

# TAIT'S EDINBURGH MAGAZINE.

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## SCOTTISH RIVERS.

### THE DEE.

THERE are two Dees in Scotland—the Galloway Dee in the south-west, and the Aberdeenshire Dee in the north-east. Ours is the northern Dee, the largest and the most interesting. The sources of the Dee are in many respects more remarkable than those of any other British river; but they are accessible only by toil and labour which few tourists are willing to encounter; although drovers and other travellers from the south to the north of Scotland often ascend Glendee and pass by Altdruin into Speyside. The mountains of Glendee are undoubtedly the highest and the most remarkable in the island; yet the guide-books either leave them “out of the Highlands,” or pass them over in a few lines that tell one truth at least, namely, that the writers never have been there. A graphic description of Glendee is quoted in several guide-books—in the *Gazetteer* published by the Messrs. Blackie, and in other works—from an early number of “*Chambers' Journal*.” It has been often republished, is considered the standard account of the matter, and therefore we insert it here in order to correct a very large “oversight:”—

“We recollect, in the time of a flood, thinking the Linn of Dee would be a fine sight. We went and were rather disappointed. The water had risen above the narrow broken part of the rocks, and its surface had a wider channel. It darted between the banks with the velocity of lightning, smooth and unruffled. But of what description must have been the working beneath! Come along, you will gaze into those black surgy depths till your eyes are fascinated and your head giddy; you will have opportunity for the exercise of fortitude elsewhere, for we are just entering the desert. There are two strange-looking hovels, a mile or so beyond the linn, with each its piece of cultivated land about it, to supply the necessities of life, unneeded, and unprovided with anything to distinguish it from the uncultivated hills but the freshness of its colour. Gradually what was something like a road dies away; and you are now compelled to pick your way among the stones, and through the long heather, occasionally meeting with one of the small tracts worn by the deer, and used by such scanty travellers as may pass through that savage wilderness. There is a peculiar effect of loneliness you may never, perhaps, have experienced before, on entering this wilderness. The hills are at first distant, and the glen wide and hollow; but a dead stillness reigns on everything, except on the clattering river, which still flows on in no unstatesly bulk. Wandering on, mile after mile, the glen gradually narrows, and gets more savage in its aspect; great black rocks, which look like the stone walls of some antediluvian city of the giants, begin to run themselves up on each side; they approach more and more towards each other, and at last the solitary spectator feels as if they impeded his breath, although they are some miles, perhaps, from each other. It is time we should tell him exactly

where he is; yonder singular looking peak, with shaggy precipitous sides, towards the west, is Cairntoul; proceeding from its side, as a wall seems to proceed from the angle of a turret, is a vast black mass of perpendicular rock; that is the Ridge of Braeriach, said, by an eminent calculator of altitudes, to have two thousand feet of sheer precipice; that two thousand feet of precipice is the object which it now almost aches your eyes to look upon—a flat black mass, streaked with snow, and sometimes intruded on by a cloud which divides the upper regions from the lower. It is probable that now, in mid-day, a hot sun gilds its black front, and mocks its streaks of snow, while a dead, unearthly silence pervades the mass. It is not so at all times: for here is the workshop of storms—here the elements, when they prepare themselves to come down with destruction on the fruitful valleys below, exercise their strength, and do no harm; then the scene is different from the stillness of the present; but with your leave, reader, it is a change that we do not wish to witness. Returning to the description of our glen: right a-head, and almost protruding into it, is the well-known Cairngorm; and, towards the east, stretches the loftier Ben-Mac-Dhui, now admitted to be the highest hill in Britain; but we shall have, henceforth, to describe some of its numerous appearances. Now, after having heard the names of these mighty objects, let us request you to indulge yourself in the feeling of striking loneliness and disconnection with the world, which everything you view seems to impose on you; and if you may not have perceived it before, you will now feel the full expressiveness of the terms in those lines by Hogg, where he says—

‘Beyond the grizzly cliffs which guard  
The infant rills of Highland Dee,  
Where hunter’s horn was never heard,  
Nor bugle of the forest bee.  
Mid wastes that dorn and dreary lie,  
One mountain rears its mighty form,  
Disturbs the moon in passing bye,  
And smiles above the thunder-storm.’

*Queen’s Wake, 95-6.*

The Dee is still a respectable stream, but we are gradually running it to earth. Ascending its brawling course, where it toils over large stones, and winds round the bases of rocks, we suddenly reach a mound of great round stones, from which it issues, gurgling and boiling at several outlets, seeming with difficulty to force itself through. Ascending the mount of stones, where we hear a deep hollow gurgling beneath our feet, we find on its summit a small round deep green lake, whose pure cold surface is here and there slightly disturbed by the bubbling up from the bottom of numberless springs. The water is of a beautiful pale green, so clear that you can see the sand and stones at the bottom almost as distinctly as through the air, where the water must be some fathoms deep. This pool of water, then, reader, so singularly placed in the midst of the wilderness, is the source of that Dee which carries civilization, fruitfulness, and commerce through a great district of Scotland, waters many a broad acre of wood and corn, and harbours the shipping of a great commercial city. Here we bid you for a while adieu, leaving you to reflect, and to eat your dinner in peace.”

The writer rather exaggerates the gloomy characteristics of the scene, but its appearance depends greatly on the state of the weather, a matter on which it is wise to place little reliance amongst the mountains at any period of the year. When the mists come down closely, which they often do with great rapidity in summer, shrouding the tops of the mountains, and leaving the traveller apparently in the bottom of a great tunnel, or a huge railway cutting, the glen "looks desperately wild." In a clear summer day, or a day not quite clear, when the sun is slightly shaded by high "fleece" clouds, without the threatening of immediate rain, the aspect of Glendee is magnificent. In this country no similar scene exists. Glencoe is wild and associated with dark remembrances; but it is not nearly equal to Glendee in the extent or the magnitude of its mountains. The writer in "Chambers" had evidently ascended the Dee to the well which he describes, and, wearied with his journey, had stopped there. This was sufficiently natural. Standing on the edge of this pretty little lake amongst the mountains, surrounded by huge barriers of stones, without an apparent inlet, and no other outlet than the gladsome Dee, careering wildly and merrily o'er its rocky bed, like any prisoner long used to the darkness of a Bastille brought back again to light and day, it was easy for the weary traveller to suppose that he had caught the river's source at last. The mistake was natural, and yet it was a great blunder. The sources of the river are more than one thousand feet higher in the world, and a supplementary journey of two hours climbing was requisite to reach them. The Messrs. Anderson of Inverness, in their large guide-book to the Highlands, pass over Glendee and its girdling mountains in a few lines, although it is the centre of the Highlands, and, from the immense height and precipitous forms of the mountains, more remarkable than any locality within the range of their work. They have certainly never been up Alt Drui, but they have gathered the particulars of the case more accurately than Chambers' contributor, who clearly was there, and took his dinner thankfully by the edge of the lowest well. They say:—

"After traversing about ten miles up the Alt Drui, we reach a very high pass, in which will be found a few small pools called the springs or wells of the Dee, and immediately we are ushered, along with its infant waters through a deep and narrow defile, flanked by the impending precipices of Ben Muick Dhui on the east, and Braeriach and Cairntoul successively on the west—three of the loftiest mountains in Scotland; the first being deemed about 20 feet higher than Ben-Nevis; the others each about 4,200 feet. The stream here forms a series of cascades—in all about 1,000 feet in perpendicular height. It is joined from the west by two other streams—the Garachary and the Geusachan—the former issuing from a dark ravine between the two last-named mountains; and the latter descending a hollow between Cairntoul and Ben-a-Vrochan, and exhibiting a lengthened cataract about 1,000 feet in height. After a southerly run for about a dozen miles, the river flows to the eastward through the great Mar forest. As the upper portion forms some of the wildest mountain scenery in the Highlands, so the pine and birch-clad reaches of the strath for many miles below, present one of the noblest woodland expanses to be met with."

We shall explain by and by that the Messrs. Anderson are entirely mistaken in their pools; but, in passing, we may add that pools of some fathoms depth—twenty feet deep pools—are rare in this country.

The Aberdeenshire mountains abound in springs on their highest summits. Within a short distance of the peak of Lochnagar, there are some very strong springs, throwing up a steady current of the finest water, through

granite crevices, for many hundred yards. Springs on the mountains, and especially on these hard granite mountains, are amongst the natural wonders not yet explained. How they are supplied, and where their inexhaustible waters are drawn from, are questions not easily answered. The summer's drought or winter's rain have no influence over them. They are independent of all apparent means. Through the huge masses of granite that form the crust of these stupendous mountains, they urge their way, in utter disregard of all external influences, and seem to have selected the highest and the most inaccessible places from whence to ooze quietly out into the world. The Dee and its tributaries are largely indebted to these springs for their waters, and for their crystal clearness. Although a large body of water passes through the "Chest of Dee"—a remarkable gorge in the river's course, which we may notice afterwards—yet the whole current, before its junction with the Geldie, is derived from the mountain springs, except immediately after heavy rains. This quality of the water may partly account for the favour shown to this river and its tributaries by skilful anglers. The valley of the Dee has never stood well in the world for fertility. Its character has been worse than its qualities. An old adage places it below its neighbouring river the Don; and it has been held for long that,

"Except it be for fish or tree,  
Ae mile o' Don's worth twa o' Dee."

The couplet is exaggerated, but, like many others of a similar kind, there is truth in its origin. The Dee was the finest wooded and the best fishing river in Scotland. Entails, manufactories, and stake-nets have partially changed all these matters; but still, for fish or wood, the Dee has few rivals amongst British rivers. The salmon contrive to force their way from the ocean, through some stormy passages, past "the Linn," and through "the Chest," a still more formidable barrier, to the foot of those terrible cliffs that hang high and stern above the infant river. An angler could not want for better sport than the Lui, a tributary of the Dee, springing from the same mountains and draining the eastern and the most rugged side of Ben-Mac-Dhui; as the west makes the Dee. It is a lonely stream, at some seasons fierce, wild, and rapid; but in its common everyday life gentle enough, winding past the foundations of old farm-houses, that are marked now only by patches of deep green amongst the heath, and then, onwards through the remains of the great Braemar forest; and sad fragments they are—stumps of trees that were the finest in Scotland during the present century. The Lui has rough work before it falls into the Dee; but the salmon make that no obstacle to their visits, and get over every barrier without much trouble. When "individuals" twist themselves up over and through "the Linn," into and out of the "Chest of Dee," there is little reason for admiring the agility of their neighbours who merely ascend the Lui.

Nearly as many misrepresentations have been made of the source of the Dee as of the springs of the Nile; and it has been kept as great a mystery as the ongoings and outcomings of the Niger; yet it should be no great secret. The summit of Ben-Mac-Dhui has many charms in a clear day of summer. It is the highest land in Britain. We can get no higher in the world without crossing the sea to Switzerland, and scaling Mont Blanc, or some other peak of the Alps. This Ben-Mac-

Dhui is president over a convocation of mountains. From its summit the crags of the Braeriach and Cairntoul to the west, the lesser Cairngorm and Benna-Main on the east, appear almost on a level with the great mountain, and grouped within a short distance of each other. On the south and west the fine outline of Beny-Gloe in Perthshire, forms a striking object, but not more so than the high cliffs of Lochnagar, rising over the multitude of mountains in the direction of Forfarshire. The scene is one of almost unapproachable wildness. The vast number of mountains apparently crowded together in every diversity of form, and extending far to the right and left, towards the south, cannot be forgotten by those who have watched them in their cold and stately dignity—so solemn and “staid looking” in a clear day, when the mist has entirely rolled off, and, except the echoes of the rough waterfalls, or the cry of the muirfowl, no sound whatever breaks the heavy solitude. Far away to the south-west, the blue outline of Ben-Lomond, dim and indistinct, running into and mixing with the sky, is pointed out. Ben-Nevis, to the west or north-west, is no: so far away. The hills that rise around the springs of the Forth may be distinguished from those out of which the beginnings of the Tay and the Tummel are drawn. Distant hazy-looking strips of green and yellow, towards harvest time, recall the broad lowland districts to the mind. Beyond them still—though it needs a clear eye or a good glass to comprehend the circle—are other strips of a different colour, formed by the sea, which is visible on three sides from the highest peak of Ben-Mac-Dhui. On the north side, and all away towards the north, the scene is soft and “inland,” when compared with the savage grandeur in all other directions. Beneath the hill, so far and “sheer” apparently to the eye, that a weak head grows light to look down to it sharply, is Strathspey, smiling upwards in its mixture of many colours, telling truly that the hand of industry has been hard at work there. Above it are the little Morayshire hills; and we know that they overlook the finest farms, and some of the fairest old towns in the north. Beyond them still, blue mountains rise up dimly in the sky like “cloudlets.” They are in Ross-shire—so Inverness must be away in that direction—and a long strip of silver, running outwards to the east, and widening by the way, is the Moray Frith; and the hills over it are in Sutherland and Caithness. The outlines of all Scotland, north of the Forth, come within the picture laid out round Ben-Mac-Dhui, and there is no scene in all that vast extent of land more gloomy and terrific than those great crags on its eastern side, that rise round Lochavon. It is singular that nearly all the mountains in this district are broken off into abrupt crags, on their eastern and north-eastern sides, as if they had been left unfinished there, while to the west they slope down, rapidly often, but seldom so sharply as to make the descent inconvenient, though it may be steep. This is the rule with Ben-Mac-Dhui. The great wall of the Braeriach is on its eastern side. The shaggy cliffs of Cairntoul are on the east. The crags of Beavenue are also on that side of the hill where the Geusachen falls over a thousand feet of sheer rock. A pony may take the Queen’s road up Lochnagar to its highest pinnacle, and to the edge of those precipices on the east, that rise in one rough but perpendicular wall for fifteen hundred feet out of the dark loch, which sleeps for ever in the gloom of their vast shadows. It is a

singular rule observed, with few exceptions, in the architecture of the northern mountains, although geologists have not explained the reason.\* The more thoughtful people of the glens could tell us why the south-western side of the mountains were bare of soil, and seem often to be run down to the hard rock. The waters of the great flood, they say, came from the south-west, and swept the soil away—a tradition quite in keeping with the still profounder statements of some scientific men, who allege that the Pacific rolled out of its bed, and went sweeping round the globe. We are aware of one fact, that from the south-west, for many years since then, we have had the greater part of our wind and rain, which may help to explain the exposure of the rocks in that direction.

Still, the precipices on the east and north-east remain mysterious. We are told that the granite of which these mighty mountains have their crust, whatever may be their interior, was thrown up in a liquid state. But the cause of its congealing in a rounded and easy form in some directions, and in sharp precipices in others, is unintelligible. Then the glens between the mountains are often half-filled with stones and blocks of this granite, piled regularly in some places, in others in confused masses, in all seeming to have been wrenched asunder and torn into pieces as they are laid, out of some huge mass, by a terrible power.

Our business is not, fortunately, with geology and the moulding of mountains; and although the labour of ascending Ben-Mac-Dhui is so great, and so well repaid on its completion, that one is apt to linger long, too long, on “the crown” of the island—for it is a hard afternoon’s walk or ride to the nearest “hostelry”—a matter of some twenty-two miles on the Braemar side, without a road for two-thirds of the distance—yet the river that we came to seek makes quick work of the path downwards, and it is better to follow its example. Those tourists who have no intention of bivouacking amongst heather have little time to spare on Ben-Mac-Dhui.

There is a dispute touching the orthography of this mountain monarch’s title. The Messrs. Anderson and some good authorities spell it Ben Muick Dhui. Others, with, we trust, better reasons, give it in the way that we have adopted, as “Ben-Mac-Dhui.” We take these letters as a matter of taste, and because also we believe them to be accurate. To southern eyes and ears the distinction may seem trivial; and yet it is of great importance for the credit of our leading British hill. The dispute—if there be any, which we hope may not be the case, for we declare firmly for Ben-Mac-Dhui, and are to stand by the “Mac” in the centre—illustrates most aptly the saying that there is but “a step from the sublime to the ridiculous.” As we spell the central word, the Highlanders render the title of the mountain, in their sonorous way, into “the hill of the son of darkness,” which is a very magnificent name and every way superior to “the dark hill.” The Messrs. Anderson are doubtless petted a little, because the Aberdeenshire hill turns out to be higher than their own Ben Nevis, which is a lumpy, monotonous affair, if compared with the graceful sweeps and curves of its superior—from a feeling of local spite, which they could scarcely help, and for which we cannot hold them re-

\* The precipices of Ben-Nevis are on the east and north-east side.

possible, because any tourist who consults their "Guide" wherever it can be useful—but that is not in Glendee—will find them to be the best-natured writers imaginable; yet, nevertheless, inspired by their local prejudice, as has been said, they must have given currency to the substitution of "Muick" for "Mac," and converted our premier mountain into "the hill of the black boar." Glen Muick, the Water of Muick, Loch Muick, and the Craggs of Muick are certainly sufficient for the swinish family; but the nearest of the series, and that is Loch Muick, and its circle of crags and rocks, must be thirty-five miles off from this part of the world; and there is no reason for supposing that the mountain had anything more to do with boars, black or grey, at any period of its history, than other hills. The nature of the surface rendered that most improbable, for although the Mar forests occupied the lower part of the glen, yet on those parts of the mountains that are absolutely stripped of soil trees never had a footing, and the wild boars had never a shelter. It is better, therefore, to adhere to Mac than Muick in the title of the first hill in the country; and even if our ancestors gave it a bad name to supply their want of taste—a deficiency not often perceptible in the Celtic names of localities, which, with scarcely an exception, are singularly appropriate.

Ben-Mac-Dhui, like the other granite mountains, is full of springs. The quantity of water that falls from the skirten rocks in Glendee is most astonishing. Long before the river has reached the mouth of the glen it has become a broad, in some places a deep, and always a rapid stream, entirely fed from the springs in the mountains. Those of Ben-Mac-Dhui fall on the east into the Lui, and on the west into the Dee, which receives the Lui beneath the Linn. On the north-west side of the mountain, opposite the Braeriach, they unite into a considerable stream, which rushes rapidly to the edge of the hill, and forms a fall there of considerable height; but the tremendous magazine of broken granite rocks between the two mountains interferes, and the falling stream is apparently lost. From the highest well of Glendee its appearance is remarkably fine. The volume of water is not large, but, chafed and broken amongst the rocks in its fall, it looks like the remnants of a long wreath of snow left in the clefts of the rock, until the noise of its fall, sometimes carried away by the turn of the wind on the mountains edge, till scarce a murmur is heard in the glen, and then coming down with increased strength, as if some pent-up store of water in the mountain had broken out and increased the volume of the stream. A person ascending the mountain from that side, and unacquainted with the circumstances, might well be startled to look upwards many hundred feet, and see right above him an angry stream of water, rushing over the hill, apparently for the first time, and threatening his position. A few seconds would assure him that it was making no progress downwards on the surface, and that it must therefore have a subterranean passage out. The water shade in the glen is only a few yards above the highest pool, and a slight change in the disposition of its subterranean channel would have thrown "the Dee" northward into the Spey, and left no doubt that the real source of the Aberdeenshire river was on the Braeriach. The matter in the meantime is in dispute amongst the keepers

and shepherds who sometimes penetrate into this region. Some of them allege that the Garachary, which rises on the top of the Braeriach, and is the first tributary of the Dee, should be considered as the source of the river—the river itself. They have never given, so far as we know, any name to the stream, which tourists and guide-books have always known as the Dee; and which unquestionably occupies the natural continuance of Glendee. At their junction the Garachary may be the largest stream, although that is very doubtful, and more precise measurement would be requisite to decide the question than we had time or opportunity to bestow upon it; but this circumstance would not change the "use and wont" by which such disputes are settled. Many streams have lost their birthright in this way. The Mississippi, for example, has been allowed to impose its name on a larger river. The Clyde, in this country, has been able to supplant a larger stream. The Dee, however, has not obtained any similar advantage. The only difference of opinion is, that in ascending the stream, some of the natives say this is the Dee that turns off out of the glen to the left; while the stream that keeps the glen is nameless; but others, supported by the general public, say that the latter is the Dee, and that the former, its first tributary, the Garachary. The two streams are nearly of an equal size. They descend from a similar height. They run almost the same distance, in nearly similar troubles before their junction. They blend together most harmoniously afterwards. They rise unquestionably in the highest lands in Britain, for the difference between the Braeriach and Ben-Mac-Dhui is only seventy feet; and the river which they combine to form has the distinction of rising at a higher point and falling farther than any other river in the British isles.

The Dee enters its subterranean channel lashed into angry foam, and it re-appears in the placid green wells, so singularly formed in the hollow between these great mountains. No agitation can be greater than that which it suffers on its disappearance, and no peace more unbroken and undisturbed than the quiet of its pure green waters when we see them again in the first great cup, constructed for them in the debris of some vast granite mountain. The horrors of the middle passage, from strife to perfect peace, are hidden; but the transition might easily remind one of the passions of a self-willed mind, tamed by many troubles into serenity.

The peace of the Dee is but temporary. The troubles of its infancy only harden it to those of its youth. From its rest in the wells it springs out again to battle with hard rocks; and it has left evidence that in its rough, wintry strength, they are often tossed lightly from its path. The wells are very strange pieces of masonry. In ascending the stream, a high wall, of regularly piled stones, appears to obstruct the path, from the bottom of which a considerable stream is rushing out, half hidden amongst the mosses that it alone has fed. On the top of this wall there is a large platform of loose stones, and in the centre a deep well of nearly two hundred and fifty yards in circumference. Towards the centre its depth is very considerable, probably twenty feet or more. Beyond the platform a second wall is raised, not quite so high as the first, but equally regular, and on its top a smaller platform, with a smaller well, and not quite so deep as the fifth, or first in ascending the river. The process is again repeated, but the platform in this in-

stance is still smaller, and the well in the centre is very small, although the surrounding stones appear often to be covered to a considerable depth. The next ascent is higher, the platform broader, and the well in the centre wider and deeper. The last ascent to the first well in descending, the fifth in ascending, the stream, is of similar magnitude, and the well is evidently of greater depth. The regularity of the construction of these wells, and their platforms and stairs, would almost justify the opinion that art had been improving at some distant day on nature; but the wells are unquestionably there, scooped out of masses of stones, with their platforms and their barricades, as they were left in some great convulsion, so powerful that no living being felt the shock and lived to explain its sensations. Although there is scarcely a morsel of soil on the rocks, yet some few pretty water-flowers skirt the edges of the wells, and float upon their surface; thin short grass runs in narrow belts up the sides of the mountains; a number of the mountain berry bushes find means of taking root among the stones, and in the autumn season are black with fruit—the etnach berries come closely up to the fountains of the Dee; and as it emerges from its last resting-place, it has planted the hard stones over which it runs with the prettiest and the greenest mosses that ever cheered a botanist, while in the bottom of the deep and rugged glen through which it passes is a thick vegetation—mosses of varied form and colour—a thin long grass—thick bushes of heath—and the black, red, and juniper berries of the mountains in profuse abundance. The course of the Dee is extremely wild and rapid, plunging over rocks in very pretty cascades, tumbling round high rocks, getting into great difficulties—gullies by the way—and leaping merrily out of them into broader space again; making large islands, as if it were a large river that could afford to divide its forces; to which, however, it repeatedly receives large additions from its parent hill; and thus it goes on in a wild reckless way, until it is met by the Garachary, and becomes a little more staid and respectable. The ravine through which the Garachary descends divides the Braeriach from Cairntoul. It is the loneliest glen, perhaps, in all the Highlands. It is not a thoroughfare like Glendee. The crags and precipices on each side approach very closely. The end of the glen is that tremendous wall of the Braeriach, two thousand feet high, of almost perpendicular black rock. The sun never shines into that glen. The shaggy cliffs of Cairntoul will not allow a single warm beam to fall upon some parts of the cold dark precipices of the Braeriach. For this reason the keepers and shepherds call it “the devil’s glen.” The wall of the Braeriach will even at a considerable distance meet the traveller’s eye, and fascinate him like a snake. It is too great to be called savage—it rises above mildness—nobody would call it grand, the most unimaginative would say it was sublime, for want of any other word at all equal to the rock. Here and there in nooks and corners there seem to be white spots, the remnants of snow from the last winter, or of many winters, laid up in this vast ice-house; and as few persons really go to the wall of the Braeriach, they are generally contented with this explanation. These white specks may be something still more remarkable. The Garachary rises almost on the highest spot of the Braeriach, and has its own deep

round well, formed by a strong spring. It runs for a considerable distance, four thousand feet and more above the level of the Dee; turning, and winding, and struggling to avoid the fate before it; but at last, as if finally made up for a desperate effort, having no means of escape, it casts itself on the edge of this huge wall, and twists its downward course—now clinging desperately to the rocks; next, cutting apparently into its heart; again, dropping from one shelf to another, leaving a long white streak of foam for ever in the hollows; and experiencing everywhere the difficulties attending the farthest fall in the shortest space, or that any stream makes in Britain. Its downward course through this terrible glen, where there is scarcely any vegetation, is a continued scene of trouble, without the lightsomeness of the gladsome Dee, that looks gaily into the sun’s face, and makes its way right into the south. The highest peak of Cairntoul looks on the meeting of the waters; and from this point, within a distance of six miles, more than twenty streams of considerable magnitude rush down the steep rocks—forming splendid cataracts in many places, and grasping the crags more curiously in others—and the smallest of these falls is over five hundred feet. No similar scene exists in this country; and its stern and rugged crags, its wildly-rushing waters, cannot be often matched in any land, from the grouping together here, within a narrow circle, of so many different mountains, each reaching to 4000 feet of altitude, and three of them several hundred feet over that measurement. The solitude of the glen is most complete. There is not a human habitation for many miles from this point. The nearest is a gamekeeper’s house, in Glen-Lui-Beg, but it is eight to nine miles away, twelve miles from the Springs of Dee; and to reach it, the traveller requires to cross Cairn Vym. By adopting that course, the finest view of the highest ridge of Ben-Mac-Dhui is obtained, nearly three miles from its base, where it is three miles farther to the summit; but although the splendid sweep of almost entirely bare granite is tempting from this point, yet there are few who think of making the ascent in that direction. It is “toilsome” by the smoothest road; but to brave the mountain’s face would prove a sad waste of power. The stream in Glen-Lui-Beg is always narrow, but in the small pools in the recesses of the rocks, there are numerous trout, seldom tempted by the angler, and the sport, to those who like it, must be good; but the difficulty lies in obtaining a lodging. Time is precious in these wild recesses; for the longest day is consumed in passing from house to house; and, as there are better spots for anglers “nearer the inn,” the Lui is neglected. Some solitary trees are left to die and wither on its banks, and in some places a few “birks” are springing up beside them, but Glen-Lui-Beg is abandoned to the deer; and the passage through it, although not closed, is not encouraged by the owners of this vast deer desolation. The gamekeeper’s house is a little above the junction of the Lui and the Dearg. It is a hermitage of the most indisputable loneliness, some five or six miles, without a road, from Inverery, and a day’s long journey from any house on the west or north. A small plot of oats in the garden looked well for straw in August, but they were very green. The little garden appeared to be of good soil, but there was no shelter around, and it is thirteen to fifteen hundred feet above the sea level. Some fine old trees had been spared

around the house, and on them hung the trophies of the chase, for nobody to look at. The interior of the cottage was hung around with warlike instruments, for which Mr. Smith O'Brien (a month before) would have given any price in the Tipperary mountains. The keeper's merry children gave some life to the haugh where their cottage stood; but they brought to the mind the circumstances of many thousand families, the pioneers of life and cultivation in the colonial woods. There was a difference. The colonists form the van of society; the keepers are the rear. The colonists are the foundations, and the keepers are the ruins of states. The colonists destroy the wildernesses, and the game-keepers, in this particular line of their trade, watch over the growth of new wastes. Year by year, neighbours gather more closely around the lonely settler in the woods, until he be lonely no more. Year by year, life retreats farther from the precincts of the watchers in deer forests, until they seem to dwell alone upon the earth, or in the primeval solitude of Adam and Eve, with beasts only for their neighbours, but without the trees, the fruit, and the flowers of Paradise.

Where Glen-Lui-Beg joins Glen-Dearg, there are still extensive remains of the great Mar Forest, but the noble trees are falling rapidly, and the largest have been cut down some years since. The Braemar pine timber was and is highly esteemed. It was considered greatly superior to American pine, and brought prices sometimes equal to the best Baltic. The forests on the Fife estates are much thinned, and in this district no effort is made to replace them. Glen-Lui, and the upper part of Strath-Dee furnished the finest trees, but they are now entirely stripped, and the stumps alone remain. The latter, in Glen-Lui, present a very singular appearance, from the rapidity with which the wild berry bushes have clung round them, piercing the wood in every direction with their fragile branches, and seeming to spring out of the very heart of the old ruin; until each root is converted into a little round hut of small green leaves, interspersed with blackberries, in their season, and set in regular lines amongst the red heather, as the trees stood. The wallflower and ivy, clinging on or crowning and concealing old ruins, have a poetical meaning that poets have readily and often seized; but they are not nearly so appropriate as the gentle bla-berry bushes, throwing, in their lowly weakness, their close and ample covering over the smitten fragments of the ancient forest kings. The annual import of pine timber into Britain is very large. The quality of the Highland timber stands high, and yet the forests are disappearing faster in many quarters than they are replaced, while large tracts might be most advantageously planted, and forests formed wide enough to meet, in a number of years, all our demands for this article. This is only one of many instances in which our resources are neglected; and especially the resources of the Highlands, which are in process of rapid destruction before the advancement of deer-forests; so misnamed, as would be better styled deer-wildernesses—for not even a tree thrives within their bleak borders.

Glen Dearg leads upwards to Loch Avon, a dark and dismal sheet of water, surrounded by the tremendous precipices of Ben-Mac-Dhui, Cairngorm, and Bena-Main. Loch Avon and its stern rocks are visited by many tourists; and the distance from Castleton of Braemar, by way of Glen Lui and Glen Dearg, is long enough for one day's journey. There is no shelter

at the Loch, except beneath the shelter stone; and even in summer nights there are not many travellers who would not avoid a bed upon the heath in that quarter.

We crossed Cairn Vym to Glen-Lui-Beg, and we may as well return. Immediately opposite the latter, from the western side of Glendee, the Geusachan falls into the river, and adds considerably to its bulk. The Geusachan rises from a hill of that name, and partly from Ben-A-Votrin, which is cleared by its branch with a fall of one thousand feet. The latter we have not seen, but from the three great mountains that cluster round the springs of Dee, the waterfalls are singularly beautiful. The hard bare crags of Cairntoul are marked by long narrow silvery strips. They are streams from the summit, grasping tightly the huge rocks, and "letting themselves down" by this rough and dangerous route. Sometimes it fails them, and they are scattered in a thousand pearls, like a shower of snow, or the May flowers on a thorn tree, where they fall from one jutting point to a shelf beneath, and there collect their scattered waters to begin again their more regular descent. When we pass the Geusachan, or Guisachan, as it is spelt, with more accuracy, we believe, and certainly with more letters, we have cleared Cairntoul, the glen widens, the hills on each side become gradually lower, and the streams from their summits descend with more steadiness and propriety to join the river. The heather is longer in some places, the mosses have grown to a considerable depth, and caution is requisite to clear the soft, spongy, deep bogs that have been formed; for their covering of grass or heath yields only a deceitful footing. Still there are many rapids and falls on the Dee which is increasing fast into a considerable stream, growing rapidly at every mile. Sometimes it reaches the summit of a huge granite rock, and runs for many yards at a sharp angle down this broad and polished channel into a deep reservoir at its base. It then divides, and establishes in the wilderness an island of some extent, overgrown by its mosses, grass, heath, and berries. Next, it winds quietly over a level reach, forming many a long and deep tarn by its side, to mark its rise in the floods of spring, when the coverings of the mountains melt, and the terrible torrents tear away fragments of the rocks in their headlong course, and hurl them for miles down their channels in the glen.

For several miles of the glen, after it has widened out into a valley, there are no signs of life, no vestiges of intelligence to mark that men had ever dwelt there. A wretched shieling on the west side of the glen is the only house in a range of twelve long miles. It is inhabited by two keepers in the summer months, who watch the deer against we know not whom, for there can be no poachers in that quarter. It is too lonely for poaching. We entered there but once, but the occupants were gone. A few billets of wood lay by the fire-place. Two padlocked chests stood in two corners of the hut. A truckle bed occupied its breadth. A number of "Chambers' Journal" was in the window ledge. That was the furniture and the literature of this lodge in the wilderness. There can be no grievances in Glendee. The grouse and deer have the world to themselves. A stray traveller, willing to encounter bad roads, or the want of roads, to cut off a long stretch of the distance from south to north—a deer-stalker occasionally—a few enthusiastic tourists during

the summer, and the two keepers, are the only invaders of this paradise for wild animals.

There have been grievances in Glendee at one time. The lower part of the glen, which forms a wide valley, once sent its men to swell the ranks of the Earl of Mar, who often brought a greater number of followers into the field than there are now of human beings from Ballater to Badenoch. The extra green grass on some of the little hillocks tell where their homes had been perched, and the foundations of their houses may still be traced, in confirmation of the theory. Desolation, like the plague, has crept over all these Highland glens. Appropriation clauses have been passed. Churches have been suppressed, and parishes united, until some of the latter are now larger than a lowland county. The parochial church of Crathie, where Her Majesty and Prince Albert attended during their residence at Balmoral, is eighteen miles from the last houses on the Dee; but they are in the parish, which, we believe, extends for forty miles in one direction.

The most curious of all the deserted spots in these Highland glens are the abandoned churchyards. We have seen several of these villages of the dead falling rapidly into ruin. The race, whose ancestors were buried there, is extinct, removed into the large towns, or located in the distant colonies. The sheep first expelled the men, and now the deer have driven out the sheep. The estates are entailed; many of them are heavily burdened. Some of them are under trustees. Creditors and life-owners alike desire to tear from the land all that it can be brought to yield without outlay, and of the latter very little is requisite to form a Highland "game preserve," or a deer forest. The people have to be removed, and the country soon becomes wild and lonely enough to be agreeable for the fastidious tastes of the deer.

A mile or two above the junction of the Dee with the Geldie, the river passes through a channel cut in a large rock; and this is called the Chest of Dee. The opening in the granite is very narrow, and the water casts itself through with great violence upon an opposite ledge of the rock, and, recoiling from the blow, turns to the left, plunging through a still narrower channel into a square cut into the stone, resembling a corn chest. The depth of this pit in the rock must be very great. Its walls rise high above the water. A number of birches stretch their branches out from the banks, hang over this home of perpetual agitation, and conceal the storm that is ever raging beneath. The water is thrown over the ledge of the Chest into a wider excavation, scooped out of the same rock, and deep but almost perfectly still. The lower and the upper excavations stand in the relation to each other of "the cup and the saucer." The latter receives and cools the overflowings of the former, and their respective forms are by no means unlike these necessary appendages of the tea table. A slight bridge has been cast over the saucer, from which there is a very fine view of this most turbulent passage of the waters, which flow over the lower as they find their way out of their upper receptacle, but in this case clearing the rock entirely by an indignant bound and a clear fall of several yards. "The Chest of Dee" is not less remarkable than the Linn. The fierce agitation of the vexed and prisoned waters above and beneath the bridge would be more enjoyed from the latter, if the erection were firmer; but it shakes in a very equivocal way; and being suspended

from the edges of the rock, at a considerable height above the water, into which the descent is easy and the ascent difficult, that pleasure which the scene might afford is greatly reduced. The power and force of the water first occurs to the mind, while looking over on this curious scene; but the quiet dignity and strength of the rock, planted in the waters' way, meeting all its wrath, and never yielding a hair's breadth, is still more remarkable. There is a small, amusing, and, withal, a sensible publication, extensively sold, under the name of a "Guide to Deeside," by James Brown, who describes himself as having long been a carman between Aberdeen and Ballater; and who is, by virtue of his vocation, well entitled to construct a general work of this nature. His work is, on the whole, far better accomplished than the majority of guide-books; but he has forgotten several of the bridges on the Dee. At the Linn, he says, "a bridge is thrown over the river here, which is the seventh on the river." We quote from his edition of 1848; but the bridge at the Linn must have been in the early part of this year the tenth on the river, counting upwards. The bridges then in existence, were, at Aberdeen, the Wellington suspension bridge and the Old Bridge of Dee. There is a third bridge, at Banchory Devenick, a few miles above the second, and erected by the late minister of the parish for the use of his parishioners; a fourth, at Banchory Ternan; the fifth at Pitarch; the sixth, at Charleston of Aboyne; the seventh at Ballater; the eighth at Crathie, or Balmoral; the ninth at Invercauld; the tenth at Mar Lodge, erected by the Duke of Leeds, during the last autumn, near the site of the bridge which was thrown down by the great floods in 1828; the eleventh at the Linn; and the twelfth is the very rickety establishment over the Chest. The ingenious carman should have been able to count the bridges, but he probably remembered that some of them scarcely deserved a better name than temptations, and ran two into one, which their builders might have done with manifest advantage. Few rivers are more destructive of bridges than the Dee, and it is apparently a maxim that a bad bridge is good enough to be thrown down. There are exceptions, as in the case of the bridge on the great north road, which has existed for three centuries and a-half. Little more than a mile beneath the Chest, the Dee is joined by the Geldie, which flows from the west, as the Dee has come from the north, in a large stream. The strath through which the Geldie falls is comparatively level; and from the point of its junction with the Dee, there is a splendid, distant, a very distant, view of the vast mountain of Ben-y-Gloe, in Perthshire. A short distance above the Dee, there is a fishing and hunting lodge belonging to General Duff—the dwelling deepest into the "far west" on the Dee or its tributaries. The Geldie is a black, dark stream, which has found its comparatively sluggish course through quagmires and mosses; and assorts ill with the wild clear Highland river that has dashed over and down, or through rocks, from its infancy. For a time, the clear and the dark waters keep their respective sides, and do not intermingle. It is a contest between purity and impurity—one that is going on in many instances and in all parts of the world; but in this case the better principle ultimately prevails, and the impure is amalgamated with the pure, without much apparent loss to the latter.

The Dee from this point changes its course from due south to east, and assumes the appearance of a broad

and important river. The forest that only a few years ago covered the head of the Strath has been completely cleared away. A road has been formed on the north bank of the river to the Linn, a distance of four miles. As we approach the Linn, a few trees remain to hide the rugged rock that the Dee has pierced through and through. From that spot onwards we never lose sight of wood again in the course of the river. The Linn may have had at one time a larger fall than now. In some far distant period, the river may have fallen over the granite rock, through which it has tunneled a course for itself. If that had ever been the position of matters, the Strath above the Linn must have been for a considerable distance the bed of a lake formed by the Dee; and this does not seem improbable. The weight of the water above the rock would naturally work a way through any crevice that may have existed. This is one way of accounting for this tortured passage. The rock itself may have been split open by some stroke, from causes altogether independent of the river; and there are perhaps other probable explanations that might be given; for now we never think of being satisfied with the simple testimony and faith of our predecessors, that rocks and rivers were so created. The sides of this dark ravine have very much the appearance of having once met, and of being forcibly split open. The rock is of considerable length, and so, necessarily, is that narrow channel of the river which renders the Linn remarkable. The falls themselves are comparatively insignificant; but entering the rock at a narrow opening, which becomes still narrower, the water twines and drags itself, from dungeon to dungeon, emerging out of one into another, by a fall or a rapid, and displays one of the most remarkable proofs of its power. It seems to be wrestling for existence with its strong and stern opponent; and the spectator can hardly release his mind from the idea that he is witness to a real conflict, that the antagonists have life, and that but for this struggling river, the sides of the reef rock would close again, and the chasm be filled up. The top of the rock is high above the river, and a bridge has been thrown over the chasm. Better views of the Linn may be obtained than from the bridge on the top of the rocks. From the latter, looking down into the dark pit beneath, the agitation in the river may be easily underrated. There is little of the foam and fury that distinguishes minor struggles. The green waters are covered with myriads of small eyes, whirled upwards by the force of the contest beneath the surface. Their number bears testimony to the intensity of the hidden agitation; and it is not difficult to suppose, as one looks down between the rocks, that they look up, imploring aid in the river's unequal strife—the strife in which it conquers. But it may be as well not to indulge these reveries, at that particular spot; weak heads grow dizzy when they are bent long over a scene like this; and a tree, or a branch, thrown into the Linn, will serve to show the difficulties that any living creature would struggle against amongst the compressed waters and the torn rocks. It is commonly said, that no human being, once in the Linn, could escape out; and that the deep, sullen, whirlpools beneath swallow up and hide for ever all that come within their influence. Notwithstanding this very decided opinion, the Linn is loosely recommended in some of the guide-books as a fitting scene for gymnastic exercises. The Messrs. Anderson say:—

“When the water is low, some of the connecting channels are not above a yard wide; but it is subject to floods, which sometimes fill the chasm to the brim, and then the fury of the pent-up torrent is tremendous. The feat of leaping across the Linn has been frequently performed. And even from one of the banks, which is lower than the opposite.”

When the Linn is leaped at all, it becomes necessary to leap back “from one of the banks which is lower than the opposite,” and that constitutes any difficulty that exists in the feat—a very idle one—although the breadth is, we think, five feet or thereby, considerably over a yard. “The Deeside Guide,” which we have already mentioned—and there is a guide to Deeside recently published by Mr. Murray, in his series of guides to Scottish scenery—but the old “Deeside Guide” says:—

“About a mile and a-half beyond Inverey, you come to the Linn of Dee, which is allowed by all to be a most singular curiosity. The whole water of the Dee rushes through so narrow a channel in the rocks, that a boy of five years old might leap across it. The force of the river is, as you may suppose, most tremendous; and the pool into which the water falls, after escaping from its toiliings among the rocks, is said by the ignorant to be so deep that it has no bottom.”

The statement in the second sentence is far more injudicious, and displays more ignorance than anything believed in regarding the bottom, or the bottomless character of the pool, by the ignorant of Inverey. Boys of five years can read guide-books; and, believing all that is written, they may try to accomplish the leap, which is described as within the capabilities of persons of their age. Many persons have jumped the Linn, from a feeling of idle curiosity, but they were not boys of five years, and we never met with one who had been over, and did not think that the work might not be better left undone. The only difficulty in the case is in getting back. It is easy to leap down, but more difficult to jump up. It illustrates the old Latin saying—“*Facilis est descensus,*” &c.

A man, who is still alive, once leaped the Linn downward; but failed in the spring upwards. He was alone. In returning, his foot had struck the opposite side, and he was thrown backwards—not on the rock, but into the water. By what means his consciousness failed in this terrible position he did not explain, but he says that he remembered nothing that occurred, after he felt his balance lost, and the conviction for a moment that he must pass, dead or alive, through the Linn, until a considerable time afterwards, when he was found some distance beneath it, cast on the river's bank at a point where the agitations of the river were past, and its quiet course resumed. Mr. Thomas Moore, in his life of Byron, states that his lordship, when a boy, narrowly escaped destruction in the Linn. He had been scrambling over the rocks above, was tripped by the heather, fell, and would have rolled into the river, if an attendant had not caught him as he was disappearing over the edge.

The road crosses the river by the bridge across the Linn, and is continued on the south side of the Dee to the clachan or village of Little Inverey, a short distance from the river. Muckle Inverey is half a mile farther on. They are the last and the poorest villages on Deeside. The inhabitants are chiefly Roman Catholics, although there are very few persons of that persuasion in this part of Scotland. The Invereys are still wholly given up to Gaelic and kilts. The people can, with few exceptions, speak English; but Gaelic is the vernacular



—the language of the home and the heart. Their houses have in late years been considerably improved. Their crofts and small farms appear to be under improved tillage. Their crops were in a forward state this autumn, when compared with many districts in Forfarshire and Perthshire; and although the Inverveys are the poorest villages on Deeside, yet they are decidedly superior to many in the western Highlands.

The upper division of the Dee was, some centuries ago, almost entirely in the hands of the Earl of Mar and the Farquharsons, who were a very powerful family. The estates of Mr. Farquharson of Invercauld are still extensive, and embrace a circle of many miles. The Farquharsons of Inverey were a cateran clan. They lived pretty well by robbery, and made descents on the lowlands, after the manner of the border chieftains, whenever their supply of food ran low. The Farquharsons of Invercauld, at least in more recent times, endeavoured to gain their living honestly, and deserted the thieving habits of their namesakes. One of the Farquharsons of Inverey is said to have been seized by Farquharson of Invercauld, and hung—probably not without good reason—upon a tree which is still shown at Inverey, and known as the Laird's Tree. "The dying malefactor" prophesied, with the rope round his neck, that the tree would remain there when there should not be a Farquharson in Invercauld. The prophecy is literally fulfilled, as the late Mr. Farquharson of Invercauld assumed the name when he married the heiress of that estate. The family name now would be Ross, except for the adoption of his wife's name by that gentleman.

A younger son of the Inverey family succeeded to the estates of Finzean, on the Dee, and in the lowland districts, and they are still in the possession of his descendants; while the Inverey estates were, we believe, forfeited in the Rebellion, and form part now of the vast property belonging to the Earl of Fife.

The marauding habits and feuds of the Farquharsons of Inverey led them into many painful rencontres. One of these, which occurred in 1592, is celebrated in an old ballad, not so much worthy of preservation from any poetical genius displayed in the composition, as from its graphic statement of ancient manners, in the Saxon dialect of Aberdeenshire:—

“THE BARRONE OF BRACKLEY.

“Inverey came down Deeside whistlin' and playin',  
He was at brave Brackley's yetts ere it was dawin.

“He rappit fu' loudlie, an wi' a great roar,  
Cried, 'Come down now, Brackley, and open the door—

“'Are ye sleepin', Barrone, or are ye waukin'?'  
There's sharp swords at your yett will gar your blood spin !'

“Out spake the brave Barrone, ower the castle wa',  
'Are ye come to harry and spuilzie my ha' ?

“'O, gin ye be gentlemen, licht and come in,  
Gin ye drink o' my wine, ye'll nne gar my blood spin ;

“'Gin ye be hir'd widdifus, ye may gang by—  
Gang down to the Lowlands and steal their fat kye;

“'There spuilzie like reivers of wild kateran clan,  
And harry unsparing baith houses an' lan.

“'But gin ye be gentlemen, licht and come in,  
There's meat and drink in my ha' for ilka man.'

“Out spake his ladye, at his back where she lay,  
'Get up, get up, Brackley, and face Inverey.

“'Get up, get up, Brackley, and turn back your kye,  
Or they'll hae them to the Highlands, and you they'll defy.'

“'Now, hand your tongue, Catherine, and still my young son,  
For yon same hired reivers will show themselves men.'

“'There are goats on the Etnach, and sheep on the brae,  
And a' will be harried by young Inverey.

“'Gin I had a husband, wherens I ha'e nane,  
He wadna lye in his bed and see his kye tane.

“'There's four-and-twenty milk-white nout, twall o' them  
kye,

In the woods of Glentanner, it's there that they lye.

“'Sae rise up, John,' said she, 'and turn back your kye,  
Or me and my maidens we will them defy.'

“'She called to her maidens, and bade them come in,  
'Tak' a' your rocks, lasses, we will them comman';

“'We'll fecht them, and shortly the oowards will fly,  
So come forth, my maidens, and turn back the kye.'

“'Now haud your tongue, Catherine, and bring me my gun,  
I am now going forth, but I'll never come in.

“'Call my brother William—my uncle also—  
My cousin, James Gordon—we'll mount and we'll go.'

“'When Brackley was busked and stood in the close,  
A gallanter Barrone ne'er lap on a horse ;

“'When they were assembled on the castle green,  
Nae man like brave Brackley was there to be sene.

“'Strike, dogs,' cries Inverey, 'and feicht till ye're slain,  
For we are twice twenty, and ye but four men.'

“'At the head o' Reneatan, the battle began,  
At Little Aucholzio they killed the first man.

“'They killed William Gordon, and James o' the Knock,  
And brave Alexander, the flower o' Glenmuick.

“'First they killed aye, and syne they killed twa,  
They ha'e killed gallant Brackley, the flower o' them a';

“'Wi' swords and wi' daggers they did him surroun',  
And they pierced bonny Brackley wi' mouny a woun'.

“'Then up came Craigievar an' a party wi' him,  
Had he come one hour sooner, Brackley hadna been slain.

“'Cam' ye by Brackley, and was ye in there,  
Or saw ye his ladye was makin' great care ?'

“'Yes, I cam' by Brackley, and I was in there,  
And there saw his ladye was braidin' her hair;

“'She was rantin' and dancin', and singing for joy,  
And vowin' that night she would feast Inverey.

“'She eat wi' him, drank wi' him, welcomed him in—  
She drank to the villain that killed her Barrone.'

“'Was to you, Kate Fraser, sad may your heart be,  
To see your brave Barrone's blood come to your knee.

“'She kept him till mornin', then bad him be gane,  
And showed him the road, that he mightna be ta'en.

“'Thro' Birse and Aboyne,' she said, 'fly, and out o'er  
A' the hills o' Glentanner ye'll skip in an hour.'

“'Up spake her young son on the noorice's knee,  
'Gin I live to manhood, revenged I'll be.'

Brackley castle stood a mile, or little more, from the present village of Ballater, on the south side of the Dee, and immediately above the Muick. The Baron of Brackley was not quite so estimable a character as the minstrel has represented, and Kate Fraser was a female "Blue Beard." The castle is now entirely demolished, and the garden of a substantial farm-house encloses the old foundations. Brackley is twenty-four miles from Inverey; but the chieftain of the caterans was travelling in the course of his business when this feud occurred. The lady of Brackley had known previously of the visit, and been perfectly willing to employ Farquharson, as on a previous and similar occasion she had used Gordon. The latter was a younger son of the Earl of Huntly. In travelling through Forfarshire he had fallen into some quarrels, and committed one or two murders in Glensk, which his father wished to disavow. He, therefore, banished his son ostensibly from his castle. Young Gordon settled at Milltown of Brackley, met with Kate Fraser; and, in pursuing arrangements with her, he attacked and killed her first husband, a Fraser, who was also Baron of Brackley. Gordon had therefore no just cause to be disappointed with her subsequent conduct when his house was surrounded by the Farquharsons and their young chieftain. The ballad has a sadly plaintive air of its own in Aber-

deenshire; but a single verse omitted from the published copy we have given explains the position of the Farquharsons. It is inserted in the original immediately after the lady's son expressed his determination to be revenged. It is properly placed there, for the boy would recall to Farquharson the remembrance of his own:—

"Inverey he spak ae word, an he spak it wrang;  
My wife an' my bairnies will be thinkin lang;  
Wae worth you, Inverey, and sad may ye be,  
Ye hae first killed my guidman, and now slighted me."

Another couplet, from its style evidently the addition of a subsequent period, appears often at the close, by the way, we suppose, of deducing a moral from the tale:—

"To the bush comes the bird, and the flower to the plain;  
But the brave and the good, they come never again."

The slaughter of Gordon and his three companions was terribly revenged by Huntly, who collected a numerous Gordon force, killed sixty of the Farquharsons, and made what the French would call a *razzia* at Inverey. The ballad, and especially the tale on which it is founded, leaves an unfavourable impression regarding the morality of the "Scottish Chiefs" in the sixteenth century; and yet the feudal system, which existed to a late period in Scotland, and which in its drags is hanging upon the resources of the country still, committed to such men as the Baronne of Brackley and young Inverey the power of life and death among their tenantry and followers.

## A BUNDLE OF BOOKS.

BY GEORGE GILFILLAN.

UP, as we have been of late, and hope for months still to be, on the cool, quiet, lofty cliffs of Hebrew poetry, we have not been so attentive, we fear, as we might to the doings and sayings in the vale of modern literature. There, for instance, the other day, we found ourselves sitting surrounded by a circle of some two dozen volumes, all of which had been kindly sent us, most of them by the writers—and all of which we had read.

First, though not foremost, stands a little volume, with the following portentous title:—"Dreams—The Dream of a Missionary; the Dream of an Opium Eater; the Dream of Another World. By Owen Howell, author of 'Westminster Abbey,' &c." We love Owen Howell, from the marks of humility and gentleness of nature apparent in him; love him, too, for certain sparks of poetic feeling, if not of poetic power, manifest in his writings; love him, in short, so well, that we would wish him to abandon the unprofitable trade of poet. Let him cease to dream, and begin to work and live. We know what ruin reverie frequently issues in. It has destroyed mightier spirits than Owen Howell. He has a good heart and a good mind, and we implore him to cultivate them, and turn them to more useful account. His book abounds in what was once poetry, and what is still kindly and pleasing sentiment.

There turns up next a little prose production, entitled "A Voice from the Wilderness, or the Broad and Narrow Way." This Voice, unless we greatly mistake, comes from an Established manse, and the Wilderness is the Howe of the Mearns. It consists of a series of sermons—very flowery, earnest, and impassioned—in some points, perhaps, a little exaggerated in sentiment and style, and with rather a profusion of "ohs" and "ahs." The book, in short, is rather a specimen of fervid preaching, than of classical or finished composition. The author we should judge to be a vehement, conscientious, and useful clergyman, and we earnestly trust that his "Voice in the Wilderness" may not have been uttered in vain. Perhaps, in his next publication, a little more of the charitable spirit of Christ, blended with the sacred fury of the Baptist, would be an improvement.

What next have we? "Criticism, by John W.

Lester, Cambridge." As this is somewhat in our own way, we refrain from saying much of it. The author, a genial, fine-minded, and broad-natured man, is still, too evidently, all too young. His book is a gush of youthful but genuine feeling. Its heat, however, becomes oppressive at last; it is not relieved, as it might have been, by discussion, anecdote, or wit. "Emotions" were a better name than "Criticism;" and you cannot look long with complacency on a plate of fevered blood. Still we have much hope of J. W. Lester. His enthusiasm is genuine—his spirit is fine—his heart large, and always in the right place; and we say to him, emphatically—*Perge puer.*

Here next is "Wight's Mosaic Creation and Geology." Mr. Wight, a young and talented Independent clergyman in Haddington, has tried bravely to bridge the chasm surmised to stretch between Scripture and the science of geology. His book shows long and intimate acquaintance with the subject. It is written with care and elegance; but we suspect, along with the works of Pye Smith, Hitchcock, and others, leaves the subject where it found it. Will our critics never see that the first chapter of Genesis is a poem, and that to square poetic with scientific truth is an attempt as hopeless as to pair off, in one amicable and linked league, water and fire?

Huge, next, as an elephant, ponderous and unwieldy, comes David Thom's long-expected "Name and Number of the Beast." We fear the public will call this a display of wasted talent and learning. It has enough of both for six bishops. Hatchet in hand, he walks down the thick forest of former explications, hewing and sparing not, till he and what seems the true explanation are left standing in the midst alone. We admire and love David Thom, and wait anxiously for his second volume on the subject, which, we trust, will set this portentous puzzle for ever at rest. No theologian of such ability has ever been so neglected and decried. His friends, however, are staunch and true, and he has not a few even among those who, like ourselves, decidedly differ from him in opinion.

Ha! here comes a book, dear to our heart, and gladdening to our eyes—"Festus," 3d edition. The third edition of this glorious poem is greatly im-

## SCOTTISH RIVERS.

## THE DEE.

*(Continued from page 728.)*

ONE branch of the Geldie, which joins the Dee above the Linn, rises at the extremity of the celebrated Glen Tilt. The determination of the Duke of Atholl to bar the passage of this Glen against tourists, has brought that nobleman, his deer, and the Glen into unenviable notoriety. At a period not yet distant, Glen Tilt was inhabited by a numerous tenantry, who must have had a road for the greater part of its length. They are banished, the traces of their homes are nearly extinct, and the Glen is a very elaborate specimen of wilderness-making. The right of the Duke of Atholl to close the thoroughfare is now under trial. The decision cannot ultimately secure that claim and others of a similar character. If the judgment of the courts do not support it, there is an end of the matter; and if it do, the law will be changed. The time has gone out when efforts of this kind were regarded with apathy; for the public are more inclined to open new roads than to close old tracts. The Duke of Atholl, and those who would imitate his example, should be careful that they do not stir greater questions than the right to pass through a deserted glen.

The Ey gives a name to the villages or clachans of Inverey. It rises from the Ben-uarn, and, although a smaller stream than the Lui, runs for a considerable distance before it falls into the Dee. The villagers of Inverey are almost entirely dependent for support on their small crofts. There are only a few families above them on the river, and the population is almost equally small to the south; while the Castletown of Braemar is only six miles eastward, and if the locality furnished any of the usual means of living in lowland villages, they would be absorbed by the Castletown. Visitors and sportsmen for a few months towards the close of summer and in autumn, may leave annually a small sum of money, and it must be very small, at the Inverneys; but for three-fourths of the year, the population are closed out of the world. The majority are Roman Catholics. Their chapel is at Castletown; but they have a school and a very intelligent teacher at Inverey. The Dee for several miles from the Linn intersects a narrow but an almost level valley. It has got into easy circumstances, and, shaded by the pines of the hills and the birch trees on its banks, glides quietly eastward, after all its troubles, like one of the still sweet English waters that never know what it is to be tossed from crag to rock, and dashed for miles on miles over a granite channel. The roads on both sides of the river run pleasantly through thriving woods of fir and birch, on the face of the high banks that overhang the narrow Vale of Dee. The southern road is that generally followed in the upper part of Dee, and the northern beyond Invercauld. Mar Lodge, on the northern side of the river, is placed at the foot of the hill, almost on a level with the stream, but separated from it by all the breadth of the northern side of the little valley, which forms a lawn

in front of this Highland mansion. A better situation could not have been selected in the wide spread lands of Mar. The high hill rising immediately from the ledge on the north, and wooded closely almost to its top, shelters it completely from the northern winds. Immediately in front, Craig-Nieh, the hill of eagles, closes the view to the south, and birch and fir trees cover it almost to the summit. On the east and west the little vale seems to be closed up in the bends of the river, by the wooded hills that appear to meet and form a ring round the "demesne." Forget for a moment the stupendous scenery of the mountains, and the terrible "pass" of the Dee from two to three miles westward; take a good few hundred feet in your mind from that eagle's nest in front, and don't suppose the hill behind to be more than a couple of hundred feet above the level of the sea, and then you can easily believe that the mansion is one of the numerous "manor houses" of central England, and that the Trent is before you, beginning its slow course to the sea. Fewer qualifications will enable one who is acquainted with the "sedgy Severn's" course, to recall, in the bottom of this first "bowl" of Dee, many scenes in the early life of the splendid Welsh river. The contrast between the grounds immediately around Mar Lodge and the previous course of the river, is complete and remarkable. Tourists, with few exceptions, ascend the Dee, and to them the contrast is not so obvious; but to the few pedestrians who have climbed Alt-Drui Glen, from Spey side, and descended Glen-Dee—who have forced or stolen their way through Glen-Tilt, and down the Geldie, from Perthshire—and to those especially who may have taken the still more laborious route from the western coast, through Badenoch—the change from the wild, stern, bare magnificence of the mountains to the green woods and haughs of Mar Lodge is most pleasing. In reference to Badenoch, and the possibility of crossing the mountains from the Camerons' country, on the banks of Loch-Eil, at the foot of Ben-Nevis, to the springs of the Dee, and the old fastnesses of the Earls of Mar and the Farquharsons, we must add that the task is most arduous, and not to be lightly attempted. Travellers from the south, and especially from England, are apt to deceive themselves on these subjects. Long "walks upon the mountains" involve the possibility, at all seasons, of passing a night in the shelter of some crag. They should not be attempted except by men of considerable muscular power; and never by one man alone, unless his acquaintance with the district be very minute. Even a person who has reason to consider himself tolerably acquainted with the mountains, may discover his error in very unpleasant circumstances. Towards the close of the past autumn there were numerous parties at Castletown, and guides were in demand to the various localities within twenty miles of that village. One party wanted to climb Ben-

Mac-Dhui, but the ordinary guides were all engaged, and as their time was valuable, they arranged with a person who had been repeatedly on the hill, but who was not a habitual guide, to accompany them. Ben-Mac-Dhui is far from Castleton, and they began their journey early in the morning. The day was clear until they were far up the hill, when a thick mist came rapidly over all the mountain tops and dropped round them like a curtain. The guide lost the route, and after some time the whole party became quite unconscious of the direction in which they were moving, and it was agreed that the guide should go in search of some landmark that he had established to assist his pilotage; and the party were to await his return. According to their own statement, they waited until their patience was exhausted, and their fears for a night on the mountain induced them to push forward in some direction. They knew at least that they were descending the hill—and, happily for them, as they went downward, they also cleared the fogs, and finally emerged into a fair and tolerable afternoon. They had a long walk, but they reached Castletown in the evening without their guide. The circumstance caused much disquiet to the man's family, which was turned into consternation and dread when, neither by the following morning nor evening, had he appeared. Another night passed sleeplessly to them. None of the persons who had been out in that direction had seen any traces of the lost man. The next day passed over without bringing comfort to the troubled family. The third night wore away, but the guide came not, and the villagers were preparing to search the mountain carefully, when, in the morning, to the relief of all parties, the Castletown kilt-maker came up the river, and assumed possession of his shopboard, cured for a season of his disposition to oblige southern travellers by guiding them over Ben-Mac-Dhui. The travellers, in this instance, were in fault. They promised to wait their guide's arrival, and he explained that, missing them at the spot where he knew they were left, on his again reaching it, he commenced to search for them, often, probably, approaching the edge of the mist-cloud, but never entirely clearing its influence. The autumn sun went down at last, and night cast its solemn shadows over the silent mountain, and threw a deep gloom upon its terrible precipices, darkening even the ever dark Loch A'an. Somehow the guide stumbled westward, over the top of Ben-Mac-Dhui. When morning dawned he was on the north side of the range, and could not recognise his position. The day was well spent before he attained the startling information, that he was well into Badenoch and far from Braemar. It was impossible to cross the mountains that night; and when he began his journey early next morning, the unfortunate man again wandered out of his way, to the eastward of Bennabuir, and finally reached the Dee ten or twelve miles beneath his own village.

Accidents have often occurred to strangers travelling in the Highlands, from a rash spirit or a love of adventure on their own part. One of the most melancholy examples of this kind happened last year, in the neighbourhood of Fort William. Two London gentlemen were travelling through some of the Glens

in that neighbourhood. They were observed to pass one farmhouse late in the afternoon, but not so late as to occasion any anxiety on their account. Their bodies were found at an early hour next morning by some of the shepherds. The strangers were dead. The immediate cause of their death will never be fully known. The night was stormy, but not sufficiently so to account for this fatal event. No suspicion existed that it was caused by violence. The bodies of both travellers lay together, as if the men had been wearied and sought to rest upon the heath from which they never rose. They must have walked a considerable distance, over ground that for fatiguing qualities may be measured double. They were probably unaccustomed to similar exercise, and had perhaps lost the recollection of their course, and become bewildered with the falling night; because it is not certain that they may not have passed beyond the spot where their remains were found, and reached it again in endeavouring to gain the farmhouse from which they were noticed at a late hour in the afternoon. The air of the mountains is peculiarly sharp and strong. We have ere now been sadly annoyed with the pertinacity of wiser friends, who resolutely vetoed the examination of some little mountain flower, the gathering of hill berries, or any other pretence to sit down and rest a half-hour, when the afternoon was wearing through, and ten or fifteen miles of heather had to be passed. It is wise to avoid indulgences of that nature, for persons not always accustomed to the atmosphere of these high regions have a singular propensity to sleep; and sometimes, when alone, it is the sleep of death. The tendency is aggravated by a practice common with tourists, of using strong Highland whisky, which perhaps they never taste at home, with or without other refreshments. They are not seasoned to the draught, and it must exercise ultimately a weakening influence unless it be occasionally repeated; and the consequence of frequent doses is apparent. To English tourists, who are certainly not familiar with the strength of "mountain spirits," the risk is considerable. The Messrs. Anderson say, in reference to the ascent of Ben Nevis:—

"The inexperienced traveller, also, may be the better of being reminded to carry with him some wine or spirits (which, however, should be used with caution) wherewith to qualify the spring water, which is fortunately abundant, and to which he will be fain to have frequent recourse, ere he attain the object of his labours."

This advice is very good, perhaps, from the Messrs. Anderson, who are Inverness gentlemen, and must have been quite familiar with the strongest and roughest "stuff" in the market; and we even wonder that they had the "forethought" to suggest wine as an alternative. It is advice that we could have followed at one time to the measurement of any Highland capacity whatever. Custom, in these matters, goes a great way—we mean, the custom of those who are considered strictly sober men; but we find the springs on the hills to answer remarkably well without mixture; and so we never mix them. If the essence of coffee, spirit-lamps, and lucifer matches had been in the world when the tourists whom we have quoted published, they would have probably recommended their use, which is quite practicable, and has been done advantageously. Their advice is

valuable on many points, and we copy what they have to say respecting some of the routes that we have named.

"But it should be distinctly borne in mind, that, when once the low valleys at either end of these journeys are passed, not a single hut or place of shelter is to be found in the hills, and that none but persons in robust health, and accustomed to walking, should try these excursions. In tempestuous weather they should on no account be attempted by any one. The length of each exceeds thirty miles of hill and dale, which is fully as toilsome as one-half additional distance on a made road; and, as the visitor must start from one end, and sleep next night at the other, without the possibility of finding any place of refreshment, we would advise his carrying provisions with him, and loitering as shortly as possible by the way."

Mar Lodge belongs to the Earl of Fife, and is occupied as shooting quarters by the Duke of Leeds, whose Scotch title is Baron Dunblane. He resides there for two or three months at the close of summer, and has rendered himself quite popular in the district, partly from his attachment to old Highland customs, and his encouragement of Highland games and societies. The great flood of 1829 committed tremendous ravages on the property at Mar Lodge. A very beautiful bridge was swept away by the torrent, which covered the vale from bank to brae, and threatened the house with the fate of the bridge. Since that time very costly embankments have been raised to protect the property against similar visitations. Nineteen years had passed away, however, and the bridge was not rebuilt, when in last August the Duke of Leeds was informed that her Majesty, Prince Albert, and the Royal family would occupy Balmoral, which stands fifteen miles further down the river. The gallantry of Sir Walter Raleigh, who spread his cloak as a carpet for Queen Elizabeth to land on, has its place in history. It was, however, a sorry compliment when compared with that paid by the noble Duke to Royalty. Anticipating the honour of a visit from her Majesty, he built a bridge over the Dee, opposite the Lodge, and nearly at the spot where the former bridge was placed, in order to save the Royal party from the necessity of adopting the usual and less convenient access to the Lodge. It is a substantial and handsome structure, destined, we trust, to stand long before it experiences the fate of its predecessor. We take it to be the best bridge ever specially built for her Majesty's use in the course of her journeys; and it is probably the most rapidly built bridge of any respectable length in existence.

Immediately beneath Mar Lodge, but on the south side of the river, Corrymulzie Cottage has been placed in the vicinity of the Corrymulzie Fall. The cottage is occupied during the shooting season by General Duff, a younger brother of the Earl of Fife, and his family, including for some years past, Mr. Ricardo, the Member of Parliament for Stoke-on-Trent, who has fallen under the enmity of the shipping interest by his movements against the Navigation-laws. The cottage is thickly surrounded with young woods and shrubbery, and is quite an ornate, villa-looking concern, transplanted to the Highlands. Corrymulzie Fall is formed by a small stream, but it is generally visited, and is singularly beautiful, not merely from its natural characteristics, but also from the manner in which the adjacent and over-

hanging banks have been laid out. On the opposite side of the river, and some distance eastward, "the Quick water" falls into the Dee. "Quick" is a corruption, we suppose, of "Quoich," the Gaelic name of this stream; and has been adopted probably from its perfect adaptation to its character. The Quoich rattles down to the Dee from Bennabuir in a wild way, tumbling over rocks, and making falls larger than that of Corrymulzie, though not so celebrated. Glen Quoich and its waterfall will quite repay the few hours that it may take from the tourist who has hours to spare. Indeed, the Quoich and the mountain which it drains, are, in their several ways, most respectable; and yet greatly neglected on account of the company in which they are placed. The hill which rises from the Quoich is Cairn-a-Drochel, and that neat residence under the shade of Cairn-a-Drochel is Allen-a-Quoich. Almost opposite, on the south side of Dee, the Carr burn enters the river from the Carr hill, making, as is the custom with all burns in this country, a small waterfall of its own. In a fine autumnal day the scenery here is most exhilarating. The river winds along a level vale, although still more than a thousand feet above the level of the sea. The road is carried over the top of the high banks overhanging the broad haughs and the river. The frost in the mornings and evenings has coloured the leaves of the thick wood, and given them in September the tints and shadings that we see in lowland districts towards the close of October. In the small district, bound up by hills, fields of yellow ripening corn mingling not only with the green haughs, but green fields—not quite so poetical, though equally useful—for an improved agriculture and turnip-growing have, long since, extended to the smallest holdings on this river. Cultivation and population are confined to a narrow strip of land on the river's banks, and on those of its tributaries; but that may be forgotten by those who have only a temporary interest in the scene. The extreme neatness of many of the houses, and of their gardens, will at once be remarked by strangers, who may have expected to meet on the Dee the miserable huts and slovenly habits but too common, we confess, amid some of the finest scenery of the western Highlands. Neat dwelling-houses, small but trim gardens, a fondness for flowers, and good cultivation of a hard soil, with a naturally sterile climate, are distinguishing characteristics of Dee-side, and tell most favourably for the industrious habits of the people. They are a race whom the country should not lose, and is losing fast from the upper districts, as we may notice hereafter. The Invereys are the only villages of any size on the river which are not in the present state of society, and, compared with similar places in other parts of the country, most satisfactory in their appearance. The industrious habits of the people are not accompanied with the same absorbing desire to make money out of visitors, that is more annoying than costly in other districts. They may not yet have been spoiled. Less interesting localities have acquired a celebrity that has not been generally accorded to the Dee, and so they have been more frequently visited. From this reason the guides in the West may have become more professional, and more anxious to gain by their pro-

fession. The Messrs. Anderson say that a guide may always be got at Fort-William to ascend Ben Nevis for seven or eight shillings—Ben Lomond is charged ten shillings—it is a regular fare. We had, last Autumn, an intelligent person from four in the morning till ten at night, in ascending Lochnagar, and he hinted that half-a-crown was sufficient remuneration. On another occasion, an active and most intelligent young man accompanied us to Ben-Mac-Dhui, the Braeriach, and some other places, travelling on foot more than forty-five miles, and he deemed the offer of half the sum that a Ben-Lomond guide would have charged for going up the hill and down again, perfectly extravagant.

We do not mention these facts for the purpose of tempting others to reduce the fair reward of industry, but to illustrate one of many perceptible distinctions between the Gaelic-speaking population of the West, and the people of the Eastern Highlands. The largest portion of Deeside is occupied by a population whose ancestors are not supposed to have used the Gaelic language as their vernacular at any period. It is retained in a corner of the upper districts of the river. At Crathie church, immediately opposite to Balmoral, one half of the services are in Gaelic. Lower on the river, and at the base of Morven, we understand that Gaelic is occasionally used in ecclesiastical services. It is the language of the country at Inverey, and in this pretty village of Castletown; yet there is no other evidence of a change in the races, except that of language, between the people of the upper and the lower regions of Dee. The same family names prevail. Similarly industrious habits characterize the people. Their physical conformation does not present a shade of change in its leading features; and, with the exception of this stumbling-block in the language, there is no reason to presume that the length of Dee is not entirely peopled by the descendants of the Taixali, who are said to have inhabited this part of Scotland previous to the arrival of the Romans.

The Gaelic language is rapidly disappearing, and we know not any good purpose to be served by its preservation. Its literature cannot repay the inconvenience arising from a diversity of tongues. For many ages there appear to have been no additions made to its stock of words, so that it is now incompetent to express many of the ideas current in society. The Highlanders cleave to it with wonderful tenacity in their social intercourse. They entertain for it that veneration which men naturally feel for a relic of the honoured and the dead—for a ruin of the ages that are mellowed by distance.

Castletown of Braemar has a population of probably not more than three hundred persons, placed in a nook of the west; and it has three places of public worship—one belonging to the Establishment, another to the Free Church, and a third to the Roman Catholics. Each of these places of worship is apparently competent to contain the entire population of the village, which, taking into account the inhabitants of the Invereyes, and all the glens, must now be placed above the necessity of further church-extension for some time. The places of worship are all fine buildings, and give an imposing appearance to the little and otherwise neat village; which, small

though it be, is intersected by the Clunie—a pretty large river—and has the rare and valuable advantage, for a Highland town, of standing on two lairds' land. The Ballater guide to Deeside, being naturally jealous of the rival village, says that the latter, "it must be candidly allowed, cannot be much admired for its size or stately buildings." We cannot, certainly, recall another Highland village, of similar population, with quite so many "stately buildings" within its precincts and its neighbourhood. Moreover, Castletown is a place of great antiquity. The name is new, but the village must be old. All our readers know that her Majesty has made Deeside her Highland home; but few of them probably remember that it was a haunt of her royal ancestors, when kings were surrounded with less state and greater difficulties than now, and had to trust their own blades and right arms to guard their dignity and their lives. The celebrated Robert Bruce was a fugitive for a considerable time in this district, and several severe contests occurred in his interest between the Dee and the Don. At an earlier period in history, Malcolm Ceanmohr had a castle in this village. Its site is still pointed out on a rock attached to the east bank of the Clunie, and near the centre of the present village. His Majesty, who was a tough bold personage, had evidently disliked a quiet life, for underneath his bedroom this boisterous Clunie raised a continuous stir, struggling amongst tremendous rocks, casting itself over them here and there like a mad river, and perpetually hurling down more of its enemies, as if there were not sufficiently numerous impediments in its way—or as if it thought to bar the Dee, which winds along in graceful carelessness of its troubled and noisy tributary. An immense body of water runs through Castletown in the channel of the Clunie after heavy rains, or when the snows on the southern hills are melting in the spring. The Clunie water rises in a range of hills on the road by the Spittal of Glenshee to Perth. The distance from Castletown to Perth is less than to Aberdeen; but the road is desolate and difficult from the mountainous nature of the country. The Clunie, during all its course, is a tumultuous stream, and, as we stated already, brings down at many periods of the year a large body of water to join the Dee. At the most distant period to which authentic history stretches, Castletown was a place of some importance. The sport afforded in Braemar brought there the kings of Scotland, at a period when their power was sparingly acknowledged by the rude barons who held their own courts within their various domains. The memorials of rude but chivalrous monarchs are strewn over all the banks of the river. Malcolm Ceanmohr had another castle on the Dee, and on its banks fought a hard contested battle with the Danes, where afterwards the friends of the Baliols were defeated by the supporters of David Bruce, and in the neighbourhood of the spot where Macbeth had his seat, and where he was slain after his defeat in Perthshire. Not far from the same place the unfortunate descendant of a long line of kings, Mary, is said to have witnessed the rout of her friends. The wild sport of the great Caledonian forests drew her chivalrous sire, James V., to Mar. Hunting parties, even at that late period

in history, were more dangerous, and different affairs than the deer-stalking of the present day. The forests in Malcolm's days abounded with stern game. The wild boars appear to have been so numerous as to give a name to extensive tracts of country; and even so late as 1528, James V. killed a wolf in this great forest. The Mar family, to whom all this district belonged, imitated the state and bearing of sovereigns. Their earldom dates backwards to the middle of the eleventh century, and previous to that period the family must have been powerful. Ever afterwards they exercised a great influence in the councils of Scotland. They appeared at Court in a style of splendour that outshone the "means and substance" of the Scottish monarchs. They retained a large retinue at Castle-town. Their hunting excursions were undertaken in a style of sumptuous magnificence. Their income must have been large, for their expenditure was extravagant; and they rarely appear to have entered the money market as borrowers. They brought large bodies of vassals into the field; and they must have had a large population on their estates. Times have changed in Braemar. The kings, the Erskines, the wolves, the boars, the splendour of regal tournaments, the excitement of the Earls' hunting parties—even the very men have disappeared from Braemar. The right of shooting over barren heath is let for money to English gentlemen—an indignity that would have been resented even in the end of the last century. But the people, where are they? The terrible wars of the Baliols and the Bruces in Scotland wasted this country more than the war of the Roses in England; for famine destroyed more than the sword, and the pestilence more than the famine.

The number of lives lost in these cruel wars, and in their sad consequences, must have been very great. Famine ravaged the country for many years. Even in the neighbourhood of Perth, the centre of Scotland, the red deer descended from the hills, resumed possession of the Lowlands, and grazed the herbage within sight of the city. The armies raised at different periods in the north prove the existence of a large population. Zealous local antiquarians are inclined to believe that even Galcaucus, the opponent of the Romans, held his court in this district, and speared salmon in the Dee. His great battle was fought at the foot of the Grampians; but the Grampians are a wide range. The exact site is unsettled. Some authorities place it south and west so far as the neighbourhood of Stirling. Others are contented to stop near Perth. An old tradition places it nearer Brechin, at the foot of those hills that defend the How of the Mearns. In either case it is said that Galcaucus retired into the recesses of the Caledonian forest, but that is a worse defined geographical term than the Grampian mountains. The adherents of the theory that Galcaucus had his dwelling in Braemar, found much upon its central position; but the roads, not yet good, were not likely to have been better then, and it would have been no easy task to lead an army by the Spittal of Glenshee or the glens of Cortachy.

There is no reason in the world for denying that he was the first chief of Mar, and that Erskine was

his family name. The mystery will never be solved, and so he may be quite as readily referred to one noble house as another. The only thing non-apocryphal concerning him is, that he was a brave chieftain of a savage tribe, struggling for their own against fearful odds.

The Earls of Mar come within the period of fully authenticated history. They were often engaged in unfortunate wars, and yet each succeeding Earl appeared in greater splendour than his predecessor. The reasons may have been that their lands lay well out of the march of English armies, and were not much exposed to the inroads of jealous rivals. One of the Earls of Mar lost the battle of Dupplin, in the minority of Robert Bruce's son, principally from want of military capacity and skill. They mingled in the politics, the squabbles, and the diplomacy of each successive reign. Eighty years afterwards, viz. in 1411, another Earl of Mar, led the army drawn out of Angus, Mearns, and Aberdeen shires, who met and defeated the Lord of the Isles at Harlaw, a farm, we believe, and once a small village at the confluence of the Ury with the Don. There is a singularity in this great battle, which finally destroyed the power of the Celtic race in Scotland—a power that, for many years, had often been employed to weaken rather than to strengthen the nation. The Lord of the Isles had subdued the counties of Inverness, Moray, part of Banffshire—and he appears to have marched, by Huntly and the Foudland Hills, onwards in the direction of Aberdeen. The force assembled to meet him was not nearly equal to his own, but they consisted of better trained and better armed men. The singularity to which we have referred rests in the circumstance that at this great fight, which settled the supremacy of the two races in Scotland, the Celts were opposed by a chief the remains of whose vassals at the present day use the Celtic dialect; and he was supported by chieftains whose vassals at that time most probably spoke the Celtic language. The little army that was to establish lowland supremacy was chiefly drawn from Aberdeenshire, Buchan and the Mearns. The forces from Angus, being rapidly drawn to the spot, consisted chiefly of men-at-arms. They were placed in advance of the main body, under Sir James Scrymgeour, the Constable of Dundee, and Sir Alexander Ogilvie, the Sheriff of Angus. Their fate is celebrated in a ballad, well known from its being inserted in one of the series of the "Waverley Novels." The leader of the band of men-at-arms is represented as asking counsel at his "henchman" when he came in sight of the Celtic army—

"Noo what wad ye do, Roland Cheyne,  
 War' ye Strathallan's Earl?  
 War' I Strathallan's Earl this day,  
 An' thou wer't Roland Cheyne,  
 My spurs wad be in my horse's side,  
 An' the bridle upon his mane.  
 Though they are twenty thousand men,  
 An' we twice ten times ten,  
 Yet hae they but their tartan plaids,  
 An' we are mail-clad men.  
 My horse wad ride through ranks sae rude  
 As through the muirland fern.  
 Let it ne'er be said that the gentle Norman blude  
 Ran could for Highland kern."

The Earl adopted his retainer's rash advice in preference to the suggestions of his own prudence, and he and all his men were cut to pieces. Their destruction was only the commencement of the fiercest combat that had ever occurred in that district. Night ended the battle, as it ended Flodden; but when the shadows of evening came down, Mar had but few of the men whom he led into the field in the morning surrounding him, and they were faint or wounded.

The slaughter of the Celts and Islesmen had been immense. They lay in heaps upon the little plain; and their leader left the field of battle during the night, retreating by the Foudland hills into Morayshire, and onwards to Lochaber and the Isles. When the Celts came southward next, in great numbers, and under a rebel flag, they came to fight along with a descendant of the Earl of Mar, and, at his invitation, to regain for an exiled prince the throne of Britain.

The enumeration of the slain on Mar's side told how fiercely the Lochaber axes had been wielded. Sir James Scrymgeour, the Constable of Dundee; Sir Alexander Ogilvie, the Sheriff of Angus, and his eldest son, Sir Robert Maule, the ancestor of the Panmure family; Sir Thomas Moray; Sir Robert Davidson, the Provost of Aberdeen, and the leaders or chiefs of almost every family in the district were dead or dying beside the Ury on the night after the battle was won, at a cost of blood to the three counties that was long remembered—for in many families every man capable of carrying arms was slain.

We have left the Dee a far way, and forgotten Castletown and its inns—wonderful places as they are, like all the other inns on the river, with one or two exceptions—where, when one gets a bill to pay, he wonders how a three months' traffic can support such establishments at the prices charged. Here, at Castletown, are two large and splendid inns, where scarcely a single traveller per week can be expected in eight months of the year. The inns are in opposition. There is the Fyfe Arms and the Farquharson Arms; and both are, we believe, good. Our acquaintance is with the first house, the new people in the district, for the Duffs are but modern dwellers in Braemar.

A short distance out of the village, there is a small knoll, on which, on the 6th September, 1715, amid a great concourse of his tenantry, John Erskine, the 39th Earl of Mar, planted the standard of James VIII., and proclaimed him king. There was a great similarity between the principles for which John Erskine risked lands and life in 1715, on Lochnagar, and those that drew Mr. Smith O'Brien to Slievenamon in 1848. "NO UNION" was engraven on both their standards. John Erskine fought not only for James VIII., but for the independence of Scotland, and to destroy the "accursed Union." Moreover, if John Erskine had reached Edinburgh, so unpopular was the Union at that time, he might have given the powers that were a world of trouble. The ballads of the period, like others that we have quoted, do not display much poetical genius. This is another distinction, in their ballad poetry, between this Gaelic-speaking population and the Celts of the North and West. The poetry of the latter is extremely imaginative, and

the rhyme of the former is doggerel and practical. We preserve the following ballad, or part of it, only because it furnishes us with a list of names—not uninteresting in looking over the disjointed fragments of Celtic history:—

"The standard's on the Braes of Mar,  
Its ribbons streaming rarely;  
The gathering pipes on Lochnagar,  
They're sounding lang and sarely.

"There's Highlandmen frae hill and glen,  
Wi' bonnet blue and martial hue,  
Wi' belted plaid and burnished blade,  
They're coming late an' early.

"Wha wadna join our noble chief,  
The Drummond and Glengary,  
McDonald, Murray, Rollo, Keith,  
Panmure, the gallant hero.

"There's Athol men, Strathallan men,  
Strath Ronald men, McGillivray's men;  
There's Highlandmen an' Lowland men,  
They're coming late an' early.

"Fie, Donald, up an' let's awa,  
We maunna langer parley,  
For Jamie's back is at the wa',  
The lad we loe sae dearly.

"We'll go, we'll go, we'll meet the foe,  
We'll fling the plaid an' swing the blade,  
An' on we'll dash, an' hash, an' smash,  
An' nick the German lairdie."

The poetry is intolerable; but the list of names is useful. The Drummonds succeeded in keeping their land. The Keiths, the Maules, and the Erskines were forfeited. The splendid dream of John Erskine melted away. The standard, embroidered by his Countess, was stricken down on Sheriff Muir. His ancestor met, broke and routed the Celtic host when they rebelled in 1411. A Celtic host, partially drawn from the isles and from Argyle's country, under the Duke of Argyle, aided by the regular forces and others, hastily assembled in the western shires, met and defeated Mar and his army as he proceeded onward on the same errand. These rebellions cost the Earls of Mar their broad lands, that were equal to many southern counties in extent—that somehow supported a numerous tenantry, and supplied their chiefs with wealth which enabled them to sustain the utmost splendour. Their territories, indeed, extended a long way down the river into broad and fertile tracts. But still in the times of all the Thirtynine Earls, the Vale of Dee and the glens of its dependencies must necessarily have supported a far denser population than are now located there.

The upper part of Dee passes through a series of "bowls," or "basins," not very large, but varied in extent. The mountains form a series of circles—leaving barely space between them for the river to pass in and escape—but widening out into the middle sometimes into considerable valleys. All the mountains now and onwards, that border on the valley of the Dee, or set their base almost into the river, at the gorges, are steep, but thickly planted with birch and fir. Sometimes a grey precipitous rock stands out in stern defiance of nature's good intentions. There is one before us on the right hand. You may catch glimpses of great crags amongst its trees. That is Craig Kenneth, or Coinnoch, for there is no precise spelling of these proper names; and it



is so named because one of the Kings of Scotland—one of the Kenneths—is said to have been an indolent huntsman, who preferred to sit on the top of the mountain to watch the chase, rather than to join in the hunter's toilsome perils. We have sometimes wondered, if he was an indolent man, how he managed to get up—or how, when up, he ever came down again. At the foot of this Craig Kenneth is the castle of Castletown, a comparatively modern erection, in which sometimes a company of an infantry regiment is quartered. When the Erskines and Farquharsons plotted rebellion they might have been useful, or when illicit distillation was prosecuted in the gleus they may have been required; but now they are useless, though the men are comfortable; and a company of the 93d who were there last summer appeared to enjoy their rustrication. The castle stands in a new pass of the Dee, opening into a wide valley, the centre of which is formed by a wide green lawn; the hills around it are covered with trees to the top, excepting two high mountains on the south side of the river.

One of them is the lion's face, and the other is the Charter Chest. The Lion's face is graven out of huge masses of granite, with, as it appears after one has been told the resemblance, considerable accuracy. The likeness is not one entirely of the imagination. The features of the king of beasts can be traced very minutely, although it might be possible for one to pass and re-pass the rock, in some directions often,

without detecting the resemblance, unless it were kindly pointed out—but that once done, the features of the lion are visible most indisputably. Clunie Crag, the next, and a higher rock, obtained its name of the Charter Chest, because the lairds of Clunie in troublous times were in the habit of depositing there the charters of their lands. The secret saved Colonel Farquharson in 1746, when, a fugitive from the vengeance of the Government, he lay concealed on this rock for nearly a year. The course of the Dee through this vale is peculiarly beautiful; over a channel of smooth sand, quiet and placid, with scarcely a ripple on its surface, where that can be seen from the south side, for the trees that hang far over the pure river, and hide its waters in their canopy of green leaves. The mansion-house of Invercauld is built upon an elevated terrace above the haugh, and at the foot of a high wooded hill, on the north side of the river, and in the centre of the valley.

Like many other old mansion-houses, there is nothing very elegant in the style of the building itself; but the site is one of the finest in Scotland, commanding the utmost variety of scenery, from the ragged peaks of Lochnagar to the crags of the Charter Chest, the frowning rocks of the Lion's face, the vast masses of birch wood climbing up and down the hills in every direction, to the still, quiet river, and the deep green lawn upon a level with the river's banks.

## REVOLUTION IN EUROPE.

### FRANCE.

THE position of France has little altered, save that the Constitution is now the law, and a Republic the legal government of the land. To many in England this will be by no means a pleasurable announcement. But it is a fact; and a few years will show how idle are the speculations of prejudice, hate and fear. All the leading men in France, who in the different parties are distinguished by their good sense and honourable character, have come to one conclusion—*Every Government is impossible in France save the Republic.* A careful inquiry into the position and internal character of France will show the correctness of this opinion. For monarchy to be powerful and even possible in any country, it must have at its back a class whose interest it is to support and sustain it; that is to say, a landed aristocracy. France has not this class, and monarchy has to sustain itself on a much more objectionable support—that of half a million of bayonets. If monarchy existed in the love and affections of the French people, it would be different; but it does not. Monarchical prejudices, and many monarchical habits, still linger in the land; but there is one thing against which royalty can never stand—the democratic position of property. This has, ever since 1789, been gradually sapping the foundation of kingship. The abolition of the law of primogeni-

ture, and the gradual diffusion of property into millions of channels, has created that equality which is one of the elements of democracy. Where everybody is a proprietor, there can be no particular political influence in the mere possession of land. There are no great fortunes in France save those made by commerce, trade and speculation; but there are thousands and millions of persons of moderate fortune. The result is largely beneficial. The misery, wretchedness and suffering which exist always beside stupendous aristocratic fortunes, is not a normal state in France. Everybody has something of his own. It is this state of things which has enabled the revolutionary year of 1848 to meet £72,000,000 of taxation. Common sense must teach that the wide diffusion of wealth, amid some hundreds of thousands of families, is far better than the agglomeration of the same amount in a few hands. In France, if there be want of work, most artisans, labourers, &c., have their little plot of land, worth £20 or £30 a-year, to fall back upon; while in England they go to the parish.

Every day it is clearer that things are returning here to their usual state. Trade and commerce suffer no longer as they did four months ago; while they never did suffer to the extent asserted. Jewellers, watch-makers, bonnet-makers, dress-makers, artificial flower merchants, feather-makers, are all well