Sir Alexander visited France as a young man, he left Angus for tuition in Edinburgh. We know little of him beyond that he was a handsome man, and that he at least equalled his ancestors in musical attainments. He married Mary Fraser, daughter of William Fraser, of Gairloch. He attended a competition in pipe music whilst in Edinburgh. The other competing pipers, jealous of his superior talents, made a plot to destroy his chance. The day before the competition they got possession of his pipes, and pierced the bag in several places, so that when he began to practise he could not keep the wind in the pipes. But Angus had a fair friend named Mary, possibly his wife. To her he went in his trouble; she found for him a sheepskin from which, undressed as it was, he formed a new bag for his beloved pipes, and with this crude bag he succeeded next day in carrying off the coveted prize. He composed the well-known pibroch called "Moladh Mairi," or "the praise of Mary," in honour of his kind helper. This anecdote is sometimes connected with one of the other Mackay pipers. Angus lived to a good old age, and was succeeded by his son John.

John Mackay, grandson of the "blind piper," was born about 1753, and became on his father's death family piper to Sir Hector Mackenzie of Gairloch. As a young man he went to the Reay country, the native land of his great-grandfather Rorie, and there received tuition on the little pipes, which are often used for dance music. He lived in the latter part of his career in Gairloch at Slatadale, where he married and had a numerous family, for whose advancement he emigrated to America with all his children except one daughter. She had previously married, but her father was so anxious that she should emigrate with the rest of the family, that she had to hide herself the night before the family left Gairloch in order to avoid being compelled to accompany them. John Mackay was a splendid piper; when he went to America, Sir Hector said he would never care to hear pipe music again. John prospered in America; he died at Picton about 1835, over eighty years of age. One of his sons, who was a stipendiary magistrate in Nova Scotia, died in the time of harvest 1884. The daughter who remained in Gairloch was married to a Maclean; their son, John Maclean of Strath, called in Gaelic "Iain Buidhe Taillear," has supplied much of the information here given regarding his ancestors, the hereditary pipers of the Gairloch family.

It is a singular fact that the four long-lived Mackays were pipers to the lairds of Gairloch during almost exactly two centuries, during which there were eight lairds of Gairloch in regular succession from father to son, but only the four pipers.

Chapter XVIII.

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William Mackenzie and Malcolm Maclean.

Two of the older bards of Gairloch deserve a chapter to themselves.

William Mackenzie, the Gairloch and Loch Broom catechist, was commonly called "An Ceistear Crubach," or "the lame catechist," owing to his being lame of a leg. He was a native of the parish of Gairloch, and was born about 1670. He seems to have been a poet of no mean order. In his early years he had the reputation of being a serious young man; he committed to memory the Shorter Catechism in Gaelic, and was afterwards for seven years employed in the capacity of perambulatory catechist at a small salary. On one occasion in the dead of winter a tremendous storm overtook him, and he was driven to seek the shelter of a rock. He was fortunately discovered, and conveyed on horseback to the house of Mr Mackenzie of Balone, where he experienced the greatest kindness. Here he saw a beautiful young lady, his host's sister, who afterwards became Mrs Mackenzie of Kernsary, and, inspired by her charms, he composed a celebrated song of great poetic merit.

He happened to be in Strath, Gairloch, at the time of a wedding, to which however he was not invited. Being joined by some others who had suffered the same indignity, and who brought a bottle of whisky with them, he forgot the sacredness of his office, and as the glass went round composed a satirical song lampooning the newly-married couple and their relations and guests. The song eked out. The ministers shook their heads, and condemned the profanity of their catechist from their pulpits. He was dragged before the kirk-session and severely cross-examined. One or two of his judges espoused his cause, and insisted that he should recite the obnoxious song. "I can repeat no song," said the bard, "unless I accompany the words with an air, and to sing here would be altogether unbecoming." This obstacle was, however, got over, and Mackenzie sang the song with great glee, while his judges could not restrain their laughter. However he was dismissed from being catechist, and was never restored to the post. He died at a good old age, and was buried in Creagan an Inver of Meikle Gruinard, on the northern confines of the parish of Gairloch.

Malcolm M'Lean, called "Callum a Ghlinne," or "Callum of the glen," was a native of Kenlochewe. His reputation as a bard rests entirely on a celebrated song he composed in praise of his own daughter. It is the only example of his genius now extant. He was fond of singing the songs of other poets, and had an excellent voice. As a young man he enlisted in the army, and after serving a number of years was allowed a small pension on his discharge. He became a crofter in his native country, and married a woman of exemplary patience and resignation. He is described as a bacchanalian of the first magnitude, and by his intemperance reduced his wife and daughter [181] to miserable poverty. The daughter, his only child, was of uncommon beauty, but for want of dowry was for a long time unwooed and unmarried. In his later years his drinking habits became more notorious than ever, and when he was seen approaching an inn the local topers left their work and trooped about him. No wonder the resignation of his poor wife, under such circumstances, is proverbial in Gairloch. He died about the year 1764.

Professor Blackie has made a spirited translation of Malcolm Maclean's song, which with the Professor's kind consent is given below.

The forgiving gentleness of Malcolm's wife is recorded in the following story:—Malcolm had occasion to go to Dingwall on a summer day for a boll of oatmeal; he took a grey horse with him. On his way, with just enough cash in his pocket to pay for the meal, he entered an inn, where he met a Badenoch drover, who proved to be a boon companion. The two continued drinking together for some time; the bard at length spent the last sixpence of his meal money. Thinking, no doubt, of the awkwardness of returning without the meal, he remarked, "If I had more money, I would not go home for some time yet." "That's easily got; I'll buy the grey horse from you," replied the drover. The bargain was speedily concluded, and the money paid. The well-seasoned poet continued the "spree," until at length the price of the grey horse was gone too. "Now," said he, "I must go." "But how," said the drover, "can you face your wife?" "My wife!" said the poet, "she's the woman that never said, nor will say worse to me than 'God bless you, Malcolm.'" "I'll bet you the price of the horse and the meal," replied the drover, "that her greeting will be very different." "Done!" eagerly shouted Malcolm, grasping the other's hand. Away they went, with the landlord and two other men to witness the bard's reception by his wife. He staggered into his dwelling, where he would have fallen into the open fire, had not his wife caught him in her arms, exclaiming, "God bless you, Malcolm." "But I have neither brought meal nor money," said the bard. "We will soon get more money and meal too," replied the wife. "But I have also drunk the grey horse," said he. "What matter, my love," she said, "since you are alive and well." It was enough: the drover had to count down the money; and it was not long before the patient wife had the satisfaction of hailing her husband's return with both horse and meal.

Callum o' the Glen.

Chorus.

My bonnie dark maid,
My precious, my pretty,

I'll sing in your praise
A light-hearted ditty;
Fair daughter whom none
Had the sense yet to marry;
And I'll tell you the cause
Why their love did miscarry,
My bonnie dark maid!

I. [182]

For sure thou art beautiful,
Faultless to see;
No malice can fasten
A blot upon thee.
Thy bosom's soft whiteness
The seagull may shame,
And for thou art lordless
'Tis I am to blame.

II.

And indeed I am sorry,
My fault I deplore,
Who won thee no tocher
By swelling my store;
With drinking and drinking
My tin slipped away,
And so there's small boast
Of my sporran to-day.

III.

While I sit at the board,
Well seasoned with drinking,
And wish for the thing
That lies nearest my thinking,
'Tis the little brown jug
That my eye will detain,
And when once I have seen it
I'd see it again!

IV.

The men of the country
May jeer and may gibe,
That I rank with the penniless
Beggarly tribe;
But though few are my cattle,
I'll still find a way
For a drop in my bottle,
Till I'm under the clay.

V.

There's a grumpy old fellow,
As proud as a king,
Whose lambs will be dying
By scores in the spring,
Drinks three bottles a year,
Most sober of men,
But dies a poor sinner
Like Callum o' Glen.

VI. [183]

When I'm at the market,
With a dozen like me
Of proper good fellows
That love barley-bree,
I sit round the table,
And drink without fear,
For my good-wife says only,
"God bless you, my dear!"

VII.

Though I'm poor, what of that?

I can live and not steal,
Though pinched at a time
By the high price of meal.
There's good luck with God,
And He gives without measure;
And while He gives health,
I can pay for my pleasure.

VIII.

Very true that my drink
Makes my money go quicker;
Yet I'll not take a vow
To dispense with good liquor:
In my own liquid way
I'd be great amongst men,—
Now you know what to think
Of good Callum o' Glen.

Chapter XIX.

William Ross, the Gairloch Bard.

William Ross, known as "the Gairloch bard," was born at Broadford, Skye, in 1762. His mother was a native of Gairloch, and daughter of the celebrated blind piper and poet Iain Dall, or John Mackay, already noticed. For want of a regular school in Skye he and a little sister were sent to the Grammar School at Forres to be educated. Here his aptness in learning attracted the notice of the master, who declared that of the many pupils he had had under his care he did not remember one who had excelled young Ross as a general scholar. After he had been some years at Forres he joined his parents, who had removed to the parish of Gairloch. His father became a pedlar, and travelled through the Lews and other western islands. The young bard, who was of a delicate constitution, accompanied his father in these travels, and endeavoured to become acquainted with the different dialects of the Gaelic language. He afterwards travelled through [184] parts of the Highlands of Perthshire, Breadalbane, and Argyllshire, and finally returned to Gairloch, where, at the age of twenty-four, he was appointed to the charge of the parish school, which he conducted until near the time of his death with much success. In a short time he acquired a great reputation as a teacher of the young, whom he endeared to himself by his tact and humour. His company was much sought after, not only for his excellent songs but also for his intelligence and sense of humour, and he maintained an intimacy with several respectable families with whom he had become acquainted during his travels. He played on the violin, flute, and several other instruments with considerable skill, and was a good singer; he acted as precentor in the parish church. Never strong he soon became a prey to asthma and consumption, and his short but brilliant poetic career was terminated by his death, in 1790, at the early age of twenty-seven. On the monument on his grave his age is stated to have been twenty-eight; but John Mackenzie, in the "Beauties," says William Ross died in his twenty-eighth year. He was residing at Badachro at the time of his death. He was buried in the churchyard of Gairloch, where a simple stone with an English inscription was all that for many years marked the spot. The funeral was attended by nearly the whole male population of the surrounding country.

A handsome freestone monument was in 1850 erected on the grave, mainly through the exertions of his clansman Mr George Ross, who was for many years head-keeper at Flowerdale, Gairloch, and is now (1886) living in well-earned retirement with a handsome pension from Sir Kenneth Mackenzie. The monument bears inscriptions in Gaelic and English. The English one is as follows:—

"In memory of William Ross, sometime schoolmaster of Gairloch, better known as the Gairloch bard, who died in 1790, aged 28 years, this monument is erected over his grave by a few of his countrymen and others, headed by the amiable and accomplished proprietor of Gairloch, in testimony of their respect and admiration of his extraordinary genius and great native talent. 1850.

His name to future ages shall extend,
While Gaelic poetry can claim a friend."

In personal appearance William Ross was tall and handsome, with open and regular features, and brown hair, and was nearly six feet high. As a student he excelled in Latin and Greek, and it was universally allowed that he was the best Gaelic scholar of his day. During his excursions to the Lews he paid his addresses to Marion Ross, of Stornoway, but was rejected, and he never married. He composed songs to his flame both before and after his rejection. Some of his best pieces were composed during his travels, but the majority of his songs were the product of his

later years. John Mackenzie included twenty-one of William Ross's songs and poems in the "Beauties of Gaelic Poetry," and published a separate volume of them, comprising in all thirty-three productions. John Mackenzie says that William Ross's poetry deserves to be styled the poetry of the heart,—of a heart full to overflowing with noble sentiments and sublime and tender passions.

Chapter XX.

[185]

Alexander Campbell, Bard to Sir Hector.

This famous bard of Gairloch is remembered in his native parish as Alastair Buidhe Mac Iamhair, or the "yellow-haired Alexander M'Iver." The surname Campbell is called M'Iver in Gairloch. He was born in 1767, probably at Melvaig, in Gairloch. On his mother's side he was descended from the Mackenzies of Shieldaig. His father's ancestor is said to have come from the Lorne country as attendant to Anna, daughter of Macdougal of Dunolly, who, about 1440, became the wife of Alexander the Upright, sixth lord of Kintail, father of Hector Roy Mackenzie. It is said that from the days of Hector Roy the bard's ancestors had always been ground-officers under the lairds of Gairloch.

Alastair Buidhe spent his youthful days at Melvaig, and assisted his father in the usual avocations of a small farmer. One of his best songs was composed whilst he was herding his father's cattle on the hill at Melvaig.

When he came to man's estate Alastair was appointed by Sir Hector Mackenzie to be one of his ground-officers, as well as his family bard. He seems to have displayed considerable tact in performing his duties. Here is an anecdote of him which illustrates not only his own character but the footing he was on with Sir Hector. It appears that Sir Hector had been much annoyed with a tenant at Poolewe, who was in arrear with his rent, and would not pay up any part of it. So he called Alastair Buidhe and instructed him to go and demand the rent once more, and in default of payment to take the roof off the house. On the tenant still refusing to pay up, Alastair got on the roof and removed one divot from the ridge at the very top of the roof, and one other from the top of the wall at the lowest part of the roof. Sir Hector, whose kind heart had by this time repented of the order he had given, met Alastair on his return. Sir Hector inquired if he had done the job. Alastair replied that he had. Sir Hector said he hoped he had not done as bad as he had been told. Alastair then told him he had put the highest divot from the roof as far down as the lowest. On this Sir Hector expressed his vexation, and remarked that Alastair had done very badly. Then Alastair said it was not so bad but that it could yet be made better, for that he had only taken off the two divots altogether. Sir Hector said, "Sandy, you are a wiser man than I am."

As bard to Sir Hector, Alastair regularly attended two or three days a week at Flowerdale House, as well as at other times when his services were required. He was much appreciated by every member of the family. Dr Mackenzie, Sir Hector's only surviving son, writing of him under date of 30th August 1878, said:—"I see honest Alastair Buidhe, with his broad bonnet and blue greatcoat (summer and winter), clearly before me now, sitting in the dining-room at Flowerdale, quite 'raised' like, while reciting Ossian's poems, such as 'The Brown Boar of Diarmid' and others [186] (though he had never heard of Macpherson's collection), to very interested visitors, though as unacquainted with Gaelic as Alastair was with English. This must have been as early as 1812 or so, when I used to come into the room after dinner about nine years old." Dr Mackenzie says in his "Odd and End Stories" that it was Alastair who told them the story of Hector Roy and "The Gairloch" (see Part I., chap. ix.). The Doctor adds:—"One of our summer evening amusements was getting him (Alastair) to the dining-room after dinner, where, well dined below stairs and primed by a bumper of port wine, he would stand up and with really grand action and eloquence give us poem after poem of Ossian in Gaelic. Alastair could not read, and only understood Gaelic, and these poems came down to him through generations numberless, as repeated by his ancestors around their winter evening fires."

When Alastair became ground-officer and bard to Sir Hector, he took up his abode at Inverkerry near Flowerdale. In his later years he removed to Strath, and Sir Hector allowed him to hold his land there rent free for the rest of his days. He survived his beloved patron seventeen years; he died in 1843, at the age of seventy-six, and was buried in his family grave in the Gairloch churchyard.

Alastair was of middle height, and had, as his Gaelic *soubriquet* implies, yellow hair; he was a slender man, and never strong at his best. In his later years he suffered from bad health, and was very weakly long before his death.

His character is described as peculiarly attractive; he was of a gentle kindly disposition, highly esteemed by all who knew him of whatever rank, and children loved him as well as their seniors. He had a great fund of humour, combined with a deep sense of the pathetic, and was "splendid company."

William Ross, "the Gairloch bard," and he were intimate friends. As Alastair was wading the

Achtercairn river one day, on his way to a sister's wedding, he met William Ross, and humorous verses were hurled from one to the other across the stream in reference to Alastair's coat, which was a "Cota gearr" of homespun cloth slightly dipped in indigo, the colour being between a pale blue and a dirty white. Alastair was also on good terms with Alexander Grant, the great bard of Slaggan.

Alastair was married, and left five sons, viz., Roderick (grandfather of Alexander Mackenzie the historian of the Mackenzies, and editor of the *Celtic Magazine*), Alastair Buidhe, Iain Buidhe, and Donald Buidhe (who was a cripple and became a tailor). Roderick, a son of Evander Buidhe, is now shepherd at Tollie, and has supplied much of the information here given about his grandfather. Another son of Evander Buidhe was in a shop at Inverness, where he died; he made a capital song to his grandfather's old house at Strath, entitled in Gaelic "Tigh mo Sheanair." So the poetic afflatus of the old bard has not altogether disappeared in his descendants.

It is remarkable that two such bright stars should have illuminated the poetic firmament at the same time in Gairloch as William Ross and Alexander Campbell. It is difficult for a southerner to [187] appreciate the fame of these two Gairloch poets, but it may be said almost to correspond with that of Southey and Wordsworth. The poetry of William Ross appeals most strongly to the cultured mind, whilst Alastair's is more in tune with the simpler instincts and impulsive heartiness of a rural life. As we should expect, the poems of Alastair Buidhe are in the present day preferred in Gairloch to the compositions of his friend. No complete collection has been published of the poems of Alastair Buidhe, though several pieces have appeared in the *Celtic Magazine*. It is feared that many of the poems, which only live in the memories of the people, may soon be lost.

Chapter XXI.

Alexander Grant, the Great Bard of Slaggan.

Alexander Grant, known as "Bard mor an t' Slaggan," or "the great bard of Slaggan," was born at Mellon Charles about 1742. His ancestor came to Gairloch from Strathspey, as attendant to Anne, daughter of Sir John Grant of Grant, who was married in 1640 to Kenneth Mackenzie, sixth laird of Gairloch. Most of the bard's life was passed at Slaggan, but shortly before his death he removed with his son to Tournaig, where he died in 1820 (or perhaps later), being about eighty years of age. The title bestowed on Sandy Grant of the "great bard" would perhaps be more correctly translated as the "big bard," for it was given him on account of his enormous stature and strength rather than for his merits as a poet. In height he was a giant, far exceeding in size any man then or now living in Gairloch; nor had he his equal in point of muscular strength. He did not fight; but on one occasion there was a row, to quell which the great bard caught Donald Morrison, of Drumchork, and held him fast by the hand. Donald, though himself a giant as compared with most men, was a pigmy by the side of Sandy Grant, and neither he nor all the bystanders could pull the bard's hand from his. Another proof of his great strength is remembered. In that day black periwinkles were plentiful, and were a favourite article of food; only two men in the country could break or crush a handful of them by the mere force of their grasp, viz., Sir Hector Mackenzie of Gairloch and the "great bard." It is doubtful whether any man could be found in Gairloch to perform this feat in the present day.

Sandy Grant was not so eminent a bard as were his contemporaries William Ross and Alastair Buidhe. He composed comparatively few songs or poems. In manner he is described as having been a "blunt" man. In appearance he was most remarkable for his gigantic form, already alluded to. I can get no positive information what was his exact height in inches; he far exceeded the height generally considered that of a tall man, and I am told he certainly stood more than seven [188] feet in his stockings. The bard was a fine-looking man in face, features, and expression. A portrait of him, which they say was an excellent likeness, appeared in the first edition of John Mackenzie's "Beauties of Gaelic Poetry." John Mackenzie made a collection of Sandy Grant's poems, intending to publish them in a new edition of the "Beauties," but death frustrated this design, and the poems seem to have been lost.

The "bard mor" was a canny man, if we may judge from the following amusing anecdote, which is quite authentic, and illustrates the superstitions of the times. It was told me by James Mackenzie: — There was a man in Loch Carron who had his cheeses stolen from his barn by a neighbour. Now Sandy Grant, the "bard mor," was reputed to have the power of discovering things that had been lost, by the faculty of second-sight. The worthy but simple-minded man who had been robbed of his cheeses sent a message immediately he discovered his loss to the bard at Slaggan, and requested that he would find out who had stolen them. The bard, who thought he saw a chance of earning an "honest penny," at once started on foot for Loch Carron. The man who had stolen the cheeses heard that the bard had been sent for, and was terrified; every day he walked out three miles on the road towards the north, hoping to intercept Sandy Grant. At last he met Sandy. Says he, "Are you not a stranger coming to Loch Carron?" "Yes," said Sandy, "I come from Slaggan." "Well," he says, "I am the man that stole the cheeses, and I'll give you fifteen shillings if

you will not tell that I am the man." The bard replied, "Of course I know it was you that stole the cheeses, but where did you put them?" "Oh, dear!" said the man, "I put them in a peat-stack at the back of the township." "Yes; I know that," said Sandy, "but which stack did you put them in?" He replied, "The one that's farthest from the township altogether." "Are you sure that you put all the cheeses there?" again asked the cautious bard. "Yes," the man said, "I put them all there, but one cheese is out of count." "Well," said the bard, "I will not tell your name; when once they get the cheeses they will be satisfied." The Loch Carron man gave him the fifteen shillings, and as they passed his house he pressed the bard to come in and have a dram. "Oh, no, no," said Sandy; "be off, that they may not suspect we have been together." Then they parted, and the bard went to the house of the man who had sent for him. After refreshing the inner man, Sandy was asked to state who had stolen the cheeses, and where they now were. "Well," he said, "I will not tell you who stole them, but I will tell you where they are." He then asked what he was to receive for coming all the way from Slaggan. The man inquired how much he asked. Sandy named twenty-five shillings, and that sum was paid to him. "When to-morrow comes," said he "I will tell you where the cheeses are; but I must warn you that there will be one cheese missing." The next day the cheeses were duly discovered and restored to their rightful owner, and the "bard mor" returned to Slaggan with both the fifteen shillings and the twenty-five shillings in his pocket, [189] making two pounds,—in those days a more considerable sum than it is now.

The Grants, who formerly lived at Mellon Udrigil but are now at Londubh, are descendants of the "Bard mor an t'Slaggan."

Chapter XXII.

John Mackenzie of the "Beauties."

John Mackenzie, piper, poet, and author, is best remembered as having been the collector and editor of the work entitled the "Beauties of the Gaelic Language." He was born 17th July 1806, at Mellon Charles. He was the eldest son of "Alastair Og," who, like his father before him, was tacksman of all the lands on the north side of Loch Ewe belonging to the lairds of Gairloch. John Mackenzie's mother was Margaret, daughter of Mr Mackenzie of Badachro. On the father's side he was fifth in direct male descent from Alastair Cam, youngest son of Alastair Breac, fifth laird of Gairloch. He was educated primarily at home, afterwards at a small school on Isle Ewe, and finally at the parish school of Gairloch. From childhood he evinced a peculiar delight in reading, and especially devoted himself to the study of the songs and music of his native district. While a mere child he made a fiddle for himself, and later on a set of bagpipes, using no other instrument or tool than his pocket-knife. He became an excellent piper, and could also play the piano, fiddle, flute, and several other instruments. His parents, seeing his skill with his knife, apprenticed him to a travelling joiner named William Ross. During his travels with his master, John Mackenzie found congenial employment in noting down the Gaelic songs and tales floating among his countrymen. While executing some work at the manse of Gairloch he received a severe blow on the head, which for a time incapacitated him. On partially recovering he went to a carpenter at Conan Bridge to complete his apprenticeship, but he soon found that the injury to his head was of such a permanent character as to unfit him to pursue his trade further. Nor was he sorry to give up what was by no means congenial to his taste. He returned to Gairloch, and employed himself in collecting the poems of William Ross, most of which he obtained from Alexander Campbell. He spent twenty-one nights taking down Ross's poems from the lips of Alastair Buidhe. He seems from this time to have given himself up to literary work, and strenuously he laboured at it, spending some twelve years in travelling through the Highlands collecting materials for his great work the "Beauties of Gaelic Poetry." While thus travelling he procured a large list of subscribers for this work and other publications. In 1833 he left his native parish, and in the same year appeared "The Poems of William Ross, the Gairloch bard," with "The History of Mac Cruislig; a Highland Tale," in one volume; and several other works of minor importance. Within the year a [190] second edition of Ross's poems was called for. In 1836 he obtained a situation as bookkeeper in the Glasgow University Printing-office. The "Beauties" appeared in 1841. He disposed of the copyright for a mere trifle to a publishing firm in Glasgow, he himself engaging to superintend the work while passing through the press, a labour which undermined his never very robust constitution. His next work of importance was the "History of Prince Charles," in Gaelic, which was published by an Edinburgh firm. This was a translation, but poor John Mackenzie received very small remuneration for his skill and labour. The publication of these works brought him considerable fame in literary circles, and he soon after obtained an engagement with Messrs Maclachlan & Stewart, Edinburgh, at one pound per week. He produced for them translations into Gaelic of Baxter's "Call to the Unconverted;" Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress," "Come and Welcome," "World to Come," "Grace Abounding," "Water of Life," and "Sighs from Hell;" as also, Dyer's "Christ's Famous Titles," and Guthrie's "Christian's Great Interest." John Mackenzie was also the author of the English-Gaelic part of the dictionary known as MacAlpine's. He produced an enlarged edition of the poems of Duncan Ban Macintyre, and various other works. In all he composed, edited, or translated above thirty publications. His last completed work was "MacAlpine's Dictionary." In 1847 he issued a prospectus for an enlarged edition of the

"Beauties." He was also the sub-editor of the *Cuairtear nan Gleann*; and he wrote some original Gaelic sermons, for Highland ministers who were too ignorant of the language to compose their own sermons in it. At the time of his death he was preparing a new edition of the Gaelic Bible, which he left in an incomplete state. Being in very weak health he returned in May 1848, after an absence of fourteen years, to his father's house at Kirkton, or Inverewe, where, after a lingering illness, he died on 19th August 1848, aged forty-two years. He was buried in the old chapel in the churchyard at Gairloch. Almost the whole population of the district attended the funeral.

John Mackenzie was slenderly built, fair-haired, and sharp-featured. He was from his youth upwards considered quite a character in his native district. He composed several pieces of his own, but not of the highest order. He made a song in 1830 to Mary Sudge (with whom he had fallen in love), and published it in his "Cruitear; or Gaelic Melodist." He also composed an excellent song to a weaver's loom. He became well known as a good piper; he and John Macrae of Raasay used to be judges of pipe music at the Edinburgh competitions.

Several anecdotes are related exhibiting his originality and humour. One is worth recording here. He was travelling through Skye and the Islands gathering materials for his own works, and collecting accounts for the *Inverness Courier*. He had collected a considerable sum and paid it into a bank at Portree, where he was invited by the banker to spend the night. Next morning he strolled down to the pier, and there saw a ship with the form of a woman as figurehead. At this he [191] stared so intently and earnestly, assuming at the same time his usual comic attitudes, that the captain's son noticing him asked, "Is she not really a very beautiful woman?" "Oh, yes," answered John, "I wish you would sell her to me." "You had better buy the ship," said he. "Oh, I cannot; it's not every man who could buy the ship, and it's her figurehead I want." The captain's son, still chaffing one whom he took to be a mere simpleton, and referring to John's long overcoat, answered, "I have seen many a man with a shorter coat than yours who could buy her." "Well, if she is cheap, I would like to buy her for the figurehead. Have you any cargo in her?" "Yes; I have five hundred bolls of meal in her; and you shall have the whole for three hundred pounds." John jumped on board, handed a five-pound note to the captain's son, who was part owner and was working the vessel, and said, "The ship is mine as she stands, cargo and all; come to the bank at twelve to-morrow, and you shall have the money." John went to the banker, related what had passed, informed the banker he had no money to pay for the ship, but that she was a good bargain, and that they must watch lest the captain's son should get away with her and the five pounds. Inquiries were made, and the banker agreed to pay for the ship, which was really worth more than three hundred pounds. They went at once to the captain's son, and offered him the money. He was in great distress, and begged to be relieved of the foolish bargain, finally offering John sixty pounds for himself if he would give up his right to the ship. This sum he magnanimously declined, and gave up the ship, strongly advising the captain's son to be more careful in future; not to chaff any one who had no intention of interfering with him or his; and, particularly, never to judge a man by his appearance, or by the length of his coat.

On 26th July 1878 a monument to the memory of John Mackenzie, which had been erected on a projecting rock outside the Gairloch churchyard, near the high road, was uncovered by Sir Kenneth Mackenzie of Gairloch, in presence of a large number of spectators. The monument, which is a granite column thirteen feet six inches high, was raised by a public subscription, originated and carried through by Mr Alexander Mackenzie of the *Celtic Magazine*. There are suitable inscriptions in Gaelic and English, that in English being as follows:—"In memory of John Mackenzie (of the family of Alastair Cam of Gairloch), who compiled and edited the 'Beauties of Gaelic Poetry;' and also compiled, wrote, translated, or edited, under surpassing difficulties, about thirty other works. Born at Mellon Charles, 1806; Died at Inverewe, 1848. In grateful recognition of his valuable services to Celtic literature, this monument is erected by a number of his fellow-countrymen, 1878."

Chapter XXIII. [192]

Living Gairloch Bards.

There are several Gairloch men now living who essay the poetic vein in their own language.

One of them is Alexander Mackenzie, of Oban, or Opinan, near Mellon Udrigil. He is called "the bard," and has composed, it is said, some good songs. He lives the ordinary life of a crofter.

Perhaps the best known of living Gairloch bards is Duncan Mackenzie, the Kenlochewe bard. He was born in 1831, on the Culinellan farm near Kenlochewe. His father Hector was a weaver at Kenlochewe, and composed some poems, but his muse was neither so prolific nor so notable as that of his son. Duncan's mother was of the Loch Carron Mackenzies, some of whom were also poets. Duncan Mackenzie was never at school, and only learned to read Gaelic after attaining manhood. He had a brother named Malcolm, who was a piper, and died some years ago. The bard displayed his talents at an early age, for he composed several pieces when only eleven years old. The first which attracted public attention to his talents as a bard was a dialogue in verse between himself and Fionnla Leith, which he composed at the age of fifteen. The bard is a crofter at

Kenlochewe. Like his father he is a good weaver; at times he has also proved himself an efficient shoemaker, mason, and carpenter. He is not a great singer, but he sometimes, though rarely, renders his own songs in a low voice but with expression. He has composed a large number of songs. A dozen of them have been published by Mr Alexander Mackenzie, under the auspices of the Gaelic Society of Inverness. Many of his pieces are forgotten by himself, though remembered by his neighbours. He has over fifty in manuscript. He excels in satire, and a vein of sometimes rather strong humour pervades his poems. He is a tall slender man, with plenty of beard, and still frequently dons the kilt.

The following poem was composed by the Kenlochewe bard on the marriage of Sir Kenneth S. Mackenzie, Bart. of Gairloch. Appended is an English version of the song which Professor Blackie has kindly made for this book. It is a close translation:—

Oran da Shir Coinneach Ghearrloch an oidhche a phos e.

Chuala mi naigheachd ro thaitneach ri h-eis 'neachd,
Sgeula chaidh aithris am baile Dhun-eidin,
Sir Coinneach bhi seachnadh ard bhan-tighearnan Shasuinn,
Sa posadh ri ainnir, cho maiseach ri te dhiu'.

Nighean tighearn Ilè tha cinnteach ro uasal,
Cho fad sa theid firinn a sgriobhadh man cuairt dì',
Eireachdail, finealta, direach, ro-stuama,
Ailleagan priseil, bho shin i air gluasad.

'S ciatach a charaid 's iad Gaidh'lach le cheile, [193]
Tha uaisle nan nadur thug bar air na ceudan,
"Ban-tighearn og Ghearrloch" an trath sa dha h-eigheachd,
'S cupaichean lana dha 'n traghadh le eibhneas.

Tein-aighir 's gach aite, le gairdeachas inntinn,
Bho iosal Strath Ghearrloch gu Braighé na tirè
An tuath-cheatharn laidir dha'm b-abhaist bhi dileas,
A dearbhadh an cairdeas 's an daimh nach da dhiobair.

Tha i' slean 'us uaislean san uair so aig feasda,
Ag innse gach buaidh a bha dualach dha'n teaghlach,
Nan suidhè gu h-uallach an guaillean a cheile
Ag guidhe bhi buan doibh, le suaibhneas 'us eibhneas.

A bhan-tighearn og aluinn tha'n traths air an tir so,
A dh-fhior fhuil nan Armunn bha tamh ann an Ilè,
Na Caimbeulaich laidir, bho chrioch Ar-a-Ghaidheil,
Toir buaidh air an namhaid 's gach ait anns am bi iad.

Tha cliu air na gaisgich dha'm b-aitreabh an tigh Digè,
'S priseil an eachdraidh th'air cleachdadh na sinnsear,
Bu mhoralach, maiseach, an curaidh Sir Eachainn;
Bha eis'neachd aig fhacal am Bailè na rioghachd.

Sir *Frank*, an duin' uasal, bu shuaircè ro choir e,
Meas aig an t-sluagh air, 's bha 'n tuath air an seol leis,
Sealgair na'm fuar-bheann, ceum uallach air mointich:
'S minic a bhuail e, na luath's an damh croiceach.

Buaidh 'us cinneachdainn piseach, 'us ainm dhoibh,
Slaintè 'us toileachdainn, sonas 'us sealbh dhoibh,
Saoghal fada, gun ghainnè, gun chearb dhoibh,
Gearrloch 'us Lagaidh, bhi pailt ann an airgiod.

Epithalamium on the Marriage of Sir Kenneth Mackenzie, Baronet of Gairloch, and Miss Eila Campbell of Islay.

I heard a piece of news last night, good news that brings no sorrow,
Good news that sped on lightsome wings from castled Edinboro',
That good Sir Kenneth wisely shuns an English maid to woo,
But he will marry a bonnie lass of Celtic blood and true.

A daughter of brave Islay's lord, a perfect lady she
From top to toe, this all who speak the truth will tell to thee;
Handsome she is, stately and tall, winsome and chaste and good:
In all she is, and all she does, a jewel of womanhood.

A noble couple, and well matched; this thing I dare to tell,— [194]

Among a thousand ladies she will bravely bear the bell.
The Lady of Gairloch! I hear them shout with loud acclaim,
While brimming cups are freely poured to her high honoured name.

And bonfires blaze on all the heights, and all hearts are ablaze,
From the green shelter of the strath up to the hoary braes;
And all the clansmen stout and true attend with loyal pride,
To prove their fealty to their chief, and greet his noble bride.

Both high and low are feasting now, and telling man to man
The virtues that from sire to son flowed on to bless the clan:
Proudly they sit in friendly groups, and pray that evermore
On them and theirs a gracious God full horn of joy may pour.

The lovely lady long the pride of Islay's faithful strand,
Of old heroic stock, shall now rule o'er this happy land;
In west Argyll her kinsmen dwell, the clan of mighty name,
Who never flinched and never failed to conquer where they came.

In Tigh mor's goodly hall they sit, where deeds of great renown
The blazoned story of the clan from sire to son come down:
Sir Hector was a noble man, and when debate was stirred
At Dingwall or at Inverness they owned his mighty word.

Sir Francis was a gentleman, right courteous and polite,
And all his tenants loved the lord who always loved the right;
A hunter bold was he, and keen to mount from crag to crag,
With wary foot, and bring to ground the fleet high-antlered stag.

Good luck and joy be with the pair, favour from God and man;
Health and goodwill and acres broad well planted with the clan;
And length of happy days be theirs, and blessings without measure,
And a fat purse to serve their need and entertain their leisure.

Alexander Cameron, who may be called "the Tournaig bard," is a native of Inverasdale, on the west side of Loch Ewe. He was born about 1848. He has been manager of Mr Osgood H. Mackenzie's farm at Tournaig for some sixteen years, and has been on the Inverewe estate since he was a boy of fifteen. He is the author of a number of songs and poems of considerable merit. Perhaps the best of them is a poem in twenty verses in praise of Tournaig. The song in its original Gaelic appeared in the *Northern Chronicle* in 1883. I have had the pleasure of hearing Alexander Cameron sing several of his own songs, and can testify to their graceful intonation. He is tall, and rather slenderly built, and has the courteous manner of a true Gairloch Highlander.

The following are twelve verses of the song in praise of Tournaig, with an English version by Mr W. Clements Good, of Aberdeen:— [195]

ORAN.

On's e'n diugh an dara Maigh
Bho 'na ghabh mi 'n Turnaig tamh,
Air leam fein nach b'olc an cas
Air a sgath ged' dheilbhinn rann.
Hurabh o gun tog mi fonn,
'S toil leam fein an Coire donn,
Diridh mi 'mach ris a mhaoil;
'S fallain gaoth a thaobh na meall.

'S gloirmhor obair Nadair fein,
Grian a g'oradh neoil nan speur,
Cuan na chomhnard boidheach reidh,
'S torman seimh aig seis nan allt.
Hurabh o, &c.

Turnaig aoibhinn, Turnaig aigh,
Turnaig shaoibhir, Turnaig lan,
Turnaig bheartach, 's pailte barr,
Turnaig ghnaiseach, ghranach, throm.
Hurabh o, &c.

Tha gach tlachd na d' thaic'air fas,
Sliabh is srath is cladach sail;
D'uillt do neamhneidibh cho lan
Far an snamh an dobhran donn.
Hurabh o, &c.

Tha do chladach clachadh, ard,
Geodhach, stacach, fasgach, blath;
H-uile sloc is lag is bagh
Loma-lan do mhaorach trom.
Hurabh o, &c.

Bradain mheanmnach na d' loch sail,
Iteach ballabhreac's earragheal tarr,
Suibhlach luath, na chuaich mar bharc,
Tigh'n on 'chuan gu tamh 'm bun d'allt
Hurabh o, &c.

Loch-nan-dail le chladach 'seoin,
Loch-nan-lach is glaise geoidh,
Iasgach pailt air bhailc nan ob,
'S gasd 'an spors do sheoid dhol ann.
Hurabh o, &c.

Air gach dail tha mart le laogh, [196]
Anns gach glaic tha pailteas naoisg,
Air gach stacan, coileach fraoich
'Mach na d' aonach sgaoth chearc donn.
Hurabh o, &c.

Coill Aigeascaig gu ceutach cluth,
'S am beil legion coileach-dubh,
Sud an doire 'n goir iad moch,
Seinn am puirt le'm bus-ghuib chrom,
Hurabh o, &c.

Cuag chuldonn anns gach ait'
Seinn guggug an dluths 'nam barr,
Breacaidh-beith 'sa ghlas charn,
Snathadag is dreadhan donn,
Hurabh o, &c.

Smudan, smeorach, creothar, dnag,
Sud an ceol is boidhche sgread;
'S bru-dearg ruiteach gearradh fead,
Thuas air creagan os an cionn.
Hurabh o, &c.

Leam a b'ait bhi seal le'm ghaol,
G-eisdeachd cruitearan do chraobh;
Gabhail beachd air obair shaor
Nadair aonsgeulaich 's gach ball.
Hurabh o, &c.

Song on Tournaig.

Twice has the bright returning May
Inspired me to poetic lay,
Since Tournaig's hills first knew my tread
And cast their shadows o'er my head.
Hurrah, the chorus let me raise!
The Corrie be my theme of praise,
On whose brown ridge the heather grows,
And where the healthful north wind blows.

Here nature glories in her pride;
O'er heaven the clouds, all sunlit, glide;
Like polished shield the ocean glows,
The babbling burn sings as it flows.
Hurrah, &c. &c.

Tournaig! thou home beloved by me!
With rich green crop and sloping lea,
With fruitful fields and white-fleeced sheep [197]
Dotting afar each breezy steep.
Hurrah, &c. &c.

I ne'er can cease my praise of thee!
Here hill and strath and briny sea;
There streams which from the mountains glide,
Where pearls abound and otters hide.

Hurrah, &c. &c.

High is thy shore against the storm,
Yet lined with sheltered coves and warm;
Whilst shell-fish fill each rocky hole
Where never ocean's waves can roll.
Hurrah, &c. &c.

And he who gazes in the deep
May see the silvery salmon sweep,
With graceful curve and stately turn,
To seek his food below the burn.
Hurrah, &c. &c.

Or we can haste to Loch-nan-Dail,
Where the brown trout will never fail;
Whilst flocks of duck and grey goose soar
From marshy haunts upon its shore.
Hurrah, &c. &c.

The shaggy herd each meadow feeds,
The snipe lies close within the reeds;
Each step the heather-cock may rouse,
Loud warning his less wary spouse.
Hurrah, &c. &c.

Coille Aigeascaig,—shade from the heat!
Here is the blackcock's sure retreat;
Yonder they crow at early day,
With bent bills crooning forth their lay.
Hurrah, &c. &c.

Wood pigeon, mavis, and night jar,
Make music sweet both near and far;
Full joyously the redbreasts call,
Perched on the rock high o'er them all.
Hurrah, &c. &c.

"Coo, coo," the cuckoo cries aloft,
The chaffinch sings in tones more soft,
The fieldfare, titlark, and the wren
All swell the chorus of thy glen.
Hurrah, &c. &c.

No symphony can rival thine; [198]
Nor elsewhere do more clearly shine
The works of God in nature's face,
Harmonious in every place.
Hurrah, &c. &c.

Would that we two were wandering now
Where these wild woods could hear our vow!
Ne'er could we roam midst scenes more grand
Than in this rugged northern land!
Hurrah, &c. &c.

Alexander Bain, who is a crofter, thatcher, and dyker at Lonmor, was born about 1849. He has composed a number of excellent poems and songs in his native tongue. He is a much-respected and very worthy man, and is a sergeant in the Gairloch volunteers. He is of middle height and good physique.

Alexander Bain has composed the following elegy on the late well-known Dr Kennedy of Dingwall, who died in 1884, and who might be termed the bishop of the Free Church in the north-west Highlands. The doctor's fervid eloquence was often to be heard during sacramental services in the Leabaidh na Bàine at Gairloch. Appended is an English rendering of the elegy, mainly contributed by Mr Good:—

MARBH-RANN.

Thainig sgeul gu crich,
Tha na bhochdainn do'n tir muthuath;
Fad's a mhaireas an linn's,
Bithidh luchd-aidmheil fo sgios le gruaim.
Thainig smal air an or,
Ged tha'n Soisgeul air doigh mur bha,

Bho'n chuir iad fo'n fhoid,
Doctear Iain bu bhoidhche cail.

Thainig freasdail mu 'n cuairt,
'S thug e rionnag nam buadh gu lar;
Bithidh a Ghaidhealtachd truagh,
'S cha dean gearan dhoibh suas am bearn.
Sguir an sruthan bu bhoidhche,
Bha toir misneach do dhoige nan gras;
'S bithidh an cridheachan leoint',
Gus an ruig iad air gloir 's aird'.

'S ann tha lot anns a Chleir
As an-d-imich a reult a baild',
Bha na cobhair do 'n treud,
G'an tabhair thairis gu freumh na slaint'.
Bha do bhuaidhean gu leir,
Air an unga le seula graidh,
'S cha n-fhaic sinne as do dheigh,
Fear a sheasas cho treun na d-ait'.

Thainig dubhar, 'us neul, [199]
Air an Eaglais, nach clear dhi 'n drasd;
Thuit a geata fo priomh
Ged tha a bunnait cho fial 's a bha.
Am measg a cedair thu dluth,
'S thusa a meangan bu chubhraidh dhasan;
Bha thu taitneach fad d'uin'
Gu bhith labhairt air run fear daimh.

Bha do phearsa gun ghiomh
An's gach rathad an iarrte fas;
Ann an tuigse, 's an ciall,
Thug thu barrachd air ciad do chach.
Bha do sholus mur a ghriann
Cuir gach onair air Criosd amhain,
'S be sin toiseach do mhiann
Dol troimh ghleanneanaibh ciar a bhais.

Elegy on Dr Kennedy.

Sorrow overwhelms the Highlands;
Saintly Kennedy is dead!
Christian souls in woe bewail him
Sleeping in his narrow bed.
Though the truth shines 'midst the darkness,
Dimly burns the golden flame
Since beneath the sod they laid him,
Lovely in his life and aim.

Death's dark angel hovers o'er him;
Low our star of goodness falls;
Wild laments are unavailing,—
'Tis the Master gently calls!
Dried up is that fount of beauty,
Quenched that welling stream of grace;
Our sad hearts will bleed with anguish
Till in heaven we see his face.

All the elders, broken-hearted,
Mourn their guiding star; his flock
Mourn their pastor, him who helped them
To confide in Christ their Rock.
Bright above his many virtues
Shone the seal of love divine;
None can equal his brave spirit,—
None such noble powers combine.

Clouds and gloomy shadows gather
O'er the church for evermore;
Yet, though shaken are her bastions,
Her foundations still are sure.
In the grove of stately cedars [200]
Thou the sweetest branch hast stood;

Eloquent thou wast, when preaching
Life through Christ's most precious blood.

Blameless was thy life-long journey,
With the choicest goodness blest;
In thy wisdom, sense, and knowledge
Thou wast high above the rest.
Like the sun thy light was shining,
Praising Jesus day by day:
Truly thou wast ever ready
Through death's vale to take thy way.

Chapter XXIV.

The Poolewe Artist.

There are few, if any, traces of the existence of artistic knowledge or skill to be met with in the history of Gairloch or among her inhabitants. True some of the ancient weapons display a little artistic decoration, but these or their patterns may have come from other parts. One or two silver brooches of old Celtic designs are to be met with in the parish, and may perhaps be considered evidence of native taste. The arts of architecture, sculpture, and painting, however, have never been practised in Gairloch, at least there are no remains that shew it.

In these later years of the nineteenth century an instance has occurred of an intense love of, and feeling for, the art of drawing and painting in a native of Gairloch, so remarkable as to call for special mention here.

The instance referred to is in the person of a young man barely yet "of age," named Finlay Mackinnon, a crofter at Poolewe. Whilst doing his duty as a crofter he struggles to progress in art, and has in fact made painting his profession. Enthusiasm for art is his absorbing passion. He is a fine well-built and well conducted young man, above middle height. In manner he is modest and unassuming, and his native Highland courtesy is conspicuous. He has been educated at the Poolewe Public School, and lives with his mother at Mossbank, Poolewe.

In the autumn of 1877 I was going out for a sail on Loch Ewe; the boatmaster, requiring a boy to assist, engaged Finlay Mackinnon (then a little barelegged lad), who happened to be standing by, and with whom I was scarcely acquainted at the time. During our trip I got into conversation with Finlay, and asked him whether he was to become a fisherman or sailor. He answered, "No." "What have you a fancy for?" I inquired. The quaint reply in his then rather imperfect English was, "All my mind is with the drawing." He afterwards shewed me his childish efforts with his [201] pencil, and some very humble attempts in water-colour achieved by the aid of a shilling box of paints! I started him in a course of instruction, and Mrs Mackenzie of Inverewe gave him great assistance. He progressed rapidly. About 1881 it was his good fortune to come under the notice of Mr H. B. W. Davis, R.A. (who has so splendidly rendered some of the scenery and Highland cattle of Loch Maree), and Mr Davis kindly helped him forward, and in 1883 had him to London where he gave him a session's teaching at South Kensington. Other gentlemen, including Sir Kenneth Mackenzie, Bart. of Gairloch, the Marquis of Bristol, Mr O. H. Mackenzie of Inverewe, Mr John Bateson, lessee of Shieldaig, Mr A. Hamond, also lessee of Shieldaig, and Mr A. W. Weedon, the artist, gave Finlay Mackinnon material aid, and he was enabled to spend the winter session of 1884-5 at South Kensington.

Some of Finlay Mackinnon's sketches in water-colour already display considerable merit, and there is every prospect of his becoming an able delineator and interpreter of the beauties of Gairloch and Loch Maree.

Chapter XXV.

James Mackenzie's Gairloch Stories.

The following stories have been related to me by James Mackenzie of Kirkton, along with many traditions and facts embodied in other parts of this book. James Mackenzie is an enthusiastic lover of family history and local folk-lore, and whilst disowning superstitious fancies is quite alive to the charms of romance. I have endeavoured to preserve the words and phrases in which he communicated the stories, and where the pronoun of the first person is used in the following tales, it must be taken as coming from his lips.

James Mackenzie was born in 1808, and consequently remembers several of the bards and pipers already mentioned. His elder brother was John Mackenzie, so celebrated amongst Gaelic speakers as the compiler of the "Beauties of Gaelic Poetry," and James shared with his brother the fund of old stories which, in the days of their youth, they loved to listen to at the "ceilidh," or social meetings, then so generally held during the long winter nights.

James Mackenzie, who is a direct descendant in the sixth generation from Alastair Breac, fifth laird of Gairloch, has been a sailor during much of his life, and still affects the blue neckerchief and dark serge clothes of the sea-faring man, topped with a Highland bonnet of the Prince Charlie type. He is short in stature, and has very expressive features. He has the true Highland *esprit*, combined with refined courtesy and faithful attachment to his chief,—qualities which many think are destined soon to become extinct.

Nearly all the following stories are strictly Gairloch tales, relating incidents about Gairloch people. The anecdote of Rob Donn James Mackenzie wished to be included, lest it might otherwise be lost.

William Roy Mackenzie.

[202]

"William Roy Mackenzie was stopping at Innis a bhaird. This was in the eighteenth century, before they commenced making whisky in Gairloch. William used to go to Ferintosh with his two horses with crook saddles, carrying a cask of whisky on each side. He always went there about Christmas. At that time Christmas was observed in Gairloch; now its observance is given up. William had two horses, a white and a black; one of them was fastened behind the tail of the other, the white horse foremost. On the other side of Achnasheen there was an exciseman waiting to catch William on his way home with four casks of whisky. The exciseman hid himself until William came past. Then he jumped out from his hiding-place, and caught the white horse by the halter, saying, 'This is mine.' Says William, 'I do not think you will say that to-morrow; let go my horse.' 'No,' says the exciseman. 'Will you let him go,' says William, 'if you get a permit with him?' 'Let me see your permit,' says the exciseman, still dragging at the white horse. 'Stop,' says William; 'let go the horse, the permit is in his tail.' He would not let go; so when William saw that, he loosed the black horse from behind the grey, that he might get at the permit. Then he lifted his stick and struck the old grey so that he plunged and jumped, and in the scrimmage one of the casks of whisky struck the exciseman and knocked him down on the ground. Says William, 'There's the permit for you.' The exciseman lay helpless on the ground; so William Roy got clean away with all the whisky, and came home with it to Innis a bhaird."

Kenneth and John Mackenzie of Rona.

"One of the Mackenzies of Letterewe had a daughter who was married to a man in Badfearn in Skye. A daughter of theirs became the wife of William Mackenzie of Rona, who was one of the Mackenzies of Shieldaig of Gairloch. He had a son named Kenneth; and Kenneth had two sons, called Kenneth and John. They were out fishing in a smack of their own, when they were attacked and taken by the press-gang. They were carried off, and placed in a hulk lying in the Thames below London. One night they were together in the same watch, and they then made a plan to escape. A yacht belonging to a gentleman in London was in the river; she was out and in every day, and always anchored alongside the hulk. The gentry from the yacht were going ashore every night, and leaving only a boy in her. The night the two brothers Kenneth and John were on the watch, the boy was alone in the yacht. What did they do but decide to carry out their plan of escape there and then! So they went through the gun-ports, one on each side of the hulk, and swam to the yacht. Then they got the yacht under weigh, the boy sleeping all the time. They got safe away with the yacht, and worked her as far as to Loch Craignish, on this side of Crinan. There they went ashore in the night, and left the yacht with the boy. They left the yacht's gig ashore in Loch Craignish, and set off on their way home. When the laird of Craignish saw the gig, [203] and the yacht lying in the loch, he went out in the gig to see what kind of yacht she was. The brothers had left the papers of the yacht on the cabin table, that it might be found out who she belonged to. So the laird of Craignish wrote to the owners in London, and advised them to send orders to him to sell the yacht and send the boy home with the money. The owners did so, and the yacht was sold. She became the mail-packet between Coll and Tobermory. I saw her long ago on that service.

"The two brothers, Kenneth and John Mackenzie, got safe back to Rona, and soon got another smack. They were going south with a cargo of fish, through the Crinan Canal; the smack was lying in the basin after you pass the first lock. There was a plank put to the shore from the gangway of the vessel; by this they went ashore to the inn at Crinan. A girl in the house went to the vessel and took the plank out; the two Mackenzies, on going back to the smack in the dark, for want of the plank fell into the basin, and were both drowned. They were relations of my mother. I saw them when I was a boy at Mellon Charles. They were fine men."

John Macgregor of Londubh.

"John Mackenzie, son of William Mackenzie, the fourth laird of Gruinard, by Lilias, daughter of Captain John Mackenzie of Kinloch (or Lochend), was a captain in the 73rd Regiment in the end of the eighteenth century. The Gruinard family had holes and presses in their houses at Udrigil and Aird, where they kept men whom they had caught until they agreed to enlist in the army.

Gruinard got money for catching men for the army. There was a man in Londubh named Ruaridh Donn or Rorie Macgregor, of the Macgregors of Kenlochewe; he was an old man, and was still strong. He had a son, John, who was a very strong bold man. Gruinard gathered a gang of twelve men to catch John Macgregor. So Mackenzie Lochend sent him down with a letter to Mackenzie Gruinard. John went with the letter, and gave it to Mrs Mackenzie, Gruinard's wife. 'Come in, John,' she said, 'till you get some meat before you go away to Poolewe.' So John went in, and she made a piece for him; she gave him a slice of bread and butter, and put a sovereign between the bread and butter so that he might get it. When John was eating he found the gold in his mouth; he put it in his pocket. So when he had finished eating, he came out of the house to go away home, and there he saw the gang of twelve men ready to catch him. Mrs Mackenzie told him he had got the king's money. 'It's not much,' said he; 'I wish I would get more of it.' Says she, 'You'll get that by-and-by.' 'I'm not so sure of that,' says John. Then the gang took him. 'If you're going to keep me,' says John, 'send word to my old father, that I may see him as I pass by; he is old and weak, and I will never see him again.' So Mrs Mackenzie sent on word to his father to meet him. John was sent away with the gang, and as they passed the garden at Londubh, Ruaridh Donn came down to the road to meet his son, leaning on his staff as if he were weak. 'Good bye! are [204] you going away, John?' says he. 'Oh yes! good-bye to you, I'll never see you again,' says John. Then the old man got a hold of John, and put him between himself and the wall. The old man was shaking on his stick. John lifted his two hands and put them over his father's shoulders, and began laughing and mocking the gang. So the twelve men dare not go near them, and they left John to go home with his money.

"Captain John Mackenzie, son of Captain John Mackenzie, Kinloch, and brother of Mrs Mackenzie, Gruinard, went to Skye to marry a daughter of the minister of Cambusmore. He went in a boat with a crew of six men, and Duncan Urquhart, his own valet. John Macgregor was one of the crew. They went ashore at Port Golaig, near Ru Hunish, the point of Skye furthest north. The captain and Duncan walked up to Cambusmore, but the crew stopped with the boat. The captain and Duncan were in the minister's house all the week. On the Saturday John Macgregor was sent up to the manse by the rest of the crew to see what was keeping them. It was late when John got to the manse. The captain came out and scolded John, asking what business he had there, and saying he might go away any time he pleased for all he cared. Then the minister came out, and said John must stop in the house until the Sabbath, for it would not be safe for him to return to the boat through the night. But John would go away back, and he fell over the high rock near Duntulm Castle and was killed. When the minister rose in the morning, he sent Duncan Urquhart to see if John had arrived at the boat. When Duncan was going he saw part of John's kilt caught on a point of rock, and found his dead body below. So Duncan turned to the house and told the bad news. The minister said to the captain, 'You may go home; you will not get my daughter this trip.' John Macgregor's body was taken home in a box, and buried in the churchyard at Inverewe. He left two daughters; one of them was married to Murdo Crubach Fraser in Inverkerry, and was the mother of Kenneth Fraser and John Fraser now living at Leac-nan-Saighead. A daughter of Murdo Crubach's is the wife of Christopher Mackenzie, Brahan, and a son of theirs is piper with the Mackintosh."

Murdo Mackenzie, or Murdo's Son.

"There was a Mackenzie of an old Gairloch stock living in Ullapool, Loch Broom. He was called in Gaelic 'Murchadh mac Mhurchaidh,' or, 'Murdo the son of Murdo;' I will call him 'Murdo's son.' He was a very fine, good-looking man, and very brave. He had a small smack, and he was always going with her round the Mull of Kintyre to Greenock with herrings from Loch Broom. Returning with the vessel empty, he put into a place called Duncan's Well, in the Island of Luing, on the other side of Oban. This island belongs to Lord Breadalbane to this day. Murdo's son went ashore at night. There was a ball going on in a house, and Lord Breadalbane's daughter was there. She fell in love at once with the good-looking Murdo's son, and he fell in love with her. He took her [205] away with him that very night, and before daybreak they set sail for Ullapool. When they got to Ullapool they were married, and he took her to his house at the place now called Moorfield, where the banker lives in the present day.

"There was no name on Murdo's son's smack at that time; there were no roads nor newspapers then; and no one knew where the smack had gone with Lord Breadalbane's daughter, only that she had left with Murdo's son. Lord Breadalbane could find out nothing more. He went to the king and got a law made that from that time every vessel should have a name on it; there were no names on vessels before then in Scotland. Lord Breadalbane offered a reward of three hundred pounds to any one who would find where his daughter had gone. When Murdo's son got the report of this reward he started off at once, dressed in his best kilt and plaid, with his dirk in his belt, and walked all the way to Lord Breadalbane's castle at Taymouth. He knocked at the door, and a man came and asked what he was wanting; he told him he wanted to see the lord. So the man went in, and soon the lord came in his slippers to the door. He asked Murdo's son what was he wanting there. He told him he came to tell him where his daughter was, that he might get the reward. Says the lord, 'You will get the money if you tell me where she is;' asked him, 'Where is she?' 'Well,' says Murdo's son, 'I'll tell that when I get the money.' 'There's your money for you then.' When he got the money, he said, 'She's at Ullapool, at Loch Broom, and if you will give me other three hundred pounds I will put the hand of the man that stole her into your hand.' The lord gave him other three hundred pounds. Says he, 'Keep out your hand.' 'There,' says he, putting his hand in the lord's hand, 'is the hand that took your daughter from the Island of Luing;' and Lord Breadalbane was so pleased with his pluck and appearance, that he accepted him as his son-in-

law, and gave him the full tocher (or dowry) of his daughter. I remember seeing their son and daughter; the daughter married John Morrison, who was the farmer at Drumchork, about 1850.

"Murdo's son was going in the same smack with herrings from Loch Broom to sell them. After coming round the Mull of Kintyre he anchored at Crinan for the night. There was lying there a lugger full of gin and brandy; she had been captured near Cape Wrath by a government cutter; the crew had been put ashore at Cape Wrath. Six men of the cutter's crew were bringing the lugger to deliver her at Greenock. She came alongside Murdo's son at Crinan, as she was going south and he coming north. Murdo's son asked them, 'What craft is that?' They told him it was a smuggler they had caught at Cape Wrath. 'Surely you have plenty drink on board,' says he. 'Oh, yes,' they said, 'she is choke full.' Says he, 'You had better all of you come over and see if the stuff I have is better than what you have got.' So they came over, all hands, to his smack. He tried the jar he had, and made them all drunk. They could not leave his cabin. When they were in this state he and his crew went to the lugger, took possession of her, and set sail, leaving her drunken crew [206] in his own smack. Murdo's son came to Ullapool with the lugger, and when he had taken the cargo out of her he set fire to her and destroyed her. A son of Murdo's son was married to Mrs Mackenzie of Kernsary before Mr Mackenzie married her, and had two sons, both now dead, and buried in Cil-lean, in Strath Garve.

"Donald Morrison, of Drumchork, was a grandson of Murdo's son and Lord Breadalbane's daughter. He went to see the Lord Breadalbane of his day, a descendant of the lord whose daughter was married to Murdo's son. Lord Breadalbane gave Donald Morrison three hundred pounds when he went to the castle. Rorie Morrison also went to see Lord Breadalbane, but he did not get anything. Donald was a very fine, tall, handsome man, and looked grand in his kilt and plaid; there was no one like him in the country, so good-looking and so well shaped for the kilt!"

Anecdote of Sir Hector Mackenzie.

"The law that a name should be put on every vessel brings to my mind an anecdote of Sir Hector Mackenzie of Gairloch. Macleod of Raasay had a boat that had no name on her when the law was made requiring names. So the boat was taken from him, and he was cited to a court at Inverness, that he might be fined for not putting a name on the boat. When Sir Hector heard of this he went to the court. Macleod was there; the judge told him he was fined so much for not having the boat named. Sir Hector said, 'Macleod's boat is the coach to his house, and he can never get home without it, and if you are going to fine him for not having his boat named, you must put a name on your own coach when you go out.' Said the judge, 'If that be the case he can go home.' Thus Macleod got clear."

Mackenzie Kernsary and my Grandfather.

"I can remember Mr and Mrs Mackenzie of Kernsary. They lived in the house where I now live. Rorie, as Mackenzie Kernsary was called, was a strange eccentric man; he died a good while before his wife, and was buried in the chapel in the Inverewe burial-ground close by. They had only one son, Sandy, and it was he who built the house at Inveran; he was married to a daughter of the Rev. Roderick Morison, minister of Kintail, the best-looking woman in the north of Scotland at that time; her nephew is the present minister of Kintail. Sandy had three sons and three daughters. One son became Established Church minister at Moy; one daughter married Mr Mactavish, a lawyer in Inverness; another daughter married one Cameron, a farmer; and another son was at sea. My grandfather, John Mackenzie, was a cattle drover; he was always going through the country buying cattle; an old Hielan'man, with his blue bonnet and old Hielan' coat. He bought cattle between Poolewe and Little Loch Broom. At times he bought a large number. One time he went to the Isle of Gruinard and bought a fat grey cow from one Duncan Macgregor [207] there. He sent a man on with the drove to Gairloch to go to the market, and stopped behind himself that day. When the cows were passing Londubh, Mackenzie Kernsary was out on the brae; he saw the cattle passing, and he asked the man with them to whom did they belong. The man replied, 'To John Mackenzie, the drover.' 'Oh!' says he, 'they could not belong to a better man. You'll turn that grey cow up here till I kill her for Mrs Mackenzie.' 'No,' says the herd, 'that'll no be the case; we'll know which is the best man first.' 'That tells you that the cow will be mine,' says Kernsary. And so it was; Mackenzie took the cow from him, drove her to the byre, got the axe, and killed her in a minute. He went in and told Mary his wife to send a man to bleed the cow before it would get cold. So Mary said, 'What cow is it?' 'Never mind,' says he, 'you'll know that before Saturday.' And so she did. The old drover himself came by next day. Mrs Mackenzie saw him passing, and called him up. She took him into the house and gave him a glass of mountain dew. Then she told him what her husband did yesterday on a grey cow of his, and that she was going to pay him. She asked him what was the value of the cow. He replied, 'Nothing but what I paid for it;' and she paid him."

The Whale in Loch Ewe.

"In the year 1809 Loch Ewe was the most famous loch known for haddock. Boats came even from the east coast, from Nairn and Avoch; indeed until the following occurrence Loch Ewe was unrivalled in the north of Scotland for its haddock fishing.

"It was a beautiful day, and all the boats were fishing on the south-west side of Isle Ewe opposite Inverasdale. A new boat was put off the stocks at Mellon Charles, and was taken out that day for

the first time. Seven men went out in her, viz., Duncan Mackenzie, Ronald Mackenzie, Rorie Maclean, Murdo Mackenzie, Donald Maclennan, John Chisholm, and Hector Macrae, all Mellon men. They went to the back of Sgeir an Fharaig, much further out towards the open than the other boats. It was so calm the oars were laid across the boat. Suddenly they saw a whale coming in from the ocean making straight at them. One of the men suggested they had better put the oars straight and pull out of her way. And this they did; but as they worked to one side, the whale cut across straight after them, and soon came up with them. She struck the boat in the bow, and made a crack about a yard long in the second plank above the keel. Six oars were then manned, and, with one man keeping his coat to the crack, they rowed for their lives; but as the crack was in the bow, the water forced itself in notwithstanding the efforts of the man with his coat. They were making for the nearest land, when the boat filled. When Ronald, who had been a soldier, saw this, he stripped and jumped overboard to swim for it. He swam some distance when the whale struck him below; so then he turned back to the water-logged boat. When he reached the boat, three of the men had been drowned, viz., Murdo Mackenzie, Donald Maclennan, and John [208] Chisholm. After that the whale disappeared, or at least ceased to molest them. It was a small whale.

"A man at Mellon Charles had noticed the incident; he ran through the township to procure help; but no boat was to be found, and there were only women and children at home. He went as far as Drumchork; there an old boat was found, that had been turned keel up for two years. Seven men were found to attempt an expedition for the rescue of the wrecked fishermen. They had only one oar, and on the other side of the boat worked bits of board, whilst two of the men were employed baling. In this way they reached the water-logged boat, and rescued the four survivors of its crew. Ever since this fatal occurrence it has been the popular belief in the country that whales attack new boats or newly-tarred boats. When the boat was got ashore a large piece of the whale's skin was found in the crack in the bow."

A Story of Rob Donn.

"Rob Donn, the great Reay bard, was bard and ground-officer to Mackay Lord Reay, in the middle of the eighteenth century. He would always be going out with his gun, and secretly killing deer. Lord Reay found this out, and sent for Rob. He said, 'I'm hearing, Robert, you are killing my deer.' 'Oh, no,' says he, 'I am not killing them all, but I am killing some of them; I cannot deny that.' Lord Reay then said, 'Unless you give it up, I must put you away out of the place; you must get a security that you will not kill any more.' 'Oh,' says Rob to him, 'I must go and see if I can get a surety.' So he left the room. Outside the door he met Lord Reay's son. 'Will you,' said Rob to the boy, 'become security for me that I will not kill more deer on your father's property?' 'Yes,' replied the boy. Rob caught him by the hand and took him to Lord Reay. 'Is that your security, Robert?' said his lordship. 'Yes,' said Robert, 'will you not take him?' 'No, I will not,' answered his lordship. 'It is very strange,' replied Rob, 'that you will not take your own son as security for one man, when God took his own Son for all the world's security.' It need scarcely be added that Rob Donn remained bard and ground-officer to Lord Reay. This story I believe to be perfectly true."

The Lochbroom Herring Fishing.

"About ninety years ago the British Fishery Society built the pier at Ullapool, and the streets of unfinished and unoccupied houses there which to this day give it the appearance of a deserted town. There were great herring fisheries then in Lochbroom, and Woodhouse from Liverpool started a large curing establishment in Isle Martin; so did Rorie Morrison at Tanera, and Melville at Ullapool. The Big Pool of Loch Broom was the best place for herrings in Scotland at that time, and there would be a hundred and fifty ships from all parts to buy herrings there,—from Saltcoats, Bute, and Helensburgh, Greenock and Port Bonachie, East Tarbert and West Tarbert. [209] Melville built two ships in Guisach, which he named the 'Tweed' and the 'Riand.' That place was full of natural wood at the time; it was in a rocky spot at Aultnaharril, opposite to Ullapool, where the ferry is. Melville was bound to take the herrings from all the fishermen's boats. They were so plentiful that he could not cure them all, so he made middens of them, and he also boiled quantities for the oil from them. After that season Lochbroom was nineteen years without a hundred herrings in it, and the fishery has never recovered to this day."

The other Rob Roy Macgregor.

"Kenneth Mackenzie, the last laird of Dundonnell of the old family, was descended from the first Lord Mackenzie of Kintail, and was a connection of the Gairloch Mackenzies. He was a peculiar man; he had a large flock of hens, and used to make every tenant pay him so many hens at the Martinmas term along with their rent. My grandfather's brother, Sandy M'Rae, who was tenant of the Isle of Gruinard, had to pay four hens every year to the laird. Kenneth Mackenzie, in 1817, married Bella, daughter of one Donald Roy Macgregor, belonging to Easter Ross; they had no family. She had a brother called Rob Roy Macgregor, who was a lawyer in Edinburgh. When Kenneth was on his deathbed his wife and Rob Roy wanted him to leave the Dundonnell estate to the latter. The dying laird was willing to do so, because he did not care for his only brother Thomas Mackenzie; but he was so weak that he could not sign his name to the will, and it is said that Rob Roy Macgregor held the laird's hand with the pen, and that the wife was keeping up the hand while Rob Roy made the signature. The laird died soon after, and left nothing at all to his brother Thomas. When the will became known there was a great feeling of indignation among all

the Mackenzies and the gentry of the low country, as well as among the tenantry on the Dundonnell estates, against Rob Roy Macgregor, who now took up his residence at the old house of Dundonnell. The whole of the tenantry were opposed to him, except one man at Badluachrach named Donald Maclean, commonly called Donald the son of Farquhar. He was the only man that was on Rob Roy's side. His neighbours made a fire in the bow of his boat in the night time and burnt a good part of it. He sent the boat to Malcolm Beaton, a cousin of his own at Poolewe, to repair it; the night after it was repaired (whilst still at Poolewe) there was a fire put in the stern, and the other end of her was burnt. The Dundonnell tenants rose against Rob Roy Macgregor, and procured firearms; they surrounded the house, and fired through the shutters by which the windows were defended, hoping to take his life; one ball or slug struck the post of his bed. The next night he escaped, and never returned again. His barn and his stacks of hay and corn were burnt, and the manes and tails of his horses were cut short. Thomas Mackenzie commenced law against Rob Roy Macgregor for the recovery of the estate. In the end it was decided that it [210] belonged to him, but it had become so burdened by the law expenses that it had to be sold."

Cases of Drowning in Loch Maree.

"It would be before 1810 that Hector Mackenzie of Sand was living in a house at Cliff, on the west side of the burn at Cliff House. Sir Hector Mackenzie of Gairloch had given him lands at Inverasdale. He went up Loch Maree in a boat to fetch wood to build a house close to the shore at Inverasdale. He took for a crew his son Sandy, a young lad, and also William M'Rae from Cove, and William Urquhart, called William Og, and his son, who lived at Bac Dubh. They reached Kenlochewe and loaded the boat. Just before they started back, Kenneth Mackenzie, a married man, and Rorie Mackenzie, a young man, who were returning to Gairloch with hemp for nets, asked for a passage down the loch. Hector said there was too much in the boat already. He was not for them to go in the boat, so they went off; but William Og said to Hector, 'You had better call the men back; you don't know where they will meet you again.' William Og called for them to come back. Kenneth Mackenzie came back, but Rorie would not return; he had taken the refusal amiss, and it was good for him that he had done so. The boat with the six of them started from the head of Loch Maree. Opposite Letterewe she was swamped, from being so heavy. All hands were lost except William M'Rae and Sandy the son of Hector, they were picked up by a boat from Letterewe.

"Two sons of Lewis M'Iver, of Stornoway, came to Kenlochewe on their way back from college. It was before the road was made from Gairloch to Poolewe. They took a boat down Loch Maree. Four Kenlochewe men came with them; they were all ignorant of sailing. Between Ardlair and the islands there was a breeze, and they put the sail up. One of the Kenlochewe men stretched himself upon the middle thwart of the boat; a squall came, and he went overboard head foremost and was drowned.

"Kenneth Mackenzie from Eilean Horrisdale and Grigor M'Gregor from Achtercairn were employed sawing at Letterewe. They were put across to Aird na h'eighaimh, the promontory that runs out from the west shore of Loch Maree to near Isle Maree, by a boat from Letterewe. One of them had a whip saw on his shoulder. On landing they started to walk to Gairloch. There was then no bridge over the river at Talladale. The stream was swollen by rain; they tried to wade it, but were carried off their legs and taken down to the loch, where they were drowned. Their bodies were never recovered. This was more than eighty years ago.

"Donald Maclean from Poolewe and John M'Iver, called John M'Ryrie, and often known as Bonaparte, from his bravery, were in a sailing boat in Tagan bay at the head of Loch Maree, when a squall upset the boat. John M'Ryrie went down, and was drowned. Donald Maclean got on the keel of the boat. Rorie Mackenzie had a boat on the stocks at Athnanceann. She had only seven strokes in her, but there was no other boat, so they took her down to the loch, and Donald [211] Maclean was saved by means of her. John M'Ryrie's body was recovered, and buried in the Inverewe churchyard.

"It would be about 1840 that Duncan and Kenneth Urquhart, two brothers from Croft, sons of Kenneth Urquhart the miller, were coming down Loch Maree one Saturday evening after dark. There was smuggling going on in the islands at that time. It was a very dark night, and there was a stiff breeze blowing down the loch and helping to propel the boat. Duncan was rowing the bow oar, and Kenneth the other. Duncan called to his brother to go to the stern and steer the boat with his oar. Kenneth jumped on the seat in the stern, and from the way that was on the boat, and his own spring, he went over the stern. He called to Duncan, but he had only the one oar left, and with the wind so strong he could do nothing for his brother, so Kenneth was drowned. His body was found nine days afterwards in the middle of Loch Maree; the oar came ashore at a spot called An Fhridhdhorch, or 'the dark forest,' where the scrubby wood now is near a mile to the north of Ardlair. Duncan came ashore with the boat on the beach in Tollie bay.

"When Seaforth bought the Kernsary estate some forty years ago Mrs M'Intyre was living at Inveran. It was after Duncan Fadach had lived there. Two years after Seaforth made the purchase he sent two lads to repair the house at Inveran. One of them was Sandy Mackenzie from Stornoway. The two lads went to bathe at the rock called Craig an t' Shabhail, or 'the rock of the barn,' where the river Ewe begins; there was a barn long ago on the top of this rock. Immediately Sandy entered the water he went down, and was drowned. The other lad hastened to the house, and a sort of drag was made with a long stick and a crook at the end of it, and with this the body was lifted. Sandy was of the stock of George Mackenzie, second laird of Gruinard,

who had thirty-three children. Sandy's brother is the present Free Church minister of Kilmorack."

The Stornoway Packet and the Whale.

"The smack 'North Britain,' Captain Leslie, was carrying the mails between Poolewe and Stornoway for eighteen years. Leslie had four of a crew besides himself. Murdo Macdonald was at the helm when the smack struck a whale. She was running with a two-reefed mainsail and slack sheet. She ran on the back of the whale and cut it through to the backbone; seven feet was put out of the cutwater of the packet; it was a severe stroke! When the smack ran up on to the back of the whale her stern went under to the companion. The whale sank down, and so the smack went over her, but made so much water in the hold that they were obliged to run her ashore. They got her to Bayhead, inside the pier at Stornoway. The whale went ashore in Assynt, and they found the cut on her. I had this account from Leslie and others of the crew."

The Wreck of M'Callum's Schooner at Melvaig. [212]

"About 1805 John M'Callum, a decent man from Bute, had a schooner and carried on a trade in herrings; he had been to Isle Martin. He had one pound in cash to purchase every barrel of herrings with. The herrings were so plenty he got them for five shillings a barrel. He had a smack called the 'Pomona' as well as the schooner, and he would be sending the smack to Greenock with cargoes of herrings whilst he stayed at Isle Martin curing herrings. At the end of the season, as there was a great demand for small vessels, he sold the 'Pomona' for three hundred pounds to Applecross men. Then he himself started home in the schooner, with a crew of seven sailors. He came to Portree from Isle Martin, and left Portree for home, intending to go through Kyleakin. When he got through the sound of Scalpay it came on a hurricane from the south. The vessel would not take the helm, and became unmanageable. She was running down the coast in that state, and at last the wind shifting to the west put her on the rocks at Melvaig. The mate went to M'Callum, who was in the cabin, and told him to come up, that they were going to be lost, and he should try and get ashore. M'Callum was old and weak, and replied that he was so frail that he would have no chance, and that his days were gone at any rate; so he remained below. One of the crew went out on the jib boom, and as she struck he let himself down by a rope from the jib boom to a shelf on a rock, and was quite safe. Another of the crew jumped out, but could not get ashore on account of the surf. The Melvaig people saw him swimming a mile off; then he turned back; he seemed to be a good swimmer; when he was in the surf and saw a big sea coming, he would dive through it; at last he disappeared. The ship went to pieces, and all hands were lost except the man who had got on the shelf of rock. All the bodies were washed ashore, and were buried in Melvaig, near the house of Murdo Mackenzie, called Murdo Melvaig. A Melvaig man, named John Smith, stripped the sea boots from one of the bodies and took them home with him. When the man who was saved heard this, he said it would have been enough for him to take them off when he was alive! The man who came ashore told the Melvaig people that the three hundred pounds realised for the sale of the 'Pomona,' as well as the balance of the money the captain had had to buy herrings, was in a box. The captain had had one pound to buy each barrel of herring, and as he had only to pay five shillings a barrel he must have had nearly four hundred pounds balance. The whole of the money was found in a box, as the man had said. The man went away home, but he did not get the money with him."

A Sea Captain Buried in Isle Ewe.

"About twelve years ago some gentlemen in a steam yacht came to Isle Martin, and inquired there whether any one knew of a place where the captain of a ship had been buried in one of the Summer Isles. They thought he had been buried in one of the small islands off Loch Broom. They [213] offered fifteen pounds to any one who could inform them, but no one could tell them anything of the place. Here is the true account of this captain and his death and burial. It was about 1822 that I was living with my father in Mellon Charles house. A schooner going to Newcastle with bars of brass put in for shelter to the sound of Isle Ewe. She lay opposite the dyke on the island; that is still the safest anchorage, the best holding ground in a storm. Two of the crew came ashore at Aultbea, and said the captain had got ill, and they were seeking a doctor; there was no doctor then in the country. My father used to go and see some who would be sick, and would bleed them if they would require it. So the two sailors were told to go to him, and they took him out to the schooner. He found the captain lying dead in his cabin, and there were cuts in different parts of his head as if he had been killed by his men. He was buried in the old churchyard in the Isle of Ewe, still enclosed by a dyke; there is a headstone yet standing at his grave. No other sea captain has been buried in this district for many years, except John M'Callum, John M'Taggart, and this captain buried in Isle Ewe."

The Loss of the "Glenelg."

"It was about 1825 that the mail-packet called the 'Glenelg of Glenelg' was lost. A year before that the Right Honourable Stewart Mackenzie, who had in 1817 married Lady Hood, the representative of the Seaforth family and proprietrix of the Lews, bought the 'Glenelg' to ply with the mails between Poolewe and Stornoway. Poolewe is the nearest port on the mainland to Stornoway. There had been packets on the same service generations before. The 'Glenelg' was a smack of about sixty tons. Her crew consisted of two brothers, Donald and John Forbes, and a son

of Kenneth M'Eachainn, of Black Moss (Bac Dubh), now called Moss Bank, at Poolewe. Donald was the master, and John the mate. She was going to Stornoway about once every week, but she had not a fixed time. It was on a Saturday, either the end of November or beginning of December, that the Rev. Mr Fraser, who was minister of Stornoway, returned to Poolewe from the low country. He had come down Loch Maree in a boat. The master of the 'Glenelg' was ashore at the inn, which was then at Cliff House. Mr Fraser came to Donald Forbes, and told him he would require to be at Stornoway that evening to preach on the morrow. Donald said it was not weather to go. Mr Fraser said he would prosecute or punish him for not going; then Donald said he should take care before he would not punish himself, and that he knew his business as well as Mr Fraser knew his own. At last Mr Fraser persuaded him to go; and there were two other passengers, Murdo M'Iver from Tigh na faoilinn, who was going to be a Gaelic teacher in a parish near Stornoway, and Kirstie Mackenzie from Croft. They started about nine o'clock in the morning, with two reefs in the mainsail. Donald M'Rae from Cove was out on the hill for a creel of peats and saw the 'Glenelg' loosing some of her canvas after going out of Loch Ewe. Nothing more was seen of her. M'Iver's box was washed ashore at Scoraig in Little Loch Broom, and two handspikes and the fo'scuttle. Another packet was afterwards put on the same service." [214]

Wreck of the "Helen Marianne" of Campbelton.

"John M'Taggart from Campbelton had a smack called the 'Helen Marianne.' He used to come to Glen Dubh buying herrings, and he had two fishing boats of his own worked with the smack. I saw him in Glen Dubh when I was fishing there; it would be about 1850. One Sabbath night he left Loch Calava at the entrance to Glen Dubh, and set sail for home, thus breaking the Sabbath. A storm from the north-east came on, and in the night he struck on the Greenstone Point, at the other side of Oban, or Opinan, there, and all hands were lost. Donald Mackenzie and Kenneth Cameron, the elder of the church, both living in Sand, had the grazing of Priest Island. On the Tuesday they went out to that island to see the cattle, and there they found the dead body of John McTaggart, along with an empty barrel. They thought he must have been washed off the deck, as the vessel had been carried past Priest Island before she was wrecked. They brought the body to Sand, and buried it in the churchyard with the rest of the crew, whose bodies were all recovered. There would be six or seven of them in all, for the crews of the fishing boats were with the smack, the two boats being on deck, one on each side."

Wreck of the "Lord Molyneux" of Liverpool.

"Farquhar Buidhe, who was one of the Mathesons of Plockton, and brother of Sandy Matheson the blind fiddler there, was the owner and master of the trawler 'Lord Molyneux,' a smack he had bought at Liverpool. He used to come to Glen Dubh for the herring fishery. It was two or three years before the wreck of the 'Helen Marianne' of Campbelton that Farquhar set sail for home one Sabbath night. Before daylight he was lost upon a rock at the end of the island of Oldany. These two ships were both lost from Sabbath-breaking."

John Macdonald, the Drover of Loch Maree.

"It was about 1825 that John Macdonald lived at Talladale. He was a cattle drover, and was always known as 'The drover of Loch Maree.' He was a fine tall man; I remember seeing him. He wore a plaid and trousers of tartan, and a high hat. He used to go to the Muir of Ord market with the cattle he bought in Gairloch. At that time large quantities of smuggled whisky were made in Gairloch and Loch Torridon. John Macdonald got the loan of an open boat at Gairloch. She was a new boat, with a seventeen foot keel; I remember seeing her. He worked her round to Loch Torridon, and then he took a cargo of whisky for Skye. Two Torridon men accompanied him. A storm came on from the south or south-west, and they could not make Skye. The boat was driven before the wind till she reached the shore of Assynt, on the south side of Stoir head. There they came ashore; the boat was found high and dry, and quite sound, above high-water mark. John Macdonald and his companions were never seen again, and some Assynt men said that they had been murdered for their whisky. Assynt was a wild country then, and long before." [215]

The Murder of Grant, the Peddler.

"It was about 1829 there lived in a house some three hundred yards above the present parks at Tournaig a man named Grant. He had three sons, William and Sandy, and another, who was the youngest, whose Christian name I forget. He was a peddler, a good-looking lad, about twenty-three years of age at the time. He used to carry his pack on his back through the country. He often went to Assynt, and was acquainted with one M'Leod, who lived near Loch Nidd, to the north of Stoir head. M'Leod was a kind of teacher; he was a great favourite with the women. Grant, the peddler, was stopping in a house near M'Leod's, and M'Leod was seeing him. One morning, after breakfast, Grant left his lodgings to walk across to Lochinver with his pack on his back. M'Leod joined him, to convoy him out of the township. When they were out of sight of the houses M'Leod struck the peddler with a small mason's hammer, which he had concealed in his breast. He struck him at the back of the ear, and killed him clean. When M'Leod saw the peddler was dead, he would have given three worlds to have made him alive again, as he afterwards said; but it was too late. M'Leod put the body in a small loch, still called from this circumstance Loch Torr na h' Eiginn, or 'the loch of the mound of violence,' and he put stones on the body to keep it

from floating. A man in the township had a dream that the peddler had been murdered and put in this loch, and he went with his neighbours and found the body there. The neighbours thought this man had killed Grant, because he knew where the body was. The poor man was apprehended, and taken to the gaol at Dornoch, where he was kept for a year, and his sufferings caused his hair to come from his head. He was not set free till M'Leod confessed the murder. The men of the place were all anxious to find out the murderer of the peddler, that they might clear their own families.

"M'Leod, soon after the murder, hid the peddler's pack in a stack of peats. He took part of the goods out of it to give to some of his sweethearts, of whom he had too many! The girl that was in the house where Grant had lodged had taken notice of the contents of the pack. She saw some of the things after the murder with a girl who was a neighbour, and whom M'Leod was courting. She said to this girl, 'It must have been you, or some one belonging to you, that killed Grant.' This girl was taken to Dornoch gaol, and another girl who was seen with a piece of cloth that had been in Grant's pack was also taken to gaol. The neighbours were all against each other, trying to [216] discover the murderer. At last these two girls gave evidence that they had received the things from M'Leod, and upon their testimony he was found guilty of the murder before the judge at Inverness. He would not confess to the murder, until the Rev. Mr Clark, minister of a church in King Street, in Inverness, who was attending on the condemned man, worked upon him so that he told the whole truth. It was not until this confession that the man who had had the dream was released from Dornoch gaol. Poor man, he never got over it. M'Leod was hung at Inverness, and on the gallows he sang the fifty-first Psalm in Gaelic. The two brothers of the murdered peddler, and their sister, who had married a MacPhail, got up a ball at Inverness on the night M'Leod was hung. It was a foolish thing."

Death of the Shieldaig Shoemaker and his Companions at Lochinver.

"It was long after the murder of Grant, the peddler, in Assynt, that three men from Shieldaig of Applecross went in their smack to fish with long lines for cod at Lochinver. One of them was a shoemaker. It is said that they came ashore to the inn there. After their return to the smack, three days passed without any smoke from the vessel, and the people on shore did not know what was the cause of it. So they went to see what was wrong, and they found the three men dead, two of them among the barrels in the hold, and one at the hearth in the fo'castle. They came ashore, and a letter was sent to M'Phee, the fishing-officer at Shieldaig of Applecross, reporting the case. Three Shieldaig men went first to Lochinver and brought the vessel home. I saw them as they passed Poolewe. Some thought that the three fishermen had had poison given them in the inn. After the disappearance of John Macdonald, the Loch Maree drover, and his two companions, and the murder of Grant the peddler, in Assynt, it was considered dangerous for men from Gairloch and the neighbourhood to visit that wild country."

A GAIRLOCH MAN.

PART III.

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Natural History of Gairloch.

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Chapter I.

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Physical Features.

The accompanying map shews the shape and general features of the parish of Gairloch.

Its area is stated by the Director of the Ordnance Survey to be 217,849 acres, *i.e.* fully 340 square miles. The three proprietors state the acreages of their estates (so far as in Gairloch) to be as follows:—

	ACRES.
Sir Kenneth S. Mackenzie, Bart. of Gairloch,	162,680
Mrs Liot Bankes of Letterewe and Gruinard,	35,000
Mr Osgood H. Mackenzie of Inverewe,	12,800

These areas make a less total than the Ordnance Survey; the deficiency may arise from the proprietors having measured their estates on the flat without reckoning the differences for altitudes.

Fisherfield and Gruinard, in the parish of Loch Broom, adjoin Gairloch on the north, and Torridon, in the parish of Applecross, on the south.

Both sides of the sea lochs of Gairloch and Loch Ewe, and the south side of the Bay of Gruinard, often called Loch Gruinard, are in Gairloch. Between Gairloch and Loch Ewe is the promontory called the North Point, terminating in Rudha Reidh, or Ru Ré, and between Loch Ewe and Loch Gruinard the promontory known as the Greenstone Point. The sea-board of Gairloch parish, indented by these sea lochs and skirting these large promontories, measures about one hundred miles.

Gairloch is, roughly speaking, bisected by the glen which holds Loch Maree. This renowned loch has on its north-east side a grand range of mountains "all in a row," viz., Beinn a Mhuinidh, Slioch, Beinn Lair, Meall Mheannidh, and Beinn Aridh Charr; the line of these hills is parallel with Loch Maree.

Further to the north-east is another almost parallel range of mountains, along which the boundary of the parish of Gairloch runs, in some cases including the summits. They are Beinn nan Ramh, Meallan Chuaich, Groban, Beinn Bheag, Mullach Coire Mhic Fhearchair (a spur of Sgurr Ban), Beinn Tarsuinn, A' Mhaighdean, and Beinn Tarsuinn Chaol, or Craig an Dubh Loch. There is on the north side of Meallan Chuaich a little knoll called Torran nan tighearnan, or "the lairds' knoll." Here three properties—Gairloch, Dundonnell, and an estate of the Mathesons of Ardross—meet, and the several lairds could lunch together, each sitting on his own ground.

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On the south-west side of the glen of Loch Maree is a cluster of still finer mountains, viz., Beinn Eighe (or Eay), with its spurs or shoulders, Sgurr Ban, Ruadh Stac and Sail Mhor, Meall a Ghuibhais, Beinn a Chearcaill, Beinn an Eoin, Bathais (or Bus) Bheinn, and Beinn Bhreac, a spur of Beinn Alligin in Torridon. One face of Beinn Dearg is also in Gairloch, the rest of it being in Torridon. These mountains are grouped in the form of a crescent, with its convex side facing towards the centre of Loch Maree. Beinn Eighe is one extremity of the crescent, and Beinn Bhreac the other, whilst Beinn Dearg lies in the hollow of it.

There are many lochs in Gairloch smaller than Loch Maree, and many lesser hills, than those I have enumerated. The visitor will best grasp the geography of Gairloch, by remembering that the long valley beginning with Glen Dochartie, continued by Loch Maree, and concluded in Loch Ewe, cuts the parish into two parts by an almost straight line; and that of the twenty mountains of Gairloch, eight are on its north-eastern boundary, five on the north-east side of Loch Maree, and seven to the south-west of the loch. For the heights of the mountains see the table, which shews Beinn Eighe (Eay) to be the monarch of the mountains of Gairloch.

There are two considerable sea islands pertaining to the parish of Gairloch, viz., Longa, in the sea loch of Gairloch, which is now uninhabited but affords pasturage for sheep, and Isle Ewe, in Loch Ewe, which is inhabited and contains a sheep and dairy farm. There are other small islands on the sea coast; the only considerable one is Foura, on the west side of the mouth of Loch Ewe. It is the largest of the smaller islands in the sea. Other islands are mentioned in their places.

There are eighty-one considerable fresh-water lochs in the parish of Gairloch, besides a vast number of smaller sheets of water which, though locally bearing the name of loch, or lochan, are but tarns.

The lochs measuring a mile and upwards in length are:—

	LENGTH IN MILES.
Loch Maree,	12½
Fionn Loch,	5½
Loch Fada,	3¾
Loch a Chroisg (Loch Rosque; one end only),	3¼
Loch a Bheallaich,	2
Loch na h' Oidhche,	1¾
Loch a Bhaid Luachraich,	1½
Loch Fada,	1½
Loch Gharbhaig,	1¼
Loch Kernsary,	1
Loch Tollie,	1

The principal river is the Ewe, by which Loch Maree empties itself into the sea. It is barely two miles in length. There is but one bridge across it, viz., at Poolewe, where the river joins the sea. The stream which runs past Kenlochewe into Loch Maree is called the Kenlochewe river, and is the main feeder of Loch Maree, and so of course also of the River Ewe. Above Kenlochewe it has [221] three divisions, viz., the Garbh river, coming from Loch Clair, the small stream coming down Glen Dochartie, and the small river Bruachaig. The streams called the Grudidh Water and the Talladale Water, or Lungard burn, are also feeders of Loch Maree, and are sometimes termed rivers, but they are scarcely worthy of the name.

There are two small rivers that flow into Gairloch (the sea loch), viz., the Kerry and the Badachro river. The Little Gruinard river, flowing out of Fionn Loch, forms part of the boundary of the parish towards the east or north-east. The Kenlochewe and Garbh rivers, and the Ewe, the Kerry, the Badachro, and the Little Gruinard river, are all more or less salmon streams.

The most extensive wood in the parish is that of Glas Leitire, near the head of Loch Maree. Another considerable wood is at Talladale, and there are woods on most of the islands of Loch Maree. These are all natural woods, except those on one or two of the islands, one of which is called "the planted island." At Shieldaig, Kerrisdale, and Flowerdale there are woods more or less natural, but many of the fine trees about Flowerdale House have been planted. There are small natural woods about Tollie and Inveran, at the foot of Loch Maree, and at Kernsary, as well as at Loch a Druing. There is also a natural wood between Kernsary and Tournaig, called Coille Aigeascaig. The woods about Inverewe House are entirely planted. There are some natural woods on the north-east shore of Loch Maree, especially between Letterewe and Ardlair, at which latter place there are also plantations. The principal larch plantations are the one between Slatadale and Talladale, and that in Kerrisdale, both containing good poles. The old fir trees about Loch Clair and the bridge of Grudidh, as well as some particularly fine specimens of pine in the woods at Glas Leitire, are remarkable for their picturesque character, and testify to the superiority of nature's planting as compared with man's handiwork.

There are two caves in Gairloch parish, one at Cove and the other at Sand of Udrigil, used as places of meeting for public worship. There is a cave or cavern at North Erradale, described in Part IV., chap. x. There is also a fine cave at Opinan, described in the same chapter. Many other caves occur on the sea-shore and in other places. Of smaller caves, the Cave of the King's Son at Ardlair, and the Cave of Gold between Ardlair and Letterewe, are separately described in these pages.

There are several waterfalls in the parish, but they are not of the grandest type, and are only really good after a heavy downpour. There is a fine one on the crag called Bonaid Donn, overlooking the farm of Tagan, at the head of Loch Maree. This crag is a shoulder of Beinn a' Mhuinidh, and the fall is called Steall a' Mhuinidh, a name almost synonymous with that of the celebrated continental Piss-vache. In dry weather it is little more than a black stain on the face of the cliff, but in heavy rain it becomes an interesting feature in the landscape. If a strong wind be blowing, clouds of spray are driven from this fall, producing a curious effect.

There is a double cascade on the Garavaig burn, a little more than a mile west from Talladale. It [222] received the name of the Victoria Falls on the visit of Her Majesty the Queen to Talladale in 1877.

Another good fall is situated a short distance behind Letterewe House, and forms a beautiful object as seen from the deck of the steamer.

The finest falls in the parish are the falls of the Kerry, situated on the River Kerry, shortly after it leaves Loch Bad na Sgalaig. If there be any quantity of water in the little Kerry river, a series of magnificent cascades tumble down the narrow channel in a deep rocky gorge. When Sir Kenneth Mackenzie's young plantations on the hill sides here have grown, they will greatly add to the beauty of the place.

There are two small waterfalls about a mile up the private road leading east from Flowerdale House.

These are all the waterfalls in Gairloch parish worthy of separate mention, but it must be added that in heavy rain there are many fine cascades on steep hill sides, seen from the mail-car or the deck of the steamer.

The natural features thus enumerated go to make up the principal scenic beauties of this lovely country, unsurpassed, as I think, for its combinations of noble mountains, gleaming lochs, wide moorlands, rugged crags, rocky torrents, and smiling woods, all diversified from hour to hour according to the spectator's point of view, and the constant transmutations of sunshine and shade, of calm and storm. With these must be included distant peeps of the blue mountains of adjoining districts, and enchanting views from all parts of the coast over the sea, with its ever-changing hues and effects.

Chapter II.

Climate and Weather.

In the present day the subjects of climate and weather receive extraordinary attention from numbers who are in search of health.

One of our most eminent physicians has told me, that the North-West Highlands, especially those parts where mountain and sea air are combined, possess more restorative qualities for the jaded constitution than any other part of the United Kingdom, and that they surpass in this respect many favourite resorts on the continent of Europe. My own personal inquiry and experience tend to confirm this opinion. Not only is the atmosphere charged with ozone, but all nature is pure and refreshing. To the traveller who comes from busy towns where everything is defiled by smoke and filth, this region possesses a powerful charm in its absolute purity. Here thirst may be quenched at almost every burn or loch, and flowers and ferns may be plucked without the fingers of the gatherer being soiled.

But changeable weather is a frequent drawback to those who cannot wait for improvement. The [223] rain-fall is believed to be over seventy inches in the year. The mountains are often covered with clouds. But there is some compensation; when the clouds break up and the rain is over, wonderful wreaths of mist roll about the hills and glens in mysterious beauty.

Sir George Steuart Mackenzie of Coul, in his "General Survey" (1810), has a chapter on the climate. His remarks are quite applicable to the climate of Gairloch in the present day. He says: —"Our winters are much milder than those of the continent, but our summers are colder." "In this country it cannot be said that we enjoy the season of spring until the portion of the year so denominated has passed. The heat of the months of July and August is often equal to, and sometimes more considerable than, the greatest heat experienced in England, but with more variation between day and night." "When our springs are late, we are pretty sure of our gardens containing abundance of fruit, and that the summer heat will be more uniform than usual." "During three-fourths of the year the wind blows from between the points south-west and north-west. The heaviest rains proceed from the southward of west. Snow storms most frequently come from the north-west, but the most severe ones are from the north-east. During summer the south and south-west winds are sometimes accompanied by thunder. On the whole the climate of Ross and Cromarty shires must be considered as moist, but particularly so in the western districts. The average annual temperature may be stated for the whole county at 46°. Snow falls in greatest quantity in the month of February; but severe storms are sometimes experienced at an earlier period of the winter. It has been remarked that the climate has been becoming worse for many years. I can answer for the truth of this since the year 1796; and I judge from the ripening of certain garden fruits. About that time I had ripe peaches sent to my shooting quarters from the open wall in the month of August. I have not had them well ripened since till the middle of September, sometimes later, and often not at all."

Dr Mackenzie tells us something in his delightful gossipy way of the old-fashioned summers. He says:—"What long hot summer days we used to have then compared with the present short lukewarm ones, that no sooner begin than they end disgracefully in comparison. Astronomers tell us their registers shew that the present seasons are just the same as in say 1812. What stuff and nonsense! In those happier times everybody had summer as well as winter clothing. Who dreams of such extravagance now in the north? Not a soul, at least of the male animals. Well do I remember one fine day before we migrated to the west, having gone down to the river to bathe with my brothers, and dawdling away our time, naked, making mill dams or dirt pies, on the sandy shore, when putting on my shirt finding as it were pins inside. On examination there were several water blisters on my back, needing a pin to empty them, and many days passed before they were healed up! And I imagine we were all alike. Who ever hears now of such blistering sun, [224] unless on an extra thin-skinned, toddy-filled, irritable nose? Then in our eastern garden the extensive walls were every year coated with apricot, peach, and nectarine trees, just crusted with loads of as fine and well ripened fruit as five most healthy stomach-always-empty urchins, who had the free run of the garden, could eat up as fast as they ripened, aye, afford often to pelt each other with a half-eaten peach or apricot, because a wasp had dug into it on its wall side. And

where in that garden, or in my own still warmer one (Eileanach, Inverness), is a living, growing peach or nectarine wall tree now to be found? Every one dead for want of sun to ripen its wood ere winter killed it. In our garden (Conan House) was a standard filbert tree, perhaps twenty-four feet high, with a stem as thick as my body, every year bearing bushels of as fine full filberts as Mr Solomon ever exhibited in Covent Garden, till old John, ruined in mind by having a vinery put up for him about sixty feet north of the poor filbert, actually cut it down on the sly, when we were in the west, in the idea that it might possibly shade the vinery! I never saw my father (Sir Hector Mackenzie of Gairloch) in a hurry, or passion, or heard him swear, but sure I am when he came on the site of the filbert, where it was not, a friend would have avoided listening to his even *sotto-voce* thoughts on *that* day. But old John perhaps only looked forward to the shocking seasons to come, when money could not discover a ripe common hazel nut, as has been the case for years now in our nut wood jungles, that used every year to flood the country with myriads of sacks of nuts, every one full to the bung, in cartloads at the Beauly markets, and in every town and village,—the nut crackers being a regular nuisance, paving every street and road and room with shells for months. The whole people in the country seemed to live with pockets full of nuts, their price being fabulously low. Nonsense talking of our temperature now being what it was seventy years ago! Moreover we used (I believe as a matter of duty) always to be settled in the west (Gairloch), for the summer, before the 'King's birthday,' June 4th. Is there an idea of loyalty in Britain now resembling the general adoration of King George the Third in those early times? I don't believe we really know now what was meant by the loyalty of those old days. Did the general feudal feeling of those times promote royal loyalty? Probably it did. Was it the cause of our never failing to have a huge china bowl after dinner with a pail of 'cream that wad mak a caunle o' my finger,' to wash down the first strawberries of the season on the 4th of June? Don't I remember their delicious smell in Flowerdale House, and their taste too? 'North Carolinas' the gardener called them. And now, in the same garden (but I deny the same climate utterly), no strawberry thinks it is called upon to ripen in less than a month later. 'The same temperature as seventy years ago!' What fools we must be supposed to be by the rascal astronomers! And we also always had a few Mayduke cherries to swear by on the 4th of June. Afterwards, was there ever such a mass of cherries offered, before or since, to five fruity boys, and as devoted a tutor, as in the Tigh Dige garden (Flowerdale), sheltered from every cold wind, and held up to the sun, [225] by all that could be desired in woods and mountains. No, I'm sure; no one can tell me where it defied five such fruiterers and their equally busy tutor to make such an impression on the tall crowd of cherry trees in that garden. Our dear tutor told me, years after, of one thing that was a weight on his mind, viz., that having dropped one forenoon nine hundred cherry-stones from his mouth into his worm-fishing bag, he was called away, and prevented finishing his thousand in one day!"

From March to September the nights are much shorter than in more southern latitudes. In June and July night may be said to be of only two hours' duration, and in clear weather those two hours are but a subdued twilight. A description of a summer evening on Loch Maree is given by Dr MacCulloch (see Appendix D). Of course in winter the days are shorter and the nights longer than in England. In autumn and spring grand displays of the Aurora Borealis, or northern lights, often relieve the darkness, frequently prognosticating tempestuous weather. Rainbows of intensest brilliance are frequently seen in Gairloch, and the weird lunar rainbow is occasionally to be observed. Strange to say fogs are almost unknown in this humid region; even with a hoar-frost there is no fog. With a south-east wind and a cloudless sky, the mountain ranges are often rendered marvellously imposing by a silvery haze, which apparently enhances their magnitude and adds mystery to their forms.

The winters are not usually severe. Whether from the action of the Gulf Stream, or owing to the presence of such large masses of water, the frosts have not, as a rule, the same intensity as in many parts further south; so that a variety of shrubs and other plants can be grown in the open air which elsewhere need protection, and many flowers and fruits are earlier than in less favoured places. Some winters have been so mild that even geraniums and calceolarias have survived unprotected in the open ground.

There is a Gaelic proverb which may be translated thus, "If spring mist should enter the meal-chest, snow will follow." The meaning is, that when mist is seen in spring, snow always falls soon after. From long observation I can vouch for the truth of this curious saying. Snow often falls during the spring months; but the heavy falls of snow are now-a-days usually in December, January, and February. They are, however, of comparatively rare occurrence.

When snow comes it gives wonderful glory to the mountains, and even frost has its peculiar charms. In the exceptionally severe winter of 1880-1, which had only once been surpassed in the experience of the oldest inhabitants, the ice displayed some of the peculiar forms described by those who have visited the Arctic circle. On the margin of Loch Maree (whose waters never wholly freeze), and especially where streams debouch into it, great hummocks of ice were formed. At the same time the brackish waters of Loch Ewe became covered with ice floes, of such extent as actually to prevent the passage of boats which had started to cross from the west side of the loch to convey persons who wished to attend sacramental services then being held at [226] Aultbea. It was the only time I ever saw the sea frozen, and this circumstance, coupled with the phenomena witnessed on the ice-bound shores of Loch Maree and the unnatural silence of nature,—whose murmuring streams were frozen dumb, and whose benumbed birds could give forth no note or song,—really seemed to transfer one to another world.

Perhaps the best spot in the parish to observe the sunsets is the Gairloch Hotel. Looking over the

bay of Gairloch, no near mountains obstruct the view, and the aspect in summer and autumn is exactly right. Beyond the bay of Gairloch itself lies the Minch, and again beyond and above the Minch are the distant and seemingly transparent hills of Skye. The scene is as it were framed by the lines of hills on either side of Gairloch, and in the immediate foreground are strips of yellow sand and ridges of dark rock. None can tell, none can paint, the glories of the setting sun; words as well as pigments are powerless to adequately record the wondrous changes of the splendid colours that gleam in the sky and clouds, the subtle tints suffused over the sea and distant hills, and the marvellous glow pervading the whole of the beauteous scene!

In this mountain land too there are countless varieties of what may be called cloudscapes; the numerous summits attract and then break up the cloud masses into rough and fleecy shapes, some thick enough to obstruct the light, others edged by silvery gleams, and others again brilliant with the sun shining through them,—the whole exhibiting wonderful examples of aerial chaos. These broken clouds are most usually seen in mountain lands; they are quite different from the wreaths of mist previously spoken of.

Some reference ought to be made here to the colouring of the landscape. Towards the end of winter, when frosts and snows are done with, much of the heather assumes an indefinable grey tint, and the bent-grass becomes a sandy brown. The leafless trees make one thankful for the firs and hollies with their grateful greens. The larches are the first deciduous trees to give signs of the coming spring. About the "Day of Our Lady" they appear tinged with pale green, and in April the birches usually follow. By the latter part of May all nature has revived, and most of the trees are in full leaf. The grasses and ferns become brilliant in June, and the heather is then making a rapid new growth of lovely velvety shades of colour. From this time until August the hillsides and moorlands present exquisite phases of green and russet colouring, on which the eye rests with unwearying pleasure. The artist, who generally visits the Highlands in the autumn, seldom attempts to depict these summer effects. He more usually represents the splendid tints of August and September, when the heather is of every shade of lilac and purple; when the brackens, broken by winds, are gorgeous with reds, yellows, and rich browns; and when the bent-grass is magnificent with its radiant orange hues. The declining year brings fresh glories; all these colours are now modified and chastened; the rowan trees grow scarlet, the weeping birches become like fountains of gold, and the oaks a brilliant brown. Even in winter there are beautiful effects of paler colours; indeed it is true that there is no season when the landscape does not [227] delight the eye.

I have long known and loved this country. I have seen it and been charmed by it in every kind of weather and at every season of the year, and I have found an ever new delight in its grand yet lovely scenery. You, my reader, may not have the same opportunity of prolonged observation, and you may not become possessed of my intense affection for this region, yet if you linger here awhile, and go about with eyes and heart open to impressions of beauty and joy, you will soon freely admit that these descriptions are not mere rhapsody.

Chapter III.

Anecdotes and Notes.

The loneliness and wildness of most parts of Gairloch are of course highly favourable to the presence and observation of some of the rarer British birds and animals.

The list of Gairloch birds given further on reveals a curious fact, viz., that several kinds, such as the house-sparrow, bullfinch, blackbird, and red-shank, formerly unknown or rare in Gairloch, are now plentiful; whilst other birds, including the house-martin, skylark, and whimbrel, formerly abundant, are now scarce. No local causes for these changes can be suggested. There is no wholesale destruction of the smaller birds here as in France. What then can be the reason?

Dr Mackenzie has some interesting remarks on this point. Speaking of his young days (1815-1820) he writes as follows:—

"Now, gentle reader, please explain why, till we were men, no blackbird was ever heard of in Gairloch,—only heaps of ring-ouzels; not a sparrow nor a magpie (except one unfortunate who was shot, and report says cooked as game, at Kerrysdale, and pronounced excellent), no rooks nor wood-pigeons, tho' plenty blue-rocks, and for many years now these then strangers have found their way to the west. Indeed blackbirds are now in crowds there, and have so entirely superseded the ring-ouzel that one of these is quite a rarity. And please explain also why not only

> 'When I was young and was werry little,
> The only steam came from the kettle,'

but why then no bird ever touched *any* fruit but cherries, while now no fruit, ripe or unripe, except black currants, is safe unless netted; the very pears, not full grown, being all pecked full of holes (or their mere skeletons hanging on the tree) by the blackbird pests, who, one might suppose, would die on the spot but for fruit that long ago not one of them would touch. Till three

years ago I never dreamed of netting my morello cherry-trees. No blackbird till then would look at a morello, had I offered him £5. Now, unless netted, I need to use them before they are really ripe, or the black villains will eat them all up. [228]

"When I was young house-swallows were legion. Now they are easily counted in the north. In our western church (Gairloch) then broken window-panes were too plenty, and the swallows' operations (building, feeding, and other arrangements), to the discomfort of those in the pews below the nests, I suppose I should admit interested us a good deal more than the preacher. Night-jars also then were very plenty, and one could hardly take an evening walk without seeing them flit in the dusk and light on the footpath before us, with their singular cat-purring song. I have often come on their extra-simple exposed nest in the heather."

The golden or black eagle may frequently be seen in Gairloch, soaring aloft in the sky. There is a general inclination now to preserve this noble denizen of the air. The eagle does comparatively little injury to game, but is accused of killing lambs and even sheep. The golden or black eagle is a size smaller than the erne or white-tailed eagle, which latter is also sometimes seen in Gairloch.

There are several Gairloch anecdotes of eagles. On the edge of the wood at the base of Craig Tollie an eagle pounced upon a roe-deer, and deeply fixed its talons in the poor beast's side. The roe taking to the wood, was near crushing the eagle against the trees. The eagle clutched at a branch with the claws of one foot, still keeping its hold of the roe with the other foot, but the speed of the roe was so great that the bird was actually torn in two. One portion was found fixed to the deer, which died from loss of blood, and the other in the tree.

Doubts have been thrown on the credibility of this anecdote; the following extract from "Martin's Western Islands of Scotland" helps to confirm it. Writing about 1695, Martin says:—"The eagles are very destructive to the fawns and lambs, especially the black eagle, which is of a lesser size than the other. The natives observe that it fixes its talons between the deer's horns, and beats its wings constantly about its eyes, which puts the deer to run continually till it fall into a ditch, or over a precipice, where it dies, and so becomes a prey to the cunning hunter. There are at the same time several other eagles of this kind which fly on both sides of the deer, which fright it extremely, and contribute much to its more sudden destruction. The foresters, and several of the natives, assured me that they had seen both sorts of the eagles kill deer in this manner."

In further confirmation the following paragraph is quoted from "Natural History Notes from Russian Asia," by A. H. M., which appeared in the *Field* of 27th October 1883:—

"The Kirghiz train the grey hawks to catch larks and quails, and showed me an eagle I could not recognise, assuring me they could train it to fly at wolves. This bird was a long way off, but it looked to me like the golden eagle. I was told that, after being kept without sleep or food for nine days, this bird became quite tame, and would feed from the hand of the man who had trained it during this period. A strap of stout leather is fastened round each leg, allowing some ten inches play. When the wolf is sighted the eagle is flown, and, as soon as it seizes him, it plants one foot firmly in the wolf's loins, and with the other drags along the ground, catching at anything that gives a little hold,—stones, weeds, &c. Should the wolf turn, the eagle drives at his eyes with its powerful beak, and, the heavy drag on his back causing him to go slowly, the falconer rides up and settles him with blows from a heavy whip, or with a knife. This is something like hawking. My driver swore, by all that was holy, that he himself had killed many wolves with these 'birghuts,' or small eagles." [229]

The method employed by the eagle of the Kirghiz in dealing with wolves, appears to be exactly on all fours with that of the eagle attacking the roe on Craig Tollie.

Mr H. E. Dresser, F.L.S., F.Z.S., &c., author of "The Birds of Europe," informs me he is sure he has been told that trained eagles are sometimes breeched, to prevent their being torn asunder. The strap employed by the Kirghiz seems to be an example of this. Mr Dresser states that Atkinson ("Oriental and Western Siberia," pp. 492-494) gives an account of trained golden eagles being flown at deer; and M. V. Scully relates ("Stray Feathers," iv., p. 123) that he has seen many such trained eagles, and he adds that in a wild state they prey on stags, antelopes, wild-cats, foxes, and wolves. Surely the fate of the unbreeched eagle of Craig Tollie is not improbable!

The next anecdote is of an eagle near Kenlochewe. This injudicious bird carried off a cat to feed its two young at its eyrie,—probably on Meall a' Ghubhais. The cat was alive and well when deposited in the eagle's nest. Pussy made short work of the two young eagles, and returned home safe and sound.

The incident is traditional, not only in Gairloch, but also in the neighbouring districts. I understand that in Assynt and Kintail, as well as in Gairloch, the following Gaelic riddle is often asked, the answer being this very anecdote. The riddle is as follows:—"Chaidh biadh do dithis go ceann Loch Maridhe dhith am biadh dithis thainig am biadh dhachidh a rhithisd." Here is a literal English translation,—"Some food went to two at the head of Loch Maree, the food ate the two, and the food came home again."

Another eagle, not long ago, at Talladale, was seen soaring above a foal, with the manifest intention of attacking it. The mare watched her foal with evident anxiety, seemingly prepared to defend her young at all hazards. The eagle, foiled in his design, took up in his talons a part of a tree stump, and let it fall, apparently in the hope that it would strike and kill the foal.

Dr Mackenzie has the following note of a good bag of eagles made in Gairloch in the early part of

the present century. He says:—"Our game-killer, Watson, had a good day once with eagles, producing three splendid birds from a day's shooting, besides two young birds also killed. A pair nested on the west side of Bus Bheinn, and another pair on its east side, both out of reach, even by rope, although the nests were visible from tops about eighty to one hundred yards away. Watson, by daybreak, was on the top of Bus Bheinn, with swan shot in one barrel and a ball in the [230] other. Peering over the rock, away sailed one of the eagles, but the swan shot dropped him in the heather below the rock. Another eagle at the nest at the other side of the hill came to the same end. Then hiding himself among the rocks, near where a wounded eagle flapped his wings, a third eagle, coming to see what this meant, was invited down by a shot, making a brace and a half of old eagles before breakfast! Then to shorten matters with the two chicken eagles, he climbed the hill again, and ere his bullets were all used up, both of them were dead, and their remains were visible on the nests for many a year after, having got more lead to breakfast than they could digest. I wait to hear of the gunner in Britain who could shew his two and a half brace of eagles killed in one day, before breakfast!"

The most numerous and noticeable birds about Loch Maree in the months of May, June, and July, are the black-backed gulls. They fly with great speed and apparently little effort. I have often endeavoured, watch in hand, to estimate the velocity of their flight, and I have come to the conclusion that in a calm atmosphere, or with a favourable breeze, they attain the speed of a quick train, viz., nearly fifty miles an hour. They breed on the islands of Loch Maree, and appear to have almost displaced the herring gulls, which used to be pretty numerous on the islands. Very few gulls now breed on Eilean Ruaridh Mor, though it seems from the following anecdote of Dr Mackenzie's that this island was a favourite gullery until the incident he relates occurred:—

"Some years ago it was observed that, without any visible reason, the gulls quite deserted Big Rorie's island for another at a little distance, till a shepherd, landing with his dog, found a pine-marten-cat in the island, mere skin and bone, and despatched him. How he had got to the island, half a mile from the mainland, and the water never frozen, no one could imagine; but though he may have lived well for a time on the gulls, there being nothing else to feed him on the island, unless a chance grouse or a roe, he soon made a desert of it, and would have died of hunger but for the collie who ended him."

Gairloch is not without examples of very rare birds, but those usually seen, though rare in many parts of the kingdom, are mostly the common birds of the Highlands. They are interesting enough to all,—to the lover of nature they are delightful; let the gunner spare them; let the bird-nester allow them to rear their young in peace. In the bright spring-time there is to my mind nothing sweeter than to listen on a calm evening to the sounds of the various birds that haunt the neighbourhood of Inveran. You may hear the whirring wings of the wild ducks, goosanders, and mergansers flitting up and down the Ewe; the sand-pipers, in great numbers, piping as they hurry along the river banks; the black-cocks crooning in the adjoining fields; the cock-grouse crowing on the moors close by; the rooks cawing all around; the wood-pigeon cooing in the neighbouring woods; the herons screaming on the margin of the water; the curlews whistling their weird call not far away; the night-jar humming his prolonged trill below Craig Tollie; the corncrake uttering its creaking note in the meadows and growing corn; the owl hooting from his tree or rock; the [231] familiar cuckoo calling on all sides, near and far; a host of the smaller birds singing, chirping, and twittering around; whilst above them all the ravens croak, the grey crows screech, the sea-mews cry, and (sometimes) the wild geese gabble, high in air.

Observation of this teeming bird life has a wonderful fascination for many, and I can imagine no purer pleasure. Mr Alexander Cameron in his song about Tournaig (Part II., chap. xxiii.) notices some of the birds of Coile Aigeascaig; he must have often enjoyed their exquisite symphonies.

The insects which frequent the air are not all delightful. Some of the moths and butterflies, as well as the large dragon-flies (supposed by many to be the originals of our artificial salmon-flies), are beautiful enough. These abound more especially on the north-east side of Loch Maree, where limestone occurs. The flies that sting or bite force themselves upon our notice, and the tiny midge is the most obnoxious of them all. Wasps are rather plentiful in some seasons, but the midges are always in swarms on warm calm evenings from July to October. Even royalty can claim no immunity from their attacks! Her Majesty the Queen notes in the diary of her visit to Loch Maree, "the midges are dreadful, and you cannot stand for a moment without being stung;" and again, "there is a perfect plague of wasps, and we are obliged to have gauze nailed down to keep these insects out when the windows are open, which, as the climate is so hot, they have to be constantly."

A visitor to one of the hotels recorded his opinion of the midges thus:—

"I love Maree's soft rippling waves;
I love her mountain ridges;
I love her silver birken trees,—
But I detest her midges!"

It is a curious fact that prolonged residence in the country seems to render one slightly less liable to the attacks of these minute pests; but when they swarm on a calm evening in September, every one must give in, and cease all stationary occupation out of doors. Many different washes for the skin, aromatic and otherwise, are recommended, and some persons wear veils; but preventive measures are never wholly successful, and it is best to retreat before the little aggravating foe. How dreadful must have been the sufferings of the Rev. John Morrison, minister

of Gairloch, when stripped naked, tied to a tree, and exposed to the attacks of the midges, at Letterewe, as related in Part I., chap. xvi.! With some people each particular midge bite inflames, and produces a small lump like a pea under the skin. Total abstinence for the time from alcohol, or at least from whisky, will generally mitigate this unpleasant result. If it be a midgy evening, choose if possible an exposed breezy road for your stroll, and you will escape the creatures. Fishing is out of the question if it be so calm that the midges are bad.

The stone-flies, gad-flies, or horse-flies, are very troublesome at times, but can easily be dealt with.

The large caterpillar which is the larva of the fox-moth, is very abundant on the heather in the shooting season. [232]

The beasts of the earth next claim our attention. Except deer, hares, rabbits, and (on calm evenings) a few bats near woods or houses, few of these beasts come under the observation of the ordinary visitor to Gairloch. Some indeed of the beasts which are considered vermin, such as badgers, otters, marten-cats, and polecats, are now nearly extinct; great raids were made upon the two former some years ago for the sake of their heads and skins, which were and still are much used for sporans to wear with the kilt.

With respect to martens, Dr Mackenzie says:—"Martens have so fine a fur, that I remember a lady friend going into a London furrier's shop with a boa made of martens' skins, trapped by our gamekeeper, and which the furrier would insist was sable fur! I once shot a marten entangled in a net spread over a magnum bonum tree on the Flowerdale garden wall, the gardener being provoked by finding many plumstones on the top of the wall, and blaming jackdaws for the theft, while the marten was evidently the thief, his caggie on dissection being well packed with magnums!"

There are plenty of wild-cats in Gairloch, but the majority of them are domestic cats gone wild, and their offspring. Occasionally specimens of the true wild-cat are trapped. Here is another anecdote of Dr Mackenzie's; it tells of a wild-cat having its young in a singular place:—

"One morning the fox-hunter's dogs picked up a scent behind the Tigh Dige (Flowerdale) garden, on charming jungly Craig a chait (rock of the cat), that carried them away over the hills for about five miles to the side of Loch Tollie, where they lost scent opposite to a mite of an island, all covered with bushes, about a hundred yards from the shore. No more scent being found, the dog-master made up his mind it must be an old cunning fox, whose bedroom the island was. So he stripped and swam to the island, followed by his dogs; to his and probably their amazement, they were faced by a monster wild-cat, hardly yet dry from her swim, who had brought home to her six kittens a nice grouse for breakfast. They needed no more grouse after that interview. What a deal of thought pussy must have had ere she could make up her mind to constant swimming in Loch Tollie till her kittens could leave the island, as her only chance of saving them from the detested fox-hunter! Did she reason out the question, or was it mere instinct? Who can tell?"

The lover of the picturesque must admire the shaggy cattle of the breed now called "Highland," especially those of Mr O. H. Mackenzie of Inverewe, and of Dr Robertson of Achtercairn. The black-faced lambs are particularly bonnie when young, but visitors seldom come to Gairloch early enough to see them. Goats, mostly in a semi-wild state, are kept on some of the rocky sheep-farms; the idea is that they, being good climbers and fond of cropping the herbage in steep places, may safely consume the tender grass in spots where, if left uneaten by goats, it might tempt the "silly sheep" to destruction.

Some small horses and ponies are bred in Gairloch. A shaggy pony sometimes adds to the interest of the landscape, or diversifies the appearance of a shooting party. [233]

Chapter IV.

Lower Forms of Life.

The scientist tells us that every drop of water, fresh or salt, and every portion of the air we breathe, teems with living organisms. The phosphorescence of the sea is due to infusoria; so also is the luminosity of footprints on boggy ground. I have often noticed this last phenomenon when walking behind another man across wet moorland on a dark night, his footprints being plainly defined by a lambent glow of light. There can be little doubt but that the notion of the "will o' the wisp" had its origin in something of this kind.

A few remarks seem to be required with regard to the forms of organic life in the wide region between the birds and beasts on the one hand, and those minute organisms on the other hand.

The reptiles of Gairloch are snakes, slow-worms, lizards, frogs, and toads; the two latter common, the others rarely seen. I have not met with or heard of any adders in Gairloch. It is said that frogs and toads were formerly unknown here, as they still are in the Lews.

The only fish that live in fresh water in Gairloch are trout, pike, eels, and char. Salmon and bull-trout, sea-trout, and finnocks divide their time between fresh water and salt water. Remarks on these fish will be found in Part IV., as also some notes on salt-water fish.

There are many shells to be found in both salt and fresh water, all inhabited or recently inhabited by creatures allied to the fishy creation. The fresh-water mussel is found in most of the burns and rivers, and yields a few small pearls to those who undergo the labour of gathering, opening, and examining a vast number of shells. The promiscuous gathering of these mussels in Gairloch has almost exterminated them. Oysters, clams, and cockles have also been nearly exterminated, and are now protected, though still much poached.

The spout-fish, whose long angular shell—sometimes nine inches in length—is popularly called the razor-shell, is abundant on all sandy beaches in Gairloch. It is commonly used for bait at the spring cod fishing. It is not easily captured. The following is Dr Mackenzie's account, slightly abridged, of the mode in which the fish can be taken:—"Go to the sands at the ebb of a spring tide,—always at Gairloch between twelve and two p.m.,—armed with a small spud and fishing-basket. Walking backwards close to the edge of the sea, up flies a spout of water from an inch-wide hole in the wet sand, which instantly fills it up. Experienced spout-fish catchers in a second have the spud slanted into the sand a few inches nearer themselves than where the spout-hole [234] was seen, pushing down till something stops it. Then they carefully remove the sand above the spud, and uncover the top of the spout-fish. Do not touch the top of the shell, or you may draw blood. Scoop the sand away at the side till finger and thumb are able to grip the shell, and basket it. Take care you do not pull violently, or the shell may come up without the fish. By repeating this process you may, if skilled and fortunate, secure a nice basket of spout-fish. The fish, when properly cleared from sand, make the best of stock for a rich soup which has peculiarly nutritive qualities."

Sea anemones are abundant on the Gairloch coast. I understand there are some rare varieties. Will any reader who is knowing about these beautiful things make us a catalogue of them?

The love of flowers and plants is older than the appreciation of fine scenery, if we may judge by the poetry of bygone days. Surely the man, woman, or child who takes no pleasure in the jewels of the vegetable world is greatly to be pitied. It is sad to find how the introduction of sheep has diminished the number and variety of Gairloch flowers. Rocky places, and flat ground near the sea-shore, are commended to the wandering botanist as localities where good plants may still be found. Any person who would add to the list given further on of Gairloch plants would deserve our gratitude. The true lover of flowers will surely abstain from rooting up anything rare that may be discovered.

Besides what are commonly known as flowering plants, there are numbers of other forms of vegetable life, including the grasses, mosses, lichens, seaweeds, fresh-water weeds, and fungi. Complete lists of all these are wanted.

Of the grasses, the most noticeable is that species of bent-grass which so abounds on all the moorlands and hill sides, mingling with the heather, ferns, and flowers. It is this grass which, with its orange tinge of colour in autumn, gives to hills and moors a rich deep colour like old gold.

Of the mosses, the deer-grass, or stag's-horn moss, which is the badge of the Mackenzie clan, is appropriately plentiful in some spots in this land of the Mackenzies. The club-moss, somewhat similar, is commoner. The sphagnum-moss is the most noticeable of all; it forms in some places enormous lumps. I have measured a few lumps four to five feet high, and with bases six to eight feet in diameter. The sphagnum-moss presents lovely colouring, varying from deep crimson and rosy red to pale primrose. The fern-moss is very abundant in and about the margins of all woods, and is easily distinguished by its beautiful little branches, so closely resembling the fronds of a fern. There must be hundreds of different species of moss in Gairloch. A Devonshire botanist told me he had identified nearly three hundred different mosses in a two days' ramble in that county. Gairloch cannot be far behind.

Lichens, though so diminutive and slow of growth, give the principal colouring to most of the rocky parts of Gairloch landscapes. Several species are still much used in Gairloch in producing red and brown dyes, into which the wool is dipped before being spun and formed into hose or [235] tweed. Lichens are a singular class of plant; sometimes they grow on rocks, sometimes on trees, sometimes on detached pieces of wood, sometimes on boggy moorland, sometimes on the bare ground, sometimes on old buildings, sometimes on loose stones, and sometimes on nothing but themselves. In Dr Lindsay's book on British lichens, it is recorded that "a curious erratic parmelia was discovered in Dorsetshire by Sir W. C. Trevelyan, lying loose on the ground, and rolling freely along before the wind." There may be similar eccentricities of nature in Gairloch.

The following are a few lichens common in Gairloch, mostly named for me by Dr C. F. Newcombe:—

Cladonia vermicularis.—The pale greenish grey, almost white, tubular lichen; growing abundantly on peaty grounds.
Cladonia pyxidata.—Also grows on the ground; has cups or stems half inch high, red inside.
Cladonia rangiferina.—Like vermicularis, but much finer; almost resembling lace.
Cladonia digitalis and extensa.—Both have stems like pyxidata; the former finer, the

latter coarser, with scarlet tops.
Cladonia cervicornis.—Small antler-like pale greenish grey or white lichen; growing on the ground.
Lecidea geographica.—Bright green and black growth on rocks, scarcely perceptible to the touch; named from the resemblance to a map.
Lecidea ferruginea.—A bright rust-coloured stain on rocks.
Lecidea sulphurea.—A sulphur-coloured stain on rocks.
Stereocaulon paschale.—Pale greenish grey in colour; growing one and a half inch high on rocks.
Lecanora tartarea subfusca and parella.—Grows on rocks; one-eighth of an inch thick; pale green, with dark crimson or blackish spots; the "cudbear" lichen, gathered in the Highlands and largely exported in the early part of this century for producing purple and crimson dyes.
Parmelia saxatilis.—Grey and black with brown spots; much used in making a brown or brownish-red dye or crottle.
Parmelia parietina.—Bright orange; flat growth on old trees and on rocks, especially on the sea-shore; very noticeable and beautiful.
Sticta pulmonaria.—On trees, standing out an inch or two in scales; pale green on surface, brown underneath.
Parmelia herbacea.—Like the last, but greyer; it grows on the ground.
Peltidea canina.—Resembles the two last, but coarser.
Gyrophora erosa.—On rocks, like a soft black button; up to two inches in diameter.
Cornicularia prolixa and cana.—Pendent from trees; brownish.

Seaweeds grow profusely on Gairloch shores; they are largely used as manure, and were formerly the source whence kelp was obtained. Some of the kinds growing in deep water are of brilliant colour; specimens of these, detached by storms, may often be collected on the beach, [236] and when pressed are highly decorative. Fresh-water weeds are not so various, but both classes are well worthy of study.

The fungi of Gairloch include several edible species. Whether edible or poisonous many of them are very beautiful. There are brilliant scarlet fungi with orange or white spots; others are purple, yellow, chestnut-brown, green, pale lilac, cream-coloured, or white. The following are a few Gairloch species, mostly identified for me by Mr A. S. Bicknell, a skilled fungologist and daring fungus eater:—

Agaricus laccatus.—Purple.
Hydnum repandum.—Buff fungus, without gills; edible.
Cantharellus cibarius.—Yellow; edible; the "chantarelle."
Hygrophorus pumicens.—Red, with orange gills; poisonous.
Russula heterophylla.—White; top variable in colour; edible.
Amanita muscaria.—Red; poisonous.
Agaricus muscarius.—Crimson; spotted; poisonous.
Agaricus phalloides.—White, with pale yellow or green top; poisonous.
Boletus edulis.—Umber; white flesh; edible.
Agaricus campestris.—The common mushroom; edible; only abundant here at rare intervals.
Lycoperdon giganteum.—White; the "puff-ball"; edible.
Agaricus semiglobatus.—Yellowish; poisonous.
Russula fœtens.—Reddish brown; poisonous.

There are many other fungi and toadstools to be met with in Gairloch, even by the wayside; they need identification.

These are all my notes on these branches of nature. Of course many forms of life have been scarcely alluded to; it is even difficult, if not impossible, for the scientist to define where organised life ceases. The farther research is carried, the more marvels it reveals. Have we not here plain indications of the work and design of the Divine Being, either direct or through the medium of some law of evolution? It may be commonplace, but it is none the less rational, to believe that for our enjoyment of nature we are indebted to a benign Providence.

> "Thou, Lord, hast made me glad through Thy work."

Chapter V.

Mammals of Gairloch.

The mammals found in the parish of Gairloch are, or have been, as numerous as in any other part of the kingdom. The following list has been prepared with the assistance of Mr Osgood H. Mackenzie of Inverewe, and is believed to be complete. I have added an account of the Arctic

fox trapped on the North Point in January 1878, and of some other captures of the same animal in the Highlands, but of course this cannot be called a native species. Tradition says that the mountains of Gairloch were formerly the haunt of numerous wolves, bears, elk, and reindeer; and there is no doubt these animals were abundant in the Highlands in the old days. [237]

Red-Deer (*Cervus ellaphus*).—The wild red-deer is abundant on the mountains of Gairloch, and is the subject of the sport of deer-stalking, treated of in Part IV., chap. xx., where some information is given regarding this animal. Its horns have been found deep in peat bogs, where they had probably lain many centuries, for in one case an antler was found close to the bronze spear head described in Part I., chap. xxi., in a peat bog half-way between Tournaig and Inverewe, and the spear head could not have been in use since remote times. There are few finer spectacles than a herd of red-deer. In severe weather, in winter or early spring, this sight may often fall to the lot of the traveller on the shores of Loch Maree, without leaving the high-road.

Roe-Deer (*Capreolus capræa*).—This pretty little deer is not so numerous as it used to be in Gairloch, but I have often seen individuals not far from the high-road near Slatadale, and there are always a few about Flowerdale and Shieldaig. They frequent woods and adjoining moorland. Very few are now shot by sportsmen. They are a delicate little creature, and sometimes die in a hard winter. I have seen specimens lying dead by the roadside, passing through the Glas Leitire woods. Possibly the increase of rabbits has tended to reduce the number of roe-deer, by diminishing their food supply.

Fox (*Vulpes vulgaris*).—The common fox is very abundant in Gairloch, but is kept down by the keepers on account of the destruction it wreaks on all kinds of ground and winged game. The fox also kills many lambs, and sometimes, though rarely, full-grown sheep. It has even been known to kill the calves of red-deer when very young. The foxes here have their earths or dens mostly in cairns of rocks and stones. The keepers will watch one of these dens all night in order to destroy or capture the old and young foxes. Any that are taken alive (and these are most usually the young ones) are sent to England to be turned out by masters of fox-hounds, who generally pay ten shillings a piece for them.

Badger (*Meles taxus*).—The badger is now nearly extinct in Gairloch, but is still occasionally met with. Mr John Munro, gamekeeper on the North Point, told me that one was trapped in Garbh Coire, near Loch Bad na Sgalaig, in 1874. The badger lives on worms, honey, eggs, and carrion, but its staple food is grass. It does little harm to game, unless it destroys a few eggs of grouse. It frequents cairns of stones like the fox.

Otter (*Lutra vulgaris*).—The otter was formerly very plentiful, and is still frequently met with in cairns on the sea-coast of Gairloch and Loch Ewe and of the island of Longa, but it is not so abundant as it used to be. When the people found how valuable the skins were they captured all they could. The skins, like those of the badger, are much used in making sporans (purses), to be worn with the kilt. The head is usually mounted as the over-lap of the sporan. Two young otters were taken in Fionn Loch in 1881, and were sent to the Zoological Gardens, Regent's Park, London. The otter lives exclusively on fish. [238]

Wild-Cat (*Felis catus*).—The wild-cat is frequently trapped by the gamekeepers in cairns of rock. It destroys great quantities of game. The wild-cat is shorter in the legs than the domestic cat. Mr O. H. Mackenzie has killed a true wild-cat measuring forty-three inches in length. The wild-cat is about twice the weight of the domestic cat. Many domestic cats become wild, and adopt the habits of the wild-cat, and some persons take them for wild-cats. There are also crosses between the two.

Marten-Cat (*Martes abietum*, or *foina*).—The marten is now scarce in Gairloch. One was trapped in Gairloch in 1877. An old one and several young ones were killed about the same date in Torridon, on the southern confines of Gairloch. One was trapped in 1884 at Kerrysdale. It is generally found in woods or long heather, and was formerly plentiful hereabouts. Mr O. H. Mackenzie tells me that he once came upon a dead sheep at the foot of a steep place, down which it had evidently rolled; beneath the carcass he found a dead marten-cat. He believed it had attacked and killed the sheep, and the latter in its struggles had rolled down the hill, and unwittingly been the cause of its destroyer's death.

Polecat (*Putorius fœtidus*).—There are a few polecats still occasionally to be met with in Gairloch, but the beast is scarce. It used to abound in the woods. In its habits it resembles the weasel.

Weasel (*Mustela vulgaris*).—This well known animal is very numerous in this parish. It destroys many rabbits. I have seen it more than once in the very act of killing a rabbit.

Stoat, or Ermine (*Mustela erminea*).—The stoat is very numerous and has the same habits as the weasel, which it closely resembles in appearance, except that it is rather larger. The stoat generally becomes snowy white in winter, except the tip of the tail, which remains black. Numbers of them are imported into Britain from Russia in their white state, and make the ermine fur used in the royal robes.

Alpine Hare (*Lepus variablis*).—The Alpine hare is quite distinct from the common brown hare and the Irish hare. It is commonly called the "blue hare," but the epithet grey would be more suitable, for in colour it resembles a common rabbit. It mostly frequents the higher moorlands and the mountain sides, but is sometimes found on quite low ground. Towards the end of November its coat becomes nearly or entirely white, the change being gradually effected, so that sometimes piebald hares may be seen. In February or March the coat again assumes the grey colour. Mr

John Munro is of opinion that the change to white is the result of a loss of colour, and involves no actual change of the coat. But he believes the change from the white to the original grey colour is due to a complete change of the coat itself,—that in fact the old white wool of winter comes off, [239] and is replaced by a new grey coat. In support of this view he states that he has often found quantities of the white wool on the ground at the time of the spring change, but he never found grey wool in November. The grey hare has three or even four young in a litter, and has several litters in the year. Its average weight is from four to five pounds. I have seen several which weighed seven pounds, but this is a very uncommon weight. They feed on grass and heather, and even on lichens and mosses. Their white colour makes them an easy mark for the gunner when there is no snow on the ground. Some thirty years ago this hare was almost unknown in Gairloch. Now it is very abundant, though perhaps less so than a few years back.

Brown Hare (*Lepus timidus*).—The common brown hare was very numerous in Gairloch some years ago, but is now comparatively scarce. It is the same species as the English hare, and is larger and heavier than the Alpine hare. Sometimes a variety, or supposed variety, occurs, alleged to be the result of a cross between this species and the Alpine hare.

Rabbit (*Lepus cuniculus*).—The common rabbit was quite unknown in Gairloch parish until about the year 1850, when it was introduced at Letterewe. It did not become general for many years after, but is now common almost everywhere. Occasionally black or white individuals are met with, probably descended from tame rabbits let loose.

Brown Rat (*Mus decumanus*).—This obnoxious creature swarms everywhere. They arrived in this country about 1860. It is said they had been known before for a short time, but had disappeared.

Black Rat (*Mus rattus*).—The old black rat is very scarce. Mr John Munro tells me that he has seen it near a bothie on a mountain in Gairloch. It is not such an objectionable beast as the brown rat.

Mouse (*Mus musculus*).—The common mouse is very abundant everywhere.

Water Rat, or Water Vole (*Arvicola amphibius*).—Mr O. H. Mackenzie says this rat is not uncommon, though rarely seen.

Long-Tailed Field-Mouse (*Mus sylvaticus*).—This creature, which is not a vole but a veritable mouse, is found about gardens in Gairloch, where it eats the bulbs of the crocus, tulip, &c. Mr O. H. Mackenzie tells me that he has actually found this mouse (February 1885) inside the house at Tournaig eating fruit on the shelves.

Short-tailed Field-Mouse (*Arvicola agrestis*).—It is common enough, and is found in corn-fields.

Shrew (*Corsira vulgaris*).—The common shrew-mouse is quite common. Cats will not eat them. The shrew lives on worms.

Water-Shrew (*Crossopus fodiens*).—The pretty little black water-shrew is not often seen. Mr O. H. Mackenzie gave me a specimen on 13th October 1885.

Mole (*Talpa Europæa*).—The mole is now very abundant, but was quite unknown in Gairloch twenty years ago, and no one can tell how it came here. No doubt the mole does good, but it is very annoying to see a newly-sown patch of vegetables or flower-seeds destroyed all along the [240] top of the underground path of the mole.

Bat (*Pleiotus communis*).—The common bat is frequent. Only the common small kind is found in Gairloch. It is seen near woods and houses on calm evenings.

Seal (*Phoca vitulina*).—The common seal is often noticed in Gairloch and Loch Ewe, especially near the mouths of streams. They do not breed here.

Porpoise (*Phocœna communis*).—The porpoise is not uncommon in the sea lochs of Gairloch. I have known one approach close to Poolewe, at the head of Loch Ewe, no doubt attracted by shoals of herring which were then in the loch.

Whale, Shark, and Grampus.—Occasionally a whale, shark, or grampus is observed off the coast of Gairloch.

Arctic Fox (*Vulpes lagopus*).—On 30th January 1878 an Arctic fox was trapped by Mr John Munro, on the edge of a very small sheet of water at the back of the Bac an Leth-Choin, on the North Point, about two miles from Rudha Reidh. The remains of several hares had previously been found with the head and neck eaten off to the shoulders. This fox was a female, and quite white, and its shape was unmistakeably that of the true Arctic fox. It was set up by Mr W. A. M'Leay, of Inverness, and is now in the possession of Mr S. W. Clowes of Norbury, Derbyshire, who has for many years been a shooting tenant on the Gairloch estate. It is impossible to determine how this animal, which does not belong to the British isles, had found its way to the North Point. The following occurrences of the Arctic fox in the Highlands were narrated to me by Mr M'Leay, of Inverness:—

An old Gairloch shepherd, who had been a foxhunter in his younger days, shot an Arctic fox, about 1848, while on a pass before the hounds on the heights of Monar. There never was a fox known in that district which made such fearful havoc amongst lambs.

About 1871 an Arctic fox was sent to Mr M'Leay for preservation, for Lord Abinger. Mr M'Leay

inserted a descriptive paragraph in the local newspapers. In the course of a few days he had a letter from a gentleman in Peterhead, asking particularly about it, and saying that an Arctic fox had been given him by the master of a Greenland whaler, which he had kept chained in his yard for upwards of a year; that six weeks before it had managed to escape, and though he had advertised offering a good reward for its recovery, no trace could be got of it. From Mr M'Leay's description he had no doubt it was his fox. How it had managed to elude all the keepers, guns, traps, and snares between Peterhead and Fort-William, a distance of about two hundred miles, was very strange.

Another Arctic fox was shot at Inverness on 14th February 1878, within three weeks of the capture of the Gairloch specimen. Mr Findlay, superintendent of Tomnahurich, observed the fox in the cemetery, and chase being given it was driven down towards the Infirmary. After an exciting run, the animal was shot in the field at the back of Tomnahurich Street.

I cannot but suppose that the Arctic foxes of Gairloch and Inverness, killed so near the same [241] date, had a common origin, but nothing positive is known of their previous history.

Chapter VI.

Birds of Gairloch.

In compiling the following list and notes I have had the valuable aid of Mr Osgood H. Mackenzie of Inverewe, who is a life-long ornithologist and observer of nature. He has spent more of his life in his native country than perhaps any other Highland gentleman now alive. He has very rarely been absent even in winter. He allows me to say that he is mainly responsible for this list. It includes more than one hundred and fifty species, or supposed species. Our effort has been to make the notes absolutely accurate, but nesting-places are generally not stated for obvious reasons. It is earnestly hoped that the information contained in this chapter will not be made use of by visitors to enable them to disturb, destroy, or rob any of the interesting birds of Gairloch.

Mr J. A. Harvie Brown, of Dunipace, has kindly placed at my service a list of birds observed by him in the spring and early summer of 1884 at Aultbea in Gairloch, at Priest Island off the north-east corner of Gairloch parish, and at Gruinard on its northern boundary; and this list is referred to in several cases.

The order and scientific nomenclature are the same as adopted in the revised edition of "Yarrell's British Birds," by Newton and Saunders.

Golden Eagle, or Black Eagle (*Aquila chrysaetus*).—This noble bird, which is slightly smaller than the erne, is not uncommon in Gairloch. I have seen a pair hovering near the head of Loch Maree, and I have frequently noticed single birds soaring high in air. One Sunday afternoon I saw an eagle mobbed by curlews within half-a-mile of Inveran. It nests in the parish, always on ledges of precipitous rocks. There is an eyrie on Meall a Ghuibhais. For anecdotes of the golden eagle see Part III., chap iii. One was trapped on the Inverewe ground, in February 1885, by Mr John Matheson, who has been gamekeeper at Inverewe nearly twenty years.

White-tailed, or Sea Eagle, or Erne (*Haliæetus albicilla*).—Occasionally occurs. A pair formerly nested annually in Eilean na h' Iolair (Eagle Isle), on Fionn Loch. In 1850 there was a nest on Beinn Aridh Charr. A fine specimen, trapped on Bathais [Bus] Bheinn, in 1879, is in the collection at Inveran.

Osprey, or Fishing Eagle (*Pandion haliæetus*).—This now rare and very interesting bird, called by the natives "Allan the fisherman," or "the fisherman," is occasionally seen. One was observed in Gairloch, about 1880, by Mr John Munro. It is not now known to nest in the parish. There were [242] formerly three nesting-places in Gairloch,—(1) in Eilean Suainne, in Loch Maree, on a point nearly opposite Isle Maree; (2) on a fir-tree on a small island in a loch on Eilean Suainne; and (3) on a stack or insulated rock in a small loch called Loch an Iasgair (the loch of "the fisherman"), near the Little Gruinard River. The last nest in any of these places was about 1852; an osprey was shot from the garden at Inveran in that year. I have been told of other nesting-places in Gairloch by old men, who say the osprey used to be abundant in the parish.

Peregrine-Falcon (*Falco peregrinus*).—The peregrine is abundant in Gairloch. During the spring of 1884 Mr John Munro, who has been gamekeeper on the North Point since 1865, and is a noted trapper of vermin, trapped no fewer than eight peregrines on the North Point, besides what were trapped during the same spring by other keepers in the parish. There are several nesting-places in Gairloch, all on ledges on the faces of rocky precipices. If one of a pair preparing to nest be killed, another bird takes its place within a few days, and even where both birds have been destroyed another pair has been known to occupy their nest in a very short time. Though mostly keeping out of gunshot, the peregrine is sometimes very bold. For instance, in 1883, one swooped at a hen close to a house in Londubh; it missed its mark, and, unintentionally no doubt, took a header into a wash-tub, whence it was taken alive. The peregrine destroys more grouse than any other winged vermin; it is believed that each bird kills at least one grouse for its own

sustenance every day, and when they have their young, a pair of them have been known to kill five grouse in one day, so that it has been truly said that the bag made by each peregrine is at the least equal to that of one gun on a moor.

Merlin (*Falco æsalon*).—This pretty little hawk is very common, and its nests are often taken. It usually nests in long heather on a steep hillside.

Kestrel (*Falco tinnunculus*).—This universal hawk is as common in Gairloch as elsewhere. It builds mostly on rocks. It occasionally kills young grouse, and takes them to its nest. Mr John Munro has actually shot kestrels whilst carrying young grouse in their claws to their young. Mr Harvie Brown has observed similar freaks on the part of the kestrel, but he does not think the defect is generically constitutional.

Sparrow-Hawk (*Accipiter nisus*).—The sparrow-hawk is common. It nests in trees. I have seen several nests. The female sparrow-hawk resembles the male peregrine both in size and plumage. In all birds of prey the female is larger than the male, whilst in other birds the reverse is usually the case. The sparrow-hawk kills young grouse, and has been seen by Mr John Munro pecking at an old grouse which was still warm, and had probably been killed by it.

Kite, or Glead (*Milvus ictinus*).—Was formerly common in Gairloch, but has not been observed for many years. Strychnine was on one occasion put into the dead body of a horse, and the result was that a large number of kites were (intentionally) poisoned. This would be about 1825; kites were [243] then very numerous here, and even destroyed poultry. The Gaelic name is Clabhan gobhlach nan cearc, or "fork [tailed] buzzard of the hens."

Buzzard (*Buteo vulgaris*).—This bird, which closely resembles the golden eagle, but is much smaller, is common, but seldom breeds in Gairloch. It used to nest in Craig Tollie. It is not so destructive to game as some of the lesser hawks.

Hen-Harrier (*Circus cyaneus*).—This hawk is tolerably common, but is not known to nest in Gairloch. When out grouse shooting one day I saw a hen-harrier strike and kill a grouse just beyond gunshot. I gathered the grouse, but the harrier escaped.

Tawny Owl, or Brown Owl (*Strix aluco*).—This owl is common, and breeds in Gairloch. They seem to frequent woods and rocks, and at night their loud wailing hoot or howl is often heard. I believe they are harmless as regards game.

Long-eared Owl (*Asio otus*).—This bird occurs, but is not common. It is a migrant, and does not breed here.

Short-eared Owl (*Asio accipitrinus*).—This owl is not uncommon in Gairloch. It is a migrant, and comes with the woodcock. It is not known to breed in Gairloch. Mr O. H. Mackenzie once shot five over setters in the Isle of Ewe in the month of November.

White Owl, or Barn Owl (*Aluco flammeus*).—This owl is also common, and here generally nests in cracks in rocks.

Spotted Flycatcher (*Muscicapa grisola*).—Common. It nests near houses. I have seen its nest at Inveran (1885). Both Mr O. H. Mackenzie and Mr Harvie Brown have noticed several pairs in Gairloch parish.

Golden Oriole (*Oriolus galbula*).—This splendid bird is very rare here. Mr O. H. Mackenzie, and a friend with him, saw one at Coile Aigeascaig on 25th May 1884. One was shot in the garden at Mungasdale (the farm of Gruinard) about 1870. This place is within three miles of the northern boundary of Gairloch.

Dipper, or Water Ouzel (*Cinclus aquaticus*).—Very common on all rivers and burns, and on the margins of lochs. It is called in Gaelic Gobha dubh an uisge, or "the water blacksmith." I have seen several of its remarkable nests behind small waterfalls, or on rocks overhanging running water. It is one of the first of the small birds to build its nest. On 31st January 1879, and on several days before and after that day, I saw an immense number of dippers on the river Ewe. I counted nearly a hundred within a length of a mile. They were of the ordinary brown-breasted kind. Two of them are in my collection, and other two (I believe) in the national collection. I can offer no explanation of this unusual gathering. It is interesting to watch this active little bird diving in running water. It is now acquitted of the charge formerly made against it of eating the ova of fish. It lives on water insects and their larvæ.

Mistletoe Thrush, or Storm-cock (*Turdus viscivorus*).—This bird occurs in Gairloch, though not commonly. Mr O. H. Mackenzie saw a nest in a rock at Inverewe recently. He unmistakably identified the birds and the eggs. The storm-cock used to be abundant in Gairloch, and built [244] generally in oak trees.

Song-Thrush, or Mavis (*Turdus musicus*).—Very common. It nests in trees, bushes, and tall heather. Mr Reid, of Isle Ewe, says that the mavis builds in walls there for lack of trees. Some years ago Mr O. H. Mackenzie killed one with a ring round its neck, such as the ring-ouzel has. This anomalous specimen may be seen at Inverewe.

Redwing (*Turdus iliacus*).—Common. It has been known to remain in Gairloch all summer, making it probable that it breeds here.

Fieldfare (*Turdus pilaris*).—Common. A migrant. Not known to nest here.

Blackbird (*Turdus merula*).—Common enough now, but it is said to have been formerly unknown in Gairloch.

Ring-Ouzel (*Turdus torquatus*).—Common, and, like the mavis and blackbird, very destructive to fruit. I often see a number about my cherrytrees in the garden at Inveran.

Dunnock, or Hedge-sparrow (*Accentor modularis*).—Common, especially near houses.

Redbreast, or Robin (*Erithacus rubecula*).—Common everywhere, and at all seasons.

Redstart (*Ruticilla phœnicurus*).—Rather common. Both Mr O. H. Mackenzie and I have often seen it, and Mr Harvie Brown noted it as seen at Gruinard in 1884.

Stonechat (*Saxicola rubicola).*—Fairly common. It nests early. Mr Harvie Brown saw it at Aultbea in 1884, more abundantly than the whinchat.

Whinchat (*Saxicola rubetra*).—Abundant. Mr Harvie Brown noted it as "common" at Strath na Sealg in 1884, and Mr O. H. Mackenzie and I have often seen it in Gairloch.

Wheatear (*Saxicola œnanthe*).—Very common. It arrives about the end of March or the beginning of April, and nests mostly amongst stones.

Sedge Warbler (*Acrocephalus schœnobænus*).—Occurs. Not common.

Blackcap (*Sylvia atricapilla*).—This bird is not common, but occurs.

Willow Wren, or Warbler (*Phylloscopus trochilus*).—Frequent. Mr Harvie Brown found it common at Gruinard in 1884.

Chiff Chaff (*Phylloscopus collybita*).—Common. Seldom seen, but often heard. It is a migrant.

Goldcrest, or Golden-crested Wren (*Regulus cristatus*).—Very common. I found one in the house at Inveran one evening, and have often seen flocks in the larches close by.

Wren (*Troglodytes parvulus*).—Common everywhere all the year round.

Creeper, or Tree-Creeper (*Certhia familiaris*).—The creeper is tolerably common. I have often seen it creeping or almost running up the side of the house at Inveran, pressing its tail against the wall after its manner.

Blue Titmouse, or Tom-Tit (*Parus cæruleus*).—Very common, but not so much seen as the coal-titmouse. [245]

Coal-Titmouse (*Parus ater*).—This spry little bird is very common, and is seen at all seasons of the year; often in large flocks, frequently in company with the long-tailed titmouse.

Long-tailed Titmouse, or Bottle-Tit (*Acredula caudata*).—This tiny bird is abundant.

Pied Wagtail, or Water Wagtail (*>Motacilla lugubris*).—Very common. Like the other wagtails, it is a summer visitor; it arrives in the end of March.

White Wagtail (*Motacilla alba*).—This bird visits Gairloch. I have seen at least two pairs on the River Ewe in most years. An ornithological friend shot two specimens near Poolewe bridge some years ago, and identified them as being undoubtedly the white wagtail of Yarrell.

Grey Wagtail (*Motacilla sulphurea*).—This beautiful bird is tolerably common here. On 30th July 1886 I obtained at Inveran a singular variety of this wagtail; it was a young bird in nestling feathers, but strong on the wing, of a white and fawn colour intermixed,—not an albino.

Meadow-Pipit, or Titlark (*Anthus pratensis*).—This is one of the commonest birds in Gairloch.

Rock-Pipit (*Anthus obscurus*).—The rock-pipit is frequent here. Mr Harvie Brown noted it as common at Gruinard in 1884.

Skylark, or Lavrock (*Alauda arvensis*).—The skylark is not common now. It used to be so, and no reason can be given for the falling off in its numbers. Mr Harvie Brown observed it at Aultbea in 1884.

Snow Bunting, or Snow Fleck (*Plectrophanes nivalis*).—This pretty bird is common, and is frequently seen in large flocks in winter. It is believed to breed on the higher hills, but there is no evidence that its nests have ever been found in Gairloch. Donald Fraser, the old forester at Fannich, who had been head tod-hunter to the old Duke of Sutherland, told Mr O. H. Mackenzie about thirty years ago that he had often seen the nests of the snow bunting under flags on the top of the Scuir Mor of Fannich. On the same mountain Mr O. H. Mackenzie saw (about 1858) several broods of snow buntings flitting about when deerstalking there. The young birds were in nestling plumage.

Bunting, or Common Bunting (*Emberiza miliaria*).—The common bunting, which is rare in some parts of Britain, is abundant in Gairloch, and is with us all the year round. I shot a cream-coloured bunting at Inverasdale some years ago; it is in my collection at Inveran.

Yellow Bunting, or Yellow-Hammer (*Emberiza citrinella*).—This bunting is very common; it is one of the tamest of wild birds.

Black-headed Bunting (*Euspiza melanocephala*).—This peculiar-looking bird is common here. I

have seen their nests.

Chaffinch, or Spink (*Fringilla cœlebs*).—The chaffinch is perhaps the most commonly seen bird in Gairloch.

Mountain Finch, or Brambling (*Fringilla montifringilla*).—The brambling is rarely seen here. Mr O. H. Mackenzie once shot one out of a flock of chaffinches in Gairloch. He saw more at the time. [246]

House-Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*).—The house-sparrow used to be unknown in Gairloch. It is said to have first come to the Free Manse at Aultbea or to Isle Ewe in the mail-packet from Stornoway. This was about 1852. Mr Harvie Brown noticed it at Aultbea in 1884. It is now pretty common where it can find nesting-places about houses. It often builds in trees close to houses, if it can get no better place.

Greenfinch, or Green Linnet (*Coccothraustes chloris*).—Common, but not known to breed.

Goldfinch (*Carduelis elegans*).—Mr O. H. Mackenzie shot several at Charleston many years ago. It has not been observed latterly.

Siskin, or Aberdevine (*Carduelis spinus*).—Not common, but sometimes seen in flocks in late autumn. It is a migrant.

Redpoll, or Lesser Redpoll (*Linota rufescens*).—Common. Seen in flocks.

Linnet, or Grey Lintie (*Linota cannabina*).—I am not positive that I have seen this bird in Gairloch parish, and Mr O. H. Mackenzie has never observed it. Mr Harvie Brown saw it in the adjoining parish of Loch Broom in 1884, and I think it only right to include it in the list of Gairloch birds.

Twite, or Heather Lintie (*Linota flavirostris*).—Common, especially near the sea-shore. Mr Harvie Brown noted it as seen at Aultbea in the summer of 1884.

Bullfinch (*Pyrrhula Europæa*).—This handsome bird is quite common now, and destroys the young fruit of plum trees, and the fruit buds of gooseberry bushes, so that gardeners wage war against it. Mr O. H. Mackenzie says it was unknown in Gairloch about thirty years ago.

Crossbill (*Loxia curvirostra*).—Not common, but occurs. Mr O. H. Mackenzie shot three out of a large flock, in a larch tree close to the house at Inveran, about 1851.

Starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*).—Very common in places. For want of old trees it builds in heaps of stones and old walls; and in the island of Foura, at the mouth of Loch Ewe, it uses holes in the ground for its nest, along with the stormy petrel.

Rose-coloured Starling, or Pastor (*Pastor roseus*).—This rare bird probably occurs here. One was shot at Torridon about 1880, so close to the southern confines of Gairloch parish as to justify my mentioning it in this list. It is in Mr Darroch's possession at Torridon; it is a beautiful specimen in mature plumage.

Chough, or Redlegged Crow (*Pyrrhocorax graculus*).—This bird is rare indeed. Mr O. H. Mackenzie saw one at Tournaig in the summer of 1883, the only instance he knows.

Raven (*Corvus corax*).—The raven is very common here, and has many favourite nesting-places, all in crags. It is the earliest bird to build its nest. The raven is very voracious; it lives mostly on carrion, but destroys the eggs of grouse and other game birds. [247]

Hooded Crow, or Grey Crow (*Corvus cornix*).—The hoodie is very common. It nests in trees and sometimes in rocks. It destroys many eggs of game birds. Mr O. H. Mackenzie has not observed the black or carrion crow (the kindred species) here.

Rook (*Corvus frugilegus*).—The rook is common, but is not so abundant as it used to be. After the breeding season all the rooks in the district gather each evening in one large flock, and roost every night from the end of October to the end of March in the fir wood on the River Ewe, a little below Inveran. During the rest of the year not one is to be seen at this place, for they are engaged elsewhere with their nests and young. There are now at least three rookeries in the parish, viz., at the burial-ground at Culinellan near Kenlochewe, at the Poolewe manse, and on the crannog or artificial island on Loch Kernsary. Formerly there was no rookery in Gairloch. The rook destroys eggs. Mr O. H. Mackenzie has caught rooks in the very act of demolishing hens' and partridges' eggs.

Daw, or Jackdaw (*Corvus monedula*).—The jackdaw is occasionally seen in winter, but it does not breed in Gairloch, at least not in the present day.

Pie, or Magpie (*Pica rustica*).—The magpie is now unknown in Gairloch, but Mr O. H. Mackenzie says that in the early part of the century, as old people tell him, numbers of magpies lived in the fir wood which then covered the knoll at the back of Srondubh house.

Swallow (*Hirundo rustica*).—Occurs, but is not common. I caught one in the house at Inveran on a summer evening in full plumage, with the brilliant red colour about the head.

Martin, or House-Martin (*Chelidon urbica*).—Is not common now, though it used to be. Within a few years I have seen several martins' nests in the windows of Poolewe church. Mr O. H. Mackenzie remembers when they nested in hundreds on the face of the "Black rock," at the east end of the range of Craig Tollie.

Sand-Martin (*Cotile riparia*).—Very common. Burrows its nest in almost every gravel or sand pit which has a high bank.

Swift (*Cypselus apus*).—Occurs occasionally, but is not numerous. It is not known to breed in Gairloch.

Night-jar (*Caprimulgus Europæus*).—Several pairs of the night-jar visit the parish of Gairloch annually to breed. I have many a time heard their singular note or jar, like the hum of a winnowing machine, resounding under the shade of Craig Tollie on a summer evening. Mr Harvie Brown heard and saw night-jars at Gruinard in 1884. This curious bird nests on the ground under heather. I have seen a night-jar in the garden at Inveran.

Cuckoo (*Cuculus canorus*).—The cuckoo arrives in great numbers near the end of April, and until the middle of June the whole country resounds with its calls. I first saw the cuckoo this year (1885) on 23rd April. I do not think it is more abundant in any other part of the kingdom. It lays its egg mostly in the nests of the meadow-pipit. In July the cuckoos take their departure, but I have seen young ones as late as the middle of August. I have noticed three cuckoos at one time in [248] my little garden at Inveran. They seem to be fond of gooseberries.

Kingfisher (*Alcedo ispida*).—This most brilliant of all native birds is almost unknown in Gairloch. I have never seen it here. Mr O. H. Mackenzie has seen one on the River Ewe, and one on the River Kerry; both these occurrences were some years ago.

Ring Dove, Wood-Pigeon, or Cushat (*Columba palumbus*).—A few wood-pigeons are here all the year round, and breed in the parish. I have seen their nests in tall trees.

Rock Dove (*Columba livia*).—The blue-rock is very abundant, and inhabits caves and fissures in the rocks all along the coast line of Gairloch. It is here seldom found far inland. Mr Harvie Brown, however, says that it is found inland above the head of Little Lochbroom. I have noticed several variations in its plumage, some birds being mottled, and others very pale in colour. It is the parent of, and closely resembles, the common domesticated blue pigeon. It is excellent eating.

Turtle Dove (*Turtur communis*).—Very rare. One was shot on the glebe at Gairloch in 1880 by Mr W. B. Mackenzie, a son of the minister of Gairloch, who brought it to me for identification. It was consorting with golden plover in a turnip field. It was a bird of the year.

Black Grouse, or Black Game (*Tetrao tetrix*).—Black game are fairly abundant about Gairloch, but they wander a good deal, and sometimes the sportsman is disappointed in his search for them. They are polygamous, and it is important to keep down the cocks, otherwise the black cocks may become numerous out of proportion to the grey hens. They say the best proportion is one black cock to three grey hens.

Red Grouse (*Lagopus Scoticus*).—The grouse is abundant on all the moorlands of Gairloch, but its numbers in any season are liable to be greatly affected by wet or cold weather at the time of hatching. Many early broods are lost, and consequently there is no lack of "cheepers" on the "Twelfth." Disease occasionally appears; it is certainly not due to over-stocking. The grouse is monogamous. The cocks generally exceed the hens in number. It is very beneficial to a moor to kill off the unmated cocks. The grouse in the Highlands are slightly smaller than those on English and Irish moors.

Ptarmigan (*Lagopus mutus*).—Common on the mountain tops, where it breeds. It seldom visits lower regions, but one was shot on the North Point some years ago in tempestuous weather, at an elevation of not more than seven hundred feet above the sea-level; and another was shot on Isle Ewe by Mr O. H. Mackenzie, many years ago, on a top not more than a hundred feet above the sea.

Pheasant (*Phasianus colchicus*).—Introduced some years ago at Shieldaig, probably about 1860. It is now pretty common, and sometimes wanders away from the coverts where it has been bred.

Partridge (*Perdix cinerea*).—The partridge is fairly common in Gairloch, but is never very abundant, owing to wet breeding seasons and the number of rooks and domestic cats.

Red-Legged Partridge (*Caccabis rufa*).—Introduced some years ago, but now believed to be extinct. [249]

Quail (*Coturnix communis*).—Very rare. Mr O. H. Mackenzie shot one in Isle Ewe about 1860. It may be seen at Inverewe.

Land-Rail, or Corn-Crake (*Crex pratensis*).—Now rather rare. It used to be very abundant in grass or corn.

Water-Rail (*Rallus aquaticus*).—This bird is occasionally found in Gairloch.

Moor-Hen, or Water-Hen (*Gallinula chloropus*).—Common. I have frequently seen it feeding with my ducks at the end of the garden at Inveran abutting on the River Ewe.

Dotterel (*Eudromias morinellus*).—Very rare. Donald Fraser, an old forester at Fannich, who was a keen and accurate observer of birds, told Mr O. H. Mackenzie that the dotterel formerly bred on Beinn Bheag, near Kenlochewe. It is called in Gaelic Feadag chuirn, or "cairn-plover."

Ringed Plover, or Ring Dotterel (*Ægialitis hiaticula*).—Abundant on all the sandy shores on the coast of Gairloch. I have seen it also on the shore of Loch Maree, at Slatadale, in the breeding season. It is called in Gaelic Tarmachan na tainne, or "the ptarmigan of the waves."

Golden Plover (*Charadrius pluvialis*).—Abundant, and breeds in considerable numbers on high moors.

Lapwing, Peewit, or Green Plover (*Vanellus vulgaris*).—Not abundant. Arrives early in February, and nests in the parish.

Turnstone (*Strepsilas interpres*).—A common shore bird in Gairloch. Seen in summer, but not known to build.

Oyster-Catcher, or Sea Pie (*Hæmatopus ostralegus*).—Very common, and breeds abundantly on island rocks in the sea, and sometimes on the mainland close to the shore. I have seen many of their nests.

Woodcock (*Scolopax rusticula*).—Abundant. Large flocks arrive in October and November, and a few pairs breed in the country. I have seen the little woodcocks running about in June, and have shot full-grown birds in August. I have often observed a woodcock carrying a young one in its claws. When standing in the garden at Inveran, late on a summer evening, the woodcock, with its young one borne in this manner, has frequently flown within six or eight yards of my head. Mr O. H. Mackenzie has actually seen the woodcock pick up its young one, when nearly full-grown, at his very feet, and fly off with it.

Snipe (*Gallinago cælestis*).—The "full snipe" is common throughout Gairloch. It breeds in the parish. I have seen nests. Numbers of snipe come in autumn from other countries.

Jack Snipe (*Gallinago gallinula*).—This bird is an immigrant, and arrives about the end of October. It was formerly more plentiful than it is now-a-days.

Dunlin (*Tringa alpina*).—This is a very abundant shore bird, and occurs in flocks on all the sandy sea-beaches. It is believed to breed on moors in Gairloch.

Purple Sandpiper (*Tringa striata*).—This also is common. It is seen mostly on rocks and shingle, at the very edge of the sea. [250]

Knot (*Tringa canutus*).—Uncommon. Mr O. H. Mackenzie shot one on Loch nan Dailthean one autumn,—a solitary bird. It is to be seen at Inverewe.

Sanderling (*Calidris arenaria*).—Not common. Mr Henry A. Clowes sent me one he shot at Sand, Gairloch, 11th September 1886.

Common Sandpiper (*Totanus hypoleucus*).—This bird is very common in the breeding season, along the shores of all waters. Its shrill piping is almost a nuisance in the month of May. I have often found its nests, and seen its pretty chicks.

Redshank (*Totanus calidris*).—Fairly common, and as it is seen all the year round it is believed to breed in Gairloch. Mr O. H. Mackenzie says it was formerly very rare or unknown here.

Greenshank (*Totanus canescens*).—Fairly abundant. It arrives in February, and breeds on moors. I have seen one nest, and heard of others. It sits very close on the nest. It is a shore bird, except in the breeding season.

Bar-tailed Godwit (*Limosa lapponica*).—A rare winter visitant. I saw two specimens at Inverasdale in the winter of 1880-81, and a friend with me shot one. Mr O. H. Mackenzie shot a specimen near Inverewe several years before.

Curlew, or Whaup (*Numenius arquata*).—Common, and breeds in abundance. It nests on moorlands, and is found on or near the sea-shore all the rest of the year. Its peculiar whistle is well known, and sounds very weird, especially when heard inland on a summer evening.

Whimbrel (*Numenius phæopus*).—This bird, resembling a small curlew, used to be numerous in Gairloch, but, though still noticed, is becoming rarer every year. It is a migrant. Mr O. H. Mackenzie saw four or five whimbrels below the Inverewe garden in the first week of June 1886.

Arctic Tern (*Sterna macrura*).—This tern, which closely resembles the common tern, is abundant in Gairloch in summer. It nests on small islands in the sea, or in fresh-water lochs near the sea. The common tern has not been identified in Gairloch.

Black-headed Gull (*Larus ridibundus*).—This gull is not uncommon in Gairloch, and has several nesting-places on small islands in fresh-water lochs. Some specimens have the black on the head of so dull a colour, and extending so little beyond the forehead, as to closely resemble the gull figured in the books as the masked gull. The black-headed gull entirely loses the black colour on the head during winter. Sometimes the breast of the bird is of a lovely rosy pink colour, which fades after death.

Common, or Winter Gull (*Larus canus*).—The common gull is not nearly so common in Gairloch as the black-headed gull. It has several nesting-places on small islands in fresh-water lochs, and it sometimes lays its eggs on the neighbouring mainland.

Herring Gull (*Larus argentatus*).—A few pairs of herring gulls nest along with the lesser black-backed gulls on the islands of Loch Maree. It nests also on Foura, and I think in some other places in the parish of Gairloch. Numbers breed in the Shiant Isles, and a good many visit the Gairloch shores during autumn and winter.

Lesser Black-backed Gull (*Larus fuscus*).—This voracious bird breeds in thousands on the islands of Loch Maree, and seems to be increasing in numbers. The nest is beautifully formed of moss. The eggs, which are generally three in number, but sometimes only two, and occasionally as many as four in number, are much sought after by the natives and others as articles of food; but Sir Kenneth Mackenzie, to whom the islands belong, has endeavoured to check the depredations. This bird, though called "lesser," is larger than any of the other gulls, except the herring gull and the great black-backed gull. The young are grey until they reach maturity, which is not until their second winter. Both the species of black-backed gulls destroy many eggs of game birds. [251]

Great Black-backed Gull (*Larus marinus*).—This noble but predacious bird is frequently seen in Gairloch. It does not associate with other birds, or even with other pairs of its own species. A few pairs nest on islands on Loch Maree and other fresh-water lochs, and I believe it occasionally nests also on stacks in the sea close to the mainland. It is commonly charged, as is also its lesser congener, with being guilty, like the raven, of killing sheep and lambs, beginning the process of murder by blinding its victims.

Glaucous Gull (*Larus glaucus*).—Mr O. H. Mackenzie has occasionally observed this gull in the parish of Gairloch.

Iceland Gull (*Larus leucopterus*).—This pale-coloured gull is occasionally seen in the parish. I have identified a specimen shot by Mr John Matheson.

Kittiwake (*Rissa tridactyla*).—This graceful gull is common on our coasts. It breeds in great numbers at the Shiant Isles, on ledges of high rocks above the sea. On my visit to these islands a shot was fired, when a vast crowd of birds filled the air, and there were innumerable cries of "kittiwake, kittiwake," pronounced as distinctly as if spoken by the human voice.

Great Skua (*Stercorarius catarrhactes*).—The great, or common skua is rarely seen in Gairloch, but may be occasionally observed attending on parties of gulls, whom it robs of the fish they catch.

Arctic, or Richardson's Skua (*Stercorarius crepidatus*).—This skua occasionally occurs in Gairloch, but is not abundant. One stormy day in late autumn I observed several about the head of Loch Ewe.

Manx Shearwater (*Puffinus anglorum*).—Mr O. H. Mackenzie has occasionally seen this bird on Gairloch waters.

Storm Petrel (*Procellaria pelagica*).—This tiny sea bird, which makes its home on the ocean waves, is seldom seen in Gairloch. I have observed a small party at the mouth of Loch Ewe. They used to breed on the islands of Longa and Foura, at the extremities of long burrows in grassy slopes, and probably do so still. A specimen was recently brought to me which had been found dead on the roadside between Gairloch and Poolewe. It was in stormy weather.

Razor-bill, or Auk (*Alca torda*).—This bird is seen in Gairloch and Loch Ewe often along with the guillemots and puffins, and I think it is more abundant than either. It nests in the Shiant Isles, and, like the common guillemot, lays its single egg on ledges on the face of cliffs. Mr Harvie Brown saw a very few pairs in a crevice on the east shore of Priest Island, on 4th July 1884. [252]

Guillemot (*Uria troile*).—This sea bird frequents the coast of Gairloch. It has no breeding station within the parish. The nearest is at the Shiant Isles, twenty miles away, where a large number of guillemots deposit their single eggs, all of exquisite colouring and marking, but no two the same, on ledges in the face of a high cliff.

Ringed Guillemot (*Uria lachrymans*).—It is now settled that this is a dimorphic form of the guillemot, and not a different species. I have obtained mature specimens with the ring or bridle only partially developed, and there is no doubt it is a marking which occasionally occurs in the common guillemot, and is not distinctive.

Black Guillemot (*Uria grylle*).—This beautiful bird is common, and has many nesting-places in Gairloch, on rocky islands in the sea, and sometimes on rocks on the mainland overhanging the sea. In winter the plumage of the black guillemot changes to a speckled grey colour. Mr Harvie Brown says that he has in his collection male specimens in speckled plumage taken off the eggs in the Badcall islands. Neither Mr O. H. Mackenzie nor I have noticed the speckled plumage in breeding birds. The young have the plumage yet more speckled than the mature winter dress.

Rotche, or Little Auk (*Mergulus alle*).—The little auk is rarely seen, but is occasionally driven to the shores of Gairloch by storms. One was brought to me which had been found dead near the shore of Loch Ewe.

Puffin, or Sea-Parrot (*Fratercula arctica*).—This curious bird is common on the Gairloch coast at some seasons of the year. Like the guillemot it breeds abundantly on the Shiant Islands. The puffin lays its single egg at the extremity of a burrow formed on grassy banks sloping towards the sea. The egg which, when laid, resembles an ordinary hen's egg, soon becomes more or less of a dirty brown colour.

Great Northern Diver (*Colymbus glacialis*).—This largest of our divers is common on these coasts. There are always some on the Gairloch and on Loch Ewe, except perhaps in July and August. I once saw one near the Fox Point on Loch Maree, but not in the breeding season. It remains in our waters until the beginning of June, and then goes north to breed. It has now no authenticated

nesting-place in the British Isles. Mr O. H. Mackenzie has an egg which he had taken for him in one of the Shetland Isles many years ago,—probably the last British specimen. Dr Saxby, author of "Birds of Shetland," obtained the egg for Mr Mackenzie. It is very much larger than the egg of the black-throated diver. Mr Mackenzie had often heard of the nesting-place in Shetland from Dr Saxby's brother.

Black-throated Diver (*Colymbus arcticus*).—It breeds on a number of fresh-water lochs in Gairloch. The nests are usually on islands, but I have seen one on the mainland. This diver is seldom, if ever, observed in Gairloch, except during the breeding season.

Red-throated Diver (*Colymbus septentrionalis*).—This diver is not so common here as the black- [253]
throated diver. I know two nesting-places in Gairloch. Mr John Munro has known four pairs nesting in the same locality. The red-throated diver is more frequently seen on the wing than the other species, and when flying frequently utters a loud wailing cry, which is said to prognosticate rain. A specimen was brought to me which had been caught in a herring-net.

Sclavonian Grebe (*Podiceps auritus*).—This grebe is often seen in winter. A pair of grebes has for many years nested annually on a fresh-water loch in Gairloch parish; in some years there have been two pairs on the same loch; and sometimes another pair has nested on a loch about two miles away. Mr E. T. Booth saw the grebes on the former loch in 1868; he was unable to decide the species at the time, but in a letter he wrote to me on 2nd March 1885, he said that "from the last description of the bird that he received he came to the conclusion that it was a Sclavonian." Mr H. E. Dresser saw one old and one young grebe on the same loch on 30th June 1886. He could not get a distinct view of the bird, but he was satisfied it was either the Sclavonian or the eared grebe. Mr John Munro, who has annually seen and scrutinised the birds during the past twenty-one years, and has compared his impressions of them with the pictures of the several species of grebe from Mr Dresser's "Birds of Europe" and other works, believes that these birds nesting in Gairloch are Sclavonian grebes; indeed there can be no reasonable doubt that they are so. Mr Booth has called the birds in question Sclavonians in his "Rough Notes." I believe this is the only recorded instance of the Sclavonian grebe nesting in the British Isles.

Dabchick, or Little Grebe (*Podiceps fluviatilis*).—It is common here as everywhere.

Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax carbo*).—The great cormorant is not very common in Gairloch, but I have known one or two pairs nest in the parish, on rocks overhanging or surrounded by the sea. Mr Harvie Brown found it abundant on Priest Island on 4th July 1884. He saw there a colony of about a hundred pairs. It is commonly seen on fresh-water rivers and lochs, where it engages in fishing. I have often observed it fishing within a few yards of the garden at Inveran.

Green Cormorant, or Skart, or Shag (*Phalacrocorax graculus*).—The common shag is abundant on Gairloch and Loch Ewe. It nests on high rocks on islands in the sea. It is never seen on fresh-water.

Gannet, or Solan Goose (*Sula bassana*).—This singular bird is often observed fishing, after its peculiar manner, in Gairloch and Loch Ewe. It flies, or rather dashes, rapidly to and fro, and when it sees a fish in the sea, darts or falls so suddenly down upon it, that one almost fears the concussion with the water must injure the bird. Its nearest breeding station is at St Kilda.

Heron (*Ardea cinerea*).—The heron abounds in Gairloch. There are three heronries, which are [254]
strictly preserved. A number of herons frequently roost in autumn and winter in the fir wood on the River Ewe, along with the rooks.

Grey-lag Goose (*Anser cinereus*).—This wild goose, which seems to have been the origin of the domestic goose, resembles it more closely than any other species of wild goose. It is common in Gairloch, but not so abundant as formerly. It does not attain maturity until its second winter. It nests on small islands in fresh-water lochs. Farmers destroy the eggs whenever they can get to the nests, on account of the injury the wild geese do to the crops. This is no doubt the cause of the diminution in their numbers. A smaller species of wild goose has been occasionally noticed by Mr John Munro consorting with the grey-lag goose, but it has not been identified. The grey-lag goose becomes very tame if brought up in captivity.

Brent Goose (*Bernicla brenta*).—Rarely seen here. Mr O. H. Mackenzie has shot two on a grass field at Tournaig, close to the edge of Loch Ewe.

Whooper, or Wild Swan (*Cygnus musicus*).—Occasionally visits Gairloch in winter. It is sometimes on the sea, but appears to be particularly fond of Loch Maree. On Sunday, 30th January 1881, I saw six of these splendid birds, all in mature white plumage, pluming themselves on the beach within a hundred yards of the house at Inveran. That was an exceptionally severe winter. Mr O. H. Mackenzie broke the tip of the wing of one on Loch Ewe with a bullet, and sent the bird to the Zoological Gardens, Regent's Park, where it still (1886) lives.

Bewick's Swan (*Cygnus Bewicki*).—This lesser wild swan also visits Gairloch occasionally in winter.

Sheld-Duck, or Shieldrake (*Tadorna cornuta*).—This magnificent duck, though very abundant in the Hebrides (and there called "Cradh gheadh"), is rarely seen in Gairloch. I obtained a specimen on the River Ewe, at the foot of the garden at Inveran, on 25th November 1880, in stormy weather. Although when first observed this bird had been seen to fly, it was found on examination to have had the quill feathers of both wings clipped. It was probably one of the semi-domesticated specimens so commonly kept along with poultry in North Uist. The bird was a

drake in full plumage, and was in company with my tame ducks. It is in the collection at Inveran. Mr O. H. Mackenzie saw one for several days together on the shore at Inverewe some winters ago. It was very wild and unapproachable.

Mallard, or Wild-Duck (*Anas boscas*).—The wild-duck is abundant, and breeds on islands and on moors near water.

Pintail (*Dafila acuta*).—This bird is rare. Mr O. H. Mackenzie shot one at Inveran more than twenty years ago.

Teal (*Querquedula crecca*).—This beautiful little duck is plentiful, and breeds in Gairloch.

Wigeon (*Mareca penelope*).—The common wigeon is rather rare here, but is occasionally seen, especially in winter. It sometimes nests. I obtained a specimen near Inveran on 19th January 1881.

Pochard (*Fuligula ferina*).—The dun bird is often seen on Gairloch waters, and occasionally breeds with us. [255]

Scaup (*Fuligula marila*).—The scaup is not uncommon. I have a pair in my collection which were shot on Loch nan Dailthean, in June 1883, by Mr John Matheson. I saw several on the river Ewe in the winter and spring of 1885; they were sometimes close to the garden at Inveran. The drake when swimming appears to be snow-white on its back. I see one of them as I sit in my study writing these notes. The scaup does not nest in Gairloch.

Tufted Duck (*Fuligula cristata*).—It is not often seen, but I observed a few pairs on the River Ewe, at the end of the Inveran garden, in the hard weather of January 1881, and shot one for identification on 27th January 1881.

Golden Eye (*Clangula glaucion*).—Common; its nest has not been found in Gairloch, but pairs have been seen on fresh-water lochs in the breeding season, and Mr John Munro has seen the young with the old birds, so there is no doubt this duck breeds within the parish.

Long-tailed Duck (*Harelda glacialis*).—This sea duck was formerly very common on this coast, but is now rarely seen. Mr Percy Dixon procured a young immature one in the summer of 1883 on the River Ewe. It had evidently been injured.

Eider-Duck (*Somateria molissima*).—This large duck is very rarely seen in Gairloch, although it is so abundant in the Hebrides. A female was killed at Shieldaig in 1884.

Common Scoter (*Œdemia nigra*).—This sea bird is rare. Mr O. H. Mackenzie has observed it on the Gairloch coast. Mr E. T. Booth, in his "Rough Notes," speaks of scoters breeding in North-West Ross-shire. They certainly do not nest in Gairloch, nor, as far as I can learn, in any of the adjoining parishes.

Goosander (*Mergus merganser*).—The goosander is tolerably abundant here. I have seen several of its nests in Gairloch parish, and so has Mr O. H. Mackenzie. Mr Harvie Brown noted a pair on the Meikle Gruinard River both in 1883 and 1884.

Red-breasted Merganser (*Mergus serrator*).—The merganser is very common on almost all Gairloch waters, and many of them breed in the parish. I have no doubt it destroys great quantities of the ova and fry of both salmon and trout. It nests on banks, or in holes, or under heather or juniper bushes on islands, or on the mainland near water.

Smew (*Mergus albellus*).—I have not observed the smew duck on Gairloch or Loch Ewe, but I have seen it in numbers at the mouth of the Meikle Gruinard River, which is little more than a mile beyond the northern limit of the parish of Gairloch. I think therefore it is a Gairloch bird.

Chapter VII. [256]

Flowering Plants of Gairloch.

It is matter of regret that no adequate herbarium has been prepared for Gairloch. With the aid of Lady Mackenzie of Gairloch, Mrs Fowler of Inverbroom, Mr O. H. Mackenzie, Mr A. Davidson, and other helpers, a list has been compiled, and is appended to these notes. It is imperfect, but we hope that it may lead to a more accurate and complete account of the flora of the parish.

Visitors to Gairloch are invited to add to our list, and any botanical information they may be willing to impart will be received with thanks. But they are appealed to to abstain (when searching for plants) from anything like a trespass or an infringement of the privileges of others. Thoughtlessness on the part of a few, may bring discredit on botanists generally.

Searchers for wildflowers are further entreated, not to eradicate any plant that may be found,—nay, not even to greatly reduce its dimensions; remembering that others ought to be allowed the

chance of observing it, and that it is unfair to rob a country of its charms. Two instances are given in our "Introduction" of the destruction of ferns by tourists. Surely a word to the wise is sufficient.

The larger and more showy of our woodland plants, as well as of many kinds that should flourish on the edges of moors and about cultivated land, have become rare, and in some cases have altogether disappeared, since the introduction of sheep-farming into Gairloch. Not only do the smearing materials applied to sheep poison the ground, and being washed down into streams check the multiplication of trout, but the close nibble of sheep deteriorates pasture, and destroys many succulent plants. In spring, before the grass on the hills has made any growth, the sheep everywhere attack the primroses, so that no early blooms can be found except among wet places and rocks. The ewes and lambs are often kept near home until summer has set in, and one can almost fancy that they have a special taste for the choicest flowering plants. Dr Mackenzie attributes the present scarceness of wildflowers to the appetites of sheep, and all who have considered the question entirely concur in this opinion. Dr Mackenzie, writing of the first quarter of the nineteenth century, says, "The braes and wooded hillocks were a perfect jungle of every kind of loveable shrubs and wildflowers, especially orchids, some of the epipactis tribe being everywhere a lovely drug."

Most of the best flowers are now only met with on steep banks, among rocks, by road sides, on soft boggy ground, by the sea-shore, or in other localities not much frequented by sheep. The epipactis ensifolia, formerly abundant, is now almost unknown in Gairloch. In June 1883 I discovered a specimen on a stony bank by water. In 1885 there were two plants at the same place. I have not seen it elsewhere, nor had Mr O. H. Mackenzie seen it until this plant was found.

Most of the gayest wildflowers are over by the time the run of tourists begins. Many of the [257]
loveliest bloom in June or early in July. A bouquet of wildflowers, well arranged in masses, does not stand long in water, but is difficult to beat for graceful forms and exquisite tones of colour. The yellow iris, the rosy sea-thrift, the purple orchis, the orange St John's wort, the ragged robin, the blue hyacinth, and the lilac valerian, are eminently fitted to display the taste of the fair florist.

Though many beautiful flowers have disappeared before September, yet in autumn the country becomes brilliant with a fresh supply. The moors are purple with heather and ling, and also teem with the orange-coloured bog asphodel, whilst the patches of corn are ablaze with the brilliant yellow corn marigold so popular for bouquets. From March to October each month has its peculiar gems, and this Highland parish yields not only the rare alpine plants of the mountains, but many equally prized treasures of the rocks and strands that edge the sea lochs. There are also several interesting plants that abound in fresh-water lochs, such as the white water-lily, the water-lobelia, and the bog-bean.

Of the rarer plants found in Gairloch the following are perhaps worthy of special note, viz., the narrow-leaved helleborine, the long-leaved sun-dew, the pale butterwort, the purple saxifrage, the stone bramble, the cloudberry, the cranberry, the water avens, the chickweed wintergreen, the arrow-grass, the trollius, the water lobelia, and several uncommon ferns.

The following list includes the indigenous trees and all the ferns I know; several plants are doubtful natives, such as the corn-poppy and corn-cockle. The order of arrangement is that adopted in Sowerby's "British Wildflowers":—

Flowering Plants of Gairloch.

Thalictrum alpinum—Alpine meadow rue.
Anemone nemorosa—Wood anemone.
Ranunculus aquatilis—Water crowfoot.
" *hederaceus*—Ivy-leaved crowfoot.
" *flammula*—Lesser spearwort.
" *ficaria*—Small celandine; pilewort.
" *acris*—Buttercup.
" *repens*—Creeping buttercup.
" *bulbosus*—Bulbous buttercup.
Caltha palustris—Marsh marigold.
Trollius europæus—Globe flower.
Berberis vulgaris—Barberry; doubtful native.
Nymphæa alba—White water-lily.
Papaver dubium—Long-headed poppy.
" *rhœas*—Corn poppy.
Chelidonium majus—Celandine.
Fumaria capreolata—Rampant fumitory.
" *officinalis*—Common fumitory.
Corydalis claviculata—Climbing corydalis. [258]
Cakile maritima—Sea rocket.
Crambe maritima—Sea-kale.
Coronopus didyma—Small wart-cress.
Capsella bursa-pastoris—Shepherd's purse.
Lepidium Smithii—Smooth-fruited pepperwort.

Cochlearia officinalis—Scurvy-grass.
" *anglica*—English scurvy-grass.
" *danica*—Danish scurvy-grass.
Draba verna—Whitlow-grass.
" *incana* —Twisted-podded Draba.
Cardamine pratensis—Lady's smock.
" *hirsuta*—Hairy bitter-cress.
Arabis petræa—Rock-cress.
" *hirsuta*—Hairy wall-cress.
Barbarea vulgaris—Winter cress; yellow rocket.
Sisymbrium thalianum—Thale-cress.
Sinapis arvensis—Charlock; wild mustard.
Viola palustris—Marsh violet.
" *canina*—Dog violet.
" *tricolor*—Heart's-ease; pansy.
" *lutea*—Mountain pansy.
Drosera rotundifolia—Sun-dew.
" *longifolia*—Long-leaved sun-dew.
" *anglica*—Great sun-dew.
Polygala vulgaris—Milkwort.
Silene acaulis—Moss campion.
" *maritima*—Sea campion.
Lychnis flos-cuculi—Ragged Robin.
" *diurna, and var. vespertina*—Campion.
Agrostemma githago—Corn-cockle.
Sagina procumbens—Creeping pearlwort.
Spergula arvensis—Spurrey.
" *subulata*—Small hairy spurrey.
Stellaria media—Chickweed.
" *holostea*—Starwort.
Arenaria peploides—Sea sandwort; sea pimpernel.
Cerastium vulgatum—Broad-leaved mouse-ear.
" *viscosum*—Narrow-leaved mouse-ear.
Linum catharticum—Little flax.
Radiola millegrana—All-seed.
Malva sylvestris—Common mallow; doubtful native.
" *moschata*—Musk mallow; doubtful native.
Hypericum perforatum—Common St John's wort.
" *pulchrum*—Small St John's wort.
Parnassia palustris—Grass of Parnassus.
Geranium sanguineum—Crimson crane's-bill.
" *lucidum*—Shining crane's-bill.
" *Robertianum*—Herb Robert.
" *molle*—Soft crane's-bill.
Erodium cicutarium—Heron's-bill.
Oxalis acetosella—Wood-sorrel. [259]
Ulex europæus—Furze; whin.
Anthyllis vulneraria—Kidney-vetch.
Medicago lupulina—Black medick; doubtful native.
Trifolium repens—White clover.
" *pratense*—Red clover.
" *procumbens*—Hop trefoil.
" *minus*—Lesser yellow trefoil.
Lotus corniculatus—Bird's-foot trefoil.
Vicia cracca—Tufted vetch.
" *sativa*—Tare.
" *sepium*—Bush vetch.
Ervum hirsutum—Hairy tine-tare.
Lathyrus pratensis—Meadow vetchling.
Prunus spinosa—Blackthorn.
" *padus*—Bird-cherry.
" *cerasus*—Wild gean.
Spiræa ulmaria—Meadow-sweet.
Geum urbanum—Common avens.
" *rivale*—Water avens.
Rubus idæus—Raspberry.
" *fruticosus*—Bramble.
" *saxatilis*—Stone bramble.
" *chamæmorus*—Cloud-berry.
Fragaria vesca—Wild strawberry.
Comarum palustre—Marsh cinque-foil.
Potentilla anserina—Goose-weed.
" *reptans*—Creeping cinque-foil.
Tormentilla officinalis—Common tormentil.
Alchemilla vulgaris—Lady's-mantle.

" *alpina*—Alpine lady's-mantle.
" *arvensis*—Field lady's-mantle.
Rosa involuta—Unexpanded rose.
" *mollis*—Soft-leaved rose.
" *canina*—Dog rose.
Cratægus oxyacantha—Hawthorn.
Pyrus malus—Wild apple; crab.
" *aucuparia*—Mountain ash; rowan.
" *aria*—White beam-tree.
Epilobium angustifolium—French willow-herb.
" *montanum*—Broad-leaved willow-herb.
" *alsinifolium*—Chickweed willow-herb.
" *alpinum*—Alpine willow-herb.
Circæa alpina—Alpine enchanter's nightshade.
Montia fontana—Water blinks.
Rhodiola rosea—Rose-root.
Sedum anglicum—Mountain stonecrop.
" *acre*—Stonecrop; wallpepper
" *reflexum*—Crooked stonecrop.
" *glaucum*—Glaucous stonecrop.
Saxifraga stellaris—Starry saxifrage. [260]
" *aizoides*—Yellow mountain saxifrage.
" *oppositifolia*—Purple saxifrage.
" *hypnoides*—Ladies'-cushion.
Chrysosplenium alternifolium—Golden saxifrage.
" *oppositifolium*—Opposite-leaved golden saxifrage.
Hydrocotyle vulgaris—Marsh pennywort.
Ægopodium podagraria—Gout weed.
Bunium flexuosum—Earth-nut.
Œnanthe crocata—Hemlock dropwort.
Ligusticum scoticum—Scottish lovage.
Meum athamanticum—Spignel.
Crithmum maritimum—Samphire.
Angelica sylvestris—Wild angelica.
Heracleum sphondylium—Cow-parsnip.
Daucus maritima—Sea-side carrot.
Scandix pecten-Veneris—Venus's comb.
Anthriscus sylvestris—Cow-parsley; wild chervil.
Myrrhis odorata—Sweet cicely.
Hedera helix—Ivy.
Cornus suecica—Dwarf cornel.
Sambucus nigra—Common elder.
Viburnum opulus—Guelder rose.
Lonicera periclymenum—Honeysuckle.
Galium verum—Yellow bed-straw.
" *palustre*—White water bed-straw.
" *saxatile*—Smooth heath bed-straw.
" *uliginosum*—Rough marsh bed-straw.
" *aparine*—Goose-grass.
Sherardia arvensis—Field madder.
Asperula odorata—Woodruff.
Valeriana dioica—Marsh valerian.
" *officinalis*—Great wild valerian.
Scabiosa succisa—Devil's-bit.
" *arvensis*—Field scabious.
" *columbaria*—Small scabious.
Sonchus oleraceus—Sow-thistle.
Leontodon taraxacum—Dandelion.
Apargia hispida—Rough hawk-bit.
Hieracium alpinum—Alpine hawkweed.
" *sylvaticum*—Wood hawkweed.
Crepis tectorum—Smooth hawk's-beard.
Lapsana communis—Nipplewort.
Arctium lappa—Burdock.
" *majus*—Burdock.
Saussurea alpina—Alpine saussurea.
Carduus nutans—Musk thistle.
Cnicus lanceolatus—Spear thistle.
" *palustris*—Marsh thistle.
" *arvensis*—Common thistle.
" *heterophyllus*—Dark plume thistle. [261]
Tanacetum vulgare—Tansy.
Artemisia vulgaris—Mugwort.
Antennaria dioica—Cat's-foot.
Gnaphalium sylvaticum—Highland cudweed.

" *supinum*—Dwarf cudweed.
Tussilago farfara—Colt's-foot.
Petasites vulgaris—Butter-bur.
Senecio vulgaris—Groundsel.
" *Jacobæa*—Common ragwort.
" *aquaticus*—Marsh ragwort.
Aster tripolium—Sea starwort.
Solidago virgaurea—Golden-rod.
Bellis perennis—Daisy.
Chrysanthemum leucanthemum—Ox-eye daisy.
" *segetum*—Corn marigold.
Pyrethrum inodorum—Corn feverfew.
Matricaria chamomilla—Wild chamomile.
Anthemis maritima—Sea chamomile.
Achillea ptarmica—Sneezewort.
" *millefolium*—Yarrow; milfoil.
Centaurea nigra—Black knapweed.
" *cyanus*—Corn-flower; blue-bottle.
Campanula rapunculoides—Creeping bell-flower.
" *hederacea*—Ivy-leaved bell-flower; doubtful native.
Lobelia dortmanna—Water lobelia.
Vaccinium myrtillus—Bilberry.
" *vitis idæa*—Cow-berry.
Oxycoccus palustris—Cranberry.
Erica tetralix—Cross-leaved heath; bell-heather.
" *cinerea*—Common heath.
Calluna vulgaris—Ling; heather.
Azalea procumbens—Creeping azalea.
Arctostaphylos uva-ursi—Red bear-berry.
Pyrola minor—Lesser winter-green.
" *secunda*—Serrated winter-green.
Ilex aquifolium—Holly.
Fraxinus excelsior—Ash.
Gentiana campestris—Field gentian.
Menyanthes trifoliata—Bog-bean.
Lithospermum maritimum—Sea gromwell.
Myosotis cæspitosa—Tufted forget-me-not.
" *arvensis*—Field forget-me-not.
" *collina*—Early forget-me-not.
" *versicolor*—Changeable forget-me-not.
Lycopsis arvensis—Bugloss.
Atropa belladonna—Deadly nightshade.
Orobanche rubra—Red broom-rape.
Veronica serpyllifolia—Thyme-leaved speedwell.
" *scutellata*—Marsh speedwell.
" *beccabunga*—Brooklime. [262]
" *officinalis*—Common speedwell.
" *chamædrys*—Germander speedwell.
" *hederifolia*—Ivy-leaved speedwell.
" *agrestis*—Germander chickweed.
Bartsia odontites—Red eye-bright.
Euphrasia officinalis—Eye-bright.
Rhinanthus crista-galli—Yellow-rattle.
Melampyrum sylvaticum—Wood cow-wheat.
Pedicularis palustris—Marsh red-rattle.
" *sylvatica*—Dwarf red-rattle.
Scrophularia nodosa—Knotty figwort.
" *aquatica*—Water figwort.
Digitalis purpurea—Foxglove.
Mimulus luteus—Yellow mimulus.
Mentha sylvestris—Horse mint.
" *piperita*—Peppermint.
" *sativa*—Water mint; whorled mint.
" *arvensis*—Corn mint.
Thymus serpyllum—Wild thyme.
Teucrium scorodonia—Germander.
Ajuga reptans—Bugle.
" *pyramidalis*—Pyramidal bugle.
Galeopsis tetrahit—Hemp-nettle.
" *versicolor*—Bee-nettle.
Lamium album—White dead-nettle.
" *purpureum*—Red dead-nettle.
Stachys sylvatica—Hedge woundwort.
" *palustris*—Marsh woundwort.
Nepeta cataria—Cat-mint.

Prunella vulgaris—Self-heal.
Scutellaria galericulata—Skull-cap.
Pinguicula vulgaris—Butterwort.
" *lusitanica*—Pale butterwort.
Utricularia minor—Small bladderwort.
Primula vulgaris—Primrose.
Glaux maritima—Sea milkwort.
Trientalis europæa—Chickweed winter-green.
Lysimachia nemorum—Wood pimpernel.
Armeria maritima—Sea thrift.
Plantago major—Greater plantain.
" *lanceolata*—Ribwort.
" *maritima*—Sea plantain.
" *coronopus*—Buck's-horn plantain.
Beta maritima—Beet.
Chenopodium maritimum—Sea goosefoot.
" *urbicum*—Upright goosefoot.
" *murale*—Nettle-leaved goosefoot.
" *album*—White goosefoot.
" " *var. candicans*.
" " *var. paganum*.
Salicornia herbacea—Glasswort. [263]
Salsola kali—Saltwort.
Scleranthus annuus—Knawel.
Atriplex patula—Spreading orache.
Polygonum viviparum—Alpine bistort.
" *aviculare*—Knot-grass.
" *persicaria*—Spotted persicaria.
" *hydropiper*—Biting persicaria.
" *maritimum*—Sea knot-grass.
" *convolvolus*—Black bindweed.
" *amphibium*—Water persicaria.
Rumex crispus—Curled dock.
" *obtusifolius*—Broad-leaved dock.
" *acetosa*—Sorrel.
" *acetosella*—Sheep's sorrel.
Oxyria reniformis—Mountain sorrel.
Empetrum nigrum—Crow-berry.
Mercurialis perennis—Mercury.
Euphorbia helioscopia—Sun-spurge.
" *peplus*—Petty-spurge.
Callitriche verna—Springwater starwort.
Urtica dioica—Common nettle.
Ulmus montana—Wych elm.
Myrica gale—Sweet gale; bog-myrtle.
Betula alba—White birch.
" *nana*—Dwarf birch.
Alnus glutinosa—Alder.
Salix pentandra—Sweet willow.
" *alba*—White willow.
" *angustifolia*—Little tree-willow.
" *ambigua*—Ambiguous willow.
" *reticulata*—Net-leaved willow.
" *viminalis*—Common osier.
" *cinerea*—Grey sallow.
" *caprea*—Great sallow.
" *nigricans*—Dark-leaved willow.
" *herbacea*—Dwarf willow.
Populus tremula—Aspen.
Quercus robur, or *pedunculata*—Oak.
Corylus avellana—Hazel.
Pinus sylvestris—Scotch fir.
Juniperus communis—Juniper.
" *nana*—Dwarf juniper.
Orchis maculata—Spotted orchis.
Gymnadenia conopsea—Fragrant orchis.
Habenaria albida—Small white orchis.
" *chlorantha*—Butterfly orchis.
" *bifolia*—Smaller butterfly orchis.
Herminium monorchis—Green musk orchis.
Listera ovata—Tway-blade.
Epipactis ensifolia—Narrow-leaved helleborine. [264]
Iris pseud-acorus—Yellow iris.
Hyacinthus non-scriptus—Wild hyacinth.
Allium oleraceum—Wild garlic.

" *ursinum*—Ramsons.
Tofieldia palustris—Scottish asphodel.
Narthecium ossifragum—Bog asphodel.
Juncus conglomeratus—Common rush.
" *lamprocarpus*, or *articulatus*—Jointed rush.
" *triglumis*—Three-flowered rush.
Luzula sylvatica—Great hairy-rush.
" *spicata*—Spiked hairy-rush.
Triglochin palustre—Arrow-grass.
" *maritimum*—Sea-side arrow-grass.
Potamogeton natans—Broad-leaved pond-weed.
" *lucens*—Shining pond-weed.
" *oblongus*—Oblong-leaved pond-weed.
Eriophorum vaginatum—Hare's-tail cotton-grass.
" *angustifolium*—Common cotton-grass.
Equisetum arvense—Field horse-tail.
" *sylvaticum*—Wood horse-tail.
" *limosum*—Smooth horse-tail.
" *palustre*—Marsh horse-tail.
Polypodium vulgare—Common polypody.
" *phegopteris*—Mountain polypody; beech fern.
" *dryopteris*—Tender three-branched polypody; oak fern.
Lastrea oreopteris—Sweet mountain fern; mountain buckler fern.
" *filix-mas*—Male fern.
" *spinulosa*—Narrow prickly-toothed buckler fern.
" *dilatata*—Broad prickly-toothed buckler fern.
Polystichum lonchitis—Holly fern.
" *lobatum*—Close-leaved prickly shield-fern.
Cystopteris fragilis—Brittle bladder fern.
Athyrium filix-fœmina—Lady fern.
Asplenium adiantum-nigrum—Black spleenwort.
" *trichomanes*—Common wall spleenwort.
" *viride*—Green spleenwort.
" *marinum*—Sea spleenwort.
" *ruta-muraria*—Wall rue.
" *septentrionale*—Forked spleenwort.
Scolopendrium vulgare—Common hart's-tongue.
Blechnum boreale—Hard fern.
Pteris aquilina—Common brake.
Hymenophyllum Wilsoni—Scottish filmy fern.
Osmunda regalis—Royal or flowering fern.
Botrychium lunaria—Moonwort.
Ophioglossum vulgatum—Common adder's tongue.
Lycopodium clavatum—Common club-moss.
" *annotinum*—Interrupted club-moss.
" *alpinum*—Savin-leaved club-moss.
" *selago*—Fir club-moss.

Chapter VIII.

[265]

Shells of Gairloch.

By the Rev. John M'Murtrie, M.A.

The following article appeared in *Good Words* in August 1883, and is generously contributed to this work by the author, the Rev. John M'Murtrie, lately minister of St Bernard's Church, Edinburgh, and now convener of the Foreign Mission Committee of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland. Mr M'Murtrie has kindly added an appendix containing a list of shells, prepared by him expressly for this book. The article, which is inserted here with the consent of the Rev. Donald Macleod, D.D., editor of *Good Words*, is entitled—

"Spring-tide at Gairloch, West Ross—
A study of small shells.

"By the way, some people know as little about spring-tides as about small shells. I lately read, in a thrilling narrative of escape from drowning, 'It was neap-tide, and the sea was very far out.' Evidently the writer supposed that neap-tides are the very low tides, just as spring-tides are the very high ones. Of course, the truth is, that spring-tides both rise very high and fall very low; while neap-tides are the tides of least variation,—when, in short, the tides are *nipped*, and do not

fall very low.[1] Once a fortnight there is a series of spring-tides, but, for reasons astronomical, some are much better than others. The half-hour of lowest recess of a first-rate spring-tide is precious to naturalists. You may chance to find them then at the edge of the sea, working, as if for dear life, under rock ledges and among seaweeds; and, wading as deep as they can, with bare arms they lift great stones from the bottom, and examine them for their living treasures. The sea in calm weather becomes very still during that half hour. When it is ended there occurs a remarkable thing, which I have never seen mentioned in books, but I think many shore-naturalists and bait-gatherers must know it. It is a sort of shudder of the sea, as though it awoke; there is a sudden strong *susurrus*,—the sound of that wonderful Latin word tells you its meaning,—the wash-sh of a swift little wave, breaking all along the shore and rising in every crevice at your feet, the first impact of a resistless power. At such a time I found myself at Gairloch, on the shore of Western Ross, beyond that gem of Scottish lakes, Loch Maree.

"Naturalists divide every shore into its upper, middle, and lower 'littoral zone.' I cannot write this paper without using a few hard words; *littoral zone* just means the beach between high and low [266] tide-marks. Those plants and animals which live in the 'upper littoral' want no more of the sea than an occasional bath, or even merely its salt spray. The middle region is inhabited by species which prefer to be half their time under water, and the lower by those which agree with being usually submerged. Below the littoral we come upon the great *laminarian zone*, the region of waving laminaria, or sea-tangle. The best view of this submarine forest is from a boat, and you may have dipped an oar at low-water among its olive-brown fronds. These are not uncovered at ordinary tides, but a low spring-tide reveals them. Changed and weird is then the aspect of the sea, and the searcher has access to what he calls the 'upper laminarian.' It is but little harm after all that he ever does, if we take into account the prodigality with which the shore is furnished with life. But should a storm rage when the spring-tide is low, the waves tear up the tangles by hundreds, and pile them, with their countless freight of living shells and other creatures of God, in irretrievable ruin on the strand.

"At Gairloch I found that the rocky shore, while not precipitous, was yet so steep that the various zones and their subdivisions, which on a level beach may easily occupy a mile, were compressed into a very small space. Every few steps in a downward scramble brought one to a new vegetation and new forms of animal life. In particular, it was obvious that innumerable molluscs of the smaller, and therefore less-known species, found shelter and food among the seaweeds that densely clothed the rocks. These molluscs seemed brought to my hand that I might look at them. It occurred to me that no shell-gatherer, so far as I knew, had ever made it his study to know with exactness a compact little shore like this, to determine all the species of those myriads of living shells, to note their distribution and relative abundance, and to estimate the number of individuals.

"It was necessary first of all to devise a right method of investigation. To examine the whole shore was impossible and unnecessary. Plainly I must take samples. The rocks just below high-water mark were covered with a thick stubble of *lichina*, a small plant resembling the lichens of the land. Various species of minute sea-shells nestled plentifully at its roots. As much of the lichina as two hands could hold was soon scraped from the rocks, wrapped in paper, and called Parcel No. 1. Though months passed before I had leisure to scrutinize my prize, I may here state the result. When all the lichina and broken plates of barnacles and other *débris* had been removed, there remained twelve hundred and twenty perfect shells, which had been alive when captured; and when they were all put into a pill-box of the smallest size used by druggists, it was scarcely two-thirds full. The leading shell was a dwarf form of our smallest winkle, *Littorina neritoïdes*,—a species which may almost be said to dislike the sea, though it cannot live far from it. There were six hundred and three of this tiny winkle. Next came lasaea, a red and white bivalve (*L. rubra*), with four hundred and thirty-nine, mostly full grown. Small as it is, you may, with care and a good lens, open its valves and count a score of young ones within, each having a shell like that of its parent. Skenea (*S. planorbis*) was third, with a hundred and six shells, each [267] like a short and not quite flat coil of brown rope. But a large skenea is less than the head of a small pin, and these were all young. The rest were a few specimens of the fry of all our other British winkles, and of the common mussel. Rissoa—so named from a naturalist of Nice, M. Risso—is a genus of humble spiral-shelled molluscs, which feed upon decaying seaweeds. Two specks in the parcel shewed themselves under the lens, by the bands which encircled their whorls, to be the young of *Rissoa cingillus*,—the rissoa, with the little belts around it.

"It would weary the ordinary reader to go through such details in the rest of this paper. I only seek to give him a glimpse into a world of life, of whose existence he was perhaps scarcely aware.

"Parcel No. 2 was an equal quantity of a small seaweed, with a long name, *Polysiphonia fastigiata*, which fringes common wrack between tides with its thick and branching tufts. Nothing can be simpler than the process of separating thousands of shells from such a handful. You put your seaweeds in a basin of cold fresh water, and all the molluscs instantly let go and fall to the bottom. When those of this parcel were dried, the little pill-box was again in requisition; they exactly filled it. If anybody wants precision, there were forty-two minims of shells. It may give a new thought to some one to read that there were in that box about twelve thousand five hundred shells, each of them a marvel of beauty, and each of them only the external skeleton of a highly organised creature, which secreted and built up that shell bit by bit as its soft body grew larger, and which mixed in the colours and lined it with mother-of-pearl. The little skenea, which began to appear in our first parcel, reached here the extraordinary development of about eleven thousand eight hundred specimens, of which one hundred and thirty-eight were grown up, while

all the rest, to the unassisted eye, were like dust, and weighed only eleven and a half grains. The remainder of the parcel consisted of twelve species, ranging in number of examples from one to three hundred and fifty. The shell of which there was but a single specimen was *Cyamium minutum*, a glittering bivalve, somewhat smaller than lasaea.

"Parcel No. 3 was made up by scraping from the rock a small strong-smelling seaweed called *Laurencia*, which grows near low-water. It yielded about twenty thousand shells, belonging to fourteen species, and they more than filled two of the little boxes. The most remarkable circumstance was, that the shining little bivalve cyamium, which was represented by a solitary specimen in the second parcel, formed here at least three-fifths of the whole. In other words, twelve thousand individuals, old, young, and middle-aged, of this cyamium—each of them a good walker, a good swimmer, a good spinner when it wished to moor itself by a rope, and each the maker of its own polished shell—were clustered upon a handful of one of their favourite plants. I could not get them till now, because I was not near enough to the edge of the ebb tide. It may be worth noting that there are other shell-gatherers who know where to look for cyamium, for it is [268] told in books upon shells that thirty-five thousand cyamiums were once taken from the stomach of a mullet.

"No. 4 was a parcel of the same size as all the rest, and consisted of various small seaweeds growing at ordinary low water. It proved to contain about eight thousand five hundred shells, of ten species. There was scarcely a bivalve among them. Two *lacunæ* (cousins to the winkles), and a pearly top-shell (*Trochus helicinus*), shewed by their abundance that the verge of the accessible shore was nearly reached.

"No. 5 was a parcel of the same kind, from the lowest point of the spring-tide, and produced about thirteen thousand shells. The between-tides species—such as skenea—now visibly began to fail, and a few shells from deeper water, including a youthful scallop, made their appearance.

"The tide was about to turn. Could one more 'parcel' be achieved? From the rock there was visible, far down in the quiet depth, a giant frond of laminaria, apparently detached, but likely still to have its shelly inhabitants upon it. The day was warm, the spot retired, the water inviting; to swim downwards with the eyes open is easy, if you learned as a boy. Soon the laminaria was gently laid on dry rock. It was quite ten feet long, and bore one hundred and fifty-seven little shells of nine species, one of them a prize—*Rissoa violacea*.

"This record is not written for conchologists, but for others to whom its facts are unfamiliar or unknown. Two dozen species, most of them common, and three or four varieties, were all that were found. But, of individual shells there were fifty-five thousand. A calculation, necessarily rough, but as likely to be under the truth as over it, led to the conclusion that, if it were possible to examine all the seaweeds which the lowest tide leaves bare for a stretch of only twenty-five or thirty yards along that shore, a hundred million living shell-bearing molluscs would be found. Of all these not even the smallest would, strictly speaking, be a microscopic object, though certainly requiring a lens for the determination of its species. A hundred millions! How easily we set down the words! And neither the writer nor anybody else has the least conception of what they represent. And if, from that little nook on the Gairloch as a measured base, I tried to estimate the molluscan population of our British shores, making due allowance for the comparative barrenness of many places, I might fill a large part of one of these lines with figures; but who would be any the wiser?

"We are not to suppose that a shore so prolific as that of Gairloch has really only twenty-four kinds of shells. That no more were found among the seaweeds examined, is simply due to the circumstance that all the samples were taken from the same kind of ground. Hard by, round a jutting rock, there is a sandy shell-strewn beach on which, without trouble, fifty species may be gathered,—some of them such rarities that the reading of their names is enough to make an eager collector wish he might forthwith take train for Achnasheen.[2] Let us single out one. Time [269] was when *Crenella decussata* was known to naturalists by a single valve. Here, in a little shell-sand, were six perfect specimens, the valves united and closed, or each what children call a 'box.' Imagine an almost transparent pearl, the size of a grain of mustard seed, suffused with opaline gleams, and covered with exquisite latticed and bead-like sculpture. It wants nothing but size to rival the most splendid exotics.

"Nothing but size! But, to most people, size is everything; wherefore to them the small shells and their beauty are not. Their minuteness hides them as though they were in a far-off and uninhabited isle. To science bulk is an accident, only one of the many properties which she has to consider. What science does for us—even for those of us who, being otherwise busy, can be naturalists only in our leisure time—is something still more important than providing us with a magnifying lens. She takes away that mental habitude which makes minuteness a barrier to interest,—she puts her hand on the inward eye, and we see. Whosoever has been thus *touched*, has an 'open-sesame' to a treasure-house, has a slave of the lamp to make rubies common. And, besides all this, who dare say that that hidden world of beauty and adaptation is wasted, is lost, till the scientific observer draws near? Certainly he who has watched the little molluscs at their love and their play will be slow to think that they have not a sense of beauty which can be pleased. He who notes how the shells during life are protected from their enemies by their colours; how they are brown and yellow and red like the seaweed on which they feed; how they are pink and white among those algæ which are encrusted with lime; how they are transparent and iridescent as any jelly-fish in the clear sea-water,—has a glimpse into the process by which the Divine Architect who works through the ages fashioned those manifold species. And I, for

one, am of Charles Kingsley's creed in this matter:—'See now,' said the hero of 'Westward Ho!' to his brother, as they looked at flies and flowers and humming-birds in a West Indian island, uninhabited till the white man came,—'See now, God made all these things, and never a man, perhaps, set eyes on them till fifty years agone; and yet they were as pretty as they are now, ever since the making of the world. And why do you think God could have put them here, then, but to please Himself'—and Amyas took off his hat—'with the sight of them?'"

Appendix.

Mr Dixon has kindly sent me a considerable quantity of shell-sand from Gairloch shore. I have examined it, and found the following sea-shells. Those which were somewhat plentiful are marked with an asterisk. It would be easy to name some additional shells which will probably be found on Gairloch shore, though they were absent from the sand examined; but I have preferred not to do so.

*Anomia ephippium.
* Do. do., *var.* imbricata.
*Pecten opercularis.
P. similis (a valve).
*Mytilus edulis.
*Modiolaria discors.
*Crenella decussata.
*Montacuta ferruginosa (single valves).
M. bidentata.
Kellia suborbiculata.
*Cyamium minutum.
*Cardium edule.
*C. nodosum.
C. echinatum.
C. Norvegicum. [270]
*Cyprina Islandica.
Astarte sulcata (a valve).
A. triangularis.
*Venus gallina.
V. lincta.
V. exoleta.
*V. casina.
V. ovata (a valve).
*Tapes virgineus.
Do. do., *var.* alba.
*Tellina tenuis.
*T. fabula.
T. pusilla.
*Psammobia ferroënsis.
*Donax vittatus.
*Mactra stultorum.
Do. do., *var.* cinerea.
M. subtruncata.
M. solida.
Scrobicularia prismatica.
*Solen siliqua.
*Thracia papyracea.
*Saxicava rugosa.
* Do. do., *var.* arctica.
* Do. do., *var.* minuta.
*Patella vulgata.
* Do. do., *var.* picta.
* Do. do., *var.* cœrulea.
*Helcion pellucidum.
* Do. do., *var.* lævis.
Tectura testudinalis.
*T. virginea.
*Trochus cinerarius.
T. umbilicatus.
*T. millegranus (young shells).
*T. helicinus.
*Do. do., *var.* fasciata.
T. zizyphinus.
*Lacuna divaricata.
*L. pallidula.
*Littorina obtusata.
*L. litorea.
*L. rudis.
*Do. do., *var.* saxatilis.

*L. neritoides.
*Rissoa violacea.
* Do. do., *var.* ecostata.
  R. semistriata.
*R. striata.
* Do. do., *var.* arctica.
*R. parva.
*Do. do., *var.* interrupta.
  R. punctura (a fragment).
*R. cingillus.
*Hydrobia ulvæ.
      Do. do., *var.* albida.
*Skenea planorbis.
  Cœcum glabrum (one specimen).
  C. trachea (one specimen).
  Odostomia rissoïdes.
  O. indistincta.
  O. lactea.
*O. nitidissima.
*Natica Alderi.
  Velutina lævigata.
*Aporrhaïs pes-pelecani.
*Cerithium reticulatum.
*Purpura lapillus.
      Do. do., *var.* imbricata.
  Buccinum undatum.
  Fusus antiquus.
*Nassa incrassata.
    Do. do., *var.* minor.
  Pleurotoma striolata (one specimen).
*Cylichna umbilicata.
*Utriculus truncatulus.
  U. obtusus.
*U. hyalinus.
  U. mammillatus (two specimens).
  Philine catena.
  P. angulata (one specimen).
  Melampus bidentatus.
  Spirialis retroversus.

The following are a few notes on the land and fresh-water shells:—

Pisidium fontinale—Occurred in the shell-sand, having been washed down to the sea by streams. I found a fine variety—perhaps *var.* pulchella—in a pond between Gairloch and Loch Maree.
Ancylus fluviatilis—Several among the shell-sand.
Succinea putris—Two among the shell-sand.
Vitrina pellucida—Not uncommon under stones, &c.
Zonites cellarius—Two among the shell-sand. I found it also living among stones.
Zonites nitidulus, *var.* nitens—Living among stones, &c.
Zonites purus—Among dead leaves.
Zonites radiatulus—Two among the shell-sand. It is probably not rare under stones, &c.
Zonites fulvus—Among dead leaves.
Helix nemoralis—Among the shell-sand.
Helix rotundata—Under stones.
Pupa umbilicata—Under stones. The variety edentula occurs.
Balia perversa—Common at the foot of walls near the parish church, and probably in other places.
Clausilia rugosa—Under stones, &c.
Cochlicopa lubrica—Three among the shell-sand.

J. M'Murtrie.

Chapter IX.

[271]

The Geology of Loch Maree and Neighbourhood.

By William Jolly.

The geology of Loch Maree is unusually varied, interesting, and representative. It exhibits, in a limited area, the whole debated series of the succession of rocks in the North-West Highlands. This has been a fertile subject of controversy, surpassed only by the world-famous Glen Roy. It has engaged the attention and the pens of some of the most eminent British geologists, including Macculloch, Hugh Miller, Sedgwick, Sir Roderick Murchison, Professor Nicol of Aberdeen, Archibald Geikie, and a host of others not less able. After considerable discussion, chiefly between Murchison and Nicol, the authoritative name of Murchison, along with that of Archibald Geikie, who wrote a joint memoir on the subject, seemed for a time finally to settle the question in Murchison's favour; and his views were not only generally received, but were embodied in the geological maps of the district most in use. But, lately, the whole question has been reopened with greater keenness than ever, and the conclusions of the geological king have been vigorously and uncompromisingly assailed all along the line. The war is, at the present date, in full swing, but with a near prospect of final peace. The geological problem of the Highlands is by no means settled, though much additional light has been thrown on the debatable ground by the researches of the numerous and capable combatants, including recently Peach and Horne, of the Geological Survey; and their investigations will no doubt hasten the final determination of the vexed question. But a firm basis of interpretation has at length been gained, by which the geological structure of the broad tracts of the Highlands, hitherto uniformly coloured as Silurian, will be investigated under new and important lights, and a remapping of the Highland area erelong achieved, with such permanent results as have hitherto been impossible.

The conditions of the problem are extremely well exhibited round Loch Maree. Here we are presented, as Dr Archibald Geikie truly observes, with "a series of sections of singular clearness." He confesses that he knows of "no locality where the geologist may better acquaint himself with the order of superposition of the ancient crystalline rocks of the Highlands, or with the dislocations and metamorphism which they have undergone." These will now be briefly explained. The whole subject may, without much difficulty, be understood by the ordinary reader, if he will use a geological map of Scotland, such as Nicol's or Geikie's, which he will also find useful as a guide.

A.—The Series of Rocks in the North-West Highlands. [272]

The rocks round Loch Maree are shortly the following:—

I. The Hebridean Gneiss.—The Long Island from the Butt of the Lews to Barra Head consists almost entirely of a species of gneiss, very much metamorphosed. It occurs in the Inner Hebrides in Tiree and Coll, in Sleat, in Raasay, and Rona, off Portree, but very little in Skye, one of our youngest isles. It is found in patches on the Mainland on the western shores of Ross and Sutherland, and stretches from Torridon to Cape Wrath, whose contorted cliffs it forms. It has been variously designated *Hebridean*, from being chiefly found in the Hebrides; *Lewisean*, from forming the most of the Lewis, a less acceptable name; *Archæan*, from being the earliest system; *Pre-Cambrian*, as being earlier than the Cambrian sandstone immediately above it; and *Fundamental*, from its constituting the lowest rock strata in the British Isles. Murchison identified it with the lowest geological series, the *Laurentian*, which is so named from being extensively developed on the St Lawrence in Canada. It is best, however, to designate the rocks by a geographical and non-theoretical term, like Hebridean.

This gneiss is more largely exhibited on the shores of Loch Maree than any other rock, forming the greater part of its northern side from the exit of the Ewe to Slioch, and running along its southern side from near Inverasdale on Loch Ewe to Talladale. It stretches northwards from the lake to Loch Gruinard, and westwards to Poolewe and Gairloch, where its characteristics are very well seen on the wave-beaten coast near the hotel there. It forms the rugged outlines of Craig Tollie, at the west end of the loch, and of Beinn Aridh Charr and Beinn Lair, near Letterewe. It shows one of the most magnificent series of furrowed precipices in Britain, at the back of Beinn Lair, which should be visited by all who appreciate the wildly grand; and entirely encloses the lone Loch Fionn and its darker chamber of the Dubh Loch at its head. North of Coigeach, it occupies most of the west coast on the mainland up to Cape Wrath; and southwards, there is a patch of it at the Narrows of Loch Torridon. From recent researches, it will probably be found widely extended over the rest of the Highlands.

It is more or less vertical in dip on the west coast, and has there a general persistent strike from north-west to south-east. The special character of its scenery is very well seen round Loch Assynt, and is well presented in the parish of Gairloch. As shewn on the map, it forms the splendid peak of Alligin, above three thousand feet, which towers above Loch Torridon, from which it passes to the head of the Gairloch, where it is admirably exhibited in structure, dip, and strike on the shore near the Free church and along the picturesque road to Poolewe. It contains some limestone on Loch Maree in a line parallel to the loch, for some miles on both sides of Letterewe. A vigorous attempt has recently been made by Dr Hicks to discriminate this gneiss into certain series or epochs, which he has named, and by which he seeks to interpret the rest of [273] the Highlands.[3] In America, the Laurentian system contains the celebrated *Eozoon Canadense*, that is, the Canadian Dawnlife, the lowest organic form yet known. It has as yet proved absolutely barren in Europe, though a flutter was raised by its supposed discovery by Dr Heddle of St

Andrews, Dr Carpenter asserting the fact, but its discoverer, on further examination, disclaiming the honour.

II. The Torridon Sandstone.—This is the chocolate-coloured sandstone so splendidly exhibited round Loch Torridon, where it towers into the mural dignity of Liathgach. It is well presented in the mountains of Applecross, as seen from Loch Carron, and from Loch Kishorn which lies at their southern base. This sandstone occurs only at one spot in the Outer Hebrides, round the harbour of Stornoway; it is found in Rum, its southermost position, in Sleat, Scalpa, Raasay, and neighbouring islets; it occurs continuously, except where the Hebridean gneiss appears, from Loch Carron to Coulmore near Loch Inver, and thence in isolated patches, north to the Kyle of Durness. The scenery it presents is uncommonly striking, massive and grand, its mural character, which arises from its horizontal strata, being a special feature, and nothing in style can anywhere surpass the splendid spear-headed crest of Slioch, the monarch of the mountains, worthy though his compeers are, that stand round Loch Maree. The denudation to which this ancient sandstone has been subjected has been extraordinary. This is well seen round our loch, when we consider that Slioch is above three thousand feet in height; but still more impressively, from the sea off Loch Inver, in the sugar-loaf cone of Suilven and its brethren, all isolated stacks of Torridon sandstone,—so remarkable that Murchison selected this scene as the most striking example of denudation he knew, to illustrate the subject in his famous "Siluria."

Round Loch Maree, it forms its southern shores east of Talladale, where its character can be well examined in the delightful drive from Kenlochewe. On the north side, it touches the loch only at its two extremities, at the one end, near Inveran and along the Ewe, and at the other, in Slioch, stopping short of the head of the lake, as can easily be seen from the south side. It is more or less horizontal, or dips slightly to the south-east, being deposited in thick, well-marked beds, as everywhere exhibited, and thus forms a remarkable contrast to the vertical strata on which it rests. An excellent junction of the two, easily reached and examined, occurs on the shores of Gairloch, at the end of the rocky peninsula on which the Free church stands. There the two are seen, the more or less horizontal Torridon superposed on the vertical Hebridean, in the most striking style, which is rendered all the clearer by the washing of the restless tides. This sandstone about Loch Maree is about four thousand feet in thickness.

It was correlated by Murchison with the Cambrian system, the second in the geologic series, and [274]
was so named by him,—a name now recognised by the chief authorities. It is well, however, to designate it by a neutral geographical term, and to retain the title given it by Professor Nicol, that of Torridon Sandstone, or Torridon Red. In Scotland, it has as yet yielded no organic remains, though these are abundant and good in Wales, after whose ancient name of Cambria it is called, and also in Scandinavia, which remained united to Scotland till post-glacial times. It was long thought to be a western representative of the Old Red Sandstone of the east coast, Hugh Miller, among others, looking on it as a worthy example of his pet rocks; but in his day, the geology of the Highlands was but dimly and imperfectly known, and their great problems were not even surmised.

Like the Old Red, a fact that tended to mislead early observers, its lowest bed is a thick massy conglomerate or breccia, which is very well seen at the junction at Gairloch, and which is generally persistent throughout the system on the west coast. It consists of varied pieces, sometimes rounded, often angular, and some of them large, of the under-lying Hebridean rocks, enclosed in a finer matrix of the same materials. Portions of the "Eastern rocks" have, it seems, also been detected in it,—a fact which, if established, indicates the true age and succession of these "Eastern rocks."

III. The Quartzite.—Above the Torridon Red, lies a thick-bedded whitish rock, called from its general appearance Quartzite. This French word is, however, a partly misleading term, as the rock is not quartz, though much made up of quartz grains; but it is a highly metamorphosed fine sandstone. It is here sometimes coincident in dip with the underlying Red, but it is generally non-conformable. It can be easily seen, looking from the south side of Loch Maree, at a point east of Slioch, on the right side of a glen watered by a stream called the Fasagh, which separates Slioch from the ridge to the east. In Glen Fasagh, the Torridon Red is clearly observed to rest horizontally on the Hebridean gneiss below, on both sides of the glen; the Torridon forming the most of the western side of the valley up to the summit of Slioch, but rising, on the eastern side, only half-way up, being then surmounted by the strongly contrasted Quartzite to the top of the ridge. The Quartzite continues eastwards to the wide glen beyond, generally but erroneously called "Glen Laggan," or "Glen Logan," though its real name is Glen Cruaidh Choillie.[4]

A vertical fault exists in the middle of this Quartzite ridge, situated halfway between the two glens, and is easily distinguished by the eye from the other side of Loch Maree. It has thrown down the rocks on the eastern half of the ridge some distance, and affects both the Quartzite and the Torridon Red below.

This Quartzite is devoid of mica. It passes from pale pinkish to pure white in colour, and occurs in [275]
thick, uncommonly regular beds, with rectangular joints. It is well developed at the head of Loch Maree, and rises into the white, glistening, barren peaks and ridges of Beinn Eay. It forms some admirable scenery, not only here but wherever it occurs, for it is widely distributed over the Highlands.

Its capabilities in this way are also well exhibited on the west coast round Loch Assynt, rising there into the summits of Beinn More and Queenaig, above three thousand feet; and also near Loch Carron to the south, and between Assynt and Eriboll to the north. On Loch Torridon, its prevailing tendency to whiteness gives rise to the name Grey Heads, very descriptive of certain contorted peaks near Coulin Lodge.

The Quartzite is interesting as exhibiting the earliest indications of organic life yet discovered in Scotland:—

1. *Annelid Borings.*—The lower beds next the Torridon contain, on their surface, as described by Murchison, "large round knobs on the top of cylindrical bodies, which pass through several layers," their number being often astonishing. These are, it is safely concluded, "infillings of excavations" made by certain worms called Annelids, and are known as *Annelid Borings*. They are noteworthy as "the oldest vestiges of life which can be detected in the North Highlands." They are often very clearly seen, as the filling in has generally been done by a different coloured sand from that in which they had been bored. They sometimes project above the surface like "pipes," and are so numerous as to cause these beds to be called "pipe-rock." Examples are abundant round Kenlochewe, and on the roadside at the entrance to Glen Cruaidh Choillie, where they are unusually good. They should be secured by the intelligent visitor from their extraordinary interest.

2. *Fucoid Remains.*—Interstratified with the Quartzite, are certain brown, mottled, shaly and flaggy bands, with curious impressions of what seem leaves, which have been thought to be fucoids or seaweeds. The recent Survey explorations would seem to point to their being simply very much squeezed annelid "pipes." The shales in which they occur are thus generally known as the Fucoid Beds, and, when found, are very good evidence of the horizon of the rocks. They are often very distinct and easily seen, and are most interesting. They occur on Loch Maree near the top of the east side of Glen Fasagh, imbedded in the Quartzite, and run through the Quartzite to Glen Cruaidh Choillie.

Other organisms have been found in it elsewhere, such as orthoceratite in Assynt, and certain small conical bodies called serpulites.

This Quartzite, with its annelid borings and fucoid beds, is placed by Murchison in the Silurian series, the third in the geological record. By others, such as Dr Hicks, it is considered possibly Cambrian.

IV. The Limestone.—On the western side of Glen Cruaidh Choillie, resting on the Quartzite, and generally conformable with it, is found a limestone. By examining the map, it will be seen that this limestone runs more or less continuously from Loch Carron to Loch Eriboll. It receives its [276] greatest development at Inchnadamph, at the east end of Loch Assynt, where it forms splendid cliffs. It is of commercial value, and has been worked at various places along its outcrop. It will also be observed that there is a wide isolated patch of limestone at Durness, between Loch Eriboll and Cape Wrath.

In this Durness limestone, which was long considered unfossiliferous, like the other rocks of the North-West Highlands, shells were discovered in 1854 by Mr Peach, the eminent geologist, and friend of Dick of Thurso. These were determined to be Silurian by Mr Salter, a great specialist in such matters, and were described and figured in a paper by Sir Roderick Murchison in 1858.[5] Since then finer specimens have been discovered. Their likeness to British Silurian fossils is very remote, and they are more related to American forms; but they are generally now accepted as of Silurian or Ordovician age. This discovery of fossils gave a great impetus to the study of these rocks, and formed the basis of the theory propounded by Sir Roderick Murchison.

The Durness limestone turns out, however, to be, as a whole, of a different type from the great strike of limestone which goes through Glen Cruaidh Choillie and terminates at Loch Eriboll. This Durness limestone is held by Dr Heddle, who first ascertained the fact, and by other competent authorities, to be non-dolomitic, while that of the great strike to the east is dolomitic; dolomite (so called from the French geologist Dolomieu) being a variety of limestone, which, in addition to the carbonate of lime of which common limestone mainly consists, contains more or less carbonate of magnesia,—in this dolomite, forty-eight per cent. Dolomitic beds have, however, lately been discovered in the Durness basin by the Survey. For long, no fossils were obtained from the great dolomitic strike, except an orthoceratite at Assynt by Mr Peach, and a possible organic mass by myself at the same place; but recently a varied and important suite of fossils has been gathered by the Survey, which has clearly decided the age of the Dolomite to be Silurian. Of its position above the Quartzite there is no doubt.

It is pretty well exhibited in Glen Cruaidh Choillie, where it has been worked at various places, and where its superposed junction with the Quartzite can be seen.

V. The "Logan Rock."—Immediately to the east of the Limestone, and in contact with it, is found a remarkable rock, which appears at various parts in the middle of Glen Cruaidh Choillie, and which has caused great discussion in regard to its character, relative position, and age. By Professor Nicol, it was held to be igneous, serpentinous, felspathic, porphyritic, and intrusive, and was named by him "Igneous rock;" by Murchison, to be here a "syenite," and elsewhere a "greenstone," and "serpentinous and felspathic," interbedded with and resting directly upon the

limestone; by Dr Hicks and others, to be a "syenite," or a "granitic" and "quartz diorite," and igneous, faulted, and intrusive, like Nicol; and by Dr Callaway, as the Hebridean gneiss "brought up by a fault." It is well here, as in all other cases, to designate it geographically, and call it the "Logan Rock," as first suggested by Heddle, and now generally used. [277]

In "Glen Logan," it is best exposed in the bed of the river about two miles above the school. At a point about halfway up the glen it runs up the hill on the west side, and is seen to overlie the limestone.

This rock appears, as maintained by Nicol, more or less continuously associated with the limestone strike, and assumes a great variety of forms, as shewn by the different characterisations it has received. It has played an important part in the history of the theories of the succession of these Highland rocks. In Sutherland, it sometimes receives a broad development.

VI. The "Eastern Gneiss."—Immediately to the east of this rock, rising in Glen Cruaidh Choillie at once from contact with the "Logan Rock," and forming the whole of the eastern wall of the glen, there stretches a long series of shales, schists, gneiss, and other rocks. These appear on both sides of Glen Dochartie, and thence on eastwards through Ross and the main body of the Highlands, till they are overlaid by the Old Red Sandstone of the east coast. The position and interpretation of these rocks have caused extraordinary investigation and discussion, which is still being carried on. They are variously known as the "Eastern gneiss," "Eastern schists," by Murchison and others; the term "Caledonian" has also been proposed by Dr Callaway,—all to distinguish them from the Hebridean of the west coast.

B.—The Controversy regarding the Succession of these Rocks.

Up to the Limestone, the order of succession of the rocks may be regarded as settled, all parties agreeing as to their relations though differing as to their classification under the early geological systems. It is held that the order is,—lowest, the Hebridean gneiss; above that, very unconformably, the Torridon Red; above that, less unconformably, the Quartzite, with its embedded organic remains; and above that, more or less conformably, the Limestone, with its numerous fossils. At this point, begins the controversy which has so long been waged regarding the nature and succession of the rocks in the North-West Highlands, and which has passed through many phases of opinion, and even disturbed the long-tried friendship between the chief combatants, Murchison and Nicol.

The "Logan Rock" Murchison considered to rest on the Limestone, and not to be intrusive and igneous as thought by Nicol. He also maintained that the "Eastern gneisses and schists" lay more or less conformably above the limestone or interbedded syenite, and were therefore more recent,—in fact, were a continuation of the Silurian system, of which the limestone was the representative example.

Professor Nicol held to the last,[6] that the Limestone is the highest rock in the whole series of the North-West Highlands; that faulting or igneous action exists along the line of the "Igneous rocks," associated with the Limestone; that these "Eastern gneisses and schists" do not overlie the Limestone; that where they seem to do this, the appearance is caused by an overlapping of these "Eastern rocks" through pressure from the east; and that these rocks are probably the Hebridean, or, as he called it, the "Fundamental," gneiss reappearing. Latterly, he did not condescend to identify any of these rocks of the North-West with the received geological epochs, leaving this to be settled by subsequent investigation; but he held strenuously that the succession was as he declared,—Fundamental gneiss, Torridon Red, Quartzite, and Limestone, the rocks east of this point being metamorphic forms of the western gneiss reappearing. [278]

Murchison, at last associated with Dr Archibald Geikie, who in 1858 wrote a joint memoir with him on the subject of great value,[7] held, on the other hand, that there exists an unbroken series from the Fundamental or Laurentian gneiss to these "Eastern gneisses and schists," and that they succeed each other in superposition and age. They, moreover, classified them as Laurentian, Cambrian, and Silurian; the Silurian beginning with the Quartzite, and continuing eastwards in various folds and reduplications till overlaid by the Old Red Sandstone. Other points of difference existed between these eminent geologists, particularly as to the existence of two Quartzites, and two Limestones, as apparently exhibited at Assynt and elsewhere; but as these do not occur in our district, they need not be further described.

For twenty years Murchison's theory dominated over Nicol's, with scarcely a dissentient voice. The brave old professor maintained to the end, against the geological world, opinions to which, while seemingly less probable, he had been led both by years of unusually careful examination of the whole field, which he knew better than any, and by general considerations regarding metamorphism and other matters affecting these ancient rocks; while his opponents were so confident of their position, that Geikie, in his "Life of Murchison," headed one of his chapters "The Geological Conquest of the Highlands." But in 1878, Murchison's conclusions began to be vigorously assailed, the attack being led by Dr Henry Hicks,[8] and has been strenuously

maintained by him and other eminent geologists, of London, such as Bonney, Huddleston, Callaway, Heddle, Lapworth, Etheridge, Judd, and many others. These have written numerous papers advocating conclusions more or less adverse to those of Murchison, and agreeing in the main with those of Nicol.

Even Geikie has had to abandon his early position, and declare against the theory of his former [279] chief. In a remarkable declaration, published in *Nature* of November 13, 1884, prefacing a paper on "The Geology of North-West Sutherland," by the two Survey geologists Peach and Horne, Geikie made a brave and honourable retractation of these opinions, which he had so long and so ably advocated with Murchison. He there declares: "With every desire to follow the interpretation of my late chief, I criticised minutely each detail of the work upon the ground, but I found the evidence altogether overwhelming against the upward succession which Murchison believed to exist in Eriboll from the base of the Silurian strata into an upper conformable series of schists and gneisses." He found the same true all along the strike of these controverted rocks. "The clear coast sections of Eriboll have now taught me that the parallelism between the Silurian strata and the overlying schists is not due to conformable deposition." He traced the same kind of evidence southwards for more than ninety miles, and found it "as well marked above Loch Carron as it is at Loch Eriboll."

These "Eastern gneisses" not only frequently appear to be superposed upon the rocks beneath, but, as Geikie says, the parallelism of dip and strike between them and the rocks below them is so complete in some of the Ross-shire sections, that he asserts "had these sections been planned for the purposes of deception, they could not have been more skilfully devised." These Survey geologists explain these extraordinary phenomena by a system of "reversed faults" and "pushes from the east," by which the "Eastern rocks" have been driven westwards, in some cases ten miles, and are thus made to overlie the older rocks, through "prodigious terrestrial displacements, to which there is certainly no parallel in Britain,"—displacements which Nicol, against the evidence of his eyes, had insisted on as factors, nearly thirty years before.

Evidences of these dislocations are not so apparent round Loch Maree as elsewhere, especially near Loch Eriboll, but they are sufficiently marked round Kenlochewe as to appeal even to a non-scientific visitor. In Glen Cruaidh Choillie, at a point already noted, the "Logan Rock" is seen superposed right upon the Limestone up to the crest of the west side of the glen; according to Heddle, it also lies over it, with a slight hiatus, as far as Glen Fasagh. It is to be remembered, following recent conclusions, that this rock did not naturally have this position, but has been pushed violently into it by unparalleled "terrestrial displacements;" and that both this and the long series that form the eastern side of the glen are portions of the Hebridean again coming to the surface, and appearing in such mass and extent up Glen Dochartie and on to Achnasheen.

It would be out of place here to enter into the various opinions offered to explain the remarkable facts connected with these "Eastern rocks," their nature, and their relations to the western. The papers on Loch Maree are already very numerous, and opinions are still conflicting; and the Survey has not yet published its memoir on the Loch Maree district.

Dr Hicks, for example, held that these "Eastern rocks" generally are metamorphosed forms of the [280] Hebridean reappearing, but that the Hebridean occurs at the junction of Glen "Logan" and Glen Dochartie, and that along the floor of the latter, the Hebridean, but not the limestone, is overlaid by certain "blue flags and sandstones, and argillaceous, quartziferous, and micaceous flaggy beds" in succession, up to the head of Glen Dochartie. These along with the Limestone he classes as Silurian, placing the underlying Quartzite with the Cambrian. At the head of Glen Dochartie, the Silurians disappear, he held, by a possible fault, and the Hebridean or "Pre-Cambrian" as he prefers to call it, again reasserts itself up to the summit of Ben Fyn and eastwards. He writes me, however (1886), that in the light of recent investigations, he is prepared to class the Glen Dochartie rocks with the Hebridean, like those at the head of the glen; though he would not yet affirm their exact place in the broad Pre-Cambrian series, which he has lately attempted to classify.

In his recent utterance, Geikie maintains that these "Eastern rocks" have undergone such intense alteration that their original characters have been in great measure effaced. Some of them are "unquestionably part of the Archæan gneiss," others are the western Quartzite, &c.; but traced eastwards, "the crystalline characters become more and more pronounced, until we cannot tell, at least from examination in the field, what the rocks may have originally been. They are now fine flaggy micaceous gneisses and mica-schists, which certainly could not have been developed out of any such Archæan (that is Hebridean) gneiss as is now visible to the west. Whether they consist in part of higher members of the Silurian series in a metamorphic condition remains to be seen."

We have now described the whole succession of rocks in our district, from Gairloch and Poolewe to the head of Glen Dochartie, and given some idea of the difficult problems they present and the theories offered for their solution. The succession up to the Limestone is accepted. The Hebridean is now variously designated "Pre-Cambrian;" and by Callaway, Geikie, and others, "Archæan;" the determination of Murchison as "Laurentian" being generally avoided. The Torridon Red is accepted as "Cambrian" by most, and recently by Geikie and his colleagues; though there are differences of opinion as to the precise period in that series to which they

belong. The Quartzite and its associated beds are placed by Hicks and others with the "Cambrian;" and by others, including Geikie, with the Lower Silurian or Ordovician: but their position above the Torridon and below the Limestone is undoubted. The Limestone is conceded to lie above the Quartzite, but its nature and age are not yet settled, some holding it to be dolomitic and unlike the Durness limestone; Heddle for a time heading these, though now agreeing with the Survey; others, like Hicks, holding the limestones to be the same or, like the Survey geologists, so related as to form one system, which they call "Durness-Eriboll limestone." The "Logan rock" is variously interpreted,—some reckoning it to be igneous and intrusive; others, to be metamorphosed Hebridean; and others, to be granitic and syenitic. The "Eastern gneisses and [281] schists" are still undetermined as to character, relations, or age, opinions being very various and conflicting; though there is a general agreement as to their belonging to some portion of the Hebridean series. Attempts have been made to classify the Hebridean, especially by Hicks,[9] but into this, space prevents our entering here.

My own opinion on this much controverted succession, during nigh twenty years' careful study of the whole field from Skye to Eriboll and more or less minute examination of the disputed sections, has been increasingly in favour of Nicol's general position. The proofs of Murchison's contention of the superposition and newer age of the "Eastern gneisses" I always regarded imperfect, as often expressed both privately and publicly. Nicol's general contentions as to the unlikelihood of highly metamorphic schistose and gneissic rocks, like the Eastern, being transformed, while older rocks remained so little affected as the Cambrian and others beneath, gained growing weight. Every fresh examination of the ground increased the probability of their apparent superposition being merely overfoldings of the western rocks. The displacements, the investigations of more recent observers have shewn to be much greater than all earlier students, including myself, ever imagined.

Great honour has lately been done Professor Nicol for his enlightened perception of the true solution of this difficult problem at so early a date, "against a phalanx of eminent geological authorities." Professor Judd, at the meeting of the British Association at Aberdeen last year (1885), in reviewing this geological problem in a masterly address, justly observes, and in so doing felicitously expresses general opinion:—"Calmly reviewing, in the light of our present knowledge, the grand work accomplished single-handed by Nicol, I have no hesitation in asserting that, twenty-six years ago, he had mastered the great Highland problem in all its essential details." "The Murchisonian theory of Highland succession," he finally concludes, "is now, by general consent, abandoned."

C.—Other Noteworthy Geological Phenomena.

There are other noteworthy phenomena connected with the geology of Loch Maree deserving attention, which will be now shortly described:—

I. Faults.—Several faults have already been pointed out. The greatest, however, is that which runs parallel to Loch Maree itself, the loch lying in and along this huge fault. It extends from Loch Ewe, along Loch Maree and up through Glen Dochartie to its head, and so on eastwards. It runs parallel to the strike of the Hebridean gneiss, and has thrown down the rocks on the south side of Loch Maree by a south-west downthrow of considerable magnitude, as compared with the rocks on the north side of the lake. It has not, however, interfered with the strike of the rocks or [282] their relations to each other, which remain the same on both sides of the fault. The formation of Loch Maree, which lies exactly in the line of this great fault, is due in some way, no doubt, to the presence of the fault at this place and in this direction. The existence of this fault is proved, among other facts, by the general want of symmetry between the rocks on the two sides of Loch Maree, and by the low horizon at which the Torridon lies in the islands of Loch Maree and round Talladale, as compared with that at which the Hebridean stands in Beinn Aridh Charr and Beinn Lair, and with its own height in Slioch.

The same remarkable faulting holds good of other lakes. Loch Assynt to the north, being in much the same position as Loch Maree to these controverted rocks, lies also in the line of another great fault; Loch Ness also runs in the line, and occupies the place of a stupendous crack in the rocks there, shewn by a great anticline which runs from the Moray Firth to Loch Linnhe, and which has also in some way given rise to the enormous hollow occupied by Loch Ness,—a hollow twice the depth of the German Ocean, being nearly a thousand feet deep, while the North Sea is nowhere deeper than five hundred. The great Loch Maree fault can be seen in Glen Dochartie, and is there exhibited on both sides of the glen, where the unsymmetrical relations of the rocks may be studied.

II. Glaciation.—The phenomena of the Glacial Period are exceedingly well exhibited round Loch Maree. On the surfaces of the flat Torridon sandstone, at many places along the southern shores, especially on the higher parts of the road a little to the east of Talladale hotel, the scratchings are very good, distinct, and continuous, extending, on some of the slabs, for hundreds of feet in unbroken line. They run generally parallel to the longer axis of the lake, and prove the existence of an immense glacier that moved to the sea down the deep hollow now filled by its waters. The *Stoss seite*, or rubbed side, of the *roches moutonnées* is everywhere apparent, looking up the

loch; which shows that the ice moved seawards, and pressed hard against the landward faces of all projecting rocks, while leaving their seaward faces, or lee sides, greatly untouched. This is very well seen on the islands and projecting capes in the loch itself, especially where the lake narrows at its western extremity, and markedly, on the east front and north face of the splendid Craig Tollie opposite Inveran, along and above water-level. There the smoothing, grooving, and scratching are remarkably good, and worth going far to see. The visitor should make a special point to see them also on the flat surfaces of the red sandstone to the west of Talladale, already mentioned. At both these places, the *lateral* pressure of the ice is also very well shewn, as well as, at not a few points, its *upward* pressure on projecting rocks, the *under* side of which are well glaciated. This glaciation also extends all the way down the river Ewe and out to sea, and is exhibited at many places.

The course of the ice stream has undergone several deflections, arising chiefly from the nature of the ground. Between Gairloch and Loch Ewe it has passed increasingly from north to south, as [283] exceedingly well seen on certain exposed rock surfaces above and to the west of the road between Gairloch and Poolewe. There the glacier movement seems to have been from Loch Ewe to Gairloch, showing that the ice stream from Loch Maree had probably expanded fan-wise on its exit from the narrow glen near Inveran, where its pressure had been greatest and where its effects are so well shewn.

Another striking evidence of glacial work, and a telling proof of the existence of this mighty glacier, should be visited. This is the series of lateral moraines that lie between Loch Ewe and Loch Gruinard, more or less parallel to their coasts. They are cut across by the high road at its most elevated portion, and run interruptedly out to sea, along the peninsula between these lochs. They consist of irregular lines, more or less continuous, of rough *débris*, enclosing angular and sub-angular stones, and they mark the later boundaries of the ice-sheet which filled Loch Ewe from side to side, flowing over Eilean Ewe, out to the Minch, and glaciating the rock faces in its course, as well seen at many points between Poolewe and Inverasdale on the south, and between Poolewe and Aultbea on the north. No glacier in Scotland is more proved than the great Loch Maree glacier. The ice markings near Udrigil to the north of Loch Ewe, and beyond Inverasdale on the south, are very good, on the well-preserving red sandstone that forms these bounding rocky peninsulas. Good scratches also occur along the road between Talladale and Gairloch. At one time Craig Tollie itself had been an immense *roche moutonnée*, over which the ice sheet, here at least fifteen hundred feet thick, had triumphantly ridden.

Still another evidence of glaciation is the number of "Carried Blocks" everywhere seen, borne by the ice sheet, and dropped far from their parent rocks in the line of the ice movement. At many points, they are finely perched on conspicuous elevations, and often on the summit of the higher peaks, as well exhibited on the road between Gairloch and Poolewe, and, indeed, all over the district. But nowhere are they shown in such multitude as round the Fionn Loch, and especially from a low eminence near the stable at the foot of the loch, where they are scattered over the whole surface in surprising abundance, and look like sheep or goats in lines along the ridges, gazing on the rare intruder.

A most interesting feature connected with the glaciation of the district is the probable existence of a glacial period before the Torridon sandstone was laid down upon the Hebridean gneiss! As suggested by Archibald Geikie (*Nature*, 26th August 1880), there are evidences of ice action on the Hebridean floor on which the Torridon conglomerates were deposited, and the idea is coincided in by Dr Hicks, who also pleads for the existence of pre-Cambrian volcanoes, as well as glaciers, as exhibited round Loch Maree. Dr Hicks thinks that the immense amount of broken rocky matter necessary to form the Cambrian conglomerates was probably produced in part by pre-Cambrian glaciers, combined with sea action (*Geolog. Mag.*, Nov. 1880).

III. Denudation.—One of the most striking geological features of the district is the amount of [284] denudation to which the rocks have been subjected. Slioch itself is a splendid monument of denudation, standing, as it does, a gigantic cone, in isolated grandeur, the rocks that once reached the same altitude around him having been swept off by gigantic denuding forces, of which we have now little conception. The same denuding processes have been at work, as already remarked, on the Torridon peaks round Loch Torridon and Loch Inver. But Scotland has been subjected to extraordinary denuding forces all over its surface, from John o' Groats to Galloway; such peaks remaining as wonderful monuments both of what once existed and of what has been swept away. Other remarkable examples of denudation are given in this work. Such forces have been active since the birth of time.

IV. Rock Junctions.—In the district, there are several noteworthy junctions of the rocks of the great geological epochs deserving examination.

One has already been mentioned, that on the shore near the Free church at Gairloch, between the Torridon and the Cambrian, strikingly clear and impressive from the perfect unconformability between the two series, and their extraordinary dissimilarity in character. The composition of the breccia may here be easily examined, from its wave-worn bareness, and the fact perceived that it has been formed of pieces of the Hebridean floor immediately beneath, with foreign matters included.

Another equally remarkable junction of the same two systems, hitherto unnoticed, occurs three

miles from this one, across the Gairloch, at a beautiful spot called Shieldaig of Gairloch. Just before descending on the mansion, the road enters a narrow pass, having a steep cliff on the right. This precipice consists, in the lower portion, of the Hebridean, and in the upper, of Torridon conglomerate. The line of union, halfway up the cliff, is clear from the road, and on reaching it, you can insert your hand between the two systems and crawl along their junction. The components of the conglomerate are here much more rounded than at Gairloch. This Torridon forms an isolated patch, on both sides of the road, about a quarter of a mile in length and two or three hundred yards in breadth. It is eminently worth a visit, and is easily reached by the pedestrian.

Another striking junction, also undescribed and little known, occurs between the road and the sea, about a mile from Poolewe, not far from Tournaig. There, in a peat bog, an isolated patch of Hebridean rises to the surface, through the Torridon, which surrounds it. It is not more than three or four hundred square yards in area, and is the only gneiss in the broad expanse of Torridon sandstone, which lies on this side of Loch Ewe between Inveran and Greenstone Point. A fine conglomerate of the Torridon firmly adheres to the surface of the rough gneiss, on the outer edges of the bare Hebridean, and fills up its irregularities in a telling way.

Another junction of the same rocks occurs on a small cape formed of gneiss, called Craig an t'Shabhail, which juts into Loch Maree about a hundred yards from Inveran. There a still finer conglomerate is seen, in a thin hard layer, sticking to the surface of the gneiss, evidently the tenacious remnants of a thick bed that has been scraped off by the powerful denuding forces once so active in this region. [285]

Another capital very unconformable junction between the gneiss and the conglomerate is found on Loch Torridon, where the isolated patch of Hebridean that towers into Alligin crosses the loch and forms its Narrows. In the bed of a burn, not far from the school, and in a ridge above it, the two rocks may be easily traced in contact for a considerable distance, and the composition of the brecciated conglomerate easily examined. Similar junctions exist on both sides of this loch at the Narrows, some of them near Shieldaig of Applecross being very good,—all examined by me many years ago.

Between Gairloch and Poolewe, in a hollow to the west, just before the road rises to its summit level, a detached mass of Torridon sandstone, referred to elsewhere, may be easily observed by the traveller. It forms a thick deposit, with a bold precipitous front facing the south and east, the horizontally bedded red sandstone contrasting well with the grey gneiss that surrounds and underlies it. It also bears well-marked traces of the lateral pressure of ice on its sides next the road.

V. The Valley of the Hundred Hills.—No geologist or traveller should miss traversing the picturesque road between Kenlochewe and Loch Torridon, for its wonderful scenery of unsurpassed grandeur and loneliness, and its splendid exhibitions of the Torridon sandstone, crested by the contrasting pale Quartzite, as seen in Beinn Eay, the Grey Heads, and Liathgach. No sea loch in the Highlands is encircled by such mountain masses, mighty, mural, precipitous, and profoundly impressive.

About halfway to Torridon, on the left hand, the eye is arrested by an extraordinary, if not unique, assemblage of hillocks, closely set along the bottom of a glen which opens on the road. These are generally round and peaked, and consist of loose stony *débris*. They caught the eyes of the observing Celts of old, who named the place the Coire Cheud Cnoc, the "Corrie of a Hundred Hillocks." The explanation of their number and character seems not far to seek. It will be observed that, opposite this valley, on the right, lies the steep narrow glen that separates Liathgach from Beinn Eay. Out of this has issued an immense glacier, as proved by the abundant scratches that point into it, which pushed its ice right across the strath we are in, against the hills on the other side and up into the valley with the hillocks. As is well known, the surface of a glacier is traversed by numerous runnels, which gush over its icy front, bearing with them the *débris* that constantly falls on the glacier from its enclosing walls. These streamlets thus deposit a series of conical hummocks of this *débris*, which gradually cover the ground as the ice retreats, similar to those in the corrie in question. Examples of such glacial hillocks may be found, by the uninitiated, in the sketches of Norwegian glaciers in Campbell's "Frost and Fire." On the Liathgach glacier, the amount of detritus would be unusually large, from the steepness of the hillsides and the constant waste of the sandstone, and still more, from the superabundant *débris* of the rapidly disintegrating Quartzite in the precipitous Beinn Eay. [286]

VI. Curious Impressions on Torridon Sandstone near Talladale.—Near Loch Maree Hotel, the stream that forms the Victoria Falls runs over Torridon sandstone. A short distance above the bridge which carries the Gairloch highway over its waters, about three or four hundred yards above the falls, and just beside the last of a succession of lesser falls, on the left bank of the stream, there exists a flat bed of sandstone, some sixteen feet square, on which occur certain remarkable impressions which deserve attention. These were first noticed by the late Mr Walter Carruthers of the *Inverness Courier*, who directed my attention to them, and published some account of them, along with observations made by me regarding them (July 1, 1880), of which the following is a summary:—

The most distinct of the impressions consists of two continuous flat bands side by side, 1¼ to 1½

inch broad and about a quarter of an inch deep, running quite straight across the flat layers of sandstone *in situ*, and perfectly distinct for sixteen feet, disappearing on the west side under the superincumbent rock, and broken only where portions of the sandstone have been weathered out. In some places, a third line runs alongside, but this is much less distinct and persistent. The double band resembles nothing more nearly than the hollow impression that would be left by double bars of iron neatly inserted in the rock for clasping some structure on it, if the iron were subsequently removed. The bands, when narrowly looked into, consist of very fine, close, hair-lines, continuous and parallel to their sides, resembling very minute striæ left by glaciation, and they look as if caused by some object drawn along the original red sand, before it became the present indurated rock.

A similar double line runs parallel to this one, about two feet lower down, seven feet long; and a third parallel double line occurs on the upper side, three feet long,—both of the same breadth as the first. Besides those pointed out by Mr Carruthers, which occur on the same flat of sandstone, other lines exist farther down, on the other side of the pool below this rocky flat, on a similar bed of sandstone, part of the same layer,—one three feet in length, another six feet, running more or less parallel to those above. Indications of others may also be seen, and, no doubt, several more may be discovered on more careful examination.

What they are I can scarcely even surmise, having seen nothing of the *same* kind elsewhere. They do suggest the possibility of their being the indentations of the caudal appendage of some huge creature, similar to the hollow tail lines between the footprints on the sandstone at Tarbatness and along the shores of Morayshire,—a suggestion strengthened by the fact of the existence, on both sides of the line, of numerous rounded hollow marks, very like the footprints on these [287]
reptiliferous rocks, occuring, as in them, at intervals. But the continuous even breadth and square section of the lines would seem to render this impossible. They might be the depressions left on the soft sand by the hinder portions of the shell of some huge crustacean,—a more likely cause, rendered more probable by the existence of very good ripple marks on the same sandstone, in the same and neighbouring layers. The striæ-like lines of which the grooves consist would seem to point to some moving agent, organic or physical. They may, however, be the casts or impressions of some great land reed or sea fucoid, the hair-lines being the marks of the fine flutings on its stem or the parallel veins of its leaves. It would be desirable to have the superincumbent layer of rock carefully removed where the bands in question disappear under the upper rock, in order to shed more light on the nature of the strange marks. Whatever they are, they certainly deserve the careful attention of geologists. Dr Heddle, who has examined them since 1880, is of opinion that they are not in any way connected with organisms, but are due to mineralogical and structural causes, but he has not yet published his views.

VII. The Fionn and Dubh Loch.—This double loch is remarkable, and eminently worth visiting, not only for its scenery, elsewhere described, but also for its geology. Both lakes are enclosed in Hebridean gneiss, which here very powerfully exhibits its usual characteristics, reaching its highest in the picturesque peak of Coire Chaoruinn, above the centre of the loch. The Torridon sandstone appears on Ruadh Stac or Red Peak, which bears an appropriate title, and possibly on the very crown of the Maiden. The pale rock which catches the eye from far on the front of Craig an Dubh Loch, at the head of the Fionn Loch, is a remarkable species of granite, known by the French term Pegmatite, which consists of quartz and felspar, often with small quantities of silvery mica. It abounds in the Hebridean gneiss in other parts of the west coast, but in our district, it is comparatively little developed except at the Dubh Loch, where it also appears on the Maiden's shoulders, and on Carn Bhan or the White Cairn, to which it gives name. It should be examined on the great cliff of Craig an Dubh Loch, where it traverses its face and head in serpentine lines and masses, like injected lava. The rare mineral epidote is also found here, and near the top of Beinn a Chaisgean, on the north shore of the lake.

The smaller upper part of the loch is almost entirely separated from the lower, and forms an Alpine chamber, strongly contrasting with the rest in form, feature, colour, and surroundings, which has given rise to its most appropriate name of the Dubh or Black Loch. This loch is an excellent example—none better—of a moraine-dammed lake, being held in by an uncommonly pronounced moraine, which marks the last boundary of the ancient glacier that filled its deep pot. This moraine begins on the left side, under the grand cliff of Craig an Dubh Loch, curves finely round the lower end of the Dubh Loch, crosses the loch to the other side, forming in its passage the narrow waist that separates the two lakes, and then runs along two-thirds of the [288]
Dubh Loch till it gets lost in the general rubbish of the hills, the path to Loch Broom which crosses the causeway taking advantage of its terraced line for some distance. The moraine consists of a long circular ridge of loose *débris*, enclosing large protruding blocks, having a general height of from twenty to thirty feet, with steep sides, like a kaim or esker, and considerable breadth. It is quite continuous, except for three hundred yards at the union of the lakes, where it has been cut through to water-level, but descends so little below the surface that stepping-stones, forming a causeway, are carried across the strait. On the north side, the moraine widens greatly, and encloses a lochan, beyond which rises an isolated steep hill, Carn na Paite, some three hundred feet high, which has formed a huge *roche moutonnée*. Over this the ice of the old glacier has passed, and smoothed it, the same ice having crushed and striated the steep front of Craig an Dubh Loch, on the other side of the glen.

Other telling proofs are apparent all round of the more general glaciation of Scotland, when it was a veritable Greenland, with a huge ice sheet enveloping mountain and glen, in the numerous

perched blocks placed in most striking positions. One large boulder is set right on the very head of Scuir a Laocainn. Others crest the surface of Carn Bhan and the Maiden, and give the sky-line of their summits the appearance of a broken-toothed saw, so numerous are these deposits of the great ice sheet of the severer Glacial Period. The remarkable gathering of blocks seen from the lower end of Fionn Loch has already been noted, and the height near the stable there should certainly be climbed to view them. The jutting capes and islands, as well as many exposed surfaces on the way back to Poolewe, all tell the same tale.

VIII. The Trias at Loch Gruinard.—Another series of rocks—the comparatively recent Trias—may be seen by the traveller not far from Loch Maree, on Loch Gruinard, some miles to the north of the moraines already described. On the way to Aultbea, the road rises to a considerable height above Loch Ewe, and overlooks its waters. Here, from the Torridon sandstone, a magnificent view may be had of the whole remarkable country, with its striking scenery and interesting geology, exhibited at a glance. In front, stretches a rolling plateau of the bare Hebridean gneiss, which attains its greatest altitude in the graceful Maiden and her powerful fellows at the head of the Fionn Loch, and in the pointed Beinn Aridh Charr, Beinn Lair, and Beinn Alligin. Beyond, rise the dark domes of the Torridon Red, in Slioch and his compeers; and then the bright peaks of the Quartzite, in the shining Beinn Eay and other mountains, the Quartzite being seen finely cresting masses of the lower red sandstone. Behind these, stretch the undulating hills of the Eastern gneiss far into the background of the wonderful picture.

On the shore of Loch Gruinard, to the east and west of where the road touches the loch, are found two isolated patches of the Lower Trias, the lowest of the Mesozoic series, and the second above the Carboniferous. This Trias is the second rarest series in the Hebrides,—rarer than the [289] next strata, the Lias and Oolite of Skye, Mull and Brora, and than even the Cretaceous or Chalk, on the shores of Mull and Morven. The only rarer, if not unique, rock in the Hebrides is the one patch of Carboniferous on the tide line of Ardtornish in Morven, opposite Oban.

The Trias here consists chiefly of a thick-bedded sandstone of uncommon redness, which recalls the bright tints of the Old Red of Fochabers and the Permian of Dumfries. It is well exhibited in cliffs and reefs along the shore, by breccias and conglomerates, thin shales, yellow and greenish sandstones and flags, and concretionary limestone.

These Triassic rocks extend for about three miles, from Sand, on the east, to a point beyond Udrigil House, on the west. They are continuous, except near Udrigil, where the Torridon sandstone that encloses them comes to the surface. They are reckoned to be about a thousand feet thick. No fossils have as yet been found in them, but their age has otherwise been satisfactorily determined.

These rocks are extraordinarily interesting. They are the most northerly examples of the Secondary Geological Period on the west coast, and they form an isolated fragment of the deposits of this period, which once extended from Gruinard to the Ross of Mull to a depth of over a thousand feet, and which have been entirely swept away by enormous denuding forces, except at a few scattered points. Their protection has, in all cases, except at Gruinard, been due to being covered by volcanic outbursts on the grandest scale, which took place in the late Tertiary Period, and mainly formed the beautiful islands of Skye and Mull. At Gruinard, they were preserved from destruction by enormous faulting, by which they were dropped down at least a thousand feet into the Torridon Red. They are represented on the east coast of Sutherland, and, according to Professor Judd, by the famous reptiliferous sandstones of Elgin.[10]

Chapter X.

Minerals of Gairloch.

By Professor W. Ivison Macadam, F.C.S., F.I.C., M.M.S., &c., Edinburgh.

The following minerals were obtained in the localities mentioned, but the list is very incomplete. Time has not permitted of analyses being made of many samples, but such are now under examination, and will be available for a further edition of this work:—

Agalmatolite—Black Rock, Tollie.
Albite feldspar—Loch Fionn.
Agaric limestone—Coppachy. [290]
Agate—Tollie Rock.
Barytes—Black Rock, Tollie.
Biotite—Loch Fionn.
Calcite—Black Rock, Tollie, &c.
Chalcedony—Glen Logan, &c.
Chalcopyrite—Coppachy.
Chlorite—Loch Gruinard, &c.

Dolomite—Glen Logan, Slioch, &c.
Epidote—Loch Fionn, Tollie Rock.
Galenite—Glen Logan limestone.
Garnet—Loch Fionn.
Heliotrope, or Bloodstone—Glen Logan, &c.
Hornblende—Loch Gruinard, Loch Fionn, &c.
Limestone (Massive)—Glen Logan, &c.
Limonite (Bog iron ore)—South Erradale, &c. &c.
Marcasite—Glen Logan, Coppachy, &c.
Muscovite—Loch Fionn, &c.
Oligoclase feldspar—Loch Fionn, &c. &c.
Pyrite—Glen Logan, Coppachy, &c.
Pyrolusite (Dendritic markings)—Loch Fionn.
Quartz—Common.
Quartzite (common)—Glen Logan, &c.
Rock crystal—Black Rock, Tollie (small crystals).
Serpentine—Black Rock, Tollie.
Smoke quartz—Tollie Rock.

PART IV.

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Guide to Gairloch and Loch Maree.

NOTE.

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In addition to the references to preceding Chapters given in this Part, the reader is recommended to consult the Index for other references to pages where the various places and persons noticed have been previously mentioned.

Chapter I.

[293]

Gairloch of the Present Day.

There is no town, in the ordinary acceptation of the term, in the parish of Gairloch, and there is no village that, properly speaking, bears the name of Gairloch. Of villages or townships there are about thirty-four. They contain the greater part of the population of the parish, which according to the census of 1881 numbered 4594. Many of these villages are so small that in the

lowlands they would only be termed hamlets. They have no separate legal existence as villages or townships; but in those which are townships there is a bond of union, in so far as the crofter inhabitants have their hill pasture in common, and club together for the purpose of herding their cattle and sheep thereon.

All these villages are on the sea coast except the five first named. They are as follows:—

Near the head of Loch Maree—Kenlochewe.
On the north-east side of Loch Maree—Coppachy, Innis Ghlas, and Fuirneis.
On the south-west side of Loch Maree—Talladale.
At the south-west extremity of the parish—Diabaig (part of).
On the south or south-west side of Gairloch (the sea loch)—South Erradale, Openham (or Opinan), Port Henderson, Bad a Chrotha (Badachro), and Charlestown.
On the north side of Gairloch—Gairloch (the hotel, Free church, &c.), Achtercairn, Strath (including Smithstown, Upper and Lower Mioll, and Lonmor), Sand (or Big Sand), North Erradale, and Melvaig.
On the west side of Loch Ewe—Cove, Meallan na Ghamhna (Stirkhill), Inverasdale (including Midtown, Brae, Coast, and Firemore), Naast, and Poolewe (including Londubh).
On the east side of Loch Ewe—Aultbea (including Tighnafaoilinn), Badfearn, Buaile na luib, Ormiscaig, Mellon Charles, and Slaggan.
On the west side of the Bay of Gruinard—Oban, Mellon Udrigil, Laide, Sand, First Coast, and Second Coast.

There are the following churches in the parish of Gairloch:—

Of the Church of Scotland (Established) at—
(1) Gairloch, the parish church; (2) Poolewe, the church of the *quoad sacra* (or ecclesiastical) parish of Poolewe.
Of the Free Church of Scotland at— [294]
(1) Kenlochewe; (2) Gairloch; (3) Poolewe (meeting-house); (4) Aultbea; (5) North Erradale (meeting-house); and (6) Opinan (mission church).

Gairloch is one undivided civil parish, but has been divided for ecclesiastical purposes by the erection of Poolewe into a *quoad sacra* (or ecclesiastical) parish.

The minister of the parish of Gairloch is the Rev. Duncan S. Mackenzie, of the manse at Strath of Gairloch, and he officiates at the parish church at Gairloch.

The minister of the Poolewe *quoad sacra* parish is incapacitated, and his duties are performed by an assistant-minister. The *quoad sacra* parish of Poolewe includes the west side of Loch Ewe, the east side of Loch Maree, the River Ewe, and Loch Ewe, and all places in Gairloch parish lying to the east of Loch Ewe. It extends along the north-east side of Loch Maree as far as Fuirneis, Letterewe. The rest of the parish of Gairloch is attached to the old parish church of Gairloch. Gairloch is in the Presbytery of Loch Carron and Synod of Glenelg.

There are two Free Church ministers, viz., the Rev. John Baillie, who officiates at the Gairloch Free church, and at Opinan and North Erradale, and who resides at the Gairloch Free Church manse; and the Rev. Ronald Dingwall, who officiates at the Aultbea and Poolewe Free churches, and resides at the Aultbea Free manse. Mr Baillie has the assistance of Mr John Mackenzie, of Melvaig, as catechist; and Mr Dingwall is assisted by Mr William Urquhart, of Cove, as catechist. A catechist can conduct ordinary services, just as a minister can. Mr Dingwall also officiates occasionally in a room in the old schoolhouse at Inverasdale, and in the caves at Cove and Sand, as well as in rooms at Mellon Udrigil and Slaggan.

The parishes or districts attached to the Free churches, are the same as those of the Established churches.

A Free Church minister is provided at intervals, as can be arranged, for the church at Kenlochewe, but there is no manse.

There are ten and a half schools in the parish of Gairloch, all conducted by certificated teachers. They are situated at Kenlochewe, Achtercairn, Opinan, Big Sand, Melvaig, Poolewe, Inverasdale, Buaile na luib, Laide, Mellon Udrigil, and Diabaig, where the school is shared with the parish of Applecross.

The School Board of Gairloch has the management of these schools, and consists of nine members, who meet periodically at Poolewe, with the Rev. John Baillie as chairman. Mr John Ross, of Strath, and Mr Mackenzie, of the post-office, Aultbea, are the officers appointed by the School Board for looking after the attendance of the children.

Mr James Mackintosh, postmaster, Poolewe, who is clerk of the School Board, has furnished me with the following information regarding the ten principal schools in Gairloch relating to the year 1884:—

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School.	Numbers of Scholars	
	On the Rolls.	In average attendance.

Kenlochewe	35	27
Opinan	53	36
Achtercairn	107	55
Sand	40	26
Melvaig	60	51
Inverasdale	89	66
Poolewe	34	21
Buaile na luib	97	63
Laide	55	33
Mellon Udrigil	55	30
	—	—
Totals	625	408

Besides the above about twenty Gairloch children attend the school at Diabaig.

The following are the present teachers of the ten schools:—Kenlochewe, Miss Maclean; Opinan, Mr A. Nicolson; Achtercairn, Mr M. Lamont; Sand, Mr J. Mackenzie; Melvaig, Mr J. MacRae; Inverasdale, Mr J. Maclennan; Poolewe, Miss Ferguson; Buaile na luib, Mr H. Murray; Laide, Mr H. Macleod; Mellon Udrigil, Miss Johanna Mackenzie.

Mr Mackintosh tells me that the number of scholars in all the school districts of Gairloch is decreasing, with the exception of Achtercairn, and perhaps Inverasdale. At the commencement of the Education Act in Gairloch, the number of children of school age for whom accommodation was then provided was 850.

There are also what are termed side-schools at Letterewe and Slaggan, for a few children at each of those places whose homes are at a considerable distance from any board school. The school-rate is one shilling and sixpence in the pound.

Those who are acquainted with the working of schools in the south, will consider the average attendance at the Gairloch schools rather meagre as compared with the numbers on the rolls; but allowance must be made for the great distances between the homes of the children and the schools, for the rough roads or tracks some of the children have to travel, and for the stormy weather, especially in winter.

Notwithstanding these difficulties several of the teachers succeed in passing 98 per cent. of the scholars they present at the annual examinations by Her Majesty's inspectors, and the average percentage of passes is about 80 per cent.

Mr Malcolm Lamont, Achtercairn, is registrar of births, deaths, and marriages for the parish of Gairloch.

Pauperism is too prevalent in the West Highlands. There are on the Gairloch roll of paupers one hundred and thirty-eight persons receiving parochial relief, viz., forty-six males and ninety-two females, besides fifty-three dependants, such as children, who are relieved along with the [296] paupers. There are also six lunatics boarded at home, and nine in the joint-asylum at Inverness. The other paupers are relieved at home. The total outlay on these paupers, dependants, and lunatics was £1172. 14s. 10d. for the year ended Whitsunday 1886. The poor-rate is one shilling and tenpence in the pound, half of which is paid by the proprietor and half by the tenant. The poor-rate is administered by the Parochial Board, which includes the proprietors of the parish or their representatives and certain elected members. Mr Mackintosh is the inspector of poor for the parish, and has kindly given me the particulars here stated. Dr F. A. M'Ewen, who resides at Moss Bank, Poolewe, is the only general practitioner in the parish. He receives a fixed salary for medical attendance on the paupers of the parish. He is a duly qualified surgeon and physician. Dr Robertson is likewise a registered medical practitioner.

There is one highroad in the parish, viz., that which leads from Achnasheen, down Glen Dochartie, past Kenlochewe and Talladale, on to Gairloch, and thence forward to Poolewe and Aultbea, where it terminates. It has a branch from Kenlochewe towards Torridon. It is a county road, and is entirely maintained by the county, the cost being defrayed by an assessment averaging about fivepence in the pound. This road is generally kept in fair order by the local contractor. All other roads are private estate roads, maintained by the proprietors, with certain contributions from their tenants.

There are but two policemen in the parish, the one stationed at Achtercairn, the other at Aultbea. There is a lock-up with two cells at Achtercairn. There is little crime in Gairloch. The few offences are due either to the temporary presence of workpeople from other places, or to the too free use of the ardent spirits obtained at the licensed houses.

Several justices of the peace reside in Gairloch parish, but they seldom hold courts. When they have business they meet at Poolewe. Ordinary misdemeanours are tried by the sheriff at Dingwall.

There are six licensed houses in the parish, viz., the hotels or inns at Kenlochewe, Talladale (the Loch Maree Hotel), Gairloch, Poolewe, and Aultbea, and the small public-house at Cadha Beag in Fisherfield Bay, at the northern extremity of the parish. The hotels are described in their places in the Guide. The license to Luibmhor inn has been discontinued.

There is a daily post, conveyed by Mr M'Iver's mail-car, from Achnasheen to Gairloch, and thence, by a smaller mail-car, also daily, to Poolewe and Aultbea. Letters are conveyed by runners three days a week to the villages on the north and south sides of the Bay of Gairloch and on the west side of Loch Ewe. There is also a runner who takes the post-bags three days a week (in winter, only two days a week) to the villages between Aultbea and Gruinard. Mr M'Iver's mail-cars leave and collect post-bags and parcels at all the villages and places along the line of the county road.

The telegraph to Stornoway runs alongside of the county road to Poolewe, and thence for six miles along the shore of Loch Ewe to Firemore, where it becomes submarine. There is a supplemental wire serving Kenlochewe, Talladale, and Gairloch, to and from which places, as well as to and from Poolewe, telegrams may be regularly transmitted. [297]

The carrier of Messrs Wordie, of Edinburgh, conveys goods from Achnasheen to Kenlochewe and Torridon in the first half of each week, and from Achnasheen to Gairloch and intermediate places in the second half of each week.

The bank at Gairloch, a branch of the Caledonian Bank, is a substantial building, a little to the north of Charlestown, and nearly a mile from the Gairloch Hotel. Mr Alexander Burgess is the manager.

There are cattle markets held twice a year at Gairloch and Aultbea, and once a year at Kenlochewe and Tollie; they are of little more than local importance.

One or two members of the preventive service are stationed at Gairloch; their chief work is to detect illicit distillation.

Mr David Macbrayne, of Glasgow, provides a service of steamers on the west coast. One of his large steamers, with cargo and passengers, calls every Saturday at Gairloch, Poolewe, and Aultbea. In summer there is a regular service of swift steamers to or from Oban, and to and from Portree in Skye.

Mr Hornsby's little steamer the *Mabel* plies on Loch Maree during the summer months.

Full particulars of these steamers are to be had at the hotels; and Mr Alexander Burgess of the bank, who is agent for Mr Macbrayne, is always ready to supply every information.

A company of rifle volunteers was organised by Mr Alexander Burgess (who was the first lieutenant) in 1867, and is still in a flourishing condition. Sir Kenneth Mackenzie was captain for nearly fifteen years, and was succeeded in the command by Mr Burgess, who, on his retirement from the corps in 1883, was permitted, after his long service of sixteen years, to retain his rank of captain. The present officers are, the writer as captain, and Mr Malcolm Lamont and Mr Anthony MacClymont as lieutenants. The sergeants are as follows:—Colour-Sergeant Alexander Macpherson, Opinan; Sergeant Roderick Macintyre, Strath; Sergeant John Maclennan, Inverasdale; and Sergeant Alexander Bain, Lonmor. The corps includes a number of fine tall men; the right-hand man stands six feet four inches in his stockings, and a number of the rank and file are fully six feet in height. The pipers are Mr A. Mackenzie, Mr W. Maclennan, and Mr W. Boa. The company is worked in three separate sections, viz., the headquarters section at Achtercairn, the "south-side" section at Opinan, and the Poolewe section. The sections meet occasionally for combined drill during the spring months. The disused schoolhouse at Achtercairn has been granted by Sir Kenneth Mackenzie, Bart. of Gairloch, at a nominal rent, for an armoury and drill-hall. There is a good drill-shed at Opinan, and the Poolewe Public Hall is hired for drills there. There are rifle ranges at each of the three centres. Each section has its annual shooting competition, the prizes being mostly provided by subscription, to which the gentlemen in the neighbourhood handsomely contribute. Besides money prizes, there are an antique challenge cup presented by Mr Bateson of Shieldaig, and a challenge cross given by Mrs Burgess, which are competed for periodically. [298]

The principal houses in the parish of Gairloch are the Kenlochewe Lodge, Flowerdale House, Shieldaig Lodge, Pool House, Inverewe House, Tournaig, Drumchork House, Inveran, Ardlair House, and Letterewe House. Flowerdale House is occupied part of the year by Sir Kenneth S. Mackenzie, Bart. of Gairloch. It was built in 1738 by Sir Alexander Mackenzie, Bart., the ninth laird of Gairloch; it is an interesting old house, and has a curious façade (*see* *frontispiece*). Its gardens contain some plants which exemplify the general mildness of the west coast winters. Flowerdale is usually let with shootings for the shooting season, from 12th August till the end of October. Inverewe House is the beautiful residence of Mr Osgood H. Mackenzie, situated in the north corner of the bay at the head of Loch Ewe. It is also usually let for the shooting season, and sometimes, with angling, for the spring and summer. Kenlochewe, Shieldaig, and Drumchork are also shooting-lodges, but Mr C. E. Johnston lives at Drumchork House during a greater part of the year than the ordinary shooting season. The Dowager Lady Mackenzie of Gairloch resides at Tournaig; and the writer at Inveran. Mr and Mrs Liot Bankes have erected a spacious mansion, with extremely lovely prospects, at Ardlair, beneath the cliffs of Beinn Aridh Charr. Mr Charles Perkins, the lessee of the Fisherfield deer forest, has enlarged the old house at Letterewe, where he resides during the shooting season, and he has erected a shooting-lodge near the head of the Fionn Loch. Sir Thomas Edwards Moss, Bart., is the lessee of Pool House, at Poolewe, which has been enlarged, and he rents shootings along with it.

Of other houses mention may be made of Kerrysdale, an old house, which has been frequently occupied by a younger brother or by a son of the laird of Gairloch. There is a roomy house at

Carn Dearg, about three miles from the Gairloch Hotel. It was erected by Mr George Corson, of Leeds, and commands a fine view of the bay of Gairloch and the Minch with its islands. It is remarkable for its high-pitched and red-tiled roof. The old house on Isle Ewe is occupied by Mr William Reid, the farmer. The farmhouse at Slatadale is a modern building. The Established Church manses at Gairloch and Poolewe, and the Free Church manses at Gairloch and Aultbea, are substantial houses.

There is at Poolewe a building used as a public hall. It comprises a reading and recreation room, which is available for meetings, and though comparatively small is sufficient for the population. It was opened on 12th February 1884 by a meeting, at which Mr Osgood H. Mackenzie presided. It contains accommodation for a caretaker, and it is intended to provide an additional recreation room. The profits, if any, of this book are to be devoted to this little institution.

Chapter II.

[299]

Approaches and Roads.

There are four approaches to Gairloch by road.

1. From Achnasheen.

This is indeed the mode of entering Gairloch by road most generally adopted. The traveller usually reaches Achnasheen by rail. No time-tables will be given in this book. Trains, steamers, and mail-cars run at different times, and those times are liable to continual variations. The traveller should consult the printed time-bills issued from time to time, and which may always be seen at the hotels. The route from Achnasheen is described in our next chapter. It has many advantages. It avoids the uncertainties of a sea-voyage, and is worked in connection with the trains on the Highland Railway.

2. From Loch Carron.

A new road has been made from Achnashellach, leading from the main Loch Carron road through the Coulin forest, past Loch Coulin, to Kenlochewe. This road is strictly private. It passes through magnificent scenery, but as it is not available to the ordinary tourist it is not necessary to describe it here.

3. From Loch Torridon.

There is a road from Loch Torridon (described in Part IV., chap. viii.) by which Kenlochewe may be reached. This road enters Gairloch parish about six miles from Kenlochewe. Drive from Strathcarron to Shieldaig of Applecross, where there is a humble inn, and proceed thence on foot, or horseback, or by boat to the head of Loch Torridon. There is a right-of-way up the loch side to Torridon, and part of it is a good road. There is no difficulty in procuring a boat at Shieldaig. This approach to Gairloch not only includes the scenery of Glen Torridon, but also that of Glen Shieldaig, which is very fine, and well worth seeing. The route is strongly recommended. There is no hotel at Torridon, nor is there any service of steamers into Loch Torridon. Those travelling in a yacht will find it a pleasant expedition to visit Loch Maree and the adjacent parts of Gairloch from Loch Torridon. All who enter Gairloch by this route must walk from Torridon to Kenlochewe, unless conveyances have been previously ordered to meet them at Torridon.

4. From Gruinard and the North.

The estate road between Gruinard and Aultbea having now been rendered passable by carriages, there is no reason why it should not be used as a means of ingress or egress to or from Gairloch parish. The principal difficulty in the way is, that there is no bridge over the Meikle Gruinard [300] river, and it cannot always be forded. A minor difficulty, not however of much importance, is that a quarter of a mile of private road between the ford on that river and the commencement of the county road near Gruinard House is in a very bad state. The best method of using this route as an approach to Gairloch, is either to walk it, taking the ferry-boat across the Meikle Gruinard river, or else to drive to that river in a conveyance hired from Garve or from the Dundonell Inn at the head of Loch Broom, and to have another conveyance from the river to Aultbea, Poolewe, or Gairloch, as may be desired,—the second conveyance to be ordered beforehand from the hotel at one of the last named places. The distances are given in the "Tables of distances." Of course if this route be selected for leaving Gairloch, the conveyance for the road north of Gruinard must be ordered beforehand. The route from Garve need not be described here. The last part lies over Fain Mor, or Feithean Mor, to Dundonell and Little Loch Broom, and thence forward to Gruinard. The road from Gruinard to Aultbea is described in Part IV., chap. xii. When a bridge is erected over the Meikle Gruinard river this route will no doubt become popular. It reveals some grand scenery.

Besides these approaches by road there is Mr David Macbrayne's service of west coast steamers, by which a large number of tourists arrive at and depart from the Gairloch pier during each summer. Gairloch is reached from Oban in one day, and the arrangements are so complete that you may even visit Skye from Gairloch and have eight hours in that interesting island, returning the same day. I have myself done this.

There is an approach to Gairloch which is sometimes adopted, and has its charms in settled weather. It is to take a boat from Ullapool to Laide, where, by previous arrangement, a conveyance may meet the traveller from one of the inns or hotels in Gairloch parish, of which Aultbea is the nearest. Of course this route may be also used as an egress from Gairloch, by previously arranging for a boat to be ready at Laide. With a favourable breeze the part of the journey on the water is delightful, to those who are good sailors, affording as it does magnificent views of the mountainous coast and of the Summer Isles. The great drawback is the uncertainty. I remember once leaving Aultbea, after an early breakfast, walking to Laide, and owing to a dead calm not reaching Ullapool until 9 p.m.

The pedestrian who is able to take advantage of the rougher roads not traversable by carriage, and the canoeist who, in summer weather, can explore any part of the coast at his pleasure, will find other means of entering Gairloch. Our map will shew all that is needed.

The roads within the parish of Gairloch are named in the "Tables of distances," which state also their condition. The main road from Achnasheen to Kenlochewe, Talladale, Gairloch, Poolewe, and Aultbea, which is maintained by the county, is usually in a good state of repair, and even the man on wheels—the bicyclist or tricyclist —will find this road yields him easy running. The great [301] drawback is the steep hills, or "braes" as they are called, which have to be surmounted. These are for the most part unavoidable, though in one or two cases the gradients might be still further improved. The estate and private roads are also generally kept in good order. They are included in the "Tables of distances," which specify the parts where carriages will find it rough travelling.

Loch Maree is itself a sort of highway, and boats may generally be hired at Kenlochewe, Talladale, or Poolewe to traverse its length. But now that the little steamer plies on Loch Maree the tour of the loch is greatly facilitated. (See Part IV., chap. xiii.)

Chapter III.

Achnasheen to Kenlochewe.

The parish of Gairloch communicates with the great railway system of the kingdom at Achnasheen; the nearest part of the parish is about four miles from the railway station.

The Dingwall and Skye Railway was opened about 1870, and is now a branch of the Highland Railway. Before 1870 the Gairloch mail-car started from the Dingwall railway station. The mail-car was worked at that time, as now, by Mr Murdo M'Iver, the much-respected and courteous landlord of the Achnasheen Hotel. At this hotel the traveller may obtain refreshments *en passant*, or may linger awhile. Notice the luxuriant growth of the lovely scarlet creeper *Tropæolum speciosum*, on the hotel. The mail-car leaves Achnasheen for Gairloch soon after the arrival of the morning train from the south. In the height of the tourist season it is safest to bespeak seats on the car. More luxurious tourists may hire open or close conveyances from Mr M'Iver, whose postal address is "Achnasheen, by Dingwall." The name Achnasheen means "the field of storms," and is generally allowed to be appropriate. The obliging station-master may be relied upon to remedy as far as he can any of those casualties which frequently occur to travellers in the tourist season, who sometimes move about with an unnecessary amount of luggage.

To most people it is an agreeable change to lose sight of the railway, a consummation which is achieved a few minutes after you leave the Achnasheen Hotel. Over the bridge on the left goes the road to Strath Carron. Beyond the bridge is the Ledgowan shooting lodge, formerly the hotel. Notice here the wonderful straight terraces, resembling very closely great railway embankments. Geologists differ about their origin; they look like moraines of ancient glaciers or ancient sea-banks, broken through by the now small river from Loch Rosque, which must have had larger volume at some remote date. On the left we pass the old Loch Rosque lodge, and on the right the new one. Near the roadside, below the new lodge, are to be seen quantities of iron slag, the [302] evidences of ancient iron-smelting. Similar remains of ironworks may also be observed by the roadside near the other end of Loch Rosque. These old ironworks belong to the ancient class treated of in Part I., chap. xvii. Loch Rosque is over three miles long, and is placed on our list of Gairloch lochs, inasmuch as its western end juts into the parish. Observe on the other side of the loch pieces of detached walls, erected to enable sheep to shelter from the cutting winds which often sweep through this glen. Most travellers get rather tired of Loch Rosque, yearning as they naturally do for the superior attractions of Loch Maree. A small burn near the west end of Loch Rosque is the boundary of Gairloch parish. Just after passing it is a cottage, and near it stands a square upright stone. The stone is called Clach an t' Shagart, or "the stone of the priest." The place is called Bad a Mhanaich, or "the monk's grove." It seems there was here a settlement of

some of the early pioneers of Christianity. They say that baptisms were conducted at the Clach an t' Shagart. The name of Loch Rosque itself is believed by many to signify "the loch of the cross." (See "Glossary.")

After passing the Gairloch boundary there is another humble dwelling (lately a licensed house), called Luibmhor. It suggests what the inn at Kenlochewe must have been in the old days as described in Pennant's "Tour" (Appendix B). On the green at the head of the loch was the original Luibmhor Inn, the scene of the incident called "The watch of Glac na Sguithar," related on page 51.

The road now ascends; gradually the eastern hills pass out of sight; the rugged mountains of Coulin and Kenlochewe are in view during the drive along Loch Rosque; then they also disappear. At this part of the journey I always think of what occurred to myself some years ago. I was on the mail-car, traversing this road in the reverse direction. Near me sat a tourist, a clergyman of the English Church, who had amused himself during the preceding part of the journey by inquiring the name of every hill and place we passed. As soon as the mountain called Scuir a Mhuilin, to the south of Strath Braan, eastward of Achnasheen, came in sight, he asked me its name. I told him. When we got near Achnasheen he again inquired the name of the same hill, which now seemed larger and grander, and I again told him. Half an hour later he came up to me on the platform of the Achnasheen station, and asked quite seriously if I could tell him "the name of that hill." I said with some emphasis, "Scuir a Mhuilin!" I am bound to admit that the reverend gentleman tendered a humble apology for his unconscious repetition of the inquiry. Whether he remembered the name of the mountain I know not. There is no good to be gained by stating the name of every hill we notice.

Soon after leaving Loch Rosque a curious hill is seen away to the left, which is said in all the guide-books to resemble the profile of a man's face looking skywards, and by a stretch of the imagination any traveller may arrive at the same conclusion.

The ascending road now tends to the right. Near its extreme height an improvement in the line of [303]
the road was effected about 1874. The original piece of road is visible a little above to the right. It is a pity some other Gairloch roads are not similarly improved.

At the head of the watershed, 804 feet above the sea-level, we enter Glen Dochartie, a truly wild Highland glen. Its stern character is greatly relieved by the exquisite distant view of Loch Maree, half-way down which, at a distance of about twelve miles from the spectator, Isle Maree may easily be discerned. There used to be a very good well just below the road at the head of the glen; the water still flows at the place, but the well is covered by the new road; this was formerly a favourite trysting-place of the Gairloch and Loch Broom men when they went out to lie in wait for the Lochaber cattle-lifters. Glen Dochartie, and the Great Black Corrie in Glen Torridon, were the entrances to Gairloch from the south and east. (See stories in Part I., chap. xiii.) Glen Dochartie has many attractions, especially in the great variety of colouring on both sides. Perhaps it is best seen on the return journey by this route. On the right is Carn a Ghlinne (1770 feet), and on the left Bidein Clann Raonaild (1529 feet). There are remains of ancient ironworks near the head and at the foot of the glen (Part I., chap. xx). We travel rapidly down the glen, passing at the foot of it, to the right, the farm of Bruachaig. Shortly before finishing this stage Meall a Ghuibhais and Beinn Eighe (or Eay), come into view, the latter being perhaps the most effective mountain, from an artistic point of view, in the kingdom. Leaving the Kenlochewe shooting-lodge to the right, and crossing the bridge over the River Garbh, we pull up at the hotel at

Kenlochewe.

The name of this place is in Gaelic Ceann-loch-iu. It signifies the head of Loch Ewe, by which name Loch Maree was called in the seventeenth century. Hugh Miller, in that interesting book "My Schools and Schoolmasters," says:—"The name—that of an old farm which stretches out along the *head* or upper end of Loch Maree—has a remarkable etymology; it means simply the head of Loch Ewe, the salt-water loch into which the waters of Loch Maree empty themselves, by a river little more than a mile in length, and whose present *head* is some sixteen or twenty miles distant from the farm which bears its name. Ere that last elevation of the land, however, to which our country owes the level marginal strip that stretches between the present coast line and the ancient one, the sea must have found its way to the old farm. Loch Maree, a name of mediæval origin, would then have existed as a prolongation of the marine Loch Ewe, and *Kenlochewe* would have actually been what the compound words signify,—the head of Loch Ewe. There seems to be reason for holding that ere the latest elevation of the land took place in our island, it had received its first human inhabitants,—rude savages, who employed tools and weapons of stone, and fashioned canoes out of single logs of wood. Are we to accept etymologies such as the instanced one—and there are several such in the Highlands—as good in evidence that these aboriginal savages were of the Celtic race, and that Gaelic was spoken in Scotland at a time when [304]
its strips of grassy links, and the sites of many of its seaport towns, such as Leith, Greenock, Musselburgh, and Cromarty, existed as oozy sea-beaches, covered twice every day by the waters of the ocean?"

Kenlochewe is a thoroughly Highland village, with its shooting-lodge, hotel, church, school, smithy, and not far away the old burial-ground of Culinellan. The village is beautifully placed, near the head of the level strath which spreads south-eastward from the head of Loch Maree. It comes in for a good deal of rain, being the centre at which four glens meet, viz., Glen Cruaidh

Choillie (often erroneously called Glen Logan), Glen Dochartie, Glen Torridon, and the great glen of Loch Maree. The shooting-lodge is surrounded by a well-grown plantation; and other younger plantations are growing up near the village. The hotel is exceedingly comfortable, and visitors staying here have the privilege of fishing in the upper parts of Loch Maree. As the hotel is not large, rooms should be engaged beforehand. In Pennant's "Tour" (see Appendix B) is his account of the accommodation he found at Kenlochewe; read it, and be thankful for the luxuries of the present well-kept house. The neat little church was erected in 1878 by public subscription; it belongs to the Free Church, but has not a regularly settled minister. There was in old days a church or place of worship at or near Kenlochewe. There is a large grove of tall ash trees in the Culinellan burial-ground, and a colony of rooks nests annually in them. Several of the stories and traditions given in Part I. refer to Kenlochewe or its neighbourhood. A little to the north of the Kenlochewe Free church is the hillock called Cnoc a Chrochadair, or "the hangman's hill," where some of the M'Leods are said to have been hung (see page 45). Below the Culinellan burial-ground is the ford on the river called Athnan Ceann, or "the ford of the heads." The story relating the origin of this name is given on page 13. Kenlochewe is a favourite resort of artists, who find many subjects in the neighbourhood. Beinn Eighe, and the more distant Liathgach,—both in Glen Torridon,—are superb mountains, and they are best seen from Kenlochewe or near it.

There are two modes of reaching Gairloch from Kenlochewe. One, described in the next chapter, is by the county road past Grudidh bridge, Talladale, Slatadale, and the Falls of Kerry to the Gairloch Hotel. The other is to take the steamer from Ru Nohar, down Loch Maree to Tollie pier, and to proceed thence by road to Gairloch, as described in Part IV., chap. xiii. The mail, which, as has been said, is worked by Mr M'Iver, of Achnasheen, is not at present in connection with the steamer. Mr Hornsby, of the Gairloch Hotel, by previous communication, or Mrs Macdonald, of the Kenlochewe Hotel, so far as regards those who are staying in her house, will arrange for the conveyance of passengers and luggage to the steamer at Ru Nohar pier, which is two miles from Kenlochewe Hotel. In the busiest part of the tourist season there is a large conveyance awaiting the arrival of the mid-day train at Achnasheen, to carry to Ru Nohar those who wish to avail themselves of the steamer route.

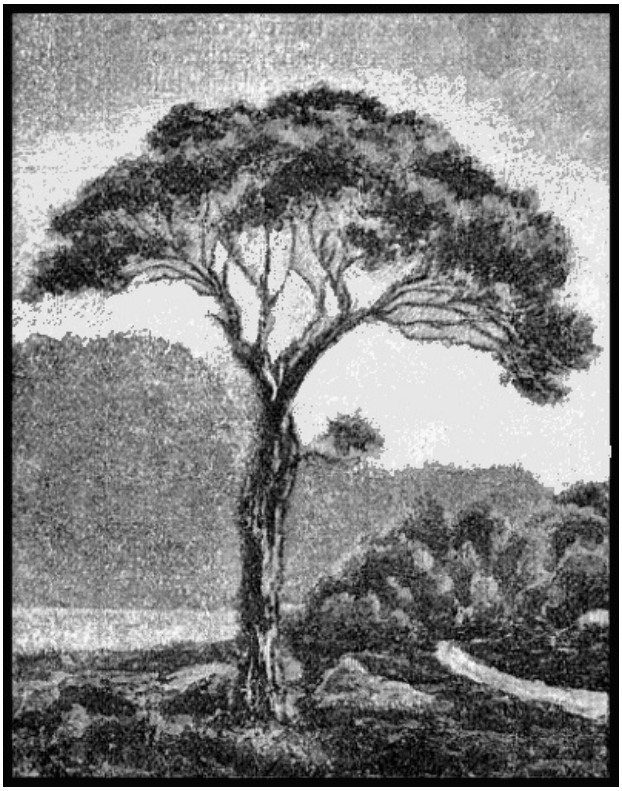
Chapter IV.

[305]

Kenlochewe to Talladale.

Leaving the village of Kenlochewe we see the Torridon road striking off to the left. A mile further on the road crosses a burn, whose bed is composed of fragments of white quartzite washed down from the rocky heights of Beinn Eighe.

Further on to the right is the farm of Tagan, a short distance from the road. Beyond and above it notice the precipitous spur of Beinn a Mhuinidh, called Bonaid Donn, and the waterfall (Part III., chap, i.) on its steep face. In the distance, looking up the glen between the Bonaid Donn and Slioch, may be observed a curious hill, similar to one noticed in the last stage; the outline is a silhouette of a man's profile facing skywards.



UMBRELLA FIR, GLAS LEITIRE.

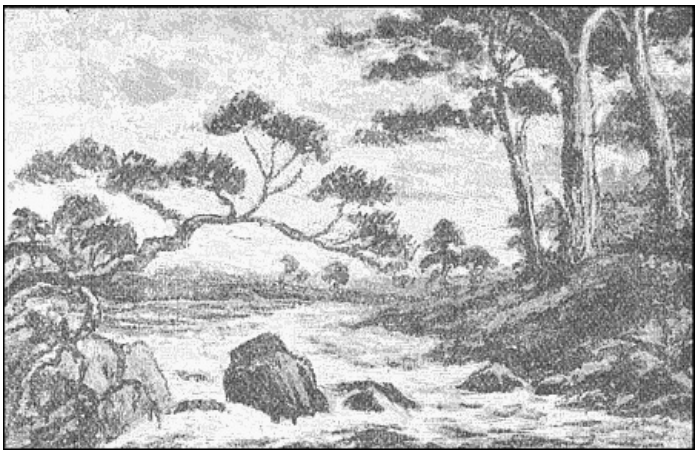
As we approach the strand of Loch Maree the woods of Glas Leitire begin, and now the interest heightens. Wildfowl may often be seen about the marshy ground at the head of the loch. On the left a spur of Meall a Ghuibhais, with wild ravines, comes near the road, and the mingled foliage [306] of the firs and birches enhances the charms of the scene.

Ru Nohar, with its little pier or jetty, is soon reached and passed. Were it not for the great convenience of the steamer on Loch Maree, and the new beauties it unfolds, most people would think it out of character with the wild surroundings.

Passing through the Glas Leitire woods roe-deer and black game may often be observed. One or two fir trees are of umbrella-like form (*see illustration*).

Her most gracious Majesty Queen Victoria, in "More Leaves from the Journal of a Life in the Highlands," describes this part of the route in the following graphic language:—

"The windings of the road are beautiful, and afford charming glimpses of the lake, which is quite locked in by the overlapping mountains. There are trees above and below it, of all kinds, but chiefly birch, pine, larch, and alder, with quantities of high and most beautiful heather and bracken growing luxuriantly, high rocks surmounting the whole. Here and there a fine Scotch fir, twisted, and with a stem and head like a stone-pine, stands out on a rocky projection into the loch, relieved against the blue hills as in some Italian view."



ABOVE GRUDIDH BRIDGE.

The road is almost level until a mile beyond the bridge of Grudidh. Before we reach this bridge the wild Glen Grudidh, which is one of the most telling features in the scenery of Gairloch, has come in view. Its noble centre-piece is the fine peak of Ruadh Stac of Beinn Eighe, which is the

highest summit in Gairloch parish, and attains an altitude of 3309 feet. The smaller peak beyond it acts as a foil to set off its grandeur.

There are fine old fir trees near Grudidh bridge; in combination with the rocky course of the Grudidh water they supply a series of splendid subjects for the artist's brush (*see illustrations*). [307]

A mile further Eilean Grudidh is seen in a little bay. This island is mentioned on pages 21, 24, and 43, and is described on page 98. It was many centuries ago a stronghold of the MacBeaths, and afterwards of the MacLeods.

The road here is wild and dreary. Her Majesty speaks of it thus:—"Part of the way the road emerges altogether from the trees and passes by a mass of huge piled-up and tumbled-about stones, which everywhere are curiously marked, almost as though they were portions of a building, and have the appearance of having been thrown about by some upheaving of the earth."

Some rocks by the roadside exhibit fine examples of groovings and scratchings effected by ice in the glacial epoch.

The rocky hill along the base of which the road passes is Coinneachadh Beag (1830 feet), a spur of Beinn a Chearcaill. The English of Coinneachadh is a "meeting-place;" it does not require a great flight of imagination to picture the famous Hector Roy meeting his warrior forces on the slope of this wild hill to plan dire vengeance against the blood-stained M'Leods. Two miles beyond Grudidh bridge the road ascends and climbs the shoulder of Coinneachadh Beag, which runs out in a low promontory almost dividing Loch Maree. The highest part of the road is 130 feet above the level of the loch, and affords a fine view of Letterewe at the other side, and of the hills beyond it, on which is the place called to this day the Hollow of the son of Black John. An account of the death of this Macleod at the spot which bears his name will be found on pages 43 and 44. Descending the western side of the hill we reach the hamlet of Talladale, at the foot of the Talladale river, which comes from Strath Lungard. Here are picturesque trees. On the right is an old lime-kiln, and a little further on the same side the keeper's house. In the corner of the first field on the left were formerly ironworks (see page 92). John Roy Mackenzie, fourth laird of Gairloch, died at Talladale; his piper, Rorie Mackay, spent part of his life here, and here Rorie's son, the celebrated "Blind piper," was born. Crossing the bridge, notice the stony bed of the small river and the steep end of Beinn an Eoin in the distance to the right. Almost immediately we reach

The Loch Maree Hotel, Talladale.

This hotel was built in 1872, and is beautifully placed in a sheltered bay, backed by a hill called Sron a Choit, 970 feet in height, whose rocky tops rise above most beautiful natural birch woods. A small pier or jetty was erected here in 1884 as a landing-place for the steamer. There are good stables, in connection with the larger posting establishment at Gairloch. Mr M'Iver, of Achnasheen, has also a stable not far from the hotel for the horses which work his mail-cars. The hotel, which has lovely views of Slioch and the islands of Loch Maree, contains a spacious coffee-room, a private sitting-room, and near a score of bedrooms. There is a telegraph and post office, and a supply of boats and gillies waiting for engagement. Visitors here have the privilege of fishing some of the best parts of Loch Maree. The sport varies in different years, and is frequently very good. Part IV., chap. xvii., is devoted to the subject of angling in Loch Maree, which may be said to continue from the middle of May to the middle of October. The greatest rush of anglers is from the middle of August to the middle of September; I recommend those who can to come earlier in the season. [308]

The Loch Maree Hotel has been distinguished by the visit of Her Majesty Queen Victoria, who occupied the house from 12th to 18th September 1877. Her Majesty narrates the incidents of this visit very fully in her book already quoted, to which I beg to refer the tourist. Her Majesty has the following entry on the day of her departure:—"Got up early and breakfasted at half-past eight, and at a quarter to nine we left with regret our nice cozy little hotel at Loch Maree, which I hope I may some day see again." This visit of our most gracious Sovereign evoked the reverential loyalty of all in Gairloch, and the popular wish still cherished among us may be accurately expressed in the old words,—

"Will ye no come back agen?"

In commemoration of the visit of Her Majesty, Sir Kenneth Mackenzie caused an inscription to be carved on a boulder of the "Torridon red" sandstone, which stands opposite the front door of the hotel. The inscription is in Gaelic, and is as follows:—"Air an dara latha-deug deth mhios meadhonach an fhoghair, 1877, thainig Ban-Righ Bhictoria a dh' fhaicinn Loch-Maruibhe, agus nan criochan mu'n cuairt. Dh'fhan i sea oidhche s'an tigh-osda so thall; agus 'na caomhalachd, dheonaich i g'um biodh a' chlach so 'na cuimhneachan air an tlachd a fhuair i 'na teachd do 'n chearn so de Ros."

The following is a literal translation:—"On the twelfth day of the middle month of autumn 1877 Queen Victoria came to visit Loch Maree and the country round it. She remained six nights in the opposite hotel, and, in her kindness, agreed that this stone should be a memorial of the pleasure she experienced in coming to this quarter of Ross."

Chapter V.

Talladale to the Gairloch Hotel.

The road from Talladale to Gairloch passes for more than a mile through the woods which here skirt Loch Maree. Pretty peeps of the loch are obtained here and there where the trees permit.

As the natural birch wood grows thinner, its place is taken by a thick plantation of larch. This is bounded by the Garavaig burn, which is surmounted by a substantial bridge. Crossing the bridge we get a glimpse of the Victoria Falls (Part III., chap. i.). On the right begin the fields or parks (as [309] enclosed cultivated lands are always called in the north) of Slatadale. In the angle formed by the loch and the Garavaig burn, at the corner of the first park, was the old Garavaig iron-smelting furnace; and if this field should happen to have been lately ploughed, the traveller may notice that parts of it are stained black with charcoal burnings (see page 93). The house of Slatadale, which is distant two miles from the Loch Maree Hotel, is a neat building, prettily situated near the margin of the loch.

Along the shore at Slatadale commences the section of the old road, which follows the line of the loch for some two miles further, and then strikes up the depression to the south-west of the Craig Tollie range, and so reaches Poolewe. Remains of this old military road have been visible all the way from Achnasheen, except in some parts where the present road is on the same track.

From Slatadale the road to Gairloch rapidly ascends, winding round the base of a hill named Meall Lochan a Chleirich (1319 feet), which rises to the left; on the right, but further away, is Meall an Doire. As we approach the summit, lovely views are obtained of the range of mountains on the north-east side of Loch Maree (including the conical peak of Slioch), and of the wide part of the loch with its numerous islands, which from this point of view stand out distinctly separate from each other.

A little above the road, on the left, is a large detached fragment of rock, which bears a curious resemblance to an old stage coach, or perhaps, more accurately speaking, to one of the old lumbering *diligences* of France.

Just beyond the apex of the watershed is a small loch, on the left, called Fear (or Feir) Loch, and a little further a larger and very picturesque loch called Loch Bad na Sgalaig; in the distance is the superb peak of Bathais or Bus Bheinn. For an account of the introduction of pike into these lochs see Part IV., chap. xviii. The good bag of eagles recorded in Part III., chap. iii., was made on Bus-Bheinn; and Iain Liath's well (see page 39) is at the base of the mountain. Near the road, but on the other side of the River Kerry where it leaves Loch Bad na Sgalaig, is a keeper's house; and a little beyond it the old road diverges to the right, at the foot of a hill called Meall Aundrairidh (1068 feet).

The road now rapidly descends, and in half a mile passes alongside the Kerry Falls (Part III., chap. i.). Another mile brings us to Kerry bridge, where Her Majesty Queen Victoria, on 17th September 1877, graciously met above two hundred and fifty Lews people, who had come over by steamer from Stornoway to see their beloved Queen, accompanied by the Rev. Mr Greenfield, their minister.

The road over this bridge leads to Shieldaig and the other places on the south side of Gairloch. Beautiful patches of natural wood are seen on all sides, and the colouring of the lower hills is very fine.

A little further, Kerrysdale House is passed. It is a small farmhouse, with very picturesque surroundings, but is placed rather low. The road now enters a large larch plantation, and runs for [310] some distance along the Kerry river. This was a well-known resort of the fairies. The Gaelic name of Kerrysdale is Cathair Bheag, or the "little seat" of the fairies. Emerging from the wood, look back at the remarkably fine view of Bathais or Bus Bheinn. It rises beyond the centre of the deep gorge, which has dense woods on either side. In the dark depths of this gorge the River Kerry is seen gleaming far below. Another mile brings us to the bay and hamlet of Charlestown, in an inner recess of the Gairloch sea-loch. The houses clustered about the head of this bay (called in Gaelic Ceann an t' Sail, or "the head of the salt water") are now generally included in the term Gairloch, as applied to a village or place. The first house we come to is Glen Cottage, the residence of Mr Donald Mackenzie, west coast manager for Sir Kenneth Mackenzie. Before arriving at the post-office several houses are seen below the road and near the sea to the left, where are some trees of remarkable size, considering that they actually overhang the tide. The best of these houses is a lodging-house kept by Miss M'Iver; another is the only bakehouse in the parish. On the other side of the little bay is the Gairloch pier, with its storehouse and several houses beyond, called Port na Heile.

The post-office (which was formerly the Gairloch Inn) is at the head of the bay of Charlestown. Close by is the burn or small river which comes from the Flowerdale glen.

Immediately over the bridge that spans this burn is the road, to the right, leading to Flowerdale House and farm. This road is private. About a quarter of a mile up it is Flowerdale House, on the left. On the right, in a field below the road, may be seen the remains of the garden walls of the Tigh Dige and Stank-house, recalling memories of the old chiefs of Gairloch, and in a paddock

beyond is "the island of justice," all described in former pages. Among the farm buildings is the old barn with the Mackenzie coat-of-arms, including the figure of Donald Odhar, the great Macrae archer.

After passing the end of the Flowerdale road, the short road leading to the pier at Port na Heile turns off almost immediately to the left. Just beyond this point the main road passes the well called "the Gairloch," from the story told on page 30.

Before leaving this picturesque little bay, the view up the Flowerdale glen, with the rocky Craig a Chait rising above the woods immediately behind the house, ought to be particularly noted. Think of Donald Odhar's wonderful shot recorded on page 46. Looking out towards the sea-loch, Fraoch Eilean is seen, celebrated for the slaughter of so many Macleods in the affair of Leac nan Saighead, the story of which is told on pages 45 and 46.

It is about a mile further to the Gairloch Hotel. Mounting a "brae," we pass the Caledonian Bank on the right, and a little further the Established church, also on the right. Just below the road on the left, alongside of the Established church, is the hollow in the turf-covered sand called the Leabaidh na ba bàine, or "bed of the white cow," where the sacrament of the Lord's Supper is dispensed twice a year. The gathering on these occasions is well worth seeing; it is described on [311] pages 118 *et seq.*

A little further, to the left of the road, in a flat hollow in the sand hills, is the Gairloch churchyard or burial-ground, where lie the remains of the older lairds of Gairloch, and of many of the bards, poets, and pipers mentioned in this book, as well as of a great number of the less-known inhabitants of Gairloch. Here also was formerly the church of St Maelrubha, probably a thatched edifice. Perhaps the most remarkable gravestone in the churchyard is that of John Hay (see pages 82 and 83), said to have been the last manager of the Letterewe ironworks. Outside the entrance to the churchyard some fragments of slag may be seen (page 95). Between the churchyard and the road is the monument erected to the memory of John Mackenzie of "The Beauties" (Part II., chap. xxii.). The road now mounts the shoulder of the hill called the Crasg (mentioned on page 40); and fine views open out of the largest sandy beach at Gairloch, and of the wide expanse of the bay or sea-loch of the same name, with the hills of Skye, and some smaller islands further north, in the distance. At the south-west end of this sandy beach, a little to the right of the volunteer targets, is the hillock on which the Dun, the ancient castle of Gairloch, often named in the traditions given in Part I., and described on page 98, formerly stood. Some traces of its foundations are still to be seen, as well as slight remains of a vitrified fort, which is supposed to have occupied the same site before the castle stood there. On the side of the Crasg overlooking the churchyard, and a few yards west of the high road, is the Cnoc a Croiche, or "gallows hill," overhanging a steep ravine (see page 116).

Surmounting the Crasg we rapidly descend, and passing the new Free church (which actually contains a stained-glass rose window) on the left, and the Free church manse with its well-kept garden on the right, we reach at last

The Gairloch Hotel.

This hotel was erected in 1872, and enlarged in 1881. It has a large coffee-room, a good drawing-room, a reading-room, a smoke-room, a billiard-room, and several good private sitting-rooms, whilst nearly one hundred and fifty beds can be made up. The hotel is conducted on the best modern system, and no one should object to the charges, for when the highest degree of comfort is provided it should be ungrudgingly paid for. The season is short, and the crowds of visitors it brings are necessarily a great tax on the resources of the establishment.

During the season services according to the form of the Church of England are conducted in the house, whilst those who prefer the Presbyterian churches will find the Established and Free churches in close proximity.

There is a stall in the hotel where Gairloch hose, photographs of the district, and other souvenirs can be purchased.

There are excellent gardens and hothouses on the slope behind the hotel, which is well supplied [312] from them not only with vegetables in season, but with grapes, flowers, and decorative plants.

Near the hotel is a lawn-tennis ground, which may also be used as a bowling-green.

Sea-bathing may be had on the sandy beach below; a suitable bathing-machine is provided. Those who prefer to bathe *al fresco* and are able to swim, will find a retired nook immediately to the south-west of the eminence where the Dun and vitrified fort formerly stood; here there is a sort of natural swimming-bath, into which a header may be taken, and which gives space for a good swim. The sea is always as clear as crystal on this rock-bound coast.

Boats may be hired from the hotel for sea-fishing, or for expeditions on the Gairloch. The smaller islands may be visited, and the coast on either side examined.

Loch Tollie is appropriated for anglers staying at the hotel. There is a boat on the loch, and good trout-fishing may be had on its waters.

There is a small shop in the vicinity of the hotel. In the neighbouring village of Strath, about a mile from the hotel, are good general merchants' stores where most things may be purchased.

The Gairloch Hotel is remarkable for the fine view of the broad bay which is obtained from all the front windows of the house. Beyond the bay is the Minch, bounded in the extreme distance by the Isle of Skye. Every atmospheric change invests this beautiful view with a new character.

Chapter VI.

The Gairloch Hotel to Poolewe.

Starting northwards from the Gairloch Hotel, the hamlet of Achtercairn (Part IV., chap, x.) is the first place we pass; Achtercairn House (Dr Robertson) is on the right.

As the road ascends the Achtercairn Brae the village of Strath of Gairloch is well seen. The house in the largest grove of trees is the Established church manse (Rev. D. S. Mackenzie), in the enlargement of which in 1823 the celebrated geologist and author, Hugh Miller, took part as a mason's lad. In another grove in Strath is the Cottage Hospital, founded by Mr Francis H. Mackenzie, but now disused and occupied as a dwelling-house.

From the higher parts of the Achtercairn Brae there are splendid views of the Bay of Gairloch and the hills of Skye. From one point near the top of the Brae the jagged summits of the Cuchullins in Skye may be discerned.

To the left of the road, as the higher part is gained, there is a fine deep gorge down which the Achtercairn burn or river rushes; it forms a pretty cascade in the higher part. A rock on the north side of the gorge is called Craig an Fhithich, because a raven formerly nested in a crevice on the [313] face of it. After a short descent notice a large boulder on the right of the road called "The shoestone" (Clach nam Brog), from the fact that women who had walked barefoot over the hills on their way to church at Gairloch were (and still frequently are) accustomed here to resume their shoes and stockings. To the left is a reedy loch on the minister's glebe, called Loch Feur, a haunt of ducks and other wildfowl. Another small loch, called Lochan nan Breac, or Lochan nan Breac Adhair, lies still further to the left.

At this point notice a singular-looking hill to the right of and nearer to the road than the Lochan nan Breac. It is an interesting subject for the geologist. Dr Geikie, speaking of the hummocky outlines of the gneiss emerging from under the overlying sandstones, writes as follows of this hill: —"Little more than a mile to the north of the church (Gairloch) the road to Poolewe descends into a short valley surrounded with gneiss hills. From the top of the descent the eye is at once arrested by a flat-topped hill standing in the middle of the valley at the upper end, and suggesting some kind of fortification; so different from the surrounding hummocky declivities of gneiss is its level grassy top, flanked by wall-like cliffs rising upon a glacis-slope of debris and herbage." Further on, this flat-topped hill, seen in profile, looks like an enormous railway embankment.

By the side of the road, on the left, there is or was one of those heaps of stones formed by funeral parties (see pages 115 and 116).

About half a mile beyond the shoestone, and some two hundred yards to the right of the road, is a pond or very small loch, called Lochan nan Airm, or the "tarn of the arms," into which long ago warriors vanquished in a fight near the place threw their weapons (see page 21). The commencement of a drain, intended to empty the tarn so as to discover the weapons, is still to be seen; it was stopped by the then laird of Gairloch, whose permission had not been obtained for draining the tarn. This tarn is in a hollow on the side of one of the moraines of ancient glaciers which hereabouts flank the highroad.

About two and a half miles from the Gairloch Hotel the summit of the watershed is reached. The pass through which the road turns, after a long ascent, is called "The glen," where is a good spring. To the left is the rock called Craig Bhadain an Aisc, at which the two little boys of Allan M'Leod, of Gairloch, were murdered by their uncles and then buried (see page 26).

At the further end of "The glen" there is on the right hand side of the road a flat moss called Blar na Fala, or "the plain of the blood," because this was a place to which cattle were driven in order that blood might be taken from them (see page 136).

Further on, Loch Tollie, a mile in length, is spread out on the right. The trout-fishing of this loch is attached to the Gairloch Hotel, and there is a boat for the use of anglers. The small island near the shore with a few bushes on it (*see illustration*) is of artificial origin; it was a crannog or fortress of the MacBeaths, and afterwards of the M'Leods. The traditions connected with the island will be found in chaps. vi. and vii. of Part I. An anecdote of a very different character, [314] telling how a wild cat and her young were killed on this island, is given in Part III., chap. iii.

The hill to the south of "The Glen" bears the name of Meall Aridh Mhic Criadh, and is 1140 feet in height.

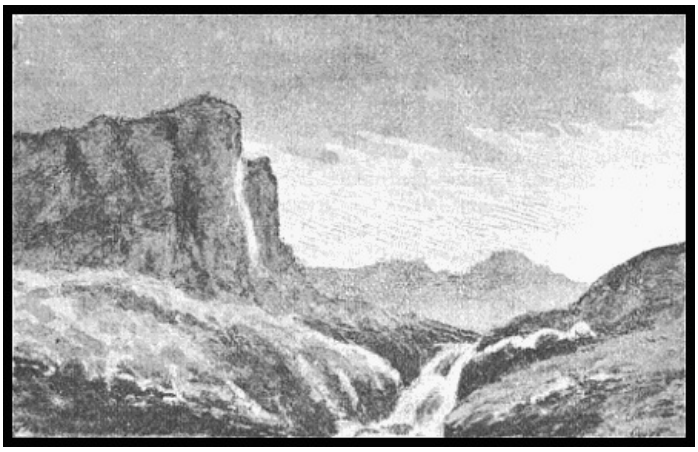
Beyond Loch Tollie, to the right, is the northern end of the fine range of Craig Tollie, which is

peculiarly rocky and wild.

The hill to the left of the road before we got to Loch Tollie was Meall a Deas (749 feet); and now, as we leave Loch Tollie, we have on the left the end of Meall na Cluibha, or Cliff Hill (750 feet), which is much finer on its face towards Poolewe, where it rises from a lower plateau.

From the higher part of the road as we skirt Loch Tollie there is a good view before us, at a distance of some six or eight miles, of Beinn a Chaisgean (2802 feet), in the parish of Loch Broom, beyond Fionn Loch, and through a gap in it may be seen some of the jagged summits of the Dundonell mountains.

At the lower end of Loch Tollie there was formerly a weir or dam in connection with a mill far down the burn which flows from the loch, and this kept the water of the loch at a higher level than it now stands at.



LETH CHREAG, TOLLIE.

After leaving Loch Tollie we can easily trace the old road from Slatadale winding down the glen behind Craig Tollie. Shortly before it joins the road we are travelling it is overshadowed by a bold crag, called Leth Chreag (*see illustration*), on the opposite side of the burn. The name means the "half rock," and refers to the sheer aspect (as if half had been broken off) of the face of the rock towards the burn.

The first view of the lower end of Loch Maree now comes in sight, with the graceful form of [315] Beinn Aridh Charr rising above it. A peak close to the summit of this mountain bears the name of Spidean Moirich, or "Martha's peak." It is said that a woman of that name having climbed this peak sat down and began winding thread on her spindle. The spindle fell from her hand down the steep rocks to the north-east. Martha tried to recover the spindle, but fell over the rock and was killed. Hence the name. To the left of Beinn Aridh Charr are the spurs of Beinn a Chaisgean Mor, called Scuir a Laocainn and Scuir na Feart, with the Maighdean to the right. Reaching the point where the branch road leads down to Tollie pier, a magnificent view of Loch Maree presents itself to the eye. The whole length of the loch, and Glen Dochartie beyond it, are in sight. On any tolerably fine day the road up Glen Dochartie is plainly seen at a distance of not less than fifteen to sixteen miles, a proof of the wonderful clearness of the northern atmosphere. Beyond Glen Dochartie in the extreme distance are peaks, thirty miles away, of mountains in the Monar forest, which retain some snow long after it has disappeared from the mountains of Loch Maree. Half-way up Loch Maree is seen Isle Maree, with its grove of tall trees. The immediate foreground is softened by the natural woods of birch, oak, and rowan round the bases of Craig Tollie and of the lower hills on the east side of Tollie farm. This view of Loch Maree has formed the subject of celebrated pictures by the late Horatio M'Culloch, Mr H. W. B. Davis, R.A., Mr A. W. Weedon, and other well-known artists. The road so far is the same as that which is traversed by the carriages or "machines" conveying voyageurs to the Loch Maree steamer. For our present purpose we shall suppose the tourist to be proceeding towards Poolewe.

The road now turns abruptly to the left, and rapidly descends the hill called Croft Brae. The present road is a great improvement upon the old one, which takes a higher course and has a steeper incline. The old road went straight down to the banks of the Ewe, but our way proceeds from the foot of the hill along level ground a little above the river. The small hamlet or village here is properly called Croft of Tollie, misspelt in the Old Statistical Account "Croft of Jolly," the last word being decidedly a *lucus a non lucendo*. This hamlet is usually called Croft. A short bit of road to the right leads to the landing-place at the lower extremity of the navigable part of the River Ewe, called Ceann a Chro, or Cruive End, *i.e.* the head or end of the cruive (for taking salmon), which formerly spanned the river just below. At Cruive End is a thatched house called "The still," occupied rent free by several poor widows. It was originally built for a whisky distillery. Close to Cruive End there formerly stood a small thatched church or place of worship (see pages 70 and 99), which was used in the memory of old people now living, *i.e.* up to about 1826. All traces of it have now disappeared.

On the left of the high road, two hundred yards beyond Cruive End, is the green hillock called "The hill of evil counsel," where Allan Macleod, who lived in the island of Loch Tollie (see page 25), was murdered by his brothers.

Looking back there are beautiful views of the upper reaches of the river Ewe winding through [316] low wooded hills, which may be called "the Trossachs of Loch Maree," and a distant peep of the loch itself heightens the charm of the view.

Further on to the right is the Poolewe manse, well placed on a brow overlooking the river. To the left is the Poolewe post and telegraph office, formerly a school.

The group of houses a little further on to the left is called Mossbank. The tallest house (Mrs Morrison) is a lodging-house. The next is Mossbank Cottage, occupied by Dr M'Ewen; it has a fruitful walled garden. Another house, of the usual local type, is occupied by John Mackenzie (Iain Glas), the present water-bailiff of the river. In a cottage a little further on lives Finlay M'Kinnon, the Poolewe artist (Part II., chap. xxiv.). We now enter the village of

Poolewe.

It is not a beautiful spot, but it perhaps gives one more the idea of a village than some other more scattered places in Gairloch parish. Mr H. F. Wilson, of Cambridge, has well described Poolewe, in his racy ode, dated August 1885, and entitled "Carmen Pooleviense." After speaking of the Ewe, he says you may see,—

> "Just where that river feels the brine,
> A bridge, a pool, a whitewash'd line
> Of unpretentious cottages,
> Differing in sizes and degrees;
> A kirk, too ample in extent
> To house the shrunk 'Establishment;'
> An inn, our 'guard-room,' to command
> Wide-reaching view by sea and land;
> A windy green, a sandy cliff,
> A flag-staff standing stark and stiff;
> Such is our πολις, proud to be
> Compact, αναγκαιοτὰτη."

Poolewe was formerly called Clive, and, according to the retour of 1638 (page 61), was once "a burgh of barony." There are three merchants' shops in the village street, also (on the left) the salmon depôt or boiling-house of Mr A. P. Hogarth, of Aberdeen, the lessee of the salmon-fishings on the extensive sea coast of Gairloch. It is managed by Alexander Mutch, of Aberdeen, who generally arrives at Poolewe early in April and remains until September.

The first building on the right is the Poolewe Public Hall, which though but a small room suffices for the wants of the place (see Part IV., chap. i.).

On the same side at the further end of the village street is the Established church (Church of Scotland), and on the right is the Poolewe Inn or Hotel, kept by Mr A. Maclennan. Compared with the Gairloch, Loch Maree, and Kenlochewe hotels, it yields but humble accommodation. Some [317] improvements are being effected, and I believe even ladies find the house comfortable enough. Mr Maclennan carries on a posting business. Boats can be hired for sea-fishing in Loch Ewe, and trout-fishing can generally be had on some fresh-water lochs.

On the flat plain behind and to the south of Poolewe and Moss Bank (called Bac Dubh), a large market, called the Feill Iudha, or "ewe market" (page 104), was held for generations, and was discontinued about 1720.

Mr Macbrayne's large steamers call at Poolewe once a fortnight. A jetty and storehouse, where goods are landed and kept dry, have recently been provided just below Poolewe church. There are considerable quantities of clayband and hematite iron ores to be seen both here and nearer Poolewe bridge,—evidences of those ores having been landed here (see page 89).

The Poolewe Free Church meeting-house, and the smithy, with a number of dwellings, are on the other side of the river. They are, properly speaking, in Londubh.

At the other side of the mouth of the river is Pool House, formerly the Londubh Inn. It has been enlarged and improved by Sir Thomas Edwards Moss, Bart., who has a lease of it with some shootings. He has erected a stable near the east end of Poolewe bridge, where the smithy formerly stood.

The hamlet or township of Londubh, including all the dwellings and buildings on the east side of the lower part of the River Ewe, has since the erection of Poolewe bridge become virtually a part of Poolewe. The name Londubh signifies "the black bog." I have heard a native suggest that the name of the metropolis of Great Britain is pure Gaelic, for the Gaelic for a brown bog (which the Strand is said to have originally been) is just Lon-donn!

Many of the houses in Londubh are on a flat hidden by the old sea terrace, and are therefore scarcely visible from the main road. Londubh, or Baile na h'Eaglais, was formerly called Inverewe, a name now only applied to Mr Osgood H. Mackenzie's house opposite. The most

conspicuous house in Londubh is that called Kirkton House, a little above the road skirting Loch Ewe beyond Pool House. Londubh was formerly part of the Kernsary estate, and this house, where James Mackenzie, so often quoted in these pages, now lives, was then the home of the proprietors of Kernsary. Close to it is the old Inverewe burial-ground. A wall was built round it a few years ago. Here is the burial-place of the Kernsary family, formed out of the ancient church or chapel (page 101) which in old days occupied the site.

Chapter VII.

[318]

Poolewe to Aultbea.

Leaving Poolewe we follow the county road over Poolewe bridge, behind Pool House, and along the shore of the bay that forms the head of Loch Ewe. Notice the picturesque pool in which the River Ewe joins Loch Ewe, so much finer than the usual muddy estuary of an east coast river.

After passing on the right the Londubh or Inverewe burial-ground and the home of James Mackenzie at Kirkton (referred to in the last chapter), we cross a small burn. This forms the march or boundary between the estates of Sir Kenneth Mackenzie, Bart. of Gairloch, and his half-brother Mr Osgood H. Mackenzie of Inverewe. Since the parish of Gairloch was entered at Luibmhor, near the west end of Loch Rosque, we have been on the territory of Sir Kenneth Mackenzie.

On the right is Srondubh, with a few trees, and by it the farm buildings of the home farm in connection with Inverewe House. The road skirts along well cultivated arable land until the Inverewe plantations are reached.

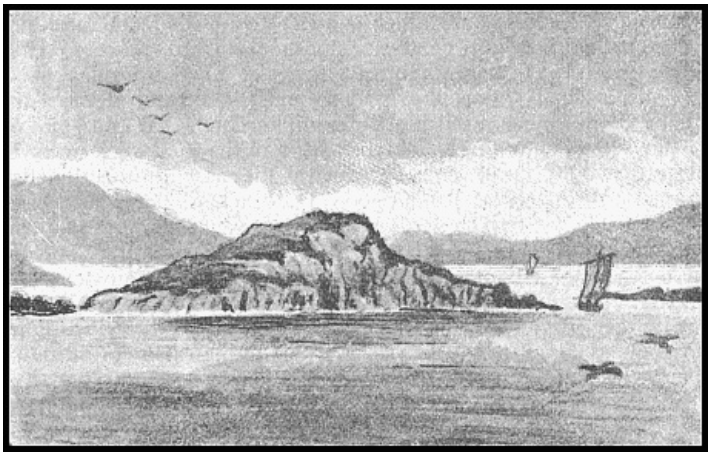
Inverewe House was erected by Mr Osgood H. Mackenzie in 1865. It is beautifully situated in a northern recess of the bay at the head of Loch Ewe, in the shelter of a rocky headland called Ploc-ard. The house has a Highland character; it faces due south, and commands a fine view of Beinn Aridh Charr. To the south the summits of the distant Gairloch mountains and the rocky ranges of Craig Tollie and Cliff Hill, with the mouth of the River Ewe and the bay at the head, of Loch Ewe in the foreground, form an enchanting picture. From the village of Poolewe the house—surrounded as it is with planted woods now well grown—is a pleasing object. There are walks in these woods, and separate sea-bathing places for ladies and gentlemen. There is the best anchorage for yachts of the largest size close to the house.

The Inverewe gardens are wonderfully attractive, yielding as they do exquisite flowers nearly all the year round. The following remarks about these gardens are from one of a series of letters from the Highlands which appeared in the *Times* in the autumn of 1883:—

"Thanks to genial winters, from the softening influence of the Gulf Stream, ornamental gardening richly repays one in those sheltered situations that slope to the sea-arms. The most enchanting spot in that way which I have seen is the garden of Inverewe, on Loch Ewe, rented at present by Lord Fitzwilliam. The garden was laid out by the proprietor, Mr Osgood Mackenzie, whose taste must be as unimpeachable as his knowledge of flowers. The gardens form a terraced amphitheatre, shelving gently towards the Loch, and backed up by the hanging woods, which have only been recently planted. Fruit-trees, but a very few years old, are already loaded with plums, pears, &c. The low stone walls that front the earth-banks are covered with many of the [319] rarer creepers, some of them almost semi-tropical, with luxuriant myrtles just bursting into flower, and with clusters of roses of wonderful size. But what is most remarkable is the marvellous vividness of the colours in such brightly tinted flowers as crimson roses and scarlet gladioli. The warm damp seems to give a brilliancy to the tints which I have never seen either in England or in southern Europe."

The highroad now takes an easterly course, and, passing young plantations, soon comes in sight of Loch-nan-Dailthean. Here is Tournaig, the residence of the Dowager Lady Mackenzie of Gairloch, with its beautiful little garden, described in the *Times* letter just quoted, as follows:—

"Even more noteworthy, perhaps, is the less pretentious garden at Mr Mackenzie's pretty cottage of Tournaig, situate two miles inland. There, a mere pit in the heather, which must have originally resembled a stone quarry, has been turned, chiefly by blasting, into a little fairyland of leafy luxuriance and gorgeous colouring, though where the plants find soil to strike their roots is a puzzle. As for the cabbages, in their swelling proportions they are rather like balloons than ordinary vegetables. And it must be a piquant experience to stroll of a morning among flower-beds that recall the beauties of Bellagio or the Isola Bella, and afterwards to go out ptarmigan shooting or deer-stalking on some of the most storm-beaten hills in the whole breadth of the Highlands."



DUNAN ON LOCH TOURNAIG.

About half a mile beyond the head of Loch nan Dailthean, and a mile south from Tournaig, is the pretty natural wood called Coille Aigeascaig, whose charms are celebrated in Alexander Cameron's song, given in Part II., chap. xxiii.

There is a small cave among the hills two miles due east from Tournaig. It is called Uamh Mhic 'ille Rhiabhaich, or "the cave of Mac Gille Riabhaich." The cave is close to a loch bearing the same name, on which are two small islands, one of which seems to have been a stronghold. An account of Mac Gille Riabhaich, who lived in this cave, is given in Part I., chap. viii. [320]

In one of the fields at Tournaig is a place where the natives in the old days used to bleed living cattle landed here from the Hebrides (Part II., chap. viii.).

At Tournaig the road bends to the left, and passes the Tournaig farm buildings, where lives Alexander Cameron, the farm manager, who is a Gaelic poet (Part II., chap. xxiii.). The branch of Loch Ewe which approaches Tournaig is called Loch Tournaig.

In Loch Tournaig is a small peninsular headland, on the north side of the Inverewe Point called the Dunan (*see illustration*). This headland is insulated at high spring-tides. On it a dun, or fort, is said to have formerly stood, but tradition does not say who held it. There are many loose stones on the top, though no traces of walls or foundations can be found. The strongest evidence that this was the site of a fort or other similar place, is found in the large and regularly placed stepping-stones which connect it with the mainland. The now superfluous height of these stones seems to point to their having been placed there when the sea was at a higher level.

From Loch Tournaig the road ascends, and has a devious and rather tedious course, until Drumchork is reached. At one point on the way is a peep of the well-known form of the Storr rock in Skye; and further on a burn is crossed, which is the march in this direction between the estates of Mr Osgood H. Mackenzie and Mrs Liot Bankes. The western shore of Loch Ewe is well seen, with its townships of crofts. Loch Ewe is a fine expanse of water, opening due north to the Atlantic. Isle Ewe soon comes fully in view, with its little settlement towards the nearer end; whilst in the far distance may be seen, beyond the north-eastern extremity of the North Point and above the mouth of Loch Ewe, the northern parts of the Long Island, or at least of that part which is in the county of Ross, and is called "the Lews." Sometimes the three summits behind Stornoway may be distinctly discerned.

Drumchork, which is nearly seven miles from Poolewe, comprises a commodious shooting-lodge some way up the hillside (now leased by Mr C. E. Johnston), and nearer the road, on the right-hand side, a square of farm buildings, erected about 1880 on the site of the old house of Drumchork. This place, as well as the village of Aultbea, and the territory on both sides of the following road, including the whole of the Green Stone Point (except Mellon Charles, which is Sir Kenneth's), is the property of Mrs Liot Bankes. Her estate extends westward from here to a burn on Slioch, where it marches with Sir Kenneth's estate. Towards the north her property is bounded by the sea, and then by the Meikle Gruinard river; thus it extends beyond the parish of Gairloch; it may be said to include all the parts of the parish up to Slioch lying to the north-east of Loch Maree, the River Ewe, and Loch Ewe, except Mellon Charles and the Inveran beat belonging to Sir Kenneth, and except the estate of Mr Osgood H. Mackenzie. The latter extends northwards and eastwards to Fionn Loch and the summit of Beinn Aridh Charr. The road turns off, to the left, just below Drumchork, to the village of [321]

Aultbea.

This village comprises an inn and post-office, and at some distance a large Free church and manse, with a stable where horses that have brought people from a distance to attend church can be put up. It may be said to comprise the hamlets or townships of Aultbea, Badfearn, Tighnafaoilinn, and Cuilchonich, which cover about a square mile.

The name Aultbea signifies "the birch burn," but there are not many birches there now. The burn runs into the sea close behind the inn. The county road at present terminates here. The bay is

formed by the Point of Aird, the channel between which and Isle Ewe is barely half a mile across, and affords safe anchorage. Here stands Aird House, occupied by Mr Muir. It was erected by the Mackenzies of Gruinard, and was the residence of that family for some time.

The inn is old-fashioned, but sufficient for bachelors who do not object to roughing it a little. The landlord, Mr Forbes, is most civil and obliging; and excellent angling, both in Loch Ewe and on some good fresh-water lochs, can be had by those staying at the inn. Mr Forbes can also provide a good horse and trap, and can arrange for the voyage from Laide to Ullapool suggested in Part IV., chap, ii., as a mode of exit from Gairloch. The hand-line fishing accessible from Aultbea, and the lythe trolling round the north end of Isle Ewe, are probably the best in Gairloch waters.

One of the two Gairloch policemen is stationed at Aultbea.

The road beyond Aultbea to Laide, and thence forward to Gruinard, has been put in excellent order by Mrs Liot Bankes, through whose property it passes. This and the branch roads are described in Part IV., chap. xii.

Chapter VIII.

[322]

Excursions from Kenlochewe.

The drives from the Kenlochewe Hotel include those to various points of interest on the county road in both directions,—*i.e.* towards Achnasheen on the one hand (Part IV., chap, iii.), and towards Talladale on the other (Part IV., chap. iv.). Both sections will bear repeated examination, especially the part from Kenlochewe to Grudidh bridge in the direction of Talladale.

NEAR GRUDIE

The excursion to Loch Torridon is perhaps the most interesting expedition from Kenlochewe. The distance from the hotel to the head of Loch Torridon is eleven miles; the excursion, including a rest at Torridon village, will occupy five hours. For a shorter drive or walk the bridge on the Allt a Choire Dhuibh Mhoir, or "burn of the great black corrie," may be made the limit. As it is only a good six miles from Kenlochewe the horses will not require a rest. The road is not at present complete beyond Torridon, and the visitor who proceeds there from Kenlochewe must return by the same road, unless he has a yacht awaiting him at Torridon, or takes the route *viâ* Shieldaig of Applecross recommended in Part IV., chap. ii. The road to Torridon leaves the Gairloch road at the north end of the village of Kenlochewe. It keeps the Garbh river to the left for some miles. About half a mile from Kenlochewe, in a picturesque bend of the river, is the hamlet of Cromasaig, where lived the old bard mentioned on pages 51 and 175. There are patches of natural birch wood and some rocky salmon pools on the river. To the right the magnificent mountain Beinn Eighe, with its quartzite peaks, rises very grandly; and in front are fine views of the Coulin hills. Fe (or Feith) Leoid is on the hill to the left; its name records the slaughter of Leod Mac Gilleandreis by Black Murdo of the Cave (Part I., chap. iii.). Four miles from Kenlochewe, Loch Clair is reached. It is a beautiful sheet of water, about three quarters of a mile long, with fine old fir trees on its shores. The new private road to Achnashellach, ten miles from Kenlochewe, diverges at this point, and is seen skirting the eastern shore of Loch Clair. There is a rock near Loch Clair called Maelrubha's Seat, where it is said the saint of Isle Maree rested when travelling between the monastery of Applecross and his cell on Isle Maree. Half a mile beyond Loch Clair is a smaller loch on the left, called Loch Bharanaichd. Two miles beyond Loch Clair the march or boundary between Gairloch and Applecross parishes is reached. To the right [323] of the road, on the Gairloch side, is a pile of very large stones—evidently artificial—heaped up on a flat space. It is called Carn Anthony, or "Anthony's cairn," and is said to have been erected long

ago in memory of a son, named Anthony, of one of the Mackenzie proprietors of Torridon. There are some remains of smaller heaps of stone by the side of the Torridon road formed by funeral processions at places where they halted to rest (Part II., chap. iii.). Half a mile beyond the march the road passes over the burn of the great black corrie. To the left, below Loch Bharanaichd, is a large hollow filled with a vast number of circular knolls or hillocks. This hollow is called Coire Cheud Cnoc, or "the corrie of a hundred hillocks." These singular mounds appear to a casual observer to resemble the artificial sepulchral tumuli found in other parts of the kingdom, but in reality, as geologists tell us, they are due to the natural action of ice or water in ages long since past. Some guide-books erroneously call the place Coire Cheud Creagh, or "the corrie of a hundred spoils;" the spoils were cattle lifted—*i.e.* stolen—in Gairloch; they were often driven this way, so that the name though fictitious has some justification. It was at shieling bothies near this place that Alastair Ross called for the Lochaber cattle-lifters, as related in Part I., chap. xiii. Another traditional incident assigned to this locality is that illustrating the Rev. Mr Sage's muscular Christianity, narrated in Part I., chap. xvi. The remainder of the road to Torridon is overshadowed by the mighty precipices of Liathgach, the highest top of which is 3456 feet above the sea level. The prefix Beinn often put before the name of this mountain is superfluous and out of place. Her Majesty Queen Victoria drove to Torridon on 15th September 1877, and in her diary refers to "the dark mural precipices of that most extraordinary mountain." Her Majesty writes:—"We were quite amazed as we drove below it. Beinn Liathgach is most peculiar from its being so dark, and the rocks like terraces one above the other, or like fortifications and pillars—most curious; the glen itself is very flat, and the mountains rise very abruptly on either side. There were two cottages (in one of which lived a keeper), a few cattle, and a great many cut peats."

The dark hill to the left is Sgurr Dubh (2566 feet), a gloomy mass of steep rocks. On its west side, in an elevated hollow invisible from the road, is the little loch or tarn called Lochan an Fheidh, where the battle between the Mackenzies under Alastair Breac and the Macleods under Iain MacAllan Mhic Ruaridh took place in 1610. The Macleods were completely routed, and nettles still grow over the spot where their bodies have long since returned to dust. Further on, to the left, is Beinn na h' Eaglais (2410 feet), or "church hill," a name evidencing the widespread labours of the followers of St Columba, who brought Christianity to these parts. The descent down the narrow glen towards Loch Torridon becomes steeper as we proceed, and in due time the little village of Torridon, at the head of the loch, is reached. Since the boundary of the parish of Gairloch was passed the road has been entirely on the estate of Mr Duncan Darroch, [324] proprietor of Torridon, descended from MacGille Riabhaich (see page 28); he is an enthusiastic Highlander, and since he acquired this property in 1872 has done much to improve not only the estate but the condition of the people. He has erected a noble mansion on the shore of the loch about two miles beyond the village. He has recently sold the Beinn Damh estate, on the south side of the river and loch of Torridon, to the Earl of Lovelace.

A pleasant hour may be spent while the horses are being rested at Torridon. The low promontory jutting into the loch near the village is the Ploc of Torridon, mentioned in the story of the visit of John Roy Mackenzie to Lord Mackenzie of Kintail (Part I., chap xi.). From some points of view Beinn Alligin and Beinn Damh are conspicuous in the landscape. Beinn Alligin (3232 feet) is to the north of Loch Torridon, and is the mountain seen so well from Gairloch; Beinn Damh (2956 feet) has not such a noble contour. The traveller will probably return by the road just traversed. In some respects the views seem finer on the return journey.

Another pleasant little expedition from Kenlochewe is to the Heights of Kenlochewe, distant about three miles; the road is traversable so far by wheeled vehicles. Cross the bridge over the Bruachaig river just above the Kenlochewe lodge, and follow the road which soon bends to the right. There are good views from different points, especially of Beinn Eighe. The "Heights of Kenlochewe" is the name of the sheep farm, but the road does not attain to a level of more than three hundred feet above the sea. The glen has been erroneously called Glen Logan. The local name is Glen Cruaidh Choillie. The south-east side of it is called Leacaidh, or "the place of flags." Can "Logan" have been invented by some one who mispronounced Leacaidh? The great glen north of the head of this glen is called Glen na Muic, or the "glen of the pig;" they say wild boar were formerly hunted here; it must have been long ago. Some old people of the district locate the Fingalian legend of the "Boar of Diarmid" in Glen na Muic but that well known and almost universal story is connected with many other places in the Highlands.

The path on the east side of Loch Maree forms an interesting expedition, or series of expeditions, for the pedestrian. Cross the bridge over the Bruachaig river, as if going to the Heights; turn to the left, and take the path past the head-keeper's house and the kennels. At a house to the right Duncan Mackenzie, the Kenlochewe bard, lives (Part II., chap, xxiii.). A little further are the farm and burial-ground of Culinellan; some remains of a house outside the burial-ground are called "the chapel;" it may have occupied the site of an ancient church, but this is mere conjecture. It is however certain that there was a church in this neighbourhood in the seventeenth century, and probably much earlier (see page 99). The river was formerly on this side of the burial-ground; a great flood altered the course of the stream, and they say washed away some bodies. Further on, immediately to the left of the path, is a small well, called Tobar Mhoire, *i.e.* the well of the Virgin Mary, or perhaps of the god Mourie (see Part II., chap. xi.). There is no better water in the [325] country than this bubbling well supplies. Some of the old inhabitants believe that the ancient church called "Heglis Loch Ew" stood near the well. From a point half a mile beyond Culinellan the path lies along the bank of the Kenlochewe river. It is about two miles from Kenlochewe to the south-east corner of Loch Maree. Half a mile before this is reached is the small pond or swamp called Lochan Cul na Cathrach, into which the Fasagh ironworkers are said to have

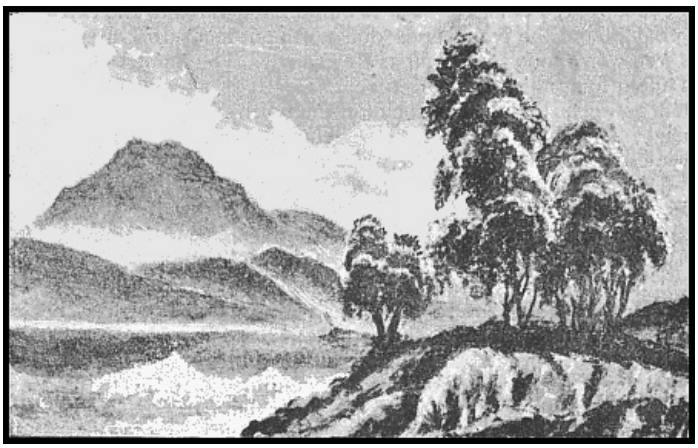
thrown their tools when the furnaces there were abandoned (Part I., chap. xx.). The name means "the lakelet or tarn at the back of the fairy seat;" a large mound or hillock at this place is called Cathir Mhor, or "the big seat of the fairies;" evidently the "good folk" frequented this place. Some other mounds here are called Torran nan Eun, or "the mounds of the birds;" the locality was formerly wooded. A large pool on the river is called Poll a Chuillin, or "the pool of the hollies," but there are no hollies there now. Another half mile brings us to the remains of the Fasagh ironworks, on the east side of the Fasagh burn, which comes from Loch Fada. These ironworks are described in Part I., chap. xx. The dark crag above is called Bonaid Donn, or "the brown bonnet." There is a wooden bridge over the burn, a little above the ironworks, and again above this bridge a narrow gorge; through which the burn has worn a deep course; it is a very picturesque spot. A quarter of a mile further the Cladh nan Sasunnach, or "English burial-ground," lies on a low flat bank close to the loch (Part I., chap. xviii.). Two hundred yards to the east of this burial-ground the path bends due north; it leads to Letterewe, and is well worth following as far as Regoilachy. The hamlet of Smiorsair is about four miles from Kenlochewe. It is situate in a hollow or dell, between the mighty Slioch (on the north) and a ridge of no great height stretching between the secluded plateau where Smiorsair nestles and Loch Maree. It is a romantic place with its waterfall, and a quiet burn meandering through the flat ground. The path next passes through a narrow gully called Clais na Leac, where they say ironstone used to be quarried. A mile beyond Smiorsair is the place called Regoilachy, near the shore of Loch Maree; there are remains of houses, but no one lives there now. The other hamlets between this and Letterewe are each about a mile apart; they are Coppachy, Innis Ghlas, and Fuirneis. Letterewe House is again a mile beyond Fuirneis; it is a walk of nine miles from Kenlochewe to Letterewe. The expedition may be continued beyond Letterewe to Ardlair, four miles, and thence on by Inveran to Poolewe, another four miles; but some portions of the path can scarcely be distinguished by strangers, and the part along the Bull-rock is, to say the least, difficult, and I do not recommend it. The Fasagh burn and Smiorsair may with advantage be made the objects of separate excursions, especially by those who sketch.

Perhaps the most generally enjoyable excursions from Kenlochewe are expeditions on Loch Maree itself. Boats can be hired in connection with the Kenlochewe Hotel, and many sailing or rowing trips undertaken in them along either shore of the loch. Not only the angler, but the [326] searcher after health, the archaeologist, and the artist or amateur sketcher, will find much to interest and delight. The Fasagh burn and its ironworks, the Cladh nan Sasunnach, the curious Grudidh island, and the beauties of the lower part of the Grudidh river, may be visited by boat.

Chapter IX.

Excursions from Talladale.

The excursions from the Loch Maree Hotel at Talladale, so far as *terra firma* is concerned, are principally to points along either section of the county road in the directions of Kenlochewe or Gairloch. These sections are described in Part IV., chaps. iv. and v. I recommend Grudidh bridge on the former, and the Kerry Falls on the latter, as being pleasant limits for drives or walks. The excursion to Torridon may, in imitation of Her Majesty, be made from the Talladale Hotel; and places near Gairloch (see next chapter) may also be visited from this hotel by those who prefer it to the larger and busier hotel at Gairloch.



SLIOCH FROM RUDHA AIRD AN ANAIL.

For other walks from Talladale, a climb to the top of the lower hill immediately behind the hotel, a ramble about the hamlet of Talladale, and a stroll to the Victoria Falls, are recommended.

Please spare the oak fern in the woods near Talladale.

A longer walk is to take the county road going west so far as the turn down to Slatadale farm. [327] Take this turn, and when the shore of Loch Maree is reached, close to the farmhouse, walk a mile, or two miles if you like, in a north-westerly direction, along the old road which passes behind Craig Tollie, in the direction of Poolewe. This ramble has several fine points of view, and though after leaving Slatadale the road or track is rather rough, the walk will not be too much for any one in ordinary condition. This is a delightful excursion, and ought by all means to be tried. It may be prolonged to Poolewe (*see map*).

But as at Kenlochewe, so at Talladale, Loch Maree itself supplies the most charming expeditions. These may be taken either by the steamer or by hired boats.

The steamer is timed so as to give those staying at the Loch Maree Hotel, Talladale, the opportunity of visiting Tollie bay soon after breakfast. A short stay is permitted in the lovely nook where Tollie pier has been erected; and the return voyage to Talladale is accomplished by noon. The visitor on returning from Tollie may, instead of landing at Talladale, proceed at once to Ru Nohar, at the head of Loch Maree, and after spending an hour there may return by the steamer and be again landed at Talladale about or before three P.M.; or this excursion may be made apart from and on a different day to the voyage to Tollie and back. Either way luncheon should be taken to Ru Nohar, as there is scarcely time to visit the Kenlochewe Hotel for that purpose. This expedition is described in Part IV., chap. xiii.

The boating excursions from the Loch Maree Hotel, Talladale, are almost endless. The shores of Loch Maree, within a distance of four or five miles from the hotel, may be best surveyed and examined from a boat. It is usually the angler who adopts this means of locomotion, but those who are sketching or seeking for fresh points of view will find a boat equally suitable.

Chapter X.

Excursions from Gairloch.

The following drives may be taken from the Gairloch Hotel.

1. To any of the places on the road on the south side of the Gairloch (see "Tables of distances"). Leaving the county road at the Kerry bridge, an estate road strikes off to the right, and passes picturesque natural birch woods, with a fine view of Bathais or Bus Bheinn over the moorland to the left. In the narrow ravine as we approach Shieldaig is an interesting "junction" of the Archæan gneiss and the Cambrian conglomerate. It is described in Part III., chap. ix. At Shieldaig is the pretty lodge leased by Mr J. Bateson, the Marquis of Bristol, and Mr A. Hamond. The garden is brilliant with choice flowers, even as seen from the road. Shieldaig is placed in a [328] secluded little bay called Loch Shieldaig, in which are two islands. The road ascends, and a mile further the hamlet of Leac nan Saighead lies to the right. Close to the shore at Leac nan Saighead may still be seen the spot where Donald Odhar and his brother Iain Odhar concealed themselves and nearly four hundred yards away is Fraoch Eilean, or "the heather island," where so many of the M'Leods were slain by the arrows of those Macrae heroes (Part I., chap. xii.). Kenneth Fraser, who has probably as large a store of the old traditions and legends of Gairloch as any other inhabitant, lives at Leac nan Saighead. The road now strikes inland, and skirts Loch Badachro, at the north-western corner of which the rocky Badachro river leaves the loch for its short course to the sea. It is a remarkably picturesque little river, with its rocky bed and banks, and its overhanging trees. The fishing of the loch and river are let with Shieldaig. Passing the farmhouse of Badachro we soon come in sight of the village of Badachro, at the head of an almost landlocked bay shut in by islands, one of them the considerable Eilean Horisdale or Thorisdale, so called after the Norse god Thor. The Dry Island is joined to the mainland at low tide. Here are two fish-curing stations, Badachro being the centre of the important cod-fishery of Gairloch (Part II., chap. ix.). After leaving Badachro the road again strikes inland, and passes a loch, fully half a mile in length, called Loch Bad na h' Achlais. Another mile brings us to the straggling village of Port-Henderson; and again another mile over a rugged and boulder-bestrewed moor and we are on the sandy hill overlooking the pretty bay of Opinan, where there is a fine sandy beach. On the headland between Port-Henderson and Opinan is the Uamh nam Freiceadain (mentioned in Part I., chaps. xii. and xxi.). A short distance to the north of this place there is on the seashore a large cave, which is worth a visit; it is called Uamh an Oir. It has a fine entrance; it branches off right and left; the branch to the left can be followed for about forty yards, that to the right is not so deep. In the village of Opinan are the board school and volunteer armoury, the latter an iron house. A little beyond the village, to the south, is the new Free church, which is a mission church or chapel-of-ease in connection with the parent Free church of Gairloch. It is a plain and substantial building of recent erection. You cannot drive further than South Erradale, but the road beyond is well worth exploration on foot. Some of the inhabitants can point out the green spot in a hollow where the two Macleod fratricides were slain and buried (page 26). The village of South Erradale, with its stream called the Red River, is about a mile beyond Opinan. Two of the dwelling-houses are built of turf. At the upper end of the crofts are the Garradh Iaruinn, or

"iron dyke," and other evidences of bog iron (see page 87). About three miles further we come to the farm of Point, or Red Point, where is also much bog iron. Along all this route are magnificent views of the Torridon mountains, of the island of Rona, and of the shores and mountains of Skye, which last are much nearer and more plainly seen than from the Gairloch Hotel. The rocky coast, with the primitive houses of the people, the rough moorland, and the background of rugged [329] mountains, give to this expedition the charm of great wildness. Your charioteer can rest his horses at Opinan or South Erradale whilst you walk further on.

2. To any of the places on the road running along the north side of the Gairloch (see "Tables of distances"). This expedition may be done by carriage as far as Melvaig. Leaving the Gairloch Hotel by the county road going in the direction of Poolewe we turn off to the left at Achtercairn. Passing the police-station and the board school on the right, we are quickly on the sea-shore. Turn to the right, and cross the curious narrow wooden bridge over the Achtercairn river or burn. To the right, a little way from the road, is the manse of Gairloch (Part I., chap. xvi.), and then the fishing village of Strath or Smithstown is entered, at the back of which there was formerly much bog iron. There are two good merchants' shops, a boat-building yard, several shoemakers' shops, and a meal-mill. The straggling village of Lonmor lies to the right of and above the road after we pass Strath. Here plenty of bog iron is still to be met with (Part I. chap. xx.). Except for the views of the Gairloch, with Skye in the distance, the road is now uninteresting for a mile or two. It bends to the north at Carn Dearg House (Mr Corson), which is a peculiar building, close to the road, with an enormous red-tiled roof. Below the house is a low rocky cliff, of a reddish colour. About a mile inland are the Sitheanan Dubha, or "fairies' hills."

A little beyond Carn Dearg is a fine sandy bay, and half a mile from the shore is the island of Longa. It is more than a mile in length; in ancient times it was a retreat of the Norse vikings (Part I., chap. i.). From Carn Dearg the road strikes inland due north, passing the farm of Little Sand on the left, and beyond that again around a large sandy bay the village called Big Sand. Among the first sandhills you come to on the farm of Little Sand may be seen some thin pans of bog iron (Part I., chap. xx.). More than a mile further on, close to the new board school, the road bends again towards the west. The hill to the right is Meall na Glaice Daraich (522 feet), and then further on, to the left between the road and the sea, lies the township of North Erradale. The building near the road, with its clump of trees, was formerly the schoolhouse; it is now used as a place of worship. Among the crofts of North Erradale some remains of bog iron pans are met with (Part I., chap. xx.). At the shore, below the village, is a rocky cove enclosing a shingly beach, where the people keep their boats.

A little to the north of this is a wonderful cave, known as Uamh an Oir. It is said that ages ago twelve men, headed by a piper, marched into the cave, the piper playing a lively strain; they were to search for the precious metal; the party are believed to have wandered for miles among the windings of the cavern; the music of the bagpipes was heard underground as far away as the village of Strath, Gairloch, but neither the piper nor any of the men ever came back; it is supposed "they forgot to turn." Further details of this story are given by some, who connect it with an old song well-known in the Argyleshire and other Highlands. I have explored the cave, [330] candle in hand, as far as to where the passage narrows. Before the narrow part is reached there is a large chamber, in which are traces of fires said to have been used for the illicit distillation of whisky. The cavern appeared to expand again beyond the narrow place. They say the cave may be explored a long way further, but Mr Corson tells me he cannot discover any passage. The cave is well worth a visit. Lights must be provided, and care be taken that return to the outer world is not delayed by the tide, which for two hours before and after high water prevents access to or from the cave unless a boat be at hand.

From North Erradale a long stretch of road conducts the traveller towards the north. The hamlets of Peterburn and Altgreshan are passed, and at last the village of Melvaig is reached. It has a good school, and is placed on the top of a rocky cliff, of no great height but so steep that the shore below can only be safely reached by those who are acquainted with the place and have a ladder. There is a cave on the shore, which has been used for illicit distillation. There are magnificent views of the Minch and its islands from Melvaig and near it. It is well worth walking three miles north of Melvaig along the cliffs to Rudha Reidh, or the Seann Rudha as it is often called by the natives. About a mile from Melvaig any inhabitant will point out the "leac," or large flat stone, from the shelter of which Fionnla Dubh nan Saighead and his friend Chisholm let fly their arrows at the crew of Macleod's birlinn (Part I., chap. xii.). Two or three picturesque burns are passed, and the cliffs gradually rise to a height of 300 feet. Rudha Reidh itself is a fine headland of reddish rocks, with a very picturesque bay to the right, exhibiting on a sunny day remarkable contrasts of colour, the sands being white, the rocks and cliffs black and red, and the sea intense emerald green streaked with purple. Looking over the cliffs some detached masses of rock are seen standing in the sea. One square rock is called Stac Buidhe, or "the yellow stack," from the brilliant orange-coloured lichens growing upon it. It is the breeding-place of a few gulls and other sea birds. Twenty miles away due west the Shiant Isles are visible. Return by the same route. Your horses will require a rest at Melvaig.

These are the principal drives from the Gairloch Hotel, but several shorter drives may be made with great advantage on the county road in the direction of the pass leading to Slatadale on Loch Maree. I can recommend the drives to Kerrysdale or to the Kerry Falls, or still further to Loch Bad na Sgalaig and Feur Loch, or to the head of the pass, whence a magnificent view of Loch

Maree and its islands is obtained.

It is a good drive also to Poolewe (Part IV., chap. vi.), and the drives recommended in the next chapter to be made from Poolewe may be conveniently taken from the Gairloch Hotel (Part IV., chap. xi.).

Undoubtedly the chief excursion to be made from the Gairloch Hotel is that on Loch Maree. Carriages leave the Gairloch Hotel about ten a.m., and convey passengers to Tollie pier. The road to Tollie is described in Part IV., chap. vi. Hence the voyage of the *Mabel* is made (Part IV., chap. xiii.), and the party can return to the Gairloch Hotel by five P.M. the same day. [331]

There are very pleasant expeditions to be made by boat on the Gairloch, not only by anglers but by those who wish to explore this fine bay and its interesting shores and islands. You may land on the island called Fraoch Eilean and see the graves of the Macleods, nearly three centuries old (Part I., chap. xii.); or you may go into Loch Badachro and learn all about its cod fishery; or you may venture as far as the rocky shores of the wild island of Longa. The angler will get good sport in the Gairloch, either trolling or with hand lines (Part IV., chap. xvi.).

Of walks there are many about Gairloch. A short but steep stroll, affording splendid views, is that up the hill behind the hotel, called the Kirk hill. Another short walk is to explore the villages of Achtercairn and Strath. If the salmon fishing be going on, a visit to the salmon station at Achtercairn may lead to the acquisition of interesting information on the subject; or the sergeant-instructor of the Gairloch volunteers will obligingly show the armoury he has charge of. Other strolls are to Strath and Lonmor, or to the large sandy beach below the Gairloch Established church. This latter may include the old Gairloch churchyard, where so many of the Gairloch family of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries are buried, as well as many of the bards and pipers, and where is also the tombstone of John Hay, discussed in Part I., chap. xviii.; this walk may also include an examination of the Cnoc a Croiche (Part II., chap. iv.), and of the Dun, and remains of the vitrified fort (Part I., chaps. vi., vii., xi., and xxi.) at the further end of the large sandy beach. Below the rocks, and on the face of them, at the extreme east end of the sandy beach, is a remarkable junction, where the Archæan gneiss and the Cambrian conglomerate or breccia actually touch each other. This stroll may be prolonged to Port na Heile, where the Gairloch pier is situated. Another and a longer walk is to take the old road, to the left, at the south end of the bridge at Ceann an t' sail, where the post-office is, and then follow this old road until it joins the county road a little below Loch Bad na Sgalaig. The return walk from Loch Bad na Sgalaig may be varied by taking the present county road back to the Gairloch Hotel *viâ* the Kerry Falls, Kerrysdale and Charlestown. The old road is rough, and most visitors will find it best to walk both to and from the Kerry Falls by the county road, and I certainly advise this as preferable in every way. Other rambles in the neighbourhood of the Gairloch Hotel may be made along the sea-shore, in both directions, and on the nearer parts of the roads already described. Anglers will enjoy the fishing on Loch Tollie.

Students of geology will find many places about Gairloch that are well worth examination (see Part III., chap. ix.). Dr Geikie, in his "Geological Sketches," writes as follows of the interesting geological facts of the neighbourhood of the Gairloch Hotel. He says:—"Behind the new hotel at Gairloch the ground rises steeply into a rocky bank of the old gneiss. Along the base of these slopes the gneiss (which is here a greenish schist) is wrapped round with a breccia of remarkable coarseness and toughness. We noticed some blocks in it fully five feet long. It is entirely made up of angular fragments of the schist underneath, to which it adheres with great tenacity. Here again rounded and smoothed domes of the older rock can be traced passing under the breccia. On the coast, immediately to the south of the new Free church, a series of instructive sections lays bare the worn undulating platform of gneiss, with its overlying cover of coarse angular breccia." [332]

More distant excursions to places described in connection with Talladale, Kenlochewe, Poolewe, and Aultbea—either drives, walks, or boating expeditions—may be taken from Gairloch, by utilising the Loch Maree steamer, or the public mail-car, or by hiring; in fact all the expeditions recommended to be made from any of those places may be worked from the Gairloch Hotel.

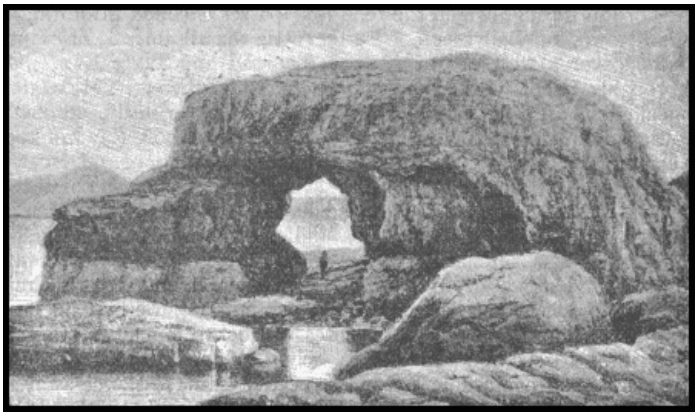
Chapter XI.

Excursions from Poolewe.

From Poolewe there are several interesting drives to be taken.

1. *To Places on the West Side of Loch Ewe.*—From Poolewe Inn strike off to the left along the sea-shore. The first house beyond the inn is called Cliff House (Mr J. Mackenzie). Here was formerly the Gairloch manse. A little further, to the left of the road, are the two large holes, full of water (Part I., chap. xx.), which were borings made long ago by Sir George Hay or some of the ironworkers, who projected a canal to connect Loch Maree with the head of Loch Ewe. About half a mile from Poolewe the road forms a sharp angle to the right. This place is called Cuil an

Scardain, a very descriptive name, for it means "the corner of the screes." There were formerly houses here. Many spots have Gaelic names indicating either that they were formerly inhabited, or that some particular incidents celebrated by the "seannachaidh" occurred at the places. The little water-mill of Boor for grinding meal is soon reached. It is on the right of the road at the foot of a rocky burn, whose steep descent to the left makes quite a picture as you look up it from the road. The farm of Boor is now passed. The farmhouse (Mr John Mackenzie) is on the hill side to the left. A little hazel scrub, containing a few choice wildflowers, is on the same side of the road. It was in this direction that the last of the chiefs of the Macbeaths fled from the two Kintail men (Part I., chap. vi.). The name "Boor" is supposed by some to have originated in this incident; others say the name means the "roaring" of a stag. For some distance beyond there is nothing requiring notice except Sgeir Bhoora (the rock of Boor), a small island in Loch Ewe. The small headland jutting into Loch Ewe at the north end of Boor farm is called on the Dutch map of 1662 [333] Ruymakilvandrich, *i.e.* Rudha Mac Ghille Aindreas, or "the point of the son of St Andrew's servant or disciple;" the story of this place is now lost. The road skirts Loch Ewe, which widens somewhat abruptly beyond the opposite point called Fiaclachan, on the Inverewe side of the loch. The Isle of Ewe (with its satellites Sgeir an Fharaig and Sgeir a Bhuic) comes into sight, and far away to the north are gradually expanding views of range beyond range of the mountains of Sutherland. Naast is the first village we pass. Its Norse name is said to mean a castle or fort; a stronghold anciently stood on the rocky headland forming the tiny bay below the township, where a picturesque group of fishing boats is generally to be seen lying on the beach. The headland is called Dun Naast (see pages 61 and 98). Another mile brings us to the commencement of Inverasdale, a straggling collection of hamlets spread over a tract a mile and a half in length and half a mile or more in width. Inverasdale is entered by a narrow bridge over the burn called the Great Burn (though it is but small), which joins the salt water at a picturesque little creek often occupied by herring boats out of work. On the other side of the creek is a tall house, formerly the school. The large room in the building is now used as a place of worship by the members of the Free Church. The section of Inverasdale on the hillside to the left is called Brae; the portion through which the road first passes is called Midtown, or Middletown, or Ballymeon. Further on, the allotments, or rather crofts, cover a wide space between the road and Loch Ewe, with thoroughly Highland dwellings dotted here and there. This section is called Coast. The substantial board school, with the teacher's house adjoining, is to the left of the road nearly at the hill top. Near the school some pans of bog iron may be noticed. Descending the hill the hamlet of Faidhir Mor, or Firemore, which is the furthest north portion of Inverasdale, lies to the right. On a promontory here are the signals indicating where the telegraph cable begins its submarine course to Stornoway, the capital of the Lews. The range of hills which having commenced with Craig Tollie on Loch Maree was continued behind Poolewe by Cliff Hill, and has been prolonged by a series of rocky eminences, varying from three to six hundred feet in height, along the side of the road as far as Inverasdale, has now receded some distance away to the left, or rather the road has deviated considerably to the right. That range of hills runs forward in an almost straight line until it reaches the Minch, where it is broken off and forms the rocky headland called Rudha Reidh, or Seann Rudha, mentioned in the last chapter. On the east side of the highest top of this range is the place called Bac an Leth-choin, and a moorland ridge between the road and the range of hills is the Druim cam Neill; both are mentioned in the story of the death of Neil Macleod told in Part I., chap. xii. Crossing the burn beyond Firemore the road skirts a beautiful sandy bay, and shortly arrives at Meallan na Ghamhna, or Stirkhill. There are some caves frequented by rock pigeon, on the sea margin of the hill. It was here that a cave full of weapons, which (both cave and weapons) had been concealed long ago by means of the "sian," [334] were seen by some women gathering lichens not many years since (Part II., chap. xiv.). Two miles away, to the left, the woods of Loch a Druing may be noticed clothing a hollow on the side of the range of hills beyond the Bac an Leth-choin. It was in these woods that the fairy called the Gille Dubh lived (Part II., chap. xiii.); and behind the top of the ridge is the Fedan Mor, where Duncan MacRae hid the keg of gold (Part II., chap. xiv.). The road is not passable for carriages beyond Stirkhill, but a walk forward to Cove is strongly recommended. The primitive out-of-the-world character of the place and its inhabitants, the fine cave, the natural arch (*see illustration*), and the views from and general features of the coast, will well repay the pedestrian who spends an hour in the following stroll. The village of Cove begins very soon after you leave your carriage. The road is a cart road, until, on the left, a house is reached with a wing (formerly used as a school) at right angles to its main portion. Open the door of this wing and you see a curious room, which is a place of worship with its little pulpit, and is also a store-house of all manner of fishing implements and dresses. The house is the home of the catechist attached to the Aultbea and Poolewe Free churches. The picturesque cove or harbour is to the right of the path, and when the many coloured boats are laid up on its shore it forms a charming picture. Go forward by the narrowing path, and ask some of the civil inhabitants to show you the cave where they worship. It is a romantic place with its old desk, and stones and pieces of wood arranged for seats, the nest of a mavis or thrush on a ledge of rock, and the narrow entrance veiled by a tangle of woodbine and eglantine. The sea can almost wash into this cave. A few yards from it is a hole which opens into another and smaller cave; there is a larger cave in the rocky headland nearer the harbour. A [335] brief further stroll on the top of the low cliff reveals the curious detached rock standing out from the shore with its natural arch (*see illustration*), resembling similar arches at Torquay, Freshwater (Isle of Wight), and other places. The return from Cove is by the same route, or a boat may be hired to Poolewe.



NATURAL ARCH, COVE—LOW TIDE.

2. *Excursion to Fionn Loch.*—This excursion (so far as beyond Inveran) can only be made by special permission of Mr O. H. Mackenzie of Inverewe, and that certainly cannot be obtained after July. Cross the bridge at Poolewe and turn to the right. The road follows the course of the River Ewe pretty closely. There is a picturesque little crag on the left called Craig an Fhithich, or "the raven's crag." The flat peat bog a little further on is called the "Shore." Between the road and the river, on the right, is the remains of the iron furnace called the Red Smiddy (Part I., chap. xx.). The next hill we pass, on the left, is called Craig Bhan. It was on this and other hills to the left and further on that Donald Maclean saw the visions of soldiers in red uniforms described in Part II., chap. xv. Observe the beautiful peeps of the river Ewe and Loch Maree, and the wooded hills often called the Trossachs of Loch Maree. The road soon enters the Inveran woods, and after passing the Inveran farmhouse, where there is a fine view of the lower end of Loch Maree, arrives at a wooden bridge over the Inveran river or burn, the outlet from Loch Kernsary. To this point the road has been on the property of Sir Kenneth Mackenzie, but now enters that of Mr Osgood H. Mackenzie. The gate at this bridge is kept locked. A small loch (Loch an Doire Garbh), with abundant water lilies, is soon passed on the right, and then Loch Kernsary is reached, a fine sheet of water about a mile long. There is an artificial island, or crannog, with a grove of trees on it, now nearly destroyed by the rooks that nest here. Turning to the right the farm of Kernsary, with its sheltered fields and smiling woods, is reached. The small river is spanned by a frail foot-bridge, below which is the ford for carts and carriages. The cottage and byre on the hillside to the left are the place called Innis a Bhaird. A house was built here in the first half of the eighteenth century by the bard named Cross, who was called "Bard Sasunnach" (Part I., chap. xiv.). From Kernsary the almost Alpine road constructed by Mr O. H. Mackenzie about 1875 gradually ascends to a height of 600 feet above the sea level. Both at Kernsary and for a mile further, near the road, are the remains of cottages or shieling bothies. The patches which were formerly cultivated are now mostly overgrown with bracken. The varied colouring of the landscape, especially to the right of the road, is wonderfully fine at any time of the year. At a distance of about six miles from Poolewe the road terminates at Fionn Loch, which is admirably described by Mr Jolly in chapter xiv. of this Part. This fine loch is 550 feet above the sea level, and contains some picturesque little islands, mostly wooded. Some of them are mentioned in Part III., chap. vi. The chief attraction of Fionn Loch consists in the amphitheatre of mountains round [336] the head of the loch. Beinn Lair, broken off towards the north-east in a series of remarkable precipices, is the central object (*see illustration, page 54*); whilst the Maighdean to the east, and Meall Mheannidh to the west, form noble guards on those flanks. The horns of the crescent are completed by Beinn a Chaisgean on the east of Fionn Loch and Beinn Aridh Charr on the west, the latter presenting a series of magnificent escarpments. The south end of Beinn a Chaisgean has two fine spurs, Scuir a Laocainn and Scuir na Feart. Below Beinn Lair, and slightly to the east, are the lower eminences of Craig an Dubh Loch (a spur of Beinn Tarsuinn Chaol), streaked by veins of pegmatite, showing white even at some miles distance. Return to Poolewe by the same route. This excursion may be made also from the Gairloch Hotel, but in any case special permission must be obtained for it beforehand.

Other excursions by road from Poolewe Inn may be made in either direction towards Gairloch or Aultbea, and the excursions from Aultbea described in the next chapter may be accomplished from Poolewe.

Of water expeditions there are the voyage on Loch Maree (Part. IV., chap. xiii.), which can readily be done from Poolewe Inn, and boating expeditions on Loch Ewe either for purposes of angling or exploration.

Of walks and strolls there are many. Rambles on the west shore of Loch Ewe, or about the township of Londubh, or to Inveran farm and bridge, or to the splendid points of view of Loch Maree above Tollie, are all replete with interest. The old track continued from Tollie pier along the south-west side of Loch Maree is well worth following for a mile or more. Expeditions for angling purposes to any lochs which are open to those staying at Poolewe Inn furnish additional walks. There is a walk from Poolewe Inn to Craig Bhan which I particularly recommend. Cross Poolewe bridge; turn to the right, and follow the Inveran road (as if you were going to Fionn Loch). It is about a mile to the first small detached strip of natural birch wood just opposite the

house (on the other side of the river) furthest away from Poolewe. Craig Bhan is the low hill that rises close above the road on the side you are on. Near the top, about one hundred and fifty yards from the road, you will find on the one hand a magnificent view of Loch Maree, and in the other direction of Loch Ewe. I know no finer point of view in the district. One of the brochs, or Pictish round houses (Part I., chap. xxi.), is to be seen on Craig Bhan.

Chapter XII.

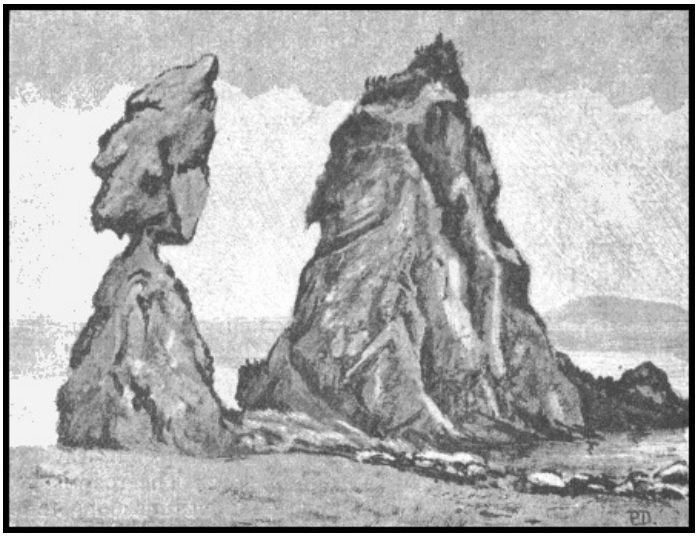
[337]

Excursions from Aultbea.

Three drives are recommended to be taken from Aultbea.

1. *To Mellon Charles.*—After leaving Aultbea Inn the road crosses the burn, which gives its name to the place, and after passing the post-office, and further on the Free church and its manse, reaches Aird House, on the promontory which forms the bay and is called Aird Point. The tiny hamlet below Aird is called Cuilchonich. Further on the village of Buaile na luib is reached, with its board school. The road now becomes rough, and the rest of the journey may perhaps be better accomplished on foot. The first village after leaving Buaile na luib is called Ormiscaig, and then the township of Mellon Charles is entered, with its sandy beach. It is an interesting Highland place, and, like Cove on the opposite side of Loch Ewe, gives one the idea of being near the end of the world. There are fairy stories connected with this neighbourhood (see Part II., chap. xiii.). Above the village rises Craig an Fhithich Mhor, or "the great raven's crag," 395 feet in height. The rocky coast on either side of Mellon Charles contains some fine caves inhabited by blue-rock pigeons. This excursion may perhaps be better made on foot.

2. *To Mellon Udrigil.*—Take the road leading north-east from Aultbea. On the left is Tighnafaolinn, a straggling township on the hillside. On the right, after crossing the burn, is the hamlet of Badfearn. The road ascends for about a mile and a half. On both sides are rough moorland, with moraines of ancient glaciers. Soon after passing the brow of the hill the road descends to Laide House, a small but neat dwelling, with a few trees about it, noticeable more for their present rarity in this part of the country than for any merits of their own. The straggling village of Laide, or more fully the Laide of Udrigil, is now entered. The first building, on the left, was used as a place of worship some few years ago, but has been lately unroofed. A little distance from the road, to the right, is the board school. At the merchant's shop turn to the left, leaving the ruin of the ancient chapel to the right below. The road is rather rough, but quite passable. For about a mile it runs along the top of low cliffs; the picturesque salmon station of Mr Hogarth, of Aberdeen, is seen on a small promontory. The curious red cliffs (the only trias hereabouts, Part III., chap. ix.), the picturesque ridges of rock jutting into the sea, and the salmon station itself, are well worth an exploration on foot. The road descends as it passes round the base of the hill called Meallan Udrigil (298 feet), and then ascends, passing Udrigil House, a little way above which is the hamlet of Achagarve. The road now strikes somewhat inland, behind the hill called Meall nam Meallan (478 feet). On the left is the Loch of the Beast, the haunt of the celebrated water-kelpie (Part II., chap. xiii.). A mile further, through a narrow pass, we enter the little village of Mellon Udrigil, with its board school, which, though small, is sufficient for the place. An [338] examination of the village, and a stroll on the sands, will be found interesting. Meall nam Meallan forms a series of fine cliffs along the coast to the south of Mellon Udrigil. During the whole of the drive from Laide there have been magnificent views of the hills and islands around and within the bay of Gruinard. On a fine day, at any time of the year, these views are enchanting. It was from Mellon Udrigil that the vision of the great fleet, with boats manned by red-jackets, was seen (Part II., chap. xv.). The bay of Gruinard, or Loch Gruinard, is described in a separate chapter by Mr Jolly.



CURIOUS ROCKS, SAND OF UDRIGIL.

3. *To Second Coast and intermediate places.*—The road to Laide is the same as in the last drive, but instead of turning off to the left at the merchant's, keep straight on in an easterly direction. The scenery and surroundings are described in Mr Jolly's chapter on Loch Gruinard (see page 355). The ruined church or chapel of Sand (Part I., chap. xxi.), standing in a crowded graveyard, is well seen to the left, and is worth a visit. In my memory there were the remains of a mullion and tracery in the little window in the eastern gable. This little church, called the chapel of Sand, is said to have been one of the earliest Christian churches on the west coast (*see illustration, page 70*). The straggling collection of cottages called Sand adjoins Laide; here, as the name implies, there is a fine stretch of sandy beach, beyond which a wonderfully diversified rocky shore extends. A little beyond Sand, in a cove on the sea-shore close below the road, and [339] accessible from it by a winding footpath, are two caves and some curious detached rocks. One rock is a sort of rugged pyramid, and another resembles a sphinx (*see illustration*). This latter is particularly remarkable, and is overgrown with beautiful lichens. The larger cave is used for public worship, and the small one as a dwelling. The first hamlet or village after Sand is called First Coast, and the other, further on, is Second Coast. The Gaelic name of the former is "Bad an t' Sluig," or "the clump of the gullet;" and of the latter, "An t' Eirthire Donn," or "the brown side or edge." The word "eirthire" is here spelt according to the local manner; it is in other parts of the Highlands spelt "oirthire," which is said to be more correct.

The villages of First and Second Coast differ from most of those in the parish of Gairloch in having the habitations all together, instead of being scattered in their respective crofts or allotments, as is the usual arrangement. This is due to the "run-rig" system of cultivation having been retained here to a comparatively recent date (Part II., chap. viii.).

Second Coast is bounded by a considerable burn, which joins the sea in the bay below the village, sometimes called Mill bay, because of the mill which formerly stood at the foot of the burn. Proceeding by a long ascent the summit of Cadha Beag is at last attained, with a most lovely view of the horseshoe bay of Fisherfield. At the foot of the steep road down Cadha Beag is a bridge over the Little Gruinard river, which flows out of Fionn Loch, and is the northern boundary of the parish of Gairloch. Here, on the Gairloch side of the river, is a black bothy, which is a licensed house, kept by one William Gunn, the humorous father of a numerous family. The farm, with arable land on both sides of the river, is called Little Gruinard.

The continuation of this drive to the Meikle Gruinard river is well worth taking; a picturesque burn is crossed half-way between the two rivers, and the horses may perhaps be baited at the Fisherfield farmhouse. This road may be used as an exit from Gairloch (Part IV., chap. ii.).

The return journey to Aultbea is by the same route. All the comparatively low ground of the Greenstone Point is called the "Laigh of Loch Broom," *i.e.* low ground of Loch Broom. It is curious that this part of Gairloch parish should be spoken of as if it were part of the adjoining barony of Loch Broom. In former days Gairloch and Loch Broom were considered to form one district, and this may have originated the confusion perpetuated in this name. "Laigh" is a Scotch, not a Gaelic, word.

Excursions by water from Aultbea are mostly what can be made by boat on Loch Ewe, and may be either for the purpose of sea-fishing, which is very good, or with the object of exploring the rocky headlands and numerous caves at the north end of Isle Ewe or on the mainland beyond Mellon Charles. There is a fine sandy bay, with an out-of-the-world little village called Slaggan, where the great bard of Slaggan (Part II., chap. xxi.) had his abode, and this may be made the [340] subject of a boating excursion. In fine weather a sail on the wide bay of Gruinard will reveal magnificent views of the mountainous coast round its shores, and further north and east.

For walks I can recommend either shore of the Greenstone Point. Mr Forbes, at the inn, will suggest pedestrian rambles, as well as make arrangements for boats on sea and on fresh-water

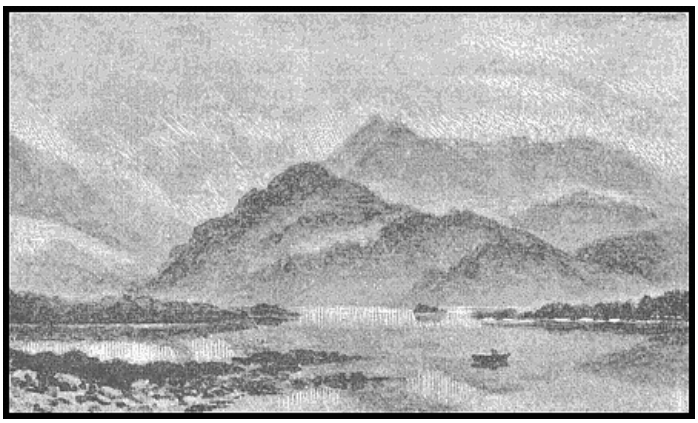
lochs.

Chapter XIII.

Excursion by Steamer on Loch Maree.

The steamer on Loch Maree affords a means of viewing the beauties of this queen of Highland lochs in a thorough and luxurious way.

The route from the Gairloch Hotel past Loch Tollie to the junction with the Tollie road is described in chap. vi. of this Part. Proceeding down the estate road past Tollie farm, the tourist will be delighted with the views of Loch Maree and Beinn Aridh Charr, and will soon arrive at Tollie pier in the north-western corner of the loch, where trees and rocks mingle in lovely confusion beneath rugged grey cliffs.



LOCH MAREE FROM ARDLAIR.

Loch Maree is a magnificent sheet of water, rather over twelve miles in length. Pennant in his "Tour" (Appendix B) says it is eighteen miles long, and this error has been repeated in the New Statistical Account (Appendix E), and in most of the guide-books. The Old Statistical Account (Appendix C) gave the correct length, which can now be attested by any one who will take the trouble to refer to the Ordnance Survey.

Pennant described the scenery of the loch as "making a most beautiful appearance." Dr Arthur Mitchell, adopting the opinion expressed in Anderson's excellent guide, characterises the scenery as "utterly savage and terrific," though he admits that the islands make the loch "an exquisite picture of calm beauty." [341]

Thus doctors disagree! Without claiming to have anything new to say on the question, I must express the opinion, which I share with many others, that the scenery of Loch Maree is not surpassed in the United Kingdom for both wild and gentle beauty.

Perhaps its leading characteristic is the frequent contrasts it exhibits between barren, often precipitous, rocks and mountains on the one hand, and calm lochs, smiling woods, or richly-coloured moors on the other. The unconscious, or unanalysed, impressions of these contrasts produce the most pleasing effects on the spectator's mind and feelings.

The Rev. Mr Small refers to the charms of contrast, exemplified in the scenery of Loch Maree, thus:—

> "In rugged grandeur by the placid lake,
> Rise the bold mountain cliffs, sublimely rude;
> A pleasing contrast, each with each, they make,
> And when in such harmonious union viewed,
> Each with more powerful charms appears imbued.
> Even thus it is, methinks, with mingling hearts,
> Though different far in nature and in mood,
> A blessed influence each to each imparts,
> Which softens and subdues, yet weakens not, nor thwarts."

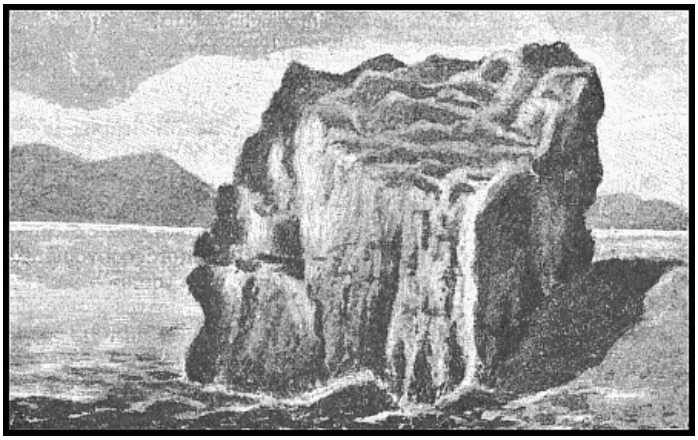
The derivation of the name Maree from St Maelrubha is discussed and conclusively established by Dr Mitchell (Part II., chap. xi.). Other references to the loch incidentally occur in several parts of this book.

At Tollie pier (erected 1883) we step on board the little steamer, and commence the tour of the loch. It will be more convenient to describe the left or north-east shore on our way up the loch, and the other side on the return voyage. As the steamer leaves Tollie pier the Fox Point (Gallicé, Rudha mhadaidh ruaidh) is seen on the left. It is a low and small promontory, terminating in grey-white rocks, deriving its name from some story of a fox closely pursued by dogs taking to the water here, or from some fox of unusual size being killed at the place.

Observe the extreme clearness of the water of Loch Maree. Owing to the rocky and gravelly nature of the bed and shores of the loch, its waters never acquire that dark peaty tinge which characterises the water of Loch Katrine. The Fox Point has long been the resort of persons suffering from various ailments, who have come to drink of the marvellously pure water of the loch, which is, or was, believed to possess valuable health-restoring qualities (Part II., chap. xiii.). The traveller casually tasting Loch Maree water, especially in the summer when it is slightly warmed by the sun, may be disappointed with its flavour, or rather want of flavour, and may think it lacking in freshness. Remember that the fresh sparkle of much spring water, so [342] agreeable to the palate, is due to a certain amount of mineral or other impurity.

Behind, or to the north of, the Fox Point the River Ewe leaves Loch Maree. Here are Inveran House and Inveran farm (Miss Maclennan), situated on the estate of Sir Kenneth S. Mackenzie, Bart. of Gairloch, to whom both sides of the River Ewe and, as we shall see, most of the shores of Loch Maree belong, as well as all its islands and the sole right to the salmon and sea-trout fishings, not only of the loch but also of the river and contiguous sea.

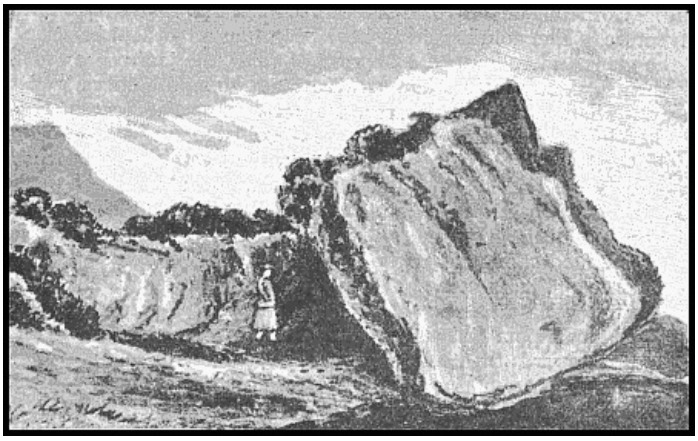
This end of Loch Maree has its Ossianic legend (Part I., chap. i.). "The sweetheart's stepping-stones" are said to have been placed in their present position in the water near the Fox Point by Fingal himself; they render the navigation difficult to those ignorant of their localities.



CLACH A MHAIL, ARDLAIR.

From the Fox Point to a burn a mile further up, the estate of Mr Osgood H. Mackenzie abuts on the loch; then commences the property of Mrs Liot Bankes. The scrubby wood on the hill side sloping to the loch is called An Fhridh dhorch, or "the dark forest." The sheep have been removed from this ground, so the wood here will now have a chance of growing. As the steamer emerges from the comparatively narrow part of Loch Maree the new mansion-house of Ardlair (Mrs Liot Bankes) comes in view, situated in natural pleasure grounds of peculiar beauty. The charms of this place, embracing sloping lawns, shady glades, dense thickets, graceful trees, masses of grey rock, and a shingly beach, edged by a belt of feathery wood, the whole reposing at the foot of magnificent precipices, seem to constitute a sort of garden of the Hesperides, and fully justify the title bestowed on the spot by a Scotch poet, who truly called it "the sweet Ardlair." The name [343] Ardlair signifies "the mare's height." It is derived from a stone, rather like a horse's head, which stands in the loch a few yards to the south of the pier below the house.

A little past the cultivated land, to the east of the house of Ardlair, is the "Cave of the king's son" (Part I., chap. iv.); near it is the stone still called the "Minister's stone" (*see illustration, page 81*), where tradition has it that the Rev. Farquhar MacRae (Appendix A) used to preach.



UAMH A MHAIL, ARDLAIR.

Beyond the woods of Ardlair may be seen a large boulder on the beach, called Clach a Mhail, or "the stone of rent or tribute" (*see illustration*), at which the proprietor of the Letterewe estate used to gather his rents, and where a whisky market used to be held. A small cave a little above, called Uamh a Mhail (*see illustration*), was used by the proprietor if the weather were too stormy for his business to be conducted at the stone. Further on is a long bluish-looking point called Rudha Chailleach, or "the old woman's (or witch's) point," where it is supposed women accused of witchcraft used to be ducked, or more probably drowned.

On the side of Beinn Aridh Charr, about half way up above Rudha Chailleach, is a conspicuous mass of quartz, called the "White horse." Its shape justifies the name.

Our notes on the islands, among which the steamer passes when opposite Rudha Chailleach, shall be deferred until the return journey.

An enormous rock, or rather lump of rocks, on the southern shoulder of Beinn Aridh Charr rises (just beyond Rudha Chailleach) to the height of 1000 feet. It consists of a number of large rounded masses of stone descending sheer into the waters of the loch, and is called Craig Thairbh, or the "Bull Rock," from a detached stone in the water at the base of the rock supposed to resemble in shape a bull. After passing the Bull Rock the shores of the loch are more or less wooded for a distance of some four or five miles. [344]

On a wooded knoll opposite Isle Maree is an artificial cave, called Uamh an Oir, or "the cave of gold," about forty yards from the margin of the loch. It is an old excavation, made by searchers for the precious metal, which is said to have been found there but in unremunerative quantity. Dr Cochran-Patrick, in his "Early Records relating to Mining in Scotland," gives many interesting facts on the subject of gold mining. Gilbert de Moravia is said to have discovered gold at Durness in Sutherland in 1245. The Scottish Parliament granted to the Crown in 1424 all the gold mines in Scotland. Gold mines were commenced on Crawford Moor during the reign of James IV., about 1511. During the minority of James VI. Cornelius de Vois, a Dutchman, obtained in 1567 a license from the Regent Murray to work gold and silver for nineteen years in any part of Scotland. Cornelius de Vois had several partners who held shares in the adventure. The gold is said to have been found by them principally in the glens and valleys. This "cave of gold" may have been made by them. Many later attempts were made to find gold as well as silver. There is nothing whatever to shew when the search which resulted in the formation of the "cave of gold" took place. According to the New Statistical Account (Appendix E), this excavation was made by some one seeking a vein of silver, and several old people now living say the same, but the name "cave of gold" seems to connect it with the more precious metal.

A rounded mountain to the east of Beinn Aridh Charr, called Meall Mheannidh, is seen above the craggy eminences of Letterewe; and just beyond it Beinn Lair rises in a flattish undulating form, with one small point shewing to the summit. This hill is as it were broken off towards the north in a series of remarkably fine precipices, not discernible from this side (*see illustration, page 54*). At the back of Beinn Lair are the Claonadh, or "slopes," mentioned in the story of the "Gillie Buidhe" (Part I., chap. xiv.).

The woods of Letterewe begin about half way up the loch. At the commencement of the policies may be noticed the mouth of a canal, and, on the hillside above, the track of a tramway in connection with it. These were constructed by the late proprietor for the purpose of bringing limestone from an extensive and picturesque quarry further up. The quarry is now disused.

To the east of the tramway track notice a fine cascade. Letterewe House (Mr C. Perkins) is an old mansion of the Mackenzies of Letterewe, and is now the property of Mrs Liot Bankes, whose estate extends from the burn (already mentioned) between the Fox Point and Ardlair up to another burn on the west side of Slioch.

A mile beyond Letterewe House the Furnace burn falls into Loch Maree. The hamlet of Furnace takes its name from the iron-smelting furnace (Part I., chap. xx.) established here by Sir George Hay in or about 1607.

The hamlets or places from Letterewe to the head of Loch Maree are in the following order:— [345]
Furnace, Innis (or Inch) Ghlas, Coppachy, Regoilachy, and Smiorsair. Above them rises the lordly height of Slioch,—*not Beinn* Slioch, if you please,—whose name signifies a spear-head; the conical shape of the mountain, as seen from Talladale and Slatadale, resembles the form of the rather thick head of an ancient spear or lance, and still more closely that of an ancient flint arrow-head.

Slioch loses this conical form as the steamer approaches the mountain; it now assumes the appearance of a vast wall, furrowed and grooved by the natural agencies of ten thousand generations. The rills and burns which trickle down its steep sides become in wet weather foaming cataracts. The upper part of the mountain is fluted by deep weather-worn channels, thus forming the range of grand summits that nobly cap this chief feature of Loch Maree. Whilst Beinn Aridh Charr is remarkable for its graceful contour, Slioch stands pre-eminent for its barren wildness and grandeur.

At the foot of the Fasagh burn, which flows into Loch Maree to the east of Slioch, are, on the one side (at some little distance), the old burial-ground called the Cladh nan Sasunnach, or "English graveyard" (Part I., chap. xviii.); and, on the other (the east side of the burn), the remains of ancient ironworks, where large quantities of slag may still be seen (Part I., chap. xx.).

From the head of the loch, which the steamer is now nearing, stretches away to the south-east the partly cultivated strath of Kenlochewe, with the farm of Tagan in the foreground. On the left of the strath, towards the north-east, is a spur of Beinn a Mhuinidh, called the Bonaid Donn, with its waterfall, which, during or immediately after heavy rains, is a fine cascade of the mare's-tail type (Part III., chap. i.). On the south-west side of the strath is Meall a Ghuibhais; and exactly below it, near the head of the loch, the steamer pulls up at the pier on a shingly beach—a "silver strand"—which forms the promontory generally known as Ru Nohar, or "the giant's point." The full spelling of the Gaelic name is "Rudha an Fhomhair" (see "Glossary"). The name of the giant after whom this point is called is not recorded. Can he and his fellows have been buried in the large graves in the Cladh nan Sasunnach?

After a ramble on shore, where many a pleasant nook amid woods and rocks may be found by the roadside suitable for a brief pic-nic (including the consumption of the lunch which the thoughtful voyageur will have provided before starting), we again embark on the steamer for

The Return Voyage.

Our notes will now describe the right or south-west side of the loch, and also the islands which add so much to the beauty and romance of Loch Maree.

Observe, as the *Mabel* gets under way, the slopes and undercliffs of Meall a Ghuibhais, clothed with extremely beautiful woods. They consist for the most part of birch and pine raised by nature, and therefore more picturesque than if planted by man. The oak, the ash, the rowan, the sallow, [346]
the hazel, and the quivering aspen, are mingled with the firs and birches, and are all indigenous. Black game and roe-deer abound in these woods, and may often be observed near the margin of the loch. Above the woods are rocky heights; in one place a yellow scar is noticeable, where a landslip occurred many years ago, illustrating the effect of water and frost in disintegrating the hardest rocks.

The woods of Glas Leitire, as this fragment of the old forest is named, extend along some two miles of our return route. As they become thinner, individual trees display their characteristic shapes more freely (see Her Majesty Queen Victoria's remark about these trees quoted in Part IV., chap. iv.).

The county road towards Gairloch, also described in that chapter, runs along the side of the loch we are now noticing. It may be seen here and there winding through the trees, or surmounting some rocky point on the edge of the loch.

After passing the Glas Leitire woods, Glen Grudidh opens out; the transition from the lovely woods to this wild lonely glen is indeed a transformation scene! The view looking up Glen Grudidh is one of the finest in the country; the herbage assumes, particularly in autumn, a ruddy golden hue, contrasting wonderfully with the blue-grey boulders scattered upon it, and the steep blue peak of Ruadh Stac—the highest summit in Gairloch parish—and of Liathgach which form the background.

Further on, at a distance of five miles from the head of the loch, is Grudidh Island (Eilean Grudidh), in a small bay renowned for its sea-trout fishing, and where now and then a salmon is hooked. This interesting little island (Part I., chap, xxi.) was originally a stronghold of the MacBeaths, and was afterwards held by the Macleods (Part I., chap. xii.).

Rounding a promontory, called Aird na h' Eigheamh, or "the calling point," which considerably narrows the loch, we come in sight of the main body of the islands. They are said to be twenty-four in number, but no one can accurately number them. When the loch is high from recent rains many parts become detached from the larger islands, which when it lowers again are reunited. The principal islands are Isle Maree, Eilean Suainne ("the everlasting island"), Eilean Dubh na Sroine ("the black isle of the nose or promontory"), Garbh Eilean ("the rough isle"), and Eilean Ruaridh Mor ("the big island of Rory"), with its pendicle Eilean Ruaridh Beag. Another considerable island is called "the planted island." These islands are part of the Gairloch estate of Sir Kenneth Mackenzie; they are the resort of red deer, which swim across from the mainland;

and of black game, sea-gulls, and wild fowl, as well as occasionally of roe-deer. In a hard winter wild swans repair to Loch Maree (which is never frozen over), and frequent the islands. A specimen may be seen in the Loch Maree Hotel. Wild geese (the grey lag goose), wild ducks, mergansers, goosanders, black-throated divers, and countless sea-gulls, visit the islands during May and the following months for the purpose of nesting and rearing their young. The sea-gulls [347] are of four kinds, viz., the great black-backed gull (two or three pairs), the lesser black-backed gull (in great numbers), the herring gull (very few), and the common or winter gull (a few pairs).

The islands are for the most part beautifully wooded,—some of the trees being the remains of the ancient forest, which their insular position protected from the axe of the ironworkers; others self-sown in recent years; and others again planted by the lairds of Gairloch, to whom all the islands have for four centuries belonged. It is pleasant to notice young trees springing up along the north-east shore of the loch, no doubt the result of seed blown from the islands.

Isle Maree is the best known and most interesting of the islands (Part I., chap. ii.; and Part II., chaps. xi. and xii.).

The following verses by Mr James G. Whittier, the American poet, though not quite exact in descriptive details, refer so touchingly to the holy well of Isle Maree (see page 151 *et seq.*) that I must quote them here:—

"Calm on the breast of Loch Maree
A little isle reposes;
A shadow woven of the oak
And willow o'er it closes.

Within a Druid's mound is seen,
Set round with stony warders,
A fountain, gushing through the turf,
Flows o'er its grassy borders.

And whoso bathes therein his brow,
With care or madness burning,
Feels once again his healthful thought
And sense of peace returning.

O restless heart and fevered brain,
Unquiet and unstable,
That holy well of Loch Maree
Is more than idle fable!

Life's changes vex, its discords stun,
Its glaring sunshine blindeth,
And blest is he who on his way
That fount of healing findeth!

The shadows of a humbled will
And contrite heart are o'er it;
Go read its legend—'Trust in God'—
On Faith's white stones before it."

Eilean Suainne is the largest of the islands. It is nearly a mile long. Within it is a small loch, with two small islands, on one of which is a large fir tree. Beneath this tree the fairies used to assemble (Part II., chap. xiii.), and in its branches an osprey used to build its nest. Another osprey built on a headland of this island (Part III., chap. vi.). There are traces of the remains of the residence of Alastair Breac, laird of Gairloch, and of some of the older chiefs of the [348] Mackenzies, on this island, as well as of bothies where illicit distillation used to be carried on.

Eilean Ruaridh Mor is called after a celebrated chief of the Macleods. On this island, as well as on Garbh Eilean and Eilean Suainne, the illicit distillation of whisky was extensively conducted in the early part of the nineteenth century.

To the west of Eilean Ruaridh Mor is the small island known as Eilean Ruaridh Beag (or "the little island of Rorie"), formerly the residence of Ruaridh M'Leod, and subsequently of John Roy Mackenzie (Part I., chap. xxi.).

The steamer passes between Eilean Suainne and the mainland to the south of it, and soon reaches the Loch Maree Hotel (described in chap. iv. of this Part).

There is a fine view from the steamer, looking up the glen down which the Talladale river flows. To the right is the eastern shoulder of Beinn an Eoin. The mountain further back, and some distance to the right, is Bathais (or Bus) Bheinn. It is better seen from further down the loch.

After a brief call at Talladale the steamer proceeds in a northerly direction. For a mile or so the Talladale woods continue alongside, and then comes the Garavaig water, where the Slatadale farm begins. About three hundred yards from the loch may be seen through the trees the Victoria Falls (Part III., chap. i.). Close to the loch, at this point, are remains of iron-smelting (Part I., chap. xx.).

The Slatadale farm-buildings are a quarter of a mile further on. Above this farm the road to Gairloch is seen climbing the hill, but taking advantage of a depression.

The steamer now passes between Garbh Eilean, on the right, and Eilean Ruaridh Mor, on the left. Notice the fine views of Slioch.

Beyond Slatadale, *i.e.* to the west and north-west of the *Mabel's* course, not a dwelling of man is to be seen, except a shepherd's cottage (now uninhabited) at a place called Doire. The old road, which was formerly the main road to Poolewe, may be traced here and there, until it disappears behind the range of Craig Tollie.

A large bay now opens out, with a small wooded island; it is called Ob Choir 'I, *i.e.* "the bay of the island corrie." This name is Anglicised into the "bay of Corree." Here, in the summer of 1868, I was fishing with a friend, who succeeded, after a struggle extending to forty minutes, in landing a magnificent yellow trout of twenty-one lbs. (Part IV., chap. xvii.).

Leaving Corree bay well to the left, we reach the point called Rudha aird an anail, or "the high point of breathing," this being a favourite spot for a few minutes' breathing-time when rowing up or down the loch. Observe how the rocks are rounded by ancient glacial action.

From this point the first spur of the range of rocky hills called Craig Tollie begins to rise. A quarter of a mile further on is a rugged cliff, with a precipitous face, 300 feet high, which descends sheer into the loch (here thirty fathoms deep), and is often called the "Black Rock," [349] from its generally dark colour. The peregrine falcon builds her nest on a tiny ledge of this cliff, on which the young falcons are reared, unless the wary keeper shoots or traps the old birds; or else, let down by a rope fastened round his armpits, robs the nest of eggs or young, as I have witnessed.

On the Black Rock it is said there was formerly an eyrie of the golden eagle, until the ledge where the nest used to be built was destroyed or detached by a flash of lightning.

In the face of the Black Rock, on the northern end, is a cave, hidden by a mass of ivy, about twenty yards above the water, and almost inaccessible. The hardy and sure-footed Highlander, John Mackenzie,—who was the last post-runner from Dingwall to Gairloch, and was called Iain Mor am Post (Part II., chap. x.),—succeeded in entering this cave, and reported that twelve men might sit in it. The cave is called in Gaelic Uamh gu do roghiann, or "the cave for your choice," a name supposed to refer to some love story now forgotten.

The steamer proceeds alongside the slopes and below the crags of Tollie. The highest point of this range is 1123 feet in height. Some forty years ago a sad event occurred on the side of Craig Tollie. Heather burning, which is carried on in the months of March and April every year, in the interests alike of grouse and sheep, was in hand, and a newly engaged fox-hunter or trapper was assisting. Smothered by the smoke and overtaken by a sudden rush of flame, he was burned to death. Grand effects, as if blazing lava were pouring down the hillsides, are often witnessed during the annual seasons of heather-burning.

Stepping on to Tollie pier, we have completed the tour of Loch Maree, and again enter the carriage or "machine," which returns to Gairloch by the way we came.

Chapter XIV.

The Fionn Loch and its Dubh Loch.

By William Jolly.

There is no royal road to learning, and there is no "royal route" to our finest scenery. The common tourist, like the sheep, meekly follows the beaten tracks, missing the better bits, which only the hardier and more adventurous pedestrian finds, like the more independent goat. There are a hundred nooks of rarest beauty and wildest grandeur hidden away in our mountainous land, far from the sheep runs of coaches and hotels, and their mere enumeration would be longer than a Gaelic song or a Highland sermon.

One of these nooks may be found not far from Loch Maree. Immediately to the north of the lake stretches one of the least frequented tracts in broad Scotland,—the region that surrounds the beautiful, many-islanded, salt-water Loch Gruinard. Here, right across the high range which [350] skirts the north shore of Loch Maree from Beinn Aridh Charr to Slioch, lies the Fionn Loch, with its upper chamber, the Dubh Loch. Fionn Loch—that is "the fair lake"—is so called from its contrast to its darker portion, the Dubh or "black" Loch. Its name contains the word that has become classical in the famous name of the heroic Fingal, "the fair stranger" of some interpreters; and in the less known but real name of the equally famous Flora Macdonald, Fionnghal, "the fair one."

The Fionn Loch may be reached by the hardier climber by crossing Loch Maree from Talladale,

and dropping down on it through the pass behind Letterewe. But the easier, and in a scenic point of view better, way is to go from Gairloch or Poolewe by the good road which runs to its very shores. From Gairloch the way is unusually fine, commanding one of the best views of the queen of Scottish lakes, from the very spot rendered famous by Horatio Macculloch's great picture; passing the sweet sea gulf of Loch Ewe, and skirting the picturesque banks of the swift-flowing Ewe, which carries the waters of the great lake to the ocean. Leaving this clear stream you enter on a wild heathery region, till lately trodden only by the firm foot of the hunter or the pedestrian in search of game or the picturesque. You soon catch a view of Loch Kernsary, holding its prehistoric artificial island, and of its knots of trees, a pretty picture, with Loch Ewe looking like a lake, and the sea in the distance. You soon leave the Torridon sandstone and enter on the ancient barrenness of the Hebridean gneiss, covered by innumerable erratic blocks, the representatives of the Arctic era when ancient Caledonia was a Greenland and Fionn Loch was swathed in ice. From an eminence on a spur of the Rowan Tree Hill, you at last look down on Loch Fionn. It is a large sheet of fresh water, seven miles in length, enclosed within winding shores, diversified by islands, and surrounded by a magnificent range of mountains, which stand about it on every side but the one next the sea. In fine weather it forms a splendid mirror set in a fretted frame of alpine carving, seldom surpassed for wild and picturesque beauty. In storm it becomes a furious sea of crested waves, under driving rain, rolling mist, and howling winds. These descend with uncommon strength from frowning mountains, which guard a scene then almost as wild, dark, and grand as Coruisk itself. From its character and surroundings the lake assumes either aspect with equal ease.

Right in the centre of the view stands Craig an Dubh Loch, or the "black loch crag," a bare precipitous mountain, whose white front at once catches the eye and unifies the wide-sweeping view. On both sides of this central point there extends a semi-circle of mountains, a splendid range of rocky masses,—those to the right, pointed and craggy; those to the left, more rounded and sloping, and grassed to the summit. The striking peak farthest to the right is Beinn Aridh Charr, "the ben of the rough shieling." It presents a front of steep precipice, two thousand feet in height, and has a cairn of immense blocks at its base, called the Cairn of the Caves, till a few years ago an eyrie of the golden eagle. The hill next it is Meall Mheannidh, or the "middle [351] mountain," so named as lying between it and the grander mass beyond. That is Beinn Lair, or "the ben of the mare," which rises right from the widest part of Loch Maree. From the left of the central Craig an Dubh Loch stretches a series of mountains with different trying names. The fine peak next to it bears the pretty title of Maighdean, "the Jungfrau, or Maiden." The highest is Beinn a Chaisgean Mor, and the farthest to the left is Fhridh Mheallan. This long mountain screen is singularly varied in outline and aspect, being both precipitous and rolling, peaked and rounded, and greatly diversified in contour and colouring. The hills are separated from each other, especially those to the right, by deep narrow glens, which afford passage across the range, and increase their picturesqueness.

On the right hand, the loch is separated from the steep mountains by a narrow stretch of rough heathery moorland, containing many small lakes; to the left, the hills swell right from the water in green rounded slopes. At the lower end, the lake divides into several sinuous branches, with numerous tributary lochans, and its waters are discharged by a stream, a few miles in length, which falls into the sea at the head of Gruinard Bay.

It is nigh twenty years since I first visited this romantic spot, along with some scientific friends, intent on geologic and scenic pursuits; one of whom, Dr James Bryce, has since perished in the pursuit of science, near the Fall of Foyers, where a monument, subscribed by his admirers, marks the tragic spot. We followed the wild mountain track between Beinn Aridh Charr and the lake, up to its head, and had a glorious day.

Many years after I paid the scene a second visit, accompanied by other friends; one of these, the proprietor, Mr Osgood Mackenzie, whose unrivalled knowledge of the country, and especially of its birds, completed our enjoyment.

The morning was lovely, the sky blue and flecked with light fleecy clouds, though the air was electrical, with threatening masses of raincloud which darkened part of the day. The colouring was unusually fine, the shadows transparent, the sunshine warm and mild, and the sheen on the water such as our artist declared could be painted only by Alfred W. Hunt. The severity of the retreating winter was revealed in July in several patches of snow, which gleamed in some of the corries, chiefly in the group at the head of the lake. Everything was favourable to high influence and happiness,—the threatening possibilities of storm only adding new elements to the scene.

Embarking at the pier, we rowed slowly up the smooth lake, enjoying the scenery and passing several islands, the haunts of some of our rarer birds. Reaching a sandy bay, about half-way up the loch on the right, we landed beneath a projecting cliff called Rudha Dubh, or "the black cape," which bears a singular resemblance to a Highland bonnet, a perched block on its crest appropriately completing the likeness by way of tassel. We ascended till we came in sight of two other lochs with islands, called Lochanan Beannach, or "the lakelets of the bens." There we rested for lunch, in view also of the Fionn Loch and its opposite hills, and beneath the crags of [352] Beinn Aridh Charr. From this point the nearest of the peaks of this Beinn presents a perfect natural dome, which at once suggests a gigantic St Paul's. The pass between this peak and its neighbour, the Middle Hill, is unusually low, some two thousand feet under the enclosing mountains. It forms a grand inverted curve, almost as fine in sweep as the hollow of Glen Rosa in Arran, with the peaks of Beinn Eay and Liathgach on Loch Torridon, visible through it in blue distance.

The situation was simply charming, and luncheon there amidst such surroundings, with genial friends, pure pleasure. Its interest and beauty were increased by watching two black-throated divers (*Colymbi Arctici*) on one of the lakelets below, a very rare sight in this country. They had a pair of tiny babies, just hatched, whom they tended with pretty care, keeping them between them as they quietly oared themselves onwards, circling round them at times, and gently leading them to greater effort, and wider range,—altogether a pretty group of nature's nurslings.

Taking boat again and rounding the Black Cape, we left our artist and his wife at the next rocky point, which charmed them, there to sketch the remarkable mountains round the Dubh Loch, while we explored the upper reaches of the lake. The precipitousness and grandeur of the hills increased with nearness. Fresh peaks rose into view, and the old took new and more striking forms with each new point of sight. Many tops, unseen before, opened up to the left of the Maiden,—the Ruadh Stac, or "red peak," so called from its red Cambrian strata, a fine contrast to the Carn Bhan, or "white cairn," in front of it, formed of bare glistening pegmatite; and a remarkable hill called Scuir a Laocainn, which means either "Scuir of the calf-skin," so named from some ancient legend or fancied appearance, or, according to one of my friends, the "Scuir of the heroes."

We landed in a flat bay called Poll Fraochainn, or "the heathery pool," on the right of Craig an Dubh Loch, in order that I might reach the precipices of Beinn Lair. The way to them, through a narrow pass right ahead, is steep and trackless, but the reward is well worth the toil. It skirts the base of a high cliff on the right, where you are greeted by the mountain sorrel, last seen on Ben Nevis, with its bright green and russet leaves, which will refresh your parched throat; the rare *Cornus suessica*, or dwarf dogwood, occurring also near the big Ben; the beautiful European globe flower; and by abundant oak fern and other charms for the lover of wildflowers.

With stout heart you soon reach a green platform between two valleys, where a wonderful scene at once bursts on your sight,—a straight, narrow, long-drawn glen stretching for miles before you, with Loch Fada at its farther end, skirted all along its right side by a continuous wall of gigantic cliffs, which are the back of Beinn Lair. These cliffs are practically vertical, forming a sheer precipice above fifteen hundred feet in height. They are singularly barren of vegetation except on the ledges of the rock, and strangely mottled in colour, with grey lichen on dark rock. [353] They are scarred and fissured with countless deep vertical cracks running from base to summit, which, by carrying the eye upwards, increase the apparent altitude. Their crest is jagged, pointed, domed, and battlemented, in a wonderful serrated edge. Seen from this point the long cliffs stretch down the glen in splendid succession, rampart behind rampart, which are separated by the vertical fissures of the gneiss. The whole is clothed in sombre deep purple, tending to black. Except for the trickling runnels from the rock, the scene is solitary and silent even to sadness, with a powerful grandeur which becomes painful from its impressiveness. In a thunderstorm it must pass conception. The Honister Crag, near Borrodale, in Cumberland, magnificent as it is in a dying sunset, is narrow and poor in comparison.

In returning by the top of the hill that rises above the pass to the south, I passed a great perched block, fifteen feet long and ten feet high, a standing witness of the Ice Age. An old hill fort on the head of this ridge, formed by a strong enclosing wall, was an unexpected sight in such a retired region, indicating more inhabitants in the old days. It commands an unsurpassed prospect over the whole lake country below, westwards to the open Minch with the dim Uists in the far horizon.

Descending, I caught the old road to Loch Broom, which crosses the Bealloch from Letterewe on Loch Maree, and which led me straight to the boat.

After embarking, we pulled till just under the front of Craig an Dubh Loch, a precipice above a thousand feet high, whose remarkable whiteness had arrested the eye from the first. This is caused by the presence of the pale granite, called pegmatite, which runs over the face of the cliff in serpentine lines and masses, expanding and contracting, and stretching in tongue-like extensions to the summit, where it is again broadly developed. This curious granite gives the cliff the general aspect of the precipices of Cape Wrath or Skye, with their volcanic intrusions and contortions, as figured by Macculloch and Nicol.

The upper part of the Fionn Loch glen narrows into a steep close corrie, occupied by the waters of the Dubh Loch, and a higher green *cul de sac*, with its mountain streamlet, enclosed by Craig an Dubh Loch on the right, and the Maiden and her rugged companions to the left or north. The Dubh Loch is a dark, deep pool, grand in a scenic and most interesting in a geological view. It forms a marked contrast to the expansive and brighter Fionn Loch, of which, nevertheless, it is merely an alpine chamber; and the contrasted names given by the old Celts to two parts of the same water, the "white" and the "black," are as true as they are descriptive. Their general aspect shows this sufficiently, but when viewed from any of the neighbouring hills, the truth of the description is more evident. The Dubh Loch always bears a dark look if not a sullen frown, even in a calm, looking then like a pavement of black Galway marble.

The Dubh Loch forms a well-curved crescent, its concave side being occupied by Craig an Dubh Loch. Crossing the causeway between the lakes, the traveller should ascend the steep rocky hill, [354] called Carn na Paite, some three hundred feet high, which is isolated from the mountains beyond by a deep valley. Its top commands a wonderful view of the whole alpine scene, and enables you to see the steep silent corrie at the head of the Dubh Loch, and thus complete your survey. The scenery from this central point of vantage is very grand, being wild, desolate, and imposing, unusually stern in character and colouring, and as lonely and separate from the world as Manfred or the most misanthropic could desire.

When we left the Dubh Loch, a fierce thunder shower burst, the big drops being sent sharply into the lake like hail, with a pellet-like force and high upward rebound of water. Viewed through this wonderful screen of rain and mist, the great mountains became mere flat shadows. Then it changed to a misty gauze, returned again and again to a black obliterating denseness, and then cleared off till the hill-tops held the upper clouds like volcanic smoke from active craters, the whole scene passing through many grand and beautiful phases from thundery rain to sunshine. It was a splendid exhibition of the scene in its alpine aspects, and completed the pictures of the varied day.

In the middle of the falling rain we picked up our artists, drenched, but delighted, though with unfinished canvas. The wet prevented a visit to some of the islands in this part of the loch which we wished to see, the haunts of some of our rarer birds that still linger in this wild Highland loch. In Eilean a Chuillin, on the north side, a heronry is said to have been destroyed by golden eagles from the rocks on Beinn Aridh Charr, one of the accused being poisoned in consequence. In Eilean nan Corr-sgreach, that is the "heron's isle," the largest heronry perhaps in the country still flourishes on stumpy crooked birch and holly trees, the flapping wings of the birds being visible through the mist. On another island close by this one, the very rare goosander used recently to build, Mr Mackenzie being the first discoverer of its nest in Scotland. On another islet close by the opposite shore the white-tailed eagle nested more than twenty years ago. On Eilean Molach, near the pier, the black-throated diver still exists. The peregrine falcon then haunted the scene, having its eyrie on the cliffs of Beinn Aridh Charr, and one flew over our heads, chased close to his nest by two angry curlews; but he has, it seems, now deserted the place. Other still rarer species yet linger in this retired spot.

It is devoutly to be hoped that they will long continue to do it honour, guarded by the proprietors, and all good and true men. Happily none are allowed on the lake unless under the care of sanctioned boatmen; and the whole has now been forested. These means of protection, we trust, will preserve these rare creatures as a beauty and a boast for generations to come. In this connexion, nothing shows the defects of the moral and æsthetic training of our people more than the prevalent desire, in even the so-called cultivated classes, to destroy such unusual visitants, some of them harmless. If individual kindliness and sense will not do it, public indignation and [355] penal enactment should be invoked for their preservation.

Our artist and his wife returned by carriage to comfort and shelter. Wishing to see more we crossed the rough country, covered with boulders, lakes and bogs, that lies between this and Loch Ewe. We were disappointed at not reaching Loch an Iasgair, that is the "loch of the fisher or osprey." This rare and interesting bird seems now to have quite deserted this alpine region, though once abundant both here and in the islands of Loch Maree. We visited, however, an immense block of gneiss not far from the loch, borne hither in glacial times, twenty feet long, ten broad, and fifteen high, with steep inaccessible sides, crowned by two feet of moss, and adorned with grass, heather and bushes. Forty years ago a pair of marten cats committed such havoc amongst the lambs that they were watched and followed, but they were always lost sight of just when their lair was thought to be reached. Both dogs and men were long at fault, till a pair of sharper eyes one day observed the clever martens leap to the top of our boulder in two bounds. That was, of course, the end of their history, of the Martens of Castle Marten, as they were called by my friend; for they were followed, and themselves and their young exterminated. This big block is but one of countless others of all sizes scattered over this rude mossy territory, in which they form a special feature; their glacial history being further corroborated by the abundant, well rounded, polished, and striated *roches moutonnées*, here so abundantly scattered between the hills and the sea.

Reaching an eminence which commanded the whole of the Fionn Loch and its enclosing peaks, the last look we had of it revealed it in a bright, pearly light, exquisitely fresh after the rain, its now smooth surface reflecting a silvery sheen in the descending sun, and showing the appropriateness of its name, the "fair lake."

Chapter XV.

Loch Gruinard.

By William Jolly.

Of all the sea-lochs in the West Highlands, I long thought that Loch Duich, the southern branch of Loch Alsh, bore the palm on the mainland, not only as viewed from the road above the kirk of Loch Alsh, but as enjoyed on the surface of the loch itself, amidst its picturesque and elevated peaks. But after seeing Loch Gruinard, many years ago, in its smiling and varied beauty, homage has been divided. Yet the two scenes are scarcely comparable, so different are they in type,—the one with even shores and unbroken surface, and closely beset by towering mountains; the other open and expansive, and varied with numerous isles. Each is to be admired for its own sake, and both reveal somewhat of the wealth of scenic loveliness created by the union of "the

mountain and the flood" in our beautiful land.

Seven miles from Poolewe is Aultbea, with the smooth green Eilean Ewe in front of it, in the middle of Loch Ewe, a transcript of southern cultivation amidst Highland crofts. Before descending on the village the road rises high above the sea, and shews a wonderful view. At your feet lies an upper reach of Loch Ewe, called Tournaig Bay, in calm, smooth as a mirror, which forms the eye of the picture. Beyond it stretches a rolling plateau of bare parti-coloured rock in front, and a screen of great summits round Loch Fionn and Loch Maree behind. You can distinguish, from the left, the fair Maiden, the pointed Beinn Aridh Charr, the bright Beinn Eay, the dark Beinn Alligin, and their numerous fellows, onwards to the lesser eminences behind Gairloch. The crowded sandstone peaks, crowned with the white Quartzite, like Beinn Eay, look in the distance like the white crests of gigantic billows suddenly arrested in wild tumult and transformed to stone. [356]

Near Aultbea you turn to the right, and cross the neck of the peninsula of flat Cambrian sandstone that terminates in the Greenstone Point. Near the top of the ridge the road passes through several long serpentine ridges of gravelly *débris*, with countless embedded blocks. These are the lateral moraines of the huge glaciers that pushed their resistless march from the mountains above out to sea. They are good and patent examples of their class, interesting as existing so far from the parent source of the great ice-sheet of which they were the enclosing walls, and which has left its footprints in well-marked scratchings and polishings on all the exposed rocks round.

A little beyond the highest and best moraine a point is attained where the whole expanse of Loch Gruinard suddenly comes into view. It forms a broad bay, land-locked on right and left, and open to the Minch on the north. On a day of sunshine and shadow it is truly a fair and picturesque scene.

The free sea in front is soon broken up by islands. Eilean Gruinard lies to the right; Priest Island is the nearest in front; and behind it is an archipelago of rocks and islands, of varied size and outline, called by the pleasant name of the Summer Isles. Bold headlands stretch far beyond. To the left is the wide Minch, with the low lands of the Lews in the dim horizon, terminating in the Butt. On the right the bay is enclosed by the indented shores of the mainland, at the entrances of Great and Little Loch Broom.

Inland extends a long succession of mountain summits, similar to those already seen above Aultbea. Over Rudha Coigeach, tower the great peaks round Loch Assynt and Kyle Skou, conspicuous among which is the cone of Suilven, flanked by Queenaig and Canisp. Next comes the mountain group of Coigeach, crowned by the broad Beinn Mhor. Then, isolated and steep, the dark double-peaked Beinn Gobhlach heaves itself between the two Loch Brooms, and, being separated entirely from the rest, stands as a grand centre to the picture. Finally, closing the line to the right, rise the domed Sail Mor and the pointed peaks that stand round Loch na Sheallag.

This wide expanse of mingled sea and shore, island and mountain, becomes an indelible memory, especially under a favourable sky, bearing with it the proverbial joy.

One extraordinary feature of the scene is the absolute want of trees, except a few at the head of Loch Gruinard. The country looks to the eye as bare of wood as Caithness or the Uists. [357]

But more remains. Descend the road a short distance, and climb a slight eminence on the left, which will tax the strength of none. From its top, low as it is, a still more magnificent prospect may be had, unusual in its sweep and remarkable for the number of hill tops in sight. At one glance your eye commands the whole series of mountains comprised in both the views already obtained, from Sutherland to Applecross, the peaks crowded round Loch na Sheallag and Fionn occupying the centre of the splendid circle. In the far north, in clear weather, the isle of Handa at Scourie is distinctly seen, and under very favourable conditions Cape Wrath itself is reported at times to be visible. Behind you, to the west, appear the outlines of the Lews and Harris, the shadowy representatives of Atlantic lands. This remarkable outlook should by no means be missed.

But there are other matters besides the scenery that will interest not a few. On the shore, where the road strikes the coast, the picturesque old chapel, amid its overgrown graveyard, will draw the antiquarian and the sentimentalist to observe and to meditate. The sandstone cliffs will attract the geologist; and these should interest even the common traveller. The coast consists of a series of steep cliffs, whose unusual redness arrests the eye. Here, hidden away, as it were, in this remote bay, occur two patches of the Trias, one of the rarest systems in Scotland, only a few scattered patches representing that comparatively modern epoch, here enclosed by the two most ancient systems of Britain, the Hebridean gneiss and the Torridon sandstone, as elsewhere explained.

Beyond the sandy bay to the east, the shore rises into high precipices, unusually contorted and picturesque, with isolated stacks and projecting capes, which shew varied forms and remarkable "weathering." A footpath leads down the cliff, and should be followed to the beach. There one of the old caves, excavated by the sea in a crack of the Trias, has been enclosed by a wall and put under lock and key. It is regularly used as a chapel by the Free Church, and there numerous worshippers gather on Sabbath, and, seated on the boulders that form the pews, listen to sacred words and sing their weird Gaelic psalms. This cave is cold and comfortless compared with another at Cove on the other side of Loch Ewe, also utilised as a church. This other is formed in

the Torridon sandstone, and is roomy and dry, and well seated with planks laid on stones. The entrance is festooned with wild plants and flowers, and the interior shews a full view of the open bay and the land beyond. Worship under such conditions must be at once picturesque and impressive.

Close to this cave on Gruinard Bay another exhibits a still more interesting sight,—a modern example of the ancient cave-dwellers. It is the home of an old woman of seventy, and a girl her sole companion. The front of the shallow cave has been rudely closed in with stones, turf, and cloths, leaving an opening above through which escapes the smoke of the peat fire. The interior is barely furnished with the simplest of necessities. The fire is close by the door on the left, and [358] the bed lies on the ground on the right just under the open roof, though protected by the projecting rock. The old dame seemed bright as the sunshine when we visited her this summer (1886), and declared that, though rough, the place was more comfortable than it looked. As she drank her simple cup of tea from the top of a box, after putting some clothes to dry upon the shore, with her wrinkled but intelligent face, her Gaelic Bible her only literature, the wild rocks round, and the splash of the restless waves in the ear, this simple, solitary old woman looked as picturesque and pathetic an object as I had ever seen, much more so than the wildest of gipsies at a camp fire. But this is not the place to enter into her story.

Beyond this the road passes through two townships called Coast. These stand where an interesting junction occurs between the Trias system and the Torridon sandstone; while a little further on exists another junction between the Torridon sandstone and the grey contorted gneiss.

The numerous blocks along the shore, mostly foreign to the ground, are monuments of the great Ice Age.

At the very head of Gruinard Bay a large white mansion may be seen embosomed among trees. That is Gruinard House, situated at the mouth of the Gruinard river, perhaps as out-of-the-world a dwelling-place as may be found in broad Scotland. Towards this point the traveller should make his way either by the good road past Fisherfield, or still better by boat from Coast.

The position of the mansion is admirable, being cosily set close by the pebbly shore, on the edge of a fertile old sea terrace, enclosed by crags, knolls, and mounds. These are wild and steep, and clothed with trees and shrubs on their lower flanks, but bare and grand above, one lion-shaped precipitous rock being specially striking. The place is protected from every wind but the north-west, and has a climate as genial as in the south of England. A road runs by the side of the river, which has cut its way through a rocky pass and plunges over a cataract of huge boulders in foaming grandeur. Beyond a little school you come to a flat green meadow, the bed of an ancient lake. At its far extremity the dark craggy peaks of Ben Dearg form a powerful picture, which has been well rendered in a painting by Weedon. Crossing this plain and ascending the steep ridge at its head, you there command a grand view of the great mountains that enclose Loch na Sheallag, —that is "the loch of the hunting,"—the very name shewing that the old Celts looked on this region as the peculiar habitat of wild creatures. The lake itself is hidden by high ranges of the Hebridean gneiss, but you get a full view of the precipitous peaks which rise right from its waters. On the left you have the great mass of Sail Mor, the pointed Scuir a Fiann, and Scuir an Fhithich, the Raven's Rock; and on the right the grand purple peaks of the bold Beinn Deargs, an unusually fine group, excelled by few in the Highlands. In some features Loch na Sheallag and its mountains surpass those of the Fionn Loch, grand as these are. The whole scene is one of [359] remarkable wildness and grandeur, and of unexampled solitariness.

The traveller may return by road to Gairloch back the way he came. But if he is able to face it, he should recross the Meikle Gruinard river, and, ascending the Little Gruinard river, which drains the Fionn Loch, reach Poolewe by the skirts of the mountains, through as rough and picturesque a country as could well be imagined. He has still another course open to him, which will bring him back to the common-places of life. He may order a carriage from Dundonell Hotel, at the end of Little Loch Broom, ten miles distant, or he may take himself thither on foot. There he will find a most comfortable resting-place, and he will certainly think himself fortunate in seeing also the picturesque combinations of glen and mountain, wood and water, which adorn the beautiful Loch Broom.

Chapter XVI.

Angling in Sea Lochs.

The north-west Highlands of Scotland are a favourite resort of many anglers. Here the accomplished veteran of the gentle art can find full scope for his consummate skill, and the tyro may often obtain fair sport, inexperienced though he be. There are several classes of anglers who visit the Highlands,—the wealthy man with ample leisure, who takes salmon or trout fishing on lease, together with or apart from shootings and a house or lodge; the determined angler, who spends his annual holiday in this delightful recreation, and usually settles down for several weeks or even months at a hotel at some well-known centre; the less persistent and less fortunate

brother of the craft, who in a more desultory manner devotes to it a part or the whole of his briefer holiday; and the tourist, who scarcely claims the name of angler, but carries a rod about with him in his peregrinations, and occasionally takes advantage of such opportunities as may present themselves. For each of these classes there is ample scope in the parish of Gairloch, and my remarks are addressed to all of them.

The angler visiting this country should be provided with at least two rods, viz., first, a trolling rod, strong enough for the powerful lythe of the sea lochs, and yet light enough to be used when trying for the so-called ferox, or large trout of the fresh-water lochs; and secondly, a light single-handed rod, to be used in fly-fishing for the lively sea-trout, or the brown or yellow trout which are to be found in almost all the fresh water in the district. These rods, with a supply of guttapercha sand-eels and strong traces for lythe fishing, lighter traces and artificial minnows for the ferox, and fine gut casts and a variety of flies for trout-fishing, will suffice for all ordinary purposes. The sand-eels and strong traces for the sea can generally be had at the Gairloch Hotel, or may be procured beforehand from Messrs Brooks, Stonehouse, Plymouth. The artificial [360] minnows, and the traces for them and the artificial trout flies, may, of course, be purchased from any good fishing-tackle maker. I recommend Mr W. A. M'Leay and Messrs Graham & Son, both of Inverness, as being well acquainted with local requirements. Perhaps two or three flights of hooks for spinning natural bait for ferox may prove a useful addition. The tackle necessary for salmon fishing is not described, as the visitor to Gairloch is hardly likely to get a chance of this noble sport, unless he has arranged for it before his arrival, or unless he be personally acquainted with those who have rights of salmon fishing in the parish. Waders are not required, except perhaps for trout-fishing in some lochs which have no boat.

With these equipments the angler, or even the tyro, staying at any of the hotels, or taking a lodging, may meet with fair fishing, and ought to be able to keep the table supplied.

Let us begin with a visitor to Gairloch, Poolewe, or Aultbea, who wishes to "sniff the briny," and become acquainted with some of its inhabitants. By arranging the day before, a boat with boatmen may be procured, and they will know the best places to be tried. There are two usual modes of sea-fishing for anglers, viz., trolling for lythe, and hand-line fishing for smaller specimens of the finny tribes of the salt water. For lythe the artificial sand-eels recommended above seem to be the best lure. As a rule the smaller sized sand-eel is the most killing, and the pattern coloured red often beats the white. There is a nearly black form of the artificial sand-eel which is sometimes very attractive. Occasionally the sand-eel answers better with the bright metal spinner at the head. Take care that your trace (which ought to be of very stout triple gut) is sound, and that the swivels on it are working freely. The lead weight, about a yard from the sand-eel, should not be a heavy one. The lythe, which is called the whiting-pollack in England, varies in weight from half a pound to 16 lbs., at least that is the greatest weight up to which I have taken them in Gairloch waters. Many of them run from four to seven pounds, and these are the best fish for the table. The lythe is rather soft, but is an excellent breakfast fish when properly fried, and is sometimes firm enough to boil well. It is a very game fish, and is therefore called by some the salmon of sea fishing. If you hook a good one, be hard upon him at first, for if he once gets down to the sea-weed you will probably lose him and your sand-eel and trace into the bargain. This fish appears to be in season from June to December, but it is not always to be met with, at least in any number. I have had splendid sport with them in June, and equally good in November. On 31st October 1879 we captured (two rods) in Loch Ewe, in an hour and a half, twenty-seven lythe weighing 176 lbs., and a good cod weighing 17 lbs., being a total of 193 lbs.; but this was an exceptionally good bag. Sometimes a cod or coal-fish (saythe) takes the sand-eel, when, if the fish be a large one, the captor thinks he has caught a whale. The lythe are generally found near rocky headlands or round island rocks.

Hand-line fishing is not to be compared with rod fishing for lythe, and therefore I have not [361] recommended the angler to carry hand-lines about with him, but they can generally be borrowed if desired. The boatmen know the best "scalps," or banks, and can also obtain mussels for bait. The fish most commonly taken are whiting, haddocks, gurnard, millers or "goldfish," sea-bream or "Jerusalem haddies," and rarely rock-cod and flounders. For sea-bream you must go further out than for the others. Mackerel are not plentiful in Gairloch waters, and are generally taken with spinning bait. Hand-line fishing requires very close attention and a light touch. If you are not smart the smaller fish will continually get away with your bait. For all kinds of sea-fishing the evening is the best, and a half-tide, either rising or falling, is considered most favourable. It is little use fishing where there are many jelly-fish about.

Sometimes the hand-lines will capture a specimen of the larger fishes (more usually taken by the professional fishermen, who set long lines), such as cod, ling, conger-eel, skate, and even the halibut, locally termed turbot. The conger-eel, as well as the fresh-water eel, are not eaten by the natives, who regard them as allied to the serpent tribe, and therefore related to the tempter! The halibut here frequently attain a large size. In January 1885 I purchased from a fisher-lad his one-third share of a halibut. On arriving at home with my prize I found it scaled fully thirty-three pounds, so that the fish when entire must have weighed 100 lbs. Wonderful stories are told of enormous skate taken on this coast. I have heard 2 cwt. stated as the weight of a single skate! Dr Mackenzie mentions john-dory and mullet as being sometimes captured in Gairloch, but not with bait.

Chapter XVII.

Angling in Loch Maree.

Loch Maree reigns supreme amongst the angling waters of the parish of Gairloch, with the exception of course of its outlet the River Ewe.

It is true that the excessive fishing which followed on the opening of the Loch Maree Hotel at Talladale has to some extent injured the angler's chances, especially by diminishing the number of large black trout usually called ferox. But there is still excellent sport to be had with sea-trout and loch trout.

The angling of Loch Maree is open to visitors staying at the hotels at Kenlochewe and Talladale, except the lower part, about two miles in length, which is reserved by the proprietor for himself and his shooting-tenants. The reserved water includes the whole of the narrow part of the loch lying to the north or north-west of Rudha aird an anail on the west side of the loch, and An Fhridh Dhorch on the north-east side.

The best fishing ground is to be found amongst the bays and shallow banks around the islands and off the points. [362]

The fish in the loch are salmon, sea-trout, and brown trout; no doubt there are also char in the loch; I believe they occur in most Highland lochs, but they are very difficult to take. I never heard of one being caught in Loch Maree; but they say the last Lord Seaforth used to visit Loch Maree every autumn to net char in shallow waters, and that he got them of remarkable size running up to 1 lb. weight. The char is a deep-water fish, and only comes towards the shores for about a fortnight at the end of autumn to spawn.

Salmon are but rarely taken in the loch, though they must be numerous in its waters. I have known one taken with a blue artificial minnow off the Fox Point, and two were bagged in Tollie bay in 1882 with ordinary sea-trout flies and a light rod; one of these weighed 15 lbs. I have heard of other instances of salmon being captured in different parts of the loch; several at its very head, others among the islands, and others again at places I need not specify. The statement made by some gillies that salmon are never taken in Loch Maree is a delusion; that they are not generally taken, I admit; but every angler on Loch Maree, at any time of the year, whether throwing the fly or trolling the minnow, has a chance of hooking a specimen of the monarch of fishes.

Sea-trout come next. In some years they are very abundant, in others comparatively scarce. This fish has different names in different parts of the kingdom. Sometimes it is called the white trout; sometimes the salmon trout; sometimes the sewin. Again the term white trout includes the bull-trout, which is an immigrant from the salt water. The sea-trout of Loch Maree appear to be of three distinct species:—

I. The sea-trout or salmon trout (*Salmo trutta*); II., the bull-trout (*Salmo eriox*); III., the finnock or whitling (scientific name unknown to me). Some say the finnock is a samlet.

Of these No. I. is abundant; No. II., scarce; and No. III., which never exceeds half a pound in weight, is also abundant. The sea-trout here vary from ¾ lb. to about 6 lbs.; they afford excellent sport, and are good eating. The sea-trout fishing is at its best in the months of July, August, and September. The finnocks are nice little fish, and for their size give pleasant sport. The only bull-trout I have known were taken from the Ewe.

Salmon and sea-trout fishings in Scotland belong exclusively to the crown and its grantees. In Gairloch the fishings are held by Sir Kenneth Mackenzie, Bart. of Gairloch, under an ancient charter from the crown. Any person taking a salmon or sea-trout, without the permission of Sir Kenneth, is simply a poacher.

Brown trout are not so plentiful nor so large as they used to be. In Part IV., chap. xiii., I have mentioned the large trout killed in the bay of Corree, or Ob a Choir 'I, in the summer of 1878, when I was fishing along with a friend. This splendid fish weighed 21 lbs. when we got it to the nearest railway station, then at Dingwall. It was certainly not a sea-fish, *i.e.* not a bull-trout, salmon, or sea-trout, and it had not the large head and wild look of the fish usually called ferox; [363] in my opinion it was just a brown trout.

Here I must propound my pet theory, that the so-called ferox and the brown or yellow trout are one and the same species. I have caught, or known caught, a number of large trout out of Loch Maree and other smaller Gairloch lochs, weighing from three to twelve lbs., besides the 21 lb. fish of 1878. I am quite aware of the number of large fish taken during years past in Fionn Loch, and I have shared in the capture of some of them. I know that the greater part of these fish would generally be classed under the head of *Salmo ferox*. I feel sure they were only ordinary trout which had grown to an extraordinary size; many of them were completely out of condition, like a spent salmon; one or two, indeed, were not trout at all, but were spent salmon. I have talked with several old anglers, who professed to know the points of a ferox; none of them agreed in their diagnosis, and the characteristics they tried to point out were obscure, and to my mind not distinctive. Everyone knows that trout vary greatly in size, form, and appearance, according to the nature of the water and the bottom, and the quality and quantity of food. Even from the same

loch I have seen trout, taken on the same day, so unlike each other that a tyro would have been pardoned for calling them different species. I have noticed no differences between the so-called ferox and any other large brown trout, that have not corresponded with the differences between various specimens of the smaller fish. It seems to me that whenever some anglers capture a trout above 3 lbs. weight they call it a ferox.

The ordinary loch trout are taken with similar flies to the sea-trout, but if you want the big ones you must troll either natural bait or the artificial minnow. The large brown, or rather black, trout (the so-called ferox) are never worth eating, and are rarely beautiful objects to look at; they would be seldom sought for, but that salmon fishing is so costly that many anglers can only realise the excitement of playing a salmon when they succeed in hooking what they call a *Salmo ferox*.

Sir George Steuart Mackenzie wrote:—"In Loch Maree is that species of trout called the gizzard trout." I suppose he meant the variety commonly called the gilaroo trout, which occurs in a loch near Inchnadamph, in Sutherland. I can only say I never caught one, nor heard of one being caught, in Loch Maree or any other loch in Gairloch.

Chapter XVIII.

Angling in Fresh-water Lochs.

Besides Loch Maree there are many other fresh-water lochs within the parish of Gairloch; they are enumerated in Part III., chap. i. Those which are within deer forests or grouse shootings are nearly all strictly preserved, but permission to fish several good ones may be obtained by [364] visitors staying at the different hotels. Those in private lodgings may sometimes get limited permission to fish, but except at Poolewe this cannot be easily obtained.

There are very few lochs which do not contain trout of more or less respectable quality, yet trout are not so numerous in Gairloch waters as they were formerly. Writing of trout as they were in the early part of the nineteenth century Dr Mackenzie says:—"Seventy years ago (about 1815) there were in every pool of water in our west (Gairloch) the most marvellous quantities of trout. Our lakes were, I suppose, never counted. Innumerable, like the trout, some contained good, well-fed, pink-fleshed trout, and others a mere mob of say four ounce bags of water. These filled the pools that ran to the sea from every loch in shoals, and, singular to say, sometimes as plentiful above falls, far too high for any fish to swim up, as below them. I have been told that water beetles, all of whom can fly, have been caught fresh from a feast on fish roe, with some of the roe adhering to their back; and in this way it is supposed fish have been planted in lakes from which there was no stream, or none up which they could have found their way.

"I have often filled a large fishing-basket twice over in a few hours in a hill burn not two miles long, and requiring much cookery help ere their consumers praised them.

"I have never yet heard an explanation why there are only about one trout in the same burns and lochs for every ten now that there used to be seventy years ago; unless it be that then the moors washed into the lochs far more cattle *débris* than there happens now, when sheep with their horrid anti-fish 'tarry-woo' are everywhere, with a flavour as hateful to fish as it is to game; no eatable insect growing in sheep *débris*, while from cattle and horses crowds go to feed fish."

The Doctor's theory, that the falling off in the numbers of trout is due to the substitution of sheep for cattle, is generally accepted. Something is also due to unconscious expansion in reminiscences of the good old days, surrounded as they are by the halo of youthful enthusiasm; and no doubt there is too a real falling off in the number and weight of trout, owing to increased travelling facilities bringing north a far larger number of tourist-anglers. However extensive a loch may be, it must be remembered that its deepest parts are seldom feeding ground for trout, which mostly congregate in the shallows adjoining the shores and on the few banks there may be further out.

Next to Loch Maree itself, Fionn Loch, which is five hundred feet above the sea level, is the best known. It used to be celebrated for its yield of the so-called ferox. There is a wonderful record of the large number of these monsters that were captured in the months of March and April some thirty years ago by a celebrated sportsman.

My own experience of Fionn Loch is, that the trout have slowly but surely fallen off in number and size. In 1871 I remember making some grand baskets on this high-level loch. We used to pass the night at the shepherd's house in the bay of Feachasgean, and the evening and the morning made our day. Our bags generally included two or three fish of four or five pounds, and a dozen [365] or two ranging from one to two pounds, at which last weight we could have got as many as we wished with a favourable breeze. At this time it was almost a virgin loch, and there was no road within four miles of it.

Perhaps the best day's trout fishing I ever had was on a glaring hot day in June 1874, when in the

upper pools of the Little Gruinard river, a short distance below Fionn Loch, I caught with ordinary trout flies one monster of ten pounds, about a dozen from two to three pounds, and a large number of lesser fish.

Permission must now be obtained to fish Fionn Loch, and no angler need expect to make the bags of the old times, either in number or size.

At the head of Fionn Loch is a smaller loch, called the Dubh Loch, swarming with large trout. In 1876 and 1877 this sheet of water was the subject of litigation. The Lord Ordinary, in the Outer House of the Court of Session, decided that the Dubh Loch was not a separate loch from the Fionn Loch, and that Mr O. H. Mackenzie had a joint right of fishing in it as well as in the Fionn Loch, part of the shores of which belong to him. This decision was reversed by the Inner House, whose judgment was (on appeal) finally upheld by the House of Lords. The issue raised was a nice one, and depended on the determination of several interesting questions.

In a small loch on the Inverewe ground, on 24th September 1874, I hooked three trout of one pound each at one cast, and succeeded in landing them all. I have several times landed three small trout on the same cast when fishing the Little Gruinard river, but I never got three really good ones except that once.

All the lochs open to visitors at the hotels yield fair sport to the fly-fisher, and those who like bait fishing will be sure of a nice bag of trout from any of the smaller lochs, if the tempting worm be tried in the "gloaming," or twilight.

Large trout may be captured by trolling on Loch Kernsary, which is, I believe, open to visitors staying at the Poolewe Hotel. It is my opinion, as already said, that char exist in most Highland lochs. I have only known these pretty little fish to have been actually taken from four of the lochs in Gairloch. Loch Kernsary is the only one of these lochs which is open to tourist-anglers. Char may be taken by the angler, and possibly may be thrown into the creel without the captor noticing the red belly which is the chief distinction between the char and the trout. Very few char are taken in Gairloch, and they are usually small, about four or five to the pound. In flavour they are not to be distinguished from trout, any more than the pink-fleshed trout are to be distinguished from those with white flesh. If you doubt me, try an experiment; let some one whose palate you can trust be blindfolded, and he or she will, to your surprise, be unable to discriminate between char and trout, and between pink and white-fleshed trout. Take care the experiment be tried fairly, and it will not fail.

The ordinary trout of the country do not rise to the fly before May, and then in no great numbers. In June they yield good sport, but July is the month in which the largest bags of well-conditioned [366] trout may be expected. Trout fishing requires more delicate skill than salmon fishing, and is grand training of the senses of sight and touch.

There are eels in all the lochs and streams, but they are seldom hooked, and, when they are, what a mess they make of your tackle!

The only other fish in the fresh waters of Gairloch is the voracious pike. I believe this monster only occurs in the Feur (or Fiar) Loch and Loch Bad na Sgalaig, and in the river Kerry, all in connection, and I only hope he will not spread further. Dr Mackenzie gives the following account of the importation of pike to Gairloch. Writing of his boyhood, he says:—"No loch had pike till one black day my eldest brother inveigled me into catching a dozen small pike in the east coast Blackwater and driving them to the west, where I launched them safely into Fiar Loch, a small twenty acre sheet surrounded with bullrushes, and just boiling with innumerable trout. It only communicated with one other lake, and from it the pike flew to the sea over a high waterfall, down which we never dreamed that the abominable creatures would go. Very soon the lochs were not boiling with trout on a summer evening as of old, and plans were laid for famous pike-fishing with trimmers, or a flock of geese with trout-baited hooks fastened to their legs and sent across the loch. But ere this ploy came off a salmon fisher in the river below the falls caught a fine pike on his salmon hook; the abomination was one of those I had launched into Fiar Loch, and who ought to have broken his neck when shooting the Kerry falls; alas, it was quite ower true a tale! The vermin had learned that the Kerry was a salmon river with lots of delicious smolts there in May, and parr, *i.e.* young salmon, all the rest of the year. So they soon stocked every pool in the Kerry, and a salmon in that river has for years become a greater wonder than a white blackbird; the fry all carefully eaten up, and few salmon return to the Kerry."

Sir Kenneth Mackenzie, the present baronet of Gairloch, states that none of the pike above-mentioned as having been put into Feur Loch survived, and that pike were introduced (or re-introduced) in his day—about 1848.

With this I commend the fish of Gairloch to all jolly anglers, only begging them not to angle where they have no permission, and not to interfere with other people who have a superior right.

May good sport wait on the patient angler!

Chapter XIX.

SALMON fishing is undoubtedly at the head of all angling, whether in Gairloch or any other part of the world. Here it may be enjoyed under very pleasurable conditions, and with fair prospects of sport.

There are five salmon rivers in the parish of Gairloch, viz.:—the Kenlochewe or Garbh river, the Kerry, the Badachro, the Ewe, and the Little Gruinard river. [367]

The river Ewe is by far the best of them. It has, or had, the reputation of being one of the best salmon rivers in the Highlands, but since the removal of the last of the cruives it has not yielded large bags to the angler, except in a few unusually good seasons. The cruives were removed about 1852, with the object of lowering Loch Maree, and so draining land at the head of the loch. The cruives consisted of dams or weirs constructed across the river, containing openings; in these were inserted boxes or large creels, through which the water could pass down the river, but fish could not pass up except at certain times when the cruives were open. The oldest cruive on the Ewe was that which is still called "the old cruive," a little below the Poolewe manse. A great part of the dam still remains. The lower banks of stones were the original cruive; the higher dam was more recent. When entire the old cruive was frequently used by pedestrians as a means of crossing the river, which had then no bridge. Some deaths by drowning occurred here. For instance, the piper Roderick Campbell (Part II., chap. xvi.) was drowned whilst endeavouring to cross this cruive. Again, an American merchant was drowned in the pool below the old cruive about sixty years ago. He was crossing the cruives when his tall hat flew off; he swam across the pool to recover it, and he got to it on the little island, and stood there a minute. In returning, the stream at the tail of the pool was too strong for him, and carried him down to the rough water, where Alexander Maclennan, the old mason of Moss Bank, saw him dashed against a large stone or rock opposite the Poolewe Free church, and so killed. He saw the poor man no more; the body was found, a fortnight after, at the ebb, on the Ploc-ard side of the head of Loch Ewe. It was long after this time that the old cruive was abandoned, and the new cruive was erected just at the foot of the navigable water of the Ewe, where are the remains of the old ironworks called the "Red Smiddy." This cruive appears to have only existed for some ten years; it was removed about 1852, as already stated. Great numbers of fish were taken in these cruives. Bag-nets and other engines for taking salmon in the sea are still sanctioned by the legislature, and some people think the gradual but certain diminution in the stock of fish is due to them, though this charge is by no means proved. There is sometimes a good year, like 1883, but on the whole the tendency is downwards, as both the net-fisher and angler complain.

The fortunate angler who has permission to fish the Ewe must first learn something of the pools on the river. The Ewe is nearly two miles long from the place where it leaves Loch Maree, close above Inveran, to the bridge at Poolewe. Taking the casts from Loch Maree downwards, we find on the east side of the river (whose course is very little west of due north) the following pools or casts:—There is a cast, almost useless, at the lower end of the kitchen garden at Inveran; it is difficult to fish from the shore, and I have never known anything but a chance sea-trout taken from it. [368] Sir Kenneth Mackenzie once captured two bull-trout here. The Upper Narrow below the fir wood comes next; it is an excellent cast when the river is high. Below this the river expands, and at the end of the birch wood, where it begins to contract again, is a cast called the "Kelt corner;" it is of little use, but sometimes a grilse is hooked in it. The Middle and Lower (or Little) Narrows are the next casts, and are both good; indeed, I would rather have the Middle Narrow than all the rest of the river. The Lower Narrow is a favourite resting-place of running fish, after struggling through the rough water below. Then comes the New Cruive Pool, which is excellent, and fishes best from this side. Below is a stream called Mac Cordaigh; in Gaelic the name signifies "the pool of the son of Mac Cordaigh," who was probably a noted angler, but whose deeds are lost in the obscurity of the past. Below is the Ash Pool, a good place for grilse. Some distance further on is the Craig Pool, or Manse Pool, which is difficult to fish from this side, owing to the high rough rock which juts down into it. The flat between this pool and the old cruive affords a considerable stretch of good fishing when the river is in spate, but is useless when the river is low. The Old Cruive Pool, immediately below the cruive wall, is an uncertain place. Alongside the Free Church meeting-house is the Sea Pool; it fishes better from the other side. From the other side of the river are the following casts, viz.:—The Middle and Lower Narrows, same as the other side; the New Cruive and Mac Cordaigh; and then the Ash Pool and the Hen Pool. The Manse Pool, which comes next, is best fished from this side. It often holds good fish, but they are "very stiff." The "flat" is well worth fishing from this side; it requires a pretty long cast, and there is a bank behind. The Old Cruive Pool being out of reach, the next and last pool on this side is the Sea Pool, an excellent cast. There is a beautiful dark pool below Poolewe bridge. It looks very tempting, but it is very rarely indeed that a salmon is taken in it. I have, however, known a grilse of 7 lbs. weight, and several good sea-trout, taken from it.

The Ewe is not an early river, and many of the fish that do come in the spring run through into Loch Maree, and as far as Loch Clair. The kelts, or spent fish, often remain in the river until May or even June. There is generally a run of salmon early in May. The grilse and more salmon come in June and July, especially July, and fish continue running until the breeding season in November; indeed, some say there are always fresh-run fish in the water. If a low state of the water hinders the kelts from going down to the sea, they become very numerous in the Ewe in the spring, and I have landed as many as eight in one day. Of course they had to be returned to the river, pursuant to law. The Ewe salmon is a handsome fish when fresh run. I once caught a

fresh-run bull-trout in the river weighing 21 lbs., a very handsome fish. The natives call these bull-trout Norwegian salmon. Mr Osgood H. Mackenzie, some years ago, caught one of them which weighed 27 lbs., the largest fish he ever took from the Ewe. I have caught several large sea-trout, which were of the same species. A few of the ordinary sea-trout are got in the river [369] when they are running up to Loch Maree, and occasionally a respectable brown trout. The largest salmon on record from the Ewe weighed, I believe, 34 lbs., and was taken from Mac Cordaigh by an angler fishing on the west bank of the river. I got a fine hen salmon of 30 lbs. from the Middle Narrow in August 1876. The best flies for the Ewe have yellow or black bodies rough and full, and mixed wings also pretty full, jay hackle or heron hackle, and a gold pheasant tail. Small flies kill best, unless the river be in spate.

If the Ewe could tell its own tale, it would mention many illustrious characters, and would no doubt give us some good stories of them. Here is an amusing yarn of Dr Mackenzie's. Speaking of the landlady (about 1808) of the Kenlochewe Inn, the doctor writes:—

"She would wait long for a character from the late Sir Humphrey Davy, who used to fish and write 'Salmonia' on the river Ewe. Once going east with Lady Davy, he had put up a 20 lb. pattern salmon, probably to show his friends what sort of fish he was catching. They arrived at the inn, when, I suppose, the larder was rather empty, and the landlady, who valued a salmon no more than any other fish, imagined the twenty pounder was being carried by Siromfredavi (as a foreigner once addressed him by letter) to help empty Highland larders as he moved through the land; so she chopped Mr Salmo in two, without a hint or 'by your leave,' and astonished her guests by presenting it boiled as their mainstay for dinner! It was reported that Sir Humphrey's ugly language was audible half a mile away, and that listeners suspected he was on his way to an asylum."

Not many years ago I was walking along the road from Inveran to Poolewe, and saw, as I thought (and rightly), a well-known politician fishing the river. His attendant was the water-bailiff, John Glas, who came up to speak to me about something or other. I asked him, "Who is that gentleman fishing?" He replied, "One Bright." I said, "The great John Bright, you mean?" His answer was, "I never heard of him, but he is a good fisher." Such is fame!

How many odd little incidents happen to the angler; they seem so extraordinary at the moment, but perhaps lose their effect by repetition. When a salmon is in good humour, or hungry, or irritated, or vicious, or whatever it may be, he will take any sort of fly. Having gone out one day to fish the Ewe without my fly book, I suddenly discovered the old fly I was fishing with had come to pieces; there was little left of it but the hackle, untwisted, and attached to the hook at one end. I shortened it to the length of the hook, and got a salmon with it at once.

What a pleasant incident it is, how flattering to one's self-esteem, when a friend who has toiled in vain all day begs you to try his rod, and you immediately get a salmon from a pool he has just fished! This has happened to me more than once, each occasion being a palpable fluke.

I remember hooking a very lively fish one day in May 1881 at the Middle Narrow; he jumped, he [370] flashed hither and thither; he now had out almost the whole of my line, and in another instant was at my very feet. After a little of this sort of work, he got off; I was horrified when the line came slack, and in a bit of a tiff jerked the rod up, drew the line, and threw it again. At the moment the fly touched the water another fish took it, which I ultimately bagged. A friend standing by positively never noticed that I had parted company with the first fish!

Fishing a year later at the same Narrow, I felt a slight suction as my fly approached a well-known yellow stone in the water. I pulled the fly away, thinking it might be a fish. My gillie said he saw nothing. After a brief pause I began again, and again felt the slight suction at the same spot. My gillie had seen nothing, and assured me it was but the eddy round the stone that I had felt. However, I allowed the usual interval, and, instructing my attendant to place himself where he could command the best view, I re-commenced. The same suction, the same remark by the gillie. So without further pause I threw again, and this time hooked a good fish at the same stone, which, after a sharp struggle, I brought to bank. It was he who had been at me all the time.

On another occasion, after I had fished the New Cruive Pool, I was coming ashore from the stone I had stood upon, and carelessly left the line dangling in the water. On lifting the rod I found there was a fish on, and I soon grassed a fresh run grilse of 7 lbs.

How well I remember the February fish which my faithful attendant declared (wrongly) was a kelt, and the other one, really a kelt, which I landed above the Middle Narrow, marked and returned to the water, and caught again two days later in the Old Cruive, when he received quite a cordial greeting and a second benediction to help him further on his way down to the sea!

It was in the spring of 1883 that, fishing the Lower Narrow one afternoon, two fish, almost elbowing each other, came at my fly at the same moment, an incident that had never occurred to me before. I hooked one of them, but it proved to be a kelt; these kelts are greedy beasts.

A friend with me one day hooked a big fish in the New Cruive Pool; the fish ran and leaped for some minutes, and then went down. We alternately held on from eleven A.M. till five P.M., when a growing suspicion proved true that the fish had got the line fast under a stone, and had escaped.

I shall never forget the Rev. Gordon Calthorp, minutely cross-examining me at a lunch one day on the subject of salmon fishing, and, a day or two afterwards, during a church mission, using the information he had thus acquired to illustrate, in his telling way, the wiles of Satan. Of course,

the successful angler represented the Evil One! I was meekly sitting near.

The present water-bailiff of the Ewe is John Mackenzie (Iain or John Glas), of Moss Bank, Poolewe. He is a silent man, but knows the river thoroughly. His predecessor was Sandy Urquhart, well remembered for his stupendous loquacity. He had many good stories,—one, of the [371] "fine gentleman" who had a day on the Ewe, killed a salmon, and gave Sandy a five pound note (!); another, of a well-known Ewe angler, who, Sandy said, being annoyed by the long sulking of a fish, stripped and dived down to the hole where the salmon lay. He succeeded in pulling the fish from his lair, but also pulled the hook from the fish's mouth.

The Ewe is easy to fish. There are few trees or banks, and all the casts are accessible. Waders are not necessary, and a long cast is seldom required. There are convenient "toes" for many of the casts, though not always quite in the right places. A north-west or north wind is the best for the Narrows, as it rouses a useful ripple against the scarcely apparent stream. I have said nothing about rod and line; they should be light. It is no use the angler wearying himself with a heavy nineteen or twenty foot rod. A sixteen or seventeen foot rod is quite enough, remembering the elementary principle that the shortest line which will cover the water is the best. I never now use a gaff on the Ewe. It is quite unnecessary, as there are no steep banks. I never lost a fish for want of a gaff, but many I have hooked have got off during vain attempts to gaff them, even when the gaff has been wielded by an experienced hand. To gaff a kelt involves an almost certain breach of the law, for the kelt is nearly sure to die. To gaff a clean fish is to mar one of the most beautiful objects of sport. My plan is to draw the nose of the fish to the edge of the water, then lay down the rod, and instantaneously grasp the root of the tail firmly with one hand, whilst the other hand, under the head of the fish, assists to place it the next moment high and dry upon the bank. Dr Hamilton of Windermere has invented a spiked glove to be worn on the hand tailing the fish, but I see no need for it; and between the difficulty of putting it on at the right moment and the clumsiness that must accompany its use, I would rather be without it.

The number of salmon and grilse taken from the Ewe is insignificant as compared with the quantities captured in the bag-nets. The largest number I have ever known killed in one day was eight clean fish; this was in 1874. I never got more than five clean fish myself on the same day. Sir Kenneth Mackenzie once killed ten fish in a day on the Ewe,—his best bag. Mr O. H. Mackenzie of Inverewe about 1853 killed seven salmon in one day, and five the next day. He was only a boy at the time, and was not fishing long on either day. For a notice of the sport the late Sir Hector Mackenzie and others had in the Ewe many years ago see Appendix E.

Sir Hector had a singular mode of fishing. His son, Dr Mackenzie, writes:—"Few were better able to handle a rod than our father, and then there were no wading mackintoshes dreamed of to keep all dry. And as many pools in our river needed to be waded into or a boat to fish them rightly, wicked knowing old white Trig was ridden by my father into the pool, which thus was commanded by his rod all over it; and very soon Trig became quite interested in the sport, and the moment he saw a rush from a salmon or sea-trout, he backed slowly and steadily to the bank [372] and let my father dismount and land the fish." This was on the river Conan.

The charms of the Ewe are manifold,—the wooded knolls on its upper reaches; the lovely peeps of the mountains of Loch Maree, and of the nearer range of Craig Tollie; the stories of the past that linger about its neighbourhood; the beauties of the river itself, replete with bird life and with wild flowers; and above all the exciting sport, are attractions which cannot fail to delight the angler, especially if he be successful. And there are pools in the Ewe that yield an occasional fish, even when the river is at its lowest. After August the fish are mostly dark in colour, though I have known a bright grilse bagged as late in the season as 11th September.

The other salmon rivers in Gairloch depend more on a good supply of water than the Ewe. They fish best in July if there be water. Each of them has had cruives at some time. They are all in private hands. For the benefit of any angler who, being a friend of the tenant of any of these rivers, obtains permission to fish, I may mention that the river running from Loch Clair to the head of Loch Maree, called the Garbh, is best fished from Kenlochewe, and is let with the Kenlochewe shootings; the Badachro river is let with the Shieldaig shootings; and the Kerry river is let with the Flowerdale shootings. The Little Gruinard river is not exclusively in one hand; the principal right to it is let with shootings.

Chapter XX.

Deer Forests and Grouse Shooting.

The red-deer of the Highland mountains form the subject of a branch of sport largely used as a means of recreation and recuperation by many of our most busy and often overworked statesmen, soldiers, and commercial and professional men.

The red-deer is indigenous in the northern parts of Scotland, as it used to be throughout the kingdom. There are so few obstructions that I believe it would be possible for these wild deer to roam if they pleased from the north of Caithness to the south of Argyleshire, but as a rule the

deer attach themselves to particular localities. Their numbers do not increase rapidly, even under favourable circumstances. The antiquity of the red-deer in Gairloch is proved by their cast-off horns having been found deep in peat bogs, where they must have lain many centuries (Part III., chap. v.).

Deer are said to have been scarce in Gairloch in former times, when, notwithstanding rigorous penal statutes to the contrary, there was much poaching. In the reign of James I. (1424), there was an enactment that "alsoone as onie Stalker may be convict of slauchter of Deare, he sall paie to the King fourtie shillings; and the halders and mainteiners of them sall paie ten poundis;" and there were statutes of a similar character in almost every succeeding reign, the penalties [373] becoming more serious as time went on. Since the time when the present system of letting deer forests was introduced, the number of deer in Gairloch has greatly increased.

A considerable part of the hill ground is now under deer, or, to use the popular but (to the uninitiated) misleading expression, is "forested." This word is supposed by some to be a corruption from the Gaelic word *fridh*, which they say was originally synonymous with the English "free;" not meaning that forests were free and open to the public (for nothing was less so under the old Scots acts), but signifying that the ground had been "freed from," or made clear of, cattle and sheep. If this were so, the word "forest" as thus used would of course have nothing whatever to do with trees. But the better opinion seems to be that the Gaelic word *fridh* always meant a forest in the usual acceptation of the English word, and so was really covered with wood. The forests of timber which formerly clothed the Highlands have been previously mentioned, and the causes of their disappearance in recent times have been discussed (page 74). It was mostly the woodland that was kept unpastured, and so became the resort of wild animals, including deer. The *fridh* was most strictly preserved, and exactly corresponded to the "forest" of the old Scots acts. In a Scots act of 1535, prohibiting the intrusion of "gudes, nolt, scheepe, horse, meires, or uther cattle," into "forrestes" reserved for "wild beastes and hunting," the "forrestes" are classed with "haned wooddes." Now "hained" is a Scotch word still in use; on the Borders they constantly speak of a grass field being "hained" when the stock are withdrawn from it, either to take a hay crop from it or to rest it. If *fridh* (*Anglicè*, forest) was in 1535 considered equivalent to a "hained" wood, it appears unlikely that it ever meant a "free" wood. In any case, there is abundant evidence that for at least nearly five centuries deer forests have been private hunting grounds strictly protected by the legislature.

The deer forests of Gairloch are to a great extent unsuitable for sheep. The recently formed deer forests have been constituted by putting the sheep off what were previously sheep farms. It may surprise some readers to learn that in this part of the Highlands, as well as in many other parts, it generally requires at least ten acres of hill ground to support one sheep.

There are the following deer forests within the parish of Gairloch:—

- South-west of Loch Maree.
  - Kenlochewe.
  - Flowerdale.
  - Shieldaig.
- North-east of Loch Maree.
  - Letterewe.
  - Ardlair.
  - Kernsary (new).

These forests will by-and-by probably yield altogether about two hundred stags a year, besides a like number of hinds in the winter, but not until the newer forests have had a year or two more to allow of an increase of their stock of deer. It is impossible to estimate accurately the number of [374] wild red-deer in Gairloch. Considering, however, the number of deer that may probably be killed in Gairloch after the next year or two, I would suppose that the stock when that time arrives will number about two thousand five hundred deer. This is a mere guess, based upon a comparison of the number killed and the stock on the ground, ascertained approximately by census, in some old deer forests that have come within my knowledge.

Stags are usually in condition for killing between 15th August and 8th or 10th October. These dates depend upon the season. In the case of a stag with a very fine head, the sportsman will probably not wish to shoot it until the horns are quite free from velvet, which perhaps may not be until well into September. Roaring begins in the last days of September, and a week or ten days later the stags are out of condition. There is no close time fixed by law for killing stags, and some proprietors do not even limit the season, which really fixes itself by the condition of the deer.

A stag which has twelve points to its antlers is called a royal, but a royal head is not necessarily first-rate. The best heads are distinguished by their wide span, thickness, and long points. A good stag is generally eight or ten years old at the least. The stag casts its horns every spring, and it is said the hinds eat the old horns; certainly they are seldom found.

Hinds are in the best condition for shooting in November and December. The hinds have only one calf in a year, though there have been rare cases known of a hind having two calves.

Deer-stalking is an arduous and absorbing sport,—its difficulty is its glory. This is especially so in the stag season, for in summer and autumn the deer often keep to the higher parts of the mountains. Frequently a stalk is only attempted when a good stag has been spied in the early morning, or even the day before. If it be decided to stalk a particular stag, the sportsman and his attendants endeavour to approach by such a route as that, if possible, they may not be visible,

and so that no breeze may convey their scent to the wary deer. Notwithstanding every precaution, it will sometimes happen that the suspicious stag gets an alarm from a previously unseen sheep that has strayed into the forest, or from a crowing grouse, or a frightened mountain hare, or even an eagle, and it may be the chance of a shot is lost to the sportsman for that day.

Hence it will be seen how fatal to a successful stalk would be the sudden presence upon the scene of a thoughtless rambler upon the mountains, who, quite unintentionally it might be, would thus mar the pleasure and success of the hard-earned and well-paid-for sport of the deer-stalker.

Until late years the deer were hunted by staghounds, and the present method of deer-stalking was rarely practised. Now-a-days dogs are not much used except for the purpose of tracking wounded deer; and cross-bred dogs, including strains of the collie, pointer, lurcher, and other breeds, are found to be better adapted to this use than the handsome staghounds so grandly depicted by Sir Edwin Landseer, scent being more important than speed. Even for tracking, dogs are little used in the smaller forests, lest their baying might drive deer away to other ground. [375]

In "The Pennylesse Pilgrimage," by John Taylor, "the King's Majestie's Water Poet," printed 1633, an excursion he made to Scotland is described. He visited the Earl of Mar at Braemar, and made the following quaint record:—

"There did I find the truely noble and Right Honourable Lords John Erskine, Earle of Marr; James Stuart, Earle of Murray; George Gordon, Earle of Engye, sonne and heire to the Marquise of Huntley; James Erskin, Earle of Bughan; and John, Lord Erskin, sonne and heire to the Earle of Marr, with their Countesses, with my much honoured, and my best assured and approved friend, Sir William Murray, Knight, of Abercarny, and hundreds of others, knights, esquires, and their followers; all and every man in general in one habit, as if Licurgus had been there and made lawes of equality. For once in the yeere, which is the whole moneth of August, and sometimes part of September, many of the nobility and gentry of the kingdome (for their pleasure) doe come into these Highland countries to hunt, where they doe conforme themselves to the habite of the Highland men, who, for the moste parte, speake nothing but Irish; and in former time were those people which were called *red-shanks*. Their habite is shoes with but one sole apiece; stockings (which they call short-hose) made of a warme stuff of divers colours, which they call tartane. As for breeches, many of them, nor their forefathers, never wore any, but a jerkin of the same stuffe that their hose is of, their garters being bands or wreathes of hay or straw, with a plaed about their shoulders, which is a mantle of divers colours, much finer and lighter stuffe than their hose, with blue flat caps on their heads, a handkerchiefe knit with two knots about their necks; and thus are they attyred. Now, their weapons are long bowes and forked arrowes, swords and targets, harquebusses, muskets, durks, and Loquhabor axes. With these weapons I found many of them armed for the hunting. As for their attire, any man of what degree soever that comes amongst them must not disdaine to weare it; for if they doe, then they will disdaine to hunt, or willingly bring in their dogges; but if men be kind unto them, and be in their habite, then they are conquered with kindnesse, and sport will be plentifull. This was the reason that I found so many noblemen and gentlemen in those shapes. But to proceed to the hunting.

"My good Lord of Marr having put me into that shape, I rode with him from his house, where I saw the ruines of an old castle called the castle of Kindroght," &c.

It thus appears that lowlanders were in the habit of visiting the Highlands nearly three hundred years ago for the purpose of hunting the red-deer, and that to please the natives they adopted the Highland dress whilst in the north.

It was not, I believe, until between 1830 and 1835 that the present system of letting deer forests became general in the Highlands. The rents paid to the proprietors have enabled them in many cases to free their estates from encumbrances, and to effect material improvements, whilst the [376] annual visits of wealthy southerners have conferred considerable benefits on the native population.

The well-remembered Colonel Inge, who (about 1832) began his sporting visits to the Highlands, is often spoken of as one of the pioneers of English sportsmen in the north. At that time he rented deer-stalking in Gairloch from Sir Francis Mackenzie, and the military discipline he maintained among the forty keepers and gillies he always employed is still spoken of, as are also his passion for method and order, and his love of a good joke.

There are many misconceptions abroad with regard to deer forests, even among those who might be expected to be better informed.

In 1883 a Royal Commission inquired into the condition of the crofters and cottars in the Highlands and islands of Scotland. In the report of the Commissioners a large section is devoted exclusively to deer forests and game. The Commission was considered to be decidedly friendly to the interests of the crofters. The report can be purchased through any bookseller for 4s. 8d., and ought to be perused by all who are interested in the subject. The following quotations speak for themselves:—

The Commissioners say:—"The principal objections advanced against deer forests, as presented to us, are the following:—

"1. That they have been created to a great extent by the eviction or removal of the inhabitants, and have been the cause of depopulation.

"2. That land now cleared for deer might be made available for profitable occupation by crofters.

"3. That it might at all events be occupied by sheep farmers, and that a great loss of mutton and wool to the nation might thus be avoided.

"4. That in some places, where deer-forests are contiguous to arable land in the occupation of crofters, damage is done to the crops of the latter by the deer.

"5. That deer deteriorate the pasture.

"6. That the temporary employment of gillies and others in connection with deer forests has a demoralising effect.

"1. In regard to the first of these objections, we have to state that we have only found, during the course of our inquiry, one clearly established case in evidence of the removal of crofters for the purpose of adding to an already existing forest. Depopulation, therefore, cannot be directly attributed to deer forests, unless it can be shewn that they employ fewer people than sheep farms.

"2. The evidence on this head is, as might be supposed, very conflicting. It is of course true that there are few deer forests where an occasional spot of hard green land might not be found which would be available for a crofter's residence, and cultivation; but, looking to the small proportion of arable to pasture land in such places, it may fairly be assumed that almost insuperable difficulties would be offered to the settlement of crofters in these deer forests, as they would find it impossible to defray the expense of purchasing the large sheep stock which the ground is [377] competent to carry, even though they would not in this case be obliged to take over the stock on the ground at a valuation.

"3. Suffice it to say, that as sheep in the Highlands do not come into the market until they are three years old, and, making no allowance for losses, there would be an additional annual supply of about 132,000 if all these forests were fully stocked with sheep; it is thus abundantly evident that, in view of the sheep in the United Kingdom amounting to 27½ millions,—besides all the beef grown at home, and all the beef and mutton imported, both dead and alive, from abroad,—the loss to the community is not only insignificant but almost inappreciable; while owing to the large importation of wool from abroad, the additional supply of home-grown wool would be altogether unimportant, if the area now occupied by deer were devoted to sheep."

"4. This complaint has been brought several times under our notice. In some cases the proprietor has, when appealed to by the crofters, shewn readiness to erect a fence to protect their crops from depredation, or to afford aid in warding off the deer; but in others the small tenant has been left without protection and without assistance." To meet these latter cases simple remedies are suggested.

5. The Commissioners state that the evidence on the fifth objection is conflicting; they express no definite opinion of their own upon it.

6. In discussing the last objection, the Commissioners state the pros and cons, which they seem to balance pretty evenly. They add: "It must be remembered, however, that temptations to dissipation are not tendered to the youth of the Highlands by sporting employments only. They may be found with equal facility, and less qualified by wholesome influences, in connection with the existence of a sea-faring man, a fisherman, or a casual labourer in the lowlands,—in fact, in all the other walks of labour and of gain to which the Highlanders betake themselves, and betake themselves with confidence and success. That there is a certain number of persons living loosely on the custom of tourists, anglers, and occasional sportsmen in the Highlands, and thus engaged in pursuits unfavourable to habits of settled industry, is undoubtedly true; but these people are not attached to forests, and their existence is inseparable from the general attractions of the country."

The Commissioners then summarise the subject in discussing two comprehensive questions. The first is, whether "the occupation of land as deer-forest inflicts any hardship or injury upon any class of the community, and if so upon what class?" and in reply to this question they say, "It has been shewn that crofters have rarely, at least in recent times, been removed to make or add to deer forests; that comparatively little of the land so occupied could now be profitably cultivated or pastured by small tenants; that no appreciable loss is occasioned to the nation, either in mutton or wool; and that the charge of inducing idle and intemperate habits among the population is not consistent with experience. There remains the class of sheep-farmers, of whom it may be said, that if they are affected at all, it is only in connection with the cost of wintering [378] their hill sheep, and that in this respect deer forests have undoubtedly benefited those who remain by diminishing competition.

"We next have to inquire, Whether deer forests are of substantial benefit to the various classes which compose the community in the Highlands? There can be no doubt that in the case of landowners this is so. If it were otherwise, they would clearly not let their land for the purpose. The advantage is especially felt at the present moment, when sheep farms are very difficult to let. We believe that if it were not for deer forests, and if the present condition of sheep farms is prolonged, much of the land in the Highlands might be temporarily unoccupied, or occupied on

terms ruinous to the proprietor.

"It has been shewn in evidence that not only does the proprietor derive pecuniary benefit from the system, but that, either through himself or his shooting tenant, substantial advantages have accrued to other classes of persons resident in the district. In the first place, the high rents given for deer forests must have the result of reducing local taxation, and this affects the smallest crofter as well as the largest farmer. The material advantage to the inhabitants of such districts does not, however, stop here. We have evidence that a very large expenditure has been effected, both by owners and lessees of deer forests, which would not certainly have been the case in their absence. Especially as regards those who have recently purchased Highland properties, it seems that while a deer forest formed the chief original attraction, this may subsequently become only an incident in the charm of a Highland residence, and that a great portion of the improvements made by new proprietors has little direct reference to sport. As instances of the latter may be mentioned the erection of houses of a class far superior to mere shooting-lodges, roads, farm buildings, and, above all, plantations, which in some cases are on a very large scale, and which, so far from being immediately dependent on or connected with deer, require to be carefully protected from them by six-foot wire fences. The expenditure directly connected with deer forests occupied by tenants includes bridle-paths, shooting-lodges, and keepers' houses, besides a good deal of wire-fencing, sometimes between sheep and deer, and sometimes between one deer forest and another. Taken together, the expenditure is very large. It will be thus seen that, contrary to what is probably the popular belief, deer forests in a far greater degree than sheep farms afford employment to the various classes above mentioned, and this consideration forms, in our judgment, the most interesting of all those which have been submitted to us."

In the above extracts detached sentences and paragraphs have been quoted, but any reader who cares to compare the quotations with the original report will, I am sure, allow that the extracts present a fair epitome of the Commissioners' views.

It is but right to add, that the Commissioners make the following recommendation on this subject:—

"It is our opinion that provisions should be framed, under which the crofting class would be [379] protected against any diminution, for the purpose of afforestment, of arable or pasture area now in their possession, and by which the areas which might hereafter form the most appropriate scene for expanding cultivation and small holdings, should be preserved from curtailment; if this were done, the interests of the class for whom we are specially concerned would be effectually secured."

Grouse shooting is of course a sport largely indulged in by sportsmen tenants in Gairloch, as in other parts of the Highlands. Grouse are not so abundant on the west coast moorlands as in some other districts. This is principally due to two causes,—the larger proportion of bent-grass and rushes to heather, which is the food of grouse; and the cold hail and rain which often occur just at the time the grouse are hatching. There is one compensation, viz., the grouse disease does not appear so frequently, nor wreak such wholesale destruction, on Gairloch moors as on other better stocked grounds elsewhere. In many years nearly all the first nests produce no young birds, so that by the Twelfth "cheepers" are still abundant, and it is far pleasanter to defer grouse shooting until a fortnight later.

The delights and the healthfulness of grouse shooting have been favourite subjects of sporting writers. There are few peculiarities in grouse shooting in Gairloch. Perhaps it is worth mention that mixed bags are more frequent here than in many districts, and this is especially true in the latter part of the season, which by-the-by yields out and away the most enjoyable and invigorating sport. It is a pity that so many sportsmen from the south run away to their partridges and pheasants, and leave untouched and unenjoyed the very pick of Highland sport. Many sportsmen, even of some experience, would be surprised to find how well grouse lie to dogs on the west coast up to the very last day of the season. In and after October the following varieties may be added to the bag of grouse, viz., woodcock, snipe, wild duck, teal, golden plover, rock-pigeon, hares, and rabbits. Of course black game and partridges are also frequently met with, as well as roe-deer.

Grouse and ptarmigan are shot in all the deer forests of Gairloch. There are only three separate grouse shootings in the parish, viz., those attached to Inveran, Poolhouse, and Drumchork.

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My Schools and Schoolmasters. By Hugh Miller.

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Statement in MS. By the Dowager Lady Mackenzie of Gairloch, 1885.

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Tragedy of Isle Maree	Old inhabitants. Anderson's Guide. Dr Arthur Mitchell.
Black Murdo of the Cave and Leod Mac Gilleandreis	History of the Mackenzies. James Mackenzie.
Ewan Mac Gabhar, the son of the Goat	The Ettrick Shepherd, on the authority of Mr M'Intyre of Letterewe. Old inhabitants.
Expulsion of Mac Beath from Loch Tollie island	*Celtic Magazine.* James Mackenzie.
Murder of Allan M'Leod and his two boys	James Mackenzie. Old inhabitants.
Mac Gille Riabhaich's oak cudgel	Duncan Darroch, proprietor of Torridon.
Donald Dubh Mac Gillechriosd	History of the Mackenzies. Donald Gregory's History.
Vision of Hector Roy and his bodyguard	Ruaridh an Torra.
Hector Roy and "The Gairloch."	Dr Mackenzie, Eileanach, on the authority of the late Alexander Campbell.
Battle of Park	History of the Mackenzies. Other histories.
Big Duncan of the Axe	History of the Mackenzies.
Battle of Drum a Chait	History of the Mackenzies.
Big Duncan of the Axe	History of the Mackenzies.
Battle of Drum a Chait	History of the Mackenzies.
Hector Roy, Mac Cailean and the King	*Celtic Magazine.*
Fight at Beallach Glasleathaid	History of the Mackenzies.
Fidelity of Iain Gearr to John Glassich	History of the Mackenzies.
Donald Gorm's invasion of Kenlochewe	Origines Parochiales Scotiæ. History of the Mackenzies.
John Roy's youth, and recovery of Gairloch	*Celtic Magazine.* Kenneth Fraser, Leac nan Saighead.
How Ruaridh Mackay became piper to John Roy	Iain Buidhe Taillear.
John Roy's visit to Lord Mackenzie at Torridon	Iain Buidhe Taillear.
Mac Iain Dhuibh MacLeod	Sir Kenneth S. Mackenzie, Bart. Old inhabitants.
Ruaridh Mac Allan M'Leod murders Iain Mac Ghille Challum and his two sons	Donald Gregory's History.
Affair of Leac nan Saighead	Ruaridh an Torra.
Fionnla Dubh nan Saighead and young Macleod of Assynt	Ruaridh an Torra.
Fionnla Dubh nan Saighead slays Neil M'Leod	Alexander Maclennan. Old inhabitants.

Fight at Lochan nan Feidh	History of the Mackenzies. Old inhabitants.
Affair at Raasay	History of the Mackenzies.
Alastair Buidhe Mackay slays Iain Geal Donn and other Lochaber cattle-lifters	*Celtic Magazine.*
The guard of the Black Corrie	*Celtic Magazine.*
The watch at Glac na Sguithar	Ruaridh an Torra.
Murder of the Gille Buidhe	George Maclennan, Londubh. James Mackenzie. Old inhabitants.
Duncan M'Rae hides the keg of gold in the Fedan Mor	James Mackenzie. Old inhabitants.
Man-of-war fires a broadside at Flowerdale House	Dr Mackenzie, Eileanach.
Rev. John Morrison exposed to midges at Letterewe	Old inhabitants.
Christmas Eve at Tollie	James Mackenzie.
Rev. Mr Sage's muscular Christianity	James Mackintosh, postmaster, Poolewe.
The Hay tombstone	James Mackenzie.
Old manner of administration of justice	Simon Chisholm.

Memoirs of Bards and Pipers.

Ruaridh Mackay, piper	Iain Buidhe Taillear.
John Mackay, piper and bard, called Iain Dall	Beauties of Gaelic Poetry; corrected by Iain Buidhe Taillear.
Angus Mackay, piper John Mackay, piper, his son	Iain Buidhe Taillear.
William Mackenzie and Malcolm Maclean, bards	Beauties of Gaelic Poetry.
William Ross, the Gairloch bard	Beauties of Gaelic Poetry.
Alexander Campbell, bard to Sir Hector	Roderick Campbell. James Mackenzie.
Alexander Grant, the bard mor an t' Slaggan	James Mackenzie.
John Mackenzie of the "Beauties"	*Celtic Magazine*; corrected by James Mackenzie, his brother.
Roderick Campbell, piper and fiddler	Ali' Iain Ghlass. James Mackenzie.

The History of the Mackenzies above referred to is that of which Mr Alexander Mackenzie, a native of Gairloch, is the author. The *Celtic Magazine* is edited by the same Alexander Mackenzie. The Gairloch traditions taken from it are believed to have been mostly communicated to the Editor by Kenneth Fraser, of Leac nan Saighead, now an old man.

Where the traditions obtained from the sources stated above differ from the accounts of the same incidents given in old MSS., I have preferred to adopt the versions supported by the authorities referred to, believing them to be quite as reliable.

TABLES.

I.

Mountains of Gairloch.

THE TERM "MOUNTAIN" IS HERE TAKEN TO INCLUDE ALL HILLS OF TWO THOUSAND FEET AND UPWARDS IN HEIGHT.

	NAME.	HEIGHT IN FEET.
The range on the north-east boundary of Gairloch.	Beinn nan Ramh (shoulder)	2000
	Meallan Chuaich	2250
	Groban (one face)	2424
	Beinn Bheag (one face)	2000
	Mullach Coire Mhic Fhearchair	3000
	Beinn Tarsuinn (one face)	2750
	A Mhaighdean, or the Maiden	2500
	Beinn Tarsuinn Chaol	2000
The range along the north-east of Loch Maree.	Beinn a Mhuinidh	2231
	Slioch or Sleugach	3217
	Beinn Lair	2817
	Meall Mheannidh	2000
	Beinn Aridh Charr	2593
The group to the south-west of Loch Maree.	Beinn Eighe [Eay]	2750
	Do., spur called Sgurr Ban	3188
	Do., spur called Ruadh Stac	3309
	Do., spur called Sail Mor	3217
	Meall a Ghuibhais	2882
	Beinn a Chearcaill	2376
	Beinn an Eoin	2314
	Bathais [Bus] Bheinn	2869
	Beinn Bhreac (a spur of Beinn Alligin)	2031
	Beinn Dearg (one face)	2500

This Table is compiled from the Ordnance Survey; the heights are taken exclusively from it.

Where not otherwise expressed the mountains are wholly in Gairloch.

II.

Distances.

PLACES ON THE LINE OF THE COUNTY ROAD THROUGH GAIRLOCH PARISH AND ON THE CONTINUATIONS TO RAILWAY STATIONS.

Achnasheen Station	0
Luibmhor	4
Kenlochewe	10
Tagan Farm	11½
Ru Nohar Pier	12
Grudidh Bridge	15½
Talladale (Loch Maree Hotel)	19½
Victoria Falls	21
Slatadale	21½
Kerry Falls	25
Kerrysdale	27
Charlestown	28½
Gairloch Hotel	29½
Achtercairn	30
Tollie Farm Road	34½

Croft, or Cruive End	35
Poolewe	35½
Inverewe	36½
Tournaig	38
Drumchork	42½
Aultbea	43
Laide House	45
Sand of Udrigil	45½
First Coast	47
Second Coast	47½
Little Gruinard	49
Meikle Gruinard River	50½
Gruinard House	51¼
Dundonell Inn	61
Fain, or Feithean Inn	69
Braemore Junction	76
Garve Station	95

The short piece of road between the ford and ferry on the Meikle Gruinard river and the commencement of the county road near Gruinard House is very rough, but can be traversed by carriages.

The places printed in italics are outside the parish of Gairloch.

Places on the Road from Kenlochewe to Torridon.

Kenlochewe Hotel	0
Loch Clair	4
Bridge on the "burn of the Great Black Corrie"	6½
Torridon village	11
Torridon House	13

This road is within the parish of Gairloch only for the first six miles after leaving Kenlochewe, the places printed in italics are therefore outside the parish.

The road beyond the village of Torridon is the private approach to Torridon House.

Places on the Road on the South Side of Gairloch (the Sea Loch).

Gairloch Hotel	0
Charlestown	1
Kerrysdale	2½
Shieldaig	4
Badachro	7
Port-Henderson	8½
Openham, or Opinan	9½
South Erradale	10½
Point, or Red Point	13

The road is not passable for carriages beyond South Erradale, but its continuation is a good foot or bridle road.

Places on the Road to the North of Gairloch (the Sea Loch), being the South and West Sides of the North Point.

Gairloch Hotel	0
Achtercairn	0½
Strath, or Smithstown	1½
Lonmor	2
Carn Dearg House	3½
Little Sand	4

Big Sand	4½
North Erradale	6½
Altgreshan	10
Melvaig	11

Places on the Road along the West Side of Loch Ewe.

Poolewe Inn	0
Boor	1
Naast	3
Inverasdale (Midton)	4
Do. (Coast)	5
Do. (Firemore)	6½
Meallan na Ghamhna (Stirkhill)	7½
Cove	9

The road will not do for carriages beyond Stirkhill, but its continuation is an excellent foot or bridle road.

Places on the Private Road from Poolewe to Fionn Loch.

Poolewe Inn	0
Inveran Farm	2
Inveran Bridge	2½
Kernsary	3½
Fionn Loch	6

The road beyond the Inveran Bridge is kept strictly private, and the gate there is locked.

Places on the Road North of Aultbea to the East of Loch Ewe, being on the West Side of the Greenstone Point.

Aultbea	0
Aird House	0½
Buaile na luib	1
Ormiscaig	2
Mellon Charles	3

The road beyond Aird House is not a good carriage road.

Places on the Road North of Laide, on the East Side of the Greenstone Point, starting from Aultbea.

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Aultbea	0
Laide Village	2
Udrigil House	3½
Mellon Udrigil	5

The road beyond Laide is rough, but passable by carriages.

Those wishing to visit the places on the shores of Loch Ewe and to the north and east of Aultbea are recommended to stay at the Poolewe Hotel. The distances of the above-named places from Poolewe may be calculated by adding 7½ miles to the distance as stated from Aultbea.

Distances of Places on Loch Maree accessible by means of the Steamer from Tollie Pier.

Tollie Pier	0
Ardlair (by signal)	2½
Talladale (Loch Maree Hotel)	6
Letterewe	9
Ru Nohar	14

A special trip of the steamer may at any time in summer be arranged (at an hour not to interfere with her regular trips) to convey a party direct from Tollie Pier to Ru Nohar or *vice versâ*. In that case the distance between the two extremities of the voyage measures exactly twelve miles.

DISTANCES OF PLACES (ACCESSIBLE BY ROAD) FROM THE GAIRLOCH HOTEL.

Achnasheen	29½
Achtercairn	0½
Aird House, near Aultbea	14
Altgreshan	10
Aultbea	13½
Badachro	7
Big Sand	4½
Boor	7
Buaile na luib	14½
Carn Dearg House	3½
Charlestown	1
Cove	15
Croft, or Cruive End	5½
Drumchork	13
Fionn Loch (private road)	12
First Coast	17½
Grudidh Bridge	14
Inveran Bridge	8½
Inveran Farm	8
Inverasdale (Midton)	10
Do. (Coast)	11
Do. (Firemore)	12½
Inverewe	7
Kenlochewe	19½
Kernsary (private road)	9½
Kerry Falls	4½
Kerrysdale	2½
Laide House	15½
Laide Village	16
Little Gruinard	19½
Little Sand	4
Loch Clair	23½
Lonmor	2
Meallan na Ghamhna (Stirkhill)	13½
Mellon Charles	16½
Mellon Udrigil	19
Melvaig	11
Naast	9
North Erradale	6½
Openham, or Opinan	9½
Ormiscaig	15½
Poolewe Bridge	6
Port-Henderson	8½
Ru Nohar Pier	17½
Sand of Udrigil	16½
Second Coast	18
Shieldaig	4
Slatadale	8
South Erradale	10½
Strath, or Smithstown	1½
Tagan Farm	18
Talladale (Loch Maree Hotel)	10
Tollie Farm Road	5
Tollie Pier	6
Torridon Village	30½
Tournaig	8½
Udrigil House	17½
Victoria Falls	8½

III.

Population, &c., of Gairloch.

The only estimates of the population of the parish of Gairloch given in the old accounts of the parish are manifestly mere approximations. They are as follows:—

Sir George Steuart Mackenzie says the population	in 1755	was 2050
Pennant in his Tour says the population	in 1772	" 2800
The Old Statistical Account says the population	in 1774	" 2000
Sir G. S. Mackenzie says the population	from 1790 to 1798	" 2200

The Registrar-General's returns of the population and numbers of houses at the census taken in each of the following years is given below. The census of 1801 is believed to be imperfect, and that of 1811 gives a slightly less figure than the Rev. James Russell's estimate (see page 114). The population of Gairloch in 1801 was probably over 2000.

Sex.	**1801.**	**1811.**	**1821.**	**1831.**	**1841.**	**1851.**	**1861.**	**1871.**	**1881.**
Males	740	1434	2410	2164	2346	2527	2617	2452	2253
Females	697	1321	2108	2281	2534	2635	2832	2596	2341
Totals	1437	2755	4518	4445	4880	5162	5449	5048	4594

Number of Houses.

Description.	**1841.**	**1851.**	**1861.**	**1871.**	**1881.**
Inhabited Houses	925	947	1042	1001	966
Uninhabited Houses	3	10	8	29	28
Houses in course of erection	2	4	2	3	9
Totals	930	961	1052	1033	1003

IV.

Ministers of the Parish of Gairloch.

NAME.		DATE OF PRESENTATION.
Sir John Broik, rector,		about 1530
Alexander Mackenzie,		1582 or 1583
Farquhar M'Rae		1608
Farquhar Mackenzie		1614
Roderick Mackenzie		1649
John Morrison		1711
James Smith		1721
Æneas M'Aulay		1732
John Dounie		1758
Daniel Mackintosh		1773
John M'Queen,	presented but refused to accept	1802
James Russell		1802
John Campbell		1845
Duncan Simon Mackenzie		1850

Ministers of the Quoad Sacra Parish of Poolewe.

Donald M'Rae	1829
Hugh Ferguson Macdonald	1846
John Sutherland Mackay	1848
William G. G. M'Lean, assistant	1884

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V.

Lairds of Gairloch.

NAME.	BORN.	SUCCEEDED.	DIED.
Hector Roy Mackenzie	1440	1494	1528
John Glassich Mackenzie	1513	1528	1550
Hector Mackenzie	1542	1550	1566
John Roy Mackenzie	1548	1566	1628
Alastair Breac Mackenzie	1577	1628	1638
Kenneth Mackenzie	1605	1638	1669
Alexander Mackenzie	1652	1669	1694
Sir Kenneth Mackenzie, Bart.	1671	1694	1703
Sir Alexander Mackenzie, Bart. (ninth laird)	1700	1703	1766
Sir Alexander Mackenzie, Bart. (tenth laird)	1731	1766	1770
Sir Hector Mackenzie, Bart.	1757	1770	1826
Sir Francis Alexander Mackenzie, Bart.	1799	1826	1843
Sir Kenneth Smith Mackenzie, Bart.	1832	1843	—

Hector Roy received a grant of Gairloch from King James IV. in 1494. He is believed to have had a similar grant some years before.

Several of the dates given above are conjectural, especially among the earlier generations. For fuller details and evidence of dates see the History of the Mackenzies by Alexander Mackenzie, F.S.A. Scot.

Since John Roy Mackenzie, each laird of Gairloch has been the eldest or eldest surviving son of the preceding laird. John Roy was third son of John Glassich, who was the eldest son of Hector Roy. John Roy's elder brothers, Hector and Alexander, died without issue.

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APPENDICES.

Extracts from Old Writers and Records, &c.

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A.

EXTRACT from the "Genealogical account of the Macras, as originally written by Mr John Macra, sometime minister of Dingwall in Ross-shire, who died in the year of our Lord 1704. Transcribed by Farquhar Macra of Inverinate in the year 1786. Printed, Camden, South Carolina, 1874."

The following are some passages in the life of a Highland minister, who was vicar of Gairloch for ten years in the seventeenth century. Note:—the title "Mr" is applied in old books and documents only to those who held the degree of M.A. "Saint Johnstown" is the old name of Perth.

"Mr Farquhar Macra the second son of Christopher MacConnochie was born at

Islandonan, anno 1580, being a seven months' child howbeit he became afterwards to be a man of a very strong body, and his father seeing his good genius for learning sent him to the school of Saint Johnstown, where he stayed four or five years and became a great master of the Latin language, as appears by some discoveries of his yet extant. From Perth his father sent him to the college of Edinburgh, where he became a pregnant philosopher beyond his condisciples, and commanded Master of Arts under the discipline of Mr Thomas Reid his regent, who afterwards became Principal of the College, all the members of which pitched on Mr Farquhar as the most accomplished and capable to take Reid's place as Regent. But Kenneth Lord Kintail, being then in Edinburgh, disapproved of the design, and prevailed with the members of the college to pass from Mr Farquhar, who himself preferred to be a preacher of the Gospel to any other calling whatsoever, and for that end had for some months preceding heard the lectures and lessons of Mr Robert Rollack, professor of divinity. So that omitting that opportunity of improving his great abilities he was brought by Lord Kenneth home to Chanery of Ross, where he was overseer of the Grammar school which then flourished there, and stayed for the space of fifteen months and passed his tryals. He became a sound, learned, eloquent and grave preacher, and was pitched upon by the bishop and clergy of Ross as the properest man to be minister of Garloch that he might thereby serve the colony of English which Sir George Hay of Airdry, afterwards Chancellor of Scotland, kept at Letterewe, making iron and casting cannon. Mr Farquhar having entered there did not only please the country people but also the strangers, especially George Hay. In the year 1610 Kenneth Lord Kintail brought Mr Farquhar with him to the Lewes, where he preached the Gospel to the inhabitants, who were great strangers to it for many years before, as is evident from his having to baptize all under forty years of age which he did, and married a vast number who lived there as man and wife thereby to legitimate their children, and to abolish the barbarous custom that prevailed of putting away their wives upon the least discord. This was so agreeable to the well thinking part of the people that my Lord Kintail promising to place such a man among them made them the more readily submit to him, so that all the inhabitants at this time took tacks from him except some of the sons of MacLeod of Lewes, who fled rather than submit to him. My Lord falling sick returned in haste home to Chanery of Ross where he died, and was the first of the family that was buried there, leaving the management of his affairs to Rory Mackenzie his brother, commonly called the Factor of Kintail, of whom are come the family of Cromarty. Mr Farquhar married Christian MacCulloch, eldest lawful daughter of MacCulloch of Park, on the first day of December 1611, dwelt at Ardlair, where several of his children were born.

"But Sir George Hay went from Letterew to Fife. He seriously invited Mr Farquhar to go with him, promising he would get him an act of Transplantation and his choice of several parishes of which he was Patron, and besides give him a yearly pension from himself and endeavour to get him ecclesiastical promotion. Mr Farquhar could not in [396]
gratitude refuse such an offer, and was content to go with him, was it not that Colin Lord of Kintail prevailed with Sir George to dispense with him, Lord Colin himself purposing to transplant him to Kintail, which was then vacant by the death of Mr Murdoch Murchison, uncle by the mother to Mr Farquhar, who accordingly succeeded his uncle both as minister of Kintail and Constable of Islandonan in the year 1618, as will appear by a contract betwixt Lord Colin and him dated at Chanery that year. Mr Farquhar lived here in an opulent and flourishing condition for many years much given to hospitality and charity....

"Mr Farquhar being rich when he came from Garloch provided his children considerably well, having six sons and two daughters that were settled in his own life time, viz. Alexander, Mr John, Mr Donald, Milmoire or Myles, Murdoch, and John....

"In the year 1651 Mr Farquhar, being old and heavy, removed from Islandonan by reason of the coldness of the air to a place called Inchcruiter, where he lived very plentifully eleven years; some of his grandchildren after his wife's death alternately ruling his house, to which there was a great resort of all sorts of people, he being very generous, charitable, and free-hearted.

"In the year 1654 when General George Monk passed through Kintail with his army, they in their return carried away three hundred and sixty, but not the whole of Mr Farquhar's cows, for which after the restoration of King Charles the II., he was advised to put in his claim; but his love of the change of affairs made him decline it, and at his death he had as many cows as them, and might have had as many more were it not that they were constantly slaughtered for the use of the family when he had his grandchildren and their bairns about him. Being at last full of days, and having seen his children that came of age settled after he had lived fifty-four years in the Ministry, ten of which at Garloch, he departed this life in the year 1662, and the eighty-second of his age. He was buried with his predecessors at Kilduich in Kintail."

B.

EXTRACT from "A Tour in Scotland and Voyage to the Hebrides, 1772, by Thomas Pennant." Dedication dated at Downing, March 1, 1774.

Mr Pennant accomplished most of his tour in the Western Highlands and Islands by means of a sailing vessel. Landing at Dundonnel at the head of Little Loch Broom, on 30th July 1772, in tempestuous weather, he was hospitably entertained by Kenneth Mackenzie, Esq. of Dundonnel. He made this note here:—"Dundonnel,—Determine to go by land to visit Loch Maree, a great lake to the south; and direct Mr Thompson to sail and wait for us at Gairloch."

After a rough ride, occupying most of the day, and which seems to have been by way of Achneigie, thence by Glen na Muic and the heights of Kenlochewe to the lower end of Glen Dochartie (a route still indicated by a mountain track), he writes as follows (vol. ii., page 328) under date of 1st August 1772:—

"Black morassy heaths succeed, named Gliann-dochartai. Dine on the side of a rill at the bottom, on plentiful fare provided by our kind host, whose son Mr Mackenzie, and another gentleman of the name, kindly undertook the charge of us to the next stage. Ride through a narrow strath called Kin-loch-ewe, where we first saw the signs of houses and a little cultivation since morning. This terminates in a meadowy plain, closed at the end with Loch-Maree: the night proved wet and tempestuous; we therefore determined to defer the voyage till next day; and to shelter ourselves in a whisky house, the inn of the place. Mr Mackenzie complimented Mr Lightfoot and me with the bedstead, well covered with a warm litter of heath: we lay in our cloaths, wrapped ourselves in plaids and enjoyed a good repose. Our friends did not lose their sleep; but great was our surprize to see them form their bed of wet hay, or rather grass collected from the fields; they flung a plaid over it, undressed, and lay most comfortably, without injury, in what, in a little time, must have become an errant hot bed: so blest with hardy constitutions are even the gentlemen of this country! [397]

"At seven in the morning (Aug. 2) take a six-oared boat, at the east end of Loch Maree, keep on the north shore beneath steep rocks, mostly filled with pines waving over our heads. Observe on the shore a young man of good appearance, hailing the boat in the *erse* language. I demanded what he wanted; was informed, a place in the boat. As it was entirely filled, was obliged to refuse his request. He follows us for two miles through every difficulty, and by his voice and gestures threatened revenge. At length a rower thought fit to acquaint us, that he was owner of the boat, and only wanted admission in lieu of one of them. The boat was ordered to shore, and the master taken in with proper apologies and attempts to sooth him for his hard treatment. Instead of insulting us with abuse as a *Charon* of *South Britain* would have done, he instantly composed himself, and told us through an interpreter, that he felt great pride in finding that his conduct gained any degree of approbation.

"Continue our course. The lake, which at the beginning was only half a mile broad, now, nearly half its length, widens into a great bay, bending towards the south, about four miles in breadth, filled with little isles, too much clustered and indistinct. Land on that called Inch-maree, the favoured isle of the saint, the patron of all the coast from Applecross to Loch-broom. The shores are neat and gravelly; the whole surface covered thickly with a beautiful grove of oak, ash, willow, wicken, birch, fir, hazel, and enormous hollies. In the midst is a circular dike of stones, with a regular narrow entrance; the inner part has been used for ages as a burial-place, and is still in use. I suspect the dike to have been originally *Druidical*, and that the ancient superstition of *Paganism* had been taken up by the saint as the readiest method of making a conquest over the minds of the inhabitants. A stump of a tree is shewn as an altar, probably the memorial of one of stone; but the curiosity of the place is the well of the saint; of power unspeakable in cases of lunacy. The patient is brought into the sacred island, is made to kneel before the altar, where his attendants leave an offering in money; he is then brought to the well, and sips some of the holy water: a second offering is made; that done, he is thrice dipped in the lake; and the same operation is repeated every day for some weeks: and it often happens, by natural causes, the patient receives relief, of which the saint receives the credit. I must add that the visitants draw from the state of the well an omen of the disposition of St *Maree*; if his well is full, they suppose he will be propitious; if not, they proceed in their operations with fears and doubts; but let the event be what it will, he is held in high esteem; the common oath of the country is by his name; if a traveller passes by any of his resting-places, they never neglect to leave an offering; but the saint is so moderate as not to put him to any expense, a stone, a stick, a bit of rag contents him.

"This is the most beautiful of the isles; the others have only a few trees sprinkled over their surface.

"About a mile farther the lake again contracts. Pass beneath a high rock, formed of short precipices, with shelves between, filled with multitudes of self-sown pines, making a most beautiful appearance.

"The south of the water is bounded with mountains adorned with birch woods, mixed with a few pines: a military road runs along its length. The mountains are not very high, but open in many parts to give a view of others, whose naked and broken tops shooting into sharp crags, strangely diversify the scene, and form a noble termination.

"Towards the bottom of the lake is a headland, finely wooded to the very summit. Here the water suddenly narrows to the breadth of a hundred yards, and continues so for nearly a mile, the banks cloathed with trees, and often bending into little semilunar bays to the very extremity; from whence its waters, after the course of a mile, a continual *Rapide*, discharge into a deep and darksome hole, called Pool-ewe, which opens into the large bay of Loch-Ewe.

"The lake we had left is eighteen miles long; the waters are said to be specifically lighter than most others, and very rarely frozen; the depth is various, in some places sixty fathoms; but the bottom is very uneven; if ten feet of water were drained away, the whole would appear a chain of little lakes.

"The fish are salmon, char, and trout; of the last is a species weighing thirty pounds.

"Land; are received by the Rev. Mr Dounie, minister of Gairloch, whom we attend to church, and hear a very edifying plain comment on a portion of Scripture. He takes us home with him, and by his hospitality makes us experience the difference between the lodgings of the two nights. [398]

"Aug. 3. Take a view of the environs: visit the mouth of the river, where the salmon fishery supplies the tenant with three or four lasts of fish annually. On the bank are the remains of a very antient iron furnace. Mr Dounie has seen the back of a grate, marked 'S. G. Hay,' or Sir George Hay, who was head of a company here in the time of the Queen Regent; and is supposed to have chose this remote place for the sake of quiet in those turbulent times.

"Potatoes are raised here on the very peat-moors, without any other drains than the trenches between the beds. The potatoes are kiln-dried for preservation.

"It is to be hoped that a town will form itself here, as it is the station of a Government-packet, that sails regularly from hence to *Stornoway*, in *Lewis*, a place now growing considerable, by the encouragement of Lord Seaforth, the proprietor. This is a spot of much concourse; for here terminates the military road, which crosses from the East to the West sea, commencing at *Inverness*, and passing by *Fair-burn* and *Strath-braan* to this place. Yet I believe the best inn on the last thirty miles is that of Mr Roderick Mac-donald, our landlord the last night but one.

"Ride about six miles South, and reach Gair-loch; consisting of a few scattered houses, on a fine bay of the same name. Breakfast at *Flowerdale*; a good house, beautifully seated between hills finely wooded. This is the seat of Sir *Hector Mackenzie*, whose ancestor received a writ of fire and sword against the antient rebellious owners; he succeeded in his commission, and received their lands for his pains.

"The parish of Gair-loch is very extensive, and the number of inhabitants evidently encrease, owing to the simple method of life, and the conveniency they have of drawing a support from the fishery. If a young man is possessed of a herring-net, a hand-line, and three or four cows, he immediately thinks himself able to support a family, and marries. The present number of souls are about two thousand eight hundred.

"Herrings offer themselves in shoals from *June* to *January*; cod-fish abound on the great sandbank, one corner of which reaches to this bay, and is supposed to extend as far as Cape Wrath; and South, as low as *Rona*, off Skie; with various branches, all swarming with cod and ling. The fishery is carried on with long-lines, begins in *February*, and ends in *April*. The annual capture is uncertain, from five to twenty-seven thousand. The natives at present labor under some oppressions, which might be easily removed, to the great advancement of this commerce. At present the fish are sold to some merchants from *Campbeltown*, who contract for them at two-pence farthing a-piece, after being cured and dried in the sun. The merchants take only those that measure eighteen inches from the gills to the setting on of the tail; and oblige the people to let them have two for one of all that are beneath that length. The fish are sent to *Bilboa*; ling has also been carried there, but was rejected by the Spaniards. This trade is far from being pushed to its full extent; is monopolised, and the poor fishers obliged to sell their fish at half the price to those who sell it to the merchants.

"The want of a town is very sensibly felt in all those parts; there is no one commodity, no one article of life, or implement of fishery, but what is gotten with difficulty, and at a great price, brought from a distance by those who are to make advantage from the necessities of the people. It is much to be lamented that after the example of the Earl of *Seaforth*, they do not collect a number of inhabitants by feuing their lands, or granting leases for a length of years for building; but still so much of the spirit of the chieftain remains, that they dread giving an independency to their people; a false policy! as it would enrich both parties; and make the landlord more respectable, as master of a set of decent tenants, than of thousands of bare-footed half-starved vassals. At present adventurers from distant parts take the employ from the natives; a town would create a

market; a market would soon occasion a concourse of shipping, who would then arrive with a certainty of a cargo ready taken for them; and the mutual wants of stranger and natives would be supplied at an easy rate.

"By example of a gentleman or two, some few improvements in farming appear. Lime is burnt; sea tang used as manure; and shell sand imported by such who can afford the freight. But the best trade at present is cattle: about five hundred are annually sold out of this parish, from the price of one pound seven to two pounds five a-piece. About eighty horses, at three pounds each, and a hundred and fifty sheep, at three pounds per score. The cattle are blooded at spring and fall: the blood is preserved to be eaten cold. [399]

"We found our vessel safely arrived at anchor with many others, under the shelter of a little isle, on the south side of the bay. Weigh, and get under sail with a good breeze."

C.

NOTES on the Parish of Gairloch, from the "Old Statistical Account," being an Extract from "The Statistical Account of Scotland, drawn up from the Communications of the Ministers of the different parishes, by Sir John Sinclair, Bart.,"
vol. iii., page 89, printed in 1792.

"PARISH OF GAIRLOCH.

"By the Rev. Mr Daniel M'Intosh.

"*Name, Extent, &c.*—This parish had its name originally from a very small loch, near the church and the house of Flowerdale, and so close by the shore that the sea at high tides covers it. The etymology of it is abundantly clear, and signifies in the Gaelic language a short contracted loch.

"The parish of Gairloch is situated in the county of Ross, in the presbytery of Lochcarron, and synod of Glenelg. Its length is no less than thirty-two miles English, and its breadth about eighteen.

"*Soil.*—This country resembles many other parts of the Highlands of Scotland. The valleys are surrounded with hills, that afford good pasture to different kinds of cattle. As the parish abounds in hills and mossy ground, the arable parts of it are consequently but of a small extent. When the season is favourable, the crops are by no means bad, yet they scarcely serve the inhabitants above seven or eight months. The potatoes the farmers plant, and the fish they catch, contribute much to their support. This country, and all the West coast, are supplied in the summer with meal by vessels that come from different ports at a distance, such as Caithness, Murray, Peterhead, Banff, Aberdeen, Greenock, &c., and, at an average, sell the boll, consisting of eight stones, at 16s., and, when provisions are high, at 18s. and upwards.

"*Rivers and Antiquities.*—There are many rivers in this parish, but no bridges nor passage but by horses; and therefore, when these rivers overflow their banks, which often happens in the winter and spring seasons, and sometimes even in summer, travellers are detained, and are exposed to delays and additional expences. There are two large rivers near the east end of this parish, which meet and run into one at Kenlochew, which, in the Earse language, imports the Head of the Loch-River. These two rivers empty themselves into Loch-Mari. This loch again is twelve computed miles in length, and more in some parts than a mile in breadth. There are twenty-four small islands in it, which are beautified with fir trees, and a variety of other kinds of wood; in one of these islands there is an antient burying-place, called Isleand-Mari, where the people on the north side of the loch still continue to bury their dead. There is a well in it of a salubrious quality, the water of which hath been found, for ages past, very serviceable to many diseased persons. The remains of a Druidical temple is likewise to be seen in this small island.

"*Fish.*—Gairloch has been for many ages famous for the cod-fishing. Sir Hector M'Kenzie of Gairloch, the present proprietor, sends to market annually, upon an average, betwixt 30,000 and 40,000 cod, exclusive of the number with which the country people serve themselves. Gairloch hath also, from time immemorial, been remarkable for the herring-fishing. The coast of this parish abounds in very safe harbours for vessels of all dimensions.

"*Agriculture.*—Oats and barley are sown in this country. Some of the gentlemen sow a small quantity of pease, which, when the harvest is warm and dry, yield profitable returns; our time of sowing oats, black and white, is commonly from the middle of [400]

March to the end of April, within which period we also plant potatoes; we sow barley from the beginning of May to the 10th of June; our latest barley is seldom the worst part of the crop, when the summer proves warm and showery. Our harvest commences about the end of August, and the crop is gathered in about the 10th of October. Our crop frequently suffers much from shaking winds, attended with heavy cold rain, about the autumnal equinox.

"*Diseases.*—No peculiar local distemper of any kind is prevalent in this parish. Fevers are frequent; sometimes they are of a favourable kind; at other times they continue long, and carry off great numbers. An infectious and putrid fever, early in winter last, made its way from the north over a long tract of different countries, and proved fatal to many.

"*Population.*—There were in this parish, in the year 1774, of examinable persons about two thousand. And from that period to the present there is an increase of two hundred souls and upwards. In Dr Webster's report the number was two thousand and fifty. There are a few people in the parish at the age of eighty-six and eighty-seven. Two died lately who arrived at the age of an hundred years.

"*Character of the People.*—They are in general sobre, regular, industrious, and pious. They have always been remarked and esteemed for their civility and hospitality to strangers.

"*School.*—In the great extent of this parish, as hath been already observed, there is no school but the parochial, by which means the rising generation suffer much and are wholly neglected, having no access to the benefit of instruction. There are only two catechists, who have their appointments partly in the skirts of this and partly of the two neighbouring parishes.

"*Church.*—All the people of every denomination are of the Established Church; there are no Dissenters, Seceders, nor any other kind of sect whatever in the parish. The church of this parish has stood more than a century, but has for some years past been in a ruinous situation, and was therefore taken down this summer, and a new elegant church is building. There are three places of public worship in the parish, exclusive of the church, viz., Kenlochew, Chapel of Sand, and the croft of Jolly. The church and manse are at the distance of six English miles from each other. The manse is very near the shore, on the north of the church, and supposed to be in the centre of the parish. The value of the living, exclusive of the glebe, and including the expence allowed for communion elements, is only £58, 6s. 9½d. There are five heritors in the parish, viz., Sir Hector M'Kenzie of Gairloch, Baronet, John M'Kenzie of Gruinord, John M'Kenzie of Letterew, Roderick M'Kenzie of Kernsary, and Colonel M'Kenzie of Coul, who is at present in the East Indies; all the rest reside in the parish.

"*Rent.*—The land-rent cannot be ascertained with accuracy. It may probably be about £1700 per annum.

"*Poor.*—The number of the poor in this as well as in many other Highland parishes is daily increasing. There are eighty-four upon the kirk-session roll, besides some other indigent persons, who, though not inrolled, yet are considered as objects of sympathy. They have the annual collections made in the church, with the interest of £20, distributed among them. The collections, upon an average, are about £6, 7s.

"*Language.*—The Gaelic is the prevailing language in this as well as in several other corners of the West coast, where the people have no opportunity of learning English."

D.

EXTRACTS from "The Highlands and Western Isles of Scotland,
founded on a series of annual journeys between the years 1811 and 1821,"
by John MacCulloch, M.D., F.R.S., L.S.G.S., &c., vol. ii., page 280 *et seq.*:—

"There is nothing worthy of notice between Loch Torridon and Gairloch; but this inlet possesses considerable beauty in various parts, and more particularly in that angle occupied by Flowerdale. The very unsuspected ornament of this place, contrasted also [401]
as it is with all the surrounding wildness, almost carries us back to the most polished regions of Perthshire. It is an interesting spot, independently of its beauty, as proving that nothing is wanting but taste and industry to render a thousand places on the west coast rivals to the most ornamental parts of the interior of Scotland, qualities which may exist in many persons besides Sir Hector Mackenzie, but which are wasted if the proprietors do not reside on their estates. Had there been as many Sir Hector Mackenzies as there are spots equal in capacity to Gairloch, the west coast of Scotland might have challenged any equal space in the world for judicious ornament,

embellishing and improving Nature, as it now may for natural advantages.

"Loch Ewe is a deep and not a very wide inlet. The form of the land on each side is tame, and it is only at the extremity where the high mountains of the interior come into view that the outline has any character. But the view of Pol Ewe, from the anchorage, is picturesque; as the finely characterised mountains which surround Loch Maree form its conspicuous features. The rocky hills that surround this rude and strange valley are singularly wild. From Loch Maree, scarcely a mile distant from the sea-shore, the Ewe, a broad river, runs with a rapid course to the sea. Issuing from the lake, it first meanders gently through low grounds interspersed with wild groves of alder and birch and oak, enclosed by woody cliffs and irregular rough ground, which, on both hands, rise up the intricate skirts of the high mountains that bound the lake and the valley together. Shortly, however, it is seen roaring through a steep and stony channel, deep below the surrounding land, which is now a rude heathy moor, with occasional patches of corn near the margin of the water. Hence, passing a salmon weir, the river forms a considerable cascade, falling into a dark rocky pool; immediately after which it joins the sea.

"The peculiar wildness of this valley is rendered more impressive by the crowded population, for which, considering its aspect, it is remarkable. We think little, in this country, of deserted and solitary rudeness and barrenness, since they are of such daily and incessant recurrence; but when inhabited they impress us forcibly, and apparently from an unacknowledged sympathy with those whose lot it is to reside in them. Besides the small tenants who occupy the numerous black houses about this waste, and whose peat stacks are even more conspicuous than their dwellings, there is here a large farm house, a slated inn, which is also the post-office, and a salmon fishery. From the post-office there is a weekly packet to Stornoway, so that Pol Ewe reminds us of that world, of which, in a few weeks cruising about these seas, we are very apt to lose sight. The river is noted, both for the abundance and the goodness of its salmon, and is rented by Berwick fishermen; the produce, here and elsewhere on this coast, being carried across the country on horseback to the Murray Frith to be boiled for the London market, an arrangement which does not appear the best that could be devised, as it is a journey of two days. The river abounds equally in trout, as does also Loch Maree; so that, for brothers of the angle as well as for trading Berwickers, Pol Ewe is one of the most enticing places on the west coast.

"A fortunate discovery which I made of some Allium ursinum (wild garlick) gave zest for a week to our hashed mutton and our insipid broth. The sea-beet and the Crambe maritima served for ordinary greens, and sorrel was always at hand for a fricandeau a l'oseille. The Cotyledon luteum, very unexpectedly, proved to be a good substitute for spinach; but, best of all, and most abundant, were the Chenopodia, common on all these shores, which ensured us a never-failing supply.

"Loch Maree lies so completely out of the road, and so far beyond the courage, of ordinary travellers, that, except by Pennant, I believe it has never been visited. The length is about fourteen miles, and the greatest breadth three, though in most parts it scarcely exceeds one; while, being bounded by high mountains, and having a very varied and irregular outline, its shores present a good deal of interesting scenery; the entire lake itself being displayed from many different points and under a great variety of aspects, so as to produce some of the finest specimens of this class of landscape in the Highlands. In point of style, it ranks rather more nearly with Loch Lomond than with any other of the southern lakes, though still very far inferior.

"The most accessible and the finest general views may be obtained from the rocky hills that bound the exit of the river. The mountain outline, which is grand and various, [402] presents a greater diversity of form and character than any of the Scottish lakes; but Ben Lair[11] is always the principal feature, graceful, solid, and broad. The middle ground is a great source of variety; splendid and wild, an intermixture of rock and wood, more easily compared with some parts of Loch Cateran than with any other well-known scenery, yet still different. The winding and wooded course of the Ewe adds much to its liveliness, the bright reaches glittering as they emerge from among the trees and rocks through which the river forces its way.

"The first day of creation was not more beautiful. July, the June of this country, was in its full glory. A few thin silvery clouds rested on the clear blue sky, and the sun shed a flood of light over the bright surface of the lake, which reflected every rock and every tree that hung over the glassy surface. Even the line of the shore was undistinguishable, except when the casual passage of a gentle air, descending from the hills, ruffled for a moment the bright expanse; when the gay vision vanished, till again, as the breeze passed off across the water, it collected its scattered fragments, reappearing in all its former brilliancy, and rivalling its original. Even the dark firs assumed a look of spring, and the barren and cold grey cliffs of Ben Lair seemed to rejoice in the bright sunshine. While the warm brown and glowing purple of the heath, now in full blossom, tinged the faces of the nearer hills with that richness of colour known only to these mountainous regions, every summit, as it retired, assumed a purpler and a bluer tone, till the last peaks emulated the misty azure of the sky into which they melted, as if they had belonged rather to the fields of air than to the earth

below.

"No one can know the full value of summer who has not known it in a land of mountains; no one can feel, who has not felt it among the hills, the joy with which the sun can fill the mind, as it fills the atmosphere; the sense of beauty, of bounding, exuberant happiness in which it wraps our very existence as it does the landscape; giving to every feature, to the wildest mountain summit and the gloomiest valley, to the barest rock and the lowliest flower, charms to which all the glories of the richest cultivated country are insipid and tame.

"The northern margin of Loch Maree presents a great variety of close shore scenery, consisting of rocky and wooded bays and creeks rising into noble overhanging cliffs and mountains; and it displays also the finest general views of the lake. The effect of Sleagach, seen at once from its base to its summit, is perhaps more striking than that of any mountain in Scotland. Where the skirts of Ben Lair descend steep into the water, the scenes are often peculiarly original as well as grand. In one place[12] in particular, the remains of a fir forest, in a situation almost incredible, produce a style of landscape that might be expected in the Alps, but not among the more confined scope and tamer arrangements of Scottish mountains. Immediately from the water's edge, a lofty range of grey cliffs rises to a great height, so steep as almost to seem perpendicular, but varied by fissures and by projections covered with grass and wild plants. Wherever it is possible for a tree to take root, there firs of ancient and noble growth, and of the most wild and beautiful forms, are seen rising above each other, so that the top of the one often covers the root of the succeeding, or else thrown out horizontally in various fantastic and picturesque modes. Now and then some one more wild and strange than the others, or some shivered trunk or fallen tree, serves to vary the aspect of this strange forest, marking also the lapse of ages and the force of the winter storms which they so long have braved.

"The eastern extremity of the lake becomes insipid, terminating in a range of meadows, through which the stream winds its sluggish way. But beyond, all is rude and savage, displaying a chaos of wild mountains and a succession of white precipices and spiry snow-white crags, bright, cold, and dreary, and giving a character of polar sterility to the landscape, as if no living being, not even vegetable life, could here find home or refuge. Evening arrived as we reached this end of the lake, for not a breeze had blown to aid us. The long shadows of the mountains were now stretching across the water, and a vast and broad body of shade on the western hills gave a repose to the scene, so deep and so solemn, that even the liquid sound which followed the dip of the oars seemed an intrusion on the universal hush of nature. No living object was seen or [403] heard, and even the occasional passage of the bee that winged its evening way home to its mountain abode in the heath, disturbed a silence that appeared never before to have been interrupted. The last crimson at length vanished from the sharp rocky summits of the eastern hills, and all became alike wrapped in one gentle hue of tranquil grey. But it was the summer twilight of a northern July, and night was now but one long and lovely evening.

"It was with some difficulty that we explored our nocturnal way through the labyrinth of islands in the centre of this lake; as they are little raised above the water, and covered with scattered firs and with thickets of birch, alder, and holly, while they are separated by narrow and tortuous channels. The features of the whole are so exactly alike that no part can be distinguished from another. Inch Maree has been dedicated to a saint of that name, and it still contains a burial-place, chosen, it is said, like all those which are found in islands, to prevent depredations from the wolves of ancient days. This theory, however, seems disputable, because the extirpation of this animal is an event of considerable antiquity, and many of these burial-grounds seem of comparatively modern times. Here also there was a sacred well, in which, as in St. Fillan's, lunatics were dipped, with the usual offerings of money; but the well remains, and the practice has passed away. Although now midnight, the heat was so great as to be almost oppressive, exceeding seventy degrees, an occurrence not very uncommon in these Highland valleys in summer. But the hot breeze served to fill our sails, and, by midnight, had brought us back to the river; nor were we sorry to find, some time after, on board of our vessel, the dinner which we had not calculated on deferring to the morning of a following day."

E.

EXTRACTS from the "New Statistical Account of Scotland."

"PARISH OF GAIRLOCH.

"Presbytery of Lochcarron, Synod of Glenelg."

Drawn up by the Rev. DONALD M'RAE, Minister of Poolewe, and dated September 1836.

"I.—TOPOGRAPHY AND NATURAL HISTORY.

"*Name.*—The name of the parish is compounded of gearr—short, and loch. The parish takes its name from a salt water loch of the same name. At the end of this loch, the natives point out a hollow spot of ground which they choose to denominate 'the Gairloch' by way of distinction, as they allege that the parish takes its name from it; but it evidently derives its name from the salt water loch, or rather bay, for, comparing it with most of the other salt water lochs on the west coast, it scarcely deserves the name of loch.

"*Hydrography, &c.*—Few parishes on the west coast can boast of more magnificent mountain scenery, as the traveller can testify who has sailed down the picturesque Lochmaree. The principal mountain in the range is Slioch, or Sliabhach; its elevation above the level of the sea cannot be less than three thousand feet. The traveller who, from the west end of Lochmaree, takes a view of the scenery before him, cannot fail to be struck with astonishment at the wild grandeur of the scene presented to his view; the much admired and far-famed Lochmaree, with its four-and-twenty wooded islands; the range of mountains, commencing on the right and left, and extending four miles beyond the east end, of Lochmaree; Lochmaree itself, eighteen miles long, appearing in the distance like an amphitheatre of nature's own workmanship, and presenting to the eye of the stranger an impenetrable barrier.

"*Hydrography.*—Lochmaree, as already stated, is eighteen miles long, and one and a half mile broad at an average. The greater part of it is sixty fathoms deep, so that it has never been known to freeze during the most intense frosts. About the centre of the loch is an island called 'Island Maree,' on which is a burying-ground supposed to be [404] dedicated to the Virgin Mary; hence the name of the island and of the loch. This is one conjecture; another is, that some of the Danish kings were buried in this island, and that the original name of it was 'Eilean nan Righ,' which came to be pronounced 'Eilean Maree.' The number of tombstones in the burying-place, with inscriptions and hieroglyphical figures which few now-a-days can satisfactorily decipher, gives a plausibility to this conjecture which is not easily got over. As it is a doubtful subject, and likely to remain so, a third conjecture may be ventured. There lived, a great many years ago, in this part of the Highlands, a great and good man called 'Maree,' who had his principal residence on this same island; after his death his admirers prefixed Saint to his name. Many of his generous and benevolent deeds are, to this day, recounted by the people of this and the surrounding parishes.

"On the centre of this island is a deep well, consecrated by the said Saint Maree to the following purpose. To this same well are dragged, volens nolens, all who are insane in this or any of the surrounding parishes, and after they have been made to drink of it, these poor victims of superstitious cruelty are towed round the island after a boat, by their tender-hearted attendants. It is considered a hopeful sign if the well is full at the time of dragging the patient to the scene. In justice to the people of this parish it may be stated, that they have not such an unbounded belief in the healing virtues of the well, and the other parts of the transaction, as their most distant neighbours appear to entertain. The belief in such absurdities is daily losing ground in the Highlands; and there is little doubt that, in course of a few years more, the clouds of superstition that overhang the moral horizon of our Highlands will be dissipated by the better education of the peasantry.

"There is only one river worthy of particular notice in this parish, viz., the 'Ewe,' which issues from Lochmaree, and is only one mile long from its source to its confluence with the arm of the sea called 'Lochewe.' This beautiful stream abounds with salmon of the very best description. It is surpassed by no river on the west coast for angling; and hence it is, during the summer months, frequented by gentlemen from all parts of the kingdom for this healthy and delightful exercise. An English military gentleman killed one hundred salmon and grilse, in the course of a few weeks, during the summer of 1834; and I am credibly informed that the late proprietor, Sir Hector Mackenzie of Gairloch, Bart., frequently killed twenty salmon in one day. Besides Gairloch, Lochewe is the only other salt water loch in the parish. This loch, into which the waters of Lochmaree fall, is from eight to ten miles long. Near the mouth of it is a fertile and well cultivated island, called Isle Ewe. Much attention and expense were bestowed upon the improvement of this island by the present proprietor, Sir Francis Alexander M'Kenzie of Gairloch, Bart., before he came into the full possession of the Gairloch estate. The two principal headlands jutting out on each side of Lochewe, are Ru Rea on the south, and Green Stone Point on the north side.

"*Climate.*—The climate is mild, although extremely rainy. This may be accounted for, partly by the mountainous character of the country, and partly by other causes. The prevailing winds are the west and south; and at whatever season of the year it blows from these quarters, we are almost certain of torrents of rain. Easterly winds invariably bring us dry weather, and hence they are welcome visitants, although they warn us to wear additional coverings. The easterly winds are more prevalent in the month of

March and first half of April, than at any other season of the year. But there has been a marked change in the climate for some years back. Instead of the deep falls of snow, and the long-continued frosts that were wont to starve the black cattle, smother the sheep, and fertilize the soil in former years, we have now mild weather and very much rain. Notwithstanding the extreme wetness of the climate, and the people's frequent exposure in the open air, their principal employment being fishing, they are in general healthy, and of robust constitutions.

"*Geology and Mineralogy.*—This and the neighbouring parish of Lochbroom afford numerous displays of interesting geological phenomena. Old red sandstone and quartz rock abound, but gneiss and its various subordinate formations may be considered the prevailing formation. Upwards of one hundred and fifty years ago, when the science of mineralogy was comparatively in its infancy in Scotland, and when the spirit of speculation and adventure did not move with such bold strides as in later times, a Sir [405] James Kay sent several people to work at veins of iron ore, on the estate of Letterewe, along the north side of Lochmaree, in this parish. I understood they continued to work successfully for several years; but as wood was their sole fuel for conducting the operations, they were obliged to desist when the wood in the neighbourhood was exhausted. The ruins of one of the furnaces for working the ore are within a few hundred yards of the manse of Poolewe; and those of another are ten miles farther up, along the north side of Lochmaree. A spot is pointed out to the passer by, near the east end of Lochmaree, where they buried their dead. It is, to this day, called 'Cladh nam Sasganach,' the burying-ground of the Englishmen. Highlanders look upon all who do not speak the Gaelic language as Sasganaich, or Englishmen. At a later period, some other individual, or perhaps the same, thought he had discovered a vein of silver ore, in another place along the north side of Lochmaree; but after digging to a considerable depth, the undertaking was abandoned, without yielding a remunerating return to the spirited adventurer.

"II.—Civil History.

"*Eminent Men.*—This parish has been as fortunate as most of its neighbours in being the birth-place and residence of eminent characters; but the only person whom I shall at present mention, is William Ross, the celebrated Gaelic bard. This individual was born in the parish of Strath, Isle of Skye, in the year 1762. After receiving as liberal an education as the school of Forres at that time could afford, he was appointed parochial schoolmaster of Gairloch, when about twenty-four years of age. In that situation he continued four years. He died in his twenty-eighth year; and his remains are deposited in the churchyard of Gairloch. 'As a writer of Gaelic songs' (to quote from a short memoir prefixed to a collection of his songs, published four years ago), 'William Ross is entitled to the highest praise. In the greater number of his lyrics, the bard leads us along with him, and imparts to us so much of his own tenderness, feeling, and enthusiasm, that our thoughts expand and kindle with his sentiments.'

"*Landowners.*—The landowners of the parish are Sir Francis Alexander M'Kenzie of Gairloch, Bart.; Sir George Stewart M'Kenzie of Coul, Bart.; Duncan Davidson, Esq. of Tulloch; James Alexander Stewart M'Kenzie, Esq. of Seaforth; and Hector M'Kenzie, Esq. of Letterewe.

"*Parochial Registers.*—There were no parochial registers kept in the parish previous to the year 1802; since that period they have been regularly kept.

"III.—Population.

"*Character of the People.*—The ancient population of this parish, as far back as the oldest living inhabitants can remember, was comparatively rude and uncultivated. There are now living in the parish some who remember the time when there was only one or at most two Bibles in the parish, besides the minister's. What, in such a state of things, could be expected of the manners of the inhabitants? Yet these same individuals will unhesitatingly affirm, that people were more generous and more noble-minded at that period, than they are now.

Population in	1801,	. . .	1437
"	1811,	. . .	2755
"	1821,	. . .	4518
"	1831,	. . .	4445

The causes of the increase are various, and too numerous to be mentioned here. Among these, however, may be mentioned the habit of early marriage, and the system of letting the land in lots. The lot of lands this year in the possession of one family may, before twelve months are over, be divided into three equal portions,—in other words, three distinct families live upon the produce of it.

The yearly average	of births for	the last seven years,	100

"	of marriages for	do.	40

No register of deaths kept in the parish.

The average number	of persons	under fifteen years of age,	1693
"	"	betwixt fifteen and thirty	1128
"	"	betwixt thirty and fifty,	927
"	"	betwixt fifty and seventy,	602
"	"	upwards of seventy,	95

The number	of proprietors of land of the yearly value of £50 and upwards,	5
The number	of bachelors upwards of fifty years of age,	16
"	of widowers do.	18
"	of unmarried women upwards of forty-five years of age,	76
"	of families,	795
"	of inhabited houses,	791
"	of houses now building,	6

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There are only four blind individuals within the bounds of this parish; ten fatuous persons; and six deaf and dumb; four of the latter belong to one family, and two to another.

"*Language, &c.*—The language generally spoken is the Gaelic. I am not aware that it has lost ground within the last forty years. Some young men, indeed, who have received a smattering of education, consider they are doing great service to the Gaelic by interspersing their conversation with English words, and giving them a Gaelic termination and accent. These corrupters of both languages, with more pride than good taste, now and then introduce words of bad English or of bad Scotch, which they have learned from the Newhaven or Buckie fishermen, whom they meet with on the coast of Caithness during the fishing season. The Gaelic, however, is still spoken in as great purity by the inhabitants in general as it was forty years ago.

"The houses of the people in general have but one outer door, and as they and their cattle go in by that one entrance,—the bipeds to take possession of one end of the house, and the quadrupeds of the other,—it cannot be expected that a habitation common to man and beast can be particularly clean. Some of the people, indeed, are now getting into the way of building byres for their cattle, contiguous to their dwelling-houses; and it is acknowledged even by the most indolent that a great improvement is thus effected. It is hoped that the practice may soon become more general. When the young people go to kirk or market, few appear more 'trig or clean;' and a stranger would hardly be persuaded that some of them lived in such miserable hovels. When a girl dresses in her best attire, her very habiliments, in some instances, would be sufficient to purchase a better dwelling-house than that from which she has just issued.

"The people are in general contented with their situation and circumstances. If they have a lot of lands, grass for two or three cows, and fishing materials, they seldom have any further objects of ambition. Owing to the means of education not being commensurate with the increase of population, the intellectual character of the people does not keep pace with their moral and religious character. They are naturally a shrewd, sensible, steady sort of people. With a few exceptions, they are of good moral character. They seldom quarrel among each other; and when they have any differences, these are generally settled by the proprietors or factors. A law-suit is seldom heard of from this parish.

"When I advert to their religious character, I am constrained to acknowledge my fear that their knowledge of the truths of our holy religion is more of the head than the heart. The form of godliness is not so much wanting as its power. I do not mean, however, that in this respect the people of this parish are not on a parity with those of the neighbourhood.

"Smuggling was carried on to a great extent in this parish some years ago, but is now very much on the decrease; indeed while there is a vestige of such a demoralizing practice remaining there can be but slender hopes of moral improvement. It may be mentioned to the honour of one of the heritors, that he has erected a licensed distillery, for the sole purpose of giving a death-blow to the smuggling on his estate.

"IV.—Industry.

"*Agriculture.*—The number of families employed in agriculture, including those who employ servants, is 556; male servants upwards of twenty years of age, 86; female servants of all ages, 141. Number of acres under wood, 5000. The woods are generally kept in good condition, by thinning, pruning, &c.

"*Rent of Land.*—Average rent of arable land is from 10s to £1 per acre; rent of grazing a cow or ox for a year, from £1 to £2; rent of pasturing a ewe or sheep for a year, from 1s 6d to 2s 6d.

"*Wages.*—Farm servants receive from £5 to £8 per annum for wages, exclusive of their victuals; masons receive from 2s 6d to 3s, carpenters from 2s to 2s 6d, blacksmiths 3s, weavers from 1s 6d to 2s, per day, all including victuals. [407]

"*Fisheries.*—The various kinds of fisheries carried on in this parish are salmon fishing, cod and ling fishing, and herring fishing. The salmon fishings are let at £150 per annum. Salmon fishing is carried on by cruives, stell-nets, bag-nets, and stake-nets. Cod and ling are taken by long lines and the hand-line; and herring by the common mode of meshed nets.

"*Navigation.*—There are four vessels belonging to the several ports in the parish, averaging about thirty-five tons burthen each.

"V.—Parochial Economy.

"*Means of Communication.*—This parish is extremely ill supplied with the means of communication, owing to the want of roads. We have one post-office, situated at Poolewe.

"*Ecclesiastical State.*—The parish church is as conveniently situated as it could well be, considering the extent of the parish; its distance from the eastern extremity of the parish is twenty-eight miles, from the southern fifteen miles, from the western twelve miles, and from the northern extremity twenty miles. The church was built in the year 1791, and got a thorough repair in 1834. The church affords accommodation for five hundred sitters only. The manse was built in the year 1805; but a considerable addition was built to it in the year 1823. The glebe is worth about £30 per annum; the amount of the stipend is £240. There is one Government church in the parish; it is situated at Poolewe, six miles to the north of the parish church, and fourteen from the northern extremity of the parish. It is now erected into a new and separate parish *quoad sacra*, called the Parish of Poolewe. We have one catechist employed by the Committee for managing His Majesty's Royal Bounty, and another paid by contributions from the parishioners. There is not a single Dissenter within the bounds of the parish. The average number of communicants at the parish church and Government church is 360.

"*Education.*—The total number of schools in the parish is nine; the parochial school is one of that number; all the rest are supported by different religious societies. The branches of instruction taught at the parochial school are Greek, Latin, mathematics, arithmetic, writing and English, and Gaelic reading. The branches taught at the Society schools are arithmetic, writing, English and Gaelic reading. The salary in the parochial school is £30 sterling, and £4 are obtained from school fees; at the Society Schools the salaries are from £5 to £25 sterling. Scarcely any school fees can be calculated upon, owing to the poverty of the people. From six to eight schools are still required in the parish; and some of the schools now in operation ought to be put on a more permanent and efficient footing. Not more than one in every ten of the whole population is able to read and write in English. In 1833, 1773 persons above six years of age could not read either in the Gaelic or English languages.

"*Poor.*—The number of poor receiving parochial aid in the parish is about one hundred, each receiving from 2s 6d to 6s per annum. The annual amount for their relief is about £16, principally arising from church door collections.

"*Inns.*—There are five licensed inns in the parish. Their effects are most destructive to the morals of the people. This is evident from the fact, that those who live in the close neighbourhood of these houses are in general given to tippling and idleness, while those who have not such a temptation at their doors are sober industrious people.

"*Fuel.*—Peat is the only kind of fuel used by the people; it is procured in the mosses contiguous to their dwelling-houses, at an expense of from £1 to £2 for a family, in the year.

"*September, 1836.*

F. [408]

EXTRACTS from the Records of the Presbytery of Dingwall relating to the Parish of Gairloch.

I.—Minutes Referring to the Inaccessibility of Gairloch.

At Kilmorack, *8th August 1649*.

"The Brethren tacking to their consideration the expediencie of visiting the Hiland Kirks and the ordinance made thereanent formerly, appoynts to tacke journey (God

willing) upon Monday nixt, and to visit the Kirk of Kintaill upon the Wednesday, the Kirk of Lochalsh upon the Thursday, and the Kirk of Lochcarrin upon the Fryday immediately following; and ordaines Mr Do$^{d.}$ M^{c}Rae to advertise them conforme, and to writt to Mr Alex$^{r.}$ M^{c}Kenzie, minister of Lochcarrin, requiring him in the Presbyteries name to advertise Mr Rorie M^{c}Kenzie at Garloch and Mr Do$^{d.}$ Ross at Lochbroome to meete with them at Lochcarrin the said Fryday for appoynting dyats for visiting their Kirks."

At Lochcarron, *17th August 1649*.

"The visitation of Gairloch and Lochbruime continewed [postponed] by the way not rydable and inabilitie of brethren to goe afoote."

At Dingwall, *14th August 1650*.

"The Brethren considering the condition of the Kirks of Lochbroom and Gairloch and the expediency of visiting them (not being visited the last yeir with the rest), appoynts all the brethren to meete at Lochbroome for visiting the kirk thereof, the 10. day of Septr. next, and at Gerloch the Fryday thereafter."

At Dingwall, *5th June 1672*.

"No report from the Hyland Ministers except from Mr Rorie M^{c} Kenzie of Gairloch, who wrott a letter off excuse which was not judged relevant at that tyme, bot is continewed till his coming, and another letter from Mr Murdoch M^{c} Kenzie, who declared he could not meet for fear of caption," *i.e.* arrest.

At Dingwall, *10th July 1672*.

"The Presbytery considering that though the Ministers off the Highlands was reannexed to the Presbytery of Dingwall by appointment and ordinance of the Bishop and Synod, and that now they had written to them and acquainted them to meet with them two severall diets, and yet none of them came:—They appoynt and ordaine that they be the third tyme written to, to come (as they will be answerable to the Bishop and Synod)."

At Dingwall, *4th September 1683*.

"No exercise in regard Mr Jo$^{n.}$ M^{c} Kenzie, Minister at Lochbroom, who should have exercised, and the rest of the brethren of the Highlands were annexed to the Presbytery of Chanonry." [*Note.*—The Highland churches were the west coast parishes, including Gairloch. There are other minutes showing the irregular attendance of the Highland ministers, and making continual complaints against them on account of it.]

II.—Minutes relating to the Wars of Montrose against the Covenant.

At Dingwall, *8th January 1650*.

"Received two letters from the paroch of Gerloch, one from Mr Rorie M^{c} Kenzie, Minister y^{r}[there], importing that he had made intimation to the Lard of Gerloch to compeir before the Presbyterie this day, but withall testifieing that he was very infirme and unable to come; and the other letter was from Gerloch himselfe importing the same [409] and withall that he would, health serving, be heir the nixt day" [*i.e.* at the next meeting]. [*Note.*—This Laird of Gairloch was Kenneth Mackenzie, the sixth laird; he was a "malignant," *i.e.* on the side of the Marquis of Montrose, called in the following minutes James Grahame, without his title.]

At Dingwall, *22d January 1650*.

"Compeired Kenneth M^{c} Kenyie of Gerloch, confessed his accession to Ja: Grahames rebellion and to the late rebellion in the North, professing his griefe for the same and desyreing to be received to the covenant and satisfaction; who is continewed till Furder tryall, and is ordayned to be heir the next day."

"Compeired Kenneth M^{c} Kenyie there who confest his accession to the late insurrection in the North, who is remitted to the Session of Gerloch to be furder tryed and received according to the maner prescryved in the act of Classes." [The Act of Classes specified the punishment to be inflicted on malignants.]

At Dingwall, *4th February 1650*.

"Kenneth M^{c} Kenyie of Gerloch found accessorie to Ja. Grahames rebellion and the late insurrection in the north. [At the same meeting Kenneth M^{c} Kenzie of Assint, near

Dingwall, Rorie M^{c} Kenzie of Davachmaluag, Kenneth M^{c} Kenzie of Scatwell, and Rorie M^{c} Kenzie of Fairburn, were also found guilty.] Therefore the brethren considering the foresaid persones severall guiltes, and that all of them were eminentlie active in the late rebellion in the north, being urgers and seducers thereto, plotters and pryme promovers thereoff, doe therefore ordayne them to repaire forthwith to the Commission of the General Assemblie sitting at Edinburgh in this present month of Febry. to make satisfaction as there they shall be appoynted, with certification if they faile to be immediately processed."

At Dingwall, *19th February 1650*.

"That day was presented a supplication by Kenneth M^{c} Kenyie of Gerloch and Kenneth M^{c} Kenyie of Assint, that by the lawes of the kingdome, horning and captions is obtained against them for Seaforth's debts, so that personallie they cannot repair to Edin$^{r.}$ unbeine [without being] incarcerat; and therefore they petition the Presbytrie that their process be suspended till they obtayne the Commission of General Assemblie's answer anent their satisfaction. Wheruppon the Presbyterie assignes them this day six weeks to report their last diligence and bringing to the Presbyterie a satisfactorie answer from the Commissione, with certification if they fayle, to be thereafter immediatlie processed."

At Dingwall, *9th April 1650*.

"Received a letter from the Moderator of the Commission of the General Assemblie advysing the continewation of Assint and Gerloch's process till the next quarterly meeting in May."

At Dingwall, *16th April 1650*.

"The Brethren being informed of Ja: Grahms landing in Caithnes with forces and coming forward for furder supplie for carrieing on his former bloodie rebellious and perfidious courses, ... they doe therefore for preventing anie associations, considerations, or correspondence with the said excommunicated bloodie traytor or his forces, Ordayne all the brethren to make intimation out of their severall pulpits that anie who shall associat or correspond with the said Rebell or his forces shall be sentenced with excommunication summarlie."

At Dingwall, *28th May 1650*.

"The Brethren report that they kepied the Thanksgiving for the Victorie at Carbisdell obtained against James Grahame and other enemies to ye cause and people of God, his adherents."

At Dingwall, *16th July 1650*. [410]

The minister of Gerloch ordained to send in a list of his "malignants," and to summon them to appear at next meeting.

III.—Minute shewing the Wide Scope of the Presbytery's Jurisdiction.

At Dingwall, *13th November 1655*.

"Duncan M^{c} Murchie vic Cuile in the Parochin of Garloch regraiting his wife to have deserted him being referred to the Presbyterie from the Sessione of Garloch compeired befoire the bretheren, and being asked in the cause of ye desertion, declaired ... was repudiated by his wyf, and deserted him and went to hir parents."

"Agnes Kempt in Garloch being maried uppon the said Duncan, compeired professing her unwillingness from the beginning to marie the said Duncan, bot moved and threatned by the superior of the land, acknowledging hirselff to be free from any carnall dealing with the said Duncan, ever to this tyme. Ordaineing some of the brethren, such as Mr George Monro, Mr Donald Macrae, with certain other frends met with the foresaids at Logie, to see what they can work upon these maried persons, to agree them, and advyse them in thair christiane dutie towards each other." [On 8th January 1656 it was proved to the Presbytery that Agnes Kemp (who was no doubt a daughter of one of the Letterewe ironworkers) never consented to the marriage but was forced into it by her laird.]

IV.—Minutes relating to Sacrifices of Bulls and Restoring the Sick.

"At Appilcross, *5 Septemb 1656*.

"Convened, M^r Jo^n M^c cra, Moderator; M^r Jo^n Monro, M^r Thomas Hogg, M^r Jo^n M^c Killican, M^r Donald Fraser, M^r Donald M^ccra, M^r Rorie M^c Kenzie, M^r Alex^r M^c Kenzie, and M^r Donald Ross.

"The name of God Incalled. Inter alia, The Minister being inquired be his brethren of the maine enormities of the parochin of Lochcarrone and Appilcross, declaires some of his parochiners to be superstitious, especiallie in sacrificeing at certaine tymes at the Loch of Mourie, especiallie the men of Auchnaseallach; quho hes beine summoned, cited, bot not compeiring, execution is lawfullie given be the ... kirk officer of Loch Carron, quhose names ar as followes:—Donald M^c conillchile—Murdo M^c Ferq^re vic conill eire—W^m M^c conil eire, Gillipadrick M^c rorie—Duncan M^c conill uayne vic conill biy—Alex^r M^c finlay v^cconill diy—Donald M^c eaine roy vic choinnich—Johne M^c conill reach—Murdo M^c eaine roy—Murdo M^c eaine voire v^c eaine ghlaiss—Finlay M^c Gilliphadricke—Ordaines the kirk officer to chairge these againe to compeire at Dingwall the third Wednesday of October nixt—recommend that thaire Minister compeire the said day at Dingwall, and that he preach at the vacand kirk of Urquhart, the ensuing Lord's day he is in the country.

"The said day the presbyterie of Dingwall, according to the appoyntment of Synode for searcheing and censureing such principalls, and superstitious practices as should be discovered thaire—haveing mett at Appilcross, and findeing amongst uther abhominable and heathenishe practices that the people in that place were accustomed to sacrifice bulls at a certaine tyme uppon the 25 of August, which day is dedicate, as they conceive, to S^n Mourie as they call him; and that there were frequent approaches to some ruinous chappels and circulateing of them; and that future events in reference especiallie to lyfe and death, in takeing of Journeyis, was exspect to be manifested by a holl of a round stone quherein they tryed the entering of their heade, which (if they) could doe, to witt be able to put in thair heade, they exspect thair returning to that place, and failing they considered it ominous; and withall their adoring of wells, and uther superstitious monuments and stones, tedious to rehearse, Have appoynted as followes—That quhosoever sall be found to commit such abhominationes, especiallie Sacrifices of any kynd, or at any tyme, sall publickly appear and be rebuked ... six several Lord's dayis in six several churches, viz., Lochcarron, Appilcross, Contane, Fottertie, Dingwall, and last in Garloch paroch church; and that they may, uppon the [411] delatatione of the Sessione and minister of the paroche, he sall cause summoned the guiltie persone to compeire before the pbrie, to be convinced, rebuked, and there to be injoyned his censure, And withall that the session sould be charged to doe thair dewties in suppressing of the foresaid wickedness, and the foresaid censure in reference to thair sacrificing to be made use of in case of convict, and appeiring, and evidences of remorse be found, and failing, that they be censured with excommunicatione. Ordaines the minister to exercise himself with his people in such manner as at his coming to Appilcross, once in the five or sax weekes at each Lord's day of his coming, he stay thrie dayes amongst his people in catechising a pairt of them each day, and that he labour to convince the people of their former error, by evidenceing the hand of God against such abhominations as hes beene practised formerlie. Appoynts M^r Allex^r M^c Kenzie to informe the presbiterie of any strangers that resorts to thease feilds as formerlie they have to their heathenishe practices, that a course may be taken for their restraint."

"At Kenlochewe, *9 Sept{r} 1656*.

"Inter alia, Ordaines M^r Allex M^c Kenzie, minister at Lochcarron, to cause summond Murdo M^c conill varchue vic conill vic Allister in Torriton, and Donald Smyth in Appilcross, for sacrificing at Appilcross—to compeire at Dingwall the third Wednesday of October, with the men of Auchnaseallach.

"The brethren taking to their consideratione the abhominationes within the parochin of Garloch in sacrificing of beasts upon the 25 August, as also in pouring of milk upon hills as oblationes quhose names ar not particularly signified as yit—referres to the diligence of the minister to mak search of thease persones and summond them as said is in the former ordinance and act at Appilcross 5 Sept: 1656, and withall that by his private diligence he have searchers and tryers in everie corner of the countrey, especiallie about the Lochmourie, of the most faithful honest men he can find; and that such as ar his elders be particularly poseit, concerning former practices in quhat they knowe of these poore ones quho are called Mourie his derilans[13] and ownes thease titles, quho receaves the sacrifices and offerings upon the accompt of Mourie his poore ones; and that at laist some of thease be summoned to compeire before the pbrie the forsaid day, until the rest be discovered; and such as heve boats about the loch to transport themselves or uthers to the Ile of Mourie, quherein ar monuments of Idolatrie, without warrand from the superiour and minister towards lawful ends; and if the minister knowes alreaddie any guiltie, that they be cited to the nixt pbrie day, and all contraveners thereafter, as occasione offers in all tyme comeing. The brethren heiring be report that Miurie hes his monuments and remembrances in severall paroches

within the province, but more particularly in the paroches of Lochcarron, Lochalse, Kintaile, Contan, and Fottertie, and Lochbroome, It is appoynted that the brethren of the congregationes heve a Correspondence, in trying and curbing all such, within their severall congregationes. And for thease that comes from forren countreyis, that the ministers of Garloch and Lochcarron informe themselves of the names of thease, and the places of their residence, and informe the pbrie thereof, that notice may be given to those concerned."

"At Dingwall, *6 August 1678*.

"Inter alia, That day Mr Roderick Mackenzie minister at Gerloch, by his letter to the prebrie, declared that he had summoned by his officer to this prebrie day Hector Mackenzie in Mellan in the parish of Gerloch, as also Johne Murdoch, and Duncan Mackenzies, sons to the said Hector—as also Kenneth M^{c} Kenzie his grandson, for sacrificing a bull in ane heathenish manner in the iland of St Ruffus, commonly called Ellan Moury in Lochew, for the recovering of the health of Cirstane Mackenzie, spouse to the said Hector Mackenzie, who was formerlie sicke and valetudinairie:—Who being all cited, and not compearing, are to be all summoned againe pro 2^{0}."

G.

RECORDS and EXTRACTS relating to Sir George Hay and the Manufacture of Iron.

Act anent the Making of Iron with Wood. This Act was probably intended to suppress Sir George Hay's Ironworks. Scots Acts, vol. iv., p. 408*b*.

"*Act anent the making of Yrne with Wode.*

"*Apud Edinburgh xxvij die mensis Januarij 1609.*—Forsamekle as it hes pleasit god to discover certane vaynes of ritche mettall within this kingdome: as alsua certane wodis in the heylandis: whilkis wodis by reasoun of the savagnes of the inhabitantis thairabout wer ather vnknawin or at the leist vnproffitable and vnused: and now the estaitis presentlie conveyned being informit that some personis vpoun advantage of the present generall obedience in those partis wald erect yrne milnis in the same pairtis: To the vtter waisting and consumeing of the saidis wodis: whilkis mycht be reserved for mony bettir vseis: and vpoun moir choise and proffitable mettaillis for the honnour benefite and estimatioun of the kingdome: Thairfore the estaitis presentlie conveyned Statutis and ordanis: and thairwith commandis chairgeis and inhibitis all and sindrie his maiesties leigis and subiectis: That nane of thame presome nor tak vpoun hand To woork and mak ony Irne with wod or tymmer vnder the pane of confiscatioun of the haill yrne that salbe maid with the said tymmer: to his maiestes vse: And ordaines publicatioun to be maid heirof be oppin proclamatioun at all places needful quhairthrow nane pretend ignorance of the same."

Ratification to Sir George Hay of the Gift of the Manufacture of Iron and Glass. Scots Acts, 1612.

"*Ratificatioun To Sr George Hay off his gift and privilege of making of yron glasworkis passed October 23d 1612.*

"Oure Souerane Lord with aduise and consent of his Estaittis of parliament Ratifies apprevis and confermis The Commission and Licence grantit be his Maiestie vnder his hienes great seall To his Maiesties Louit Sr george hay of Nethirliff knycht gentilman of his Maiesties privie chalmer his airis executouris and assignais Be him selff his factouris and servandis and vtheris haueand his licence tollerance and permissioun within the haill boundis of the kingdome of Scotland To mak yrne and glass within the said kingdome of Scotland In forme and manner specifeit in the said Commissioun And that during the space of threttie ane zeris nixt efter the dait efter specifeit of the said Commissioun As the samyn contening diuerse and sindrie vtheris priuilegis prouisiones and conditiones off the dait At quhitehall the twentye foure day of December ane thowsand sex hundreth and ten zeris at mair lenth proportis In All and Sindrie pointis part heides articles clauses conditiones and circumstances quhatsomeuir thairin contenit Efter the forme and tennoure thairof with all that hes followit or may follow thairvpoun Lykeas his Maiestie with Aduise and consent foirsaid Statutis decernis and ordains That the forsaid Commissioun and this pnt ratificatioun thairof Sal be ane sufficient lauchfull and valide rycht To the said Sr george hay and his foirsaidis for vsing of the haill rychtis priuilegis and liberties thairin contenit and vplifting of the haill proffites and dewities comprehendit or that may be comprehendit vnder the said Comission during the space aboue specifeit thairin contenit Efter the forme and

tennoure thairof in all pointis."

Proclamation restraining the Export of Iron Ore out of Scotland. Regist. Secreti Concilii Acta, Folio 166. Probably intended to assist Sir George Hay's Enterprise.

"*Apud Edinburgh Septimo Aprilis 1613.*—Forsamekle as certane of his maiesties subiectis oute of thair affectioun to the credite reputatioun and commoun weill of this thair natiue countrey haueing interprysit the practise and making of yrne within the same and haueing with verie grite travellis chargeis and expenssis broght that work to ane ressounable good perfectioun of purpois and resolutioun to prosequute and follow out the same work for the good of the countrey, Thay ar lyk to be hinderit and disapointit in the cours and progres of the saidis workis by the frequent transport of the Irne vr furth of this realme, whiche transport is now become sa ordinar and commoun alsweill in the personis of strangeris as of the borne subiectis of this realme as thair can nocht be haid sufficientlie whairwith to interteny the saidis workis and since this art and practise of making of Irne is most necessar and expedient for the commonweill of the countrey and that the same can nocht be intertenyed and haldin fordwart yf thair be nocht aboundance and sufficiencie of vr within the countrey whairwith to work the same, Thairfoir the lordis of secrete counsell hes thocht meitt and expedient for the commoun weill and benefite of the countrey to discharge lyk as the saidis lordis by these presentis discharges the transport of ony kynd of vr furth of this realme, and ordanis lettrez to be direct to command charge and inhibit all and sindrie his maiesties lieges and subiectis as alsua all streangearis resorting and repairing within this realme be appin proclamatioun at all placeis neidfull That nane of thame presvme nor tak vpoun hand at ony tyme after the publicatioun heirof to carye or transport furth of this realme ony Irne vr vndir the pane of the confiscatioun of the same and of the rest of the movable goodis partening to the awnaris and transportaris and siclyk to command charge and inhibit all and sindrie skipparis maisteris awnaris and marchantis of shippis and veshellis that nane of thame ressaue within thair saidis shippis and veshellis ony Irne vr to be transportit furth of this realme vndir the pane of confiscatioun of the saidis schipis and veschellis to his maiesteis vs, certifeing all and sindrie personis who sall violatt and contravene this present act and ordinance in maner foirsaid that thair saidis goodis vr schippis and veshellis sal be confiscat to his maiesteis vse as said is." [413]

Licence to Sir George Hay anent Selling his Iron.

"*Licence to S^{r} George Hay Annent Selling off his Irne, Scots Act passed August 4th 1621.*

"Oure Souerane Lord With advyse and consent of the Estaittis of Parliament, And in speall with advyse and consent of the Commissionaris off the haill ffrie burrowes Royall within this Realme, Gevis and grauntis full and frie Libertie, Licence, and powar to S^{r} George Hay off kinfawnis knicht Clerk off his hienes Reg^{r} be him selff his seruantis and vyeris in his name, To transport and Carye ony Irone maid be him and his saidis servantis in his name within this realme To any poirt or harbrie off any ffrie burgh Royall or ony vther place within ye samen, To vnloade weigh and dispone vpoun the said Irone to any persoun qt sumeuir within this realme that they sall think expedient, And that notwithstanding off ony privilegis or Liberties qt. sumeuir formarlie grauntit to the saidis burghes To be contrar heiroff Quhairanent his maiestie with advyse and consent foirsaid dispensse be thir pñtis, Provyding Alwayis that this pñtt act Sall nawayis hurt nor preiudge the liberties and priviledges of the saidis Royall burghis in any vther caices, And that in regaird they thame selffis haif consentit to this priviledge."

Remarks on Dr Samuel Johnson's Journey to the Hebrides. By the Rev. Donald M'Nicol, A.M., London, 1779.

Page 139.—"Several English companies come to different parts of the west coast for charcoal, and bring ore all the way from England to be there smelted."

Page 155 *et seq.*—"The smelting and working of iron was well understood and constantly practised over all the Highlands and Islands for time immemorial. Instead of improving in that art we have fallen off exceedingly of late years, and at present make little or none. Tradition bears that they made it in the blomary way, that is, by laying it under the hammers in order to make it malleable, with the same heat that melted it in the furnace.

"There is still in the Highlands a clan of the name of MacNuithear, who are descended from those founders, and have from thence derived their surname. I am likewise well informed, that there is in Glenurchy, in Argyleshire, a family of the name of MacNab, who have lived in the same place, and have been a race of smiths, from father to son, for more, perhaps, than three hundred years past; and who, in consequence of the father having instructed the son, have carried down so much of their ancient art, that they excel all others in the country in the way of their profession; even those taught in the south of Scotland, as well as in England, not excepted. A tinker or smith of the [414]

name of Mac Feadearon, a tribe now almost extinct, was the most famous of his time for making arrow-heads.

"It is certain that Mac Donald was formerly possessed of most of the western isles, as well as of several large districts upon the continent or mainland. He had many places of residence, such as Ardtorinish, &c., but the most common one was in an island in Lochsinlagan in Isla. Near this place, and not far from Port Askaic on the sound of Isla, lived the smith Mac Cregie (that is, the son of the Rock), and his posterity for a great length of time. There is still pointed out, by the inhabitants, the rock out of which he dug his iron ore. Near the rock is a large solid stone, of a very hard consistency, on which he knapped his ore; and, at a little distance, there is a cascade on a rivulet, where stood his mill for polishing, or otherwise preparing the iron which he had manufactured. He and his descendants made complete suits of armour, according to the fashion of the times; such as helmets, swords, coats of mail, &c. The Isla hilt for the broadsword is well known, and so famous as to have become proverbial."

Extract from Douglas's Peerage.—Kinnoul.

"George Hay, the second son [of Peter Hay of Melginche] born in 1572; went about 1590 to the Scots College at Douay, where he studied some years under his uncle Edmund, and returning home about 1596, was introduced at Court by his cousin Sir James Hay of Kingask. King James the VI. was pleased to appoint him one of the gentlemen of the bedchamber, and to bestow on him the Carthusian priory or Charter House of Perth, with a seat in Parliament, 18th Feby. 1598: also the ecclesiastical lands of Errol by another charter dated the 1st of that month. But finding the rents too small to support the dignity of a lord of Parliament, he returned back his peerage to his Majesty. He attended the King to Perth, 5th August 1600, when the Earl of Gowrie was killed in his treasonable attempt on his Majesty's life. Mr Hay applying to the profession of the law, acquired considerable property, was designed of Netherleiff, and had charters of Dunninald, in Forfarshire, 17th May 1606, and of Lewes, Glenelg, Barra, &c., 24th July 1610. He was appointed Clerk Register in 1616 and knighted. Sir George Hay of Netherleiff had charters of an annual rent of Redcastle, 18th July 1620; of the barony of Kinfauns, 20th July 1620; of Tulliehow, 20th March 1622; and of Innernytie, Kincluer, &c., 15th May 1622. He was constituted High Chancellor of Scotland 16th July 1622; had charters of Craigton 28th August 1622, of the land and earldom of Orkney and Zetland 22d August 1624; of the barony of Aberdalgy, Duplin, &c., 29th July 1626. He was created a peer by the title of Viscount of Duplin, and Lord Hay of Kinfauns, 4th May 1627, to him and the heirs male of his body, and advanced to the dignity of Earl of Kinnoul, Viscount of Duplin, and Lord Hay of Kinfauns, by patent, dated at York, 25th May 1633, to him and his heirs male for ever. His Lordship enjoyed the Chancellor's place with the approbation of the whole kingdom and the applause of all good men, for his justice, integrity, sound judgment, and eminent sufficiency till his death, which happened at London on the 16th December 1634. His body was conveyed to Scotland, and on the 19th August 1635, was interred in the Church of Kinnoul, where a sumptuous monument was erected to his memory, being a statue of his Lordship of the full size, dressed in his robes as chancellor, and reckoned a strong likeness. There is no inscription on the monument: but an epitaph on him by Dr Arthur Johnston is published in Crawford's lives of the Officers of State, beginning thus:—

> Gone is the wise Lycurgus of our time,
> The great and grave dictator of our clime.

His Lordship married Margaret, daughter of Sir James Halyburton of Pitens, and by her, who dying 4th April 1633, was buried at Kinnoul 7th May following, had issue—

1. Sir *Peter* Hay, who had charters to Peter Hay, eldest son of George Hay of Neyerleiff, of the ecclesiastical lands and right of patronage of Errol, 8th Jany 1602-3; and of the lands of Dunnynald, 23d May 1611. He died before his father, unmarried.
2. *George*, second Earl of Kinnoul."

Portrait of George Hay, 1st Earl of Kinnoull, now in Dupplin Castle. [415]

Extracted from the Life of George Jamesone, the Scottish Vandyck, by John Bullock, 1885, p. 150.

"This picture bears evident trace of Jamesone's hand, but it has been largely repainted. He wears a fine cap, richly ornamented with lace, and a common ruff over a plain doublet. It is a usual feature of these repainted portraits that the dates of Jamesone's pictures are generally sacrificed by the restorer.

"He was the youngest son of Peter Hay, and was appointed a Gentleman of the Bedchamber, and honoured with the dignity of knighthood (1598). He was created Baron of Kinfauns and Viscount Dupplin in 1627, and in 1633 was created Earl of Kinnoull. He married Margaret, daughter of Sir James Haliburton of Pitcur. He died in

1634."

The portrait of Sir George Hay, 1st Earl of Kinnoull, above described, is reproduced amongst our illustrations.

Another portrait of the illustrious ironfounder of Loch Maree, also at Dupplin Castle, forms another illustration. It is entitled "Portrait of Sir George Hay of Megginish, by Ferdinand." It represents Sir George as a young man in armour.

On a map of "the Kingdome of Scotland," by John Speed, published in 1610, there is marked to the north or north-east of Loch Hew "mines of iron." The sheet of water called on the map "Loch Hew" is evidently Loch Maree.

H.

ADDENDA ON ST MAELRUBHA AND ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY.

The following Notes are principally gleaned from Dr Reeves' paper on St Maelrubha (*Proc. Soc. Antiq. Scot.*, vol. iii., p. 258 *et seq.*), and from "Bishop Forbes' Journals," &c., by Rev. J. B. Craven (1886):—

St Maelrubha was eighth in descent, on his father's side, from Niall of the Nine Hostages, Sovereign of Ireland, through Eoghan (who died in 465), one of Niall's sons, and on his mother's side he was akin to St Comgall, the great abbot of Bangor, in the county of Down. He was born 3rd January 642, and trained at the monastery of Bangor, of which, according to some, he became abbot. In 671, following the example of St Columba, he went to Scotland, probably in the first instance to Iona, and in 673 he founded the church of Applecross, which became the nucleus of a conventional establishment, following the order of Bangor, and for a long time affiliated to that monastery. He founded a church on an island on Loch Maree,—both island and loch still bearing his name in the corrupted form of Maree. He preached Christianity in the adjoining districts. Maelrubha's Seat, near Loch Clair, is so named because it was a place where he preached. He died at Ferintosh, whilst discharging his sacred office, on Tuesday, 21st April 722, at the age of eighty. There is a tradition that he suffered martyrdom at the hands of the Danes, but it seems inconsistent with existing records. His body was removed to Applecross, and there interred. He acquired so great a reputation for sanctity that he was regarded as the patron saint of this part of Scotland, whence he extended his influence both in the islands and on the mainland. His work in the parish of Gairloch did not die with this holy man. Isle Maree became the residence of a priest. Later on two churches were erected within the parish,—the church dedicated to St Maelrubha at Gairloch, and a church near the head of Loch Maree, then called Loch Ewe. In all probability this church stood (as tradition has it) by the small well that still bears the name of Tobar Mhoire, or "Mourie's well." No doubt St Maelrubha had himself hallowed the spot by blessing the well, or preaching close to it. From the numerous dedications of churches to his memory, not only here but elsewhere, we learn how laborious must have been his missionary work. The name [416]
Maelrubha is compounded of *Mael*, a servant, and *Rubha* or *Ruba*, patience. It has been corrupted in almost endless variety. There are the following amongst many undoubted corruptions:—

Mulruby,	Morew,	Maree,
Malrew,	Morow,	Măríe,
Mulruy,	Maroy,	Măry,
Mulroy,	Mareve,	Mury;

or dropping the initial letter,

Arrow,	Erew,	Olrou;

or dropping the first element of the compound name,

Rice,	Row,	Rufus,
Ro,	Ru,	Ruvius;

or combining the title "Saint,"

Summaruff,	Samarevis,	Samerivis,
Samervis,	Smarevis,	Smarivis.

Contemplating these corruptions of Maelrubha, one cannot but conjecture that the name Smiorsair, given to a hamlet two miles north of Tobar Mhoire, is derived from the

name of the saint, and that perhaps some other Gairloch names may have had the same origin. At and near Applecross are many names connected with the saint and his successors.

The churches founded by St Columba and St Malrubha not having the assistance of a powerful body like the Church of Rome (with which they had no connection), gradually fell into decay. Later on the Romish Church stepped in and gathered up the threads of languishing Christianity; but the inaccessible Gairloch seems to have had no place in church history for some centuries. No doubt Christianity was maintained by a few pious priests amid the clan contests and general turbulence that filled the long interval before the Reformation. That casting off of the Roman yoke made little difference on the west coast. It seems most likely that the Rev. Farquhar MacRae, ordained vicar of Gairloch in 1608, was brought up as a Roman Catholic, and no doubt his learned hearer, Sir George Hay, was so too; but neither they nor the common people seem to have objected to the change made by the Reformation, nor can we suppose that it affected them to any appreciable extent. The simple ritual of the Highland churches was scarcely capable of any change; and it is not likely that forms and ceremonies were much debated in Gairloch.

It was far different when the change came from Presbyterianism to Episcopacy. The Highlanders clung to the old faith, and stoutly struggled against the introduction of Presbyterianism.

The diocese of Ross at the Revolution (1680) comprised within its bounds thirty-two parishes divided into four presbyteries or "exercises," one of which was Gairloch. Of the thirty-one clergy (one parish was vacant) nine were deprived of their livings by the Presbyterians; one voluntarily demitted, declining to obey the new powers; one offered to submit to the new church government (his services were declined); of one parish we have no account; and the remaining nineteen continued (without submission to presbytery) to hold their benefices to their deaths. Of this last class was the Rev. Roderick Mackenzie, Episcopal minister of Gairloch, whose masterly disregard of the Presbytery has been stated (page 65).

When the long incumbency of the Rev. Roderick Mackenzie was brought to a close by his death in 1710, the presbytery resolved to have a minister of their own settled in Gairloch. The Rev. John Morrison was nominated, and the Rev. Thomas Chisholm was sent to Gairloch to take preliminary measures. At a meeting held at Kiltearn, 28th February 1711, Mr Chisholm reported "that, in obedience to the presbytery's appointment, he had gone to the parish of Gerloch in order to have preached at that church and serve the edict for Mr Morrison's admission; but after he was come near to said church he was seized upon by a partie of men and carried back again about six miles, and that being let go by them, he had essayed again to go to the said church another way, and that he was again seized upon by another partie of men, and carried back by them to Kan-loch-ow, where he was detained by them for some time as a [417] prisoner, and thereafter by other parties coming successively was carried back till he was a great way out of the parish, and not let go till Sabbath afternoon; but that while he was detained prisoner (understanding that he was designedly carried back lest he should preach at Gerloch) he had read and intimat the said edict before six or seven persons, within ane house at Kan-loch-ow, which is one of the preaching places of the said parish, and he returned the said edict endorsed by him with the attestation of his having executed the same in the foresaid manner." The Rev. John Morrison was admitted minister of Gairloch,—not at Gairloch, for that was impossible, but at Kiltearn. The story of his treatment by the tenants of Sir John Mackenzie of Coul, and of Sir John's declaration to him, has been recorded (pp. 65, 66). It seems the presbytery represented Sir John's conduct to the General Assembly, but he set them at defiance, and apparently with impunity.

When the Presbytery of Gairloch was constituted in 1724, only two ministers were found in its bounds.

The subsequent progress of Presbyterianism in Gairloch is recorded in Part I., chap. xvi. Notwithstanding the statement of the Rev. Daniel Mackintosh in the "Old Statistical Account" (1792), that there was then no division or dissent in the parish, it seems that there were at least a few who still clung to Episcopacy, for we find from a quotation given in "Bishop Forbes' Journal," that in the end of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth century Episcopal "pastors took it by turns to wander over the west of Ross, through Strath-Garve, Torridon, and Gairloch, and thence into Skye and the Long Island, ministering to the detached families who still kept up a connection with them."

FOOTNOTES:

[1] Professor Skeat traces "neap" and "nip" to one root. I have myself heard, in the Channel Islands, "the tides are nipped," for the "tides are neap."

[2] "Such names as *Crenella decussata*, *Tellina pusilla*, *Modiolaria marmorata*, *Venus verrucosa*, *Cylichna umbilicata*, *Utriculus hyalinus*, *Melampus bidentatus*, *Rissoa violacea*."

[3] See *Quart. Jour. of Geolog. Soc. of London*, May 1883.

[4] Pronounced *Croocholee*. The wrong name occurred in the common maps, and from them, being much used by geological writers, will, it is to be feared, continue to be employed.

[5] See *Quart. Jour. Geolog. Soc. of London* for Dec. 1858.

[6] See *Quart. Jour. Geolog. Soc.* for Feb. 1861; and his "Geology and Scenery of the North of Scotland," 1866.

[7] See *Quart. Jour. Geolog. Soc.* for Dec. 1858 (Murchison); for May 1861 (Murchison and Geikie).

[8] See *Quart. Jour. Geolog. Soc.* for Nov. 1878, on "Metamorphic and Overlying Rocks in the Neighbourhood of Loch Maree."

[9] See *Quart. Jour. Geolog. Soc. London* for 1878 and 1883, and *Geol. Mag.* for 1880.

[10] For an interesting and valuable account of these Gruinard rocks and their correlations, by the greatest authority, Professor Judd, see *Quart. Jour. Geolog. Soc.* for 1878, pp. 670, 671, 688-690, where they are called Poikilitic, or Variegated, their varied colouring being well shewn on Loch Gruinard.

[11] Beinn Aridh Charr is called Beinn Lair on the older maps.

[12] Probably the Bull rock.

[13] Mr William Mackay, of Inverness, points out that this word is misspelt by Dr Mitchell, who makes it "devilans." In the original record, which Mr Mackay has examined, the word is "de*r*ilans," which is probably an old Gaelic word signifying the "afflicted ones" (or lunatics), from "deireoil," used in Kirke's Gaelic Bible for "afflicted."

INDEX.

Many names of subjects of Natural History and of books, &c., that are included in lists given in the foregoing pages are not indexed.

Local names of persons will generally be found under their Christian names.

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ERRATA.

[437]

Page 1, line 2 from foot, *for* "88" *read* "90."

Page 61, line 16, *for* "Bleau" *read* "Blaeu."

Page 127, line 7, *for* "xviii." *read* "xx."

Page 151, line 26, *for* "1858" *read* "1856."

Page 185, line 15 from foot, *insert* "as bad" *before* "as he had."

Page 190, line 12 from foot, *for* "Crultear" *read* "Cruitear."

Page 214, line 18, *insert* "Mc" *before* "Taggart."

Page 219, line 21 from foot, *for* "Reid" *read* "Reidh."

Page 220, line 3, *for* "meal" *read* "meall."

Page 221, line 15 from foot, *for* "South Erradale" *read* "Opinan."

Page 229, line 26, *for* "meal" *read* "meall."

Page 237, line 9, *for* "xviii." *read* "xx."

Page 293, last line, *parenthesis should end after* "ecclesiastical."

Page 295, line 6, *for* "86" *read* "89."

Page 295, line 9, *for* "65" *read* "55."

Page 295, line 10, *for* "50" *read* "30."

Page 302, line 15, *for* "Mhannaich" *read* "Mhanaich."

"Eilean Suthain" *should be* "Eilean Suainne" *throughout the book*. "Suainne" *is the Gaelic form of* "Sweyne," *probably a Norse viking, who occupied the island long ago*.

Gaelic scholars will detect other errors and some inconsistencies in the spelling of Gaelic names. Several of these are due to the names being spelt as they would be if written in Gaelic with the article before them.

ADDENDA.

Page 132, line 17 from foot, *after* "site" *insert* "There are, however, two modern turf-built dwellings still to be seen at South Erradale."

Page 250, line 5, *after remarks on the* "Knot" *insert* "Sanderling (*Calidris arenaria*)—Not common. Mr Henry A. Clowes sent me one he shot at Sand, Gairloch, 11th September 1886."

Page 258, after line 2, *insert* "*Crambe maritima*—Sea-kale."

Page 262, after line 44, *insert* "*Beta maritima*—Beet."

ERRATUM

[438]

Page 58, line 19. It is erroneously stated that the present representative in this country of the Mackenzies of Letterewe is Mr John Munro Mackenzie. But the gentleman who in fact represents the family in Great Britain is Mr John Mackenzie of Auchenstewart, Wishaw, who is an older brother of Mr J.M. Mackenzie.

ERRATUM

[439]

Page 296, line 14. After "physician" *insert* "Dr Robertson is likewise a registered medical practitioner."

[440]

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TRANSCRIBER'S NOTES

Corrections have been made throughout according to the lists of "Errata" and "Addenda" on pp. 437-439.

Several corrections have also been made in the Index, where typos have been obvious when compared with spellings in the main text.

Obvious typos and errors in punctuation (this occurs mainly in the glossary) have been silently corrected. The variation in use of full stop and capitalisation has been left unchanged.

The following corrections have been made to Gaelic words where there is an obvious typo:

1. Corrected Achadbgarbh to Achadhgarbh in glossary.

2. Corrected Coinneathadh to Coinneachadh in glossary.

3. Corrected Donnahadh na Fadach to Donnachadh na Fadach in glossary.

4. Corrected Garrbh to Garbh in glossary.

5. Corrected Promadh to Pronadh in glossary.

6. Corrected Db'fhan to Dh'fhan in Part IV Chapter IV.

"Anglicè" is sometimes italicised, sometimes not. Sometimes it is written with a grave accent, sometimes with an acute. Similarly, "Gallicé" is sometimes written without an accent. These variants have been left unchanged.

Inconsistencies in spelling and hyphenation have been retained, except where there is an obvious error.

Variants in place names and "Mac" surnames have been retained (except where there is an obvious typo). For example: "Achnashelloch" and "Achnashellach"; Macleod, MacLeod and M'Leod.

There is often confusion between oe ligatures and ae ligatures; the correct form has been adopted where an obvious eror has occurred.

The "separate words" in the glossary entry for "Gille Cailean Mor" are Gille and Mor

The "separate words" in the glossary entry for "Iain Dubh Mac Ruaridh" are "Dubh" and "Mac"

The "separate words" for "Sabhal Geal" are "Sabhal" (for which there is no entry in the Glossary) and "Geal"

The Mackenzie lairds of Gairloch are listed in Table V on page 391. Links have been provided for each Laird in the Table to his listing in the Index.

The two different portraits of Sir George Hay of Megginish are here and here.

The illustrations of stone troughs are here and here.

The illustrations of fir trees are here and here.

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